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Readers' Forum

My Share

JALT Praxis

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In this month's issue . . .

Greetings, and welcome to *The Language Teacher*'s March/April edition. This is a time of marking finals and preparing for the new academic year, and what better way to prepare than reading thought-provoking *TLT* articles?

First, as any student of language (or anything else for that matter) knows, it is not enough just to encounter a new word, but to be able to recall it when necessary. With this in mind, this issue's Feature Article by **James Bury** compares three different methods of lexical retrieval, and concludes that expanded spaced retrieval (ESR) and uniform spaced retrieval (USR) techniques outperform massed retrieval (MR) methods.

Continuing on to the Readers' Forum, **Michael J. Crawford** provides an overview of the important but often overlooked topic (particularly in the L2 context) of note taking. This is of particular importance as universities increasingly move to teaching content in an L2, such as English. Students are also increasingly studying abroad during their post-secondary education, and often require support to prepare for the experience. In order to help future study abroad students anticipate challenges and come up with strategies to deal with them, **Erik Fritz** and **Junko Murao** outline a method of designing materials based on real-life situations encountered by actual students studying abroad.

And if those excellent articles aren't enough mental stimulation, you can always turn to the My Share column for many practical activities to use in your own classroom. And as always, if you have something that you would like to share with the teaching community, please send it our way.

Philip Head & Gerry McLellan, My Share Co-Editors

皆様こんにちは、そしてThe Language Teacher 3月4月号にようこそ。学期末試験の採点を終え、新年度の準備を始めるこの時期ほど示唆に富むTLTの論文を読むのにふさわしい時期はありません。

まず、言語学習者の誰もがわかっている様に、新出単語に出くわすだけでは十分ではなく、大切なことは必要な時にそれを思い出せる事です。今号のJames BuryのFeature Articleでは、前述した事柄を踏まえつつ、語彙検索に於ける異なる３つの手法を比較し、間隔伸

Continued over



TLT Editors: John Roberts, Glenn Magee
TLT Japanese-Language Editor: Toshiko Sugino

張検索（ＥＳＲ）と均一間隔検索（ＵＳＲ）法は、集中検索（ＭＲ）法にまさると結論づけています。

続いてReaders’ Forumでは、Michael J. Crawfordが、第二言語習得に於いて重要ではあっても、しばしば見落とされがちなノートテイキングについて概観します。これは英語などの第二言語で授業をする大学が増えていることもあるので、特に重要です。高校卒業後に留学する学生も益々増加し、そのサポート体制が必要とされています。これから留学する学生の予想される困難に対応する戦略を構築する為にErik FritzとJunko Muraoは、実際に留学生が遭遇した実生活状況に根差した教材デザイン法の概要を述べます。

上述の論文でまだ物足りなければ、いつでもMy Shareをご覧下さい。クラスで実際に活用できるアクティビティが数多く掲載されています。そしていつもの様に、もし他の教師と共有されたい事柄があれば私たちのところにお送り下さい。

Philip Head & Gerry McLellan, My Share Co-Editors

Correction

In the January 2016 issue of *The Language Teacher* (Vol. 40, No.1), the name of one of the Readers' Forum writers, Yo Hamada, was inadvertently misspelt on the cover. The editors sincerely apologise for this error. Please note that the online version of *TLT* has the correct listing.

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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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The Effects of Three Spacing Methods on Students' Mid- to Long-term Retention of Lexis

James Bury
Shumei University, Japan

This article investigates the effect that six different lexical spacing interval schedules had on Japanese university students' retention of lexis on a translation test completed in the first and last lessons of a 15-lecture course. Two schedules used an expanded spaced retrieval (ESR) technique, two employed a uniform spaced retrieval (USR) technique, and two were based on massed retrieval (MR) methods. It was found that the ESR and USR schedules had greater positive effects on student performance than MR. It is also posited that the challenging learning conditions created by expanding the intervals between the initial encoding of a lexical item and subsequent retrieval attempts can positively affect students' retention rates and overall learning experiences. Consequently, it is suggested that teachers and curriculum developers implement ESR and USR techniques more when planning and adapting materials.

本論は、日本の大学生が全15回の講義の初回と最終回に行う訳の試験での語彙定着力に、6つの異なる語彙分散間隔スケジュールがどのような効果を与えるかを調査したものである。2つで間隔伸張検索（ESR: expanded spaced retrieval）法を使用し、別の2つで均一間隔検索（USR: uniform spaced retrieval）法、残りの2つは集中検索（MR: massed retrieval）　法を用いた。結果としてESRとUSRは、MRよりも学生の成績により良い影響を与えた。また、語彙の最初の発信と次の検索の間隔を延ばすという厳しい学習条件が、学生の語彙の定着率と総体的な学習経験に良い影響を与えると仮定される。そのため、教師やカリキュラム作成者は、教材の教授予定を作成する際、より多くのESRやUSR法を取り入れるよう推奨したい。

When teaching reading courses, or reading segments of more integrated courses, instructors regularly use materials that include complex grammatical structures and exigent lexical items (Bury, 2014). Exposing students to vocabulary that is too challenging can be overwhelming and demotivating (Huang & Liou, 2007), negatively affecting retention of vocabulary and the overall learning process (Fulcher, 1997). Therefore, finding a way to introduce new, more advanced vocabulary in a way that engages students and improves their mid- to long-term retention of lexical items is imperative for teachers.

This article examines the effects of three spacing methods on students studying in an English for Tourism course at a Japanese university. The methods investigated were expanded spaced retrieval (ESR), uniform spaced retrieval (USR), and massed retrieval (MR). A recent study by Bury (2014) found that Japanese university students reported increased levels of confidence and perceptions of ability following a course incorporating USR, but that study did not investigate the comparative effect of ESR or MR. As ESR and USR methods have predominantly been tested on college-age adults (Balota, Duchek, & Logan, 2007) and Alzheimer's patients (Camp, Bird, & Cherry, 2000), this paper adds to the current literature, expands the contexts in which the methods have been investigated, and identifies a practical way to improve students' mid- to long-term retention of lexis.

Literature Review

Texts used in traditional English courses are often grammatically complex and introduce academic lexical items that have not been previously encountered by the students. Consequently, students are exposed to more advanced vocabulary and this can aid language acquisition, as in Krashen's (1981) theory of comprehensible input. However, if learners are presented with too many new items, or with items of a level that is perceived as unattainable, they can quickly become demotivated, raising their affective filters (Krashen, 1981). Research has shown that students often become overwhelmed with the complexity of the texts they encounter in class (Murphy, 2007), and this can negatively affect their learning experiences (Fulcher, 1997).

Spaced retrieval is a method of memory improvement in which items are spaced over a lesson, or set of lessons, and not massed together in quick succession, as in MR. Spaced retrieval can be divided into two types: expanded spaced retrieval (ESR) and uniform spaced retrieval (USR). When implementing ESR, items are spaced at increasingly

distant intervals, instead of being standardized, as in USR (Logan & Balota, 2008). In terms of lesson and syllabus planning, the retrieval plan for an item in an ESR schedule could be [1-3-6-10], where the numbers represent the lessons in a course, or possibly activities, if used in a shorter course, in which the item would be reintroduced after the initial presentation. The retrieval schedule used in a USR method could be based around a schedule similar to [1-3-5-7]. MR, which is a technique commonly employed in the periods leading up to exams by students and teachers, attempts to cram information into students' memories through repetition in quick succession.

Camp, Bird, and Cherry (2000) claimed that ESR is particularly beneficial for long-term retention of information, and Landauer and Bjork (1978) demonstrated an average increase in final recall tests in an ESR experiment. Cull, Shaughnessy, and Zechmeister (1996) also found a significant advantage for ESR schedules over USR in final recall tests.

Three explanations of why the ESR method produces generally better results than USR and MR can be identified. Firstly, the increased intervals between items being reintroduced makes it necessary for the information to be retained for longer periods before it is retrieved than in USR and MR methods. This makes it more difficult to access an item, leading to increased retrieval effort (Carpenter & DeLosh, 2005), and thus, a strengthening of retrieval routes (Baddeley, 1997). Therefore, in a retrieval schedule where the first retrieval attempt comes after just one lesson or activity, the retrieval event is relatively easy, whereas when there is a larger interval, an increased amount of re-sampling occurs (Karpicke, 2004, cited in Logan & Balota, 2008).

Secondly, Landauer and Bjork (1978) found an increase in performance during the learning phase of their ESR experiment, and early retrieval success in the initial stages of the learning process encouraged successful retrieval later in the test stage (Camp, Bird, & Cherry, 2000). However, although retrieval success is important during learning for maintaining student motivation, retrieval schedules that have consistently high rates of retrieval success, such as MR, are less effective in developing long-term retention, indicating that mid- to long-term retention benefits from a certain level of difficulty and imperfect performance during the learning process (Bjork, 1999).

Thirdly, spaced retrieval techniques present learners with opportunities to encode items in more than one context (Pashler, Cepeda, Wixted, & Rohrer, 2005), increasing the likelihood that the word will be successfully retrieved later (Cobb, 1999; Schmitt, 2000). Schedules that incorporate multiple retrieval attempts allow students to reprocess items, and increased exposure can help students consolidate meaning (Schmitt & Carter, 2000; Folse, 2004). However, recalling items that are already highly accessible does not require much additional contextual sampling, and therefore does little to consolidate mid- to long-term lexical retention.

Therefore, the most effective retrieval schedules are likely to be those that balance retrieval effort with retrieval success multiple times throughout a course. Consequently, mid- to long-term retention of an item will optimally occur when it requires maximum effort to retrieve in a number of contexts, without being totally inaccessible (Bjork, 1999).

Method

Eighty-eight students in the Tourism and Business Management Department and the English and I.T. Department at a university in the Kanto region of Japan enrolled in three different classes that covered the same materials based around English for Tourism. The classes were made up of 46, 26, and 16 first- to fourth-year mixed-ability students. Students that did not have 100% attendance were not included in the final analysis as their absence may have negatively impacted the effect the different retrieval schedules had. Consequently, this article reports on the test results collected from 71 students (M = 19.6 years old, SD = 1.3).

All participants were given a translation test (Appendix A) in the first lesson of the course. The items were then reintroduced four times each in the class materials throughout the course using six different retrieval schedules: two for ESR, [5-7-10-14] (S1) and [2-5-9-14] (S2); two for USR, [8-10-12-14] (S3) and [5-8-11-14] (S4); and two for MR, [13-13-14-14] (S5) and [14-14-14-14] (S6). All six retrieval methods were used in all of the classes. The test consisted of 36 items, six from each schedule. A second test, using the same items ordered differently, was then administered in the last lesson of the course of 15 lectures. Results for both tests were returned to the students.

The schedules used in this investigation were chosen because they best fitted the Japanese university semester length of 15 lectures. As performance in memory retention and retrieval tests is affected by the intervals between the last engagement with an item and the final recall test (Crowder, 1976), all of the schedules finished in Lesson 14, one week before the last test in Lesson 15.

According to Huang and Liou (2007), in order to improve students' retention of lexical items, it is essential for vocabulary instruction to be targeted

to their needs and goals. Ensuring that the target language in a course is relevant to students' contexts is of particular importance, as relating new vocabulary to their own experiences strengthens their associations and can improve language retention (McAdams, 1993; Sökmen, 1997). In view of this, the items used in this study were selected according to relevance to the course content, as well as level according to the JACET 8000 Level Marker (http://www.tcp-ip.or.jp/~shim/J8LevelMarker/j8lm.cgi) (Appendix B). Each subset (1-6) consists of six items within the same JACET 8000 level, and is made up of only nouns, verbs, or adjectives. The items within the six subsets were assigned to each of the six schedules randomly.

When teaching English for Tourism, the focus on communicative competence and intercultural communication is especially pertinent (Alred, Byram, & Fleming, 2003). Consequently, unlike traditional English courses, which have been regarded as noncommunicative (Zhang, 2009; Rustipa, 2010), this course was developed and taught in a way that encouraged the students to engage with the lexical items communicatively in extension activities. Low-frequency lexical items were avoided where possible, and the complexity of the texts increased throughout the course. Furthermore, by providing the participating students with positive and encouraging feedback, the teacher aimed to improve students' self-belief, perceptions of ability, and confidence, which would in turn help to improve communicative competence (Bury, 2014).

Results and Discussion

From Table 1, it can be seen that all of the items on the test showed improved recognition rates across all six schedules. The smallest positive effect was 5.4% on Item 4 of Schedule 5, and the greatest was 33.7% on Item 6 in Schedule 4.

Table 1. Test Results and Differences in Percentage by Item

S1 [5-7-10-14]							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Test 1	75.7	67.6	58.1	54.1	43.2	63.5	60.4
Test 2	94.6	89.2	73.6	82.5	68.9	91.9	83.5
Diff.	18.9	21.6	15.5	28.4	25.7	28.4	23.1
S2 [2-5-9-14]							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Test 1	77.8	63.5	56.8	64.9	70.3	56.8	65.0
Test 2	90.2	84.5	75.0	81.1	83.8	86.5	83.5
Diff.	12.4	21.0	18.2	16.2	13.5	29.7	18.5
S3 [8-10-12-14]							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Test 1	87.8	78.4	86.5	71.6	56.8	62.2	73.9
Test 2	97.3	94.6	98.6	90.5	75.7	86.5	90.5
Diff.	9.5	16.2	12.1	18.9	18.9	24.3	16.7
S4 [5-8-11-14]							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Test 1	84.5	79.7	54.1	80.5	52.7	59.5	68.5
Test 2	93.6	87.8	79.7	89.3	83.8	93.2	87.9
Diff.	9.1	8.1	25.6	8.8	31.1	33.7	19.4
S5 [13-13-14-14]							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Test 1	83.8	70.3	90.5	58.1	60.8	54.1	69.6
Test 2	97.3	81.1	98.6	63.5	68.9	67.6	79.5
Diff.	13.5	10.8	8.1	5.4	8.1	13.5	9.9
S6 [14-14-14-14]							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Test 1	87.8	78.4	74.3	59.5	79.7	56.8	72.8
Test 2	95.9	87.8	89.2	73.0	90.5	71.6	84.7
Diff.	8.1	9.4	14.9	13.5	10.8	14.8	11.9

As Table 1 shows, the schedule that had the greatest positive effect on test results was S1 (23.1%), followed by S4 (19.4%), S2 (18.5%), S3 (16.7%), S6 (11.9%), and S5 (9.9%). These data, when looked at in conjunction with that shown in Table 2, indicate that ESR has the greatest positive effect on students' retention of lexical items, with a combined average of 20.8%, followed by USR (18.1%), then MR (10.9%). Thus, it can be stated that the students showed substantial benefits of both ESR and USR when compared to MR. This is consistent with findings from Balota, Duchek, Sergent-Marshall, and Roediger (2006), and Logan and Balota (2008).

