



# JALT Teacher Development SIG

## Explorations in Teacher Development Volume 25, Number 1

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# From the Editor

Do teachers have anything in common with the Dog Whisperer? Can journal writing assist our learners in pair conversations? Do you need tech help and are not sure of the best places to get some? These are the topics covered by our contributors, **James Porcaro, Erika de Jong Watanabe, and Guy Smith.**

The spring issue of the ETD always features the reports from the TD-CUE Joint Forum at the previous year's JALT Conference. This time, **Henry Foster, Daniel Hooper, Harry Meyer, Cian O'Mahony, Meg Ellis, Keiko Iyanaga, Alan Mulvey, and Cristina Tat** reported on their presentations.

Please read the Call for Papers below if you are interested in submitting a paper. In this issue, we are debuting two new columns. Anyone is welcome to submit an installment for a column, so please read the descriptions at the beginning of the "Teacher Reflections" and the "Conference Reflections" to find out more. We are currently accepting submissions for the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 issues of *Explorations in Teacher Development*. If you have any questions about what would be acceptable, please feel free to email me and ask away!

Happy Reading!

Amanda Yoshida, Publications Chair

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Anna Loseva	Guy Smith Jane Pryce	Daniel Hooper Devon Arthurson

## Call for Papers

*Explorations in Teacher Development* is a journal for teachers, by teachers, where we encourage people to share their experiences and reflections.

Papers for the *Explorations in Teacher Development* (ETD) Journal are accepted on an on-going basis. We encourage both members and non-members of our SIG to submit papers, so please share this information with your colleagues and friends to ensure a rich and diverse publication.

Following is a list of the categories and types of articles we are interested in publishing:

### **Research Articles (2000-3000 words)**

- Narrative Inquiry
- Reflective Inquiry
- Action Research

### **Explorations (1000-3000 words)**

- Reflections on beliefs/practices
- Learning / Teaching Journeys

### **Columns (500-1000 words)**

- "Teacher Reflections"
- "Conference Reflections"

In addition, interviews of relevant educators/researchers as well as book reviews may be accepted at the discretion of the editors. Please contact us if interested in writing an interview piece. TD SIG also publishes the proceedings of our Teacher Journeys conference held in June as well as occasional special issues in collaboration with other JALT SIGs.

If you wish to contribute to the ETD, please pay attention to the following requirements:

All submissions should use APA style and a maximum of 12 references. Submissions that are not in APA style will be sent back to the authors for reformatting.

Titles of papers should be 10 words or less.

Research articles should include an abstract of 100-150 words.

Explorative pieces do not require references but connections to the literature are encouraged.

Column contributors are invited to submit at any time, but you may want to send an inquiry regarding your idea.

All authors should provide their current affiliation and a contact email. A short bio and photo are optional.

When sending in a submission, please indicate which category of the ETD Journal your article will fit under.

Please note that all submissions for the research and explorations sections of the ETD will undergo a peer-review process and that, if accepted, we will provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Authors are encouraged to include charts, images, graphs, etc. with their articles, which will provide a visual representation to our readers. Questions and contributions may be sent to Amanda Yoshida at the following email address:

[jalt.ted.ete.editor@gmail.com](mailto:jalt.ted.ete.editor@gmail.com)

# Beyond the silo: 10 things to learn from “The Dog Whisperer”

James W. Porcaro

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“When you know it all it is time to quit because you are too dumb to know how dumb you are.” So commented a reader in response to the question, “Who’s learning?” posed by my brother in his woodworking blog (Porcaro, 2017, Feb 28).

He is an optometrist by trade and a master woodworker by avocation. In his award-winning blog he writes on topics that include techniques, tools, the shop, resources, and ideas. Though I am not a woodworker or handicraftsman of any kind, from time to time I read his blog to try to enter the mindset of the master craftsman in order to reap some insights that might apply to my own craft as a teacher of English as a foreign language.

That simple question he posed to his readers led me to ask, “What have I recently learned in my practice?” Frankly, I somewhat smugly thought, after 50 years of classroom teaching and having published more than seventy articles on the many diverse areas of English language instruction I have done over the past 33 years in Japan, I would have to dig deeply to answer that with any degree of personal satisfaction. Of course, we never “know it all” and perhaps, as with many lessons to learn in life, answers often lie right before us.

For one example, I recalled having learned early in this school year to recognize, appreciate, and adapt my instruction to the unexpected but palpable growth in the maturity of the students in my second year high school class after having taught them the previous year as incoming first year students. Their enhanced seriousness of purpose, more careful attention to assigned tasks, and deeper level of expression enabled me to present more challenging work for them without hesitation.

Some years ago, I read another of my brother’s blog postings (Porcaro, 2009, Sept. 6), in which he shared several of his shop work habits that he thought might be helpful to other woodworkers. I was struck immediately by a remarkable convergence of his habits and my own classroom teaching habits. After careful reflection, I related his ideas to my own instructional practice and experience and shared that with other teachers (Porcaro, 2010).

For example, he wrote, “A process in one wood may not work well in a different species or even a different board of the same species.” I responded, “Certainly it is true that in some ways every class is different from another, as individually and collectively students are unique. Instruction that works with one particular class may not work as well with another class. I have developed many variations of particular lessons in my repertoire to suit the different circumstances I have experienced in different classes. Whenever I deliver a lesson to a class for the first time, as I learn about those students, I learn further how to adapt the instruction to their specifications.”

This kind of reflective inquiry into our practice as teachers is a very important means for advancing our professional development. It leads us to make sense of our work and to define it, and to construct our professional and personal identity (Porcaro, 2015). Through such inquiry teachers can “uncover who they are, where they have come from, what they know and believe, and why they teach as they do” (Johnson & Golombek, 2002, p.5).

A very helpful part of that process, I am suggesting in this piece, can be to explore and consider what we can learn from the work of those in other professions, crafts, and occupations of all sorts. In this way, we give ourselves the opportunity to step outside the classroom box and the silo of the narrow teaching domain that may confine our thinking.

## **“The Dog Whisperer”**

Over recent years I have watched many episodes of programs with Cesar Millan as “The Dog Whisperer” on the National Geographic channel on cable TV. Mr. Millan is an internationally renowned dog psychologist/behaviorist. The term “whisperer” refers to his deep sensitivity and understanding of a dog’s mind, feelings, and behavior; and his ability to communicate effectively and to establish patiently a beneficial relationship with the animal. However, most importantly, as Mr. Millan always makes explicitly clear, he educates and trains humans, the dog owners, and rehabilitates dogs with behavioral problems. He never refers to himself as a dog trainer.

Following are ten principles asserted by Mr. Millan as part of his professional philosophy related to his work with humans. I have stated the points as they would apply in a classroom setting and for each point I emphasize what we teachers can learn for our instructional practice, in our role as leaders, from the education and training of humans that Mr. Millan so successfully directs.

### **1. Always display calm and assertive energy.**

For teachers this means that our demeanor sets the atmosphere for the classroom. Our positive, measured assertion of confidence and fervor, and our expectations of students, are essential for students to achieve successful outcomes in our lessons. Dornyei (2001) recognizes the influence of such an approach in his discussion of motivational strategies which promote classroom language learning. When class management problems may arise, whether small or serious, the teacher’s calm and assertive disposition in dealing with these matters will effectively resolve them and restore order.

### **2. Students must give 100% respect to the teacher.**

The teacher is the adult in the room and we are to be respected for our position as the instructor. That should go without saying. When the teacher is speaking, for example, students listen attentively in a proper posture at their desks. They do not chat with one another or slouch over the desk, and they do not play with their smartphones. Teachers need to establish clear classroom rules and procedures, and explain their purpose, so that they are well understood and accepted by students. Lemov (2010) makes distinctly clear that it is utterly false to think that warmth and strictness in the classroom are opposites. The teacher must be both; indeed, often at exactly the same time. “When you are clear, consistent, firm, and unrelenting and at the same time positive, enthusiastic, caring, and thoughtful, you start to send the message to students that having high expectations is part of caring for and respecting someone. This is a very powerful message” (p. 213).

### **3. When the teacher is in charge, students can be calm, relaxed, and balanced.**

Students expect the teacher to establish an efficient, productive, and orderly environment in the classroom. They will mirror the teacher’s demeanor and accept our direction, which will enable them to follow the lesson and engage successfully with us and each other.

### **4. Set rules, boundaries, and limitations.**

This, again, is what students expect from the teacher, who understands from experience that the fair application of classroom policies will include both limits and leeways. Students are empowered when they can work within such a structure that promotes productive outcomes. They are not empowered when we teachers relinquish our leadership role.

### **5. In the classroom, be grounded in the now.**

It is true that in Japan in most instructional circumstances almost all students have very little or no use for English outside of the classroom. But, so what? Focus on the very existential situation in the classroom wherein attention to the tasks and the working relationship between teacher and students, and among students, are most important. As Azar (2007) remarks forcefully about communicative language practice in that classroom environment, it takes account of the reality that students are in a classroom trying to learn English and it “means that real people are communicating in real time about real things in a real place for a real purpose.”

## **6. Exercise, discipline, affection – in that order.**

I consider the application of this trilogy in the following way. Praise for students' work is earned. Teachers set instructional tasks and expect students to be on task and to achieve suitable outcomes. While students are making their best effort and upon successful completion of the task, appropriate encouragement, assistance, and praise are given by the teacher. Praise or reward for never having accomplished anything – the “everyone gets a trophy for simply showing up” mentality – is meaningless and students know it. In such a case, the teacher's message to students is actually that English study does not matter, which leads to the phenomenon of some students giving up on learning English, having made little or no effort. Reward for accomplishment drives effort and promotes success. This is a lesson for life.

