

LEARNING LEARNING 学習の学習 24.3

Newsletter of the JALT Learner Development SIG ISSN 1882-1103

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IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the Winter issue of *Learning Learning*. In this issue, we bring together a rich range of writing that explores learner development from various perspectives and across different educational levels. In *Members' Voices*, Kio Iwai, Bruce Lander, Akiko Kiyota, and Nick Kasperek—all new members of the SIG in 2017—share stories from their own experiences as learners and teachers around issues of identity, inclusion, learner autonomy, and creativity. In *Looking Back*, PanSIG 2016 LD presenters Joël Laurier, Alison Stewart, Katherine Thornton, Debjani Ray, Hiroyo Nakagawa, and Greg Rouault invite us to consider a variety of educational approaches that have helped foster creative ways of learning for their students both inside and outside of the classroom. LD grant awardees Daniel Hougham and Farrah Hasnain also look back to share their experiences and takeaways from the 2017 JALT PanSIG and JALT CALL conferences, respectively. In *Short Articles*, Matthew Hollinshead reports on insights into teacher identity, role, and power that emerged for him from keeping a reflective journal over a school year, while, within the different context of a self-directed learning module, Yuri Imamura investigates the impact of her work as a learning advisor on guiding students to become more aware of affective aspects of their learning processes. Takeshi Ishikawa then looks at both how and why a class of university students became more engaged with writing in English through a carefully scaffolded diary exchange. These short articles are followed by Ellen Head's review of a book by Caitlin Walker exploring the development of collaborative autonomy in groups. In *Getting Connected* you will find short reports on the Kansai, Hiroshima, and Tokyo get-togethers in 2017, after which interviews with the editors of the recently published and upcoming issues of *The Learner Development Journal* focus on their diverse experiences of working together with each other and with the writers, reviewers, and others involved in each issue's creation. Without further ado, we extend a warm welcome to readers and wish you and yours a very merry winter and as always ... happy reading!

Learning Learning Editorial Team

December 2017

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With special thanks to Sean Toland
Guest Editor

It is our pleasure to welcome Ken Ikeda, Fumiko Murase, and Sean Toland to the editorial team. We would like to encourage other SIG members to take part and work together with us on *Learning Learning*. If you are interested, please see <http://ld-sig.org/information-for-joining-the-learning-learning-team/> for more information, as well as for details of how to contact us. Many thanks!

本号について

『学習の学習』の秋/冬号をお届けします。本号も「インターアクションと学習者のアイデンティティとの関係性」「日本人英語教員とネイティブ英語教員に対する学習者の好み」など、様々な観点・教育レベルから学習者の成長に関して探究した、皆様の実践や教授法に役立つ内容となっています。「Members' Voices (メンバーの声)」では、SIGの2017年の新メンバーである Kio Iwai, Bruce Lander, Akiko Kiyota, Nick Kasperek が学習者や教師としての自身の成長について省察し、アイデンティティ、一体性、学習者オートノミー、創造性に関する学習者および教師としての経験を共有しています。「Looking Back (報告)」では、PanSIG 2016 LD の発表から、Joel Laurier, Alison Stewart, Katherine Thornton, Debjani Ray, Hiroyo Nakagawa, Greg Rouault が、教室内外で創造的な学びを促すさまざまなアプローチについて報告。LD 研究助成金受賞者の Daniel Hougham と Farrah Hasnain は、最近開催された JALTCALL と 2017 JALT PanSIG の各学会での経験を共有します。「Short Articles (小論)」では、まず Matthew Hollinshead が教員のアイデンティティ、役割、パワーについて、1年にわたる省察的なジャーナルを通して考察。続いて Yuri Imamura が、学習アドバイザーとしての自身の役割が、学習者が自身の学習を振り返る際に与える影響について検証します。また Takeshi Ishikawa は、足場かけを意識した交換日記の活動を通して、大学生が英語のライティングに積極的に取り組むようになったプロセスや理由を明らかにしています。Ellen Head による寄稿は、グループの協働オートノミーの発達に関する Caitlin Walker の著書に関する書評です。「Getting Connected (つながりを求めて)」では、2017年に行われた関西、広島、東京での get-together に関するレポート、さらに「The Learner Development Journal (LDJ)」の編集者とのインタビューを掲載しています。インタビューでは編集者間、著者、その他各号に関わる人々との協働的な取り組みについて語られています。皆様が素晴らしい冬をお過ごしになれますよう、編集チーム一同願っております。

『学習の学習』編集チーム
2017年12月



*Whose Autonomy?
Voices and Agency in Language Learning*

**Independent Learning Association Conference 2018, Konan
Women's University, Kobe, 5-8 September**

The Call for Proposals closes 14 January 2018!
For more information <ila2018.org>

GREETINGS AND NEWS UPDATES 挨拶と近況報告

Greetings all and welcome to the winter issue of *Learning Learning*! As the new co-coordinators of the SIG, in writing our very first message to the members of the Learner Development SIG, we had read a number of previously published LL newsletters. In the course of the reading, we stumbled upon a message written by the 2013 *Learning Learning* coeditors, James Underwood and Glenn Magee. We have learned that the LD SIG is going to commemorate its 25th anniversary in 2018. We also encountered the footprints left by many different active members of the LD SIG. We came to the realization that the anniversary is the product of collective efforts made by all the hardworking people who have been involved for the development of the LD SIG.

We also would like to quote Hugh Nicoll who stepped down from the coordinator position in 2011. “*It is as clear as ever that we are a hard-working group, and that the SIG is an amazing, on-going work in progress*”. As Hugh stated in his message, the LD SIG has been and will stand strong with the support of hardworking volunteers in the community. It is our honor to be involved as part of this amazing group and work with all of you. We would like to keep building on the legacy of the LD SIG until we pass the torch to the next coordinators as the previous coordinators, Mathew Porter and Mayumi Abe, have done.

We believe that the year of 2018 is going to be as full of excitement for LD SIG members as the past years have been. PanSIG, JALTCALL, and JALT International conferences are the three major annual events for the LD SIG. In addition to these events, we would like to touch upon the Independent Learning Association (ILA) conference, *Whose Autonomy? Voices and Agency in Language Learning*, which will be held in Kobe in early September 2018. Chika Hayashi, one of our SIG’s active members, is going to represent us and has been invited as a plenary speaker of the conference. To get more information about the conference, please go visit <http://ila2018.org/>. The deadline for submitting proposals is January 14th 2018, and we hope that many LD SIG members will be able to take part. Our local activity, Get Togethers, will also be a great platform for new members to network and make beneficial relationships with other members of our community.

We are looking forward to meeting and working with you in 2018!



Yoshio Nakai



Koki Tomita

Learner Development SIG Coordinators

December 2017

みなさま、こんにちは。

Learning Learning の 2017 年冬号をご覧いただきありがとうございます。

この度コーディネーターをさせていただくことになりました富田浩起、中井好男です。メンバーの皆さまへの最初のご挨拶となります。このご挨拶を考えるにあたり、私たちはこれまで発行された多くの貴重なニュースレターを拝読しました。それを通して、数多くのメンバーによるご功績をたどることができました。その中でも特に、2013 年のコーディネーターであった James Underwood と Glenn Magee のメッセージに目が留まりました。そのメッセージを拝読して、この LDSIG が 2018 年に 25 周年という記念すべき年を迎えるということを知りました。このような記念すべき 2018 年を迎えることができるのも、ひとえに LDSIG でご活躍されているメンバーの皆さまのご功績のたまものであり、ここに感謝を申し上げたいと思います。

また、Hugh Nicoll が 2011 年にコーディネーターの任期を終えられた時のご挨拶を引用させていただきたいと思います。「この SIG は、勤勉な人たちが集まるグループで、今もなお進化を続ける素晴らしい SIG であることは明らかです。」この Hugh のメッセージにあるように、LDSIG は今後もメンバーの皆さまの素晴らしいサポートのもとにより確固たる組織であり続けることでしょう。私たちは、このような素晴らしいグループの一員として皆様とともに活動できることを光栄に思っております。そして、これまでの功績を引継ぐとともに、前のコーディネーターである Mathew Porter や Mayumi Abe から引き継いだバトンを次期コーディネーターへと繋ぐまでの間、さらなる発展のために微力ながら尽力して参りたいと思っております。

さて、2018 年は LDSIG のメンバーの皆さまにとって、これまで以上に非常に有意義な一年になると思います。PanSIG、JALTCall、3 年に一度開催される JALT の国際大会、それに加えて、ILA の大会 “Whose Autonomy? Voices and Agency in Language Learning” が 2018 年 9 月に神戸で開催されます。ILA では当 SIG のメンバーでもある Chika Hayashi がプレナリースピーカーとしてご講演されます。ILA に関する詳しい情報につきましては、<http://ila2018.org/>でご確認ください。プロポーザルの締め切りは 2018 年 1 月 14 日です。LDSIG のメンバーの皆さまもぜひご参加くださいますよう、よろしくお願いいたします。さらに、私たちの支部会である Get Together においても、様々なメンバーとの新たなネットワークづくりと有益な情報が得られるプラットフォームづくりを目指し活動しておりますので、そちらへのご参加もよろしくご検討ください。

最後になりましたが、2018 年も皆様にお目にかかれるのを楽しみにしております。

富田浩起、中井好男
学習者ディベロプメント研究部会コーディネーター
2017 年 12 月

MEMBERS' VOICES メンバーの声

Members' Voices offers spaces for SIG members to introduce themselves to other members of the SIG in a variety of accessible and personalised text formats and lengths.

“メンバー声”、SIG会員皆様が他会員皆さんに向けて多様な形式・文体・長さで、ご自身の考えや活動をご紹介していただくためスペースです。例えば、以下のような様々な声を歓迎しています。

Please visit the “Information for Contributors” page for more details: <http://ld-sig.org/information-for-contributors/>

You Are What You Speak: A Bitter Lesson I Learned from Study Abroad



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Suppose there were a labelled bottled wine and another one without a label. Would you dare choose the one without a label? Maybe not. We actually depend much on the information on the label when we decide which wine to drink. In the case of humans, the equivalent of the label is our appearance and, more importantly, what we speak. This is a story of me when I carried a very small label.

I started learning English when I entered junior high school. In those days, English classes mainly focused on grammar and reading comprehension, and students seldom had chances to listen to or speak English.

For me, English was a school subject. I studied English to get high scores in tests, preferably full marks. I used to believe without doubt that there are “correct answers” because term tests and high school entrance exams are made to have only one right answer for each question. Some of my classmates had a strong yearning for American rock music or Hollywood movie

stars, but I was not. The only English-speaking singers I liked were Olivia Newton John and ABBA because they were blonde and good-looking. I listened to their music but was not interested in singing their songs. I did not even know what their nationality was. I simply thought English-speaking people belonged to the world outside Japan.

In the second year of high school, I joined an international youth exchange program called Youth For Understanding (YFU). It was partly because my mother recommended me to do so, and partly out of curiosity. As a student who was getting fairly good grades at school and was socially active and popular, I had little fear of living outside Japan. Thanks to practical orientation meetings and workshops that YFU held for us in Japan and in San Francisco before we headed for each host family, I thought I was well prepared for a different culture. Filled with hope and expectation, I started living in a small town in Georgia, U.S.A. with a host family and went to a local high school for one year.

I knew from the beginning I was not fluent in English, so I asked my host family to correct me whenever I made an English mistake. I must have been naively expecting any English-speaking people to be my English teachers. On the other hand, I tried not to pick up the Southern accent that everybody was speaking with in that area. I was afraid I would not be

able to speak “proper” English if I acquired a strong regional accent. Likewise, I decided not to learn any slang expressions. One reason was slang was not included in my idea of “proper” English. Another reason was I thought I would be able to live more peacefully if I did not understand when other people spoke ill of me using slang expressions including four-letter words. I could be sure such words would not slip out accidentally if I did not know them.

In a few months, my listening ability of English improved considerably, but my speaking ability did not get better as much as I had expected. This was partly because I could not speak English as fluently as other people. More importantly, I was not yet used to explain everything in mind because the American people I talked with didn’t guess what I wanted to say and supplement it in English as Japanese people often do in Japanese. As a result, I was not able to take part in conversations with my classmates and my host sister. I was so frustrated because I thought I would have been able to say something witty if the conversations were in Japanese. I would have offered advice for my friends and would have been trusted and respected. I could have even taken leadership positions in classes and extracurricular activities. The reality, however, was that I was treated like a five-year-old girl, because my spoken English level felt so basic.

I sometimes made English mistakes that even small children wouldn’t make. One day, I wanted to buy some yarn to make a doll with. So, my 16-year-old host sister drove me to a local general store. I wanted to ask where I could find black yarn, but could not remember whether it was “black” or “brack” because we don’t distinguish “R” sound and “L” sound in Japanese. As soon as I had asked, “Where can I find BRACK yarn?” my host sister and the sales clerk, who happened to be my host sister’s

classmate, burst into laughter and talked about it again and again after that.

From then on, to protect my pride and to make some space for myself, I created a new personality of “funny Kio”. She was innocent and simple minded, she would often misunderstand what other people said, ask bizarre questions, and tell silly jokes. In that way, I played the role of a clown. My classmates and my host family treated me as if I were a five-year-old, though in fact I was the top student in the math class and the best pianist in the school.

These frustrating experiences let me learn the hard way that we are judged by how we are presented, and not by what we really have inside. Even if you have a good idea to share, it will not be appreciated by other people unless you use appropriate words and expressions with adequate speed, tone, and pronunciation. You need to get the timing, too. You can, I learned, even manipulate your image by controlling how you talk, like actors who speak with a different accent depending on their role and aim. This became a motivation for me to study foreign languages after I came back to Japan. It also helped me understand the feelings of foreign exchange students when I later studied at university.

Despite the challenges that I faced while studying in America, there were a few people with whom I was able to talk naturally. One of them was another exchange student from Finland, Riitta. Our English level was nearly the same. We somehow understood each other using what little vocabulary we had. Riitta and I taught each other our own language and often played with English. For example, we call ourselves “the bestest friends” to the present. I also felt comfortable when I talked with older people in the choir at the church my host family attended. They lived at such a slow pace that

they were always ready to wait for me to find the right words. These people not only helped me learn to speak English, but also gave me confidence that I didn't have to speak English as fluently as native speakers to communicate successfully. This confidence has since supported me throughout my learning and teaching career until today.

We seldom have a chance to notice that the way we speak a language directly shapes our image when we are learning the language as a foreign language. As a teacher of English, I will keep recommending my students to study abroad not only to improve their language ability, but also to experience the frustration that they may experience when they cannot get assessed fairly because of their inadequate language proficiency. From that point, I believe, they can open a new door to their development as active language learners.

Big Changes, Same Focus



Bruce Lander
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Hello everyone, my name is Bruce Lander. I'm from the UK and next year I will have been in Japan for 20 years on and off. Pleased to meet you all. As of June 2017, I am a "born again" LD SIG member. In fact, some of you may, or may not, remember me from my initial years with the group, as I first became a member of this family in 2007. After my membership expired in 2010 for no particular reason I was absent, and now, in 2017 am very pleased to be back again. So, a heartfelt "*bajimemashite*" to some of you and a "*tadaima*" to the pillars of the group who are still around.

As would be expected, a lot has happened in the 8 years or so, since my absence, from global issues, tragic world events to educational vision and expectations. Without delving into the political realms of the pros and cons of each one, for many reasons I now see the world in a different and more positive light. Now, like us all, I am more experienced, have been through the rigmarole of post-graduate degrees at all levels both through correspondence and here in Japan, am now a parent, and have moved around quite extensively. But, one thing is certain. I am still a college-based teacher in Japan, hold a strong passion towards independent learning, and challenge myself to make my students become more autonomous learners.

For many years previous, before initially joining the LD SIG, I had been interested in groupwork, in project-based learning and having students collaborate more with each other rather than just learning passively. I remember walking past lecture theatres with the door open seeing students charging phones, generally looking bored and uninterested, chatting to each other, and showing very little respect to the teacher at the front of the lecture hall. Those images haunted me back then and still do now. I vowed never to be like that rather to try to encourage students in class to become more active, more independent, and more creative in their learning from that day on.

I started devising projects back then which I still use now to some degree. These include the movie-project, the picture-book project and the TV commercial project, all of which involve lots of collaborative group work. The goal of each of these projects was quite similar, to get students to communicate more with each other, meet as groups, and become more autonomous in their learning decisions. During that period at Ehime University in Matsuyama, it also helped being around several inspiring educators who

shared this sentiment that is so prevalent amongst LD followers, that students may learn more outside the classroom than they do in it. All that was quite topical 10 years ago, but seems to be even more timely now with the current trend in “active learning” and trying to get students to collaborate more, learn more from each other, and become more independent in their learning.

Teaching in this way was so rewarding, but also frustrating at the same time. On the surface student response was mostly good, but it was very difficult to tell if they were in fact becoming autonomous. How can we know? What can we do to explore improvements and changes in their learning strategies? Without enforcing pre-test, post-test formats I think it is quite difficult to discover any improvement at all in language ability or learning outcomes. However, one day in 2014, about 6 years after leaving my post in Ehime, I received a message from a former student whom I had taken through every project I could muster over the three years in which I taught him. This particular student used every opportunity to learn and improve his English. He kept in touch, he visited us regularly. He came to every workshop, signed up for every class he could and visited the communal office we shared at the time. He was getting married to an American lady and wanted me to be the MC at his wedding to help with translating for the foreign guests. Needless to say, I took him up on the offer. It was an honour and a privilege, and, more to the point, it was evidence that this one student had developed into the perfect autonomous learner. This student remains a good friend, my best student ever, and a highly proficient English speaker. A complete success story.

Nevertheless, things were quite different during my inaugural beginnings of life in the LD SIG. The word iPod was a commonality, Wi-Fi was

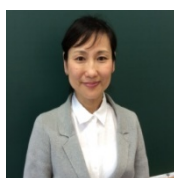
in its early-stages, everyone seemed reluctant to make the switch to the unknown smartphone, and iPads did not exist. I remember sharing things so much more then than I do now, books, CDs, ideas, but at the same time life was quite private. Only a select few would know of your whereabouts, upcoming travel plans, weekend itinerary, and even your birthday. I even still knew how to read a map then. Digital technology was far less ubiquitous then than it is now. Now, it seems everyone knows everything thanks to the onset of computers, social networking, mobile technology, communicational tools and the way we interact with each other. Ownership of smartphones is now widespread and close to 100% amongst our students. Now, with the help of such technology the chance to make our students more autonomous learners is greater than ever. Almost all our students carry around highly expensive and cutting edge technologies that, if used in the right way, can bring foreign language learning to their fingertips any moment they choose. There is a long list of educational EFL/ESL apps, not to mention podcasts and other tools that theoretically allow students to learn any time anywhere.

To this day though, many of the decisions I make in the classroom now originate from that inspirational year and from those influential peers whom I met in 2007. I learnt a great deal back then and also from further involvement at LD events, workshops, and international conferences attended by like-minded educators who all shared similar belief. I still remember my first official international conference, the ILA in Hong Kong headlined by David Little in 2009. Many conferences later, my interest in independent learning has not waned any, rather it has been spurred on by the new trend in CALL (computer aided language learning). My research made the likely transition towards CALL, but maintained its roots in LD. I still adopt a lot of the projects used 10 years ago, but

have adapted them with innovative changes using Google docs, iPad apps, and various other collaborative Edu-tech tools. Now, a lot of my time is spent on professional development projects, knowledge management, and introducing how technology and smartphones in particular, can aid the autonomous learner.

Although unfortunately the overall language ability gap between those who can and those who cannot seems to be widening, my aim remains focused on making our students autonomous enough to learn by themselves. It is an honour to be back and I look forward to meeting some familiar and new faces on the scene to exchange ideas with. Finally, I would like to thank my inspiring colleagues who influenced me so much: Steve, Tanya, Ian, you know who you are you, I salute you all and hope to see you soon.

Motivating Low-Proficiency College Students: Growing into a More Understanding Teacher



Akiko Kiyota
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Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula or good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement. (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 72)

Hello, everyone. Currently, I teach groups of low proficiency students at university level. By “low proficiency students,” I am referring to learners who have had six years of compulsory English education in junior high and high school, and whose

TOEIC Bridge Test scores range from 56 to 110 (equivalent to 280 or below in TOEIC). In this short reflection, I would like to share with you my experience of how I motivated these students, and look at interconnections between the story of my own personal and professional development and the stories of my learners.