Table 2. Test Results and Differences in Percentage by Schedule

	Test 1	Test 2	Difference	Average diff.
S1	60.4	83.5	23.1	20.8
S2	65.0	83.5	18.5	
S3	73.9	90.5	16.7	18.1
S4	68.5	87.9	19.4	
S5	69.6	79.5	9.9	10.9
S6	72.8	84.7	11.9	
Average	68.4	84.9	16.6	

While there was variation in the levels of positive effects between the different schedules, the two schedules that showed the highest average differ-

ence were S1 and S4. Both of these schedules had an average interval of three lessons (S1 [2-5-9-14] and S4 [5-8-11-14]). This suggests that in the EFL and ESP contexts, retrieval schedules with intervals averaging three lessons have the greatest positive effect on students' retention of lexis over a 15-lecture course. S2 had the third greatest effect, with an average interval of four lessons ([2-5-9-14]), followed by S3 with intervals of two lessons ([8-10-12-14]).

A number of limitations in this study can be identified. The course was conducted over 15 lectures, so it was not possible to examine the effects that larger periods of expansion may have had on retention levels. Furthermore, each lesson was at least a week apart, so the students would have come into contact with multiple external inputs outside of this study. The course was not studied in isolation, and other external factors that the students were exposed to, including both formal and informal learning, may have affected the findings outlined above (Erstad, Gilje, Sefton-Green, & Vasbo, 2009; Furlong & Davies, 2012). Additionally, the data do not control for words the students may already have known before the course. Finally, there were non-native Japanese students among the participants in this study, and, although all students at the university must have achieved a standardised level of Japanese proficiency before enrolment, it is possible that a translation test could have negatively affected their test scores.

Conclusion

Although one technique did not produce consistent advantages in the final recall test, it is important to note that all of the schedules for ESR and USR showed a greater positive effect than MR. This is consistent with previous studies that found spaced retrieval in any form is a beneficial memory improvement technique in terms of the learning stage, final recall tests, and students' confidence and perceptions of ability (Camp, Bird, & Cherry, 2000; Balota, Duchek, & Logan, 2006; Bury, 2014). Therefore, it is suggested that more teachers and curriculum developers implement both ESR and USR techniques when planning and adapting their course materials.

It is also posited that the challenging learning conditions created by expanding the intervals between the initial encoding of a lexical item and subsequent retrieval attempts can positively affect students' retention rates and overall learning experiences. In certain circumstances, higher degrees of success during learning could improve motivation and students' confidence, especially for students who are often frustrated by difficulties with their memory. However, finding a schedule that successfully balances the maximum effort required to retrieve items and multiple opportunities for processing those items in different contexts is of paramount importance. If a teacher can teach the same students over a longer period of time, it may be possible to determine the best retrieval schedules according to their specific abilities, goals, and preferences (Pavlik & Anderson, 2004), and this should be one of the main aims of teachers when attempting to develop their students' retention of lexical items.

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Appendix A. Lesson 1: Test with Answers

Vocabulary Test

Section A

1.	economy (n.)	_____	a. 経済
2.	distant (adj.)	_____	b. 遠く
3.	society (n.)	_____	c. 社会
4.	independent (adj.)	_____	d. 独立
5.	tradition (n.)	_____	e. 伝統
6.	ancient (adj.)	_____	f. 古代
7.	local (adj.)	_____	g. 現地
8.	development (n.)	_____	h. 開発
9.	cultural (adj.)	_____	i. 文化的
10.	growth (n.)	_____	j. 成長
11.	specific (adj.)	_____	k. 特定
12.	nation (n.)	_____	l. 国家

Section B

1.	negative (adj.)	_____	a. 陰性
2.	border (v.)	_____	b. 境界
3.	founding (adj.)	_____	c. 創立
4.	surround (v.)	_____	d. 囲む
5.	expensive (adj.)	_____	e. 高価な
6.	promote (v.)	_____	f. 推進する
7.	claim (v.)	_____	g. 主張する
8.	developing (adj.)	_____	h. 発展途上
9.	prevent (v.)	_____	i. 防ぐ
10.	global (adj.)	_____	j. 世界的
11.	maintain (v.)	_____	k. 維持する
12.	positive (adj.)	_____	l. 積極

Section C

1.	contemporary (adj.)	_____	a. 現代の	7.	destination (n.)	_____	g. 生き場
2.	wildlife (n)	_____	b. 野生生物	8.	significant (adj.)	_____	h. 重要
3.	severe (adj.)	_____	c. 厳しい	9.	selection (n.)	_____	i. 選択
4.	territory (n.)	_____	d. 領土	10.	ethnic (adj.)	_____	j. 民族的な
5.	sacred (adj.)	_____	e. 神聖な	11.	peak (n.)	_____	k. 頂点
6.	stability (n.)	_____	f. 安定性	12.	urban (adj.)	_____	l. 都市

Appendix B. Test Items and JACET 8000 Levels

	1. noun		2. adj.		3. adj.		4. verb		5. adj.		6. noun	
S1	economy	1	local	2	negative	2	claim	2	contemporary	3	destination	3
S2	development	1	distant	2	developing	2	border	2	significant	3	wildlife	3
S3	society	1	cultural	2	founding	2	prevent	2	severe	3	selection	3
S4	growth	1	independent	2	global	2	surround	2	ethnic	3	territory	3
S5	tradition	1	specific	2	expensive	2	maintain	2	sacred	3	peak	3
S6	nation	1	ancient	2	positive	2	promote	2	urban	3	stability	3

Lecture Notetaking: Questions and Answers

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This paper provides an overview of research on lecture notetaking. Despite the importance of this academic skill, to date it has not received much attention from researchers working in L2 contexts. As the Japanese Ministry of Education moves towards encouraging universities to offer more lecture courses in English, it is important for teachers to gain a better understanding of the processes involved in notetaking, and how to help learners to develop their skills. To this end, the paper poses 8 questions that teachers may have about notetaking and provides answers from the research that has been done to date in both L2 and L1 contexts. Because the amount of research in L2 contexts is still small, the answers given are not meant to be definitive. However, it is hoped that they will provide some preliminary answers to questions that teachers may have.

本論はノートテイキング(講義をノートに書き写す)に関する研究を概観する。ノートテイキングは重要なアカデミックスキルであるにも関わらず、L2環境における研究はこれまであまり注目を浴びてこなかった。文部科学省が英語による大学講義科目の拡大を推進している昨今、教員がノートテイキングの過程及びその指導方法に関する知識を得る重要性が益々高まっている。この現状を受け、本論では、ノートテイキングに関して、教える側が持つ可能性のある８つの質問を提起し、これまでのL2及びL1環境で行われた研究の中から答えを導き出す。L2環境における研究が未だ少ないことから、導き出した答えは決定的とは言えないが、ノートテイキングに関する教師の疑問に少しでも答えられたことを願う。

Notetaking is an important academic skill. Van de Meer (2012) states that it "is often taken to be the distinguishing characteristic of learning at university" (p. 13). Despite its importance, however, notetaking has received relatively little attention from researchers working in L2 contexts, including those based in Japan. There are several reasons why this should be remedied, but first and foremost is that in its push to internationalize higher education, the Japanese Ministry of Education is encouraging universities to offer more courses in English (MEXT, 2012). This trend, which is not limited to Japan, offers potential rewards for students. However, it also presents challenges, one of which undoubtedly is notetaking (Haswell & Lee, 2013). Although notetaking has not been the focus of much research in L2 contexts, there is some useful research available. Additionally, research on notetaking in L1 contexts (both English L1 and Japanese L1) is related to and has implications for L2 learners. Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to pose some questions that teachers may have about notetaking, and provide answers from the research that has been done to date.

Question 1: Should notetaking skills be taught, or do learners just pick them up naturally?

DeZure, Kaplan, and Deerman (2001) write that "notetaking has generally been taken for granted by both instructors and students" (p. 1). In many cases, teachers may just assume that students will pick up notetaking skills on their own. Research has shown, however, that this view may be mistaken, and that many students in both L1 and L2 contexts need help developing their notetaking skills. Kenneth Kiewra, a leading researcher on notetaking among L1 learners in the United States, writes that students, "left to their own devices are terribly incomplete note takers recording only about 30% of lecture idea units for future reference" (Kiewra, Benton, Risch, & Christensen, 1995, p. 173). Perhaps not surprisingly, some research suggests that for L2 learners the situation may be even worse. In a study of notetaking skills among L2 learners in the United States, Carrell (2007) found that students only recorded about 20% of main ideas or supporting details in a lecture.

Question 2: Does notetaking instruction lead to positive results?

In a wide-ranging review of studies conducted in English L1 contexts, Kobayashi (2006) found a modest effect for the benefits of instruction on notetaking. An important factor found was academic level, with lower-level students showing greater benefits than higher-level students. Positive results have also been found in L2 contexts. Hayati & Jalilifar (2009) found that Iranian students who experienced notetaking training did better on a listening comprehension test than students who took notes but did not receive any instruction, as well as students who

took no notes. Similar results were found for Taiwanese students (Tsai & Wu, 2010). Here in Japan, Crawford (2015) found that students who received notetaking instruction and had many opportunities to practice improved their use of notetaking techniques that are considered to be effective. Lauwereyns (2015) obtained similar results with Japanese students, and also found that training in notetaking led to better listening comprehension.

Question 3: What techniques for notetaking have been shown to be helpful?

Effective notes are not necessarily copious notes. In fact, one study showed an inverse relationship between the overall amount of notes taken and lecture comprehension (Dunkel, 1988). What seems to matter is efficiency, and that means writing down only important information (e.g., content words as opposed to function words), and using techniques such as abbreviations, symbols, underlining, highlighting, and arrows; in short, techniques that allow students to write down key ideas and any relationships between them in a timely and efficient manner. Support for this in an L2 context can be found in the aforementioned study by Carrell (2007), and in a Japanese L1 context in Saito and Harada (2007). In the latter study, notetaking techniques of high school and university students were examined. Within each group, it was found that those students who used techniques such as underlines, circles, and arrows more frequently performed better on a test related to the content of a 60-minute lecture.

Question 4: Does notetaking have positive effects on comprehension?

When discussing the effects of notetaking on comprehension, two distinct functions can be considered: the encoding function and the storage function (Kiewra, 1989). The encoding function refers to the actual process of taking notes, whereas the storage function refers to the ability to keep notes after a lecture and utilize them for later review. With regard to encoding, Kiewra (1989) found that only about half of the studies he reviewed showed positive effects. With regard to storage, also in L1 contexts, the findings are more robust, with studies in English L1 (Armbruster, 2009) and Japanese L1 (Kishi, 2004) showing benefits. In L2 contexts the amount of research in this area is limited, but Dunkel, Mishra, and Berliner (1989) failed to find support for the encoding function, as did Hale and Courtney (1994). As was noted above, however, Hayati and Jalilifar (2009) did find benefits for encoding, with students who didn't take notes doing more poorly than those who did on a comprehension test immediately following a listening task. There is also some evidence that students perceive the encoding process to be beneficial. Hale and Courtney (1994) found that 77% of the students in their study reported notetaking as helping them remember information in a lecture. With regard to the storage function in L2 contexts, Liu (2001, cited in Liu & Yi, 2012) found support in a study of Chinese EFL students. However, while storage was found to aid in the remembering of specific information (e.g., dates, etc.) in a lecture, it did not necessarily improve students' ability to recall more general information. While all of the results noted above are interesting, it is worthwhile to note that the quality of students' notes has not always been taken into consideration. Clearly, the usefulness of the storage function depends in part on how well students have encoded information in their notes. Further research should examine this relationship.

Question 5: How important is working memory in lecture notetaking?

Lecture notetaking places a significant cognitive load on working memory. Students must not only listen, process information, and write it down, but they must do so while simultaneously continuing to listen to what is being said so that they do not fall behind. However, somewhat surprisingly, most, but not all L1 research has not shown any significant relationship between notetaking and working memory. Peverly et al. (2013) describes this as being "a bit perplexing" (p. 122). In L2 research, the number of studies is limited, but Dunkel, Mishra, and Berliner (1989) also failed to find a relationship, as did Carrell, Dunkel, and Moulan (2000). Peverly et al. (2013) suggest that one possible reason for this is that long-term memory resources, such as writing speed, background knowledge, and language comprehension, play a more important role than short-term memory. In the case of L2 contexts, the last one, language comprehension, may be particularly pertinent.

Question 6: To what extent does language proficiency mediate notetaking ability?

Peverly et al. (2013) note that the amount of research on the relationship between language proficiency and notetaking ability in L1 contexts is "extremely limited" (p. 116), and that the research that has been done has failed to detect a meaningful relationship. This may be so when research is focused on L1 learners only, but in L2 contexts, the situation is likely to be quite different. Clerehan (1995) com-

pared the notetaking skills of L1 and L2 students in Australia and found that the L2 students' notes were much less comprehensive than those of the L1 students. With regard to the hierarchical structure of the lecture, the L2 students failed to record 19% of level 1 (main) ideas, and 43% of both level 2 and level 3 (supporting) ideas. She attributes this to their language proficiency, and states that the L2 students are at a "huge disadvantage" (p. 145).

Question 7: Are there any differences between students who take notes on a computer and those who do so with pencil and paper?

Peverly et al. (2013) found that handwriting speed is a significant predictor of note quality, and that note quality was a significant predictor of lecture recall. However, no matter how fast a person can write longhand, it is unlikely that he or she will be able to write as fast as a skilled typist. For this reason, it may come as no surprise that Bui, Myerson, and Hale (2012) found that students using computers (in an L1 context) were able to take significantly more lecture notes than students writing by hand. They also found that students who typed their notes performed better on a test of lecture comprehension, but Beck, Hartley, Hustedde, and Felsberg (2014) were unable to replicate this finding. Results from a similar study by Mueller and Oppenheimer (2014) also contradicted Bui et al. (2012). In their study, L1 students taking notes on a computer did not do as well on a recall task as peers who used pencil and paper. The authors suggest that because they were able to type quickly, they essentially wrote down verbatim what the lecturer said, and that this actually impeded comprehension. These results suggest that the kind of cognitive processing that goes on during the encoding function may be critical. Namely, that it is important to process the information and transfer it into one's own words rather than just writing down word for word what the speaker says.

Question 8: Does the provision of notes or outlines have any impact on how students take notes and how well they comprehend lectures?

One method of helping students deal with the challenge of notetaking is to provide training in effective techniques, as was noted above. However, another potentially useful method is to provide students with outlines or other types of lecture notes before a lecture is given. In L1 contexts, a number of studies have been conducted which attempted to examine the possible benefits of this type of support. In a review of these studies, Armbruster (2009) concludes that, on the whole, the evidence is that these methods help students to take more notes and facilitate learning. Most recently, Peverly et al. (2013) found that even just providing students with sheets of paper which indicated the main sections of the lecture aided comprehension. Working in an L2 context, Song (2008, cited in Song, 2011), found that providing an outline benefitted students, but this applied more to higher-level students than lower-level students. For the higher-level students, the outline led to more and better organized notes. In contrast, the lower-level students appeared to have been unsure of where in the outline to record details, and this may explain why their notes were less complete.

Conclusion

This brief overview of research into lecture notetaking has addressed a number of issues that are likely to be relevant to teachers who teach academic listening. Although it is hoped that this will answer some questions teachers may have, it is important to reiterate that the amount of research in L2 contexts is limited, and that at this point it is too early to make any firm conclusions. Nevertheless, the research that has been done has begun to shed some light on important issues, in some cases confirming and extending results found in the much more extensive body of research in L1 contexts (e.g., the benefits of training), but in other cases yielding different results (e.g., the role of language proficiency). Considering that in the future, students in Japan and other countries will likely be faced with an increase in the number of lecture courses they must take in English, and considering how important notetaking abilities are for academic success, it is essential that more research addressing these and other important questions be conducted.