## **7. Fear can become aggression.**

The classroom environment, especially for students with lower language proficiency and those who simply dislike English lessons, should never be one in which students feel embarrassed, humiliated, or demoralized. Fear of being in such a setting commonly leads some students to display passive aggressive behavior, such as refusing to respond to a teacher's simple question or not even facing a pairwork partner. Our lessons must be carefully structured and suitable for all students, and presented in a safe, fair, and controlled learning environment; and at the same time be interesting, meaningful, and challenging. In this way, students will be motivated and involved in the English lessons and find them enjoyable.

## **8. Have a vision of the behavior or situation desired, then you will have it.**

I always do this. As I am preparing a lesson at home, driving on my way to school, or just before going into the classroom, I visualize the flow of my lesson and the manner in which I expect the students' work to be carried out. Almost invariably that is what happens. But not always. Perhaps counterintuitively, rather than such visualization fixing a rigid mindset for the lesson, somehow it actually enables the teacher to be flexible in dealing with the class when things go otherwise, provided that it is not tunnel vision but rather one that takes in a wider panorama of outcomes.

## **9. Students do not listen to you if you do not mean it.**

In such a case, they sense that you know too that you do not mean it.

## **10. If students sense that you do not trust them, they will not trust you.**

Trust is the *sine qua non* of our relationship with students as their teacher. Their sense of our trust in them is based on their perception of our honesty, fairness, genuine caring, and respect for them. Their trust in us will be given in turn and earned further through our good teaching and professionalism.

## **Conclusion**

We teachers learn to advance the practice of our craft in many ways – from reflective inquiry, feedback from students, teacher development conferences and seminars, mutual classroom observations with other teachers, reading the literature in our field, and so on. The aim of this discussion has been to add to the list our exploration and consideration of what practitioners outside the field of education do successfully and how they do it, like my brother, the wood craftsman, and Cesar Millan, the trainer of humans who own dogs. Teacher development is, indeed, a lifelong process, as new ideas, experiences, and challenges continually serve to enlighten us and inspire our work, and to confirm and refine the definition of our work and our identity as the teachers we are.

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# Using Journal Writing to Help with Free Talking

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Silence. That is what I used to hear when I asked a question to the students in my first year high school English conversation class. Silence. That is what was heard when these students were “free talking” with each other in English. Silence...not always a good sound.

When I started teaching at Fukushima Kosen many years ago, I strove to find creative and interesting ways to get the students talking more in English to help them improve their oral English abilities. All were rather unsuccessful until approximately six years ago when I was introduced to a clever warm-up activity by a Japanese colleague. Initially it was not a perfect exercise, but with continual tweaking, I believe that I have designed a fun, yet educational, way to get my students interacting in English with more ease. This four-part activity, which is easily incorporated into any English conversation class regardless of the students’ proficiency levels, involves journal writing and free talking.

Prior to commencing this four-part activity, I inform the students that while their partner is speaking, they are to remain silent and instead actively listen to and remember what is being said in order to subsequently re-tell it to another student and then write it down. I also remind them of the importance of eye contact. For the first part of the activity, the students stand up, face their partners and begin talking freely, unconcerned with making grammar or vocabulary mistakes. I give them a topic to talk about, usually related to the theme of the class or the previous class, and then one student starts talking while their partner listens. After one minute they switch roles and repeat. After one cycle is done, the students switch partners and for the second part of the activity, the first student spends 30 seconds retelling what his/her first partner said and then the second student does the same. In part three, the students remain with their new partners and each one takes a turn talking for 1 minute repeating, and hopefully adding details and fluency to what they initially said. Finally, the students return to their seats and write down what they remember of what both partners said. Overall, this activity focuses on speaking, active listening, and writing.

At the beginning of each year, the students start with one minute talking and 30 seconds of repeating, and by the end of the year they work up to one minute 40 seconds of talking and 40 seconds of repeating. However, when I first started this activity I observed that many students struggled throughout the whole year to talk for the entire allotted time. I heard a lot of “umms” or silence. Even after I told the students not to worry about making mistakes and not using “proper” English, usually after 30-40 seconds the sound of the students’ voices became quieter and quieter. Before the activity started, I would give the students hints as to what they could talk about, and I would encourage them to talk about anything related to the topic. However, my scaffolding and support seemed to come to nothing, and I was at a loss as to what to do to encourage my students to just talk.

However, that all changed in February 2016 when I was introduced to a book that has helped immensely with this problem. *My High School Writing Journal* by Helene Jarmol Uchida has provided the learning support that my students needed.

This book is organized into six themes such as My Family, My School, Sport, Hobbies and Entertainment, and each theme has between 6 and 11 topics. For example, under the theme My School, topics include “My School”, “My Friends at

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School”, “My Favorite Subject”, “The Best School Trip”, all of which are relevant to the students’ lives and therefore easy for them to write and speak about. The topics are also diverse enough that they easily connect to what is being taught in class. For example, when I teach a unit on “The Family”, I can assign the corresponding units in the journal, such as “My Family, My Parents, Family Rules”, for the students to write about. In addition, there are enough journal entries to match the number of weeks that I spend on a particular subject.

In April 2016, I adjusted the warm-up activity to include journal writing. The students are given a journal topic to write about for homework with the instructions that they must fill the entire page and, if possible, to add extra pages to make it longer. In the following class, without referring to their journal (although before the class I often find the students rereading what they have written), the students talk about what they have written, using the aforementioned speaking, listening and writing warm-up pattern. What I have found is that the students are now very animated when they talk and that there is very little, if any, silence. Only if the student fails to come to class prepared does (s)he find talking for the allocated time difficult. Since the students have already written on the subject, they are then able to freely talk about it. Consequently, the students are becoming more successful in expressing themselves, demonstrating an increase in their oral fluency.

Furthermore, this activity has also benefited the students’ aural skills. Initially, there was a clear division between the students who wrote a lot about what their partner said to them and those who did not. It would appear that the students who wrote a lot started the year with a rather strong aptitude and higher English proficiency level than the students who wrote very little. However, as the year progressed, the gap between the amounts written by both groups became narrower and narrower. It would seem that the students became more interested in and adept at understanding what their partners said.

As the current and prevalent teaching philosophy with regards to journal writing is to use it to develop the students’ writing skills, recently I introduced dialogue journaling to this activity in the hopes of improving the students’ written abilities as well. So now the journal is used as a tool for not only improving the students oral communication skills (which is my primary goal), but also as a mode of written communication between the students and myself. As Kreeft Peyton (1993) stated, these types of journals “not only open new channels of communication, but they also provide natural contexts for language and literacy development.” Kreeft Peyton also argued that this dialogue journaling technique allows the teacher to learn more about his/her students while not hampering the free form of this writing technique. Any “markings” the teacher makes is in the form of comments about the content of what the students wrote rather than to correct any mistakes made. Tanner and Clement (1997) commented that “since the entries are not graded, the students can feel free to focus on the exploration and discovery process of writing and are less threatened if they make mistakes during their experimentation with the language” (p.113). It can be argued that since the teacher’s written responses to the students’ journal entries act as a model of correct language form and structure, the more exposure the students get of it, the better it will be for their writing skills.

Owing to the fact that although my 1st year class has 41 students in it, I only teach half of them on one day (Wednesdays) and the other half on a different day (Fridays). This allows me the time needed to respond to the students’ entries. If this were not the case and I taught all 41 students at one time, I would have to omit or adapt this part of the activity.

Since I have only just introduced dialogue journal writing to this activity, it is too early to determine what effect it has had on my students’ written abilities. However, as I have seen a great advancement in the students’ oral and aural skills with the introduction of the journal, I am also hoping to see an improvement in their written skills after a few months of dialogue writing. If successful, this activity would be a very quick and fun way to develop the “4 skills” of language acquisition - reading (what the teacher writes), writing (the journal entry, “conversation” with the teacher, what their partner spoke about), listening (to their partner) and speaking.

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# A Helping Hand in Using Technology in the Classroom

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In recent years technology usage in education has been accelerating rapidly, and the digital options available to teachers growing. This ongoing development of new Information and Computer Technology-related (ICT) educational tools can often offer teachers what seems to be a multitude of confusing choices. Teachers fortunate enough to be involved with Educational Technology (Edtech) development-related programs at their university run by experts in computer and digital technology are given the opportunity through these advisers to become reasonably comfortable and proficient with many of the digital tools being used in education today. Teachers in these programs develop the confidence, knowledge base, and willingness to try out and use new tools and technologies. However, a great number of teachers do not have these professional development opportunities, particularly those working part-time at a number of universities or those in universities where Edtech implementation is not seen as a priority. This article outlines some frameworks which offer guidelines for teachers to understand where they may stand in relation to the implementation (or not) of Edtech in their classrooms. The frameworks offer directions for teachers to follow in taking some graduated steps towards developing their understanding of the role of technology in teaching and in expanding, and integrating the use of technology in their classrooms.

I imagine that quite a few college teachers hear a conversation similar to the following, “Yeah, I’m thinking about trying out the App, Kaizena, for putting voice comments on my student work shared through Google Docs. You can get it at the Google Web store. I think you need to share the App download with your students too, though.” They may feel, firstly, a little intimidated by the tech talk, and secondly, that trying to keep up with the rapid changes and developments in technology may not be worth all the time and effort. The use of educational technology certainly has been accelerating greatly over the past five or six years. G-suite for Education, Microsoft Classroom, Edmodo, Moodle, and LearnBoost are just a few of the learning and workflow management systems that are currently on offer for teachers. The large, and ever-growing, number of these learning management systems, learning applications, digital teaching tools, and workflow management systems can be overwhelming for teachers, especially those who consider themselves not particularly skilled technology users.

