

# Explorations in Teacher Education

## 教師教育の探究他

the newsletter of the JALT Teacher Education SIG

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### AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR...

TE SIG Coordinator

Happy Autumn!

When I sat down to write this message I realized how soon the JALT national conference in Shizuoka is coming up. The conference is an exciting time for the Teacher Education SIG - to meet and network, exchange ideas and to just have fun. This year at JALT, the SIG will sponsor two presentations. Our own charismatic Tim Knowles will lead a discussion on the emancipatory potential of action research and ways to return it to the teacher. Having attended Tim's presentations in the past I can imagine a most passionate flow of ideas throughout the room.

We will also welcome from the US, Jack Millet (School for Int'l Training) who will lead a workshop on teaching teachers to reflect on their teaching. I was lucky enough to take an online course from Jack that had a partial focus of teacher reflection and I can recommend his presentation with great enthusiasm. Check out the abstract inside this issue (CONFERENCE HOTSPOTS, p. 2).

The annual SIG meeting (AGM) will be held Saturday at lunchtime - just after Jack's presentation. You're welcome to bring your lunch and can contribute often or less actively between bites. At the meeting we'll

look at possible events for next year and take suggestions from the group. We'll also elect new officers. I will be leaving Japan after this semester, so I won't be continuing as coordinator.

What would it be like to be coordinator of the SIG? My experience has been entirely positive. I have found all of the officers, guests, and members inspiring. The work can be comfortably shared. It could be just the thing to re-energize you. Tim Knowles will also be stepping down after a long stint at Membership. His contributions are greatly appreciated I know as he is the one who mails out this newsletter. There are many places for new people to get involved in the SIG in a variety of capacities. Think about it.

I'm looking forward to meeting many of you at the conference. Please stop by the table (or volunteer to hang out there for an hour or so - see below) and definitely come to the TE SIG dinner (most likely) Saturday night. It's always one of the highlights of the conference for me!  
See you!

Lois Scott-Conley  
<lois.scott-conley@sit.edu>

### **Outbound newsletter co-editor**

It has been challenging and rewarding to have served as one of numerous TE SIG newsletter co-editors over the past three years, especially so to have cooperated with coordinators the likes of Neil Cowie & Lois Scott-Conley. More so than last year, however, I feel that it is time to step aside. I do so with a satisfying sense of accomplishment, tempered by a nagging notion of much that could have been done.

In the wings are a number of enthusiastic colleagues capable, ready, & willing (I hope) to assume greater responsibilities for putting together quality newsletters than they have taken on already as contributors & readers, co-editor & translation coordinator. They include (but are by no means limited to) Katie Datko, Catherine Smith, & Shinichiro Yokomizo; whose names I have taken the liberty of listing as interim contacts for contributors to future issues (Call for papers, p. 19).

Thanks go to all of the contributors who have made reading newsletter submittals such an interesting job. I would also like to personally thank the quintessential reader and all-round supportive colleague, Dan Kirk, to whom I have turned on many an occasion for the ever present but hardly ever seen 'second opinion' on papers submitted. Keep those submittals coming.

Cheers,  
Paul A. Beaufait  
<pab@pu-kumamoto.ac.jp>

## **CONFERENCE HOTSPOTS**

### **TE SIG-sponsored presentation: Teaching teachers to reflect on their teaching**

*Jack Millet, School for Int'l Training*  
Saturday, 10:25-12:00, Rm. 903

Recently, much has been written about what it means to teach reflectively and how one can do it (Hatton and Smith, 1995, Richards and Lockhart, 1996, Schon, 1983, 1987, Zeichner and Liston, 1996). What has yet to be presented, however, is a description of how teachers actually learn to reflect. Likewise, little

discussion has been given to how teacher educators can effectively teach teachers to reflect. The goal of this workshop is that participants understand reflection as both a process and a skill and that they gain insight into ways to teach teachers to reflect.

In order to understand the process of learning to reflect, participants will engage with a framework of teacher reflectivity (Stanley, Rodgers, Millett 1999) which outlines common phases of development that teachers face as they become or develop their skills as reflective practitioners. Data gathered from a ten-month on-line experimental reflective teaching project with experienced teachers who are graduate students from the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program at the School for International Training (SIT) will be used to help participants identify indicators of each phase of the framework.

In order to gain insight and practice in teaching teachers to reflect, participants will work with samples of the teachers reflective entries from the reflective teaching project. Finally, an overview will be presented and discussed of the merits of four ways of working with teacher reflection: individual teacher journals, videotaping and analysis of a lesson, teacher-supervisor dialogue, and peer reflection in community.

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Note: Jack Millett's presentation was given at TESOL 1999 to a standing room only crowd. People 14 deep in the doorway stayed throughout the whole thing (Lois).

### **Guided discussion: Action research for empowerment**

Tim Knowles from Sophia will also represent the TE SIG as he leads a discussion on Action Research for

Empowerment. The discussion will be held on Friday, 16:15-17:00.

### **Don't miss the TE SIG's AGM!**

The Teacher Education Special Interest Group's annual general meeting is Saturday 12:15-1:00, in Room 903, just after Jack Millett's presentation. We will be asking new and veteran members' for ideas, and urge everyone to get involved in the SIG for the next year. Come to listen, participate and learn more about the SIG. You can even bring a friend!

### **Be a part of TE SIG hospitality**

The Teacher Education SIG will have a table at the JALT 2000 conference in Shizuoka. We'll be there to explain the SIG, share ideas, and answer questions. All members are encouraged to stop by and leave their e-mail and to 'sit' at the table for an hour or so to talk to interested people. There will also be a sign up sheet there for the annual SIG dinner.

