

Andy: One other idea for the mix is creating on the LD website some “publication resources” with links to different kinds of exploratory writing about learner development - within different SIG publications and in the wider field. Those kind of near-peer role models could be a useful reference for helping writers to break into new kinds of writing. “Developing (multi-interactive) communities of exploratory writing, responding and editing practices” seems a rich area for ongoing discussions - and feels closely connected to moving beyond reifying “full-length papers” as the requirement for first drafts by LDJ contributors.

Hugh: (not feeling sure if he wants to give the appearance of having the last word) . . . but as I read/scroll through this lengthening text, am grateful for the wide-ranging scope of the discussion, and the fact that after several weeks of development, this document has grown more and more dialogic. We have, for example, Darren pointing out the practical difficulties for editors as writers with different experiences and histories of ‘academic’ writing contribute to the journal, and the challenges that are the inevitable result. This perspective, considered in relation to Tim’s and Andy’s observations (above), suggest to me that some practice/perspective of expansion (of inclusiveness?) is the key to meeting the ideals we are struggling to articulate and realise as we work towards the publication of volume 2 and focus on the necessary next steps in bringing volume 3 towards completion. Though it remains difficult for all of us to allocate time and energy - and to coordinate the efforts our SIG projects require, the models of co-operation (of “working in teams”) both in the SIG as a whole, and on finalizing individual publications, offer the best models of practice for the future. Perhaps the Google Docs model we’re using to work on *Learning Learning* offers one simple solution to the “near-peer role models” approach Andy describes as a practical way forward in the development of “multi-interactive communities of interactive writing (and editing).”

Tokyo July 2018 Get-together Reflections and Plans for 2019

Andy Barfield, Martin Cater, Ken Ikeda, Kio Iwai, & Koki Tomita

Note: These reflections focus on discussions at the July get-together about learners’ linguistic repertoires and plans for the get-togethers in 2019.

Koki: I joined the Get-together a half hour late. The members had already started their discussions about Andy’s ongoing research. It was pleasant to see that the research has evolved since Andy shared it with us during the April Get Together. The main topic was Andy’s student research participant’s language identity and her perceptions of standard Japanese and her Japanese dialect. Here, Lee talked about the hard time he had in his childhood in formulating his identity in the U.S. as a son of an Australian mother and an American father. This involved selecting “appropriate” lexicon and avoiding deviating from social norms to blend into the culture and the society. Ken also shared a story from his childhood where his teacher in the U.S. told his parents to use only English in their household to improve Ken’s English competency because Ken was not linguistically functioning well at school at that time. Both cases exemplify how much the standard language(s) pushes off other politically, socially and economically weak dialects or deviated languages in a society.

In the second half of the meeting, we talked about the continuity of future Tokyo Get-Togethers and CCLT4. We agreed that we need more communication and a different way to attract more members to come to the get-togethers. One of the ways to achieve the goal is dividing the meeting into the input and discussion parts. In the input part, we will have a few presenters and get them to share their research-oriented or practical hands-on presentations to the audience, and discuss the content with more depth.

In considering our plans for CCLT4, we came to the conclusion that local LD SIG members can use each Get-Together as a chance to generate a topic that they can present at the CCLT 4 which they can receive various feedback from the professionals in the field. It will be wonderful to have more officers and members join the organization of the December event. I am very excited to create the event with Ken and other members in the SIG.

Andy: Around the discussion of the get-togethers we came to the conclusion that it would help if each person attending the get-togethers made a commitment to leading a discussion/ presenting on their learner development interests in an interactive style for (part of) one of the get-togethers in the year. Kio's suggestion was that this "input" should be 10 minutes or so at most in length and be aimed at fostering discussion among participants. So, the proposal is to have mini-inputs for leading discussions of 30 minutes or more at get-togethers. The difference will be to ask everyone to make a commitment to giving one such input and leading one such discussion one time in a calendar year, with a view to (hopefully) having everyone take part in an end-of-year informal half-day conference in the final get-together in December, i.e., *Creating Community: Learning Together*. (On reflection participants should also have the choice not to do this if they prefer not to ... something to discuss further in any case.)

