Getting Connected: Local Get-Together Reports from Kansai,Tokyo, and Hiroshima

つながりを求めて：関西・東京・広島

Tokyo Get-together Report: Plans for 2015
Andy Barfield, Ken Ikeda & Ágnes Patkó

Our last get-together of 2014 featured the *Creating Community: Language Together (CCLT) Conference*. We felt blessed because of the high involvement of both students and Japanese and non-Japanese teachers. For 2015 we've made plans to have five get-togethers this year at Otsuma Women's University on April 19, May 24, June 28, October (TBA), and December (TBA). We hope that many people will be able to take part in these meetings this year.

When the three of us met in March to discuss ideas for the 2015 get-togethers, we reflected on the December event and came back to questions of creating community. We felt that it would be interesting in 2015 to take such questions as a common focus for part of each get-together this year.

Our hopes are that this year's get-togethers will involve:
• working in pairs and small groups around practitioner research into learner development issues that interest get-together participants;
• developing together different understandings of community building;
• exploring broader issues to do with critical approaches to education;
• writing reflectively about the different get-together discussions and learner development explorations that participants engage in over the course of the year.

We also hope to work with you towards hosting a second CCLT informal conference in December.

Visit our webpage for more details about Tokyo Get-togethers. (<http://tokyogettogethers.blogspot.jp>)

Please join us this year!

LD Get-together Report: Kansai
Brandon Kramer

The Kansai chapter has had some difficulty getting together over the past year, and could use your help! If you or anyone you know would like to help lead the Kansai events send us a message. Co-coordinators are also welcome!

A few ideas for possible events include:

• Organizing meetings with local area chapters. Events with the Kobe chapter have been very successful in the past, but meeting with Osaka, Kyoto, and Nara are also possible.

• Practical workshops where members work together to brainstorm solutions to classroom issues and other questions related to student autonomy.

• Holding a workshop as part of another event, either Chapter or SIG-related.

• A possible online meeting using Skype or Google Hangouts.

In the meantime, keep an eye out for an event at the Osaka Back-To-School event in April.

If you are interested in helping, please do not hesitate to get in touch! <brandon.l.kramer@gmail.com>

2014 Hiroshima Get-together Report

Jim Ronald

We have not met for our Hiroshima LD get-togethers for two or three months, so our lack of getting together is all we have to report this time. Which is a shame, as the various benefits—reminders that this is time well spent—are so obvious to us get-together regulars. We share the various learner development-related projects or activities we are involved in; share, read, and discuss papers on learner autonomy or self-directed learning; talk informally about various work- (or not work-) related matters; encourage each other in various ways; and become closer friends.

At the same time, I've noticed that many of the people who join the get-togethers are among the busiest people I know: working on postgraduate degrees, conducting research, helping with JALT or other organizations, with young children... And working too! As coordinators of the Hiroshima LD get-togethers, Ariel Sorensen and I both hit a very busy patch, too, the first three months or so of this year, and hardly noticed that no get-togethers were happening. We are looking forward to starting up again, on the last Friday evening or Saturday afternoon of May. If you are interested in joining us, you would be very welcome! Watch out for details on Hiroshima JALT's website or contact me, Jim Ronald, directly: jmronald@gmail.com.

LDSIG Publications Available Online

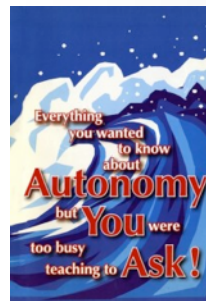### *Collaborative Learning in Learner Development*

Published in 2014, and edited by Tim Ashwell, Masuko Miyahara, Steven Paydon and Alison Stewart. Twelve chapters offer a multifaceted and critical new look at the widely held assumption that people learn best in groups. Available here.

Learner Development Working Papers: Different Cases, Different Interests.

Published in 2014, and edited by Andy Barfield and Aiko Minematsu. Nine chapters offer multiple, and unexpected, critical perspectives on the learner development issues that it deals with. Available online here or in print here

Autonomy You Ask!

Published in 2003, and edited by Andy Barfield and Mike Nix. Sixteen chapters of Japan-based collaborative research explore learner and teacher autonomy within Japanese contexts. Available here >

Learning Learning Archives

Issues of *Learning Learning* going all the way back to 1994 are now available in PDF format here:.