Obtaining my M.A. in TESOL in 2005, I continued teaching at an *eikaiwa* school, and then later began teaching part-time at a Japanese university. In both places, students were generally highly motivated and eager to learn and master English. Then I had to leave my position and Japan also, in order to live with my husband who was assigned to work overseas. Returning to Japan in 2015, I started teaching at my present situation in private Japanese universities, where I was allocated to teach the lowest groups of non-English major students, according to their placement tests. This change of teaching context made me notice a fundamental difference. With motivated students, you can fully focus on language pedagogy itself; however, with low proficiency students, who are often not fond of learning English or not good at learning a language, you additionally need to take care of issues *other* than teaching language *per se*.

The first day of the class used to be almost the same every year—students sitting scattered (often at the back of the room), not looking at each other, seemingly not interested in learning English very much (or, *at all*). However, after putting a lot of effort into creating a motivational, cohesive class group and generating motivation in students, the climate is now totally different. My students sit in their designated seats so that they can form groups for collaborative learning, they have become friends with each other, and they are not quiet anymore. On the contrary, they are quite talkative as much as they can speak at their (“broken”) English level, and they engage fully

in every activity. There is a lot of laughter and smiles during each class. The change in student attitude and participation is professionally satisfying and rewarding, because at last, from here on actual learning and preferable development can take place.

Personal and professional growth

To be honest, teaching such students was very difficult in my first year back in Japan. The shock from having a miserable lesson was emotionally overwhelming and tiring. Soon I started to take actions to change what I was doing. I started to gather information about my students' backgrounds, as well as what they could do and what they were not good at doing. I spoke informally with them after lessons, and communicated with other teachers, too. Attending conferences and seminars by JALT and other academic associations let me gain theoretical and practical teaching ideas. I also participated in workshops offered by the Facilitation Association of Japan, and obtained practical knowledge on various facilitating techniques such as ice-breaking, brainstorming, and workshop design.

Meanwhile, I read books on classroom management, ice-breaking, and motivational strategies, including those written by Japanese elementary school teachers. Among the works I read, the book by Dörnyei (2001) *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*, and another by Dörnyei and Murphy (2003) *Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom* have been tremendously helpful throughout the time I have been adapting my teaching to these learners. I constantly consulted these two books; and have adopted and adapted almost all of the ideas that were possible for me to execute in my situation.

Trying out new methods and ideas that I have learned with my students and seeing their reactions, which are often positive, has been not

only enjoyable but also rich in learning about my learners further. Also, observing student growth in their reflective writing and reports was an excellent source for understanding about their learning and development. With all these changes, my current teaching situation has certainly been training me to grow into a more understanding teacher.

Learner development: One case

It is August at the time of writing, and I have just finished the 2017 Spring semester. I feel relieved and content that many students have shown satisfactory development since April. Among them, there was one student, Hideki (pseudonym), whose transformation was striking. This student wrote in several of his reflection sheets at the beginning of the semester comments such as “I get goose bumps when I listen to English,” and “Doing listening activities from the morning gave me a headache.” However, practicing English through the semester with a friendly, cohesive class group, together with peer role models outside the classroom, and constant teacher support, Hideki had, by the end of the semester, developed to the level where he could enjoy his visits to the school's English lounge (which he visited more than five times). He could even approach and have a conversation with an English-speaking staff member from the lounge outside school when he saw him at the train station. Hideki reported that he had a pleasant conversation in English on the train. (I was so happy when I heard this from him.) In his final reflection sheet, Hideki wrote, “(Before) I had a strong “*nigate ishiki* [awareness of not being good at]” and I had never had a decent score on tests ..., but (now) as I reflect, I have made a progress as if it seems almost strange. I want to keep up this pace and be able to speak English freely” [*my translation*].

To end...

As I reflect on this student's growth as a learner and my own as a teacher, I feel that the right classroom atmosphere, constantly generating and keeping motivation, and providing follow-up advice and words of encouragement were the keys to the successful development of the student mentioned above, and these keys were made possible through my own development as a teacher. Because teachers are the ones who can generate motivation in students, or create an environment where students can form intrinsic motivation, the teacher's role can have a great impact, especially for those learners who lack initial motivation. I look forward to meeting you someday at get-togethers and other events, exchanging motivational strategies with you, and listening to each other's stories of learner development. The stories of student growth are so beautiful and touching to reflect upon and appreciate with each other.

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Significant Learning through Curriculum Design, Collaborative Play, and Creative Thinking: My Learner Development Research Interests and Plans

Nick Kasperek

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As both a scholar and a teacher, I have long been curious about the expansive possibilities of education. In my MA research into peace education theory, I came to believe that scholar-educators need to transcend their self-imposed limitations on imagination, and I argued in my thesis and elsewhere for an explicitly utopian turn for this philosophy of education (Kasperek, 2016a). Completing my MEd studies on teaching English language learners, I was likewise drawn to educational thought that conceptualized learning as something more than just the sterile transfer of knowledge and skills. It was thus a revelation when I discovered L. Dee Fink's (2013) taxonomy of six interrelated types of "significant learning" for university students: (a) foundational knowledge, (b) application, (c) integration, (d) the human dimension, (e) caring, and (f) learning how to learn (p. 37). As this taxonomy suggests, Fink's (2013) conception of significant learning "goes beyond understand-and-remember and even beyond application learning" (p. xii) and is characterized broadly as "something that is truly significant in terms of the students' lives" (p. 7).

Fink (2013) presents an integrated approach to designing primarily content courses to help college teachers achieve this ambitious goal of significant learning, but I began to see inspiring possibilities for language learning goals as well. In fact, as Díaz-Rico (2013) suggests, language teachers may actually be better positioned than

content teachers to help learners achieve humanistic and caring types of goals because language teachers can draw upon “a symbolic system that is subdominant in the first language but lies dormant, connected with powerful emotions, in a sense waiting for a portal of expression” (p. 202). Considering this potential for significant learning goals regarding both content and language, Fink’s course design model based on significant learning seemed to provide a strong framework for my MEd capstone course design project for a content and language integrated learning (CLIL) course for Japanese universities (Kasperek, 2016b).

While all six types of significant learning are vital and interrelated, I have found it especially interesting to focus my recent research on how to achieve the more ambitious three types of significant learning goals, namely, the human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. The human dimension refers to students “learn[ing] something important about themselves or others,” which “enables them to function and interact more effectively,” while caring goals provide “the energy [students] need for learning more about [the subject] and making it a part of their lives,” since the learning experience itself changes how much students care about what they are studying (Fink, 2013, p. 36). Building on this, learning how to learn “enables students to continue learning in the future and to do so with greater effectiveness” (Fink, 2013, p. 37).

To achieve these three connected forms of learning goals, I have been especially interested in researching interconnections between curriculum design, a playful and creative approach to learning and teaching, and learning through interaction and collaboration. This has led me to take an iterative and reflective approach to applied research into curriculum design for significant learning. I hope to use research from particular classroom experiences

to inform teaching in other contexts and suggest new possibilities. Exploring iterative course design, I want especially to attend to evidence of how much students learn regarding the human dimension, caring about the subjects, and learning strategies. At this point, however, I am still at the early stages of this research, as until now I have focused more on how valuable this design process is for teachers’ own learning and professional development (Kasperek, 2016b).

I am further along in my research into play and creativity in language learning. Drawing upon my positive experiences as a language learner, I have designed activities to facilitate playful student creativity (Kasperek & Turner, 2017; Turner & Kasperek, 2017), and I have conducted mixed-methods classroom research on the effects of a playful and creative approach on student learning (Kasperek, 2015; 2016c; 2017). Findings from my classroom research suggest that both collaborative play and individual creative writing are effective language learning strategies that students can internalize and transfer to different contexts (Kasperek, 2016c; 2017). While I still have some concerns about students taking serious content too lightly, I believe that more playful interaction affords opportunities for not only more engaging repetitive practice but also deeper engagement with various subjects. In fact, student questionnaire responses have shown surprising correlations between self-reported play and their sharing of real ideas (Kasperek, 2016b). These results suggest that collaborative play helped students find new ways to care about the content. I also plan to explore other ways of creating the conditions for interaction in which learners can co-construct the relevance of the content for themselves and in which sustained collaborative engagement with any content can become an end in itself, such that learning about any subject can become truly significant. Additionally, as part of my own continued learning, I hope to interact and

collaborate with other teachers and researchers in the Learner Development SIG to explore these issues further together.

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LOOKING BACK 報告

Starting a New Conversation: Using Innovative Approaches to Ensure New Learning

Joël Laurier
University of Tsukuba
Alison Stewart
Gakushuin University
Katherine Thornton
Otemon Gakuin University

Debjani Ray
Tokyo University of Science
Hiroyo Nakagawa
Kansai Gaidai College
Greg Rouault
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New Conversations to Help Shape the Future of Education

Joël Laurier

As educators, we are continually innovating to keep pace with our students' needs in today's rapidly changing world. From materials usage to materials creation, to lesson content and teaching style, teachers in a wide variety of contexts develop innovative practices to suit the ever-changing dynamics of our creation studios, commonly known as classrooms. At the same time, as we innovate, we need to be keenly aware of the effects of innovations on our students. Maintaining critical and constructive dialogues or conversations with our learners and with other teachers is essential for gauging the worth of these innovations. These new conversations, in all their varied forms, bring about initiatives that help shape the future of education and help educators be agents of change. For the Pan-SIG 2016 Conference in Okinawa, the Learner Development Special Interest Group (LD SIG) Forum showcased a variety of innovative practices. This article presents summaries of the five posters that were shown at the Forum, each of which reflects different perspectives on what innovation means and what kind of innovation might benefit learners and teachers. The article starts off with Alison Stewart offering a critical look at the place of autonomy as an innovative language learning approach through a comparative overview of theories of learning and language learning pedagogy. Katherine Thornton provides a perspective of one university's initiative to foster autonomous language learning practices among its students. Debjani Ray provides a reflection of an English Lounge and its effects on her students. Hiroyo Nakagawa introduces a new approach to develop reflective writers. Greg Rouault ends the article with an account of his mentoring of his undergraduate teacher trainees. This initiative enabled his students to attend language-teaching conferences with the support of an LD SIG Outreach Grant.



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Changing Paradigms: Evolving Theories About Language Learning and Learner Development

Alison Stewart

The aim of this poster presentation was to consider learner autonomy as an idea and to explore how and where it might fit in a historical scheme of innovative ideas about language learning and learner development. I have been thinking about this for some time, most recently in the course of collaborating with other Learner Development SIG members to define or explain learner autonomy for book chapters (Stewart & Irie, 2011; Stewart & Ashwell, 2014; Stewart, Ashwell, Miyahara & Paydon, 2014), and in a lecture course “Introduction to Applied Linguistics and TESOL” at Gakushuin University. Although these attempts to clarify learner autonomy have given me some insights, they have also raised new questions about learner autonomy, what we mean by it, and what that means for our teaching practice and research, and I wanted to discuss these questions with other participants at the LD SIG Forum at PanSIG.

Although language learner autonomy is sometimes regarded as an innovative approach to language learning, the idea of autonomy in learning is far from new, with its antecedents in the teachings of Plato and Socrates, Confucius, and the Hindu Upanishads. What we tend to now think of as “traditional” education methods—teacher-fronted classrooms and rote memorization—were also “innovative” at one time. Reflecting on the role education was called upon to play in the creation of modern nation-states in eighteenth-century Europe reminds us that innovative methods of teaching and learning are introduced to respond to social conditions and challenges.

Turning more specifically to ideas regarding language learning, the following table of language learning approaches highlights contrasts in their pedagogical focus, the teaching/learning practices they promote, and the ideologies or theories on which they are based. Learner autonomy is included in this table as a language learning approach, but, unlike the other approaches listed, there is no clearly defined theoretical framework with which it can be associated.

Table 1. A Comparison of Language Learning Approaches

Language Learning Approach	Reason for Learning	Practices	Theories
Grammar-Translation	Translation/reading/writing	Translation	Nationalist
Audio Lingual	Speaking/listening	Drills, chants	Behaviorist
Communicative Language Teaching	Communicative competence, SLA	Interaction	Cognitive
Content-Based Learning (incl. CLIL)	Discourse alignment	EAP, ESP	Socio
Learner Autonomy	Learner development	Self-regulated learning, reflective practice	?

The final part of the poster traced some recent “turns” that have occurred in the field of applied linguistics. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research evolved out of Chomsky’s (1959) rejection of a Behaviorist view that emphasized conformity to social norms and ignored the role of autonomy and creativity in the learner. A subsequent “social turn” (Block 2005) saw researchers looking more closely at issues of structure and agency in learning. Finally, a “spatial turn” now sees learning as a complex dynamic system (e.g., van Lier, 2000; Larsen-Freeman, 2015) that develops as a result of interaction with and upon the environment (people, places and things).

Learner autonomy research and practice have followed all these turns, although this does not mean that researchers or practitioners have necessarily rejected previous theoretical perspectives. Quite different theoretical frameworks continue to underpin new research: SLA (individual differences), social (collaboration, interdependence), and spatial (learning spaces, linguistic landscapes), to the point that a leading figure in the field has questioned whether applied linguistics can even be called a field at all (Cook, 2015).

Does it matter? Is it helpful to think of learner autonomy as an “approach” or a “paradigm”, or does that push us to become dogmatic in our decisions about how we should go about conceptualizing it in our classes or curriculums and in our research? There may not be any clear answers to these questions, but this should not be a reason not to ask them, nor to continue to seek answers.



Alison Stewart teaches in the Department of English Language and Cultures at Gakushuin University. She has a doctorate in Applied Linguistics focusing on teacher identity and is the co-author of a recent article in ELT Journal on Language Teaching Associations in Japan (one of which is JALT).

Reflective Dialogue for Language Learning: A New Conversation?

Katherine Thornton

Mastery of a foreign language requires that students engage in learning beyond the classroom. The growing movement towards learner autonomy in language learning (Benson, 2011) has emphasized the role of the language teacher as a facilitator in this process and the importance of providing sufficient support for learners to successfully negotiate their own pathways to effective language learning. As Stewart (this paper) rightly points out, the development of learner autonomy can be approached from many perspectives. In this section, I focus on a course I developed at a foreign languages university in Japan, the aims of which were to develop the self-directed language learning skills of the students. Reflective dialogue is a major component of the course, in both written and spoken form.

The one-semester course for third- and fourth-year students, was held twice a week and taught by myself, a learning advisor. While a teacher’s main focus is usually to support a learner to develop proficiency in a language, an advisor focuses primarily on metacognitive skills for learning, through engaging in an intentional reflective dialogue with the learner (Kato, 2012). In this course, I employed several modes of

instruction to help develop these skills: classroom activities, face-to-face advising sessions, and written reflection through journals. The course included the following phases: awareness raising, planning, and two self-directed learning cycles.

Awareness raising

Learners' prior learning experiences can have a significant impact on beliefs about learning, which in turn influence decisions made about language learning (Cotterall, 1995). In the initial weeks, students completed the following activities to analyse their existing beliefs: including beliefs surveys and language learning histories. I also introduced important self-directed learning skills that would be necessary to successfully complete the course goals: planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating (after Wenden, 1998), with an emphasis on implementing (Thornton, 2010), as experience showed that students struggled most with issues such as time management and maintaining motivation, in other words the implementation of their plans.

Planning

After considering their prior learning experiences and critically analysing their beliefs, learners engaged in a process of needs analysis, resulting in the formation of concrete learning goals. They then conducted a diagnostic, to identify their strengths and weaknesses and focus their goals, and decided on materials and strategies to use. This process was supported by individual advising sessions to help each learner to explore this plan critically through supportive questioning. I also gave suggestions for materials and strategies where appropriate, which the learner was free to incorporate or ignore. Learners then embarked on two separate learning cycles.

Learning Cycles

Each cycle lasted three weeks. One class per week was given over to self-directed learning, with students completing at least 3 hours of self-directed language learning by following their plans. Each week they wrote a learning journal reflecting on their activities that was uploaded to a shared platform where it could be read by peers, and was commented on privately by the advisor. In the remaining class, students discussed their learning experiences in small groups, sharing ideas and encouraging each other.

At the end of each cycle, learners repeated their diagnostic activities as a form of evaluation to measure their progress towards their goals.

Reflection Through “New Conversations”

Reflection was a main tenet of the course, and incorporated in a number of ways. Firstly, the language learning beliefs activities were designed as reflective activities to encourage students to critically analyse their previous experiences. Secondly, students attended three advising sessions throughout the course, in which reflective dialogue helped the learner to think more deeply about their learning (Kato & Mynard, 2016). The same process took place in written format in the learning journals, and students were also given the opportunities to reflect with peers in class discussions. Finally, on completing the two learning cycles, learners used a reflective tool called the wheel of language learning (Yamashita & Kato, 2012), in

which they visually represented their level of satisfaction with being able to use self-directed learning skills in a wheel, which formed the basis for the final advising session, and was then written up in a final reflective report. In this way, in both spoken and written formats, learners engaged in a “new conversation” with the advisor in order to reach a deeper understanding of their learning processes.



Katherine Thornton has an MA in TESOL from the University of Leeds and is associate professor at Otemon Gakuin University and is the Program Director of the self-access centre there. She is a former president of the Japan Association of Self-Access Learning (JASAL) and a column editor of the Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal.

English Lounge: A New Perspective to Enhance Learning

Debjani Ray

Learning is “a journey through landscapes of practices” and “through engagements” (Wenger, 2010) and to enforce student motivation, engagement is extremely vital (Schilling & Schilling, 1999). Non-classroom language learning spaces are a relatively new approach to enhancing language learning but the rationale for them is based on concepts of self-directed learning, learner-centered learning, autonomous learning, and collaborative learning. In self-access learning centers, students choose from different available resources to study independently (Klassen, Detaramani, Lui, Patri, & Wu, 1998) and their active participation is the key (Gibbs, 1995, Carter, 1999). Brent and Felder (2008) say learning through activities engages students in meaningful tasks through which they learn. This way it becomes an efficient way for learning as it encourages and engages students and through it they can connect to the real world with their newly gained knowledge. In the English Lounge described in this article, that was the focus, not just memorizing and storing of the information but using it in real context.

I started an English Lounge once a week five years ago at the university campus where I used to teach. The idea was to give the students an opportunity to practice the language they were learning in the classroom. As General English classes are non-communicative, some students protested vocally when a special communication class taught by me for advanced students got cancelled to make room for some other class. That gave me the idea that there was a need for it. I initiated the plan for an English Lounge and the idea was supported by my supervisor but there was no financial support available. I gathered old English books and newspapers, some games that I owned, e.g., English Karuta, Checkers, Scrabbles etc. for the Lounge. I also bought poster paper, pencil set, markers, glue, tape etc., as well as light snacks and tea and coffee with my own money. We managed to continue the English Lounge despite a number of changes in venues and times with all sessions lasting for about an hour and a half to two hours. Studying at a science university, the students were all from diverse fields of science and technology. They chose from the available resources and did different kinds of activities, such as reading books/the newspaper, playing games, having conversation/discussion. Here I will discuss the group projects of a group of Architecture students who developed a project on different architectural landmarks.

At first, even though they were motivated enough to visit the English Lounge, the students were at a loss as to what to do as it was not a class, nor was it a course to be followed. They were 13 second-year

Architecture students with intermediate level of English and great interest in architecture. As a facilitator of the group, I suggested they discuss some buildings or objects of architectural importance, in line with their major, in English. This developed into group projects, which the students presented over a two-week period.

The students formed groups consisting of 3 to 5 students and smoothly chose their themes of interest: different landmarks in Tokyo. They visited the English Lounge once almost every week and worked together on their projects there. They did extensive research on them both in and outside the English Lounge. The students were assisted when they needed help, particularly with the language. I monitored and kept notes on their progress throughout the process. It took about 8 weeks to research and prepare and they kept the English Lounge as their common place to meet and work. Finally, the students presented their work in both printed and electronic formats, speaking in front of many students whom they had invited to attend.