A big thank you to everyone for a highly stimulating discussion of the "I-poems" that I shared from an interview with a student about her linguistic repertoire and use of language in her life. The "I-poems" were created from the interviewee's use of "I" in a 60-minute interview, so each I-poem brought together a cluster of "I-statements" around a particular topic or experience that the interviewee talked about in the interview. Extracting the I-statements in order from the interview and creating poems from them is intended to help the interviewer (and readers) to develop a "more sensitised" understanding of the interviewee's "linguistic repertoire lifeworld."

Here are three of the I-poems that we looked at and discussed at the get-together:

When I hear local languages

when I hear local languages or just when I saw Nagano or Azumino I feel happy

I feel happy if there is some posters or the letter in another areas, then "oh my hometown is outstanding"

I feel connected with these letters

after I came to Tokyo

I found my hometown is kind of special

I didn't think my local perspectives are kind of special before I came to Tokyo

I went many cities

I've never told this feelings

I felt "ahh here is my hometown or here is where I want to live or where I want to spend time"

I don't feel anything from the languages that people use here

I started to stop using dialect

when I came to Tokyo I had strong bias like the people from other areas can't use their own languages dialects

I felt a little bit nervous to use that word then when I came to not just Tokyo also like big cities

I started to stop using dialect

sometimes I use Nagano's dialect without any special reason

that's why I put this in my center

I didn't know that's dialect then I just speaking that way

そんなことしなんでいいよ しなんでいいよ

it's not correct

it's not 標準語

I don't know why I feel negative feeling to use local language

just not cool

I have to use keigo to senpai*often feel I should use**I have to use keigo to sempai often sempai**sometimes I can use not keigo to teacher**but for sempai I can't**I think it's strongly connected with my experience
in my junior high school age**I joined volleyball club**and these sports club have strong hierarchy system**if younger people doesn't use keigo to senior
people**senior people just angry for not using keigo**I think it's stupid**but I just get used to this way of using keigo**because I have gap age when I entered this
university I was worried**I was worried for using keigo to third years student
because they're same age to me**I just want to use keigo**I think it's from my experience**that's why I can't use the straight Japanese**I just use keigo**but it's not the sign of respect**I didn't show respect to him**but I just use keigo*

Our discussions of these and the other I-poems covered a wide range of issues. One was the use of [方言札 / hōgen fuda](#) for eliminating use of local languages or local dialects/varieties in different education systems. The standard language ideology had strong resonances for all of us, with Ken's story of forced assimilation particularly astonishing for all the complex and long-lasting consequences that followed from his elementary school teacher's interdiction. In my interviewee's case, she gives voice to a sense of conflict about using her local dialect in her new student life in Tokyo. She feels that she should avoid using it, but is unsure why she has this sense (“*I started to stop using dialect*“ and “*I don't know why I feel negative feeling to use local language*”). In effect, she is experiencing how her use of her local variety of Japanese has

become/is being stigmatised and dislocated. This ongoing transition brings her to identify more with the branding of her local area for tourism (“*I feel happy if there is some posters or the letter in another areas, then “oh my hometown is outstanding*”) than with using her local dialect in her own life.

