The Language Teacher

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JALT2014
*Conversations
Across Borders*

JALT 2014
Conversations Across Borders
November 21–24, 2014 in Tsukuba, Ibaraki

November 21-24, 2014
Tsukuba International Congress
Center, Tsukuba, Ibaraki
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JALT2014

Conversations Across Borders · Nov 21-24, 2014
Tsukuba International Congress Center, Tsukuba, Ibaraki
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In this month's issue . . .

As many of you may already know, Kevin Cleary, JALT President, passed away on January 15th having suffered a sudden cardiac arrest 5 days earlier. Kevin was an inspiration to all of us—totally dedicated to both JALT and teaching. We have lost a leader, a teacher, and a genuinely nice man. In this issue we pay tribute to Kevin, with his friends and fellow JALT members sharing their thoughts and memories.

It seems fitting that this issue of TLT is a My Share Special Issue. It showcases the work of JALT members and educators across Japan and shows the amazing organisation that Kevin gave so much to.

David Marsh & Carol Begg, TLT *Editors*

すでにご存じの方も多いかと思いますが、JALT会長のKevin Cleary氏が突発性心不全を起こし、その5日後の1月15日に逝去されました。

Kevinは私たちにとって励みになる存在で、JALTと教職に非常に熱心に取り組まれてきました。私たちは、リーダーであり教師であり真に素晴らしい人物を失ったことになります。この号では、彼の友人と仲間であるJALT会員に彼との思い出を共有してもらいながら、Kevinを追悼したいと思います。

このTLT号がMy Shareの特別号であるのはそれにふさわしいと思います。日本中のJALT会員および教育関係者の仕事の成果を紹介し、Kevinが多くを捧げてくれた協会が素晴らしいものであることを示しています。

David Marsh & Carol Begg, TLT *Editors*

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March/April 2014 online access

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[login: mar2014 / password: QebuW6BU]

TLT **Editors:** David Marsh, Carol Begg
TLT **Japanese-Language Editor:** Toshiko Sugino

While a chill lingers in the mornings and evenings, the advent of spring promises warmer days and verdant surroundings to come. This season also brings us to the beginning of a new academic year and all the preparations that accompany it. There is no need to fret over a lack of inspiration for lessons, however, because this month is the annual *My Share* special issue. We have assembled a large selection of activities for you to take with you into the new school year.

We start off our hit parade with warmers. Jamie Lesley forwards an activity that takes a hint from knowledge of the brain to raise classroom energy levels and help students focus while Adrian Leis works on increasing students' fluency in the first few minutes of class. Next up, Peter Quinn shares a professional tip to help save you time and hassle in taking attendance, and John C. Herbert provides a framework for coaching students in a reflective revision of their speech manuscripts. Then, Alexey Kukharuk provides an activity for using corpus analysis to fine-tune student writing. Shaun Iwasawa combines pair speaking practice with a short speaking test to provide students with rapid feedback. Robert J. Lowe and Matthew W. Turner offer a fun and engaging way to provide students with practicing paraphrases through the use of comic strips. Hiroaki Umehara harnesses the power of TED Talks to provide structured listening practice aimed at helping students appreciate the content and message of the listening material. Jacob Schnickel details a writing activity that has students thinking about their personal learning goals and sending messages to their future selves. Meanwhile, Matthew Michaud has students getting creative with recipes. Anthony Young utilizes technology to prompt students to review their own output and make repairs. Charles McLarty demonstrates how to use the game of baseball to provide students quick, fun practice. Sean Toland has a role-playing activity to encourage spirited exchanges in the classroom. Finally, Lance Stilp rounds out the activity parade with a job interview simulation to help students review grammar. This year's *My Share* Special certainly offers the lion's share of great activities and helpful hints. We hope it will provide you with all the inspiration you need to welcome the spring with a smile.

Donny Anderson & Chris Wharton,
My Share Editors

朝晩はまだ冷え込みますが、春の訪れが暖かい日々と新緑を約束してくれています。また、この季節は私たちに新学期の始まりと、そのための準備を予感させます。しかし、授業に対するわくわくするような着想が湧かないことを心配する必要はありません。というのも、今月号は毎年恒例のMy Share特別号です。皆さんが新しい学年に向けて授業で使えそうなアクティビティをたくさん集めてみました。

まずは、教室の雰囲気を温めるものからご紹介します。Jamie Lesleyは、教室の活力レベルを上げて学生が集中するのを助けるために、脳の知識からヒントを得た授業内活動を紹介します。また、Adrian Leisは、授業の最初の数分間を使って学生の流暢さを高める取り組みを紹介しています。次にPeter Quinnが、出席をとる時間と手間を省くための素晴らしいアイデアを披露し、John C. Herbertは学生がスピーチ原稿を考察し改訂するための指導の枠組みを提供しています。そして、Alexey Kukharukはコーパスを使った分析法を使用して学生のライティングを手直しする授業内活動を紹介します。Shaun Iwasawaはペアで取り組むスピーキングの練習と短いスピーキングテストを組み合わせ、学生にすぐに評価・感想を与える方法を示します。Robert J. LoweとMatthew W. Turnerは、学生が漫画のコマを使用してパラフレーズする練習ができる、楽しく魅力ある方法を紹介しています。Hiroaki UmeharaはTED Talksのパワーを生かして、学生が教材の内容と伝達事項を正しく理解するのを助けるための体系的なリスニング練習法を提供してくれます。Jacob Schnickelは学生に自分自身の学習目標を考えさせ、将来の自分にメッセージを送らせるライティング活動の詳細を述べます。また、Matthew Michaudは創造的な調理法を学生に作らせています。Anthony Youngは、学生が自分自身のアウトプットを見直し、修正するためにテクノロジーを利用します。Charles Mclaryは、学生に早くて楽しい練習を提供するために、野球を利用することを教えています。Sean Tolandは、教室で活発な意見交換を促進するためのロールプレイを示してくれます。最後にLance Stilpが、学生が文法の見直しをするための、就職面接を想定した授業内活動で、これまでご紹介した様々な授業内活動を締めくくります。

今年のMy Share特別号は、大変意義あるアクティビティと役に立つ手がかりを豊富に提供してくれています。これが皆さんに必要なインスピレーションを与え、春の訪れを笑顔で迎えてくださることを願っています。

Donny Anderson & Chris Wharton
My Share Editors

In Memoriam – Kevin Michael Cleary 1962-2014

JALT President 2010-2014: Teacher, author, leader, friend

On Friday, 10 January 2014, the JALT Board of Directors gathered in Kyoto for our first meeting of the year. Though the last to arrive, our president Kevin was the most excited about beginning the weekend of work. This was what he loved to do: bring people together to build a smart and supportive teaching organization. We swapped jokes and told stories and Kevin was the heart of the group, as always. As he was talking, he collapsed without warning. Kevin was taken to the hospital immediately, but did not regain consciousness. He passed away in the early hours of Thursday, 16 January, surrounded by his family. Kevin is survived by his wife Naoko Fujiwara, son Atticus, daughter Kirsten, mother Ann Cleary, and sisters Karen, Celeste, and Heather.

Kevin touched the lives of so many of us and will be missed more than he could ever know. Hundreds of friends and colleagues gathered at St. Ignatius church in Tokyo for a wake 21 January and funeral the following day. The ceremonies were an emotional celebration of Kevin's optimistic, humble, and caring nature.

Naoko shared some of the last words she had heard from Kevin, "2014 is going to be a good year!" Kevin bore many responsibilities, but he loved his work and always looked for projects that he could improve. Kevin always hoped for the best and believed everyone could grow, learn, and help each other. This tragic loss seems to make that good year impossible, but Naoko promised that she and their children will try to make his dream come true, because Kevin would have wanted them to. Though we are bereft at losing him, we should try to do so too. Kevin was deeply committed to JALT and inspired us all with his gentle leadership.

We also heard the story of Kevin and Naoko's wedding rings. His Irish heritage was a core part of Kevin's identity. He made it part of their marriage by choosing claddagh wedding bands. The claddagh is made up of three parts: a joined pair of hands, clasping a heart, and topped by a crown. The hands symbolize friendship. The heart is love. And the crown represents loyalty. He wore this ring everyday, but more importantly Kevin lived these values. These three principles guided his actions and are part of what made him dear to so many.

Kevin's sister Celeste shared a story that epitomized this character. In high school, he really wanted a car and worked long hours frying fish in a fast food restaurant to save money

for one. He came home speckled with burns from the hot oil. Even worse, the job also came with a uniform—imagine Kevin dressed as a pirate with a red kerchief and giant fake gold hoop earring. And of course, it smelled terrible after a night at work.

But Kevin persevered and saved enough money to buy the huge, old, red Ford of his dreams. He added great speakers and drove around listening to his favorite music. But a couple of years later on a visit back home from school in Chicago, friends noticed that Kevin's amazing car was gone. He explained that his grandmother's cleaning lady didn't have a car, so he gave her his. She needed it, and he could help her. It was that simple for him. That was the kind of person Kevin was.

All of us in JALT have experienced Kevin's generosity. He made time for anyone who needed to talk with him. But it was more than just kindness—he paid attention. He noticed people and understood their needs. He listened.

And we should listen to him. In a letter from Japan in 1990 to his friend Eric Gray back in Oklahoma, Kevin wrote, "To teach, to be independent, to actually help people through school is my mission." Though we will miss him very much, we should be grateful that Kevin actually accomplished his mission in life. His mother and sisters will tell you that he was a born teacher. We in JALT were lucky to have had Kevin in our lives. We are all a little bit better for having known him and learned from him.

With fond memories of Kevin and deepest sympathy for his family,

The Directors, the Executive Board,
and the membership of NPO JALT

Religion in the ELT classroom: Teachers' perspectives

Kenneth Foye

Muroran Board of Education, Hokkaido

The appropriateness of certain discussion topics in language learning settings is an important consideration for teachers, and one of these topics is religion. This paper reports on a survey of nearly 300 ELT professionals to ascertain their views on the discussion or mentioning of religion in the language classroom. Respondents were questioned on their feelings regarding the discussion or mentioning of religion in class; this datum was cross-analyzed with the respondents' indicated religious beliefs and countries/regions where they teach. In addition to gathering quantitative data in the form of multiple-choice opinion questions, the survey asked respondents to expand on their answers by providing written commentary which was examined for emerging themes and patterns of thought.

言語習得の場で提起される話題に妥当性があるかどうかは、教師にとって重要な問題である。その1つとして挙げられるのが「宗教」である。本論は約300名のEFL及びESL教師を対象とした調査報告で、語学の授業内で宗教について言及または議論することに関し、教師がいかなる認識を持つかを確認する目的で行われた。まず、調査対象者が現在教育している国や地域についてデータを収集した。次に、授業中に宗教に関する話題が出る頻度について、回答を求めた。最後に、授業中に宗教に関する話題が出ることに関し、どのように感じるかを質問した。このデータは、調査対象者の回答した宗教的信念に基づきクロス分析されている。多項選択式の質問により意見を選択する量的データの収集に加え、与えられた回答にとらわれない新たなテーマや思考パターンを検討するために、記述式の回答により回答の幅を広げることも試みた。

Interest in the relationship between religion and language teaching/learning is growing among researchers (Wong, Kristjansson, & Dörnyei, 2013); however, research aimed at gauging EFL/ESL teachers' receptiveness to religion being raised in lessons seems to be lacking. Some researchers have their own views: Johnston (2003), Varghese and Johnston (2007), and Wicking (2012) argue that a teacher's moral and religious beliefs will invariably affect their teaching and interactions with learners, while Purgason (2009) holds that language instructors "do not have to shy away … from letting religion or any other controversial topic come up in the classroom" provided that the subject is not raised in a way that offends or asserts power over learners (p. 191). Liyanage, Bartlett, and Grimbeek (2010) go further, supporting the view that learners' ethno-religious backgrounds may be a factor in instructional design.

Other EFL/ESL practitioners, however, feel that religion is to be kept out of the classroom. Edge (2003) and Pennycock and Makoni (2005) raise concerns about teachers of faith evangelizing unsuspecting students. Wicking (2012), citing some comments posted on an online discussion forum, expressed concern that a no-religion policy appears to be put in place by many teachers.

None of these contributions to the literature, however, contain research on what teachers in the field think about religion being raised in class. The rationale behind this study, therefore, was to shed some light on EFL/ESL teachers' thoughts on this issue—to see if the "no religion in class" comments mentioned by Wicking (2012) represent a common belief or that of a vocal minority.

Research questions

This study explored the following research questions:

1. What are the opinions of EFL/ESL teachers based in Japan and elsewhere on religion as a discussion topic or as a topic of mention in ELT settings?

2. Are there significant differences of opinion on this issue between teachers with religious/spiritual beliefs, agnostic teachers, and atheist teachers?

The respondents

A total of 277 EFL/ESL teachers, teacher-trainers, and materials developers participated in the survey: 46% are based in Japan and the rest are spread out in 43 other countries. Nearly all of the respondents (99%) teach or have taught in primary or secondary schools, and 71% teach or have taught at the university level. Nearly 60% have past or current experience in private language schools, and 14% operate or have operated their own schools.

Regarding religious belief, 42% of respondents identified themselves as Christians (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, or nondenominational). Atheists (22%) and agnostics (10%) comprised the next-largest groups, while 7% reported a belief in a divine power without practicing a formal religion. Religious beliefs such as Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, and Sikhism combined for the remaining 19% of respondents (see Table 1).

Table 1. Respondents' religious beliefs

Religious belief	% of respondents
Christian	42%
Atheist	22%
Agnostic	10%
Believe in God, no formal religion	7%
Muslim	5%
Buddhist	2%
Jewish	1%
Hindu	1%
Sikh	1%
Other	9%

Methodology

Respondents were asked three multiple-choice questions regarding their views on religion being discussed/mentioned in ELT settings. In addition, each question contained a written-comment option. A six-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" was used; a "neutral" answer-choice option was not offered so as to encourage respondents to deeply consider their opinions, and to prompt as many respondents as possible to leave written comments.

The multiple-choice answers were tabulated for respondents overall, according to their religious beliefs or lack thereof, and according to the countries/regions where they teach. The qualitative data contained in written comments were quantified after being examined for frequently appearing opinions or patterns of thought.

Results

The data gathered in this study suggest that EFL/ESL teachers are generally not opposed to religion being mentioned or discussed in class, provided that it is done in certain ways and under certain conditions. Respondents' answers to the study's three main questions are as follows:

Question 1: To what extent do you agree with the statement, "Religion should be totally avoided in English lessons?"

Of the survey's 277 participants, 272 selected one of the six answer choices (ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"), and 93 left written comments.

Multiple-choice answers

As shown in Figure 1, nearly 60% of the respondents disagreed at least somewhat with the idea that religion should be totally avoided as a class topic. Overall, only 9% strongly felt that religion should be totally avoided: 15% of atheists and 15% of agnostics held this view, compared to 5% of believers.

Nearly half of atheists (49%) and more than half of agnostics (54%) disagreed to at least some degree with the idea of entirely avoiding religion in class—compared with 61% of believers (see Figure 2). In other words, atheists and agnostics were more likely than believers to want religion avoided in class, but not overwhelmingly so.

Teachers based in the Middle East were nearly

50% more likely than respondents in general to feel, at least to some extent, that religion should be avoided in class. The findings for other countries/regions were not significantly different than those for respondents overall.
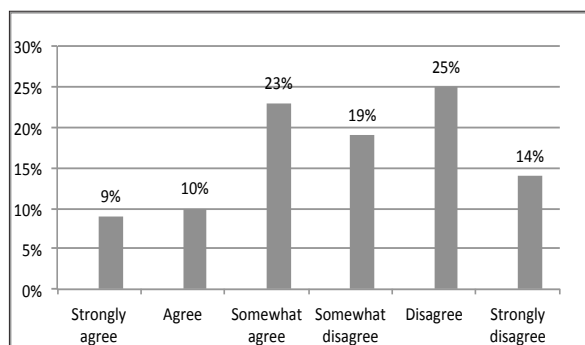
Figure 1. Responses to "Religion should be totally avoided in English lessons." (respondents overall; n=272)
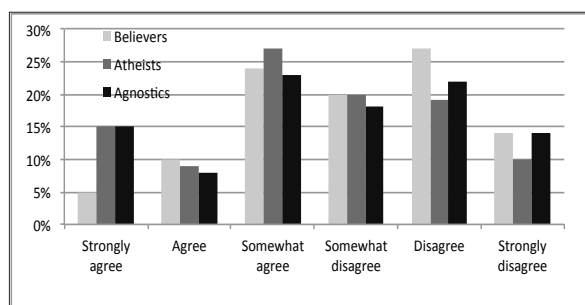
Figure 2. Responses to "Religion should be totally avoided in English lessons." (believers, atheists, and agnostics)

Written responses

The most common sentiment expressed in written comments (see Table 2) was that mentioning or discussing religion in the ELT classroom is acceptable if done relative to cultural understanding or in another neutral way. For example:

"Religion (and lack thereof) is part of one's culture, and should be respected. We can't respect what we do not discuss and consider." (Agnostic, U.S.)

"Cultural holidays and customs often have religious origins, so if you want someone to explain a part of their culture but bar others from explaining theirs, it is discrimination.

Thus, it is acceptable to discuss religious content in a neutral way in public school contexts." (Protestant, Japan)

"Religion and culture go hand-in-hand. The issue isn't whether or not you discuss religion; it's how you go about it." (Protestant, Japan)

"It's a huge part of the cultures of English-speaking countries. It's shaped our culture, our language, and science, and remains a vital issue in today's societies. Avoiding it altogether on purpose is a terrible idea." (Agnostic, Japan)

Other respondents noted that religion need not be avoided provided that it is raised by learners, not by teachers:

"The key is that the topic of religion (like many topics) should be brought up by the students, not forced upon the students." (Protestant, Japan)

"If my students want to talk about religion, then we do." (Catholic, Japan)

"I don't build it into my lessons, but a good teacher allows students the freedom to 'run' with a lesson in the direction of their choice." (Agnostic, Hong Kong)

"Topics discussed should reflect what students want to talk about, not what the teacher wants to impose." (Religious belief not specified, Poland)

Another frequently expressed view was that mentioning religion in class is fine as long as proselytizing is avoided. For example:

"I think it's fine to use it as a subject for discussion or for study texts. I would hate to see English lessons being used as a vehicle for proselytization, though, especially for children. I know there are American fundamentalist churches with branches in Japan offering English lessons as a way to lure unsuspecting Japanese students into their cults—it's sad, scary, and true." (Buddhist, Japan)

"There is nothing wrong with discussing religion. Don't preach, however, and don't try to convert." (Catholic, Japan)

"Using an EFL classroom for proselytizing is simply unethical. However, if you work at a

religious institution or if the student wants to learn 'Biblical English' (i.e., English for Specific Purposes) then it would be a natural topic." (Atheist, South Korea)

Table 2. Written responses' emerging themes: "Religion should be totally avoided in English lessons."

Emerging theme	Number of occurrences
OK to discuss religion regarding cultural understanding or other neutral way	27
Religion is OK if raised by learners	22
OK to discuss religion if proselytizing is avoided	20
Religion is part of daily life, so it's OK to mention/discuss	19
Religion is inappropriate in EFL/ESL classes	9
Religion is OK to spark discussion/conversation	5
Depends on students, class demographic, or school policy	2
OK as long as students/teachers are sensitive to various religions	2
OK to speak openly about God/religion	1
OK if learners are old enough	1
Anti-religious comment	1

(93 written comments; some comments expressed more than one theme)
Total 109

Question 2: To what extent do you agree with the statement, "It's okay to discuss religion in an English class, but only in a neutral way (e.g., if discussing it as a cultural aspect of a given country or countries)?"

Of the survey's 277 participants, 271 selected one of the six answer choices (ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"), and 61 left written comments.

Multiple-choice answers

Most respondents (85%) agreed at least somewhat that discussing religion in class is acceptable as a

cultural aspect or in another neutral way. Agnostics (89%), believers (86%), and atheists (78%) were not significantly different in their responses from the overall 85% result (see Figure 3).

One-third of atheists (compared to 19% of believers and 14% of agnostics) answered "strongly agree" that discussion of religion in a neutral way was okay in class. Atheists were also significantly more likely to disagree with the idea to some degree (22%) than were believers (14%) and agnostics (11%) (see Figure 4).

There were no significant differences of opinion among teachers in different countries or parts of the world.
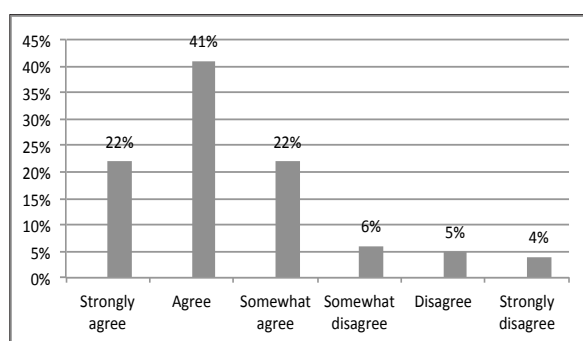
Figure 3. Responses to "It's okay to discuss religion in an English class, but only in a neutral way." (respondents overall; n=271)
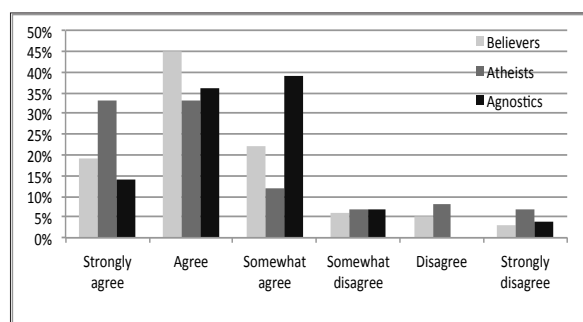
Figure 4. Responses to "It's okay to discuss religion in an English class, but only in a neutral way." (believers, atheists, and agnostics)

Written responses

The most common view expressed in written comments (see Table 3) was that the raising of religion in a cultural or societal context is acceptable in ELT classes. For example:

"English-speaking countries are religiously diverse both in particular religion and level

of practice. It would be hard to understand America without explaining these things, and many students (especially Japanese) come with the preconception that 'America is a Christian nation.' The only way to handle this is to talk about it. Silence leaves ignorance in place." (Protestant, Japan)

"So the children will be aware that in every country there is a religion and people have a style of praying and action." (Catholic, Japan)

"With older students and adults, discussions about wider political issues connected to religion can make for engaging topics." (Atheist, Turkey)

"For young children religious themes (Christmas, Easter, etc.) can be taught as cultural trends and even celebrated in an attempt to learn about that culture. In older/adult settings religion can be discussed objectively. And it's often used as reasoning for individuals' opinions on abortion, gay marriage, etc." (Atheist, South Korea)

The second most common view was that mentioning/discussing religion in ELT settings is fine, so long as proselytization is avoided:

"The English class not the place to convert people. But it's appropriate to let your students know what your belief system is." (Protestant, Japan)

"It's okay to discuss religion, full stop. On the other hand, religion should be avoided if the teacher is not confident of being open-minded and supporting any views that appear. Teachers should avoid proselytizing." (Believer with no formal religion, Japan)

"It should be discussed neutrally in terms of history or doctrine. There should never be proselytizing." (Atheist, Japan)

"It's okay to discuss one's own experiences, as long as the teacher and students avoid salesmanship of religion, and as long as this doesn't become common enough to constitute an agenda on the part of the teacher or student." (Agnostic, Japan)

The third-most commonly expressed view was that religion was an acceptable ELT topic provided that it is raised by learners, not teachers:

"Only if it comes up in discussion and is not part of the teacher's lesson plan." (Atheist, Japan)

"One's personal views on the afterlife should not be discussed except at the instigation of the student." (Atheist, Japan)

"I don't think teachers have a right to begin a discussion with religion in mind and to push their views onto their students, but they can allow students to discuss it if that is what they want to do." (Agnostic, Hong Kong)

"If one of my students brings up religion in class, asks a question, then the question is answered." (Catholic, Japan)

Table 3. Written responses' emerging themes: "It's okay to discuss religion in an English class, but only in a neutral way."