Through conducting the English Lounge, I was able to see the benefits of a wholly student-centered learning approach in which students took part actively and engaged in activities that they chose independently. Among the benefits of the English Lounge the most prominent ones might be: opportunities for using English, improvement of communication in English, self-motivation, developing independent learning skills and self-management, improvement of student performance and self-confidence. In the English Lounge, the Japanese students communicated with each other in English without any hesitation, although they sometimes used Japanese to negotiate. Away from any course or syllabus, they felt free to choose what they were interested in and used English to discuss what they knew with each other. Through this process their knowledge and skills of the language became deeper and broader and, at the same time, the content knowledge improved.

It can be safely interpreted that students try to work wholeheartedly for the projects when they are at the center of the task and they learn by doing. The students in the English Lounge were actively engaged in investigating the themes that they had chosen, and that helped them in gathering content knowledge and in enhancing their language skills as well.



Debjani Ray has been teaching at universities in Japan for more than 20 years. She teaches communication skills to students science and engineering students at the Tokyo University of Science, Kanamachi Campus. She teaches communication skills to Science and Engineering students. Her primary interest is teaching communication in context. One of her research interests is social impact on education.

An Assisted-Writing Approach for Japanese College Students

Hiroyo Nakagawa

With growing globalization, written communication is becoming more important for Japanese students. However, since communicative language teaching has dominated English classes in Japan since the 1990s, there has been insufficient research on teaching writing. Recently, educators have been conducting more research into the teaching of writing, but there is still a need to improve teaching materials and approaches specifically for Japanese students. Educators should look into teaching methods for students who have difficulty in writing even a single paragraph (Hirose, 2003; Nakashini, 2006). The purpose of the present study is to examine how Japanese college students can improve paragraph-writing skills with an assisted writing approach that encourages learner development through reflective writing. In other words, students can engage in paragraph-writing activities to become reflective writers capable of thinking about their own writing to reduce errors, improve organization and content. An assisted writing approach involves the teacher's intervention in two aspects: giving explicit instructions on paragraph structures and providing corrective feedback in a classroom where students can discuss their ideas. I conclude by considering how such an approach can reduce students' anxiety about writing, achieve self-esteem, and build their confidence.

Based on the ideas above, I presented a practical research report entitled "Assisted paragraph writing for Japanese college students" in the LD Forum. In the research, 25 junior college second-year students, whose TOEIC scores were about 440, wrote their thoughts and impressions on social issues they had read in reading classes. They failed a compulsory writing class taught by native speakers of English when they were in their first year, which made them discouraged regarding writing. Some expressed that they did not follow those teachers' guidelines; others had too many absences. Therefore, I believed that giving the target students explicit instruction as well as encouragement was imperative.

At the beginning of the semester, a pre-writing test, and at the end, a post-writing test were administered for 30 minutes. During the semester, after providing explicit paragraph writing structures, such as topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences, the students practiced writing paragraphs in each class twice a week for one semester. During those writing activities, they had to engage in pre-writing exercises such as planning, mapping, brainstorming, and making outlines. Afterwards, during the in-writing stage they worked on drafting their paragraphs, reviewing, and revising. Once they figured out how to do paragraph writing activities, they were assigned to practice over and over.

Preliminary findings indicate that these writing activities may be effective in enabling learners to develop their fluency, understand basic paragraph structure, and be aware of controversial issues. Out of 25 students, 16 increased the range of their vocabulary and 24 increased the number of connectors they could recognize. It seems that those students were able to understand at least what the paragraph organization should be. Overall, their paragraphs became more logical with increased use of connectors.

Overall, the pilot study implies that paragraph writing activities helped their learner development. Student feedback suggested that paragraph writing activities such as mind mapping are helpful in generating new ideas. Additionally, others mentioned that they were able to write a lot of supporting details through making outlines. It may be true that planning is very important to reduce writing

anxieties and develop fluency. Planning stages can provide students with opportunities to share their own thoughts and can activate in-class discussion. Pre-writing discussions played a key role in developing their creativity and organizing their ideas. However, some of them still had writing shortcomings in vocabulary, grammatical competence and writing experiences, which are issues to be solved in the future.



Hiroyo Nakagawa is an associate professor at Kansai Gaidai College and is interested in Japanese EFL students' writing and learner autonomy. She has written several TOEIC textbooks.

Mentoring for Professional Development: A Case Study of Undergraduates Seeking Teaching Licenses

Greg Rouault

Mentoring is generally accepted as a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. Farren (2006) elaborates further by describing mentoring as a learning and development partnership between someone with vast experience and someone who wants to learn. Drawing largely from business contexts, Kouzes and Posner (1993) have suggested that mentors look for “teachable moments” in order to expand or realize the potentialities of the people in the organizations they lead.

Personal experience has shown that recommendations from respected people who I perceived as mentors, even informally, can be very valuable. For example, the advice I have received to get involved with professional development by attending conferences and taking on roles in academic societies has fostered several career related opportunities. These suggestions created openings for networking and experiential learning, which Silberman (2006) has called “learning by doing.” I decided to provide similar guidance to support my seminar students in beginning their own careers as novice teachers. The goal for this short term, situational mentoring (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982) was to introduce the learners to chances for further education and examples from practicing teachers, as well as to offer moral support and inspiration.

While mentoring is certainly not a new concept, a scan of the index in popular teaching methodology texts for ESL/EFL teaching did not reveal the term. Various forms of professional development and teacher training/education are listed, but not specifically mentoring. However, if the role of teachers in fostering autonomy is as a facilitator or counsellor, then, the psycho-social support that is provided must include raising awareness and motivating learners, as well as technical support for learners to plan, carry out, and evaluate learning (Aoki, 1999).

Considering this underpinning and my personal experience, I wanted to act as a formal mentor, even for a very short term, and recommend that my students take part in academic conferences. I believed this could have a positive impact on their engagement in present learning as pre-service teachers and on their approach toward professional development in the future. I submitted a proposal to the LD SIG for an

Outreach Grant to support senior undergraduate students in attending local teacher education conferences. This section reports briefly on the initial outcomes of that project relating specifically to the Pan-SIG LD Forum theme.

Two students in the teacher training program at a private university in Osaka were selected and agreed to take part in this case study into mentoring for professional development. I provided them with a survey to be completed in two parts: (a) prior to and (b) after attending the teacher training conferences. Open-ended questions were used specifically to raise awareness, to focus planning, and to capture learning and reflections from this first-time, unfamiliar experience. The teacher training events proposed for participation included (a) the Spring Conference for JACET Kansai, (b) Pearson Education “Days”, and (c) the English Teachers in Japan Kansai event. Each student attended two of these, on their own, without my involvement, and with only the survey questions as a guide.

In terms of contributing to the affective and behavioral goals as well as skill development for these student teachers, there is hope to be seen in one subject’s answer to, “What does teacher/faculty development mean to you?”

In current Japanese education, the teaching style where the teacher teaches students one-sidedly is no longer accepted, so teachers are searching for various ways. I think this [training/workshop] is a good way to study, acquire, and verify new ways of teaching that are different from conventional ones. [Translation from Japanese original]

While some may suggest that communicative language teaching has permeated English language classes in Japan since even before these university students were born, when asked, “How has attending this first set of conference presentations and workshops changed your thinking about professional development or lifelong learning?” one subject responded:

I was surprised because the ways of teaching presented in the workshops were completely different from the ones I have experienced ... we should study new ways of lessons because the times are changing ... teachers should put the new ways into practice and whether the result is good or bad, they should take actions against the challenges that they find. [Translation from Japanese original]

Mentoring as a concept is not new and may even be included under other terms in ESL/EFL language teaching methods instruction. However, for the future teachers in this case study, the mentoring nurtured to promote attending teacher training conferences opened a conversation for a new approach for new learning.



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Conclusion

Joël Laurier

As society continuously changes, learning needs and methods of learning also change, bringing about innovations and “new conversations.” The necessity to regularly re-tool, re-formulate, and revamp the educational process keeps educators challenging their students and themselves for better pedagogical results. The innovative processes have endless possibilities. This article brings to light but a few of them. From self-learning management to engaging students in reflective decision-making, these five presenters have shown that innovation is an important part of the process, if not the key point. Whether it be opening doors for students to answer the questions or making special courses to help sustain autonomous learning, the innovative practices described in this article bring an interesting dimension to the forefront. With these new conversations arising, what will the future of education bring us?

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LD SIG 2017 GRANT AWARDEE REPORTS

研究助成金受賞者の報告

Takeaways and Practical Applications from JALTCALL 2017

JALTCALL 2017 における成果と実践的活用

Daniel G. C. Hougham ダニエル・G. C. ・ホフム

Hiroshima University



The JALTCALL 2017 conference was held at Matsuyama University in June, and I was fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to attend numerous presentations there, two of which stood out to me as being of particular relevance and importance to learner development: (a) an interactive poster presentation titled *Online testing for learner feedback and development* by Blair Barr & Brett Milliner (of Tamagawa University) as part of the LD SIG Forum, and (b) a show-and-tell presentation titled *Building and learning together with Quizlet* by Blair Barr (of Tamagawa University). This reflective report will focus on what the main takeaways from these two presentations were for me, from a learner development perspective, and how I have already been able to make use of them, and plan on making further use of them to encourage learner development in my university teaching in the near future.

Learner development via online testing & timely feedback

As its title suggests, *Online testing for learner feedback and development* by Barr and Milliner looked at how online testing can be beneficial for learners by providing them with helpful and timely feedback. Sharing their numerous experiences with viewing and interacting with online test results, the presenters reported on the results of a survey of their students' (N=190) impressions of doing online tests with immediate feedback. The survey was conducted

after students had completed several computer-assisted language tests either via Blackboard Learn or Google Forms, as well as M-Reader quizzes. The findings provided some fascinating answers to some very interesting questions including what the advantages and disadvantages of online tests/homework are compared to the advantages and disadvantages of paper-based tests/homework.

One of the main points I took away from the discussion was that students clearly recognize and appreciate the benefits of online testing, including convenience, ease/quickness of completion as well as the immediacy of feedback. Another takeaway for me was that many students responded that online tests are not without some disadvantages, especially their dependency on internet connectedness and the possibility of submission or input errors. Student responses also indicated that many of them see some advantages of doing paper-based tests/homework, particularly the positive effect that writing down their answers directly has on memory. Respondents also mentioned that paper-based tests have disadvantages such as time commitment, greater requirement of effort, and inconvenience.

What was of particular note was that a large majority (76%) of their students preferred doing tests and homework online (with feedback), with an equal number indicating that they have taken computer-assisted language tests again for revision or self-study purposes. In other words,

most of the students expressed a preference for online tests over paper-based tests, and many of them found online tests beneficial enough to do them again. For me, what stood out was that the use of online tests can be an effective and efficient way not only for teachers to manage assessment, homework, and other classroom tasks, but also, more importantly, for learners to receive and reflect on the timely feedback. Learning quickly from their mistakes, students are better able to become self-directed and autonomous learners.

Encouraged by these insightful and promising results, as well as the helpful related information that Milliner and Barr (2017) have recently published, I am glad to report that I have since been able to conduct some online tests and

quizzes using some of the methods they introduced, namely Google Forms and Google Sheets with the add-on applications Flubaroo and FormCreator, with much success and positive student feedback. After several weeks of doing weekly vocabulary quizzes via Google Forms, I anonymously surveyed in the spring of this year two classes of English majors (N = 45) at a private university regarding the extent to which they agree with the statement: “I like the Google Forms system which lets me know my score and answers by email soon after doing each online vocabulary quiz” (Google Forms で Vocabulary(語彙)クイズをした後、メールですぐ、点数や答えを知るシステムが好きだ。). Students responded using a Likert-style scale from 1 *strongly disagree* to 4 *strongly agree*.

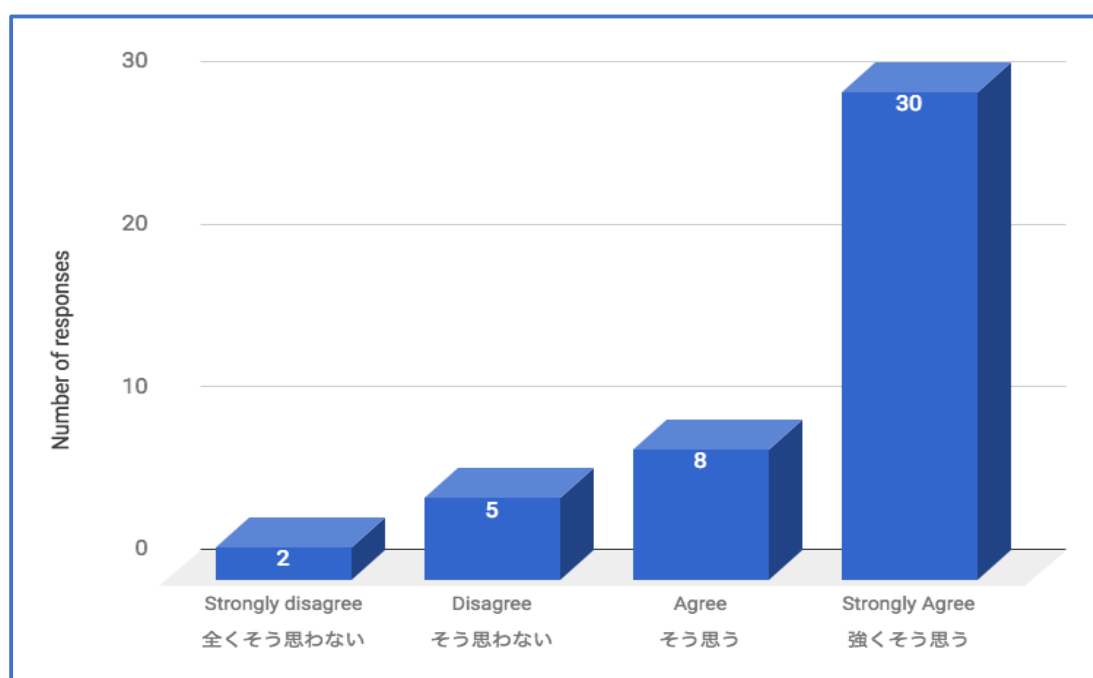


Figure 1. Student feedback about online testing (vocabulary quizzes) (N=45)

Figure 1 shows that a very large majority (84%) of my students agreed or strongly agreed that they like the online testing system that was used to conduct quizzes and provide immediate feedback.

In addition, after conducting various online listening tests via Google Forms in the spring semester, I surveyed 3 classes of non-English majors (N=94) at a prefectural university with a similar question. Using a Likert-style scale from 1 *strongly disagree* to 4 *strongly agree*, students were

asked to what extent they agree with the statement: *“I like the Google Forms system which lets me know my score and answers by email soon after doing*

an online listening test” (Google Forms でリスニングテストをした後、メールですぐ、点数や答えを知るシステムが好きだ。)

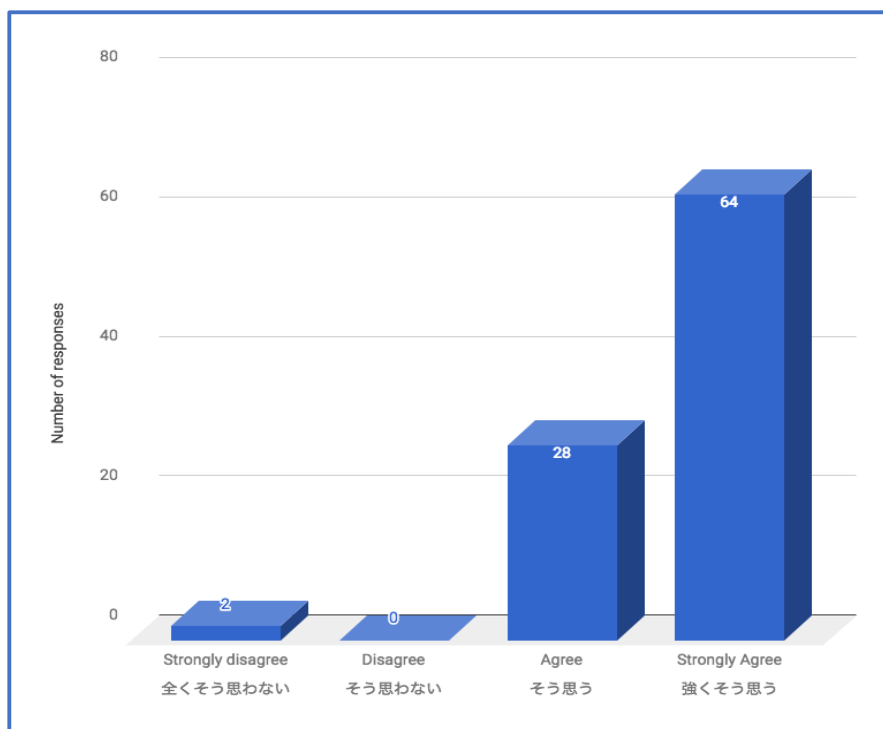


Figure 2. Student feedback about online testing (listening tests) (N=94)

Figure 2 shows that the vast majority (97%) of students (N=94) agreed or strongly agreed that they like the online testing system that was used to conduct listening tests and provide timely feedback on those tests by email.

One of the reasons why the students and I strongly like this system is that we have been able to gain immediate insights into their scores and vocabulary development. Figure 3 shows an example of a summary of “insights” (Google uses the term “insights” here to mean test results) that was automatically and instantly generated by Google Forms after the students had completed their online quizzes.

I was able to display this summary on the overhead projector so students could see information such as the average score, median,

and range as well as a bar chart showing how many students scored how many points. Another good thing about this system is that, with the add-on app Flubaroo, I was able to see at a glance more in-depth information, including whether any questions were low scoring and which, if any, students were struggling. Flubaroo also enabled me to privately share individual feedback with each student by email in a timely manner, after grading them manually. More recently, I have also learned how to use Flubaroo’s “Autograde” feature, which not only automatically grades each test or quiz, but also automatically sends each student’s test score to their individual email inboxes as soon as they have submitted their answers, thus further streamlining the feedback process. “Autograde” is an advanced feature which requires a few extra set-up steps prior to each implementation,

but it makes it possible for students to receive their scores very soon after submission and see which, if any, of their responses were incorrect, thus creating the opportunity for them to very quickly learn from their mistakes.

Based on these encouraging and promising results, in the near future, I plan to continue using these methods and tools for online testing, designing, and implementing a wider

variety of quiz and test question types, to encourage students to deepen their vocabulary knowledge by becoming familiar with more examples of use. Also, I aim to increase the quality and quantity of feedback to students, by providing them with personalized reports such as those described in Unser-Schutz (2017).