In fact, a great many of the college teachers I have worked with, both Japanese and from other countries, tend to regard themselves as “not too good with computers”. In my own case, five years ago I was sitting in a course orientation, one objective of which was to learn how to teach Google Apps technology and tools to assist students in collaborating on classroom tasks and presentation projects. At that time, I would have considered myself a teacher for whom technology as an option in teaching was close to the bottom of my list. Now, five years later, I am a Google Certified Educator, and one of the people that other teachers come to asking for help with using the G-suite for Education Google Apps range, which our university has as part of being a Google Educational Domain.

I was very lucky. In my early steps towards a better understanding of the potential applications of technology in my teaching, I had mentors who had developed a program that introduced not only the student, but also the teacher to means of accessing, and successfully applying Google Apps (amongst other useful tech-related educational and research tools). I had colleagues who were very interested in increasing awareness of the power and utility of new digital tools, and passing on

their expertise in this area. I learnt from these people how digital tools can bring increased opportunities for students to collaborate with their peers and the wider academic community. I also learnt how students and teachers can spend much less time hunting down answers to questions, and more time on creative skill building tasks. Furthermore, they showed me how teachers can flip the classroom and assign learning to be done at home through videos or multimedia text-sets with links to websites, opening up more class time for discussion work and application tasks with small groups of students. Finally, I discovered ways in which teachers can dramatically cut down on their time spent on basic classroom management through adopting digital learner management systems or workflow management systems such as Google Classroom.

For teachers working part-time at a number of universities, or in universities where attempts to implement digital tools are not particularly encouraged or supported by the department, however, gaining this knowledge can be a much more difficult process. For those teachers, I would like to suggest some technology implementation frameworks that let you easily and clearly place yourself within a technology ladder of usage, and also let you see how you might plan to move up a rung.

## **Levels of Technological Implementation (LoTi)**

LoTi is a framework developed by Dr. Christopher Moersch (1995) for defining at what level technology has been integrated into the instructional setting. The LoTi framework also describes the educational setting in terms of being teacher centered and involving lower-order thinking skills, or student centered with a focus on higher-order thinking skills. In its Level of Teaching Innovation Framework, it starts with LoTi 0 (Non-use). In terms of use or encouragement of digital resources, LoTi 0 describes a setting which does not use such resources to any extent. It then moves through 7 more levels ending with LoTi level 6 (level 4 includes level 4a and 4b) describing an instructional setting using and with access to extensive and advanced digital and online tools and resources and an emphasis on higher-order thinking skills. In the words of Dr. Christopher Moersch (2001, p.23), LoTi “...was an effort to create a consistent set of measures that accurately reflected the progressive nature of teaching with technology.” Of special note is the LoTi Sniff Test which allows teachers to ask themselves questions and follow a flowchart to find out where they stand in the LoTi framework. The LoTi framework and Sniff test offer a useful and informative framework for instructors to easily gauge at what level they are integrating higher-order thinking skills with the available technology, and to envisage what their next step might be. LoTi offers a free self-paced introductory learning course to the LoTi methodology, and for those wishing to learn more, a comprehensive pay-per-unit training course is also available.

## **International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)**

The International Society for Technology in Education offers teachers an opportunity to look at their guide to implementation of digital technology and strategies in learning and teaching in its ISTE Standards for learning, teaching and leading with technology. Adopted by a wide range of institutes around the world, the standards are separated into guidelines for teachers, students, administrators, coaches, and computer science educators. The guidelines are currently being refreshed to see the teacher as learner, teacher as leader, as citizen, as collaborator, as designer, as facilitator, and as analyst.

## **TPACK and G-Suite for Education**

There are other useful avenues for teachers to explore when looking for direction, or seeking to develop their use of technology in the classroom.

a) Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK). TPACK examines and defines what kind of knowledge teachers require to be able to teach effectively using technology. It considers every educational context as dynamic and unique, thus promoting the importance of creativity and flexibility when considering using technology with groups of learners. The TPACK academy offers a wide range of resources to explore the ideas and concepts behind TPACK.

b) G-suite for Education. From Google, this set of applications, including Google Classroom, Google Forms and Quizzes, have a relatively soft learning curve and will assist teachers in streamlining their work flow and adding to their creative options for lesson making. G suite for Education offers a free training course to become a Google Certified Educator (Level 1 and 2) at the end of which a 3 hour test (costing 20 dollars) of practical skills and knowledge can be taken

for official certification. Google also offers a certified Google Trainer and Innovator course. For teachers interested in trying out Google Apps in their teaching, the Eric Curtis Blog Control Alt Achieve: Transforming Education with Technology offers a number of easy to follow and comprehensive tutorials on understanding and using Google Apps in the classroom on its Resources page.

## Missed the Boat?

A colleague of mine, who is soon to retire, has been one of the teachers at our university leading the implementation and spread of Google Apps in improving administrative workflow, collaborative opportunities for students, and quality of classes. He started to use Google Classroom last year, and in his winter teaching term last year ran a mostly paperless classroom. He has been active in India where he helped colleges there to become Google Educational Domains, which offer educational institutions some special benefits. He has held workshops demonstrating the educational applications of Google Apps such as Google Classroom and Google Drive. He is not that technically inclined, but decided that it was never too late to “give it a go”. He has been delighted with the time savings and the new creative possibilities opened up by adding these technological tools to his classroom, and inspired to share these with others.

Have a look through the frameworks to find out where you stand in your use of technology, and consider how you might innovate some of the things you have always done with your students and classes. Think about how technology might make a difference in streamlining your workflow, adding variety to lessons, and in improving collaboration between students. Now, you may have the desire to attend some Technology in Teaching (TnT) workshops to find out more about digital tools to empower your students and interest them more in learning, and help you save time in your administrative flow. Once you start, it can be contagious. The key is to carefully consider how technology can enhance and compliment your own personal style of teaching, and to discover your preference in balancing your use of digital tools and traditional methods.

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## Resources

Eric Curtis, Control Alt Achieve Blog

<http://www.controlaltachieve.com/p/resources.html>

TPACK

<http://www.tpack.org/>

International Society for Technology in Education

<https://www.iste.org/>

G-suite for Education

<https://www.google.com/intx/en/edu/>

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# TD-CUE SIG Forum at JALT

## November 2017

### “Globalizing Education: Shaping Perspectives”

*Mike Ellis, Co-Program Chair, TD-SIG*

For many of us, our work as teachers is confined to classrooms and offices. However, we have a responsibility to provide our students with skills that they can use in the greater world around them. In TD SIG’s seventh joint forum with CUE SIG at JALT 2017 in Tsukuba, we invited presenters to share stories of equipping students with these skills.

As in past forums, the eight presentations were conducted over two sessions, simultaneously to rotating small groups in informal PechaKucha style. A wide range of topics were shared, including reducing threats to “face” by Cian O’Mahony, and near-peer role models by Daniel Hooper. A final discussion was moderated by Dr. Vander Viana of the University of Stirling. Vander shared remarkable points from each presentation, and tied them all to each other and to the forum theme.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy the papers from this forum. The eighth forum’s theme will be “Moments of Creating Culture in the Classroom”. We are looking forward to seeing many of you there in Shizuoka this November.



# Raising Awareness of Global Issues in the EFL Classroom

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One of my convictions as an English language teacher and researcher is that global issues should be a component of most any TESOL program, especially in the university context which is where I teach. The theme of the 2017 TD-CUE SIG forum, “Globalizing education: Reflections on shaping broader perspectives in the classroom,” presented a perfect opportunity for me to share about one course that focuses on global issues.

We are bombarded daily with news about climate change, environmental destruction, armed conflict, terrorism, human rights violations, blatant economic inequity; the list goes on and on. These are issues that we share in common with all 7.6 billion of our fellow earthlings and these are issues that are not going to just go away or work themselves out; nor are they going to be solved by random voluntary individual actions. When push comes to shove, solving these problems is going to take collaboration on an unprecedented global scale. A positive example of this is the Paris Accord which is a small step in the direction that we need to be moving in as a species; but many more such steps will be required.

As language teachers, we have the opportunity to make a lasting influence on our learners, whose numbers when seen in terms of one’s whole teaching career, are considerable. I firmly believe that as educators we have a moral imperative to raise awareness and explore these issues with our learners. This imperative applies to us not only as educators, but also as language teachers, and in particular as English teachers. Collaboration means communication, and communication means language. More and more, English is becoming the language of international communication. English therefore occupies a special position when it comes to global issues. In my teaching I have been trying to find effective ways to incorporate global issues content and currently my flagship course for doing so is entitled ‘English Lecture.’ Incorporating global issues into the TESOL classroom involves certain challenges, so before describing the course, let me outline four major challenges.