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Creating Training Sessions and Lesson Materials from Study Abroad Interviews

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Students will most likely need some kind of support before studying abroad, either culturally or linguistically, in order to help them adjust to their new lives. This research proposes a method, via analyzing interview data, that details how to make materials for lessons and training sessions that prepare students for study abroad. It was found that students appreciated the training session, and felt that the information and strategies offered and generated were valuable.

留学前に学生たちが新しい生活に適応できるよう文化や言語に関する支援が必要である。本研究では、面接データを分析して留学準備用の授業やトレーニングのための教材の作成方法を提案する。実際、学生たちは実施されたトレーニングセッションを高く評価し、提起された情報や方法が役に立つと感じたことが判明した。

The need for training sessions, workshops, and in-class preparations before embarking on a study abroad experience has been suggested by many researchers (Gebhard, 2013; Trice, 2004; Wang, 2009). In Wang's (2009) study of resiliency characteristics and adjustment of international graduate students studying at American universities, she argued that students should begin the process of adjustment "well before even leaving home" (p. 41). Wang also encourages teachers and international centers to offer programs and activities to increase students' resiliency by various means, including learning about possible difficulties because "people can usually function better when they can anticipate what is coming" (p. 41). Similarly, Gebhard (2013) argues for programs to offer advice about social and academic adjustment and "provide strategies that students can use when faced with emotional turmoil…" (p. 176).

This study's purpose is to highlight how teachers and administrators can provide lesson materials and training sessions based on interview data to their study abroad students.

Background

The setting for this study is at a medium sized (roughly 8,000 students) science and technology university in Japan. The program that the research was based on is called the Overseas Research Experience Program (OREP). The research was conducted in the initial and second years of the OREP. In total, 16 students were selected based on their objectives, preparation, and feasibility with time limitations—stays were limited from one to three months. There were no interviews given as part of the selection process. Also, no training sessions about living abroad, apart from one safety training, were given to students.

Prior to going on the OREP, four of the sixteen students agreed to record their experiences, either through emails, photos, social media updates, blogs, or journals. They also agreed to be interviewed in English and Japanese after they returned from the OREP. Each student signed a consent form written in Japanese and was told that their identities would be protected. Students were also informed that information about their experiences would help the next year's OREP students.

Methodology

There were three stages of data collection: 1. data collection of student-generated content; 2. post study abroad interviews; and, 3. training session survey results, examples of which are outlined later in "Training Session."

Student Generated Content

Students kept journals or blogs, updated their social media accounts, took pictures, or sent us messages while they were abroad. All this information was read or seen by both authors, and from this material the authors prepared most of the questions for the interviews. The questions specifically addressed key issues or enjoyable moments that the students experienced.

Interviews

After all four students returned to Japan, both authors interviewed the students separately in English and Japanese for approximately 30 minutes each. Only one author and one participant were in the interview room at a time. The authors were concerned with talking about feelings, key events, troubles, and successes.

The English language interviews were then transcribed. Due to time limitations and the requirement for translation of the social media posts into English and training session materials into Japanese, only the English language interviews were transcribed for the present study. Both authors, however, listened to the Japanese language interviews and made notes about common themes that were brought up. During transcription of the interviews, the first author made sure to review all recordings and correct any transcription errors. There was an attempt to record all utterances, including most backchannels. During the interviews, the authors also asked the students to draw two graphs: one graph of the amount of English and Japanese used while abroad, and the other graph of how the students felt during their time abroad (see Figures 1 and 2, respectively).

The interview transcripts in English were then examined by the authors. Common themes were identified and coded with different colors. This student interview data was then used as the basis for the training session and lesson materials.

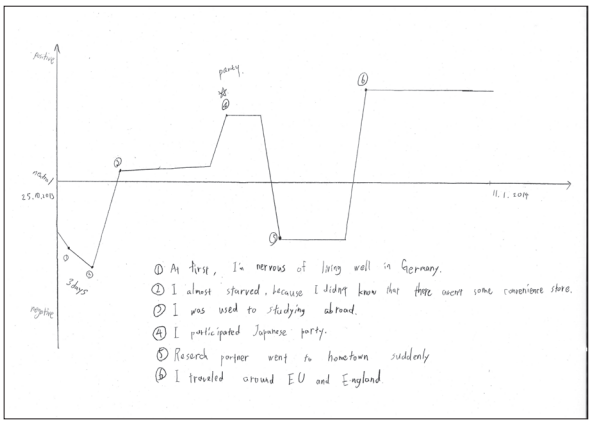

Figure 2. **Ken's annotated 'mood versus time' graph (Germany).**

Participants

All participants were graduate students in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. Of the four participants, three were former students of one of the authors, and the fourth student frequently came into the language learning center, where one of the authors works, to prepare for his trip. This may have been a factor in the amount of information that students were willing to share.

Hiroshi

Hiroshi went to Taiwan for 78 days to conduct research and attend lectures both in English and

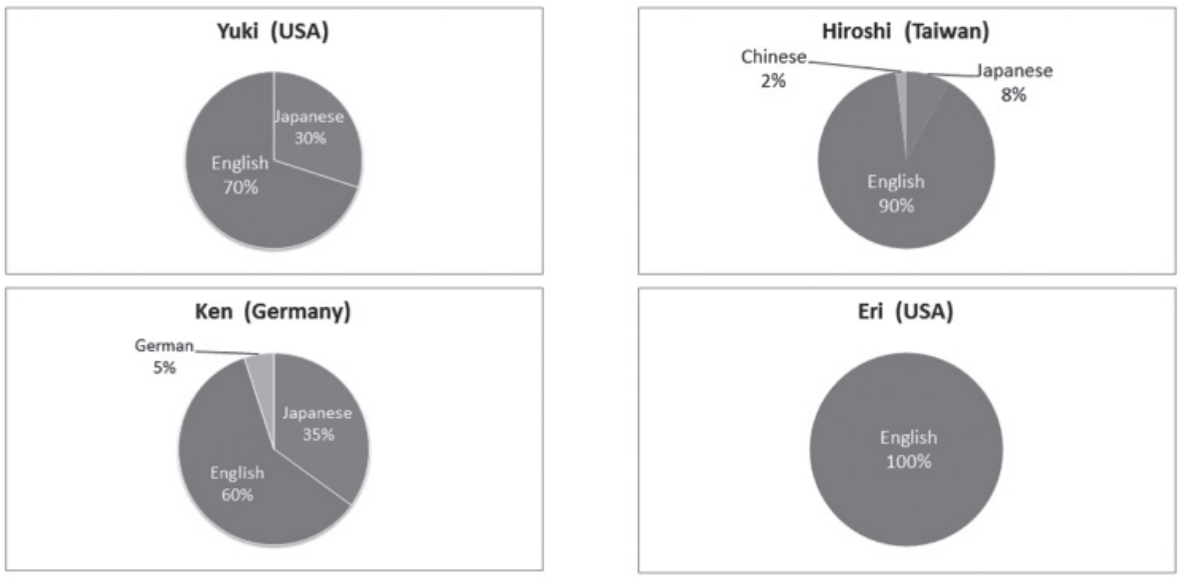

Figure 1. **Amount of English, Japanese, and other languages spoken while abroad.**

Chinese. Hiroshi did not understand Chinese, but the lesson materials were all in English. During the course of his stay, Hiroshi sent 44 emails to the authors, all in English, updating us about his daily life, thoughts, and activities. We noticed that social interactions and making friends were frequently mentioned in these correspondences. For example, in the first email Hiroshi wrote, "When I am in trouble, Taiwanese help me." In the last email he wrote, "Power electronic class use Chinese. It is hard to understand it. But lab member often helps me. I deeply appreciate lab members' gracious support." We discussed this theme further in the interview after Hiroshi came back.

Hiroshi joined a Japanese club as well, and made friends with his lab members, counting "about 80 friends" that he made in total. Joining organizations or groups that Hiroshi had interest in seemed to be quite beneficial for Hiroshi in terms of meeting new people, making friends, and learning more about Taiwanese culture.

Some issues that came up with Hiroshi were with pronunciation. On day 20 in email number 18, with the subject heading "Pronunciation is difficult" Hiroshi wrote:

> There are many loanword in Japan. The loanword often expressed Katakana in Japan. Katakana is Japanese syllabary(sic) mainly used for loanword or onopatomoeia(sic). I get used to pronounce Katakana. For example, world, variable, and hot…But I can't tell Taiwanese these. Because I speak Katakana. I want to pronounce good.

Hiroshi realized that Taiwanese people could not understand his pronunciation sometimes. We asked him what strategies he used to overcome this issue in his interview. The issues he had with listening and pronunciation and the strategies he used were turned into study abroad lesson materials (see Figure 3). Incorporating actual student voices from real encounters can lend validity to lesson and training materials. Students can then try to imagine what they would do in a particular situation, generating several ideas on how to improve their pronunciation, for example, or other issues that a person abroad may be faced with.

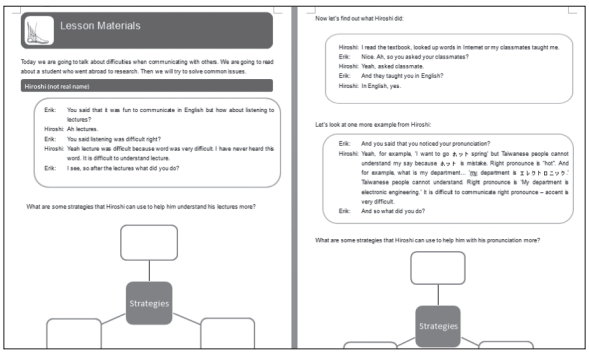

***Figure 3*. An example of lesson materials based on interview data with Hiroshi.**

Note: *This figure illustrates a way to strategize about improving pronunciation.

Yuki

During his stay of just over a month at a university in the US, Yuki posted 17 posts on his blog in Japanese, which he allowed the authors to access. All posts were translated into English by one of the authors. In addition, Yuki kept a daily journal in English, which had 38 entries. Each day's events, thoughts, and schedule were recorded. In his English journal on his second day, Yuki wrote, "I went to dinner with [X] universitie's (sic) member. I could understand what they talk. But I couldn't make sentence for talk. I'm afraid of life in [X] university." Using quotes like these from students' actual experiences in the classroom or for study abroad training sessions can help students prepare for what they may also experience when living abroad in a new environment. Asking students to think of strategies to navigate these kinds of likely situations has the potential to aid in the initial adjustment of life overseas.

Another issue the authors noticed from coding the interview data from the participants was that some students had transportation problems. See Figure 4 for Yuki's transportation problem.

Yuki was afraid of not being able to get back to the university because he was not familiar with the city bus system. By showing prospective study abroad students or students studying a language in a classroom these kinds of situations, students can begin to imagine the kinds of everyday worries and fears that can prevent them from a fuller study abroad or travel experience. Working through common troubles, and by talking about what to do in these everyday situations in class or in training sessions can hopefully prepare students more to find strategies to overcome some of their worries.

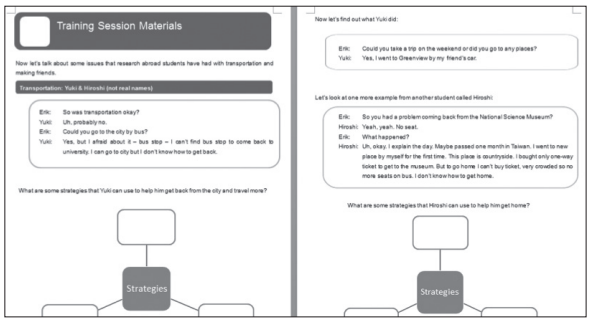

***Figure 4*. An example of the training session materials created based on interview data.**

Note:*This figure illustrates some issues Yuki and Hiroshi had with transportation that allow students to find possible solutions.

Eri

During her 43 days conducting research abroad at a university in the US, Eri sent emails and updated her Facebook about her experiences. From her posts and emails, it seemed that Eri had a nice experience with few problems. On her last Facebook update, Eri wrote (translated), "My studying in the U.S. was really fun from beginning to end. I'll miss everyone. I'm glad to have had such a wonderful time and experiences, and to have met fantastic friends." When I asked about making friends with her laboratory members in the interview, however, Eri had a difficult time.

Eri: I'm hard to make a friends because lab in the PhD students only. And another lab is PhD students only. I…it is trouble to make friends.

Author: Oh really? Why? How…can you talk more about that?

Eri: The PhD students is very friendly. They are…they think me friends but I respect them. For me it's different…different for, yeah, friends. […]

Eri: In Japan we are [including Eri] …graduate students is top in my lab. But the [PhD students in Indiana] are more three years perform their research. Their skill and brain is very intelligent. When I have a trouble they're teach me to fix my trouble.

Here Eri talks about her difficulty making friends with her lab members for two reasons: first, they are very busy; and second, Eri sees them as higher in the lab hierarchy, i.e., as mentors, and not as equals, hindering, for her, the ability to become friends. She has still not received her Master's degree so she sees her lab members more as people to turn to for expertise and research advice than as people to socialize with outside of university. Cultural attitudes may be a factor here, since in Japan the *senpai* and *kohai* (roughly mentor/senior and mentee/junior) relationship dynamic is common. Eri remarks that the PhD students see her, in fact, as a friend, but she still feels that their seniority is a barrier to becoming friends. Talking about these and other cultural issues (that come directly from the students) in class might also help students understand differences in culture.

Ken

Ken spent 78 days researching at a university in Germany. He took several photos and shared them with the authors upon his return to Japan. Although finding some difficulty arranging housing, Ken seemed to have a good overall experience. Again, the subject of socializing and making friends came up after one of the first questions.

Author: How was your experience in Germany?

Ken: Uh, at first I feel…I was very nervous. Hmm, at first I, I was alone so I want to… I want to make some friend.

Ken attended an international party at his host university and made some friends who he ended up traveling with to other countries in the region after his research was completed. The authors used this quote to make training session materials about making new friends.

Training Session

There were 10 attendees at the pre-study abroad training session for the second year OREP students, out of a total of 26 in the program's second year. The session was not mandatory. The schedule of the training session (see Figure 5) started with the topic of adjusting to a new culture. This was followed by two brainstorming sessions on the topics of transportation and making friends which were chosen based on the analysis of data received from students and from the interviews.

For the first topic, the authors asked students to draw how they thought they would feel during their time abroad (mood versus time) and then showed them the graphs of the four students who had gone the previous year (see Figure 2). One student remarked in the survey, "I'm relieved to know everyone will experience periods of feeling high and low during study abroad." Students also produced graphs of what percentage of English they

thought they would use while abroad and were then presented with the previous students' language use graphs (see Figure 1).

Students seemed to appreciate how we incorporated real student data and situations. One student remarked, "It was good to know some examples of possible situations we may experience. We could discuss real situations." Another student wrote, "Through referring to previous data, we had a good opportunity to get ready for problems with transportation and making friends." Lastly, students also made comments about wanting more pre-study abroad training sessions. "I hope more of these kinds of sessions will be held," one student wrote. All ten students found the session at least somewhat helpful, with eight students checking "useful" and two "somewhat useful." The other choices were "unsatisfied" or "not sure." All comments were anonymous and translated into English by one of the researchers.