Emerging theme	Number of occurrences
OK if religion isn't pushed; avoid proselytizing	15
OK if raised by students	14
Religion is inappropriate in language classes	8
OK to discuss God/religion openly	6
Social/moral issue context	5
Depends if educational setting is religious	3
OK to raise, but class should stay on course goals	2
Anti-religious comment	2
Concern about stereotypes	1

(*61 written comments; some expressed more than one theme*)

	Total	73

Question 3: To what extent do you agree with the statement, "It's okay to include religious themes or references while teaching a lesson point (e.g., while practicing past tense, saying 'I went to church last Sunday')?"

Of the survey's 277 participants, 274 selected one of the six answer choices (ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"), and 66 left written comments.

Multiple-choice answers

More than 70% of the respondents felt at least somewhat that including religion-themed vocabulary or references within a larger teaching point was acceptable (see Figure 5). Agnostics (86%) and believers (80%) expressed at least some approval at rates higher than the overall 70% rate (see Figure 6).

Atheists (62%) were the most likely group to at least somewhat disapprove of the use of religious themes or vocabulary when teaching or practicing language features. They also answered "strongly disagree" to this question more than three times as often as respondents overall and nearly six times as often as believers.

Teachers based in the U.S. or Canada were 72% more likely than respondents overall to oppose the embedding of religious references within teaching points. In contrast, United Kingdom-based teachers were 23% more likely than respondents overall to support it.
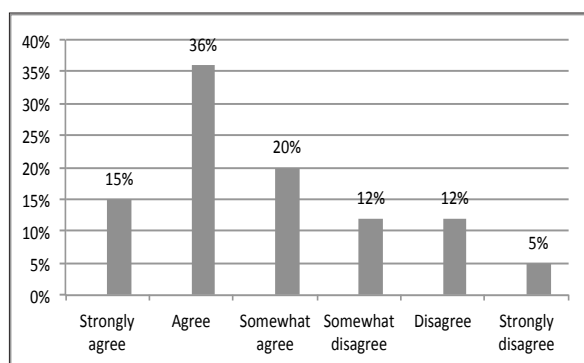
Figure 5. Responses to "It's okay to include religious themes or references while teaching a lesson point." (respondents overall; n=274)
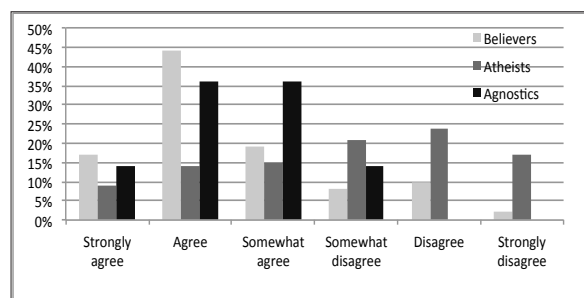
Figure 6. Responses to "It's okay to include religious themes or references while teaching a lesson point." (believers, atheists, and agnostics)

Written responses

While the multiple-choice responses were favorable toward including religious themes/references within teaching points, the respondents' written comments generally called for strict conditions being placed on the practice.

The most commonly expressed opinion (see Table 4) was that the use of religious vocabulary/references is acceptable only if it serves students' learning needs. For instance:

"Religion shouldn't be included in your lesson plan. But for students who are religious then they will have to learn how to express this in English and so it would be necessary to include this during the lesson." (Atheist, Japan)

"It depends on the context and whether or not learning such language will be useful and relevant to the students. If they're going to visit a Christian country, it seems to be practical." (Believer with no formal religion, Japan)

"If I'm teaching a class with students from many different countries, I might teach them the various ways they can describe their religious activity in English: 'I went to the temple last Sunday,' 'I went to the mosque last Sunday,' 'I went to church last Sunday,' etc. However, I teach in a secular Japanese environment, so it would not be a useful sentence for most students." (Protestant, Japan)

"If it fits into the context of the lesson, why not?" (Believer with no formal religion, Turkey)

The second most common view was that including religious references is acceptable when describing the teacher's or learners' daily lives:

"If someone (the teacher?) is relating the events of her weekend and includes this then it's OK, but it seems unnecessary otherwise." (Atheist, Japan)

"Religious observances are part of some people's everyday lives. Being able to express one's lifestyle is a valuable part of any English program." (Atheist, Japan)

"If that's what I do on Sunday, what does it matter? I know some of my colleagues would say, 'I went drinking on Saturday.'" (Protestant, South Korea)

"No difference between using 'I went to church' and 'I went to the movies.'" (Atheist, South Korea)

Other respondents approved of use of religious themes/references provided that proselytizing is avoided, or that they are brought into play by learners and not teachers. Slightly fewer than 10% of written comments expressed the view that including religious vocabulary/themes is never appropriate.

Table 4. Written responses' emerging themes: "It's okay to include religious themes or references while teaching a lesson point (e.g., while practicing past tense, saying 'I went to church last Sunday')."

Emerging theme	Number of occurrences
OK if relevant to lesson/contains useful language/serves learning needs	18
OK if used to describe daily life	13
OK as long as proselytizing is avoided/views or beliefs aren't pushed	9
OK if religion is raised by learners	7
Not appropriate to include religious references	6
OK if explaining cultural aspects (holidays, etc.)	4
OK as long as one religion isn't favored	4
Not necessary at all to avoid religion	4
OK as long as religious vocabulary is used proportionate to other vocabulary	3
OK if learners are of the same religion	2
Anti-religious comment	1
(*66 written comments; some expressed more than one theme*)	
Total	71

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn regarding the research questions:

1) What are the opinions of EFL/ESL teachers based in Japan and elsewhere on religion as a discussion topic or topic of mention in ELT settings?

The survey's findings do not support the hypothesis by Wicking (2012) that there may be a strict "no religion" policy put in place by a high number of EFL/ESL teachers. The survey's respondents generally did not oppose religion being mentioned or discussed in class, provided that it pertained to culture or societal issues; that it was raised by learners and not by teachers; that it was raised relative to teachers' or learners' daily lives; and/or that proselytizing was strictly avoided.

2) Are there significant differences of opinion between teachers with religious/spiritual beliefs, agnostic teachers, and atheist teachers?

Atheist and agnostic teachers did not support the idea of "checking religion at the door," at least not *en masse.* While atheists were a bit more likely than believers and agnostics to favor avoiding religion in the ELT classroom, they were still at least somewhat agreeable to religion being raised—again, provided that certain conditions are met, as mentioned above.

The survey's 277 respondents (22% of whom were atheists) had every opportunity to make hostile comments about religion in the survey's written responses, but only two did so—providing further evidence that hostility toward religion in the ELT field, about which Wicking (2012) expressed concern, is not a common sentiment among teachers.

The only significant difference of opinion between atheists, agnostics, and believers regarded the embedding of religious references within the teaching of specific language features—a practice that atheist teachers were far more likely to oppose than believers.

Pedagogical implications

The results of this survey suggest that ELT instructors (whether they believe in the divine or not) generally hold the same view as Purgason (2009)—there is no need to shy away from religion as a language classroom topic, provided

that the subject is handled appropriately.

The survey's respondents generally acknowledge religion's role as an important part of many people's lives and as a key characteristic of nations and cultures—as such, it need not be excluded from the ELT classroom any more than any other topic in life. The respondents in general also acknowledged that discussing or mentioning religion is not the same thing as trying to "sell" it—and that the former is acceptable provided that the latter is avoided.

Possibilities for future research

The study described here involved a small sample of EFL/ESL teachers. Further research involving a greater number of teachers would provide a better view of the language teaching community's perspective on religion being raised in class.

In addition, although this study's participants are based in 44 countries, nearly half of them are based in Japan; a more balanced respondent sample in terms of countries represented would be ideal. This study suggests that where a teacher is based likely has little bearing on their views regarding religion in class, but a wider geographical sample could shed more light on that question.

This study did not differentiate between native-speaker teachers of English and non-native-speaker teachers. Investigating whether opinions on religion in class differ significantly between the two groups could be a revealing research effort. Given Western ideas of "political correctness," for instance, it might be hypothesized that native-speaker teachers are more likely than non-native speakers to frown on religion as a class topic. There is no evidence of this in the study described here, but then again, that question was not specifically addressed.

Another research possibility involves learners' views on the mentioning or discussion of religion in their language lessons. Ultimately, the best English lessons are centered on students' needs—learners' feedback on what happens in the ELT classroom, including their views on the appropriateness of topics such as religion, is vital to making student-centered learning a reality.

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Second language writing, genre, and identity: An interview with Ken Hyland

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On page one of his new book, *Disciplinary Identities: Individuality and Community in Academic Discourse* (2012, CUP), Ken Hyland identifies himself as a middle-aged, British, vegetarian hiker. He is also Professor of Applied Linguistics and Head of the Center for Applied English Studies at Hong Kong University. His book credits as author include, *Teaching and Researching Writing* (2002, 2009, Pearson Longman), *Second Language Writing* (2003, CUP), *Genre and Second Language Writing* (2004, University of Michigan Press), *English for Academic Purposes: An Advanced Resource Book* (2006, Routledge), and *Academic Discourse* (2009, Continuum), along with a number of co-edited volumes such as *Innovation and Change in Language Education* (2013, Routledge) with Lillian Wong. He has taught in seven different countries and in addition to book chapters, his papers (see <www2.caes.hku.hk/kenhyland/>) have been published in the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *English for Specific Purposes*, *TESOL Quarterly*, and *Applied Linguistics*, where he is currently co-editor.

In February 2013, Professor Hyland conducted lectures at Temple University in Tokyo and Osaka as part of the Distinguished Lecturer Series and he returned in August as a plenary speaker for the 52nd JACET International Convention in Kyoto. He took time to share his reflections on teaching and researching academic writing, genre, and identity in academic disciplines.

GR: As 10 years have passed since your publication of *Second Language Writing* in the Cambridge Language Education Series, what are some of the interesting developments you have seen in this area?

KH: When I wrote that book, certainly teachers were not very familiar with corpus work. I think now I see far more use of it in the classroom and also as an out-of-class learning resource in that teachers direct their students towards online corpora for homework and additional practice. I also see teachers referring to corpora themselves. If a student wants information about how best to express something or what the meaning of a word is in a particular context, then they are just as likely to go to a corpus as a dictionary. I've also seen teachers using corpora far more with their students in class to develop writing skills and I think this is an interesting development. We are seeing more of an interest in out-of-class learning as well. Instead of sending students away with an essay to write for homework, teachers are beginning to use flexible programs like Moodle and Blackboard to help manage the

delivery of classes and the practice of writing, out of class, where they can set tasks and very focused activities involving writing. I think we have also become more focused on learning rather than teaching: we've become much more goal-directed. We are more interested in what the learning outcomes of what we are doing in class are. Instead of asking or assuming that what we teach will be learned, we are now asking, "What do I have to do to accomplish effective learning?" And what that means I think is being more sensitive to learners—where they are now, where they are going—rather than making assumptions about them and taking materials and activities into class. I think a lot of this comes out of teachers' own curiosity and action research. Teachers have always tried new things in class, particularly when they find they don't work with their students. Changing things around—giving students different things to write, giving them different sources to write from, giving them different stimuli to produce writing, scaffolding the writing in different ways. I think a lot of that is very productive, particularly when it involves talk around writing. Teachers are recognizing that students don't just write in an isolated, quiet way in a class or at home, but they need to do other things as well. Writing is the product of reading, of talking about writing, of sharing ideas in groups, so I think we see far more writing workshop type classes where instead of teachers just giving students an essay topic, there are a lot of things going on. I think all of those things have really evolved in the last 10 years or so.

GR: In your recent lectures, you talked about assumptions about writing and literacy.

KH: I think the assumptions about what writing is and what literacy is have really been questioned in the last 10 years. The New Literacy people writing out of London at King's College and so on have shown us that literacy is really relative to particular contexts. The whole English for Specific Purposes movement has encouraged the view that students can't just write in a particular way irrespective of the context. There is always a purpose to the writing. There is always a particular audience and that audience has assumptions, things it already knows, doesn't know, might need to know. It has an attitude toward what is being written about and all of these things have to be considered in how an author shapes a text. That kind of thinking is feeding into the teaching of writing, making it

far more context specific rather than the idea that there is a single way of writing or way of teaching writing.

GR: You have also written a lot on discourse and genre, two words which often get widely appropriated. Could you identify what genre is (or isn't) and clarify its relationship to writing "products" such as recipes and business reports and written "messages or functions" such as appeals or persuasion and promotion?

KH: I think you are making two distinctions here. One is between text and genre. A text is a particular physical piece of writing or speech – something that exists in the world, whereas genre is a rather abstract term. It's something we recognize in texts because we see texts as being similar, we can group them together on the basis of certain characteristics. Genre is such a complex idea. It is essentially the repeated use of language to accomplish particular purposes in routine situations. The kinds of things you have mentioned between functions and genres, I think we are really talking about macro and elementary genres, in Jim Martin's sense. We have macro genres like describing or persuading and then specific examples of them where not all persuasions are the same. We persuade someone to buy a fridge in very different ways than persuading people to give up smoking. It's very complex. Some people talk about genre as metaphor. That it is a way of seeing the world, a schema. But essentially it is a routinized way of using language to accomplish social purposes as effectively as possible.

GR: The writing course materials I have looked at from the various ELT publishers are concentrated largely around process writing of specific "types" of paragraphs and/or essays (e.g., descriptions, narrative, opinion, cause and effect, argumentative). In terms of teaching genre or writing for specific academic purposes, do you see these as complimentary or conflicting?

KH: I think they are useful. I think it is good to help students become aware that language varies according to the purpose of the user. Learning how to describe, how to narrate, how to give an opinion are useful skills. But the problem, I think with teaching in this way, is that they are decontextualized. They are generic ways of using language and while students might be able to transfer those into particular genres and particular situations, I am not sure if we can always make that assumption. I think it is more

helpful if we focus on the genres the students need to write. What is it they want to describe - is it a sunset or the new Toyota? Instead of taking a description as an autonomous way of using language, we situate it. We put it into a context that students are going to find useful and can then apply in their lives.

GR: How can writing teachers in foreign language contexts effectively scaffold their instruction with models and practice using examples or appropriate form and discourse, yet bring the writers to produce their own written output and not simply substitute into a template or pour content into a mold of structures?

KH: We need models to learn effectively, to understand "How can I express this meaning effectively in a way that readers or hearers are likely to understand and accept?" Certainly there is a danger in genre teaching or in providing models that students will believe that is the only ways of expressing particular kinds of meanings. They need to see variations, of course. But I am sure even the great piano players learn the scales before they learn the variations in sophisticated concertos. I think starting with models, deconstructing them to look at how they are organized and the language they contain is an essential starting point to then ask, "How else can we do this?" "What other ways are there of expressing these meanings and what do these variations mean?" " What nuances or connotations do they convey?"

GR: If you could wave a magic wand or rub a lamp, what would your three wishes be for best practice in curriculum to teach writing development over the limited contact hours available in tertiary education in a foreign language context?

KH: I understand not having enough time to teach what you have to teach. The first wish would be that we should focus on students' needs rather than trying to teach everything. One of the problems with school curricula is that there is just too much in it. We overload students with demands of what they should learn and teachers have become terrorized by the concept of *coverage* of the textbook or the syllabus, which is often impossible. We need to try to identify what the students need the language for and then teach that kind of language. A second wish would be to start with what the learners know, not what they are assumed to know. Where are they now, what are their proficiencies, what are their interests, what is it that motivates them to

learn language, if anything at all? Because of the limited contact hours, my third wish would be to give plenty of out-of-class learning opportunities to use the language outside of class and the skills to learn autonomously. How students can make the best use of an environment that is not English-rich could be exploited rather more either through the internet or assignments which look for uses of literacy in the local environment.

GR: For those who might be interested in conducting research on their own students' writing, could you prescribe a short list of do's and don'ts?

KH: Ok, the first do would be keep it simple. The second, which is related to the first, is be focused. By that I mean have answerable questions. Instead of "Why do my students have problems with English?" or "Why don't they like writing?" use something finite that you can actually answer through your research like "What structures cause the most problems when they write essays?" or "How can I best help students express emotions in writing?" A third do would be to triangulate, which is just a fancy term to mean collecting data in different ways—talking to students, talking to teachers, looking at the materials they are using, looking at the tasks you are giving them. Most particularly, always look at texts—the kinds of writing they are doing. And look at the writing for particular things, for example not just errors but particular kinds of errors or what is it that they are doing repeatedly that is good or bad or helps you to answer your question.

GR: Your most recent title in the Cambridge Applied Linguistics series, *Distinguishing Identities*, talks about disciplinary identities. Could you explain these and position them in relation to your definition of identity?

KH: The mantra is that "identity is performance." We are what we do. I wanted to find one way how we might get at that idea. If identity is a performance, it is a performance that has some kind of stability, it is repeated. We do it again and again because it works for us and helps us to align with others. So identity is really certain kinds of behavior, and particularly I am interested in language behavior, that we engage in to become members of social groups—what it is that is valued by particular disciplines. To get at that, you need to look at how language is used repeatedly by members of social groups. To me, that means looking at corpora. How is language

used by particular disciplines, how is it used in different disciplines, how is it used by individuals in particular disciplines, and how does that differ from others? Identity isn't what we say we are or think we are, it is what we do—how we represent ourselves in talk again and again and again. It is about belonging to a group and being an individual member of that group. It's always a balancing act between community and individuality.

GR: In your book, you mention the increased attention given to the topic of identity in the human and social sciences over the past 25 years. What makes a title drawn from a disciplinary perspective so timely and how do you see it adding to the literature?

KH: I think there are so many definitions of identity and so many ways of understanding it that it is beginning to lose its meaning a little bit. It's the lens through which the social sciences view the world. It is the way of approaching everything. Identity is often used as "who I think I am" and so interviews are often used where people tell stories about themselves and that is often construed as their identity—how they reflect on their lives. Another way it is used is by conversation analysts who see identity changing in talk all the time—there is a listening identity, a controlling identity, a supporting identity—where identities can change almost by turns of speech. I think that really undermines the idea of identity because identity should have a core that is relatively stable or unchanging. If we see it as a performance, it is not a performance that we change all the time. It comes to represent us, it has continuity. What I think I have done is try to establish that idea and add it to the literature by providing an empirical way of getting at identity. Corpora of different communities exist, so what does it mean to have an identity as an applied linguist or as an English teacher in Japan? What I think it means is that people use language in a certain way to relate to their community in a way that they value. It is a complex term, but one that I think does have value and we just need to find ways of getting at it.

GR: Near the end of the book, you state "every act of communication is an act of identity" (p. 195). How can researchers look to digest identity into manageable research investigations?

KH: I think that people generally accept that we express some kind of identity in the clothes we wear, our accents give us a regional identity, our

age probably has a bearing on identity. All those things seem to index something about us. I am saying that looking at what individuals do again and again, particularly how they use language again and again, and how others respond to this provides another way of understanding identity. So I guess researchers should start with this: What is it? What kind of language are we using which makes us engineers or taxi drivers or policemen? What are the repeated rhetorical actions that people use? Because that is where we find identity, not in interview responses or who we think we are.

GR: Or surveys reflecting on who we think we are?

KH: That's right.

GR: Much of the research in the book makes use of corpus data. How might writing teachers make better use of corpora?

KH: There are now much bigger, more contemporary corpora of student writing, of published writing which are available freely online—the BAWE corpus (British Academic Written English corpus) is a corpus of A and B grade undergraduate assignment writing and that is a really rich resource. There are corpora of lingua franca Englishes with different language groups. There is the MICASE corpus of academic speech. So there are a lot of corpora around that teachers can get free access to. What they are then going to do with them is something else. Teachers tend to use corpora in two ways (1) as a reference that they can use to create materials and give to students. With a lot of the concordance programs that analyze corpora, you can make gap fill exercises, you can create word lists. Or teachers can use them (2) as references of how language is used as authentic content that they can turn into tasks. Perhaps more difficult is what Tim Johns calls *data driven learning* where the students become the users of the corpora themselves. They become researchers to explore questions the teacher gives them, such as collocations, hopefully motivating them to study language more and learn more about language.

GR: Finally, in the Acknowledgements for *Disciplinary Identities*, you cite your familiarity with "academic discourse, disciplinary writing, and [the] interpersonal aspects of language" (p. xi), but then go on to say that the book approaches these from a perspective that is rather new to you. What advice might you have for academics

looking to put a fresh, new spin on their areas of interest?

KH: I have to admit that I stayed away from identity for a long time. I thought it was something really beyond my expertise to study and too ephemeral. So I moved out of my comfort zone to look at it. But when I started to read about it I found a lot of disagreement in the literature and that is something that you can exploit. I don't really have advice, but I think what I would say are just three things—be curious, be confident, and be skeptical.

GR: Thank you, I appreciate you sharing your insights.

Greg Rouault is an associate professor in the Department of International Studies at Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts. He has a Master of Applied Linguistics in Language Program Management from Macquarie University and has been teaching in Japan in language schools, on company training courses, and in content-based and EAP skills programs at universities for 15 years. He is an International Volleyball Referee and an instructor for the Japan Volleyball Association. His research interests include foreign language literacy, and identity and selves in ESP learners.

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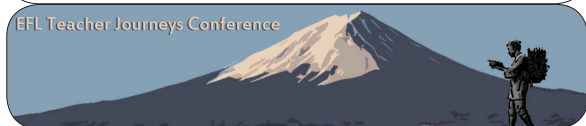
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Left brain, right brain: The 123 game

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Warmer, tired students, energy, the brain
- **Learner English level:** Pre-intermediate and higher
- **Learner maturity:** Junior high and higher
- **Preparation time:** None
- **Activity time:** 10 minutes
- **Materials:** Whiteboard, pens

The 123 Game combines basic language production with simple motor skills and rests on the belief that the left and right brain hemispheres control different processes and actions. It ties in with lessons on the mind or thinking, but is perhaps best used as a non-specific warmer or mid-lesson distractor that should generate a positive response from even the most listless learner. Since it requires people to stand while completing quick word-action sequences, it encourages blood circulation, oxygenates the body, and is designed to leave participants energized. I have used it in business training workshops to add levity to overly-serious executive types just as I have in university classes. With a reduced or removed focus on actual brain theory, it works well with young learners too.

Preparation

No preparation is required, provided you can draw something resembling a head and a brain labelled left and right. If not, you can always use a printed picture. Personally, I find it best to draw my own as it affords a little extra language practice—possibly with adverbs and modals— and adds a touch of anticipation.

Procedure

Step 1: Draw a large circle on the board (a head) with a small semi-circle at the base (a nose) as seen from above. Ask the class to guess what you've drawn. Accept any answers but don't confirm anything yet. Draw two more semi-circles on the left and right sides (ears). You should have something your students recognise as the top of a head. These stages can be sped up or slowed down as desired. Quick is probably best.

