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Interested in joining the *TLT* staff? Contact the editors at the back of this issue.

In this month's issue . . .

SEPTEMBER and back to school. If you're interested in some ideas to start the new semester out fresh, then TLT is here to deliver. In the Feature, **Jennie Yguico Kern** explores devices used by students in a discussion task to gain and hold the floor. In Reader's Forum, **Rintaro Sato** proposes teaching approaches adapted to the Japanese context. In addition, **John Gunning** interviews **Mike Guest**, one of the plenary speakers at the upcoming JALT College and University Educators (CUE) Special Interest Group (SIG) annual conference on October 17th and 18th at Tezukayama University, Gakuenmae Campus in Nara. It's still not too late to add this exciting event to your calendar; preregistration closes September 15th.

Of course our regular columns are also brimming with information and ideas. In My Share, **Kaori Nakao** introduces a strategy for successful team teaching, and **Thomas Amundrud** shares an interesting way to liven up writing classes. In Book Reviews, **Kurtis McDonald** reviews *Our Unique Planet*, an EFL textbook for upper-intermediate university students.

Welcome back to school! We hope your fall semester goes well.

All the best,
Theron Muller
TLT Coeditor

学校に戻る9月です。新学期を迎えるにあたり何か新しいアイディアに興味をお持ちなら、*TLT* こそまさにふさわしい場所です。Feature では Jenny Kern が話すタイミングを見計らい、発言権を得るためにディスカッションタスクで学生が使用している方策を調査します。Reader’s Forum では Rintaro Sato が、日本に適した教授法について述べます。また、John Gunning は奈良県の帝塚山大学学園前キャンパスにて来る10月17、18日に開かれる JALT CUE SIG の年次大会の基調講演者である Mike Guest にインタビューをしています。9月15日までは事前の参加申し込みを受け付けておりますので、奮ってご参加下さい。

もちろん、おなじみのコラムも情報やアイディアでいっぱいです。My Share では Kaori Nakao が効果的なチームティーチングのストラテジーについて概観し、Thomas Amundrud はライティングクラスを活発化する面白い方法を提案します。Book Reviews では、Kurtis McDonald が大学生中級レベル向けEFLテキストブックの *Our Unique Planet* について論評しています。

学校にようこそ、お帰りなさい。秋学期も上々である様お祈りします。

All the best,
Theron Muller
TLT Coeditor

TLT Coeditors: Theron Muller & Jerry Talandis Jr.

TLT Japanese-Language Editor: Mihoko Inamori

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Advertiser Index

– Important message –
TnT Special Guest Workshop at JALT2009

The date and time of the special guest lecture by Garr Reynolds for the TnT workshops at JALT2009 is **Friday, November 20**, from **17:00-18:00**.

[This is a correction of the date that appeared on p.11 of the *JALT2009 Conference Preview*.

IN MEMORY OF GENE van TROYER

On 18 July 2009, JALT lost colleague and former President Gene van Troyer, after an extended bout with cancer. Gene served JALT as President from 1996-1999, as Publications Board Chair in 1995 and 2001-2002, and as The Language Teacher editor 1994-1995, as well as in other positions. Gene was President in 1998 when the Japanese government changed the law concerning nonprofit organizations, which ultimately led to our rebirth as the official NPO JALT.

In addition to his many roles in JALT and his vocation as a dedicated language educator, Gene was also a talented and very creative writer whose innumerable poems, essays, and science fiction and short stories can be found on the Internet. He was, as well, a seasoned translator of Japanese fiction and editor of numerous compilations of poetry and fiction.

We can thank Gene's wife, Tomoko Oshiro, for bringing Gene into our JALT lives. They met in a graduate TESOL class at Portland State University, after which Gene studied at Waseda University and the University of the Ryukyus. Gene then taught at various universities in Okinawa before becoming a professor at Gifu University, where he taught for 10 years. He then returned to Okinawa and taught at the Okinawa Christian University, University of Maryland and various other local universities. He also kept up with his prolific creative writing.

Gene will be sorely missed by Tomoko, on the faculty of Okinawa International University, and their three grown children, Miika, Makoto, and Akito. Gene and Tomoko were regular attendees at the annual Okinawa JALT Family Christmas brunch following his return to Okinawa. The twinkle in Gene's eye, his wit, infectious chuckle, and his sometimes ironic sometimes whimsical sense of humor could always be counted on to brighten a room and enliven a party.

For the title page of the handbook for the 23rd JALT International Conference (in Hamamatsu in 1997), when Gene was President, he wrote this haiku:

> We have come so far
> and we keep on moving still,
> a river moving still.
> -gvt
> 私達は，ここまで歩んできましたが，
> これからも歩み続けることでしよう，
> 川がよどみなく流れ続けているように．
> -gvt

Tomoko and the three children will join Gene's family in Oregon for a memorial service. The Okinawan 一年忌 (ishuki) ceremony for Gene will be held on the first anniversary of his death, 18 July 2010, in Okinawa.

JALT mourns the loss of a true professional and very special friend. Gene, with you we came so far and we keep on moving still.

— *Aleda Krause, JALT Director of Records & Caroline Latham, Okinawa JALT President*

To follow or to flout? Communicative competence and the rules of turn taking

Jennie Yguico Kern
Kochi University and Kochi Women's University

Keywords

Due to differing cultural contexts, adequate understanding, and successful negotiation of turn-taking behavior in the L2 can be notoriously difficult for language learners to master. For Japanese learners of English, turn taking can be particularly challenging with regard to more aggressive modes of communication such as debate and argumentative discourse, in which the ability to gain and hold the floor is essential to effective communication. This study examines the turn-taking devices used by a group of Japanese university students to successfully gain and maintain the floor while performing a discussion task. Incorporation of interruption techniques in the language classroom is discussed as well as the need for students to have not only an awareness of turn-taking rules but also a willingness to break them.

異なる文化的背景により、L2でのターンテイキングを十分に理解し有効活用することは、外国語学習者にとって難しいことで知られている。日本人の英語学習者にとってディベートやディスカッションなどのより論争的なコミュニケーションに於けるターンテイキングは、特に難しい。そういったコミュニケーションを効果的に行うには、話すタイミングを見計らい発言権を得る能力が必要だからである。この研究は、話し手がそのタイミングを捉え、発言権を得るためのディスカッションタスクを行っている、日本人大学生のターンテイキング行動を検証するものである。会話をさえぎるテクニックを外国語教室に取り入れて、学生にターンテイキングのルールを意識させるだけでなく、時にはそのルールを破ろうとする意欲を持たせる重要性についても検討する。

As language instructors, many of us are aware of the reticence Japanese students often show when speaking English, particularly in more assertive modes of communication. While the passive role of the student (Williams, 1994) and insufficient focus on oral communication (Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000) in the English education system in Japan are contributing factors, a lack of understanding of turn-taking conventions may provide additional difficulty for language learners (Cook, 1989). Turn taking systems can vary across cultural contexts (Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006), and transfer of such conventions from one language to another can hinder successful communication (Tarone & Yule, 1989). For non-native speakers of English, adequate understanding and successful negotiation of turn-taking behavior in the second language (L2) is an essential skill to master. Through conversation analysis, this study aims to evaluate the use of interruption and other turn-taking devices by Japanese speakers of English in order to show how successful speakers negotiate turn taking in their L2 and to further explore the pedagogical implications for the language classroom.

Interruption and other kinds of simultaneous speech

Zimmerman and West (1975), define interruption as a simultaneous utterance which occurs in the middle of another speaker's turn. It is a violation of the turn-taking rules of Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1978), which mandate that only one participant speaks per turn and that speaker change occurs at *transition relevance places* (TRPs), which Sacks, et al. (1978) describe as "'possible completion points' of sentences, clauses, phrases, and one-word constructions" (p. 34). According to the rules of turn taking, speaker change occurs at TRPs in the following manner:

1. Current speaker (CS) may select next speaker (NS).
2. If rule one is not invoked, NS may self-select.
3. If the above rules are not invoked, CS may continue with his or her turn.

Overlap is distinct from interruption, as it is a simultaneous utterance which occurs at a TRP (Zimmerman & West, 1975; Sacks, et al., 1978). Although a breach of the turn-taking rules does not occur, overlap may limit the other speaker's participation (Itakura & Tsui, 2004).

Cameron (2001), however, finds that such notions of interruption and overlap are unable to account for instances where the breaching of rules has a supportive function between speakers. Hatch (1992) notes that the use of simultaneous speech can "show alignment with communication partners" (p. 16), while Coates (1986) similarly describes such behavior as indicating that interlocutors may be approaching mutual agreement on a topic. Coates defines interruption, by contrast, as simultaneous speech in which the first speaker's utterance may be contradicted or disregarded. For our purposes, however, we shall consider interruption to be utterances occurring at non-TRPs which minimize the turn of another speaker, regardless of orientation to said speaker's viewpoint.

Methodology

For this study, students from the Kochi University English Program for International Communication (EPIC) class were selected to give samples of talk. These students, ages 19-20, had spent eight or more years studying EFL and upon entering university had been evaluated as either lower or upper intermediate level speakers on the Kochi University English Conversation Placement Exam (Nunn & Lingley, 2004). Most had also studied English overseas for a period of six months, on average.

A video recording was made of seven students having a twenty-minute discussion based on an argument-style task entitled "Lifeboat." The task involves nominating two people to leave an overcrowded lifeboat following the sinking of a cruise ship. As part of the pre-task stage, students were assigned characters and then spent time planning their arguments in order to facilitate greater fluency during the task (Skehan, 1996b). The task was then performed, followed by a post-task analysis in which students reflected on the language forms, learner participation, and pragmatic skills involved in the activity, similar to what Murphy (2003) and Skehan (1996b) suggest as possible task follow-up activities. Students generally felt that the task was difficult due to a lack of vocabulary and negotiating skills; this was addressed in the following lesson with an emphasis on teaching students techniques for interrupting and expressing disagreement. Students then repeated the activity with different members and this second task performance was

video-recorded. This repetition was intended to allow students to put their reflections to use and to aid in bringing greater awareness to the learning goals of the activity, objectives encouraged by Skehan (1996a). Three portions of one discussion, totaling six minutes, were selected for their salient features, namely little silence and significant amounts of heated, simultaneous talk. These were then transcribed and analyzed for the occurrence of specific language devices used to gain and maintain the floor (see Appendix for transcription conventions). Student names have been substituted with their character names to protect anonymity and aid in readability.

Japanese patterns of conversational interaction

Simultaneous speech in Japanese most commonly occurs as backchanneling (Murata, 1994), brief utterances which are spoken during or immediately after a speaker's turn. Backchannels do not indicate a request for a turn (Donahue, 1998), but rather serve a variety of functions in conversations, including signaling for the speaker to continue, showing one's understanding of content, giving emotional support, agreeing, and giving minor additions (Maynard, 1997). Such behavior is displayed by the Criminal in Extract 1, as the Millionaire tells the Sailor that the food rations are not enough to support him.

Extract 1. Millionaire and Criminal

```
1 Millionaire: We only have uh food
   for five people and you are, you
   are fat. //It means you eat a lot.

2 Criminal:
        //Yeah.
```

Backchannels in English include short utterances such as "hmm," "uh huh," and "really" (Donahue, 1998). In the above example, the backchanneling of 'yeah' in line 2 serves as a means of supporting the speaker and expressing a shared viewpoint, a typical function of backchanneling as it occurs in Japanese (White, 1989).

According to Maynard (1997), most Japanese communication is governed by a desire to maintain "nonabrasive human relationships" (p. 156). While conflict is generally avoided, it can occur in interaction between people of intimate standing or in socially sanctioned arenas, such as televised debates. In casual conversation, however, Murata (1994) found that interruption as a means of initi-

ating a turn occurred far less frequently between native Japanese speakers than between native English speakers, for "the Japanese have respect for the 'territoriality' of their conversational partners, and do not impose on them" (p. 399). In a study of conversation among close friends, Kitamura (2001) similarly found that participants actively avoided conversational overlap, often falling silent in instances where turns were made simultaneously.

Floor-grabbing devices

Despite a cultural background which stresses mutual consideration between interlocutors, analysis of the talk showed participants were generally unafraid to impose on one another, with 27 percent of the 165 turns in the talk stemming from interruptions. Three interruption types, as defined by Murata (1994), were identified, comprising 75 percent of all interruptions: topic-changing, floor-taking, and disagreement interruptions (see discussion below). The remaining 25 percent were unsuccessful interruptions, in which the interrupter was not able to take the floor or alter the course of the conversation.

Topic-changing interruptions accounted for 20 percent of the interruptions in the talk. In Extract 2, the Sailor suggests that the Criminal be sent overboard, but the Criminal interjects with a topic-changing interruption, shifting the emphasis onto the Doctor.

Extract 2. Sailor and Criminal

```
1 Sailor:  But hey so there is a
  criminal in in //in in… {gestures
  to the Criminal}

2 Criminal: {pointing to the Doctor}
                // No but he sh...
  he stole the money.
```

Even when the turn-taking rules of speaker selection appeared to be invoked, participants did not hesitate to grab the floor. In Extract 3 the Sailor, an expert in navigation, questions the Millionaire's assertion that the survivors are drifting off the shore of Hawaii.

Extract 3. Sailor and Millionaire

```
1 Sailor: Why  //do you know?=

2 Millionaire: //You can…

3 Millionaire: =//Nobody knows no-
```

```
body knows so you, only you know,
ok?=

4 Sailor:       //I know I know.
```

Sacks, et al. (1978) note that question and answer adjacency pairs are often used as a means of "possibly selecting next speaker" (p. 28). Though he directs his question to the Millionaire, the Sailor initiates a floor-taking interruption in line 4 precisely when Millionaire starts her response, which according to the rules of Sacks, et al. (1978) violates the right of the selected NS. Floor-taking interruptions, unlike topic-changing interruptions, do not alter the topic, but rather expand upon it (Murata, 1994). Such interruptions accounted for 23 percent of the interruptions in the talk.

Nearly a third (32%) of the interruptions came in the form of disagreement interruptions, which not only involve changing the topic or taking the floor, but express a disagreement with CS's utterance (Murata, 1994). In Extract 4, the Sailor poses a question, leading the Millionaire and the Criminal to respond simultaneously with differing assertions.

Extract 4. Millionaire, Sailor, and Criminal

```
1 Millionaire: So you can swim to
  Hawaii.

2 Sailor: Hawaii?=

3 Millionaire: =Ha… or somewhere is-
  land.

4 Criminal: Hawaii.=

5 Sailor: =Yeah but only I?

6 Millionaire: Yeah //because you,
  only you know…

7 Criminal:       //No with your
  partner.

{laughter}

8 Criminal: You need to have a part-
  ner.
```

In question and answer adjacency pairs, Sacks, et al. (1978) note a bias for CS to select the previous speaker (PS) as NS. This tendency suggests that the right to the turn following line 5 belongs to the Millionaire, who has been the main interlocutor for the past few turns and whose utterances provide

the impetus for the Sailor's questioning. Furthermore, the Millionaire appears to have earned the floor via the "first starter" rule (Sacks, et al., 1978, p. 31), having initiated her turn a split second prior to the Criminal. Yet the Criminal's repetition of "Hawaii," to which line 5 is latched, begs the question: Where is the divide between backchannel and turn? Coulthard (1985) notes that while backchannel behavior such as nods and murmurs are generally not considered turns, longer instances of backchanneling are more difficult to categorize. If considered a turn, the utterance in line 4 places the Criminal in the sequential role of PS, which primes her for the floor despite a split-second late start. Should her statement be a mere example of backchanneling, however, line 7 then becomes a disagreement interruption, both a usurpation of the floor and a clash with the Millionaire's utterance.