Researching Abroad Training Session Program

I. Adjusting to a new culture (20 minutes)

1. Draw feelings/time graph (projected)
2. Share graph with your group
3. Look at previous research abroad students' graphs
4. Briefly talk about adjusting to a new culture

II. Transportation (15 minutes)

5. Give transportation scenarios and groups come up with advice or solutions
6. Reveal what previous research abroad students actually did

III. Making friends (15 minutes)

7. Brainstorm ways to meet new people and make friends
8. Reveal what students last year did to make new friends and meet people

IV. Q&A (10 minutes)

9. Students make questions together in their groups
10. Go over questions together as a class

***Figure 5*. Researching abroad training session program.**

Implications

In this study, the participants were graduate students in STEM fields studying in labs abroad, but any teacher or international center staff member could adapt this style—interviewing students, transcribing data, and using that data to make activities and training sessions—for any kind of study abroad experience. Even if students do not provide information during their experience abroad, the post study abroad interview can still provide a wealth of information that can be mined for possible use in a training session or lesson plan.

Universities that do not offer training sessions or preparation programs for students should take into account that students do need support, and that this support can make a difference in the adjustment of their academic and social lives during their study abroad experiences.

Suggestions for Further Research

More interviews, both additional interviews with the same students and more interviews with returnees from the OREP, could provide richer data to showcase not only the commonalities of students' experiences studying abroad, but also the variability and uniqueness of each student's experience. In addition, interviewing returnees who have taken part in training sessions could be beneficial to understanding how effective or useful the training sessions indeed were.

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Junko Murao has been a university lecturer in Japan for over 15 years. She is interested in researching e-learning programs, study abroad programs, and textbook and material design.


Philip Head and Gerry McLellan

We welcome submissions for the My Share column. Submissions should be up to 600 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers, and should conform to the My Share format (see the guidelines on our website below).

Email: my-share@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare

Spring is a wonderful time in Japan. Cherry blossoms provide a colorful reminder of winter's retreat and the beginning of another new academic year. So, while watching nature renew and refresh itself, why not take the opportunity to refresh your own teaching and start the new school term armed with the following useful classroom ideas?

Jeremiah Hall starts us off with a vocabulary review activity that taps into student creativity by allowing students to create their own stories, as well as creating resources for their classmates while actively using vocabulary. Next, Tsui-Ping Cheng finds a use for those click-bait articles that pop up all over the Internet by having students examine them to learn how to effectively get the attention of their audience. And, speaking of content that constantly clutters our social media feeds, Michael Sullivan shows us an effective way to teach students to gather and present poll data. In addition, Steven MacWhinnie presents a fun way to introduce the oft-neglected (but very useful for correct pronunciation) International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to students through the use of proverbs.

You can also go online to find not only useful appendices that accompany many articles, but also online-exclusive content, such as Alison Nemoto's method of creating an inclusive and communicative classroom environment through making creative group names as well as Gordon Carlson's fun and physically active method of teaching directions through a competitive group puzzle-solving race. With all this in mind, take time to enjoy the blossoms secure in the knowledge that there is no shortage of useful ideas to help you make the most of the new school year.

Vocabulary Review Through Narrative

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Quick Guide

- Keywords: *Speaking, comprehension, vocabulary*
- Learner English level: *Intermediate and above*
- Learner maturity: *University*
- Preparation time: *20 minutes*
- Activity time: *30-45 minutes*
- Materials: *Vocabulary list*

People have long used stories to help remember things, as attested to by oral traditions around the globe. Narratives surround us for most of our lives, and stories provide us with a natural format for practicing and remembering vocabulary words. Using narrative forms in the class can help make learning more fun while unobtrusively assisting with the transition from vocabulary memorization to practical language production.

Preparation

Choose words from class materials to make a vocabulary list, including definitions and appropriate grammatical permutations for each.

Procedure

Step 1: Arrange students into groups of three to five.

Step 2: Direct groups to each create a short story that incorporates all of the provided vocabulary words. Have them try to use at least one vocabulary word in each sentence. Teams may choose any kind of scenario they like (scary, silly, etc.).

Step 3: Have groups write out their stories and remove the vocabulary words, leaving a blank space for each word.

Step 4: Instruct teams to exchange stories and fill in the blanks in the story they receive.

Step 5: Have teams present the results of the fill-in-the-blank exercise. Then, have the team that originally created the story present the original version. Ask students to discuss any differences and see how the stories may have changed.

Variations

Allow students to develop the vocabulary lists themselves, giving them more control over which

vocabulary words are used in the stories. These lists can be different for each team, or the same.

Skip Steps 3, 4, and 5, and instead, have teams present their stories to everyone. Ask the students to vote for their favorite story.

Conclusion

I have found this activity to be most helpful when used for vocabulary reviews near the middle and end of term. It not only helps students remember vocabulary, but it helps them use it in a meaningful way. At the same time, having students get their creative juices flowing makes studying more fun, making this a potentially powerful tool for language instruction.

A Critical Look at Upworthy Headlines

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Quick Guide

- Keywords: *Hooks, speaking task, peer feedback*
- Learner English level: *Intermediate and above*
- Learner maturity: *University*
- Preparation time: *30 minutes*
- Activity time: *30–40 minutes*
- Materials: *Handout, computer, internet connection, projector*

Launched in 2013, the website Upworthy has generated discussions of social issues for the past couple of years. The site's success has to do with its catchy headlines on videos such as: "Experience for 60 seconds how the world looks, sounds, and feels to someone who has Autism," "Watch a teenager bring his class to tears just by saying a few words," and "See why we have an absolutely ridiculous standard of beauty in just 37 seconds" (<http://www.upworthy.com>). Titles like these are so emotional and sensational that people can't help but click on them and share them through social media. By analyzing Upworthy headlines in class, students will learn strategies that arouse an audience's curiosity, and appeal to their emotions, and use such strategies in future presentations and essays.

Preparation

Step 1: Ask students to decide on their topics and research them before class.

Step 2: Go to <http://www.upworthy.com>. Select 4–5 headlines that showcase a good range of hook strategies (see Appendix A for examples of strategies). Consider students' interests, proficiency, and vocabulary level in the selection.

Step 3: Prepare a handout with the selected headlines (see Appendix B for an example). Make enough copies for students to read in pairs.

Procedure

Step 1: Explain to students why it is important to hook an audience's attention in the introduction to a presentation or essay. Write a couple of methods for accomplishing this on the board. Emphasize that the method has to be relevant to their topics. A list of common hook methods is available in Appendix A.

Step 2: On the screen, briefly introduce the Upworthy website.

Step 3: Distribute the handout. Explain how the first headline grabs the reader's attention.

Step 4: Have students form pairs, analyze the remaining headlines, and discuss their ideas in English. Call on a few pairs to share their answers with the class. Write these on the board.

Step 5: Point out any hook strategy that was not commented on by students.

Step 6: Refer to the notes on the board and have students vote for the most effective headline. Elicit answers and reasons from a few pairs.

Step 7: Explain how the recurring strategies in Upworthy headlines can be used to create an effective introduction.

Step 8: Instruct students to brainstorm at least two different hooks for their own topics.

Step 9: Have students form new pairs, share their hook strategies, give each other feedback, and decide on the most effective strategy (or a combination of strategies).

Extension

For homework, have students go to the Upworthy or Upworthy generator <http://www.upworthy-generator.com> websites and choose one headline that attracts them the most. Have them share their choices in the following class.

Conclusion

Using Upworthy headlines as examples is a quick way to help students understand the key elements of an effective hook. This activity can raise students' awareness of how to draw an audience's attention right away. The awareness is reflected not only in how students plan their introduction, but also in how they evaluate each other's hook methods.

Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

Presenting and Discussing In-Class Poll Results

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Quick Guide

- Keywords: *Survey, poll, graph description*
- Learner English level: *Intermediate and above*
- Learner maturity: *University*
- Preparation time: *20-30 minutes*
- Activity time: *45-60 minutes*
- Materials: *Polling worksheet*

There is a growing need for English language learners to not only express and elicit from others their thoughts on topics of the day, but also to analyze and present any related data. So, why not do so with the help of an in-class poll or survey? A survey generally consists of a question or a set of questions used to help gauge the thoughts, opinions, or attitudes of others. In this learner-centered activity, students are asked to carry out a survey among their peers, present results in graph form, assess the results in small groups, and then discuss how these results relate to the general population at large by comparing the results of similar surveys by outside media sources.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare a worksheet on which students can design a graph and write a short description of the results. The worksheet should provide key graph description and opinion language across the top of the page.

Step 2: Select several topical questions for each group (at least one question per group member). Different groups can have the same questions as long as two members of the same group do not have the same question. Show the questions that the students can choose on a projector or blackboard. Make sure that the content and language of the questions suit the students' level.

Step 3: Give each student the question the day or week before the activity. For homework, have the students read over the question and check the meaning of any unknown vocabulary.

Step 4: Prepare a PowerPoint slide or sheet of paper with the results from an actual online poll for the same questions. Several news organizations hold online polls, often daily or weekly. For example, the Daily Mail Online <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/columnists/polls/index.html> conducts a number of daily polls on various topics, ranging from health and science to showbiz and sports.

Procedure

Step 1: Review graph description and opinion language before starting the activity.

Step 2: Arrange students in small groups. Within each group, each student chooses a different question of the week.

Step 3: Each student then mingles with students from outside the small group to get responses to his or her particular question.

Step 4: Students return to their desks to compile and tabulate the responses.

Step 5: On the worksheet, each student designs a graph (e.g., pie chart or bar graph) and writes up a brief graph description based on the responses.

Step 6: Each student gives a mini-presentation to their group on the results. In their presentations, each student defines the question, but also introduces, highlights, explains, and summarizes their graph.

Step 7: Have the other students in their group then express their opinion on the topic and the results.

Step 8: Once all students in the group have given their presentations and expressed opinions on the student results, the students predict the results from an online poll asking the same questions. Students then look over the online responses, assessing and comparing within their group the in-class results with the online ones.

Conclusion

The primary intention of this activity is to encourage learners to be responsible for their own learning. However, by collecting, organizing, discussing, evaluating, and presenting survey data, and by comparing student-generated results with those compiled by the media, secondary goals come into play, such as building vocabulary, creating and describing graphs and charts, developing fluency, and fostering interactivity among learners.

Learning the IPA with Proverbs

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Quick Guide

- Keywords: *IPA, pronunciation, vocabulary*
- Learner English level: *Intermediate*
- Learner maturity: *High school and above*
- Preparation time: *10 minutes*
- Activity time: *5-10 minutes every class period*
- Materials: *Blackboard, chalk, IPA reference sheet*

Many students are concerned with their ability to correctly pronounce English. However, there is often little or no time spent instructing students on how to use the pronunciation guides in their textbooks and dictionaries. This activity is designed for multiple class periods. Over the course of a semester or a year, students will become familiar with the use of IPA, or alternately their textbook pronunciation guides.

Preparation

Step 1: Download an IPA pronunciation guide. Alternatively, simply use the pronunciation guide from your course textbook or from a dictionary, although it will often differ from IPA. Decide if your goal is to teach students IPA or the pronunciation key from their textbook or dictionaries. You may wish to spend some class time explaining how to use the IPA guide you choose.

Step 2: Choose proverbs. These can be from memory or simply by searching the web for "English proverbs." It is a good idea to use straightforward proverbs so that students will be able to understand them easily. When you choose a proverb, decide what IPA sound you wish to focus on during that class. That IPA sound should be reflected in the proverb you choose.

Step 3: Transcribe the chosen proverb into IPA. You may wish to print out your transcribed proverb beforehand, or, alternatively, you can write the proverb by hand on the board in class.

Procedure

Step 1: At the beginning of class as students are coming into the classroom, have a proverb written in IPA on the board.

Step 2: Have students copy the proverb into their notebook and try to figure out each word by saying it aloud.

Step 3: Check that the students are able to say the word correctly, and, in turn, write each word in the proverb in their notebooks using both the alphabet and IPA.

Step 4: Have the students focus on the target IPA sound and, if desired, provide additional examples of words containing that sound. It is also helpful to explain or show mouth shape and tongue placement for difficult sounds.

Additional: You may wish to spend some time discussing the meaning of the proverb if it is not immediately obvious.

Conclusion

For this activity to be effective, it must be done every class period for an extended period of time. Students in my class were able to read and say words I wrote in IPA after spending a semester studying using this method. The use of proverbs helps to challenge the students by allowing them to engage with the content. The students weren't simply memorizing symbols, they were applying that knowledge to a problem. The students were interested in the proverbs which gave them motivation to remember the IPA to expedite reading and to understand them. This activity can function as a simple warm-up or be extended to take up more time by discussing the meaning of the proverbs in depth as well as some discussion of similar proverbs in the students' native language.

Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

Adam Lebowitz

"Outside the Box" 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.

Email: outside-the-box@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/outside-the-box

My present hiatus from the Academy has reintroduced me to the world of the *shakaijin* EFL learner. Compared to university students, they are older, have more life experience, and have a longer history of personal decision making. Consequently, each has their story, and "typicality" becomes a weak assumption at best. Therefore, what inspires them to study, and what defines "success?" Producer, scriptwriter, director, and chiropractor (plus, part-time elderly care worker) Takahashi Yoshibumi gives us this brief, personal history that shows that the way of the artist, especially through L2, is fraught with difficulties.

On Being a Fool for English

Takahashi Yoshibumi

I became a fool for English due to the American films I saw in my childhood and youth. Ultimately, this affection would lead me to make independent films, and into a deep study of the language. Initially, I was forced to dive into this alphabet culture when subtitling my work. Ultimately, in 1999, I decided to go to Amsterdam. Carrying two heavy cans of 16mm film, I went around looking for a buyer for my work so it could be shown at film festivals. I also wanted to visit the grave of the Dutch photographer, Ed van der Elsken, whose work and bohemian life I loved to death.

For the first six months, I stayed at a Christian youth hostel, paying my way as a cleaner. Every night, I joined in a group discussing the wisdom of the Bible. After that, a group of young—oh, so young—Greek, American, French, Aussie, Israeli, and Japanese friends and I found a flat and lived together for months. We somehow could argue all night, despite my pretty awkward English, about our poverty, finding decent food and city survival as well as other short quarrels. This provided many precious and sensational occasions for my *back pages*: "Youthful Idiot Works Toward Sentimental Dreams."

This survival continued, and after one year I was still poor and without a buyer for my films. I realised I needed to know more about the business of making film deals, so I decided to go back to school. At the age of 31, I entered a small art school in Amsterdam, but after just three months had passed, the principal—not a very nice guy—suddenly announced I should go back to Japan. I still don't know why he did so, but as my luck did not seem about to change anytime soon, I decided to take his advice.

What have these experiences taught me? Aside from English ability, something else is necessary to stay on this path. Maybe I should become Bob Dylan?

Call for Submissions: Do you have a unique student? By all means, let us know their story, as well as any other ideas that may be "outside the box." SUBMIT!

Edo Forsythe

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 editor before submitting.

