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Special Issue: My Share Activities

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Special Issue: My Share Activities

THE LANGUAGE TEACHER'S My Share column is a valuable resource for both experienced and inexperienced teachers. The column's worth is felt not only in Japan, but also anywhere English is taught as a foreign or second language. Many teachers have been keen to share their ideas and to publish lessons that have worked well for them and their students.

This issue provides a special collection of lessons from teachers in Japan, divided roughly into six different categories: Speaking, The Arts, Vocabulary, Authentic Materials, Classroom Management, and Listening. The lessons range from ones suitable for the first day at kindergarten to those suitable for adults at business colleges.

In the Speaking category, **Mark Coughlin** suggests a way to help students inexperienced in speaking to feel comfortable with a question and answer context. **Michael Kistler** writes about an activity that helps students focus on the difference between accuracy and fluency. **Ian Walkinshaw** provides a practical activity that helps students understand how to use negative speech acts in a culturally sensitive manner.

The Arts category contains articles using songs, limericks, and haiku from **Richard Barber**, **James Venema**, and **Howard Brown**. In the Vocabulary section, **Justine Ross** shows us a structured activity for young learners, and **Paul Hays** and **Jay Melton** suggest ideas for teaching the vocabulary of sport. **Takako Kawabata** writes about the use of the Internet for authentic materials, and **Annie Menard** describes a clever way to mark multiple-choice questions quickly. Finally, in the Listening category, we have a fun dictation activity from **Blagoja Dimoski** and another brief listening exercise from **Paul Batten**, one that helps students practice voice inflection.

We hope you find something here you can use in your classes.

Lorraine Sorrell and Jerry Talandis Jr.
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　４月号は、日本にいる教師のレッスンを集めた特集号ですが、次の6分野に分かれています。スピーキング、アート、語彙、生きた言語教材、教室運営、リスニングです。これらのレッスンの種類は、幼稚園での最初の日にピッタリのものから専門学校での授業用まで多岐にわたっています。

　スピーキングでは、Mark Coughlinがスピーキングに自信のない学習者にQ&A形式で安心してスピーキング活動ができるように手助けをします。Michael Kistlerは、正確さと流暢さの違いに焦点を置いた活動について書いています。Ian Walkinshawは、文化的な感情に配慮した発話行為を理解するのに役立つ実際的な活動を用意しています。アートでは、Richard Barber、James Venema、Howard Brownが、歌・リマリック（戯歌）・俳句を使ったレッスンを紹介します。語彙では、Justine Rossが早期英語学習者用の統制した活動を紹介します。また、Paul Hays とJay Meltonは、スポーツに関する語彙を教えるアイデアを提供してくれます。Takako Kawabataは、インターネットを利用して生きた言語教材を手に入れる方法を、Annie Menardは、多肢選択問題を採点する簡単な方法を説明します。最後のリスニングでは、Blagoja Dimoskiが楽しいディクテーション活動を、Paul Battenが声の抑揚を聞き分ける簡単なリスニング活動を紹介します。

　以上の記事の中から、皆さんの明日のレッスンに利用していただくものが見つかることを、心より願っております。

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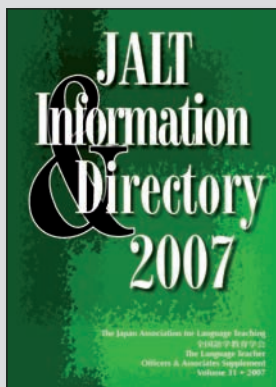
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Getting the class talking!

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Having taught college classes for several years I've often found students reluctant to talk among themselves in English, regardless of the class level. Therefore, I devised this activity which I found not only helps guide students into speaking English but is often quite fun.

Quick Guide

Key words: Making and asking questions; general knowledge

Learner English level: Beginner to low intermediate

Learner maturity level: High school age and older

Preparation time: You will need to set aside approximately 20 minutes before class to create the necessary question sheet for that day's activity. Then allot 5 minutes to make the number of copies needed for the class.

Activity time: 20–30 minutes

Materials: You will need one copy of the question sheet for each student. Whatever you feel will be of interest to the class and their level is fine. Here is an example:

Procedure

Step 1: Hand out the question sheet and read each question aloud making sure the class understands them. You can also read the questions and pick students to answer. Either way it's important to be sure the class understands the questions before starting. Also, be sure to stress the importance of answering in a complete sentence.

Step 2: After reviewing the questions, have the students take a few minutes to write their bonus question (My Question) at the bottom of the handout.

Step 3: After the bonus questions have been written have the class stand up and arrange them into teams of three (four isn't recommended because students tend to pair-up). You might consider manipulating the groups to ensure a *talker* is placed with those who might not be so outgoing.

Step 4: The teams stand in a circle and start by asking each other the topic questions in any order they choose. After asking a question the student then writes down the response on the handout under column A. (Only the student asking the question writes down the response.) One or two-word written answers are fine. You don't want

Movies and TV	A	B
1. What kinds of movies do you like?		
2. What kinds of movies do you dislike?		
3. What is your favorite movie?		
4. Who is your favorite movie actor or actress?		
5. When you are on a date is it important for the boy to pay for the movie? Is 50-50 better? Why?		
6. What TV star do you like best? Why?		
7. How often do you watch TV? Are you a *couch potato*?		
8. Which is more important: a TV or a computer? Why?		
9. My Question:		

the class spending too much time writing. What's important is the spoken response and making sure students try to answer in a complete sentence.

Step 5: While the students are working, circulate about the room, listening to be sure they are speaking in complete sentences or helping those who seem stuck on a question.

Step 6: After 15 minutes or so stop the class and rearrange the students into new teams where they ask the same questions but place their answers under column B.

Step 7: As with Step 5 mingle about the class. After 15 minutes end the exercise and have the students return to their seats.

Conclusion

This activity isn't designed to be a conversation tool as much as it is getting the students comfortable in speaking in a question/answer session. Much of the success of this exercise depends on the quality of topic questions created by the teacher. The more interesting and relevant to real life the questions, the more fun students will have. Another key point is the time allotted for the students to finish asking their questions before switching into new teams. Approximately 10-15 minutes is recommended but you'll get a better idea once you've mingled among the groups and noticed the number of questions answered on their handout sheets.

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4 MY SHARE • ACTIVITIES FOR SPEAKING

Using speaking prompts to improve accuracy

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Quick Guide

Key words: Accuracy, fluency, language points, prompts

Learner English level: High beginner and above

Learner maturity level: All

Preparation time: Varies. It depends on whether you use the example text provided in Appendix A or furnish your own.

Activity time: 30-45 minutes

Materials: Handout

Introduction

The following activity can be used by students working together in pairs and across a variety of levels. By using a short text that has had certain language points removed, such as verb forms, articles, prepositions, and connecting words, students are able to practice and improve their accuracy. This activity gives students some insight into the difference between fluency and accuracy, and it also provides them with a fairly simple and interesting way to practice speaking. For example, students learn that by focusing on speed and intonation, they can improve their fluency. They also understand by focusing on the specific language points mentioned above, that their accuracy improves. It might also be useful for the teacher to explain and model the difference between accuracy and fluency. Students relate to the activity better when they understand that a person can be fluent (speaking smoothly and quickly) without being accurate (using grammatically correct language) and vice versa.

Preparation

Step 1: Choose or create a short text (Appendix A is an example).

Step 2: Make prompts by removing certain language points from the text (Appendix B).

Step 3: Make copies of the text and prompts for students.

Procedure

Step 1: Read the version of the text with the prompts and ask the students if they think any-

thing is wrong with what they've just heard. Ask if any information is missing and what kind of information they think it is. Depending on the level of the students, the teacher can decide whether or not to explain the specific language points that have been removed.

Step 2: (Optional) Explain the difference between fluency and accuracy.

Step 3: Students read the original text supplied by the teacher (Appendix A). It might be a good idea here to have students fold their papers so they can focus on one text at a time.

Step 4: Students read the version of text with prompts.

Step 5: In pairs, students' practice using the prompts.

Step 6: Student A covers the original text and looks at the prompts.

Step 7: Student B covers the prompts and looks at the original text.

Step 8: Student A uses the prompts only and tries to make complete sentences.

Step 9: Student B listens and follows along using the original text; if student A makes a mistake, student B asks him/her to stop and try again. Students can use their own judgment and accept different words that don't change the meaning of the text.

Step 10: Students A and B repeat this process and switch until they can both produce the sentences smoothly and with few mistakes.

Conclusion

Although students may find the activity challenging at the outset, they generally experience success with it after several attempts and working with different partners. Students should be reminded that this is something they can do outside of class as well. One possibility for extending this activity is to have students record their conversations and then check their own accuracy. They can also be provided with different texts and make their own prompts to be used when working alone or with a partner. Most importantly, the activity gives students a structured but interactive speaking activity that allows them to experiment and manipulate English with sufficient repetition to achieve results.

Appendices

The appendices can be viewed at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/resources/0704.pdf>

MY SHARE • ACTIVITIES FOR SPEAKING | 5

Practicing negative dialogues

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This article is based on a workshop given at the 2005 JALT Annual Conference in Shizuoka.

Quick Guide

Key words: Speech acts, politeness, status, listening, role-play

Learner English level: Lower-intermediate to advanced

Learner maturity level: Junior college, university, adult

Preparation time: 30-45 minutes

Activity time: Activity 1- 25 minutes; Activity 2- 30 minutes

Materials: Activity 1- taped conversation, cassette player; Activity 2- roleplay cards

Introduction

In a second language it is easy to complain too forcefully, disagree too curtly, refuse too abruptly or, for that matter, apologise too profusely. The inability to use negative speech acts appropriately can cause an embarrassing communicative failure, particularly in conversations with higher status people. This article presents two inductive

tasks that assist students in learning and rehearsing these speech acts in the classroom. The first activity involves receptive skills, and prepares students for the second activity, which is more productive.

1. Listening and analysing conversations

This task helps students to identify how language reflects a speaker's status. They listen to a status-unequal dialogue and decipher the politeness strategies used, without having to produce the language themselves.

Preparation

Step 1: Choose a short segment of two-way dialogue taken from a textbook listening tape or something similar. This should be a dialogue between two power-unequal speakers who are having a negative exchange, as with the teacher and student in the following example:

(A) Isobel, can you think what it means?

(B) Does it mean there's been an accident further along the road?

(A) No.

(B) Does it mean double bend ahead?

(A) No. Look at the car.

Make sure the English level and the length of the segment are appropriate for the students' ability.

Step 2: Prepare a tape player, preferably with a counter so that you can rewind and play the segment repeatedly.

Procedure

Step 1: Tell students that they will hear a short dialogue between two people. Tell them the two speakers are higher and lower in power, and they have to guess which speaker is in each role by listening and making notes about each speaker's language.

Step 2: Play the dialogue several times, with short breaks to allow them to take notes and process the language.

Step 3: Ask students to work in pairs to discuss the language they heard and the information that it revealed about each speaker's status.

Step 4: Finish with a whole-class discussion, eliciting and writing down some of the relevant language. Discuss what the language reveals about each speaker's status.

2. Roleplay

Roleplays, in which two people take on pre-determined roles and improvise a conversation around a situational context, can easily be adapted to reflect status difference between speakers.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare two roleplay cards describing two unequal speakers. One card may describe a teacher, office manager, or police officer, while the other may describe a student, employee, or citizen (see the Appendix for an example).

Step 2: Make copies for your class. Half the students will have card A and the other half will have card B.

Procedure

Step 1: Put students in pairs. Give card A to one and card B to the other. Make sure they don't read one another's card.

Step 2: Before the actual roleplay have students get together briefly with others playing the same role to discuss the things they might say, the language they might use and so on.

Step 3: Put students back in their original pairs.

Step 4: Ask two able students to perform their roleplay while the others observe them. This will provide a model for the rest of the students.

Step 5: The other pairs act out their roleplays. Stress that the speakers should aim to use politeness strategies that are appropriate for their partner's status. For example, A might use an indirect requesting style *Would it be possible to borrow some money?*, while B would be able to speak more directly *You haven't paid me back from the last time yet!* (see Appendix).

Step 6: Ask the students to switch roles, allowing them to practice using another linguistic form.

Step 7: Elicit some of the language which A and B used in their roleplay. Write some phrases on the board and discuss some of the differences between the language of A and that of B.

Note. The same process may also be repeated as a group roleplay (see Appendix).

Conclusion

These two tasks help students: a) determine what kind of language is appropriate in power-unequal negative talk; and b) use this language accurately

in simulated power-unequal exchanges. They can then begin to comprehend how to use negative language in context and with appropriate force–neither too direct nor too oblique–before having to use it in more genuine situations.

Appendix

The appendices can be viewed at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/resources/0704.pdf>

MY SHARE • ACTIVITIES FOR THE ARTS | 7

Sequence and order–for kids, too

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Quick Guide

Key words: Song lyrics, sequence and order, reading, collaboration, closed-task, the zone of proximal development, language as discourse, onset and rhyme, phonics.

Learner English level: False beginner to advanced

Learner maturity level: Upper kindergarten to adults. Note that although this activity was originally designed for children, with minimal changes it can be used for all ages.

Class size: 1-10 learners

Preparation time: 15-30 minutes

Activity time: 20 minutes

Materials: Printed song lyrics cut into sentence strips, songs on a CD or cassette player

Introduction

This collaborative, closed-task activity encourages reading and listening for a genuine purpose. Young learners enjoy working together to arrange the mixed-up lyrics of a song whose meaning they have recently worked with. It fosters collaborative dialogue and peer-interaction in the zone of proximal development as the learners work together to arrange on the table the mixed-up song lyrics they have on strips of paper. It suits all levels, as even false beginners at kindergarten level can use guidance from the instructor about the onset sound of key words to successfully complete the activity.

Preparation

Step 1: Type out the lyrics of a song whose meaning has been covered in class. Often the lyrics from songs in published texts are printed in the back of the learners' books.

Step 2: Enlarge the font size to about 20.

Step 3: For content words, change the colour of the initial sound(s) to something like eye-catching bright pink. For example, change the *k* in *kite*, the *o* in *orange* and the *sw* in *sweater* to bright pink.

Step 4: Print the lyrics.

Step 5: Cut out the lyrics so there is one line printed per strip of paper.

Step 6: Laminate the strips of paper for durability, if possible.

Procedure

Step 1: Play the song and review the meaning using pictures, props, and dancing.

Step 2: Play the song again while the learners follow along running their finger from left to right under the printed lyrics in the back of their books.

Step 3: Say a key content word to the learners from each line. For example, if the song's lyrics were *I want a burger, I want a juice, I want a doughnut, I want a sandwich, I want a coffee, Yum! Yum! Yum!* then the only words to use in Steps 3 and 4 are the key words *burger*, *juice*, *doughnut*, *sandwich*, and *coffee*.

Step 4: Say the word's initial phonic sound and elicit the onset letter. For example, the instructor says *burger* and elicits the letter *b* as the onset.

Step 5: Repeat Steps 3 and 4 until all the key words are covered.

Step 6: Ask the learners to stand up.

Step 7: Drop the sentence strips one by one from up high so the learners can run around and try to catch them (the lyrics generally flutter down in a very curious way if you flick them just right). This is purely for affective reasons.

Step 8: Learners then sit down.

Step 9: Play the song.

Step 10: Step back and let the learners work together to arrange the mixed-up lyrics into their correct order. The hints about the key words' onset sounds in Step 4 are usually sufficient to allow the learners to work out for themselves the correct order.

Step 11: Repeat Steps 9 and 10 as many times as necessary.

Step 12: Once the learners have decided that they are happy with their arranged lyrics, check the finished order by playing the song and singing out loud what the learners have arranged. The learners just listen at this stage and check whether what you're singing (following their arranged strips) and the voice on the CD are the same. In this way the learners can collaboratively check their (mis)arrangement in a face-saving and non-threatening manner.

Step 13: Repeat Step 12 until the arranged order matches the CD.

Step 14: Point at the words as everyone sings together. (Ask the learners who has the loudest voice? Tell them that it's you, and watch everyone singing at the top of their lungs as they try to prove you wrong!)

Step 15: Shuffle the lyric strips and have the class read them back to you, strip by strip.

Conclusion

Young learners' printed song lyrics appear to be an under-exploited source of pedagogic material. Young learners' workbooks often require reading and writing very similar material as that contained in the lyrics from the textbook's songs. Using those lyrics prior to checking their written work is one way to help them to experience success in reading out loud from their workbooks. Of course, learners without workbooks also enjoy this activity immensely.

