Explorations in Teacher Education
教師教育の探究他

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AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR ...
new TE SIG Coordinator

Hello everyone!

I have recently taken over from Lois Scott-Conley as the Teacher Education SIG Coordinator. So far, my impression is that even though the TE SIG may seem somewhat relaxed, it contains many people who are very dedicated to teaching and helping others in their professional development. I had a chance to meet many members in Shizuoka, and hope to become acquainted with more of you in the coming months. Please join me in welcoming our new and returning officers: Gordon Bateson, Treasurer; Anthony Robins, Recording Secretary; Tim Newfields and Colin Graham, Program Co-Chairs; Tim Ashwell, Membership; Catherine Haigh Smith, Kazuyoshi Sato, Shinichiro Yokomizo, Robert Croker, Katie Datko, Newsletter Team; Anthony Crooks, Web master, and Neil Cowie and Andy Barfield, Members at Large.

I am currently studying the art of teacher supervision by participating in

Jack Millet's online course, Supervising Teachers: An Educating Process. It has been a very exciting experience for me to hone my observation and counseling skills, and then try them out through observing a colleague at work in her context. One recurring theme in the course is how crucial the relationship is between the supervisor and observee in determining whether long-term learning can take place. Another point that has jumped out at me again is the recognition that each one of us is a teaching expert in our own right, and by sharing our expertise, both the supervisor and observee can grow in their development.

"One of the main goals of our work together is to find ways to unwind each other's expertise so that we can understand each other and find common meaning" (Stanley, 1993a, p. 1).

I wish to approach the TE SIG in the same spirit. I see it as a place for people to network and meet others with like interests. It is also a place for ideas to be exchanged and knowledge shared. My role is to do exactly what my title implies--coordinate these efforts. Please contact me if I can be of help to you.

The largest task for me in the past two months has been to coordinate the TE SIG's proposals for the PAC3 at JALT2001 Conference in November. We are very pleased to have been able to invite Nguyen thi Hoai An from UCLES, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Noako Aoki, from Osaka University, as our Co-Featured Speakers. As the time for the conference draws nearer, more information on their exciting presentations and other SIG-sponsored events will be given. Many thanks to Andy Barfield and Neil Cowie for their help in organizing, editing, and preparing the proposals.

Miriam Black
<miriamblacktesig.yahoo.com>
Reference:
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A NOTE ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Many apologies for the late appearance of this issue of the newsletter. The plan was to have this out to you in April but, due to a number of circumstances, most of them beyond anyone's control, this is now the pre-summer vacation newsletter! The advantage of this unforeseen delay is that this issue is now brimming with a

backlog of excellent articles which should stimulate your professional interests over the holidays and beyond.

The next issue should be out in October and Robert Croker has bravely offered to be the Newsletter Coordinator for that, and possibly subsequent, issues. Not content with this reckless offer, he and Tim Murphey have also proposed a new column for the newsletter entitled 'Inciting Professional Development'. Tim's inaugural article for the new column appears on page 28.

If you would like to submit something for the next issue, please see 'Call for Papers' on page 36.

Regards, Tim Ashwell, Temporary 'editor'

ESSAY
Keeping your teaching genki©
Katie Datko

Many of us in EFL/ESL are living the lives of contract workers. Regardless of whether or not we have a long-term contract of more than a year or a short-term contract of a semester, the reality of our field is that most of us are peripatetic. Recently, one of the Teacher Ed SIG members suggested to me that I focus on my own recent experiences with changing my contract and the problems I've encountered while job-hunting. (I'll have

to say, that I probably have enough material to write a book on the topic!)

Having now joined the ranks of the freeway flyers (or densha dashers in Japan), my concerns lie not only with basic life needs, but also with my own professional development. It's difficult to think about development when I'm teaching 20 hours per week and looking for more hours just so that I can make a living wage. I think that many of us have either experienced the same problem or will experience it at some point. These days I find that to truly remain a "genki" teacher, I not only have to evaluate my career goals, but also have to realistically address the issue of my career prospects.

"You put your right foot in?"

You put your right foot out.
You put your right foot in and you shake it all about.
You do the hokey-pokey and you turn yourself around.
That's what it's all about?

I was reminded of this song while I was talking to a former colleague one day. Despite my interests in teaching and research, I'm not really 100% certain whether or not I'll continue working as an

EFL/ESL instructor. Sure, I've devoted time and effort in grad school and with professional development. But, there are also times when I don't feel committed to the field.