## **ESSAY**

### **Keeping your teaching genki®**

*Katie Datko*

Fall always conjures up images of going 'back to school' for me. Despite the fact that I've lived in Japan the past few years, fall still feels like I'm teaching everything from scratch. Some of us might have continuing classes in the fall, while other of us start with new classes and new programs. But, as with the start of any new semester, we are greeted with new challenges and walk into the classrooms with certain expectations of ourselves.

As so often happens in life, things (especially in the beginning of the term) don't always work out the way we want them to. The following essay suggests a way to view those 'not so perfect' teaching moments.

### **Think of it as just another 'bad hair day'**

I have curly hair. In Japan, it's difficult to get my hair to do what I want it to given the fact that it's really humid a good 8 months out of the year. Sometimes I am really going for a certain 'look,' but when I step out of the house into the sauna-like weather, my hair kinks up and I look like I've stuck my hand in an electric socket. There is just nothing I can do. Luckily, I've grown my hair out, so on those days when it doesn't look just right, I pull it back. When it comes down to it, no one really notices how my hair looks except me. I'm the only one who really sees the individual hairs that stick out.

Recently I've come to think of my teaching in the same way I think about my hair. Some days there are environmental factors I can't control (like the humid Japanese weather) which throw a wrench into my plans in the classroom. On other days, classes just seem to go without a hitch (like those days when my hair does what I want it to do). Still, there are other days when I think one of my classes was terrible - maybe there were one or two "less-than-perfect" teaching moments. I pick apart the individual things that I didn't do well and worry excessively about them. On such days I have a tendency to analyze the moments where I haven't done well and how I can do better the next time. This is just like my spending time in front of the mirror primping and styling those few stray hairs.

What I've come to see, though, is that it's not every single nanosecond (or in the case of the metaphor - strand of hair) that counts in the classroom - we can't always have everything go the way we want it to. Rather what really counts is how the lesson went overall. Did I achieve some of my objectives? Was my lesson "presentable?" If things didn't go right, was I able to think of an alternate way to meet most of my objectives? If I can answer 'YES' to these questions, then I can think of my class as having been a success.

In all likelihood, only I have seen the minute things that haven't gone as planned. If I look at what I perceive as a bad class, I'll probably find that I am quite satisfied with the way things went as a whole - that my class was presentable. If I am a seasoned teacher, then thinking of the small things that go wrong too often rather than the larger things that go right can lead me to spend too much time looking in the reflective mirror isolating the negative rather than reflecting on the positive. Reflection on what didn't go well in class can be a great tool - when done in healthy doses and not too analytically nor critically. I liken it to using too much conditioner. Eventually, if I over-condition my hair, it can become stripped of its natural oils. I may need to condition my hair once in a while, but, as with most everything in life, in moderation.

So, what it all boils down to is that we all have bad hair days, or rather not-so-good hair days. But if we can accept that overall we look good and presentable and that everyone else has not-so-good hair days too, then what does it matter if our hair isn't always "perfect?"

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## REPORTS

### The 'Action Research Weekend' (2000)

Tim Ashwell & Lois Scott-Conley

The Teacher Education SIG held an 'Action Research Weekend' lead by Dr. Andy Curtis on April 22 - 23, 2000. The workshop was held in the lounge of a 18th century style building at British Hills, Fukushima – high in the misty hills north of Tokyo. This report consists mainly of reflections from some of the participants and from Andy himself. These are preceded by a summary of what we covered and are followed by a list of references given out at the weekend. We hope this will be of some use to those of you who were unable to attend.

What cannot be shared in the report was the feeling of camaraderie and enthusiasm that developed among the participants in the workshop. Andy led the two day-long sessions with a dynamic energy that was inspiring, and lunchtime group swims aided some of the participants in trying to keep up with his energy. British Hills is a village of 17th and 18th century-style English buildings complete with Manor house and hooded capes in the closets of all of our rooms. Outside the workshop we had some very good fun traipsing about in capes and hanging about in the pub.

Below is a brief summary of some of the material and discussions involved at different stages of the workshop, a number of individual reflections, and references distributed during and after the workshop.

**STEP 1:** We were asked to first individually and then in small groups complete the sentence *Research is....*

Our collective definition included the following. Research is systematic and documented inquiry. It is recorded, disciplined, exploratory. It involves a cycle of asking questions, looking for answers and asking more questions. The process of researching involves observing, hypothesizing, collecting data and then analyzing and interpreting it.

We also surmised that research is carried out in order to expand views and practices and to better meet learner needs by triggering a change for the positive. Andy asked us to consider what is *worth knowing* vs. what is knowable. He cited examples of research questions able to generate volumes of data that would not necessarily inform a useful change in the teaching or learning involved.

**STEP 2:** We looked at definitions of "research" from Nunan, 1992.

Key among Nunan's description is that research is about inquiry and has both process and product. Much of what we had come up with was found in Nunan's definition though he placed a stronger emphasis on problem solving and the proving or disproving of theory or ideas. During this discussion Andy gave examples of how "no finding" is still a finding.

**STEP 3:** We looked at the quantitative/qualitative dichotomies from Allwright and Bailey, 1991 and Nunan, 1992.

Qualitative research assumes a more dynamic reality which is observed in a more naturalistic less controlled way. It is more subjective, exploratory, descriptive. Quantitative research assumes a more stable reality

which is measured in an obtrusive and controlled way. It is more objective, verification-oriented, and inferential.

**STEP 4:** We thought about different types of research paradigm using diagrams from van Lier, 1988 and Nunan, 1992.

Using van Lier's diagram we looked at types of research in terms of Structure, Control, Selectivity, and Intervention. More structured types of research are those he termed *Measuring* and *Controlling*. *Measuring* (surveys, coding, and systematic observation) was considered more selective and had less intervening, *Controlling* (experiments, quasi-experiments such as pre and post testing) were more selective and also had more intervention. *Watching* and *Asking/Doing* oriented research fell into the less structured quadrants. *Watching* (ethnographic observation, case studies, and diaries) was less selective and had less intervention. *Asking/Doing* (interviewing and elicitation) was also less selective and had fell on the side of more intervention.