There would appear to be numerous other benefits, too. According to Meara, children's songs are extremely memorable and less likely to be forgotten than other aspects of language learning (Laufer, Meara, & Nation, 2005, p. 5). As most language is discourse, it is, arguably, preferable to present it whenever possible as discourse, rather than as discrete, disconnected pieces. As attention is a limited resource which prioritizes meaning over form, this activity enables tasks to be divided by the instructor into those which focus separately on meaning and form. Schmidt challenges task designers to set up situations where noticing of important aspects of form occurs by freeing up attentional capacity in this way (as cited in Skehan, 1996, p. 45). This also allows the learners' interlanguage to be stretched and input to become intake (Skehan, 1996, pp. 45, 50-51). Knowledge of onset and rhyme is not just a useful strategy for task completion but a necessary skill of and by itself for young learners to become literate (Smith, n.d.).

In conclusion, this activity enables the learners to quickly find their own ability level, and, arguably, get into their zone of proximal development more quickly than they might otherwise. Watching young learners working together towards a common goal also reminds us that as well as acquisition, *participation* is an equally useful metaphor in deconstructing how language is learned by young EFL learners in their language classrooms (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2001, p. 156). Facilitating young learners' emerging literacy through enabling collaborative dialogue and peer-work is very satisfying and rewarding for both the instructor and the learners. And it's fun, too!

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Using limericks to introduce connected speech

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Quick Guide

Key words: Limerick, connected speech, stress-timed language, linking, weak forms, unstressed vowels

Learner English level: All

Learner maturity level: All

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Activity time: 60 minutes

Materials: Copies of selected limerick (optional)

Introduction

Connected speech typically presents problems for students of English in both reception and production. Limericks, with exaggerated rhythm and stress, are an ideal way to introduce a variety of aspects of connected speech.

Preparation

Select and prepare copies of a limerick to introduce to your students, or write it on the board. It should be reasonably short and offer a clear rhythm. My own favourite is as follows:

> There was a young lady from Niger
> Who smiled as she rode on a tiger
> When they arrived
> She was inside
> And the smile on the face of the tiger

Procedure

Step 1: Introduce the students to the limerick by writing it on the board and reading it a couple of times. Let students discuss the meaning in pairs and ask the teacher questions if they want to.

Step 2: Run through the limerick a few times with students, exaggerating the rhythm and stress by clapping on the stressed syllables as follows:

> There **was** a young **lady** from **Niger**
> Who **smiled** as she **rode** on a **tiger**
> **When** they ar**ri**ved
> **She** was in**side**
> And the **smile** on the **face** of the **tiger**

Step 3: Divide students into pairs. Have one student in each pair clap through the natural rhythm as follows: 1 2 3 pause 1 2 3 pause 1 2 1 2 1 2 3 (Try it! The rhythm will be obvious once you do it!) The other students should be reading the limerick, keeping pace with their partner's clapping.

Step 4: You will almost certainly find that most, if not all, of your students have difficulty in keeping up. Ask them to make note of where they had difficulty, in both pronunciation and pacing, and circle those areas on the board. Generally, you will find that problem areas correspond to different aspects of connected speech as follows: (While not necessarily a comprehensive review of the issues that might arise, these are, I feel, the three key, albeit overlapping, aspects in enabling students to keep pace and rhythm while reciting the limerick.)

a. English as a stress timed language: For an excellent introduction refer to Gallacher (n.d.) at <www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/pron/stress.shtml>. The stress-timed nature of English is evident in this limerick, as the length of a line is determined not by the number of syllables but by the number of stressed syllables.

b. Linking and reduction: Students will be unable to keep pace unless they learn to reduce the length of utterances such as *there was a* by dropping the *re* sound and linking the three words. Similarly, *as she* is linked as in *ashe*.

c. Weak forms and unstressed vowels: Weak (unstressed) syllables and words typically are quite common in English. In particular the unstressed vowels /ə/ and /ɪ/ (as in *carrot* and *cabbage*, respectively) play an important role in connected speech. Students will find it very difficult to keep pace unless they use short vowel sounds for many of the unstressed word in the limerick such as *and the* and *of the*.

Step 5: Introduce the different aspects of connected speech that arise and have students repeat after you, line by line, until they are better able to keep pace.

Step 6: Divide students into pairs once again and let them practice as in Step 3. This time students should be much better able to keep pace. Walk around the class and work with students who still seem to be having trouble.

Step 7: Divide students into small groups or teams and have them compete to see who can read the limerick at the greatest volume while the rest of class keeps pace with clapping. Alternatively, have the pace of the clapping gradually increase to see which group can go through the limerick the fastest.

Step 8: Have students practice the limerick for homework and tell them the class will review it the beginning of next class. If students have access to recording equipment they could record it for homework either individually or in pairs or groups.

Conclusion

Generally I have found that students very much enjoy working on reciting limericks in class, and I often find them working on the limerick well after the class has ended. In fact, you may find that the limerick is very difficult to get out of your head! More importantly, it offers a revealing introduction to aspects of connected speech and allows students to make considerable progress in production within the confines of a single class.

References

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10 MY SHARE • ACTIVITIES FOR THE ARTS

Writing haiku to raise awareness of syllable breaks and reduce katakana pronunciation

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Quick Guide

Key words: Pronunciation, katakana, syllable counts, creative expression, haiku poetry

Learner maturity level: University to adult

Learner English level: Low intermediate (for a pronunciation focus) to advanced (for a self-expression focus)

Preparation time: Variable, depending on your ability to write sample haiku

Activity time: 90 minutes

Material: Handout or OHP with cloze passage describing haiku, incorrect and incomplete haiku.

Introduction

Japanese learners of English often exhibit something that can be called katakana pronunciation. They tend to pronounce English words as if they were written in katakana. Thus, the 2 syllable *Christmas* becomes the 4 syllable *kurisumas*. This problem can be partially corrected by raising consciousness of syllables and syllable breaks in words. Traditional haiku with their rules governing syllable counts can be an effective way of raising consciousness while giving the learners an opportunity for self-expression.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare a handout or OHP with the cloze passage describing haiku (see Appendix A) and some incorrect and incomplete haiku appropriate for your learners' level (see Appendix B for examples).

Step 2: Also prepare large pieces of paper and art supplies for the learners to use in presenting their original haiku (optional).

Procedure

Step 1: Start class by asking the students to discuss the following introductory questions with a partner.

- Did you study haiku in school?
- Do you know any famous haiku writers?
- Have you ever written a haiku in Japanese? In English?
- What do you know about the format of haiku?

Step 2: Hand out, or project, the cloze passage and give the students a few minutes to work with a partner to fill in the blanks. Then, check the answers as a group.

Step 3: Tell the students that you have written a few (3 or 4) haiku. Hand out or project the incorrect haiku. Ask the students to work with a partner to discuss the image of the haiku. Can they see what you are talking about in the haiku?

Step 4: Ask them to check your haiku. You are after all a novice haiku writer. Refer back to the cloze passage to reinforce the idea of syllables. You may want to teach the students a little about what a syllable actually is. Then have the students work with a partner to check the syllable count of each line. Encourage them to count out syllables on their fingers as they say each word and check a dictionary for the syllable breaks.

Step 5: When the students have found that your haiku have the wrong number of syllables in them, encourage the learners to find a way to fix your haiku.

Step 6: Then introduce the incomplete haiku you prepared and have the students work together to write the missing lines. When they finish, have a group member read their completed haiku to the class and encourage the class to choose the best and/or help improve other students' haiku.

Step 7: Have the students move on to creating original haiku, working in pairs or small groups. The haiku can also be written on large pieces of paper and decorated appropriately for display in the classroom. This can also be done as homework.

Conclusion

During this activity many of my learners have commented on the difference between English and Japanese. Syllable counting is straightforward for them in Japanese but not nearly so transparent in English. This lesson helps them pay more attention to their own pronunciation. Following this lesson, I have noticed my students stopping after saying a word they think they know how to pronounce and counting it out to themselves. It has also given the class a common frame of reference for talking about katakana pronunciation issues. The students now consult their teachers, classmates, and dictionaries for pronunciation questions much more often.

Follow-Up

Since haiku are seasonal this activity can be reviewed and expanded throughout the year at the seasons change. I have also had success expanding this activity into reading and creating other forms of poetry, especially limericks and song lyrics.

Appendices

The appendices can be viewed at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/resources/0704.pdf>

The first day of class for young learners

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Quick Guide

Keywords: First English class, alphabet, colours, questions

Learner English level: Beginners

Learner maturity level: 3–5 year olds

Preparation time: 10–15 minutes

Activity time: 60 minutes

Materials: 2 sets A-Z alphabet flash cards and colours, including multicolours, a picture for each child to colour-in, coloured pencils of the same colours as the flash cards.

Introduction

Here is a complete lesson made up of sequenced activities that build on each other to help teach young children the alphabet, colours, and simple classroom language. This lesson is for learners who are not sure about what they should be doing, but who are energetic and want to have fun. The following original activities are inspired by the Natural Approach (Krashen & Terrell, 1988), a methodology used to provide comprehensible input without requiring complex responses by learners in the target language.

Preparation

Step 1: The A-Z flash cards and colour cards can be self-made or bought. They should be big enough for the children to see easily, as well as being visually appealing. The teacher can choose any picture suitable for colouring-in, according to the age and interests of the children.

Step 2: Young children have a short attention span and like to move around the classroom. I suggest that you start with all the children sitting on the floor at the front of the room for Steps 1–9. When you read the lesson procedure below, it should be clear that the children will move around the classroom to locate the cards in Steps 6 and 10, but make sure you keep them focused on the objectives of the lesson. After Step 6, have the children return to their space on the floor to carry out the other steps. In Step 11 the children return to their table to colour-in.

Procedure

Step 1: Show young learners flash cards with 6 letters of the alphabet. Clearly read and show each card to the class. Children can imitate the reading aloud if they choose.

Step 2: Place the cards on the blackboard by either using a magnetised strip on the back or balancing them on the shelf within reachable distance for the children. Ask the children to come to the board. Use instructions like *Show me A* or *Show me C*. The children can point to or touch the appropriate card.

Step 3: Ask the children to shut their eyes. When they are not looking, take away one card. Instruct them to open their eyes by saying *Good Morning*. They reply *Good Morning.*

Step 4: You may need to dramatise the next step by looking at the cards and then ask the children what is missing. When they say the missing letter, show it to them and return it to the board. Repeat this game.

Step 5: Ask the children to shut their eyes again. Put the cards in obvious to see places around the classroom then say *Good Morning*, so the children will open their eyes.

Step 6: As they notice the board is empty ask them *Where is A?* The children walk around the room until they can find the flash card with A on it and take it back to the board. Ask the children to return all the letter cards to the board then say *Thank you*.

Step 7: Next, show students flash cards with different colours. Show them each flash card and say the name of each colour. Children can repeat the name of the colour after you.

Step 8: Have ready two sets of the colour flash cards. Place them face down on the floor. Each child can pick up two cards. If they are the same colour, they can keep them. The teacher says

the name of each colour as the child turns that card over. Then the next child takes their turn. If the colour flash cards are not the same, the next child takes a turn. As each card is turned up, the teacher continues to say the name of the colour.

Step 9: When all of the cards have been turned up, the teacher walks around the room and points at different objects, asking *Is this brown?* or *Is this blue?* The children who want to participate will answer *Yes* or *No*.

Step 10: Give a multicoloured card to a child and say *Where is brown?* Ask them to then find a matching colour in the classroom. Use body language and gestures to help children to understand how to do this. Children move around the room as a response to the teacher's question *Where is brown?* or *Where is green?*, etc.

Step 11: As a follow-up activity, ask the children to complete a colouring-in activity with the coloured pencils in front of them. The teacher says *Show me blue*. The children hold up their blue pencil. Instructions continue: *Colour the car blue*. *Show me yellow*. *Colour the banana yellow*.

Conclusion

With these activities, the teacher maintains a constant flow of comprehensible input using key vocabulary such as letters and colours, appropriate gestures, repetition, and short sentences to ensure comprehension. Most of the above activities follow the TPR methodology, as well as the principles of the Natural Approach which requires second language input be provided without expecting the learner to respond orally until he or she is ready to speak. Young children love repetition. Do not hesitate to teach this lesson several times, so that the children in your class enjoy plenty of opportunity to hear and practice the language input that you have introduced.

Reference

Krashen, S., & Terrell, T. (1988). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom.* London: Prentice Hall.

MY SHARE • ACTIVITIES FOR VOCABULARY | 13

Sports English: Play ball, run, or do something?

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Quick Guide

Key words: Grammar, vocabulary, sports, noticing

Learner English level: Low to intermediate

Learner maturity level: Junior high school and above

Preparation time: Minimal

Activity time: 15-60 minutes

Materials: A written or mental list of sports, writing board, and chalk or pen

Introduction

Have you ever had a conversation—or a class—that went something like this?

Teacher: So, what did you do this weekend?

Student: I went out with some friends.

Teacher: Great. What did you do with them?

Student: We played bowling.

Teacher: Oh really? What was your score?

You want to tell your student something like: *You can't say "play bowling". You have to say "we went bowling" or "we bowled."* The question is can

we give our students a model to be able to handle such an obviously important aspect of English?

Here is a quick activity to help learners talk about sports. It includes a simple paradigm that is teachable, testable and, even better, quite useful for students. These terms fall into three categories: ball sports played in games, such as baseball or soccer; verbs which are also sports activities, such as swimming or bowling; and those nouns which are the names of sports which are not games, such as karate or kendo. Teachers can easily modify the lesson for their own teaching style and classroom situation.

Procedure

Step 1: Put the students in groups of four or so and ask them to write up a list of 10 to 20 sports. You can, of course, prompt them by putting a few examples on the board, and you can help them out by thinking of sports they like to do or watch themselves. You can also bring in your own examples from a concordancer or have the students do this as a computer lab activity.

Step 2: While the students are putting their list together, set up three columns on the board. In these three columns write (but don't write the paradigm information yet) at least one *ball sport* (not bowling, of course), at least one sport that uses a *verb* and one that is a *noun*, for example:

baseball	swim	sumo
football	run	archery

Step 3: If your students are not so shy or of a relatively high level, have each of them write one or more of the sports on their list under one of the columns indicated. If you are reluctant to have them try it out, then call on students to tell you one of the sports on their list, and you can write it under the correct column. Do this until you have a good set of data on the board. Watch the clock to make sure you have enough time for the fol-

lowing steps.

Step 4: If the students wrote the sports on the board themselves, move any that are out of place into the correct columns.

Step 5: Ask the groups to come up with three rules for classifying the sports. Alternatively, if you are using computers, have the students do a quick web search for each of the sports on the board. Then, looking at one or more of the pages they have found, they can do a word search to find the relevant lines. Cutting and pasting these into a word processing file would allow them to generate a lot of data quickly. You should instruct them to locate only three or four examples for each sport. Then, they would look at the data to try to determine the patterns and formulate rules for the three columns.

Step 6: Elicit from students what they think all the sports in a single column have in common. The column with ball sports is fairly easy to decide, but the other two require the students to activate their grammatical noticing skills.

Step 7 (Optional): You may need to provide some hints along the way. If so, tell the students that the other two columns differ based on their grammar, not on the kind of sport as in the first column. The fact that you can add an –*ing* ending on these sports should be the clue here. The general paradigm is given in Table 1.

Step 8: Once students have worked out the paradigm, it's time to show them how to talk about the sports. You can, of course, have them tell you ways to talk about them or you can just show them—this will all depend on how much time you want to spend on the lesson. If you are teaching at a college or university, you could, for example, also create a handout using the university sports clubs and circles.

Conclusion

Giving students this paradigm can help them to talk about the myriad of sports there are in the world. Of course, there are sports activities which

Table 1. Paradigm of verb pattern with type of sport

Ball sports	Verb sports	Noun sports
play *ball sport*: *I like to play pool/volleyball/football.* You can say *We had a baseball game.*	Just use the *verb* or use *go verbing*: *I like to jog/fish/rock climb. I like to go jogging/fishing/rock climbing.* You can say *We climbed a mountain.*	do / practice *noun sport*: *I do/practice kyudo/archery/karate.* You can say *We had a kendo match/meet* or *We practiced karate.*

are also common activities, such as walking or running. When we are just swimming for fun, is it a sport? There are also exercise activities which fit in this paradigm, but are not exactly sports, such as Tai Chi or yoga. Working with these patterns can open the way to a variety of discussion topics, from simple personal leisure activities, to healthy living through an active lifestyle, to cul-

tural differences through preferred sports activities. Additionally, the students have the benefit of exploring real language data and developing the paradigm for themselves. This can give them confidence to find their own usage patterns for other vocabulary. It also gets them noticing language, looking carefully at numerous examples.

MY SHARE • ACTIVITIES FOR VOCABULARY | 15

Using authentic materials to develop reading skills and reading strategies

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Quick Guide

Key words: Reading, vocabulary, strategies, motivation, and autonomy

Learner English level: Intermediate and above

Learner maturity level: High school and above

Preparation time: 60 minutes

Activity time: 90 minutes for all activities

Materials: 2 enlarged texts of information printed out from websites, 2 worksheets with reading questions, and a test paper for each student

Introduction

A survey conducted in my class shows that most of the students want to acquire a sufficient level of English proficiency to enable them to read brochures and gather information when travelling overseas. However, it also exposed the fact that the students tend to think that English lessons in an educational context do not lead to the actual use of English after leaving school. Some students comment that the English they learn at school and the English they come in contact with through various mediums seem completely different to each other.