Ken: I've told my vignette before, but its import seems to have resonated much more in the context of Andy's student's “I” poem. As I was growing up in Los Angeles, I recall being told by my parents that my well-meaning homeroom teacher had asked them to use only English at home with me so that I could pass the 2nd grade in my elementary school. This may seem unfathomable to both present-day thinking about respecting the home language, equally unthinkable in Japanese schools from grades 1-9 of the possibility of being held back one year. But in those days, even on the heels of the civil rights movement in the United States, my parents' acquiescence with my teacher's proscription was likely along the lines of ‘when in Rome, do as the Romans do’. My mother was a real ‘*kyoiku mama*’, so everything the teacher told us was the gospel to her. By the end of my 2nd grade, my language problems at school straightened out. My teacher was pleased, but her decision had destroyed the language fabric in my family. English was my mother's first love, but my father never developed a facility with the language, having not studied it at all until he came to the States as a war refugee (he sojourned in northeast China in his youth and teen years). My mother became the intermediary between my father and I, transmitting messages back and forth in Japanese and English. For the next forty years, my father and I never had a long conversation with each other. It was only after my mother passed away, my wife coaxed me to speak with him, which broke the wall of intransigence (maybe old-fashioned machismo of not wanting to admit one's stubbornness) that had built up between us. As I reflect on the wonderful conversations with my father in the remaining ten years of his life, I can also sadly imagine how cut off he must have been, feeling not at liberty to express his thoughts to his

eldest child in so many life moments: my high school graduation (he himself was unable to complete his secondary school education as he was drafted into the Japanese army during WW2), my university graduation, wedding, getting job acceptances, etc. How unfathomable are the adverse consequences created by the blithe decisions of others.

Andy's explanation about the social oppression *hougen fuda* resonated with poignancy a few days after our get-together meeting when I was having a lunchtime discussion with one of my students. One of the students she has interviewed for her thesis research spoke of having been sorely stung by her English pronunciation instructor's remark during her freshman year in university. She was told her English speaking was "*inaka kusai*", that of a country provincial. I happened to know that this particular student comes from the city of Minami-Soma which was severely afflicted by the Fukushima nuclear reactor debacle. The student was so deflated by the insulting remark that she dropped out of the English teacher certification program and gave up on English learning. But she has regained interest in English in her final year in university after being told receiving her job offer that she needed to use English in the workplace. She has been motivated to speak it by participants who encouraged her at an international barbecue gathering.

I welcome Koki's and Kio's suggestions to steer this get-together in new directions that could very well stoke interest in discussions, spawn research directions and encourage members to come and participate. Koki's willingness to help with the coordination of a possible CCLT4 could kick-start the nature of future get-togethers. Kio's idea of having participants tell what they are doing in their teaching situations, share learners are experiencing (as expressed in Andy's I-poems). I hope those reading our reflections can get excited thinking of prospects in these get-togethers.

Kio: We had substantial discussions with all participants sharing their own stories on variety of topics. I would especially like to thank Andy for sharing his "I-poems" project with us. It was

amazing how wide a range of topics these "I-poems" of one student brought about: language varieties and standard language, language shift, language policing, learners' rights, student's perception of "global", etc. Not only did the "I-poems" generate lively discussions, but they also inspired me to think about my own background of learning and teaching languages.

This is a big reason why I supported Koki's suggestion to introduce some kind of presentations into our Get-Togethers. It would be nice if two or three members interactively shared their on-going projects, thoughts or ideas related to learner development in the first half of each Get-together, and everyone could discuss the topics either in small groups or in a big group in the latter half of the Get-Together. Members would get a chance to "bring something" to the Get-Together and get feedback from other members. What does everyone think?

Martin: I particularly enjoyed the first part of the session, consisting of discussion of the *I-Poems*. The thoughts and feelings the student had about dialects and discrimination were very familiar to me, as I think many people from the UK have had similar experiences. I was also interested in the perception of "English as global language", something the interviewee felt particularly positive about, compared with their perceptions of other languages. It was a stimulating discussion; I would certainly be keen to examine more of these poems at a later date, including *They-Poems* from these interviews or other sources.

After a short break, we discussed the future of the Tokyo Get-Togethers, which have seen a reduction in participant numbers over the past couple of years. Ideas of how to shape the gatherings into 2019 were put forward, which have been described above by other participants in this write-up. I am in agreement that members should take responsibility for leading a session however they choose, offering some kind of input which would lead to discussion. There are not a large number of sessions in the calendar year; I think it would be feasible for volunteers to step up and lead one discussion during the period.