**STEP 5:** We discussed research design and methodology using Bogdan and Biklen, 1982 and Nunan, 1992.

**STEP 6:** We discussed the problems of planning and implementing a research project using Nunan, 1992 and problems and solutions using Bailey, Nunan, Curtis, 2000.

A few problems that stood out were: narrowing the area; refining the question so it is doable; being too ambitious; avoiding vagueness; identifying the steps/how to do; lack of literature in the chosen area; lack of time, lack of expertise in questionnaire

design, matching the method to the question, collecting data before knowing enough about research methodology; lack of skill or confidence with statistics; collecting too much data, drawing conclusions from data during the analysis phase; and overgeneralizing when drawing conclusions.

Solutions included start small, consider less conceptually challenging or less time-consuming alternatives, solicit help from more experienced people, collaborate with colleagues, learn a new skill (i.e. internet search, writing questionnaires), be aware of the common problems in order to self-check, be realistic in matching research goals and schedules, and schedule time for research.

**STEP 7:** We tried to define "action research". We looked at some definitions, e.g. Cohen and Manion, 1980 and Brown and McIntyre, 1981.

Cohen and Manion discuss AR using these key phrases: on-the-spot procedure, concrete problem, immediate situation, step-by-step process, using a variety of mechanisms, translated into modifications... to bring about a lasting benefit. Brown and McIntyre also emphasize the on-going nature of the AR method.

**STEP 8:** We discussed "reliability" and "validity."

**STEP 9:** We looked at the action research cycle.

AR can be viewed as following a cycle of Plan, Act, Observe, Reflect, repeat with a new goal. Many of the participants in the group were more comfortable viewing AR in terms of a repeating cycle than in steps that

progress in a "mythologically" linear way. Nunan's 7 steps to AR are stated below.

1. Initiation: identify a problem or a puzzle
2. Preliminary investigation: collect baseline data
3. Hypothesis
4. Intervention: A strategy / action
5. Evaluation
6. Dissemination: share your findings
7. Follow-up: investigate alternative interventions or hypotheses

**STEP 10:** We looked at some action research case studies and evaluated them.

From our evaluations we came up with a list of things to remember or consider in our own AR. Some are:

- You don't have to have a problem - solution orientation;
- Start with your own beliefs and be focused;
- One difference between just getting feedback and carrying out AR is that AR requires a degree of rigour;
- Collaborate! At minimum be up front and share with your subjects. When possible, involve colleagues;
- Messiness is OK;
- Small is OK!



### Individual reflections on the Action Research Weekend

*I came away from the weekend clearer in my mind about the differences between action research (participative, collaborative, focused on the local, concerned with change) and outsider research, which may involve many of those features but often doesn't. I also felt more strongly that measurements of reliability and validity are inappropriate for qualitative approaches. AR is more likely to be using qualitative methods, therefore 'measures' of quality such as trustworthiness, clarity, believability etc. are more appropriate. The opportunity to think through and talk at length about the purpose of AR - not just with Dr Curtis, although that was very useful, but with many other participants was important for me.*  
(Neil Cowie)

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I had not been clear about the concept of AR and the difference from other methods of research. Ambiguity is still in my mind but I am aware that AR is a kind of self circulating research for the students we face. Sharing ideas with other participants was the most important part of the weekend for me. That's what AR is for. I assume AR is not only for myself, not for generalization, but for understanding each other among teachers and students objectively and subjectively. (Hisashi Azuma)

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At the weekend I learned about many different variables that can be happening within a classroom at the same time. I found Dunkin and Biddle's division of these into presage variables, context variables, process variables and product variables, very useful. I also saw patterns of participation being researched in classrooms. Because I find that there is usually so much happening in a classroom, it is hard to consider all of the aspects. But two visuals on turn-taking and observable participation made it clear to me how the pieces in a classroom could be 'dissected.'

I learned new terms that form the 'metalanguage' of research, learned about various types of research (qualitative, quantitative, action research) and now have many more resources and options than I had prior to going to this retreat. I don't think my attitude has changed regarding research, but I found it particularly informative / empowering / challenging / exciting to realize the role that practicing classroom teachers can have in implementing action research in their current classrooms while they are teaching. I gained more of an awareness of how large the field

of classroom research is, and that research can be conducted everyday on very practical, 'ordinary' classroom things / practices. (Kerry Lida)

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I came away with a commitment to try to "see" more in my classroom and to be more rigorous about recording what is happening. Andy C. was a wonderful model of that and he opened up images of how I could do that more in my work: keeping a notebook with my materials in class, recording short comments into a tape recorder during class or throughout the day, making notations on my lesson plan.

Andy introduced the questions "What's knowable?" and "What's WORTH knowing?" as useful considerations in starting AR. That is a useful distinction. He gave examples of being able to collect a lot data, but pointed out that I need to really be sure that it is WORTH knowing before I set out doing the research. It was really drilled in that AR is for CHANGE. It's not to find out something interesting and then put it on the shelf. It's to impact our lives and our students' lives now.

It was useful to hear someone who obviously spends so much of his time and energy doing research to share with us that we should be honest about how much time we really have to devote to the research. It was liberating too, to realize that I can find worthwhile research to do within a smaller time frame. I just have to ask a question that fits my schedule.

It was very useful to hear from others who are doing or have done AR about "the myth of linearity." Many books present AR in tidy stages where everything works out so beautifully. Those are useful examples



to see the steps to take, but I learned more about how steps overlap and recycle and so I feel more comfortable with my own research.