Step 2: Draw a brain in the middle of your circle and divide it in two. Label the left and right halves *L* and *R*. Establish the meaning and elicit anything known about the brain's left and right sides.

Step 3: Explain that the brain's left side deals with things like logic, language, and order. Write a number 1 above the head in the 12 o'clock position, a number 2 down to the right, at 4 o'clock, and a number 3 to the left, at 8 o'clock. Draw an arrow clockwise from 1 to 2 around to 3 and back up to 1. Say you want to practice a quick left-brain activity.

Step 4: Ask students to stand. Select a volunteer to help model this sequence:

- a) One
- b) Two
- a) Three
- b) One
- a) Two
- b) Three
- a) One
  - ... etc.

Pair students and practice this at speed for 15-20 seconds. Keep everyone standing afterward.

Step 5: Say you want to add some right-brain creativity. Cross out the 2 on the board and write *clap*. A handclap will now replace saying "Two." Model this:

- a) One
- b) [clap]
- a) Three
- b) One
- a) [clap]
- b) Three
- a) One
  - ... etc.

Have students practice in pairs for 25-30 seconds. Stay standing when finished.

Step 6: Say you will add one final level of difficulty. Cross out the number 3 and write *click*. Demonstrate clicking your thumbs and index fingers on both hands and model this sequence:

a) One

b) [clap]

a) [click]

b) One

a) [clap]

b) [click]

a) One

… etc.

Allow 30-45 seconds practice. Congratulate everyone and ask them to be seated.

Step 7: Finish by explaining that in this lesson, you will try to strengthen the brain processes used in language-learning by combining left-brain vocabulary and grammar with right-brain creative role-plays and speaking practice.

Conclusion

The science behind the 123 game is admittedly over-simplified. Speech creation resides largely in the left hemisphere whereas cognitive processes required to interpret language are primarily on the right. We rely on both sides functioning together to communicate. This activity's purpose, however, is to raise energy levels, invigorate the lesson atmosphere, and have fun, rather than to explore the complicated realm of neuroscience. As a quick aid to class management, it is easy to use with a range of learners and levels. Variations on clapping and clicking are, of course, possible too.

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Every minute counts: A warm-up speaking and listening activity to build fluency

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Speaking, fluency, bottom-up listening, warm-up
- **Learner English level:** Beginner to advanced
- **Learner maturity:** Junior high school to university
- **Preparation time:** 30 minutes (at the beginning of the semester), 1 minute (before classes)
- **Activity time:** 5 minutes
- **Materials:** Counting cards (Appendices), stopwatch

The first few minutes of a class are often seen as what make or break students' attitudes for the rest of the lesson. A warm-up activity usually creates an atmosphere where students feel relaxed enough to actively participate in class. However, this time can go beyond this, giving the instructor an opportunity to implicitly introduce the focus of the lesson and grasp what students already know about what they are about to learn. The first few minutes of the lesson should be an appetizer the teacher serves to students, leaving them hungry for more in the main course of the lesson. The following activity is a one-minute speech done at the beginning of each lesson throughout a course to help students prepare for the grammatical or situational focus of each lesson. Although speeches often increase anxiety rather than helping students relax, this activity is done in pairs, giving students an opportunity to speak without the concern of many eyes on them. With carefully chosen speech

topics, instructors can gain an idea of students' prior knowledge of the lesson focus. Finally, the activity helps train students' bottom-up listening skills, vital in improving listening accuracy (Wilson, 2008).

Preparation

Step 1: At the beginning of the course, distribute the counting cards (Appendix A, Appendix B).

Step 2: Think of a topic for the one-minute speech before each class.

Procedure

Step 1: Casually talk for 1 minute about the topic of that lesson. If the lesson is focusing on ordering food, for example, the topic could be *my favorite restaurant*. If the grammatical focus of the lesson is the past tense, the topic could be related to the previous weekend or a recent vacation.

Step 2: Have students get into groups of two (S1, S2), swap counting cards and decide who will speak first. (Students should make a new partner each lesson.)

Step 3: Announce the topic for the one-minute speech and gives students 20 seconds to think about the topic and what they will say.

Step 4: Strictly time the students using a stopwatch. S1 speaks for one minute while S2 counts each word uttered by S1. The counting should be done as a tally in the middle pages of the counting card. The roles are then reversed.

Step 5: Have students return their cards to each other and record the number of words they spoke using the graph on the back page of the counting card.

Step 6: Have students write a short reflection in the middle pages of their counting card about how they can increase the number of words they spoke.

Conclusion

The one-minute speech activity is effective for several reasons. It allows students to share their own thoughts and knowledge about the topic to be covered in the lesson, giving an indication to the instructor of what needs emphasis in the lesson and what does not. The counting component strengthens students' bottom-up listening process while also giving explicit feedback on

the progress of the speaker's fluency. The graph works to motivate the students to speak more as they see their score increase or decrease each time. Reflecting on their performance and how to improve their fluency encourages students' metacognitive skills, including the use of strategies to use time, effort, and concentration effectively (Efklides, 2006). With regular use of this activity, I am sure both you and your students will be encouraged by the progress that can be made.

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Appendices

The appendices are available from the online version of this article at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

How to take attendance in classes with low motivation

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Classroom management, motivation, autonomy
- **Learner English level:** All
- **Learner maturity:** University students
- **Preparation time:** Minimal
- **Activity time:** 3 to 5 minutes
- **Materials:** Two attendance sheets, each with two columns: *Name* and *Student Number*

I once had a class where one student did not answer when his name was called for attendance. I called the roll again and again, but the student still did not answer when his name was called. It took me a long time to find out why there were more bodies in the class than students marked present on my attendance sheet. The student did the same thing the following week. On the third week, I used the method explained in this article to deal with the problem. The reluctant student only had to be marked absent once before he started following the instructions. I recommend doing these steps as overtly as possible. Let the students see what you are doing so they can understand and accept the procedure.

Procedure

Step 1: Place the papers at the front of the class. Have students come to the front to write their names and student numbers on the paper. You might have to tape the papers to a desk the first few times to ensure students do not just pass around the paper while sitting. Take this time to chat with students about anything. Lend pens to students who ask to borrow a pen in English. Be available for spontaneous communication with the students who are writing their names.

Step 2: After all students sit back down, make sure the number of students on the list matches the number of students in the room. You must never omit this step. If there are too few names, explain that students who do not write their names will be marked absent. If there are too many names, determine who the absent student is and delete that name. Students do not try that trick twice.

Step 3: Draw a line under the last name. Students who come late must write their names under this line. For late students, write the number of minutes they are late next to their names. Students are considered to have joined class when they write their names on the paper. If any students come too late to be considered present, do not allow them to write their names on the paper.

Follow-up activity

This follow-up can be done in the middle of the semester, at the end of the semester, or both. Have students guess in writing how many times they were absent or late. Talk to each student in-dividually. Look at each week's attendance sheet with each student. Give appropriate feedback about their attendance and lateness. This activity can be done more discretely.

Conclusion

This method has many advantages over the traditional method of calling the roll. I always make my students walk around to get their blood flowing. This method gets students to stand up and walk. It deals in a non-confrontational way with students who are reluctant to answer when their names are called as well as students who enter the classroom late but do not want to be noticed. They may approach you after a lesson and say, "I came five minutes late, but you didn't see me." You can show them the paper and say, "If your name is not here, you are absent." This makes attendance and lateness more obvious than just marks in boxes made by the teacher. Students who are late see that they must write their names under the line and see the teacher write how late they were. Students who come too late to be considered present are shocked not to be allowed to write their names on the paper. Overall, this procedure gets students involved by giving them more responsibility. With a traditional roll call, if a mistake is made with attendance records, it is the teacher's fault. With this method, it is the student's responsibility. Thus, it is much harder for a student to argue that the roll is incorrect.

Helping speech contestants to help themselves

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Speech contests, syntactic cues, process approach
- **Learner English level:** Varied
- **Learner maturity:** Age 12+
- **Preparation time:** Varied

- **Activity time:** Varied
- **Materials:** MP3 recorder, speech transcript

The following approach to preparing EFL students for speech contests is meant to help students to help themselves. When a coach encourages a speech contestant to utilize these steps, they should keep in mind that ownership of the speech itself should always remain with the contestant and that the coach should try not to be overly helpful. By doing so, the contestant actually has greater benefit. However, many first draft transcripts are not immediately relevant to contest audiences. So, how can a coach persuade a contestant to modify the topic without taking away ownership of the speech?

Procedure

Step 1: Look at the completed rough draft. Make no corrections or suggestions. Just ask the contestant questions to clarify the intended purpose, meaning, audience, and flow of the speech. Praise the contestant for the strengths found in the transcript.

Step 2: Have the contestant outline the transcript to expose any weaknesses in the logical structure of the speech. Help the contestant to recognize where redundancies, contradictions, or irrelevancies might exist.

Step 3: Encourage the contestant to brainstorm ideas to restructure the speech so that it will have a clear purpose and meaning, good audience awareness, and a logical flow. In some cases, this brainstorming may lead the contestant to discard the transcript completely and start from scratch. Only contribute general ideas and hints to the brainstorming while encouraging the contestant to come up with more concrete ideas independently.

Step 4: Have the contestant outline a new or revised speech and check it for improvements in the awareness of purpose, meaning, audience, and flow.

Step 5: Have the contestant write another draft. Make as few corrections as possible. Just ask the contestant questions to clarify the intended purpose, meaning, audience, and flow. Also, point out common grammatical errors. Again, praise the contestant for the strengths found in the transcript.

Step 6: Repeat Step 5 as many times as feasible, regarding the contestant's revisions and responses to your questions on each draft until a clear purpose and meaning, good audience awareness, and logical flow have been established.

Step 7: Have the contestant divide the text of the speech into

       meaningful language chunks,
    which cascade
      down the page
        like this
          with back indentation
            where there may be
              a pause,
  as in the case
    of the commas
      seen here.

Ideally, the contestants would do this independently. However, a shortcut would be to have the contestant use ClipRead, an online program from LiveInk.com, which will parse text automatically. Either way, coaches should confirm that the parsed text has the desired syntactic cues and is ready for speech rehearsals.

Step 8: Coach the contestants through rehearsals in person and give advice on all aspects of the contestants' physical, visual, and vocal components of their delivery as often as feasible.

Step 9: Upload the syntactically cued text and an audio recording of the speech read by the coach to a preferred learning management system (LMS) or simply provide the original audio file with a printed version of the cued text.

Step 10: Have the contestant practice the speech by shadowing the recording and reading the parsed text as it is delivered online or read from paper.

Step 11: Record the student's best rehearsal and repeat Steps 9 and 10 with the new recording. Alternatively, both recordings could be made available for the contestant to choose from.

Step 12: Have the contestant visualize winning the gold.

Conclusion

These steps lead to success. In particular, the syntactic parsing described above makes it possible for a speech contestant to guess a subsequent language chunk by the syntactic cues present in the previous chunk or the first word of the

subsequent chunk. In this manner, contestants are encouraged to memorize how to convey meaning rather than memorizing word for word. In turn, recognition of the syntactic cues also makes it easier to identify where to apply prosodic features for conveying meaning even more clearly.

Polishing writing skills: Corpora analysis in class

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Quick guide

- **Key words:** Autonomous learning, corpus, concordance, grammar, register, vocabulary, writing
- **Learner English level:** Intermediate and higher
- **Learner maturity:** University and higher
- **Groups size:** 10-12 (divided into smaller groups later)
- **Preparation time:** 5-10 minutes
- **Activity time:** 90 minutes
- **Materials:** Computers with Internet access, students' essays or teacher-written essays

Improving students' grammar becomes significantly more difficult at higher levels when learners have mastered the general rules but make small mistakes with consistency that may be difficult to pinpoint. At such a level, students require more fine-tuning than a full-fledged introduction of a grammar point. With the time constraints of a classroom lesson, it makes sense to teach students how to use tools which will enable them to monitor their own writing and answer emerging questions without the teacher's help. Concordancers offer unbiased analysis of a corpus and enable independent research of English grammar, vocabulary and register.

Preparation

Step 1: Have students write an essay at home or in a previous lesson and bring it to class

Step 2: Ensure there are enough computers (at least one per group) with Internet access for students

Step 3: Ensure the concordancer site of your choice is open and available (see Appendix for suggested websites)

Procedure

Step 1: Collect the students' essays to check yourself or have the students peer review each other's compositions. Discuss and take note of the grammatical, lexical, or stylistic mistakes for Step 2. Discuss the organization or content of the essays with the students or tell them to do it in groups of 2-3. (20 minutes)

Step 2: Write full sentences or phrases with mistakes from Step 1 on the whiteboard (e.g., "way for reconcile"). Elicit answers regarding how they could be improved. (10-15 minutes)

Step 3: Tell the students to search for the phrase(s) (both incorrect and supposedly correct) from Step 2 in the concordancer by typing them in the search bar. This is a familiarization stage, so the focus should be more on figuring out how to use the concordancer rather than actually solving the problem. (10-15 minutes)

Step 4: Have the students choose the best correction for the phrase based on their observations of the collocation use. Write the incorrect and corrected versions on the whiteboard. Check together and discuss. (10 minutes)

Step 5: Let the students check their writing by repeating Steps 3-4. Help them identify the mistakes or allow them to find errors independently. (15 minutes)

Step 6: Instruct students to write a final copy of the composition with the corrections they discovered in Steps 2-4. This can be done either individually or in a group where the students choose the essay they all agree to work on collectively. (15 minutes)

Variations

To focus the activity even further, free software (see Appendix) can be used to analyze a corpus of your own choice which reflects a particular genre of writing (e.g., argumentative essays). It

can also be used to analyze a corpus of students' previous essays for comparison and analysis. If the students feel comfortable enough with the concordancer, they may attempt to search for new lexical units rather than check the existing mistakes. For bigger classes, several essays can be prepared in advance with mistakes chosen specifically for the lesson purpose. Previous students' essays can also be used.

Note

The exploratory skill this activity relies on may not be easily developed in one lesson. An experimental corpus-based course conducted by Lee and Swales (2006) reportedly took more than 20 hour-long lessons to develop the skill in students that would enable them to continue independent research in the corpus.

Conclusion

Since this is a "discovery" lesson, the teacher will have to take on the role of an assistant and a research organizer (Johns, 1991), rather than an omni-knowledgeable expert. By learning from the analysis of numerous language sources, students do not only receive an unbiased opinion about language but also learn to polish their language skills without the teacher's support. This kind of lesson can be conducted regularly to both expose students to a large amount of authentic language with grammar and vocabulary relevant to their immediate needs and empower them as independent learners for future self-development.

References

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Appendix

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

Pair speaking test and presentation in one

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Speaking, question comprehension, memorization, writing, feedback
- **Learner English level:** Middle school grade 1 to high school grade 3
- **Learner maturity:** Middle school to high school
- **Preparation time:** 15-20 minutes
- **Activity time:** 20-25 minutes
- **Materials:** Activity sheet

Two frustrations often faced by English teachers are students not taking the time to read over corrections made by teachers and teachers not having time to correct students' work. This activity solves both these problems. The speaking component focuses on question comprehension, writing, memorizing, and speaking; it can be adjusted to almost any level. The advantage of this activity is that students have their written work corrected by the teacher, thereby providing immediate feedback. Students can then memorize and produce correct English grammar.

Preparation

Step 1: Decide on a question that is appropriate for your student's level.

Step 2: Make a dialogue worksheet with the question at the top and four to six lines with A and B listed on each line. For lower level classes, pictures like those from the *Eiken* Test can be used with the question. In addition, prompts, target sentence starters, or follow-up questions can be used, for example, *I think that…, Because/so…,* or *What do you think…* Finally, all sentences should include an answer and supporting information.

Procedure

Step 1: Assign students a partner or have them choose. Groups of three can work if necessary. If you wish to use this activity for every class, explain to the students that they will stay in the same pairs for the whole term.

Step 2: Students are given the handout with a question on the top followed by *A-B* dialog lines. They make a dialog using the question at the top as a prompt. Encourage students to use full-sentence answers with supporting information, such as, "I like school uniforms because I don't have to think about what to wear in the morning." Groups work at a pace they set. While some students are still writing, other groups may be doing the steps below.

Step 3: Once finished, students take their dialog up to the teacher at the front for grammar and spelling correction.

Step 4: Students memorize their corrected dialog. Student A must also memorize the question at the top of the paper.

Step 5: Once memorized, students bring their paper to the front and present their dialog, including the prompt question, to the teacher. Incorrect pronunciation is corrected and students can be told to rememorize their script if it is not memorized properly. The teacher then gives them a score out of two points and gives the students the next speaking test paper. Students reverse A and B roles and start from step one again.

Conclusion

This activity gets students to write, speak, memorize, and develop supporting sentences. Students are also able to get immediate feedback from the teacher, thus enhancing their learning. This activity can also be adapted to any level by adjusting the questions. It can also accommodate class sizes up to 30 to 40 students. The questions are easy to prepare, and this activity can be used as a warm-up for every class over a term.

JALT2014

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Collaboratively adapting graded readers into comic strips

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Quick Guide

- **Keywords:** Direct and reported speech, comics, graded readers, collaboration
- **Learner English level:** Pre-intermediate and above
- **Learner maturity:** High school and above
- **Preparation time:** 30 minutes to 1 hour
- **Activity time:** 1-2 hours
- **Materials:** Graded readers, writing and drawing materials, comic strip caption template, handout containing questions

In EFL classes, reading is often a passive activity in which students practice skimming and scanning techniques before answering some questions to check their comprehension. More active approaches to reading may involve discussion questions about a text, writing a new ending to a story, and so on. The activity here presents a new way for learners to process a text and demonstrate their comprehension. Through the use of graded readers and subsequent production of short comic strip captions, learners are encouraged to actively transfer information from one source to another in an engaging and creative way. When the activity is done with a whole class, these abilities can be extended to the collaborative adaptation of an entire book. This activity assumes and utilizes the students' knowledge of certain grammar forms, such as

direct and reported speech, and could be positioned towards the end of a reading skills course.

Preparation

Step 1: Find a suitable graded reader in accordance with your students' level. It should be short and contain only a few concise chapters, each a few pages long with the language level reflecting the ability of your students.

Step 2: Make enough photocopies for small group work. For example, one chapter can be shared between two or three students. If students have access to their own copies, encourage students to use them. Consider any copyright infringements before making photocopies.

Step 3: Put together a worksheet containing a series of blank captions in the style of a comic book (see Appendix A).

Procedure

Step 1: Arrange students into small groups, ideally one group for each chapter in the graded reader depending on class numbers and practicalities. Randomly assign each group a chapter or two from the book. Label each group with a letter (*A*, *B*, *C*, etc.) making sure these are random and unrelated to the order of their corresponding chapters.

Step 2: Instruct students to read the chapter(s) from the graded reader and make notes about key plot points, characters, dialogue, and so on. Allow ample time to record and plan the necessary information.

Step 3: Bring students together and show them the blank comic strip template (see Appendix A). Encourage students to transfer their notes to the blank comic strips provided using the compiled notes on their chapter(s). Monitor their progress.

Step 4: Allow students enough time to finish the language transfer. Any unfinished images can be left for homework.

Step 5: At this stage, students still won't know the correct order of the entire narrative. Hand out a series of questions to the group (see Appendix B) and instruct students to exchange information about their chapters.

Step 6: Elicit from students the agreed order of the narrative by getting everyone to stand in a line holding their comic strips. Correct as necessary.

Variations

For an advanced class or writing-orientated class, this activity can be reversed, with the students adapting a comic strip into a narrative.

Conclusion

This activity helps students engage with a text on several levels. Not only will they have to understand the narrative and characters, but also have to understand direct and reported dialogue in order to change one into the other. In addition, they will be encouraged to focus on the descriptive language in the text to produce visual depictions of scenes. This activity can stimulate the learning of new vocabulary, challenge learners' comprehension of the text on a deeper level than is often required, and engage them in practicing the transfer of dialogue from direct to reported speech. The students will leave the class with a piece of work they can be proud of collectively.

Appendices

The appendices are available from the online version of this article at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

TED: Helping students realize the power of the English language

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Quick guide

- **Key words:** Motivation, real-world, thought-provoking, listening, note-taking skills, varieties of English.
- **Learner English level:** Intermediate and above
- **Learner maturity:** High school to adult
- **Preparation time:** 30-60 minutes
- **Activity time:** 60 minutes

- **Materials**: TED.com, computer with Internet connection, projector

Many English classes conducted with a video clip have students complete worksheets emphasizing vocabulary and grammar. This type of activity can divert attention from the content and turn the activity into a structural drill. In order to avoid this pitfall, I make great use of TED Talks. TED is an open forum for all sorts of ideas that can change attitudes, lives, and even the world. TED invites influential people from all over the globe to talk on various topics for 3 to 60 minutes. All talks are English subtitled! It is easy to find a short but illuminating talk to improve students' listening and note-taking skills.

Preparation

Step 1: Go to TED.com. At the top of the homepage are links, such as *Talks*, *Speakers*, and so on. *Talks* is the best place to search for suitable videos for classes.

Step 2: Click *Talks* and a sidebar appears on the left to help choose a talk based on five criteria: (1) available subtitles, (2) TED event names, (3) talk length, (4) description and rating, and (5) topics. It is always a good idea to look for a video rated either *persuasive* or *informative* so you can use the video for a follow-up discussion.

Step 3: Click the video you want to show. You can obtain an English transcript by clicking the link marked *Show Transcript* under the video screen.

Step 4: Read through the transcript and check whether there are too many words unfamiliar to your students.

Procedure

Step 1: To activate students' schemata, give the title and topic of the video. Ask students what they think the speaker is going to talk about and have them write what they know about the topic.

Step 2: Have students get into groups of three and share what they wrote. Call on a few students to tell their thoughts to the rest of the class.

Step 3: Introduce key vocabulary necessary to understand the gist of the talk.

Step 4: Play the video and ask students to jot down main ideas. Tell them they do not have to write down every word they hear and that they will have two more chances to watch the video.

Step 5: Instruct students to look for supporting ideas during the second viewing. Play the video again. Then, allow students some time to share their notes with others around them.

Step 6: Instruct students to make more detailed notes during the last viewing. Play the video.

Step 7: After showing the video, have students form pairs and summarize the video while referring to their notes.

Step 8: Elicit summaries from a few groups. Write these on the board.

Step 9: If you chose a video rated *persuasive*, ask students to think about possible opposing views. If you chose a video rated *informative*, ask students to think of questions the speaker has to answer to make his/her point. Call on a few students and have them write on the board.

Step 10: As a class, discuss if the idea is worth spreading or not and why.

Extension

If you have already shown a few TED Talks and students are familiar with TED Talks, you can ask students to critique the presentation style (e.g., slides, tone, styles, etc.), analyze the variety of English the speaker speaks, and think about why the talk is important in today's world.

Conclusion

This activity is useful for helping students realize the utility of English while motivating them and providing authentic opportunities to hone note-taking skills. Owing to the nature of TED Talks, content and delivery are fascinating, so students pay great attention. Many of my students have mentioned they watch TED Talks just for their amusement outside of class and want to be able to understand the videos' content without Japanese subtitles. This activity is a good way to demonstrate how English competence is meaningful and productive.

