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## In this month's issue . . .

**G**reetings and welcome to the May/June 2012 issue of *TLL*. How are your new classes? Teachers and students are now getting accustomed to a new academic year, enjoying a short break from school during Golden Week, and preparing to cope with the long and hot rainy season in June.

In our *Feature* articles, **Masumi Tahira** examines MEXT's new Course of Study Guidelines in terms of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and **Mark Rebuck** introduces the CI-slot approach, incorporating controversial issues into pre-existing lessons and investigates students' reactions.

We have two articles in *Readers' Forum*, **Paul Tanner** and **Jim Chapman** first explain a 6-week poster presentation project, and next **Scott Menking** discusses exchange agreements between Japanese and foreign institutions for studying abroad programs.

In *My Share*, **Germain Mesureur**, **Nathaniel French**, **Christopher Pulte**, and **Doreen Gaylord** give some fresh ideas for the classroom. In the *Book Reviews* section, **Chris Wharton** reviews *Seeds of Confidence* and **Mark Lewis** provides a review of *The Sixties: Activities for Students of English as a Second or Foreign Language*.

*Continued over*

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*TLL* Coeditors: Jennifer Yphantides, Jason Peppard  
*TLL* Japanese-Language Editor: Emika Abe

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We are grateful to the many contributors and production staff members who helped complete this issue. We hope that you find the content helpful and practical.

Emika Abe

TLT Japanese-Language Editor

**T**LTの2012年5/6月号へようこそ。新しいクラスはいかがでしょうか。教師も学生も4月に始まった新年度の生活に慣れ、ゴールデンウィークでひと時の休息を楽しみながら、6月にやってくる長く暑い梅雨を乗り切る準備をしています。



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## Submitting material to The Language Teacher

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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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本号のFeatureでは、Masumi Tahiraが、コミュニケーション言語教育の観点から文部科学省の学習指導要領を検討し、Mark Rebeckは、既存の授業の一部に社会問題を取り入れる、「社会問題の広場」アプローチを紹介し、学生の反応も調査しています。

Readers' Forumでは、2つ記事のうち、Paul TannerとJim Chapmanが6週間にわたるプレゼンテーションプロジェクトを説明し、Scott Menkingは、海外研修のための日本と海外の教育機関との交換協定について論じています。

My Shareでは、Germain Mesureur, Nathaniel French, Christopher Pulte, Doreen Gaylordの教室での使える新しいアイデアを紹介しています。また、Book Reviewsでは、Chris WhartonがSeeds of Confidenceを、Mark LewisがThe Sixties: Activities for Students of English as a Second or Foreign Languageを論評しています。

本号を作成するに当たり、ご協力いただいた多くの著者やスタッフの皆さんに感謝の意を表します。本号が読者の皆様にとって有益で実践的でありますように。

日本語版編集長  
阿部 恵美佳

## Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

### A nonprofit organization

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) is a nonprofit professional organization dedicated to the improvement of language teaching and learning in Japan. It provides a forum for the exchange of new ideas and techniques and a means of keeping informed about developments in the rapidly changing field of second and foreign language education.

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# Behind MEXT's new Course of Study Guidelines

## Keywords

Course of Study Guidelines, MEXT, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Japan

The new Course of Study Guidelines of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT) started to be implemented in stages in 2011. This paper reviews how MEXT's policies for English education have changed and examines how the Ministry has attempted to implement communicative approaches over the last two decades. However, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is not well rooted in Japan, so teachers do not fully understand it and are not confident about using CLT. This is the result of the lack of commitment by MEXT, which has led to ambiguity about CLT itself. This lack of commitment hampers the achievement of its ultimate goal of improving Japanese students' English proficiency. MEXT must provide greater support for teachers by clarifying its advocated principles and providing ongoing training opportunities.

新学習指導要領が2011年から順次実施されている。本論では、文部科学省による日本の英語教育方針の変遷を振り返り、過去20年間にわたるコミュニカティブ・ランゲージ・ティーチング (CLT) 導入の取り組みについて考察する。CLTはまだ日本の教育現場に十分根づいておらず、教師側のCLTへの理解、CLT実践への自信も十分とはいえない。これは、これまで同省がどのような教え方をすべきかについて曖昧さを残したままにしてきたことの結果でもあり、日本人生徒の英語力を向上させるという最終目標を阻害するものとなっている。同省は、自ら推し進める理念を具体的に示し、継続的な研修機会を提供して教師支援をさらに行うべきである。

Masumi Tahira

Temple University

**T**he *Course of Study* is the series of guidelines for subject teachers officially released by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT) soon after the end of World War II. The guidelines have been revised approximately every 10 years. They are now considered official principles for English education in Japan's public schools, providing overall goals and appropriate curricula. The latest versions were released for elementary, junior high, and senior high schools in 2008 and 2009, and began to be implemented in stages in 2011.

This paper reviews how MEXT's policies for English education have changed and examines how the Ministry has attempted to implement communicative approaches over the last two decades. It appears to be difficult for the Ministry to change its policies promptly and implement them. There remains a big gap between the stated policies and what is actually done in the classroom. In this paper it is argued that MEXT's commitment to new policies is in doubt, as evidenced by a lack of meaningful support for teachers. This lack of commitment hampers the achievement of its ultimate goal of improving Japanese students' English proficiency, which is quite low as is shown by TOEFL (iBT) test scores (ETS, 2011). In spite of a stated policy shift towards a focus on communication, the teaching principles advocated by MEXT are not fully practiced and understood by teachers, and the Ministry needs to provide further support for them.

## A brief history of MEXT's Study Guidelines

The first Course of Study Guidelines for foreign language teaching, as well as for other main subjects, was released in 1947. They stated that (a) habit formation was the ultimate goal in learning a foreign language, (b) listening and speaking were the primary skills, (c) it was advisable to accurately imitate

utterances, and (d) students should get used to English focusing on its sounds and rhythms without using textbooks for the first six weeks (MEXT, 1947). In fact, (a) to (d) above exactly reflect what Richards and Schmidt (2010) described as the Audiolingual method of English teaching and learning (p. 40). The ultimate goal of English education at that time was to gain Western knowledge from native English speakers.

Further changes in the guidelines emerged in the 1950s. One of these was the introduction of the number of words students should learn in school. The guidelines of 1956 designated up to 5,700 words throughout the six-year high school period (MEXT, 1956) as the appropriate number. The number was later reduced to 4,900 (MEXT, 1960). In addition, the importance of grammar rules was emphasized for the first time. The Ministry had placed special emphasis on listening and speaking skills in the early 1950s; however, by the 1960s it was placing emphasis on grammar rules and language structures. MEXT's introduction of the grammar-based syllabus played a decisive role in the establishment of the Grammar Translation method, *yakudoku*, where "the teacher gives grammatical translation of written English in Japanese; students have few chances to vocalize English" (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008).

After the experiences of the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 and the Osaka International Exposition in 1970, the focus of MEXT's guidelines "turned from teaching four skills separately to a more integrated communicative ability to comprehend the foreign language" (Yoshida, 2003). However, the two features in the previous guidelines noted above, the designation of the vocabulary size and grammar-driven curricula, still remained.

With the dramatic economic changes of the 1970s and 1980s, MEXT guidelines began to indicate a stronger recognition of the communicative purposes of language learning (MEXT, 1977, 1978). This can be seen from the 1989 guidelines which declared, for the first time, that developing students' communicative ability in English was the central purpose of English education in Japan (Yoshida, 2003; Kikuchi & Browne, 2009). The launch of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program in 1987 was a symbolic event reflecting this policy change. At the same time,

the vocabulary size required through the high school period was reduced to 2,200 words. The trend toward communicative English skills has continued right up to the present.

Since 2000, MEXT has taken a strong interest in the effects of globalization, and this has influenced MEXT's perspective on Japanese education. In the Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities launched in 2003, English was considered the primary international language; therefore it was thought essential for children to acquire communication skills in English in the 21st century. With regards to Japanese people's English ability, MEXT rated it quite low and insufficient (MEXT, 2003). In line with this evaluation, MEXT simultaneously listed several subpolicies to support the Action Plan. They covered a broad range of themes, for example, the incorporation of more activities in English classes, the introduction of English conversation activities in elementary schools, the introduction of a listening test in the University Center Examination (which was realized in 2006), and the sending of 10,000 high school students to study abroad annually (MEXT, 2003). At the same time, MEXT also required English language teachers to basically conduct classes in English instead of in Japanese. Many of the subpolicies have led to major changes in the latest guidelines.

### The latest MEXT Course of Study Guidelines *The guidelines for elementary schools*

In April 2011, the new guidelines for elementary schools were implemented in full. A critical revision is that foreign language communication activities are, for the first time, compulsory for fifth and sixth grade students. MEXT (2008c) claims that these activities aim at "fostering a positive attitude toward communication" (p. 1) instead of teaching a foreign language as a school subject. This is evidenced by the fact that the section dealing with these activities is separated from the section relating to other teaching subjects in the new guidelines. This is related to another important point in the guidelines: "homeroom teachers would be responsible for these new classes" (Fennelly & Luxton, 2011, p. 20). The reason why homeroom teachers are to play the main role in foreign language communication activities is that they are the teachers most

appropriate to remove students' anxiety and elicit their willingness to communicate (MEXT, 2008d).

### *The guidelines for junior high schools*

Several major revisions have been made in the new Course of Study Guidelines for junior high schools, which were scheduled to be introduced nationwide in all grades from spring 2012. One is that the number of class hours has been increased from 105 to 140 per year (MEXT, 2008b). Another is that the vocabulary size students should acquire in junior high school has been increased from 900 words to 1,200 words (MEXT, 2008b).

Another noticeable change is that now the importance of a balance in the teaching of the four language skills is clearly stressed (MEXT, 2008b) as can be seen from the overall objective "to develop students' basic communication abilities such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing" (MEXT, 2008a, p. 1). In addition, MEXT (2008b) also mentions that it has increased the class time as well as the vocabulary size so as to increase classroom activities for practicing communication, not to increase grammar teaching. These shifts indicate that for MEXT the purpose of foreign language education is to foster communicative ability (MEXT, 2008b).

### *The guidelines for senior high schools*

Implementation of the new Course of Study Guidelines for senior high schools begins for first-year students from 2013. There are several changes in the new guidelines for senior high schools. First, as is the case for junior high schools, the new guidelines place language activities at the center of language teaching, and emphasize that all four skills in "language activities should be interlinked for comprehensive learning" (MEXT, 2009, p. 2). Thus, the required courses will be reorganized as English Communication (I, II, III) and English Expression (I, II), removing the old reading and writing courses. Second, for the first time in the history of Course of Study Guidelines, MEXT has declared that "classes, in principle, should be conducted in English in order to enhance the opportunities for students to be exposed to English" (MEXT, 2009,

p. 7). Third, the vocabulary size students should acquire in high school has been increased from 1,300 to 1,800 words. At the same time, MEXT has taken the position that "grammar instruction should be given as a means to support communication" (MEXT, 2009, p. 7). By emphasizing grammar as an adjunct to meaningful interaction, MEXT is moving toward more communicative approaches, reducing the dominance of Grammar Translation in teaching.

### **Remaining concerns**

#### *The current situation of CLT in Japan*

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is defined as an approach to foreign or second language teaching which considers communicative competence the goal of language learning and emphasizes that learners learn a language through using it to communicate (Richards & Schmidt, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). More than twenty years have passed since MEXT's first attempted introduction of CLT. However, the implementation of CLT appears to be happening at a sluggish pace. A survey MEXT conducted in 3,598 high schools in 2010 indicated the reality fell short of language-use-oriented communicative activities (MEXT, 2010). The results show that 48.5% of the 9,726 teachers who participated noticed that less than half of their students' utterances were in English during oral communication courses. In keeping with the goals and approaches to teaching advocated by MEXT, which they assert will achieve the development of communication ability through using all four language skills, the latest guidelines attempt to promote CLT more strongly. Today, in the middle of the process to fully implement the new guidelines, problems in incorporating CLT in the actual classrooms still remain.

#### *Varied interpretations of CLT*

A major difficulty which has prevented CLT from taking root in Japanese public schools is that CLT is not a teaching method but a set of approaches to language teaching; therefore, it has "many interpretations and manifestations" (Brown, 2007, p.45). The ambiguity around what CLT really is has resulted in varied teacher perceptions of communicative activities; thus many

teachers allow other methods and approaches to coexist. A study by Sakui (2004) found that “teachers spent most of the class time involved in teacher-fronted grammar explanations, chorus reading, and vocabulary presentations” (p. 157), while CLT activities “seemed to play a much smaller role” (p. 157). Likewise, Nishino’s research (2011) involving 139 high school teachers revealed that they “did not frequently use communicative activities” (p. 132), even though they “held positive beliefs about CLT” (p. 132). She also reported that the types and degrees of communicative activities performed in class varied among teachers.

### *Guidelines not well understood yet*

Combined with the ambiguity of CLT, the insufficiency of explanations officially given by MEXT may militate against a shared understanding of the new principles. For example, since the final draft of the new guidelines for senior high schools was put forward in December 2008, there has been robust debate about whether or not the new policy of “teach English in English” is feasible. A few months after the new policy was introduced in March 2009, at a round-table talk hosted by *Eigo Kyoiku* magazine, attended by teachers and a MEXT official, the official stressed that the teacher’s role would be to help learners to use language, not to give lectures (Taishukan, 2009). He also warned that having an image of a class as one in which the teacher gives a lecture in English all the time would indicate a misunderstanding of the real purpose of the policy. Accordingly, he noted, there is no need to conduct the whole class in English because it is often unrealistic to explain the rules of grammar to learners in English. His remarks may help us to more fully understand what is expected of teachers under the new guidelines. Nevertheless, these details cannot be found in official documents (on the MEXT sites as of October 2011). Therefore, MEXT’s expectations remain obscure for many people. In terms of the newly introduced English activities in elementary schools, Fennelly and Luxton (2011) point out that “neither the curriculum nor the guidebook seemed to be well understood” (p. 21), and the lack of understanding “can obviously lead to very serious problems in the future” (p. 21).

Therefore, it is necessary that MEXT more clearly defines the type of classroom activities and ways of teaching which it expects teachers to adopt.

### *Need for teacher training*

An additional key issue is support for teachers when they have to accommodate the fundamental policy reforms. Although MEXT has provided training for teachers, researchers have found that there is the need for more training programs and support for teachers. Fennelly and Luxton (2011) found “a lack of confidence among teachers” (p. 21) despite “many of the teachers concerned... [having]... received 30 hours of English teaching training” (p. 22). They posit that one possible reason is teachers are still unfamiliar with the knowledge or strategies which are useful in CLT. They assert that “additional training is necessary” (p. 22) and suggest that the quality of training matters. Nishino (2011) stresses the importance of opportunities for teacher development where teachers can continuously learn from their colleagues. She explains that these opportunities are essential as it can take a considerable amount of time for teachers to switch to new ways of teaching, to accumulate experience in using communicative approaches, and at the same time, to overcome obstacles and constraints including class size and pressure from the grammar-translation-centered university entrance examination system (Nishino, 2011). In July 2011, MEXT (2011) released a report which includes supplemental proposals for the implementation of the new guidelines. MEXT plans to provide teacher training on a broad scale according to the report. Although the details of training programs have not been clarified yet, it is essential that more support be given in order for teachers to become confident and capable of teaching in communicative ways.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has discussed MEXT’s Course of Study Guidelines. In the latest version of guidelines, the Ministry intends a radical reform of English language education by promoting communicative approaches more intensively in public schools. However, CLT is not well rooted in Japan, so teachers do not fully understand



it and are not confident about using CLT. This is the result of the lack of commitment by MEXT which has led to ambiguity about CLT itself. MEXT must provide greater support for teachers by clarifying its advocated principles and providing ongoing training opportunities. Over 20 years have passed since MEXT's first attempted introduction of CLT. It should have been a long enough period of time for trials and errors, and for the Ministry to recognize the realities experienced by teachers and reported by researchers. Based on the lessons from and reflections on the past, MEXT needs to commit to supporting teachers struggling to improve Japanese students' English skills through CLT.

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# The CI-slot approach to controversial issues: The students' views

## Keywords

controversial issues, teacher stance, disclosure

While using controversial issues (CI) in the language classroom has been widely advocated, some have argued that EFL is being sidetracked for purposes other than language teaching. Taking into account such concerns, the author introduced CI in the form of slots that occupied only a small part of pre-existing communicative lessons. These CI-slots comprised a video followed by disclosure of the teacher's personal viewpoint. A questionnaire study was conducted to ascertain students' reactions to two CI-slots, one on the topic of environmental destruction and the other on the dangers of fast food. Results showed that most students responded positively to the slots, in part because the issues they dealt with were considered *mijika*, or close to their lives. The majority of students also considered their teacher's disclosure to be appropriate. Implications of the study for the teaching of CI are discussed.

英語の授業で、題材として社会問題を扱うことは良いことであると見なされている。しかし、社会問題に焦点を当てると、学生の視野を広げる効果をもつ一方、文法などの言語の学習が疎かになると指摘する者もいる。これらの指摘を踏まえ、筆者は「社会問題の広場」のような形で、既存の授業のごく一部に社会問題を扱う題材を導入してみた。この「社会問題の広場」は、関連するビデオを視聴させ、そのあとに授業者が自分の意見を述べるという形で進めた。社会問題として扱ったのは、環境破壊と食育の2つのトピックである。そして学生がこの「社会問題の広場」に対して、どのような感想を持ったのかについて質問紙調査を行った。その結果、大半の学生がこの時間を肯定的に評価した。その主な理由は、ビデオ教材を使うことで社会問題を「身近」に理解することができたというものであった。そして、授業者の率直な意見を聞くことについても肯定的な反応が見られた。これらを踏まえ、本論文では、英語の授業において社会問題を扱ううえで、注意すべき点について考察した。

Mark Rebuck

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At JALT2010, human rights activist Anna Baltzer gave a presentation on her experience of living in Gaza (Baltzer, 2010). Although she did not explicitly encourage teachers to take her talk's message back to the classroom, some in that room appeared eager to do so. One teacher, for example, suggested making the Israeli occupation “more relevant” to students by focusing in class on the campaign to boycott a well-known Japanese retailer because of its plans to open branches in Israel. While the teaching of controversial issues (CI), including what Weintroub (1998) calls the “hot potato” of the Israel-Palestine conflict, has been advocated widely, the use of English language classes for this purpose is itself not free of controversy. The author, taking into account certain concerns raised against the teaching of CI, has integrated them into his class in the form of short slots, centered on a video conveying a certain message on a social topic. After discussing some of the arguments over the use of CI, this paper reports on a study that examines students' perceptions of two CI-slots. Of particular interest to this exploratory research was ascertaining students' reactions to the presentation in the classroom of only a single viewpoint.

## Why teach controversial topics?

Much communicative language teaching “involves ... relatively trivial topics” and is imbued with a sense that “it is simply engagement with the language that matters” with content being of little significance (Johnson, 2003, p. 29). CI, on the other hand, foreground content. Moreover, when CI are discussed, students benefit from “hearing new perspectives” and “actively engaging others who might not agree with them” (Guest, 2005a).

Haynes (2009) focuses on the topic of HIV/AIDS in her classes to signal to her students that it is an issue of importance and relevance to our lives. While acknowledging that whether students alter their behavior is ultimately a personal decision, one of the aims of Haynes' classes is to encourage students to make healthy, informed choices (personal communication, December 20, 2010). It could thus be argued that she is acting, in the words of Brown (2010), as an "instrument of social change." To see oneself, he argues, in such a role is not only acceptable, it is imperative: "Either you are a teacher who believes that your job is one whose value must extend outside the classroom, or you are one that tows the party line that language is no more than a sum of its parts" (p. 6).

### Concerns about the teaching of CI

In a rejoinder to Brown's contention that it is the ELT teacher's job to effect social change, Perrin (2010) argues that his students "pay good money" because "they want to learn how to talk in English" and not to "extend their world view...[or] change their outlook on life" (p. 43). He points out that "what distinguishes foreign teaching from mother tongue instruction...is that in the L2 classroom, the emphasis has to be as much on form as on content" (p. 43).

### Slots of controversy

Perrin (2010) also asserts that ELT teachers should stick to the "unglamorous work" of teaching language rather than "cast[ing] round for other roles" (p. 45). Controversial issues can, of course, be contained in tasks that focus explicitly on the language. Norton and Pavlenko (2004), for example, report on how a teacher raised students' awareness of gender issues while practicing modal auxiliaries. Nevertheless, in the light of the admonition made by Perrin, the author reflected on his own teaching of CI. He was concerned, in particular, with achieving a balance between content and form and between the "regular" topics used in communicative language classrooms and CI.

Emerging from this reflection was the insertion of CI-slots into already existing lessons. In these slots students watched a short video, completed a simple focus-on-language task, and then

listened to their teacher's view on the issue. The language used in the third stage of the CI-slot cycle (i.e., the teacher's talk) was carefully targeted to the students' proficiency level. Writing key words and phrases on the board and translating some low frequency lexis provided support for the students during this teacher-conducted "live listening" (Harmer, 2007, p. 306).

CI-slots were kept short (under 10 minutes) so as not to displace other parts of the lesson; no time, therefore, could be allotted for debate or discussion. The CI-slot approach meant that CI were given considerably less prominence in the author's course compared to one that followed, for example, Altan's (2010) recommendation of devoting each week's lesson to a different (global) issue.

### Teacher stance

An important consideration for teachers using CI is that of stance, that is, whether it is best to remain neutral, adopt a balanced approach (i.e., present all sides of an issue), or take a committed position and disclose their opinion (for more on teacher's stance see *Global citizenship guides*, 2006, p. 7). While Guest (2005a) advises teachers to remove themselves from "center stage," Cotton's (2006) research found that maintaining complete neutrality when teaching controversial issues can be difficult, if not impossible.

### Method

#### Participants

This study involved 53 first-year students (34 female and 19 male) taking a required English communication course at a private university in central Japan. The students, all non-English majors, had a low-intermediate proficiency level and were in two classes ( $n=30$  and  $n=23$ ) following the same course syllabus.

#### Procedure

Due to space limitations, only two of the four CI-slots used during the autumn semester in 2010 are considered here. The videos were selected because they linked to material in existing lessons, and because they were short (around one minute each) with highly visual, immediately understandable messages. What

follows is a summary of how the CI-slots were integrated into the lessons and a brief description of each video. To bring these descriptions to life, readers are encouraged to watch the videos for themselves.<sup>1</sup>

### Video 1: "I was lovin' it"

This CI-slot followed an activity in which students asked about each others' vacations, forming questions from prompts, the final one being "Find someone who ate at McDonald's." The author then wrote "I'm lovin' it" on the board and asked students why this could be considered ungrammatical; this led into a brief review of stative verbs. Prior to viewing, students were asked to note down how this catchphrase had been changed in the video and by whom the video had been sponsored.

The video shows an overweight, middle-aged man dead on a mortuary trolley, with a woman weeping over his body. In the corpse's hand is a half-eaten McDonald's hamburger. After eliciting the answers to the task and explaining the language in the voice over ("High cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart attacks. Tonight, make it vegetarian"), the author disclosed his views on McDonald's recounting some of the reasons he tended to avoid eating there.

### Video 2: Environmental destruction during COP10

Video 2 was incorporated into a lesson focusing on the phrase *used to*. Students talked about changes in their lives, in the lives of family members, and in the world around them. In the CI-slot, students were shown a video made by campaigners fighting to save Hirabari Satoyama, which was possibly the last remaining *satoyama* ecosystem in Nagoya.

The video opens with a scene of a tranquil forest and lake. With the video paused, students described what they saw on the screen. After the captions "COP10開催中に伐採が始まった" (The felling began in the middle of COP10), the scene changes to one of destruction with trees being cut down. The video ends with the captions "私達のお金を里山開発に使わないで" (Don't use our money to develop Satoyama) and then a close-up of a certain bank's passbook being cut in two. Following the video, students completed

sentences with *used to* by inserting the appropriate phrasal verb; for example:

*There used to be a big forest but it was [cut down].*

*There used to be lakes full of fish and frogs but they have been [filled in].*

The author then spoke with some passion—he had been involved in the campaign to save the site—on the destruction of the Hirabari Satoyama, explaining, for example, the meaning of the word *hypocrisy* in relation to the bank highlighted in the video.<sup>2</sup>

### Data collection and analysis

Students completed a questionnaire, co-written by the author and a Japanese native speaker, that sought to ascertain their views on the appropriateness of the videos and their teacher's disclosure. Students' comments that were written in Japanese were translated into English by the author and analyzed for salient features and common themes (all the comments included in this paper are translations).

## Results and Discussion

### Video 1

In response to the statement "It was appropriate to use this video in class," 46 (88%) of the 52 students present for this lesson marked either "very appropriate" ( $n=20$ ) or "appropriate" ( $n=26$ ). One reason given for this response was topic relevance: the word *mijika* (身近), familiarity or closeness, appeared in 12 (26%) of the comments. Although the detrimental effect of "junk food" could be considered common knowledge, 22 students (41%), including the writer of comment *a*, indicated that the video was awareness-raising:

a) *It's something I eat without thinking about it, but this video has made me aware of what kind of damage this food can do.*

Four students indicated that the video, and most likely the teacher's talk that followed it, challenged preconceptions of Westerners' dietary preferences:

b) *I don't want to sound rude, but I had the image that foreigners loved fast food. It was interesting to know that some don't.*

There were six comments that negatively evaluated the video, including the one below:

c) *I know that this was some kind of parody, but in Japan we have a strong antipathy to criticizing specific institutions so openly. Showing this video raises questions about your lessons.*

That the Japanese tend to avoid open criticism may be true, but it is interesting that no negative comments were received in relation to the attack on the bank in Video 2. Perhaps the targeting of a company so much a part of students' lives as McDonald's was taken somewhat personally.

### Video 2

Of the 46 students attending this lesson, 43 (93%) responded that it was "very appropriate" ( $n=26$ ) or "appropriate" ( $n=17$ ) to use this video in class. An analysis of the comments showed that there were two main reasons for the students' positive evaluation.

The first was familiarity or closeness with the topic (the word *mijika* appeared in 18 [39%] of the comments). This familiarity was both spatial—Hirabari, being the location of the Aichi Driving Test Center, was a place known to all students—and temporal—this lesson was taught a week after COP10, a major convention on biological diversity held in Nagoya in 2010. Awareness raising was the second reason. Twenty comments (46%), including *d* below, indicated that this CI-slot had alerted students to a reality of which most were unaware and, without this lesson, would most likely have remained so.

d) *I am embarrassed to say that I knew nothing about this before the lesson, although COP10 was taking place a short distance from here. It was a valuable chance to realize how ignorant I am about environmental issues; I'm glad this lesson made me feel embarrassed about my ignorance.*

The students' unawareness of the situation was initially surprising since the controversy surrounding Hirabari Satoyama had received extensive coverage on local television and in the national press.<sup>3</sup> However, talking to students, it became clear that many rarely, if ever, watch or read the news. This suggests that even without discussion, and even if only one side of an issue is presented, an activity that raises awareness

can be valuable if it encourages students, even out of embarrassment (see comment *d*), to take a greater interest in the world around them.

Of the four comments that expressed negative sentiments, one considered showing the video to be "pointless" because "there was nothing we could do about [the situation]," while another felt it "just showed how difficult it was to hold back development."