The Framework for success from Andy's chapter in his upcoming book had good advice:

- Start small.
- Collaborate with Colleagues.
- Get someone in from the outside to legitimize the experience if that would help.
- Turn your research into a narrative account.
- Consider less conceptually challenging or less time-consuming alternatives if helpful.

I came away with a list of ways of gathering data: interviews, questionnaires, school records, T journal entries, Students journals, think-aloud protocols, stimulated recall (asking Students or teachers what was happening as they look back at video or listen to audio), audio/video recordings of class, test scores or performance, student work, observer notes, photographs.

I came away feeling the strength in collaboration - from Andy sharing his experiences, from hearing about the various participants' experiences (one informal AR group meeting once a month to share progress on writing AR, and another organized network at the prefectural level among Japanese teachers to conduct AR and present case studies in Kochi. (Lois Scott-Conley)

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I think the best thing at the retreat was getting to know other teachers and finding out what kind of research they are interested in and doing. I had promised myself that I would keep in

touch with some of teachers but am sorry to say that I haven't and I'm wondering how everyone is and how they are doing in their teaching and research. I'm especially interested in how Mariko Nomura is and how her plans are coming along for the 2001 high school teachers' conference AR workshop in Kochi.

Also meeting Andy and seeing how he planned and conducted the workshop was interesting for me. (Ethel Ogane)

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I was reminded of the following points (among others):

- a. there still appears to be some tension between people who consider themselves to be primarily classroom teachers and those who consider themselves to be primarily researchers, so there are still a lot of bridges to be built
- b. but when these two groups work together, great advances in our knowledge, skills and understanding can be achieved
- c. action research is just one approach, and like any single approach, it does not provide all the answers. It has strengths and weaknesses, like all approaches.

The most important part of the weekend for me was:

- a. getting to explore and develop my own current understanding of AR through hearing what everyone had to say about AR
- b. being able to compare and contrast what I know about the AR situation here in HK, with what I learned about it in Japan
- c. making new friends, colleagues and maybe even future co-teacher-researchers. (Andy Curtis)

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## Suggestions for the future

Andy also suggested that for a future event we could have two different groups or even two different weekends: one for those who have (a lot of) experience of AR, and one for relative newcomers; one weekend as an intro to AR, and one to which people could, for example, bring data that they've collected and work with the data for much of that weekend.

## References:

We received the following list of references at the beginning of the AR weekend:

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- Schofield, Phil. 1995. Quantifying language: A researcher's and teacher's guide to gathering language data and reducing it to figures. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- And Colin kindly photocopied and sent us copies of Andy Curtis' "Top Twelve Papers" after the weekend. These are:
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## Diary Research

*Catherine Smith*

### 1. Introduction

Keeping a teaching diary has given me invaluable insight in to my teaching by focusing attention on my teaching methodology and the communicativeness of my classroom. In this article I will describe the framework I used to keep a diary and both its positive and negative results. At the time I began my diary study, my teaching environment had changed and I wanted to define how my methodology was evolving accordingly. Whilst I was able to identify a change, in doing so I became aware that my teaching was not as communicative as I had hoped. Both of these outcomes gave my teaching a new direction and I would highly recommend keeping a teaching diary as a result.

### 2. The diary framework

I adopted a procedure outlined by Bailey (1983, 1990) and referred to by Nunan. Nunan states that Bailey recommends: "a five stage procedure, beginning with an account of the diarist's personal learning history" (Nunan, 1992: 120). A diagram of the five procedures is included in Nunan (1989). After outlining the learning (or in this case, teaching) history, the diarist records their current teaching

experience over a period of time and then revises the journal for the public version of the diary. The diarist then studies the entries to look for patterns, and in the final stage the observations identified as important to the teaching experience are discussed.

McDonough (1994) notes Bailey's (1990) distinction between writing a diary and doing a diary study. A diary is private, whilst a diary study is made available to the public. As this was to be a personal diary and not a diary study, stage three of the process was eliminated. It therefore became a four stage procedure as outlined below:

- i. An outline of the teaching history, including a definition of my teaching methodology;
- ii. The recording of the diary for three weeks;
- iii. Study of the diary for patterns;
- iv. Interpretation and discussion of the patterns.

#### *Stage 1*

Writing out my teaching history illustrated how many different students and experiences that I had had and how they had affected the gradual realization of my teaching methodology.

At the time of commencing my diary, I summarised my methodology as: " based on the communicative approach and in line with Johnson and Littlewood's (1984) description of the 'skill learning model' as described in Richards and Rodgers (1986). I incorporate cognitive and behavioural aspects into my lessons by setting the students up with the grammatical rules and social conventions governing speech. These are then practised in a communicative

environment to make their speech automatic and fluent." When starting my diary, I was aware that whilst still being based on the communicative approach, my methodology had started to change. I decided to use the diary to investigate how it had changed, and, as I claimed to base my teaching on the communicative approach, I decided to see how communicative my classroom actually was.

### *Stage 2*

Keeping the diary was enjoyable; it helped to focus me after the lessons and served as a reminder of ideas that I wanted to follow up in later classes. However, there were difficulties involved in the process itself: in particular, a sense of audience and time.

I found it hard to ignore the fact that what had prompted me to keep the diary was an assignment for an MA course and so, on re-reading my diary, I was aware that I was writing for an audience. I used various quotes and academic references influenced by the course materials that I was reading at the time of the entries. By subconsciously writing for an audience, the candidness and the validity of my diary were all affected. For example, in one entry when I was questioning how much information to give students before a task, there is evidence of my attempts to 'prove' that I was doing the course reading. I quote Michael Swan: "Swan writes in Part 2 of his Criticism of the Communicative Approach that, 'it may be best to deal with such problems of form before students do communicative work on notions or functions in which they will have to mix these structures with others.'" Having kept a diary since this initial

study, whilst I might paraphrase something that I have read, or make a note to look for a relevant quote, I do not copy out quotes in such a formal manner.