While it is often regarded as an act of conversational aggression, there are instances where interruption may be seen as simultaneously supportive and aggressive. In Extract 5, the Millionaire and the Criminal argue on the behalf of the passengers who have children.

Extract 5. Sailor, Millionaire, and Criminal

```
1 Sailor: The uh the fact you have
  uh kids or not is not so big
          prob... //not...

2 Millionaire 1: //Big problem //for
  us who has k//ids. Yes...

3 Criminal:                    //It
  is.

4 Criminal:   //Kids. You //don't
  understand cause you don't have a
  kids.

5 Millionaire 2:          //(we...)
```

The Criminal is able to anticipate Millionaire 1's utterance and show alliance by chiming in with "kids." While this simultaneous utterance along with backchanneling in line 3 appear to have a supportive function, the Criminal does not stop with the synchronous word, but rather takes the floor in line 4. According to Coulthard (1985), in such instances the right to the next turn belongs to the speaker whose utterance was jointly completed, a tendency which is evidenced by the Millionaire's attempt to hold the floor in lines 2 and 5. In this particular interaction, the floor-taking interruption initiated by the Criminal involves jockeying for the position of CS despite a shared viewpoint.

Floor-holding devices

With pressure from other participants wanting to speak, the ability to gain a turn and keep it requires the use of additional language devices. A feature of successful speakers is their ability to counteract the interruptions of others. In Extract 6 the Criminal suggests that the Sailor should leave the boat with a suitable partner.

Extract 6. Criminal and Sailor

```
1 Criminal: She or he //can teach
        you //how to swim.

2 Sailor:              //But...

3 Sailor: //I can't swim. I can't
  swim.=

4 Criminal: =No no your partner can
  teach you how to swim.
```

The Sailor attempts an interruption in line 2 and then launches a disagreement interruption in line 3. The Criminal then initiates a repair in line 4 by restating her interrupted utterance, thereby ensuring not only the comprehension of her statement but her share in the distribution of turns (Sacks, et al., 1978).

Similarly, repetition within a single turn helps speakers hold the floor. In Extract 7, the Millionaire insists she is too feeble to swim to safety, while the Student argues that she must be healthy since she can afford to eat expensive food.

Extract 7. Millionaire, Student, and Doctor

```
1 Millionaire: //Skinny, very very
  skinny body, very very //skinny
  body. Little skinny. //Too skinny
  to swim.

2 Student 1:  //Because you very
  nice...

3 Student 2:            //Very nice
  food...

4 Doctor:              //So you can...
```

Cameron (2001) notes that repetition serves as a "way of 'buying time' to plan the next chunk" (p. 34) while aiding in listener comprehension. Repetition during simultaneous speech accounted for 66% of the 38 instances of repetition in the talk, suggesting

that participants also use it as a means of maintaining the floor in the face of interruption and overlap.

Lexical devices may also be employed to grab the floor when it is otherwise unavailable. In Extract 8, the Millionaire and the Sailor argue against each other, each insisting they are unable to swim and should not be asked to leave the lifeboat.

Extract 8. Millionaire and Sailor

```
1 Millionaire:  but I… Listen //lis-
  ten listen my opinion. //Listen to
  me. And if I go swim    it means
  you all kill me kill //me because
  everybody on this boat knows I
  cannot survive if I swim.

2 Sailor:                    //I
  cannot swim.

3 Sailor:                 //Ok.

4 Sailor:            //Yeah.
```

The use of pre-sequences such as "listen my opinion" and "listen" occurred three times in the talk, enabling speakers to gain and maintain turns (Cook, 1989). According to Sacks, et al. (1978) these "interruption markers" (p. 39) serve as devices for repairing the organization and distribution of turns. In the example above the tactic not only minimizes interruptions from the Sailor, but also elicits backchanneling acknowledgment, thereby enabling the full realization of the Millionaire's turn.

According to Coulthard (1985), there are several grammatical devices which may also be employed to acquire a more extended turn. In Extract 9, the Sailor attempts to plead with the Millionaire to give up her life for the sake of the other passengers.

Extract 9. Sailor and Millionaire

```
1 Sailor 1: But I want you help us.

2 Millionaire: Hai. [Yes.]

3 Sailor 1: If you go swim //we can
  survive so=

4 Millionaire:          //Uh-huh.

5 Millionaire: =No no //no bec… be-
  cause of because //of you are on
  this boat, no body
  survive because you are too heavy.
```

```
6 Sailor 2:          //can you…

7 Sailor 3:          //can you allow us
  to give…
```

Beginning with the appositional "but," the Sailor's statement in line 1 is on one level a request for help, but on a rhetorical level it is also a request for a longer turn, a pre-sequence that prefaces the message that will follow (Cook, 1989) and thus elicits acknowledgment from the Millionaire in line 2. The Sailor's use of the conditional "if," which Coulthard (1985) refers to as an "incompletion marker," (p.64) further prevents NS from immediately grabbing the floor, as the completion of the utterance hinges on the realization of the necessary clauses. This instead prompts an instance of backchanneling from the Millionaire in line 4. Once the requisite clauses are completed, however, the Sailor attempts to continue with an *utterance incompletor,* or conjunction, in line 3. This is met with an immediate interjection, however, from the Millionaire. Such interruptions at conjunctions are quite common according to Ferguson (1975, as cited in Coulthard, 1985), who in examining eleven hours of conversation found that they account for 28 percent of interruptions. Coulthard (1985) notes that these devices do not necessarily guarantee an extended turn, but their employment can place NS in "a position where he must interrupt and be seen to be interrupting" (p. 64).

Conclusion

Cook (1989) has noted the difficulty that foreign language learners have in negotiating turn taking in their L2, and not all students in the study were comfortable making interruptions (see Table 1). The Doctor made significantly more backchannels than interruptions, while Mr. Video, a shy student who often falls silent during group discussions, did not contribute any utterances during the six minutes of analyzed talk. Various factors, including extroversion (Cohen, 1990) and gender (Itakura & Tsui, 2004; Zimmerman & West, 1975) may contribute to a speaker's ability to dominate in a conversation. It should be noted that the Sailor, the sole male participant, contributed the greatest number of turns and interruptions.

Table 1. Breakdown of interruptions and non-TRP backchannels by participant

	Turns (does not include backchan- nels)	Interrup- tions	Non-TRP backchan- nels
Overall	165	44	25
Sailor	52	19	4
Millionaire	39	10	12
Criminal	39	7	1
Doctor	7	1	6
Student	12	3	1
Actor	16	4	1
Mr. Video	0	0	0

Yet analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data suggests that students are generally not shy to take and maintain the floor. Though Murata (1994) found that simultaneous speech among Japanese native speakers predominantly occurs as backchan-neling, there were 76 percent more interruptions than backchannels occurring at non-TRPs in the talk. Students may be adapting their turn-taking behavior according to L2 conventions, for not only had they had just completed a reflection task and training on interruption techniques in the L2, but many of them had also studied English overseas. A similar trend was found by Murata (1994), who observed that Japanese speakers display greater use of interruption in L2 conversations with English native speakers than in L1 conversations with Japa-nese native speakers.

As language teachers it is therefore important, as McCarthy (1991) points out, to bring awareness of various turn-taking systems to the classroom. Language devices such as lexical phrases (Glick, 2002) may aid all learners in making more interrup-tions. Li, et al. (2005) found that conversation pairs trained with a list of interruption phrases were able to make more interruptions than those who had not been trained. In addition to basic techniques such as repetition, knowledge of grammatical devices such as utterance incompletors and incompletion markers may aid students in formulating turns that are more resistant to interruption when performing discus-sion oriented tasks. Ultimately students should be made aware of turn-taking conventions in order to understand the liberties they can take. It appears that successful negotiation of the turn-taking mecha-nism depends not only on the ability to know the rules but also knowing when and how to flaunt them.

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After graduating from UCLA in 2001, **Jennie Y. Kern** moved to Japan from her hometown of Los Angeles to work as an ALT on the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program. She became a convert to the slow, country lifestyle of Kochi Prefecture when she first caught a glimpse of its mountainous greenery from the seat of an airplane. Jennie has been teaching English at Kochi University and Kochi Women's University since 2005 and is currently studying for her Master's Degree in English Language Teaching with the University of Reading, UK.

Appendix
Notes on transcription

Transcripts follow various conventions described in Cameron (2001), Carter and McCarthy (1997), and White (1997) with certain adaptations. Symbols and their indications are as follows:

,   recasting of utterance

{ }   description of non-verbal communication and additional sounds

…   incompletion of word or syntactical unit

//   simultaneous speech between two or more utterances

```
Criminal:  I have a wife //four
kids.
Sailor:                 //Well
life is very difficult so…
```

=   latching, or connection without pause or overlap, between utterances

Speaker 1, 2   continuation of turn broken up by non-simultaneous utterance or portion thereof

```
Millionaire 1:  You don't know=
Sailor:   =But //I will have a
kids.
Millionaire 2 //our big problem.
```

( )   uncertain transcription of talk

[ ]   translation of Japanese utterances

Periods, question marks, and additional commas have also been added to aid in readability.

Suggestions for creating teaching approaches suitable to the Japanese EFL Environment

(日本のＥＦＬ状況に適した教授法創造の提案)

Rintaro Sato
(佐藤臨太郎)

Nara University of Education（奈良教育大学）

Keywords

students' needs and motivation, Input, CLT and TBL, PPP

As the emphasis on developing students' communicative abilities has increased in both junior and senior high schools, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-based Language Learning (TBL) have been attracting attention. However, in the Japanese EFL situation where there are insufficient opportunities for input or output, and in which many students learn English for academic purposes, CLT and TBL are not always successful. Thus teachers are obliged to create teaching approaches suitable to their situations. This paper proposes pragmatic and eclectic teaching approaches in the Japanese learning context.

中高生のコミュニケーション能力を高める必要から、コミュニカティブ言語教授法(CLT)やタスク重視の言語教授法(TBL)が注目を浴びている。日本での外国語としての、または学校科目の1つとしての英語を考えた場合、その適用には十分な配慮が求められる。本論では日本のEFL環境の実情に見合った有効で実用的な英語教育・授業を提案する。

Considerations regarding students' needs and motivation

Motivation has a crucial role in aiding English learning and is a predictor of English-learning success. In improving students' motivation, teachers have to consider what it means to learn English in the Japanese EFL context. The Course of Study (MEXT, 2008) requires teachers in junior high schools to deepen students' understanding of languages and cultures through foreign language learning, to foster a positive attitude to attempting communication, and to develop basic communication abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It requires teachers in senior high schools to develop their students' practical communicative abilities, while deepening their understanding of language and culture, and fostering a positive attitude toward communication through foreign languages (MEXT, 2003). We cannot say with confidence that teachers and students are pursuing all of these goals, though teachers are certainly required to do so. It seems that Japanese students have dual orientations for learning English: a practical, realistic goal related to examinations and grades, and a vague idealistic goal related to using English for international or intercultural communication (Yashima, 2000). Since English has long been taught as a knowledge-based subject and students are studying it for high-stakes tests, teachers should take both goals into serious consideration. In entrance exams, students' knowledge or understanding of different cultures, attitudes toward communication, or practical communicative abilities are rarely measured. In this situation, where there may be a huge gap in the goal of learning between students and teachers, students cannot be highly motivated. Communicative activities and tasks, which are now coming into fashion, are not always compatible with students' needs and can demotivate exam-oriented students from learning. Ideally, dual goals should overlap or be integrated in the classroom through well-organized teaching. However, as long as the passing of knowledge-based exams continues to be the primary objective for many students, teachers may sometimes have to focus less on the ideal goal of learning English for communicative purposes. For

many students, a short-term realistic goal related to an examination is more concrete and immediate (Yashima et al, 2004). Teachers do not have to feel ashamed of conducting classes aimed mainly at realizing students' realistic goals, that is to say, success in exams. Communication-oriented classes, if teachers do not take account of tests at all, may be worthless for some students.

Providing plentiful input opportunities

It is, without a doubt, crucial for learners to be exposed to a great amount of input to acquire or learn an L2. Krashen (1981) has taken a very strong position on the indispensability of input, claiming that comprehensible input is all that is required for successful acquisition. His argument is controversial in that he disregards the role of output, but there is no lack of theories or hypotheses that regard input as a precondition for learning (e.g., Gass, 1997; Robinson, 1995). Especially in the input-scarce Japanese EFL environment, in which junior and senior high school students do not have natural exposure to or actual need to use English outside the classroom, teachers have to maximize the use of English in their classes. English should not only be the object but the medium of instruction. Thus, English classes conducted in English are highly justified.

However, in creating rich and meaningful classes, teachers sometimes have to use complicated, abstract, or subtle Japanese expressions to convey true intentions and meanings to students, and this cannot easily be done only in English. Since previous studies have shown that appropriate use of L1 is valuable and effective (Levine, 2003), it makes sense to use Japanese effectively and purposefully in limited cases. However, to create an input-rich learning environment the base language must definitely be English**.** Clément et al. (2003) showed that learners' willingness to communicate in L2 is influenced by the frequency and quality of L2 contact. Teachers have to give students as much high quality input as possible by conducting the class mainly in English. Ideally, every teacher should be proficient enough to conduct meaningful classes entirely in English, yet should also learn when and how to use Japanese to create more effective lessons.

Providing plentiful output opportunities
CLT and TBL

Providing opportunities for input cannot, on its own, lead students to acquisition of new language. Learners also have to be encouraged to produce output. How can this be achieved? As emphasis in English teaching both in junior and senior high schools has been moving toward communication, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-based Language Learning (TBL) have been gaining our attention. However, in these communication-oriented approaches, questions such as "with whom?" and "for what?" can arise in this Japanese EFL learning environment. While CLT and TBL can be effective in improving motivation and helping students develop true fluency in an L2 by putting them in a real English situation (Dekeyser, 1998), we can easily find a huge mismatch between CLT or TBL and the actual learning situation in Japan. For example:

- CLT and TBL are of Anglo-American origin and can conflict with a Confucian-heritage culture in which teachers are supposed to have authority over students (Hu, 2005).
- In TBL, as learners are allowed to choose the language needed to achieve the outcome of the task and are given freedom to decide which grammatical items to use (Ellis, 2003), they may not produce the target items in an activity.
- Teaching in TBL is not designed with examinations in mind (Wills and Willis, 2007).
- In the TBL-based classroom, it is better to give all the classroom instructions in English to provide a clear link between the classroom and the real world (Willis & Willis, 2007), but many Japanese teachers are not using English as the sole, or even main, tool for communication in their classes.

Careful examination of the meaning of English learning in the Japanese context indicates that CLT and TBL are not yet as suitable as we would expect in encouraging Japanese EFL learners to produce output in the classroom. The effect of tasks, of course, must not be dismissed since they can improve learners' motivation and help them to develop true fluency in an L2 (Dekeyser, 1998). We can use tasks effectively if they are attuned to the purpose of the class.