### Teacher stance

Responding to the statement, "It was good for your teacher to give his opinion on controversial issues," all 53 students indicated strong agreement ( $n=40$ ) or agreement ( $n=13$ ). A number of students commented that listening to the teacher's opinion served as a chance to reflect upon and deepen their own. It was particularly interesting that 15 comments (28%), including *e* below, indicated in some way that the teacher's views were regarded as emanating from just another individual and assumed no particular significance.

e) *The opinion of the teacher is just one of many. Hearing the teacher's opinion makes us aware that such views exist and makes us think about our own views.*

Hess (2005, p. 47) points out that teachers who disclose their opinions often stress they are duty bound to "model the importance of taking a stand on issues." This was a view echoed in four of the students' comments, including *f*.

f) *If the teacher takes a neutral stand and just talks about innocuous things, then we will also take a neutral stand on everything. If the teacher gives his opinion, then we will realize that we should give our opinion.*

No students considered their teacher's disclosure inappropriate, but six students (11%), including the one below, qualified their comments:

g) *As long as students in the lesson feel free to give their opinion, then it is good for the teacher to give his.*

While the author sought to foster a classroom atmosphere in which students, including the writer of the last comment, felt comfortable expressing an opinion, not allocating time for discussion certainly limited the opportunity for

students to respond in class to the issues raised in the CI-slots. The slots, it needs to be reiterated, were to some extent a compromise: a way to introduce stimulating and substantive content into, but without greatly disrupting, pre-existing lessons aimed at students whose overall proficiency would have precluded discussion in the L1. Nevertheless, a chance to respond could have been provided. In the case of the author's course, end-of-semester interviews, which formed part of the final evaluation, would have been an ideal venue for students to voice a (prepared) response.

Although there was no explicit indication in the comments that students felt a certain viewpoint was being imposed upon them, it could be argued that reinforcing the video's message with the teacher's opinion rendered the CI-slots too overbearing. Using video material that did not reflect the teacher's viewpoint would provide more balance to the CI-slots. More balance would also be achieved if teachers, after first declaring their own position, then presented other viewpoints. As well as expressing his personal views about McDonald's, the author could have introduced, for instance, the opinion of Holmes (2010) who argues that many of McDonald's practices could greatly improve catering in UK hospitals.

### Conclusions and limitations

Although this study was conducted primarily to inform the author's teaching of CI, it was hoped that its findings would be of potential use to the wider teaching community. It is important to note, however, that teacher personality, the degree of teacher-student trust, and classroom situation variables are factors which limit the potential for making generalizations.

Moreover, while the questionnaire did ask students for their "honest response," serious consideration needs to be given to the possibility that the overwhelmingly positive evaluation received may have been in part the result of response bias; that is, students may have answered the questionnaire in a way they thought the teacher wanted them to rather than according to their true beliefs. Conducting the study with students not usually taught by the author would have increased the validity of the results. Of course, it may also have been the case that the

positive evaluation was because the messages expressed in two CI-slots were those that students happened to agree with. A slot that challenged culturally sensitive issues—for instance, one that incorporated the trailer from the movie *The Cove*—would perhaps have elicited more critical and/or defensive comments.

The questionnaire would have provided further insights if the students had been asked not only about their teacher's disclosure in general, but also about each of the teacher talks following video 1 and 2. Future research should employ a more detailed questionnaire to enable a deeper probing into the specific factors that influence students' responses, and supplementing the questionnaire with interviews (conducted by a third party) would also allow for a considerably more in-depth analysis.

Despite these limitations, the study does raise several points that may be of interest to teaching practitioners. Firstly, complete lessons, or even courses, do not necessarily have to be devoted to CI; students' awareness can be raised, and their interest in an issue piqued, by short slots of CI. Teachers not wishing to make drastic changes to existing courses could incorporate these slots, as could those concerned about spending excessive time on "weighty" content.

Secondly, a key reason for the positive evaluation of the CI-slots was that they dealt with issues students felt were close to their lives. This result, together with the motivational benefit of relevance reported in the literature (see, for example, Dörnyei, 2001, p. 126), underlines the importance of topic relevance when selecting materials for CI.

Thirdly, while a comparison of students' reactions to neutral, balanced, and committed stances could be included in future research, and notwithstanding the possibility of response bias mentioned above, the positive reaction to teacher disclosure perhaps suggests that students are more interested in their teacher's views than we might suppose. Moreover, the fact that a number of comments indicated students did not attach particular weight to their teacher's viewpoint might indicate that worries voiced by Guest (2005b) about indoctrination of "impressionable" students are somewhat unfounded.

Finally, Parker (2010) contends that ELT is moving into areas such as “saving the world” in which it “has no business venturing” (p. 335). While his assertion may be contentious, it should at least remind those teaching CI, in whatever form, to consider their motivations for doing so. This study has indicated some of the benefits for students of incorporating CI, but teachers also have much to gain, not least because bringing such issues into the classroom nudges us to reflect on our professional roles and priorities.

## Notes

1. Video 1: <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx0IJnO3o8g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx0IJnO3o8g)>  
Video 2: <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWwwqjVzmlW](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWwwqjVzmlW)>
2. Despite advertising on its homepage (<[www.juroku.co.jp](http://www.juroku.co.jp)>) its membership of 日本の森を守る地方銀行有志の会 (“Save the forest in Japan”), the development of Hirabari Satoyama was financed by this bank. Its role in the development was raised by congresswoman Tomoko Abe on November 9, 2010, in a Diet committee, footage of which can be found at <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5grP10kxm8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5grP10kxm8)>
3. For an English language article, see E. Johnston (2010, March 4), Battle lines drawn across Nagoya land. *The Japan Times*, p. 3.

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# Poster presentations speak for themselves

## Keywords

task based learning, poster presentation, conducting surveys, data analysis

Poster presentations are a task based activity in which students develop a research topic, ask questions, gather and analyze data, and present it to their peers. This paper provides a chronological explanation of how a poster presentation project was implemented into a university class of English majors over a six-week span. Included are suggestions for organization, pitfalls to avoid, hints at which areas need special emphasis, and recommendations about how to gather useful feedback.

ポスター発表は、学習者が研究テーマを設定し、疑問に思ったことを調べ、データを集めて分析し、それをクラスメートに発表するというタスク中心教授法 (TBLT) のアクティビティの1つである。本論では、英語専攻の大学生向け授業における、6週間にわたるポスター発表課題の実践例を時系列に説明する。さらに、構成方法への提言や失敗しないための注意点、特に重点を置くべきこと、役立つフィードバックの集め方についても提案する。

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**D**esigning a poster involves students in a “hands-on, problem focused activity which encourages relation of knowledge to a specific question of interest and stimulates demonstration of comprehension” (Bracher, Cantrell, & Wilkie, 1998, p. 552). When considering a joint presentation activity for two university classes of sophomore English majors, a poster presentation seemed a natural fit. Each class was comprised of 10 students; of the 20 students, 12 were Chinese. Classes met twice weekly. The goal was to combine listening, speaking, and presentation skills while students developed personalized topics and collected research data. The research included selecting a topic, making a questionnaire comprised of 10 questions, surveying at least 20 people, summarizing the data, and drawing some conclusions. Students would then present the results of their research in front of an audience of peers without the pressure of memorizing a speech, or using crib notes. While providing a description of the procedure, this paper focuses more on the problems encountered and how they were dealt with.

## Benefits of poster presentations and literature review

A task-based assignment such as a poster presentation forces students to use the target language for real-life situations. This communication stresses message conveyance over linguistic accuracy (Ellis, 2003). People learn language not by making the language the object of study, but rather, “experiencing it as a medium of communication” (Long & Robinson, 1998, p. 18) in the context of “real operating conditions” (Johnson, 1988, p. 94). Vujakovic (1995) notes that posters allow for independent learning and for students to develop both research and creative abilities. Students must develop

a sense of information prioritization (Lane, 2001) and decide what to emphasize and which information to eliminate. Poster presentations necessitate strategic planning, which helps to enhance fluency and complexity. Ellis (2003) cites several studies that show that strategic planning results in greater fluency.

One important benefit is that students can do their presentation more than once, leading to improvement through repetition. Bygate (1996), for example, believes that task repetition has beneficial effects on learner performance. Furthermore, with the use of posters, audience members can preview and review key concepts from the presentation. Choosing their own topics helps students increase their interest, reduce anxiety, and increase their ability to develop autonomy and self-direction (Benson, 2001; Ford, 1999). Posters are technologically simple, which eliminates the potential for technical glitches that can plague some types of presentations.

Lane (2001) notes that presenters find poster presentations less daunting and formal than conventional speeches, while allowing for a smoother two-way transfer of information. Compared to prepared speeches, the immediate focus of attention is on the display rather than the presenter. Ford (1999) observed that learners tend to become "unduly preoccupied with trying to memorize individual speeches" (p. 41). This is avoided in poster presentations since the poster serves as a speaking prompt.

In a comparative survey done by Lane (2001), teachers and students showed a preference for poster presentations over standard presentations. Students rated the poster presentations higher for "communication with audience," "not reading," "modifying the presentation while giving it," and "general enjoyment." The widest gap was in "ability to understand each others' presentation," with posters rating 3.91 on a 5-point Likert scale, while standard presentations rated 3.21 (p. 894), demonstrating that poster presentations were more easily understood than standard presentations.

### Procedure

This section describes how we implemented our investigation. Throughout we have included student comments on the various stages of the

project drawn from student reflective essays written at the end of the poster presentation activity.

### *Introduction to charts and graphs*

After discussing the results of an independent survey topic, students were asked to draw a graph illustrating the answers. This served as a preliminary means of judging students' knowledge of charts and graphs. In the next class, the student charts and graphs were displayed to show the variety of possibilities, including a vertical bar chart, horizontal bar chart, pie chart, and full bar graph. Students made legible, accurate, and descriptive explanations, revealing that no remediation was necessary.

### *Week One: Introduction and deciding topics*

Students were given a handout outlining the project (See Appendix). Teachers explained the assignment and timetable in detail, providing many examples of the do's and don'ts of collecting, classifying, and explaining research. Students were expected to choose a topic from a list provided to them or generate their own idea. No two people were allowed to choose the same topic. Students struggled to make interesting and appropriate questions that would yield data that could be evaluated and presented. As one student noted, "*Making questions is most important and difficult. It takes much time.*"

Students were then asked to write ten questions for the following week.

### *Week Two: Gathering data*

Remediation was necessary at this point. Students wrote questions, but they did not have enough variety or depth. For example, concerning the topic of sports, some flawed questions included: "Which do you prefer, baseball or soccer? Do you like baseball? Do you know what Japan's national sport is?" Examples such as these showed an over-reliance on yes/no questions. The instructors collected the questions and corrected grammar points, offering suggestions for improvement and ways to add variety. While the instructors were working with the questions, students were given a worksheet with sample questions, and asked to improve them.

After this initial attempt at producing questions, students were provided with a worksheet with space for 10 questions, including two yes/no (or true/false), three multiple choice, three open-ended, plus two more of any type.

Some students were intimidated by this project, with one saying, *“At first I didn’t want to do this project, but once I started to research, I enjoyed this.”* Others took initiative and expanded their questions and made worksheets to facilitate easier data collection. A few students added demographic information including age, job and other personal information. This allowed for better classification and provided a more useful and detailed data pool. Another simple problem that arose was that students did not leave themselves enough room to write responses to their questions. The more thorough students had one question sheet for each respondent. Once students understood the necessity of taking thorough notes, they allowed more space for answers or used one questionnaire paper for each respondent.

For homework students were instructed to interview a total of at least twenty people and bring their data the following week.

### ***Week Three: Consolidating data and drawing conclusions***

Students again discussed their research findings and provided feedback on their results and data. Next, time was allotted for each group of three or four students to produce a sample graph, chart, or table representing one question for each student. They were also instructed not to use the same format more than once (e.g., bar graph or pie chart). This requirement reinforced the importance of choosing a variety of techniques to represent data as well as making students think about selecting the most appropriate method to make their data understandable. Students were asked to explain what they learned from their data and what conclusions they could draw. For future poster presentation activities, this activity could be enhanced by requiring students to complete a worksheet with a title, two charts or graphs, and three sentences or more about what they learned from their research.

After students completed the worksheet they were given a blank poster paper (80 cm x 200 cm)

and instructed to prepare their final posters and practice their presentations for homework.

### ***Week Four: Finishing touches and practicing***

The entire period was used to add finishing touches, get final advice from the teacher, and, in a worst-case scenario, remediate. Some of the slower students realized they didn’t have enough data to draw conclusions and added questions and asked some of their classmates for answers.

Students were told that posters should “invite” questions, and spur audience interest. As a final preparation activity, Akister and Kim (1998) require presenters to display their poster, but respond only to questions, rather than give a monologue. Although we did not proceed in this manner, the idea that the poster should have a stand-alone quality that invites questions is a worthwhile point to emphasize. In another awareness-building activity, Ford (1999) requires students to cover up key information on their posters in a pre-presentation task while the viewers guessed the missing information. This can also be carried out in the final presentation. Ducker (2011) suggests students practice by speaking to a partner across the room, who must make notes on the presentation. Because half of the class is talking at the same time, the partners must communicate clearly, using language, eye contact, and gestures to overcome the noise.

For the students, the most important part of this lesson was practicing their presentations. As one said, *“After I presented, I thought, if only I had one more day to practice, I could do better.”* Bygate (1996) opines that rehearsal may afford learners the extra processing space they need “to integrate the competing demands of fluency, accuracy, and complexity.” Ellis (2003) notes that rehearsal improves the performance of a task in addition to adding linguistic accuracy and complexity. Yule, Powers, and McDonald (1992) concluded that rehearsals helped speakers to adapt their output to their listeners’ needs. One student mentioned the importance of relating to the audience, *“Its not a simple presentation, its training to teach the audience what was most important. We have to change it to be understandable.”*

### **Week Five: Presentation day!**

Presentations were given over two class periods. Two adjoining classrooms were used in order to facilitate easy access and allow some distance between presenters to prevent voice overlap. Two presentations were run simultaneously in each room. There were a total of 20 students and instructors available as audience members, who were asked to spread out equally at one of the four presentation locations. When a presenter was finished, audience members were strongly encouraged to ask questions. Alternatively, students could be required to ask a certain number of questions. Each student presented twice, which allowed people to watch more presentations and provided a second chance for the presenters to improve their performance. As one student shared, *"I'm really glad to watch others' presentations. It made a fresh class atmosphere."*

Audience members were each given a simple feedback sheet with space for comments about "good points," "bad points," and "how the presentation could be improved". The audience member's name was recorded in the upper left corner. After the instructors evaluated the quality of the feedback, they cut off the writer's name and divided the now anonymous feedback forms to return to the presenters. One student opined, *"The presentation was a nice way to let students show their own ideas and skill."* Another student wrote, *"I enjoyed the feedback from my classmates."*

Three rounds (12 presenters) could take place in the allotted time for one class period, so with two class periods for presentations, 24 presentations in total were given. Unfortunately, there were wide variations in the length of presentations. One problem was that all presenters had to wait until the longest presentation was finished before moving on. Since it is difficult to stop a student in the middle of a presentation even if it has gone overtime, the authors began using a timer. After five minutes, we allowed the timer to beep long enough to remind presenters to move on to the conclusion and wrap things up.

### **Week Six: Review and reflection**

In the beginning of class, the teachers did their own poster presentation summarizing the student poster presentations. Finally, students

reflected on the project in a 10 minute timed writing exercise. Students wrote their feelings about the project, including what was useful, what they enjoyed, and whether the project helped their English. Comments from the feedback are contained throughout this paper.

### **Addressing challenges to facilitate improvement**

A few key areas present special challenges for students. One potential problem is that students are generally not skilled at editing their own work or eliminating unnecessary or unimportant information. In future poster presentations, students will be given a worksheet with possible survey questions (using student-generated samples). Students will be asked to improve the sentences in order to enhance data collection. An important corollary is that students may modify or adapt questions as needed. Teachers can encourage or at least make students aware of this possibility.

A second problem is that students may not be aware of the different styles of questions available to them, nor realize the utility of asking follow-up questions. Ideally, students will learn and practice these skills in their work on their poster presentation. A worksheet, on which all students must develop open-ended, multiple choice, true-false, and yes-no styles of questions, in addition to an in-class review of the student responses, should lead students toward an awareness of the most appropriate types of questions.

A final point worthy of re-emphasis is that it was important to ensure students summarized their findings and explained what they discovered from their research. Without this step, the project would have remained unfinished and inconclusive. One student expressed frustration with this problem, *"Although many interesting topics were presented, I was disappointed a little because some students didn't analyze their data."*

### **Conclusion**

Despite the amount of time required for preparing this course and for the students to prepare their presentations, student performance and feedback demonstrates this was a popular, useful

project. Teachers observed a high level of interest and participation. When one of the presentations continued after class time was officially over, not one student attempted to leave early. Another benefit was that the project allowed students to work at their own level, which provided a special challenge to the most ambitious students, while setting a bar of competency to the less motivated students.

Voting for awards for various “best” categories, such as best poster, most energetic delivery, best overall presentation, most humorous and others is a nice way to wrap up the project. We would highly recommend that teachers seeking a worthwhile project consider poster presentations. As our student put it, “I think this project was significant for me. I hope to do it again.” Another said “I liked this project. We can train our thinking, analysis, and presentation abilities.”

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## Appendix

### *Collecting, classifying and explaining research*

After choosing a topic, you will write ten questions about this topic, and ask at least 20 people these questions. Write down their answers. Make a chart, graph, or illustration explaining your results. You will do a poster presentation explaining the results of the survey, analyze the results, explain what you have learned, and draw some conclusions.

Your poster presentation will include the most interesting, useful, and informative material. You might not use everything you have collected—just the “good stuff”.

**Possible topics**

- foreign travel
- television
- Internet use
- movies
- music
- eating out
- sleeping hours
- part-time job
- cell phone
- reading
- favorite foods
- breakfast
- study
- dinner
- lunch
- improving Japanese government
- superstitions
- the supernatural
- anime
- sports
- crime
- jobs
- animals
- Okinawa
- athletes
- admired people
- happiness
- music
- foreign food
- China
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**Wilma Luth (Hokkai Gakuen University)**  
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Wilma Luth is a freelance teacher and teacher trainer who is moving back to Canada in 2012 after coming to Japan “for a year” in 1991. During her 21-year career she has taught in a variety of teaching contexts mostly in Sapporo. She earned her MAT in TESOL from the SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont. As a licensed SIT TESOL Certificate course trainer she has trained teachers in the USA, Costa Rica, and South Korea.


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# Exchange agreements between Japanese and foreign institutions

## Keywords

foreign language exchange, study abroad

A great deal of research has been done on the benefits of, and problems associated with, students studying abroad, particularly those who participate on school and university-sponsored programs, but this research has been based on the premise that there is a system in place that allows the students to study at another institute connected to their home institution. Usually, such an exchange is achieved through an exchange agreement with a foreign university. There has been less discussion of the actual exchange agreements. The author reviews what these agreements are and the benefits of establishing them before explaining the processes of and difficulties encountered when working to finalize one with a department at an American university.

学生の海外研修、特に学校や大学主催のプログラムに参加する学生の利点や問題について多くの研究が行われている。しかし、これらの研究は、学生が他の教育機関で学ぶことが出来る交換システムが既にあることが前提になっている。多くの場合、このようなシステムは、海外の大学との交換協定に基づき実施可能となる。しかしながら、この論文の焦点である、実際の交換協定自体に関しては、これまで殆ど論じられていない。筆者はこの交換協定を締結するよさを論じると共に、米国の大学某学部との最終的な締結に至るまでの過程と問題点についても論じる。

Scott Menking

Shimane University

In Japan, the literature on study abroad tends to focus on sending Japanese students to another country, but this is only one part of the international exchange equation. The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) formulated the Global 30 Project to raise the number of international students in Japan to 300,000 (MEXT, n.d. a). MEXT also promotes international activity through research, including joint international projects and symposia, informational and intellectual exchange, and the physical exchange of researchers (e.g., MEXT, n.d. c), with particular emphasis on the sciences and technology (e.g., MEXT, n.d. b). The University of Tokyo's academic exchange agreements provide one example of this threefold approach to internationalization, with 37 involving the sending and receiving of students and 284 including academic staff, researchers, and students (University of Tokyo, 2010).

The exchange of both researchers and students is usually conducted under the umbrella of an international cooperative exchange agreement, but the establishment of such an agreement is rarely discussed in the literature or at international conferences. MEXT is equally silent on how to establish these formal alliances. This lack of concrete information can become an obstacle for those working outside of an International Center but who hope to further international activities at their university. The author, for example, found that most staff and professors at his university agreed that it was in their best interest to conclude an exchange agreement, but they were unable to provide concrete guidance on how to proceed. Furthermore, the majority of staff and professors were unwilling or unable to devote time to explore the idea or see the project through to completion. On reflection, the team who went forward with the project was not fully prepared for the intricacies of establishing a researcher exchange agreement, and

this learning curve became an impetus for this article. After reviewing the benefits of exchange agreements, the paper draws on these experiences to suggest how others may approach the entire procedure.

### Benefits of exchange agreements

Both internationally and in Japan, international exchange is neither novel nor new. In the 1870s, Dairoku Kikuchi studied at Cambridge University, influencing other Japanese students who later studied in Great Britain (Long, 2005; National Diet Library, 2004). International exchange in Japan is facilitated by agreements between Japanese and foreign university departments, faculties/colleges, graduate schools, research institutes, or entire universities. On the broadest level, international exchange agreements allow the university to gain a competitive edge over other universities with fewer international relationships. The author's university calls this "branding." Guest and White (2009) were less restrained, referring to the agreements as necessary for "the survival of the university." Gilmour (2007) used equally strong language when asserting that if Japanese institutions ignore international educational exchanges, then the universities are either static or digressing.

The advantages of exchange agreements are not limited to university-wide prestige. To begin with, when others become aware of their international activities, exchanges can legitimize the status of a department and individual faculty members within the university (Guest and White, 2009). In addition, researcher exchanges allow Japanese instructor-researchers to use resources on the foreign university's campus (e.g., a secure, individual study carrel; Internet and library access), thus making the actual research process more efficient. Equally important, international exchange agreements give faculty members an advantage because they can be more specific in grant applications and show greater development in their proposals (e.g., demonstrating an ability to get approval to actually do research on a specific campus).

In addition to the opportunities afforded the university and individual researchers, when international exchanges result in more foreigners on Japanese campuses, there are two main

advantages for the student body. First, Japanese students who do not have the financial resources to study abroad are afforded the opportunity to gain intercultural knowledge and have unique experiences, resulting in exposure to new ideas. For example, Ryan (2009) discussed the dilemmas and cultural learning that occurred when Filipino students who were visiting his Japanese university had a different sense of time, had different eating habits (i.e., five times a day rather than the Japanese three), and viewed walking and biking very differently than Japanese university students. This type of interaction is crucial for meeting the needs of future global citizens.

Second, having foreign students on campus allows Japanese students the "unique opportunity to observe the language learning process from a number of different perspectives" (Freed, 1995, p. 4). For example, Japanese students enrolled in an elective English discussion course with one French student were asked to reflect on the intercultural discussions they had in class and to provide any insights about the importance of English as a common language. One Japanese student reflected, "I have learned the difficulty. It is difficult to listen to English which is spoken by non-native speakers except Japanese people (sic)." When asked what, if anything, they had learned about language studies by having the French student in the class, one student noted, "There many type of English (People have each accent), so we don't need too attention to speak clean English (sic)." The French student's insight is equally revealing. "By being here studying English with Japanese people I have felt again how much it's difficult to learn a language totally different from you mother tongue. French and English have many similar words so it is much easier to remember vocabulary but for Japanese people, I realized that it is as difficult as for me to learn Japanese (sic)."

### Finalizing an agreement: A case study

Table 1 outlines the time required before the Japanese Faculty completed its researcher exchange agreement with a Department in an American university; activities since acceptance are also summarized. When a charter was first explored, the Japanese university project members worked to establish an exchange that included both



researcher-instructors and students. However, this type of agreement requires the approval of both the president of the university and the International Center, and further discussions revealed a division of opinion about whether an additional all-university student exchange with an American university was needed. When the agreement was not quickly finalized, initial enthusiasm for the project waned. In addition, when concerns about long-term obligations were raised, the future success of the project became less certain, resulting in some people becoming even less willing to devote time to an uncertain outcome. The project team eventually decided it would be best to first establish a researcher exchange agreement, and then as the international relationship developed, student exchange could be pursued.

August 2003 – March 2004	Japanese professor conducts research at the American university.
June 2004	Japanese faculty agrees to allow the professor to explore a cooperative agreement.
December 2005	Two professors visit US university and discuss an agreement that would include both students and researchers.
2007-8 School Year	Attempts to take students to the American university are unsuccessful because the proposed program lacked a homestay component and was not significantly different than a program already offered.
June 2008	Dean's competitive grant awarded to two faculty members. The grant covers part of the expense for the members to go to the United States to finalize a researcher exchange agreement.
2008-2009	Discussions within the Japanese university result in a decision to finalize a researcher exchange agreement and not include students initially.

March 2009	Three faculty members visit the US university. Verbal researcher exchange agreement made. Fourteen Japanese students visit the American university and have a short-term cultural awareness program designed to meet students' expressed needs.
April – December 2009	Approval process completed. Researcher exchange agreement finalized and signed.
March 2010	Two faculty members do research made possible by the exchange agreement (e.g., office space was provided at the US institution). At the same time, Japanese students visit the American university for a short-term cultural awareness program.
Summer 2010	Author completes a how-to document to help Japanese faculty members wishing to conduct research by utilizing the exchange agreement.
March 2011 to March 2012	Two faculty members again take Japanese university students to the American university for a short-term cultural awareness program. American faculty members continue to express interest in bringing students to Japan but also discuss financial and administrative barriers that will not make this possible in the immediate future.

Table 1. Timeline of the agreement

### *Obstacles during the process*

Even after the Japanese faculty had agreed, in principle, to a researcher agreement, the details had to be negotiated and formulated in both English and Japanese. During these procedures, there were three main objections. First, there was a great deal of discussion about the "balance of power" between a Japanese faculty and an American department. This problem was finally resolved when the International Committee

members acknowledged the fact that the American college's size, which includes 23 departments, a 2008 enrollment of 14,582 students, and 826 faculty members, was larger than the entire Japanese university. As a result, the members agreed that the size and scope of the Japanese faculty is more equivalent to the American department than to a college. The second concern was raised by Japanese faculty members who questioned whether they would be able to do research with American faculty members who are not directly included in the proposed agreement. Once Japanese faculty members understood that the agreement could help them arrange, and did not in any way preclude, co-research with professors across the American university campus, these apprehensions abated. Once this issue was resolved, however, the third challenge, the "balance of status" between the people signing the document, became prominent in the discussions. The American department kindly complied with the Japanese faculty's request, and the final agreement was signed by the Dean of the Japanese faculty, the Dean of the American department, and the Dean of the International Centers in both countries.

### The endless paper trail

The university at which the author works established its first agreement with a foreign university (in the United States) in March of 1982. As Chart 1 demonstrates, following the national trend, there has been a steady increase in the number of agreements, and in 2011, the university or institutions within the university had completed 39 inter-university agreements with institutes in 12 countries (Center for International Exchanges, 2011).