The second difficulty was the time lag between the class and the diary entries. The diary is a retrospective research tool, and, as Nunan writes: "Retrospection has been criticised by a number of researchers (see, for example, Nisbett & Wilson 1977) on the grounds that the gap between the event and the reporting will lead to unreliable data" (Nunan, 1992: 124). Being aware of this, I tried to complete my diary as soon as possible after the class, but this was usually twenty-four to forty-eight hours later.

### *Stage 3*

I analyzed the information to find my current methodology by asking only three questions: What methods are influencing me? Do I set up my activities according to my prior definition of my methodology, that is, in a Presentation, Practice, Production (3P) manner? Is my class communicative? For anyone thinking of doing a diary study, I would suggest more specific post analysis reflective questions such as those suggested in Richards and Lockhart (1994: 16-17). As it stands, the internal reliability of my diary was suspect due to the openness of the question, "Is my class communicative?" Another person could find different results, according to their definition of a communicative classroom. Despite this, the patterns that I found helped redefine my classroom practice.

### *Stage 4*

What I found was that my methodology had become more task-

based and process-oriented. Rather than present the target of the lesson, for example: grammatical rules, functions, vocabulary, phonetics, points for discussion, etc.; in the initial stages of the lesson, I tried to give the students tasks that would generate my lesson's goals as they solved problems.

At the end of my study I redefined my methodology as based on the communicative approach with students learning the language in a task based manner while they solve problems or complete projects. The underlying influences on my practice were Community Language Learning (CLL) and the Natural Approach. For example, in one entry I write: "The students are beginning to reuse phrases that they have searched for during tasks. It reminds me of CLL where the students are provided with the language that they need to complete their dialogue." My diary confirmed that my teaching had changed to a more process-oriented methodology.

### 3. Implications

My diary showed that as a consequence of having recently adopted a more task-based lesson structure, there were weaknesses in my planning which affected the communicativeness of the classroom. For example, one entry recording a communications class where the girls were working on a drama production, I wrote: "I was hoping that as they decided on their parts, set up the scene, etc., that a lot of outer language as described by Willis (1987) would occur. Unfortunately, this only happened with the returnee students, as the others reverted to the L1." As a result of keeping a diary I realized the need to develop the nature of my tasks to

ensure that they produced more L2 communication.

### 4. Conclusion

Keeping a diary helped me to redefine my teaching beliefs and examine whether I "practise what I preach," so to speak. It thereby gave me pointers as to where my teaching needed improvement and questions that I needed to answer. The following are questions from my diary that I am still pondering: "I can keep students in the L2 when I set up activities in a controlled, 3P manner, but the language is definitely Inner Dependent. When I give them independent tasks they use their L1 a lot, but the language in the L2 tends to be more Outer. How do I decrease the use of the L1 in task based learning? Is this important?"

A diary is an accessible way in which to analyze and improve teaching practice. It is also a way to ensure that we do not get fixed in our ways to the detriment of our teaching. The diary enables us to spot strengths and weaknesses in many areas of the classroom, and identify questions and areas for change. Keeping a diary is the easy part, the questions it creates are the challenge.

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## REVIEW

### 横溝紳一郎『日本語教師のための アクション・リサーチ』凡人社

良書です。アクション・リサーチに関心をもつ人のみならず、現場でのよい実践研究を模索している方、効果的で組織的な教育実習・新人研修についてお考えの方など全ての人にお勧めしたいと思います。「日本語教師のための・・・」とありますが、日本語教育の中だけでしか通用しない議論などは皆無に近く、この本は日本語教育以外の分野の人にも読まれるべきだと思います。ましてや第二言語教育という点で共通する英語教育の分野の人には是非読んでいただきたいと思います。(実際引用文献の多くは「第二言語としての英語教育」の文献です)。

この本を良書とするのは、この本が、具体的に、広がりを持ち、正直な記述をしているからです。

「具体的」に関しては特に第三章と第四章が優れています。第三章(「日本語教育におけるアクション・リサーチの実践報告例」)では、特に51ページから108ページにかけて、著者の横溝さん自身のアクション・リサーチが公開されていますが、三つのサイクルにわたって「プロセス・シラバス」の導入と実施を追いかけたこのアクション・リサーチは記述がとても具体的です。自ら教壇に立つ現場教師なら、たとえ「プロセス・シラバス」について無知であったとしても、これを読み終える時には、プロセス・シラバスの功罪を横溝さんの記述とともに追体験し、理解を深めることでしょう。横溝さんは、予想とは異なるように変化する状況へ迅速かつ合理的に介入し、そこからのフィードバックに

よって問題の理解を深め、さらなる行動へと実践を進めてゆきます。この記述がもつ説得力と私たちが感じる(教師としての)共感の強さは、実験論文では得難いものです。このようなアクション・リサーチなら、様々なテーマで読んでゆきたいと多くの現場教師と研究者は思うことでしょう。また第四章(「アクション・リサーチを行なうために」)は、そのようなアクション・リサーチを進めるにはどうしたらよいか、非常に親切に、手を取るようにして示されています。問題の設定の仕方、話し合いの深め方、観察・記録の仕方などが、通り一遍のリストにならず、リサーチを行なう人間の立場に立って書かれているのは、この著者自身が上に述べたような優れたアクション・リサーチをやっているからなのかもしれません。