Email: tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/tlt-wired

Using the Sketch Engine Corpus Query Tool for Language Teaching

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Corpora, and the tools used to query them, have seen rapid advancements in the last decade. These advancements have primarily been concerned with the exploitation of web-derived linguistic data through the development of sophisticated tools that can handle the crawling, processing, and analysing of the data extracted from the World Wide Web. These web corpora, often made up of billions of words, rather than the millions associated with more traditional corpora like the British National Corpus (BNC), can be loaded into web-based corpus query systems, such as Sketch Engine, CQPweb, and Colibri2, allowing corpus querying to be done anywhere. This article gives a brief overview of the rise of web corpora and web-based corpus query systems, and outlines some of the ways in which the Sketch Engine—a web-based corpus query system built around a huge number of web-derived corpora—can be exploited for educational purposes.

The Rise of Web Corpora and Web-Based Corpus Query Systems

The benefits of exploiting web text within corpus linguistics were recognised over 15 years ago, with Kilgarriff (2001) stating that "the web is with us, giving access to colossal quantities of text, of any number of varieties, at the click of a button, for free" (p. 344). Bernardini, Baroni, and Evert (2006) put forward four different conceptualisations of the relationship between the web text and corpus linguistics: (a) web as a corpus shop, whereby researchers download texts retrieved by search engines and make disposable corpora; (b) web as a corpus surrogate, whereby the web is accessed through search engines to achieve tasks such as translations; (c) web as a corpus proper, which looks at the web as a whole in terms of web English; and (d) a mega-corpus mini-web, which involves combining large amounts of web-derived texts with corpus characteristics, such as part-of-speech annotation (pp. 10-14).

Going hand-in-hand with the rise of web corpora have been rapid advancements in the tools used to query them. The most groundbreaking advancements have been with the development of web-based corpus query systems, meaning that users can engage in corpus linguistics without needing to download the corpora or the software programs. For web corpora, this has been an essential development as it means users can easily and cheaply access ultra-large-scale corpora that would be too large and costly to distribute for download. This has untied corpus linguistics from private computers and moved it into a cloud-based, mobile environment. Indeed, it is now possible to make a rapid query of a ten-billion word corpus of any of the world's major languages simply through using an Internet connected device.

The Sketch Engine

One of the first and most widely used platforms to bring together web corpora and web-based corpus query tools is the Sketch Engine <https://www.sketchengine.co.uk>. This is an online corpus interface that houses over 200 corpora of over 80 languages. At its core it includes a family of 31 web corpora of most of the world's major languages, called the TenTen family. Each one contains between two and 15 billion words that have been crawled and processed in a similar manner. Whilst the corpora are not balanced in the traditional sense of balanced corpora, such as the Brown Corpus on written American English and the LOB Corpus on written British English, the fact that they are part of a family makes it possible to compare the behavior of words between the different web-based languages.

The central function of the Sketch Engine is the *word sketch*, which is used to reveal how words

behave collocationally and grammatically within a corpus. These were originally developed in order to help with lexicography, and are now used widely within language research and education in general. Figure 1 shows a word sketch from the jpTenTen11 corpus of Japanese web text for the English loanword インターナショナル (*intaanashonaru*) [international]. Through the word sketch, a rich overview of the behaviour of this word in all of its 55,821 instances in the corpus becomes quickly and easily visible, and is something that would be all but impossible through introspection alone. The word can be further investigated through analysing the concordance lines, and comparing the loanword with its native, near-semantic equivalent of 国際 (*kokusai)* [international]. This is possible using the innovative function of the *sketch-diff*, which allows the user to compare the collocational and grammatical behaviour of two similar words to draw out the important differences in usage. This word sketch could then be compared with the English language form of *international*, generated from the enTenTen12 corpus.

The Sketch Engine for Language Learning

Word sketches can be brought into the classroom through access to the full Sketch Engine system, via individual or institutional licenses after a one-month free trial. This allows full access to a wide variety of corpora in a large number of languages, and it allows the student to exploit a range of corpus query tools for activities such as concordancing, producing word frequency lists, and comparing near synonyms. There has been a recent, pedagogically-focused development of the Sketch Engine with the introduction of the Sketch Engine for Language Learning (SkELL) <https://skell.sketchengine.co.uk/run.cgi/skell>, which is a free, online, stripped-down version of the full software program.

SkELL references a one-billion word web corpus of English, with a simple, student-friendly user interface. It is built around three primary functions: concordancing, word sketches, and a thesaurus. The concordancing tool returns 40 corpus-based examples of the keyword in context. These can be used to develop reading skills such as context clues, where students try to define a word by examining its linguistic context. Using copy and paste, the concordance lines can also be used to create a fill-in-the-gap exercise (see Appendix) where the search word, or words in the context, can be blanked out for the students to fill in. For more collocational and grammatical detail, the word sketch function of SkELL produces compact versions of the full word sketches in the Sketch Engine, and can be used to get a quick overview of the different senses of a word. Figure 2 shows that the collocates are arranged by grammatical category, which means focus can be given to specific collocations within particular grammatical structures and categories, allowing a rich understanding of the word's behaviour. Furthermore,

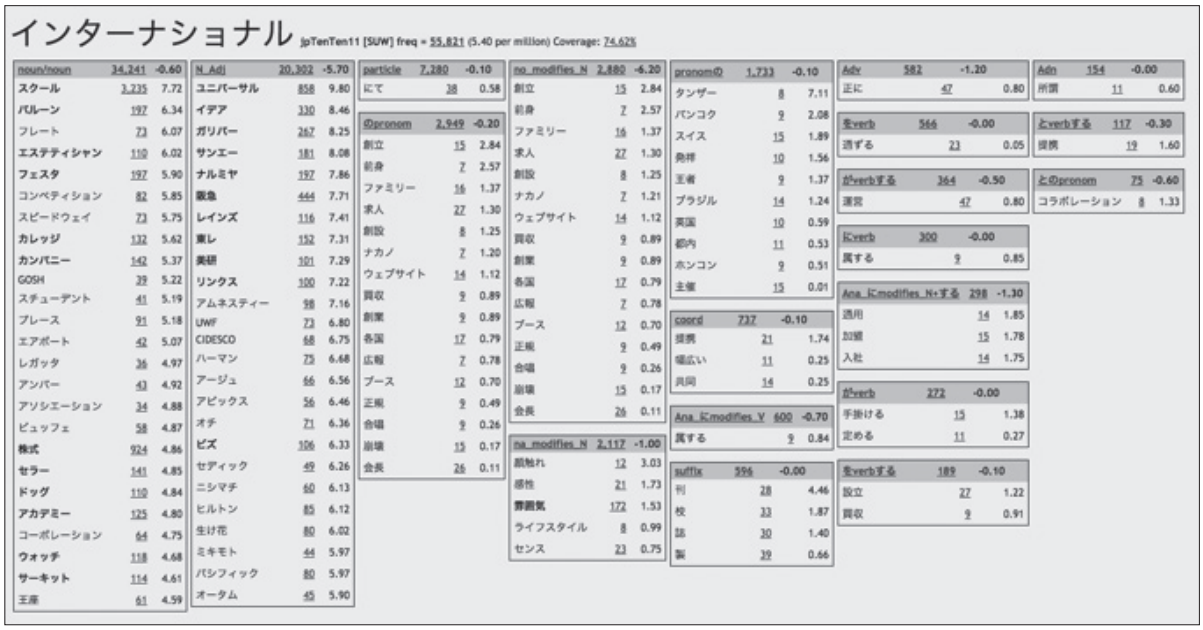

Figure 1. **A word sketch from the jpTenTen11 (Japanese) corpus for the English loanword インターナショナル (*intaanashonaru)* [international].**

Figure 2. **A word sketch produced in SkELL for the English word *international*.**

each of the collocates is clickable, which takes the user to new concordance lines of the search word in context with the selected collocation. The third function of producing lists of similar words returns around 20 synonyms of the search word, and can help with developing skills such as selecting alternative expressions for a writing task.

The most rewarding way in which corpus tools are put into practice in my classes is by encouraging students to pursue corpus-based analyses of the English language for their graduation theses. A particularly insightful study compared the meanings of Japanese loanwords in English with their counterparts in the Japanese language via a comparative analysis of their most frequent collocations. This was done by using the collocation function of the Sketch Engine to generate lists of the collocations, as well as by generating lists of similar words to the main search word using the thesaurus function. Another student used the tools within the Sketch Engine to create their own mini-corpus of Japan-related English web pages, and looked at the ways in which Japanese culture is described in English. Another study focused on English in the Japanese linguistic landscape, and used English corpora to check the frequencies and meanings of words that are used on Japanese shop signs.

Conclusion and Further Reading

Corpus linguistics as a method of investigating language has been greatly invigorated by the increasing availability of corpora and corpus query tools. This has been made possible through the rapid advancements made with web corpora, which allow them to be compiled with significantly less human and financial resources than has been previously possible. This, in turn, has led many of the corpora and corpus querying tools to become cloud-based, such as the Sketch Engine and SkELL tools, meaning that access to corpus linguistics has been opened up to anyone with Internet access who wants to investigate how language behaves. For language education in particular, the advancements in simplifying the access to large-scale corpora means that corpus-based data can become a regular part of language teaching, learning, and research. More details on using the Sketch Engine for learning English, including a large number of practical classroom exercises and examples, can be found in *Discovering English with the Sketch Engine* (Thomas, 2015).

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Kilgarriff, A. (2001). Web as corpus. In P. Rayson, A. Wilson, T. McEnery, A. Hardie, & S. Khoja (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Corpus Linguistics 2001 Conference* (pp. 342–344). Lancaster, U.K.: University of Lancaster.

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Editor's Note: The web has brought a myriad of tools to our students' fingertips, and Keith Barrs has shared an engaging tool for investigating how language is evolving and being used today. The appendix is available below. You can learn about many more tools and technology practices at JALTCALL 2016 this June at Tamagawa University. Registration begins soon, and details are available at <http://conference.jaltcall.org>. Together we'll learn how to keep our classes *Wired!*

Appendix

Context Clues Concordance Jigsaw Activity

Instructions (based on a class of 16 students)

- Make four groups. Give each group one of the four sets of 10 concordance lines.
- Ask groups to think about the missing word in their set (the missing word is the same for all the concordance lines in that set).
- Guide them to use the context around the missing words in the concordance lines to help make their decision. (For example, using background knowledge, part-of-speech, and meaning)
- Ask students to make notes of anything interesting that appeared in the concordance lines, for example multiple meanings of the word, figurative language, and spelling/grammatical mistakes.
- Reorganise the groups so there is one student representative from each of the four concordance sets in each of the four new groups.
- Give each group some extra copies of the concordance sets. Have the student representative for each group encourage the others to guess the missing word for their set, and then explain anything interesting that they had noticed about the concordance set in their previous group.
- For homework, ask students to make their own concordance set, with the keyword blanked out, for a vocabulary word related to the theme of the course.

Concordance Set 1

1	The preceding & following _____s were very snowy.
2	Ice hockey is official national _____ sport.
3	France has neither _____ nor summer nor morals.
4	It looks like _____ has finally arrived.
5	A late _____ means a late spring.
6	The rice barrel was left empty during the _____ months.
7	This course is offered during _____ quarter only.
8	During _____ temperatures frequently drop below freezing at night.
9	The area enjoys warm summers and mild _____s.
10	_____ storms swiftly obliterated his expensive engineering structures.

Concordance Set 2

1	This happy mood lasted roughly until last _____.
2	The _____ months were slightly above average.
3	The promotional activity last _____ was rather less visibly aggressive.
4	Fall is here and colorful _____ leaves are abundant.
5	_____ has occurred every year since records began.
6	The _____ sun was beginning to set.
7	_____ and winter months are usually windy.
8	Spring and _____ bring fairly mild weather.
9	But summer passed away and _____ came.
10	The weather is beautiful–a lovely _____ morning.

Concordance Set 3

1	Its expected completion date is _____ 2015.
2	The _____ hunting season may impact male mortality rates.
3	A full size box _____ is 53 inches long.
4	The housing turnaround hit full stride last _____.
5	The _____ game is where coaches build goodwill.
6	A late winter means a late _____.
7	Some students enjoyed sandy beaches on _____ break.
8	The best bird watching times are late fall and early _____.
9	New luxury hotels are _____ing up everywhere.
10	The vast boundless valley colored by bright _____ flowers.

Concordance Set 4

1	Remember fire bans apply during _____ months.
2	My best summer story happened every _____ night.
3	Average _____ temperatures are around 22 degrees.
4	His black bear sounds were recorded right here last _____.
5	The anticipated release date is _____ 2013.
6	The _____ was going–was gone.
7	Around every corner is another interesting _____ home.
8	Extra buses are added during the high _____ season.
9	There are _____ festivals and farmers markets.
10	The days of _____ heat defy description.

Answers

- Concordance set 1: Winter.
- Concordance set 2: Autumn.
- Concordance set 3: Spring.
- Concordance set 4: Summer.

Robert Taferner

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

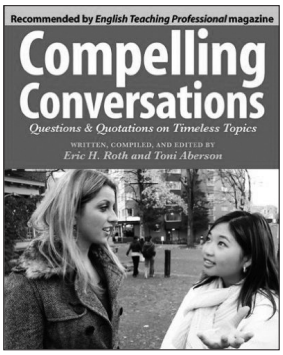
Email: reviews@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/book-reviews

This month's column features Jake T. Reed's review of Compelling Conversations: Questions and Quotations on Timeless Topics *and Adam Pearson's evaluation of* Nice to Meet You – Academic.

Compelling Conversations: Questions and Quotations on Timeless Topics (2nd Edition)

[Eric H. Roth & Toni Aberson. Los Angeles: Chimayo Press, 2008. pp. xii + 152. ¥3,147. ISBN: 978-1-4196-5828-0.]

Reviewed by Jake T. Reed, Kanda University of International Studies



Compelling Conversations is a textbook written for the upper-intermediate to advanced level adult or college level student, and provides readers with useful information and practice activities to assist English learners with starting and continuing a variety of compelling conversation topics. The textbook's focus is on speech fluency, vocabulary development, American culture, and conversational pragmatics. There are no audio files or long reading activities included with the textbook. The authors' primary objective of encouraging students to converse is easily attainable if the material in the book is employed by an effective teacher who facilitates the students' learning by providing feedback and encouragement.

Compelling Conversations is organized into 45 separate lessons, each of which contains around 30 questions to promote pair or larger group conversation, 10 targeted vocabulary words in a list, and between 10 and 15 quotations or proverbs from famous authors, religious leaders, or historical figures. All of the questions, quotations, proverbs, and lexical items are centered on a specific topic, including gardening, musical tastes, dating, and controversial topics such as voting.

In my classroom, I found using the book to be extremely easy. When planning lessons, I do not have to worry that latter lessons will require any more grammar or vocabulary knowledge than earlier lessons. Therefore, if a topic in the book is relevant to current events or my students' interests, then including some of these questions as warm-up or cool-down conversations in class has been a great way to motivate my students to speak more confidently on a variety of topics. Another way to use the book is to have students keep a written journal to answer several of the questions for themselves each week. These questions can be ones that I assign or those that are chosen by students, depending on how I want to organize the next lesson. This not only gives students an opportunity to write something other than academic prose, but also encourages those students who are shy in class by offering them a way to gather their thoughts. I have found this sort of prewriting activity to be an extremely useful tool for improving the spoken fluency and motivation of such students when the same questions assigned for writing are brought up during the following class.