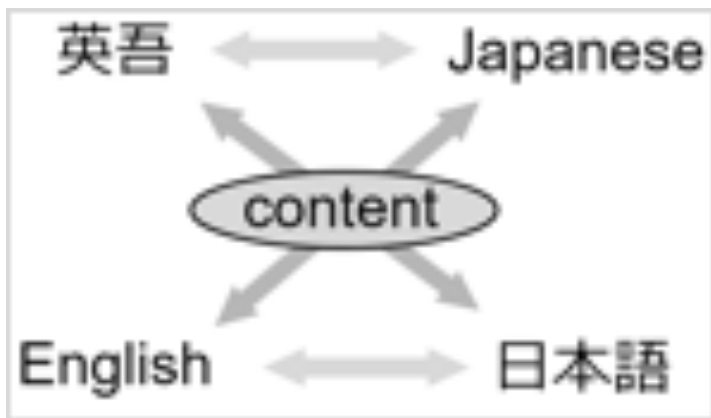


staple	(n.) Rice is the ~ food in Japan.
Christian	(a./n.) ~ people study the Bible and follow the teachings of Jesus.
Buddhist	(a./n.) Almost everyone in Cambodia is a ~.
Muslim	(a./n.) ~ people study the Koran and follow the teachings of Muhammad.

## Four Challenges

The first challenge is that there is a lot of useful and free content and resources available on the internet, such as articles, videos and interactive websites. However, these tend to be difficult and dense. If you simplify texts enough to satisfy the conditions for ‘comprehensible input’ or extensive reading and/or listening, you run the risk of excessively dumbing down the issues and losing the complexities inherent to them. If, on the other hand, you do not simplify texts, you then run the risk of overwhelming and demotivating your students.

The second challenge is that university students are often superficially interested in global issues and it can be difficult to really engage their interest to the point where you achieve the snowball effect; and they start to explore and do research of their own volition. You may find students expressing only shallow and simplistic opinions about the issues you are



studying, which may be due to a lack of interest, knowledge, or a combination of both.

The third challenge is teacher knowledge. You are probably as concerned as anyone else is about these issues, but that does not make you an expert. How can you fulfill the role of a teacher when dealing with content that you do not understand in much depth, as you do not want to mislead your students with incorrect information or skewed viewpoints.

The fourth challenge is the role of the learner's first language (L1). The more difficult the content becomes, the more likely that students are going to fall back on their L1 and feel unable to express themselves effectively in English. This would seem to defeat the whole purpose or premise of a language course.

## Meeting These Challenges

These are challenges that I have been grappling with since I began teaching my English Lecture course in April 2016. When I was first assigned to this course, I was simply told to lecture in English on the topic of my choice. I did not relish the thought of just lecturing at a group of language students for 90 minutes a week, so my original idea was to use TED talks as 'guest lecturers' and build lessons around those talks in a text-driven approach (Tomlinson, 2013). The text-driven approach involves building a course around texts selected for their power to engage the learner, and leading the learner through a series of activities designed to help them experience and respond to those texts holistically, affectively and multidimensionally. Bringing in outside experts partly solves the teacher-expertise problem. I teach the class in a computer lab, which helps with comprehension when we watch the talks in class, because students can choose their preferred mode: just listening to the English; turning on English or Japanese subtitles; or also reading the interactive transcript in either English or Japanese. Furthermore, they can replay sections that they want to watch again, thus progressing at their own pace. TED Talks, aside from the difficulty of the language, are great texts to work with. Good TED Talks are both affectively and cognitively engaging, and while they tend to have difficult language, this is counterbalanced by all the visual and linguistic support they offer.

When working with the talks, instead of trying to discourage or eradicate L1 use, I try to promote and support translanguaging (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012), reinforcing connections and interactions between the L1 and English, so that the former serves to scaffold development of the latter. I encourage my students to pre-watch the talks with the Japanese subtitles or read the Japanese transcript so that they can grasp the content first, before focusing on the English.

When it comes to producing output about this content in English, probably the biggest barrier, after understanding the content itself, is having the necessary vocabulary for talking about it in English. So again leveraging the technology, we make use of Quizlet to study and take weekly quizzes on a class list that grows every week based on the course material. I enlist my students to help me develop the list. When we are looking at a given talk, I have them use the vocabulary profiler on Lextutor to help find important vocabulary; they then submit their findings via a shared spreadsheet for easy collation. The format of the vocabulary list is another way that I try to promote translanguaging. Next I make double entries for each term, one with a Japanese gloss, and the other with a sentence in English that



relates the word to content and context.

## **Evolving to Meet Students' Needs**

The course began to evolve as soon as I had started teaching it. The TED Talks were good, but it quickly became clear to me that a better use of our time would be to focus on discussing and talking about the issues, so I began to flip the classroom. I started having students digest the materials, including TED Talks and other online materials, outside of class. Back in the classroom, I summarize and review the material while they listen and practice taking notes—the ‘lecture’ part of the lesson—and then we spend more time interacting with each other and discussing the issues. I have also started applying a more learner-driven approach by letting the students do the research and bring the issues to class for me. This not only promotes learner autonomy and co-construction of knowledge; but it also saves me time and effort.

The centerpiece of the current version of the course is a cycle of presentations. I prepare materials to introduce a topic; for example, we started our human rights unit by looking at some stories of human trafficking victims. After we have explored those materials together, each student, either individually or with one or two partners, chooses a specific topic related to the general theme of the unit. They research it and prepare a presentation with the goal of teaching their fellow classmates about the topic that they have researched. When we present, it is in round-robin style: each student presents to a partner; next they give each other feedback; and then they change partners and present again. We repeat this several times, exposing them to as much of each other’s work as possible in a way that promotes active listening and engagement (try to sleep through a presentation when you are the only listener!). This also gives them the chance to improve fluency and confidence in presenting their own work. The last time they record their talk to submit it together with their slides for evaluation. A strength of this approach is that they are not only teaching each other; they are also teaching me, which again addresses the teacher-expertise problem. I do not need to be an expert on the content as the point is to explore the issues together, raise awareness about them, and develop tools for discussing them in English.

Working with global issues has proved to be one of the most challenging and rewarding aspects of my language teaching practice, and it is a thread that I intend to pursue and develop as long as my career continues. If you are interested in being a proactive global citizen, I highly recommend experimenting with incorporating global issues into your own practice.

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# Subversion with a Smile

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My presentation at JALT 2017 told a story of my internal struggles as an *eikaiwa* ‘teacher’. The reason I have chosen to write ‘teacher’ in quotations is because I constantly felt like my identity as a professional was called into question both within the setting where I taught and in the larger professional community. In this brief summary, I will describe the main tensions that I encountered in *eikaiwa* teaching, and how I was able to counter some of what I perceived as the dominant beliefs within the industry while also avoiding reprimand or contract termination by the company I worked for.

Although I was perhaps partially aware of a disconnect between my principles and my practice within *eikaiwa* for a number of years before, I couldn’t really ascribe a name to this itch. It was really only when I became active in professional development and academic research that this hazy disconnect developed into an inconsolable rift that was intertwined with a sense of responsibility to my students and the way I viewed my own professional identity. The literature I was exposed to through my MA studies further added fuel to this fire and probably contributed to a growing isolation from my ‘native-speaker’ co-workers who I often saw as well-meaning but were essentially reinforcing many of the issues that I was struggling with at the time (Hooper & Snyder, 2017).

## Why just ‘go native’?

The construct of the ‘native-speaker’ teacher in *eikaiwa* was perhaps the most prominent issue that I struggled with, due in part to *eikaiwa* being a prominent site of native-speakerism (Cater, 2017) and also because of the awkward relationship I had with my own ‘native-speaker’ status. Feelings of discomfort over native-speakerism really took root during some of my earliest experiences of professional development in Japan. When attending teaching seminars and certificate courses, I would commonly find myself in the minority as one of two or three ‘native-speakers’ among twenty or thirty Filipino teachers. This imbalance was further brought to the forefront of my mind when, in my position as head teacher and recruiter in one *eikaiwa* school, I found that Filipino or Singaporean teachers were avoided by the school management in favor of untrained, inexperienced (and usually Caucasian) ‘native-speakers’. Furthermore, my ‘native-speaker’ co-workers at the time appeared to be making not even a fraction of the effort to develop their teaching skill that their ‘non-native’ counterparts were. But in *eikaiwa* maybe that was not the point.

In my attempts to make sense of the world that I was teaching in, I stumbled upon a number of academic works that further complicated the way I viewed my school’s native-speakerist tendencies. Rather than framing ‘native-speakers’ as simple authority figures or mere beneficiaries of privilege, some studies discussed a sense in which they were transformed into sellable products by *eikaiwa* schools (Kubota, 2011) and how, in some regards, their ‘native speaker’ status actually played into a deprofessionalized and marginalized positioning within ELT in Japan (Rivers & Houghton, 2013). These ideas resonated with my experiences in *eikaiwa* schools. I had become convinced that, even while my professional knowledge and skills developed, I was essentially perceived as inhabiting the same role that my co-workers had accepted – a marketable piece of foreign realia.

Partly as a result of this growing aversion to the ‘native speaker’-centric approach to classes in my school, I sought ways to draw more focus towards attainable role-models to which my students could truly relate. I felt the prevalent model in my school often disempowered learners by juxtaposing teachers’ ‘native’ proficiency with theirs, thus reinforcing an identity based upon deficiency as ‘non-native speakers’. I was fortunate enough to have been enrolled in a module in my

MA course taught by Tim Murphey. Tim had been explaining to us how he had been using ‘near-peer role models – proficient speakers similar in some way (age, culture, background, etc.) to the learners themselves – in order to motivate his students (Murphey, 1998). This immediately sounded like something that could challenge the *eikaiwa* status quo while also feasible to implement without raising too many eyebrows from the school’s management. I recorded six videos of students and Japanese staff members who shared their experiences as language learners and their advice to others looking to become proficient speakers. After showing the videos to several classes, the students gave me written feedback on what value, if any, they saw in the videos and if their beliefs about language learning had changed after hearing from the near-peer role models. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with some students appearing to question the validity of ‘native’ proficiency as a learning goal and others gaining practical tips for developing their English from relatable people who had ‘walked the walk’ (Hooper, 2016).