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Letters to the future: *Tanabata* and learning goals

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Study abroad, goal-setting, *Tanabata*
- **Learner English level:** Intermediate to advanced
- **Learner maturity:** University
- **Preparation time:** Variable
- **Activity time:** 45 minutes
- **Materials:** Printed instructions, a lettermelater.com (or similar) account, *Tanabata* decorations (optional)

This is a simple technique that uses the occasion of *Tanabata* as an opportunity for students to identify important educational goals and revisit them with an email sent to themselves at a specific time in the future. I use this activity with students who are going to study abroad. Their goals focus on making the most of their time overseas. However, this activity can be used to support students in setting and moving toward a range of goals. *Tanabata* is a celebration of the annual meeting of two celestial lovers who must remain separated for the rest of the year. For *Tababata*, people in Japan write their wishes on strips of paper, which they hang from bamboo branches. The results are beautiful: many colorful strips of paper hanging amidst green bamboo leaves. For the activity described here, instead of writing these wishes on strips of paper alone, learners also put them into an email message in the form of carefully crafted goals, which they will receive at a strategically chosen time in the future.

Procedure

Step 1: Ask students in small groups to discuss their educational goals for the area specified in class. In my class, students talk about how they plan to make the most of their time abroad and describe their ideal study-abroad experiences.

Step 2: If desired, distribute colored strips of paper and ask each student to write his or her learning goals on one in as much detail as possible. When finished, students can hang the strips on real or artificial bamboo leaves, which can be affixed to the board with magnets. Students could also simply write in their notebooks or on a handout prepared for the occasion.

Step 3: Tell students they will send these *Tanabata* wishes—their learning goals—to their future selves at a time when they will be able to revisit the goals, assess their progress, and make adjustments if necessary. I ask my students, who spend at least a semester abroad, to write an email message to themselves about their study-abroad goals and schedule the messages to arrive two to three weeks after they arrive in their study-abroad countries.

Step 4: Explain how lettermelater.com, or a similar website, works. Pass out basic instructions on using the website.

Step 5: Encourage students to set up the email messages as quickly as possible after the class, and follow up with students in subsequent classes to ensure they have arranged for their goals to be sent.

Variation

Instructors can put in place an opportunity for students to further process their goals once they have received their emails from the past. For example, students can check in via email or in person with a prearranged partner. They could also send a short self-assessment to the instructor. A third possibility would be to ask students to respond to their goals in a journal.

Conclusion

This is a simple activity with a payoff that goes beyond the space of classroom and the time afforded by the semester. I use this activity on the occasion of *Tanabata* to help students identify goals for their study-abroad experiences, but it would work well for instructors who would like to support their students in individually developing language skills during the summer vacation. In its most basic form, with no bamboo leaves or paper strips, this activity requires minimal preparation. If instructors choose to

take some additional steps, they can create a festive atmosphere. I feel this is a great way to celebrate students' goals for the future as the semester draws to a close.

Using recipe production to teach group creativity

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Creativity, recipes, food project ideas
- **Learner English level:** Beginners and up
- **Learner Maturity:** University
- **Preparation time:** 20 minutes
- **Activity time:** 180 minutes
- **Materials:** Handout, blank pieces of paper, whiteboard and whiteboard pens.

Many ESL students at the university level are used to studying textbook units for a class or two. Delving into a food unit more deeply is very productive and can offer students more creative activities. Instead of moving on swiftly to the next unit in the textbook, students follow up the unit on food with an exciting project. This project is the creation of a recipe through a group presentation. This kind of group work requires the use of creativity and imagination. The final product shows the teacher and class how students can come together to create wonderful culinary dishes through the use of the board, some artistry, and teamwork.

Preparation

Have students focus on a food unit in a textbook. Focus on vocabulary and verbs associated with cooking. Highlight how recipes are used when creating dishes.

Procedure

Step 1: Show the class a video clip of someone making a dish on YouTube or a similar service.

Step 2: Choose a recipe and demonstrate the preparation and cooking process on the board using defined steps and simple vocabulary. This can be done through the use of improvisation using lots of body language.

Step 3: Get students into groups. Tell them they can create an original recipe; choosing a favorite from memory or from the internet via their cell phone, tablet, or PC.

Step 4: Have students brainstorm on blank paper and come up with ideas. If students are having problems with this, create a mind-map on the board to help them come up with ideas.

Step 5: Give each group blank recipe templates, either one per group or one per student. The handout should help guide the students in creating their recipe coherently. A handout would include the recipe title, ingredients and steps. There can be room for sketches of each step to go along with their written detailing of subsequent steps. If this is the first time doing this in the class, keeping their recipes short and written in fewer than five steps is ideal.

Step 6: Check group progress. Check grammar and spelling on the handouts. Encourage students to work together and efficiently.

Step 7: At this point, the 90 minute lesson should be coming close to an end. Assign the handouts as homework and inform students that they must hand in the good copy of their recipe to the teacher.

Step 8: At the start of the second class, the teacher should go over the recipes of each group. This can be done quickly. The point of the activity is group participation, creative recipe creation, and the end product which is the presentation.

Step 9: Group by group, students stand in front of the class. They transfer their recipe from the paper to the board. This takes teamwork. For example if there is a group with three students, one student could be the artist, one could coach, and one could be directing the information from the handout to the artist.

Step 10: After each group is finished the class should discuss their opinions about each presentation.

Conclusion

This is a fun and creative activity for students. It enables a lot of group work and team coordination. The idea of such an activity is that students be creative, team players and that they learn to think on the fly while using English. Students will take away a further understanding of how to create recipes in a fun and fluid atmosphere. The point of the presentation is to let students work together; the teacher must give them space and time and not constantly talk or interrupt them. The final presentation should be a process whereby the students complete something on their own.

Appendix

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

Transcribing poster talks to foster reflective learning

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Quick guide

- **Keywords**: Moodle, Voicethread, speed, practice, recording, transcribe, error correction
- **Learner English level**: False beginner to advanced
- **Learner maturity**: High school to adult
- **Preparation time**: 30 minutes
- **Activity time**: Approximately 180 minutes
- **Materials**: Student posters, computers, headsets

Students often let out a melancholy groan in a class when the teacher announces today's topic is going to be about something mundane like holidays. It is often the case, however, that when pushed to give more details (in other words, more in-depth output) about such subjects, even more advanced students struggle with appropriate vocabulary and form. According to Swain (1995), output serves three main functions for language learners. It prompts them to test hypotheses, allows them to notice gaps in language use, and acts as a spring board for metalinguistic awareness. The purpose of this activity is to create such a situation where students are pushed to speak outside their comfort zones and in turn reflect on where it is they fall short.

Preparation

Step 1: (Optional) Set up a Moodle page for your class and add an assignment link for students to upload their transcripts.

Step 2: Have students create a Voicethread.com account to use for the recording section of this activity.

Step 3: Link your students' accounts on Voicethread.com with your own by adding them to your friend list. Create a class thread and send out an invite to all members to contribute (with editing privileges).

Procedure

Step 1: Choose a topic relevant to your students' lives, for example, family, future plans, and so on. Develop schema and establish key grammar and vocabulary through the use of warm-up activities. Then set out guidelines for a poster talk. For example, it will be 2:30 in length, include five designated talking points, make use of specific grammar and/or vocabulary.

Step 2: Have students create personalized posters about the topic on Microsoft Word consisting of images only. This can be homework. These posters will act as visual aids to support students in the practice stage to help them organize their ideas into an orderly fashion.

Step 3: Have students practice by pairing them up and having them talk about their posters under timed conditions. This is very useful as it makes students aware of the importance of speed, clarity, and time management. It is important to note that the scripts should not be used as the key objective of this activity is to have students speak naturally about the topic.

Step 4: Instruct students to log in to Voicethread.com and upload their posters to the class thread set up beforehand. Then have students record and rerecord themselves speaking until they are happy with the quality of their work. This may take around 25-30 minutes.

Step 5: Have students listen back to their recordings and transcribe themselves onto a new Word document. Then instruct students to go through it and highlight any parts in which they feel are not correct or they feel could be improved on. Afterwards, have students copy and paste the transcript below the original and try and make corrections to it, this time highlighting their corrections in another color.

Step 6: Finally, put students into groups where they read their transcripts, show their repairs, and offer each other advice on how to improve their work. Finally, students upload their transcripts onto Moodle to be checked and graded.

Follow-up activity

Once the teacher has gone through the transcripts, common errors can be noted and a quiz activity can easily be created to reinforce the reflective theme.

Conclusion

This activity has proven to be effective with different levels of L2 learners. The no-script, time-restricted, and content-intensive boundaries set for the poster talks makes even the most ordinary topics challenging. Yet, students' ability to delete and rerecord their talks until satisfied creates a low-stress environment and an enjoyable, reflective learning experience.

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JALT2014

Conversations Across Borders

Nov 21-24, 2014

Tsukuba International Congress Center, Tsukuba, Ibaraki

‹jalt.org/conference›

English baseball: A game that gets students' competitive juices flowing

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** English, opposites, competition
- **Learner English level:** Elementary to false beginner
- **Learner maturity:** Junior high school and above
- **Preparation time:** Approximately 15-20 minutes
- **Activity time:** 30-60 minutes, depending on class size
- **Materials:** Printed flash cards with antonyms on front and back, printed handouts, baseball caps and gloves (optional)

This is a fun, fast-reaction game where students can enjoy competing with each other while using familiar English vocabulary words. This game is my creation, but the idea is based on arithmetic baseball, which my third grade teacher used to use to successfully motivate math-hating students in our elementary school.

Preparation

Step 1: Give students the printed handouts a week before playing the game if possible. The words used can be any part of speech, though I have found adjectives to work best. About six to ten pairs of words are sufficient though using more is possible. Read through the handout words with students. They should answer with opposites as in the following:

Teacher: *Hot.*

Students: *Cold.*

Try asking questions to elicit answers from the designated word pairs.

Teacher: *Is it hot today?*

Students: *No, it's cold.*

Step 2: After reading through the word pairs, have them turn their handouts over on the back. Now they must answer without looking at the handout.

Step 3: Once they can answer without the handout, begin using the flash cards. When the teacher shows hot on one side, they must say cold as quickly as possible. After they master the flash cards, begin the game.

Procedure

Step 1: Divide the class into two teams. Designate team captains next. To decide which team bats first, have the two captains do *janken* or a coin toss. The winning team gets to bat first.

Step 2: Since the team that lost the toss must play defense first, assign positions for students to play. Choose a catcher and first, second, and third basemen. The teacher should be the pitcher the first time students play English baseball. Designate which parts of the room will be home plate, first base, second base and third base. Then, announce the home team's starting lineup and assign students their positions. They take their positions and the teacher assumes the position of pitcher.

Step 3: Decide the visiting team's batting order. Like real baseball, at least three will come up during an inning. It's a batter versus catcher showdown. The teacher "pitches" by showing a flash card to the catcher and batter. If the card shows *hot*, the player answering with *cold* first wins. If the catcher wins, it is a strike. If the batter wins, it is a hit and he or she goes to first base. If catcher and batter answer simultaneously, it is a foul ball. Like real baseball, three strikes and you're out. When a batter reaches first base, the teacher shows a flash card. If the baseman wins, the runner is out. If the runner wins, he or she advances to second. Runners who defeat both second and third basemen, score. Games can be played for nine innings, but two to three innings may be enough for many classes. When pitching, the teacher can use flash cards, read from the handout, or do a combina-

tion of both. First batters and catchers need a few warm-up pitches to get over their nerves. For large classes, teachers should substitute liberally to give "benchwarmers" a chance to play.

Conclusion

I recommend this game because even students with little knowledge of baseball can compete successfully. Also, it can improve motivation, as some boys who were unenthusiastic in regular class work came alive during games in my class. English baseball requires eight students, but can work with larger classes. Teachers can modify the game to suit their needs. Good luck!

The superhero speed dating game: Using role-playing to spark authentic communication

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Quick guide

- **Keywords**: Role-play, writing, speaking, listening
- **Learner English level**: Pre-intermediate to advanced
- **Learner maturity:** High school to adult
- **Preparation time:** 20 minutes
- **Activity time:** 60 to 90 minutes
- **Materials:** Lesson handouts, tape, stopwatch

EFL educators in Japan are constantly searching for innovative lesson ideas that will inspire learners and improve their communicative abilities. One strategy that can facilitate oral communication and inject authentic language situations into a classroom is role-playing activities. The lesson plan that follows requires

students to imagine that they are a caped crusader attending a party with other superheroes. The learners create an original profile for their character and discuss this information in a speed dating session. During the activity, the students will have 10 dates with 10 different superheroes. Each date lasts three minutes. At the end of the event, the learners will select a suitable match for their character and make a brief report to their classmates.

Preparation

Step 1: Before the class, print out the lesson handouts (Appendix A – Appendix D).

Step 2: Reconfigure the desks in the classroom into a long line. The male superheroes will sit on one side and the female characters on the other.

Step 3: Create MALE and FEMALE cards. (e.g., 30 students—15 male & 15 female cards)

Procedure

Step 1: Divide the class into small groups. Provide each group with two superhero cards (see Appendix A). The groups must identify the superheroes and their special powers. The teams tape their cards to the board and brainstorm two more superheroes.

Step 2: Bring the groups together. Each team will make a brief report to their classmates.

Step 3: Explain that the students must create an ORIGINAL superhero character. They cannot use any of the characters on the board.

Step 4: Provide the students with a copy of the '*Thunderbolt Woman*' profile card (see Appendix B). Select student volunteers to read the items on the profile card. Review difficult vocabulary (e.g., marital status).

Step 5: The learners select a MALE or FEMALE card from a bag (Note: If a female student selects a MALE card, she must create a male character).

Step 6: Give the students a profile card template (see Appendix C). The learners have 20 minutes to complete their profile cards. They must also sketch a picture of their superhero after the information on the profile card is completed.

Step 7: Provide the students with the '*Speed Dating Activity*' handout (see Appendix D). This will help the students remember their dates and select a partner when the activity is finished.

Step 8: Explain the rules of the game. Each date

is three minutes. Remind them that they are the superheroes (i.e., use first person). The participants shake hands, introduce themselves, ask and answer questions. At exactly three minutes, the instructor will signal it's time to change. The male superheroes stand up and go to their next date. The females remain seated.

Step 9: Before the activity commences, the instructor will model a speed date with a student volunteer. Emphasize that this is a communicative role-play activity and NOT a reading exercise.

Step 10: When the activity is finished, the participants write their character's preferred date on the board. The learners get back into their original group and make a report that highlights the best match for their character.

Conclusion

This activity can be modified for different proficiency levels. Lower level learners might need more time to complete their character profile cards. This task can be assigned for homework and the speed dating game can take place during the next class. The superhero speed dating activity not only brings excitement into the classroom, but it also introduces new vocabulary and enhances the students' writing skills. Most importantly, however, it allows learners to utilize authentic language in a realistic context.

Appendices

The appendices are available from the online version of this article at <jaltpublications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

JALTCALL 2014

- Theme: *New Horizons in CALL*
- Dates: 6-8 June 2014
- Place: Sugiyama Jogakuen Univ. in Nagoya
- Website: <conference2014.jaltcall.org>
- Registration opens April 1, 2014.
- Keynote speaker: Dr. Regine Hampel, The Open University, UK
- Plenary speaker: Dr. Glenn Stockwell, Waseda University

Reviewing grammar through round-robin interviews

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Quick guide

- **Keywords:** Penny Ur, grammar review, modals
- **Learner English level:** Beginner to advanced
- **Learner maturity:** University
- **Preparation time**: 30 minutes
- **Activity time:** 2 days (45 to 60 minutes each)
- **Materials:** Large poster paper (B4/A3 size), markers, example classified advertisements for job positions, computers with Internet, timer

This activity focuses on reviewing a grammar lesson or unit that is communicative and interactive. The original activity is based on an activity from Penny Ur's book, *Grammar practice activities: A practical guide for teachers* (Ur, 1988). This activity is done as a round-robin style interview. Students will divide into equal number groups and become a hiring committee. Not only will each group be in charge of "hiring" a new employee, but they will also each individually attend an interview for another job. Therefore, during the actual interview, students will leave temporarily to interview for another position, while their other group members remain interviewers.

Preparation

Step 1: Students should already be familiar with the target grammar or focus.

Step 2: Give students an overview sheet of the next two days. Include grading criteria, class procedure each day, homework, and discussion questions. Discussion questions should reflect the types of grammar the teacher wants to review.

Step 3: The teacher should prepare ahead of time the materials needed from prep day (classified ads, discussion questions, posters, markers) and for interview day (example interviews, stopwatch, group assignments).

Procedure

Step 1: Begin the lesson by showing students various classified advertisements for different job opportunities. Ask students to discuss in small groups whether or not they have had work experience or if they want to apply for any of these jobs.

Step 2: Distribute review or guide sheet. Have students discuss and create wanted posters for their hiring position. Let students be creative, but make sure that they are using the target grammar (e.g., modals) in their poster.

Step 3: Students post their wanted ads around the room. Afterwards, students are selected (either by the teacher ahead of time, randomly, or by some other method) for an interview for a different position; they can get up and observe the wanted poster. Let students take pictures with their cellphones since they will need the job information in order to prepare for their interview.

Step 4: Tell students that they will need to come up with 10 interview questions in their hiring committee, either with remaining class time or as homework. Each group member should receive a copy of the interview questions and practice them before interview day.

Step 5: Remind students that they have two different tasks over the weekend: to prepare to interview their classmates as a hiring committee, and also prepare for their own selected interview. If time permits, have students brainstorm possible questions/answers for their own interviews.

Day 2

Step 1: Ask students if they have ever had an interview before. Let them discuss some good/bad interviewing techniques. Consider showing a video of two different interviews and having them discuss which one is better and why.

Step 2: Allow students to ask questions about their interview questions, pronunciation, or prepare for their own interview. Remind interviewers that they should take notes during the interview in order to select the best candidate at the end.

Step 3: Conduct the interviews. Each student interviews for three minutes, with one minute afterwards for interviewers to discuss their notes. Students should know their order ahead of time.

Step 4: Allow time for students to discuss which candidate is accepted for the job and provide two reasons why. Present the winners to the whole class.

Conclusion

I believe that this type of activity allows students to engage with target grammar structures in a meaningful and communicative way. It blends discussion, group work, individual work, and communication activities together into a 2- to 3-day project. For evaluation, I typically combine group and individual scores, placing emphasis on poster creation, interview questions, and overall effort in the interview.

References

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TLT RESOURCES
BOOK REVIEWS

…with Robert Taferner

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

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

BOOK REVIEWS ONLINE: A linked index of Book Reviews can be found at:

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

This month's column features Brendan Van Deusen's evaluation of *World in Focus*.

World in Focus

[Rebecca Moeller. Tokyo: CENGAGE Learning, 2013. pp. 112. ¥2,520 (including DVD). ISBN: 978-1-285-19751-7.]

Reviewed by Brendan Van Deusen, Nagasaki International University

World in Focus is a video course book aimed at high-beginner to intermediate students with a suggested TOEIC score of 380-700. The book draws content from *National Geographic*, with each of the 15 units focusing on a topic related to culture, science, or the natural world. The book's stated aim is to prepare learners to join the *global community*. The book is ideal for university students who are interested in learning about general interest topics through English.

Each six-page unit has been designed for supporting students to understand the content and accomplish the communication tasks. The first two pages of every unit present introductory and vocabulary questions to help students grasp the topic and linguistic content. Students also accomplish a task while watching the video, such as sequencing events, which helps scaffold the viewing experience (Ellis, 2003). The third page presents a reading passage that mirrors the video content. The fourth and fifth pages offer comprehension and listening skills practice for use with the video.

Each unit concludes with a section on grammar and a communication task.

Although the book does not directly discuss pedagogy, the publisher describes *World in Focus* as offering a multidisciplinary approach to language learning. Upon closer inspection, the book is structured as a notional functional syllabus with what Littlewood (2004) describes as structured communication tasks. For example, Unit 14 concludes with an explanation of superlative adjectives, form-focused exercises, and a task where students select which parts of the Hajj that they would most like to watch and why.

The videos and readings are the main focus of each unit. The videos last an average of three to four minutes, which I found was long enough to present the topic while maintaining students' interest. One helpful feature of the DVD is the option to show English subtitles during playback. Subtitles in other languages are not included. As Ellis (2003) points out, modifying the input can affect the difficulty of a task. In this way, it is possible to use subtitles to modify the difficulty of video-related tasks. The DVD also includes audio for the reading passages and video segments for comprehension and listening-skills questions. The only criticism I have of the DVD is that the content can appear dated at times due to people's fashion and the lack of widescreen playback.

As far as support materials are concerned, the teacher's manual only consists of answer keys to the textbook questions and Japanese translations of the reading passages. Teaching suggestions and additional activities are not included. There is also no teacher's version of the textbook or DVD, though I did not find this to be problematic. I was pleased that the DVD is included with every student book so students have full access to all of the videos.

I used *World in Focus* with a second year class of 12 students majoring in either International Tourism or Social Work. Based on my observations, the videos, topics, and layout of the book appealed to students. It was easy to connect the content with students' main area of study. For example, I modified a communication task that called for students to list the advantages and disadvantages of living in Venice so that students considered the problem from the perspective of tourists, seniors, or people with disabilities.

There are a lot of practice activities for working through the content, averaging around 55 questions per unit. At times, I opted to have students complete schematic diagrams instead of some of the textbook questions. As Anderson (2003) states, "Concept maps and unstructured drawings enable teachers to gain a deeper understanding of their students' understanding" (p. 76). I found that schematic diagrams were effective both as a change of pace and as a way for students to demonstrate a holistic understanding of the content. Though most university students will have covered the main grammar points before, in some cases the grammar sections were helpful. At other times, I found it more helpful to focus students' attention on discourse and genre conventions of the texts.

Overall, *World in Focus* is highly recommended as a source of interesting content that is easy to use and adapt according to one's teaching situation. Ample support is provided in the form of vocabulary and comprehension questions, high quality photos, and grammar practice. The readings and videos complement each other and provide a meaningful context for communication in the classroom.

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Recently Received

...with Steve Fukuda

<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

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

RECENTLY RECEIVED ONLINE

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

Books for Students (reviewed in *TLT*)

Contact: Steve Fukuda
<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

* *Breakthrough Plus*. Craven, M. Oxford, UK: Macmillan, 2013. [5-level communication-focused course based on CEFR incl. student books, digibook, test generator, and online support webpage w/ videos, worksheets, and downloadable audio files].

Decide for Yourself: Debating Controversial Global Issues. Rabbini, R. Tokyo: Cengage Learning, 2012. [14-unit course book centered on critical thinking skills and strategies to promote reading and speaking competency incl. teacher's manual w/ audio CD].

* *English for Mass Communication*. Horie, H., Kato, K., Konishi, K., Miyazaki, S., & Uchino, Y. Tokyo: Asahi Press, 2013. [10-unit course book focused on reading current events w/ teacher's manual and downloadable audio files].

Getting Into English. Cronin, J., & Bray, E. Tokyo: Nan'un-do, 2013. [15-unit oral communication course book for beginner-level students incl. teacher's manual w/ final exams and audio CD].

Global Outlook. Bushell, B., & Dyer, B. New York: McGraw Hill ELT, 2013. [3-level intermediate to advanced basic reading skills and strategies series incl. student books w/audio CD and answer key].

* *Interactive English*. Uchida, M., Nelms, R., & Kameyama, H. Tokyo: Shohakusya, 2013. [2-level course incl. 2 reading and 2 TOEIC® test textbooks used individually or simultaneously for intermediate learners incl. student books w/ self-study audio CD, teacher's manual, and smartphone application].

Modern Japanese Grammar: A Practical Guide. McGloin, N. H., Endo-Hudson, M., Nazikian, F., & Kakegawa, T. New York: Routledge, 2014. [Reference guide and practical usage manual for learners of Japanese covering traditional and function-based grammar].