PPP

Anderson (1993) claims in his acquisition theory that language learning starts out in declarative form, progresses to the stage of proceduralization through extensive practice, and then knowledge becomes automatic. Drawing on this theory, Sharwood Smith (1981) and DeKeyser (1998) argue that explicit knowledge can be converted into implicit knowledge through extensive practice. This posi-

tion supports the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) approach, which starts with explicit explanation of specific new forms and meanings, followed by practice focusing mainly on accuracy, and finally moving to the production stage in which "learners would be required to produce language more spontaneously, based on meanings the learner himself or herself would want to express" (Skehan, 1998, p.93).

This PPP approach has been roundly dismissed by proponents of CLT and TBL. For example, Willis (2004) mentions that language learning is a complex process that does not proceed in a linear additive way. Skehan (1998) states that "such an approach is now out of fashion" (p.94) and White (1988) discredits the PPP approach as a meaning-impoverished methodology.

However, this traditional approach, which is still often seen in Japanese EFL classrooms, can still be justified. In his learning model (Figure 1), Saito (1998) utilizes drill activities, which would be dismissed in TBL, and argues for the crucial role of the remedial phase which allows learners to move back to the previous stage when they cannot successfully perform in the current stage. The sequence of the model is more compatible with a PPP approach than with TBL. This model is convincing as it is based on Saito's extensive teaching experience in the Japanese classroom.

Activities which are not regarded as crucial in CLT or TBL, such as imitation, repetition, pattern practice, drills, and memorization are in fact necessary in most Japanese English classes. Yamaoka (2006) argues that imitation, repetition, and pattern practice are essential for English learning in the input-scarce Japanese EFL environment. In addition, Ding (2007) reports the crucial roles of text memorization and imitation in the success of Chinese learners of English whose EFL learning environment is identical to the Japanese one.

Conclusion

As English teaching and learning has been shifting to a more communicative approach, CLT and TBL have been attracting more attention. However, these Western approaches, which do not take sufficient account of the unique English learning environment in Japan, are not yet as practical in application as the PPP approach.

Many teaching approaches and methods, most of which are of Anglo-American or European origin, have been imported. We have seen fads in teaching methods come and go. SLA research has been providing suggestions for more effective teaching and now even brain science is beginning to enter into the area of English education. In this chaotic situation with an overload of information, including some attractive-sounding ideas that may not be suited to the local context, some may be easily confused about how they should teach English.

However, teachers' own beliefs rooted in their own learning and teaching experience in this Japanese EFL context should be the base for teaching. Firm beliefs, established through struggling with English learning (teaching), will lead instructors in the right direction. Of course, they can refer to Western methods or research implications, but the final decision should be left to well-qualified, competent teachers. Teachers, who have worked hard to acquire learning and teaching experience to improve the quality of their English classes, must decide what and how to teach their students.

As was mentioned earlier, learners can have dual goals, namely, a practical, realistic goal related to tests or grades, and a goal related to using English for international or intercultural communication, and they may attach a greater or lesser degree of importance to each of these (Yashima, 2000). It seems that most learners have the former type of motivation (related to tests) more than the latter (related to communication) in the Japanese EFL situation (Yashima et al, 2004). However, whatever goals they have, teachers can do a lot to enhance students' intrinsic motivation (Ellis, 2005). Dörnyei (2001) states that the best way to improve students' motivation is to improve the quality of teaching. Giving careful consideration to Japanese students' unique learning en-
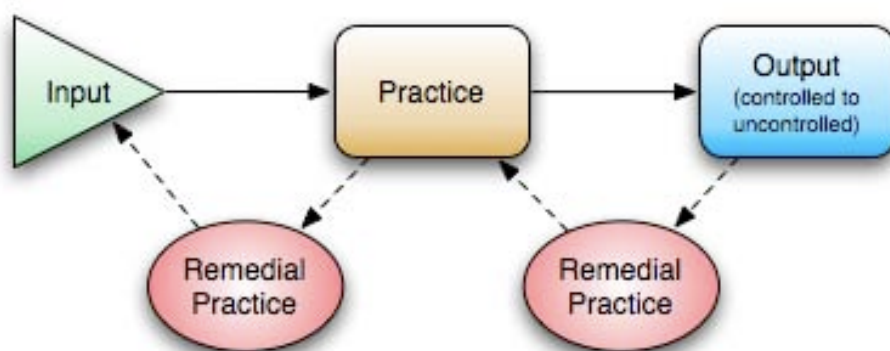
Figure 1. Learning model

vironment without being influenced too easily by attractive, supposedly effective methods or flavor of the month teaching systems, teachers have to conduct genuinely effective English classes.

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Rintaro Sato has over 15 years' experience working as an EFL/ESL practitioner, and currently is an associate professor in the Dept. of English Education at Nara University of Education. His research interests include intake and output processing, negotiation of meaning, and feedback.

An immodest proposal for tertiary level EFL: An interview with Mike Guest

Keywords

College and University Educators, CUE, Special Interest Group, SIG, Michael Guest, ESP, EAP

大学教育者SIGの年次大会が今年度は奈良県の帝塚山大学にて、10月17、18日に開かれる。この大会を盛り上げるために、会の主催者John Gunning が宮崎大学医学部准教授のMichael Guestにインタビューした。Guest氏はデイリー読売のEFLコラムニストでもある。両氏はESP/EAPの教授法に関する問題を議論した。

John Gunning

Chairperson, CUE Conference 2009

Tezukayama University

Last July, in the closing hours of the College and University Educators (CUE) Special Interest Group (SIG) annual conference held at Kinki University, the reins were passed and I somewhat reluctantly agreed to become this year's conference organizer. I say "reluctantly" only because I knew that I would be following on the overwhelming successes of the Kinki Conference and ones held in previous years. I was lucky in one respect – as CUE Coordinator Matt Apple and others were discussing this year's theme at lunch that Sunday, we unanimously decided on the theme for the 2009 CUE Conference: *ESP/EAP: English for Global Working, Living and Studying.* With this in mind and based on discussions I had with John Campbell-Larsen and Stuart Cunningham, who both chaired and organized a one-day conference on ESP at Himeji University in May 2008, I knew the CUE 2009 conference theme would generate interest among educators in Japan. Through casual conversations with other CUE members, I have come to the conclusion that many of us are involved with educational issues related to both English for General Purposes as well as courses that could be described as either being English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

One of the first orders of business was to generate a short list of plenary speakers. Campbell and Cunningham mentioned Dr. Thomas Orr at the University of Aizu as a possible speaker. I contacted him and was thrilled that he agreed to speak. Matt Apple then mentioned and subsequently contacted a familiar name – Michael (Mike) Guest, an Associate Professor of English in the Medical Faculty at the University of Miyazaki and a regular columnist on EFL affairs for *The Daily Yomiuri* newspaper. After he agreed to attend our conference as one of the plenary speakers, I was fortunate enough to discuss some issues related to ESP/EAP with him.

John Gunning (JG): Mike, thanks for taking time with me today. I guess I should cut to the chase and get right into it then. ESP and EAP is such a growing area of language education in Japan, but it is often

quite misunderstood in general terms. What is the role of the ESP/EAP teacher in the current state of Japanese tertiary education?

Mike Guest (M.G.): *Is*? I doubt that there is a single *role* as such. But I do think that *all* tertiary English education in Japan *should* fall under the rubric of ESP/EAP. University education is supposed to be primarily academic in form, which means developing and using academic skills. It is *not* supposed to be a glorified conversation school, a hobby center, or a simple extension of standardized high school public education. And since tertiary education is expected to have a particular focus it seems to me that tertiary English education must therefore be *about* something. It should be content-based, well beyond teaching general *English for English's sake*, even though many courses may be outwardly designated as such. Unfortunately though, (unnecessary) titular designations between content classes and English classes often relegate these general English classes to a status that is very un-academic and un-focused. It can easily become something like an on-campus *Eikaiwa* school, a remedial high school course, or TOEIC prep – which should not be the function of any university course.

JG: Based on your reply and in my own experience, it seems that many universities do not have a very clear understanding of what ESP/EAP actually is and how it relates to the differences between general English classes. I am not a trained ESP teacher, but I do have training as an English teacher in general. With this in mind, what is the general consensus about the background of an ESP teacher? In other words, is it better to be experienced in that content area, or to be a well-trained/experienced English teacher in general?

MG: Actually, there doesn't even seem to be any consensus as to exactly what an ESP/EAP teacher is, what a general EFL teacher is, or even what is meant by terms like *content teacher.* After all, so-called regular EFL teachers may teach using content-based learning as a methodology – are they then content teachers? If a so-called general EFL teacher at a business vocational school uses business content English with specific language applications in mind, is that teacher still an EFL teacher? ESP/EAP? A content teacher? All of the above? The nomenclature is vague because the roles are vague; not that there is anything wrong with that. However, as long as the *E* is the first letter in the acronym, we can reasonably assume that any ESP/EAP teacher is still basically teaching English. A *real* content teacher in Japan would obviously be teaching in Japanese.

Anyway, the only definite experiential qualification is that the instructor be a well-trained *educator*, and not *just* a scholar or expert. That is, he or she should know, in training and experience, something about the processes of learning, how to manage classes, how to design lessons and curriculum, and how to evaluate, in general. Everything else is secondary.

As for the 'content' part of the question, my intuitive response is that all teachers at the tertiary level should be teaching content anyway, content that is cognitively engaging and connected to academic or professional discourse. If there is an emphasis upon *communication*, and not just conversation or exchanges, there must be some meaningful content that is being communicated. There shouldn't be much of a distinction between tertiary EFL, content, and ESP/EAP teaching. It's an artificial dilemma, a false trichotomy.

JG: You mention content, and I try myself to focus on it to provide my students with opportunities to use language in a more authentic manner and, hopefully, complete more meaningful tasks which seem to be more motivating. However, some professors at my university have little or no experience in TESL/TEFL. This may be a sweeping generalization, but at many Japanese universities the ESP courses are taught by teachers with little or no TESL/TEFL training or background, often in stereotypical teacher-fronted, large class-size lessons. What is the case at your current university regarding teacher training, curriculum and syllabus design, and the implementation of both?

MG: That's a loaded question, and one that seems to be pointing in many directions. My university observes academic freedom and non-interference, thank goodness. I wouldn't like it if administrators or the *kyoju-kai* tried to tell me how to run my classes. The last thing I would want is a nanny institution ordering re-education for teachers who don't follow some preconceived progressive notion of pedagogical orthodoxy. Esteemed 65-year old Prof. Saito, who has led the Microbiology section for 45 years, should not be held to (humiliated by?) current EFL notions about pedagogical correctness. Moreover, some classes may be acceptable, or even be better, if large or teacher-fronted. It's not as if all of my university classes back in the day were learner-centered tutorials. In fact, some of my most interesting classes were teacher-centered lectures.

Now, if a teacher really is struggling, or there is some egregious breach of teaching standards at my university, encouragement or criticism would be done at a very local level, such as from the head

professor of that section to the instructor in question. The usual means of faculty development are available, student feedback is encouraged, and, since we are all adults, it is expected that we all try to further our skills and professionalism through research, attending conferences, collaborations and the like, the details of which are up to the individual but are noted in the teachers' database and become a factor in contract renewals and the like. The *choices* we make about our professional development are not determined by our overlords.

JG: Professional development has certainly helped my own career and any involvement with it can only be an individual's choice. In a couple years, we will have some openings at my current university, and I will more than likely be asked to sit on the hiring committee. Based on your experience, which would you recommend for successful ESP teaching: an experienced EFL teacher with no experience in the ESP field of study, an experienced teacher with a background in the specific field of study, or a team-teaching approach (EFL teacher with no field experience plus Japanese teacher with the specialty background)?

MG: Either of the first two is fine – definitely not the third choice. The latter takes content out of the EFL person's hands and tacitly assumes that content is meaningful only when conveyed through the mother tongue; not exactly the best psychological footing for acquiring a second language. The EFL person has little or no meaningful role in such a team-teaching situation.

JG: Perhaps, that is why, when I have observed courses that have been taught using a team-teaching approach, the level of English skills and ability to communicate were almost non-existent. On a different, but somewhat related thread, there has recently been a growing body of research done on needs analysis with ESP/EAP. In your opinion, when it comes to field, or discipline-specific EFL courses, would you suggest conducting some sort of needs analysis before teaching the first lesson(s) or before designing the syllabus? What kind of analysis is most beneficial?

MG: I would never recommend a needs analysis for anything educational. I consider such things to be a waste of time and effort, a kind of grandiloquent sophistry. Instead, one should be able to anticipate what the educational needs the students may have (and it's not as if these are monolithic), not by an analysis but by simply getting some common sense info. Find out what other courses the students are taking (English or otherwise), typical student back-ground, expectations of the administration, and anything about their current student English levels. It will be imperfect of course, and you'll end up adjusting it as you go along as certain needs (is that even the right word?) emerge. But you won't find these out by doing prior research – that just seems counter-intuitive and unnecessarily egg-headed to me.

JG: I somewhat agree. However, I find that perhaps an employer's needs analysis looking at the types of language skills a student needs in order to be successful at work or in that field may influence the curriculum and type of courses being offered. With the growing changes in the curriculum of universities regarding departments and core curriculum initiatives, there seems to be an increase in the number of ESP/EAP types of classes being offered. In addition, universities are always looking for experienced ESP/EAP educators. What advice would you offer an English teacher not familiar with the sciences or workplace English and yet is interested in becoming an ESP teacher?

MG: Most definitely it is to be more cognizant of discourse norms and modes of English. In short, being aware of how language communicates meaning through discourse. I teach medical students, and I had absolutely no prior medical education whatsoever, but it doesn't matter one iota. Why? Because as a trained and experienced EFL teacher I've developed an awareness of how English discourse is arranged, of noting discourse patterns relevant to my learners. The norms of specialized speech communities are not elusive if you have a general sense as to how language works. For example, when taking a patient history, explaining a diagnosis of a patient, or reporting medical data to a colleague, you don't need specialized technical knowledge or much familiarity with terminology to create good, meaningful ESP lessons. It's very natural if you use a discourse-based approach. People should get away from the simplistic notion that ESP means explaining terminology or technical terms- anyone can use a dictionary for those. Good tertiary English teaching is always good ESP teaching, meaning content-centered and discourse-based teaching, period.

JG: Thanks Mike for a very enlightening and openly refreshing discussion on the nature of ESP/EAP in Japanese universities today. I look forward to seeing you at the CUE 2009 Tezukayama Conference.

I hope my short interview with Mike has got you thinking about attending what will certainly be an

engaging plenary by Mike at this year's conference at Tezukayama University, Nara Prefecture on October 17-18. This year's CUE conference will include two featured speakers, Dr. Thomas Orr and Michael Guest, two panel discussions led by the plenary speakers themselves, 42 presentations, two workshops, two round-up reflective sessions, and plenty of breaks scheduled for more informal exchanges and networking opportunities. And please join us for the banquet reception, a chance to meet new colleagues as well as the time to reacquaint yourself with old ones. We look forward to seeing you at

CUE 2009 at Tezukayama. For more updated conference information please visit the CUE SIG web site at <jaltcue-sig.org>.