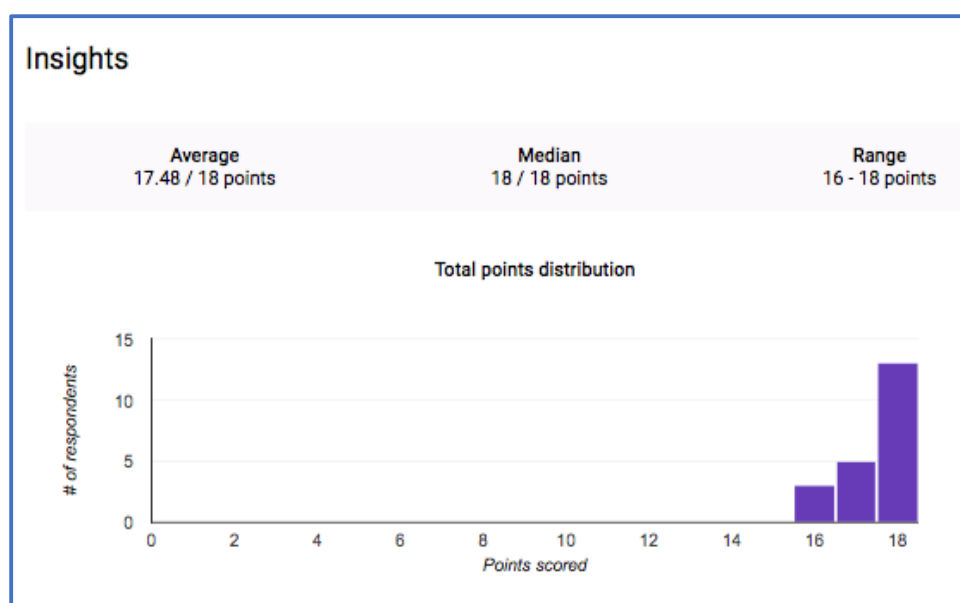


Figure 3. Screenshot of a summary of “insights” generated by Google Forms

It is well worth noting here that Google offers free online, self-paced, guided courses aimed at growing the practical technological skills that teachers can use in the classroom. I recently completed the *Google Certified Educator Level 1* certification and, through doing so, gained know-how and a working command of some of the best strategies for integrating Google tools, such as Google Forms and Sheets, in the classroom. Milliner’s (2016) helpful article introduced me to Google’s free, online training for the classroom, and I wholeheartedly recommend that language teachers who want to improve their computer- and mobile-assisted language learning/teaching skills consider taking full advantage of what Google offers. One of

the most helpful and enjoyable things about this course is that, at the end of each short lesson, there is a short quiz that serves to self-check whether you have understood the main points of the lesson. After answering each quiz question, you can immediately get feedback by clicking a button to check your answer and see whether it was correct or not. If it was not correct, you can immediately try again and make sure you get the correct answer. It is also noteworthy that, fortunately, Google has made this free, online training available not only in English, but also in many other languages, such as Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish, thus making it widely accessible to educators worldwide. To

learn more about it, go to:
<https://edutrainingcenter.withgoogle.com>

In addition to Google tools, some other online and mobile learning tools have been steadily gaining popularity in classrooms. One such tool that has seen consistent success and growth worldwide is called Quizlet. This has greatly impacted my own development as a learner of Japanese, helping me to achieve greater success on my Japanese Language Proficiency Tests (level N3 and N2). The instant feedback provided by the customizable self-test feature in Quizlet's mobile app has been particularly useful in enabling me to develop as a self-regulated learner. Moreover, recent studies have found that Quizlet can help students improve their language test scores (e.g., Milliner, 2013; Barr, 2016), and that the in-class team-based Quizlet Live game can create very high levels of excitement and positive feelings among learners who feel that it helps them actively learn vocabulary in an enjoyable way (Wolff, 2016; Hougham, 2017). Let us now turn to how Quizlet can be useful for learner development in the classroom.

Building and learning together with Quizlet

Building and learning together with Quizlet by Blair Barr presented several of Quizlet's features for classroom use, one of which was Flashcards. Barr showed that Quizlet can be used for Q&A, with the Flashcards function being an excellent way to display discussion questions and sample answers. He explained that this helps because you can include a picture with the question and you can flip the card to reveal sample answers when necessary. Additionally, you can change partners, shuffle the deck, and redo the discussions to recycle language.

Another key feature Barr presented was the in-class team-based learning game called Quizlet Live, which involves learners working together

using their mobile or other devices in a race to correctly match a Quizlet set's terms and definitions. Barr described several ways to get learners involved in the development of Quizlet flashcard sets to help deepen their learning, support the learning of their peers, and reap the interactive benefits such as the motivational excitement that Quizlet Live generates. In particular, he showed how to collaboratively create, edit, and interact with class sets that can then be used together as a group. It is possible to make Quizlet sets visible and editable by certain classes, so that only members of certain classes can use and edit certain sets. I am glad to say that I have since tried out this technique, to extend a language-focused learning activity in a course book, asking each of my students to work with a partner and add one English adjective together with its Japanese translation to a Quizlet set in class. We enjoyed collaboratively creating a set together as a whole class, practicing the set together using Flashcards mode, and then playing a few rounds of team-based Quizlet Live, so much so that I certainly plan on using this technique again in the future. Once students become familiar with the procedure of adding items to a shared set, I plan to ask them to do so for homework so that we can make the most of our class time together.

Encouraging learners to get involved in the collaborative creation of word cards that can be used with Quizlet Live nurtures their motivation and interest. It also introduces them to Quizlet's most useful features including "Auto-define" and "Add image." "Auto-define" facilitates the creation of word cards by enabling students to use definitions that have already been added by other Quizlet users, while "Add image" enables them to add an image from the millions available in Quizlet's image gallery. From a learner development perspective, the main takeaway from Barr's presentation was that the advantages of Quizlet Live can be harnessed as a way to

train students to become familiar with Quizlet's useful flashcard creation and self-regulated learning capabilities, in hopes that students will gain know-how to make use of Quizlet to take more control of their language learning independently.

There is however a need for attention to accuracy. Some recent classroom research (e.g., Wright, 2017) has found that, although students can create Quizlet sets within a reasonable amount of time, the accuracy of the sets they create may well be an issue that needs to be attended to by spending some class time on error-correction.

Concluding reflections and suggestions for future research

The online testing and online/mobile learning tools described in this report have great potential for facilitating learner development, and the presentations and results that have been discussed are very encouraging. I feel much encouraged to make further use of these tools in my classes, and I plan to continue to do so, with a view to exploring the impact that they can have, especially from the learner's perspective. There is a particular need for collaborative research between teachers that explores online testing with Google Forms, and learner training with Quizlet. Building and learning together with Quizlet has great potential for encouraging learners to develop and make use of a very useful learning tool they have at their disposal, especially with the ingeniously designed mobile app in their smartphones. I encourage you to attend a JALTCALL conference in the future and learn more about how Google and other digital tools such as Quizlet can be used to facilitate learner development.

Acknowledgement

My sincerest appreciation goes to the Learner Development SIG for awarding me the JALTCALL 2017 Conference Grant and making my unforgettable journey to Matsuyama University possible. I am deeply grateful for their support. I would also like to offer my special thanks to Arnold Arao and Yoko Sakurai for their constructive comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this report, and to Philip Head and Andy Barfield for their meticulous help with proofreading.

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Developing Learner & Educator Identities at PANSIG 2017

Farrah Hasnain ファラ・ハスネイン
Hamamatsu Senior High School



This was my first time presenting at a JALT conference, and the second JALT conference that I had ever attended. As an ALT, I wanted to contribute to this year's PanSIG conference at Akita International University by presenting my research on how effective team-teaching is in Japanese high schools. As a learner myself, I wanted to attend as many presentations and panels as I could to broaden my perspective on how other teachers and students have progressed in their learning experiences over time. To me, the theme, "expand your interests," meant taking the initiative to share my own research interests with a wider audience.

My first JALT conference was JALT2016 in Nagoya. Luckily, I live in Hamamatsu, so it was close and inexpensive for me to attend. I was only there as an attendee, but I felt very welcomed by the Learner Development SIG and was encouraged by members of the LD SIG and the Shizuoka JALT chapter to do research and expand my knowledge on teaching English as an ALT in the JET Program.

I started doing research on the effectiveness of team-teaching after attending JALT2016. The programs chair of my chapter invited me to do a presentation at our local JALT chapter meeting on the current state of ALTs in Japan. At first, I dabbled with many concepts such as lesson planning strategies and pedagogy. In the end, I decided to center my research on teacher training from the ALT's and JTE's perspective because I felt that it would be a good opportunity to give a voice to the types of instructors who usually could not present at JALT conferences for various reasons, including finances, overlapping work schedules, and their unfamiliarity with JALT. I wanted to share what

kind of English education students in Japan would have before they graduate high school and create a dialogue with other educators about what we can do to improve the students' English acquisition.

Since I joined JALT last spring, I have seen many presentations by non-Japanese teachers about how they perceive their agency in Japanese workplaces. The two presentations that really stood out to me in my local chapter were by Diane Nagatomo and Laura Kusaka. In October 2016, Nagatomo presented on how female native English instructors developed their identities after moving to Japan. In February, Kusaka presented on the idea of *Nihonjinron* (a body of discourse which claims that the Japanese race, language, geography, culture, and psychology is entirely unique) and shared quotes from her interviews with Japanese-American university English instructors in Japan over the course of three years. After seeing their presentations, I decided to go towards an ethnographic route and personally interview and survey ALTs and JTEs nationwide for this presentation. To me, statistics are important, but interviews can help directly address and clearly illustrate the issues that are implied in the collected data. Over 7 months, I surveyed 128 ALTs and 14 JTEs, and interviewed 31 ALTs (4 former) and 8 JTEs (1 former) in-person and over Skype. As I started making the presentation, I began to think critically about how ALTs and JTEs are being trained to team-teach, and expanded my interests in team-teaching: how satisfied both parties actually are with their teacher training and how aware other educators are about what's going on in the classroom before their students enter university or vocational school.

One of the local chapter members encouraged me to present at PanSIG and share this research with a wider audience. Before presenting at PanSIG, I was able to present at two local chapter meetings in Hamamatsu and Shizuoka and perfect my presentation in time for this conference. Unfortunately, I had no access to funding, so I was not sure if I could even afford to attend another JALT conference. However, thanks to the LD PanSIG Grant, I was able to fly to Akita and share my presentation with many people. Despite having taught in Japan for three years, I was not a university professor, nor had I published my research; so, at first I felt more like a practitioner, someone who practices teaching, than a researcher, who observes and analyzes what is put into action.

Before I presented at PanSIG, I saw other presentations by AIU students and mentors. After I attended the opening ceremony, I watched the AIU students present Pecha Kucha-style presentations on exploring their identities in English. Some that stood out to me include a Zainichi Japanese student who navigated Japanese, Chinese and Korean perceptions of the Senkaku Islands dispute, and a Japanese AIU student who joined a group of Christian migrants and wandered through Spain with them. These students intersected the theme of this year's PanSIG and the missions of several of the SIGs by connecting their English learning experiences with their expanding intercultural awareness.

At the LD SIG Forum, I also attended several poster presentations on how the members of the LD SIG themselves created opportunities for their students to think reflectively on their learner development. These presentations not only expanded my interest in reflective activities for my students, but they also inspired me to become more conscious of my own development as a teacher. The LD Forum had a rotation of about four different poster

presentations. The methods that these instructors used were especially helpful for visual and auditory learners. Tree diagrams, interviews with native speakers, eikaiwa teaching methods, and other reflective activities were presented. Through these poster presentations, I learned how to adapt these worksheets for my own students. One of the featured presentations included a language learning tree diagram, which was part of a collaboration between Mathew Porter and an ALT. Seeing this collaboration between ALTs and instructors in higher education made me consider doing my own projects in the future. After the LD SIG Forum, I went to a poster presentation by Debra Occhi about one of my favorite Sanrio characters, *Aggressive Retsuko*. She's an atypical Sanrio character who is a clerical worker. She deals with micro-aggressions in every episode, and Debra parallels the character's experience with common workplace issues in Japan. For example, in one episode, she compared the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare's initiatives for combating power harassment with the character pressured to work overtime.

In the middle of the day, I did my presentation. As it was my first JALT conference presentation, I was very nervous. The time slots between presentations were also very quick; we had to set up our equipment as soon as the last presenter finished. The presenter before me happened to be Melodie Cook, who presented on adopted children Japan and the issues they face in the foster care system. Her theme was unique and informative. As I watched her sharing her own personal encounter with raising adoptive children with traumatized pasts, I felt in awe of the idea of presenting a topic that was very intimate with her identity as a mother and a mentor. I'm also interested in research that relates to me but is outside of TESOL, such as immigration and the Asian diaspora. Seeing presentations like Melodie's helped me understand that as learners, our identities and

personal experiences can highly influence the type of research area we would want to pursue.

There were more audience members in my presentation than when I had given it twice before. One member was from my chapter, and two were the presenters whom I had seen right before. The rest were unfamiliar, but I felt honored that I recognized some of my audience. I clicked through each slide and put my audience in the shoes of the modern high school ALT and JTE. Time flew by quickly; it felt surreal once I finished speaking. At the end of my presentation, the audience members gave me such positive feedback and I ended up making a few connections. One was a contributing writer for the Japan Times, whose article I referenced in my presentation. I was impressed at how responsive my audience and other attendees were at my presentation. It made me feel validated, and this experience encouraged me and made me realize that I can play the role as a practitioner and a researcher at the same time as I actively teach as an ALT.

I was unable to attend the banquet because I didn't pre-register; instead, I spontaneously joined some members from the Speech, Drama, & Debate SIG next to whom I had sat on the bus from AIU. We had deep conversations about learning how to teach. "Teaching is a performance", one of them said, "When teachers perform, they practice good teaching strategies instead of only observing them." This

person especially stood out to me. Like me, she was a woman of color who was fairly young. She and many of the other attendees were very diverse and I felt more at home at this conference. If I hadn't attended, I would not have known how diverse JALT is.

On the second day, I felt more relaxed. I switched out my suit for jeans like some of the other attendees and checked out some more presentations before flying back to Shizuoka. This conference had such an amicable atmosphere. Even in the waiting area, it was so easy for me to naturally have conversations with new people. I also noticed that a few people recognized my name and asked me about my presentation. Attending this conference as a first-time presenter was really worthwhile.

It was truly an honor to attend this year's PanSIG conference. I intend on attending (and maybe even presenting again!) at next year's PanSIG. This conference embodied the theme of expanding interests as I interacted with many folks from different SIGs and bonded with ones from my own. Attending the conference allowed me to expand my practice, my experience, and my own identity as a teacher. It also helped me interact and connect with a larger community of diverse learner-educators, providing a strong foundation from which I can truly "expand my interests".



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Short Articles 小論

Reflections on Learning and the Japanese Classroom

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Abstract

The social nature of language is clear. However, for teachers concerned with the day-to-day running of a classroom, this can sometimes be an aspect that slips into the background; not in the sense of a failure to think about the pragmatic aspects of the language we are teaching, but rather in respect to how our students are using an unfamiliar language to navigate through the society of the classroom. This short research article looks at the reflective journal of an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) attempting to understand better what is being asked of students as they attempt to manage themselves in a small but important social setting (the English classroom) using the tools of a language with which they are not yet completely familiar. In this research article I identify the main themes of the journal and then go on to examine these themes as they apply to a specific context.

要旨

言語の社会性は明確であるが、授業運営に携わっている教師にとって言語の社会性は、時に忘れがちになりやすい側面でもある。それは我々が言語を教える際、語用論の側面を無視するということではなく、我々の生徒がいかに彼らにとって親しみのない言語を教室という社会的環境で使用しているかということである。この論文では外国語補助教員（ALT）による振り返り日記を通して、生徒が小さいながらも重要な社会的環境、つまり英語のクラスで、彼らが未だ完全に慣れ親しんでいない言語を使用しながらいかに教室内でコミュニケーションを図っているかを見る。この論文では日記に記された主要なテーマを明らかにし、そのテーマの背景となっている文脈について分析する。

Keywords: journal writing, teacher reflection, sociolinguistics, learner identity

ジャーナルライティング, 教師の省察, 社会言語学, 学習者のアイデンティティ

Sociolinguistics is the study of why people speak differently in different social contexts as well as the social functions of language and how social meaning is conveyed (Holmes, 2008). In order to understand my role as a teacher better, I wrote reflective journal entries over the course of one academic year teaching at a junior high school in Japan. My aim was to examine the dynamics of classroom-as-society and its interaction with language. The validity of such an approach seemed to me to lie in the nature of language learning which requires the learner to expose themselves in a way that is much more personal and potentially threatening than other fields of study. Language learning *is* social by its very nature, as is teaching; therefore, a sociolinguistic approach appeared justified. My purpose in this

short article is to examine those reflections, identify the major themes that occur throughout, and consider how they might apply to the classroom.

The diary

Four personal diary entries were written at regular intervals throughout the course of the year. No strict structure was imposed prior to writing, the intention being simply to note, as they arose, the sociolinguistic aspects that presented themselves for notice. These reflective journal entries (RJE) sought to examine what was being asked of the students, specifically as members of a social context and not simply as isolated individual language learners. Two major themes emerged from the diary:

- identity
- the role of the teacher.

Each of these themes will be looked at in more detail below.

Identity

Identity concerns how a person conceives of him or herself in the world and how they seek to convey that message to others. Chryssochoou (2003) states that identity “is a particular form of social representation that mediates the relationship between the individual and the social world...Its functions are to inscribe the person in the social environment, to communicate peoples’ positions and to establish relationships with others” (p. 225).

One aspect of identity that garnered a lot of attention in the RJE was the use of the learners’ first language in the classroom. I reflected that if language helps to convey identity, then by barring the use of the L1 in the classroom teachers are effectively negating the identities of the vast majority of their students. The entries expressed a belief that the suppression of the learners’ identity is too high a price to pay for any of the perceived advantages of an English-only classroom.

In addition to concern over learner identity, the RJE made regular mention of the identity of the teacher. I expressed concerns about the extent to which the teacher is justified in imposing their identity upon the classroom material and the learner. Summarized, the crux of my reflections on teacher identity revolved around the question of balancing the essential need of the student to retain their identity while they struggled to learn a second language, and the need for the teacher to remain mindful of the potential for their own identities to become the dominating factor in the classroom by virtue of their command of the subject matter and their position of power.

The role of the teacher

Throughout the journal entries there is quite naturally a preoccupation with the role of the English teacher: What is the traditional view of the role of the teacher? Is this view compatible with effective language learning? How do I conceive of the role I must play in my students’ learning? Harmer (1995) writes of a movement in language teaching towards shifting authority from the teacher to the student and that this “has ...been seen as a way of making students the investigators or discoverers of facts about language rather than just recipients of information” (p. 337). This accurately summarizes my view of the role of the teacher.

The RJE's contain several mentions of the role of the teacher as a bi-directional conduit through which language may pass as learners "discover" it, rather than as a source of knowledge dispensed to recipients. The journal entries express particular concern with teachers becoming arbiters of language, judging what is acceptable or even "good", and what is inferior or unnecessary.

Common theme: Power

While the above constitute the two dominating topics as they present themselves throughout the journal, one major unifying theme undoubtedly connects them both: power. There is an almost ubiquitous concern with issues of power throughout the RJE's.

In terms of identity, much of the issue revolves around the power inherent in the position of teacher. All teachers bring with them ideas about their own identity and the teacher-student relationship. In the journal I was often concerned with the power of the teacher to impose their beliefs upon students. More significant however is the crucial role that identity plays within all of us and the ability of the teacher to significantly diminish or even disregard those of his or her students through decisions made in the classroom.

The role of the teacher is a topic so laden with issues of power that it might conceivably be called the unifying theme of these diary entries. The RJE's express concern with who decides which material to cover, who decides which forms of English are ok and which unacceptable, the necessity of students being able to trust the teacher with providing their education, and the conception of the teacher as a companion on the learners' journey towards English acquisition.

The classroom

Having identified the major concerns shown in the journal, the next step was to examine those themes in a specific context—as mentioned earlier, a junior high school located in a very small town in rural Japan. The role of an assistant language teacher (ALT) is to assist a lead Japanese teacher and the role is incidental, in many ways, to the running of the class. Each of the 12 classes taught by the author contains between 32 and 38 students and standards of behavior vary considerably between classes.

What becomes obvious upon even brief reflection is that a gulf exists between the theory and the practice of the classroom—the most obvious fracture occurring around the role of the teacher, and so I will cover this area first.

The role of the teacher

While it is easy and certainly useful to formulate a philosophy of teaching in isolation, the RJE's showed that in doing so I had presumed a kind of "ideal learner". This learner was mature, motivated, responsible, and committed to the journey of discovery upon which I had conceived of the teacher as being his or her companion. Unfortunately, this learner is often somewhat chimerical.

In the context of this junior high school a major role of the teacher is that of classroom manager. As students move through the first year to the third, not only do they develop as people, but they undergo a kind of evolution in their approach to English. Despite this, each year group, for differing reasons, is actively managed by the teacher. This proved quite instructive as I developed my conceptions of the role

of teacher.

Sometimes it simply is not possible to hold the learners' hand on an idealized journey towards English competence. Learners attend class for myriad reasons and not all of them include the learner's own volition. In this context, many of the most desirable practices in the role of teacher are often superseded by the need to maintain an effectively functioning classroom. A teacher may not always be able to take such a "companion" approach with a student who disdains English and is contemptuous of school in general.

Similarly, my "ideal learner" had possessed a degree of competence that allowed the teacher to function as a conduit rather than an origin of knowledge. Again, this conception needs reevaluating in the light of this specific context.