Performance: Conversations Scenes from Everyday Life. Harrington, D., & LeBeau, C. Eugene, OR: Languages Solutions Incorporated, 2013. [12-unit course book focused on using drama theory and role play methodology incl. teacher's book and internet support].

* *Structure, Structure, Structure: The Best Guide to Reading and Writing Ever*. Gale, S., Fukuhara, S., & Cross, T. Tokyo: Nan'un-do, 2012. [14-unit essay writing course based using model reading passages incl. student book w/ audio CD, teacher's manual].

! *Top Grammar Plus*. Becker, L., Frain, C., Hill, D., & Thomas, K. Crawley, UK: Helbling Langauges. [3-level comprehensive grammar series incl. exam practice, e-zone online activities, and teacher's books w/ tests].

VOA News Clip Collection. Yasunami, S., & Lavin, R. S. Tokyo: Seibido, 2014. [15-unit integrated skills course based on VOA clips and reading texts incl. teacher's manual, classroom DVD and CD].

! *Writing Points! Basic Grammar for Better Writing*. Okuda, T., & Allan A. Tokyo: Kinseido, 2012. [12-unit writing course focused on basic grammar incl. student book w/ audio data, classroom CD, teacher's manual, translations, and review tests].

Books for Teachers (reviewed in *JALT Journal*)

Contact: Greg Rouault
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Identity and Language Learning: Extending the Conversation (2nd ed.). Norton, B. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2013.

Learning Vocabulary in Another Language (2nd ed.). Nation, I. S. P. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

2nd Annual *Reacting to the Past* Workshop
- Saturday, March 15, 9:00-17:30 (one day only)
- Sophia University, Yotsuya campus
- Registration ¥2000 yen for members, ¥3000 for non-members
- Register at <jalt-rttp2014.peatix.com>

"Reacting to the Past" (RTTP) is an exciting educational approach that uses content to get students to engage in debates, research and prepare papers and speeches, in a way that allows students to develop invaluable critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork skills. Several games are currently in use at universities in Japan. The two games to be run in this one-day workshop are "Legacy of the 47 Ronin" and "The Threshold of Democracy, Athens in 403 B.C." Participants will be assigned a role in which to engage in one of the games. Role sheets and readings will be sent to participants by March 8th in order to prepare.

TLT RESOURCES
OUTSIDE THE BOX

…with Adam Lebowitz

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

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

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

Text, text, text . . . we claim to know what it means, but what does it *mean*? Comprehension is one thing, but trying to get to the heart of the writer's message—including the message the writer herself is trying to hide—requires a different skill set beyond what we generally consider to be "L2 education". Enter discourse, that friend of linguists and litterateurs alike; University of Tsukuba instructor Michael Tesseron thinks we should have our charges handle it head-on, lest it handle us!

Discourse analysis and beyond

Michael Tasseron

We live in times more exciting than anyone apart from Orwell could have imagined. The revelations about the NSA surveillance programs and the disclosures by Wikileaks have radically changed perceptions about information gathering and dissemination. The function of information as a tool used to persuade, to shape opinions or perpetuate stereotypes is clearly apparent.

Texts may convey meanings that are not always obvious (Paltridge, 2006), and raising learner awareness about this can be beneficial (Fenton-Smith, 2013). Now it is time to create a curriculum that reflects this. To this end, discourse analysis, text structuring strategies, document classification, and other basic techniques of information management should be an integral component of any compulsory L2 course. This will develop critical thinking and an awareness of the function of discourse beyond the all too familiar comprehension skills.

Critical discourse analysis can be applied easily to class materials at all levels of ability. For example, at its most basic level, we can teach students how to become more aware of persuasive elements in a television commercial. Understanding the emotive language in a newspaper column can help illuminate subtexts, such as the nationalist undercurrents to hosting international sporting events. More advanced classes can compare the structure of academic journal articles with other media, with the aim being that learners approach subsequent texts differently, and hopefully develop the appropriate reading strategies in dealing with them.

At the lexical level, this approach may aid learners in improving not only their vocabulary, but also their knowledge of how certain words and phrases function within a text beyond "definitions". Learners are also encouraged to respond to the subject matter in any way they deem to be appropriate. In doing so, they can engage with each other and discover more about what is conveyed in the materials they routinely encounter in their environment.

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Fenton-Smith, B. (2013). The application of discourse analysis. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.) *Applied linguistics and materials development* (pp. 127-141). London: Bloomsbury.

TLT RESOURCES
TLT WIRED

…with Edo Forsythe

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

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

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

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

With the proliferation of tablet computers such as the iPad, Surface, Asus Transformer Pad, and others, teachers and students have an excellent opportunity to individualize learning and reduce the use of paper in the classroom. This issue's column focuses on two instances of the integration of tablet computers into educational programs. The first article provides a list of things to consider before taking the leap toward tablets, and the second article details the pros and cons experienced by teachers in an all-iPad mini school. I hope this information will help you in your efforts to make your classrooms *Wired!*

The transition to tablets

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Envisage a classroom in which learners are in charge of decisions such as whether to replay a listening, re-read a text, or move on to the next activity. Making the transition from teacher-centered instruction to autonomous, individualized learning was the primary impetus for our decision to adopt tablet computers as the means of providing instructional content. Tablets are an effective way to put learners in control of the choices, material, and activities that define their learning. Hardware quality has increased even as tablet prices have decreased, creating a win-win situation for both language teachers and learners. By harnessing the Internet and wireless LAN in the classroom, it is possible to take advantage of the exponential increase in the volume of English language content and the number of learning applications. Below are 10 aspects we considered in detail that facilitated a smooth transition to tablets.

1. Digital delivery system

Storing content, sharing data and collaborating online can be as easy as opening a Google account. We opted for Moodle, an open-source learning management system to create our virtual learning environment, but Canvas is also another easy-to-use, out-of-the-box choice.

2. Content creation

Content is key. MoodleReader (Robb & Kano, 2013) and commercial spaced repetition software (SRS) services such as iKnow! and EnglishCentral were made available to students from the outset (see Godwin-Jones, 2010 for a discussion on SRS and vocabulary learning). Four modular courses were created in response to an extensive needs analysis. Two recommendations we would make are to set up a shared Google account to use for online accounts, such as Prezi and Survey Monkey and to create how-to videos using screen capturing software, such as Screenium for Apple computers.
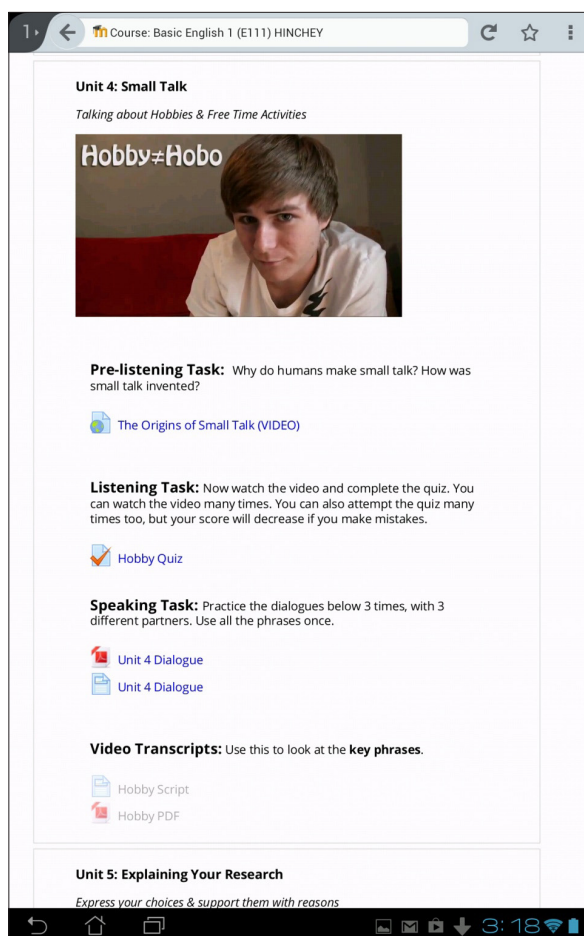
Figure 1. Screenshot of the courseware used on a school-provided tablet.

3. Wireless LAN

On a wireless network, students can easily form new conversation groups or change partners while having the lesson goals, example dialogues, and a list of core speaking strategies available at the swipe of a fingertip on their tablets.

4. School- or student-owned devices

Providing learners a standard tablet reduces compatibility issues and the need for testing content on multiple platforms, since content is accessed using the same type of device. However, incorporating learners' own Internet-enabled devices means not only fewer devices need to be purchased, prepared, and maintained, but also that learners will be more familiar with the features of their own devices. We opted to encourage all learners to bring their own device, but purchased enough to distribute to those with no device or suffering technological difficulties. We found that over half the students brought their own device.

5. iPad or Android device

Although iPads are the preferred choice in some universities in the US and Japan, we selected tablets using the Android operating system because of their lower price, larger market share and open-source ethos. We also found that expanding external storage was much easier than for iPads.

6. Detachable keyboards

Slate tablets are perfect for in-class use, but we suggest buying a detachable, docking keyboard for administrative use. These keyboards bring various bonus features, such as USB ports for data transfer and longer battery life. Unfortunately for iPad and Google Nexus tablets, only third party providers sell keyboards that are not physically attachable to their tablets. Other advantages of detachable keyboards over Bluetooth keyboards include less lag time on connection to the tablet, easier charging and not having to buy extra cases to make the keyboard and tablet one physical unit.

7. Regular or mini size

Smaller or mini-sized tablets carry a lower price tag, but require more swiping by students to navigate online content. We chose Asus Transformer Pad Infinity tablets (approximately A4 size) to reduce the amount of scrolling needed to access our online courses and to make it easier to answer quiz questions, since learners could view both video clips and quiz questions simultaneously.

8. Application compatibility

The tablets should, of course, be compatible with any learning apps your students use. We chose Android tablets knowing that the commercial learning apps that our students use on their desktops and laptops would also sync data with the mobile apps of commercial services. This gave us the flexibility to fully test apps before considering them for student use. It also left the door open for tablets to be assigned to individual students and potentially be used outside of class.

9. Camera & microphone suitability

Most tablet devices have the ability to record audio and video. Depending on your course objectives, you may want to record your stu-

dents; if so, we recommend selecting one with an option to decrease the quality of recorded video. Standard-definition video quality (480p) is fine for class use and avoids the larger file sizes of high-definition videos.

10. Time, energy, and finance

Each device needs to have the optimum interface to ensure that the tablet does not become a barrier to access the class content or online activities. In order to prepare each tablet for distribution to students, this involved (a) charging the battery, (b) selecting English as the OS language and selecting an English keyboard, (c) disabling the default Android browser and enabling Google Chrome, (d) setting the browser homepage to our online course with appropriate bookmarks, (e) registering the MAC addresses with the school wireless network, and (f) updating the Android OS. The entire process took 20 hours. Our key expenditure was purchasing a set of tablets for classroom use. Since our remit was to develop an e-learning program, we were supported by our division administrators who approved the purchase of 17 Asus Transformer tablets with the standard one-year warranty for just over 250,000 yen in 2012.

Conclusion

Considerable time and energy were required to get the project operational. Although it is difficult to calculate the exact amount of time we dedicated to this transition, we both feel that the rewards are well worth the time and effort necessary. Transitioning to tablets also provided us with valuable experience with e-learning for the future, and puts us in a prime position to take advantage of new, online developments such as the forthcoming free massive open online courses provided by Japanese universities. If you have any questions about making the transition to tablets, feel free to contact the authors.

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The paperless classroom: Pros and cons

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The introduction of the iPad in 2010 raised the possibility of using tablet computers in the classroom to go paperless. At the Bunkyo English Communication Center (BECC) at Hiroshima Bunkyo Women's University, students and teachers are carrying out paperless General English classes every week thanks to the university's decision to give an iPad mini to all incoming students from April 2013. This article will consider some of the practical pros and cons of the paperless classroom we have discovered in our first year.

Pros

Easy transition from current materials

The biggest advantage of going paperless at our institution has been preserving all of our current materials. Our in-house curriculum is made entirely in Microsoft Word, and is easily converted to a PDF file in seconds. Using the PDF annotation app Notability, all our current materials are preserved and can be interacted with on the iPad mini as if it were paper. This ability to mark up PDFs minimizes the disruption caused by introducing iPad minis into lessons, and allows teachers to make changes to their pedagogy at their own pace. Having the soft copy also ensures a backup is always available in case of network failure. Teachers are still able to print lesson materials and distribute to students on paper.

Easy materials management

Materials management in the paperless classroom is improved in many ways. Eliminating the need to print class materials not only saves time and reduces printing costs, but also allows for last-minute editing. One typo no longer necessitates the reprinting of hundreds of booklets

of paper. If materials are stored in an online repository, then they are always available to students in the event that they are absent from class or accidentally delete materials from their device. As an iPad mini is much easier to carry than a large folder full of handouts, students can always access work from previous classes. Distribution of materials is also fast; students can download materials ready for use in class in only a few seconds if a simple website is used to store materials. Google Sites makes for a simple, fast, and free way to store and organize materials.

Enhanced materials

Going paperless also provides an easy way to enhance materials. Materials and handouts that have been carefully designed on computer often lose their visual appeal when printed in monochrome. However, no such loss in quality is experienced in a paperless classroom; students will see materials exactly as the designer intended. Moreover, the iPad provides functions that paper cannot. In the Notability app, PDFs can be enhanced by inserting web clips, images, audio, and figures.

No computers

A big advantage of students carrying their own iPad minis is removing the need to deal with computers. A large amount of time is saved by not getting computers out of cabinets and waiting for them to start. In addition, the familiarity with their device that students gain by using it every class means almost everyone is highly competent at carrying out tasks that used to be done on computers. For example, students using iPad minis at the BECC were able to create presentations much more quickly on the Keynote app than students in previous years who had to use PowerPoint on computers.

Cons

The learning curve

The initial introduction of iPad minis into lessons requires a large amount of training for both students and teachers. As language teachers already have a packed curriculum and are not IT specialists, training before the first class is essential. All students in the BECC received guidance in how to use Notability in Japanese in their IT classes, and students who attended the pre-student day were also given homework to complete in Notability. Teachers also received

three hour-long sessions in using iPad minis in class. Even with this training, the initial pace of lessons was slowed as students and teachers got used to working with class materials on their devices.

Uploading and storage

Although the iPad mini is very convenient for downloading and interacting with lesson materials, turning in assignments or homework from the iPad mini is not as smooth. Similarly the 16 GB memory of the iPad mini base model may not be sufficient for four years of university study. There are a variety of methods for sharing documents and storing files in an external location, such as cloud services (e.g., Dropbox) or sending directly (e.g., email), but generally require students or teachers to sign up for accounts and none provide an experience as smooth as downloading materials to the device. These problems are not insurmountable, but none are currently as easy as uploading from a computer or as convenient as using USB or SD card slots that can be found on many Android devices. There is also the question of how well the iPad minis will stand up to both technological advances and wear and tear over four years of continuous use.

Computer-assisted language learning?

The fact that pedagogy has not been influenced by the introduction of iPad minis can be seen as both a pro and a con. According to the SAMR model (Puentedura, 2012), the iPad mini is functioning as a direct substitute for a lesson handout printed on paper. Given that there is no
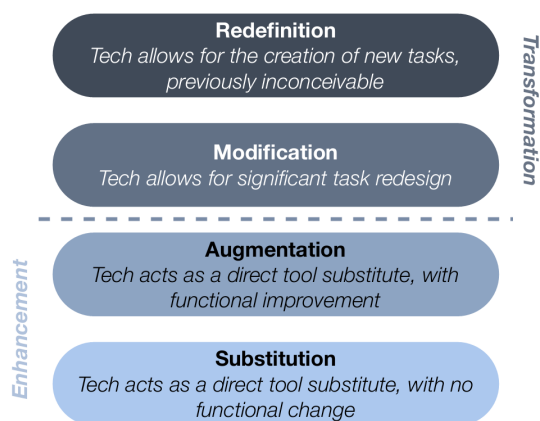

Figure 2. The SAMR model (Puentedura, 2012)

functional difference between writing on a piece of paper and using a stylus to write on an iPad mini screen, we are hardly dealing with CALL at all. On the other hand, if direct substitution is seen as a first step before moving up the SAMR ladder (see Figure 2), paperless is an excellent option. It allows users to get used to the technology using familiar materials and start to enhance their lessons at their own pace. Some teachers have already moved to the augmentation stage by using Notability to embed online content in lesson handouts.

Conclusion

The paperless classroom is a big challenge for not only teachers and students, but also managers and administrators all over the university who have an interest in its success. The initial steps in establishing a paperless classroom may not themselves serve to improve pedagogy, but the numerous practical advantages outweigh the disadvantages and have placed the BECC in a position to greatly enhance the learning experience in the coming years.

Reference

Puentedura, R. R. (2012). *The SAMR Model: Background and Exemplars*. Retrieved from <hippasus.com/rrpweblog/archives/2012/08/23/SAMR_BackgroundExemplars.pdf>

Editor's Note: I hope you found these articles helpful in your preparations to integrate tablets into your program. You can learn more about using technology in the language classroom at JALTCALL 2014 in Nagoya from June 6 – 8, 2014. Check out <conference.jaltcall.org> for more information about the conference and I hope to see you in Nagoya! Until then, keep your students *Wired!*

JALT FOCUS
JALT NOTICES

…with Malcolm Swanson

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

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

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

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

2014 JALT National Elections
Call for Nominations

JALT elections for national officers will be held in 2014. All current JALT members are invited to participate in the process. Voting will be held in September. Now, you are invited to nominate JALT members in good standing who have suitable experience for national office.

PRESIDENT: The President has general responsibility for coordinating the activities of the Executive Board and for directing and publicizing the affairs of JALT. He/she presides at Executive Board and Board of Directors' meetings. The President, with the approval of the Executive Board, appoints the heads of committees, subcommittees, and boards not specified in the constitution and bylaws. The President is a member of all committees. Voting status is designated by the bylaws.

VICE PRESIDENT: The Vice President presides at meetings in the absence of the President and shares the duties and the responsibilities of the presidency. In the absence of both the President and Vice President, another member of the Executive Board, appointed by the President, shall chair the meeting. The Vice President chairs the Administrative Committee and supervises the running of all aspects of JALT Central Office.

DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP: The Director of Membership is responsible for overseeing JALT membership records; coordinating the formation of new affiliates, chapters, and SIGs; formulating and implementing policies governing their

relationship to JALT; and assisting in membership drives. The Director of Membership chairs the Membership Committee.

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM: The Director of Program is responsible for supervising the arrangements for the Annual Conference and for planning special programs and workshops for various chapters and SIGs. The Director of Program chairs the Program Committee.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS: The Director of Public Relations is responsible for coordinating JALT publicity nationally and internationally; promoting relations with educational organizations, media, and industry; finding and developing new Associate Members and institutional subscribers; coordinating Associate Member relations with the business manager and the Director of Program; and liaising with the Publications Board on all matters related to publications. The Director of Public Relations chairs the External Relations Committee.

DIRECTOR OF RECORDS: The Director of Records is responsible for recording and keeping the minutes of Executive Board Meetings and General Meetings, and for keeping the chapters and SIGs informed of the activities of the national organization. The Director of Records chairs the Records and Procedures Committee.

DIRECTOR OF TREASURY: The Director of Treasury maintains all financial records, is responsible for collecting and disbursing all funds of the organization, and presents an account of the financial status of the organization at a General Meeting. The Director of Treasury chairs the Finance Committee.

AUDITOR: The Auditor's duties include the following: inspect the status of business conducted by the Directors; inspect the status of assets of JALT; report to the General Meeting or the concerned governmental authority if, as a result of the inspection specified in the preceding items, improper conduct or important facts indicating violation of laws, regulations, or the Articles of Incorporation with regard to the business or assets of JALT is discovered; convene the General Meeting, if necessary, to submit a report as specified in the preceding item; and present opinions to the Directors on the status of business conducted by the Directors or the status of assets of JALT.

TERM OF OFFICE: All terms are for two years and start immediately after the Ordinary General Meeting that will be held on 23 November 2014 (Sunday) at the JALT2014 international conference. JALT2014 will be held at Epochal Tsukuba International Congress Center, Tsukuba, Ibaraki, 21-24 November 2014.

You can nominate yourself or any other JALT members for any of the positions, with the limitation that you can nominate only one person per position. Please note that any person nominated must be a current member of JALT. Please clearly indicate membership number(s), affiliation(s), and contact information as part of your nomination. Nominations must be sent by email to Bernadette Luyckx <nec@jalt.org>, JALT Nominations and Elections Committee Chair. Nominations must include a brief resume of most recent educational history, current position, JALT experience, and a statement of purpose for the position, in both English (not more than 200 words) and Japanese (not more than 200 characters). Nominations must be submitted by 15 May 2014.

2014年全国選出役員選挙—推薦者募集

以下の役職の選挙が9月に行われることを公示します。これらの役職に適任と思われる会員をご推薦ください。

理事長:理事長は執行役員会の活動を統括し、本学会の事業を指導し周知させる全般的な責任を有する。理事長は、執行役員会及び理事会の議長となる。また執行役員会の承認をもって、各種委員会、小委員会および定款と定款細則に記載されていない役員会の委員長を任命する。理事長はすべての委員会の構成員となるが、投票権については細則に明示される。

副理事長:副理事長は理事長不在の際に会議の議長を務め、理事長の責務を補佐する。理事長、副理事長ともに不在の場合は、理事長の指名により執行役員会のその他のメンバーが会議の議長を務める。副理事長は、総務委員会の議長を務め、JALT事務局の運営全般を管理する。

会員担当理事:会員担当理事は、本会の会員の記録を管理し、新しい準支部ないし準分野別研究部会、支部および分野別研究部会の設立のための調整をはかり、これらのグループと本会の全国組織との関係に関わる方針を定め、実施する責任を持つ。またこれらのグループの会員の獲得を支援する責任を持つ。会員担当理事は、会員担当委員会の議長をつとめる。

企画担当理事:企画担当理事は、年次大会の準備を監督し、支部や分野別研究部会のために特別なプログラムやワークショップを企画する責任を持つ。企画担当理事は企画委員会の議長をつとめる。

広報担当理事:広報担当理事は下記の任務を有する。(1)本学会の国内外の広報活動を統括する。(2)他の教育団体、報道機関、産業界との交流を促進する。(3)新たなビジネス会員、法人購読会員を獲得する。(4)ビジネス　マネ

ージャー・企画担当理事とビジネス会員間の調整役をつとめる。(5)出版関連の事項で、出版委員会との連絡役をつとめる。広報担当理事は、渉外委員会の議長をつとめる。

書記担当理事: 書記担当理事は執行役員会会議及び総会の議事録を作成、管理し、本部の活動について支部と分野別研究部会に周知をはかる責任を持つ。書記担当理事は、記録管理委員会の議長をつとめる。

財務担当理事: 財務担当理事は、すべての経理記録を管理し、本会のすべての資金を収集し、配分する責任を負う。また総会において本会の財務状況の報告を行う。財務担当理事は、財務委員会の議長をつとめる。

監事: 監事は、次に掲げる職務を行う。(1)理事の業務執行の状況を監査すること。(2)この法人の財産の状況を監査すること。(3)前2号の規定による監査の結果、この法人の業務又は財産に関し、不正の行為又は法令、若しくは定款に違反する重大な事実があることを発見した場合には、これを総会又は所轄庁に報告すること。(4)前号の報告をするために必要がある場合には、総会を開催すること。(5)理事の業務執行の状況又はこの法人の財産の状況に就いて、理事に意見を述べること。

任期: すべての役職において任期は、年次国際大会時の2014年11月23日(日)に行われる年次総会直後より２年間とする。JALT2014年次国際大会は、2014年11月21日から24日に茨城県つくば市つくば国際会議場で開催される。

　　推薦は自薦、他薦を問わないが、いずれもJALT正会員である事。連絡時には推薦する者、推薦される者の会員番号と支部名を明記の上、履歴書(最新の教職経歴、現在の職業、JALTでの活動経験を含む)と志望動機を英語(２００ワード以内)と日本語(２００字以内)の併記にて、バーナデッテ・ラウクス宛、Eメールでお送りください。2014年5月15日必着。

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

JALT Environmental Impact Committee

JALT established an Environmental Impact Committee at the June 2013 EBM. We are investigating ways to make JALT a greener organization. If you have any suggestions, big or small, or require further information, please contact <greenjalt@gmail.com> or <brentoldchap@hotmail.com>.