John Gunning is an Associate Professor at Gifu Pharmaceutical University. His research interests include curriculum and syllabus design, discourse analysis, and motivational theory related to task sequencing. He is the publications chair of the College and University Educators (CUE) SIG and Chair of the upcoming CUE conference.

18   RESOURCES • MY SHARE

…with Mark de Boer & Dax Thomas
<my-share@jalt-publications.org>

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

MY SHARE ONLINE

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

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

I N this month's My Share, Kaori Nakao describes how to meet diverse student needs using a strategy for successful team-teaching, and Thomas Amundrud spices up the writing class with an activity involving secret pen pal letters.

Team-teaching speaking task preparation
Kaori Nakao

Seinan Gakuin Daigaku
<kaorinewyork@hotmail.com>

Quick guide

Keywords: elementary school, team-teaching, speaking practice, group practice
Learner English level: Beginner
Learner maturity level: Elementary (grades 5-6)
Preparation time: None (provided vocabulary cards are available)
Activity time: 15 minutes
Materials: Word cards with pictures

Introduction

During 2007, I observed and analyzed EFL team-teaching (Japanese EFL teacher plus native EFL teacher assistant) classes at 21 elementary schools. During my observations, an instructional routine emerged which was independent of teacher and institution: (1) greeting; (2) vocabulary and pronunciation instruction followed by practice/modeling; (3) group game/activity; (4) brief review. I observed that in many elementary school EFL classrooms, inter-student English competency and confidence was often inconsistent. The following is an adaption of the most successful instructional method that I observed for overcoming students' inconsistencies in communication-oriented elementary school team-teaching situations with mixed-level groups.

Procedure

Step 1: Students are told that they will divide into two groups, one with the native teacher (NT) and the other with the Japanese teacher (JT): the

NT group will learn the content in an interactive fashion, while the JT group will learn the content in a "repeat-after-me" style, progress at a slower pace, and receive explanation in Japanese when necessary. Students may then choose which group to join.

Step 2a: The NT begins by briefly modeling the vocabulary or collocation and then proceeds to question the students as a group and individually to ascertain their understanding.

Step 3a: Once the NT group has displayed confidence with the new vocabulary or collocation, the cards, initially used by the NT for instruction and modeling, are handed out to the students and they move around asking each other questions, to which their cards are the response. For example, carrying a picture of a soccer ball, a student asks a peer "What sports can you play?" and the peer looks at the card and says, "I can play soccer."

Step 2b: In the JT group, the JT comprehensively instructs the students in the new vocabulary (meaning and pronunciation) through modeling and "repeat-after-me" tasks. Following considerable group practice in a given task, the JT may select one or more confident students to model the content with the JT in front of the class.

Step 3b: Students in the JT group are paired-up for practice while sitting down. After a few minutes of "safe" practice, the students are asked to stand up and make two lines facing each other. The students are asked to shake hands with their new partners and practice the target pattern. Following the completion of the exchange, the students are told to shift in a "conveyor-belt" fashion to a new partner and practice again. The shifting and practicing can be done until the students are confident with the new material.

Step 4: The two groups come back together. The NT and JT, as a pair, review and then model the content one more time before moving on to the day's activity or group game.

Conclusion

For some teachers, this task is perhaps a new and unorthodox approach to team-teaching. The underlying idea is that team-teaching does not necessarily entail two teachers teaching the same content, to the same group of students. Instead, to effectively meet the needs of the students' competencies and varying levels of confidence, teaching two separate groups of students may be a more effective instructional approach. To continue to grow in effectiveness in its new environment (elementary schools), team-teaching needs to remain flexible and responsive to learners' needs. The success I

observed in the use of the above teaching technique suggests that it may be a more effective, flexible, and truly "team"-teaching approach.

Class secret pen pals

Thomas Amundrud
Ritsumeikan University
<tat24292@lt.ritsumei.ac.jp>

Quick guide

Keywords: letter/email writing, paragraph practice, cohesion building, writing game

Learner English level: Pre-intermediate and above

Learner maturity level: University (and possibly high school)

Preparation time: 5-10 minutes initially, and 10-15 minutes organization time per week

Activity time: 15-20 minutes, repeated every week or two throughout the course

Materials: Pen and paper

Introduction

A common complaint by both teachers and students about writing classes is that they are quite dry compared to oral communication classes. Initially developed to liven up lower-level university writing classes, this activity enables students to practice paragraph and letter or email writing skills, while also allowing them to exercise their imaginations. Since many university writing courses focus on academic, as opposed to creative, writing skills, this activity can serve as a break from the academic work.

Preparation

The teacher doesn't need any materials to start this activity. However, I found it helpful once the letter exchanges were underway to have a "mail bag" in which to collect the letters. If you are teaching more than one class, you might find it helpful to use A4 or larger envelopes to separate the letters from each class, rather than carrying multiple bags.

Procedure

Step 1: After reviewing the basics of letter or email writing structure, tell the students to choose a ficti-

tious name, and have them submit the names to you secretly. Tell them that this is their secret name, and that they should not tell any other students.

Step 2: Before the next class, pair the students. I made a list with two columns, one an alphabetical list of the students with their pen names in parentheses, and the other with each student's partner.

Step 3: In the next class, give each student their secret pen pal's name. Instruct them to write a letter introducing themselves. Have them fold the letters and write "To: (their secret pen pal's name) From: (their own secret pen name)" on the outside. I also had each class write a unique stamp to prevent confusion with letters from other classes. Collect the letters to distribute them in the following class.

Step 4: Before the next class, collate the letters according to the real name-secret name list you made in Step 2. This can be time consuming, but makes things easier in class.

Step 5: Have students write their letters as a regular warm up activity—I used it about once a week. Use letter exchanges to build on writing skills taught in class, such as paragraph format, different openings and closings, etc. You can also monitor student work during the collection and arrangement stage, and then give feedback in class about common errors.

Step 6: Finally, for the last day of the activity, have the students write farewell letters. Pass them to the students as usual, then have each student stand and reveal their secret name. This can be quite surpris-

ing, since students often choose playful names, either of *anime* characters, famous people or places, or funny things they like, concealing their gender, pastimes, or club activities, etc.

Variation

One possible alternative to actual physical letters is to use Facebook or other blogging applications that allow for a community of blogs with aliases where students can respond to each other's blogs without knowing who is writing, but where the teacher can still limit access to class members only. This would also reduce the organizational time needed every week by the teacher to match names and letters. However, many teachers may still prefer the old-fashioned approach, as it requires no materials beyond pen and paper.

Conclusion

I developed this activity for my pre-intermediate and lower intermediate students as a warm-up and a supplementary activity for letter and paragraph writing skills. Many students enjoyed the regular practice of writing to someone they knew was in the class, even though they didn't know who it was, and many enjoyed creating their fictitious characters. The final step of revealing each writer's identity was the most fun, as many students were very surprised to discover to whom they had been writing!

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20   RESOURCES • BOOK REVIEWS

…with Robert Taferner
<reviews@jalt-publications.org>

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

BOOK REVIEWS ONLINE

A linked index of Book Reviews can be found at:

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

THIS month's column features Kurtis McDonald's review of *Our Unique Planet*, an EFL textbook for upper-intermediate university students.

Our Unique Planet

[Ian Bowring & Ruth Urbom. Tokyo: Seibido, 2008. pp. 117. ¥1,800. (incl. teacher's guide; CD set ¥5,000). ISBN: 978-4-7919-4623-5.]

Reviewed by Kurtis McDonald, Kwansei Gakuin University

Our Unique Planet is an upper-intermediate reading comprehension book focused specifically on subject matter related to science and technology. It is primarily intended for use with university-level Japanese science students in their EFL classes, centered on reading and vocabulary. As a textbook targeted at such a specific audience, *Our Unique Planet* is able to cater directly to Japanese students with the inclusion of brief unit introductions and glossaries in Japanese. The textbook's accompanying teacher's guide apparently seeks to narrow the potential market for this textbook even more because it is written entirely in Japanese.

The overall structure of *Our Unique Planet* consists of 22 topic-based units ostensibly divided into four parts: *Life on Earth*, *Research and Technology*, *Our Home*, and *Exploration*. Beyond the superficial connection between the topics included in each part, there is no real cohesiveness between units, and the vocabulary presented is not cumulative. Each of the 22 units revolves around a central reading passage concerned with a contemporary scientific or technological topic. The topics selected do well to represent a broad cross-section of the many different areas of science and technology of interest to many university-level Japanese science students. In my experience using portions of this textbook in EFL Reading classes for second-year Chemistry and Physics majors, most students found the occasional introduction of selected units from this textbook to be a welcome addition to our course. In addition to the great diversity of scientific topics touched on throughout the textbook, the written content also seems both up-to-date and appropriately sophisticated, both scientifically and linguistically, for the intended audience.

Unfortunately, the same degree of sophistication is not present in the visual content, as the entire textbook is completely black-and-white, with the exception of the cover. Beyond the lack of color, the few, often nondescript pictures that are included are almost always recycled within each short unit. The charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams that are included do serve to enhance the scientific feel of the textbook but, unfortunately, appear far too sporadically to do much in terms of helping students to "develop skills in interpreting visuals" (p. 3) as is proposed in the preface.

For better or for worse, *Our Unique Planet* follows the exact same pattern in each of its 22 units. First, a set of six cloze sentences attempts to introduce background information and key vocabulary. The central component of each unit, the reading passage, is next and typically consists of six paragraphs within which selected vocabulary and phrases are marked in bold and included with a Japanese translation in the glossary that follows. After each passage there is a simple vocabulary matching exercise, followed by multiple-choice comprehension questions. Students are then asked to fill in blanks to complete a summary paragraph of the unit's main reading passage before checking their answers by listening to a native speaker reading of the text on the accompanying CDs. Each unit ends with another set of six cloze sentences related to the reading passage.

While perhaps comforting to some students and instructors who value a consistent approach in reading texts, most students and instructors will likely find the monotony of the unit presentation exhibited throughout this textbook to be extremely uninspiring. Likewise, *Our Unique Planet* brings nothing new to the exercises that accompany the potentially engaging scientific reading passages. As a result, although my students did report that they enjoyed the scientific subject matter and challenging level of English used in the reading passages of the units that we looked at, they also noted that the repetitive style of the exercises soon became boring. Indeed, the complete lack of any built-in expansion activities, such as opportunities for discussion or debate, or resources for further information, such as relevant website links or an interactive CD-ROM, leaves the challenge of making this textbook meaningful to the students very much up to the instructor's additional planning and preparation. Though the teacher's guide apparently includes a minimal amount of additional information about the main topics of each unit in Japanese, there are no supplemental materials for reviews, quizzes, tests, or other peripherals of any kind included at all.

All in all, *Our Unique Planet* does provide EFL reading material for Japanese science students, providing a resource of scientific reading passages that are current, interesting, and appropriately challenging linguistically. Unfortunately, as the main textbook for a course, the repetitive style of unit presentation, lackluster visual appeal, and complete absence of supplemental materials make it unlikely to meet the needs of most students or instructors.

…with Greg Rouault

<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

A list of texts and resource materials for language teachers available for book reviews in *TLT* and *JALT Journal*. Publishers are invited to submit complete sets of materials to the Publishers' Review Copies Liaison address listed on the Staff page at the back of *TLT*.

RECENTLY RECEIVED ONLINE

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

* = new listing; ! = final notice. Final notice items will be removed 30 Sep. Please make queries by email to the appropriate JALT Publications contact.

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

Contact: Greg Rouault

<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

* *A Good Read*. Islam, C., & Steenburgh, C. Singapore: CENGAGE Learning Asia, 2009. [3-level reading coursebook focused on strategies and lexical development incl. class audio CD and teacher's guide].

* *Academic Listening Encounters*. Kanaoka, Y., & Wharton, J. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. [4-level content-based series w/ 2 books on academic listening, discussion, reading, writing, and study skills incl. student CD, class audio CD, teacher's manual, listening scripts, photocopiable quizzes, and answers].

* *An A-Z of Common English Errors for Japanese Learners.* Barker, D. Nagoya: BTB Press, 2008. [English grammar and usage guide w/Japanese explanations].

* *Business Result*. Multiple series authors. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. [5-level course-book in business communications incl. CD-ROM w/interactive workbook and audio, class audio CD, case studies, online resources, teacher's book w/teacher training DVD, worksheets, and progress tests].

* *Interchange: Companion to the TOEIC Test*. Kerr, C. Singapore: Cambridge University Press, 2009. [TOEIC-styled practice tests for self-study or classroom work linked to *Interchange Third Edition* incl. audio CD, downloadable answer key, and online teacher and student resources].

* *Oxford Word Skills*. Gairns, R., & Redman, S. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. [3-level vocabulary skills books w/can-do titled unit themes incl. interactive CD-ROM and website].

* *Read to Write.* Moore, D., & Barker, D. Nagoya: BTB Press, 2009. [English writing manual incl. models formulated from learner writing w/Japanese explanations].

* *Reading Explorer*. Douglas, N., & MacIntyre, P. Boston: Heinle CENGAGE Learning, 2009. [4-level reading and vocabulary skills coursebook w/ adapted National Geographic texts incl. video activity self-study CD-ROM, teacher's guide, class audio CD, video DVD, *ExamView* assessment CD-ROM].

* *Vital Signs*. Morooka, V., & Sugiura, T. Tokyo: NAN'UN-DO, 2009. [English for healthcare incl. audio CD].

Books for Teachers
(reviewed in *JALT Journal*)

Contact: Bill Perry
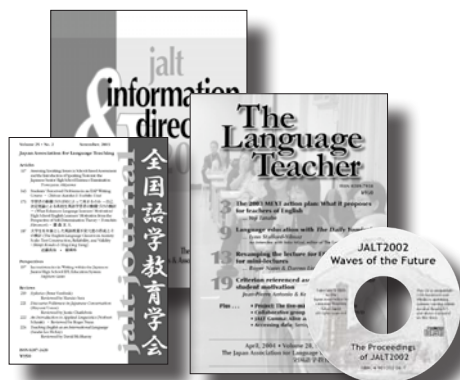
<jj-reviews@jalt-publications.org>

…with Paul Daniels & Ted O'Neill

<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.

As well as our feature columns, we would also like to answer reader queries. If you have a question, problem, or idea you would like discussed in this column, please contact us.

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

Giving your students an online voice

Damon Brewster
Hans von Dietze
Simon Hunter

J. F. Oberlin University, Tokyo

VOICETHREAD <voicethread.com> is an easy to use, free web-hosted technology for creating narrated slideshows and is a powerful educational tool that can be easily added to any language program. Students can creatively share stories and experiences while gaining valuable language and real world skills. This software is currently ranked by the Centre for Learning and Performance Technologies as 23rd in its top 100 tools for learning. We use it to enrich a study abroad program introduced by our university in 2007.

Background

Each year, our university sends up to 300 students to over 25 universities on a one-semester study abroad program. Most students study in ESL programs, but some students choose South Korea or China as their destination. We wanted a way for students coming back from this experience to productively reflect on their time abroad and to help create a sense of community around their experiences. We decided that a good way to help students reflect on their experiences would be to encourage them to share their feelings and thoughts with peers, the wider university community and family. The sharing process would result in them producing something concrete and would also serve as a good way to reintegrate them into their normal studies; the transition from a study abroad period and returning home can be difficult. Voicethread allows us to do all these things.