## **Business vs. education**

Arguably the most significant factor distinguishing *eikaiwa* schools from most formal educational contexts in Japan is the fact that they are fundamentally profit-focused enterprises. This is not to say, of course, that educational and business interests are insoluble, but I found that this tug-of-war between business and education created tensions that strongly influenced my teaching beliefs and practice. This divergence of interests has also been examined by Bossaer (2003) where certain business practices implemented by Japanese *eikaiwa* managers such as lax hiring policies and a perceived lack of concern with teacher training were perceived by foreign instructors to be at odds with their image of what an educational establishment should be. In my case too, hiring practices and professional development in *eikaiwa* became pivotal in the way that I conceived my teaching role and my responsibility to my students. In my former position as a recruiter within our school, I was all too aware of the race-centric, devil-may-care manner in which the management selected new teachers and knew the likelihood of motivated learners being short-changed if they left their development in the hands of the company. However, I was not really in a position where I could inform students of my concerns directly for fear of them letting it slip to my bosses. Therefore, I decided to try and frame this issue in a more positive fashion.

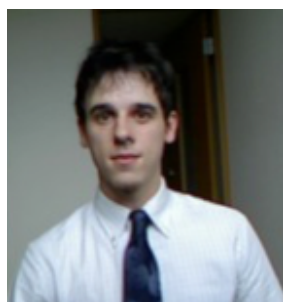
I began spending time in each class introducing resources (graded readers, YouTube channels, diary writing, flashcard software, etc.) that learners could utilize to develop their English outside of class without needing to rely on the school. Generally, rather than explicitly raising my concerns about quality control and ethical issues in *eikaiwa*, I stressed the importance of independent learning as a result of Japan being an EFL context with few opportunities for engagement with the target language. As most of the resources I introduced were either free or self-provided, the school had no grounds to object as I was simply giving their customers extra services and keeping them happy. What I was actually attempting to do was chip away at students’ reliance on an organization that I felt cared very little about the quality of the product they were providing. However, one thing I learned from this endeavor that I unfortunately felt limited its effectiveness was the importance of constant support for students’ independent learning. When I started introducing out-of-class resources, I hoped that it would simply cut the ‘umbilical cord’ that tied them to the school, allowing them to continue developing regardless of the teacher they received. Although I received a great deal of positive feedback about the out-of-class learning, another key theme that emerged was that most of the students stated that it was the feedback, encouragement and consultation they received that sustained their efforts. Rather than the resources themselves, the value of teacher-student relations and the enthusiasm that the teacher had appeared to be the defining factors in whether their independent engagement in language learning would be long-lasting or transient. This meant that my efforts to ‘save’ students from the ‘tourist teacher’ were perhaps in vain. On a more positive note, however, it reaffirmed the value of interpersonal relations in our classrooms and the teacher’s role as a potential catalyst for motivating learners.

I hope this short reflection has succeeded in raising two encouraging points. First, that even in a context marked by various institutional constraints that may challenge teachers’ self-image and students’ growth, if approached carefully, there are ways in which we can take small steps to challenge the norm while also ensuring that our employment is not put in jeopardy. Although there may be times where we question the value of what we do or even the validity of our own professional status, awareness of the tensions that exist in our workplace and a desire to ensure our students don’t suffer

because of them, make small victories possible translating into significant changes in their learning. The second reassuring point that came out of my experiences was finding that *eikaiwa* schools, despite being stigmatized and under-represented in the field (Lowe, 2015; MacNeill, 2004), are a viable setting for action research. These grass-roots projects can be conducted by teachers aiming to both develop professionally and enact positive change in their classrooms.

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# Global Understanding in the 21st Century: Making Our Students “Global Ready”

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As Japan moves forward into the 21st century, its workers will need to be “global ready.” What is “global ready?” A minimalist definition of being global ready might include the following:

- Having foreign language skills.
- Being culturally aware (understanding the role of culture and how it can affect interactions between individuals and groups).
- Being aware of the global situation.

In my presentation, I proposed how a course might be designed to meet the above goals.

## Sample Syllabus

### **Aims:**

By the end of the course students would:

- 1) Become more aware of the similarities and differences between other cultures and their own, and how these differences affect the thinking of one culture’s people and their relations with people of other cultures.
- 2) Examine international issues affecting the world today and how these problems might be solved.
- 3) Improve creative writing skills through preparation for presentations.
- 4) Improve presentation skills by giving presentations.
- 5) Improve English skills by utilizing English as a medium for discourse throughout the course.

Table 1 shows a possible syllabus to achieve the course aims. The syllabus could be modified, possibly omitting some topics due to time constraints.

*Table 1*

Week	Class Content (90-min Lessons)
1	Greetings; Explanation of syllabus Class-building/Get to know you activity Introduction to presentation
2	What is culture? The cultural iceberg; The culture tree
3	Personal space and body language
4	Culture shock; cultural misunderstandings
5	Appearance and stereotypes Nationality vs. ethnicity
6	What makes a person Japanese?
7	Population growth and decline
8	Migration and immigration
9	Mid-term exam
10	Climate Change
11	Climate Change continued / Formation of groups for final presentation
12	Challenges for Japan in the 21st Century
13	Challenges for the World in the 21st Century
14	Group presentations
15	Group presentations/review
16	Group presentations or Final exam

In Week 1, class building is emphasized, with an introduction to presentation skills. In Week 2, the concept of culture is introduced through culture models like the “cultural iceberg” and the “culture tree” with students learning about “surface culture” and “deep culture.”

Week 3 introduces personal space and body language with the aim of making students aware of different cultural perspectives regarding personal space and body language. Foreigners are not a homogeneous group, but are diverse. A member of one cultural group may make a member of another uncomfortable through violating their personal space or making a gesture that has a different meaning in the other’s cultural group. Both personal space and body language are used to introduce the concepts of culture shock and cultural misunderstandings which are the topics for Week 4.

Week 5 deals with stereotypes about ethnicity and nationality, and looks at multicultural societies. Week 6 asks the students the questions:

“What is it that makes a Japanese person Japanese?”

“Is the word コーラ (kohra) a Japanese word? What about エスカレーター (escalator)? Where do these words come from?”

“What about 南 (minami)? Is this Japanese? What country does this come from?”

“Is it possible for something to be both foreign and Japanese?”

“Could a foreigner become Japanese?”

Students are introduced to the concept that many “Japanese” things have their origins in other countries and that it is possible to be both foreign and Japanese at the same time.

Weeks 7 and 8 look at population decline in Japan and other industrialized countries, population growth in developing countries, the problems that arise from both of these trends and how they might be mitigated by migration and/or immigration.

After the mid-term in Week 9, Week 10 introduces climate change. Students work in groups and discuss what they know about climate change and its consequences and share their insights with the class. Groups are then asked about the sources of greenhouse gases and what percentage they think each source is responsible for. For homework groups research ideas for climate change mitigation for the following class.

In Week 11, groups present their ideas for climate change mitigation and are introduced to something they may not have thought about – the political dimensions of climate change. Groups are asked about the political and economic impacts of moving away from fossil fuels and the effects on stability in countries dependent on revenue from fossil fuels. Questions for the students are:

“Will countries collapse? What will be the effect of tens of millions of migrants attempting to gain access to developed countries? Is there something that can be done to mitigate the economic impact on such countries?”

“What will happen to oil companies? What will they do? What of their extreme political influence? Is there some way to mitigate things for them, so they will drop their opposition to reform?”

Weeks 12 and 13 act as a review to sum up the challenges faced by Japan and the world. Weeks 14 and 15 are dedicated to final group presentations. Week 16 can be used either for more presentations or a final exam.

## Conclusion

Given that curricula are crowded, a course such as this could be used to integrate content and language into learning. It would allow students to increase their cultural sensitivity and become more aware of current issues that affect them and the world they live in. It also would give them the opportunity to improve their writing and presentation skills, while practicing input and output in the target language.

# Creating Global Citizens at Kyoto Tachibana University

Meg Ellis, Keiko Iyanaga, Alan Mulvey, and Cristina Tat

*Kyoto Tachibana University*

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Sports (MEXT) requires universities to equip students with skills for global communication. While this is gradually and noticeably changing high school English education, we find that many students in their first year at university still view English largely as a textbook subject used for passing tests. As a result, their ability to confidently use English, particularly regarding their speaking and listening skills, can be low.

The Department of Global English Communication at Kyoto Tachibana University (KTU) has redesigned the English program to reflect the need for more interactive language learning, and the ability to communicate in a variety of real-life situations. The initial stages of this course are called English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The name reflects the ultimate goal of the course, however not every stage uses academic skills.

The EAP course consists of four main stages over the first two and a half years of study. There are three semesters of language classes, followed by a compulsory two semesters at an overseas university or college in the Study Abroad Program (SAP). EAP 1 is the first semester. This is designed to acclimate the students to regular study in English-only classes, and to lead from the book and test-based English of high school classes to actual production of English on a daily basis. As a result, students revise relatively simple grammar and vocabulary with the aim of confident and accurate productive use, both spoken and written. There is also a very strong focus in establishing effective self-study habits, and skills for group work within an intensive English environment.

The second semester is EAP 2, which continues the focus on study habits, group work, and production while introducing basic writing skills and using higher-level grammar in both speaking and writing. This semester forms a bridge between the very practical base of the first semester, and the higher level academic skills that will be required in the third semester.