New JALT Associate Members

OISE English Language Coaching

OISE English Language Courses are purpose built for ambitious learners who are looking to excel in an international business or academic environment. The courses focus on all aspects of language learning and develop key soft skills by exposing students to different teaching methods and tasks for a dynamic and immersive programme. Students emerge as confident and proficient users of English. Courses are bespoke and flexible, and classes are taught in small groups for a wholly personalised experience. Teachers come from different professional and academic backgrounds so any subject and level of English can be catered for, whether it be an advanced learner wishing to study specialised language for career advancement, a student wishing to take an exam for entrance into an English speaking university, or a complete beginner. Training centres are located throughout the UK, the USA, Canada, and Australia. OISE also offers summer and year round courses in England, USA, Canada, and Australia for teenagers and young children from ages 7-17.

Kumon English Immersion Camp (EIC)

Kumon English Immersion Camp (EIC) began in 2001 to nurture children who can have successful experiences communicating in English, accept each other's differences, and contribute to the global community. Third to sixth graders who have passed Eiken (STEP) Grade 5 can apply for four-day camp and those who have passed Eiken (STEP) Grade 4 or above can apply for a six-day camp. EIC enables them to communicate with people from different countries and backgrounds.

Aims of English Immersion Camp:
• To allow children to experience successful communication, using English as a global language.
• To allow children to share a communal lifestyle with people from different countries and to realize the importance of understanding each other.
• To allow children to have confidence to actively challenge the unfamiliar and to strive for higher goals.

EIC slogan "Don't be afraid of making mistakes. Let's try communicating in English."

What is important is not for them to use English without making mistakes, but to use English without *the fear* of making mistakes.

Kumon English Immersion Camp (EIC) は英語のコミュニケーションの成功体験を持ち、お互いの違いを受け止め、地球社会に貢献する子どもたちを育てるために2001年より始まりました。小学校3~6年生が対象で、英検5級に合格した生徒は4 daysキャンプ、英検4級以上に合格した生徒は6 daysキャンプに応募することができます。また、ＥＩＣを通じて子どもたちは色々な国や異なるバックグラウンドの人たちとコミュニケーションすることができるようになります。

EICの目的

• 世界共通語である英語を使ったコミュニケーションの成功体験をもつこと

• 子どもたちが、いろいろな国や地域の人たちとの共同生活を通じて、それぞれの考え方や文化を知り、地球人としてお互いを理解することの大切さを知ること

• 子どもたちが、自信を持ち、未知のことにも積極的に挑戦しようとする力、さらに高い目標に向かって努力しようという意欲を高めること

EICスローガン「間違いを恐れないで英語のコミュニケーションに挑戦しよう」

大切なのは、英語を間違わずに使うことではなく、間違いを恐れずに、どんどん英語を使おうとする姿勢です。

日本公文教育研究会

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JALT FOCUS
SHOWCASE

…with Kristen Sullivan

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

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

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

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

In this issue of Showcase, Malcolm Swanson and Steve Paton share their experience of participating in the 2013 Apple Distinguished Educator programme.

Apple's Distinguished Educator programme
Malcolm Swanson & Steve Paton

Every two years, Apple opens up its Distinguished Educator programme <apple.com/education/apple-distinguished-educator> to new inductees. As its website states, "Apple Distinguished Educators (ADEs) are part of a global community of education leaders recognized for doing amazing things with Apple technology in and out of the classroom." With both of us having a strong background in and passion for using Apple's technology in the classroom, we decided to apply for the 2013 intake. The application process is not for the lighthearted. It involves not just a lengthy written application, but also the creation of a video that introduces the applicant and what they are doing in their programmes. With Apple's penchant for creativity, that video

in itself needs to showcase the applicant's inventiveness and expertise. Finally, there is a long list of agreements that need to be signed by both the applicant and their institution.

Apple selected around 20 people from Japan to join its Asia-Pacific programme, and we were invited to take part in their six-day event in Bali, Indonesia. We had to fly ourselves there, but all accommodation (in the sumptuous Pan Pacific Nirwana Bali Resort) and in-country costs were covered by Apple.

At this stage, you're probably thinking that a six-day junket on Apple's dime sounds like a wonderful vacation, but it was anything but relaxing! From 8:00am to 7:00pm every day, we, along with 300 other highly motivated attendees from everywhere between China and New Zealand, took part in back-to-back seminars and workshops on everything from advanced instruction in software use to action research methodology. Through all this, we were being guided towards defining a final project that we would carry back to complete in our home countries. Malcolm chose to focus on using e-books for academic writing. This is part of a programme he is working on in his university to help students stuck with the drudgery of writing research papers to bring other media and better typography into their work. Steve's topic was on developing the use of Keynote software for language-teaching purposes. Rather than just using it as a presentation tool, he has developed a whole range of classroom materials to graphically teach content to his students.

Every evening, after the sessions were finished, one of the five regional zones in the area would showcase how two or three people in their group were utilizing Apple's technologies in their educational environments. Most of these were very slick Steve Jobs-style presentations on how mass rollouts of MacBooks and iPads are being used in highly funded settings. However, for many of us, the highlight was a simple and elegant demonstration by Japan's Hyu Yamaguchi, showing how he is using iPad applications to help Okinawan special-needs students become independent learners. Seeing footage of those students' faces, as they finally escaped their dependency on others for learning assistance, was both humbling and moving.

Back in Japan, we got stuck into our "homework", which was to produce a multi-media chapter for an e-book on classroom technologies that Apple is collating. We were all provided with an iBooks Author template to use, and submitted our work for peer review using the Japan group's Basecamp <basecamp.com> project management site. Collaboration between members still continues with regular workshops in the Kansai/Kanto areas. Members are also collaborating with Kanda University of International Studies to host the *Paperless: Innovation & technology in education* mini-conference. There are fewer ADE members down here in the Kyushu area, but the two of us have run workshops at the Apple Store in Fukuoka, as well as at various JALT events.

Taking part in something like this carries its own form of motivation—particularly for Apple geeks. Where else would you be able to stand alongside 300 like-minded peers, each clutching two or three Apple devices—which, combined, managed to bring a robust Internet hub to a grinding halt? The program has put us in touch with a network of educators with interest and expertise in classroom applications of technology, and having gained membership to ADE, we are all members for life, and can join future ADE activities around the world.

For anyone interested in the 2015 induction, please visit the ADE website <apple.com/education/apple-distinguished-educator> for more information. Details should be available this coming autumn, with an application deadline likely in early December.

Malcolm Swanson teaches at Seinan Jo Gakuin University in Kitakyushu, and is currently working on the development of a multimedia centre.

Steve Paton teaches at Kyushu Sangyo University and Kurume University, and is working on developing materials in Keynote for teaching conversational grammar.
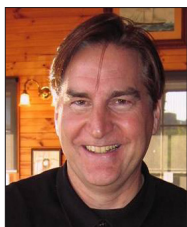
JALT FOCUS
GRASSROOTS OUTREACH

…with David McMurray

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

Grassroots Outreach is a place for essays and short reports that can motivate readers to take action and bring about positive change in our language teaching profession, here at home, as well as around the world. The editor of Grassroots Outreach warmly invites 750-word reports, essays, and interviews about events, groups, or resources that are organized inside or outside of JALT, and can be found inside or outside of Japan. Contributors may also submit articles in the form of interviews with language teachers based overseas who would not otherwise readily have access to a readership in Japan.

Find Grassroots Outreach articles online:

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

An American twang is no match for a lyrical Irish accent. Yet there's something irresistible about a Southern accent that conjures gentlemanly qualities. A London Cockney accent connotes liveliness. English spoken by a French actress oozes sexiness. Although no accent should be considered better or worse than another, some accents are judged to be more aesthetically pleasing than others because of the social connotations of the group of people who speak them. A rugged Scottish burr is seductive because of the men who speak in it: Sean Connery, Richard Madden, and Ewan McGregor. Unfortunately, many accents get a negative reception.

In this issue of Grassroots Outreach, Robert Smith suggests that pronunciation needs more attention in English language classrooms in Japan. Shyness to speak can be exacerbated if one's foreign accent interferes with the speaking of the target language. To reduce anxiety and to motivate students to converse more often in English, Smith recommends students try to shake their use of katakana-sounding pronunciation. Japanese language phonology is very different from English and this can lead students to speak in a distinct Japanese-sounding accent.

If left unaddressed, Smith warns that an accent problem can lead to poor spelling, unintelligibility, a reluctance to communicate with native speakers of English, and even discrimination when students travel overseas.

Teaching Pronunciation in Japan

Robert Smith

University Central Lancashire

Accents are one of several important elements that contribute to the intelligibility of speech. In this essay I posit that the Japanese method of pronunciation is a major barrier to effective communication in English. The fear of speaking English with a Japanese accent is a large factor in why Japanese learners of English lack confidence in their oral communication ability. Language learners with heavy accents tend to be poor spellers and those who go abroad can even suffer from discrimination.

The Japanese speakers of English with whom I've freely conversed with have spent time abroad in English-speaking countries. Although

The author (left) performs a skit using finger puppets to speak in a variety of accents with Japanese students

a number of them seem to have reading abilities at or below that of other learners of English whom I've met in Japan, their speaking abilities –and most of all– their willingness to speak English is at a much higher level than their peers. The reason for this soon became clear when I tried to encourage some of their lesser confident friends to say a few words (see Photograph). It's an accent problem. The students who have spent time abroad speak in a more natural way, and often I can even tell where they have been by the way they pronounce certain words. Students who have never been abroad however, have often only encountered spoken English within their classroom learning environment and therefore their pronunciation is marked by a distinctive Japanese accent. Being self-conscious of one's accent can make a student reluctant to speak, especially in the presence of native English speakers.

The accent problem seems to begin early on in the education process at elementary school levels, when Japanese katakana pronunciation is applied to the English vocabulary being taught. Words like 'fan' and 'fun' become indistinguishable from one another and longer more complex words are transformed into something that most native English speakers can't properly decipher. Poor pronunciation carries over into poor spelling. Misspelling is a problem even for native speakers. A study by Kathryn Sutherland revealed that the British novelist Jane Austen (1775-1817) wrote with a regional accent from Hampshire, coined the *Hampshire Hog* to the south of London. Her accent caused her to make numerous spelling mistakes in her manuscripts that had to be corrected by her editor, William Gifford (Caroe, 2010). In an effort to simplify the universal spelling of certain words in English, Wells (2003) claims, "All speakers of English, no matter where they come from, pronounce *friend* so that it rhymes with *bend, send, tend*. So a reformed spelling *frend* ought to be uncontroversial (1.1 par. 2)."

Having a strong Japanese accent when speaking English is not only a barrier to effective communication, but it can also become the target of discrimination for learners who go abroad. In England, it's known as *Engrish* (somewhat resembling the way that some Japanese pronounce the word English) and is frequently ridiculed or at least seen as being somewhat comical. Ng (2007) found that some accents are labelled as being ugly or criminal. Japanese speakers of English who speak in this manner will likely not only be regularly misunderstood by native speakers of English, but might even become victims of accent discrimination. In England, where the country's accents seem to be almost as diverse as the world's languages, accent discrimination can be directed at native speakers just as much as it can be directed at non-native speakers. Research by Gluszek and Dovidio (2010) has linked the perceptions of different accents with their associated images, confirming that people with accents are judged as less intelligent, less competent, less educated, having poor English language skills, and as generally unpleasant to listen to. A Japanese learner of English who has been taught a correct method of pronunciation, however, is much less likely to be the victim of such discrimination. Many foreign accents within the English speaking world have stereotypes attached to them; unfortunately, many of these stereotypes are negative. Japanese learners of English who speak with a more standard method of pronunciation, whether it is American or British English can avoid stereotyping. Their accent may not be a native-like one but it will allow them to be free of the negative connotations associated with *Engrish*, while at the same time improving their ability to communicate verbally.

A fair share of the criticism about the current state of English education in Japan concerns the English ability of the students it produces. However, even amongst those who are reluctant to speak English, many learners of English in Japan seem to have reading and writing abilities above those of similarly-aged students of foreign languages in England. I have met very few people in my home country who can properly converse in the foreign language they studied at high school, even among those who graduated with high scores on foreign language exams. I speak with a Lancashire accent, commonly heard in the area of Preston where the University of Central Lancashire is located. Classroom based foreign language learning has its limits, and for many students (such as myself) a good understanding of grammar and some useful vocabulary might be the best we can get out of it.

Proposed longer teaching hours and improved training for teachers is certainly not a bad thing; however, to significantly improve students' speaking abilities it seems to me that the accent problem has to be addressed. Instead of briefly skipping over pronunciation or relying on Japanese pronunciation when teaching English, care should be taken to ensure that a more standard method of pronunciation is achieved. And

though the very idea of pronunciation classes may send some students straight to sleep, I have found that discussing accents tends to generate a lot of interest. Accents can be readily learned and taught. If introduced at an early stage, not only will students find it much easier to adopt correct pronunciation but the introduction of different accents into the classroom can present opportunities for some fun tasks while also creating awareness that not all English speakers sound the same. Actors are often called upon to speak varieties of language other than their own. In an analysis of the Queen's Christmas broadcasts, Harrington (2006) has shown that accents can be changed at any age. Knowing this can help reduce any later anxiety one might have about their own accent and perhaps provide the extra nudge needed for some students to start speaking in a foreign language.

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TLT COLUMN SIG NEWS

…with Jennie Roloff-Rothman

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

JALT currently has 26 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes announcements of SIG events, mini-conferences, publications, or calls for papers and presenters. SIGs wishing to print news or announcements should contact the editor by the 15th of the month, 6 weeks prior to publication.

You can access SIG News online at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/sig-news>

SIGs at a glance

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

The 13th Annual JALT PanSIG Conference, *Sustainability: Making Learning and Teaching Last*, will be held in Miyazaki, May 10-11, 2014. By the time you see this, you should be able to see the schedule at <pansig.org/2014/schedule> as well as to take a look at all the accepted abstracts and make comments. There is still time to register as a participant, and this year, we have lowered the conference fees:

- University teachers w/ support ¥5000
- University teachers w/o support ¥4000
- Secondary teachers and ALTs ¥3000

Hope to see you in Miyazaki!

Bilingualism

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

The Bilingualism SIG monograph *Third Culture Kids and Their Families* is out! This publication will be of special interest not only to TCK and

their parents, but also to families raising their children in three languages. Of course, it also provides parents raising bilingual children with hints and inspiration on their multilingual journey. Edited by Bernadette Luyckx and Ron Murphy, 2013.

The JALT Bilingualism SIG has put together an extensive collection of monographs on various practical topics to do with raising children bilingually, particularly in Japanese contexts. In addition to general information on bilingualism, popular topics include bicultural children with special needs, naming bicultural children, and educational options for bicultural children in Japan or overseas. Whether you are a new parent looking for advice or an educator wondering about how to deal with bilingual children in your class, the wealth of personal experiences in these books will provide you with plenty of directions and perhaps even some answers to your questions. To see more titles, visit our website: <bsig.org>.

Business English

The JALT Business English SIG was formed with the purpose of developing English teaching which enables participation in the world business community. We aim to provide instructors in this field with a means of collaborating and sharing best teaching practices.

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

College and University Educators

[☀ tertiary education, interdisciplinary collaboration, professional development, classroom research, innovative teaching] [📖 *On CUE* —2-3x year] [🎤 Annual SIG conference, regional events and workshops]

Last year CUE celebrated its 20th anniversary by organizing various professional events from Hokkaido to Kyushu. CUE officers would like to thank each and all of its members for their support and involvement in SIG-related activities. Please feel free to contact us at <jaltcue-sig.org/officers> for further information about our events and activities. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you soon at one of our events!

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 Conference is coming up from June 6-8 at Sugiyama Jogakuen University in Nagoya. This year's theme is "New Horizons in CALL". The planned keynote speaker will be Regine Hampel, who is a Senior Lecturer in Modern Languages at the Open University. The plenary is yet to be determined. For further details, please visit the website at <conference2014.jaltcall.org>. We hope to see you there.

Critical Thinking

[☀ critical thinking] [📖 *CT Scan*—3x year]

Please consider writing for a future issue of *CT Scan*. Full research articles: 1,500-3,000 words, detailing your research related to critical thinking in language education. Articles that connect theory to classroom practice are encouraged. Classroom reflections: 500-2,000 words, detailing classroom activities that have been used to teach or encourage critical thinking among language learners. Commentaries: 500-2,000 words, detailing personal observations meant to provoke discussion within our membership regarding critical thinking in language education. All submissions are welcome at <ctscan.editor@gmail.com>. We recommend adhering to *JALT Journal* style guidelines for your submission. Please refer to < jalt-publications.org/downloads/jaltstyle.pdf> for guidance.

Extensive Reading

[☀ extensive reading, extensive listening] [📖 *ERJ*—3x year] [🎤 Annual ER Seminar]

We welcome you to take part in the 7th Annual Extensive Reading Seminar & 2014 Vocabulary Symposium on Sunday, September 28, 2014 at Keisen University, Tokyo. The theme is "Covering the Text: Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension." For the call for papers and other information please check the seminar website: <ersig.org/drupal-ersig/7th-er-seminar>.

The ER SIG also welcomes submissions to our two publications, the ERJ (*Extensive Reading in Japan*) and the JER (*Journal of Extensive Reading*). Members receive printed versions of the ERJ twice a year, and both publications are available

electronically via our website for free. Please see our website <ersig.org> for submission guidelines, how to become a member and much more.

Framework & Language Portfolio

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

This SIG aims to discuss the CEFR and ELP and other similar frameworks and their relevance for Japan. The SIG holds periodical seminars focusing on classroom use of the CEFR, amongst other things. More info: <sites.google.com/site/flpsig/home> Contact: <flpsig@gmail.com>

13th Pan SIG, May 10-11 2014

Joint forum with CT, LiLT and BE SIGs

Current title: *Creating a lasting impact on students' learning: Connections inside and outside the classroom*

SIG Conference in Nagoya, May 31 2014

Venue: Chukyo University, Nagoya.

Title: *Critical, constructive assessment of CEFR-based language teaching in Japan and beyond*

More info: <sites.google.com/site/flpsig/critical-constructive-assessment-of-cefr>

The FLP SIG Kaken Project 2012-2014

Development of EAP Textbooks based on the CEFR and Learner/Teacher Autonomy Support Tools

The principal purpose is to develop English language integrated skills textbooks for the higher education context in Japan.

More info: <tinyurl.com/FLPKaken>

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 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.

GALE produces a double-blind, peer reviewed academic online journal once a year and a community newsletter twice a year. The online *Journal and Proceedings of the Gender Awareness in Language Education SIG,* started in 2008, has been attracting excellent academic research articles related to gender issues and awareness raising. Archives and submission guidelines can be found at <gale-sig.org/website/the_gale_journal.html>.

We also have a Facebook page, an online discussion list for all members, and an executive discussion list for officers and any GALE member who would like to take an active role in, or know more about, GALE business.

For more information about GALE, visit our website at <gale-sig.org/website>. If you have any questions about joining GALE, please send a message to <coordinator@gale-sig.org>.

Global Issues in Language Education

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

GILE aims to promote global awareness, international understanding, and action to solve world problems through content-based language teaching, drawing primarily from the fields of global education, peace education, environmental education, and human rights education. The SIG produces a quarterly newsletter, organizes presentations for local, national, and international conferences, and maintains contacts with groups ranging from Amnesty International to Educators for Social Responsibility to UNESCO. Contact us for a sample newsletter or for more information about the SIG's work in "teaching for a better world." visit <gilesig.org>, our Facebook page or contact Kip Cates <kcates@rstu.jp>.

Japanese as a Second Language

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

日本語教育論集への投稿を募集しています！研究報告、学会発表報告論文、日本語教授・学習法に関する論文、ブックレビュー等。2014年3月末締め切り。詳細は論集編集担当：服部珠予<hattoritamayo@yahoo.co.jp>まで。また、日本語教育ニュースレターへの投稿も募集しています！研究報告、指導法・学習法、エッセイなど、日本語研究者・指導者・学習者の皆様からの投稿を年間を通してお待ちしています。詳細はニュースレター編集担当：高野のぞみ<takano-n@tama.ac.jp>まで。

Call for papers: *JALT Journal of Japanese Language Education*. JSL researchers, teachers, learners are invited to submit articles, research reports, essays, and book reviews. Deadline is March 31, 2014. For details, please contact Tamayo Hattori <hattoritamayo@yahoo.co.jp>. Also, send your JSL articles, reports, and information to the JSL SIG Newsletter. We accept them throughout the year. Please email submissions to Nozomi Takano <takano-n@tama.ac.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 JSHS SIG is now on Facebook! If you are a JSHS SIG member, then come and check out our exclusive group at <facebook.com/groups/jshsig>. Whether you want to ask a question, help someone out or just share something, this is the place for junior and senior high school teachers to be. We also have a public page at <facebook.com/JSHSSIG> so anyone can have a look, click 'like' and our news will be your news! Everybody is welcome!

Show us what you've got! Last year's SIG Forum at the JALT2013 Conference offered 90 minutes of shares *from* junior/senior high school teachers, *for* junior/senior high school teachers! With so many shares from people in your field, we can almost guarantee something of interest to everybody.

Learner Development

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

The Learner Development SIG is a lively and friendly network of more than 200 members who are interested in exploring and researching practices that help develop autonomous learning and teaching, among other issues to do with learning inside and outside the classroom. We welcome the participation of teachers from diverse teaching contexts, including elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, distance learning, language school, university settings, and teachers teaching languages other than English.

The LD SIG is organizing forums at the PanSIG, JALTCALL, and JALT conferences, as well as local get-togethers with members during the coming year. On the publication front, in addition to the regular twice-yearly issues of our newsletter, *Learning Learning*, we have two book projects nearing completion: *Learner Development Working Papers* and *Collaborative Learning in Learner Development*. We are also offering grants for membership, subscription, research, conferences, and outreach projects. For more information, please visit: <ld-sig.org>.