Figure 1. Voicethread main interface

How does it work?

To make an account you need an email address and a password of your choice. Our students use their university email addresses to make troubleshooting easier, but accounts are managed by the students themselves. Digital images are easy to upload from the computer desktop, flickr or Facebook accounts, and audio recording is done directly into the software via any attached or built-in microphone. This being a web-hosted resource, students can work individually or in groups, asynchronously from home, campus, or elsewhere. Once completed, the audio slideshows can be shared via links, embedded in other pages, or creators can invite people to view them at the Voicethread site. Therefore, Voicethread is easy to use and share, and a great vehicle for students to explore their reactions to their time abroad.

The task

The students are asked to create a slideshow in English for someone at home in Japan describing their study abroad experiences. This slideshow should represent their study abroad experience and should include their reflections on their experiences.

To assist with planning and to give students a clear idea of a direction to take, we made a starting slide with a distinct theme. All slideshows start with this same slide.

We give clear guidelines for three other important considerations. Firstly, the slideshow should not be more than 4 minutes. It may be a daunting task at first, so limiting the length made the task seem more manageable. Also, viewers tend to lose interest if the slideshow is longer than 4 minutes. Secondly, there should be no more than 12 photos. Finally, students can work alone or in groups of two or three.

As an example, the students have access to our demonstration slideshows, which adhere to these guidelines.

Three stage process

Before departure: We conduct a workshop for students in which they are introduced to the online software, open accounts, and learn how to upload and manage photos. They also practice some of the features, including the recording and, importantly, the delete feature. As students are often nervous about recording their own voices, it is important to show how easy the software is to use. During this workshop the task is also outlined.

Whilst overseas: A follow up email is sent reminding students of the task and encouraging them to seek assistance with language questions, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

On return to Japan: Students submit their slideshows approximately 3 weeks after their return to Japan. During this time, students have access to the university's computer facilities and are able to seek assistance from teachers in order to complete the task. Finally, students email the embed code to their teacher so that the slideshow can be made public on a website.

Figure 2. Completed project gathering embedded slideshows

Encouraging results

Slideshows that students have submitted have been pleasing. Not only do they provide a documentary of the many institutions that they visited and studied at, but also they provide students with a sense of achievement and a positive closure to their study abroad experience. From a returnee point of view, these slideshows go some way to assisting students with reverse culture shock as they readjust to their Japanese surroundings and process their experiences. Teachers as mentors also open lines of communication, allowing students to share their experiences, while encouraging further language study. We found that preparing scripts, editing text, and practicing pronunciation gives students valuable language practice.

To round off the process, winning submissions are presented to the greater faculty and students at a final party where one entry is selected as an overall winner.

Further uses

In our setting, awareness of Voicethread has led to several positive developments:

- Another faculty member is now conducting a photography workshop to assist students with their photographic skills and photo selection.
- A wider range of faculty members are given a real demonstration of students' English ability, and there is a greater awareness of the challenges and joys of study abroad.
- Students are able to share these slideshows with family and friends, as they own the accounts and the online content.
- Some classes are using Voicethread at the end of the year as a class photo farewell album.

Voicethread is powerful software with many uses, and should be an enjoyable addition to any language program.

References

Centre for Learning and Performance Technologies (C4LPT) (2009). *Top 100 Tools for Learning 2009*. Retrieved July 17, 2009, from <www.c4lpt.co.uk/recommended/>.

Damon Brewster <brewster@obirin.ac.jp>, **Hans von Dietze** <h-dietze@obirin.ac.jp>, and **Simon Hunter** <simonh@obirin.ac.jp> are members of the faculty in the English Language Program at J. F. Oberlin University, Tokyo. They combine their wide range of teaching experience with a passion for engaging media to create learning experiences for their students.

…with Marcos Benevides

<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>, the JALT events website <jalt.org/events>, or see the SIG and chapter event columns later in this issue.

▶ 1 Oct 2009: Pre-registration deadline for presenters at JALT2009 in Shizuoka <jalt.org/conference>

▶ 11 Oct – The 4th JALT Joint Tokyo Conference, Toyo Gakuen University, Hongo Campus.

▶ 26 Oct 2009: Pre-registration deadline for JALT2009 in Shizuoka <jalt.org/conference>

▶ 21 - 23 Nov – JALT2009 "The Teaching Learning Dialogue: An Active Mirror" will be held at Granship Shizuoka. See <jalt.org/conference> for more information.

JALT Focus

This month we have two news items: a report on the successful online forum for the PAC7 at JALT2008 conference, followed by a report by JALT Vice President Cynthia Keith on the June EBM and OGM. Please note the news item regarding the next OGM, to be held during the JALT2009 conference.

JALT online forum for JALT2009

Last year, the conference section of the JALT Forums was implemented for the first time. The objective was to create a space where:

- All conference presenters could publicize at a grassroots level, thus increasing interest and attendance at their own presentation, workshop, or poster session.

- Presenters could also revise or fine-tune their presentations through discussions with participants interested in the topic.

- Conference participants could pre-select some presentations and presenters that they were especially interested in seeing.

- First-time participants could make contact with a kindred soul or two online before the conference, hopefully enhancing their social experience.

- Potential participants could, as it were, "sample the wares" at a JALT international conference, and decide whether they wanted to attend or not.

Because it was JALT's first attempt at creating such an online space, expectations were modest. We thought that if we could get even 20 vetted presenters to participate, that would be a great success. In fact, the PAC7 at JALT 2008 Forum, now archived at <forums.jalt.org/index.php/board,3.0.html>, generated 173 posts in 75 topics, and brought together dozens of participants.

The list of participants in last year's forum reads like a who's who of the active educators, authors, and researchers at the conference itself: Curtis Kelly, Dorothy Zemach, Alvino Fantini, Mike McKay, Philip Shigeo Brown, Steven Herder, Fergus O'Dwyer, Andrew Vaughn, Chris Valvona, Theron Muller, Mark deBoer, and many more. Page views for many of the topics ran into the thousands, with none under 200. Combined, the topics were viewed over 25,000 times.

So, this year, don't just wait for November.

Whether you are presenting, attending, or just want to get a taste of the action, join JALT2009 online at <http://forums.jalt.org>.

And if Facebook or Twitter is more your thing, well—we're there as well: Look for "JALT International Conference" on Facebook, and #JALT2009 on Twitter. This year there's really no excuse to miss out on the full, interactive conference experience!

Report of the June EBM and OGM

The 2009 National JALT Executive Board Meeting and Ordinary General Meeting were scheduled for the weekend of 27 and 28 June. Attending this meeting as voting members on behalf of their various constituencies were the chapter presidents, special interest group (SIG) coordinators, and national officers. Also in attendance were a number of non-voting appointed officers, subcommittee chairs, and the JALT national auditor. It was a long but productive 2 days.

The weekend started with Saturday morning pre-meetings for the PCCP (Pre-Conference Committee Planning) and the FSC (Financial Steering Committee), which deals with the overall national budget. These meetings are essential to ensure that the basics are hashed out and ready for dissemination to the full EBM. They covered aspects like where our income comes from, how and where we invest our resources, and contingency plans for the conference in case of a swine flu outbreak.

We were introduced to the staff of the JALT Central Office, listened to officer reports, heard about new organizations who want to join or support JALT, discussed administrative and office regulations and protocols, including a new security plan for the safeguarding of membership information and handling, and heard about the great plans for Daily Yomiuri advertising opportunities for all chapters and SIGs.

Summary of motions

The following motions were passed:

- 2009-1-7 Acceptance of amended JALT Central Office Regulations 2009
- 2009-2-1 Acceptance of Study Abroad SIG as an Affiliate SIG
- 2009-2-2 Acceptance of Oita Chapter as a Forming Chapter
- 2009-2-3 Introductory AM membership
- 2009-2-4 Appointment of TLT Associate Editor
- 2009-2-5 Acceptance of the Gunma Chapter constitution and bylaws

- 2009-2-6 Acceptance of Teachers Helping Teachers SIG as an Affiliate SIG
- 2009-2-7 2009-2010 budget
- 2009-2-8 Appointment of JIC Coordinator
- 2009-2-9 Amendment of retraction of auditor's report
- 2009-2-10 Motion of apology

The following motions were postponed:
- 2009-1-3 Addition of motions to Standing Rules
- 2009-1-4 Renumbering of Standing Rules and inclusion of rescinded rules
- 2009-1-5 Amendment of Standing Rule 6.1
- 2009-2-11 Amendment of Standing Rule 6.4

The EBM adjourned at 14:50.

JALT Notices
Position Available: Associate Editor

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

This post requires several hours of concentrated work every week editing Reader's Forum articles, scheduling and overseeing production, and liaising with the Publications Board. Applicants should be prepared to make a minimum three-year commitment with an extension possible. The assumption of duties is tentatively scheduled for early 2010. Applicants should submit a curriculum vitae (including details of publication background and published works), a cover letter, and a statement of purpose indicating why they would like to become Associate Editor (and later advance to Co-editor) of *The Language Teacher* to: Steve Brown, JALT Publications Board Chair <pubchair@jalt.org>. Position is open until filled.

…with Jason Peppard

<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.

N this month's Member's Profile, Robert S. Murphy talks about his research on the cognitive development of Japanese EFL students.

MEMBER'S PROFILE

Robert S. Murphy

What a hectic couple of years. I recently finished my Master's at the University of Birmingham (researching the cognitive development of Japanese EFL students), and concurrently received certificates from Cornell, Rutgers, Oxford and Harvard in the fields of Education and Neuroscience. WIDE World at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) has elected me as a candidate for an online "coach". I am to begin a PhD candidacy at Utrecht University and will be co-presenting with Qin Higley from WIDE World at JALT2009.

My name is Robert Shoichi Murphy, and I have lived in Japan for over 23 years. I'm a New Yorker who grew up in Kobe in the 1980s. There I attended Canadian Academy international school, which had an experimental program where older bilingual kids were chosen to assist first-graders who didn't have a strong command of English. We were asked to help improve their English and help them fit into the international school environment. Those precious hours mark the beginning of my journey into cognitive development research and are the reason that I am a doctoral candidate today.

For my Master's dissertation, I conducted a pilot study with protocols developed at HGSE. Using Kurt Fischer's skill theory and the SiR (Self in Relationship) interview, I tested nine female Japanese students ranging in age from 12 to 20. The SiR interview had been conducted in China, Korea, and Taiwan, but not Japan. Although it was only a pilot study, my findings show similar results to the other three Asian studies. The Japanese students tested showed a clear range of stage-like cognitive development in the "low support" and the "high-support" contexts.

What does this mean? The SiR interview is an ingenious interview protocol that tests for and allows the administrators to graph participants' "normal" level of displayed cognitive capabilities vs. potential. A battery of questions is administered to participants, one-on-one. The first set, known as the *low support context* is a recorded interview regarding how the participant felt in the following psychosocial roles: with mother, with father, with siblings, with best friend, with acquaintance, in class, and "the real me". The second stage, known as the *high support context* takes the same set of questions, but has the participant write responses on gummy labels, add emotional valences (plus/minus marks), and then place them on the SiR diagram in one of three zones: *Important, Somewhat Important,* and *Not Important.* After that, the participants are asked to create groups of responses by encircling labels that seemed to fit together, and to draw lines between labels and/or groups that could be positively or negatively connected. This activity is a fun eye-opener for the participants: They are often amazed with the connections that they come up with. They are then thoroughly interviewed with graded questions about the choices they made. The complexity of their answers is documented and analyzed.

Most participants produced responses with cognitive complexity exactly matching Fischer's projections while in the high support context, yet produced responses of much lower complexity when the contextual support was gone. This has huge pedagogical implications. I plan to pursue this line of research in my doctoral work on Japanese students.

One interesting set of findings that I also wish to pursue on a larger scale is related to Japanese Neo-Confucian filial piety. In the small sample, I found that filial respect showed an inverse pattern to actual reported respect. That is to say, the two psychosocial roles that *demand* the most respect

within the tested list of roles, "father" and "in class", had an outstanding number of negative hits. Considering that the adage, "Respect should be earned, not demanded" is foreign in Japan, the results make sense, albeit a bit shocking when realized in graphic form. By conference time (JALT2009) I will have new data to ponder!

What are the pedagogical implications of these findings? I have designed a pedagogical method, called CREAME (Consciousness-Raising, Emotion Analysis, Manipulation and Expression), in an effort to combine Teaching for Understanding (TfU), student-centered learning, task-based learning, the contextual high support condition in skill theory, and other models. Qin Higley from WIDE World (a professional development program at Harvard focused on TfU) and I will be co-presenting my research, the TfU framework, and pedagogical implications at JALT2009. We shall also discuss how *you* can participate in the Harvard WIDE World program. Hope to see you there!

Robert S. Murphy can be contacted at <m@murphyschool.com>.

28 JALT FOCUS • GRASSROOTS

…with Joyce Cunningham and Mariko Miyao

<grassroots@jalt-publications.org>

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

IN keeping with this year's conference theme, *The Teaching Learning Dialogue: An Active Mirror*, our Asian Scholar mirrors her own language learning (English and Japanese), looking at the application of two learning theories. In the second report, Salem Hicks reports on the Pan-SIG conference, a special event that has recently attracted increasing attention from international researchers.

Balsamo Asian Scholar

by Mary L. Burkitt, JALT2009 Balsamo Asian Scholar Liaison and Four Corners Tour Program Chair

Each year, JALT invites a scholar from Asia to participate in its international conference on language teaching and learning. Bill Balsamo, the former president of Himeji JALT, as well as the person instrumental in forming the Teachers Helping Teachers group (now a JALT SIG), donated quite a bit of his time, energy, and resources to helping colleagues in South Asian countries who did not have the same access to resources as teachers in countries like Japan. Bill passed away in April of 2008, and the Asian Scholar position was renamed in his honor.

Amihan April Mella-Alcazar of the Philippines has been named as the 2009 Balsamo Asian Scholar. At the time of his death, Bill was working with her to plan THT events in the Philippines for this year. As a lawyer, teacher, and NGO worker, April has been active in government, research, teaching, and development work in the Philippines, and has advocated for better English language teaching in the Philippines through seminars held in August 2008 and February 2009 with the Department of Education and THT (Teachers Helping Teachers).

Prior to that, she won government scholarships to study in both Japan and Germany, graduating from Tohoku University with MBA and PhD degrees. As a student of languages, April's native tongue is Tagalog, and she is fluent in English and Japanese, as well as having proficiency in German, Spanish, and French. Her conference topic will be "The functional

literacy theory and the contextual learning theory as applied to English language learning".

April will be arriving in Japan pre-conference to take part in the **Four Corners Tour**, visiting various chapters and giving presentations in Okayama, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Kitakyushu before arriving at the conference venue in Shizuoka. Post-conference, she has been invited to speak at her alma mater, Tohoku University, in the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies. However, before she returns to the Philippines on 30 November, she will probably squeeze in a few more chapter visits, specifically Kobe and Himeji, with others to be confirmed.