EAP 3 in the third semester has two main points of focus. The first focus is on the targeted preparation for the classroom aspect of the SAP, with students learning formal, academic writing skills such as those required for the IELTS test and native-speaker content courses at universities overseas. Students also work on producing presentations at a level that is suitable for an academic or business setting. The second focus is on students learning practical, situational English for confidence in a variety of everyday English interactions during their time abroad. Both of these aspects involve the teachers constantly linking skills and content to topics and social behaviors that contribute to becoming effective in international communications.



After completing the first three semesters, students undertake the SAP component of their course during the fourth and fifth semesters. The SAP is 46 weeks of study at campuses in the UK, Canada, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, or Malaysia. Students choose from a range of courses depending on their language level at the time of departure from Japan. Course possibilities include EFL classes only, EFL plus an academic Bridging Course, or Bridging Course plus Content Courses. Ideally, the majority of students will manage at least two native-speaker level content courses during their SAP.

The course culture is an important component of the EAP course at KTU. In an effort to provide as immersive an environment as possible, students have a constant, daily input of English. All students have English classes every day, for a total of seven classes per week. Class sizes are small, with a maximum of 15 students to each class, and classes are conducted entirely in English with the exception of occasional explanations in Japanese for the lowest level class. In addition, there is a great deal of out-of-class study involved, including weekly Skype conversations with international teachers, online TOEIC practice, and Extensive Reading. In fact, all EAP students must read a minimum of 500,000 words of English books to pass the first two semesters of the course. These activities form part of the formal assessment, as does a class attendance requirement of 80%, and that students must pass each level of the course before progressing to the next.

Staff also have an important role to play within the course culture, resulting in some expectations that may be quite different from previous tertiary teaching experiences in Japan. For example, classes are taught in lock-step which use the same syllabus, course books, and grading rubrics across all classes. All assessment is common to all classes, with speaking and writing assessment tasks being moderated among all teachers. Students have at least three classes per week with the same teacher, who becomes the contact point for all students in that class and is able to provide specific personal support when needed. This situation within the EAP course means that close cooperation between EAP teachers, other department members, and university administration staff is essential.

There are seven levels of classes in each semester of EAP, chosen according to the students' overall English ability, with class levels being reevaluated at the end of each semester considering both grades and active class performance for each student. This allows teachers to direct lessons accurately to students' needs, and results in considerably more motivation, particularly for students who may begin in lower-level classes.

The year 2017 was the first year of implementation for the new EAP program. The course is very different from all previous course designs at this university, and more strongly resembles the kind of study environment that students may face in ESL departments when they study overseas. The performance of students has exceeded the expectations not only of teachers but also of the university and even the students themselves. To date, students demonstrate excellent levels of motivation and engagement, as well as quite dramatic improvements in both English use and TOEIC scores. There remain many details to consider and adjustments to be made, not least of all for the staff and students facing a much heavier workload than is usual for such courses. This year, 2018, will see the first generation of *sempai*, and promises to continue to strengthen the active English culture that is rapidly growing on campus.

As the goal of the EAP course is to increase a sense of global citizenship within the student body, the true results of course changes will best be seen when the first students return from their SAP in the summer of 2019. Meanwhile, continuing to refine methods and foster a more international culture at Kyoto Tachibana University is a challenging but enjoyable and rewarding endeavor.





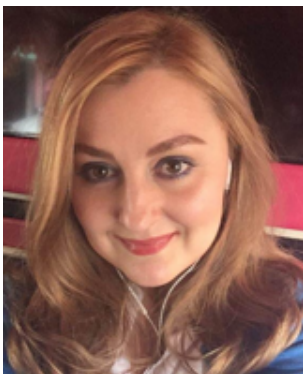
Bio: Meg Ellis (B.A., English Literature) has been teaching English as a Foreign Language since completing CELTA in 2005, beginning in Brisbane, Australia with full-time international students from every continent. She conducted courses in General English, IELTS preparation, and Cambridge exam courses, before moving to Japan in 2012. After leaving Ehime University in 2016, she began working with Keiko Iyanaga at Kyoto Tachibana University to completely redesign the English course for the new Faculty of English and Department of Global English Communication at KTU, which opened in 2017. Ms. Ellis is passionate about developing a classroom environment which encourages students to actively develop their language use, and acquire confidence in their ability to communicate with people anywhere in the world.



Bio: Keiko Iyanaga is an Associate Professor in the Global English Communication Department at Kyoto Tachibana University. A graduate from the Doctoral Program at Temple University, Dr. Iyanaga's research interests include extensive reading and vocabulary development.



Bio: Alan Mulvey graduated from Trinity College in Dublin with a B.Sc. in Architecture (1996) and a Masters in Philosophy (2001). His research interests include behavioral sociology, volunteerism, social entrepreneurship and civil society leadership. He is currently working as an Assistant Professor in the Global English Communication Department at Kyoto Tachibana University.



Bio: Cristina Tat is an Assistant Professor in the Global English Communication Department at Kyoto Tachibana University. She is a graduate of Vassar College (B.Sc.) and Baruch College Marxe School of Public and International Affairs (MPA). A former fellow of the National Academy of Sciences, her research interests include extensive reading and comparative education.



# An Analysis of Saving Face in the Classroom

Cian O'Mahony

*Asia University*

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Losing, saving and maintaining face in the ESL classroom can be a potential minefield for even the most experienced teachers. This presentation will examine the meaning of the word “face”, how face is threatened, and ways to reduce the threats and to maintain face.

Brown and Levinson (1987) define face as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (p. 61). Speakers of any language in any culture constantly try to defend and enhance this self-image during discourse, both their own and that of others (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson (1987) divide face into two types which they call positive face and negative face. Every person has a certain “positive consistent self-image or ‘personality’”, and it is the desire for approval of this self-image that Brown and Levinson term “positive face” (1987, p. 61). For example, if a speaker (S) expresses interest or concurrence with a hearer’s (H) ideas, he/she is building the positive face of H. Conversely, refutation of those ideas may cause the loss of positive face. Positive face therefore involves expressing “involvement, friendliness, and solidarity” (Hatch, 1992, p. 69). In addition to the desire for approval, people have a desire to speak and act as they please without intrusion from others. “To maintain autonomy, we recognize distances between people, being deferential and considerate” (Hatch, 1992, p. 69). This constitutes a person’s negative face. Acts such as orders or threats, which can impose on H’s freedom, can thus challenge H’s negative face, while Ss may use hedges or apologies to reduce the impact and maintain H’s face (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

So how is this bridged to the classroom? The classroom is an ‘arena of face’ where students have to deal with an abundance of emotions, pressures, stresses, etc., on any given day. In my experience, perhaps the biggest stress for my Japanese students is that their academic ability is on display. Almost daily, their eyes will follow me intently around the room until the moment arrives when I ask a question and all eyes simultaneously fall to the floor. Brown and Levinson (1987) attribute the causes of losing face for students is showing unexpectedly high level of incompetence, criticism from the teacher, public criticism from their peers (laughter, sniggering – humiliation), and an inability to meet perceived teacher’s standards.

From my experience in teaching in Asian countries, the effects a loss of face in the classroom can be catastrophic. Initially, students fail to play the social role (what is that social role? to be composed?) that is expected and become embarrassed, ashamed, anxious, etc. As a result of this, they lose confidence in participating with others and retreat into a shell, and their contribution levels dropping significantly. In extreme cases, I have witnessed attendance issues with some students giving up either the class or, possibly, the language entirely. Teachers need to be cautious and attentive when approaching the issue of face. Brown and Levinson (1987) give two strategies, among others, that I have had great success with in the classroom: 1) Positive politeness and 2) Negative politeness.

A negative politeness strategy involves trying to maintain H’s negative face, by showing “self-effacement, formality and restraint ... centering on his right to be unimpeded”; it naturally follows, then, that a positive politeness strategy aims to enhance H’s positive face by showing a certain amount of approval of H’s wants (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 70). Examples of negative politeness strategies include apologizing or the softening of direct expression (“I’m sorry to...., I’d

like you to tell us a little bit about....), showing deference to the students, and giving H the option of refusal (“Would it be possible for you to...?”).

Positive politeness strategies, on the other hand, may involve showing agreement (“Yes, I see what you mean.”), approval (“Wow, that’s a really nice phone.”) or any utterance that identifies S and H as belonging to the same social group (which may involve choosing certain topics of discussion or using the same slang words). Exaggerating (interest, approval, sympathy with H) and seeking agreement by using safe topics (“It takes me one hour to get to school. –Oh my god, one hour???”) are approaches my Japanese students respond extremely well to. Negative politeness strategies often involve phrases that are traditionally taught as “polite” forms, such as “Sorry.”, “Excuse me.”, “Could you...?”, “Would you mind...?”, “May I please...?” and so on. Many positive politeness strategies, however, may not immediately seem “polite” in the traditional sense, since showing solidarity with others can involve somewhat pushier and less deferential language (Bayraktaroglu, 2001).

Face is, however, a far from simple issue. Daly et al. (2004, p. 961) note that “extensive understanding of the cultural norms and values” is essential for acting in an appropriate way, especially regarding expressions of solidarity and positive politeness strategies. It would be too much to expect such “extensive understanding” to be achievable through regular second language classes alone. Negative politeness strategies, which respect H’s negative face, can be taught somewhat successfully, and can be found in most language learning textbooks, such as New Headway Elementary (2000). Although positive politeness strategies and bold on-record strategies may be difficult to teach and even potentially offensive. Nonetheless, some effort should be made to at least give students an awareness of the issues, since they make up an important part of human interaction.