「広がり」については、巻末の24ページにもわたる引用文献・参考文献のリストを一瞥しただけでも予感できると思いますが、その本領は第五章(「アクション・リサーチを深く理解するために」)で発揮されます。この章は非常に勉強になります。アクション・リサーチがどのような広がりを持つものかがわかり、アクション・リサーチに対する考えが深まります。第二章(「アクション・リサーチとは何か」)と合わせて読むならば、アクション・リサーチの姿が短時間で的確に理解できます。

「正直さ」については、第三章の横溝さんによるアクション・リサーチによく現れています。実験研究は、妥当性と信頼性を強調するあまり、「邪魔な」要因(=ノイズ)をあの手この手で排除し、かつ書き手の試行錯誤も一切見せずに、あたかも研究がはじめから最後まで終始一貫整然と進んだような書き方をしばしばします。これは言い過ぎかもしれませんが、実験論文をジャーナルに採択してもらおうと思ったら、いかに整然と見せるか、瑕疵がないようにみせるか、仮説がいかに一貫して変わらなかったか等を印象づけるための記述に腐心する人も多いのではないのでしょうか。たしかにそうして出来上がった記述はスマートで短時間に読めますが、一方で実践者としての共感はなかなか湧いてきません。反面、ここに見られるようなアクション・リサーチでは、思いがけない結果や試行錯誤が正直に語られます。正直に語られ、記述するからこそ、冷静に問題は省察され、次のステップへと実践は深まってゆきます。もちろん次の実践とて、完全からは程遠いもののなの

ですが、「完全な実践」を望むべくもないのが私たちの姿。完全な仮説なんて、実践・実験前はおろか、実践・実験後も得られないというのが私たちの姿です。私たちにせいぜいできるのは、よくよく予想をして実践し、その結果を謙虚にできるだけ組織的に反省するぐらいです。アクション・リサーチはそのようなプロセスであり、そこでは「正直さ」が大切だと私は考えています。また193ページや212ページあるいは第六章（「おわりに」）では横溝さんは自分の主張を正直に（もちろん根拠にもとづいた誠実なやり方で）開陳しています。このような正直さがこの本を無味乾燥さとは無縁のものにしているといえましょう。

これで日本語出版市場でもアクション・リサーチについての本が複数入手することができるようになりました。アクション・リサーチに関する理解が深まることによって、「理論と実践」というテーマに新しい血が通うようになることを心から祈ります。

柳瀬陽介

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<<http://ha2.seikyoku.ne.jp/home/yanase/>>).

*Review of YOKOMIZO,  
Shinichiro's Action Research for  
Teachers of the Japanese  
Language*

I would like to recommend this book for those practitioners who are interested in action research, that is, those who are seeking to research their own teaching practices, and who are considering how to provide an effective and systematic teacher development program for pre-service and in-service teachers. Although the title includes "for Teachers of the Japanese Language," most topics discussed can be applied to the field of education, and therefore, I believe that this book is written for everyone. This book is highly recommended to those who are in the field of English language teaching, as both Japanese and English language teaching deal with teaching language as a

second/foreign language, and also since most of the references in this book belong to the field of English language teaching.

I recommend this book because of the thorough usage of 'concrete,' 'wide,' and 'honest' descriptions. Concrete description can be found particularly in chapters 3 and 4. In Chapter 3, *Action research report in the field of teaching Japanese as a second/foreign language*, an action research by Yokomizo is presented from pages 51 to 108. You can see his very concrete descriptions throughout this report on 'practicing the process syllabus' with three action research cycles. Even though you may not be familiar with a process syllabus, you can experience its pros and cons as guided by Yokomizo's concrete descriptions. By the time you complete reading the report, your understanding about the process syllabus will be greatly deepened. Yokomizo promptly and rationally deals with situations which constantly change beyond his expectation, deepens his understanding on problems in each situation, and accordingly proceeds to take further action to resolve them.

The convincing statements and empathy we feel from his efforts are the ones we rarely experience in the case of empirical research articles. I believe that many practitioners and researchers are willing to read more of this type of action research on various topics. Also, in Chapter 4, *To practice action research*, Yokomizo introduces how to start and proceed with this type of action research in a very detailed and reader-friendly manner. Yokomizo does not simply list up how to identify a topic, to deepen discussion with colleagues, to observe what's going on and to record what

happened, but he introduces them from the viewpoint of those who will practice action research. This is probably because the author himself is the practitioner who has conducted excellent action research.

'Wide' descriptions, as you may presume from 24 pages of references can be found best in Chapter 5, *To understand action research deeply*, which provides readers with a wide variety of discussion on action research. This chapter is very educational, and helps to deepen your understanding on how much action research covers. By reading both Chapters 2, *What is action research?*, and 5, you can easily grasp the appropriate image of action research.

'Honest' descriptions can be seen most in Yokomizo's action research report in Chapter 3. Since strong emphasis is placed on validity and reliability in the case of empirical research, writers very frequently attempt to exclude unnecessary 'noises' and to hide their struggles throughout the research process. As a result, the research report appears to read as if the research has been conducted without any problem throughout its process. This may be an overstatement, however, in that I find that in order for an empirical research article to be accepted in journals, many writers strongly attempt to make the readers believe that 'this research has no unexpected result' or 'my hypothesis has been consistent.' This type of description looks neat and does not require too much reading time. However, practitioners do not empathize with this type of research report.

On the other hand, Yokomizo's report includes many honest statements on unexpected results and

his struggles. Because of these honest statements, the author can reflect upon problems calmly and proceed onto the next step of action. Of course, his next step of action is far from the 'perfect' practice. But, I believe that as we language teachers we are unable to hope for the existence of the 'perfect' practice. We cannot attain the 'perfect' hypothesis before nor after the experiment. The most we can do is to take an action with careful expectation and reflect upon its result systematically and modestly. I believe that action research shares the same process and 'honesty' is the key term in it. In addition, in Chapter 6, *Epilogue*, Yokomizo presents his honest assertion on action research in a sincere manner. Such honesty makes this book far from being a dry and meaningless one.