If we can conceive of the points between the "conduit" and "origin" as existing on a continuum, I believe that all three of the lead teachers at my school swing too far towards the "origin" end. For example, the first-year students are corrected incessantly by their teacher if their handwritten letters stray too far from the prescribed norm of the textbook, even if the learner's handwriting of Roman script more closely approximates a natural, cursive style of writing. Here, the teacher, together with the textbook, is the final word.

Having said this, there is obviously the need, at very elementary levels of study, for the teacher to dispense knowledge. Low-level learners simply do not possess the necessary linguistic tools to advance in a way that allows the teacher to operate in the idealized way mentioned in my RJE's.

Identity

Very similar to the problems associated with classroom management are those linked to student identity. The most obvious issue concerns class size. In a class of 38 fifteen- and sixteen-year-old students, the space for making broad allowances for individual identity is minimal at best. It is not so much the individual learners are not interested as other learners and their requirements make individualization impossible.

A further set of issues compounds the problem—the curriculum as assessed by nationwide and prefectural exams leaves teachers with the bare minimum of space in which to improvise. The time demands on teachers are extraordinary, and reliance on the textbook allows them to carry out all the other functions required of the role. Moreover, a culture of rote learning and teacher-as-origin-of-knowledge means that an approach that largely ignores individuality is the norm and, for the most part, expected. Taken together, there is little possibility of allowing for individual learner identity and there appears little inclination to do so.

The exception to all of this is the use of the students' native language (L1) in the English classroom. In all of the classes a rough estimate of Japanese spoken during class, by both students and teachers, would be approximately 80-90%. Unfortunately, this is not done for such lofty and idealized reasons as safeguarding learner identity, but rather because English is approached in much the same fashion as any other school subject—a series of rules and problems able to be learnt and assessed through pen and paper testing.

Power

Undoubtedly in this context, the teacher remains the source of virtually all power. Teachers act as the bringer-of-knowledge, a role that helps explain the traditionally high esteem in which teachers have always been held in Japan, but which also means that students have absolutely no input into the nature of their learning. Students remain passive “recipients of knowledge,” varying in their degree of receptivity by such things as interest and motivation. That this motivation remains sparsely spread is evidenced by the prevalent distraction and recidivist sleeping on show in most of the classes. There is little allowance possible or expected for learner identity due to numerous factors, a frustration for me when I can see learners keen to learn but am unable to offer them time to engage in the material on a more personal and meaningful level.

Conclusion

Keeping a reflective journal over the course of a year provided interesting insights into the dichotomy between expectations and practice. However, such a confrontation can be of immense value to a teacher, whatever stage of their career they happen to be in. The practical necessities of real life may make our conceptions and ideals regarding such things as the role of the teacher and the necessity of considering learner identity at times unworkable. However, such ideals can act as a spur in all aspects of life and the presence of obstacles on the road to their attainment is a poor argument against the attempt. Life is seldom simple; there seems little reason to expect the language classroom to be different.

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Exploring Effects of Socially Mediated Interactions on Learners' L2 Motivation

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Abstract

The field of advising in foreign language learning has been attracting more attention in language education. In self-access centres, learning advisors support learners to gain self-directed learning skills and develop awareness about their learning. From a theoretical point of view, sociocultural theory and constructivism emphasise the importance of socially mediated interactions and can be applied to the field of advising in language learning (Mynard & Kato, 2016). Socially mediated interactions are an important factor for language learners to reflect on their learning progress and develop both language and learning skills. Ushioda (2003) states that interactive support from experts helps learners' motivation and promotes learner autonomy. This research investigates how socially mediated interactions with a learning advisor support learners to be autonomous throughout a self-directed learning module in the SAC at a university in Japan. In the process, they are guided by a learning advisor in both spoken and written interactions enabling them to discover more about themselves as learners. The analysis of interviews demonstrates how students became aware of their language and learning progress, as well as affective aspects of the self-directed learning process, through socially mediated interactions with a learning advisor.

要旨

外国語学習アドバイジングの分野は、言語教育においてより多くの注目を浴びるようになってきている。自律学習センターでは、学習者が自己管理的学習 (self-directed learning) を習得し、自らの学習に対する気づきを促進するようラーニングアドバイザーがサポートを行っている。理論的観点において、社会文化理論と社会構成主義はともに社会的相互作用の重要性を強調しており、言語学習アドバイジングの分野においても適用できると言われている (Mynard & Kato, 2016)。相互作用は言語学習者が自らの学習成果を振り返り、言語と学習のスキルを向上するための重要な役割を担っている。さらに Ushioda (2003) は、学習者の目標に精通した熟練者による相互的サポートは学習者の動機を助長し、自律学習を促すと述べている。本稿では、日本の大学における自律学習センターで提供されている自己管理的学習モジュールを通して、ラーニングアドバイザーとの社会的相互作用がどのように学生たちの自発性を促進しているのかを考察する。モジュールでは、ラーニングアドバイザーの口頭と記述両方からのサポートを通して、学生たち自らが、自身がどのような学習者なのかを知る機会を多く設けている。また、インタビューの結果をもとに、ラーニングアドバイザーとの社会的相互作用を通して、学生たちが言語と学習スキルの成長、そして自己管理的学習の過程に起こる情意に関してどのように振り返ったのかも論証する。

Keywords: self-directed learning, self-access, learner autonomy, socially mediated interactions, motivation 自己管理的学習、自律学習、学習者オートノミー、社会的相互作用、モチベーション

This study aims to explore learner motivation in socially mediated interactions. Curry, Mynard, Noguchi and Watkins (2017) stated that autonomous language learners are learners who possess “a good understanding of self-directed language learning (SDLL); that is cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social processes that govern learning” (p. 17). Socially mediated interactions play a crucial role in learner autonomy, and numerous researchers have researched the ability of socially mediated interactions to help language learners be more engaged in their learning (Mynard & Kato, 2016; Yamashita, 2015). This short research article aims to understand more about learners’ motivation through socially mediated interactions with a learning advisor while taking an optional module offered at a Japanese university.

The setting

Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) is a private university specialising in the fields of foreign languages and intercultural communication. For all students, learning English is compulsory, and the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) provides various types of resources (such as self-learning sheets and courses) and access to specialists (such as learning advisors) to support students to learn and practice English outside their classes. When I conducted this research in the 2016/2017 academic year, the language policy in the SALC was English only.

The SALC’s mission in KUIS is to “foster learner autonomy by providing learners with opportunities to reflect and take charge of individualizing their language learning, and to develop skills for the learning experience and making informed choices” (SALC, n.d.). That is, the SALC is a learning space where students can explore their language learning journeys based on their own targets and goals with support from learning advisors, friends, lecturers and others.

Learning advisors

The aim of a learning advisor in KUIS is to support learners to gain self-directed learning skills and an awareness of their learning through both spoken and written dialogue. Learning advisors offer various forms of support, including 30-minute face-to-face advisory sessions, help desk support (learners can drop in with questions), and other informal advising that takes place in the SALC. In addition, the SALC offers self-directed learning courses to support students to be more responsible for their learning outside of class. Through both spoken and written advisory sessions, a learning advisor facilitates a learner’s reflective processes in language learning in order for the learner to become more capable of planning their self-directed learning (Kato & Mynard, 2016).

How the module supports learner autonomy

The SALC module is a self-directed module that learners complete with the support of learning advisors. At the time of the study (April 2016 to January 2017), the module was non-credit bearing. Through the module, learning advisors encourage learners to think about their learning processes actively to become more independent learners. Although the interactions between learners and advisors are largely conducted through written correspondence, learners can book one-to-one advisory sessions whenever required. The content of the module is as follows:

Week 1: Goal setting

Week 2: Learning strategies

Week 3: Resources

Week 4: The SURE (study, use, review and evaluate) learning cycle and creating a learning plan

Weeks 5 - 8: Self-directed learning journal

In the first four weeks, the module introduces “the concept of self-directed learning by explicitly teaching the learners about useful tools for taking charge of their language learning” (Mynard, Curry, Noguchi & Watkins, 2016, p. 47). Later, they make learning plans based on their own goals, strategies, and chosen resources and utilise self-directed learning journals for a month.

Motivation as an interactive process

Ushioda (2003, p. 90) drew on McCombs (1994) to say that “learners’ capacity for autonomy, their motivation must be viewed as an intrinsic part of human nature, yet one which needs supportive interpersonal interactions and an optimal learning environment in order to grow in positive ways.” In addition, Ushioda (2003, 2007) stated that the interactive support and scaffolding provided by experts have an impact on increasing learners’ motivation. That is, as learning is a social and intrapersonal process, socially mediated interactions are one of the key factors that support learners’ motivation and provide scope for learner autonomy. For example, Yamashita (2015) focused on socially mediated dialogic interactions between a learner and a learning advisor and conducted a case study that considered the learner’s affect as a resource. She analysed spoken advisory sessions in Japanese with a Japanese learner of English and saw how the learner came to control (or understand) her affect over the period. Yamashita (2015, p. 79) summarized that “As the learner accumulated more dialogic interactions, the learner progressively became the central agent in utilizing her affective states, developing her motivational and metacognitive awareness.” Her research indicated that the socially mediated interactions and support provided by an expert had a positive impact on the learner’s motivation and helped in controlling her affect, leading her to develop her learner autonomy. Her research, however, specifically focused on the learner’s affective capacity as a resource through spoken interactions between a learner and a learning advisor; in contrast, in the present study, I am interested in the broader reasons why socially mediated interactions by an expert support learners’ motivation and I seek to investigate the following research question:

How do socially mediated interactions with a learning advisor help learners on the module to get motivated and sustain their language learning?

Method

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with four students who completed the module with the author as their learning advisor in the 2016/2017 academic year. All of them had booked advisory sessions with their learning advisor regularly depending on their purposes, in addition to written dialogue throughout the module.

The interview questions below were designed to address the questions:

- What made you continue your module every week?
- How did you feel about the relationship between you and your learning advisor?

Interviews were conducted face to face in Japanese and audio-recorded. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. When the data were analysed, I found three elements of interaction between a learner and a learning advisor: affective scaffolding, promotion of learner's reflective process, and exploration of learning strategies.

Participants

Student A, a second-year student studying international business communication in the International Communication Department, had tried the module twice in his first year but could not complete it. When he took the module with me, it was his third time attempting to learn about self-directed study.

Student B, a second-year student in the English Department, took the module to get more opportunities to use the SALC and to improve her listening skills for TOEFL ITP, on which she needed a certain score for a class on the Teacher Licence Course.

Student C, a first-year student in the English Department, took the module to develop her speaking skills. She requested a Japanese advisor to advise her for the module.

Student D, a second-year student in the English Department, wanted to improve her speaking skills through taking the module.

Findings

Through the interviews with the four module takers and subsequent analysis, I found that socially mediated interactions between a learner and a learning advisor seemed to offer the following:

- a means of affective scaffolding
- opportunities for a learner to reflect on their learning process
- an exploration of effective learning strategies.

A means of affective scaffolding

All participants pointed out that affective scaffolding was the most important form of interactive support that they gained from their learning advisor through taking the module. Having an environment where the learner feels comfortable with sharing their affective and emotional states with someone (i.e., a learning advisor) is crucial to being more autonomous.

Student C – In class, not only me but also other classmates have equal opportunities to speak. On the other hand, in a one-to-one dialogue with my learning advisor, as this is “my time,” I do not need to be rushed, and I can focus on my speaking. Additionally, my learning advisor often summarises and restates what I said, and that makes me feel she understands me. I feel less anxious

about my speaking skills and silence when I talk with her. (translated from Japanese by the author)

Student C noticed that having opportunities to voice her feelings and to feel relieved speaking her target language had a positive impact on her learning experience outside class.

Student A – I realised that interacting with my learning advisor keeps my motivation high. This may be because I like to talk with people like a teacher and a learning advisor to develop myself depending on my interests.

Through taking the module, Student A noticed that his preferred learning style, which was to get support from teachers and learning advisors, helped him to develop his skills more than learning by himself. This relationship is exactly what Ushioda (2003) stated: Interactive support from experts plays a critical role in increasing a learner's motivation.

Student B – Showing my learning advisor my weekly learning journals pushed me to study in a good way, and written feedback made me confident in my learning. In the one-to-one spoken advisory sessions, I was not anxious about my linguistic mistakes because my focus was on increasing opportunities using the SALC.

Student D – I looked forward to written feedback from my learning advisor (and fancy stickers!). Though I thought that the SALC was a difficult place to go to, I have come to know more people in the SALC, and that led me to go there more often after taking the module. The module gave me a connection with not only my learning advisor but also the SALC.

As both Students B and D mentioned, one of the roles of a learning advisor is to give learners positive experiences in the SALC and to provide a connection with the SALC. Why learners feel uncomfortable going to the SALC needs to be considered in future research; it is clear that some learners desire to use the SALC effectively and try to fulfil this need by making a connection with a learning advisor.

Opportunities for learners to reflect on their learning process

As the module and the learning advisor aim to encourage a language learner to gain self-directed skills, the interview data clearly show that learners gain more opportunities to reflect on their learning process through the module.

Student A – I noticed that my goal was vague when I was a first-year student. Because of that, I was not able to use appropriate strategies to develop my language skills and ended up giving up the module. Now, I am able to make a clear learning plan and study routine for improving my English and learning skills.

Student A reflected on the reason why he could not complete the module in his first year at KUIS—because he did not have enough time to consider what he wanted to focus on in his language learning. While focusing on his academic writing skills, he tried academic writing practice and showed his work to the Writing Centre, where students can get writing support (through English lecturers checking structures, vocabulary usage, and grammar) once a week. In addition, he established spoken reflection session with his learning advisor and that became his weekly routine. Based on his interview, continuing

his learning plan for a certain period of time gave him a sense of achievement in his language learning and motivated him to continue to study.

Student B – The written dialogue helped me to discover different strategies to develop my English skills, and I could spend more time on considering my learning process and looking back at what I did based on the feedback. I recognised that having a clear goal keeps my motivation high.

As Student B mentioned above, one of the positive aspects of written comments is that both the learner and the learning advisor can look back on the learning process whenever needed. While looking back on her learning journal for the module, Student B noticed what was important for achieving her own goal. Written reflection and interactions encourages learners to think deeply about their learning process and develop metacognitive skills (Mynard & Navarro, 2010; Mynard & Thornton, 2012).

Student C – I learned both negative and positive aspects of my learning through spoken dialogue, and that helped me to review my learning process and make my weekly target for the next week. Before taking the module, I did not think about my learning deeply. Even in class, I sometimes zoned out, but I started to try using English more consciously.

As Student C pointed out, she gradually became more able to think about her learning process. In both spoken and written interactions with her, I noticed that the learner was able to answer powerful questions that were aimed at developing her metacognitive skills.

An exploration of effective learning strategies

In my own experience, learners who have less learning experience tend to use the same materials and learning strategies that they have used before, such as the grammar textbooks that they used in high school. Thus, socially mediated interactions with a learning advisor or other experts like teachers often give them new insights for their language learning journey.

Student B – For my TOEFL ITP study, I only used the official study book and never tried other resources. My advisor suggested to me that I try TEDed¹, and I learned that there are many materials for language learning. Though I am still exploring appropriate resources for my target, I discovered different learning strategies using new materials through the module.

Student D – While I was trying out the self-directed learning journal, a teacher at the Practice Centre (where a student can practise speaking English with an English lecturer for 15 minutes) advised me to check what I could not say after having a conversation, and the strategy was very useful for my goal.

The interview data show that the socially mediated interactions offered in the SALC help learners to explore various learning materials and strategies to achieve their own goals. In the interview, both Student B and C reflected on the importance of building a relationship between them and experts such as learning advisors and lecturers. A good relationship in socially mediated interactions encourages them to try new strategies and resources for their language learning.

¹ TEDed is an online collaborative learning platform for teachers and learners. See <https://ed.ted.com/>

Conclusion

Autonomy must come from within; yet, socially mediated interactions support the development of autonomy (Ushioda, 2003). That is, SDLL is highly interpersonal. As Ushioda (2007) stated, the interactive support and scaffolding provided by experts have an impact on increasing learners' motivation; both spoken and written interactions are crucial factors that motivate learners to keep learning English. Through the interviews with the students, I noticed that the learners had increased engagement in their learning through the module, and both written and spoken dialogue gave them deeper understandings of their learning process, particularly in reviewing their learning process and making plans for the future. Although most of the participants had had little previous opportunity to think about their learning deeply, while or after taking the module, they clearly became more conscious of their learning processes. This suggests that socially mediated interactions are essential to the development of learner autonomy.

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Can Diary Exchange Lead Students to Become Engaged in English Writing?

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Abstract

This study attempts to investigate to what extent writing an exchange diary on a regular basis influences English language learners' motivation, attitudes, and habits. This action research took place in a university writing class in Japan that met twice a week. In the first class of the week, after being randomly paired up with a partner, students wrote a diary entry out of class that included questions for the partner. In the following class, they exchanged diaries, then took home the partner's diary and wrote an entry that answered the questions. In the next class, they returned the diary to its owner. This series of procedures was called "one boomerang" and was the minimum weekly work assigned to each pair. The boomerang procedure was repeated for a period of three months. The teacher maintained the role of facilitator and did not intervene in the content of each diary entry. Data were gathered through two questionnaires with free comments. The results indicate that the diary exchange contributed to the increased enjoyment and speed with which students wrote in English. Although the average motivation level towards writing in English did not show any great quantitative jump, most of the students reported favorably about diary exchange in their comments.

要旨

本研究は学生同士で定期的に行う英語での交換日記が、英語を書くことに対する学生の動機づけや態度、習慣に影響を及ぼすのか、またその場合どの程度の影響があるかを明らかにすることを目的としている。アクションリサーチである本研究は、ある日本の大学のライティングクラス（週二回）で行われた。まず、学生は各週の最初の授業でカードによりペア分けされ、ペアの相手への質問も含めた日記を授業外で書いた。そして次の授業で、お互いに日記を交換し家に持ち帰り、ペアの相手の質問に対する返事を記入した上で返却した（これを1ブーメランと呼び、これを最低限のノルマとした）。この活動を実践した3か月間、教師は進行役に徹し、日記の内容には介入しないと約束した。2回のアンケートデータを分析した結果、英語での交換日記は学生達の英語を書くスピードの向上に役立つことが示された一方で、英語を書くことに対する動機づけに関しては数値上大きな伸びは見せなかったが、この活動に対する好意的な意見が多く、多くの学生のコメントに見られた。

Keywords: diary exchange, learning strategy training, writing habits, learner development

交換日記, 学習方略トレーニング, ライティングの習慣, 学習者の成長

Though students recognize that English is an important communication tool, many still approach English as a code to be deciphered; by analyzing the language and learning pattern sentences by rote. Fiercely competitive entrance exams and pervasive grammar-translation teaching practices have only contributed to this mindset. It is not surprising that few students read English for pleasure and even fewer write English outside the classroom. As of 2020, Japan will start English classes in third grade elementary school and make English a compulsory subject for fifth graders. I truly hope that this will create opportunities for educators to re-examine how English is taught in schools. Perhaps students will come to a better understanding of English not only as a communication tool, but also as a vehicle of discovery so that, rather than studying English for its own sake, they can use English to discover and expand on their own interests and connect those interests with others'. This kind of meaningful learning is an important principle of learner-interest driven language learning and teaching. It is crucial to "capitalize on the power of meaningful learning by appealing to students' interests" (Brown, 2001, p. 57). Brown also stresses the significance of risk-taking, mentioning that "successful language learners...must be willing to become 'gamblers' in the game of language" (p. 63). When developing productive skills such as speaking and writing, making mistakes is inevitable. Naturally, students do not usually want to make mistakes, but if the activity is related to what interests them, they might be able to get over their unwillingness to take risks.

Overcoming this reluctance provides opportunities for students to engage in skill building. Nuttal (1996) emphasizes the importance of building these skills, particularly reading skills to avoid the vicious circle where those who are poor at reading are not willing to read much, and because they do not read, they do not find reading enjoyable. Day and Bamford (1998) claim that you improve your reading skills only through actual reading where you learn various pieces of knowledge prerequisite to be a fluent reader. The same could be said for writing. Teachers should help students escape from the cycle where the less they write, the less they are able to write. The key seems to be encouraging students to write whatever they want to write. This is where the activity of diary exchange comes in. In a diary exchange, students can write whatever they want to write. Furthermore, students interact with peers of the same age and who share similar interests. Unlike conventional writing assignments, diary exchange provides students with more incentives to write in English.