Compelling Conversations is an easy way to engage students in meaningful conversations, either with each other, with the teacher, or as a whole class. On the other hand, the vocabulary presented in the book is not revisited in later chapters explicitly, and no pages are dedicated to grammar, study strategies, or writing. What this means for my classroom is that I cannot use only this book as a main text. Instead, I use the book as a supplemental tool to give the students a meaningful framework for using their newly acquired language, or practicing what they have previously learned.

From a theoretical perspective, using this book exclusively, without recourse to any sort of form-focused instruction, may be supported by an extremely strong version of meaning-focused curricula,

such as communicative language teaching, but such a one-sided approach ignores the research suggesting the pedagogical efficacy of at least some focus on form (FonF) instruction (Loewen, 2011). Qin's (2008) study of 110 EFL students in China showed that a dictogloss activity used to teach the passive voice resulted in increased acquisition, according to the results of a delayed post-test. Having students acquire grammatical structures is important when using a relatively advanced text like *Compelling Conversations*, and a dictogloss is one effective way to compensate for this during class. One other study looked at the effectiveness of recasts, and found them to be effective in terms of uptake and retention about half of the time, as measured by post-tests (Loewen & Philp, 2006). The most effective recasts were those that were made more explicit to students. As stated earlier, a teacher who provides feedback during or after student interaction can use *Compelling Conversations* most effectively. Therefore, I would recommend using the book as a supplement to a more well-rounded FonF lesson.

In closing, I would recommend *Compelling Conversations* to English teachers who seek ready-to-use conversation starters for their classes, or who are simply looking to give their students an extra learning tool for outside of class. I have had success using the book with my students, and would encourage other teachers to try it for themselves, especially if the students are having trouble starting or continuing a conversation in English.

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Loewen, S. (2011). Focus on form. In E. Hinkel, (Ed.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning, Volume II* (pp. 576–592). New York: Routledge.

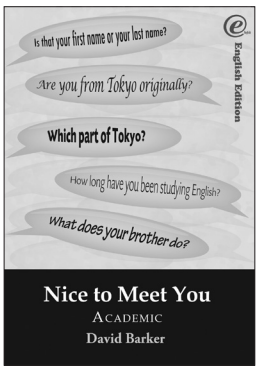
Loewen, S., & Philp, J. (2006). Recasts in the adult English L2 classroom: Characteristics, explicitness, and effectiveness. *The Modern Language Journal, 90*(4), 536–556.

Qin, J. (2008). The effect of processing instruction and dictogloss tasks on acquisition of the English passive voice. *Language Teaching Research, 12*(1), 61–82.

Nice to Meet You—Academic (Japanese Edition)

[David Barker. Nagoya: Back to Basics Press, 2013. pp. 100. ¥1,944. ISBN: 978-4-905088-45-5.]

Reviewed by Adam Pearson, Musashino Joshi Gakuin Junior and Senior High School



Nice to Meet You—Academic (Japanese Edition) is a textbook aimed at enabling Japanese university or high school students to conduct initial conversations in English with peers at an educational institution. I believe it does very well in meeting this very specific aim. The book comprises a first unit covering classroom English, and a further six—each on a different conversation likely to be encountered on first meeting someone at a school or university, such as "Where are you from?" (p. 30) and "Where did you learn English?" (p. 86).

Nice to Meet You conforms to the notional-functional model, explained by White (1988, p. 75) as one that has the aspects of a notion, dealing with time and space, and a function, describing the purpose of language. The notion here is first meetings at an educational establishment, and the function is asking and answering questions about personal information. To this end, each unit contains example conversations, questions and answers, sections for the student to write their answers, a listening activity, a pair work section, and a reading comprehension text on an aspect of studying English. Japanese translations of the texts are available free for download from the publisher's website, as are all audio recordings. Although no teacher's guide is provided, the exercises are explained in the textbook so this should not be a problem. Audio recordings are of native and Japanese speakers of American English, and are short and clear.

A key focus of the book is on understanding and using natural English. For example, it addresses the need when answering questions to keep a balance between short and long answers. Too many short

answers, and a speaker will sound aggressive or rude. Too many full-sentence answers, and they will sound unnatural. Pronunciation sections likewise concentrate on skills required to produce natural-sounding English, including intonation and connected speech.

Nice to Meet You should be used for student-centered lessons, as it is intended for practicing conversation. Apart from modeling conversations, a teacher's role when using this textbook should be to provide extra examples of natural speech and additional explanations where appropriate.

Having said that, the book itself does a good job of explaining the finer points of natural English in initial conversations. These are provided in Japanese in the copy under review. An English version of the instructions and explanations is also available. The sections in which a student can create new conversations, alone or with a partner, support a student centered approach and lessen the teacher's workload.

I tried this textbook with a class of 1st graders at a private high school who have an above average English level for their age group. The exercises attempted threw up some problems, such as what *first name* refers to in English, and what constitutes a nickname. As class motivation is high, these did not negatively affect students' interest. Nonetheless, it was noticeable that many needed help from their peers or the teacher, and a lot of time to complete the exercises. I would say, therefore, that the book would be best used by medium to advanced-level students in the second or third grade of high school, or at university. On the other hand, the in-depth concentration on and frequent repetition of natural question and answer pairs gave my students more confidence in using them, and this tight focus is one of the book's major selling points. If used in the two to three months leading up to real-life academic encounters with native speakers, I think it would provide students with a good base from which to develop English-speaking relationships with their peers.

The book imagines what an English speaker with little knowledge of Japan would ask a Japanese student, not what is necessarily interesting to a Japanese student. As such, the example conversations feature almost no reference to Japanese culture and so may seem a little generic. Also, no mention is made of SNS, email, or any other aspect of communications technology. This is perhaps because the conversations in this edition are intended for an academic institution (a non-academic version of the book is also available), but the idea of young people meeting for the first time in real life without mentioning these things is hard to believe.

These are, however, minor criticisms of a book that, having set itself a narrow but important aim, reaches it in an engaging, easy-to-use, and focused manner. For teachers of students intending on an English-language course of study in Japan or abroad, this textbook is recommended.

References

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Recently Received

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*.

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Books for Students (reviewed in *TLT*)

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* ***Alpha English*** — Kizuka, H. Tokyo: Macmillan LanguageHouse, 2014. [12-unit four skills remedial course for lower level learners incl. online teacher's manual and classroom audio].

Business Plus — Helliwell, M. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014. [3-level integrated skills and business English course w/ TOEIC® style practice sections incl. teacher's manual and downloadable audio and supplementary worksheets].

* ***The Dynamic Interplay between Context and the Language Learner*** — King, J. (Ed.). London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. [Edited volume of conceptual papers and empirical studies to consider how contextual factors interact with learners and influence L2 learning and usage].

Getting Global! Engineer Your Future with English — Tsujimoto, T., Noguchi, J., Miyama, A., Mukuhira, A., Kirimura, R., & Murao, J. Tokyo: Kinseido, 2015. [24-unit course aimed at developing global language skills incl. teacher's manual w/ class audio].

! ***Girl Talk*** — Elwood, K. Tokyo: Nan'un-do, 2014. [15-unit all around English textbook for and about women incl. teacher's manual and audio CD].

! *Language Teaching Insights from Other Fields: Psychology, Business, Brain Science and More* — Stillwell, C. (Ed.). Alexander, VA: TESOL International Association, 2015. [15-unit professional development title exploring language teaching from perspectives in other fields].

* *Longman Academic Reading Series* — Various Authors. White Plains, NY: Pearson, 2014. [5-level academic reading course for college, focused on effective reading, vocabulary building, note-taking, and critical thinking incl. online teacher's manual w/ quizzes].

! *NorthStar (third edition)* — Various Authors. White Plains, NY: Pearson, 2015. [5-level reading/writing and listening/speaking course with focus on critical thinking and academic skills incl. teacher's manual w/ tests and classroom audio CDs and DVDs].

Open Your Eyes through News in English — Watanabe, A., & Ishii, T. Tokyo: Sanshusha, 2015. [14-unit reading course incl. teacher's manual w/ class audio and webpage access].

* *Reading Explorer (second edition)* — Various Authors. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2015. [6-level reading course created with National Geographic Learning incl. online workbooks, student and instructor ebooks, and assessment CD-ROM with ExamView].

! *Say What You Think* — Perkins, D. Mountain View, CA: Creative Commons, 2015. [4-part communicative course for teaching discussion, presentation, debate, and conveying emotion at the upper high school level incl. online worksheets, tests, slide shows, and videos].

Scraps — Cullen, B., & Mulvey, S. Nagoya, Japan: Perceptia Press, 2014. [8-unit course with a scrapbook theme for developing vocabulary, listening, and speaking incl. teacher's guide].

Sure — Hobbs, M., & Keddle, J. S. Crawley, UK: Helbling Languages, 2015. [4-level course of integrated themes within a grammar syllabus aligned with CEFR, Cambridge English, and Trinity exams incl. student workbook, teacher's book w/ class audio, and access to SURE cloud on e-zone].

! *Tactics for the TOEFL iBT Test: A Strategic New Approach to Achieving TOEFL Success* — Lee, C. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. [26-unit course focused on skills, strategies, and language necessary for entry into post-secondary institutions incl. student book w/ two full practice tests and access to online skills practice].

* *The Thinking Train* — Puchta, H., & Gerngross, G. Crawley, UK: Helbling Languages, 2015. [Five interactive picture books for young learners incl. online teacher's manual with resources, worksheets, and online mp3 audio].

Books for Teachers (reviewed in *JALT Journal*)

Contact: Greg Rouault – jj-reviews@jalt-publications.org

Demotivation in Second Language Acquisition — Kikuchi, K. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters. 2015.

[JALT PRAXIS] TEACHING ASSISTANCE

David McMurray

Graduate students and teaching assistants are invited to submit compositions in the form of a speech, appeal, memoir, essay, conference review, or interview on the policy and practice of language education. Master's and doctoral thesis supervisors are also welcome to contribute or encourage their students to join this vibrant debate. Grounded in the author's reading, practicum, or empirical research, contributions are expected to share an impassioned presentation of opinions in 1,000 words or less. Teaching Assistance is not a peer-reviewed column.

Email: teach-assist@jalt-publications.org

For this issue's Teaching Assistance*, the author encourages readers to take a look at ways to improve student engagement and learning. While studying at Colorado State University, Erik Davis had the opportunity to study abroad in Nagasaki and come in contact with Japanese language, culture, history, and society. After graduation, he was hired as a teaching assistant in classes in the Faculty of Education at a university in Japan. He was initially shocked by how little the foreign language students would say. Having no experience in teaching English as a foreign language, he nonetheless set about trying to end this silence—a task which seemed as hard as a brick wall.*

In this essay he suggests four personal principles that he developed to inform his approach to teaching and help him to break down communication barriers between students and teachers. As an example of the maxim to "follow the learners' interests to maintain student involvement" (Richards, 1996, p. 287), he recognized that by calling out the names of his students and showing a personal interest in their hometowns or what they do on weekends could make them become more comfortable when speaking in English around him and their peers. His supervisor at Kagawa University, Gerardine McCrohan appraises the advantages of having a TA in a postscript to this article.

Teaching Assistance: Knocking Down Brick Walls

Erik J. Davis

Kagawa University

When asked how much time he used to prepare for his lectures, retired Professor of Physics, Walter Lewin of MIT replied that, on average, he spent 40 to 50 hours preparing

for just one lecture. This included multiple dry-runs of the lesson in the empty classroom where he was going to lecture (Chu, 2012). While there are differences between the ways in which physics and foreign languages are taught, we can still appreciate the outstanding dedication Lewin had toward his teaching style. In this increasingly changing world, educators everywhere are constantly looking for new ways to improve the effectiveness of their lessons, and to get their students more engaged in learning. But how can we go about improving these aspects of our teaching styles?

Similar to my peers, after graduating from a university in America I wanted to gain the international experience of teaching English in the 'Land of the Rising Sun'. I had no prior training or practice in teaching English as a foreign language, but with some luck I found a job at Kagawa University in Takamatsu, where I have been helping in English education and international programs for the past ten months.

You might be thinking, what can someone with only ten months of teaching experience offer to veteran teachers of foreign languages? Perhaps the fact that I was recently a student of a foreign language myself, and that I have also just crossed the bridge into the teaching world might enable me to share a perspective from both sides of the classroom that some might find unique and interesting.

Like several other newly-hired teachers at our university, my first time leading an English lesson was somewhat painful. As I stood in front of the class, many of my enthusiastic words seemed to collide head-on with a solid brick wall of silence. I had half expected this, as I had been told many times that the Japanese classroom is much different from the American classroom. Even so, this gave me the determination to find new ways to increase the engagement of my students and the effectiveness of my teaching. I began to really reflect on the time when I was a student, as well as observe the teaching styles of my colleagues at the university. So here are four maxims that have helped me and which might help improve the engagement of your students and the efficiency of their learning: Learn more about your students, embrace their mistakes, understand different learning styles, and be positive and realistic.

Learn More About Your Students

Richard Schmidt, Professor of Second Language Studies and Director of the National Foreign Language Resource Center at the University of Hawaii compiled and published a list of generally accepted findings concerning second and foreign language learning. In it, he claims that factors such as student-teacher and student-student relationships, expectations of success or failure, self-confidence, and anxiety can all affect a student's motivation to learn (Schmidt, 2001). So how do we begin improving on these factors?

A person's name may sound like a small fraction of their identity, inadequate to be a main factor of a teacher-student relationship. But in actuality, it is one of the most important elements in establishing and maintaining a good relationship with anyone. I remember that the professors who knew and remembered my name were the professors I was more comfortable speaking and addressing my academic concerns with.

I began trying to remember the names of my students—even creating funny mnemonic stories to help me remember them. Many of my students found the stories enjoyable and appreciated my efforts in trying to remember each of their names. I then went a step further and began learning more about my students by asking: What were their interests? Where were they from? Did they have a big soccer game coming up? Did they recently go on a trip? Showing an interest in these kinds of things helped my students become more comfortable when speaking English around me and their peers, engaging in class activities, and approaching me with questions or concerns. In this way, I was able to remove a few layers of bricks off the wall of silence in my classes.

Embrace the Mistakes

When we make a mistake in front of our peers, it often results in a bad experience that leaves us embarrassed and less motivated to engage in active learning. I decided to tackle this problem head-on in order to create a better learning environment because I believe that mistakes are the backbone of learning and that they play a fundamental role in the true acquisition of any skill. Unarguably, students often have inaccuracies and misconceptions within their current knowledge of a foreign language. Mistakes are what help make these aberrations clear, and what make it possible for them to be corrected. Alice Kolb and David Kolb of Case Western Reserve University suggest that:

> All learning is relearning. Learning is best facilitated by a process that draws out the students' beliefs and ideas about a topic so that they can be examined, tested, and integrated with new, more refined ideas (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 194).

In class, whenever I ask a general question to my students, I consistently convey that it is okay if they make a mistake when answering it. I tell them that the students who make the most mistakes and try their hardest to correct them will improve their English the most. I don't just state this once at the beginning of the semester, but multiple times. Throughout the semester I remind students that mistakes are okay, and the fear of making them should not hinder their ability to participate in class activities. Embrace the mistakes, and only admonish the student who puts no effort in trying to correct them. When I did this, a few more layers of bricks came off the wall of silence.

