Publication Team Discussion

Alison Stewart, Masuko Miyahara, James Underwood, Fumiko Murase & Steven Paydon

On Friday, 14th September, five members of the LD SIG Publications Team met for dinner at Tribeks on the 20th floor of the Hotel Century Southern Tower in Shinjuku. Over squid fritters, bagna cauda and pasta, we talked about the role of the publications team, possible projects leading to publications, and the future direction of *Learning Learning*.

Role of the Publications Team

The Publications Team aims to provide a support service to the SIG membership with regard to publications. This means helping facilitate discussion and development of new research, for example, in get-togethers, conference forums, workshops, panels, symposia etc., helping new writers to develop their writing for publication in *Learning Learning* and other SIG publications, and supporting initiatives aimed at publishing research and thinking about learner development as well as resources or materials for language learners.

Possible Projects

Critical Understandings of Learner Development (draft title)

Andy Barfield and Aiko Minematsu have already initiated a new project aimed at producing an anthology of papers developing out of the Tokyo get-togethers and the LD SIG Forum at JALT2012. This anthology is to comprise of articles by SIG members, together with responses to them from inside and outside the field, on defining learner development through different practices. Papers for the edited collection would also form a major discussion forum at the LD SIG 20th Anniversary Conference in November next year.

Language Learning Narratives

Masuko Miyahara and Chika Hayashi are interested in putting together a collection of language learning narratives together with responses to them from various different theoretical perspectives. We discussed what kind of narratives would be appropriate, and ideas ranged from narratives from participants in a workshop at a future conference, to narratives from learners from different age groups, to fictional narratives of language learners and learning. As a first step, Masuko will look into organizing a workshop at one of the conferences, or a separate meeting/retreat next year.

Criticality/ Critical Thinking

Following the warm reception of the plenary session by Richard Pemberton and Mike Nix at the Realizing Autonomy Conference in Nagoya last year (see also the article in the Realizing Autonomy Conference Proceedings <http://ld-sig.org/LL/19two/pemberton-nix.pdf>), we discussed the possibility of getting people together who are interested in working on Criticality or Critical Thinking. This could involve collaboration with groups outside of LD SIG, such as the new Critical Thinking SIG and the Global Issues in Language Education SIG. A first step would be a workshop or panel at a forthcoming conference or retreat.

Tohoku Stories Readers

As the SIG has been actively involved in the Tohoku recovery effort since March last year, one idea to extend this involvement is to create a bank of "stories", graded readers of stories by and of people affected by the earthquake and tsunami and involved in the recovery and regeneration of the area. One idea that was discussed at the dinner was offering this as an online resource together with a prominent link for the downloader to make a donation to various relevant charity organizations.

Two new ideas for projects that came out of the dinner discussion were:

• Resources for teachers and learners.

• Lesson plans and materials which can be downloaded or copied. The emphasis would be on practical use, but would also include an introductory section which would outline the theoretical assumptions behind the practice.

Best of *Learning Learning*

As the LD SIG will be celebrating its 20th anniversary next year, a call for nominations from the SIG membership for the 10 best articles in *Learning Learning* since its inception. The top 10 nominations would be published in English and Japanese as an e-book or special issue of *Learning Learning*. We will be sending out calls for nominations on the LD Discussion List over the next few months, but please feel free to suggest articles you would like see in this publication at any time. Once we have more than 10 nominations, we will start a Survey Monkey to identify members' top choices.

Learning Learning: New Directions?

Since two of the dinner meeting participants are incoming editors of *Learning Learning*, a lot of discussion time was devoted to the purpose and possible future direction of the SIG newsletter. One issue is that as *Learning Learning* is a newsletter, it does not have the status of a journal, and so the question was raised whether it would be featuring journal-like research articles at all? One solution is to split *Learning Learning* into two publications:

• a much shorter bi-annual newsletter for SIG news, reports on recent events, conferences etc, and information on upcoming events

• a journal or review of original research, research work-in-progress, opinion pieces, book reviews, and other less traditional genres: e.g., fiction, poetry, digital histories

etc. Possibly including an advisory board and independent peer review for article.

The two publications could be renamed (suggestions for names to be sent to Alison or Masuko and then voted on by Survey Monkey) and launched at the 20th Anniversary Conference.

This is just a taste of the very productive conversation we had. If you would like to add your own suggestions for projects that would involve many SIG members and could lead to a publication, whether in print or online, please feel free to contact us. We'll also be continuing discussion about these ideas at the AGM, so we hope you will come along and add your thoughts and ideas.

Alison Stewart (stewart1411@gmail.com)

Publications Officer

Masuko Miyahara (masukom.m58@gmail.com)

Shadow Publications Officer