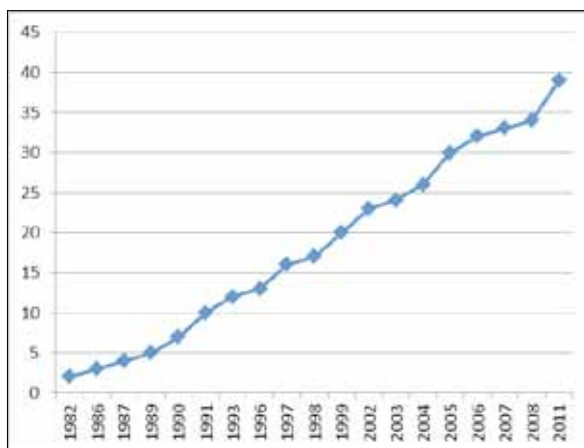


Chart 1. Growth in agreements at author's university

In spite of this, neither the university nor the faculty has a boilerplate document that can be used as a basis from which to start discussions with a foreign institute. In addition, at the time of negotiations, the university guidelines lacked most of the detail that was necessary to conclude an agreement. As a result, when making the documents, it was unclear who to talk to or whether that person had the correct information. Officially, there are nine steps before an agreement is approved, but revisions sometimes required the documentation to again be presented to a sub-committee in a previous step of the process, resulting in my colleague noting that there appeared to be a virtually endless loop between two of the steps. Through this undertaking, the author and colleagues gained valuable insight into how the process could have proceeded more smoothly.

### Concluding an agreement: Some advice

Although the author can only speak from personal experience, if he and his colleagues had had the following advice when first exploring an agreement, it would have greatly facilitated the process. Before deciding to pursue an exchange agreement, therefore, there are several important considerations.

1. Do many of the people in your faculty agree that they need the agreement? Could you (personally) accomplish your goals without it?

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2. Does the university, or your faculty, already have a similar agreement? If so, what makes your proposed agreement unique?
3. What does the agreement commit you and the faculty or university to do? Who will be responsible for these commitments? Can you realistically fulfill these obligations alone, if necessary?
4. What is the period of the partnership? Does it renew automatically upon mutual consent or will negotiations be necessary again in a few years?
5. In the long-term, will exchanges continue or is there a high probability that they will stagnate or become one-sided (e.g., only Japanese researchers going to the other country)?

Once you have decided to proceed, you, your department, and the university must make four decisions. First, between whom will the agreement be? This is a surprisingly complex question. If the agreement will be between the two universities, the approval procedure may be longer than first anticipated because responsibility for continuing the exchange is not limited to the faculty.

A second consideration is whether to include student exchanges in the agreement. When students are included, there are more implicit and explicit obligations. The appendix includes questions that your university should consider if you will be required to host students from the foreign university.

Another consideration is funding. In order to conclude the agreement, two faculty members traveled to the United States twice; this travel was supplemented by the Dean's competitive grant but also significantly funded by private budgets. Had we had the information we have now, one trip may have been sufficient. Once the agreement is concluded, there is no expense to maintain it, but there could be costs in hosting foreigner researchers (e.g., proportionate cost of electricity and phone costs for the office space given to the visiting researcher) and/or students. When first exploring a new agreement, discussions about funding for travel and hosting expenses are prudent.

To minimize financial outlays, both faculty members and researchers may want to explore collaborative research culminating in co-authored publications and joint education projects. With a little creativity, there are many research (e.g., comparative studies) and student exchange possibilities (e.g., students interviewing each other using Skype) that can be accomplished when you collaborate with a faculty member in another country. Eliminating travel not only decreases costs but also the time required, and still allows you to contribute to the body of literature and increase your students' participation in international exchange.

The last issue to resolve is who will be involved in the process. Based on our experience, it seems prudent to have a team of people that work well together, but at a minimum, two people are necessary. The team members must be willing to commit a great deal of time to an uncertain outcome and be able to work within the existing system to achieve the final result. At least one of the people needs to work closely with the Japanese university--answering queries and completing the countless documents that are required. Ideally, this person should be a Japanese permanent faculty member who also speaks the language of the foreign university. The second person must liaise with the foreign university, so a native speaker who understands the culture of both countries and can explain, when necessary, the cultural differences to both parties, is best. In addition, if you will take students overseas while concluding the agreement, it is helpful to enlist an additional team member. Our third member was an English instructor who had been actively involved in study abroad. This allowed the other two members to continue to focus on the negotiations while the instructor handled logistics of the trip (e.g., domestic and international transportation, schedule while visiting the foreign university, lodging).

### Final suggestion

MEXT continues to emphasize international exchange, and as a result, more universities and faculties are incorporating the establishment of exchange agreements into their mid-term (five-year) plans. Concluding an agreement with a foreign university is a time-consuming, but

very rewarding, experience. It not only allows you to learn more about your own and other universities but also provides you with additional contacts for the future. If you realistically define your goals from the outset and explain the Japanese institute's approval procedure to the foreign university, the process will be smoother and there will be less chance for misunderstanding between the two institutions.

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## Acknowledgement

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## Scott Menking

has been teaching in Japan since 1993. Since completing the exchange agreement, he has returned to the American university with students for three exchange programs. As part of his research into English as an International Language (EIL), he has conducted interviews with university students in seven countries and plans to visit two more this year.

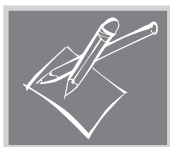


## Appendix

1. Does the other university want a cultural awareness program or an intensive language course, or perhaps some combination?
2. Who will be responsible for creating and implementing the students' schedule--your university or theirs?
3. Who will teach the students? Some American universities are making programs in foreign countries; their faculty members

lead the programs (e.g., Hulstrand, 2006), reducing the burden on the host institution and allowing the foreign university to better control course content.

4. Does your university have classrooms or other facilities that will be available during the time of year that the foreign university would like to visit?
5. How long will the students stay? Will they visit other parts of Japan?
6. How many students and chaperones do they expect to send? What are their language abilities?
7. How will the students travel to and from your area? Will you be required to escort them to and from an international airport?
8. Will you be required to provide transportation in your area?
9. Where will the students stay and eat? Can you provide home stays for at least a week-end?
10. Will you be required to provide conversation partners, leaders, and/or funding for activities?



TLT RESOURCES

# MY SHARE

...with Dax Thomas & Harry Harris

To contact the editors:  
<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 <jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare/guidelines>).

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MY SHARE ONLINE: A linked index of My Share articles can be found at:

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tributor, Christopher Pulte, helps build English context comprehension skills using a projector and a whiteboard. Finally, Doreen Gaylord has students creating personalized bookmarks to augment an extensive reading program. We're sure you'll enjoy these activities as much as we did.

## Using L3 mini lessons in the L2 classroom

Germain Measureur

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### Quick guide

- » **Keywords:** Students as teachers, mini lessons, third language, L3
- » **Learner English level:** All levels, especially beginner to intermediate
- » **Learner maturity:** High school and above
- » **Preparation time:** 30 minutes in-class, the week before
- » **Activity time:** Variable, usually 45 to 90 minutes
- » **Materials:** Handout for the teacher's demonstration lesson

**W**elcome to this issue's installment of My Share. As always, we have a great variety of interesting activities to help bring fun and excitement to the classroom. Our first author, Germain Measureur, has students teaching mini L3 lessons to their peers. Next, Nathaniel French uses vocabulary cards to encourage students to generate creative conversation and story output. Our third con-

Japanese students enjoy learning a few words in a new language. Most university students in Japan study English (L2) and one more foreign language (L3). This lesson plan offers a great way for learners to act as teachers in the L2 classroom, by delivering short L3 lessons in English. It allows the students to practice speaking in a different register from that used in presentations and other situations, thus helping them to gain confidence in their use of English.

### Preparation

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**Step 1:** The week before their mini-lesson session, explain to the learners that they are going to become language teachers. They will teach their L3 in English to the rest of the class. Each student will teach for 4-5 minutes.

**Step 2:** Give a demonstration of what is expected from the students. An example L3 lesson in French is provided in the appendix.

**Step 3:** Conduct a quick survey of the class to find what L3 the learners are currently studying.

**Step 4:** Let the students choose a lesson topic. Usually, these will include any aspect of L3 they've recently studied. Students who do not study any L3 can be given the option to teach an interesting grammar point or usage aspect of English, such as:

- The order of adjectives, the differences between adjectives and adverbs, etc.
- The pronunciation differences between words with similar spellings (though, tough, through, etc)
- Idioms such as "raining cats and dogs," "no room to swing a cat," etc.
- Students whose main interest is in Japanese language study can teach, in English, some unusual *kanji* characters or little-known Japanese grammar points.

**Step 5:** Explain to the students that they will need to design a handout of exercises for the class. Gap fills, crosswords, matching exercises, etc., are all easy to find in textbooks, or can be created from scratch, but all instructions must be in English.

**Step 6:** Students prepare class copies of the handout.

### Procedure

---

The following four steps describe what is done by the student-teachers, not by you. You should sit among the students, and take part in the activities as if you were a student.

**Step 1:** Student-teachers teach L3 vocabulary, then make the class repeat and troubleshoot pronunciation.

**Step 2:** Student-teachers introduce the main body of their mini lesson (sentence patterns, unusual *kanji* or idiom, etc.).

**Step 3:** Student-teachers explain handout exercises and always write one example on the board.

**Step 4:** Student-teachers distribute handout and circulate in the classroom, checking students' progress, and giving help or feedback in English if necessary.

### Conclusion

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Becoming teachers, even for only a few minutes, can be very empowering for the students who get to play the experts in their L3 field. This fun activity often has a positive impact on the way students relate to each other in the class. In addition, it allows learners to gain an understanding of the work involved in the preparation of a language lesson.

### Appendix

For a demonstration lesson, a dozen words and basic sentence patterns are usually enough to create a short beginner-level lesson, possibly including a short role-play. The following is enough for placing an order in a French café.

#### Vocabulary:

- *Bonjour* - hello
- *S'il vous plait* - please
- *Café* - coffee
- *Garçon* - waiter (male)
- *L'addition* - check
- *Merci* - thank you
- *Au revoir* - goodbye

#### Sentence pattern:

- *Je voudrais ...* - I would like ...

A handout in English, with instructions on how to do the activities, includes the above lists with blanks for the English or French, and a comic strip with stick figures showing a person entering a cafe, greeting, ordering coffee, asking for the check, thanking, departing. Students make a dialog for the comic strip with the appropriate vocabulary /sentences and practice it.

# Creating generative output with beginning and intermediate learners

Nathaniel French

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## Quick guide

- » **Key words:** Conversation, vocabulary words, generative speech
- » **Learner English level:** Upper beginner and intermediate
- » **Learner maturity:** Upper junior high to high school
- » **Preparation time:** 5 minutes
- » **Activity time:** 30 to 90 minutes
- » **Materials:** Word cards

This activity was created in an attempt to increase students' use of new vocabulary, to foster their speaking ability, and to promote the building of communication strategies. Students are encouraged to create their own semi-controlled conversations, thus reducing their dependency on example conversations. In addition, the objective of this activity is to get students to recognize that even simple conversations can be constructed in many different ways and to prepare them for non-scripted conversation. This activity can also be seen as a way to promote small amounts of autonomy in the conversation classroom, and

can be used as a stepping stone towards more complicated conversational activities.

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Teach students 6-10 vocabulary items and have them write the new words and their translations on word cards. One side has the word in English and the other side its translation in Japanese.

**Step 2:** Break the students into pairs and have them line-up their vocabulary cards on the table between themselves, with the English face up. Students will be in pairs for all steps below.

**Step 3:** Give the students a fixed amount of time (2-5 minutes should be more than enough time) to create a conversation or story which uses all of the vocabulary and is based on a specific topic. In deciding the topic, choose something that is compatible with the vocabulary items and is interesting to the students. Everything is done orally, so students should not be writing their conversations down. When a word is used, the student takes that card and turns it over. If the students decide to do a conversation, each person takes one role and they build the conversation together. The conversation continues until all words have been used, which means that all cards should be Japanese side up when students finish. If the students decide to create a story, one student will say the whole story by themselves, using all the cards, while the other student listens to see if the story is understandable and has correct word usage. This activity is then repeated one more time with roles reversed.

**(Optional):** If the students are lower in level or are not used to this type of lesson, break students into groups of 2-4 and have them prepare for the activity ahead of time by *writing* a conversation or story which uses all of the given vocabulary. This will take 15-30 minutes. During the time the students are writing, walk around the classroom, making sure that students are on task, answering questions, and correcting students' written conversations.

**Step 4:** While students are speaking, walk around the classroom to make sure that students are on task and to answer student questions. Communication and generative output is the focus of this lesson, so it is advised that instruc-

tors do not correct students' grammar unless it is causing understandability issues.

**Step 5:** Have students change partners and repeat the activity until students feel comfortable with creating the target output and are able to understand a large portion of what their peers say.

### Conclusion

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I used this activity once a week with my second-year junior high school students. While the students were unsure of their ability to participate in this activity for the first few lessons, students learned very quickly that creating conversation was not as difficult as they thought it to be. By the seventh or eighth lesson, nearly all of the students were able to both create and tell a four to six sentence story involving princesses and dragons.

Although grammar is not always used well when students participate in this activity, the students' ability to convey meaning increases significantly. Also, after students realize their newfound ability to communicate meaning, there is noticeable increase in their confidence level as well.

## Whiteboard and projector language game

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### Quick guide

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- » **Key words:** Fill-in-the-blanks, English in context
- » **Learner English level:** Low intermediate to advanced
- » **Learner maturity:** Junior high school to adult
- » **Preparation time:** 30 minutes

» **Activity time:** 30 minutes

» **Materials:** Whiteboard, projector, colored markers

Here is a game which teaches English context comprehension skills such as those needed in multiple choice tests like the TOEIC. A text with words removed, rather like a cloze test, is projected onto a whiteboard, and students write directly into blanks on the whiteboard with colored markers, attempting to guess the correct words.

### Preparation

---

**Step 1:** Choose a dialogue or text and prepare a Word text of it.

**Step 2:** Choose words to be removed from the text based on what you are trying to teach in the lesson and what the context of the text has to offer. Prepositions work well anytime, especially those used in phrasal verbs. In choosing a verb, pay attention to its object, for a noun, its modifier, anything which lessens ambiguity and helps students in their efforts to guess the correct word. Depending on their difficulty, idioms work well. And look to global references within the text which might provide less direct indications of the words' meaning. Choose a fair number of easily identifiable words to build up your students' confidence at the beginning of the game, but also choose a few difficult words for the end game because for each word correctly guessed and written, a word will be crossed off of the list. As the list of unused words narrows down, it will gradually become easier for students to hit upon correct words.

**Step 3:** In place of the words you have removed from the text, leave underlined spaces. Make the blanks equal in length if you want to make the game more challenging. But I usually use two underline spaces for every letter in the word. (Example:         , for a three-letter word.) By the length of the underlined blank, they will get some idea of the length of the word. Because there will be any number of words of near equal length, this works as a confidence builder narrowing down possible choices, without giving them away completely. I usually remove 25 to 30 words from the text. But that will depend on the text's level of difficulty and time constraints.



**Step 4:** Take the words you have removed from the text and arrange them in alphabetical order in columns above the text.

**Step 5:** In presenting your Word file, consider the Word print preview or perhaps PowerPoint. What works best for me is to scan a printed text and save it as a JPEG file which I open with Windows Picture or Fax Viewer.

### Procedure

**Step 1:** Project the image of your fill-in-the-blanks text onto a whiteboard.

**Step 2:** Divide the class into two teams.

**Step 3:** Give a colored whiteboard marker to a member of each team, and designate one team as red and the other as blue. Have the teams take turns writing in missing words while you determine whether the word chosen is correct and can be crossed off the list.

**Step 4:** To keep everyone involved, have all the members of each team take turns writing on the board. Should they have trouble, they can call on the help of other players. This game works best when you give each team one chance per turn to write in a word. At the beginning of the game, teams should be switching and students passing their markers off at a brisk pace. With the markers moving around rapidly, a larger class should stay involved. Students will have to pay close attention because the marker will always be working its way back to them.

**Step 5:** On finishing, count the number of reds and number of blues and declare a winner.

**Step 6:** Go over the completed text, giving explanations where needed.

### Conclusion

This is the most basic of many similar games I use. It works both as an introduction to a text and as a review.



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## Bookmark this!

**Doreen Gaylord**

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### Quick guide

- » **Key words:** Extensive Reading, after-reading activity, bookmarks
- » **Learner English level:** High beginner and above
- » **Learner maturity:** High school to university
- » **Preparation time:** 1 hour
- » **Activity time:** One 50-minute class
- » **Materials:** Heavy-weight white paper (ケントシ) pre-cut in rectangles measuring approximately 5 cm x 17 cm; fine-tip color markers; string, yarn and ribbon in various colors and textures; assorted adornments such as beads and charms; scissors; single-hole punch; laminator and pouches or clear contact paper (cover film, カバー フィルム). You can keep everything organized in a craft box with compartments.

This article describes making bookmarks in the Extensive Reading (ER) class. It is one activity that can help teachers get to know their students at the beginning of the course. Knowing where your students' interests lie can not only help guide you in choosing appropriate books for your ER library but also help you in making fitting book recommendations for students throughout the course. Making bookmarks is also a valuable after-reading activity that gives students a chance to reflect on the book they've just read. While any old scrap of paper will serve as a bookmark, why not make something nice to look at and make reading more fun?

### Getting-to-know your students activity

Instruct students to make a bookmark that shows what they like to do in their free time. The teacher should make one beforehand that shows his/her hobby or interest as an example for students.

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Distribute blank bookmarks and have students draw a picture in pencil about something they enjoy doing (their hobby or interest) on their bookmark. Encourage creativity. Students should write their name on it.

**Step 2:** On the reverse side, students write three (or more) adjectives that describe themselves as well as their three favorite genres of books.

**Step 3:** When finished, students should show it to their teacher for approval. Engage the students in conversation about their drawing. After the teacher approves it, students should trace it in pen or fine-tip marker.

**Step 4:** Next, have students cover it in clear contact paper or laminate it for protection and a more professional look and feel.

**Step 5:** Have students punch a hole about one centimeter from the top in the center with a single-hole punch.

**Step 6:** Students can make a tassel using string, yarn and/or ribbon and thread it through the hole. For fancier ones, adornments such as beads and/or charms can be added to the string.

**Step 7:** Collect the completed bookmarks and grade for creativity/originality and appropriate use/spelling of adjectives.

## ER after-reading activity

As an after-reading activity in the ER classroom, students make a bookmark to reflect on the book they've just read. Distribute the (double-sided) student handout/grading rubric (see Appendix) and follow the same procedure as above, though students should draw a picture from their imagination of a key character or a scene they remember well. They should include the book title and author. The adjectives students write on the reverse side should describe the character or the mood of the scene. The book genre can also be written here.

Grade the finished bookmarks according to the criteria in the handout. Have students express their opinion of the book in the "Your Opinion Matters" section of the handout.

## Options for finished bookmarks

When finished, students can:

1. Keep it to use and enjoy with any book.
2. Donate it to the ER library, putting it inside the corresponding book for the next reader of that book to use and enjoy.
3. Give it to someone who loves to read. Handmade bookmarks make great gifts for both children and adults.

## Conclusion

Even if you don't teach an ER class, having students make a bookmark about their hobbies or interests is a wonderful activity to help get to know them at the beginning of any course. Students enjoy getting a bookmark to use for their pleasure reading and it can inspire them to read more books (in English?). Fine hand-crafted bookmarks also make fun, inexpensive awards for reading challenges.



Example of student's bookmark – scene



Example of student's bookmark - character

## Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at [jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare](http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare).



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TLT RESOURCES

# BOOK REVIEWS

## ...with Robert Taferner

To contact the editor:

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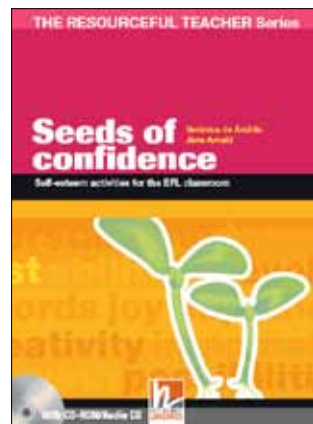
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as icebreakers for newly formed classes, while others are better suited for established groups of students.

*Seeds of Confidence* is divided into five chapters, which correspond to Reasoner's (1982) five fundamental components of self-esteem: Security, Identity, Belonging, Purpose, and Competence. The chapter introductions provide reviews of the relevant literature, emphasizing the connection between self-concept, self-esteem, and learning. Additionally, and serving as the *raison d'être* for *Seeds of Confidence*, the book posits that self-esteem can be transformed through direct instruction, which will then contribute to increased success for L2 learners. The authors remind readers that the activities should be used consistently and considered pedagogically fundamental as the positive effects accumulate over time.



There should be no doubt that confidence plays an enormous role in learning and using an L2. For Japanese students, a lack of confidence might be the greatest challenge to successfully learning English.

Yashima (2002) suggests that reducing anxiety and building confidence in the EFL classroom should increase the willingness of Japanese students to communicate in English. English learners need to realize that a perfect understanding of English grammar and an extensive vocabulary will not help solve one of their most serious communication problems—a lack of confidence. Fortunately, these students, and their teachers, may find help in the pages of *Seeds of Confidence*.

I trialed many of the activities contained within the book in Japan at a junior college and

This month's column features Chris Wharton's review of *Seeds of Confidence* and Mark Lewis' evaluation of *The Sixties*.

## Seeds of Confidence

[Verónica de Andrés & Jane Arnold. London: Helbling Languages, 2009. pp. i + 192. ¥3,750. ISBN: 978-3-85272-200-9.]

Reviewed by Chris Wharton,  
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Technology (Canada)

*Seeds of Confidence* is an invaluable teaching resource for the EFL teacher that explores the importance of developing self-confidence in language learning. It is essentially an activity book with something for every student, from beginners to advanced learners. There is also an abundance of one-size-fits-all activities throughout the book. Although the activities are designed primarily with second language (L2) classrooms in mind, they can also be used successfully across a variety of subject areas and contexts. A majority of the activities are best used

a private English conversation school. I also incorporated some of the activities in my current ESL teaching context in Canada. The feedback from students and the enthusiasm generated from the activities were positive.

A great activity that comes early in the book, *My mistake*, encourages students to view mistakes positively. By looking at famous quotes related to mistakes, like John Powell's "The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing" (p. 37), it helps instill the belief in students that mistakes are necessary to grow as language learners, and that the English classroom is the perfect place to take chances and make mistakes.

Visualization, a technique that may be novel to many teachers and students, is used throughout the book. One such activity, *Seeing your language self*, involves learners visualizing themselves as proficient English speakers. After some initial hesitation, students really immerse themselves in the activity. Those who have not tried visualization in the classroom may be pleasantly surprised with this activity. Visualization is actually used in several activities throughout the book.

Throughout the book, students are also encouraged to use English confidently to speak about themselves and present their uniqueness to the class. *A commercial about yourself* allows students to bring in pictures they have drawn, play songs they have written, and even perform dances they have studied. Although this activity sounds more like an adult version of *show and tell*, I was surprised at the passion with which students spoke about themselves and their interests. Again, keeping an open mind is essential when trialing the activities.

In addition to the 68 activities described in the five chapters, there is also a CD-ROM and audio CD, which includes printable worksheets and texts for use in the classroom, audio files, and video files for some of the activities. As teachers use the materials in class, it is important that they reflect on their own teaching practices. To this end, self-evaluation forms that correspond to each chapter are included in the Appendix.

*Seeds of Confidence* addresses an important aspect of language learning that is often overlooked by teachers and textbook authors alike. Confidence is likely the most noticeable

quality that sets learners with similar proficiency test scores apart when situated in real world contexts. The classroom activities described throughout the book will help teachers build confidence in their students and at the same time develop their language skills. *Seeds of Confidence* should have a place in every teacher's resource library.

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# The Sixties: Activities for Students of English as a Second or Foreign Language

[Chris Elvin, Kawasaki: EFL Club Press, 2011. p. 92. \$19.95. ISBN: 1453737731.]

Reviewed by Mark Lewis, Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University

The content of *The Sixties* is suitable for intermediate level Japanese EFL students, and is targeted for students who have a minimum TOEFL score of 400. The four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are emphasized in the rich context of recent history. Students will get the chance to listen to and learn about music they are familiar with, as well as gain some understanding of cultural and political issues of the time period.

The book is divided into ten chapters, one for each year of the decade: Chapter One, 1960; Chapter Two, 1961, and so on, and each chapter is divided into eight sections: Vocabulary matching; Songs from the Sixties (listening); Fluency

practice (shadowing); Photo fluency practice; Dictation (“What happened in 1960?”); Face to Face; Conduct a survey; and Research and write.

In each chapter’s opening activity, students match 30 words with their definitions. My students enjoyed working together on this task, chatting and using their dictionaries as needed. They were excited to be learning vocabulary on their own. Unlike some textbooks that give little opportunity to practice vocabulary, new words are used repeatedly throughout each chapter.

The second section is for listening to popular music. The songs chosen for 1963 are Surfin’ USA by the Beach Boys, She Loves You by the Beatles, Ring of Fire by Johnny Cash, and The End of the World by Skeeter Davis. For copyright reasons, the author could not include downloads, or lyrics for the complete song; instead, samples with accompanying lyrics are available online.

In the following fluency practice section, two or three sentences are written about the four songs. For example, perhaps it was a best seller for that year, or it talks about lost love. Students are asked to shadow these sentences: First I would read the sentence, and then one by one my students would repeat the sentence, and then would try to do it again, word for word, with the book closed. Prior to using *The Sixties*, I was unfamiliar with shadowing (Murphey, 2001), and was surprised to see how much my students enjoyed and seemed to profit from it.

Next, there is a photo from the year being studied. For 1962, it shows James Meredith, the first African-American student to attend the University of Mississippi, being escorted to the classroom by two U.S. marshals. Students are asked to talk about the photo in their own words for one minute. What do they see in the picture? What is the setting? What do they think is happening? In the next section, students dictate historical facts to their partner. An example from 1964: President Johnson declared a war on poverty campaign. Their partner writes the fact being dictated, and then dictates her own fact.

The following section, Face to Face, was my students’ favorite section because it gave them a chance to share their own ideas. Students ask each other a question and write their partner’s answer. The student being asked does not see the question because she is looking at a different

page. For example, a student asks her partner: What can be done to fight poverty? Students are able to respond, because by this point in the chapter, they have been equipped with the necessary vocabulary and historical facts to do so.

The next section asks students to create a survey question based on the issues talked about in the chapter so far (e.g., Have you ever seen someone living in poverty?). After conducting the survey in class, they make a pie chart with a summary of their findings.

In the essay writing section, the final section of the book, students are asked to do further research and to write an essay for homework. They are given eight different topics to choose from to research online or in the library.

There is a detailed Teacher’s Book providing rationale for each activity and teaching suggestions. *The Sixties* also comes with supplementary activities such as history quizzes, music matching, and vocabulary matching. This supplementary material could be used for quizzes or tests. I used this new book with a class of three intermediate-level students at a four-year university. They enjoyed it immensely and found the activities engaging and useful.

*The Sixties* is suited for two 15-week semesters of ninety-minute class meetings. It took us more than two classes to get through one chapter, and we spent fifteen weeks working on the first five chapters. It was a relaxed, yet efficient pace, and my students asked to continue using *The Sixties* in the coming semester.

## References

- Murphey, T. (2001, April). Exploring conversational shadowing. *Language Teaching Research*, 5(2), 128-155.

The JACET ESP-Kanto SIG & JALT FLP SIG will jointly hold a presentation and discussion

**The CEFR in general,  
in Japan, and with ESP**

July 7, Tokyo area

See <[tinyurl.com/CEFRES](http://tinyurl.com/CEFRES)>

for more information

# Recently Received

...with Steve Fukuda

<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 Steve Fukuda at the Publishers'

Review Copies Liaison address listed on the Staff page on the inside cover of *TLT*.