To respond to their needs and objectives, this lesson teaches the students vocabulary, reading skills, and reading strategies while providing opportunities to access authentic written materials in English. It also motivates the students and introduces cultural contexts in foreign countries.

During one semester, the lessons simulate a real situation in one specific tourist location.

Preparation

Step 1: Decide on a theme to be used as a reading topic for the class, for example, finding a hotel, using public transportation, and locating a famous tourist attraction.

Step 2: Access visitor's guides for tourist information on the web such as <onlysf.sfvisitor.org> and <www.sfguide.com/>.

Step 3: Find information from a relevant site, for instance *Where to Stay* for the topic *Finding a hotel*.

Step 4: Print out and enlarge two texts of the information. (Text 1 for the first activity-introducing vocabulary and demonstrating reading strategies as a whole class and pair work activity; and Text 2 for the second activity-individual work as further practice.)

Step 5: Prepare 20 reading questions, 10 for Activity 1 and 10 for Activity 2, based on the texts and chosen theme. Questions could be a yes/no alternative or wh-questions, depending on the learners' proficiency.

Step 6: (Optional) Design 3 to 5 TOEIC/TOEFL style questions related to Text 2, for example:

Q: Which of the following is not allowed at Global Village Hostel?

(A) Smoking in the hostel.

(B) Drinking alcohol in the hostel.

(C) Staying for two weeks.

(D) Watching TV in the common room.

Procedure

Activity 1

Step 1: Elicit students' prior knowledge about the topic by asking and discussing some questions.

Step 2: Teach vocabulary relevant to the topic, vocabulary that cannot be guessed from the contexts of the text, and vocabulary the students might not be familiar with.

Step 3: Write key words for reading comprehension on the blackboard.

Step 4: Put up the enlarged Text 1 on the board, and provide Worksheet 1 with reading questions for the text to each student.

Step 5: Read the questions and the text with the students and demonstrate how to find specific information related to the reading questions. Underline or circle the key words in the text.

Step 6: After demonstrating the way to sort important information from less important information for the first few questions, ask the students with a higher proficiency to model several examples by answering questions, reading the sentences which contain key words, and explaining how to extract important information. Gradually, transfer to pair work and individual work.

Step 7: Check the answers for the reading questions and confirm the students' understanding of the text and the reading strategies before moving on to the second activity.

Activity 2

Step 1: After introducing reading strategies to locate specific information and how to find the answers for the reading questions, put up the enlarged Text 2 on the board and provide Worksheet 2 with reading questions for the text to each student.

Step 2: Ask the students to use the reading strategies they have learned during Activity 1 and answer the reading questions individually.

Step 3: Check the answers with the whole class. Ask the students to read aloud the sentences which include key words and important information to answer each reading question. Underline or circle the key words in the text to make it explicit.

Activity 3 (Optional)

For assessment purposes or preparation for TOEIC style exams, conduct this activity as a test following the TOEIC format.

Conclusion

These activities assist students to acquire vocabulary, reading skills, and reading strategies. Selecting a topic that the learners are interested in enhances their motivation and autonomy, and using authentic materials gives them confidence in reading English texts.

This program is ideal for the class where the learners' proficiency level varies as each student can work at his or her own pace. Moreover, the higher proficiency students cannot only act as examples of competent readers but also support less competent readers during pair work.

Note. Use computers in the class if each student has access to the Internet. For an upper-intermediate to advanced class, ask the students to find information from the website by themselves. It helps the learners to develop information-gathering skills.

Marking 100 multiple-choice answers in about 20 seconds

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Quick Guide

Key words: Test marking

Learner English level: All

Learner maturity level: All

Preparation time: Making your test plus an extra 15-20 minutes

Activity time: About 20 seconds

Materials: 1 sheet of thick colored (or white) paper to match the size of the students' answer sheet, 1 box cutter, 1 highlighter if you're using white paper (do your eyes a favor by not using a yellow highlighter).

Introduction

Many of us give multiple-choice tests for various reasons, but we are all faced with the same task at the end: marking them. Some ways to mark them are easier than others, such as selecting the letters in the answer choices so they form words or certain patterns. Unfortunately, the students can catch on to those patterns and the test results can be tainted because of such methods. Then again, assuming the students are oblivious to the answer patterns, this still takes a while to mark, especially when our rhythm is broken by the students' mistakes. It is easy to lose track of where we were when the mistakes are plentiful.

A way to avoid all this cumbersome page turning is to create an answer sheet. With this method though, patterns should not be used because they become obvious very quickly. On the other hand, having all the answers on one single page makes the teacher's task of marking a lot easier. One kind of answer sheet requires the students to write in their answers, A, B, C, or D on the line, with only one space next to the question number.

Here is an example:

    1-   __A__
    2-   __C__
    3-   ____

The easier version of this method is an answering grid in which each question number offers the student four answer choices (A,B,C,D). The students simply have to make a mark in the box that represents what they think is the correct answer choice (A,B,C,D). They can make a check mark, an X, a heart, a flower, a slash, anything they want. Write some examples on the board. Allowing the students to be creative here will take some of the test pressure off them since they will not have to worry about making a specific mark in a specific manner.

Here is an example of the answering grid:

Question	A	B	C	D
1			X	
2	X			
3				

Now, let's make it even easier by creating a marking grid that will be placed right on top of the answering grid, with holes cut out in the squares where the answers should be. As you place this marking grid on top of the student's answering grid, any square not showing some kind of mark in it means the student picked an answer other than the correct one. It is then very easy to just go over the marking grid with a highlighter (of the same color as the marking grid) and fill-in the blank spaces. This way, when the students receive their test back, they will not only clearly see where they made mistakes, but also see what the correct answers should be.

The advantages of using this method are: a) the students can see their results right away (and look at you as if you were the most efficient person on earth), and b) you can get all your marking done in a ridiculously short amount of time.

Preparation

Making the marking grid.

Step 1: Print an extra copy of the students' answering sheet on sturdy colored paper or thick white paper. The marking grid should be exactly the same as your answering grid.

Step 2: Take the test yourself and write your answers on the marking grid. As any good teacher knows, you should take the test yourself before giving it to your students. At this point, you can fill-in one copy of the answering sheet yourself (either on regular paper or directly on the sturdier paper). If you answer on thin paper, you'll have to transfer your answers to the thicker paper since that will become your stencil.

Step 3: After you have written your answers on the sturdy paper (and made sure there are no mistakes), cut out the squares bearing a mark. An easy way to do this is to make all the horizontal incisions at once, then making all the vertical ones at once. Yes, you may turn the paper. This way is much faster than trying to cut out each box one at a time.

Step 4: Cut out the extra paper (margins) surrounding the answering grid itself. This way, when you lay your grid on the student's answer sheets, it will be easier to align properly.

Step 5: If you used colored paper, you're ready to go. If you used white paper, it's a good idea to color in all the boxes (A,B,C,D). This way, when you place your master grid on the student's white answer sheet, the answers (or the squares where the answers should be) will jump at you because of the contrast of white against color.

Procedure

Using the marking grid

Step 1: Place the marking grid on top of the student's answer sheet and make sure it is aligned properly.

Step 2: Go over the master grid with a marker or a highlighter of the same color as your master grid and color in the white squares that are not bearing a mark. The squares on your master grid are where the correct answers should be, so if there is no mark on the student's answer sheet, it means the student did not choose this answer. What you are doing with the marker is indicating where the mistakes are. The students can then see where they made mistakes and see what the correct answer is. As you mark, keep track of how many times you color in a square.

Step 3: Subtract the number of times you colored in a square from the total number of possible correct answers. Each time you colored in a square equals one mistake. It takes about 15 seconds to mark 100 questions.

Conclusion

This idea is not new. I remember my teachers using marking grids such as this one when I was in high school, maybe even before that. The difference is that this one is custom made to fit your own test and very easy to use.

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18 MY SHARE • ACTIVITIES FOR LISTENING

Meaningful fun with dictation

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Quick Guide

Key words: Four-skill activity, individual/pair/group work, motivational, non-threatening

Learner English level: All (depending on text)

Learner maturity level: All (depending on text)

Preparation time: 60 minutes

Activity time: One lesson

Materials: Handouts of written text A & B, worksheet A & B (See appendices)

Introduction

This activity is highly effective for reinforcing or consolidating learning objectives since it gives

learners the opportunity to practice the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) in a motivational, fun, and meaningful way. It also provides a platform on which they can engage in individual, pair, and group work in a way that is non-threatening and promotes risk-taking.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare a written text (dialogue or narrative) of about 300 words. The text should reflect the learners' English level and incorporate relevant target language.

Step 2: Prepare one copy for Student A (SA) and one for Student B (SB).

Step 3: Choose an even number of words (such as key vocabulary items or other relevant learning objectives) to delete from the texts. Generally, about 30 words are sufficient for a 90-minute class.

Step 4: Beginning with Text A (see Appendix A), delete the first word. Then delete the second word from Text B (see Appendix B). Alternate this way until you have deleted all of the chosen items.

Step 5: Prepare Worksheets A (see Appendix C) and B (see Appendix D). In the left column write the numbers that correspond to the deleted items.

Procedure

Step 1: Divide the class down the middle into two even groups, A and B.

Step 2: Distribute copies of Text A and Worksheet A to each student in Group A and copies of Text B and Worksheet B to each student in Group B.

Step 3: Individually, students try to guess their missing words. Encourage them to guess all of their words and to write them on their worksheet, not on the text.

Step 4: After students have completed the task, pair them off within their group. Students who cannot finish the task on their own will have a chance to complete it with the help of their peers during Steps 5 and 6.

Step 5: By negotiating in pairs, students try to agree on their answers. To achieve this they need to justify and defend their answer choices.

Step 6: Next, each group as a whole should gather together and try to agree on a single set of answers. Have one group leave the classroom so that they do not overhear the other group's discussion.

Step 7: Bring the two groups together again and make pairs consisting of one partner from each group. Ensure that the pairs sit face-to-face and explain that they must not allow their partner from the other group to see their worksheet. Remember, this is a four-skill activity and seeing is NOT one of those skills.

Step 8: Rather than explaining, demonstrate the following procedure with a short example text (with missing words) on the board, which you could prepare during Step 6:

- Using a volunteer, show students that SA begins reading Text A aloud and stops at the first missing word (1). At this point SA must say *I don't know the next word but I think it is…* and read out the answer they guessed for (1).

- If correct, SA receives 5 points and records that on their worksheet. If incorrect, SA must ask SB for a hint.

- The first hint SB gives will be the first letter of the missing word, the second hint the second letter, and so on. Each hint costs SA one point. For example, asking SB for three hints will leave SA with two points.

- This continues until SA guesses the word correctly, or uses up five hints, at which time SB must give SA the correct answer.

- Once SA has the correct answer for (1), SB begins reading Text B aloud from that spot (1) until SB reaches their missing word (2), at which point SB must say *I don't know the next word, but I think it is…* and read out the answer they guessed for (2).

- The two students repeat the above process and alternate in this way through to the end of the text.

Step 9: Monitor the students' progress during the activity. If you have demonstrated the activity clearly, this step will require no further intervention.

Step 10: Wait until all of the pairs have completed the task, and then announce the winner. The winner could be either the student or the group with the highest total points.

Variation

To raise the stakes and make the activity more motivational, teachers could offer a prize (such as chocolates or no homework) to the winning students.

Appendices

The appendices can be viewed at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/resources/0704.pdf>

A brief filler activity on voice inflection

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Quick Guide

Key words: Voice inflection, intonation, prosody
Learner English level: All
Learner maturity level: High school and above
Preparation time: 5 minutes
Activity time: Approximately 15 minutes
Materials: Blackboard, paper, pens or pencils

Introduction

Most of my students are keen to improve their grammar and vocabulary. However, the prosody of what they say, their emotional stress, is also a very important part of their English production skills. It's usually something they need to brush up. Here is a rather simple activity for practicing and reinforcing this with students. It works with low-level groups as well as more advanced groups. It helps raise students' awareness of this important aspect of their L2 skills.

Procedure

Step 1: Tell the students you will be giving them a dictation and instruct them to write down the five expressions or phrases that they hear.

Step 2: Read out the list below. Repeat the words, being careful to read them with the appropriate emotional stress or voice inflection (the words in the brackets will help you keep on target).

1. I am.   (normal)
2. I am…   (guilty)
3. I am!   (happy)
4. I am?   (surprised)
5. I am.   (very confident)

The key point is to produce the words with different emotive stress so that they all sound different, and in reality, convey differing messages. At first there may be some confusion when students realize that the words themselves (i.e., the spelling) are all the same.

Step 3: Encourage the students to check their answers together. By this stage, most of them should understand what this dictation is about–realizing that although the spelling is the same, the meaning conveyed differs, in some cases being totally different.

Step 4: Ask if any repetition of items is necessary. Most likely, they will want you to repeat the items several times. This is good, as it will provide them with many examples of the different prosodic values.

Step 5: Write words such as those listed below on the blackboard along with a few random items as well:

Happy	Surprised	Shocked
Proud/confident		Sad
Guilty	Normal	

Step 6: While writing the words, demonstrate the meaning of the words, giving examples to help students understand the meaning. For example:

- I lost my friend's favorite book. I feel so guilty. Am I the one who lost the book?/I am...
- Are you the Lotto 6 winner?/I am! (happy)
- Are you my teacher?/I am. (normal)
- You are the best student in this class!/I am?? (shocked or surprised)

Emoticons may also be an option here since students are often very familiar with these. !(.-.)!

Step 7: Tell the students to listen to the original words again and try to match the dictated phrases' numbers with the words that you have written on the board.

Step 8: After students have checked these together, review the words and elicit the answers, checking to see that the students have matched the words (happy, surprised, etc.,) with the correct number in the dictated list of *I am*.

Variations

- It can be quite funny to produce mistaken answers. Students can guess the difference in meaning. For example:

T: You are a bad student.
S: I am! (proudly, confirming the fact!)
 vs. S: I am? (questioning it).
To help students understand that the wrong tone was given, you can point to the word (happy, etc.,) on the board to reinforce your emphasis.

- A further activity at this stage is to write (or elicit) suitable questions and ask students to work either in pairs or groups to practice answering them. Another stage can be asking students to decide whether the response given to such a question is appropriate or not.

 Q: Are you a cheat?
 A: I am! (laughs: inappropriate)
 Q: You are the winner of the Lotto Prize!
 A: I am! (surprised/happy: appropriate)
 Q: You are (wrong name)!
 A: I am? No, I'm not. I'm (real name).

Conclusion

Prosody, or emotional stress, in spoken English carries a lot of a meaning. Encouraging learner awareness of this aspect of their second language production is a positive contribution towards improving their overall communication skills.

…with Robert Taferner

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

BOOK REVIEWS ONLINE

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THIS MONTH'S column features Christopher Bozek's evaluation **of** *People Like Us*, a textbook for EFL students interested in exploring cultural issues. Sybil Armstrong and Loran Edwards then discuss the merits of *Synergy Student Book Plus*, a four-level four-skills textbook series for false beginner to upper intermediate students.

People Like Us: Exploring Cultural Values and Attitudes

[Simon Greenall. Tokyo: Macmillan Language House, 2003. pp. 96. ¥2,100. ISBN: 4-89585-445-0.]

Reviewed by Christopher Bozek, Kitami Institute of Technology

Finding a culture textbook with English exercises may be challenging, but *People Like Us* makes the search easy. *People Like Us* is the first in a series of two textbooks that contains thirty-six 2-page units focusing on culture. It introduces 10 people from around the world who share many aspects of their culture and country. Each of the thirty six units includes new vocabulary, speaking, writing, reading, and listening exercises. The textbook comes with two 60-minute cassette tapes. Each unit usually takes one class period of ninety minutes to complete.

My students were interested in topics such as food and drink, time off, and dating, but unfortunately, the textbook did not explore them enough. Although I thought that the topics did not go into enough depth, the length of the units makes it easy for teachers to pick and choose which ones they would like to cover during one semester or one year.

The best part of this textbook is the variety of exercises. For example, in Units 12 and 14 there is a unique exercise where the student is asked to put questions into the appropriate place in the interview. After asking the students to complete the exercise, they can practice the interview with their classmates. There are several exercises that require students to work together in pairs. For example, in Unit 16, there is an exercise in which pairs of students discuss gift-giving ideas from their own culture, and in Unit 24 students are asked to work in pairs and discuss whether they agree or disagree with seven statements. After discussing the statements, students match comments from the books' participants to the statements they just discussed. This is unique because it connects the two exercises and enables the students to see if their answers are the same as the books' participants. In Unit 28, culture clashes are presented. There are several good examples and a discussion can evolve about the culture clashes that the students themselves have experienced. Unit 35 describes how other cultures' concepts of time are different.