With the appearance of this book, we are able to read more about action research in the Japanese language. I do hope for a new generation of changes in the 'tatemae' in theory and practices by a deepened understanding of action research.

*Reviewed by YANASE, Yosuke;  
Dept. of English Language Education  
Hiroshima University*

*Review translated by YOKOMIZU,  
Shinichiro; Dept. of Teaching Japanese as a  
Second Language, Hiroshima University*

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPOTS

**A hot source for university  
teachers: Tomorrows-Professor  
Listserver**

*Tim Murphey, Nanzan University*

In the summer of 1999, my  
colleague Mark Wright came back  
from a study leave to the University of  
British Columbia in Vancouver,



Canada, and told our faculty in a mass e-mail about the Tomorrow's Professor List. I was probably the only person who signed up and as they say back home, as they slap their thighs, "Boy, was I glad!"

Coming out of Stanford, the list mails about one or two short, often abridged, articles a week to mailing list members. The articles all have to do with professional teaching concerns: from active learning techniques useful in the classroom to job hunting, from what the Internet-teaching future looks like to university presidential missioning and visioning statements. All the articles are archived so that you can go through and pick and chose (which I haven't done), but just receiving a little quick article a week kind of gets you thinking and forces you to take time to really do that quality reflecting that keeps you developing.

So far in Japan only about 27 people have subscribed out of 9000 worldwide, 8000 in the US. Anyone can SUBSCRIBE to Tomorrows-Professor Listserver by sending an e-mail message to:

<Majordomo@lists.Stanford.EDU> with the command:

"subscribe tomorrows-professor" (without the quotation marks) in the body of the message.

Try it! It is great teacher development.

### **Free web magazine: Humanising Language Teaching**

This email is to bring you news of a free web magazine Humanising Language Teaching:

<[www.hltmag.co.uk](http://www.hltmag.co.uk)>, and ask you to let JALT members in your area know about the magazine. We have been up and running for one and a half years

and so now we have enough material on the web to talk to you about.

If you want jokes to use in your teaching you will find a good stock of them on the site.

Are you doing an MA or PHD?

There are some major articles (one each issue) that could be relevant to this kind of thinking.

If you want outlines of lessons that have worked, then please go to the sections headed Lesson Outlines and An Old Exercise.

The section I am most proud of is Student Voices, which is not something you will find in most magazines for EFL/ESL teachers. Some of the student voices over the past 18 months have shrieked and some have sung mellifuously. Maybe you could send me some of your student's voices.

Please visit the magazine, please tell others about it and please consider writing for the magazine.

Mario Rinvulcri, Editor  
Humanising Language Teaching  
[mario@hltmag.co.uk](mailto:mario@hltmag.co.uk)  
[www.hltmag.co.uk](http://www.hltmag.co.uk)

### **Quarterly newsletter: Language Link**

"The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC CLL) is pleased to announce the publication of Language Link, a quarterly online newsletter about foreign language education, English as a second language, bilingual education, and linguistics. Profiles of relevant books, journals, and recent ERIC documents will follow a feature article on a given theme. Each issue will also feature news from ERIC partners and the ERIC system, as well as information about upcoming conferences and links to organizations and publishers. To subscribe to Language Link, send a

message to <langlink-on@mail-list.cal.org>. Please leave the subject and message fields blank. You will then receive a welcome letter along with subscription option information. Contact: <linkeditor@cal.org>."

Note: C. Jannuzi of the FL Literacy SIG compiled this offer in collaboration with A. Mackenzie of the CUE SIG. E. Melchior shared it on SIGNIF list ([signif 04113], 21 May 2000). Current and past issues of Language Link are accessible online at: <<http://www.cal.org/ericcll/langlink/>> (25 Sept. 2000).

## CALLS FOR FEEDBACK

### Questionnaire for university teachers of reading

Hello, happy end of holidays  
everybody ...

If you have a moment and if you are teaching reading at the university or college level, please take a few minutes to fill in the following questionnaire.\*

I'm writing part of a chapter on reading with Bob Betts and Mayumi Watanabe, and wanted to get as broad a picture as I could of how reading classes go at the uni / college level.

Your experiences and feedback would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Cheers, Andy Barfield (12 Sep. 2000)

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If you're teaching reading at university or college ...

- 1) Please say which year: first - second - third - fourth ... - post-grad and please say what kind of uni / college: .....
- 2) Elective or required course?
- 3) Over the whole academic year or just one term / semester?
- 4) About how many contact hours

total for the course? And how many students in class?

- 5) Once a week or more than once a week? And what level best describes the course for you?
- 6) Course goals and materials integrated with other courses taught by you or your colleagues, or independent?
- 7) Any form of reading test or test score used for class placement?
- 8) If yes to (7), please explain a bit more (e.g. in-house test? reading and vocabulary test? Commercial or developed by institution or self? What format does the test take? How long to complete? Reliable? Etc )
- 9) What are the course goals in a few sentences?
- 10) What are the course reading materials? And have you developed any particular parts of the materials yourself? For example?
- 11) The course is primarily: Skills-based? Strategy-based? Content-based? General texts? Academic texts? Or other ....
- 12) Specific vocabulary learning targets are used? If so, what for example?
- 13) Assessment is done by ....? Any end-of-course test used? Specifically ...?
- 14) Strengths of the course are:
- 15) Weaknesses of the course are:
- 16) Student feedback on the course includes ...
- 17) Students are expected to read outside class each week? If so, please explain a little more:
- 18) Your own ideas for developing the course are ...
- 19) Taking an institution-wide view of reading courses where you work, the reading course you've described so far is: pretty much what most other teachers do in that .... ; slightly

different in that ... ; strikingly different in that ...