## RECENTLY RECEIVED ONLINE

An up-to-date index of books available for review can be found at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/recently-received>

\* = new listing; ! = final notice. Final notice items will be removed 31 May. Please make queries by email to the appropriate JALT Publications contact.

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

Contact: Steve Fukuda

pub-review@jalt-publications.org

\* *Business Life*. Badger, M., & Menzies, P. London: Marshall Cavendish ELT, 2005. [4-level business English course starting at A2-level of CEFR incl. detachable answer booklet, listening exercise CD, self-study workbook w/ audio CD, and trainer's guide].

*College Grammar Pathfinder*. Honda, Y., & Tsuchiya, T. Tokyo: Kinseido, 2012. [24-unit coursebook in essential grammar for Japanese college students incl. audio CD, teacher's manual, review tests, and downloadable audio].

*Door to Door: A Complete Study Abroad Guide*. Minehane, G. Nagoya, JA: Perceptia Press, 2009. [5-section coursebook for students who are thinking about studying abroad, aimed to

guide students before, during, and after their study abroad experience].

! *The English Course*. Ireland, G., Murphy, K., Short, M., & Woollerton, M. Tokyo: The English Company, 2009. [Speaking/listening and writing course for false-beginner and low-intermediate university students incl. student books, teacher's guide w/ answer key, DVDs w/ audio/video clips and quizzes, and access to self-study and teacher support website].

! *Health Matters: Health Awareness for College Students*. Fujii, T., & Murray, A. Tokyo: Pearson Longman, 2009. [A health awareness-related, content-based coursebook w/ review units in TOEIC test format incl. student assignments CD and bilingual glossary].

\* *Outcomes*. Dellar, H., & Walkley, A. Hampshire, UK: Heinle Cengage Learning, 2011. [4-level English integrated skills course incl. access to online resources and grade book, review units, interactive whiteboard CD-Rom, test generator CD-Rom, teacher's book, audio CD, vocabulary builder, and student workbook].

\* *Reading Fusion*. Bennett, A. E. Tokyo: Nan'undo, 2011. [2-level reading skills coursebook w/ extra speaking and writing activities, review tests, audio CD, and teacher's manual].

*Tactics for Listening 3rd Edition*. Richards, J. C. & Trew, G. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. [3-level listening skills course w/ testing program incl. teacher's book, testing program and resource CD-ROM, and access to Audio Download Center].

*Thinking in the EFL Class: Activities for blending language learning and thinking*. Woodward, T. Crawley, UK: Helbling Languages, 2011. [Teacher resource book w/ 37 tips for teachers and 87 practical activities for the classroom to encourage flexibility, fun, creativity, and rigor in teacher and student thinking incl. downloadable handouts].

\* *Word Master Approach for the TOEIC® Test*. Tsumatori, C., Matsui, K., Tobe, N., & Inamori, Y. Tokyo: Seibido 2011. [B6-sized vocabulary text containing 1080 words from the TOEIC® test w/ self-study audio CD and Linguaporta access incl. teacher's manual and review tests].

\* *Write Away Right Away*. Martin, D. Saitama, JA: EFL Press. 2010. [12-unit writing skills course

for low-intermediate level Japanese university students incl. teacher's notes w/ answer key].

*Beyond the Language Classroom*. Benson, P., & Reinders, H. (Eds.). Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

\* *Identity, Motivation, and Autonomy in Language Learning*. Murray, G., Gao, X., & Lamb, T. (Eds.). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2011.

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

Contact: Greg Rouault

jj-reviews@jalt-publications.org



# OUTSIDE THE BOX

## ...with Adam Lebowitz

To contact the editor:

<outside-the-box@jalt-publications.org>



"Outside the Box/Off the Wall" is a column that not only challenges the community to address a problem, but proposes a creative solution without concerns of being "unrealistic." The focus is on originality and creativity, not rigor. More information on submissions can be found online, or contact the editor.

OUTSIDE THE BOX ONLINE:  
A linked index of Outside the Box articles can be found at:

<jalt-publications.org/tt/departments/outside-the-box>

similar ways of life. Its vicinity to the US means it is greatly exposed to the hegemony of American culture.

The course will explain the cultures of the Caribbean using theories of *cultural pluralism*, and *creolization*, in addition to some cultural definitions and metaphoric descriptions of the Caribbean. Cultural pluralism presents a situation in which different cultures co-exist side-by-side with very little intermingling against a background of relative acceptance and tolerance for each other. M. G. Smith and Lloyd Braithwaite are among two of the leading exponents on Caribbean cultural pluralism. The creolization theory sees a Caribbean that is the result of a process of the intermixing of different cultures. This *creolized* Caribbean has been described in hyphenated terms as "part-Native Amerindian, part-European, part-African, part-Asian, yet totally Caribbean." Edouard Glissant and Rex Nettleford are two of the Caribbean cultural theorists to have fully embraced and advanced the creolization theory.

The metaphors *pepper-pot soup* and *melting pot* can be likened respectively to cultural pluralism and creolization theories. In a pepper-pot soup, one may easily be able to identify the different ingredients while enjoying it; a melting pot, however, fuses all the elements therein to produce something new, different, and harmonious.

The value of a course on Caribbean culture in Japanese classrooms will not only contribute to addressing the paucity of knowledge existing on the Caribbean, but also allow for a more scholarly, comparative, and deeper understanding of the students' own society and culture.

**G**arcia Chambers outlines the benefits of teaching students about the Caribbean. A native of Falmouth, Jamaica, he is an instructor at Shirayuri Women's College, and has studied at the University of West Indies and the University of Birmingham.

## The Caribbean

The Caribbean is long overdue as an area of study in Japanese classrooms. Intermixing the cultures of Native Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Asians, it exemplifies both benefits and burdens of globalization.

Today, the Caribbean contains Spanish-speaking, French-speaking, Dutch-speaking, and English-speaking nations, with different yet



TLT RESOURCES

# TLT WIRED

...with Ted O'Neill

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



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

We invite readers to submit articles on their areas of interest. Please contact the editors before submitting

TLT WIRED ONLINE: A linked index of articles can be found at:

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

## Researching ICT integration in Japanese EFL classrooms

Michael Stout

Toyo Gakuen University, <michael.stout@tyg.jp>

Mari Yamauchi

Chiba University of Commerce, <yamauchi@cuc.ac.jp>

Web-based resources for communication in EFL classes provide a communicative environment where students can use English to interact with people beyond the classroom walls. However, the potential benefits may not be reaped unless due consideration is given to students with limited computer experience (*vis-à-vis* cell phones), and those with negative feelings toward using or learning English. In April 2011, we began a three-year Kaken grant funded study called

Developing Practice Models for ICT-Integrated EFL Instruction Centred on Production and Exchange. At the beginning of the project we asked ourselves these questions:

- What could be the challenges to integrating technology into the EFL classroom in Japan?
- How can we overcome these challenges?
- What could be an effective instructional model for integrating technology into EFL classes in Japan?

By finding answers to these questions we hope to identify which technologies are best for our students to use in order to practice English for communicative purposes. We will then propose practical ways that other teachers in Japan can integrate technology into their EFL classes, especially where there is limited access to ICT in the classroom. In this article we'll share some of the things we've discovered over the first year of our study.

### Challenges to integrating technology into the EFL classroom in Japan

The most obvious challenge to integrating technology into the EFL classroom is the set up of most classrooms in Japan. Many classrooms still have just a chalkboard and rows of desks, which makes giving students opportunities for hands-on practice very difficult. Furthermore, our own experience over the years, and studies including Murray and Blyth (2011), show that some students are not comfortable using computers, and even those students who are, may have limited computer literacy.

Another challenge is choosing which tools to use. The most important factor when teachers choose a technology is their own readiness to use it. Students won't be comfortable using the tool if the teacher isn't comfortable using it. Other factors to consider are accessibility and ease of use. For Japanese students, tools that can be accessed using a mobile phone are best. While the number of tools like this is limited, more and more students are getting smartphones. The range of



tools accessible via smart phones is growing day by day. As for ease of use, teachers even need to be aware of whether a site requires registration and log in. Many students don't like the bother of registration and log in. Many students forget their log in details too.

There is also the challenge of finding people for students to communicate with online. While random strangers can, and do, comment on blogs and other sites, it would be unwise to rely on this happening for a variety of reasons, including safety. This means that teachers need to arrange projects and exchanges. Projects and exchanges with other classes in Japan are easiest, but are these the people our students want to communicate with in English? Projects and exchanges with overseas classes can be problematic because of different academic calendars and different time zones. Finally, we have a paradox: many students are unable to reach a desirable level of English proficiency because they lack meaningful opportunities to practice English. While the Internet can provide opportunities for students to practice using English, the public nature of the Internet may scare them away from taking these opportunities.

### Overcoming these challenges

At JALT2011, we reported on the use of Moodle, a virtual learning environment (VLE) with first and second year false beginner level students at Chiba University of Commerce (CUC) in 2010. A survey of the students found that for many students Moodle was either difficult to use or a hassle to use outside the classroom: some said they wanted to use their feature phone for online discussion. Moodle had limited mobile phone compatibility. Despite the accessibility problem the students said that they enjoyed doing online activities once they got used to them. However, many students also wanted to do grammar or vocabulary exercises using Moodle, suggesting that more language-focused tasks, coupled with communicative activities, might help increase student participation in online activities. Based on what was learned with this group of students, we came up with a plan for our classes beginning in the spring of 2011.

We decided to start by trying out blogs that students could post to using their mobile phones. The classes at Toyo Gakuen University (Togaku) were held in a CALL Room. The classes at CUC, held in a regular classroom, used iPads and the students' own mobile phones. We tried two different platforms, Blogger (with the CUC classes) and Posterous (with the Togaku class). Twitter, a microblogging platform, was also used with the Togaku class. One of the most interesting results was that the Togaku class selected Twitter as the preferred platform for communicative exchange activities. Indeed, some students in this class are still using Twitter, even though the term has ended and they have already been assigned a grade. On the other hand, these students who loved using Twitter only used Posterous when asked to. At CUC, student participation increased compared to the 2010 fall semester. They found blogging in English was helpful to improve their English, appreciated opportunities to express themselves in English, and were happy with in-class language-focused activity using their posts. However, their blogging activities were not very *interactive* at this stage, which posed another challenge.

In the next stage we set up another blog called Connected Classrooms for interclass blogging. Classes in five universities participated: Togaku, CUC, Tokyo Metropolitan University, Soka University, and Osaka Prefectural University. Students posted to the blog using either computers or mobile phones both inside and outside of the classroom. To prompt conversation we posted slide shows made using Voicethread. We also gave the students assignments to complete using Voicethread and YouTube.

Meanwhile, we surveyed 173 students at Togaku and CUC to investigate how our students use technology. It showed their overall preference for mobile phones over computers, which was consistent with our previous findings. It also revealed that most of the students felt comfortable using a computer and almost 63% of the students use the Internet frequently, suggesting the challenge for the teacher is not general low technology use among students but differentiated instruction to accommodate those relatively few students reluctant to use computers.

## Conclusion

We haven't come up with an effective instructional model for integrating technology into EFL classes in Japan yet, but we have discovered some useful things about our students. Over the next two years we'll experiment some more. After that we will be sure to share all we've learned.

## Acknowledgements

This work was supported by a kakenhi Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (23520696) from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

## References

Murray, A., & Blyth, A. (2011). A survey of Japanese university students' computer literacy levels. *JALTCALL Journal*, 7(3), 307-318.

## Resources

Michael Stout's Blog for Students and Teachers: <mrstoutsblog.blogspot.com>

Togaku Basic English 1 Writing Blog: <togaku-writing.posterous.com/#!>

MYAM's Class Blog: <myam.blogspot.com>

What's Up (Students' blog) <myam2009.blogspot.com>

Connected Classrooms: <connecteden.blogspot.com>



JALT FOCUS

# JALT NOTICES

## ...with Malcolm Swanson

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



Contributors are requested by the column editor to submit notices and announcements for JALT Focus by the 15th of the month, one and a half months prior to publication.

JALT FOCUS ONLINE: A listing of notices and news can be found at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/jalt-focus>

## JALT National Officers, 2011-2012

Our elected national officers work with the JALT Executive Board to administer NPO JALT. They can be contacted at <jalt.org/main/contact>.

- ▶ President: . . . . . Kevin Cleary
- ▶ Vice President: . . . . . Nathan Furuya
- ▶ Auditor: . . . . . Caroline Lloyd
- ▶ Director of Treasury: . . . . . Oana Cusen
- ▶ Director of Records: . . . . . Aleda Krause
- ▶ Director of Program: . . . . . Steve Cornwell
- ▶ Director of Membership: . . . . . Buzz Green
- ▶ Director of Public Relations: . . . . . Michael Stout

## Notice of the 2012 JALT Ordinary General Meeting

- 日時: 2012年6月24日(日)午後2時  
Date and Time: Jun 24 2012 (Sunday), 14:00
- 場所: 国立オリンピック記念青少年総合センター、センター棟309号室  
東京都渋谷区代々木神園町3-1  
Location: National Olympics Memorial Youth Center, Central Building, Room 309  
3-1 Yoyogi Kamizono-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo

## OGM議案 / OGM Agenda

- 第1号議案 平成23年度事業報告  
Item 1. Business Report (2011/04/01-2012/03/31)
- 第2号議案 平成23年度決算報告  
Item 2. Financial Report (2011/04/01-2012/03/31)
- 第3号議案 平成23年度決算報告  
Item 3. Audit Report (2011/04/01-2012/03/31)
- 第4号議案 平成24年度事業計画  
Item 4. Business Plan (2012/04/01-2013/03/31)
- 第5号議案 平成24年度予算

- Item 5. Budget (2012/04/01–2013/03/31)
- 第6号議案 その他の重要事項
- Item 6. Other Important Issues

in both English and Japanese one week after nominations close.

Bernadette Luyckx

National Elections Committee Chair

## 2012 JALT National Elections: Final call for nominations

This is the final notice that elections for all positions on the JALT board of directors will take place in October. You are cordially invited to nominate JALT members in good standing who have suitable experience for the positions. Full details were posted in the March/April edition of the *TLT* and can also be viewed on the JALT website at <jalt.org/elections>. Nominations should be sent by email to Bernadette Luyckx, JALT Nominations and Elections Committee Chair at <nec@jalt.org>. Nominations will be accepted until 15 May 2012. Details of qualifications and candidate statements will be due

## 2012年JALT全国選出役員選挙—推薦者募集

以下の役職の選挙が11月に行われることを公示します。これらの役職に適任と思われる会員をご推薦ください。

任期:すべての役職において任期は名古屋の年次総会(2012年10月12日~15日開催)直後より2年間とする。推薦は自薦、他薦を問わないが、いずれもJALT正会員である事。以下の連絡先バーナデッテ 石田にEメールで推薦文を5月15日までにお送りください。その際、推薦する者、推薦される者の会員番号と支部名を明記してください。詳細は、「TLT」3月/4月号、または、JALTのウェブサイト<jalt.org/elections>に載っておりますのでご覧ください。

バーナデッテ・ラウクス  
選挙管理委員会 委員長  
<nec@jalt.org>



JALT FOCUS

# SHOWCASE

### ...with Kristen Sullivan

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



Showcase 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. Please address inquiries to the editor.

SHOWCASE ONLINE: A listing of Showcase articles can be found at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/showcase-members-profile>

In this edition of Showcase, Alison Stewart discusses knowledge communities in the Learner Development (LD) SIG and JALT Publications.

## Alison Stewart

It never ceases to amaze me how much skill, energy, and passion for teaching and learning there is in the JALT community.

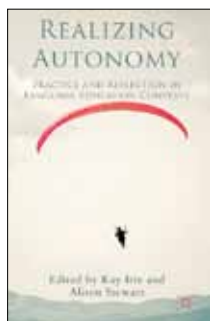
This is my fifteenth year of JALT membership, though I have to admit that for at least the first ten years my involvement didn't extend beyond renewing my subscription (sometimes) and reading the *JALT*



*Journal* and *The Language Teacher*. Things started to warm up for me when I wrote an article for the LD SIG's newsletter, *Learning Learning* (Stewart, 2007), a spin-off from my PhD on teacher identity. The next thing I knew, I was co-editing *Learning Learning* with Kay Irie. Both newcomers to the SIG and to active JALT membership, we learned on the job together, with the generous support of more experienced members. After years of struggling to master academic content and style in our doctoral careers, we now found ourselves part of a community that shared our interest in issues like identity and motivation, but wanted to talk about them in ways that were perhaps more relevant to our students and more accessible or interesting to our members.

The LD SIG has a tradition of trying to encourage and develop writers who are new to research and writing for publication, and this sense of mission to develop ourselves and those around us is something that I have especially come to value. In 2008, Kay and I sent out a call for proposals in a bid to find contributors to a new book on developing learner autonomy. As a SIG project, most of the proposals we accepted were by members of the LD SIG, and some of our contributors had no previous experience with writing for publication in English, or any writing experience at all. After three years of writing and collaborative peer reviewing among the authors of the 16 chapters, as well as by expert advisors from outside the SIG, the book, *Realizing autonomy: Practice and reflection in language education contexts* (Irie & Stewart, 2012), was published by Palgrave Macmillan this January.

As the book project was approaching completion last year, I stepped up my involvement in JALT publications to take over the lead editor position of the JALT Conference Proceedings from Alan Stoke. My experience with the JALT Conference Proceedings, including reviewing initial proposals for presentations and workshops at the conference, and peer reviewing and editing articles submitted to the Proceedings, has given me a wonderful, panoramic view of the broad extent of research into language learning and teaching among the JALT membership, as well as the opportunity to work



with language teachers and researchers throughout Japan and beyond. Now coming to the end of another round of Proceedings editing, I am joined this year by a co-editor, Nozomu Sonda. We share a commitment to bringing in new authors, editors, and reviewers, and see the Proceedings, with its team of 20 sub-editors, as well as nearly 100 peer reviewers ably coordinated by Theron Muller, as an active and expanding community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). All healthy communities need a steady inflow of new members who will learn the ropes and, in time, take over leadership positions; in the same way, JALT publications also need the constant invigoration of new blood. Everybody benefits: new members develop expertise from those who have traveled that path before them; older members stay sharp and fresh as they work with those who bring new ideas and new ways of doing things; and JALT, as a knowledge community, can thrive. I would encourage anyone interested in getting involved with any of the JALT publications <jalt-publications.org> to contact the editors. Your offer to contribute will be warmly welcomed.

Still a relative newcomer, my involvement in JALT continues to be an immensely rewarding experience. I've worked with and learned from language teachers across the educational spectrum. What has inspired me most of all is the creativity and curiosity about learning and teaching that I see in the JALT community and this helps me in my goal to become a better teacher myself.

## References

- Irie, K., & Stewart, A. (Eds.). (2012). *Realizing autonomy: Practice and reflection in language education contexts*. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stewart, A. (2007). Teacher development and ad hoc communities. *Learning Learning*, 14(1), 18-27.

**Alison Stewart** has been living in Japan for nearly 18 years. She teaches at Gakushuin University in Tokyo and can be contacted at: <alison.stewart@gakushuin.ac.jp>.



JALT FOCUS

# GRASSROOTS

...with Joyce Cunningham  
& Mariko Miyao

To contact the editors:  
<grassroots@jalt-publications.org>



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

GRASSROOTS ONLINE: A listing of Grassroots articles can be found at:

<jalt-publications.org/tt/departments/grassroots>



## Join the 11th Annual Pan-SIG Conference in Hiroshima!

Naomi Fujishima, Okayama University and Pan-SIG 2012 Conference Chair

On June 16 and 17 of 2012, the 11th Pan-SIG Conference will be held on the Higashi Hiroshima campus of Hiroshima University. What does Pan-SIG mean, do you ask? The prefix *pan* comes from the Greek word meaning *all*, and of course, SIG stands for Special Interest Group. Since 2002, the SIGs in JALT have held an annual conference on a decided theme for those of us who prefer a more intimate and relaxed atmosphere from the larger national JALT conferences. Looking back, the Pan-SIG has come a long way with just two SIGs involved ten years ago, CUE (College and University Educators) and TEVAL (Testing and Evaluation). Their purpose was to outline some of the issues dealing with curriculum changes at the time, which were influenced by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology's policy changes in tertiary level education. Since then, year-by-year the Pan-SIG has grown from two SIGs to the twenty-two participating in 2012. This year, we look at education from a different angle with the theme of literacy.



The full title of the 11th Pan-SIG Conference theme is *Literacy: SIGNALS of Emergence*. When hearing the term *literacy*, most people think about reading and understanding written texts. However, more recently, critical literacy has

In the first report of this edition, Naomi Fujishima writes about the upcoming Pan-SIG Conference at Hiroshima University and explains all the reasons why you should attend this event which explores various aspects of literacy in language education. In the second report, Adam Murray describes JALTCALL 2012, one of the leading CALL conferences in Asia. In the third report, Jim Ronald tells us about some of the benefits of joining the local Learner Development get-togethers in Hiroshima. How can different groups in JALT develop lively communities of collaboration and also encourage new people to join in and become members of JALT? In the fourth report, Andy Barfield, Hiromi Furusawa, Kay Irie, and Rich Silver report on the Learner Development SIG's 2012 Wider Participation Scheme, which reaches out to current and potential SIG members and subscribers in innovative ways. In the fifth report, Morten Hunke reports that the CEFR, *can do* statements, and language portfolios are powerful tools to help teachers and students, and that they are becoming increasingly important in Japan. In the sixth report, Peter Hourdequin describes a new one-day conference that will be held this June.

focused on the ability to question and analyze these texts and see them in their social context. At the Pan-SIG Conference, we bring together special interest groups with diverse backgrounds to focus on literacy and how it is relevant to their fields. At the time of this writing, we are still accepting submissions for the call for papers so the schedule is not set yet, but so far, there are a variety of proposals that touch on literacy from many different angles. With twenty-two different SIGs, you can imagine what a wealth of topics there will be!

To bring more light to our understanding of literacy, we are proud to have three plenary speakers – Dr. Thomas Cobb, Université du Québec à Montréal, Dr. Hiromi Nagao, Hiroshima Jogakuin University, and Dr. Toshihiko Shiotsu, Kurume University. With their diverse backgrounds, we will certainly gain many perspectives on what literacy is in this day and age, and how understanding it better can inform our own teaching and research interests.

Another reason to attend the conference this year is because it is in Hiroshima, the city devoted to the cause of world peace and abolition of nuclear weapons. You can visit the Atomic Bomb Dome, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and located in the Peace Memorial Park in downtown Hiroshima. Stay in Hiroshima an extra night or come a day early so you can also visit Miyajima, where the famous Itsukushima shrine is located. Don't forget to try these delicacies that Hiroshima is famous for – *okonomiyaki*, oysters, and *anagomeshi*!

Finally, you don't want to miss visiting Hiroshima University. It is a beautiful campus located in Higashi Hiroshima in the serene countryside of Hiroshima Prefecture. Inside the vast campus grounds, there is a beautiful lake with a small stream running between the school buildings. After listening to some presentations or checking out the publishers' displays, you can take a walk outside and feel refreshed before heading back in for more intellectual stimulation.

There are several ways to get to the university from Hiroshima City, but the easiest is to take a direct bus from the center of town (go to the Bus Center next to Sogo Department Store). It takes about 55 minutes to get to the Hirodai-nishiguchi stop, which is the closest stop to the

buildings where the conference will take place. Another way is to take the local train from Hiroshima station to Saijo station (a 35-minute ride) then take a bus to the campus. At any rate, you can check the Hiroshima University website for more information on access. Be sure to visit the Pan-SIG 2012 website to get the latest updates on the schedule, registration, and accommodations: < pansig.org/2012 >.

We hope you will mark your calendars and make it over to Hiroshima on June 16 and 17. You still have time to register for the conference!

## JALTCALL 2012: A sneak preview

Adam Murray, Tokai University  
< murray@scc.u-tokai.ac.jp >

The JALTCALL special interest group will be holding our annual conference from June 1-3 in Nishinomiya, Hyogo Prefecture. The conference will be at the

Konan Cube in the Hirao School of Management at Konan University. We are expecting that the wide range of paper presentations, show & tell presentations, workshop presentations, and poster presentations will have something of interest for everyone.

Our keynote speaker, Stephen Bax, will deliver his talk on Saturday, June 2. He is a Reader in English Language, Learning, Assessment, and Technology in the CRELLA Research Centre at the University of Bedfordshire. In his presentation, he will revisit the concept of normalisation as a way of understanding innovation and CALL in language education. He will focus on the roles of teachers and managers in implementing new technological innovation in educational settings. In addition, he will emphasise the centrality of syllabus integration in the normalisation process. Throughout the talk, Bax will use examples from



East Asia and elsewhere to illustrate his points.

In addition to our keynote speaker, we are pleased to have two plenary speakers. The first plenary speaker, Lance Knowles, is the President and Head of Development at DynEd International (USA). Knowles has been a pioneer in the field of CALL for more than 25 years. His award-winning courses, used by millions of students, have been approved by Ministries of Education in Europe and Asia. His language learning theory, Recursive Hierarchical Recognition (RHR), is based on neuroscience. In his presentation, *Defining Roles: Who Does What and Why?* Knowles will focus on the need for a learning theory that defines the roles of teacher, learner, and technologies in blended learning configurations. Although the term *blended learning* is often used, many teachers are still unprepared to deal with technology. One reason is that many teacher-training programs do not adequately prepare teachers for a future where technologies play an increasing role. In this talk, fundamental assumptions about language teaching and language sequencing are challenged. Also, Knowles will discuss a new set of skills and a means for assessing progress.

The second plenary speaker, John Brine, is an Associate Professor in the Center for Language Research at the University of Aizu. In his presentation, *Language Technology: Predictions and Unintended Outcomes*, Brine will talk about how educators' expectations and unmet prior predictions have been updated or revised over the years. The promise of the educational potential of technology continues to motivate enthusiasm for each new development. However, focusing excessively and optimistically on potential seems to contribute to inadequate attention to the unintended outcomes (positive and negative) of new technologies. Interestingly, early signs of unintended outcomes of mobile technologies, and other technologies of relevance to language learning, are now being detected and debated. Brine will discuss the importance for language educators of considering both predictions about technology and unintended outcomes.

This year we are delighted to have the support of several commercial sponsors. By attending commercially sponsored presentations and visiting commercial displays, conference at-

tendees will be able to learn about the latest in materials and resources. Last year's commercial sponsors included *CHleru Co. Ltd.*, *Compass Publishing*, *EnglishCentral*, *Macmillan Language House*, *McGraw Hill*, *Oxford University Press*, and *Pearson Longman*.

All conference attendees are invited to attend the networking reception on Saturday evening. This reception provides an excellent opportunity to meet up with old friends, make new ones, and enjoy lively discussions. (Note: Admission to the networking reception is complimentary for those attendees who have pre-registered.) We look forward to seeing you in Nishinomiya at the conference from June 1-3. For more information, please visit the JALT CALL SIG website: <jaltcall.org>. You can also stay informed of SIG news by following @jaltcall, the SIG's official Twitter feed.

## Hiroshima Learner Development get-togethers

Jim Ronald

It was in 2007, as part of a Learner Development SIG initiative, that we started local get-togethers in Hiroshima. This was prompted by suggestions from Mike Nix, and by the lead taken in Tokyo and the Kansai area. I received these suggestions as one of the few SIG members in the Hiroshima area at the time – and although I managed to ignore them for a few months, I couldn't help but take them personally and eventually had to respond. And I'm very glad I did – thanks a lot, Mike!