At the back of the book, supplementary communication activities for some of the units are available. There are also notes for students that explain the activities and vocabulary in English. Finally, examples of phrases or sentences that the students are expected to use in activities throughout the units are provided. If a student does not know how to begin an exercise, they can look up the Chatfile in the back of the book to see several examples.

Overall, *People Like Us* contains many excellent exercises that could form the basis of a successful cultural experience.

Synergy Student Book Plus (Levels 1-4)

Reviewed by Sybil Armstrong and Loran Edwards, Kansai Gaidai University

Synergy is a four-level 4-skills textbook series ranging from false beginner to upper intermediate. In addition to the student text, there is a wealth of other resources including a student CD containing all the dialogues and readings, a Teacher's Guide, a Resource Pack, and an Extraciser CD-ROM, which can be used to create additional exercises to be printed or used online, and a DVD with an accompanying Activity Book. The many elements of *Synergy* give the teacher multiple methodological and materials choices.

We used the *Synergy Student Book Plus* (hereafter referred to as *Synergy)* series for ninety-minute oral communication classes of non-English major, university students. Class size averaged twenty-five students, and the levels ranged from false beginner to intermediate.

Each level of *Synergy* is organized into ten units with three 2-page lessons in each unit. Lesson 1 introduces the topic and language; lesson 2 focuses on grammar; and lesson 3 has a real life focus. *Synergy* offers a variety of topics and activities, which engage students' interest and enable them to develop their language skills. For example, each level of *Synergy* incorporates elements of popular culture, such as biographies of famous actors or sports stars, into its lessons. Another attractive feature is the model conversations, which include conversation strategies such as how to move a conversation to a new topic. In our experience, Japanese students have trouble creating and sustaining conversations, so modeling and teaching how to do this is beneficial. The textbook also offers practice pages for each unit and two comprehensive reviews. We found these additional worksheets useful in reinforcing the lesson's goals either as in-class activities or as homework assignments.

Unfortunately, we found the topics of the units too general to provide continuity throughout each unit. For example, in *Synergy Level 1* the topic of Unit 2 is People. Lesson 1 covers physical appearance, Lesson 2 introduces abilities using the modal *can/can't,* while Lesson 3 explores astrological signs. We found that the lessons do not recycle vocabulary, language functions, or tasks sufficiently, which second language acquisition research has found to be important to students' retention of new pedagogic input (Brown, 2000). Looking through all four levels, this seems to be true throughout the series.
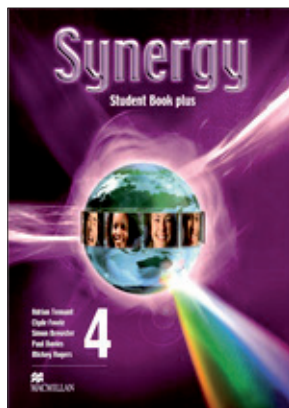
The continuity issue would not be as much of a problem in the case of a sixty-minute class as we found that one lesson's material was sufficient to fill this amount of time; however, for our ninety-minute classes it proved to be a problem. In order to adjust for this, continuity was found by selecting parts of units that corresponded to the course syllabus and lessons were supplemented using the practice pages and the Resource Pack. Additionally, despite the wealth of supplemental resources, we still found ourselves having to create our own materials.

The *Synergy* DVD is an additional element, which could be used in conjunction with the *Student Book Plus* or as a stand-alone course. All four levels utilize the same characters and have similarly themed episodes, for example, work, home, entertainment, and social events. The characters are likeable and the scenarios engaging.

From previous experience with first-year university students, we realized that they have poor listening skills. Wanting to focus on listening, we felt the *Synergy* DVD and Activity Book would be a great addition to the class. At the time that we previewed the DVD, only Level 3 was available, and we chose Levels 1 and 2 based on this preview, believing they would be similar in style and content to Level 3 but closer to the proficiency level of our false beginning and beginning level students. In Level 3, the language is authentic but spoken at a slightly slower than natural speed with clear enunciation. While the Level 1 DVD was a good match for the false-beginner level students, the speed and enunciation of the language in the

Level 2 DVD was actually more difficult than that in the Level 3 DVD. Because of this, the beginning level students were not able to complete the Level 2 DVD activities successfully, and as a result did not benefit academically from the tasks.

In short, although we did encounter some leveling problems, we still recommend the DVD. We recommend previewing all levels in order to choose the most appropriate one for your class, and since the DVD episodes are not tied to the *Student Book Plus* units, it is not essential that you choose corresponding levels if you decide to use both elements together.

Reference

Brown, S. (2000). *Slow down! The importance of repetition, planning, and recycling in language teaching.* Retrieved December 9, 2006, from Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) database. ERIC# ED446594.

RESOURCES • RECENTLY RECEIVED   25

…with Scott Gardner

<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

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

RECENTLY RECEIVED ONLINE

An index of books available for review can be found at:

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

* = first notice; ! = final notice. Final notice items will be removed April 30. For queries please write to the appropriate email address below.

Books for Students (reviewed in *TLT*)

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

! *Active Listening* (levels 1, 2, 3) (second edition). Brown, S., & Smith, D. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. [Incl. CDs].

* *Countries of the World* (elementary / intermediate reader series of 24 books, including Canada, Kenya, Vietnam, etc.). Dahl, M., et al. Mankato, MN: Bridgestone, 1999.

! *Essential BULATS: Business Language Testing Service*. Clark, D. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. [Incl. CD-ROM].

Essential English for Communication. MacGregor, L. Tokyo: Kaibunsha, 2006. [Incl. CD, teacher's manual].

! *Get Real! (new edition)* (4 levels: *Foundation, 1, 2, 3*). Buckingham, A., Craven, M., & Williamson, D. Oxford: Macmillan, 2007. [Incl. workbooks, teacher's guides, CDs].

* *Lecture Ready: Strategies for Academic Listening, Note-Taking, and Discussion* (levels 1, 2, 3). Sarosy, P., et al. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. [Incl. DVDs].

Newsflash Japan 2020: Talking Points From the Future. Stapleton, P. Tokyo: Macmillan Languagehouse, 2007.

Books for Teachers (reviewed in JALT Journal)

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

! *Language Policy, Culture, and Identity in Asian Contexts*. Tsui, A. B. M., & Tollefson, J. W. (Eds.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2007.

全国語学教育学会 jalt journal

JALT Journal

is a refereed research journal of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (全国語学教育学会).

It invites practical and theoretical articles and research reports on second/ foreign language teaching and learning in Japanese and Asian contexts.

For more information and submission guidelines see <www.jalt.org/jj/>

THE LANGUAGE TEACHER

WIRED

…with Paul Daniels & Malcolm Swanson

<tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org>

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

TLT WIRED ONLINE

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

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

Educational Blogging 101

Paul Daniels

Kochi University of Technology

BLOGGING HAS been a popular topic at recent language conferences in Japan. At the 2006 JALTCALL conference in Sapporo, half a dozen presentations were related to educational blogging. Blogs were also a popular topic at JALT's November conference in Kitakyushu. This month's Wired column presents several solutions for educators interested in setting up a blog for either classroom or personal use.

Blogs are the most recent communication channel emerging from the online digital community. These journal-like weblogs possess similarities with earlier forms of online communication such as forums, chat, and wikis, but aside from their commenting feature, they primarily distribute information and opinions from one to many.

As I am writing this blog article, I must confess that I've attempted to resurrect my personal blog on several occasions only to throw in the towel after a few posts. I have had, however, far better success on a professional level using blogs for both short-term student projects and as a method of distributing up-to-date information to colleagues.

After attending several presentations, reading other educators' blogs, and discussing innovative approaches to using blogs in the classroom, I find there are a variety of goals we hope to accomplish through blogs. Some wish to bring students together from various regions of the globe to discuss and debate, similar to email exchange projects. Others use blogs within the classroom to provide students with space to voice their opinions or with an authentic language learning environment. Still other teachers wish to set up a blog simply to provide students or other educators with information about their teaching ideas or courses or school.

There are several blog options available; some are free while others are not. The first step in selecting a blog software package or service is a simple needs assessment. The following is a list of questions that should help with your blog selection process.

- Are you interested in setting up a blog for yourself, colleagues, a few students, one class, or an entire school?
- Are you looking for free blogging services or software, or are you willing to purchase software or pay a nominal monthly or yearly fee?
- Do you need a blog platform that supports multiple users and/or user administration?
- Will you require students to sign up for a blog service themselves, or are you willing to create student accounts yourself?
- Are you looking for a text-only blog or one that allows students to upload images, sound, or video as well?
- Do you or your school have its own web server or a web hosting service to run blog application software?
- Would you like to give students the option to upload content from their mobile phones?
- Are you already using a course management system such as Moodle? If so, are you planning to integrate the blogs with your current course management system?

After answering these questions, you most likely have a better idea of your blogging needs, so let's move on and compare the advantages and disadvantages of installing your own blogging system to using a hosted blog service.

Hosted blog services have immediate advantages for those who find themselves starting up new projects the night before class. Since no software installation or server maintenance is needed, both teachers and students can have a professional looking blog up and running in minutes. This would be the obvious solution for teachers who wish to experiment with blogging in the classroom for the first time or those with little patience with technical installation procedures. However, be aware of possible obstacles, such as sign-up procedures that can overload language learners, monthly service charges, especially for added features, advertising content, and access speeds. In addition, if your goal is to establish a larger ongoing blog project, you may want to consider backup solutions, archiving, as well as control of the blog look and functions.

The top three hosted blog services

Typepad <www.typepad.com>

TypePad offers a simple one blog, one author solution for US$4.95 a month. If you would like to use the service for an entire school, you will need to sign up for the US$14.95 per month plan that allows unlimited blogs and unlimited user accounts. TypePad online WYSIWYG (What You See is What You Get) editor and automatic inserting and automatic resizing of images and thumbnails makes formatting and posting blog entries simple. You can also post text and images by email although I have not yet tried this using a Japanese mobile phone. Finally, you can choose your own blog site design from the themes.

Blogger <blogger.com>

Blogger, as you probably know, was bought out by Google in 2003 and offers users ad-free blog space at no cost. Like TypePad, it has a WYSI-WYG editor and a large selection of design templates to choose from. Blogger also recently introduced a service that allows you use your own URL to serve your blog rather than the default blogspot.com address. With Blogger mobile, you can post images and text from any mobile device that handles email. You can also post to a blog directly from Google's toolbar. As far as email posts, Mail-to-Blogger does not support images or other attachments and Blogger Mobile, which

does support images sent from mobile phones, currently only works with mobile providers in the USA. Blogger's advantages are that it is free and allows users to set up unlimited blogs. The disadvantages are its lack of categories, track-backs, image manipulation support, and international support for mobile blogging.

LiveJournal <www.livejournal.com>

LiveJournal is seen by its users as more of a community than a tool. Some communities are open so anyone can join and post entries to the community blog. Others are closed and require an invitation. It is also possible to have personal blogs that are private or open to the public. LiveJournal is also free but offers paid accounts that have some additional features. As it is primarily a personal blogging site, LiveJournal lacks multi-user features. Finally, users are exposed to small advertisements when posting and reading blog pages.

DIY Blog Software

Installing and hosting your own blog software has several advantages such as freedom to customize, student/site privacy, full control of settings, faster access speeds, and an easier bulk user administration. Installing your own blog software involves some initial planning and reading, but recent installation packages have made life easier for the teacher/administrator. User-friendly blog packages can be installed by copying the source application to a web directory and clicking through an installation menu using a web browser. An even simpler solution is the one-click software installation many web-hosting providers offer. If you are interested in having the flexibility of running your own blog software but don't want the hassles of running your own server, look for a web hosting company that offers a one-click script install service which is often called Fantastico.

MoveableType <www.sixapart.com>

If you decide to host your own blog site on your school or your web hosting site, I would recommend trying out MovableType first. It is quite easy to install and has a clean professional look. The personal version is free and is not limited as to the number of blogs you can create. If you are using it with a group of students though, you are not able to create multiple accounts. For the multi-user version, you can purchase a single class-

room version for US$39.95, and for US$299.95 you can host blogs for up to 300 students. Since MoveableType is basically the same software used by TypePad, the options are quite similar. Another advantage is its user management support. If your school is already running an LDAP server to store usernames and passwords, you don't have to worry about creating new user accounts. MovableType can authenticate users from an external user database such as LDAP.

One disadvantage is that MoveableType does not support email posts out of the box, but there are some hacks to add this feature. More information about the mail plugin can be found at <www.zonageek.com/software/files/mt/mtmail-0.5/mtmail.html>.

WordPress <wordpress.org>

WordPress is another popular publishing platform which is entirely free. It requires PHP and MySQL to run on your server and has good support for multiple users and permissions. It also has a new feature that supports email posts of images or other attachments. Because of its large community of users and developers, it has many advanced features and a nice repertoire of plugins to extend its functionality. Like MoveableType, it requires some technical know-how to get it up and running.

Moodle Blog <moodle.org>

If you are already using the free Moodle course management system, the easiest solution is to use its built-in blog function, which is available from version 1.6. The Moodle blog is a very basic tool and doesn't support advanced features such as pingbacks and blog searches. An RSS feature is included, but like its other features, it is still in its early development. In addition, the page layout is not very pleasing to the eye compared to dedicated blog systems such as MoveableType. Because of the popularity of Moodle and the lack of Moodle blog features, I have been developing a new Moodle blog module that has several new elements that include online voice recording, full multimedia support, mail posting, and a search function.

Gallery <gallery.menalto.com>

Although Gallery is not actually a blog application, it is worth looking at because of its powerful media support. For the past two years, I have been using Gallery as a mobile media blog tool through which students are able to upload images and video from their mobile phones. Gallery can also be integrated with Moodle. I have written a couple of scripts that automatically create Gallery user accounts and albums at the same time they are created in Moodle. In addition, the user login session is integrated so once students login to Moodle, they are automatically logged into Gallery too. I prefer to use Gallery as a media blog over Moodle because of its better media support and more professional layout. The Moodle/Gallery integration module as well as the Moodle blog module can be downloaded from my digital learning site <eng.core.kochi-tech.ac.jp/digital/>.

Before making any commitments, test-driving a blog solution is the only sure way to determine if it adequately meets your needs. For further information or questions about setting up a blog application for your class or school, contact the WIRED column editors.

…with Joseph Sheehan
<jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org>

JALT Focus contributors are requested by the column editor to submit articles of up to 750 words written in paragraph format and not in abbreviated or outline form. Announcements for JALT Notices should not exceed 150 words. All submissions should be made by the 15th of the month, one and a half months prior to publication.

JALT FOCUS ONLINE

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

JALT Calendar

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

JALT Watch

JALT National news and announcements in brief.

▶ If you need to contact JALT Central Office, note that the email address is now <jco@jalt.org>.

Research Grants 2007

Have you got interesting research ideas but are in need of financial resources to further them? Spring offers a new opportunity to be awarded a JALT Research Grant, with the possibility to apply between Apr 1 and May 31, 2007 for one of three ¥100,000 grants.

Successful awardees will receive comprehensive support, both from the Research Grants Committee and from experienced advisors and mentors in the Research Grants Teacher-Researcher Network.

Experiences from the viewpoints of previous awardees can be seen in the *JALT Focus: Showcase* (in this issue) and *Grassroots* (April 2006 *TLT*) columns, and full information, including application procedures, is available on the JALT website <jalt.org/researchgrants>.

Looking forward to some stimulating ideas.

*Anthony Robins, JALT Research
Grants Committee Chair*

Membership outreach and retention

One of the topics that came up at the February EBM was the need to have a stable membership base. This, of course, means renewing on time. Most members simply overlook the renewal date, and a gentle, friendly reminder works wonders. Support from chapter and SIG officers in downloading the membership lists as soon as they become available and sending out those reminders is always greatly appreciated.

We are actively seeking ideas for membership drives and outreach efforts targeted at our under-represented constituencies, such as native and non-native colleagues in the elementary and secondary school sector and conversation schools. Particular interest was generated in reviving the now defunct Eikaiwa SIG. We are counting on interested members to build up a solid membership base for this huge community of owners, teachers, and learners.

One of the positive results of this discussion was the wealth of ideas put forth on what various chapters and SIGs were doing to keep their membership thriving. They ranged from tying up with local groups and putting on joint events, inviting representatives from other target groups to make presentations and encourage participation by their colleagues, to visiting area schools or boards

of education to offer JALT-sponsored seminars or workshops. Too many ideas were mentioned to list here, but they will be compiled and made available as a resource for all officers to share. If you'd like to contribute your ideas, or simply want to share what your chapter or SIG has been doing to promote membership, please send them in to Ann Mayeda at <membership@jalt.org>.