- 20) Is your course adaptable to computer-based learning?
- 21) Is there any encouragement or perceived need at your institution for web-based reading courses?
- 22) Are approaches to learning reading in a foreign language changing at your institution? What would you say are the dominant approaches? On the basis of ...?
- 23) In your professional training as an EFL teacher, you took courses on learning / teaching reading? If so, approximately, how many hours? In Japan or outside Japan? Where? As postgrad or undergrad?
- 24) How close do you think is what you do in your reading class connected to how you were trained? If there's a difference, please explain:
- 25) Any other points you'd like to make:

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\* Please return replies by e-mail to:  
<andyb@sakura.cc.tsukuba.ac.jp>.  
Many thanks for your help!

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Note: If you would like to receive a clean copy of the questionnaire via e-mail, I suggest you contact Andy. Though his deadline (end of Sept.) may have passed by the time you read this, he agreed to publication here with the understanding that new returns "may lead to some interesting insights" (14 Sept.). *ed.*

### On-line project for browsing

Hello everyone,

Looking ahead to the 2001-2002 academic year, I am once again inviting readers to browse and provide feedback on a document on the web describing an on-line teacher development project:

<<http://www.pu-kumamoto.ac.jp/~pab/topline2001.html>>.

At that URL you will find a new proposal for continuing the on-line

EFL teacher development project launched in April 2000. Please check it out. I would welcome any comments or questions you may have about the proposal or the language teacher development project as a whole.

In October 1999, I posted a similar invitation for readers of the TESOL Teacher Education Interest Section Listserve to browse and provide feedback on a project description published on the web. At that time, I received an off-list response inquiring about the "nuts and bolts" of implementing the project and encouraging my colleague Dan Kirk and I to report on developments.

Consequently, "nuts and bolts" became the working title for a poster session we presented at the FLEAT IV Conference in Kobe, Japan (July 28 - Aug. 1, 2000). An HTML version of the poster is accessible at:

<[http://www.pu-kumamoto.ac.jp/~pab/topline\\_poster.html](http://www.pu-kumamoto.ac.jp/~pab/topline_poster.html)>.

We will have an updated poster at the JALT 2000 Conference, on Saturday, November 3, 1:00 to 3:00, in Tenjin Hall. If you will be there, please drop by for a face-to-face chat.

Paul Beaufait

<[pab@pu-kumamoto.ac.jp](mailto:pab@pu-kumamoto.ac.jp)>

### CALL FOR PAPERS

The TE SIG newsletter welcomes articles and announcements in both English and Japanese. Contact either the TE SIG coordinator or one of the newsletter team members for details:

Katie Datko, <[kdatko@hotmail.com](mailto:kdatko@hotmail.com)>;

Catherine Haigh Smith,  
<[cathaigh@gol.com](mailto:cathaigh@gol.com)>; or

Shinichiro Yokomizo,  
<[yokomizo@educ.hiroshima-u.ac.jp](mailto:yokomizo@educ.hiroshima-u.ac.jp)>.

# TREASURER'S REPORT 2000

Greetings fellow educators,

This is your treasurer, Gordon Bateson. I would like to bring you the latest information on the financial health of our group. You will remember that last year we budgeted for a small surplus of 65,000. Well, in fact the funds increased by just under 85,000. Small sums, but all positive and contributing to JALT's renewed fiscal optimism.

先生同士の皆さんへ

会計係です。我がグループの財政状態についての最新情報をお知らせします。前の会計年度には65,000円余るという予算を立てた。実際には、財源を85,000円増やしました。わずかなんですが、プラスで、JALTの財政の回復に役立ちました。

This year has also got off to a promising start with a small residue of 25,000 from the British Hills retreat in June. As in previous years, we will be sponsoring one (Tim Knowles), maybe two (Jack Millet), speakers at the JALT conference. However, we have again limited our commitment to 100,000 yen so we will not over-stretch our resources.

六月にブリティッシュヒルズ・センターで行った静修からの余りの25,000円で、今年も順調な始まりです。今年も同様にJALT学会のFeatured Speakerの一人(ティム・ノーエルズ)か二人(ジャック・ミレット)を旅費など提供するつもりです。しかしながら、寄付金の上限は100,000円にしましたので、予算を超えることはないでしょう。

For your information I include a copy of this year's budget proposal at the end of this report. I would welcome the chance to discuss any comments or questions about how the money is spent to better serve our members.

情報提供のため、今年の予算案のコピーはこのレポートの下記をご覧ください。メンバーのためのお金の使い方についての質問と意見をお待ちしております。

Yours sincerely, Gordon Bateson

<gordon@neptune.kanazawa-it.ac.jp>

会計係のゴードン・ベイトソンより

## TE SIG budget

April 1, 2000 - March 31, 2001

### REVENUE

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from JALT National 50,000  
Membership dues 165,000  
Workshops 60,000  
Miscellaneous revenue 5,000

=====

TOTAL REVENUE 280,000

=====

### EXPENSES

=====

Telephone -  
Traveling -  
Copying -  
Print 45,000 (3 x 15,000)  
Office Supplies 5,000  
Postage 45,000 (3 x 15,000)  
Refreshments -  
Room Rent -  
Honoraria -  
Miscellaneous 100,000 (featured speaker)  
Other -  
Supplies from JALT office -

=====

TOTAL EXPENSES 195,000

=====

NET INCOME (REVENUE -  
EXPENSES) 85,000

=====

Gordon Bateson, Sept. 14, 2000