Our meetings were held in cafés in or around Hiroshima Station, and continued for about 18 months, with attendance ranging from an initial dozen people to a more typical three or four. Although we'd have welcomed more people, and did feel a little discouraged by the small numbers, the fact was a small group was ideal for discussion, for telling and getting feedback about things we were planning or doing in the area of learner development, for encouraging each other as teachers, and for starting and developing real friendships.

But then I got busy, we stopped meeting for a month, then two, then three... and no one seemed to notice! I also got busy with a couple of other activities, both very enjoyable and rewarding, and both fruits in some way of the LD get-togethers: a Japanese study group made up of five or six English teachers who hadn't studied for a decade or so, and a pragmatics activities book project with two further colleagues/friends.

Then, late last year, hearing about plans for kick-starting the get-togethers in Tokyo and Kansai, and reflecting on all the good things that had come out of having them in Hiroshima before, it seemed a good time to try again. Also, the ETJ Expo was coming up, and I had been asked to present something about the LD get-togethers – the get-togethers that weren't getting together anymore...

Feeling that in Hiroshima we might need a broader base to attract more people, at the ETJ Expo I spoke about our need to develop as teachers, and how a focus on learner development is one essential aspect of our development. As language teachers we need to go beyond how and what language to teach: to helping the learners in our care learn better, find and use resources (including us!) better, and take over responsibility for their own learning. Consciously adding the dimension of learner development/autonomy to our teaching forces us to become more reflective teachers: teachers who need to challenge what we're doing, try new things, and investigate language learning in some way.

At the end of January 2012, then, we had our first new, improved LD get-together – with added teacher reflection, action research, and whatever else people brought to the mix! Thanks to support from our Hiroshima JALT chapter (many thanks!), and the LD-SIG, nine people joined this, and nine in February, too. Some of us have started reading books on learner autonomy or reflective teaching to report and discuss at our meetings. Also, as we face a new school year, we are planning how to investigate or promote learner autonomy with our classes through the year.

I'll finish with some participants' reasons for joining the Learner Development get-togethers. If you are interested in joining us – in Hiroshima,

Kansai, Tokyo, or elsewhere – please visit the LD-SIG website and find out how.

"I have great [nursing] students who start to wise up to self-directed learning in the first year, but less than a fifth of them effectively put it into practice over the next three years. I'd like to know what that missing ingredient is, and how we can bridge the gap between knowing and doing." (Simon)

"I was so happy to participate in such a meeting because it is very reminiscent of the PD sessions: literature and research shared discussion, as well as topical discussion on relevant issues. The opportunity to enjoy a meal after was a nice, friendly and encouraging way to end the evening." (Michelle)

"In Japan, it seems that students are trained to do what the teacher tells them to do, but often that is where it ends. I am interested in finding out how we, as teachers and guides, can make our students aware of their own learning so they will become more motivated to continue studying even outside the classroom. The LD meetings are useful for me because I can get ideas about learner autonomy from other teachers and participate in stimulating discussions." (Naomi)

## Encouraging wider participation through grants, subscriptions, and local get-togethers

Andy Barfield, Hiromi Furusawa, Kay Irie, and Rich Silver, Learner Development SIG committee

Last year the Learner Development SIG provided four grants of 40,000 yen each for teachers to attend conferences. Two of the grants went to teachers wishing to attend the Advising for



Language Learner Autonomy conference organized at Kanda University of International Studies in November 2011: Ian Hurrell, a language school teacher in Sapporo, and Mehmet Boyno, a high school teacher in Turkey. In return for their grants, Ian and Mehmet were asked to write for the LD SIG's newsletter-journal, *Learning Learning*, about connections between their interests in language learner advising, their own work, and issues that caught their attention at the Kanda conference. The other two grants were awarded to Matt Coomber and Michael Wilkins, both based in Kansai, to help support their attendance at JALT2011 in Tokyo. Neither Matt nor Michael receive institutional funding, so getting to a three-day JALT conference in Tokyo is a major expense for them – and the SIG's conference grants of 40,000 yen made a tangible difference for their professional development. The short, personalized pieces of writing of 1200 words or so that Matt and Michael have also contributed to *Learning Learning* help all the members of the LD SIG benefit from their conference participation.

The Learner Development SIG has been providing conference grants for SIG members since 2006. These financial grants are aimed at helping teachers and researchers new to the area of learner development who don't have access to institutional support. This year, following a consultation period with SIG members in January, we decided to expand the range of support, in particular by offering starter membership/subscription grants. Like most groups in JALT, many Learner Development SIG members work in universities, so it is important for us to make a deliberate effort to keep encouraging the participation of junior high and senior high school teachers, as well as elementary school and language school teachers – not to mention teachers doing graduate studies. We also wish to encourage greater participation by Japanese teachers in different SIG events, publications, and research. This is where the SIG's 2012 Wider Participation Scheme comes in.

The 2012 scheme provides both subscriptions and grants. We are quite aware that many teachers are reluctant to pay 10,000 yen as the basic membership fee for JALT before they can become members of any SIG. This was a very good reason for the SIG to start offering annual

subscriptions in 2012. Although subscriptions are only available to people who are not members of JALT, there is a substantial difference between an annual subscription to the SIG (2000 yen) and a JALT + LD SIG membership (10,000 + 1,500 yen). Subscriptions can act as a much lower-cost entry point for many more teachers.

In 2012, the SIG is offering 10 first-time/starter subscription grants to non-members of JALT to encourage such entry-level participation. For JALT members, the SIG is also offering 10 first-time/starter SIG memberships, so that teachers can join the SIG and see how it fits them. In terms of other grants, the SIG's 2012 Wider Participation Scheme includes:

- two Tohoku grants (free memberships of JALT and the LD SIG to colleagues working in the affected areas)
- two Pan SIG conference grants of 25,000 yen each
- two LD SIG research grants of 25,000 yen each
- two LD SIG national conference grants of 40,000 yen each.

In each case priority is being given to teachers who do not have access to institutional funding. What's more, interested teachers may make their applications in Japanese or English. Full details are available on the LD SIG's homepage at: <[ld-sig.org/grants2012](http://ld-sig.org/grants2012)>.



Developing collaboration: A recent LD SIG get-together in Tokyo

This year the LD SIG is also organizing regular local get-togethers in Tokyo, Kansai, and Hiroshima. These are an important grassroots part of the SIG's 2012 Wider Participation Scheme.

Focused on participants exploring together their learner development interests and developing small-scale action research projects, such non-presenter based gatherings offer another route for would-be members of the SIG to become involved and co-create their professional development with other similarly interested colleagues. In different but energizing ways, then, the Learner Development SIG hopes that its Wider Participation Scheme will help nurture lively communities of collaboration.

## The CEFR, *can do* statements, and language portfolios in action

Morten Hunke, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, <mortenisverige@yahoo.se>

Have you ever wondered how you could get that one particular student to improve her/his speaking skills or listening skills or any other language-related skill for that matter? Have you ever hoped you had more time to assist that very student in their learning? Have you ever asked yourself how you could help students help themselves or how to get them to take command of their own learning? As a language teacher, the chances that you have are pretty high.

One final question: Have you ever heard of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages and the European Language Portfolio (ELP)? Both are useful tools that could give your students the means to take control of their own learning. Moreover, it could give you the means to gear students more towards working on their own language learning as well as on improving particular skills. CEFR provides a huge range of so-called *can do statements* and descriptors of levels of skill. The ELP offers students and you the chance to utilise these in a concise and coordinated fashion, tracking learning processes and analysing language learning as it progresses. It does this making use

of pedagogical and reflective practices including that of utilising *can do statements* and other CEFR tools. Often when CEFR or the ELP are mentioned, mainly testing companies and the big wigs at your institution may jump on the bandwagon. Too often institutions are merely concerned with testability, accountability - of teachers' performance - and top-down control of learning. Sadly this approach doesn't actually care about the individual student, and their progress and motivation. But as a teacher you do. And we in the Framework and Language Portfolio SIG beg to differ that CEFR and the ELP are only about testing.

We know it's not, because we and others have been using it in very student-focused contexts. We have adapted *can do statements* for the teaching of particular skills. And we are working actively to promote the use of CEFR and the ELP by the learners themselves and you, the teaching professionals closest to the learners. We are a group of professionals combining a wealth of experience with regards to using CEFR/the ELP. Since its foundation in 2008 the FLP SIG has run numerous workshops, seminars, and forums, and has invited speakers on the topic of CEFR and the ELP in Japan and elsewhere at PanSIG, the JALT national conference, Nakasendo, CUE SIG events, etc. This year we are present at a number of CEFR/ELP-related events all over Japan and we are organising a panel debate at PanSIG 2012 (Hiroshima University, June 16-17, 2012) together with TEVAL SIG. We know so much more could be done. But we are only a few. Would you like to learn more about what we do and how we try to implement CEFR and the ELP in working with our students? Would you like to liaise and work with others around Japan and worldwide who work and research-related topics and issues? Would you like to get involved yourself? Please do find us at: <sites.google.com/site/flpsig>. Discover more about the FLP SIG's own Asahi Press published book: *Can do statements in language education in Japan and beyond*, or simply drop us an email: <flpsig@gmail.com>. For use in Japan the *Language Portfolio at Japanese Universities* with its appendix/*can do statements* is now available to download for free at: <tiny-url.com/LP4JU>.

Not only do we have a range of expertise in working with, presenting and demonstrating the

uses of CEFR/the ELP, we also possess access to a wide network of professionals who work on related aspects around the globe. But above all we'd very much like to hear from you, about your ideas, your queries, and your practical experiences. Please get in touch with us via email, find us at JALT and other conferences - announced on our website. Or perhaps, would you like to hear more about practical student-centred CEFR/ ELP usage in a workshop for you and your colleagues? No problem, just get in touch. Thank you and we're looking forward to your mail!

## EFL Teacher Journeys Conference

Peter Hourdequin, Tokoha Gakuen University, <peterfh46@gmail.com>

On June 24, 2012, the Shizuoka Chapter and the Teacher Education and Development (TED) SIG will be co-hosting a one-day conference in Shizuoka City. The conference will be held at the Kyouiku Kaikan, ten minutes on foot from Shizuoka station.

The EFL Teacher Journeys Conference aims to explore the richness of EFL teachers' career paths and identities. There will be two featured speakers: Patrick Kiernan from Meiji University, and Wilma Luth from Hokkai Gakuen University. Patrick Kiernan's presentation, entitled *Journeys of Teaching and Learning*, will describe insights gleaned from life story interviews with more than forty English teachers in Japan (native and non-native) working in a variety of teaching situations, and with varying degrees of experience and expertise. He will also introduce such key concepts as *narrative identity*, *communities of practice*, and *imagined identities*. To illustrate these concepts, Patrick will relate some of the more inspiring and intriguing stories in order to provoke discussion and reflection into our ongoing journeys as teachers and how these are important to what goes on in the classroom and how effectively our learners learn.

Wilma Luth's presentation is entitled *Tools for the EFL Teacher Journey*. Wilma will retrace her teaching journey of more than 20 years in Japan.

She will describe several of the tools and ideas, including reflective practice and creating a teaching portfolio, that she has used along the way to sustain her energy and enthusiasm for teaching.


Besides the two featured presentations, there will be an additional 12 presentations during three concurrent sessions focusing on a variety of topics such as the development of EFL teaching skills/expertise, EFL teacher career journeys, and teacher identity. The conference will wrap up with a networking session. Also, we are pleased that *Englishbooks.jp* will be supporting the event and will have a wide selection of professional development textbooks available for purchase (cash, credit card, and institutional order).

We hope you will join us on June 24 in Shizuoka to tell your story through either empirical research or personal narrative, or to listen to the stories of other teachers trekking along on a similar journey. For more details about the EFL Teacher Journeys Conference, please visit the conference website at: <sites.google.com/site/teacherjourneys>.

The JALT task-based learning SIG in association with The University of Central Lancashire, UK and Osaka Shoin Women's University, Japan present:


## Task-based learning and teaching in Asia: Challenges and Opportunities

Featuring Plenary Speakers David Carless and Michael Thomas and two days of presentations and workshops from TBLT practitioners and theorists from around Asia and beyond.



**David Carless**  
"Task-based language teaching in Confucian heritage settings: prospects and challenges"

David Carless is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at The University of Hong Kong and is a well-known researcher and writer in the fields of task-based learning as well as assessment and the management of educational change.



**Michael Thomas**  
"Tasks, Technologies and Asian Students: Beyond Digital Natives"

Michael Thomas is a senior lecturer in IBC and Language Learning Technologies at the University of Central Lancashire, UK. He is the author of many books on technology and language learning, including "Task-based Language Learning and Teaching with Technology".

**May 19 and 20, 2012**  
**Osaka Shoin Women's University**  
**Osaka, Japan**  
www.tbtsig.org



JALT FOCUS

# OUTREACH

...with David McMurray

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



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.

OUTREACH ONLINE: A listing of Outreach articles can be found at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/outreach>

**H**is first time to present on computer assisted language learning outside of Japan, Patrick Rates shares his experiences attending a conference in the Philippines aiming to make language learning not only more effective through the use of computers, but also pleasant. The conference organizers call on speakers from around the globe to share their experience in using computers with language teachers from schools in the local area. This outreach activity brings teachers together to discuss how to adapt valuable ideas from abroad to local conditions.



GLoCALL 2011 conference

## GLoCALL 2011 convenes in the Philippines

Patrick Rates

The Globalization and Localization in Computer-Assisted Language Learning conference, GLoCALL, is organized by the Asia-Pacific Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning (APACALL) and the Pacific Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning (PacCALL). Previously convened in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam, the fifth meeting of GLoCALL 2011 was hosted by the Department of Education and Applied Linguistics at De La Salle University in Manila from October 27-29. The conference attracted participants from all over the world, mostly from Asia, especially from the Philippines and Japan.

The aim of the conference is to share knowledge, research, and experience on how to use computer technology to make language learning more effective and pleasant, and to explore how the technology can be adapted to better meet the local needs of students and teachers. Conference organizers encourage speakers to provide global perspectives on CALL and bring the technology to local teachers who wish to develop their professionalism.

Held at the Century Park Hotel in Malate, one of the 16 cities that make up Metro Manila, one of the most populous metropolitan areas in the world, hotels, specialty restaurants, and cafes were easy to find. An active nightlife keeps the city aglow all hours. Filipinos seem to love shopping. Shopping malls are everywhere, including the largest mall in Asia, The Mall of Asia. Malate is the old part of Manila with many tourist destinations: The National Museum, San Sebastian Church, Malacanang Palace, Binondo (China town), and Rizal Park.

The 3-day conference schedule provided various opportunities to exchange information about CALL. Workshops were opened on the first day to introduce CALL to local teachers, to instruct participants how to conduct research and publish in CALL journals, as well as how to teach oral skills in groups online in real-time. Four plenary sessions and about eighty concurrent paper presentations, workshops, poster sessions, colloquia, and book publisher displays were offered on the following two days.

Plenary speakers Dorothy Chun from University of California at Berkeley, Marie-Noelle Lamy from The Open University in the UK, Siew Ming Thang from the University Kebangsaan Malaysia, and Rachel Edita Roxas from De La Salle University in Manila were interesting and informative. Being interested in language and its involvement with culture, it was inspirational to listen to Dorothy Chun discuss *Developing intercultural communicative competence through online exchanges: Focus on Asian and Pacific Languages*. She pointed out the difficulties in online intercultural exchanges that are due to linguistic and cultural differences in English, and Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and Samoan languages.

Participants could choose from a broad range of topics because the set theme and sub-themes of the conference included the application of technology to the classroom; using the Internet for cultural exchange; managing multimedia/hypermedia environments; e-learning; collaborative learning and blended learning; emerging technologies; fostering autonomous learning through technology; and training language teachers in e-learning environments.

This being my first international CALL conference outside of Japan, attending and presenting at GLoCALL was an interesting experience. It was motivating to be able to share my ideas with not only teachers from Japan, but also with participants in the Philippines and other countries. There was lots of information to absorb. Some of the information was quite useful and some was just a kind of review to me. Attending presentations that were practical and could be easily adapted to my teaching situation were of most interest and use to me. N. M. (Mitch) Terunes' *Autonomous CALL: Fostering independent language learning* provided ideas that could be

easily taken directly to the class. He talked about providing students with the resources to be independent lifelong learners of English. Thomas Robb's *Inside MoodleReader* was very interesting and informative. I also enjoyed hearing presenters and participants discuss their experiences teaching in countries other than Japan.

My presentation, *Autonomous learning through collaborative interactive group roles* explained how students can use the Internet to find materials to present and more effectively discuss in collaborative groups when roles are assigned for each member of the group. Everything ran smoothly because my topic was practical to implement in the classroom and not too theoretical. I found the participants to be very active and enthusiastic.

However, it was disappointing for me to learn that a proceedings will not be published for the conference. I may not have decided to present at the conference if I were aware of this before I registered. Apparently the editors are still struggling to get papers from the previous year up to mark for publication.

Overall, it was an enlightening and rewarding experience to attend my first conference on CALL outside of Japan. I listened to educators from all over the world explain how computers and technology can be used to assist language teaching in the classroom. Much of the information and many of the ideas I brought back have been useful to me and to my students. I felt this was a worthwhile conference and my time and money was well spent. There was plenty of useful information for those who don't consider themselves computer perceptive.

GLoCALL 2012 will be held October 18-20 at Beijing Foreign Studies University in China. I am sure that by attending the conference you can get some ideas on how to use computers to learn languages in and outside the classroom. More information is available at: <glotcall.org>.



**JALT2012**

October 12-15, 2012

Hamamatsu ACT,  
Hamamatsu, Japan

<jalt.org/conference>



TLT COLUMN

# SIG NEWS

## ...with Jennie Roloff-Rothman

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



JALT currently has 26 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.

You can access SIG News online at:  
 <jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/sig-news>

JALT and TLT are pleased to announce the addition of a new SIG to the organization: Literature in Language Teaching. We would like to extend a warm welcome to the group by listing them at the top of the column for this issue. TLT wishes them success as they develop and grow. For more information on how to join the new SIG, please see the information below.

## Literature In Language Teaching

The Literature in Language Teaching (LILT) SIG recently formed to encourage and promote the use of literature in the language classroom. Appropriately chosen literature provides real content to engage and motivate our language students. The literature itself provides ready-made context for learning that is so often lacking in our EFL situation.

What is *literature*? How to choose appropriate literature for our students? How to devise appropriate curricula? What activities to use? How to effectively assess student learning? These are some of the questions members discuss and seek to answer in our inaugural SIG publication, *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*.

Future LILT SIG activities include sponsoring literature/language experts to spread the good word of literature use, (co-)sponsoring conferences, working with other groups to promote effective pedagogical practice, and publishing a regular newsletter and an annual journal. The call for journal and newsletter submissions is ongoing.

Perhaps you are considering using literature in the language classroom and would like to discuss how best you may try to do so. Or perhaps you yourself have some ideas to share with your professional peers to improve their language classrooms. You are all very welcome to join the LILT SIG to discuss, learn, and share! If you wish to become actively involved in organising, we are looking for a Treasurer, a Membership Chair, and a Publications Chair. Interested? Contact Coordinator Simon Bibby at <liltsig@gmail.com>.

### SIGs at a glance

Key: [ 🔍 = keywords ] [ 📖 = publications ] [ 🧠 = other activities ] [ ✉ = email list ] [ 💬 = online forum] **Note:** For SIG contacts & URLs, please see JALT's website <jalt.org/main/groups>.

## Pan-SIG 2012

The 10th Annual Pan-SIG Conference will be held on Saturday and Sunday, Jun 16-17 2012 at Hiroshima University, Higashi-Hiroshima Campus. More info: <pansig.org/2012>, or see the article in this month's Grassroots column.

### Bilingualism

[ 🔍 bilingualism, biculturalism, international families, child-raising, identity ] [ 📖 *Bilingual Japan*—3x year, Journal—1x year ] [ 💬 forums, panels ] [ ✉ ]

Our group has two main aims. One is to encourage research in the area of bilingualism in Japanese contexts. This is reflected in our peer-reviewed journal, *Japan Journal of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism*. Our second aim is to support families who are raising bilingual children. Our newsletter, *Bilingual Japan* contains articles about resources and experiences avail-

able to bicultural families. The SIG also works with various chapters to hold local events. The SIG's annual forum and banquet at the national conference provide an opportunity for members to network with other bilingual families. Further information at <bsig.org>.

### Business English

The JALT Business English SIG is intended to develop the discipline of teaching English conducive to participation in the world business community. We wish to provide instructors in this field with a means of collaboration and sharing best teaching practices.

JALT Business English SIGは、世界のビジネス界に通用する英語教育の発展を目的に持ち、結成されました。連携体制を組み、最善の教育方法を共有することにより、英語教育に携わるインストラクターの皆様のお手伝いを致します。

### 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]

All CUE members receive the refereed publication *OnCUE Journal* (ISSN:1882-0220). Submissions for issue 6.3 are due June 1, 2012. Prospective authors should check out our helpful author's template and guidelines at <jaltcue-sig.org/node/56>. A slide show on basic statistics for SLA educators is available at <jaltcue-sig.org/node/32>. Details about the *OnCUE Journal* sections can be found at <jaltcue-sig.org/node/160>. Our website also provides useful information about how to use APA formatting and statistics at <jaltcue-sig.org/node/37>. For more information about CUE SIG news and events, see the CUE website at <jaltcue-sig.org>, follow <@jaltcue> on Twitter, or join JALT-CUE on Facebook or Yahoo Groups <bit.ly/9NZBTC>.

### 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] [📱] [🗣️]

Last November at the JALT national conference in Tokyo, we hosted the JALT CALL Forum: *Your students use technology every day, do your*

*classes?* It explored some of the various ways that educators are using technology in their language teaching. Edo Forsythe shared free online tools for language self study. Steve Henneberry showed how he uses an iPad in the classroom. Daniel Mills suggested the future of language learning using artificially intelligent 3D games. Douglas Jarrell demonstrated an ER project that he has created for mobile devices. Bill Pellowe introduced an open-source student response system for mobile devices. Oliver Rose talked about merging educational design and game design in a video game for learning kanji. We had a great turnout for the forum and some very positive feedback from attendees.

June will be a hectic month for the CALL SIG.

First, we will be hosting our annual conference, JALTCALL 2012, in Nishinomiya from June 1-3. The theme of the conference will be *Beyond CALL: Integration, normalisation, or separation?*



We are pleased to have Dr. Stephen Bax as the keynote speaker and Mr. Lance Knowles and Dr. John Brine as plenary speakers. For more information about the conference, please visit <conference2012.jaltcall.org>. We are looking for venues for upcoming conferences. If you are interested in hosting a future CALL SIG conference at your institution, please contact the SIG Coordinator <sig-coordinator@jaltcall.org>. Also, if you have any suggestions for speakers that you would like to see at future JALT CALL conferences and forums, please contact the Program Chair <sig-program@jaltcall.org>.

In addition to our annual conference, we will be participating in the 11th Annual Pan-SIG Conference on June 16-17 at Hiroshima University. This year, the SIG will be sponsoring one of the plenary speakers – Dr. Thomas Cobb from Université du Québec à Montréal. For more details about PAN-SIG 2012, visit the conference website <pansig.org>.

### Critical Thinking

[🔗 critical thinking] [📖 CT Scan—3x year]

We are *always* looking for new input from teachers interested in critical thinking! We invite your ideas

about the theory and teaching practices regarding critical thinking. Whether it's a classroom idea, a reflection, or a full research paper, we hope to hear from you! Think about writing for our quarterly newsletter, *CT Scan*, or our SIG website today. All submissions are welcome at <ctscan.editor@gmail.com>. For more information, visit us at <jaltcriticalthinking.org>.

### Extensive Reading

[🔍 extensive reading, extensive listening] [📖 ERJ—3x year] [🗣️ Annual ER Seminar]

The JALT Extensive Reading SIG is pleased to announce the Fifth Annual Extensive Reading Seminar *Extensive Reading: Research and Practice*. Plenary addresses from Dr. S. D. Krashen and Junko Yamanaka. The conference will be on July 1, 2012 at Sugiyama Jogakuen University, Nagoya, Japan. Please follow the website link from the ER SIG page on the JALT website <jalt.org/groups/596> for detailed and updated information on the seminar and other related events.

### 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 SIG holds periodical seminars focusing on classroom use of the CEFR, among other things. Please refer to <sites.google.com/site/flpsig/home> and <flpsig@gmail.com> for more information, including info about the *Can do statements in language education in Japan and beyond* publication and to download the bilingual *Language Portfolio for Japanese University*.

### 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 groups to promote pedagogical and professional practices, language teaching materials, and research inclusive of gender and gender-related topics. Ongoing call for papers for the academic journal. Visit our website at <gale-sig.org> or contact us for more details. Please email <coordinator@gale-sig.org> for any GALE related inquiries.

### 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] [🗣️]

GILE aims to promote global awareness, international understanding, and action to solve world problems through content-based language teaching, drawing from fields such as global education, peace education, environmental education, and human rights education. The SIG produces a quarterly newsletter, organizes presentations for local, national, and international conferences, and maintains contacts with groups ranging from Amnesty International to Educators for Social Responsibility to UNESCO. Contact us for a sample newsletter, or for more information about the SIG's work in *teaching for a better world*. For more information, please visit <gilesig.org> or 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] [🗣️]

The 11th Annual Pan SIG Conference will be held on June 16-17, 2012, at Hiroshima University (Higashi-Hiroshima campus). There will be a JSL SIG Forum entitled *Looking for the universal teaching method in teaching Japanese* and other JSL related presentations. Would you like to join us? Researchers, teachers, and learners are invited to contribute your research articles to our publication, *JALT Journal of Japanese Language Education*. Please visit <jalt.org/jsl/> for further information.

6月16日と17日に広島大学東広島キャンパスで第11回 PANSIG年次大会が開催されます。日本語教育部会も



フォーラムや研究発表などで参加します。会員の皆様と本大会でお会いできるのを楽しみにしております。次に、部会では、現在2013年度発行予定のJALT日本語教育論集の原稿を募集しております。会員の皆さまからの投稿をお待ちしております。詳しくは<[jalt.org/jsl/](http://jalt.org/jsl/)>にアクセスするか、以下までご連絡ください。部 会代表川手 <[megumik@tuj.temple.edu](mailto:megumik@tuj.temple.edu)>。

### 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 School House*, the JALT Junior and Senior High School SIG Newsletter, is accepting submissions for its next edition. We are looking for research articles related to EFL theory or pedagogy, technology articles, lesson ideas, conference reviews, and anything else that pertains to teaching English in Japanese junior and senior high schools. If interested, please send any requests to Robert Morel at <[rcmorel@gmail.com](mailto:rcmorel@gmail.com)>. Our goal is to function as an instigator, focal point, and clearing house for research into secondary foreign language education in Japan. In particular, we aim to encourage junior and senior high EFL teachers to think about their work and to share the results of their efforts with others, in the form of written or oral presentations. We also aim to provide a focus within JALT for discussion of issues directly related to the improvement and development of foreign language education in Japan's secondary schools.

### Learner Development

[🔗 learner autonomy, critical approaches to teaching and learning, teacher/learner roles, learning processes, learning content, group dynamics] [📖 *Learning Learning*, 2x year; regular emailings to members; discussion list] [🗣️ regular local area get-togethers; ongoing practitioner/action research & ebook projects; conference grants; research grants; forum at the annual JALT conference] [📅]

私たちは大学のみならず、小・中学校、高等学校、通信教育、塾などさまざまな現場で指導にあたっている先生方の参加をお待ちしております。また英語以外の言語を指導されている先生方の参加ももちろん歓迎いたします。私たちは、教師自身の学習者としての経験と自身の教育実践との関係性、及び教室内に留まることのない幅広い学習経験について探求するという理念を共有しています。

The Learner Development SIG is a lively, friendly, and growing network with about 180 members around the world who have an interest

in exploring and researching practices that help develop autonomous learning and teaching. We are also interested in socio-cultural theory, critical approaches to teaching and learning, group dynamics, literacy development, and other interdisciplinary spaces that teachers and learners may navigate.