In addition, diary writing is an effective learning strategy. Unfortunately, it is also an underutilized one. Defined as "a range of specific learning techniques that make learning more effective" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 95), learning strategy training "aims to make everyone more capable of independent learning" (Dickinson, 1992, p. 13). Learning autonomously is important for success in language acquisition because the amount of time students can spend in the classroom is limited. Research indicates a close relationship between the amount of teacher support for student autonomy and an increase in student autonomy (see Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999). One challenge for teachers is to provide students chances to try various learning strategies so that they can choose from them some that they want to adopt or adapt for future learning. However, there is some disagreement among researchers about the effectiveness of learner strategy training. Some say that there exists no verifiable evidence that awareness of strategies promotes L2 learning success (see Rees-Miller, 1993). There is no promise that students will continue using a certain learning strategy, as in this case of writing a diary, because there is no definitive strategy that fits everyone. What teachers can do is to help students widen their repertoire of learning strategies. Macaro (2006) suggests that "successful learning is...linked...to his or her orchestration of

strategies available to him or her” (Macaro, 2006, p. 332) and that “strategies do not make learning more efficient; they are the raw material without which L2 learning cannot take place” (op. cit.).

Specifically for writing, Ward’s (2004) blog project in a writing/reading class at an American university revealed that the use of blogs contributed to the increased interest of students in reading and writing. The feedback from students was mostly positive, saying that writing a blog assisted their learning. Pinkman’s (2005) qualitative study using blogs in an integrated skills class at a Japanese university showed that 7 out of 15 learners admitted that the project improved their writing skills, saying the project prompted them to use new vocabulary. Students in Pinkman’s study reported that they liked the activity so much they wanted to continue blogging. More than half of the participants found the comments from classmates and the teacher motivating.

In the current study, I incorporated a learner training approach featuring diary exchange, with the hope that students would feel that the more they wrote, the more they would want to write, and that they would adopt English writing for their learning. In order to give them the maximum autonomy, I avoided any intervention on the content of the diary entries that they wrote. As diary exchange, compared with conventional writing exercises, requires another person, I thought that peer pressure through being required to exchange their diary entries would work positively and encourage the students to become more engaged in writing in English.

Learning from students’ perceptions of diary exchanges

When explaining Galileo’s law of inertia, people often give an example of a running train. Passengers on a train continue to move in the same direction unless they are acted upon by an external force. What I hoped to make happen in the classroom runs along the same line: The teacher gets the class in the mood for diary exchange and creates a sense of camaraderie. As the diary exchange activity gains momentum, students will get so used to it that they have it ingrained in them to the extent of feeling awkward without it. With the help of positive peer pressure, a virtuous circle is formed, and students will keep exchanging diaries involving each other in a reiterative, self-propagating process. In other words, I wanted to know if it was possible to attain something as hard as making students write for three months, and if the completion of the activity would consequently change students’ perspectives about writing.

This study was conducted at a university in a Japanese metropolitan area. The participants consisted of 22 freshmen (7 males and 15 females) enrolled in an English writing class that met twice a week. In the first class, I gave the students a questionnaire consisting of five Likert-scale items intended to probe their motivation, attitudes, and habits of English learning (see Appendix A) in order to know to what degree students enjoy writing as well as what attitudes, habits of or preoccupations with writing prevent them from experiencing the fun of writing. The students were asked to get hold of an A4 size notebook and bring it to the following class. In the second class, I explained the procedures of diary exchange before the students wrote a diary entry (at least one fourth of a page) in their own notebook with some questions for their partner. In the next class, they exchanged notebooks, took their partner’s questions back home, and wrote another diary entry, but this time in their partner’s notebook and with answers to the questions. I told the students that it was okay to write about anything ranging from what they did at university, their favorite pastime, childhood memories, to their dreams. A single exchange was called “one boomerang”: Student A writes a diary entry, hands it to Student B, who returns it like a boomerang to Student A. I assured the class that it was not the content of the entry that counted but the number of

diary entries that would contribute toward their final grade. The crucial thing for me was to make sure the students understood the importance and enjoyment of expressing themselves in English and that they did not have to be afraid of making mistakes.

From there on, in the first class of each week, the students were paired up using playing cards, and the pairs sat next to each other for occasional collaboration. These pairs lasted until the following week, when pairs were re-shuffled. At the beginning of every class, I had the students open the newest page of their A4 notebook so that I could simply and quickly check if they had an entry (no error correction or comments were made). Finally, at the end of the course, the initial questionnaire was re-administered. I also asked the students to count the number of diary entries (both their own entries and their partner's).

Exploring student responses about diary entries

Quantitatively, an independent t-test was conducted to compare the students' English writing motivation, attitudes, and habits. Results showed a slight, non-significant, difference from Survey 1 ($M=3.04$, $SD=0.89$) to Survey 2 ($M=3.22$, $SD=0.92$), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Changes in Student Motivation (Survey Question 3: "I like writing in English")

	N	Mean	SD	t
Survey 1	22	3.04	0.89	0.78 ($p = 0.444$)
Survey 2	22	3.22	0.92	

In contrast, students' writing habits (see Table 2 below) revealed significant difference from Survey 1 ($M=2.14$, $SD=1.04$) to Survey 2 ($M=2.82$, $SD=0.92$). This finding featured a medium effect size ($d=0.70$).

Table 2. Changes in Student Writing Habits (Survey Question 6: "Writing in English takes me a lot of time")

	N	Mean	SD	t
Survey 1	22	2.14	1.04	2.32 ($p = 0.025$)
Survey 2	22	2.82	0.92	

By analyzing the students' responses to the first questionnaire, with the aim of understanding what habits prevent students from experiencing the fun of writing in English, I was able to identify some common perceptions across the class. First, even though all the students to some extent admitted that writing in English is a good way to improve English skills (*Strongly agree* 55%, *Agree* 40%, *Slightly agree* 5%), 64% of the students more or less thought that writing in English is something they should do after building vocabulary and improving grammar skills (*Strongly agree* 5%, *Agree* 36%, *Slightly agree* 23%). In other words, they had put off doing what they believed they should do. Second, 77% of the students said that when writing in English, they first think of a Japanese sentence and translate it into English (*Very*

often 14%, Often 41%, Sometimes 22%), and 86% of the students agreed that writing English takes a lot of time to a greater or lesser degree (*Strongly agree* 32%, *Agree* 36%, *Slightly agree* 18%). At the start of the diary exchange, they seemed to be unable to kick the ingrained habit of a word-by-word translation, which naturally hinders them from writing fast, let alone having a positive image toward writing.

Changes in the students

Qualitatively, the majority of the students had favorable reactions toward their experiences with the diary exchange. A number of students noted that the diary exchange helped them think in a different way about communicating in English. Satoshi (all names are pseudonyms) commented, for example, that he realized the benefits of using common expressions in writing:

“What has changed after this activity is that English phrases pop up in my mind more often than before. Rather than translating Japanese sentences into English, I think it is better to use common English expressions even if the intended meaning changes a little bit.” - Satoshi

Other students observed that, in addition to thinking differently, they enjoyed the interaction with peers that the diary exchange facilitated:

“I believe that writing in English is a good way to nurture the ability to think in English. However, unless you brush up vocabulary through extensive reading, it does not have enough effect because you tend to write the same things again and again. So, it is important to gain a lot of input and use it when outputting ... What was good about this activity was that I was able to get to know my partners. It often happened that conversations with them followed a lively course after the exchange of diaries” - Ryuichi

“I liked it that with this diary exchange, I had an opportunity to write what I usually do not share with others. Thanks to this activity, I was able to improve my writing skills while having fun of learning about new aspects of my classmates. - Maiko

“It was a lot of fun to write a diary. Talking about what happened during the day and my favorite things helped me be on good terms with my classmates. This activity has given me not only a chance to review English grammar but also a chance to check out ordinary English expressions and use them. - Ai

These comments reveal how the diary exchange contributed to the affective aspects of their writing, with the power of camaraderie being the driving force of their completion of this activity.

Some explained what was happening while writing from a metacognitive standpoint, which shows that they had started looking at writing from new perspectives:

“What I think is good about writing a diary is that you can visualize what you are thinking. If you understand what weaknesses you have, you can work on them. Whenever I did not know how to say something in English, I looked it up in my dictionary, which led to expanded knowledge. Every time my hand stops, I know it is a sign of my inability to express it in English, which is really educational. Unlike a conversation, there is no interlocutor in front of me, so I can write at my own pace. At first, filling out one-fourth of a page was not easy, but after a while, it became easier to write. I find it a good thing that whenever I read what I have written before, I can feel my growth as a writer.” - Hinako

“At first I was worried that I might not be able to continue writing a diary in English because I hadn’t even written a diary in Japanese. But to my surprise, after starting to do it, I found my pen moving more smoothly than I expected. By occasionally consulting my dictionary, I was able to learn expressions that I had not used before. I am happy that I have acquired a habit of writing English.” - Atsushi

Overall, many of the students recognized the benefits to this kind of interactive exchange between writers and readers. Some even reflected on their performance and wrote about how they had been able to improve their diary entries:

“Initially, I had an awareness that I was not good at writing English, but I gradually got used to it. As time went by, I found it a lot of fun to write what I am thinking. There are also some things I should have done better. The questions to ask my partners were always basic.” - Yamato

Moving from inertia to engagement

The diary exchange seems to have prompted the students who participated in the class to improve their writing fluently to some degree. Furthermore, quite a few students reacted favorably toward this activity. In the follow-up questionnaire, 95% of students strongly agreed or agreed with the statement “Receiving feedback on my writing is a positive experience.” All students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I think keeping a diary in English will help me think in English,” and 86% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I will try to write in English as often as possible.”

What is worth noting is that nobody dropped out and the average number of diary entries in students’ notebooks during the semester (the combined number of diary entries of both owner and partner) was 25.5. This is surprising, considering the fact that if they completed one boomerang every week, the number of diary entries would be 24. By writing what they wanted to write, the students were able to go beyond their own restricted linguistic resources and became “gamblers” who take chances and are not afraid of making mistakes. I must also unfortunately add, however, that there was one student who was skeptical about learning writing in the classroom at all, saying that speaking is far more significant than writing. This student believed that there will be many more chances to speak rather than write in English in the future. That said, he reluctantly admitted to the usefulness of exchange diary itself in that he was able to find out his weaknesses in grammar.

Earlier, I likened this study to the running train used in explaining Galileo’s law of inertia; needless to say, learning a language is different from physics in that it does not proceed as calculated. The degree to which students benefit from the same activity differs significantly. Nonetheless, what is important is that had it not been for this opportunity, some students would probably have graduated from university without realizing the fun of writing about themselves in their own words in English. From exploring how these students took to diary writing and diary exchange, I feel even more strongly now that as writing teachers we should guide English learners to get out of the shell of their preconceived notions that English is a mere synonym for boring analysis or wearisome word-by-word translation so that they can engage with expressing themselves enjoyably through writing.

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Appendix A English Writing Motivation, Attitudes, and Habits Questionnaire

1. Writing in English is a good way to improve my English skills.
(英語で書くことは英語力を伸ばすための良い方法である。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
2. Writing in English is something I should do after building vocabulary and improving grammar skills.
(英語で書くことは語彙力を付け、文法力を伸ばした後で行うべきことである。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
3. I like writing in English.
(英語で書くことが好きだ。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
4. I feel that reading English is a kind of deciphering a code rather than a way to get information.
(英語を読むことは情報を得るというよりも、暗号の解読のように感じる。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
5. When I read, I move my eyes from left to right, without having my eyes go backward and forward.
(英語を読む際には前に戻ったりせず、左から右に語順の通りに読む。)
☐ Very often ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
6. Writing English takes me a lot of time.
(英語を書くのにとても時間がかかる。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
7. When I write in English, I first think of Japanese sentences and then translate them.
(英語で書く際には、まず日本語で考えてからそれを訳す。)
☐ Very often ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
8. Receiving feedback on my writing is a positive experience.
(自分が書いたものに対して感想を貰うことは、プラスの体験である。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
9. I think keeping a diary in English will help me think in English.
(英語で日記を付けることは英語で物を考えるための助けになると思う。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
10. I think reading English will help me improve my writing skills.
(英語を読むことはライティングの力を伸ばす助けになると思う。)
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

11. I will try to write in English as often as possible.

(できるだけ頻繁に英語で書くようにしようと思う。)

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

12. Writing in English is high on my agenda.

(私の中で、英語で書くことの優先順位は高い。)

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

13. Please write how you feel about writing in English.

(英語で書くことについて、感じていることを書いて下さい。)

LEARNER DEVELOPMENT SIG GRANTS FOR 2018

学習者ディベロプメント研究部会 2018 年度助成金

The Learner Development (LD) SIG offers a variety of grants to support those in the field of learner development. These grants are particularly targeted to those who are new to the SIG, new to the field, or who do not have access to institutional funding.

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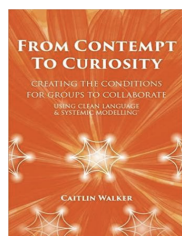
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REVIEWS 書評

Book Review

Ellen Head ヘッド・エレン

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From Contempt to Curiosity: Creating the Conditions for Groups to Collaborate Using Clean Language and Systematic Modelling. Caitlin Walker. Published by Clean Publishing, Portchester, England, 2014, 216 pages. ISBN: 978-0-9574866-1-4

I was attracted to this book after watching Caitlin Walker's TEDX talk, *Clean Questions and Metaphor Models*. Walker has worked as a consultant in contexts from schools to universities, business, and local government and is an expert in training people to understand metaphor, to be sensitive to metaphors in everyday communication, and to work more skillfully in situations where misunderstanding is caused by conflicting metaphors. Her work builds on that of psychotherapist, David Grove. Her book has much to offer to teachers and university professors, both in terms of procedures, which I believe could be lifted straight from the pages of this book and done in a classroom, and for anyone engaged in collaboration, management of a department, training or curriculum renewal project.

This book is an autobiographical account of eight projects Walker has led, with a chapter devoted to each, plus an introduction and a chapter for "taking stock" near the end. The explanations are very clear and the index enables one to go back over particular areas. The anecdotal nature of the book makes it easy to read and ensures that the reader sees the process

in a real context in which it was developed or used.

A recurring theme is the development of collaborative autonomy in groups. The goal is to hand over procedures to a group that they can use on their own. "... and I knew my work was done" is Walker's signature line when the group starts to function well, establish its own leadership, and have balanced interaction patterns. In other words, these processes are all about the development of intra-group autonomy.

In an interesting example, Caitlin Walker shares her experiences supporting a curriculum enrichment project for sports majors at the University of Liverpool. By teaching peer coaching processes to the students, the department was able to improve the program to such an extent that there were major gains in the number of students getting firsts or upper seconds, and a reduction of the drop-out rate to near zero. Though Walker mentions this phenomenal result in her TED talk, the limited time didn't allow for deeper discussion. "From contempt to curiosity" fills in some of the gaps allowing educators to go away and set up such a project.

Chapter 7, entitled "Inspiring Capability", focuses on the Liverpool project and has useful *recipes* such as *Rough Guide to Me at My Best*. In the rough guide, lecturers were asked to think of a metaphor for themselves teaching at their best; what an observer will see and hear when they are teaching at their best, what supports or hinders them, what three areas they could

improve and three things colleagues could do to support them. Staff created an orientation video for students with interviews investigating what had enabled successful final year students to get the most out of university. The areas they focused on were: learning at your best, time management, making good decisions, dealing with setbacks and how to get motivated. Students were given a handbook which was used in group tutorials. Could developing metaphors make a real difference? It seems so. One example given is a student who was lazy but brilliant, always had trouble with deadlines but still passed the course. This student said learning was like being a cheetah: “I lie around all day in a tree sleeping, then something catches my eye or I get hungry, I’m really fast, kill it, eat it and then I’m back in my tree again.” For him, time was like a cloud, and decisions were like floating in a river. After working with the tutorial group, he found the metaphor of being out in a theme park and making deliberate decisions about where he wanted to go. The workbook included a space where the group could set *developmental tasks* for each other, and his task was to use his cell phone timer for activities during the day.

Some of the most telling passages relate to occasions when Walker met resistance. “I don’t do metaphors” announces one head of IT with whom she has to work. Walker tells him her metaphor of the project as white-water rafting, to which he says, “I can see I wouldn’t want to work with you, I’d hate this.” To which she replies, “If you know you’d hate this and we’ve still got four minutes, what would an ideal project be like for you?” “It be more like designing the blueprints for a building.” she adopts his metaphor, asking if the blueprints can be in pencil to allow for alterations, and he agrees. Throughout the book, relationships are created with what she calls “exquisite attention” to language, gesture and interaction. Such

attention can bring clarity and respect in situations which seem to be deadlocked.

Chapter 6 “Getting too big for my boots” describes how her team was invited to work in a secondary school by a board of education. By training teachers and students to move away from victim / rescuer roles and to use a cycle of giving feedback, focusing on outcomes and actions (a model she calls “the drama triangle”) the behavioural norms were improved. But she comments that the project was less effective and slower because the school management team had not been consulted from the start: “The change processes should be led by the most influential points in the system” and “The motivation for change must come from within the system” are two of the principles of her approach.

Readers might need to be cautious about applying these techniques in their own settings but at the same time, I think many of the models would work well in EFL classes and teachers’ workshops and could be lifted more or less straight from the book.

Some members of the Learner development SIG may remember that in 2010 the Learner Development SIG forum focused on metaphors for language learning and using metaphors in relation to autonomy. More recently Darren Elliott (2015) has presented his fascinating, ongoing research in this area. Back in 2013, after reading an excellent article in *Learning Learning* (Sykes, 2011), I asked one of my classes to discuss their metaphors for learning. What was interesting was that students’ metaphors revealed defensiveness/aggression about their language learning, as six or seven people said learning a language was like having a weapon. One of the more fluent members said language learning was like being a sponge and absorbing words, while another said it was like going on a journey, meeting people on the way and getting

various different views. Several students decided to take up the journey metaphor instead of the weapon.

One question readers may have is “Aren't students going to be having difficulty using metaphor if they are not familiar with English?” Having used this kind of approach with students in Japan in 2014 and some European and Arabic students in the autumn of 2014, I would say it can help students to develop English which really belongs to them. Caitlin Walker's book will be invaluable for anyone who wants to work with this approach.



Ellen Head taught EFL/EAP at university in Kansai from 2000 to 2014. After a period as an EFL assessment consultant and researcher for the British Council in China, she returned to Japan in 2017 and is currently teaching at Miyazaki International College. Ellen's recent research interests focus on perceived fluency.

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GETTING CONNECTED つながり求めて

LOCAL GET-TOGETHER REPORTS

Kansai Get-together Report

Agnes Patko

We have held our meetings every month at a community centre in Kyoto and provided continuous professional support to each other. Due to a new email communication system, we managed to inform all members of the SIG in the area about our activities. We had new participants almost every month in the spring semester.

After the very successful first Kansai to the World Conference in the Autumn of 2016, the group decided to organise the event again. This year it was held in June as the venue had already been booked by one of the SIG members for another event, which had been cancelled. As result, the rooms became available for us. Organising the student conference was much easier and quicker than last year. We received positive feedback from both presenters and participants of the conference. At JALT 2017, we had a meeting with the organisers of ILA2018 and decided that K2W3 will be held at ILA2018. It will hopefully attract a large number of presenters. Although there is obvious student interest, the Kansai group do not want to concentrate solely on event organisation.

The biggest challenge that we have been facing is attracting people to the get-togethers. Even though we get new participants, it is hard to keep them active. Compared to people in the Tokyo area, people in Kansai are less willing to take an hour or longer train ride to attend the get-togethers. Discussing current issues related to teaching does not seem to satisfy members. Also, discussions about the student conference during the get-together time may prevent a number of people from attending due to a lack of interest in the event.