Understand Different Learning Styles

As a student, I quickly discovered that it is just as important to understand how to learn new content as it is to learn the content itself. One of the generally accepted findings of learning is that "different learners use different learning strategies" and that "more successful learners use a broader range of strategies more flexibly" (Schmidt, 2001, p. 7). While a student progresses through their academic years, one challenge they face is finding which learning styles work best for them, and then trying to adjust material so that it can be studied in these styles. As teachers, we can help our students by incorporating the use of many different kinds of materials to explain an idea or concept.

With the technology available today, we have access to vast amounts of information and content that is presented through various media. While teaching, I make an effort to include as many different tools of conveying information as possible, whether that be showing a video of the Tony the Tiger cereal character saying "Grrrreat" to help students practice their [r] pronunciation, or finding examples of grammar structures in popular songs or speeches to help them understand how they are used in context. There is not much of that brick wall left now.

Be Positive and Enthusiastic

If there was just one more point I could convey, it would be to stay as positive and enthusiastic as you can while teaching. Students will reflect the amount of energy you bring to the classroom, and this aspect will help them to become interested in what you have to offer them. Being positive will not only improve the engagement and interest of your students, but also add meaning and fun to your day-to-day work. So, try to think of a few jokes here and there, and keep your chin up as you tackle the brick walls that prevent your teaching from being as effective as it can be.

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Postscript from Gerardine McCrohan

I had Erik Davis as a teaching assistant for two classes. One class consisted of 52 students of Cross-culture Communication in the Faculty of Education, while the other was made up of 20 learners from all faculties and grades who wanted to prepare for TOEIC Speaking and Writing. In these classes, Erik circulated among the students, keeping them focused, helping them with their work, and asking and answering questions about the course materials. Erik was particularly valuable in supporting and interacting with students who needed additional attention. He also helped supervise tests, checked that students had written their names and student numbers on papers and tests, and verified the final test scores. Outside of class, he helped proofread tests and other handouts, advised students on their course work and assignments, and helped them practice presentations.

Erik also provided useful feedback to me about how well the material was being understood or sometimes, not understood, which encouraged me to change the pace, order, and occasionally content of my classes. I valued getting the feedback during the course as opposed to just getting student ratings after the course had concluded. Having Erik as a TA has made me a more reflective teacher and ultimately, I hope, a better one.

University faculty who are accustomed to doing classroom related work alone may ask, how do I share the complex and difficult tasks of designing, developing and sometimes modifying the curriculum, building relationships, and monitoring and guiding the students' progress, with someone who may have a different teaching philosophy and have less experience? On the other hand, I think that sharing the teaching with a TA is generally good for both faculty and students, and can be a very rewarding way of teaching. Having a TA is a win-win scenario for teachers and students. With larger classes, a TA is an invaluable asset. Having a TA in the classroom significantly improves the instructor-student ratio, which is important when students work in groups.

The Writers' Workshop Quick APA Referencing Guide

Brian Gallagher
Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

As an academic writer, in each paper you write you should include references for any work in your writing, whether indirectly quoted (paraphrased) or directly quoted. This will allow your readers to follow up on your work and to also use your research to speed up their own through the sources that you have so diligently discovered. The American Psychological Association (APA) reference style uses the Author-Date format. If you are in any doubt about your referencing, you can also refer to the rules of APA Style detailed in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition)* available at <http://www.apastyle.org/>. That being said, here is a quick rundown of the basics of APA formatting that you will need to take note of as you write.

In Text Quotations

Direct quotations in APA are straightforward, and will use quotation marks with page numbers:

Gallagher and Sugimoto (1997) suggested that "lexical density is a term used in text analysis which measures the ratio of content words to grammatical words" (p. 57).

"Lexical density is a term used in text analysis which measures the ratio of content words to grammatical words" (Gallagher & Sugimoto, 1997, p. 57).

A longer quotation of 40 or more words should be formatted as an indented block of text within your writing and does not include quotation marks:

Gallagher (2014) reported that:

> Tertiary level students are predominantly net-natives as opposed to adopters. This makes them perfect candidates for understanding the new type of learner in this decade who have been brought up with a range of technologies and differing screen sizes. In recent years, there has been in Japan a general switch from large desktop computers to smaller, cheaper and more easily replaceable laptop computers for reasons that include: cost, size, storage, security and regular updating of equipment. (p. 6)

Indirect quotations, or paraphrasing, also require in text citations and corresponding references included in the reference page.

Secondary Source Citations

When you would like to use an author's quote that is contained within a different author's work, this is called citing from a secondary source. Where possible, try and discover the original work and use the quote directly from there, but if that is not possible, follow the examples below:

In-text citation:

"Daly (1985, as cited in Coffe & Donitz, 2010) suggests there are . . ."

Corresponding reference list entry:

Coffe, H., & Donitz, S. (1986). *Communication skills: Speaking, listening, and culture.* Japan: McGraw-Hill.

Also note that in the reference list entry, the work of Coffe & Donitz is listed, not Daly.

Making a Reference List

Your references come at the end of your paper and must be an alphabetical listing of all of the sources you referenced in your writing. The APA format of listing references is relatively simple, with the basic format of *author*, *date*, *title of the work*, *source*, and *locator*.

Author

For referencing one author, simply list the last name first, with initials of the first and second name following, and in cases of two authors connect their names with an ampersand. The only exceptions will be when you list an organisation as an author, or if there is no author or organisation, in which case the title then moves to the author position.

One author	Gallagher, A. B.
Two authors	Moore, C., & Edwards, L.
Three to five authors	Edwards, L., Gallagher, B., & Moore, C.
Eight or more authors	Edwards, L., Gallagher, B., Moore, C., Langher, B. Ballesteros, S., . . . & Woods, T.

Corporate / group author	Ministry of Education.
No author	Use Anonymous only in the publication.
Author with multiple publications within the same year	Danson, T. (2009a) Danson, T. (2009b) Danson, T. (2009c), etc.

If an author has multiple publications within the same year, simply add a lower case letter to the date as an identifier, as noted in the example in the table above. When referencing this author's work with an in-text citation, simply make sure to correspond the letter identifier with the work to which you are referencing:

As discussed by Danson (2009b), it is inevitable . . . Danson (2009a) also suggested . . .

Date

Referencing the date of publication is also simple and goes in parentheses directly after the author:

Books and academic journals	(1993).
Magazines and newspapers: Monthly Daily, weekly	 (1993, June). (1993, June 12).
No date	(n.d.).
In press	(in press).

Title

The title for a major publication, such as a book, is in italics and the first word only is capitalised.

North, B. (2014). *English profile studies: The CEFR in practice*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

If you are referencing the title of a publication that is in a non-English language, simply write the title in roman letters and include an approximate translation inside of square brackets:

Yamamoto, H. (2015). *Hitsuyouna kyouiku* [Necessary education]

The most common system for writing romaji (roman letters) is the *Modified-Hepburn* system.

Locator

For the location of a publication, list the city and country (in the U.S., city and state abbreviation) of the publisher. In a case where there are multiple cities for publication listed in your source, only give the first city that is listed.

Friedman, T. L. (2008) *Hot, flat, and crowded: Why we need a green revolution, and how it can renew America*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Grioux.

Other Types of Publications

Here is a short table that lists various types of publications that you may reference in your work. Although this list is not exhaustive, it does include most of the common types of publications that you might want to reference. For more detailed information, please refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* available at <http://www.apastyle.org/>.

Book	Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). *Title of the work.* Place name: Publisher.
A chapter of a book	Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). Chapter title. In A. Editor, B. Editor, & C. Editor (Eds.), *Title of the book* (pp.xx-xx). Place name: Publisher.
Electronic book	Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). *Title of the work.* Retrieved from http://www.website.org
Periodicals	Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). Article title. *Title of Periodical, x*(x), pp-pp.
A journal article available online	Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). Article title. *Title of Periodical, x*(x), pp-pp. http://dx.doi.org/xxx-xxxxx
Online documents or webpages	Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). Title of the webpage. Retrieved from http://www.website.org

More Information About the Peer Support Group

If you would like to find out how submit to a paper for feedback or even how to become a peer-reader yourself, please visit the JALT Publications PSG webpage: <http://jalt-publications.org/psg>, or contact us through the contact page on the above site.

About the Author

Brian Gallagher is a peer reviewer and writer for the PSG. He holds a very mixed educational background, with undergraduate degrees in optometry, physiology, and sports science. Having held positions as an IBM Logistics and Order Manager, and also a high school science and mathematics teacher since 2000, he has taught at multiple levels throughout the private and public school systems. He now teaches academic writing, communication, and sports classes at the university level in Aichi, Japan.

Tiernan L. Tensai

Got a teaching problem you can't solve? Need some advice about classroom practice? Stressed out from living in a different country? Then Dear TLT is the column for you. Be it serious or comical, our panel of experts will endeavour to answer all your queries. Send your questions to the email address below.

Email: dear-tlt@jalt-publications.org

Helping Students Speak More English and Less Japanese in Class

Dear TLT,

I'm having a real hard time with one of my university English conversation classes. I'm doing my best to teach it in a communicative way, but every time I ask students to do a pair speaking activity, they end up using too much Japanese. Of course when I walk near them, they suddenly start speaking in English, but the moment I walk away, they start jabbering away in Japanese again. I feel more like a police officer than a teacher! It's really really driving me crazy! What can I do to get my students to use more English when doing speaking activities?

Crazy in Karuizawa

Dear Crazy,

Thanks a lot for your message, and sorry for your stress in dealing with students who just can't seem to stay in English during your class. This is something we can all relate to, as this *eigo keisatsu* frustration is part of our job, and something that all teachers need to deal with more fully.

So, what to do about it? Well, you'll be glad to know that there is actually a lot that can be done to help students speak more English in class, especially when you are not monitoring them closely. The first thing we suggest is to suss out the root of the problem. What is really causing your students to speak in Japanese (L1) during pair practice? Is it a lack of interest or motivation? Or could it be something about the way you're teaching them that is the primary culprit? In addition, what sort of Japanese are they using? For example, are they over their heads? Then it could be they are using L1 to overcome the limits of their ability. Or, are they just not into the lesson and are chatting away about unrelated matters? Not all L1 is necessarily bad. For example, students could use it in service of learning L2, in a process Meryl Swain (2006) calls "languaging." This is highly beneficial to learning, so you do not want to throw the baby out with the bathwater by being overly harsh about eliminating any and all L1 utterances. In addition, there is the typical occurrence of code-switching that takes place when learning a new language, where there is a normal transition period when both native and new languages are mixed (Sert, 2005). Keeping the idea that not all L1 is bad in mind can help you depersonalize the situation, which can hopefully reduce some of the frustration you feel.

There are several different ways to find out what is really going on in your lessons. First, you need the benefit of a third-person perspective. Do you have a trusted colleague who can observe your class? If this person knows Japanese, they can give you a sense of what your students are saying when using L1. In addition, they can notice something about your teaching approach that may not be working—something that you are not aware of. For example, are you giving your students enough time to prepare for conversation practice? Or are you just asking them to jump right in and discuss something they may not be ready for? Giving time for students to collect their thoughts before engaging in pair-practice just might do the trick. Also, have you prepared students enough? Do they have enough language at their disposal to complete your given tasks? If a trusted colleague is not available, then consider videotaping your class. Watching yourself teach and your students learn can help you identify what the problem really is. In most cases there will be things you can do better.

To find out more about the Japanese that your students are using during pair-practice, consider having them record short conversations on their smartphones. Most students have them these days, and they can be utilized for learning. After recording, have them write or type up transcripts for homework. In the next class, go over them with your students by engaging in several noticing tasks. Have them search out instances of L1 and reflect on why they said what they did. This sort of awareness raising activity can show you what students really need to learn. Then, you can go about teaching

them specific language that can help them stay more in L2. Most likely, you'll find that students are using L1 primarily for unconscious back-channel feedback. In that case, teach them how to do this in English via sounds such as "um", "ah", "uh-huh" and the like. Also, pay particular notice to when conversations break down. Generally this occurs when students reach the limits of their ability. Teaching and assessing repair strategy use can help, including phrases such as:

- I'm sorry, I don't understand.
- What does ~ mean?
- Pardon? Excuse me? Once more please.
- How do you say ~ in English?

Ideally, however, the best time to get students going on using a lot of L2 in your class is at the beginning of the course. Start by learning your students' names quickly and taking a genuine interest in them. As newly-hired language center assistant Erik Davis notes in the *Teaching Assistance* column in this issue, his students became more comfortable when speaking English around him and their peers when he called them out by their names and showed a personal interest in their interests: "A person's name may sound inadequate to be a main factor of a teacher-student relationship. But in actuality, it is one of the most important elements in establishing and maintaining a good relationship" (p. 30). Create a spreadsheet or a set of flashcards to help you learn names and key info more quickly.

Along these lines, establishing a feedback sheet system can also really help you get to know your students more deeply. Simply give everyone a few minutes at the end of each lesson to write a bit about their experience in class in a notebook, which you then collect. What did they learn? Which activities worked well for them? What did they find challenging or demotivating? At first, you should expect brief comments such as "It was fun" or "It was difficult." But if you can manage to consistently respond to each and every student, you'll gradually build a dialog with them that will pay great dividends in the long run. This process could also be conducted via email or text if you are technologically inclined to manage it that way. Then, when certain students start using too much L1 in class, you'll be in a much stronger position to talk with them about it. This kind of practice can also help you stay sensitive to students who are having difficulties outside of class that may be interfering with their ability to perform well in it.

In addition to getting to know your students better, make it crystal clear what you expect of them. Remind them that they are there to study English. By not using it, they're actually defeating their purpose in taking the class. This is still true even if the class is required, and they are not there by choice. They did choose to enter this school, after all! In appropriate classes, making English use in class a part of the grade can also help. If you do that, you'll need some system of tracking classroom English. One idea here is to create a 5-point Likert scale for recording English interactions, something like: *"(NAME) uses English for all/most/a few/no interactions."* You could color code it and create a table with a line for each member of the class. During classes, watch your students and mark down their English interactions with both you and other class members. Compile your results and show the class around Week 4 with their names removed and order scrambled. Explain how these results will affect their grades and reiterate to your students that they need to use English for all interactions, so there will hopefully be a definite rise in effort.

Another idea that can help is to enable students to reward each other for using L2 in class. This can be accomplished via simple "Thank You" point cards. With these cards, students can reward each other for taking the time to use English with them by signing, stamping, or adding a sticker to classmates' cards. When cards become full, show them off to everyone to reinforce the message that everyone is in it together, and that by using more L2 in class, each student is helping others learn.

Getting students to use more L2 in class is a huge topic that we've only scratched the surface of here. However, we hope you can see that by setting clear expectations, getting to know your students, and employing useful strategies for tracking and supporting L2 classroom usage, it will not only be your students who benefit—you, as a teacher, will have grown as well. So, as you feel that frustration rising next time, keep in mind that that it is simply a call for you to improve your teaching practice. Stay positive, try different things out, and enjoy the satisfaction that comes when you successfully meet a difficult challenge.

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Joël Laurier & Robert Morel

JALT currently has 26 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes an in-depth view of one SIG each issue, providing readers with a more complete picture of the different SIGs within JALT. For information about SIG events, publications, and calls for papers, please visit <http://jalt.org main/groups.