We welcome the participation of teachers from diverse teaching contexts (other than university) including elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, distance learning, and language school settings as well as teachers teaching languages other than English. We share a commitment to exploring connections between our experiences as learners and our practices as teachers, and the learners' experiences inside & outside the classroom.

The SIG offers chances to get connected with other teachers, graduate students and researchers through our twice-yearly newsletter *Learning Learning*, email and online resources, plus ongoing eBook publication projects. 2011 saw the publication of a third SIG book, *Realizing Autonomy: Practice and Reflection in Language Education Contexts* (Palgrave Macmillan). We hold regular local area get-togethers in different parts of Japan, focusing on discussion and practitioner research into learner development issues. Come out and meet the community: <[ld-sig.org/get-togethers](http://ld-sig.org/get-togethers)>.

In 2012 the SIG will be holding a one-day meeting with JALT Kyoto in April 8, as well as putting on forums at JALTCALL 2012 in Kobe, the Pan-SIG conference in Hiroshima, the Nakasendo conference in Tokyo, and at the JALT2012 conference in October. The LDSIG is also currently involved in the planning and participation of the *Junior and Senior High School SIG's Teacher Development Workshop*, to be held in July in Tokyo. For more information about all our events please visit our website <[ld-sig.org/events](http://ld-sig.org/events)>. 2012 also sees the SIG offering membership grants, subscriptions, research grants and conference grants to foster wider membership and participation in learner development events and publications. For more information, please visit our website <[ld-sig.org/grants2012](http://ld-sig.org/grants2012)>.

### Lifelong Language Learning

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

The energy of older learners who wish to lead active lives is reverberating all across Japan. The LLL SIG aims to help these older learners enrich their lives through language learning. The SIG provides resources and information online at <jalt.org/lifelong>.

### Materials Writers

[🔗: materials development, textbook writing, publishers and publishing, self-publication, technology] [📖 *Between the Keys*—3x year] [👤: JALT national conference events] [📰] [🗨️]

The Materials Writing SIG was established with 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]

OLE has published *OLE NL 61* and *62*, and the *OLE-at-JALT-2011 Compendium*. *NL 61* discusses Chinese LL strategies. *OLE 62* contains ample information for the OLE-sponsored JALTCALL and PanSIG 2012, and the JALT2012 theme in French, Spanish, Chinese, and German for our OLE colleagues. Order free copies from the OLE coordinator at <reinelt.rudolf.my@ehime-u.ac.jp>. The *OLE-at-JALT-2011-Compendium*, gratefully hosted by Ehime University, offers all OLE-related materials from JALT2012 at <web.iess.ehime-u.ac.jp/JALT2011/OLE%20at%20JALT%202011%20Compendium%20cover%20page.pdf>.

### 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] [📰]

The Pragmatics SIG is currently calling for submissions to the third volume in its *Pragmatics Resources* series, a collection of *pragivities*. Titled *Bringing Pragmatics into the Classroom*, this book will be a practical collection of lesson plans that incorporate pragmatics concepts into classroom activities. See the SIG website at <pragsig.org> for further details.

### Professionalism, Administration, and Leadership in Education

[🔗: professional development, ethics, legal issues, leadership dynamics, comparative education, societal demands on educators] [📖 *PALE Newsletter*]

PALE's mission starts from the recognition that language education does not take place in isolation from society and other fields of education. Issues of concern include curriculum design, implementation and maintenance, professional ethics, professional development and evaluation, administrative methodology, leadership dynamics, comparative education, sociological trends in education, employment problems, legal issues, and the demands that societies place on educators. PALE seeks to appraise teachers of research and trends in these issues by organizing conference presentations and through its journal, newsletter, listserv, and website <jalt.org/groups/PALE>.

### Speech, Drama, & Debate

The Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG has been extremely busy since its first meeting at JALT2011. Check our new website <sites.google.com/site/speechdramaanddebatepublicsite/home> to see what we have been doing. (The website is also accessible from the SDD SIG page on the official JALT website.) We prepared our first presentations as a SIG at the *Asian Conference of Language Learning* this April in Osaka, and have been busy building a good program for the June PanSIG Conference (poster session, a panel discussion, and presentations/workshops on

drama, debate, and oral interpretation/readers theatre). We are planning our series of webinars for this summer, and starting to develop a strong program for JALT2012. Call for Papers for *Mask & Gavel*, the peer reviewed publication of the SIG. See the website for information.

### Study Abroad

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

The Study Abroad SIG provides a supportive place for discussing areas of interest regarding study abroad and intercultural training. We welcome submissions for our newsletter, *Ryūgaku*, and we are looking for new officers to join the team. Visit our new website at <jalt-sa.org> or contact us at <studyabroadsig@gmail.com>.

当 研究部会は、留学や異文化教育に関して議論し、また支援できる場を提供しています。当部会のニューズレター“Ryūgaku”への皆様からの投稿をお待ちしております。新役員の募集をしております。詳細は新ウェブサイト<jalt-sa.org>へお問い合わせは、<studyabroadsig@gmail.com>へお願いします。

### Task-Based Learning

The JALT Task-Based Learning (TBL) SIG was created for teachers and other professionals who currently use, or are interested in using, task-based approaches in the classroom and focuses in particular on issues related to task-based language teaching and learning in the Asian EFL context. We hope that the SIG will serve as a useful forum for the exchange of practical teaching ideas, theoretical discussion, and academic studies of TBLT issues. Our journal *OnTask* focuses on both research and theory in the form of feature articles as well as more practical TBLT-informed lesson plans. Potential contributors to *OnTask* are invited to contact our publications officer, Julian Pigott at <julianpigott@gmail.com>.

Don't forget, our international *Task-Based Learning and Teaching in Asia* conference is being held at Osaka Shoin Women's University on May 19-20, 2012. The plenary speakers are David Carless from the University of Hong Kong, and Michael Thomas from the University of Central Lancashire, UK, and both are well respected researchers in the field of task-based learning. We hope you can attend as there are two days

of presentations and workshops from TBLT theorists around the world! See our website for details: <tbsig.org/conference>.

### Teacher Education & Development

[🌐] 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 and Development (TED) SIG is a network for those who want to help themselves and others become better teachers. Our activities include retreats, conferences, a library of books available for loan, and an Internet discussion group. TED's comprehensive newsletter *Explorations in Teacher Education* welcomes stimulating articles!

TED will be coordinating with Shizuoka JALT to host a mini-conference entitled *EFL Teacher Journeys* on June 24, 2012 in Shizuoka city. Featured speakers will be Dr. Patrick Kiernan of Meiji University, and Wilma Luth of Hokkai Gakuen University. You can find out more about the conference and pre-register (at a discount) at <sites.google.com/site/teacherjourneys/>.

Find out more about TED at <jalt.org/ted>. You can also stay in touch with us online by becoming a friend of our mascot, Ted Sig, on Facebook, or following him <@tedsig> on Twitter or Google Plus.

### 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 conference ] [📅] [🗨️]

The THT workshops in Bangladesh and Kyrgyzstan are moving ahead and we are looking for participants! The seventh THT/BELTA program will be held on September 12-14, 2012 in Dhaka, hosted by the Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA) and the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), while the 4th Kyrgyzstan program at Bishkek Humanities University has been tentatively set for September 17-19, 2012. The programs are not limited to SIG members or to those having JALT membership, so feel free to pass this information on to others.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email <thtjalt@gmail.com>, giving your name and the location you are interested.

### 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 TC SIG is for teachers of children of all ages. We publish a bilingual newsletter four times a year with columns by many of the leading teachers in the field. There is an email list for teachers of children who would like to share ideas or questions <tcsig@yahoo.com>. We are always looking for new ideas and new people to keep the SIG dynamic. With our bilingual newsletter, we particularly want to appeal to Japanese teachers and teachers who team teach. Hope you can join us for one of our upcoming events.

児童教育部会は 子どもに英語(外国語)を教える全ての教師を対象にした部会です。当部会では、この分野で著名な教師が担当するコラムを含むバイリンガルの会報を年4回発行しており、日本人の先生方の参加も積極的に募っています。日ごろの活動として子どもに英語を指導するアイデアや疑問を交換する場であるメーリングリスト<tcsig@yahoo.com>を運営しています。活発な部会を維持していくためにも新会員を常に募集しておりますので今後開催される部会の催し物へぜひご参加ください。

### Testing & Evaluation

[🔍 research, information, database on testing] [📖 *Shiken*—3x year] [🌐 Pan-SIG, JALT national conference] [📧] [👤]

The Testing and Evaluation SIG is concerned with all aspects of testing and evaluating language performance and language programs, and welcomes both experienced teachers and those who are new to this area and wish to learn more about it. Our interests encompass both quantitative and qualitative approaches to language assessment, and include alternatives to traditional testing, such as peer and self-assessment, portfolios, and project evaluation. *Shiken*, our refereed newsletter, contains a variety of assessment-related articles, including research reports, interviews with prominent authors, book reviews, and instructional columns on statistical analysis, Rasch measurement, and assessment literacy.

### Vocabulary

The *Inaugural JALT Vocabulary SIG Symposium* was held at Kyushu Sangyo University (KSU) in Fukuoka on March 3, 2012. This year's program included a morning session on vocabulary learning, an afternoon session on vocabulary assessment featuring over eight presenters, and 20 poster exhibitions.



The vocabulary learning session began with Andy Barfield's (Chuo University) exploration of learner autonomy via a single-subject case study. This was followed by examinations of word frequency (Dale Brown, Nanzan University), utterance verbs (speak, talk, say, tell; Yoshiaki Sato, Keio University), and the use of picture drawing and formative instruction for Japanese learners (Charles Anderson, KSU). Discussant Shigenori Tanaka of Keio University wrapped up the morning session with a number of insightful comments and analyses of the presentations.

The afternoon's vocabulary assessment session included an introduction to Jeffrey Stewart's (KSU) innovative multiple-choice test of vocabulary knowledge, an examination of the effects of text length on measures of lexical diversity (Rie Koizumi, Tokiwa University), an application of a word associates test to identify dimensions of word knowledge (Aaron Batty, Keio University), and an exploration of the validity of a test of lexical access time (Tatsuo Iso, Reitaku University). The final speaker of the day, discussant Masamichi Mochizuki of Reitaku University, recapped by reminding attendees of the high quality of the day's presentations. Indeed, the quality of the presentations and posters, not to



mention the level of research presented therein, were uniformly excellent. This event was well

organized, well catered, and well attended. Attendees are already looking forward to next year's symposium.

JALT members with an interest in the teaching and learning of vocabulary should watch this space for future Vocabulary SIG events. The Vocabulary SIG is one of the newest additions to the JALT family, but its future contributions appear to be very promising indeed. Please visit the JALT Vocabulary SIG at <jaltvocab.weebly.com> for links to the symposium proceedings, upcoming events, the *Vocabulary Education and Research Bulletin* (VERB) online publication website, and their Facebook web page at <facebook.com/groups/236623256372419>.



TLT COLUMN

# CHAPTER EVENTS

...with Gary Wolff

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 you can add your event anytime to the online JALT calendar at the URL shown below.



JALT EVENTS ONLINE: You can access all of JALT's events online at <jalt.org/events>.

**W**ith the new school year now in full swing, one good way to stay motivated is to avail yourself of the MANY wonderful JALT chapter events being held around the country. Upcoming workshops, conferences, presentations, and even a lakeside charity walk await you as great ways to connect with other teachers, make friends, and share new ideas. Hopefully you can join one of these 33

exciting chapter events, the most I can recall ever being published in this column!

Remember that chapter events can also be listed on JALT's online events calendar <jalt.org/events>. Other events may appear on the JALT website at any time during the month.

**FUKUI**—*The reading circle: A student-centered approach to teaching reading* by **Ayako Hisatsune**. This presentation explores how to incorporate a reading circle into a reading lesson. The presenter will give step-by-step instructions on how to administer truly student-centered reading classes. The presenter will also show the surveys conducted to learn students' attitudes toward the Reading Circle and student-centered learning. Information on how to tailor the Reading Circle to the needs of any English course will also be provided. The presenter believes that the Reading Circle helps students be prepared for each English class and then later become autonomous learners. *Sun 27 May 13:30-15:30; Open University of Japan, AOSSA, 7F; See <jaltfukui.org>.*

**FUKUI**—*Saying hi to "Hi Friends"* by **Matt Gilhool** and **Galina Shimo**. English Education has been slowly making its way into Japanese

Elementary Schools, first with one-shot style visits, and now as a one class hour per week subject for 5th and 6th graders. Starting this April, the Elementary English program will be undergoing its first big change since its inception three years ago – a new textbook. EALT Matt Gilhool will highlight some of what’s new in the “Hi Friends” textbooks and suggest some activities that can be used in the elementary school classroom, and beyond. *Sun 24 Jun 13:30-15:30; Open University of Japan, AOSSA, 7F; See <jaltfukui.org>.*

**FUKUOKA**—*Moodle: Has your school got it? Do they want you to use it? What can you do with it?* by **Anne-Marie Tanahashi**, Poole Gakuin University, Osaka. The presenter will talk about the Moodle site she uses and why she likes it. Learn how Moodle helps students to gain information, submit homework, and receive feedback from the instructor. *Sat 19 May 18:00-20:00; Seinan Community Center; <g.co/maps/vyca6>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

**FUKUOKA**—*Little tech for big results* by **Barbara Sakamoto**, <teachingvillage.org>. The presenter will demonstrate the small ways that she has incorporated technology tools in her classes with young learners. *Sat 23 Jun 18:00-20:00; Seinan Community Center; <g.co/maps/vyca6>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

**GIFU**—*Empowering young readers with the brain in mind* by **Mari Nakamura**, English Square, Kanazawa City. Promoting young learners’ reading skills is one of EFL’s biggest challenges. Can we accelerate literacy development when we see them weekly? What does brain research inform us about effective literacy education? This practical session will demonstrate fun and brain-friendly literacy activities using illustrated stories & graded readers. Nakamura will introduce her independent reading program for G4-6 students which promotes reading and study skills while preparing them for teenage extensive reading. *Sat 19 May 19:00-21:00; JR Gifu Station - Heartful Square, 2F (East Wing); One-day members ¥1,000, 1st visit free.*

**GIFU**—*A virtual Asian textbook tour* by **Najma Janjua**, Kagawa Prefectural University of Health Sciences. Can textbooks tell why Japanese lag behind other Asian countries on standard tests of English proficiency? This workshop will take the audience on a virtual Asian textbook tour with stops in China, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Taiwan. At each stop, the audience will *taste* a local ELT textbook sample and try to see if it can help them answer the above question. The tour promises to be eye-opening! *Sat 16 Jun 19:00-21:00; JR Gifu Station - Heartful Square, 2F (East Wing); One-day members ¥1,000, 1st visit free.*

**HAMAMATSU**—*The “Shizuoka Action Research and Professional Development Organization (SHARP-Do)” and “Book Buddies” projects*, by **Marcus Springer** and **Chris Tebbe**. Two stories of grant-funded work by foreign language teachers: a research-based organization providing teachers with practical ideas for the classroom and encouraging communication between Japanese and foreign teachers (covering: action research, error correction, and extensive writing); and “Book Buddies,” seeking to encourage literacy and multicultural awareness for bilingual children, ages 6-9, through group readings of graded readers and expansion activities on cultural points. *Sat 19 May 18:00-21:00; ZaZa City Palette, 5F; <hamajalt.org>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

**HAMAMATSU**—*Encouraging learner autonomy through peer feedback in the writing classroom* by **Jennie Roloff Rothman**. Peer feedback is crucial for managing group dynamics, empowering effective writing, and developing learner autonomy. Reflecting on the writing process and peer work, learners improve their own and others’ writing skills, creating a community of writers where learning can flourish. This workshop introduces and discusses tools for fostering autonomy in writing. It will conclude with a discussion of the applicability of the materials in different contexts, and how to get good feedback for learners. *Sun 10 Jun 13:30-16:30; ZaZa City Palette, 5F; <hamajalt.org>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

**HIROSHIMA—Textbooks, tasks, and fluency by Theron Muller.** There will be two parts in this workshop. In the first part, Muller will explain how he adapts textbook activities to make them more task-like. Participants are encouraged to bring the textbooks they teach with to consider how they can adapt activities for their own classrooms. The second part comes out of Muller's involvement as lead editor in *Fluency in EFL*, a book whose manuscript is still under preparation. Participants will explore definitions of fluency, then will move to sharing practical tasks to promote a focus on fluency among Japanese students. *Sun 20 May 15:00-17:00; Hiroshima Peace Park, 3F Conference Room; For more details: <hiroshima-jalt.org>; JALT members free, One-day members ¥500, Students ¥250.*

**HIROSHIMA—JALT Pan-SIG Conference.** Over 20 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) will meet at Hiroshima University in Higashi Hiroshima for the 11th Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference. There will be over 150 presentations! *Sat and Sun, 16-17 Jun 9:00-17:00; Hiroshima University; For more details: <hiroshima-jalt.org> or <pansig.org/2012>; Fees for 2 days range up to ¥8,000, but discounts are available for JALT members and students.*

**HOKKAIDO—Praising effectively for positive affect by Joseph Falout,** Assistant Professor, Nihon University. In this presentation, we will analyze and practice the language that teachers might use with learners to promote the positive effect that leads to motivating mindsets. Participants will gain deeper understanding and appreciation of the beneficial long-term affects their words can bring. *Sun 24 Jun 14:00-16:00; Hokkai Gakuen University; <www.hokkai-s-u.ac.jp/english/access.html>; Non-members ¥500.*

**IBARAKI—Two day mini-conference.** May 12: *What is "English conversation," and how can it be taught?* by **David Barker** from Tokai University; *Learn to write in a second language: Issues and challenges of teaching writing in Japanese EFL contexts* by **Atsushi Iida**; *An update to using contemporary technology tools in the classroom - The adjacent possible revisited* by **Dan Waldhoff**. May 13: *What I learned in French class* by **David Barker**; Title TBA by **Hidenori Kuwabara**. *Sat 12 May 13:00-18:30,*

*Sun 13 May 10:00-12:00; The National Center for Teachers' Development <www.nctd.go.jp/index.html> in Tsukuba City; More info: <ibarakijalt.blogspot.com>.*

**IWATE—Workshop on teaching young learners - Brain rules, tools, and jewels by Kim Horne.** Ahoy there! Come one and all to explore songs, chants, and other activities that will bring language and laughter to young learners. Experience many techniques to engage students and hold their attention. This energetic presentation will send you home with great ideas to supplement your curriculum and make learning fun for everyone! Horne has been teaching English and training teachers in Japan for twelve years. She works at a private kindergarten in Gifu City. *Sun 27 May 13:30-16:00; Aiina, Room 602; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**IWATE—Using student mirroring science in the language classroom by Tim Murphey** (Kanda University of International Studies) and **Harumi Ogawa** (Iwate Prefectural University). Murphey will set the stage with some recent anthropological and neuroscience findings and theory that have clear indications for education. Ogawa will talk about a pilot study she conducted using interview videos of enthusiastic L2 speakers in her English classes, sharing some comments given by the students to show how the videos affected students' motivation in L2 learning. *Sun 17 Jun 13:30-16:30; Aiina, Room 602; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**KITAKYUSHU—Task complexity and second language development: Tools to promote speaking by Colin Thompson.** This presentation discusses the role of task complexity for developing learners' L2 speaking skills. The presenter will begin by reviewing the background of task-based learning, and its advantages and disadvantages before focusing on the role of task complexity, and how tasks can be designed and sequenced to improve learners' L2 speech at the University level, referencing Robinson's (2003) Cognition Hypothesis as a framework. The talk is supported with quantitative and qualitative data. *Sat 12 May 18:30-20:00; Kitakyushu International Conference Center, 3F, Kokura; <jalt.org/chapters/kq>; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**KITAKYUSHU**—*Issues relating to independently run English language schools* by **Gareth Steele, Mike Mackay, and Mark Gibson**. This presentation will deal with the establishment and management of independent language schools. Topics that will be dealt with include: 1. The process of establishing a school; 2. Sales and marketing; 3. Development of school brand and teaching methods; 4. Employment of secretarial and teaching staff; 5. School expansion and related issues; 6. General problems. *Sat 9 Jun 18:30-20:00; Kitakyushu International Conference Center, 3F, Kokura; <jalt.org/chapters/kq>; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**MATSUYAMA**—*The 3rd Annual Shikoku JALT Conference* co-sponsored by Matsuyama and East Shikoku Chapters. Keynote speaker: *Deculturizing language for communication - Can it be done?* by **Mike Guest** of Miyazaki University. Although most teachers are aware that cultural baggage may be attached to language, explicit *culture learning* in the EFL classroom may actually serve to distance learners psychologically from the target language by presenting yet another communicative hurdle, one that is particularly susceptible to *othering*. Perhaps we can relieve students of this burden by taking some leads from the emerging analysis of ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) and—of all things—modern approaches to teaching grammar. Matsuyama Chapter Featured Speaker: *Bringing pragmatics to the classroom* by **Jim Ronald** of Hiroshima Shudo University. Pragmatics is in the air we breathe—in how we express what we say or write, in how we catch each other’s meanings or feelings, in how we respond...except in our language classrooms, where, very often, meaningful language use is filtered out, leaving only sterile, context-free language practice. Through this presentation we will explore various ways to increase real, pragmatics-sensitive communication in the classroom. Oxford University Press Featured Speaker: **Grant Trew** of O.U.P., author of *Tactics for TOEIC Listening and Reading Test* (Presentation details to be announced). *Sat 12 May 13:00-17:00; Kochi University; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**MATSUYAMA**—*Balancing language teaching* by **Rob Waring** of Notre Dame Seishin University. The first half of this presentation will introduce the Balanced Curriculum which shows how to balance all the important elements of input, output, fluency focus, and study focus. The second half will show how to implement this in the Japanese language classroom with particular reference to the least implemented element which is fluency input. *Sun 10 Jun 14:15-16:20; Shinonome High School Kinenkan, 4F; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**NAGOYA**—*Hearts of ELT and minds of ELLs* by **Najma Janjua** of Kagawa Prefectural University of Health Sciences. Textbooks are considered “the visible heart” of any ELT program. This workshop will look into the hearts of ELT programs in 10 Asian countries where English is taught as a foreign language, beginning at the secondary level. They will examine various features of the hearts and try to understand how they can function in developing the minds of ELLs, particularly in the Japanese context. *Sun 17 Jun 13:30-16:00; Nagoya International Center, 3F, Lecture Room 2; <nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/e/about-us/access-hours>; One-day members ¥1,000, 1st visit free.*

**NAGOYA**—*Empowering young readers with the brain in mind* by **Mari Nakamura**. Promoting young learners’ reading skills is one of EFL’s biggest challenges. Can we accelerate literacy development when we see them weekly? What does brain research inform us about effective literacy education? This practical session will demonstrate fun and brain-friendly literacy activities using illustrated stories and graded readers. Mari will introduce her independent reading program for G4-6 students which promotes reading and study skills while preparing them for teenage extensive reading. *Sun 20 May 13:30-16:00; Nagoya International Center, 3F, Lecture Room 1; <nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/e/about-us/access-hours>; One-day members ¥1,000, 1st visit free.*

**OKAYAMA**—*New ideas from new language educators*. Recent graduates of Okayama University will discuss their research on how to improve English language education in Japan. **Sachiko Iwamoto** will talk about difficulties Japanese



English learners have in acquiring certain types of verbs. **Tsukasa Nakamura** will demonstrate an ELT-focused corpus he developed for language teachers and researchers. **Rikako Nakanishi** will show how to make vocabulary-learning materials using the COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English) online corpus. **Mika Yunoki** will discuss teaching summary writing skills to high school students. *Sat 19 May 15:00-17:00; Notre Dame Seishin University, <www.ndsu.ac.jp/campus/index.html>, Julie Hall, Room 2-1; One-day members ¥500.*

**OKAYAMA—Project work: What is it and why, when and how to use it** by **Paul Moritoshi**. Project-Based Language Learning is gaining popularity in post-high school Japanese EFL classes, but what exactly is it and why are increasing numbers of teachers trying it? When is it (in) appropriate to use, what are its limitations, and what do you need to know to make it work for you? These questions and more will be answered, some through experiential learning. *Sat 23 Jun 15:00-17:00; Notre Dame Seishin University, <www.ndsu.ac.jp/campus/index.html>, Julie Hall, Seminar Room 2-1; Members free, One-day members ¥500.*

**OKINAWA—Establishing and running an ESP for the staff and faculty of OIST** by **Kevin A. Hunt** (Okinawa International Science and Technology graduate research center). This presentation includes a guided tour of this impressive, unique, new graduate university (大学院大学). *Sat 19 May 14:00; OIST campus, Onna, Okinawa, <oist.jp>; For further information: <kamadutoo@yahoo.com> or 090-1945-5224.*

**SENDAI—2 presentations:** 1) *English debate in Japanese high school* by **Cory Koby**. With experience taking teams twice to the All-Japan High School English Debate Tournament, Koby will present on the challenges and rewards of engaging high school students in English debate. 2) *Task based learning* by **Daniel Eichhorst**. Eichhorst will present about a task based small-group discussion activity designed to promote the development of English, communication, and critical thinking skills. *Sun 27 May 14:00 – 17:00; Sendai Shimin Katsudo Support Center, 4F, Room 5; <jaltsendai.org>; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**SENDAI—Brain days events:** (1) *ELT and neuroscience mini-conference* (2) *Off to the onsen: Up to our necks in Neuro-ELT* with **Robert S. Murphy!** Mini-conference features **Robert S. Murphy** (Kitakyushu University): *Neuromyths*; **Tim Murphey** (Kanda UIS): *Diversity Peering Mirroring Neurons*; **Curtis Kelly** (Kansai University): *Plasticity*; **Marc Helgesen** (Miyagi Gakuin): *Happiness 2.0*. (2) Five more workshop hours on Neuroscience/ELT with Murphy plus onsen stay & more. Murphey, Kelly, and Helgesen will attend. Supporters: Cengage Learning & Pearson Education. (1) *Sat 23 Jun 9:30–16:30; Sendai Sapo Center; JALT members ¥2,500*; (2) *Sat night/Sun; Akiu Grand Hotel <akiugrand.com/>; ¥18,000 JALT member advance registration (includes mini-conference); More info: <jaltsendai.org/>.*

**SHINSHU—The 23rd Suwako charity walk.** Participants walk clockwise or counterclockwise halfway around the lake (8-8.5 km) with Shinshu University researchers. After having lunch at Kamaguchi Suimon in Okaya at 11:30, a forum starts at 12:00 which includes a short talk and quiz game about the lake's environment and a musical performance. The forum ends at 13:30, after which we catch the Swan Boat back to the starting point at 14:00. Please bring your own lunch and pencils. This is a family-friendly day, so bring the kids! *Thu 3 May, starts at 8:30; Katakura Fureai Nagisa (across from Katakura Kaikan) in Suwa; Details at <jalt.org/events>; Free (donations welcome).*

**SHIZUOKA—Shizuoka JALT is proud to announce that we will be coordinating with the Teacher Education and Development (TED) SIG to host a mini-conference entitled *EFL Teacher Journeys*. Sun 24 Jun; Shizuoka City; Conference website: <sites.google.com/site/teacherjourneys>.**

**TOKYO—Teaching 140 characters at a time: Twitter and the language classroom** by **Tom Edwards**, Rikkyo University. This workshop explores how Twitter can be an efficient means of providing students with English language material when they are outside the classroom. The presentation will begin with an overview of the pros and cons of different types of social media and then focus on the use of Twitter.