We have been talking about joint research plans, but, owing to various factors, such as different teaching contexts and research interests, and inconsistent participation in meetings, we have not managed to make any concrete decision yet. Participants have expressed interest in holding mini-presentations or workshops in which they can introduce a classroom activity or report about their most recent research results. Having talked to the regular participants, I would like to propose that we meet bi-monthly with a set theme or agenda. To this end, we could send out a call for presentations and/or workshops at the beginning of the year.

Hiroshima 2017 Get-togethers

Jim Ronald

The Hiroshima LD Get-togethers have been happening now for a decade or more, with some years of regular monthly meetings, and some of less regular—and also some where nothing happens. Apart from our looming Inter-university Scrabble Contest, 2017 has been a “nothing happened” year, at least this far. Maybe a fallow year in preparation for a bigger harvest next year? Or maybe a chance to think differently about how to do things? For example, being reminded at the JALT conference of the importance of workplace teacher groups, I wonder whether the local group might work well as a supporter, encourager of these at different schools or universities. Easier for many people to join, and ostensibly more relevant to many teachers, too? For me, over the decade of local LD Get-togethers, two benefits that stand out for me have been the building of friendships, and the opportunities for languaging—giving shape and purpose to fuzzy reflections. Certainly, the second could well work online—with a Facebook group, like the Kansai LD get-togethers, or similar. And the first through helping to foster workplace groups—and just

being more sociable? Looking forward to what we can do in 2018—and appreciating the support of Tokyo and Kansai Get-togethers!

Tokyo Get-togethers: January-September 2017

Andy Barfield, Ian Hurrell and Jenny Morgan

With Ken Ikeda starting his sabbatical in California and after many years of holding the Tokyo Get-togethers at Otsuma Women's University, the get-togethers moved to Rikkyo University Ikebukuro campus from April 2017. Based on discussions and feedback from participants at the January and February get-togethers, we decided to move away from holding individual research-themed workshops of the previous year's get-togethers to focusing on building continuity between get-togethers by encouraging the creation of collaborative groups that would meet and discuss over several get-togethers with a mind to start a shared project at some point. Accordingly, we followed this structure in April, May, and June:

14.00-14.15 Mingling and meeting in pairs

14.15-14.45 Talking about people's working contexts, research interests and goals; mini-poster making about their Learner Development interests

14.45-15.00 Sharing posters; finding possible connections for group discussion

15.00-15.15 Short break

15.15-16.45 Pair and small-group discussions exploring shared interests, puzzles, and possible collaborations/projects

16.45-17.00 Whole group reflection circle to share a brief summary of the focus of each group's discussion.

To further encourage continuity between get-togethers we also decided to try out a new process for the post get-together write-ups.

Each group created their own Google Doc to record the content of their discussions and develop together a narrative of their collaboration that they might refer to from one get-together to another. Links to the groups' Google Docs are then published in the general write-up of the get-together on the LD website so that they can be viewed publicly (see <http://ld-sig.org/2017-tokyo-get-togethers/>).

The spring semester started with our **April get-together** attended by a dozen or so members at LD Tokyo's new venue at Rikkyo University Ikebukuro Campus. The theme of this first gathering was "*Beginnings: Ideas and Possibilities for Collaborative Learner Development Projects: Sharing Interests and Starting Questions.*" Attendees spent time sharing with new members about their teaching contexts, research interests, learner-teacher puzzles, and goals for attending the LD get-togethers, and as well as catching up with old friends since the winter break. Then, participants created and shared mini-posters summarizing our individual LD interests, challenge/puzzles, and goals looking for possible connections for collaboration.

This led to people splitting off into smaller interest groups that included: a motivational strategies group; a reflection group discussing reflective practices and processes in learner and teacher development; and a research analysis group for teachers who wanted to discuss their current personal research and writing projects. We ended this get-together with a commitment by group members to contribute to a short reflective report about their discussions to be shared on the LD website.

The **May get-together** was attended by a similar number of people, and had the theme of "*Explorations: Sharing Possibilities for Collaborative Learner Development Projects: Exploring Puzzles and Finding New Paths.*" We hoped that people would continue with the April interest groups, forming or re-forming other interest groups—the groups and projects are not fixed, and are always open to new people joining in. Groups discussed learner development projects they would like to do in collaboration with (an)other get-together participant(s). At that stage, we had

in mind the informal afternoon conference, *Creating Community: Learning Together 4*, tentatively proposed for December 2017. At the end of the May get-together, each group agreed to write up a report of their discussions using Google Docs. We also talked about keeping contact and momentum for our projects through to the next get-together in June.

A small but nonetheless lively group met for the **June get-together**: “*Progressions—Continuing with Our Interest Groups and Learner Development Issues*.” One member shared a specific presentation she was working on for a summer conference. Then, in response to a member’s question “What is learner development?” we launched into an extended discussion about different aspects of learner development processes and puzzles. An ongoing discussion and work in progress!

At the end of July, the Tokyo get-together coordination team (Andy, Ian, Jenny) met for reflection and discussion about the spring semester. We realise that while LD SIG members have a strong interest in discussing learner development issues, many are increasingly busy and find it hard to attend get-togethers regularly and there has been a noticeable drop off in attendance at the monthly get-togethers. This has made it difficult to cultivate collaboration and continuity between get-togethers, which is the primary purpose of the meetings. As a result, we decided to put on hold the December *CCLT4* informal afternoon conference.

At the time of writing this in early September we are looking forward to opening a discussion among LD members in the greater Tokyo area about how to re-energize participation in get-togethers or, indeed, whether to continue the get-togethers in 2018 or not. One alternative might be to move towards a blended approach for the get-togethers, for example, combining face-to-face get-togethers in the first few sessions of the year (say January, February, April, and May) with decentralised small-group meetings from May to September, and whole-group meetings in October and December. In the initial months of the year participants might

focus on identifying common issues of interest, discussing collaborative research and writing projects about learner development, and planning how to put their research ideas/puzzles/questions into action in the spring semester. Then, in the interim period from May to September/October, each collaborative group would meet decentrally to discuss the implementation of their research ideas, according to group members’ schedules, using online tools such as Skype and sometimes meeting face to face for a bite to eat and drink together, as and when people had space and time to do so. In the final period of the year “conventional” get-togethers in September and/or October would let groups start to consolidate their work with a view to sharing it publicly by the end of the year (December) or the start of the next (January).

- Would such a blended approach offer a way forward for 2018?
- Are there other approaches that you feel would be worth trying?
- How can the get-togethers be run so that they work for you?

We are looking forward to meeting with you and hearing your views or by email at <ldsigtokyogettogethers@gmail.com>.

LOOKING FORWARD 今後のイベント

Interviews with the Editors of the Learner Development Journal Issues 1, 2, and 3

『The Learner Development Journal』誌（第1号、第2号、第3号）編集者との対談

『The Learner Development Journal』誌は、JALT の学習者ディベロプメント研究部会発行のオープンアクセスジャーナルです。同誌は、第二言語習得の学習者の成長に関する諸問題について、実践者主導による研究、各種レビュー・インタビューなどを中心に掲載。2017 年秋に、創刊号をオンラインで出版する予定です。

ここでは、アリソン・スチュワート、ティム・アシュウェル、アンディ・バーフィールドの3氏をホスト役として、今後発行予定の3号それぞれの編集者との対談をお届けします。対談では、編集者間での協力、著者、査読者など、雑誌発行にまつわる人々とのエピソードなどについて伺いました。各号の編集チームは、それぞれ出版に向けて違った段階にありますので、会員の皆さんには、さまざまな編集過程に触れていただけたと思います。また今後、編集者や投稿者、査読者などとして『The Learner Development Journal』誌に携わっていただく際の参考となれば幸いです。

『The Learner Development Journal』誌について、詳しいことは学習者ディベロプメント研究部会のウェブサイト：<http://ld-sig.org/ld-journal-concept/> までどうぞ。

The Learner Development Journal is the online, open-access journal of the JALT Learner Development SIG, devoted to practitioner-driven research, reviews, and interviews exploring learner development issues in second language education. Its inaugural issue was published online in the autumn of 2017.

Here, Alison Stewart, Tim Ashwell, and Andy Barfield of the journal's steering group interview the editors of the first three issues about their experiences of working together with each other and with the writers, reviewers, and others involved in the issue's creation. As each editorial team is at a different stage along the path to publication with their respective issue of the journal, it is our hope that these three interviews will make the journal and editorial processes familiar to everyone in the Learner Development SIG, as well as encourage SIG members to consider becoming in the future an editor, contributor, reviewer, or member of the Journal Steering Group.

To find out more about the journal, please visit the current Learner Development SIG website at <http://ldjournalsite.wordpress.com/>.

An Interview with the Co-Editors of Issue 1 of *The Learner Development Journal*, “Visualizing Learner Development”

Darren Elliott and Hugh Nicoll, with Alison Stewart

Alison: Thank you, Darren and Hugh, for taking part in this email interview. I'd like to start, if I may, by asking about your particular interests in learner development issues, and what appeals to you about the theme of the issue 1, “Visualising Learner Development.”

Darren: Some of my recent research has been into learners' metaphors for learning, and ways in which those metaphors connect to autonomous actions and beliefs, so when this theme was suggested I saw an instant connection. Of course, metaphor is just one way of “visualizing.” I wanted to see how other teacher-researchers in different contexts interpreted the theme. I am really happy with the diverse range of ideas and voices we will be presenting in the first issue.

Alison: Thank you, Darren. How about you, Hugh?

Hugh: Visualising Learner Development as a theme for the first volume of the journal feels like a natural fit for me in several senses. First of all, I suppose, because I was aware through my first teaching experiences of the cyclical/reciprocal nature of the teaching/learning continuum, and that they literally and metaphorically made me aware of learning environments as new worlds that I needed to imagine fully in order to navigate and understand. I am remembering first my work with elementary school children who lived in the neighborhood of the church my family

attended in Washington, D. C. in the 1960s. We had moved to D. C. from rural Maine, so acting as a reading and writing tutor (as a junior high school student myself) with mostly 8 to 10 year old African American boys constituted a challenging and engaging introduction to the complexity of the world. My second shaping experience began just after I graduated from high school, when I started training to become a mountaineering instructor.

Those experiences took me back to the woods of my early childhood, but also triggered efforts on my part to link the physical, conceptual, and leadership challenges of working in outdoor education to ideas of an intuitive sense that my natural way of framing learning and teaching questions is essentially kinaesthetic, and having become a professor of American literature and cultural history, I see all of the key issues in learner development as part of a great interdisciplinary continuum, where, like Darren the centrality of metaphor is fundamental to the journeys we undertake as learners and as teachers.

Alison: So, whereas Darren, your interest in this theme is the natural continuation of the research you've been doing recently, Hugh, your interest has very deep roots that extend back through your long career as a teacher: an interesting contrast. But both of you see metaphor and other ways of visualizing or experiencing learner development as crucial to its realization, right? I share your views about the importance of metaphor, but I've tended to think of it more as abstract concepts rather than concrete images. So I'm looking forward to discovering some of the different approaches that you have been working with for this first issue.

But first, as this is the first issue of a new journal, I'd wonder if you would briefly describe the process of starting a new publication from

scratch? And can you give us an idea of how many people are actually involved in this process?

Darren: I came into the process a little after the decision had been taken to start the journal, although as is usual with the LD SIG, the consultation process has been fairly transparent. As I understand it, the concept behind this journal goes back to previous LD SIG publications like *Autonomy You Ask!* (AYA) and *More Autonomy You Ask!* (MAYA) (which I read in the UK as a graduate student) and *Realizing Autonomy* (to which I contributed). That is, we are hoping to offer writer-researcher-practitioners a chance to collaborate much more closely than they would on a regular journal. We (Hugh and I) have worked fairly closely with the writers of each paper, and at various stages each of the writers have read and commented on other papers submitted to the first issue. A couple of the papers we received were almost complete, but have been rewritten after commentary from other writers. Some of the papers started off as research notes or proposals and have taken a lot more work to build into the final versions we will see published soon.

We also have a Review Network drawn from the LD SIG membership who have looked at later iterations of each paper and given yet more useful feedback. Each paper will have been seen by at least half a dozen people, all of whom have made astute observations, before completion. Fundamentally, we hope that this journal will be supportive and collaborative. We aim to develop papers, rather than accept or reject submissions.

I'll be honest... I don't really enjoy the fiddly bits at the end of the process, but we have a great team of proofreaders, reviewers, and technicians sweating over the final product. Being curators of the first issue is both especially onerous and a great privilege. On the

one hand, we have to do everything from scratch, but that enables us to shape the journal as we would like to see it (to some extent, at least).

Hugh: Not a lot to add to Darren's description of the process above, though of course, having been involved in LD SIG projects since 1994, I have benefited from the collaborative processes by which *AYA*, *MAYA*, *Realizing Autonomy*, and other more recent projects have been brought into the world.

Like Darren, I find the "fiddly bits" a big challenge, especially now that I am retired, but as too-busy adjunct faculty, trying to juggle research writing and editing with the realities of my current part-timer's life. That said, the sometimes hard slog of engagement in others' re-writing challenges is both tough and inspiring.

Alison: That sounds like quite a mammoth venture, and I know that you are both still hard at work on the "fiddly bits" involved in finalising all the articles as well as the new website for the journal. I wonder if I could home in on the various stages that you describe in order to find out more about the concept of the journal and the way you are attempting to realize it in the first issue.

First of all, your work with the authors: I notice you use the term "writer-researcher-practitioner"—one step up from the more familiar "researcher-practitioner"! How does writing become part of the process of research and practice, and how do you see your role as editors in this process? Furthermore, when you say, Darren, that some of the papers were submitted as almost complete and then rewritten in response to reviewers' comments, whereas others were submitted as research notes or proposals and required a lot of work to develop, could you tell us a little more about what worked well and what you hope that

prospective writers (and editors) in future issues could aim for?

Darren: I added writer to the term as it was always our intention to work with the writing more closely if required. The usual process is to complete the research, write up the paper, and submit it to various journals. Most of the time, editors will only accept papers which need little revision. However, because each issue of our journal is themed fairly specifically it is unlikely that an “off-the-peg” article would fit—actually, we rejected several good papers because they didn’t match our theme (although we did take the trouble to suggest more appropriate homes for each of them).

The paper we worked on the most was one which came to us as a proposal rather than a piece of completed research. For various reasons, the research didn’t go entirely to plan... but the process of reworking the goals was really interesting. It’s actually rare that research DOES work out exactly as intended, of course. What was particularly interesting for me from an editorial perspective was assisting the “writer-researcher-practitioners” in repositioning themselves within the data they had and coming up with a paper which was quite different from the one they had originally proposed.

Alison: You mention the Review Network—members of the SIG with a special interest or expertise in the subject of the issue—who got involved in reading the articles in the later stages of the process. Can you tell us more about their role and how they contributed to the articles?

Darren: After the writers had commented on one another’s papers and revised their own on that advice, we distributed the papers amongst a network of LD SIG members. Each of the papers was reviewed by two of the

Review Network members. As far as possible, I tried to match “contrasting” reviewers to each paper—that is, I hoped that by choosing two reviewers with different backgrounds we may get wider perspectives in the feedback. The Review Network is fairly diverse in nature so we were able to achieve that, I think.

Hugh: I’m going to jump in and write a little about the upcoming stages as we move toward the completion of the project: Final proofing and layout, then uploading (actual publication) to the web. It looks like we’re going to need to complete a two-step move, for practical reasons, which will involve moving the current SIG web site <ld-sig.org> to a new WordPress install on the JALT server, and then create a subdomain for the journal. This is perhaps tediously technical as a subject for some members of the SIG, but in the interests of transparency, it may be good for people to understand that beyond the conceptual and logistical challenges of editorial communications and policy discussions, there are further logistical and aesthetic challenges in creating the final draft files in pdf format and creating a web site for sharing the articles.

Alison: So, the publication of the new journal still involves a whole range of important decisions to be made about what it should look like and where it should be kept. From my own position in the sidelines as a member of the steering group with Tim and Andy, I know that many of these “fiddly” processes have been collaborative and consensual, even though that is not easy, especially as we get closer to the date of publication.

But, all credit to you, Hugh and Darren, the issue is on target to come out as scheduled next month. No spoilers, but can you give us a preview of what we will find in it?

Darren: Sometimes English teachers can find themselves tucked away in their own parochial pockets so personally I want this to be an international journal. I can tell you that we have papers from Italy and Finland in the first issue, which I am very happy about. Hugh and I are still working on our introductory paper so we are picking out the threads that run through the articles and tying them together. One point that stands out is that the papers are largely research that has emerged from practice, rather than research conducted for its own sake. This is also very pleasing, and I think accessible and inspirational for other teachers considering dipping their toes into the murky waters of research.

Hugh: I couldn't agree more about how pleasing it is to be working with teachers who are committed to research writing that is growing out of their exploration of the dynamics of the teaching-learning relationship. We are also looking forward to the final chapter, a reflection on the issue as a whole, from Alice Chik. Some LD SIG members may remember the workshop on visualizing learner development that she led at the JALT 2015 international conference.

Alison: Yes, I remember it! A really stimulating session that opened up new possibilities for exploring identity and learning.

It's wonderful to see the project of creating a new international, practitioner-based journal coming to fruition with this issue. I have no doubt that the articles in it will be met with a great deal of interest in the Learner Development SIG and beyond, and perhaps lead to new practices with new puzzles and problems for further research.

Darren and Hugh, thank you both so much for taking the time to talk about your work on the journal, and good luck with the final stages!

An Interview with the Co-Editors of Issue 2 of *The Learner Development Journal*, "Qualitative Research Into Learner Development"

Chika Hayashi, Masuko Miyahara and Patrick Kiernan, with Tim Ashwell

For the second issue of the journal the editors are Chika Hayashi, Masuko Miyahara and Patrick Kiernan. At the time of writing, they are working with the contributors as they approach the deadline for a first full draft of their papers. All three editors are based in Japan, but Patrick is away on an extended sabbatical at the University of Birmingham in the UK. I wanted to start the email interview with them by asking what appeals to them about the theme of Issue 2 of the journal, "Qualitative Research into Learner Development."

Tim: Chika, Masuko, and Patrick many thanks for doing this email interview when the deadline for the first full drafts for Issue 2 is looming.

I wonder if we could start with your own interests in learner development issues, and what personally and professionally appeals to each of you about the theme of issue 2, "Qualitative Research into Learner Development."

Chika: A decade ago, I carried out a qualitative research study on learner development. It was very impressive to me not only because it was my first longitudinal semi-intervention research but also because I myself realised the dynamic process of qualitative research. In addition to interview and observation, the data collected through a double-entry journal that I constantly exchanged with a teacher connected me to the core of her

internal aspects and helped me to understand her complexly interwoven identity. Triangulating the data, I felt that the whole process of qualitative research is like a catalytic activity between participants and researcher as well as among data. Reflecting on my research history, qualitative approaches are something that I have been fascinated by and also desired to explore for a long time. I am looking forward to engaging in another catalyst activity with Masuko, Patrick, and all the contributors in this issue!

Masuko: The idea of learner development and autonomy in language education has been fairly well established now. There are currently a great deal of research studies that examine LD from various perspectives and in a diversity of contexts, and a large number of them appear to take a qualitative approach. However, when we read these published works, only a few attempt to discuss the methodological challenges of the research itself. I thought it is now time to stop, and reflect on these issues before moving forward to the next stage of LD research.

Patrick: The thing that excited me about the topic of this issue was the focus on qualitative methodology. Although learning development has of course been studied quantitatively and qualitatively, it seems to me that the issues that are of real interest, at least to teachers like myself, are the ones that can only really be explored qualitatively. The way learner autonomy is tied up with personal identity and relationships inside and outside the classroom means that there is much to be learned from the kind of fine grained analysis that qualitative methods provide. Qualitative approaches also potentially offer a more natural role for the teacher-researcher. At the same time, qualitative research has tended to be misunderstood or misrepresented as something inferior to quantitative research or as merely a stage

towards quantitative verification. Hopefully, as Masuko suggests, this issue will be an opportunity to take stock and celebrate the rewards of qualitative approaches. Also, as Chika points out, there are real rewards from sharing ideas with contributors and fellow editors.