学習者ディベロプメント研究部会(LD SIG)は、教室の内外での学びに関するテーマの中でも特にオートノミーのある学習とティーチングを発展させるための実践を探求・研究することに関心のある200名以上が組織する、活発でフレンドリーな研究部会です。私たちは、多様な教育現場でご活躍の皆様の参加を歓迎しています。小学校、中学校、高校、通信教育、語学学校、大学で指導されている皆様、そして英語以外の言語を教えている教師の皆様も、どうぞご参加ください。

LD SIGの今後の予定として、メンバーの地域別集会に加えPanSIG、JALTCALL、とJALT学会ではフォーラムを開きます。出版関連では、通常の年二回発行のニュースレターLearning Learningに加え、二冊の本(Learner Development Working PapersとCollaborative Learning in Learner Development)が仕上がりつつあります。また、会費、購読料、研究、学会参加、アウトリーチプロジェクトへの助成金を支給しています。詳細は、<ld-sig.org> をご覧ください。

Lifelong Language Learning

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

The LLL-SIG invites those teaching languages to young, middle-aged, and older adults to share information through our website <jalt.org/lifelong/index.html>, newsletter, at various SIG conferences and events (including PanSIG), and at the JALT International Conference, where an annual LLL-SIG forum is held.

Our Facebook page can be accessed at <facebook.com/jaltLLL>. As of this writing, we have nearly 189 likes and we always welcome more. If you "like" us, you will be able to find out about not only our SIG's events, but you will also be able to get tips about lifelong language learning and teaching, and find out about opportunities and events in the community that stretch your capabilities and broaden your horizons, including volunteering possibilities.

Literature in Language Teaching

[💡 literature, film] [📖 *LiLT Journal*—2x year] [🎤 LiLT conference, PanSIG conference] [📋] [💬]

Thanks for a great 2013 to all our members. LiLT SIG members engage with literature through film, creative writing, poetry, the short story, classic literature and world literature as well as literature in translation. We welcome interest from those working in cultural studies, politics through literature, language learning and applications of literary texts in different contexts. We are always interested in volunteers to help out with things such as events planning, reading and proofing for our journal and helping the SIG grow. If you think you might like to get involved we welcome you to contact us!

2014 Conference news: This year we will be participating in PanSIG, in May. If you are interested in any type of literature please come to see us there. We are also busy preparing for our first literature-themed conference to be held at Aichi University, Toyohashi campus with John Roberts as the conference chair from September 6-7, 2014. Please consider submitting a presentation, attending, or helping promote this first LiLT SIG conference. The deadline for submissions is May 15.

All important guidelines and information for contributors are available on our website <liltsig.org>. To join the SIG tick Literature in Language Teaching when renewing your SIG membership.

Materials Writers

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

Our activities in 2014 will be exciting as we'll be joining the PanSIG as usual, and we'll be involved with a few other events during the year. Please check our website for more information <materialswriters.org>. Meet old / new members and stay active!

Other Language Educators

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

OLE will participate in many events this year and is already accepting proposals for its events at JALT2014: The OLE-SIG and the Multilingualism Forum, the French Forum, and the Spanish, Chinese and German workshops. Please send your proposal without delay to the coordinator at <reinelt.rudolf.my@ehime-u.ac.jp> with the title line JALT2014.

Pragmatics

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

Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of language users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication.

The Pragmatics SIG is in the process of creating a library of humorous comics and videos that highlight pragmatic matters in everyday conversation. Look for some new videos on our website <pragsig.org> this summer!

School Owners

Please consider signing up for our newsletter! The sign-up form to the SO SIG's free quarterly newsletter is now active on the SO SIG website <schoolowners.net>. To subscribe, visit the site and enter your email address. Subscribers receive articles, freebies and news on upcoming SO SIG events.

Speech, Drama, & Debate

2014 is looking to be a good year for the Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG. The new team of officers, led by Coordinator Dawn Kobayashi, is planning a strong presence at PanSIG2014 in beautiful Miyazaki, with a collection of both PechaKucha and interactive presentations. We put out the first and second of 6 bulletins and we are preparing the first of two issues of our peer-reviewed journal, *Mask & Gavel*. Please consider submitting an article. (See <sites.google.com/site/ speechdramaanddebatepublicsite/home> to download some of the back issues.)

In addition to PanSIG2014 and JALT2014, our biggest and most exciting project for 2014 is the first annual JOESC (Japan Online English Speech Contest). For details see <sites.google.com/site/ japanonlinespeechcontest>.

Study Abroad

[⚲ study abroad, pre-departure curriculum, setting up, receiving students, returnees] [📖 *Ryugaku*—3-4x year] [🎤 national and PanSIG conferences] [📝]

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

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

Task-Based Learning

The Teacher Education and Development (TED) SIG is a network for those who want to help themselves and others become better teachers. With memories of JALT2013 still fresh in our minds, we are starting to think of the TED SIG's next mini-conference, EFL Teacher's Journeys Conference 2014. Preparations for the conference have begun and the hunt for interesting plenary speakers is on. Updates will be posted as they happen on our website at <jalt.org/ted>.

You can also find out more about TED's journal *Explorations in Teacher Education* on the website. The journal welcomes stimulating articles within the field of education. Submission guidelines for articles can be found on the SIG website. You can also stay in touch with us via Facebook or Google+ or by following <@tedsig> on Twitter.

The TBL SIG will hold the 2nd Task-Based Language Teaching in Asia conference in Kansai on May 17-18, 2014, at Kinki University, Osaka. Peter Skehan from the University of Auckland in New Zealand is confirmed as plenary speaker. We hope to see you there! Details can be found at <tblsig.org/conference>.

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

Teachers Helping Teachers

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

THT Vietnam, THT Kyrgyzstan and THT Bangladesh are looking for presenters for the 2014 events. Vietnam has been set for 8-10 August. Currently the Vietnamese National Ministry of Education has mandated CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) levels for all teachers within the national education system by the year 2020 (the 2020 Project), and while all teachers are welcome, we would particularly welcome participants who would like to present about CEFR and work with Vietnamese teachers in this area.

As of printing, the tentative dates set are:
- Bangladesh September 15-19
- Kyrgyzstan September 8-12

For up-to-date details, please visit <tht-japan.org>. If you have any questions, please contact Joe Tomei at <thtjalt@gmail.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] [📝] [💬]

January saw us host of series of highly informative webinars on becoming a presenter in conjunction with the JSHS SIG and the International Teacher Development Institute (iTDi). A big thank you to both presenters and participants in the series. We hope to run a similar series on "giving a good presentation" in autumn, prior to this year's JALT Junior conference. For those of you who were unfortunate enough to miss the webinars the first time around, never fear, they were recorded and you can see them by following the links on our Facebook page.

The TC SIG is for teachers of children of all ages and we are always looking for new ideas and new people to keep the SIG dynamic. We particularly want to appeal to Japanese teachers and teachers who team-teach to consider join-

ing our group. There is an email list for teachers of children who would like to share ideas or questions: <tcsig@yahoogroups.com>.

If you have any ideas, activities, advice or experiences you would like to share with your fellow teachers, please consider submitting them to an upcoming issue of our online *TLC Newsletter*! Email your submissions to the editor at <editor@tcsig.jalt.org>. For more information about the Teaching Children SIG and all our activities, please visit our homepage <tcsig.jalt.org>, or the TCSIG Facebook page <facebook.com/pages/JALT- Teaching-Children-SIG>.

Testing & Evaluation

[☀ research, information, database on testing] [📖 *Shiken*—3x year] [🎤 PanSIG, JALT national conference] [📝] [💬]

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

Vocabulary

The VOCAB SIG will hold its Third Annual Vocabulary Symposium on June 14 at Kyushu Sangyo University in Fukuoka City. This year's symposium will feature speakers Batia Laufer from the University of Haifa and Akiyo Hirai from the University of Tsukuba. The final call for poster presenters is March 30, 2014. The theme of this year's symposium is vocabulary learning and vocabulary assessment. The JALT Vocabulary SIG provides a venue for the discussion and research into second language vocabulary acquisition and assessment, particularly as they pertain to language education in Japan. Please visit our website at <jaltvocab.weebly.com> for more information regarding previous symposiums, events and publications. Additional SIG news and dialogue can also be found on our Facebook page at <facebook.com/groups/236623256372419>.

TLT COLUMN
CHAPTER EVENTS

…with Gary Wolff

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

Each of JALT's 36 active chapters sponsors from 5 to 12 events every year. All JALT members may attend events at any chapter at member rates—usually free. Chapters, don't forget you can add your event anytime to the online JALT calendar at the URL shown below.

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

GIFU—**Workshop:** *Yardsticks of quality in Japanese higher education* by Sarah Louisa Birchley, Toyo Gakuen University. This presentation and workshop will explore and seek to make sense of the concept of quality in HE (higher education) institutions in Japan. What quality means, how it is measured, how it is interpreted by those involved, and whether it's a habit or an act will be discussed. *Sat 19 Apr, 19:00-21:00; JR Gifu Station, Heartful Square - 2F (East Wing); One-day members ¥1,000, 1st visit free.*

HIROSHIMA—*Book and article reviews in the fields of language learning and cross-culture studies.* Various people will report about new and interesting findings in the fields of second language acquisition and cross-culture studies. There will be ample time for discussion involv-

ing the audience. *Sun 23 Mar, 15:00-17:00; Peace Park, 3F Conference Room; <hiroshima-jalt.org>; Non-members ¥500, students ¥200.*

HIROSHIMA—*Collaborative critical thinking for real world change* by **Chuck Sandy**, International Teacher Development Institute. This renowned teacher trainer and textbook author will show how students and teachers around the world are using ideas based in critical thinking theory to improve local communities and to spark both personal and professional growth. *Sun 13 Apr, 15:00-17:00; Peace Park, 3F Conference Room; <hiroshima-jalt.org>; Non-members ¥500, students ¥200.*

HOKKAIDO—*Creating authentic materials for the language classroom* by **Robert Chartrand** and **Arthur Meerman.** This presentation will outline the process of obtaining and receiving permission to add bilingual subtitles to copyrighted footage of Terry Fox's *Marathon of Hope* from the Terry Fox Foundation, Canada. The documentary footage follows a young Canadian athlete, philanthropist, and national hero as he sets out to run across Canada to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. The presentation will furthermore summarize the importance of the story itself, and explain the potential of the DVD as an effective teaching resource. Free DVDs and classroom materials will be available to all participants following the presentation. *Sat 1 Mar, 18:30-20:30; Sapporo L-Plaza: <top.sl-plaza.jp>; Non-members ¥500.*

KITAKYUSHU—*Task-supported language teaching* by **Colin Thompson**. This presentation looks at ways tasks can be used in classrooms to improve L2 speaking in terms of fluency, accuracy, and complexity. The talk first discusses what fluency, accuracy, and complexity are, how they can be measured, and issues relating to them as aspects of L2 speech proficiency. Different methodologies for using oral tasks are then examined by comparing task-based language teaching with task-supported language teaching. Finally, examples are provided to show how narrative tasks can be designed and sequenced to elicit learners' use of grammatical structures involving relative clauses. *Sat 8 Mar, 18:30-20:00; Wel-Tobata, Tobata; <jalt.org/chapters/kq>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

KITAKYUSHU—*Creating multimedia content with Apple technology* by **Steve Paton** and **Malcolm Swanson**. "Keynote in the Classroom": Using presentation software, like Keynote, in your lessons can help make them more engaging and interesting for your students, and more fun, productive, and efficient for you. "Creating Content with iBooks Author": iBooks Author is an application for creating learning content for delivery on iOS devices. Like all Apple software, it is easy to use, addictive, and capable of doing amazing things once users master the basics. *Sat 12 Apr, 18:30-20:00; Wel-Tobata, Tobata; <jalt.org/chapters/kq>; Non-members ¥1,000.*

KYOTO—**My share**: *Back to school edition*. We invite all language teachers for any age, language, or level to submit proposals for our popular annual My Share event. This year, our spring My Share focuses on activities, lesson plans, or syllabus components that help start the year right, maintain motivation, and attain curricular goals. New presenters especially welcome. *Sun 30 Mar, Registration 9:30, Event from 10:00; Campus Plaza Kyoto; For further details: <kyotojalt.org>.*

MATSUYAMA—*Establishing and maintaining intercultural exchange programs between Japanese elementary and high schools and their counterparts abroad* by **Laura Kawaguchi**, Ehime University Faculty of Education Fuzoku Primary School & Ehime University Senior High School. Japanese elementary and secondary school students have limited opportunities to communicate with their peers from abroad. This presentation will focus on establishing and maintaining intercultural exchange programs between Japanese students and young people in English speaking countries. The speaker will outline the planning process and discuss techniques for maximizing benefits and overcoming obstacles that arise in international, intercultural programs for children. *Sun 9 Mar, 14:15-16:20; Shinonome High School Kinenkan 4F; <www.shinonome.ac.jp/site/highschool/access.html>; One-day members ¥1,000.*

MATSUYAMA—*How different is second language acquisition from first language acquisition?* by **Kiyoshi Shioiri**, Matsuyama Shinonome College. The first half of the presentation will introduce the fundamental difference between first language acquisition and second language acquisition. Given that acquiring a

second language is vastly different from acquiring a first language, the latter half of the talk will offer some suggestions for teaching English more effectively to Japanese learners. *Sun 13 Apr, 14:15-16:20; Ehime University (details TBA); One-day members ¥1,000.*

NAGOYA—*Being organized for success with kids* by **Linda Donan**. A teacher who has worked with children for 30 years will present on how to organize what you teach and how you teach to achieve success for your students and satisfaction for their parents. She will also talk about how to overcome frequent difficulties and will invite questions from the audience concerning their classroom problems. Bring your own textbooks if you want personalized advice on how to teach well. *Sun 2 Mar, 13:30-16:00; Nagoya International Center, 5F, Meeting Room 2; <nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/e/about-us/access-hours>; One-day members ¥1,000; 1st visit free.*

OKAYAMA—*Collaborative critical thinking for real world change* by **Chuck Sandy.** What is critical thinking really if it doesn't lead to real-world action and changes in behavior? In this interactive session, we'll explore examples of how both student and teacher communities around the world are using frameworks grounded in critical thinking theory to create community change and spark both personal and professional growth. Sandy will then invite you to join a collaborative project designed to change the way you think about critical thinking and professional development. *Sat 12 Apr, 15:00-17:00; NDSU, Room 630, ND building; Non-members ¥500.*

OSAKA—*Back to School 2014* will be OJ's 5th annual one-day mini-conference, and it aims to share ideas on a wide range of topics to help everyone start the new school year on a positive note. With long and short presentations, poster sessions, and plenty of time to socialize, there is sure to be something for everyone at what has become our signature spring event (with over two dozen presentations each of the past three years). *Mid-April. Details of submissions deadline, venue, and date at <bts.osakajalt.org>.*

SENDAI—**My Share:** *Motivation—what motivates you? What motivates your students?* by Local Members. Motivation has long been viewed as the magical key to language learning. Come and share your own take on how you

remain motivated as a teacher and how you help foster a motivational attitude in your students. Let's get motivated together! *Sun 30 Mar; Venue and time: <jaltsendai.org>; Members free, 1 day membership ¥1,000.*

SENDAI—*Professional development through collaboration on quantitative research* by **Gregory Sholdt,** School of Languages and Communication, Kobe University**.** This April presentation will feature an overview of fundamentals in quantitative research methods and a recommendation for a gradual approach to developing research skills and knowledge through small-scale studies. Additionally, Sholdt will discuss an ongoing research-training project for language teachers that implements this approach. *Venue and time: <jaltsendai.org>; Members free, 1 day membership ¥1,000.*

SHINSHU—*From interpretation to implementation: The new course of study*. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology implemented the new Course of Study in junior high schools in 2012 and senior high schools in 2013. What impact, if any, has this had on classroom practice? Please join us for an afternoon of presentations to learn and exchange ideas on how the new Course of Study has been interpreted by a textbook writer and implemented by teachers. See <JALT.org> events calendar for latest details. *Sat 8 Mar, 13:00-17:00; Hokuto City, Yamanashi Prefecture, Sutama Fureai-ken; Non-members free.*

SHINSHU—*The 25th Suwako charity walk.* As we walk along the beautiful shore of Lake Suwa, we'll learn about the local environment from Tokio Okino, Takayuki Hanazato, and Yuichi Miyabara of Shinshu University, and their graduate students. What better atmosphere could there be for thinking about the environmental problems facing Lake Suwa? Optional free ferry ride. Meet at Fureai-Nagisa (Yagai-Ongakudo) in Suwa City. Rain or shine. No reservations necessary. See <JALT.org> events calendar for latest details. *Sat 3 May, 8:10-14:30; Admission free, but donations for environmental protection of Lake Suwa welcomed.*

YAMAGATA—*Cross-cultural communication between Germany and Japan* by **Reinhold Grinda**; *Sat 1 Mar, 13:30-15:30; Yamagata-shi Kajokominkan; Contact: Fumio Sugawara, tel. 0238-85-2468; Non-members ¥1,000.*

YAMAGATA—*Great Britain in terms of its history, culture, literature, education, language, etc.* by **Hannah Craggs**; *Sat 12 Apr, 13:30-15:30, Yamagata-shi Kajokominkan; Contact: Fumio Sugawara, tel. 0238-85-2468, Non-members ¥1,000.*

YOKOHAMA—*My question*. This event will follow a new format: "My Question." Members who attend should think of a question(s) for the group. This could be a factual question, a request for suggestions / advice, or a discussion starter. Possible question topics: teaching (e.g., "How do you choose which errors to correct in essays?"), job hunting (e.g., "common questions asked in university job interviews"), administration (e.g., "advice on setting up a graded reader library"), or research / publication (e.g., "choosing a journal to submit an article to"). Please note that this event will be held on a SUNDAY. *Sun 20 Apr; Venue TBA.*

TLT COLUMN
CHAPTER REPORTS

…with Tom Mahler

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

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

You can access Chapter Reports online at:

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

AKITA: November — *Making the most of study abroad* by **Terri Lee Nagahashi,** Akita Prefectural University. Nagahashi reported on an innovative faculty-led study abroad program. The program was designed to support the curricula of the Faculty of Bioresource Sciences at Akita Prefectural University and took place in Oregon, USA during the summer of 2012. Nagahashi showed several interesting examples of student-made presentations. The results of the post-trip questionnaire suggests that this program produced multiple benefits including enhanced intercultural awareness, increased motivation for learning English, and improved research, writing and presentation skills. This presentation was not only an excellent tutorial for those who are interested in developing short-term study abroad programs, but also an excellent project example for those who are interested in Experience-based Learning in general. A lively question and answer session took place at the end of the presentation.

Reported by Stephen Shucart

GIFU: **November —** *Teaching English to children with puppets* by **Juan Uribe.** Uribe began his workshop by restating a well-known maxim: children learn best through play. Uribe himself has over 100 puppets, ranging from marionettes and sock puppets to finger puppets and shadow puppets. During the workshop we got to know Buddy the Frog, who helped Uribe demonstrate a variety of techniques for engaging students in language learning and practice.

In particular, the use of puppets was presented as a great way of breaking down the affective filter (which is of particular importance for Japanese learners). The learner may be shy, but the puppet on the end of their hand is not, which allows them to speak freely, as it's not the learner who makes mistakes, but the puppet. Likewise, if the physical appearance of a foreign teacher may seem daunting, it could be easier for a learner to communicate with the cuddly creature sitting on the teacher's arm.

Uribe explained different types of puppets, and then helped the participants to create their own puppets from bits and pieces bought from the 100 yen store. These puppets were then brought to life, as they interacted with each other. Overall, participants left with the conviction that puppets have the potential to be an effective classroom resource, for any age group.

Reported by Paul Wicking

GIFU: November — *Who's of our profession* by **Umida Ashurova.** Above all, Ashurova conveyed her passion for teaching in a reflective presentation. She began with a wonderfully narrated story of her journey from her roots in Uzbekistan to Japan. During the presentation we were given the opportunity to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of our own teaching and how these can be influenced by the environment around us using the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis.

Ashurova focused on professional development in ELT, demonstrating the differences between what and why we teach, which she categorized as Teaching Knowledge on one hand and how we teach which can be outlined as Teaching Practice. She concluded that perhaps in the past too much attention had been paid to what we teach and therefore we need to tip the balance towards how we teach. We were able to discuss several ways to improve our classroom techniques and it was rewarding to share other teachers' successes whilst at the same time being reassured that we were facing similar problems.

Reported by Brent Simmonds

GUNMA: November — *Exposing English education in Gunma elementary and secondary schools* by **Anastasia Letcher, Terry Dassow,** and **Elizabeth Bender,** and joined by **Tomoko Nagaoka, Michiyo Imaizumi,** and **Hiroaki Kanai.** In this last Gunma JALT meeting of 2013, three ALTs introduced one typical lesson plan from each of their respective classes. They then used this lesson plan to paint, in broad strokes, a picture of English education at their respective education levels: elementary, junior, and senior high. After a short break they were joined by three Gunma public school JTEs for a panel discussion. All answered and discussed attendees' questions about English education in Gunma elementary and secondary schools. Some topics discussed were: curriculum coordination between ES, JHS and SHS English programs, the education ministry's new JHS/SHS course of study and teaching English in English, Tokyo's proposal to send 200 JTEs abroad for three months, education technology and textbooks, and student motivation.

Reported by John Larson

HAMAMATSU: December — *My share.* Jon Dujmovich, Bogdan Pavliy, Nami Takase, Dan Frost, Adam Jenkins, Susan Sullivan, John

Wolfgang Roberts, Gregg McNabb and **Atsuo Hirano** all contributed to the annual Hamamatsu Chapter My Share. The event was informative and entertaining, and topics explored ranged from how best to scaffold the introduction of cultural concepts (Dujmovich), to utilizing Moodle networks in and out of the classroom (Jenkins), to establishing an English book club in an EFL situation (Takase), to the use of English as a communicative tool in real life situations (Hirano). In addition, McNabb explored textbooks with emphasis on reading skills and which included suitable reading material for the EFL learner, Pavliy provided some solutions to the eternal struggle of maintaining interest and authenticity of task in a mixed level classroom, Roberts described the work his students have undertaken in a creative writing workshop, Sullivan spread the word about *The Font*, a creative literary journal for language teachers, and Frost delighted us with renditions of songs used to great effect in the EFL classroom.

Reported by Susan Sullivan

HIROSHIMA: November — *Content-focused language instruction* by **Brent Jones.** Jones introduced the English programme at Konan Cube - Konan University's Hirao School of Management, which developed a content-focused curriculum. Using examples from this programme, he gave a general overview and outlined some of the benefits of content-focused language instruction, as well as some of the pitfalls to be avoided. He demonstrated some of the techniques used in the classroom to give students the support necessary with this kind of language teaching, and also discussed the ways that teachers in the programme had been supported in conducting content-focused courses. Additionally, he noted the importance of backward planning—planning backwards from the goals for students at the end of the course, and forward assessment—assessing in a way that reflects as closely as possible how the skills or knowledge learned in the course would be used in future real life situations.