The presenter will provide specific examples of activities that can be used to build vocabulary and guide classroom discussions. *Mon 21 May 18:30-20:00; Sophia University; <tokyojalt.org>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

**WEST TOKYO**—*Spreading the good word: Introducing the Vocabulary SIG.* Speakers: **Charles Brown** (Meiji Gakuin University), **Jeffrey Stewart** (Kyushu Sangyo University), **Charles J. Anderson** (Kysuhu Sangyo University), and **Rob Waring** (Notre Dame Seishin University). JALT's West Tokyo Chapter and Vocabulary SIG are pleased to present an interesting series of presentations by a diverse range of speakers, all of whom represent excellence in the field of vocabulary education for EFL learners in Japan. This is a great opportunity for all ELT professionals who seek to expand their knowledge and gain useful and practical insights. *Sat 19 May 10:30-17:00; Tokyo Keizai University, Kokubunji, 中会議室 5 (chu-kaigishitsu 5), 2F, Building 6; Contact or queries: <jwt.homestead.com/home.html>; JALT members free, One-day members ¥1,000, Vocabulary SIG members ¥500 discount.*

**YAMAGATA**—*Bilingual education in Japan* by **Lisa Somers**. *Sat 12 May 13:30-15:30; Yamagata-shi Kajo-kominkan; Tel: 0236-43-2687; Contact Fumio Sugawara (Tel: 0238-85-2468) for more info; Non-members ¥1,000.*

**YAMAGATA**—*Mitt Romney as republican presidential candidate* by **Jessie Giddens**, *Sat*

*9 Jun 10:00-12:00; Yamagata-shi Kajo-kominkan, Tel: 0236-43-2687; Contact Fumio Sugawara (Tel: 0238-85-2468) for more info; Free.*

**YOKOHAMA**—*From phonics to literacy* by **Mike Guest**. Methodologies for teaching reading to EFL students have advanced a lot in Japan over the last 20 years. However, there is an expansive gap between texts and programs aimed at teaching the basics (phonics/ word recognition) and those aimed at managing and manipulating content (reading for specific information/ summarizing a passage). In this presentation, a teaching style developed to remedy this will be presented, discussed, and tried. *Teaching critical thinking skills* by **John Finucane**: Workshop about the importance of teaching critical thinking skills to students as EFL learners - how to get started and how to practice. We will discuss what skills and kinds of language are needed for critical thinking and debate, learn some simple classroom exercises for introducing debate, and do some activities created specifically to teach critical thinking skills. *Sun 20 May 13:00-16:30; Venue not set; One-day members ¥1,000.*

**YOKOHAMA**—*Yokohama chapter new presenters* by Yokohama JALT members. In January the invitation went out to all Yokohama Chapter members to take the opportunity to present for a Yokohama JALT event. This event is tailored to members who have not presented for the Chapter in the past. *Sun 17 Jun 13:00-16:30; Venue not set; One-day members ¥1,000.*



An Oita JALT event  
**Rob Waring**  
Notre Dame Seishin University  
*Balancing language teaching:  
The case for Extensive Reading*  
Sunday, May 27, 3:00–5:00  
Oita Prefectural Shakai Kyouiku  
Sougou Centre, Beppu



TLT COLUMN

# CHAPTER REPORTS

...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.

You can access Chapter Reports online at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/chapter-reports>

**GUNMA: January—*My Share!*** by Various  
*Turn down the volume: Making listening in to speaking* by **Lori Ann Desrosiers**. Desrosiers demonstrated various methods which she uses to add enticing, communicative activities to listening-heavy textbooks. Perhaps the most enjoyable was one in which a video was played with the audio muted while students attempted to substitute their own dialog in real-time. *Communicative book reports* by **Renee Sawazaki**. Sawazaki showed how written book reports can be made into interactive materials that promote communication. Using pictorial summaries as visual aids, students explained the plot of their book to classmates. In addition, Sawazaki also showed the progress of the new self-access center at her school. *Teaching writing in an EFL context: Where to start?* by **Atsushi Iida**. Iida gave a whirlwind tour of teaching writing as a method of communication in Japan. Beginning at the beginning, he showed participants the activities he uses on his first day of class. These activities reflected his strong beliefs that writing is a form of communication and that students must first and foremost develop their own voice when writing. *International kindergarten education for areas lacking international elementary schools* by **Daniel Potocki**. Potocki led members through the trials and tribulations of managing an international kindergarten in Japan. Individual topics ranged from the pros and cons of government certification to the difference between discipline and punishment. For our professor-heavy audience, this was a rare view into his exotic, Lilliputian world.

Reported by John Larson

**HAMAMATSU: January—*Using video materials to facilitate students' creative thinking and improve their English skills*** by **Bogdan Pavliy**. In this era of multimedia, it is now possible to incorporate video into the classroom. Pavliy demonstrated the problems of dwindling student motivation and learner anxiety. Following

**GIFU: January—*Serious fun: Creativity in the classroom*** by **Chris Stillwell**. Stillwell presented an informative and insightful presentation explaining how creativity in the classroom can help students discover language talents they never knew they had. After giving a brief background into brain science, the presenter asked us to discuss ways of fostering creativity in the classroom. Creativity involves crossing the boundaries of domain and the presenter outlined four concepts. The teacher should grab the students' attention, explore ways to stimulate sensory perception, use vision to trump other senses, and make them (the students) into powerful and natural explorers. We were given the opportunity to do some writing tasks in our second language followed by a discussion on the merits of error correction. Finally the presenter examined storytelling and provided examples of how images can be used including humorous video clips which he had used to develop student interest, motivation, and fluency. We left the meeting full of great ideas to motivate our teaching in 2012.

Reported by Brent Simmonds

audience reflection and brainstorming, Pavliy showed that these problems can be addressed by using materials that are both entertaining to students and stimulate students' imaginations. After explaining the theoretical basis of using video in class as an exercise in task-based language teaching while generating intrigue and improving motivation, he used examples from his teaching. Pavliy demonstrated ways of using videos (easily downloaded from YouTube) to grab students' attention and then have students engage in prediction tasks and reflect on the accuracy of their predictions. Everyone left the meeting with some great ideas on how to motivate students and tap students' creative potential using video materials.

*Reported by Adam Jenkins*

**HAMAMATSU: February—Improvisational psychodrama** (即興心理劇) by **Peter Ross** - Sponsored by West-Tokyo Chapter. The title for Ross' presentation guarantees intrigue. In his extremely audience-centred workshop, Ross demonstrated how simple stimuli such as pictures can be used to elicit stories that students develop into their very own *improvisational psychodrama*. First, students are presented with a stimulus and a brainstorming session is held in which several story ideas are produced. Following this, students choose one of the story lines and elaborate on the content creating a framework for the drama. Next, it's action! The drama is played out by students who take turns in the various roles. Ross also illustrated how the activity can lead to a deeper glimpse into the psyche when having multiple people play the *honne* (本音) and *tatema* (建前) aspects for each character in the drama.

*Reported by Adam Jenkins*

**HIMEJI: January—Building a positive learning environment** by **Jason White**. A strong turnout attended the first Himeji JALT Chapter presentation of 2012, White is an ASE (Assistant Supervisor of English) on the Sister Cities program at Himeji High School. After defining *learning* and *environment*, he highlighted the nature of classroom environments as the sum of emotions, perceptions, and attitudes of the students, teachers, administrators, and the greater community. White contrasted his experience teaching in

the US with Japan, requiring teachers to rotate among schools and a discussion on the merits and drawbacks of this followed. Characteristics of a positive learning environment included not only feeling respected, supported, appreciated, and valued, but also having a comfortable environment with motivational and emotional support. The success factors of effort, desire, and positive affect in integrative and instrumental motivation toward language were outlined with examples from the audience. Anxiety was addressed before acknowledging the roles of teachers, students, and parents in creating a more positive learning environment. In closing, participants were provided with strategies and examples using literature, humor, and journal writing in making a positive connection with a range of students through their interests.

*Reported by Greg Rouault*

**IBARAKI: February—Learners' lives as curriculum: Using student-created texts in the language classroom** by **Yasue Kawamorita** and **Tom Edwards** and *Fluency? Fluency. Fluency! Practical and theoretical approaches to fluency development* by **Peter Parise** and **Anne Takata**. Kawamorita and Edwards introduced us to the material development model called Learners' Lives as Curriculum (LLC). One of the core features of LLC is the use of texts generated by learners based on their interests, experiences, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. According to the presenters, LLC allows communities of learners to develop more readily as they create and share stories of their lives. Also, learners strive for more realistic goals because texts are close to their current knowledge and skills. The presentation ended with a group work in which we simulated the process of choosing a topic, creating individual texts, and developing a curriculum to achieve specific linguistic goals. Parise and Takata addressed the relevance of fluency development in the language classroom. They introduced us to an activity called 4/3/2. In this activity, learners stand in two rows face-to-face, one row being the speakers, the other the listeners whose sole responsibility is to listen attentively and affirmatively. The speakers are asked to talk about a familiar topic first in four minutes, then in three minutes, and finally in two minutes, changing their partners each time

(the actual time length can be modified). Under the increasing time pressure, learners improve their fluency while learning to speak more concisely and correctly. The presenters supported their argument with a classroom survey conducted by Takata. The results indicated that most students, including extremely reticent ones, felt an increased sense of enjoyment and ease of speaking after taking part in this activity.

*Reported by Naomi Takagi*

**IWATE: February—Text-to-lesson: Online resources for vocabulary and lesson-making by Christine Winkowski.** Winkowski presented on the following points: 1) Why is vocabulary so important?, 2) What should teachers know about vocabulary?, 3) What online tools can help us effectively develop vocabulary materials?, and finally, 4) How can we apply what we know and develop a lesson module from a text? During the presentation, some online tools such as *The Compleat Lexical Tutor* and *LessonWriter* were introduced and demonstrated. The participants got many practical ideas about how to quickly identify useful vocabulary in a text, and how to show students common sentence contexts for vocabulary and vocabulary collocations. It was particularly useful for people who want to create their own materials to learn how to develop a reading text into a lesson with customized exercises.

*Reported by Harumi Ogawa*

**KITAKYUSHU: February—Developing resources for self-directed learning by Paul Collett, Kristen Sullivan, and Malcolm Swanson.** The trend in faculty development is towards accountability, more awareness of student needs, and building courses accordingly, with bridging of levels becoming an important issue. With this in mind, Collett, Sullivan and Swanson are teaching their students how to learn in tandem with EFL course material. They feel that students tend to be reliant on instructors to ensure that they are making an effort to learn so it is important to get goals straight from the beginning of the course and then reflect on them again half-way through and at the end (“goaling”). Course objectives presented very explicitly via “can-do statements” start self-directed learning cycles, keeping their

well-understood goals firmly in mind, facilitated with “Study Progress Journals.” Students need to understand self-assessment, to know that something may not have succeeded not because they are stupid but because they need to reevaluate their methodology. This results in what is called English Improvement Goals and Objectives (E.I.G.O.). As an illustration of preparation for this type of class, we individually examined some sample textbook units for useful learning/teaching points, wrote them out as can-do statements and then pooled our results on the whiteboard for discussion.

*Reported by Dave Pite*

**KITAKYUSHU: March—Equipping teachers to incorporate drama by Covenant Players Drama Company.** Our chapter was treated to another session with the Covenant Players. Introducing themselves as actors rather than teachers, they explained their purpose as being to encourage speaking to break down barriers of hesitation from inhibitions, a major requirement for successful language practice. With their repertoire of over 3,000 plays, bare stage style, they often work on a thematic basis including teaching culture with teaching language. They start with getting ideas from the students as to setting and mood to get them involved right from the beginning. Invite them to imagine they’re in a large auditorium instead of a classroom and add the accoutrements such as lights, curtains, stage, seats, aisle, mic, etc., pulling out the vocabulary and reinforcing it and grammar with repetitions. Spelling each other off seamlessly in speaking, demonstrating, and whiteboard writing, they walked us through games and skits for stress and intonation awareness. Reminiscent of theater sports and other improv organizations, they got everyone involved in real educational entertainment.

*Reported by Dave Pite*

**KOBE: January—ER in the classroom and beyond: Practical applications from research by Greg Rouault and John Eidswick.** The presenters started by taking a look at Extensive Reading (ER) theory. By comparing Day and Bamford’s principles for extensive reading with the principles for reading circles by Furr,

they pointed out the clashes which lead to a dilemma facing teachers. Following from this, they argued that while *pure* ER encompasses all principles, there are *modified* and *light* versions of ER. This was followed by a deeper look at reading circles before a presentation of their own research, which compared how students reacted to different discussion roles. The presenters also shared some results of their research into the effects of peer evaluation, comparing the effects of numeric evaluations with comment-based evaluations. After a consideration of what *interest* actually is, the presenters looked at what makes texts interesting for students e.g., how gender makes a difference, with women favouring mystery, romance, and true-crime, while men are interested in sports, science, and adventure. To wrap up, participants shared ideas on how teachers can harness interest to increase and support motivation, considering possible research projects.

*Reported by David Heywood*

**NAGASAKI: January—Peer and teacher feedback on student conversation and writing: What, how and when?** by **Richard Hodson** and **Joel Hensley**. This was a two-part presentation divided into writing feedback and conversation feedback. In the first presentation, Hodson and Hensley covered their ongoing research into the effect of feedback order on student writing. Reporting on their initial findings from a small-scale exploratory study, they discussed perceived similarities and differences in learners' final essays depending on the order in which feedback was given: global revisions first and then local corrections, or vice versa. In the second presentation, Hensley reported on his development of a combined conversational storytelling and learner noticing through self-transcription course in which student pairs were trained and instructed to self-transcribe their own recorded conversations. Though only reporting on his initial implementation of such a course, Hensley indicated that, while the effects of self-transcription may be hard to measure in learners' performance, the conversational storytelling appeared to be having a positive effect on learners' fluency.

*Reported by Karen Masatsugu*

**NAGASAKI: February—Preparing students for speech contests** by **Justin Hunt**. Hunt covered the steps he takes to prepare high school students for speech contests, beginning with the issues raised when selecting students to take part, and ending with practical considerations on the day of the contest itself. Topics covered included speech topic selection, the varying views of teachers on the relative priorities of pronunciation and confidence when choosing student participants, and the importance of obtaining feedback from contest judges. Hunt outlined a typical six-week preparation schedule, and shared tips for memorization training and "disaster recovery," centering on the creation and use of annotated speech texts called "speech sheets" in practice. Later stages in the preparation include the addition of important speech elements such as voice inflection, and also gestures which, Hunt explained, meet with widely differing evaluations from judges. The talk was illustrated with a number of video extracts of actual student speeches.

*Reported by Richard Hodson*

**NAGOYA: January—Using authentic video for language learning** by **Chris Stillwell**. Stillwell asked us these questions: "How do you use video in class and for your own language learning?" and "What are benefits and risks/problems of using video?" Video is naturally interesting. It features spoken English and authentic speech. Stillwell makes his students analyze sentences in videos, discuss their accomplishments as well as the content of the video. The exposure to a variety of voices gives real life language experience and makes the learners cultural participants. The video should not be complicated. Difficult vocabulary or ambiguous situations in the story will make learners confused. Pre-, while-, and post-watching activities are necessary. To take the pictures from the screen, talk about what is happening, and retell the story will help learners get motivated. As for pre-viewing activities, the pre-view discussion on the content, playing the characters' roles, unscrambling the conversations, and the awareness of the pronunciation gaps between the spoken and the written version of the transcript will help learners gain a better understanding. Especially, in conversations,

accents, abbreviations, and liaisons will make the story difficult to understand and therefore, the features of grammar should be explained.

*Reported by Kayoko Kato*

**NAGOYA: February—Motivating students through vocabulary building, reading aloud, and home study** by **Ryoichi Matsumoto**. Matsumoto's vocabulary-building system consists of "Papaya Juice," Word Checking in Pairs, and 25 Words Test. Seeing the list of 25 new words with Japanese meanings, students pronounce English one by one in turn to the rhythm of music, the others repeating after that. If a student can't pronounce one, he/she says "Papaya juice." The others say, "Oishii-ne!" (Delicious!). Next, they exchange the word lists and, seeing only Japanese, pronounce English words in turn, putting a tick in the list box. In four-time repeated tests of 25 new words, students can start the limited words' course, challenging 25 words finally. Getting full marks at the last stage, they shout, "Bingo!" In the *sain-kai* (autograph session), students, walking around in the classroom, find anyone else to do a dialogue practice, getting the partner's autograph. Home study focuses on writing. Matsumoto gives each group of four a "Mighty (*Mainichi-Teishutsu=Mai-Tei*) Notebook," an exchange three-sentence diary, in which model words and sentences and text substitution and grammar should be used. Every diary is sent to other group members and returned to the original person with their comments.

*Reported by Kayoko Kato*

**NARA: January—The annual Tenri University and Nara JALT joint seminar: Reconsidering of the standards of teaching** by **Various**. **Kazuya Nakakono** recounted his first year as a junior high school teacher and talked to us about how hard it had been. He also raised a question whether traditional teaching practice carried out at junior high schools is justifiable by introducing some of his teaching activities. **Yasuhiro Sakata** emphasized the importance of pronunciation practice in order to enhance students' confidence in their English and maintained that speaking activities which help automatize students' skills gained through pronunciation practice should be implemented. **Takashi Yamamoto, Misa Naruse,**

and **Motoyasu Saito** shared their trial-and-error experience of making up a unified syllabus to establish common ground among teachers and to have a clear goal between teacher and student. **Matthew Apple** got the audience engaged in his lively workshop and proved that teaching materials, methods, and devices should be eclectic. **Jyuichi Suzuki** recommended amending traditional teaching procedures in more effective ways by having the audience self-evaluate 20 teaching procedures commonly used in the class. The seminar was rounded off with a snack party with many friendly locals.

*Reported by Motoko Teraoka*

**OKAYAMA: January—Reflections on elementary school English** by **Aya Morisawa** and **Eri Mizuno** and *Student use of electronic dictionaries during oral communication activities* by **Jason Williams**. Morisawa and Mizuno examined elementary school English education from three perspectives: that of the teacher, that specified by MEXT, and that experienced by the student. Homeroom teachers in Japanese elementary schools are now expected to teach English as an assessable subject. By comparing previous MEXT guidelines with those of the *New Course of Study* set out by MEXT, Morisawa and Mizuno showed how there has been a move from understanding foreign culture to using foreign language. Following some lively demonstrations of classroom activities commonly used at elementary school, Morisawa and Mizuno highlighted some positive and negative points related to elementary school English education. Williams outlined the rationale behind his research and explained that most of his students have electronic dictionaries and that they frequently use these dictionaries during oral communication classes. Williams set out to explore why students are willing to interrupt the flow of a conversation to refer to a dictionary rather than using communicative strategies or use the transactive memory of their interlocutors to fill in knowledge gaps. Through several surveys, Williams determined that students were using their electronic dictionaries as a crutch. Williams' research was interesting, and it points the way to some intriguing subsequent studies.

*Reported by Jason Lowes*

**OKAYAMA: February**—*What, exactly, do junior and senior high school textbooks teach?* by **Mutsumi Kawasaki**. The speaker began by discussing the content of typical MEXT approved English textbooks for junior and senior high schools and common teaching methods employed in using such texts. Kawasaki described her classroom experiences and students' negative reactions concerning the textbooks. She then provided a sample unit from a text she uses, and in small groups, participants discussed strengths and weaknesses for each section of the unit. Groups then openly discussed ways to improve the text and ideas on creating supplemental activities to enhance acquisition while increasing learner motivation. Kawasaki's goal is to make dry texts more communicative by introducing engaging teacher-created supplemental activities. *Incorporating crosswords in the English language classroom* by **David Townsend**. Townsend first dispelled the notion that crossword puzzles in the classroom constitute busy work or time filler at the end of a lesson. He demonstrated crosswords can be a communicative tool utilizing analytical and critical thinking skills while reinforcing vocabulary retention. By using puzzles he designed, he showed how different topics (jobs, geography) and grammar/vocabulary targets (personality adjectives) can be practiced in a fun and motivating manner. Examples of class activities included paired cloze exercises and small group clue making where students construct the puzzle. The speaker provided participants with a useful list of free online puzzle making resources and functions each site provides.

*Reported by Richard Lemmer*

**OMIYA: January**—*Studying abroad or at home* by **Jun Harada** and *Teaching compliments and responding to compliments in high school* by **Kimiko Koseki**. Harada discussed what some of the best ways when learning a language are. He covered some case studies and success stories, while comparing spending money and going abroad with staying in Japan and learning English here. He based those issues on the evidence he had found when chaperoning 43 high school students on a 17-day home-stay program in Seattle. Harada also covered some

options in duplicating a study abroad experience without leaving the classroom. Koseki first covered theory of pragmatics and the lack of its usage in language classrooms, especially in high schools in Japan. She cited Thomas and Nelson in explaining how errors in manner might be interpreted as rudeness despite non-proficiency in the language. Koseki reported on lessons in compliments in a second-year high school English conversation course. Her presentation also included demonstration of some classroom activities and discussion on how to raise Japanese students' pragmatic awareness in this still racially and culturally homogeneous nation.

*Reported by Ivan Botev*

**OMIYA: February**—*Teaching critical thinking* by **John Finucane** and *From phonics to literacy* by **Brad Semans**. Finucane's workshop was about the importance of teaching critical thinking skills to students. He discussed what skills are needed and what kinds of language are required for critical thinking and debate. The attendees learned some simple classroom exercises for introducing debate. Activities created specifically to teach critical thinking skills were also performed. Semans argued that methodologies for teaching EFL reading have much advanced over the past 20 years in Japan but that there is still an expansive gap between texts and programs aimed at teaching phonics, word recognition, etc., and those aimed at reading for specific information, summarizing a passage, and so forth. A presentation, discussion, and trial of a style developed to remedy this followed.

*Reported by Ivan Botev*

**OMIYA: March**—*My share* by **Various**. **Fuyuhiko Sekido** kicked the event off with his *Using Japanese lyrics in the language classroom*. He spoke about cross-gender performance in Japanese culture and how he uses that in the classroom. He also entertained the audience with AKB48's music videos and song lyrics. **Matt Shannon** and **Emory Premaux** presented *Daiso classroom* where the two exhibited how useful 100-yen-shop items could be when teaching English and demonstrated their *Build a Town* lesson using those unconventional stationery



items. Then **Alexander Procter** spoke about his *Effective task based learning through jigsaw activities* using the jigsaw method, developed by Elliot Aronson, that promotes learner autonomy and interaction. **John Finucane** in his *How to create an effective cloze listening activity* gave some practical advice on creating an effective music cloze activity based on ‘Trash’ by Suede. **Larry Cisar** informed us of his *Making ebooks for your students* and demonstrated how to prepare material and put it into the right form using only FREE software. **Alana Schramm** concluded with an exposition on *Using sounds and smells to teach vocabulary*, an activity that not only teaches vocabulary in an active way but also helps retention while motivating students.

*Reported by Ivan Botev*

**OSAKA: January—Winter potpourri: Four presentations** by **Stuart McLean**, **Gábor Pintér**, **Greg Sholdt**, and **Laura Markslag**. Osaka JALT once again enriched the Kansai English teaching community with an entertaining and informative mini-conference in downtown Osaka. Maclean, a JALT Research Grant recipient, shared flashcard vocabulary learning sites such as Word Engine and iknowthat.com, Moodle Reader, and xreading.com. He demonstrated the use of student assessment cards to motivate and monitor in-class activities. Pintér of Kobe University presented *Limitations of Computer Assisted Pronunciation Training Systems* in which he discussed websites such as Nuance, Ning, and talkclub, and gmail video chat, among other resources. Sholdt, also of Kobe University and a JALT2011 Featured Speaker, explained the rationale and offered an opportunity for teachers to get involved with a quantitative research study on writing fluency in their classrooms. Sholdt’s report of his presentation can be found here: <osakajalt.org/blog/2012/2/2/collaborative-research-as-an-approach-to-professional-develo.html>. Finally, Laura Markslag, an Osaka JALT officer and a lecturer at Osaka Gakuin University, discussed the online exchange program she conducted between her students and university students in Dubai as a means of motivating her all too often lethargic students through culture and authentic English. Slides and other details from this talk can be found here: <pinlab.info/talks/

20120129-jalt/>. For more details, see <jalt.org/osaka-chapter/winter-potpourri>.

*Reported by Chris Johnston with Bob Sanderson*

**OSAKA: February—Film showing: The grandpa from Brazil** by **Nanako Kurihara** a film director and producer. Osaka JALT and SIETAR Kansai co-hosted a screening of Nanako Kurihara’s award-winning documentary film *The Grandpa from Brazil* followed by a Q&A session. A graduate of Waseda University, Kurihara is no stranger to promoting social awareness through film. This, her second documentary, centers on ninety-two-year-old Mr. Kenichi Konno, one of many Japanese nationals who immigrated to Brazil in 1931 during the Japanese Great Depression. In response to growing poverty and overpopulation, the Japanese government encouraged such immigration with false promises of prosperity. Knowing first-hand the hardship of assimilating into a foreign culture, Mr. Konno devoted his life to overseeing the welfare of second generation Brazilian-Japanese returning to Japan. The film reveals what little support is available for these Brazilian-Japanese immigrants and their children, who essentially sink-or-swim amidst numerous cross-cultural, educational, and economic challenges. The film asks such pertinent questions as, “What shapes cultural and national identity?,” “How can Japan promote acculturation over assimilation?,” and “How can the national government and local governments better meet the needs of such immigrants?” In short, this documentary offers insight into Japanese society and will continue to be used as a pedagogical tool in many Japanese and foreign universities. For more about Konno, see this 2008 article: <japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20081022f2.html>, and you can visit Ms. Kurihara’s website here: <nanakokurihara.com>.

*Reported by Pahnee Fukui*

**SENDAI: January—Materials writers’ miscellany (two presentations): Elements of visual design for language learners and Authentic materials & copyright** by **Cameron Romney** (co-sponsored with the Materials Writers SIG). Most teachers give students handouts of some sort in the classroom. While lots of thought and energy go into the creation of content, often the visual

elements of the documents are ignored. Romney led our members in an engaging presentation on tactics we should consider when creating items for language teaching. Visual design elements such as typeset selection, organization, font size, and graphics are commonplace in our respective practices, and we learnt of the impact their selection has on the language learner. Romney's second presentation focused on authentic materials, i.e., those created for purposes other than language teaching, which are protected by copyright. If teachers use them in the classroom, are they violating copyright? How can teachers legally use them? We looked at the copyright laws in Japan as they pertain to teachers, students, and classrooms. While many of us are aware to some degree of the laws in our home countries, Romney brought to light the status of such activities here in Japan.

*Reported by Cory Koby*

**SENDAI: February—Grammar insights: From Swan to Thornbury to you by Matt Wilson.**

Michael Swan and Scott Thornbury's ideas concerning the development of grammar and its roles in the classroom were explored through the use of video segments from each of these renowned language teachers. After viewing the key section of video, workshop participants had the chance to discuss the concepts presented and provide their own insight into what role grammar instruction takes in their classroom. How much grammar, if any, should be taught explicitly by the language teacher? What tactics can be employed to empower the language learner to intake grammar rules and patterns in a comprehensible way? Wilson led our very lively group in a discussion that kept us engaged for the entire three hours, and could well have lasted a good deal longer.