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Bio: Cian O'Mahony (MEd) previously taught at Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo and now teaches in the Center for English Language Education at Asia University, Musashino, Tokyo. He is also the chairman of the Peer Observation Committee there and has strong research interests in teacher development and sociolinguistics.

# Column: Teacher Reflections

## What truly motivates a teacher to teach?

by Devon Arthurson

Have you been contemplating something about your teaching or classroom experiences? In this column, we invite anyone to share their reflections with us. Please contact the editor if you would like to contribute an installment or if you just have an idea you would like to run by her. We look forward to the next installment of "Teacher Reflections."

Nearly ten years ago, I became an English teacher for a purely selfish reason: to escape being a social worker. At the start of my last year studying for my bachelor's of social work in Winnipeg, Canada, I traveled to Japan for a two-week holiday. How could I not be charmed by Tokyo, a city technologically-advanced, pristine, incredibly safe and full of incredibly cute products? The Japanese people I met were so kind and obliging. Living in downtown Winnipeg, life often seemed bleak as I was surrounded by social and systemic problems stemming from oppression and manifesting themselves in poverty, addiction, and violence, particularly for those of low-incomes and belonging to indigenous groups. Also, I was always concerned about my personal safety as the city has a high-crime rate. The more involved in community development, homelessness alleviation and policy change I became, the more I realized that it was simply luck that prevented me from living in poverty and experiencing other social issues. Though I was incredibly grateful for my many blessings, the realization that it was only grace that gave me those blessings left me in continuous anxiety as my fate could abruptly change at any given moment.

Upon returning from Japan, I applied to the Japan Exchange Teaching Program and nine months later I was working in Osaka City at two high schools. Life was fun, safe, and seemingly free of the social problems I had so often seen in Canada. In regard to teaching, in the over five years I was in Osaka I worked with many incredible Japanese English teachers who mentored me in the Japanese educational system and EFL teaching. Their experience and insight helped me to understand how to teach Japanese students and, as I concurrently studied Japanese, I was able to gain some understanding into the challenges that the Japanese students may feel. In those five and a half years, I learned to be a teacher.

Nearly four years have passed since my time as an Assistant Language Teacher in Osaka. Now I am working as an English language instructor at a university in Tokyo. As a result of using a unified curriculum, participating in faculty development, having supportive program managers, and working with enthusiastic colleagues, I have more concretely developed my EFL teaching skills. I have been able to further explore learner autonomy and understand that in Osaka I was already experimenting with it in my lessons. Guided by the ethic of social work study, I always want to ameliorate power imbalances by sharing the power I have as a teacher with my students through giving them opportunities to make decisions related to classroom management.

Soon after arriving in Tokyo, I started my Master of Arts in Integrated Studies with a focus on community studies and global change. As I kept learning, I began to wonder if I should try to return to the field of social work by perhaps working at a non-profit organization. At the same time, I began volunteering at my church with outreach for homeless people and at an organization that



*The staff room*

spreads awareness about human trafficking. It became more apparent to me that Japan also has social problems but they just seem to be more hidden than in Canada. The more I learned from my studies, specifically about global education, the more I comprehended how powerful being a teacher could be. I began to realize that the way I act and think in the classroom was significant to my beliefs and values outside of the classroom. I understood that teaching and social work practice can be combined as one action if one has the awareness of the possibility.

In October 2017, my co-worker and dear friend asked me if I wanted to go to Uganda with his NPO to visit his Ugandan friends' community and possibly work with schools in February 2018. I had never considered visiting Africa but I knew immediately that my answer had to be "Yes" as I wanted to learn more about life there. After paying for my ticket, I did not give the trip a second thought for a while, as I found myself with so many things to do with my new-found freedom such as volunteering and writing after completing my master's. In January 2018 I got my visa, vaccination for yellow fever, malaria pills, and planned a lesson for elementary school students about Canadian animals. The next thing I knew I was in Uganda. Uganda is a beautiful country rightly named the Pearl of Africa with many incredibly kind people who welcomed us into their community and homes with gracious hospitality. However, economic problems and limited government funding into services and infrastructure leave many Ugandans facing numerous challenges such as high unemployment, poverty, limited access to education and health care.

Our Ugandan friend took us to his village elementary school and high school that he attended, as well as the elementary school he had worked at prior to moving to Kanagawa. The staff and students welcomed us warmly. The harshness of the lack that I observed in the schools was overwhelming (forgive me for sounding like a privileged Westerner full of prejudices). Each classroom was a brick room with only an open doorway and windows, cement floors, long wooden desks and benches, and a chalkboard. There was no electricity, no computers, no overhead projectors, no whiteboards, no ergonomically-designed desks, no TVs, no DVD players, and no air conditioners. Nevertheless, the students were full of energy and the teachers had passion despite being paid a meagre salary. (See the answer key to a test we found nearby the staffroom on the next page.)

It was at that moment, when I looked into that classroom, that I realized what motivates a teacher to teach: to sacrifice all you have for your students and to expect nothing in return. It seems that the rest, the teaching theories, philosophies, textbook materials, classroom technology, bonuses and so on, are all extras. If you want to give everything you have to your students, you will seek out whatever you can do to help them and to make their futures better despite the challenges of the current situation. Instead of teaching to escape practicing social work in Canada, I now want to fully commit to my role as an English instructor providing my students with a positive and empowering experience of learning English. As I continue as a teacher, I hope that I can be true to this motivation.



Bio: I have been living in Japan for nearly ten years after graduating with a Bachelor of Social Work completing practicums in community development and research to affect policy change in Winnipeg, Canada. Recently I received a Master of Arts in Integrated Studies with a focus on global change and community studies.

Currently I am teaching at Rikkyo University in Tokyo where I have the opportunity to explore and experiment with fostering learning autonomy, developing inter-cultural awareness and using shadowing in English discussion classes. In my free time I enjoy volunteering to help the homeless, studying Japanese and doing yoga, as well as going to art museum and DJ parties.

1. hoe/ forked hoe
2. bathing/ brushing teeth/ washing clothes/ cutting finger and toe nails/ combing hair/ ironing clothes
3. cows/ goats
4. For; income/ meat/ eggs/ manure/ feathers/ etc
5. stools/ chairs/ benches (mark any material made from wood)
6. wind
7. Farmers use wind for winnowing/ drying clothes and harvested crops/ drive wind mills/ help in sailing boats
8. Gumboots
9. They protect feet from thorns, hook worms mud, dust/ etc
10. Housefly/ cockroach/ mosquitoes/ black flies/ tsetse flies
11. Queen bee
12. Moisture/ water
13. Latrine/ toilets
14. Shedding leaves/ leaves grow into thorns/ some leaves grow a waxy layer.
15. Mortar and pestle is used for grinding and pounding food like groundnuts
16. Splash erosion/ rill erosion/ sheet erosion/ gully erosion. V wind erosion
17. Heat energy/ light energy
18. Paraffin/ kerosene
19. A house gives shelter to people/ protects people from harsh weather and wild animals
20. Leaves
21. Mass is measured in grammes/ kilogrammes while weight is measured in newtons.
22. Enzymes
23. Loam soil
24. Salk (injectable polio vaccine/ IPV)
25. Scalds/ fractures/ electric shocks/ etc
26. Solids have closely packed molecules while liquids have spaced molecules/ solids have a definite shape while liquids take the shape of containers they are put.
27. Spiracles help the insect to breathe.
28. Bacteria have one cell.
29. Proteins
30. A rake
31. It is used to collect rubbish/ level nursery beds.
32. Mushrooms/ toadstools/ puffballs/ moulds/ rhizopus
33. Sight/ hearing/ feeling/ taste/ touch
34. White yams store food in the swollen underground stems.
35. A rack is used to dry washed plates.
36. Mark any drawing of canine tooth.
37. Ant hills hide termites that destroy crops.
38. Feeding them on a balanced diet/ washing them clothes/ helping them take medicine/ bathing them/ etc
39. Penumbra/ umbra
40. Biological changes are irreversible/ form new substances/ involve growth, excretion, respiration, etc

*An answer key found nearby the staff room*

# Column: Conference Reflections

## CamTESOL

by Adrienne Verla Uchida

Have you attended any conferences that were especially inspiring? Would you like to recommend a conference to our members? In this column, contributors can share information about specific conferences, presentations they attended, or helpful logistical information for those of us who have not stepped out of our comfort zones yet. Please contact the editor if you would like to contribute an installment or if you just have an idea you would like to run by her. We look forward to the next installment of “Conference Reflections.”

The 14th annual CamTESOL Conference on English Language Teaching (CamTESOL), themed “English Language Teaching in the Digital Era,” was held on February 10-11, 2018, at the Institute of Technology (ITC) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Additionally, on Friday February 9th there was a pre-conference Regional Research Symposium held, as well as optional educational and cultural tours throughout the day. According to the CamTESOL website, over 1,700 people from 39 countries attended the weekend conference. As a prominent ELT event in Southeast Asia supported by IDP Education, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Australian and US embassies, and a variety of other institutions and individuals, the conference brought together a diverse body of people from various backgrounds.

This was the first time for me to attend an overseas conference but not my first trip to Cambodia. While I had no idea what to expect at CamTESOL, I had a positive, though somewhat dated, image of Cambodia in my head as I boarded the plane from Tokyo to Phnom Penh. It was my first visit to the country in over 10 years. The first thing that struck me upon arrival was not the balmy summer-like temperatures but rather the development of the capital, from the number of vehicles on the road to the prices of coffee at a local cafe.