If you're planning on attending the conference, be sure to attend April's presentation or, if unable to come to Shizuoka on 21-23 November, catch one of her presentations during the chapter visits. The Balsamo Asian Scholar and Four Corners Tour speakers are fully funded by donations from participating and other chapters. So, at this time, a big thank you to Tokyo and Nagasaki Chapters for their generous donations to the 2009 Balsamo Asian Scholar and Four CornersTour!

For further information, please contact **Mary Burkitt** at <iwatejalt@hotmail.com>.

Eighth Annual Pan-SIG Conference report

by Salem K. Hicks, Pan-SIG 2009 Publicity Chair, GALE SIG Coordinator, and JALT Publications Website Editor

With the spread of the H1N1 influenza virus in Japan early this spring, it was hard not to worry not only whether the school district closures might affect the attendance, but also whether the venue of the conference itself might close. In the end, Toyo Gakuen University in Chiba remained open and the attendance at the Eighth Annual Pan-SIG conference was record-breaking!

With the sponsorship of some very generous Associate Members, the help of some talented JALT members, and the dedication of an awesome organizing committee, we were able to create yet another successful conference.

This is the third year the GALE SIG has joined the conference as a co-organizer and it has been a beneficial experience each time. For GALE, it has been a great chance to: organize a conference for our members to share research and pursue professional development; luckily raise some extra funds; gain new members; forge new professional relationships; and collaborate with other SIGs, Chapters, and individual JALT members.

Along with the nuts and bolts of conference organizing, our committee instituted the Pan-SIG Professional Development (PD) Scholarship. The goal of this scholarship is to offer a full conference fee waiver to one member of each of the cosponsoring SIGs who does not have access to research funding. In this way, each SIG was able to promote professional development among its members to present a paper at the conference and subsequently publish in the conference proceedings publication.

> Being awarded the Pan-SIG Professional Development Scholarship gave me the opportunity to participate in an academic conference which I wouldn't have been able to do otherwise due to the costs. The scholarship gave me the chance to present my current research in front of my peers, receive valuable feedback, and network with people in the same field.
>
> **Michi Saki**, *recipient of the 2009 Pan-SIG PD Scholarship for GALE*

This year's conference also attracted several researchers and presenters from abroad. We were delighted and encouraged at their positive feedback on their conference experiences. Their comments inspire us to believe that the Pan-SIG conference is indeed a special event.

> Because it was my first international conference, I was very meticulous in choosing the right conference for me in terms of the location, time, and the severity...I met some colleagues who participated in your conference before. They shared some memorable experiences about both your conference and Japan. I was really impressed with what they told, so I chose to join to yours among others.
>
> **Seher Kasikara**, *Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey*

> The interaction helped to clarify ideas and spark new ones. I love the frequent interaction, which was seldom seen in other big and serious conferences.
>
> **Yun-yin Huang**, *National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan*

In between the presentations, people were gathered around the presenter and would discuss particularly interesting aspects just seen or would engage in conversation with the people sitting next to them, asking about their own interest topics, and sharing personal stories of past research experiences. I have to say, it was such a relaxed environment that it felt less a formal event, and much more a reunion of old friends.

Vera Marques, *University of Averiro, Portugal*

The conference has grown in many ways over the years. This year two newly formed JALT SIGs joined the conference, Extensive Reading and Study Abroad, and both held presentation programs that offered new perspectives and information. Of course, like JALT itself, the Pan-SIG conference is a member-driven and envisioned event and one that each year takes on the combined qualities, aspira-

tions, and creativity of the groups and members that produce it. As the Greek word implies—the union of all branches of a group—the Pan-SIG conference has the potential to unite groups of educators with seemingly disparate interests and research focuses, and provide them with the opportunity to engage in collective enquiry, and perhaps even collaboration.

Next year's conference will be held at Osaka Gakuen University on 22 and 23 May. We welcome Catherine Kinoshita as the conference chair and appreciate OGU's generosity in allowing us to use their facilities. So far, the ER, LLL, OLE, Pragmatics, SA, and TEVAL SIGs are on board to participate in 2010. The exciting and insightful theme of Learner Perspectives has been decided upon and it is of course not too late to join, so please come to the organizing meeting at the JALT2009 National Conference in Shizuoka. Contact **Eric Skier** at <skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp> for more information.

30 | COLUMN • SIG NEWS

…with James Hobbs

<sig-news@jalt-publications.org>

JALT currently has 17 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and 4 forming 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*—3x year, Journal—1x year] [🎤 forums, panels] [✉]

Our group has two broad aims: to support families who regularly communicate in more than one language and to further research on bilingualism in Japanese contexts. See our website <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, regional events and workshops] [✉] [💬]

The JALT CALL SIG provides support, information, networking, and publishing opportunities for interested persons. If you are interested in serving as an officer and/or member of the 2010 Conference Team, please don't hesitate to contact us. We look forward to meeting and hearing from persons interested in the expanding world of CALL. See <www.jaltcall.org>.

College and University Educators

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

CUE's refereed publication, *OnCUE Journal* (ISSN: 1882-0220), is published twice a year. In addition, members receive the email newsletter *YouCUE* three times a year. Check the CUE SIG website <jaltcue-sig.org> for news and updates about CUE SIG events.

Extensive Reading (forming)

The ER SIG held the Extensive Reading in Japan Seminar at Kinki University in Osaka on 5 Jul in conjunction with the Osaka and Kyoto JALT chapters. It was a wonderful event thanks to the hard work of the organizers and presenters. Special thanks to plenary speaker Rob Waring and to the many publishers who donated books for a raffle. Check out the ER SIG at <www.jaltersig.org>.

Framework & Language Portfolio (forming)

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

This SIG wants to discuss the CEFR and ELP, and other similar frameworks and their relevance for Japan. There is an emphasis on developing materials to support educators who would like to use these pedagogical tools; the bilingual Language Portfolio for Japanese University is now available online. The SIG holds seminars periodically and is present at many conferences. See <forums.jalt.org/index.php/topic,456.0.html> or contact <flpsig@gmail.com> for more information.

Gender Awareness in Language Education

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

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

Global Issues in Language Education

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

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

Junior and Senior High School

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

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

Learner Development

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

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

Lifelong Language Learning

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

The increasing number of people of retirement age, plus the internationalization of Japanese society, has greatly increased the number of people eager to study English as part of their lifelong learning. The LLL SIG provides resources and information for teachers who teach English to older learners. We run a website, online forum, listserv, and SIG publi-

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

　生涯語学学習研究部会は来る高齢化社会に向けて高齢者を含む成人の英語教育をより充実することを目指し、昨年結成した新しい分科会です。現在、日本では退職や子育て後もこれまでの経験や趣味を生かし積極的に社会に参加したいと望んでいる方が大幅に増えております。中でも外国語学習を始めたい、または継続を考えている多くの学習者に対してわれわれ語学教師が貢献出来る課題は多く、これからの研究や活動が期待されています。LLLでは日本全国の教師が情報交換、勉強会、研究成果の出版を行い共にこの新しい分野を開拓していこうと日々熱心に活動中です。現在オンライン< jalt.org/lifelong>上でもフォーラムやメールリスト、ニュースレター配信を活発に行っております。高齢者の語学教育に携わっていらっしゃる方はもちろん、将来の英語教育動向に関心のある方まで、興味のある方はどなたでも大歓迎です。日本人教師も数多く参加していますのでどうぞお気軽にご入会ください。お問い合わせは涌井陽子<ywakui@bu.iij4u.or.jp> 。または Eric M. Skier <skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp>までご連絡ください。

Materials Writers

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

The MW SIG 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 <groups.yahoo.com/group/jaltmwsig>. Our website is <uk.geocities.com/materialwritersig>. To contact us, email <mw@jalt.org>.

Pragmatics

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

Pragmatics is the study of how people use language. As teachers we help students learn to communicate appropriately, and as researchers we study language in use. This is clearly an area of study to which many JALT members can contribute. The Pragmatics SIG offers practical exchange among teachers and welcomes articles for its newsletter, *Pragmatic Matters*. Find out more about the SIG at <groups.yahoo.com/group/jaltpragsig> or contact

Donna Fujimoto <fujimoto@wilmina.ac.jp>. For newsletter submissions, contact Anne Howard <ahoward@kokusai.miyazaki-mic.ac.jp>.

Professionalism, Administration, and Leadership in Education

The PALE SIG welcomes new members, officers, volunteers, and submissions of articles for our journal or newsletter. To read current and past issues of our journal, visit <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>.

Study Abroad (forming)

[🔍 study abroad, pre-departure curriculum, setting up, receiving students, returnees] [📖 *Ryugaku*—3-4x year] [🎤 Pan-SIG, national and mini-conference in 2009] [📑]

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

Teacher Education

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

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

Teaching Children

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

The Teaching Children SIG is for all teachers of children. We publish a bilingual newsletter four times a year, with columns by leading teachers in our field.

There is a mailing list for teachers of children who want to share teaching ideas or questions <groups.yahoo.com/group/tcsig>. We are always looking for new people to keep the SIG dynamic. With our bilingual newsletter, we particularly hope to appeal to Japanese teachers. We hope you can join us for one of our upcoming events. For more information, visit <www.tcsig.jalt.org>.

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

Testing & Evaluation

[🔆 research, information, database on testing]
[📖 *Shiken*—3x year] [🎤 Pan-SIG, JALT National] [✒]
[💬]

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

COLUMN • CHAPTER EVENTS   33

…with Michi Saki

<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.

SEPTEMBER signals the end of the summer holidays and getting back to classes full speed ahead. This month also brings you a brand new editor! Hello! My name is Michi Saki, and I have taken the reins as Chapter Events Editor. Make it this month to get involved in your local chapter by attending an event—it's a great way to connect with fellow teachers who have the same interests as you, and get new ideas for the classroom. If your chapter is not listed below, be sure to keep an eye on the chapter events website <jalt.org/events/2009-07> as events may appear at any time.

Gifu—*Increasing student input and responsibility to encourage active learning* by **Mike Stockwell** and **Jon Catanzariti**. The presenters will focus on useful classroom practices and routines that encourage students to take a more responsible role in their own learning. Through the use of self-reflection methods and peer learning, adapted from an elementary school, the presenters will discuss the types of new dialogue that have opened between themselves and their university students. Participants will learn how this approach has had a positive effect on both the teachers and students, leading to a deeper understanding of the learning process. *Sat 19 Sep 19:00-21:00; Gifu JR Station-Heartful Square, 2F East Wing; One-day members ¥1,000.*

Gunma—*Arts in the classroom* by **Yoko Munezane**. Creative imagination inspired by arts in the curriculum of language classes is important in that it contributes to the development of essential cognitive skills, such as perception, critical analysis, and aesthetic awareness. The presenter will explore the benefits of integrating arts into university EFL classes, and will introduce several lesson plans and activities. *Sun 20 Sep 14:00-16:30; Ikuei Jr. College; One-day members ¥500.*

Hamamatsu—*Sharing 18 years of experience with language immersion in a Japanese K-12 school: Insights and implications* by **Mike Botswick**. The presenter will describe the development of Katoh Gakuen's English Immersion Program—the first English immersion school in Japan. Im-

mersion education is an intensive form of content-based foreign language instruction in which at least 50% of the students' academic instruction is done through the medium of a foreign language. Katoh Gakuen is also the only immersion school in Japan with accreditation from the Japanese Ministry of Education and the prestigious International Baccalaureate Organization. *Sun 13 Sep 13:30-16:00; Zaza City Pallette, 5F, Hamamatsu; One-day members ¥1000.*

Hiroshima—(1) *Learning English through e-learning* and **(2)** *How to study Japanese* by **Taiji Hotta** of Hiroshima University. During the first hour, the presenter will introduce an online EFL-learning system which he has developed using authentic American college lecture videos. He will explain how teachers can adapt this system to their own classes. During the second hour, participants will be encouraged to speak for a couple of minutes about the most effective ways to learn Japanese. Hotta, who has taught Japanese for many years, will lead the discussion. *Sun 27 Sep 15:00-17:00; Hiroshima Peace Park, International Conference Center, 3F; One-day members ¥500.*

Hokkaido—*Cambridge ESOL Examinations for learners of English* by **Jim George**. This overview of the Key English Test (KET) and Preliminary English Test (PET) provides an opportunity for teachers, school owners, and those unfamiliar with but interested in the Cambridge ESOL Examinations to learn more about the world's leading range of assessments for learners of English. Participants will be able to enrol in a weekend training program. *Fri 18 Sep 19:00-22:00. Check the website at <www.jalthokkaido.net/> for location and further details.*

Kitakyushu—*What is red?* by **David Lisgo**. The presenter will explore the areas of pre-reading and initial reading skills through the use of simple materials, songs, games, and activities, and will provide participants with teaching tools for practical use in the classroom. Lisgo is a school owner of more than 20 years, part-time teacher at Kanoya Taiku Daigaku, Kagoshima ETJ coordinator, a columnist for ELT News, and author of Blending a Hand. This presentation is aimed especially at teachers of kindergarten, elementary, and 1st year junior high school children. *Sat 26 Sep 18:00-20:00; Kitakyushu International Conference Centre, 3F; One-day members ¥1,000.*

Kyoto—*Using drama activities with diverse levels of university students* by Amanda Gillis-Furutaka and Sandra Healy of Kyoto Sangyo University. As teachers, we are always looking for ways to motivate and engage our learners, particularly at the university level in Japan. One way to do this is through the use of drama and drama-related activities. Gillis-Furutaka and Healy will discuss practical ways to introduce drama into the classroom. Healy will describe approaches using Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* with lower-level students. Gillis-Furutaka will describe an elective course which follows a task-based approach, for 3rd-year English majors. *Sun 27 Sep 14:00-16:30; Campus Plaza Kyoto, 5F, Daiichi Kougishitsu.*

Nagasaki—*An integrated skills approach to e-learning materials development, textbook writing, and publishing* by **Bill Collins** and **Tomoko Maekawa**. Collins will present various types of e-learning materials designed to implement an integrated skills approach. He will also explore video recording, story outlines, scripts, and pair conversations as ways to develop four language skills. Maekawa will explain the whys and the hows of her experience producing a four-skill ELT textbook 2 years ago, and will speak about its usage and results in different kinds of class at varying levels. *Sat 26 Sep 14:00-16:00; Dejima Koryu Kaikan, 4F; One-day members ¥1,000.*

Nagoya—*Why our English is the way she is* by **David Kluge**. This is the second part of a multimedia presentation on how English came to be as it is now. We will look at different influences on English, including French, Latin, Dutch, and German. We will examine the characteristics and influences of the Queen's English, Cockney, Irish, and Scottish English before turning to North American, Australian, and New Zealand varieties. Music and video clips from movies will illustrate various varieties. *Sun 27 Sep 13:30–16:00; Nagoya International Center, 3F, Lecture Room 2; One-day members ¥1,000.*

Okayama—*Do teacher beliefs really influence classroom practices?* by **Takako Nishino** of Temple University, Japan Campus. The presenter will report on a study investigating Japanese high school teachers' beliefs and practices regarding communicative language teaching (CLT). The results show that CLT has not yet come into widespread use in Japanese high schools, despite teachers' positive beliefs about CLT, and that contextual factors and teachers' perceived teaching efficacy influence teachers' use of CLT. *Sat 26 Sep 15:00-17:00;*

Nishigawa Ai Plaza Library, 4F, 10-16 Saiwai-cho; One-day members ¥500.