Building ties and creating communities—it's what keeps JALT healthy and happy. Keep reaching out, and have fun in the process!

Ann Mayeda, Director of Membership

From the Treasury

With over 60 members in total, the JALT financial team, made up of chapter and SIG treasurers, auditors, and liaisons, switches into high gear this month. April 10 is the deadline to submit all annual financial statements, the culmination of a year's worth of receipt collecting, expense and revenue entries, and making sure that everything conforms to Japan's NPO laws. One of those laws says we have to finish our Audit within 3 months of the end of the fiscal year. We ask for everyone's understanding and support. Please help your group's treasurer.

Kevin Ryan, Director of Treasury

JALT Notices

JALT Calendar

An oft-overlooked feature of the JALT Calendar is its *keitai* phone capabilities. You can look up JALT events by month, by prefecture, or by group (chapter or SIG) through your phone. Visit <jalt.org/calendar> on your mobile phone, or use the QR code printed in each month's *TLT* on the chapter events page.

Publications positions available

The Language Teacher and *JALT Journal*

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

JALT2007 Conference Proceedings

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

Publications website editor

The JALT Publications Board invites applications for the position of Web Editor for the JALT Publications website.

More information

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

Visited TLT's website recently?

…with Theron Muller

<memprofile@jalt-publications.org>

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

THIS MONTH in Showcase, Mami Ishikawa, a 2005 JALT Research Grant recipient, shares how the grant has benefited her professionally. Have your own story to share? I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

SHOWCASE

Mami Ishikawa

Upon receiving my JALT grant in 2005, I reflected back on my experiences as a student of bilingual/special education. In June 1992, I attended a commencement at the Buffalo Stadium of Colorado University at Boulder. Thinking it would probably be my last day of formal education, I had a bittersweet feeling as I sensed my golden days of youth were over. But my education didn't stop there. After I came back to Japan I taught at a high school in Yokohama for nine years and completed my second master's course in foreign language education at Kyoto University in 2004. Now I am teaching part-time at a university, struggling to pass what I have learned on to my students and pursuing a PhD. These continuing challenges help to keep me mentally fit even as I continue to age.

With my JALT grant I felt it time to consolidate my education in Japan, the UK, and the USA. The grant has provided me tremendous support in accomplishing this goal. My interests are based around enhancing the productive skills of university students, and I am currently looking into the syntactic complexity of student writing at various levels of English proficiency. Although my interests might still develop in other directions, each time I completed the quarterly report for the Research Grant I felt I was able to sharpen my aims and research focus. It was a great honor to be chosen as a JALT grant recipient. I recommend interested teachers apply for future grants; they represent a great learning opportunity.
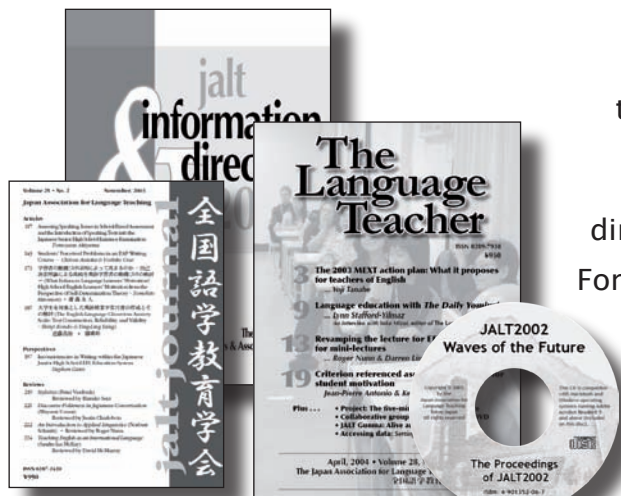
…with David McMurray

<outreach@jalt-publications.org>

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

STUDENTS AND teachers in Thailand have long thought that the only way to develop fluency in English was to live in an English-speaking environment or be exposed to the foreign language from a very young age. **Suchada Nimmannit**, a TESOL board member and associate professor at Chulalongkorn University Language Institute, discovered a remarkable exception to this maxim.

Motivations and strategies of a successful Thai learner of English

Suchada Nimmannit

Nat's classmates and I are impressed with his fluency in English. We wondered when and where he could have picked up such beautiful English intonation. His accent bears little trace of his Thai mother tongue. At 37, Nat's English speaking proficiency exceeds by far his nonnative English-speaking colleagues enrolled in a training course for flight attendants. He is an atypical case, so I asked Nat for permission to interview him, telling him that his story could inspire other Thai learners.

I framed my research questions to find out what motivated him to learn. Which learning strategies were influential to his English language development? Were there any links between his motivation and strategies?

I interviewed Nat twice. I asked about his family background, English learning experience in schools and university, interest in English language learning, and how he studied. The first interview was scribed and the second one, conducted 2 months later, was tape-recorded and transcribed. This qualitative single case study has certain limitations. To increase its validity I told Nat that his identity would be protected to ensure more authenticity in his answers, and I showed Nat the transcription of his interviews to get his approval. To increase reliability I compared his interviews with his personal notes.

Nat's speaking ability was evaluated using oral fluency scales set by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (Carroll, 1986). Four native teachers of English with an MA in TESOL rated him as an advanced-plus user of English. He could competently discuss various topics of interest and specialized fields, giving evidence and supplying details. He used compensation strategies and communicative strategies. Despite some syntactic errors and slips representing interference of the Thai mother tongue, he could be mistaken for someone who has spent long years overseas in English-speaking countries. Yet Nat's story paints a different picture.

I came from a very small village down the south of Thailand. Actually, my family was quite poor; my neighbors were quite rich. Most of their children got well graduated from Bangkok. All the rest of neighbors just respect them and admire them. So I told myself that one day I want my parents to be proud of me in some way.

The need for achievement, detected in the above excerpt, was reinforced by other instances when he recounted his experience hearing his friends and neighbors speak English.

One day I got a chance to visit the temple. I saw a lot of tourists. One of my friends went to talk to one tourist. Even he just said, "Hello," teacher and friends said, "Oh you are great! How can you talk to the tourist!" Why it wasn't me! So I said I had to practice more English in order to make people respect. One of my friends came back home and they brought

their friends. Most of their friends are foreigners. They kept talking in the language I didn't understand. How could I understand this language some day some how? How could I be this sort of person who could understand that language?

Nat was aware of the utility value of English. He revealed his instrumental motivation: "I saw movies and English speakers on the movies had good lives. I want to have good life. I must speak English."

Nat told me that he wanted to have a good job that made good money and he thought English could help him. He confirmed, "I'm really scared . . . to be a jobless person. I don't think you'll miss the job. (Interviewer: to have good jobs). Opportunities, yes."

When Nat reflected on his classroom experience, he described two teachers; one motivated him by introducing pronunciation in an interesting way, while the other did not.

When I was in year 5, one of my teacher . . . her English was very perfect. American accent . . . she's really impressed me a lot. She taught me to sing English songs . . . a lot of good English games for students to play . . . her lesson is tough . . . difficult to get through. That is my first impression to learn more and more. I love speaking. I love intonation. I love the way she spoke out. The way she made funny language because intonation is up and down, up and down and then she sang a song. I didn't have much good impression with other English teachers because they just tried to push a lot of grammar into my brain. It's just so boring.

Nat's instructors motivated him to learn more (Dörnyei, 1994), and his interest in English sounds reveals his internal motivation. Motivated by his favorite teacher, Nat developed his ability and strategies to achieve certain goals. He showed self-determination and autonomy in learning by writing to pen friends at school and reading aloud to develop his English pronunciation.

I love to communicate with people. My teachers assigned me to get penpal. I tried to send so many letters and got a couple back from Japan and the Netherlands. At the university . . . one teacher was really great. She practiced us a lot. I think it was very good because I kept practicing everyday. I practiced in class and came back home and I also keep practice every day. Like my homework. Nowadays everyday before I go to bed, I have to read at least one A4 loudly . . . Just read. Any materials. Times or Newsweek . . . any time just read . . . you could even do it in the toilet. I believe that this kind of thing could make your tongue softer to speak another language.

Nat realized that to develop communicative ability, he also needed to communicate with native speakers. "I had a chance to study at the Baptist's. I paid them. I went to their family every Wednesday from 6-8 p. m. and play with their kids. Whenever they had parties, I joined them."

He used social skills to have language exposure, input, interaction, and output, essential conditions for second language learning (Krashen, 1981; Long, 1989; Swain, 2000). On a socio-cultural perspective, Nat gained access into communities of native speakers in which he could improve his English. When he got a job as a flight attendant, he became more fluent.

I could say that it has improved a lot. I got to know people. I came to talk to them. I had close friends in England and Singapore. Every time they come to Bangkok, we go out for dinner . . have a little chat. I try to take a vacation and go to their place and stay with the family. I have a chance to practice my language.

Nat insisted that his interest in other cultures is purely internal and educational. The enthusiasm to socialize with the English-speaking community is an example of integrative motivation, though he strongly denied this as being the reason. However, when considering his reasons for visiting the Baptist's, his penpal writing, and his comments about the cultures to which he was exposed, instrumental and internal motivations are also encouraging him.

I think people would love to learn something which is different from them. For me as an Asian, I prefer to learn about Caucasian culture . . .very different from your life style . . . very interesting . . . But this is a kind of learning. I haven't brought them home. Thai people should live in our culture because nature design things in their own way . . . suitable for our country. We should not copy other culture. But we should open our eyes. We should know what other people do. Knowing what people do teach us understanding. We understand people more. We understand why they look at us in that way and the way we look at them.

A combination of motivational forces influenced Nat in various stages of his life. His need to attain basic life necessities for himself and his parents were most influential, at times his comments reflected internal or intrinsic motivation and instrumental motivation. He practiced by himself and tried to gain access into an English-speaking community. The learning strategies most frequently used were (a) imitating and repeating words and sounds, (b) reading aloud, (c) writing to penpals, and (d) communicating with English speaking people. There are links between his motivation to speak English fluently and the four strategies he used.

Learners differ depending on their context of learning. I hope the results of this study can be compared to similar studies on learners in EFL learning contexts.

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COLUMN • SIG NEWS   35

…with James Hobbs

<sig-news@jalt-publications.org>

JALT currently has 16 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes announcements of SIG events, mini-conferences, publications, or calls for papers and presenters. SIGs wishing to print news or announcements should contact the editor by the 15th of the month, 6 weeks prior to publication.

SIGs at a glance

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

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

Bilingualism

[◌ bilingualism, biculturality, international families, child-raising, identity] [📖 *Bilingual Japan*—4x year] [🎤 monographs, forums] [✉]

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

当研究会は複数言語で生活する家族および日本におけるバイリンガリズム研究の支援を目的としています。どうぞホームページの<www.bsig.org>をご覧下さい。

Computer Assisted Language Learning

[◌ technology, computer-assisted, wireless, online learning, self-access] [📖 *JALT CALL Journal Newsletter*—3x year] [🎤 Annual SIG conference, national conference, regional workshops, publications] [✉] [💬]

The JALTCALL Conference 2007 *CALL: Integration or Disintegration?* is scheduled for 1-3 Jun and will offer the opportunity to attend several excellent, exciting, and innovative presentations. The featured speaker is **Mike Levy** from Griffith University; our plenary speaker is **Yasunari Harada**, Professor of Law at Waseda University, Director of the Institute for Digital Enhancement and Cognitive Development, and member of the Research and Development Team of the Japanese PhonePass® Automated Speaking Test. More at <jaltcall.org>.

College and University Educators

[◌ tertiary education, interdisciplinary collaboration, professional development, classroom research, innovative teaching] [📖 *On CUE* —3x year] [🎤 Annual SIG conference, national conference, regional workshops, publications]

Information about what is going on in CUE can be found at <allagash.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/CUE/>. Check for regular updates on the 15th of each month.

Gender Awareness in Language Education

GALE's purpose is to research gender and its implications for language learning and teaching. We welcome submissions for our newsletter on top-

ics, both theoretical and practical, related to our purpose. Book reviews, lesson plans, think pieces, poetry—all are welcomed. Past newsletters are available at <www.tokyoprogressive.org.uk/gale>. Send your submission to Joanne Hosoya at <joanna@rb4.so-net.ne.jp>. To join GALE please use the form in the back of this *TLT* or contact the membership chair, Thomas Hardy <thomas_merlot@yahoo.com>.

Global Issues in Language Education

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

Are you interested in promoting global awareness and international understanding through your teaching? Then join the Global Issues in Language Education SIG. We produce an exciting quarterly newsletter packed with news, articles, and book reviews; organize presentations for local, national, and international conferences; and network with groups such as UNESCO, Amnesty International, and Educators for Social Responsibility. Join us in teaching for a better world! Our website is <www.jalt.org/global/sig/>. For further information, contact Kip Cates <kcates@fed.tottori-u.ac.jp>.

Japanese as a Second Language

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

Junior and Senior High School

[🔦 curriculum, native speaker, JET programme, JTE, ALT, internationalization] [📖 *The School House*—3-4x year] [🎤 teacher development workshops & seminars, networking, open mics] [✉]

The JSH SIG is operating at a time of considerable change in secondary EFL education. Therefore, we are concerned with language learning theory, teaching materials, and methods. We are also intensely interested in curriculum innovation. The large-scale employment of native speaker instructors is a recent innovation still in need of study and evaluation. JALT members involved with junior or senior high school EFL are cordially invited to join us for dialogue and professional development opportunities.

Learner Development

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

We are working together in small groups locally to create a forum about learner development at JALT2007. By working together locally in the run up to the forum we aim to create a sense of momentum and synergy between our individual research projects. If that sounds exciting and you aren't already networked with a local group, please contact Ellen Head <ellenkobe@yahoo.com> to find out who is the nearest contact in your area.

Materials Writers

[🔦 materials development, textbook writing, publishers and publishing, self-publication, technology] [📖 *Between the Keys*—3x year] [🎤 JALT national conference events] [✉] [💬]

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

Other Language Educators

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

OLE has issued *OLE Newsletter 41*, containing a brief recap of OLE at JALT2006 and JALT2007, announcements in English and German, and ample information about Pan-SIG 2007 (Sendai, May 12-13), including a flyer, venue information, and abstracts in English, French, and German. OLE will have a plenary speaker, a workshop, a colloquium, and other presentations at Pan-SIG 2007. This issue also contains part 1 of a discussion paper by Alexander Imig on the European Language Portfolio.

Pragmatics

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

The Pragmatics SIG will co-host the 6th Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference on 12-13 May 2007 at Tohoku Bunka Gakuen University in Sendai. **Mayumi Usami** of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies will present a plenary, *Discourse Politeness Theory as a Theory of Interpersonal Communication*. The Pragmatics colloquium is titled *Discourse and Its Contexts in Japanese Language Classrooms* (in Japanese), and there will also be a workshop, *Communication Apprehension and L2 Willingness to Communicate*. Don't miss it.

Professionalism, Administration, and Leadership in Education

The PALE SIG welcomes new members, officers, volunteers, and submissions of articles for our journal or newsletter. To read current and past issues of our journal, visit <www.debito.org/PALE>. Also, anyone may join our listserv <groups.yahoo.com/group/PALE_Group/>. For information on events, visit <www.jalt.org/groups/PALE>.

Teacher Education

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

Teaching Children

[☀ children, elementary school, kindergarten, early childhood, play] [📖 *Teachers Learning with Children,* bilingual—4x year] [🔊 JALT Junior at national conference, regional bilingual 1-day conferences] [✉] [💬]

The Teaching Children SIG is for all teachers of children. We publish a bilingual newsletter four times a year, with columns by leading teachers in our field. There is a mailing list for teachers of children who want to share teaching ideas or questions at <groups.yahoo.com/group/tcsig>. We are always looking for new people to keep the SIG dynamic. With our bilingual newsletter, we particularly hope to appeal to Japanese teachers.

We hope you can join us for one of our upcoming events. For more information, visit <www.tcsig.jalt.org>.

児童教育部会は子どもに英語（外国語）を教える全ての教師を対象にした部会です。当部会では、この分野で著名な教師が担当するコラムを含む会報を年4回発行しております。また、子どもに英語を指導するアイデアや疑問を交換する場としてメーリングリスト <groups.yahoo.com/group/tcsig> を運営しています。活発な部会を維持していくためにも新会員を常に募集しております。会報を英語と日本語で提供しており日本人の先生方の参加も大歓迎です。今後開催される部会の催し物へぜひご参加ください。部会に関する詳細は <www.tcsig.jalt.org> をご覧下さい。

Teaching Older Learners

[☀ lifelong learning, older adult learners, fulfillment] [📖 *Told You So!*—3x year (online)] [🔊 Pan-SIG, teaching contest, national & mini-conferences] [✉] [💬]

The TOL and Pragmatics SIGs, the Tokyo and West Tokyo Chapters, and the Graduate College of Education at Temple University are pleased to co-sponsor a mini-conference entitled *Authentic English and Elderly Learners: A Day of Sharing Theory and Practice*, to be held on 24 Jun 09:00-17:00 at Temple University in Tokyo. For more details, contact Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska <mierze@tuj.ac.jp> or Eric M. Skier <skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp>.