I chose to not stay at a hotel listed on the CamTESOL website because I wanted to give my money to hotels and organizations that promote sustainability and community development in Cambodia. However, it is worth mentioning that the CamTESOL website provided a wide range of hotels to fit a variety of budgets, so rest assured

you can find a good hotel even if it is your first time visiting Cambodia.

My hotel was located about 30 minutes away from the venue by tuk-tuk, taxi, or Uber. A few things to keep in mind when navigating Phnom Penh: haggling for a tuk-tuk is fine and expected, taxis use metered fares (you can pay in American dollars), and Uber’s pricing can be confirmed using the app on any smartphone. Lucky for conference visitors, this year CamTESOL teamed up with Uber so that people who downloaded the Uber app for the first time received a coupon code for \$4 off of 4 rides, and previous



users received \$3 off of 3 rides. These discounts were available for use throughout the weekend providing reliable travel around the city, and I personally enjoyed trying out Uber service for the first time. At the same time, remember to plan your time with regard to traffic jams as the driving style in Cambodia is very different from Japan. I think I could count the number of traffic lights I saw with my fingers and the way traffic yielded at intersections was both fascinating and horrifying!



One final piece of advice that deserves a passing mention is that some participants complained of stomach troubles that required doctor's visits upon return to Japan, and while rumor has it one building on the venue had Western style toilets, the majority of the restrooms were Cambodian style and toilet paper was not provided. If you are coming from Japan, make sure to pack pocket tissues and be ready for an experience different from attending a conference in Japan!

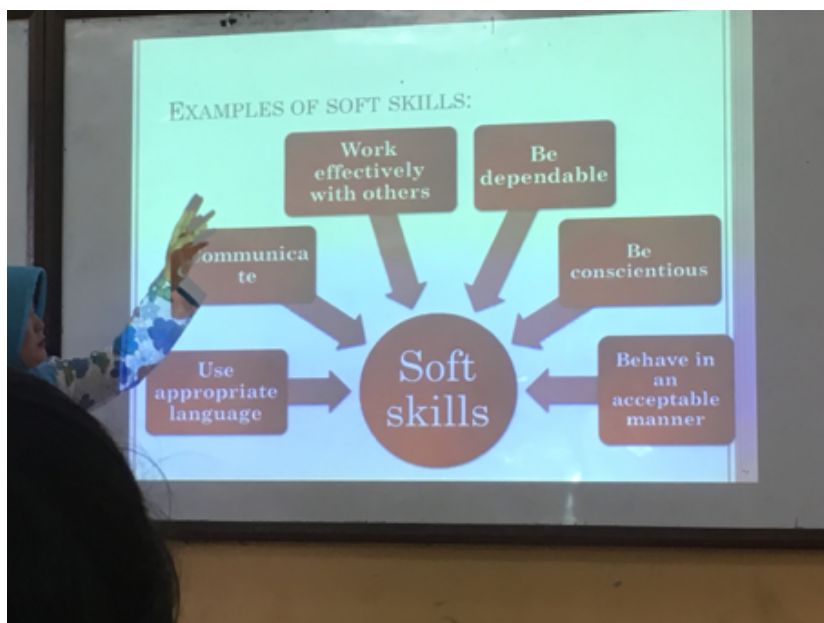
The conference started off on Saturday morning and the atmosphere was filled with nerves and excitement. While there were many people seated in the conference hall in pairs or groups, just as many participants were sitting alone. The demographics at CamTESOL were different from what I usually see at JALT-related functions in Japan, namely there were many women and even more

young people. The opening ceremony included the usual speeches by stakeholders but also the national anthem performed by a local brass band and a beautiful traditional welcome dance by Khmer dancers. John Macalister kicked off the conference with his morning plenary sharing research on what works and doesn't work when teaching reading in ELT settings and provided the audience with various ways they can incorporate extensive reading in their classrooms regardless of access to technology. People in the audience around me sat quietly and eagerly jotted down notes from his talk.



For me, the best part of CamTESOL was the variety of concurrent presentations and workshops being presented by researchers and educators from around the world. There were 29 different streams including topics such as motivation, teaching specific skills, professional development, research methods, curriculum and materials development, and many more. I made a conscious effort to avoid presenters from Japan because I hoped to learn about what educators in other parts of the world were doing in their classrooms. In some cases the presentation rooms were so full that there was standing room only and participant overflow spilled into the hallways. Despite the heat and lack of air-conditioning, audience members were engaged and hanging on the words of each presenter. Participants asked interesting and thought-provoking questions at the end of each session I attended, which created an atmosphere unlike what I had experienced at a Japanese conference. One reason for this could be that for many participants this is their only chance of professional development and they don't know if or when another opportunity will arise, so they take advantage of every moment. Understanding that clearly, as a person taking up

a desk in the audience, I too didn't want to let the opportunity to attend CamTESOL pass me by: I took notes, participated actively in discussions, asked questions, and overall did my best to be part of that engaged public.



The most memorable talks that I attended were by women from a variety of Asian countries, including Cambodia, Vietnam, and China. Examples of some of the presentations I saw include sessions on the role of growth mindset in ELT, various ways to incorporate rubrics into ELT writing classes for peer evaluation, cultivating soft skills through project collaboration, and a way to implement Facebook for classroom use. However, two presenters stood out above the rest to me. Sarina Monh, a lecturer from Cambodia, shared a great reflective activity using the “Tree of Life” as a visual for reflecting on one’s practice as an educator. It allows the reader to examine various areas, including the reasons of becoming an educator, their teaching beliefs and practices, and aspects in their teaching they want to improve. She also had each person fill out a reflective questionnaire adapted from Taggart and Wilson (1998) cited in Farrell (2015). I was shocked to find that I was on the borderline of two classifications and it has made me want to become even more aware of my teaching practices and beliefs.

Mei Lin was another speaker who I found very inspirational and motivating, so much that I attended both her presentation and workshop. Her presentation discussed the integration of 21st century key skills into EFL classrooms and then she elaborated more on how to create a classroom environment promoting those skills in the workshop. Mei Lin introduced three classroom tasks that could be incorporated into the majority of classrooms at a

variety of levels regardless of age or ability to facilitate deeper cognitive thinking skills and active classroom participation. I was particularly interested in the activity she called a “living graph.” In groups students are given a scenario, like “Sally’s first date with Marvin,” and students need to make a graph of the events that occurred that day in the chronological order and set them against different emotions that Sally felt that day. Once students have completed the graph, they present the results to other groups in the class. The results and ideas can be vastly different, so it is a “living graph!”

CamTESOL also created a positive atmosphere for networking throughout the weekend. Twice on Saturday and once on Sunday, 30-minute break times were scheduled and drinks, small sandwiches, and baked goods were laid out for the participants to enjoy while networking with other attendees or visiting the various exhibition booths around the venue. Another event that was offered for an additional fee was the Cultural Dinner on Saturday night. It included an amazing buffet with both Khmer food as well as Western dishes, and traditional Khmer theater performances. It was a nice way to chat





with friends, take photographs at the CamTESOL photo booth, and eat and drink to your heart's content.

Overall, as my first international conference, CamTESOL proved to be a great choice! I met and networked with people from all around Asia and had the opportunity to learn about teaching contexts outside of Japan. If I have an opportunity to go again, I would love to attend as a presenter and hopefully inspire and share my ideas with other educators to give back for all the things I was able to take away from the conference this year. In fact, the preliminary details for CamTESOL 2019 have already been announced. The conference will take place on February 16-17, 2019 in Phnom Penh under the theme "Teachers as Learners." Whether you have never attended an international conference and would like to or are a world-traveled conference veteran, I highly recommend attending CamTESOL at least once. Hopefully, like me, you will become enchanted with Cambodia and her people and want to attend yearly. For more information please check out the official CamTESOL website at <https://camtesol.org/>.



Bio: Adrienne Verla Uchida is an associate professor at Nihon University based in Mishima, Japan. She has 14 years of teaching experience at the secondary and tertiary level, providing her with many opportunities to work with curriculum design and student motivation. She received her MA in TESOL from Teachers College Columbia University. Her interests

include academic writing, project-based learning, student motivation, reflective practice, and the role of English in Japanese music. Correspondence should be sent to [verla.uchida@nihon-u.ac.jp](mailto:verla.uchida@nihon-u.ac.jp).

# Teacher Development

## JALT TD SIG

The JALT Teacher Development SIG is a network of foreign language instructors dedicated to becoming better teachers and helping others teach more effectively. Active since 1993, our members teach at primary and secondary schools, universities, language schools, and in various other contexts. New members are always welcome to join our conversation and share their experiences with other teachers. (Please note that the name was officially changed from Teacher Education & Development SIG in early 2016.)

## Become a TD SIG Member

### **Joining:**

TD is a special interest group (SIG) of the Japan Association of Language Teaching (JALT). To join TD, you must be a JALT member. Information on joining JALT is available on the JALT web site ([jalt.org](http://jalt.org)).

If you are already a JALT member, you can also add a TD SIG membership to your existing JALT membership. Please see the JALT membership page for information on joining in the TD conversation.

### **Benefits:**

Joining TD connects you to a network of teacher colleagues who are interested in growing professionally. Members receive the most current issue of TD's Explorations in Teacher Development (ETD) Journal by email (and in print if requested), and can participate in our mailing list.

TD also sponsors and co-sponsors events throughout the year to help teachers gain experience in mentoring and presenting.

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