Tim: It seems as if all three of you have developed an interest in qualitative research (QualR) over a number of years and that you see your involvement in this issue of the LD Journal as a way to take stock and to share your own experiences with others. Maybe you also see this as an opportunity to expound some of the strengths of a QualR approach as well as challenging some of the misconceptions that you feel surround it?

Patrick: Yes, certainly in my case, I would agree with that assessment.

Tim: I wonder if I can move on to a second set of questions? Could you each tell me about getting this issue of the Journal off the ground? How did you organize the call for contributions/proposals and how did you go about inviting a guest contributor (Anne Burns)? Also, could you explain why you chose to hold a one-day retreat for all the contributors and tell me how that went?

Patrick: Well, although this is an editorial team, I think teams always work best with a leader and Masuko both invited me to join the issue after volunteering herself and has been instrumental in coordinating everything including inviting Anne Burns as a guest contributor. She has incredible charm with getting people to do things! Meanwhile, among other things, Chika did an amazing job of organizing a retreat for the contributors to share initial thoughts face to face. Sessions on Skype

and email communications have also made it feel a very collaborative process.

Chika: I joined the team after almost everything had been organised, so the retreat was the first collaborative activity I engaged in with the other editors and contributors. To my surprise, all the contributors joined the session although we were based in different places and even countries! Before the retreat, we created a set of outlines about the proposals and shared it with all the contributors so that they could read it beforehand. At the retreat, each contributor explained about their research proposals and then received feedback from the other contributors as well as the editors. It was a serious but friendly atmosphere and some members went out for dinner afterwards. After the retreat, some of them expressed their desire to have social/academic gatherings on a regular basis! It was a pity that Patrick could not join us for the retreat, but he was there for emotional support as well!

Masuko: After the proposal had been accepted by the Journal Steering Group (JSG), the first thing was to get a line-up for the editorial team—a group of people who would not only be interested in the topic, but also editorial work. Secondly, they would draft up the CfP, and at the same time decide the schedule or flow of the project. We tossed around the draft for this with the members of the JSG several times, and I believe it was through this process that things became clearer. Setting up the deadlines was quite tricky.

Our first major event was the retreat. I was skeptical at the beginning because we had a range of contributors from different parts of the world, and was not sure if things would work. Overseas authors and people who were not able to join us in person participated through Skype. The time difference was a bit tricky, but we were able to pull it off. It was great in the sense

that we not only were able to talk to each other about our projects, but it gave us an opportunity to get to know each other. I believe this made it easier to communicate. Chika, thanks for taking the lead in organizing the event. For this issue, we were very fortunate to have Dr. Anne Burns as a guest contributor. I happen to know her through her work, and when I met up with her at JALT 2016, I talked to her about our project as well as the possibility of writing a short commentary for the issue. To my surprise, she very generously agreed to this.

Tim: The retreat (both face to face and online) sounds like a really great idea! You seem to have been able to forge a bit of a group identity and, as you say, this has probably helped a lot with communications since.

Masuko: Yes, I think if you can put a face to a name, it gives people a sense that they are indeed interacting with another human being, so to speak, and not just talking to a ‘machine.’ This is really important especially when you have a group of people from all over the world with different expertise and experience. For me, this is the most fun and interesting part in a project like this.

Tim: OK, so moving on to the writing process itself: Could you tell me how you have found working with writers on their first drafts and scaffolding writer-to-writer interaction?

Patrick: Well, of course, everyone is different and so far, after settling on the initial outlines, I have found one writer sharing the whole process with me and another keeping me in suspense (laughs). But yes, seriously, the discussion I have had with one writer has allowed me to see how intimidating it can seem to present an intimate study as “Qualitative Research.” At one point, I thought we might end up with one less contributor, but it has been impressive to witness how pushing beyond such

worries can really generate a lot of energy. This has also fed into my own thoughts about learner identity as well as inspiring me to get things done myself.

Chika: So far, I regularly contact the contributors to see how things are going and provide support whenever necessary. Once I receive their first draft, I will work more closely with them. Also, some members from LD Journal Review Network will join later, so I am looking forward to seeing how the collaborative process will be expanded and even transformed throughout the whole process of the project!

Masuko: We are just about to start receiving first full drafts. Since people are all busy with their daily things, I think it is important for editors to give gentle reminders, and ask for outlines, etc. This helps not only the authors to consolidate their ideas, but also gives us, the editors, a chance to see how things are proceeding, and give our feedback whenever necessary.

Tim: So, plenty of reminding and cajoling mixed in with “support”...?! But, interesting how interacting with people who are writing about qualitative research requires a lot of sensitivity and how it can help you reflect on some of the knotty issues for people engaging in QualR. I wonder if this is one of the more rewarding aspects of being an editor—being challenged to understand the topic from another perspective and to expand your own understanding as a result.

Finally, could you tell me how you work together as co-editors? Has it been easy to keep yourselves and the other contributors to a fairly clear schedule? What have been the joys and challenges of working as a team of three? Etc.

Patrick: For me the biggest concern has been the issue of working at a distance. I am not

entirely comfortable with Skype and missing out on the retreat, altogether, I was afraid that I would end up out of sync with everyone. However, in spite of being very obviously busy with work and many other commitments Chika and Masuko have done an amazing job of keeping a line of communication and keeping on top of the schedule and communication with both me and the writers. A case in point was that after the retreat they prepared a detailed report, which really put me in the picture. I feel that both Masuko and Chika are people I can really trust with similar outlooks making for what feels like a harmonious team.

Chika: This is my first time to work as an editor, but Masuko and Patrick invited me to the team in a natural and friendly manner, so I could join the team smoothly. We regularly contact each other and report on what is going on between the contributors, so I can see that we are moving on at our own pace, keeping our schedule in mind. More importantly, I believe that a mutually supportive environment that Masuko and Patrick naturally co-constructed before or at the initial stage of the issue is one of the key elements for a novice editor like me to embark on a new collaborative project with experienced editors.

Masuko: As the chief editor, I think my main job was to keep things rolling, so to speak. This is, thus, what I have been doing: providing updates, sending out reminders, etc. Patrick and Chika are the ones that are really doing the “job.” We have created a very friendly, warm and supportive atmosphere, and I am certainly lucky to be working with them. We have just started, but I am looking forward to working with them.

Tim: It sounds like a dream team! A blend of experience and energy! It is great that Chika feels comfortable in her first editing role. It is

exactly what we hope the Journal will do: nurture new editors and writers. I hope your example will inspire others both within and outside the SIG to step forward and join in the development of the Journal. Thank you to all three of you for sharing your thoughts so openly. And, of course, good luck with Issue 2!

An Interview with the Co-Editors Of Issue 3 of *The Learner Development Journal*, “Learner Identities and Transitions”

Christina Gkonou, Jim Ronald & Yoshio Nakai, with Andy Barfield

For the third issue of the journal the editors are Christina Gkonou, Jim Ronald, and Yoshio Nakai. At the time of writing in August & September 2017, they are working on developing the Call for Papers and sharing ideas about how they want to approach developing their work with each other together. While Jim and Yoshio are based in Japan and are active members of the Learner Development SIG, Christina is the director of the MA TESOL programme at the University of Essex in England and is the SIG's guest at JALT2017. I wanted to start the email interview with Christina, Jim, and Yoshio by asking about their particular interests in learner development issues, and what appeals to them about the theme of the issue 3, “Learner Identities and Transitions.”

Andy: Christina, Jim, and Yoshio, many thanks for doing this email interview at the same time as you are starting to get know each other and work on the Call for Papers for issue 3 of the journal. Perhaps a good place to start would be with your own interests in learner

development issues, and what personally and professionally appeals to each of you about the theme of issue 3, “Learner Identities and Transitions.”

Christina: I have always been interested in how learners “change” throughout the process of learning a foreign language; and by “change” here I refer to changes to and shifts in both their level of cognitive and linguistic development and also their personalities and identities, i.e., who they are as learners and as individuals. A number of transitions take place when learning a foreign language (for example that of becoming a speaker or user of a new language, getting to know more about a new culture etc.) which are fascinating to investigate and reflect on.

Jim: The two sides of this theme, learner identities and transitions, have become increasingly important to me as I’ve noticed how changed identities, even just titles, can make a massive difference. For example, at conferences last year I noticed a great difference in student helpers: ones I’m sure were labelled “sign holders” did just that, while others who realized that they were the welcoming face of the conference really took on that role. Just a small example, but it reminded me how important these issues are, and how I need to learn more about them!

Yoshio: Building on what Christina and Jim have said, speaking of learner identities reminds me that “learner” is just one of aspects of someone appearing in the context of language learning. So, I always think and see learners as complex organisms with various kinds of identities trying to realize different identities through learning and using languages.

Andy: You all point to many questions not just around how learners see (and think about

seeing) different identities and transitions that they can create and perform, but also about how (and why) others create, assign and enable or constrain the development of identities and transitions for learners too ... as well as questions of focus on individual learners and/or groups of learners ...

Christina: Yes, it would indeed be very interesting to look at learner identities and transitions individually and as a coherent whole, that is to say how they are shaped in the language classroom and also how learners and their identities function with connection to other environments they are embedded in.

Yoshio: Raising questions about learner identities and transitions for me is about how language teachers and supporters may better know the complexity of learner and language learning and explore what and how we can do for them through teaching and supporting, for instance in the language classroom.

Jim: I'm also very interested in learning from the various ways that language teachers and learners view and deal with these issues—in that way being an editor is at heart a fairly selfish activity!

Andy: You each have a great sense of learning from working with a group of teacher-researchers together. As you are getting to know each other, I was wondering how you feel about working together as editors in this project, developing communities of practices with writers, responding to them, and seeing things through to publication...

Christina: Jim, Yoshi, and I have only met virtually, but I am sure we all look forward to meeting in person very soon. Working with them will be a wonderful opportunity to exchange views on a topic that is of great interest to us all and also work towards

supporting our writers and ensuring that the papers that will be part of this special issue inform each other and lead to a better understanding of learner identities across different contexts.

Jim: As Christina mentions, we have never met (but I'm looking forward to it!), and that adds a dimension that I hope we are getting used to. Anyway, to me the heart of language use is not how we get things done, but how we can build good relationships as we work together. We'll make mistakes, misunderstand each other, maybe let each other down at times... but our challenge is to deal with all that—to work well as a team, to get the job done, and to appreciate each other better!

Yoshio: I really appreciate that I can have this wonderful opportunity. Working with Christina and Jim as editors is a big challenge for me as a researcher on learner autonomy and a language user as well. This seems to me that I am exercising autonomy to realize what I want to be as a researcher using English.

Andy: It's great to see those challenges from such a proactive perspective. And speaking of challenges, how is drafting the Call for Papers going?

Christina: We are nearly there with the Call for Papers, and I think Jim and Yoshi have wonderful ideas about how best to describe the content of this special issue and what we, as guest editors, would envisage for it. More to follow soon so stay tuned!

Jim: We're getting there! (As British Rail once lamely claimed...) Making it a cooperative venture from the start does take more time than having just one person do a first draft, but we're hoping it'll be worth it for everyone involved in Issue 3. Contributions won't follow quite the

same path, but we hope that the shared venture element will be true for all of us.

Yoshio: As working has just started, any clear ideas doesn't hit on me at the moment, but I hope that we can create the communities of practices of learner autonomy researchers and practitioners where we can discuss our ideas freely about learners.

Andy: Are there particular reviews and interviews that you feel might be an integral part of issue 3 too?

Jim: Just a thought, but a kind of annotated bibliography would be a very useful part of the mix—whether as one person's contribution or as a kind of shared reading project. Any takers?!

Yoshio: I'm really looking forward to seeing how everyone involved in this issue reach towards new understandings through discussing from various perspectives with autonomous and cooperative practitioners. As Jim said, I think it is because contributions will go along different kinds of path, and this will bring new discovery of issues of learner identities and transitions.

Christina: It's difficult to tell at this stage, and it will largely depend on what proposals and contributions we will receive to ensure that we maintain cohesion in the issue, but overall it would be interesting to also interview practitioners and researchers who work on the theme of learner identities. They will bring different perspectives to the topic as well as suggestions for researching and addressing learner identities in the classroom, as Jim and Yoshi also highlight.

Andy: Yes—things are still unfolding as you talk through your ideas with each other and imagine different possibilities for this project. It's fascinating to see this sense of emergent “co-understanding” and “co-imagination” developing between you. Many thanks, Christina, Jim, and Yoshi, for sharing the start of your collaboration, as well as your hopes in wanting to bring together a group of teacher-researchers to explore “learner identities and transitions.”

We're looking forward to hearing more from you as the Call for Papers takes shape—and as potential contributors start imagining how they may take part in such explorations with their learners, with you as editors, and with other teacher-researchers (or “writer-researcher-practitioners” to use Darren and Hugh's term) in the group that forms and works together on Issue 3 of *The Learner Development Journal*. I hope you have the chance to talk with many different people at JALT2017—and with each other too.

To read the completed Call for Papers for Issue 3, please visit

<https://ldjournalsite.wordpress.com/issue-three-identities-and-transitions-2019/>

Initial inquiries and proposals should be directed to Jim Ronald at jmronald@gmail.com.

SIG MATTERS インフォメーション

Learner Development SIG Financial Report

Huw Davies, *SIG Treasurer*

The SIG's finances are currently in good health, with total revenue over expenses so far of 111,145 JPY. Some minimal administrative outgoings are expected in the current financial year, but we can expect to carry forward a strong balance into next year.

SIG fund balance, December 1, 2017 / SIG 資金残高 2017 年 12 月 1 日

Balance in bank account / 銀行口座の残高	331,383
Reserve liabilities / JALT 本部預け金	200,000
Cash on hand / 現金	5,402
Balance / 合計	536,785

Revenues: April – November, 2017.

Annual grant from JALT National	219,276
PanSIG program fee	52,338
Book sales	1,000
Balance / 合計	272,614

Expenses: April – November, 2017

PanSIG grant	(40,000)
JALT CALL grant	(40,000)
Kansai event costs	(6,161)
Research grant	(25,000)
Bank fees	(308)
JALT International conference grant	(50,000)
Balance / 合計	(161,469)

Next financial year (running from April 2018 to March 2019), we can expect similar revenues from JALT and similar expenses on LD SIG grants with a total grant fund of 200,000 JPY for 2018. In addition, expenses of 145,000 JPY have been earmarked for sponsorship (70,000 JPY for the Learner Development SIG Speaker at ILA 2018) and a web-servicing reimbursement for 15 years (75,000 JPY). This will leave some money available for other projects.

If you would like to join me in administering the SIG's finances, please do contact me, as I would like to work in an LD SIG treasury team, rather than doing this solo.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you,

Huw

Email: <h.davies1@gmail.com>

Writing for *Learning Learning* 『学習の学習』 応募規定

Learning Learning is the Learner Development SIG newsletter and is published online bi-annually, in the Spring and Autumn. It has a specific ISSN number (ISSN 1882-1103), and features cutting edge articles in various formats that relate to people's ideas, reflections, experiences, and interests to do with learner development, learner autonomy, and teacher autonomy. Many different SIG members contribute to each issue of *Learning Learning*, and, by doing so, create a sense of shared community and learning together. Please feel free to contribute too and make connections within the SIG and beyond.

『学習の学習』はLD SIGのニューズレターで、年に2回（春と秋）オンライン出版されています（ISSN 1882-1103）。学習者の成長、学習者と教員の自律に関するアイディア、省察、経験や興味に関連したさまざまな形式の原稿を収録しています。SIGの多くのメンバーが『学習の学習』に寄稿し、共同体の意識を築き共に学習しています。どうぞ奮ってご投稿され、SIG内でのまたそれを超えた繋がりを築いてください。

Contributions / 寄稿

We encourage new writing and new writers and are happy to work with you in developing your writing. We would be delighted to hear from you about your ideas, reflections, experiences, and interests to do with learner development, learner autonomy, and teacher autonomy.

これまでにない形式のもの、また新しい方々からのご投稿をお待ちしております。内容についてもぜひご相談ください。みなさまのご意見やお考え、ご経験、そして学習者の成長、学習者と教師の自律性に関することなど、ぜひお聞かせください。

For more details about formats and lengths (形式と長さ) of writing suitable for *Learning Learning*, please see below. To upload your writing to the editorial team of *Learning Learning*, [please use this link](http://ld-sig.org/information-for-contributors/) or go to <http://ld-sig.org/information-for-contributors/>.

Many thanks.

Formats and lengths / 形式と長さ

Learning Learning is your space for continuing to make the connections that interest you. You are warmly invited and encouraged to contribute to the next issue of *Learning Learning* in either English and/or Japanese. In order to provide access and opportunities for Learner Development SIG members to take part in the SIG's activities, we welcome writing in different formats and lengths about issues connected with learner and teacher development, such as:

『学習の学習』は会員の皆様に興味ある繋がりを築きつづけるスペースです。次号の『学習の学習』への日本語（もしくは英語、及び二言語で）の投稿を募集しています。メンバ

一の皆様に SIG の活動にご参加いただきたく、形式や長さを問わず、学習者および教師の成長に関する以下のような原稿をお待ちしております。

Short articles on issues to do with learner/teacher development and autonomy / 学習者と教師の成長・自律に関する小論

#1: short individual articles (1,200 – 2,500 words) : 小論 (単著) (約 3,600-7,500 字)

#2: short group-written articles (1,200 – 4,000 words) : 小論 (共著) (約 3,600-12,000 字)

Reflective writing about learning for learner/teacher development and autonomy / 学習に関する省察 — 学習者と教師の成長・自律を目指して

#1: particular puzzles that you and/or your learners have about their learning, practices, development, autonomy, and so on, and inviting other *Learning Learning* readers to respond (1,000 words or more) : ご自身や学習者の悩み (学習、実践、成長、自律など) に関して、LL 読者と一緒に考えましょう。(約 4,000 字)

#2: dialogue with (an)other SIG member(s) (1,000 to 2,000 words) : SIG メンバー同士の対話 (約 4,000 字-8,000 字) stories of learners becoming autonomous (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 自律・成長する学習者に関する話 (約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

#3: stories of your learning and teaching practices: success and failure (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 学習・教育実践の成功談・失敗談 (約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

Members' voices / メンバーの声

#1: a short personal profile of yourself as a learner and teacher and your interest in learner development (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 学習者・教員としての自身のプロフィールと学習者の成長に関する興味 (約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

#2: a story of your ongoing interest in, and engagement with, particular learner development (and/or learner autonomy) issues (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 学習者の成長や学習者の自律に関する興味や取り組み (約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

#3: a short profile of your learner development research interests and how you hope to develop your research (about 500 to 1,00 words) : 学習者の成長に関する研究内容と今後の研究の展望 (約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

#4: a short profile of your working context and the focus on learner development/learner autonomy that a particular institution takes and/or is trying to develop in a particular curriculum (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 教育環境の紹介、所属機関やカリキュラムにおける学習者の成長や自律に関する取り組み (約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

Research & reviews / 研究 & レビュー

#1: summaries and accounts of new graduate research (1,200 – 2,500 words) : 大学院での研究内容の要約やその振り返り (約 2,400 字-5,000 字)

#2: proposals for a joint project/joint research (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 協働プロジェクト・リサーチの提案 (約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

#3: reports (of a conference presentation, research project, particular pedagogic practice, and so on, to do with learner development) (about 500 to 1,000 words) : レポート (学習者の成長に関する学会発表、研究プロジェクト、教育実践など) (約 2,000-4,000 字)

#4: reports of research in progress (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 研究中間報告(約 2,000 字-4,000 字)

#5: book, website, article reviews (about 750 to 1,500 words) : 書籍、ウェブサイト、論文の批評 (約 3,000 字-6,000 字)

Free space / フリー・スペース

#1: photographs, drawings, and/or other visual materials about learner development, and/or related to learner autonomy : 学習者の成長や自律に関する写真、絵、視覚資料

#2: activities and tips for learner development/autonomy (about 500 to 1,000 words) : 学習者の成長・自律を促す活動やヒントの紹介 (約 1,000 字-2,000 字)

#3: some other piece of writing that you would like to contribute and that is related to learner development : その他の学習者の成長に関する執筆

#4: poems... and much more : 詩、その他。