Testing & Evaluation

[☀ research, information, database on testing] [📖 *Shiken*—3x year] [🔊 Pan-SIG, JALT National] [✉] [💬]

…with Aleda Krause

<chap-events@jalt-publications.org>

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

CHAPTER EVENTS ONLINE

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

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

CHECK AND see if something interesting is going on at a chapter near you. If your local chapter isn't listed, or for further details, go to the online calendar. There may be newly added events and updates.

East Shikoku—*Why We Should Not Avoid Extensive Reading in Our Classes* by **Rob Waring,** Notre Dame Seishin University. Waring will explore the components of any learning program that are needed for successful language learning. Reading is probably the most important skill. This session will present an approach to reading that encourages students to read fluently and for enjoyment at the lowest ability levels, including the use of graded readers and other student-centred materials. *Sun 22 Apr 14:00-16:00; Kochi Women's University, Eikokuji Campus, Kochi City, Room 351, 3F, administration building (10 meters from main entrance). 5-15 Eikokuji-cho, Kochi City; one-day members ¥500.*

Gifu—*Meaning-Focused Learning Through Drama* by **Kathi Emori**, Nagoya Women's University. Students often are building their explicit knowledge base; however, moving that into the implicit area can be tough with the same dialogues and classroom work. Through drama, meaning-focused learning draws on their explicit knowledge and helps transfer the usage into a more implicit arena for practical usage. Emori will present drama-related activities for meaning-focused learning. The participants will try a few activities and produce their own skits as a student would. *Sat 21 Apr 19:00-21:00; Heartful Square (southeast section of Gifu JR Station), Gifu City; one-day members ¥500.*

Gunma—*Stories to Heal the World* by **Charles Kowalski**. This workshop will explore storytelling as a tool both for language learning and for bringing peace to the world. Participants will have the chance to develop their natural storytelling talent, through voice, gesture, and image exercises, and to hear and tell stories on the theme of a peaceful and healthy planet. *Sun 22 Apr 14:00-16:30; Maebashi Kyoai Gakuen College, 1154-4 Koyahara-machi, Maebashi, Gunma (t: 027-266-7575); one-day members ¥1000.*

Hamamatsu—*Incorporating Intercultural Learning Into EFL Classes: Practical Activities Workshop* by **Jon Dujmovich**, Imagination Ink Creative Education & Entertainment Services. Dujmovich will share some short intercultural learning activities that can be adapted to various EFL teaching settings. Based on current intercultural theory and methods, each activity has the English language learner in mind, blending techniques and ideas in an experimental and creative way. This workshop promises to deliver some unique ideas for your classroom regardless of age or ability. *Sun 15 April 10:00-12:00; Hamamatsu, ZAZA City Bldg. Palette, 5F, Meeting Room A; one-day members: ¥1000, first time free.*

Hokkaido—*Tips for Giving Effective Presentations* by **C. A. Edington, Chris Perry,** and **Wilma Luth**. What's the difference between a good presentation and a great one? Content is important; more crucial is how that content is conveyed. Ideas will be exchanged about what makes an effective presentation, from initial planning to delivery. Perry, on the JALT2007 Review Committee, will give advice on how to write an effective abstract. Experienced presenters and beginners will get ideas for giving presentations all can enjoy. *Sun 22 April 22 13:30-16:00; Hokkai Gakuen University, Toyohira (2 minutes from Gakuen Mae subway station, Toho Line); one-day members ¥500.*

Kagoshima—*Longman Extensive Reading Presentation*. Details TBA. See our webpage <www.jalt-kagoshima.org/prog/2007.htm>. *Sunday April 22, 15:00-19:00; Seminar Room 117, Ground Floor Kousha Biru, Shinyashiki opposite the Shinyashiki Tram Stop; free for all.*

Kitakyushu—*Writing Class: A Great Fun Part of Senior High School* by **Takashi Inomori**. When the subject of Writing replaced English 2C in Japanese senior high schools, not many teachers realized they were supposed to teach a new subject. Even now, the practice of translating Japanese sentences into English seems to occupy most writing lessons. Inomori will offer some ideas and strategies to make writing classes fun and show how to help teenagers grow, not only as writers, but also as good learning partners. *Sat 14 Apr 19:00-21:00; Kitakyushu International Conference Center, Room 31 (a 5-minute walk from Kokura Station); one-day members ¥1000.*

Kobe—*Content Teaching Ideas for Low-Level Classes* by **Stephen Ryan**. The trend towards teaching content using English is firmly established in Japanese universities. Much of the literature, however, refers to intermediate and advanced learners. Drawing on experience of teaching various content areas, such as Nonverbal Communication, Intercultural Communication, and the History of Space Exploration, to students with only an elementary level of English, the presenter will share his philosophical approach to this task, as well as giving examples of many practical materials he has developed. *Sat 21 April 16:00-18:00; Kobe YMCA (2-7-15 Kano-cho, Chuo-ku, Kobe. t: 078-241-7204); one-day members ¥1000.*

Matsuyama—*Skills for Global Communication Textbook* by **Patrick** and **Aya Dougherty**, Department of Global Communication, University of Hyogo. *Skills for Global Communication* is the first of a new multi-skill, student-centered textbook series from Seido Language Institute. This workshop will be conducted by Pat and Aya Dougherty, the authors of the textbook, and will include hands on activities and illustrations of the myriad ways the textbook series will foster student success and help maintain teacher sanity. *Sun 8 Apr 14:15-16:20; Shinonome High School Kinenkan 4F (parking NOT available); one-day members ¥1000.*

Miyazaki—*Sing Your Life: Effectively Using Pop Lyrics in EFL* by **Paul Hullah**, Associate Professor, Miyazaki University. Hullah offers research findings suggesting that, though pop music forms L2 learners' "most frequent meaningful exposure to English" outside the classroom, this resource is inappropriately presented in popular contemporary tertiary level EFL coursebooks. Recommendations will be made as to how lyrics might more effectively be *personalized* and utilized to promote self-expression, as participants tackle some original lyric-based activities developed by the presenter. Comments and criticisms regarding the proposed approach are invited. *Sat 21 Apr 15:00-17:00; Miyazaki Municipal University, Room 310; free for all.*

Nagasaki—*The Place of Placement Tests* with **Melodie Cook**, Siebold University of Nagasaki; and our ***Annual My Share.*** Cook will explain her university's experiences as they employed three placement measures to group 1st-year college students into four sections of a course in oral communication. These measures consisted of the TOEIC test, a self-assessment, and an oral interview test. It was found that there were incongruities between test scores and learners' self-evaluations. We will also have our Annual My Share session. We invite all of you to bring any interesting, motivating ideas for the start of the new school year. *Sat 7 Apr 14:00-16:00; Dejima Koryu Kaikan, 4F; one day members ¥1000.*

Nagoya—*Japanese in the EFL Class? The Why and the Way* by **Mark Rebuck**, Nagoya City University. This presentation offers a new perspective on the controversial issue of using L1 in the EFL classroom. It will examine the rationale for L1 use and will also focus on how Japanese can beneficially be incorporated. A video recording of the presenter teaching using Japanese should stimulate interesting discussion. What university students really felt about their teacher using Japanese will be revealed and participants will be introduced to several L1-inclusive English teaching activities. *Sun 22 Apr 13:30-16:30; Nagoya International Center, 3F, Lecture Room 2; one-day members ¥1,000.*

Nara—*1) Internet Technology and the Emergence of New Discourse Communities* and ***2) Blogger-riffic: Using Blogs in Language Classrooms*** by **Marlen Elliot Harrison**. During the first presentation, Harrison will discuss how Internet chat rooms, blogs, and discussion boards facilitate the emergence of new language. In the second presentation, Harrison will walk participants through the process of creating their own blogs and then discuss how blogs can be utilized in language and writing classrooms as management tools for teachers and scaffolding for students. *Sun 15 Apr 14:00-17:00; Tezukayama University, Gakuenmae Campus (Kintetsu Gakuenmae Station, on the Nara Kintetsu line); free for all.*

Okayama—*The New TOEIC® Test* by **Grant Trew**. This workshop will clarify the changes made to the test in 2006. The presenter will give examples of the new format and use interactive tasks to highlight some of the key challenges Japanese test takers will face. Participants will then be introduced to activities that can be used to prepare students for the test. Grant Trew authored the OUP Teacher's Guide to the TOEIC Test. Participants get a free copy. *Sat 21 Apr 15:00-17:00; Sankaku A Bldg. 2F (near Omotecho in Okayama City); one-day members ¥500.*

Omiya—*Who Puts the Play in the Roleplay?* by **Mitch Goodman**. We'll talk about what a roleplay is, and its applicability to diverse language learning objectives. Discussion themes will be: some possible difficulties in using roleplay effectively, roleplay in textbooks, its place in a curriculum, and how to evaluate roleplay. Participants will try out some roleplay learning techniques, as well as watch videos of students in action. The structural, multi-intelligence, dramatic, and motivational aspects of using roleplay will be focal points of interest. *Sun 8 Apr 14:00-17:00; Sakuragi Kominkan 5F (near Omiya Station, west exit); one-day members ¥1000.*

Sendai—*Constructing and Celebrating Linguistic Capital* by **Laurel Kamada**, Aomori Akenohoshi Junior College. Kamada will focus on the concept of linguistic and cultural capital in relation to English language learning in Japan, based on her PhD thesis about how *half-Japanese* girls in Japan, even with low English proficiency, construct and celebrate their English linguistic capital. Discussion will turn to how this linguistic capital can be created in EFL classrooms in Japan by instilling intrinsic motivation and introducing techniques to create and celebrate English learning, even in small, but steady, increments. *Sun 29 Apr 14:00-17:00; Sendai Mediatheque, map <www.smt.city.sendai.jp/en/info/access/>; one-day members ¥1000.*

Shinshu—*Raising English Ability Through Making Speeches* by **Dennis Woolbright,** Seinan Jo Gakuin University. Woolbright will explain the process of helping students research, prepare, and deliver speeches in English, no matter what their level. Making a speech is like making a cake. If you have all the ingredients, mix them properly, and bake long enough you can make a good cake. It's important not to expect too much at first, give simple instructions, and work with students step by step. This workshop is for both students and teachers. We will actually build a speech. *Sun 15 Apr 14:00-16:45; location TBA; one-day members ¥1000.*

Tokyo—*Behavior Analysis in Second Language Teaching and Learning: Exploding the Myth of Monolithic Behaviorism* by **Peter Castagnaro**. Castagnaro will consider why the vision of psychology that began with B. F. Skinner in the 1930s has never been seriously considered by researchers in second language teaching and learning. He will give a history of behavior analysis and discuss how this system addresses language as *verbal behavior*. Behavior analysis might well be an improvement over other psychological approaches in the second language field. Space is limited. Contact Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska at <mierze@tuj.ac.jp>. *Fri 6 Apr 19:00-20:30; Temple University Japan (Azabu Campus) Room 317; one-day members ¥1000.*

Toyohashi—*Questions as a Precursor to Communication.* by **Folake Abass**. Asking questions leads to better communication. The unfamiliarity of Japanese students with asking questions often interferes with the flow of conversation. As a result, students may lack information necessary to conduct a conversation or worse, be left out of the communication loop altogether. Instead of asking only yes/no questions, students should be encouraged to ask questions which require more elaborate answers and prompt follow-up questions. The presenter will illustrate how to give students practice with questions in English. *Sun 22 Apr 13:30-16:00; Aichi University, Bldg. 5, Room 543; one-day members ¥1000.*

Yamagata—*Second Language Education System in Singapore* by **Huang Jiefang Audrey**. Huang will share her experiences in going through the education system in Singapore, especially as it relates to learning a second language. She will compare that system with the current Japanese system in which she is an ALT in Yamagata prefecture. In her classes she focuses on introducing more listening and oral practices, such as interview and roleplay games. *Sat 7 Apr 13:30-15:30; Yamagata Kajo Kominkan Sogo Gakushu Center (Shironishi-machi 2-chome, 2-15, t: 0236-45-6163); one-day members ¥800.*

Yokohama—*Teaching Micro-Skills for the TOEFL® iBT Speaking Tasks and Independent Writing Task* by **Terry Yearley**. The objective of

this workshop is to share ideas on how best to prepare students for the TOEFL iBT. Yearley will introduce micro-skills that will help students not only with the TOEFL test, but also with future academic study. Yearley believes that the primary goal of TOEFL iBT test preparation is to learn the necessary skills for academic study in the medium of English. Thus the workshop will offer hands-on ideas to take home. *Sun 8 Apr 14:00-16:30; Ginou Bunka Kaikan (Skills & Culture Center) near JR Kannai & Yokohama Subway Isezaki-chojamachi; one-day members ¥1000.*

COLUMN • CHAPTER REPORTS   41

…with Heather Sparrow

< chap-reports@jalt-publications.org >

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

East Shikoku: January—*Professional Development Workshop: Supporting Young Practitioners.* This was the first in a two-part series of events aimed at supporting young teachers and researchers in our chapter who have limited experience in publishing and presenting. Veteran teachers provided tips, guidance, and support for our very active younger teachers interested in pursuing academic careers in language teaching. Several work stations were set up where experienced teachers made themselves available to offer suggestions on getting published, giving academic presentations, graduate study options, materials development, and applying for university posts. Reflection on teaching practice and the sharing/feedback cycle for research, methods, and ideas was emphasized as a framework for professional development.

Young teachers with limited experience in giving an academic presentation were partnered with an experienced mentor teacher based on field of interest. Mentors will be available to young presenters to guide their presentation, provide academic and material resource support, and discuss issues related to giving a paper in an academic setting. A follow-up PD event is planned for our June meeting at which first-time presenters will give a paper in the standard academic 20+10 minute format. Eight young teachers have signed up for the project.

Reported by Darren Lingley

Gunma: November—*Interview-based Journalistic Feature Writing: A Bridge Between Elementary and Thesis Writing for ESL Students* by **Robin Antepara**. Antepara compared differences in discourse style between the East (Japan) and the West (mainly America) by reviewing past literature. Western discourse style was explained as taking the form of an "inverted pyramid," in that it proceeds from "general to specific," while the Eastern style is compared to a "pyramid," proceeding from "specific to general." Another difference between Eastern and Western rhetorical styles stems from the Buddhist/Taoist distrust of logic, which can make the critical thinking needed for thesis writing difficult. Antepara suggested that *Journalistic Feature Writing* will benefit Japanese EFL learners given the following four points: (1) Feature Writing is descriptive; (2) It provides a chance to practice the Western inverted pyramid style without the pressure of formulating or defending a thesis statement; (3) It provides a familiar audience to write to; and (4) It is interview based. Antepara put participants in pairs and led them through interviews with one another. Using the information gained, participants brainstormed what the personal and social aspects of the story could be, and then developed the story into a feature story.

Reported by Natsue Nakayama

Hiroshima: January—*Media and Foreign Image Building* by **Yasuhiro Inoue.** Inoue presented a case study of Japan-US media and foreign image building that excited the audience and led to passionate debate. The presentation began with his experience sitting in an American airport lounge, stranded by the events that day on September 11th. Inoue said that he found that the subsequent media handling of those events in the USA and Japan, and around the world, supported two principles. The first was Shoemaker's assertion (1995) that "the best we can do is to compare media reality and our own personal realities." Here, many in the audience pointed out the value of self-education as opposed to the *pseudo-environ-*

ment of images that we live in.

The second point, that "there is no objective reality in . . . media content," created much discussion too, in parallel with the roles and agendas of media corporations and governments. This was seen as important in "the formation of images of a foreign country and (that country's) citizens." Inoue felt this to be especially true when "content (with time) cultivates people's beliefs."

Reported by Ewen Ferguson

Nagasaki: December—*Make It Strange: Defamiliarization in the Language Classroom.* by **Tomoko Maekawa** and **Richard Hodson**. Maekawa introduced her latest textbook, *English Communication in the Classroom*, published by Kaibunsha, and demonstrated a few activities from it. Then, Hodson introduced the concepts of *habitualization* and *defamiliarization*. He contrasted habitualization, the usual result of heavily-structured pattern practice, memorization, or other methods producing "automatic" behaviour with defamiliarization, which challenges students to look at language and find new ways of using it. After giving a brief definition and history of defamiliarization, Hudson demonstrated a variety of enjoyable and thought-provoking activities for introducing it at the word, sentence, text, culture, and creative levels.