Reported by Carla Wilson

IBARAKI: December — This month, Ibaraki JALT attendees welcomed Mary Nobuoka from the Bilingualism SIG and exchanged their views on challenges and possibilities of bilingualism. *Looking back on influences of child raising after 25 years* by **Martin Pauly**. Pauly recounted his

experience of raising his sons bilingually, which has not been without difficulties. For example, his attempts to create a play group and a Saturday school met with problems in raising money and hiring appropriate teachers. Also, one of his sons refused to speak in English to protest against the U.S. invasion of Iraq. In spite of these difficulties, Pauly posited that language is the best gift one can give to one's children. *Raising bilingual children in Japan* by **Mary Nobuoka.** Nobuoka presented some challenges and benefits of raising bilingual children through drawing on her first-hand experience of raising her son in Japan. Nobuoka admitted that this effort requires considerable time, money, and perseverance. However, when successful, it could foster a greater capacity to process information and understand people's differences, thus providing children with a wealth of social, cognitive, and emotional benefits. Nobuoka also introduced some useful methods and approaches of bilingual child rearing as well as various online and community resources available for aspiring parents. *Bilingual in Japan: German and Japanese—Reflecting theory and experience in language acquisition* by **Gabriela Schmidt**. Schmidt, a native speaker of German married to a Japanese man, reflected on her experience of raising her son who is fluent in both German and Japanese. She presented in detail the ways in which her son has naturally developed this ability despite the fact that he was born and raised in Japan and has never received a formal education of the German language. *Code-switching of bilingual teachers in EFL classrooms* by **Naomi Takagi**. Takagi discussed why some bilingual EFL teachers in Japan are driven to use Japanese as their main classroom language even though they are fluent in English. Her interviews with EFL teachers revealed various reasons, ranging from their pedagogical training, administrative concerns, situational factors (e.g., time constraints and difficulty of the textbook), to their wish to connect with their students.

Reported by Naomi Takagi

KITAKYUSHU: October — *Pecha-kucha night.* We held our annual *pecha-kucha* night consisting of 5 short presentations (20 slides X 20 seconds) covering a wide range of topics in ELT. For the first presentation, **Dave Pite** outlined useful strategies that high school students can use in order to pass university written entrance exams. Next, **Michael Phillips** discussed the emergence of global English, or "globe-ish," and its pedagogical ramifications in the fields of EFL/

ESL. After that, **Linda Joyce** talked about the importance of remembering students' names and covered several useful methods to quickly and efficiently remember large amounts of names. Our fourth speaker, **Jason McDonald**, demonstrated how podcasts can be utilized in tandem with reading material to help cover both listening and reading skills in the classroom. Finally, **Robert Murphy** introduced ten ways current testing and assessment could be improved to better motivate students and improve the language learning process. Each presentation was followed by a lively Q&A session where the topics were further explored and discussed.

Reported by Zack Robertson

NAGASAKI: November — *Using intercultural theories for ALTs and JTEs to successfully understand each other* by **Robinson Fritz,** Nagasaki University. Using examples from his experiences on the JET Programme and from his study and research in the past year, Fritz focused his talk on the relationships and communications between workers of two different cultures. He also highlighted that although there is a heavy focus on language learning in Japan, there is very little focus on learning about cultural differences—that language and culture really can't be learned apart. There is too much of a focus on only linguistics and that little or no training is offered in the areas of intercultural communication. Fritz concluded with suggestions for solutions and how people may develop intercultural competency for the purposes of communication and better understanding. Rather than forcing one model of intercultural communication (Eastern vs. Western) in the multi-cultural environment, what is actually needed is a third model which is developed co-operatively by both sides.

Reported by Thom W. Rawson

NAGASAKI: December — *Music and surveys in the classroom* by **Joe Tomei,** Kumamoto Gakuen University. Tomei covered two topics during the December meeting in Nagasaki. His first talk was a comprehensive demonstration on using music in the classroom. Examples and variations on the usual cloze-based listening activities were both insightful and useful in giving students a multi-faceted look at any one piece of music though the eyes of multiple artists and styles. In the second part of Tomei's presentation, the effective use of surveys as a means of engaging English learners in project-based learning was

covered in detail. Using scaffolding techniques and guided practice, Tomei showed how surveys can build not only the needed English communicative practice students need for improvement, but also life-skills for the future development of younger minds including team organization and collaboration, project responsibility and role taking and much-needed presentation skills.

Reported by Thom W. Rawson

NAGOYA: December — *Laughing matters in the classroom* by **Ted Quock.** Quock explained how humor can be used as core material (teaching humor), supplementary material (to demonstrate target language points), or as a motivational tool (per Mehrabian's concept of immediacy). In the first two cases, the fact that humor is subjective can help students understand that they can't, and don't have to, understand everything. Quock used materials from various media to demonstrate different kinds of humor, and how some kinds of humor (e.g., puns) are difficult for non-native speakers to understand but are therefore useful teaching materials. He pointed out how humor is often based on mistakes and misunderstandings, and how humorous mistakes by well-educated people, such as world leaders and even language professionals, can help students understand that mistake-free communication need not be an obsessive goal. Examples included the misconception that English "Mayday" is a synonym for "SOS" (rather than French "m'aidez"), mistranslations of dialogue from foreign movies into Japanese, and personal anecdotes about pronouncing English-derived acronyms in Japanese. Quock also stressed how humor can evoke not only positive reactions like laughter and smiles but also anger and sorrow, thus making it a ripe subject for academic study.

Reported by Kayoko Kato

OKAYAMA/TOTTORI: December — *Unmotivated students? Make them curious!* and *Can improv activities work in Japanese classrooms?* by **Ken Wilson,** sponsored by Oxford University Press. Wilson didn't lecture about motivation; rather he demonstrated how to "motivate the unmotivated." He quickly had everyone actively involved. He made us curious and had us moving around the room talking to many people. Wilson's main points on motivation were that teachers need to: 1) be enthusiastic about their teaching, 2) make students curious to know more, and 3) move students around and involve

more than their brains in activities. The effectiveness of his presentation was demonstrated by the fact that many people who had given up their only free day of the week felt they had an enjoyable afternoon.

Later, Wilson provided a long list of activities that involve students in spontaneously generating their own material for conversations. Some activities involve the entire class (such as pretending to be athletes at a sports event) while others need only pairs, albeit constantly shifting pairs (for example, partners exchanging information via "I want to..." and "I'm afraid you can't because..." statements). Through these activities Wilson demonstrated how a teacher using a little guidance and spurring of imagination can get students to generate their own dialogue for fun as well as for language practice.

Reported by Shirley Leane and Scott Gardner

OSAKA: December — *All-Kansai JALT bonenkai.* 'Twas the mid- of December and all through Kansai, / Language teachers had fun at the JALT bonenkai. / They came from Nara, Kobe, and Kyoto to Osaka city, / For a final JALT end-of-year festivity. / Held on Dec. 14th, from 6pm to 9:/ We talked, we drank, we had a good time! / It was pay as you go, to join us for free, / In a non-smoking area, no rsvp. / 'Twas a quiz format this time, at the local Irish pub, / So we enjoyed some questions, with drinks, and Blarney Stone grub. / From 7-8pm: 25 queries, on Kansai/Japan, / How many can you answer below? —Give it a try, man*! / Some came with their own group, to challenge and thrive, / And some made a team of 3-4 when solo they arrived. / Some questions were tough, but mostly good fun, / With the 5 teams' scores ranging from 16 to 21, / With prizes for everyone, we were all winners here, / But it's more about bragging rights, and chatting over a beer. / It was a great chance to make- new friends and network, / And with a live rock band after, some could even twerk! / 20 teachers joined our fun, which as JALT-ers we did make, / As we said sayonara to the Year of the Snake. (*To try the 25 Kansai/Japan Pub Quiz questions yourself, visit: <tinyurl.com/pxxnwbp>)

Reported (and quiz created) by Ray Franklin

SENDAI: November — *2013 Tohoku ELT expo.* ETJ/JALT co-hosted this one-day mini-conference of 32 presentations at Sendai Ikuei Gakuen's new campus in Miyagino. Nearly 100 enthusiastic educators, learners, publishers and

presenters attended the event including special guests, keynote speaker **Goodith White** and ELT author **Miles Craven**. Presentations spanned a diverse range of topics that addressed EFL story-telling with young learners, critical thinking skills, curricular change in Japanese English education, coaching lacrosse in English, global-minded learning, teaching content, differentiated warm-up activities, and developing creativity with students and teachers, to name but a few. Free Costco muffins, cookies, and pretzels helped make the mini-conference a tasty alternative to the Rakuten Eagle victory parade also held that day in the city.

Reported by James Dochtermann

SENDAI: December — *Highlights from JALT2013 & Bonenkai.* Sendai JALT members who attended 2013's JALT Conference in Kobe reported on the presentations and other aspects of the event that were particularly special. From seasoned members who have attended many times, to newbies on their first venture, the JALT2013 event was considered enormously beneficial and fun. The final event of the year was followed by the end-of-year *bonenkai* party, which was graciously hosted by **Cory Koby**, incoming Sendai JALT president. Cory kept things flowing smoothly for the nice show of members and the evening concluding with an entertaining group rendition of *The 12 Days of Christmas* led by **Marc Helgesen**.

Reported by James Dochtermann

SHINSHU: November — *Developing output skills through interactive art boards* by **Trevor Joseph.** Joseph has been teaching for 25 years, working mostly on the front line with young learners. We were privileged to host his first ever presentation for teachers, introducing his interactive teaching boards, which each comprise five foldable panels of young-learner height. On them were painted scenes of a market and a park, with several places to add magnetic objects, all based on vocabulary from Cambridge ESOL Young Learner exams. The presentation began with Joseph explaining his teaching philosophy, including his assertion that while there may be different learning styles, all young children learn kinesthetically. He told us the opportunity to present had allowed him to examine his motives for creating the interactive art boards. He also showed us video footage of art students creating the teaching boards, and young

learners interacting with them in a wide variety of ways. The presentation showcased the beautiful work that had gone into the creation of the interactive boards and highlighted the value of kinesthetic learning for young learners, evidencing Joseph's passion for teaching throughout.

Reported by Mark Brierley

TOTTORI: December — *Unmotivated students? Make them curious!* and *Can improv activities work in Japanese classrooms?* by **Ken Wilson,** sponsored by Oxford University Press. See Okayama Chapter for details.

YOKOHAMA: October — *Negotiating the discipline: Writing for publication in TEFL/TESL* by **Theron Muller,** University of Toyama. With lecture positions (both full-time and part-time) at universities increasingly requiring a steady stream of publications as part of the job description, Muller offered some timely advice on the practicalities of academic writing for publication. He emphasized the value of looking at publication from a more imaginative angle than only traditional research papers by detailing the benefits of working as an editor, proofreader or book reviewer for academic journals. Muller also gave insights into the submission procedure and the process of rejection and acceptance of research papers undertaken by journals in a variety of academic fields. In addition, he discussed the methods by which universities assess the quality of the journals in which academic papers appear. In the second part of the presentation, Muller examined the formatting of a research paper (intro, literature review, theoretical framework, methods, data and findings, pedagogical implications) and offered a Q & A session for attendees to ask specific questions relating to research for which they were currently seeking publication.

Reported by Doug Forrester

Critical, constructive assessment of CEFR-based language teaching in Japan and beyond

JALT FLP SIG

Nagoya, May 31 2014

More info: <tinyurl.com/criconcef>

TLT COLUMN
JOB INFORMATION

…with Richard Miller

<job-info@jalt-publications.org>

Job Information Center Online
Recent job listings and links to other job-related websites can be viewed at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/job-info-centre>.

Is there a doctor in the house?

Richard Miller

With never ending pressures that job seekers face, there is often a temptation to look for shortcuts, or easier ways to get the requirements for the job that is desired. These 'shortcuts' can include simply copying a degree, ordering an unearned degree or going to a diploma mill in order to obtain the qualifications. In the past few years there have been several instances of CV problems with various university instructors in Japan and it is a path that is wrought with problems for both those presenting phony credentials and institutions accepting them.

While there are numerous ways towards a shortcut, I tried two things that proved to be very easy. One was to buy off of E-Bay a "replacement diploma" for $29.95 where I supplied all of the information (which I did, taken from my earned MBA). A few weeks later a diploma with the dates and names I had supplied arrived (with no proof that I had actually earned what I said I did). The paper I received was quite good, and it did look like some kind of degree with two distinct signatures. However, it looked nothing like the real degree from the University of Liverpool that I received after graduating. The second experiment was to get an honorary doctorate from a church for $59.95 (postage included). I asked that the date of the degree be backdated, and sent the funds with the request for the degree

to be in my dead dogs name (thus the need for backdating). This time a 'degree' arrived, dated 1985 for "Scooter Miller". So it appears that the family dog now has a posthumously awarded degree of "PhD" from an LA based "church". The "church" stated in a letter that, "the degree was awarded by a church and because of the US based laws it was legal". The church had a mail box address (and when I Googled it a shopping mall showed up in the photo), and then when the 'degree' arrived it was postmarked Benidorm, Spain. And, in the letter that accompanied it there was the advice that the 'degree' holder could now refer to themselves as 'doctor'.

While the examples that were tested were of the most egregious sort, there is also the "diploma mill" route with credentials that are not legitimate (MEXT apparently has a list, but when contacted for this article they had no comment). These schools often claim to be "accredited", but keep in mind that legitimate degree programs are accredited by legitimate accreditation bodies. There are numerous examples of these, but keep in mind that not all accreditation is the same. After all, "Any school can claim that it is accredited: the use of that word is not regulated in any way" (Bear 91).

The lesson is that both hiring committees and those seeking qualifications should be aware of the possibilities. I would encourage all who are looking for work to quickly offer their degrees to any hiring committee or institution that asks to see them. And, for all involved in the hiring, to demand proof of legitimate qualifications that have been earned. After all, these are not 'just pieces of paper' but hard earned credentials set to ensure a level of knowledge and ability. After all, for those who have paid (in terms of money as well as hours of study) it is wrong on so many levels when legitimate applicants lose out, not to mention the dangers involved.

Reference

Bear. J., & Bear, M. (1998). *Bear's Guide to Earning Degrees Nontraditionally 13th Ed*. Degree.net Books El Cerrito, CA.

TLT COLUMN
CONFERENCE CALENDAR

…with Sadira Smith

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

Below is a mix of linguistic, literary, and cultural academic gatherings. Please feel free to contact me with your own interesting listings <including a website address> by the 15th of the respective month—at least 3 months before a Japan-based conference, and 4 months before an overseas conference. So, 15 January would be the deadline for an April conference in Japan and a May conference overseas. Thank you for supporting JALT and happy travels!

Upcoming Conferences—Japan

29 MAR 14—The 6th International Symposium on Digital Technologies in Foreign Language Learning. Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto. Keynote speaker is James Paul Gee (Arizona State U.). Free, but register in advance at dlearning2014@gmail.com. <dlanguagelearning2014.wikispaces.com>

MID-APR 14—Osaka JALT: 5th Annual Back to School One-Day Mini Conference. Contact Ray Franklin for further details at ray5star@yahoo.co.jp. <bts.osakajalt.org>

17-20 APR 14—The International Academic Forum: *Individual, Community, Society: Connecting, Learning and Growing.* **Conference sub-headings include The Asian Conference on Language Learning, The 3rd Annual Asian Conference on Technology in the Classroom**, and **The Asian Conference on Literature and Librarianship (**taking place on April 3**).** Osaka International Conference Center and Rihga Royal Hotel, Osaka. Featured speakers are Steve Cornwell (Osaka Jogakuin U.) and Barbara Lockee (Virginia Tech). <acll.iafor.org>, <actc.iafor.org >, and <librasia.iafor.org>

23-26 APR 14—Global Academic Network International Conference. University of Tsukuba, Tokyo. <global-conferences.eu/tokyo>

10-11 MAY 14—JALT PanSIG2014 Conference: Sustainability: Making Teaching and Learning Last. Miyazaki Municipal University, Miyazaki. Speakers include Nobuyuki Takaki (Kumamoto U.) and Alice Hsia Hui Chik (City University of Hong Kong). <jalt.org/pan-sig>

17 MAY 14—The First Annual Conference on Global Higher Education. Lakeland College Japan, Tokyo. 2,000 yen pre-registration, 3,500 yen on-site. <conference.lcjapan.com>

17-18 MAY 14—The 2nd Task-Based Language Teaching in Asia Conference. Kinki University, Osaka. Featured speaker is Peter Skehan. <tblsig.org/conference>

24 MAY 14—6th N.E.A.R. (North East Asian Regional) Language Education Conference. University of Niigata Prefecture, Niigata. Speaker is Diane Hawley Nagatomo (Ochanomizu U.). 1500 yen for members, 2000 yen for non-members, 1000 yen for students. (Deduct 500 yen for all if pre-registered.) <iuj.ac.jp/language/conference/near>

31 MAY 14—Critical, Constructive Assessment Of CEFR-Based Language Teaching in Japan and Beyond. Chukyo University, Nagoya, Aichi. This gathering is free. <https://sites.google.com/site/flpsig>

13-15 JUN 14—International Society for Language Studies (ISLS) 2014: *A Critical Examination of Language and Society.* Akita International University. Akita, Japan. <isls.co/index-2.html>

Upcoming Conferences—Overseas

28-29 APR 14—2014 International Conference on Advances in Educational Sciences. Taichung, Taiwan. Keynote speakers are Kong-Fah Steve Cheng (UMissouri at Colombia), Donald Chang (Metropolitan State U.), and Hsin-Hung Wu (National Changhua U. of Education, Taiwan). <icaes.net>

30 APR-4 MAY 14—35th ICAME Conference: *Corpus Linguistics, Context and Culture.* Nottingham, United Kingdom. Keynote speakers are Beatrix Busse (UHeidelberg), Susan Hunston (UBirmingham), Tony McEnery (ULancaster), Ute Roemer (Georgia State), and Wolfgang Teubert (UBirmingham). Opening talk will be given by Ronald Carter (UNottingham). <nottingham.ac.uk/conference/fac-arts/english/icame-35/index.aspx>

10-16 MAY 14—5th & 6th Global Conferences: Storytelling: Global Reflections on Narrative. Lisbon, Portugal. <inter-disciplinary.net/probing-the-boundaries/persons/storytelling-global-reflections-on-narrative/story-2-call-for-papers>

17-18 MAY 14—31st International Conference on English Teaching and Learning: *Empowering English Education and Cross-Cultural Communi-*

cation. Zhongli, Taiwan. <etra2014.cycu.edu.tw>

19-22 MAY 14—Annual Multidisciplinary Conference for Academic Disciplines, Ryerson University. Toronto, Ontario, Canada. <internationaljournal.org/toronto.html>

26-30 MAY 14—International Journal of Arts and Sciences Conference. Harvard University, Boston, USA. <internationaljournal.org/boston.html>

30 MAY-1 JUN 14—Semantics and Linguistic Theory 24. New York**,** USA. Invited speakers are Emmanuel Chemla (Ecole Normale Supérieure), Valentine Hacquard (UMaryland), Lauri Karttunen (Stanford), and Sarah Moss (UMichigan). <nyu.edu/projects/salt2014>

9-10 JUN 14—3rd Annual International Conference on Language, Literature, & Linguistics. Bankok, Thailand. Keynote speakers are Daniel Newman (UDurham) and Li Zeng (ULouisville). <l3conference.org/ImportantDate.html>

9-10 JUNE 14—Global Conference on Language & Information Technology (GLIT2014): *Synergizing Meaningful Education*. Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. <glit2014.org>

16-17 JUN 14—2014 International Conference on Teaching and Education Sciences. Kowloon, Hong Kong. <ictes.org/cfp.htm>

17-19 JUN 14—XXVI International Congress of the FILLM: *Languages and Literatures Today.* Ningbo, China. Invited plenary speakers are Tope Omoniyi (URoehampton), Julie Sanders (UNottingham), Hein Willemse (UPretoria), Zhang Longxi (City University of Hong Kong). <fillm.org/ningbohome.html>

9-11 JUL 14—8th International Conference on Politeness: *Conventional (Im)Politeness*. Huddersfield, UK. Keynote speakers are Haruko Cook (UHawaii), Johnathan Culpeper (Lancaster U.), Michael Haugh (Griffith U.). <hud.ac.uk/research/researchcentres/cipr/calls/8thinternationalconferenceonpoliteness.php>

14-17 JUL 14—Twenty-First International Conference on Learning. New York, USA. <thelearner.com/the-conference>

6-9 AUG 14—41st LACUS (Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States) Forum: *Pragmatics, Cognition and Culture*. Vancouver, Canada. <lacus.weebly.com/2014-conference-details.html>

Calls for Papers, Posters, Presentations

PAPER DEADLINE: 6 MAR 14 (FOR 20-22 AUG 14)—5th ACM International Conference on Collaboration Across Boundaries: *Culture, Distance & Technology* **(CABS 2014).** Kyoto. <cabs.acm.org>

PAPER DEADLINE: 20 MAR 14 (FOR 16-17 JUN 14)—2014 International Conference on Teaching and Education Sciences. Hong Kong. <ictes.org/cfp.htm>

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 24 MAR 14 (FOR 24-26 OCT 14)—Cognitive Linguistics and Pragmatics: *Theory and Practice.* China. 300-500 words, excluding references. <clpen.njnu.edu.cn/Item/Show.asp?m=1&d=1822>

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 26 MAR 14 (FOR 26-30 MAY 14)—International Journal of Arts and Sciences Conference. USA. <internationaljournal.org/boston.html>

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 31 MAR 14 (FOR 24-26 OCT 14)—1st Interdisciplinary Conference in Linguistics by LSUGA. USA. 500 word maximum. <lsuga2014.wix.com/conference#!info/cjg9>

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: 11 APR 14 (FOR 4-5 SEP 14)—9th International Workshop on Writing Systems and Literacy. United Kingdom. 300 word maximum. <sussex.ac.uk/english/newsandevents/orthographic>

PAPER DEADLINE: 12 APR 14 (FOR 5-6 SEP 14)—6th Annual Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching. USA. All topics related to naturalistic and classroom pronunciation acquisition and learning. Contact Dorothy Chun, Conference Organizer, at pslltconference@gmail.com.

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 15 APR 14 (FOR 17-19 OCT 14)—2nd Conference of the American Pragmatics Association. USA. Maximum 300 words on any topic on pragmatics and intercultural communication. <ampra.appling.ucla.edu/about-the-conference/call-for-papers>

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 1 MAY 14 (FOR 18-20 SEP 14)—43rd Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Association of the Southwest. USA. 250-500 words. For inquiries, email LASSO2014sandiego@gmail.com.

PAPER DEADLINE: 4 MAY 14 (FOR 11-13 SEP 14)—5th Conference on Language & Technology. Pakistan. <cs.dsu.edu.pk/clt14>

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: 31 MAY 14 (FOR 4-6 DEC 14)—6th CLS International Conference. Singapore. <fas.nus.edu.sg/cls/CLaSIC/clasic2014/clasic2014/index.htm>

PAPER DEADLINE: 31 MAY 14 (FOR DEC 14)— Special Issue of SiSAL Journal on Self-Regulation in Foreign Language Learning. Contact srl2013@shimonoseki-online.net for further inquiries.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: 16 AUG 14 (FOR 18-19 OCT 14)—4th Chinese National Conference on Cognitive Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition. China. 200 words. Contact Liu Xueming at cogsla2014@163.com.

JALT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

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

Annual international conference 年次国際大会

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

JALT publications include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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JALT2014

Conversations Across Borders

November 21–24, 2014 in Tsukuba, Ibaraki

JALT2014: Conversations Across Borders

40th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Materials Exhibition

Friday, Nov 21 – Monday, Nov 24, 2014

Tsukuba International Congress Center (Epochal Tsukuba)

Tsukuba, Ibaraki, Japan

Language learning and language teaching carry us across all sorts of borders: national, cultural, disciplinary, psychological, and, of course, linguistic. JALT's 40th annual conference will celebrate this phenomenon with its theme, "Conversations Across Borders."

Plenary Speakers

- *Claire Kramsch - Professor, UC Berkeley*
- *Thomas Farrell, Professor, Brock University*
- *Momoko Nakamura - Professor, Kanto Gakuin University*
- *Bill Harley - Grammy-award winning musician, story-teller, and author*

jalt.org/conference