Sendai—*Measuring vocabulary size* by Paul Nation. The presenter is a world-famous expert on L2 vocabulary acquisition and teaching. He has published numerous books and hundreds of articles on this and many other subjects. He will look at the issues involved in measuring vocabulary size; will describe a recently available test, the Vocabulary Size Test; will consider how vocabulary size affects language use; and will discuss how teachers can encourage vocabulary growth. *Sun 27 Sep 14:00-17:00; War Memorial Hall, 5F, Large Meeting Room <www.stks.city.sendai.jp/hito/WebPages/sisetu/sensai/index.html>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

Tokyo—*Communication and relevance* by Yuji Nishiyama. The presenter will provide an overview of a new approach to pragmatics called *Relevance Theory*, proposed and developed by **Dan Sperber** and **Deirdre Wilson**, and will show its rich implications for the analysis of verbal communication, emphasizing its revolutionary aspects. *Thu 17 Sep 19:00-20:30; details will be available on <jalt.org/events>; RSVP: <akie.nyui806@gmail.com>; Non-members ¥1000.*

Yamagata—*New Zealand in terms of its history, culture, education, and language* by Sundeia Bonda, an ALT in Yamagata City. *Sat 5 Sep 13:30–15:30;Yamagata-shi Seibu Kominkan; Kagota 1chome 2-23 (tel 0236-45-1223); Non-members ¥1000.*

COLUMN • CHAPTER REPORTS   35

…with Troy Miller

<chap-reports@jalt-publications.org>

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

Akita: June—*Try the opposite!* by John F. Fanselow. The presenter had the audience pretend that they were teaching at a school with the admonition TRY THE OPPOSITE! displayed in every classroom, and went on to engage us in a unique demonstration of his revolutionary teaching philosophy. Throughout the workshop, he generated numerous ways to follow that admonition to ensure that the alternative practices were related to day-to-day teaching. One of the central goals of the workshop was to illustrate ways the participants could generate alternative activities with whatever textbooks they were using. The entire workshop was a hands-on proposition, and all who attended came away with a new perspective on their task-based teaching activities.

Reported by Stephen Shucart

Gifu: May—*ELT and the science of happiness* by Marc Helgesen. In his highly entertaining and informative presentation, Helgesen highlighted how, in the past, psychology often focused on mental illness and not on positive psychology. Positive psychology is concerned with maintaining mental health. He expounded that teachers, by the nature of their work, are constantly engaged with educational psychology. By embracing positive psychology, we can become more effective teachers by creating more relevant learning tasks and promoting a more supportive environment. Helgesen provided participants with a wide range of practical activities that wedded typical language learning tasks with positive psychology.

Reported by Michael Stockwell

Gunma: May—*Try the opposite!* by John F. Fanselow. Imagine all your experience listening to presentations: Perhaps you cannot recall the content clearly, but you can work out a pattern that the speakers followed. However, as the title of this presentation suggests, Fanselow broke the pattern and put us into an "opposite" presentation. The tables were placed facing all different directions, the lights were off, the whiteboards, also placed oddly, had at first incomprehensible writing, symbols, and blanks on them, and the presenter himself walked around silently giving hints to, but not instructing, the confused participants. This was about making changes to avoid "autopilot" teaching, and to analyze the assumptions we and textbook writers make about how students learn. We may find that we sell the students short—that they know more than we

think they do and that they can think for themselves. Fanselow's *XXI Rules for Student-Centered Language Learning* include not allowing students to use erasers, and teachers not explaining vocabulary. He introduced us to several *Huh? Oh. Aha!* activities that exploit the redundancy of language and push learners toward independence by using the knowledge and skills they already possess.

Reported by Lori Ann Desrosiers

Kitakyushu: June—***Learning through ENIE*** by **Toshihiro Yamanishi**. Yamanishi's comment that he does not so much teach English as teach *through* English is well borne out in his exploitation of English newspapers in education (ENIE) to stimulate interesting classroom conversation practice. He led us through an introduction and sampling of a wide variety of exercises, interspersed with explanations and observations of the particular language of this medium, such as the fact that the answers to Wh- questions can usually be found in the lead line and that verbs are always in the present tense, with the *be* verb omitted in passive constructions. Every part of the newspaper is used, including cartoons, ads, and sports pages, capitalizing on students' familiarity with news events and with reporting conventions in Japanese. The current flu pandemic invites questions such as, "When do we have Stage Six?" and "When did we have Stage Six?" noting that the meaning changes with the verb tense. The TV schedule pages invite questions about what's on, when, and how many weather programs there are in the morning. In groups we memorized sections of Obama's inaugural address and then performed them along with the many other activity ideas presented.

Reported by Dave Pite

Kyoto: June—***Brain-based teaching and learning-centered activities***. With the overwhelming success of the Kyoto JALT MASH '09 meeting in February of this year, we decided to do the same format again for our June event. This time, the focus was on brain-based teaching and learning centered activities, with the keynote presentation on brain studies by **Curtis Kelly**. He talked about the growing movement called "brain-compatible teaching," which calls on us to develop teaching practices that focus less on language and more on how it is learned. After Kelly's talk, we had poster sessions by five teachers, who shared their approaches on learning-centered methods and activities. Discussion circles then followed, where attendees talked about related issues of the day and action plans. There was much positive feedback from partici-

pants, complimenting the vibrant speakers of the day and their presentations.

Reported by Michi Saki

Nagoya: June—***Obaachan's Garden*** by **Linda Ohama**. The Nagoya Chapter was treated to a documentary Ohama filmed to mark the 100th birthday of her grandmother, Asayo Murakami. Murakami was born in Japan and was later held during WWII in a detention camp in Canada. Murakami's story begins with her marriage to a man from a prominent Hiroshima family, with whom she had two daughters and a son. The son died shortly after birth, and her inability to bear a healthy heir marked her a failure as a wife. The marriage was dissolved and Murakami later agreed to marry a Japanese man in Canada after a photo exchange. Feeling revulsion upon meeting him, she broke her marriage contract on the spot and later married a boat-builder. Murakami became known among her neighbors for her stunning flower garden. After her husband died in 1969, she lived on her own for 27 years before entering a nursing home. To mark her 100th birthday, Murakami's children and grandchildren planted a flower garden in her honor and, to their surprise, learned the story of the two girls left in Japan.

Reported by Kayoko Kato

Niigata: July—***Designing, publishing, and researching the effectiveness of a textbook*** by **David Coulson**. Coulson's presentation was on the process behind the publication of a book he coauthored with Bob Jones. This textbook is based on actual interaction, and how to extract a discourse structure from the art of conversation. This can then be taught and practiced within an EFL classroom. Coulson was inspired after reading a publication by Jones; he called Jones, and the two of them discussed writing a textbook focusing on conversation and storytelling structure, as described in Jones' dissertation. It took 3 years from the original concept to publication. In this presentation, Coulson discussed the process of creating a viable teaching concept, approaching publishers, compromising on the material at times, and even how he piloted the book with his own 1st-year students.

Reported by Kevin Maher

Okayama: June—**(1)** *Native checkmate* by **Ian Willey**. Willey reported on a study that he and his co-researcher, **Kimie Tanimoto**, have carried out examining nursing researchers' experiences with, and attitudes towards, "native checks" on English abstracts for Japanese journals. This investigation

raised a number of interesting issues in this often frustrating process. For the writers, it is difficult to find a suitably qualified and sympathetic checker with sufficient expertise with whom they can actually talk face to face about their work; the checkers are often faced with improving difficult abstracts in a short time-frame and without sufficient expertise in that field; and many Japanese journal editors require English abstracts but do not actually publish them. Willey urged that training and sharing of information for all involved was vital if the checking process was to be improved. **(2)** *Task-based learning in the CLT* **classroom** by **Peter Lutes**. Leaning on his own experiences with university students, Lutes presented a number of critiques of task-based learning such as inappropriate, irrelevant, or trivial tasks. He then went on to suggest a number of more specific poster and presentation tasks that even relatively low-level non-English majors could enthuse about and achieve success with.

Reported by Neil Cowie

Osaka: July—*The fifth annual Tech Day Plus* was another hit, with over 50 guests and 17 presenters in attendance at Hannan University. The themes were simplicity and practicality, which appealed to teachers with little time for preparation or technical knowledge. The topics ranged from using the iPhone in class to Moodle and Podcasting. A lively exchange of ideas and a bug-free event ensured a success. The *Plus* (non-technical) side attracted members who are focusing on language basics like form, discourse, and grammar instruction. There was something for everyone, and next year is expected to be even bigger! Thanks to all those who came.

Reported by Douglas Meyer

Sendai: June—*Noticing gaps in teacher and student evaluations* by **Sean Mahoney**. Mahoney reported on his research involving 183 university students' and five teachers' evaluations of student writing, as elicited in an English dictation quiz. In particular, Mahoney was interested in differences in how students and teachers assessed error gravity. Beginning with an overview of past research on error gravity, Mahoney went on to a detailed discussion of his research design and findings—that while students and their teachers awarded identical marks to over half the sentences produced, scores from teachers tended to be wider spread overall, with much lower marks given on the more difficult questions. We then went on to a lively discussion on what his and others' findings mean for teachers and learners in regard to perceptions of error gravity.

Mahoney's presentation was of particular interest in highlighting the difficulties and tradeoffs in designing research that must also serve as productive pedagogy in the classroom.

Reported by Ken Schmidt

Shinshu: June—*How to proceed with English activities in primary schools*. This mini-conference aimed to address the needs and worries of ALTs and primary school teachers, many of whom are or will soon be teaching English for the first time. **Hiroshi Nishizawa** led the first workshop: *A realistic look at foreign language activities conducted by homeroom teachers*, providing numerous tips on how to use *Eigo Note*. Three concurrent group sessions followed: *Classroom English for conducting classes in English*, by **David Ockert**; *What to pay attention to in teaching the pronunciation of words in* English Note, by **Tami Kaneko**; and *Roundtable: JTEs' free discussion with ALTs*, hosted by **Fred Carruth** and **Sean Mehmet**. After lunch, **Taya Pitt** presented *How not to create "English Haters,"* in which she recommended that teachers concentrate on the positive in having the students try communicative tasks. According to Pitt, "If the teacher enjoys the class, the students will." **Hideki Sakai** concluded the conference with his workshop: *English activities in primary school—How to use* English Note *and other materials*, offering concrete ways to create lessons based on understandable input which are also intellectually interesting and involvement-rich.

Reported by Mary Aruga

Shizuoka: June—*Using 30-second ads in the classroom* by **Philip McCasland**. About 15 people gathered to hear McCasland describe how to use recorded commercials from YouTube as "motivating and entertaining activities". First he showed a commercial from Egypt, notable for its dramatic flair, and illustrated how he would have each group describe (or reenact) various segments, and create a background, or even a follow-up story. Helping the students "unpack the emotional content" by pre-teaching necessary language (such as accompanying lyrics) will enhance the learning opportunities. These brief glimpses into foreign culture are loaded with pragmatic tidbits that can also be exploited. Benefits of 30-second to 1-minute ads include that they can easily be replayed, leading to a 10- to 30-minute activity (homework assignments optional). Although commercials often have authentic language from English culture, there are many examples that are purposefully inauthentic, which should be explained, according to McCasland. The necessary software can be downloaded for free

from <www.tooble.tv>. After the presentation, Shizuoka JALT members were given an update on the progress being made towards the annual conference here in November and the job delegation (and volunteer recruiting) that still needs to be done.

Reported by Chris P. Madden

Tokyo: June—*Video materials production for the digitally challenged* by **Nicholas O. Jungheim**. For many teachers, advances in technology are overwhelming, and even though they may be in possession of video cameras and editing software, they

may have never used them to make video materials. Jungheim's workshop was a practical hands-on experience for the great variety of teachers who attended. After receiving an explanation and examples of how video materials can be used in language classes, participants were separated into groups to first storyboard their language lesson, then film it, and finally edit it. In a little over 3 hours, they were able to overcome their hesitations and confusion with their cameras and software and to create original and exciting video materials.

Reported by Jim McKinley

38 COLUMN • JOB INFORMATION CENTER

…with James McCrostie
<job-info@jalt-publications.org>

To list a position in *The Language Teacher*, please submit online at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs> or email James McCrostie, Job Information Center Editor, <job-info@jalt-publications.org>. Online submission is preferred. Please place your ad in the body of the email. The notice should be received before the 15th of the month, 2 months before publication, and should contain the following information: location, name of institution, title of position, whether full- or part-time, qualifications, duties, salary and benefits, application materials, deadline, and contact information. Be sure to refer to *TLT*'s policy on discrimination. Any job advertisement that discriminates on the basis of gender, race, age, or nationality must be modified or will not be included in the JIC column. All advertisements may be edited for length or content.

Job Information Center Online

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

The interview
Mark Shrosbree
Tokai University

I**T** is hard to give a definitive job interview guide, as every institution will be looking for different qualities in a candidate. Nevertheless, there are steps every candidate can take to improve their chances.

Pre-interview

- *Research the institution*. It makes a good impression if the candidate has researched the types of courses offered, and shows some knowledge of what will be expected in the job.
- *Familiarise yourself with your CV*. Ensure you can answer any questions about your CV, especially dates and important details. Be prepared to summarise any research papers or presentations listed.
- *Prepare for likely questions*. Try to anticipate the questions you will be asked. The job advertisement might give clues, and lists of interview questions can be found at: <www.shros.org/interviews.html> and <www.lll.hawaii.edu/sltcc/tipps/samplequestions.pdf>.

The interview

- *First impressions*. Arrive early to prepare yourself and your attire. In summer, take a taxi to avoid sweating.
- *Manner*. In Japan, a certain degree of humility is probably appropriate. In my experience Japanese colleagues may recoil from candidates who blow their own trumpet too much. Therefore, try to be polite, attentive, and slightly deferential. Examples of comments that make interviewers wince include: "motivation is not that difficult" and "I teach English as it should be taught."

- *Enthusiasm*. Interviewers may well be judged by their enthusiasm for teaching. Teachers who can inspire students are highly valued, especially with the increasing competition among universities to attract students.

- *Avoid flippancy*. I have been surprised when candidates reply to serious questions about teaching in Japan with knowing glances and intimations along the lines of *Well, we all know what it's like here.*

- *Be concrete*. A common weakness is to reply to questions with rather academic, abstract answers. A question such as, "How would you deal with de-motivated, low-proficiency learners?" is probably inviting concrete suggestions.

- *Demonstrate your specific contribution*. Try to show that you have a particular speciality which fits the needs of the institution. Employers will be keen to employ someone who satisfies an urgent need, such as finishing the entrance exam on time, or getting a curriculum description submitted.

- *Do not exaggerate*. Exaggeration of abilities or experience usually gets uncovered in the interview. An obvious example is Japanese skill. I have seen an interviewee get angry when asked a question in Japanese (he complained that he had not been told to prepare for questions in Japanese), even though his CV listed intermediate Japanese skill.