*Reported by Cory Koby*

**SHINSHU: January—An afternoon with ABAX**

by Various. In *An introduction to task-based language teaching*, Marco Benevides recommended task-based teaching to address the deficiencies of the communicative approach. A task should be authentic, and its main goal should not be linguistic. Assessment should be based not on grammar but on successful comple-

tion of the task. If lack of language skills prohibits successful completion of the task, teachers could address it through feedback. Finally, tasks should be themed, thus ensuring authentic recycling. **Michael Stout**, in *Narrow reading 2.0*, explained how he combines Narrow Reading (NR) and Web 2.0 in his classes. He referred to NR as being a "bridge to Extensive Reading" and cited Krashen's definition of it as being reading works in a single genre, on a single topic or by a single author. Stout explained how he combines various tools such as Twitter, Quizlet, and MindMeister and the textbook *Whodunit* (ABAX) with NR. **Alistair Graham Marr** addressed aspects to be considered in *Teaching the strategies of speaking*. According to Marr, demanding native-like acquisition is demoralizing; our goal should be communicative competence (grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic). Various strategies were introduced to train (as opposed to teach) students to acquire this. Strategies are to be employed with higher level students using more of them than lower. **Hugh Graham Marr** discussed features to pay attention to in *Teaching listening to lower level learners*. These included: how scripted listening material should be, language structure, vocabulary, speed, and phonology. Marr recommended adjusting language structure to meet the learners' needs while keeping speed and phonology intact so that they can acquire listening competence.

*Reported by Mary Aruga*

**SHINSHU: February—Portfolios in the classroom**

by John Gunning. Based on his own experience using portfolios with his university classes, Gunning guided us through the theory and practice of using portfolios. He started by reviewing the literature in the field. Knowledge is constructed, not transferred (Constructivism). Knowledge is temporary, developmental, non-objective, and socially-mediated. Portfolios give students the opportunity to take a hand in constructing their own knowledge. Gunning talked about the differences between showcase (summative) portfolios and process (formative) portfolios. We studied making a timeline for student work through a course and how portfolios can be assessed. Of particular interest was how he negotiated assessment standards with

students, then later had students do peer assessments using post-it notes. Using real student-made portfolios, we went through the process of assessment with a carefully designed *portfolio assessment rubric*, which assesses portfolios on a five-point scale under the categories, overall portfolio presentation, navigation, contents, and artifacts. Gunning asserted that because portfolios increase students' autonomy and motivation, they are suitable for use in any teaching situation, with any age and any type of learner.

*Reported by Fred Carruth*

**SHIZUOKA: August—Extensive reading and reading circles** by **Andy Kean**. Best of JALT2010 presenter Kean gave an informative presentation about extensive reading and reading circles. At the beginning of the presentation, he encouraged the audience to think back to their experiences as beginning readers of both first and second languages. Kean explained how reading skills develop. In order to be a successful reader, one needs to understand 95% of the words. However, to acquire vocabulary it is necessary to have between 10 and 30 meetings of a word. One solution is to utilize extensive reading which is reading a lot of easy texts (i.e., graded readers) for general understanding and enjoyment. Kean thoroughly explained the 10 characteristics of an extensive reading program. In the second part of the presentation, thanks to the generous support of Cengage, Longman, and Oxford, graded readers were introduced. Kean suggested online resources such as Moodle Reader and the Extensive Reading Foundation website. In the final part, Kean explained how reading circles could be integrated into existing classes. Each member of the audience left with lots of ideas and a few complimentary graded readers.

*Reported by Adam Murray*

**SHIZUOKA: November—Autonomy mastery & purpose** by **Tim Murphey**. To begin the presentation, Murphey asked a series of thought-provoking questions for the armchair anthropologists in the audience. After a lively discussion, Murphey then compared Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs with Daniel Pink's evolutionary model of motivation (Survival, Carrots & Sticks, Meaningfulness/Purpose) which

is described in Pink's best-seller *Drive*. Next, intrinsic motivation and the four essentials of autonomy and their importance in education were addressed. A model of classroom group dynamics called Present Communities of Imagination (PCOIz) was introduced. This model incorporates cultural/social capital, imagined communities, imagined social capital, and experiential capital. A central concept of PCOIz is time-frame influences (pasts, presents, futures) on students. Murphey described some examples of these activities for each of the time-frame influences e.g., language learning histories, newsletters, and possible selves to name a few. The best classroom activities are those that make students the subject matter and that can increase their sense of agency and motivation.

*Reported by Adam Murray*

**SHIZUOKA: December—ELT & the science of happiness: Positive psychology in the language classroom** by **Marc Helgesen**. Using a rather tasty metaphor, Helgesen described how happiness can be divided into three sections: set point, circumstances, and intentional activity. He stressed the importance of focusing attention on intentional activity rather than aspects which are essentially beyond control. Next, he explained that all teaching includes educational psychology and the benefits of addressing happiness in English language teaching. Helgesen concluded the first part of the presentation by demonstrating how the topic of happiness can be integrated into traditional classroom activities such as dictation and shadowing. In the second part of the presentation, he talked about the science of happiness. Helgesen talked about the PERMA model described in Martin Seligman's book, *Flourish*. The PERMA model has five components: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Helgesen also referred to a study that showed the lasting benefits of doing good 3 things (increased levels of happiness and fewer symptoms of depression). To wrap up the presentation, he showed how teachers can incorporate all of the five components by giving some practical techniques and activities. Participants left with smiles on their faces.

*Reported by Adam Murray*

**TOKYO: January—Go online with the upper-intermediate class: Build skills and confidence with blogs** by **Christopher Shore**. Shore provided an overview of different blogging platforms, including WordPress and Blogger, and then described how creating a class blog rewards teachers and students with tangible results. He explained that some students were initially reticent to have their work posted online, but as time passed, they became more open to sharing their work with a wider audience and looked forward to the comments that came in from people around the globe. An example of a class-created blog can be found at <tokyophotoreview.blogspot.jp>.

*Reported by Tom Edwards*

**TOKYO: February—Mobile audio recording and the web for language teachers** by **Scott Lockman**. Lockman shared his experiences using mobile audio recording with students. He emphasized that recording students need not be expensive and that most cell phones now allow teachers to record students—or students to record themselves. Lockman shared his use of Audioboo <Audioboo.fm> as a means to upload and share classroom recordings. He also mentioned the work of Shirley Terrell, who has developed numerous audio activities for the language classroom. Her work can be found at <livebinders.com/play/play\_or\_edit?id=103234>.

*Reported by Tom Edwards*

**YOKOHAMA: January—Content-based learning: Possible panacea to perpetual passivity?** by **Mike Guest**. The presentation focused on the benefits of content-based learning (CBL), especially with children from elementary school to post-secondary education. Guest first discussed the reasons why most Japanese learners of English do not progress past a false beginner stage, such as the receptive and teacher-centred nature of the current instructional methods that are regularly employed. Then the presenter spoke about CBL while focusing on some of its positives (e.g., enhancing and activating latently understood grammatical and lexical features learned in other classes) and negatives (e.g., the

soapbox potential where teachers use content to preach their beliefs). After that, reasons why CBL works with young children, and students in high school and in post-secondary education were discussed, including reinforcing content learned in Japanese, engaging in motivational purpose-driven communication that moves the learners from the receptive to the productive realms, and making connections between grammar forms and meaningful context. Lastly, Guest gave a modest proposal for university English, stating that an ESP English education specialist should be hired who can provide guidance to English teachers and coordinate content with regular teachers and professors in the faculty.

*Reported by Tanya Erdelyi*

**YOKOHAMA: February—Pragmatics and communicative competence** by **Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska**. Kawate-Mierzejewska's examples of different real world situations and contexts, and the ways different cultures use language in each of these mini-case studies were enjoyed by the crowd in Yokohama this February. The presentation was supported by an international group of attendees that could offer different points of view for the situations that were presented. She often drew on feedback from the crowd to help illustrate her points as she explained pragmatics, taking a closer look at speech acts, including J.L. Austin's three acts enacted with each speech act (locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary). Then she discussed *implicature*, both conventional and conversational, and the difficulties involved in trying to teach these to students learning a foreign language. After that, Kawate-Mierzejewska turned the presentation to pragmatic failure, in particular, pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure, illustrating each with clear examples. The conversation then focused on sociopragmatic competence and how people often use a variety of speech strategies to cope with different social variables. Kawate-Mierzejewska ended the afternoon by offering a few tips on how to teach pragmatics.

*Reported by Tanya Erdelyi*



TLT COLUMN

# JOB INFORMATION

...with Richard Miller

<job-info@jalt-publications.org>



To list a position in *The Language Teacher*, please submit online at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs> or email Richard Miller, 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/departments/job-info-centre>.

to find out about the inner workings of a position and whether its organizational nuances and quirks are things you're prepared to deal with. You can also tailor your application to fit what they're looking for. Then you'd be better prepared to address concerns that might come up in an interview." Create a circle of communication with professionals who are in positions you can also see yourself thriving within.

*Design applications to get interviews, not jobs.* Application materials (an M.A., publications, et cetera) are not qualifications. They are simply what will keep your application out of the shredder. Schools often separate applications into two piles from the start: complete and incomplete. The best way to make the first cut is to have everything requested in the initial posting together. Seemingly insignificant requests, when heeded, make the process of hiring you easier for those in charge. Think of your application's completeness as a given, not a goal—that is how universities see it.

*Have a perspective on the current state of language education.* Many schools ask for a brief essay summarizing your opinion on the profession. Even if none of the positions you are applying for specifically require it, write it. Modify it as your perspective changes. The act of writing about your teaching philosophy will enable you to articulate it in an interview, and will show employers that you're a thinker and a communicator.

*In interviews, show—don't tell.* There's no better way to articulate your value than by giving interviewers a mental picture of your strengths. Answer the question "What would you do?" with something you have actually done. Saying, "I think" and "I feel" is fine when you're asked about thoughts and feelings, but nothing tells your story like your story itself. Saying "Here's how I've dealt with that situation in the past" will reduce uncertainty in the minds of those doing the hiring and will set you apart from those who give *safe* responses. Share relevant anecdotes.

## Beyond your résumé: Getting noticed and getting in George Schaaff

What can creative, qualified university teachers do to get noticed a competitive job market? The strategies presented below, along with a little patience, can mean the difference between developing professionally and staying another year in your current position.

*Be comfortable networking.* Networking is not *glad-handing* and having connections, but staying informed about the current employment climate. Greg Rouault of Konan University's School of Management agrees: "Networking can help you

Don't "sell" your qualifications. Peter Sterlacci, personal branding consultant and founder of BeYB <petersterlacci.com> says "focusing only on your credentials commodifies you by grouping you with others who offer the same thing—and people don't get excited about commodities." Your qualifications are already on paper, so there's no need to initiate a lengthy discussion on them. Let the interviewer ask about them—that's her job. Yours is to tell her what she doesn't already know, namely what you—and

only you—can bring to the position. "By sharing your authenticity and unique promise of value," Sterlacci says, "employers will get excited about how you can contribute in a unique and innovative way."

These tips can give you the edge in finding a satisfying position, improve your chances of getting an interview, ensure that interviewers get a complete and accurate picture of you as a potential employee, and ultimately maximize your chances of landing the job.



TLT COLUMN

# CONFERENCE CALENDAR

## ...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 3 months before a conference in Japan, or 4 months before an overseas conference. Thus, 15 May is the deadline for an August 2012 conference in Japan or a September 2012 conference overseas. Feedback or suggestions on the usefulness of this column are also most welcome.

You can access the Conference Calendar online at:  
<jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/conference-calendar>

### Upcoming Conferences

**19-20 MAY 12—Task-Based Learning SIG (JALT) Task-Based Language Teaching in Asia: Challenges and Opportunities**, Osaka Shoin Women's U. **Contact:** <jalt.org/tbl>

**24-26 MAY 12—The 5th International Conference of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF5): Pedagogical Implications of ELF in the Expanding Circle**, Boğaziçi U., Istanbul, Turkey. **Contact:** <elf5.org>

**24-27 MAY 12—The 15th International CALL Research Conference**, Providence U., Taichung,

Taiwan. Keynote speakers will be Rick Kern (UC Berkeley), and Hsien-Chin Liou (Nat'l Tsing Hua U., Taiwan). **Contact:** <cs.pu.edu.tw/~2012call/index.html>

**26 MAY 12—KOTESOL (Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) 2012 National Conference**, Pusan, Korea. **Contact:** <koreatesol.org/node/1201>

**26 MAY 12—4th Annual NEAR Language Education Conference**, Niigata. **Contact:** <iuj.ac.jp/language/conference/near>

**1-5 JUN 12—The Annual JALTCALL Conference: Building Learner Environments**, Konan CUBE, Hirao School of Mgmt., Konan U., Nishinomiya. The featured keynote speaker will be Stephen Bax (U. of Bedfordshire) and the plenary speakers will be Lance Knowles (DynEd Int'l, USA) and John Brine (U. of Aizu). **Contact:** <conference.jaltcall.org>

**2-3 JUN 12—2nd Annual Conference of the Japan Second Language Association**, Hosei U., Tokyo. The plenary speaker will be William O'Grady (U. of Hawaii). **Contact:** <j-sla.org/e>

**9-10 JUN 12—Applied Linguistics and L2 Materials Development**, U. of Limerick, Ireland. Invited speakers will be: Kathleen Bailey, Anne Burns, Andrew Cohen, David Hill, Annie Hughes, Chris Kennedy, Ben Fenton-Smith, Irma Ghosn, Alan Maley, Hitomi Masuhara, Freda Mishan, Jaya Mukundan, Ivor Timmis, and Brian Tomlinson. **Contact:** <matsda.org.uk/conferences/annual\_conf/limerick\_2012.htm>

**16 JUN 12**—The 11th Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference 2012, Hiroshima U. **Contact:** <pan-sig.org/2012>

**24 JUN 12**—EFL Teacher Journeys Conference, Shizuoka. Featured speakers will be Patrick Kiernan (Meiji U.), and Wilma Luth (Hokkai Gakuen U.). **Contact:** <sites.google.com/site/teacherjourneys>

**1 JUL 12**—The JALT SIG Extensive Reading Japan Seminar 2012: *Extensive Reading: Research and Practice*, Sugiyama Jogakuin U., Hoshigaoka Campus, Nagoya. Plenary Speakers will be S. D. Krashen and Junko Yamanaka. **Contact:** <ersig.org/drupal-ersig/5th-er-seminar>

**2-5 JUL 12**—Australian Council of TESOL Associations International TESOL Conference: *TESOL as a Global Trade - Ethics, Equity and Ecology*, Cairns, Convention Centre, Far North Queensland, Australia. **Contact:** <astmanagement.com.au/ACTA12/index.html>

**3-5 JUL 12**—ACTA International TESOL Conference: *TESOL as a Global Trade - Ethics, Equity and Ecology*, Cairns, Convention Centre, Far N. Queensland, Aus. **Contact:** <astmanagement.com.au/ACTA12/index.html>

**8-11 JUL 12**—Language Awareness for our Multicultural World, Concordia U., Montreal, Canada. Patsy Lightbown, Concordia U., Patricia Lamarre, U. de Montréal, Roy Lyster, McGill U., Carmen Muñoz, Universidad de Barcelona **Contact:** <doe.concordia.ca/ala2012>

**11-14 JUL 12**—TaLC10: Teaching and Language Corpora, Warsaw, Poland. Keynote speakers will be: Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (U. of Łódź), Randi Reppen (North Arizona U.), Barbara Seidlhofer (U. of Vienna), James Thomas (Masaryk U.), and Chris Tribble (King's Coll., London). **Contact:** <talc10.ils.uw.edu.pl>

**14-16 JUL 12**—FAB3 The 3rd Annual International Brain Days Conference: *Connecting Neuroscience and ELT*, Kitakyushu U., Fukuoka. Featured speakers will be Curtis Kelly, Marc Helgesen, Tim Murphey, and Robert S. Murphey. **Contact:** <fab-efl.com>

**31 AUG 12**—JACET (Japan Assn of College English Teachers) 2012: The 51st International Convention, Aichi Prefectural U., Nagakute, Aichi. **Contact:** <jacet.org/2012convention/index.html>

**4-6 OCT 12**—The 10th Asia TEFL International Conference, Delhi, India. The featured presentation theme will be *Tertiary English Education in Asia*. **Contact:** <asiatefl.org>

**4-7 OCT 12**—13th National Conference for Community Languages and ESOL, sponsored by TESOLANZ and CLANZ, Palmerston North, NZ. **Contact:** <clesol.org.nz>

**12-15 OCT 12**—JALT2012, Hamamatsu, Shizuoka Prefecture. **Contact:** <jalt.org/conference/jalt2012/jalt2012-call-presentations>

**18-20 OCT 12**—GLoCALL 2012: *Globalization and Localization in Computer-Assisted Language Learning*, Beijing Foreign Studies U., Beijing, China. **Contact:** <glocall.org>

**28 OCT 12**—Fukuoka JALT Conference and Bookfair 2012, Hakata, Fukuoka. **Contact:** <fukuokajalt.org>

**1-4 NOV 12**—Pan-Asian Conference on Language Teaching and Learning (PAC) 2012 and 9th FEELTA International Conference: *Learning Languages - Building Communities*, Far Eastern Federal U., Vladivostok. **Contact:** <feelta.wl.dvfu.ru/pacfeelta-2012>

**30 NOV-2 DEC 12**—International Conference on eLearning Futures, Auckland, NZ. Keynote speakers will be: Steve Wheeler, Agnes Kukulska-Hulme, and Judy Kay. **Contact:** <icelf.org/welcome.php>

**5-7 DEC 12**—The Second Conference on ELT in the Islamic World, Teheran, Iran. Keynote speakers will be Hossein Nassaji, Larry Vandergrift, Ken Hyland, Parvaneh Tavakoli, Cem Alptekin, and Ghazi Ghaith. **Contact:** <eltconferenceili.ir>

#### Calls for Papers or Posters

**DEADLINE: 15 MAY 12 (FOR 12-14 OCT 12)**—22nd Japanese/Korean Linguistics Conference, Tokyo. Invited speakers are Michael Kenstowicz (MIT), Satoshi Kinsui (Osaka U.), Seungjae Lee (Seoul Nat'l U.), Masayoshi Shibatani (Rice U., Texas), and Akira Watanabe (U. of Tokyo). **Contact:** <www.ninjal.ac.jp/jk2012>

**DEADLINE: 31 MAY 12 (FOR 20-21 OCT 12)**—20th KOTESOL International Conference, Sookmyung Women's U., Seoul. Proposal must be submitted online. **Contact:** <koreatesol.org/IC2012CallForProposals>

**DEADLINE: 1 JUN 12 (FOR 10-11 NOV 12)**—Japan Writers' Conference, Doshisha Women's College, Kyoto. **Contact:** <japanwritersconference.org>

**DEADLINE: 1 JUN 12 (FOR 9-10 SEP 12)**—The 2012 Science and Art of Language Teaching (SALT) International Conference SALT International Conference, Arau, Perlis, Malaysia. **Contact:** <icon.saltofworld.org/index.php/SALT/2012SALT>

**DEADLINE: 22 JUN 12 (FOR 15-16 NOV 12)**—ICT for Language Learning, Florence, Italy. **Contact:** <pixel-online.net/ICT4LL2012>

**DEADLINE: 30 JUN 12 (FOR 16-18 NOV 12)**—TESOL France 31st Annual Conference, Telecom Paris Tech, Paris, France. **Contact:** <tesol-france.org>



TLT COLUMN

# OLD GRAMMARIANS

...by Scott Gardner

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## Ask the Outlander Guy

*It's time for everyone's favorite column, in which sincere intercultural questions by friends of Japan are answered with sarcasm and condescension by the Outlander Guy (OG).*



**Q:** Can you use chopsticks?

**A:** Yes, I can use training chopsticks, the oversized kind that are tied together at the top. I hope to have my string cut in another month or two.



**Q:** What's your favorite Japanese food?

**A:** I like the chateaubriand at the Tokyo Prince Hotel.

**Q:** The Japanese language is difficult, isn't it?

**A:** Sitting in the lotus position is difficult. Writing the kanji for *gloomy* (鬱鬱) is not

only difficult but hazardous to your health. Saying the phrase *loose vowels* in conversation—either in English or its Japanese equivalent—without embarrassing yourself is humanly impossible.

**Q:** Which epoch would you consider to be the most important in Japanese history: 1) the Tokugawa period, in which all warring factions along the archipelago were finally united under the Shogunate; 2) the Meiji Revolution, in which Japan opened its doors to the West and began its steady march toward modernization; or 3) the late 20th century, when Japan's technological adaptability made it one of the greatest economies in the world?

**A:** I would say 4) the Super Mario World 8 era, when the demon king Koopa was thwarted and Princess Peach was returned to the throne of the Mushroom Kingdom.

**Q:** Why did you come to Japan in the first place?

**A:** I heard the alluring call of the ramen cart and thought "Chinese noodles at midnight, with a grimy plastic curtain sticking to my back—that is the answer, yes."





- Q: Do you think Japan should switch to a daylight saving or “summertime” system to capitalize on the longer summer days?
- A: If it stops me calling my mother in Dubuque at 4:00 in the morning to ask her how much oregano to put in tonight’s spaghetti sauce, it’s a good thing.
- Q: What do you consider to be Japan’s greatest contribution to the world?
- A: For me it would have to be those reality shows that force celebrities to participate in sadistic acts for laughs. I could have used a few shows like that back when I was growing up with two younger brothers.
- Q: Have you learned any traditional Japanese arts such as *ikebana* (flower arranging), *sado* (tea ceremony), or *kendo* (fencing)?
- A: I recently passed my first-class *mondo weirdo* (extreme strangeness) exam. I’m now qualified to recruit neophytes.
- Q: Do you have a favorite musical performer here?
- A: I used to have three favorite Japanese performers, until someone told me they were all Korean. Now I mainly listen to train station theme songs. I think it’s great how each unique theme alerts sleeping passengers to which station they’ve arrived at. I wish my school had a system like that between classes.
- Q: What do you think of the Japanese train system in general?
- A: Pretty boring, actually. Trains are so common and efficient here that they’re almost invisible. The rail companies now feel the need to paint *anime* characters on the sides of trains to remind you that they exist. The British rail system, on the other hand, makes things exciting by keeping schedules like



soccer referees: the clock says it’s time, but you never know how many more minutes they’re going to add. In the U.S., passenger trains are so rare that when you see one go by you feel like you’re witnessing a herd of stampeding wildebeests. Interestingly, there are trains that leave New York six or eight times a day and arrive in Los Angeles about three days later, often with one or two people on board. Most non-Americans don’t know this. Most Americans don’t either.

- Q: What is the scariest thing that has ever happened to you in Japan?
- A: I freaked out the first time I saw those dried tuna shavings wriggling on a freshly cooked Japanese *okonomiyaki* pancake. I thought it was dozens of flatworms being roasted alive.



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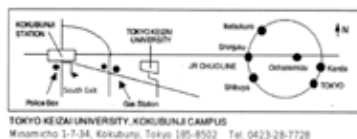
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 See “More Info” link below for online video of simple 12min walk to TKU from station.  
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**Contact:** <www.westtokyojalt-owner@yahooogroups.com>, or 070-5572-2882 on the day

JALT’s West Tokyo Chapter, Vocabulary SIG and Oxford University Press are pleased to present an interesting series of presentations by a diverse range of speakers, all of whom represent excellence in the field of vocabulary education for EFL learners in Japan. This is a great opportunity for all ELT professionals who seek to expand their knowledge and gain useful insights which may well assist them with their teaching practice in the English language classroom. All are welcome!



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# JALT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

## The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

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

### Annual international conference 年次国際大会

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

### JALT publications include:

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

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

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

- Testing and evaluation
- Materials development

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

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

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

## Membership Categories 会員と会費

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

- Regular 一般会員: ¥10,000
- Student rate (undergraduate/graduate in Japan) 学生会員(日本にある大学、大学院の学生): ¥6,000
- Joint—for two persons sharing a mailing address, one set of publications ジョイント会員(同じ住所で登録する個人2名を対象とし、JALT出版物は2名に1部): ¥17,000
- Group (5 or more) ¥6,500/person—one set of publications for each five members  
団体会員(5名以上を対象とし、JALT出版物は5名につき1部): 1名¥6,500

For more information please consult our website <jalt.org>, ask an officer at any JALT event, or contact JALT Central Office.

### JALT Central Office

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Use attached *furikae* form at Post Offices ONLY. When payment is made through a bank using the *furikae*, the JALT Central Office receives only a name and the cash amount that was transferred. The lack of information (mailing address, chapter designation, etc.) prevents the JCO from successfully processing your membership application. Members are strongly encouraged to use the secure online sign-up page located at <<https://jalt.org/joining>> .

## Something to look forward to . . . our **Featured Speakers** at **JALT2012!!**

**Charles Browne** (English Central)

*Maximizing Vocabulary Development with Online Resources*

**Carolyn Graham** (Oxford University Press)

*Making it Memorable through Songs and Chants*

**Marjo Mitsutomi** (Cengage Learning K.K.)

*English Education Overhaul: Lessons from Abroad*

**Garold Murray** (CUE SIG)

*Imagining a difference: Fostering motivation, identity and autonomy in language learning*

**Ted O'Neill** (McGraw-Hill Education)

*Writing for your readers: Tools and approaches*

**Diane Hawley Nagatomo** (GALE SIG)

*Gender Counts: Being a Female Teacher in Japan*

**John Wiltshier** (Materials Writers SIG)

*Materials Writing: 7 Key Factors*

**Sean Wray** (Cambridge University Press)

*Critical Thinking in EFL: More Brain Fodder, More to Mutter*

## **JALT2012**

**October 12-15, 2012**

**Hamamatsu ACT,  
Hamamatsu, Japan**

[jalt.org/conference](http://jalt.org/conference)



## **Volunteers for JALT2012**

If you are interested in volunteering for JALT2012, please contact Steve Cornwell at [program@jalt.org](mailto:program@jalt.org).

We are always looking for people to help both before and during the conference in a wide range of areas including publicity, editing, registration, and so on. Join the team and help make our conference a success!

## **JALT Research Grants**

**Now is the time!**

Research Grant awardees for 2010 have completed their projects! Research Grant awardees for 2011 are in the early stages with theirs! You could be next to benefit! The application period for the three 2012 grants of ¥100,000 yen is open until the end of July!

For more information on the grants and how to apply, see [jalt.org/researchgrants](http://jalt.org/researchgrants)

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@ Traditional: comprehending and producing written texts

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# L I T E R A C Y

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Sponsored by Bilingualism (BL), Business English (BE), Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Critical Thinking (CT), College and University Educators (CUE), Extensive Reading (ER), Framework and Language Portfolio (FLP), Gender Awareness in Language Education (GALE), Global Issues in Language Education (GILE), Japanese as a Second Language (JSL), Junior and Senior High School (JSHS), Learner Development (LD), Materials Writers (MW), Other Language Educators (OLE), Professionalism Administration and Leadership in Education (PALE), Pragmatics (PRAG), Speech, Drama and Debate (SDD), Study Abroad (SA), Task Based Learning (TBL), Teaching Children (TC), Teacher Education (TED), Testing and Evaluation (TEVAL), Teachers Helping Teachers (THT) SIGs, along with Hiroshima University and JALT Hiroshima chapter

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