Email: sig-focus@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/sig-news

ER Publications & Contact Information

- Biannual newsletter: *Extensive Reading in Japan* (ERJ)
- Online journal: *Journal of Extensive Reading* (JER)
- Web: https://jalt.org

Extensive Reading (ER), in its purest form, is reading large amounts of text in order to improve second language reading fluency. Using graded readers specifically written for L2 learners has been proven to help them acquire vocabulary. There is a vast range of interpretations of what can be classified as ER. As with many areas of language study, it is an expansive and expanding field. It is almost impossible to ignore the explosion of ER programs across a broad educational spectrum, both here, in Japan, and across the EFL and ESL community around the globe.

With the proliferation of ER programs comes the need for greater academic debate on the theory which bolsters ER, and on the more practical aspects of actually setting up and running ER programs.

The JALT ER SIG has existed since 2008 to help promote Extensive Reading (ER) in Japan. Through our website, our bi-annual newsletter, *Extensive Reading in Japan* (*ERJ*), our online *Journal of Extensive Reading* (*JER*), our regular, monthly e-newsletter, our grant programs, and presentations throughout Japan we aim to help teachers set up and maintain their ER programs. This is where the strength of the ER SIG lies—it provides both practical ideas and the theoretical frameworks needed to help researchers and practitioners fulfill their goal of seeing genuine improvements in students' language through the implementation of ER programs. We encourage members, both new and old, to engage in the discussion.

The ER SIG hosts several events throughout the year. The ER Colloquium at the JALT2015 International Conference attracted an audience of 60, with presentations from varied contexts, from children through to adults, and in private and public schools. The presentations provided valuable information into actual programs already implementing ER as part of their curricula. The ER SIG also holds the annual Extensive Reading Seminar In Japan, focusing on research and practice related to ER. This year will see the ninth ER Seminar held at Nanzan University in Nagoya from October 1–2. We encourage interested parties from all educational contexts to put in proposals for the seminar. See our website at <https://jalt.org> for the latest information.

We look forward to continuing the discussion in Nagoya at the JALT2016 International Conference, and invite anyone interested in ER to stop by the ER booth for a chat. We encourage anyone involved in the field of ER to put in proposals for both the JALT International Conference and the Pan-SIG Conference (see <http://jalt.org> for more information on submitting proposals). The ER SIG has also supported the ER World Congress. The first Congress was held in Kyoto in 2011, attracting over 400 participants from around the globe. We continue to support the congress, and look forward to the next one in 2017 (see <http://er-foundation.org> for further details).

As well as regular e-newsletters, the ER SIG has two publications. *ERJ* (*Extensive Reading in Japan*) comes out twice a year and is mailed directly to SIG members, given out to interested teachers, and is also available online. It gives practical support to teachers, both new to ER, and experienced practitioners. The *Journal of Extensive Reading* (*JER*) is an online publication for research papers on Extensive Reading and Extensive Listening. *JER* is peer-reviewed and seeks rigorous research, while *ERJ* is open to more practical articles that will help teachers in the classroom. More information can be found on the SIG website.

The ER SIG provides conceptual, practical, and financial support (see <https://jalt.org/er/grants> for details) to achieve the best results for both teachers and students in their unique local contexts. If you are interested in getting involved in the SIG, or joining the ER conversation, we encourage you to come meet our big friendly SIG. Our officers are approachable and knowledgeable, and we are always looking for others to join our team. Do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions about the SIG or ER in general. We look forward to meeting you.

Malcolm Swanson

This column serves to provide our membership with important information and notices regarding the organisation. It also offers our national directors a means to communicate with all JALT members. Contributors are requested to submit notices and announcements for JALT Notices by the 15th of the month, one and a half months prior to publication.

Email: jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/jalt-focus

Don't you carry nothing that might be a load
Come on, ease on down, ease on down the road
—Diana Ross, The Wiz

The JALT International Conference, like Dorothy and Toto, is easing down the road too! We are moving from Shizuoka, with its green tea and *unagi pie,* to Nagoya with its *miso katsu*, and *tebasaki*, …and its *ebi fry*, and its *oyakudon*, and its *tenmusu*, and its ….

And while foodies will love Nagoya, there is much more going for JALT2016 than just the delicious cuisine. Nagoya is centrally located and easy for many to get to. Once you arrive, WINC Aichi, the center where JALT2016 will be held, is located just five minutes from Nagoya Station. On top of that, there are many hotels in all price ranges nearby as well.

Food. Location. Lodging. All good things, but most importantly, we are putting together a program that will make it worth your while to join us in November, wherever you are based!

Our theme is *Transformation in Language Education*, and there are many ways the theme will be examined.

- Through our plenaries, featured speaker sessions, forums, and individual sessions, we will be exploring how teachers and learners change.
- Through our Educational Materials Exposition, we will be learning how materials, textbooks, and other tools have changed, and how those changes transform the language learning experience.
- And, through attendance at the conference, we can continue conversations about how the educational landscape in Japan has changed in recent years, and what other changes are coming.

JALT2016 will have many of the things that make the JALT International Conference worthwhile—many of the things JALT participants have come to expect: Technology in Teaching Workshops, Featured Speaker Workshops, Special Interest Group Forums, The Job Information Center, The Mind and Body Space, sessions on how to get published, chances to meet old friends and make new ones, and much, much more.

Our plenary speakers will be Anne Burns, Dorothy Zemach, JD Brown, and Annamaria Pinter (JALT Junior). We will be announcing Featured Speakers online by the time this goes to press.

So put November 25–28, 2016 on your calendar, and ease on down the road to JALT2016!

You just stick with us
And we'll show you how to smile, yeah
Get 'em up, get 'em up, ease on down the road
—Diana Ross, The Wiz

Steve Cornwell, Ed.D., Director of Program

JALT Welcomes Renee Sawazaki as Nominee for Chair of the New Young Learners Subcommittee

Bio: Renée's philosophy of life is living with three P's. No, not ELT's familiar "Presentation, Practice, Production," but rather "Passion, Patience, Perseverance." She has taught for 25 years in just about every context imaginable, while focusing primarily on providing young learners and their caregivers with access to good books and stories. She reluctantly left teaching youth fulltime in order to pursue other pleasures—writing, workshops, projects, and family life. She currently enjoys working with older learners as an Associate Professor in the English Course of the Faculty of International Social Studies at Kyoai Gakuen University in Maebashi, Gunma. Originally from California, she lived in Kyushu and Kansai from 1991 to 1995, received her Master of Arts in Teaching from the SIT (School for International Training) Graduate Institute in Vermont, and for the past 20 years has lived in Gunma, surrounded by gorgeous mountains and hot springs.

Renée has experience in almost every officer position in Gunma JALT, and has served in the Teaching Younger Learners and Bilingualism SIGs. She is passionate about bringing teachers of young learners together to share knowledge, ideas, and moral support. Those who are drawn to teaching young learners are generally willing to give their all to educate youth. The demands and conditions of their work, however, often do not lend to them having the time or funds for professional development. Renée would like to see growth in using technology and other creative means to serve these enthusiastic teachers, and hopes that the work done through this committee will have a positive ripple effect on our profession as a whole.

Statement: In the movie *Invictus*, the year before the South African Springboks rugby team won the World Cup, Nelson Mandela shared with their coach, "A leader inspires others to do better than they think they can." This is what I aspire to do as the Chair of the new Young Learners Subcommittee, and I am grateful to all who have worked to make this opportunity possible.

Strategic Planning Meeting Report

The JALT NPO Strategic Planning Meeting was held at JCO in Tokyo on October 31 – November 1, 2015 with all members of the Board of Directors, the JCO Office Manager, the Chapter Representative Liaison, and the SIG Representative Liaison in attendance. The Business Manager and Financial Steering Committee Chair were also included in the meeting via conference call. The agenda included the following:

Review of Strategic Planning Recommendations 2014

- Recommendations from the 2014 Strategic Planning Meeting are being implemented largely as scheduled.

Chapter/SIG grant proposals from the Working Group

- Discussions at the Strategic Planning Meeting focused on a comparison of the individual proposals that had been submitted. Proposal parameters were presented to the EBM-Net so that all proposals could be easily compared. Revised proposals were sent to the FSC Chair who provided a summary of implications for each. This report and all submitted proposals were provided to the November EBM as discussion points, with a target of reaching a consensus at the February EBM in 2016.

Chapter/SIG Assessment Schemes

- In line with changes in membership and Chapter/SIG grant structures, a Chapter/SIG assessment scheme was discussed. Developing this scheme will be discussed in the coming months, focusing on accountability, support for Chapters and SIGs, and ease of reporting. A finalized plan will be presented to the February EBM for consideration.

Themes and Strategies for EBMs

- Themed EBMs were discussed, with the possibility of the next one being scheduled in June 2016.

Recruiting Appropriate Associate Members

- Discussions included effective messaging and a timeline for developing a media kit.

Revised/Added Strategic Planning Recommendations 2015

- No additional recommendations were made at this time.

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
- Almost 3,000 members in Japan and overseas
  - 国内外で約 3,000名の会員がいます

<http://jalt.org>

Annual International Conference

- 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

http://jalt.org/conference

JALT Publications

- *The Language Teacher*—our bimonthly publication
  - 隔月発行します
- *JALT Journal*—biannual research journal
  - 年2回発行します
- JALT Postconference Publication
  - 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

http://jalt-publications.org

JALT Community

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、試験と評価、教材開発 等。

http://jalt.org/main/groups

JALT Partners

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):

- AJET—The Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching
- 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

All members receive annual subscriptions to *The Language Teacher* and *JALT Journal*, and member discounts for meetings and conferences. *The Language Teacher*や*JALT Journal* 等の出版物が1年間送付されます。また例会や大会に割引価格で参加できます。

- Regular 一般会員: ¥13,000
- Student rate (FULL-TIME students of undergraduate/graduate universities and colleges in Japan) 学生会員(国内の全日制の大学または大学院の学生): ¥7,000
- 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): ¥21,000
- Senior rate (people aged 65 and over) シニア会員(65歳以上の方): ¥7,000
- Group (5 or more) ¥8,500/person—one set of publications for each five members グループ会員(5名以上を対象とし、JALT出版物は5名ごとに1部): 1名 ¥8,500

http://jalt.org/main/membership

Information

For more information please consult our website <http://jalt.org>, ask an officer at any JALT event, or contact JALT's main office.

JALT Central Office

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Joining JALT

Use the 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 signup page located at https://jalt.org/joining.

Scott Gardner *old-grammarians@jalt-publications.org*

Double Inanity (a Sam Suffix Mystery)

I knew she was going to be a difficult client from the moment I saw her. For one thing, she shattered the frosted glass pane in my door when she knocked, along with the new white stenciling I had paid for just a week ago. The oversize S's were probably still damp. For one brief, self-aggrandizing week the world knew that this was the office of Sam Suffix, Private English Investigations. Now it was just a nondescript corner cubicle again, with poor phone reception and a missing window.

She looked at me through the newly emptied frame and asked, "Are you Sam Suffix?" I'd been waiting a week to be able to tell someone, *That's what the sign on the door says, friend*. But now, staring at the shards of glass on the floor, all I could do was nod. She opened the door and stepped impatiently around the debris, clicking her tongue like I should have cleaned up before accepting guests.

"I expect it is viable that you would exhort me," she blurted after reaching the chair at my desk, inspecting it, and sitting down. "I have a complex of an expressive quality, and it was blazoned to me that you are an expert in...bizarre word varieties." Her voice died to almost a whisper at the last three words, and she glanced nervously around the room.

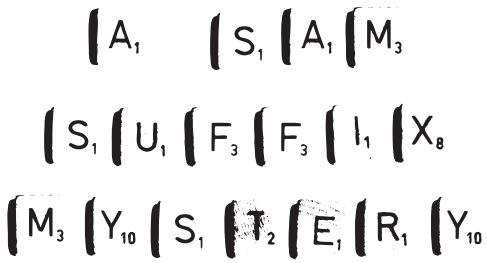
I took a moment to process her statement. "Well, I don't know about 'expert,' but I've been known now and then to scare up a forgotten connotation from a vegetating idiom. In fact, . . ." But I had to cut my résumé short, as I could see she was fumbling with the reading magnifier on my desk and visibly repressing an urge to lunge it at me.

"No time for quixotry! We must zip," she forced herself to say calmly, between annoyed breaths. "This weekend I am to join in a verbal expression joust, and there exists the hazard that I might fizzle in...obloquy." She was whispering again. Another hyper-vocabbed speech contest case, I gathered. But something about her was positively scary.

I asked if she had considered seeing an ALT, an assistant language teacher. For a few bucks more she could try a DEL, a deputy educator of language. Or if she was really gung-ho, a CTRL: communication trainer and roving lexicon.

She nodded irritably. "I did briefly employ a skivvy, yes, but I could not survive his vagary, and it was required to expel him."

Good for him, I thought. It was just about time to shake this nutcase off. "Look, the contest is almost here, right? Don't worry about it. I'm sure you've got the speech down pat. But if you need a little extra help, there's this old buddy of mine, Mike Grammar, Private Dictionary. I'll give you his number . . ."



"You fail to divine the quandary! I am anxious that my jaw manoeuvres have waxed too puzzling for any but the most zealous inquirer!"

I'd had enough. I'd been tempted to cut her a break, but her blatant British vowel-exhausting *manoeuvres* put me over the edge. I could see all the signs of a paranoid scrabblephreniac, and I was finished messing with her.

"You don't need an investigator, you need an analyst! You're a tile junkie, and you're bad news!" I jumped up from my chair for effect. "Get out of my office! Forget the window—you'll need your money for therapy!"

"Bah!" she snapped. "I never savored the veneer of your phiz, anyway! A pox on you and all the squiffy crystal flakes strewn about your faux parquet flooring!" And with that she stomped out of the room, making sure to crack a few more shards on the way.

That was a close call, I thought. Scrabblers were some of the scariest word game freaks out there. I went to get a broom to clean the floor, and started doing a little math in my head. Q is 10, two F's, a Y... and seven letters, to boot. That's an extra 50 points. I grabbed a pencil and wrote "squiffy" on a legal pad, then went back to sweeping.

JALT PanSIG 2016
INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION
教育における革新的な取り組み

Featuring

- **Rod Ellis**
- **Joseph Falout**
- **John Fanselow**
- **Tim Murphey**
- Marcos Benevides
- Robert Betts
- Charles Browne
- Melodie Cook
- Chris Davis
- James Dunn
- James A. Elwood
- Tony Jenkins
- Laura Macfarlane
- Sumiko Ogawa
- Rab Paterson
- Robert Rennie
- Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto
- Miki Shibata
- Tomoyoshi Takemura
- Masanori Tokeshi
- Rob Waring

May 20–23, 2016
Meio University, Nago, Okinawa

May 20 (Fri)

- 15:00 Conversation Analysis Forum
- 15:00 Okinawa Historical & Cultural Tour

May 21 (Sat) – May 22 (Sun)

- Keynote Speakers
- Featured Speakers & Workshops
- Presentations, Forums, & Poster Sessions

May 23 (Mon)

- 9:00 Language Education Workshops
- 10:00 Cultural Tour of Shuri Castle

http://pansig.org/
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Photo coutesy of Shurijo Castle Park