- *Speak clearly and appropriately*. In my experience, there are always Japanese speakers of English on the interview panel. However, candidates frequently speak too fast, mumble, or use culture-specific humour. The ability to speak clearly and at an appropriate speed is essential in this profession, and may be a key selection criterion.

- *Address all interviewers equally*. I have often been in interviews where there is a quiet superior who does not speak much English. Some candidates ignore this person and only address the people asking questions. It is worth remembering that this silent person might be making the final decision.

- *Questions*. Be ready to ask questions about the position. However, to avoid giving the impression that you are only interested in the money and holidays, ask some questions about other aspects of the position, too.

The hiring process can be time-consuming, tiring, and stressful for everyone involved. It is hoped that this guide will help teachers present themselves well at interviews and secure a suitable position.

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 most up-to-date list of job postings.

Location: Kanagawa, Fujisawa-shi
School: Nihon University
Position: Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor
Start Date: 1 April 2010
Deadline: 5 September 2009

Location: Saitama, Soka
School: Dokkyo University
Position: 2 part-time instructors
Start Date: 1 April 2010
Deadline: 10 September 2009

Location: Tokyo, Machida
School: J. F. Oberlin University
Position: 3 full-time lecturers
Start Date: 1 April 2010
Deadline: 18 September 2009

Location: Fukuoka, Kurume
School: Kurume University
Position: Part-time instructors
Start Date: April 2010
Deadline: 25 September 2009

Location: Kanagawa, Sagamihara
School: Aoyama Gakuin University
Position: Part-time instructors
Start Date: April 2010
Deadline: 30 September 2009

Location: Ehime, Matsuyama
School: Matsuyama University
Position: 2 full-time instructors
Start Date: April 2010
Deadline: 30 September 2009

Location: Tokyo, Hachioji
School: Chuo University (Tama Campus)

Position: Part-time instructors
Start Date: April 2010
Deadline: 15 November 2009

Location: Aichi, Nagoya
School: Toyota Technological Institute
Position: Full-time Professor
Start Date: 1 July 2010 or earlier
Deadline: 10 December 2009

Location: Nagano, Komagane
School: Interac Japan
Position: Short-term intensive language programme instructors
Start Date: Four times a year
Deadline: Ongoing

40 COLUMN • CONFERENCE CALENDAR

…with David Stephan

<conferences@jalt-publications.org>

New listings are welcome. Please email information (including a website address) to the column editor as early as possible, preferably by the 15th of the month, at least 3 months before a conference in Japan, or 4 months before an overseas conference. Thus, 15 September is the deadline for a December conference in Japan or a January conference overseas. Feedback or suggestions on the usefulness of this column are also most welcome.

Upcoming Conferences

18-19 Sep 09—Good Practice Forum: Collaborative Language Teaching in North East Asia through ICT, U. of Shimane. Keynote speakers will be Rosina Chia and Elmer Poe, co-developer of the ECU Global Understanding Project. Participants are invited to attend one or both days. **Contact**: <lms.u-shimane.ac.jp/~eguchi/conference09.html>

18-20 Sep 09—15th IAICS International Conference on Cross-Cultural Communication: *Intercultural Communication and Collaboration Within and Across Sociolinguistic Environments*, Kumamoto Gakuen U. **Contact**: <www.uri.edu/iaics/> <iaics2009@kumagaku.ac.jp>

26-27 Sep 09—International Conference on Applied Linguistics: *Developments, Challenges, and Promises*, Teheran, Iran. Keynote speakers include: David Block, Guy Cook, Hossein Farhady, Barbara Seidlhofer, Henry Widdowson. **Contact**: <appliedlinguistics.ir>

11-13 Oct 09—Language Learning in Computer Mediated Communities (LLCMC) Conference, U. of Hawaii, Manoa. **Contact**: <nflrc.hawaii.edu/llcmc>

14-17 Oct 09—English as an International Language Conference, Izmir, Turkey. Invited speakers will be Sandra L. McKay (USA), Cem Alptekin (Turkey), Gül Durmuşoğlu (Turkey), Roger Nunn (UK), Paul Robertson (Australia), Ahmet Acar (Turkey), John Fanselow (USA), Bradley Horn (USA). **Contact**: <asian-efl-journal.com/Call-for-Papers-Izmir-Turkey-2009.php>

16-17 Oct 09—First International Conference on Foreign Language Learning and Teaching, Thammasat U., Bangkok. Keynote speakers will be Anne Burns (Macquarie U.), Gita Martohardjono (CUNY Graduate Center), Shelly Wong (President of TESOL). **Contact**: <fllt2009.org>

16-17 Oct 09—Fifth International Symposium on Teaching English at the Tertiary Level, Polytechnic U., Hong Kong. **Contact**: <engl.polyu.edu.hk/events/5thISTETL>

17-18 Oct 09—Third Annual Japan Writers Conference, Doshisha Women's College, Kyoto. Presentations on all aspects of the writing craft for those living and working in Japan. **Contact**: <japanwritersconference.org>

17-18 Oct 09—CUE Conference on ESP/EAP: *English for Global Working, Living and Studying*, Tezukayama U., Nara. To feature an array of presentations, workshops, and discussions on topics related to ESP/EAP teaching, including: materials development, pedagogy, ESP/EAP programs, and syllabus/curriculum design. **Contact**: <eltcalendar.com/events/details/4457>

24-25 Oct 09—ACE 2009 The Asian Conference on Education: *Local Problems, Global Solutions?,* Osaka. The featured speaker will be Stuart D. B. Picken (Royal Asiatic Society), who is considered one of the foremost scholars on Japan, China, and Globalization in East Asia. **Contact**: <ace.iafor.org/index.html>

29 Oct-1 Nov 09—SLRF (Second Language Research Forum) 2009: *Diverse Contributions to SLA: Integrating the Parts of a Greater Whole*, Michigan State U. Plenary speakers will be Robert DeKeyser (U. of Maryland), Susan Gass (Michigan State U.), Jim Lantolf (Penn State U.), and Bonnie Schwartz (U. of Hawaii). **Contact**: <sls.msu.edu/slrf09/index.php>

5-7 Nov 09—Symposium on Second Language Writing: *The Future of Second Language Writing*, Arizona State U. Plenary speakers will be Carole Edelsky, Mark James, Ann M. Johns, Mark Warschauer, Gail Shuck. **Contact**: <sslw.asu.edu/2009>

21-23 Nov 09—JALT2009: 35th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning: *The Teaching-Learning Dialogue: An Active Mirror*, Shizuoka. Mirrors allow us to look at a single object from many different angles. In a good teaching-learning situation, there is always another way of looking at any issue: We proceed successfully only when reflection and a variety of perspectives are involved.
Contact: <jalt.org/conference>

26-28 Nov 09—14th English in South East Asia (ESEA) Conference: *English Changing: Implications for Policy, Teaching, and Research*. Ateneo de Manila U., Philippines. Keynote speakers include: Vaidehi Ramanathan (UC, Davis), Brian Morgan (York U., Canada) and Edilberto C. de Jesus. **Contact**: <ateneo.edu/index.php?p=2487>

2-4 Dec 09—ALANZ and ALAA Joint Applied Linguistics Conference: *Participation and Acquisition: Exploring these Metaphors in Applied Linguistics*, AUT U., Auckland. Keynote speakers will be Lourdes Ortega (U. of Hawaii, Manoa), Cathie Elder and Tim McNamara (U. of Melbourne), and Gary Barkhuizen (U. of Auckland). **Contact**: <confer.co.nz/alanzalaaconf09>

8-11 Dec 09—Globalization and Localization in Computer-Assisted Language Learning (GLo-CALL) Conference, Chiang Mai, Thailand. Plenary speakers will be Carla Meskill (SUNY Albany), Lance Knowles (DynEd International), Thomas N. Robb (Kyoto Sangyo U.), and Thanomporn Laohajaratsang (Chiang Mai U., Thailand). **Contact**: <glocall.org>

Calls for Papers or Posters

Deadline: 15 Jan 10 (for 16-19 Jul 10)—18th International Conference on Pragmatics and Language Learning, Kobe University. Proposals for papers (20 min. presentation, 10 min. discussion) are welcome on topics such as L2 talk and text, developmental L2 pragmatics, pragmatics in language education, assessment, computer-mediated communication, and theory and methodology in pragmatics. **Contact**: <pragsig.org/pll/>

Deadline: 28 Feb 10 (for 23-28 Aug 11)— 16th World Congress of Applied Linguistics (AILA2011) *Harmony in Diversity: Language, Culture, Society*, Beijing. **Contact**: <aila2011.org/en/newsdetails.asp?icntno=92662>

JALT2009

THE TEACHING LEARNING DIALOGUE
AN ACTIVE MIRROR
– NOV 21-23, 2009 –
GRANSHIP SHIZUOKA
<JALT.ORG/CONFERENCE>

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

日本国内での語学教育に関わる投稿をお待ちしています。できるだけ電子メールにリッチ・テキスト・フォーマットの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。郵送の場合には、フロッピーディスクかCD-ROMにラベルを張り、プリントアウトしたものと一緒にお送り下さい。書式はアメリカ心理学協会(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 subheadings (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)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 700 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。1,000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, 1½ months prior to publication. Send as an email attachment to the JALT Focus editor.

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

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

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

Submissions can be sent through the JALT Notices online submissions form.

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

SIG News. JALT's Special Interest Groups may use this column to report on news or events happening within their group. This might include mini-conferences, presentations, publications, calls for papers or presenters, or general SIG information. Deadline: 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コラムを使用します。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。毎月15日で、2か月までに、支部イベント編集者に電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

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

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

Send as an email attachment to the Chapter Reports editor.

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

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。

Editorial Staff

▶ **JALT Publications Board Chair**
Steve Brown
pubchair@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Editors**
Theron Muller
tlt-editor@jalt-publications.org
Jerry Talandis Jr.
tlt-editor@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Associate Editor**
TBA
tlt-editor2@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Assistant Editor**
Alan Stoke

▶ **Japanese-Language Editor**
稲森美穂子 *(Mihoko Inamori)*
tlt-editorj@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Japanese-Language Assoc. Editor**
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tlt-editorj2@jalt-publications.org

▶ **TLT Online Editor**
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webadmin@jalt-publications.org

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Kwansei Gakuin University, Language Center,
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Hyogo 662-8501

▶ **TLT Wired**
Paul Daniels & Ted O'Neill
tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org

JALT Focus Editors

▶ **JALT Focus Editor**
Marcos Benevides
jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org

▶ **JALT News Liaison**
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jalt-news@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Member's Profile & Showcase**
Jason Peppard
memprofile@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Grassroots**
Joyce Cunningham
Mariko Miyao
grassroots@jalt-publications.org
t: 029-228-8455; f: 029-228-8199

▶ **Outreach**
David McMurray
outreach@jalt-publications.org

Regular Column Editors

▶ **SIG News**
James Hobbs
sig-news@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Chapter Events**
Michi Saki
chap-events@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Chapter Reports**
Troy Miller
chap-reports@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Job Information Center**
James McCrostie
job-info@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Conference Calendar**
David Stephan
conferences@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Old Grammarians**
Scott Gardner
old-grammarians@jalt-publications.org

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Peer Support Group

▶ **Coordinator**
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peergroup@jalt-publications.org

▶ **Members**
Paul Beaufait, Torkil Christensen, Loran Edwards, Mark Hamilton, Wilma Luth, Steve McGuire, Theron Muller

JALT Central Office

Urban Edge Bldg. 5F, 1-37-9 Taito,
Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0016
t: 03-3837-1630; f: 03-3837-1631
jco@jalt.org

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

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

Annual international conference 年次国際大会

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

JALT publications include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Membership Categories 会員と会費

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

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

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

JALT Central Office

Urban Edge Building, 5th Floor, 1-37-9 Taito, Taito- ku, Tokyo 110-0016 JAPAN

JALT事務局:〒110-0016東京都台東区台東1-37-9 アーバンエッジビル５F
t: 03-3837-1630; f: 03-3837-1631; <jco@jalt.org>

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…by Scott Gardner

<old-grammarians@jalt-publications.org>

The OG answers your mostest confusedly grammar questions

How many negatives can I put in a sentence?

My personal best is four, last year, just before I broadsided a poor old man in his mini-truck at a busy intersection: "no, No, NO, NO!"

My newspaper's one-point English lesson says that the phrase *to put one's heads together* is commonly used to describe an intellectual act of problem solving. How does one do it?

One must first have one's head split in two, either surgically or figuratively. A surgical procedure is costly and socially abhorrent. A figurative split is easily achievable by watching several hours' worth of celebrity quiz shows on TV.

I'm studying iambic feet in my poetry class. What is an iamb?

An iamb is a mythical medieval character, akin to a biblical saint, who was said to wander—barefoot, of course—around Europe helping poor children who were being taunted by bullies. Hence the common children's rejoinder when being verbally abused: "I know iamb, but what are you?!"

<Eds.: Our friend the Old Grammarian is a bit mixed up. The children's phrase goes like this: "I know you are, but what am I?">

<OG: Excuse me, Ed., but if you look up iamb *in your dictionary, you'll see that iambs and tauntings have a lot in common.>*

<Eds.: Ooh, aren't you Mr. Etymology Expert of the Day!>

<OG: Yes I am.>

When is *food* countable and when is it uncountable?

It becomes uncountable about 10-15 minutes after you eat it.

***Anaphora* is using alternate words, like *she*, *he*, or *it*, to refer to some subject presented earlier** in the discourse. **If I am forbidden, for religious or legal reasons, from naming a certain subject even once, my use of anaphora becomes problematic. In this situation, what should I say?**

Your prayers.

My computer grammar checker always asks me if I want to say *which* instead of *that*, or vice versa. It's very annoying. How can I make it stop?

This is the result of a persistent bug in some of the most common word and usage checking software on the market. It can be easily fixed by reaching around behind your computer and switching the power button to *off*.

I wrote a speech for my boss, but when I added the greeting "I am filled with excitement," I misspelled *excitement* and accidentally allowed *excrement* as the correction. My boss read the speech as written and I got fired. Can I seek legal recourse with the makers of the spell checker?

OK, enough computer questions. This is a grammar column, not "Wired."

I learned that "It's raining" and "There once was a farmer" are sentences with *dummy subjects*. Who is the dummy that decided we need to be so anal about having subjects and verbs in all our sentences?

I know this isn't really a question but rather a rhetorically veiled diatribe against grammatical prescriptivism, so I won't answer it. Instead I will tell you how to annoy your writing teacher. Next time you are accused of neglecting to put in a decent thesis statement, and your teacher starts groaning about not knowing what the subject of your essay is, look solemnly into her eyes and say, "My essay is directive; it doesn't need a subject."

Please explain locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary utterances.

When you've just been hit by a bus, and your boyfriend pleads with you to "Speak to me!" he is requesting a locutionary utterance. It doesn't matter whether you say "I'm all right, darling," or "That elevator would sing better with longer sideburns," as long as you locute. An example of an illocutionary utterance is when you are sitting on the couch with your cat, saying "Does Kitty know how to get the newspaper?" in a voice loud enough to get the attention of your spouse who is seated nearer the front door. The classic example of a perlocutionary utterance is when your mother defends her demands with the phrase "Because I said so, that's why!"