Reported by Melodie Cook

Nagoya: January—*Drama Activities for the EFL Classroom* by **Miho Moody**. Moody engaged the participants in physical activities, using a few brief expressions, suggesting several situations where they could be used. She changed the situations in rapid succession, using the same short dialogue, giving instructions like: *Speak fast*, *Whisper*, and *Stand at a distance from your partner, walk close to your partner, deliver your words touching his/her shoulder and return to your place quickly*. Partners then repeated the same steps. The changes in situations and instructions activated the participants and made them memorize their lines easily. Moody said, "I watch the students performing, feeling how they are happy, not embarrassed, not slowing down in conversation. They soon get used to dialogues or conversations." For improvisations, she made four-member groups, having one member of the group act as Cinderella's step-mother and the other three, her interviewers. Another interview was with an extraterrestrial performed by one of the participants. An improvised dialogue between a customer who dislikes beef and a waiter who must sell beef that the

restaurant ordered too much of, was performed by two groups. Lastly, Moody showed a video of her students' skit on *Cultural Difference*.

Reported by Kayoko Kato

Omiya: October—*Three Presentations*: 1) *What Motivates Older Learners?* by **Eric M. Skier**. Skier reported that autonomous older learners are motivated by time, shame, and maturity. As he explained, after retirement, they have the time to study. Secondly, though they feel ashamed of their inability to speak English, they have refused to give up, trying to learn it—a sign of maturity. Lastly, they feel that the mental activity of learning English helps them ward off senility. 2) *Teaching Writing* by **Masa Tsuneyasu.** Tsuneyasu started out stating that with the following simple suggestions, Japanese students will be better and more independent writers of English: 1) the acknowledgement of scoring criteria, 2) input and feedback, 3) extensive reading, 4) practice in writing, and 5) meaningful (but not excessive) editing. 3) *Role and Power Sharing between JTEs and AETs* by **Kyoko Miyazato**. Miyazato discussed team teaching relationships between JTEs (Japanese Teachers of English) and AETs (Assistant English Teachers). The speaker posited that JTEs are culturally powerful, but linguistically powerless while AETs are the reverse. Miyazato concluded that a balanced power structure can lead to a positive effect between JETs and AETs.

Reported by Masa Tsuneyasu

Shinshu: December—*Shinshu Officers' Year-End Wrap-Up & Christmas Party* by **Santa Claus**. Officers gathered at an historical Japanese-style house in Matsumoto for our year-end wrap-up and final planning for next year's events. President Fred Carruth opened the meeting about the chapter efforts to increase the number of Japanese members. Program Chair Mary Aruga was pleased to announce another exciting year of regular monthly events. Please check the Chapter Events for the location, date, and time of each event. Membership Chair Sean Mehmet announced an increase in members, and Treasurer Fumiko Miyasaka reported that the chapter was financially healthy. After the meeting adjourned, participants were joined by family and friends for the annual Christmas party with a special unexpected guest appearance by Santa Claus who passed out candy and games for the kids before disappearing as suddenly as he came!

Reported by David Ockert

For changes and additions, please contact the editor <contacts@jalt-publications.org>. More extensive listings can be found in the annual *JALT Information & Directory*.

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Behind the music: An explanation of the university shuffle

By James McCrostie, JALT Kobe Chapter

Working at Japanese universities resembles playing musical chairs. Every year the music starts and instructors with expiring contracts run around looking for a new job. Most universities hiring non-Japanese full-time offer only one-year contracts, renewable three or four times. Various popular explanations have been given for this. But contrary to popular belief, the reason universities cap renewals at three or four is not because if a teacher works long enough they can't be fired, and it's not because labour laws prevent universities from keeping a teacher for longer than that. Actually, as long as a school states the number of possible renewals, a teacher can't claim an unjust dismissal. Furthermore, a few universities have contracts renewable up to 10 years, and several offer tenure to non-Japanese.

As with most other skilled professions, forcing instructors to leave after a few years appears shortsighted. So, without a law requiring it to be so, why is it still the norm at the majority of institutions? University and government officials have given their own reasons for preferring term limits, the two most prominent being cost and freshness.

Keeping costs down is one reason for limiting the number of contract renewals. The penny-pinching purge of foreign teachers in the 1990s began in December 1992 when Ministry of Education officials phoned all the national universities and warned them against keeping foreign teachers in the higher pay brackets. Schools soon sacked non-Japanese over the age of 50 (most had been promised jobs until retirement), replaced them with teachers on capped contracts, and refused to hire anyone over the age of 35 or 40 (Hall, 1998). Since 1997, universities could legally employ Japanese faculty on term-limited contracts. However, while the number of Japanese on capped contracts is increasing, capped contracts remain largely limited to foreign staff (Arudou & McLaughlin, 2001). Obviously money is not the main issue.

The more important reason for the caps is revealed in administrative attitudes towards foreign teachers. Ministry of Education and university authorities regard non-Japanese as models of culture with expiry dates stamped on their foreheads, rather than real teachers with a long-term role to play. Ministry of Education officials justified firing older non-Japanese from national universities by arguing that younger instructors would be better examples of American culture (Hall, 1998, p. 819). Ministry bureaucrats also feel term limits "encouraged the movement of teachers to other universities which was of benefit to both teachers and the universities" (Cleary, 2001). Exactly how anyone benefits was left unsaid.

Perhaps more shocking is when even educators argue similar points. Niigata University's president admitted he preferred non-Japanese "churning over constantly" (JPRI Staff, 1996). Shinichiro Noriguchi, a University of Kitakyushu English professor, contends "native speakers who have lived in Japan for more than 10 years tend to have adapted to the system and have become ineffective as teachers" (Noriguchi, 2006). If nothing else such views of non-Japanese as akin to perishable goods are at least consistent, changing little since the Meiji Era and the 1903 sacking of Lafcadio Hearn from what is now Tokyo University. These kind of arguments need to be challenged, so if

you hear a colleague make this kind of argument, think about speaking up.

Are the caps discriminatory? An in-depth discussion of whether the caps are discriminatory is beyond the scope of this article. However, while nearly all Japanese instructors receive tenure from the day they are hired and nearly every foreigner is shown the door after a few years, the Supreme Court controversially ruled that using a unique system to hire non-Japanese doesn't violate the Labor Standards Law because it applies only after someone has been hired (van Dresser, 2001).

Fortunately, some universities do appreciate that employing non-Japanese permanently benefits a school. So what's a foreigner in search of job stability to do? According to several university professors, including activist Arudou Debito, getting a doctorate couldn't hurt, but Japanese fluency is "essential because you've simply got to understand what's going on around you" (Arudou, personal communication)—although it should be noted that neither provided much protection during the purge of the 1990s. And yet progress is being made, as Arudou Debito's greenlist of Japanese universities <www.debito.org/greenlist.html> now includes 33 of the schools that offer tenure to non-Japanese. While this list is incomplete, it is encouraging nonetheless.

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Job Openings

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

Location: Niigata-ken
School: International University of Japan
Position: English language instructors, summer
Start Date: Jul 2007
Deadline: Ongoing, until filled

Location: Tokyo-to
School: Lado International College of Japan
Position: CELTA trainer
Start Date: Jun 2007
Deadline: 31 May 2007

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…with Alan Stoke

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

Upcoming Conferences

12–13 May 2007—Sixth Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference 2007: *Second Language Acquisition: Theory and Pedagogy*, at Tohoku Bunka Gakuen U., Sendai. To explore the relationship between L2 acquisition and the mechanics of the L2 classroom. Co-hosted by the Materials Writers, Other Language Educators, Pragmatics, Teacher Education, and Testing and Evaluation SIGs, and Sendai JALT Chapter. **Contact**: <www.jalt.org/pansig/2007/pansig07/>

16–21 May 2007—Fifth International Conference on ELT in China & First Congress of Chinese

Applied Linguistics: *Language, Education and Society in the Digital Age*, in Beijing. **Contact**: <www.celea.org.cn/english/5celea.asp>

18–19 May 2007—Computer Aided Language Learning Symposium: *Language, Literacy and Technology*, at Unitec School of Language Studies, Auckland. **Contact**: <www.unitec.ac.nz/?D7180940-3F76-4F09-A841-0C868D8E1921#>

19 May 2007—ACTJ and Canada Project in Kyushu Conference: *Canadian Teachers*, at the International U. of Kagoshima. To highlight contributions by Canadians in immersion learning; bilingualism; Nikkei integration and multiculturalism, literature and translation, and human security and peace initiatives. **Contact**: <www.iuk.ac.jp> <www.actj.org> <mcmurray@int.iuk.ac.jp>

26 May 2007—Third Asian EFL Journal Conference: *English as an International Language—Setting the Global Standards*, at Korea University, Seoul. **Contact**: <www.asian-efl-journal.com/index.php>

28 May–6 Jun 2007—2007 NFLRC Summer Institute: *Developing Useful Evaluation Practices in College Foreign Language Programs*, at U. of Hawai'i, Manoa. **Contact**: <nflrc.hawaii.edu/prodev/si07d/>

30 May-1 Jun 2007—Second CELC Symposium for English Language Teachers: *Learning Landscape: Continuity, Innovation and Diversity*, in Singapore. **Contact**: <www.nus.edu.sg/celc/symposium/>

31 May–2 Jun 2007—Fifth International Conference on Language Teacher Education: *Bridging Contexts, Making Connections*, in Minneapolis. **Contact**: <www.carla.umn.edu/conferences/LTE2007/index.html>

1–3 Jun 2007—JALT CALL SIG Annual Conference 2007: *CALL: Integration or Disintegration?* at Waseda U., Tokyo. To address the current fragmentation of CALL and its reintegration into more traditional disciplines; and the widening scope of CALL, e.g., into wireless learning and electronic dictionaries. The featured speaker will be Mike Levy from Griffith U., Australia. **Contact**: <jaltcall.org>

4–7 Jun 2007—25th Summer School for Applied Language Studies: *Multilingual Literacies in the 21st Century*, at U. of Jyväskylä, Finland. **Contact**: <www.jyu.fi/summerschool2007>

8–10 Jun 2007—Fifth Asia TEFL International Conference: *Empowering Asia: New Paradigms in English Language Education*, in Kuala Lumpur. **Contact**: <www.asiatefl.org/2007conference/conference2.html>

9–11 Jun 2007—29th Language Testing Research Colloquium of the International Language Testing Association: *Exploring Diverse Methodologies and Conceptualizations in Language Testing Research*, in Barcelona. **Contact**: <www.iltaonline.com/ltrc07/index.htm>

11–12 Jun 2007—Identity and Power in the Language Classroom, at Umeå University, Sweden. **Contact**: <www.mos.umu.se/IPLC/>

14–16 Jun 2007—Second Biennial International Conference on Teaching and Learning of English in Asia: *Exploring New Frontiers,* in Langkawi, Malaysia. **Contact**: <staf.uum.edu.my/tleia2/index.html>

22–23 Jun 2007—Cutting Edges 2007: *Classroom Approaches in the Spotlight*, at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. **Contact**: <www.canterbury.ac.uk/arts-humanities/language-studies/conference.asp>

29–30 Jun 2007—Applied Linguistics Seminar & Conference on Japanese Language Learning and Acquisition, at Cardiff U., UK. **Contact**: <www.cardiff.ac.uk/carbs/cjsc/index.html>

1–3 Jul 2007—32nd Annual Congress of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia: *Making a Difference: Challenges for Applied Linguistics*, at U. of Wollongong. **Contact**: <www.uow.edu.au/conferences/ALAA/home.html>

2–3 Jul 2007—BAAL Language Learning and Teaching SIG Third Annual Conference: *Towards A Researched Pedagogy*, at Lancaster U., UK. **Contact**: <www.baal.org.uk/sigs_learnteach.htm>

7–8 Jul 2007—Japanese Society for Language Sciences' Ninth Annual International Conference, in Sendai. **Contact**: <aimee.gsid.nagoya-u.ac.jp/jsls2007/wiki.cgi?page=English>

8–13 Jul 2007—10th International Pragmatics Conference: *Language Data, Corpora, and Computational Pragmatics*, in Göteborg, Sweden. **Contact**: <ipra.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=*CONFERENCE2006&n=1295&ct=1168&e=1511>

27–30 Jul 2007—Third Corpus Linguistics Conference, at the U. of Birmingham, UK. **Contact**: <www.corpus.bham.ac.uk/conference2007/index.htm>

3–5 Sep 2007—Fifth International Conference on Third Language Acquisition and Multilingualism, at U. of Stirling, Scotland. **Contact**: <www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/L3conference/>

6–8 Sep 2007—40th British Association for Applied Linguistics Annual Conference: *Technology, Ideology and Practice in Applied Linguistics*, at U. of Edinburgh. **Contact**:

11–14 Sep 2007—17th Annual Conference of the European Second Language Association: *Interfaces in Second Language Acquisition Research*, at Newcastle U., UK. **Contact**: <www.ncl.ac.uk/niassh/eurosla17>

15–17 Sep 2007—Sixth Symposium on Second Language Writing: *Second Language Writing in the Pacific Rim*, at Nagoya Gakuin U. To provide an international forum for the discussion of various issues of interest to L2 writing teachers and researchers. **Contact**: <logos.unh.edu/sslw/2007/>

20–22 Sep 2007—Second International Conference on Task-Based Language Teaching: *TBLT: Putting Principles to Work*, at U. of Hawai'i, Manoa. **Contact**: <www.tblt2007.org>

5–8 Oct 2007—Third International Conference of the Independent Learning Association: *Exploring Theory, Enhancing Practice: Autonomy Across the Disciplines*, at Kanda U. of International Studies, Chiba. Leading scholars will present, including Henri Holec, James Lantolf, Klaus Schwienhorst, and Kathleen Graves. **Contact**: <www.independentlearning.org>

13–14 Oct 2007—First Annual Japan Writers Conference, at Ochanomizu U., Tokyo. **Contact**: <www.viversimples.ezhoster.com/writerconference.html>

24–29 Aug 2008—15th World Congress of Applied Linguistics: *Multilingualism: Challenges and Opportunities*, in Essen, Germany. **Contact**: <www.aila2008.org>

Calls for Papers or Posters

Deadline: 7 Apr (for May 17–21, 2007)—Teachers Helping Teachers: Vietnam Teacher Training Seminar 2007: *Reaching Beyond our Borders*, at Hue U. of Foreign Studies. **Contact**: <www.geocities.com/yamataro670/tht.htm>

Deadline: 15 Apr (for 23–24 Jun 2007)—JALT CUE SIG Mini-Conference 2007: *Promoting Lifelong Learning*, at Sugiyama Jogakuen U., Nagoya. Proposals are invited for demonstrations or papers (40 mins.) and workshops (85 mins.) in the following areas: student and teacher motivation; curricula that promote lifelong learning; student self-assessment; and critical thinking in the university classroom. **Contact**: <allagash.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/CUE/> <CUE_2007_Sugiyama@yahoo.com>

Deadline: 27 Apr (for 22–25 Nov 2007)—JALT2007 International Conference: *Challenging Assumptions: Looking In, Looking Out*, at National Olympics Memorial Youth Center, Tokyo. **Contact**: <conferences.jalt.org/2007/submissions/>

Deadline: 30 Apr (for 21–24 Nov 2007)—Second International Conference on Language, Education and Diversity, at U. of Waikato, Hamilton, NZ. **Contact**: <www.led.ac.nz>

Deadline: 1 May (for 11–14 Oct 2007)—30th Annual Second Language Research Forum: *Second Language Acquisition and Research: Focus on Form and Function*, at U. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. **Contact**: <slrf-2007@uiuc.edu>

Deadline: 31 Jul (for 12–14 Dec 2007)—12th English in South-East Asia Conference: *Trends and Directions*, at King Mongkut's U. of Technology, Bangkok. **Contact**: <arts.kmutt.ac.th/sola/esea>

Deadline: 30 Nov (for 26–29 Jun 2008)—9th International Conference of the Association for Language Awareness: *Engaging with Language*, at U. of Hong Kong. To address language awareness in the learning and teaching of languages and, more generally, in literature and education. **Contact**: <www.hku.hk/clear/ala>

The editors welcome submissions of materials concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Japan. If accepted, the editors reserve the right to edit all copy for length, style, and clarity, without prior notification to authors. Materials in English should be sent in Rich Text Format by either email (preferred) or post. Postal submissions must include a clearly labeled floppy disk or CD-ROM and one printed copy. Manuscripts should follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style as it appears in *The Language Teacher*. Please submit materials to the contact editor indicated for each column. Deadlines are indicated below.

日本国内での語学教育に関わる投稿をお待ちしています。できるだけ電子メールにリッチ・テキスト・フォーマットの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。郵送の場合には、フロッピーディスクやCD-ROMにラベルを張り、プリントアウトしたものと一緒にお送り下さい。書式はアメリカ心理学協会(APA)スタイルに基づき、スタッフリストページにある各コラムの編集者まで締め切りに留意して、提出してください。提出されたものにつきましては編集者に一任していただくことになります。

Feature Articles

English Features. Submissions should be well-written, well-documented, and researched articles. Analysis and data can be quantitative or qualitative (or both). Manuscripts are typically screened and evaluated anonymously by members of *The Language Teacher* Editorial Advisory Board. They are evaluated for degree of scholarly research, relevance, originality of conclusions, etc. Submissions should:

- be up to 3,000 words (not including appendices)
- have pages numbered, paragraphs separated by double carriage returns (not tabbed), and sub-headings (boldfaced or italic) used throughout for the convenience of readers
- have the article's title, the author's name, affiliation, contact details, and word count at the top of the first page
- be accompanied by an English abstract of up to 150 words (translated into Japanese, if possible, and submitted as a separate file)
- be accompanied by a 100-word biographical background
- include a list of up to 8 keywords for indexing
- have tables, figures, appendices, etc. attached as separate files.

Send as an email attachment to the co-editors.

日本語論文:実証性のある研究論文を求めます。質的か、計量的か(あるいは両方)で追究された分析やデータを求めます。原稿は、匿名のTLTの査読委員により、研究水準、関連性、結論などの独創性で評価されます。8,000語(資料は除く)以内で、ページ番号を入れ、段落ごとに2行あけ、副見出し(太文字かイタリック体)を付けて下さい。最初のページの一番上に題名、著者名、所属、連絡先および語彙数をお書き下さい。英文、和文で400語の要旨、300語の著者略歴もご提出下さい。表、図、付録も可能です。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Readers' Forum articles are thoughtful essays on topics related to language teaching and learning in Japan. Submissions should:

- be of relevance to language teachers in Japan
- contain up to 2,500 words
- include English and Japanese abstracts, as per Features above
- include a list of up to 8 keywords for indexing
- include a short bio and a Japanese title.

Send as an email attachment to the co-editors.

読者フォーラム:日本での言語教育、及び言語学習に関する思慮的なエッセイを募集しています。日本での語学教師に関連していて、6,000字以内で、英文・和文の要旨、短い略歴および日本語のタイトルを添えて下さい。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Interviews. If you are interested in interviewing a well-known professional in the field of language teaching in and around Japan, please consult the editors first. Lengths range from 1,500-2,500 words. Send as an email attachment to the co-editors.

インタビュー:日本国内外で言語教育の分野での「有名な」専門家にインタビューしたい場合は、編集者に最初に意見をお尋ね下さい。3,600語から6,000語の長さです。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Conference Reports. If you have attended a conference on a topic of interest to language teachers in Asia, write a 1,500-word report summarizing the main events. Send as an email attachment to the co-editors.

学会報告:語学教師に関心のあるトピックの大会に出席された場合は、4000語程度に要約して、報告書を書いてください。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Departments

My Share. Submissions should be original teaching techniques or a lesson plan you have used. Readers should be able to replicate your technique or lesson plan. Submissions should:

- be up to 1,000 words
- have the article title, the author name, affiliation, email address, and word count at the top of the first page
- include a *Quick Guide* to the lesson plan or teaching technique
- follow My Share formatting
- have tables, figures, appendices, etc. attached as separate files
- include copyright warnings, if appropriate.

Send as an email attachment to the My Share editor.

マイシェア:学習活動に関する実践的なアイデアについて、テクニックや教案を読者が再利用できるように紹介するものです。1,600字以内で最初のページにタイトル、著者名、所属、電子メールアドレスと文字数をお書き下さい。表、図、付録なども含めることができますが、著作権にはお気をつけ下さい。My Share 担当編集者に電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Book Reviews. We invite reviews of books and other educational materials. Contact the Publishers' Review Copies Liaison <pub-review@jalt-publications.org> for material listed in the Recently Received column, and the Book Reviews editor if you wish to review unlisted material, including websites or other online resources. Review articles treating several related titles are particularly welcome. Submissions should:

- show a thorough understanding of the material reviewed in under 750 words
- reflect actual classroom usage in the case of classroom materials
- be thoroughly checked and proofread before submission.

Send as an email attachment to the Book Reviews editor.

書評:本や教材の書評です。書評編集者<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>に問い合わせ、最近出版されたリストからお選びいただくか、もしwebサイトなどのリストにない場合には書評編集者と連絡をとってください。複数の関連するタイトルを扱うものを特に歓迎します。書評は、本の内容紹介、教室活動や教材としての使用法に触れ、書評編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

JALT Focus. Submissions should be directly related to recent or upcoming developments within JALT, preferably on an organization-wide scale. Submissions should:

- be no more than 750 words
- be relevant to the JALT membership as whole
- encourage readers to participate more actively in JALT on both a micro and macro level.

Deadline: 15th of the month, 1 1/2 months prior to publication. Send as an email attachment to the JALT Focus editor.

JALTフォーカス:JALT内の進展を会員の皆様にお伝えするものです。どのJALT会員にもふさわしい内容で、JALTに、より活動的に参加するように働きかけるものです。1,600字程度で、毎月15日までにお送り下さい。掲載は1月後半になります。JALTフォーカス編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

JALT Notices. Submissions should be of general relevance to language learners and teachers in Japan. JALT Notices can be accessed at <www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/focus/>. Calls for papers or research projects will be accepted; however, announcements of conferences, colloquia, or seminars should be submitted to the Conference Calendar. Submissions:

- should be no more than 150 words
- should be submitted as far in advance as is possible
- will be removed from the website when the announcement becomes outdated.

Submissions can be sent through the JALT Notices on-line submissions form.

掲示板:日本での論文募集や研究計画は、オンライン<www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/focus/>で見ることができます。できるだけ前もって掲載いたしますが、終了次第、消去いたします。掲示板オンライン・サブミッション形式に従い、400字以内で投稿して下さい。なお、会議、セミナーは Conference Calendar で扱います。

SIG News. JALT's Special Interest Groups may use this column to report on news or events happening within their group. This might include mini-conferences, presentations, publications, calls for papers or presenters, or general SIG information. Deadline: 15th of month, 6 weeks prior to publication. Send as an email attachment to the SIG News editor.

SIGニュース:SIGはニュースやイベントの報告にこのカラムを使用できます。会議、プレゼンテーション、出版物、論文募集、連絡代表者などの情報を記入下さい。締め切りは出版の2か月前の15日までに、SIG委員長に電子メールの添付ファイルで送ってください。

Chapter Events. Chapters are invited to submit upcoming events. Submissions should follow the precise format used in every issue of *TLT* (topic, speaker, date, time, place, fee, and other information in order, followed by a 60-word description of the event).

Meetings scheduled for early in the month should be published in the previous month's issue. Maps of new locations can be printed upon consultation with the column editor. Deadline: 15th of the month, 2 months prior to publication. Send as an email attachment to the Chapter Events editor.

支部イベント:近づいている支部のイベントの案内情報です。トピック、発表者、日時、時間、場所、料金をこの順序で掲載いたします。締め切りは、毎月15日で、2ヵ月前までに、支部イベント編集者に電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Chapter Reports. This column is a forum for sharing synopses of presentations given at JALT chapters around Japan. Submissions must therefore reflect the nature of the column and be written clearly and concisely. Chapters are limited to one report per month. Submissions should:

- be interesting and not contain extraneous information
- be in well-written, concise, informative prose
- be made by email only – faxed and/or postal submissions are not acceptable
- be approximately 200 words in order to explore the content in sufficient detail
- be structured as follows: Chapter name; Event date; Event title; Name of presenter(s); Synopsis; Reporter's name.

Send as an email attachment to the Chapter Reports editor.

支部報告:JALT地域支部会の研究会報告です。有益な情報をご提供下さい。600文字程で簡潔にお書き下さい。支部名、日時、イベント名、発表者名、要旨、報告者名を、この順序でお書き下さい。支部報告編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。ファックスや郵便は受理いたしませんので、ご注意下さい。

Job Information Center. TLT encourages all prospective employers to use this free service to locate the most qualified language teachers in Japan. The notice should:

- contain the following information: City and prefecture, Name of institution, Title of position, Whether full- or part-time, Qualifications, Duties, Salary & benefits, Application materials, Deadline, Contact information
- not be positions wanted. (It is JALT policy that they will not be printed.)

Deadline: 15th of month, 2 months prior to publication. Send as an email attachment to the JIC editor.

求人欄:語学教育の求人募集を無料でサービス提供します。県と都市名、機関名、職名、専任か非常勤かの区別、資格、仕事内容、給料、締め切りや連絡先を発行2ヶ月前の15日までにお知らせ下さい。特別の書式はありません。JIC担当編集者に電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Conference Calendar. Announcements of conferences and their calls for papers as well as for colloquia, symposiums, and seminars may be posted in this column. The announcement should be up to 150 words. Deadline: 15th of month, at least 3 months prior to the conference date for conferences in Japan and 4 months prior for overseas conferences. Send within an email message to the Conference Calendar editor.

催し:コロキウム、シンポジウム、セミナー、会議のお知らせと、論文募集の案内です。Conference Calendar編集者に400語程度で電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。締め切りは毎月15日で、日本、および海外の会議で3ヶ月前までの情報を掲載します。

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The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

- a professional organization formed in 1976
  -1976年に設立された学術学会

- working to improve language learning and teaching, particularly in a Japanese context
  -語学の学習と教育の向上を図ることを目的としています

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

Annual international conference 年次国際大会

- 1,500 to 2,000 participants
  -毎年1,500名から2,000名が参加します

- hundreds of workshops and presentations
  -多数のワークショップや発表があります

- publishers' exhibition
  -出版社による教材展があります

- Job Information Centre
  -就職情報センターが設けられます

JALT publications include:

- *The Language Teacher*—our monthly publication - を毎月発行します

- *JALT Journal*—biannual research journal - を年2回発行します

- Annual Conference Proceedings - 年次国際大会の研究発表記録集を発行します

- SIG and chapter newsletters, anthologies, and conference proceedings - 分野別研究部会や支部も会報、アンソロジー、研究会発表記録集を発行します

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Old Grammarians...

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

Why not try Japanese food; it only lives once

FEW CULTURAL questions stir as much passionate dialogue as "Do you like Japanese food?" It's a fair question, but one I've heard so many times that for a while I mistook it for a routine mid-afternoon greeting, somewhere chronologically between *konnichiwa* ("good day to you") and *konbanwa* ("I'm pleased to see that you've got a bit of seaweed in your teeth this fine evening").

In my opinion there's nothing not to like about Japanese food. It's not too spicy or too bland, and for the most part it doesn't try to run away from you when you put it on a plate. These are important considerations, especially when you think about what else might be out there. For instance, some of you may know that homemade dishes in Laos are often seasoned with a paste called *badaek*, which is made by catching a fish (whatever is available in your nearest river), pounding it to a messy pulp in a stone bowl with lots of hot peppers, and then leaving it in a jar in a tropical climate for about 2 months. Whenever I find myself in the unpleasant situation of having to swallow a mouthful of raw octopus, I can usually get it down easier by thinking to myself, "At least it hasn't been dipped in badaek."

Each society has its own specimens of culinary curiosity whose victual vocabulary fails to translate across cultures. One American's peanut butter and marshmallow sandwich is another Australian's vegemite. I'm typically open-minded about food, and will try just about anything once. In my effort to be accommodating I have been known, in lieu of eating a proffered food item that I find vulgarly distasteful, to instead "consume" it in an alternate fashion, perhaps by scooping some of it into my shirt pocket or stuffing my ears with it. This compromise usually smoothes over any social bumps, and is in any event much more acceptable than the alternative, which is to try swallowing the food only to promptly regurgitate it on the table.

Surprisingly, one of my Japanese colleagues dislikes *shako*, which in Latin is called *stomatopoda*, and which in English isn't called anything because not even its existence has been conceived of in modern western society, let alone its currency as a sushi delicacy. For years I too resisted allowing those gray, scaly Mothra larvae to slip down my gullet, mainly because I have always associated shako with one particularly harrowing episode of my life (true story!) which I call The Cave That Moved.

I was resting with several friends on a tiny island in the Seto Sea, after a thrilling morning of boating and waterskiing. We had just finished lunch and I was wandering off on my own in order to . . . reciprocate in my own small way for the glorious bounty of nature. Rounding a steep cliff along the shore, I stumbled upon a large cave opening about four meters high, and just for fun I began to venture into it, when suddenly the entire cave wall in front of me made a hissing noise and shifted toward the darkness like a curtain being drawn back. It scared me so much I almost reciprocated in my shorts right then and there. In fact what I had seen were thousands of tiny unnamable crustaceans on the wall of the cave, all simultaneously clicking their shells and pincers as they ran for their lives at my approach.

Ever since then I've felt a gruesome chill whenever I see a pair of shako come crawling along the conveyor belt in my neighborhood sushi bar. Of course none of the Cave Dwellers I encountered were actually shako, but they obviously had their outfits tailored at the same shop. I can't say why I don't feel the same way about shrimp and lobster, except maybe that even after you cook and shell a shako it still looks like it wants to attach itself to your brain stem and take control of your nervous system. And I guess even that might be all right, as long as there's no badaek involved.

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or on the JALT website <jalt.org>

JALT
THE JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING
全国語学教育学会

Using speaking prompts to improve accuracy

Michael Kistler

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Appendix A. Text

TV destroys family life. Families used to play games together to pass the time, but now they just sit and watch TV. They care more about the characters in dramas than they do about the people close to them. Also, children can get all the information they want from TV, so they really don't need to speak to their parents, brothers and sisters as much.

Appendix B. Prompts

- TV / destroy / family life.
- Family / used to / play / game / together / pass / time,
- ***** / now / they / just / sit / watch / TV.
- They / care / more / character / drama / ***** / people / close / them.
- ***** / child / can / get / all / information / they / want / TV,
- ***** / they / ***** / not need / speak / parent / brother / sister / ***** / much.

Practicing negative dialogues

Ian Walkinshaw

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Appendix

Example roleplay card

A: You are a student. You have no money and you are very hungry. You want to borrow ten dollars so you can buy some lunch. You ask a teacher to loan you some money.

B: You are a teacher. A student asks to borrow ten dollars from you. You have loaned money to this student before, and you never got it back. So, you don't want to loan the money.

Example group roleplay scenario

You are the members of a school council. A wealthy supporter of the school has donated $25,000 and you are meeting to decide what to do with the money. Each student takes on one of the following roles.

- **The school principal:** You want to spend the money on computers. You are a heavy smoker.
- **The physical education teacher:** You want to buy gym equipment and send the soccer team on an overseas tour. You don't care about science.
- **The school caretaker:** You think some of the school buildings are old and need to be repaired, and some of the furniture needs to be replaced.

- **The head student:** You want to set up a programme to stop students from beginning to smoke cigarettes. You don't like sport very much.
- **The science teacher:** You think the money should be spent on equipment for chemistry and biology classes. You hate computers.

Writing haiku to raise awareness of syllable breaks and reduce katakana pronunciation

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Appendix A. Cloze passage

Haiku is a ____1____ form of poetry from Japan. Haiku have been written in Japan for hundreds of years and are now quite ____2____ around the world. Modern haiku are very flexible but traditional haiku have strong ____3____ about the content and format. Haiku should be about a ____4____ theme and have to follow a set pattern. They are always written in three ____5____. The first has five ____6____, the second has seven ____7____ and the third has five ____8____ again. Haiku seem very short and ____9____ but a careful and creative writer can make them beautiful pieces of art.

1. traditional, old, common, etc.
2. common, well known, famous, etc.
3. rules
4. seasonal, natural, etc.
5. lines
6. syllables
7. syllables
8. syllables
9. easy, simple, etc.

Appendix B. Sample haiku

Incorrect haiku (with syllable counts)   *Incomplete haiku*

Blue sheets under the trees (6)   _____
Drunk salarymen stumble (7)   Wind rattles bathroom window
Through pink snow (3)   Wipe a spot to see

Clear windy sky (4)   Stubble on the ground
Flying samurai dance (6)   Birds feasting on fallen grain
Soft rope in my hands (5)   _____

Meaningful fun with dictation
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Appendix A. Text A sample
Text A
Hello. My name is Bill. I come from _____ and I am twenty-two years old. Last year I got
              (1)

_____ and now I live in Japan. My wife's name is Hiromi. (etc…)
  (3)

Appendix B. Text B sample
Text B
Hello. My name is Bill. I come from Australia and I am _____ years old. Last year I got married and
                  (2)

now I live in Japan. My _____ name is Hiromi. (etc…)
        (4)

Appendix C. Worksheet A sample
Worksheet A

I think…	Correct word	Points
1.		
3.		
5.		
(Etc…)		
	Total Points	

Appendix D. Worksheet B sample
Worksheet B

I think…	Correct word	Points
2.		
4.		
6.		
(Etc…)		
	Total Points	