When I was talking to my co-worker, he said something to the effect of, "I don't really understand you. You are up on topics in the field and interested in affect and motivation research. You have a lot of ideas. Yet, you also talk about doing something else. I just don't get it!"

Hmmm. Neither do I really. But honestly, that's the way I feel sometimes...

I think that at most points in our careers, there comes a time when we decide whether or not we are going to stick with it. I have known several of my friends from grad school and/or former colleagues who have thrown their hands up into the air and changed course completely. There are also others who have gone into related fields. I guess some people stop doing the hokey-pokey all together.

You might wonder why I chose that particular song as an analogy for the EFL/ESL field. It's not an attempt to marginalize or downplay the work that we do, but rather I'd like to use it as an example to which we all can relate. I have found that when talking to many people at work and at conferences, one theme tends to prevail (at least among those of us who are contract workers) - few people can commit themselves to a career in which they have to pick up their bags and move or readjust to a new working environment at the end of every contract. While at any given time I might have one foot in the field, one foot is also out as well - seeing if there are more stable opportunities to be found elsewhere, because I know that before long when I am just becoming accustomed to a situation, I'm going to be turned around and have to find my bearings yet again. This is the life of an EFL/ESL "professional" entering the 21st century.

Many might argue that this is beneficial for teaching, especially for those of us who live abroad. Constantly having to change so that one doesn't stagnate or become entrenched in the same routine is a valid notion - change is always good to some extent. However, when it comes to teaching and methods, positive change should come from within the teacher herself, not simply from a change of teaching environment. Since the time I reached the end of my contract, I find myself once more concerned with

Maslow's lower order needs of paying for food and housing and earning a decent salary. How do we truly expect teachers to develop and think seriously about their teaching when they are only kept around for short periods of time? It's like the people in Japan who think that they can catch up on their sleep while commuting on the train. Just when they start to nod off, the train arrives at the station, and they have to get off.

So, in response to my concerned former colleague, yes, I am doing the hokey-pokey. But, I'd posit that many others out there are as well. Until teachers are accorded more respect by their administrations/employers and their contributions are validated by the researchers in the field, most people are probably going to be doing the hokey-pokey at some point in time or another. For me personally, I'm not necessarily doing this "dance" everyday, nor have I reached the point where I'm putting my "whole self" in and out. But rather, I'm aware of the fact that I'm engaged in this "dance" at some points in my semester and cope with it while I'm still only using my "right foot", which is better than finding out too late that I've been doing this dance everyday and discover that my "whole self" is out and the dance is over.

CLASSROOM AMBIANCE TO FACILITATE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
Leon Piasetski

"When you entertain evil thoughts like hostility and hatred, there is no joy in your heart and you are a nuisance to others. On the other hand, if you develop kindness, patience and understanding, then the whole atmosphere changes" (The Dalai Lama, 1995).

This article will focus on the issue of improving classroom ambiance to enhance learning. Various factors that frustrate communication will be considered, such as large classes, lack of student motivation, and differences in cultural expectations. Then, several recommendations will be offered on how to engage student interest, reduce tension, and develop a closer relationship between teacher and students. In particular, readers will be introduced to meditation techniques and their potential benefits in the classroom.

University language teachers in Japan often complain about classroom inertia. Teachers may entertain, challenge, cajole, or berate their students but still encounter a wall of silence. Since traditional

methods, such as Communicative Language Teaching, seem ineffective, some educators turn to more creative alternatives, such as The Silent Way and Suggestopedia - interested readers may refer to Richards and Rodgers (1986). However, results using these methods have not been conclusive (Crookes and Chaudron, 1991).

The crux of the problem of silence in the classroom remains how to bridge the socio-cultural gap between teacher and students. Improving communication obviously requires effort on the part of all participants. However, to achieve this improvement, teachers need to take the first step by being sympathetic, encouraging, and, most importantly, relaxed. If students recognize that the teacher is interested in developing a closer relationship with the class and appreciate the effort, it will create a more comfortable classroom atmosphere, and thus support students' foreign language acquisition.

On the other hand, due to culturally based expectations of formality for teacher/student roles, some students may at first be surprised and disconcerted by the teacher's sympathetic but unconventional behaviour. Nevertheless,

it is a risk worth taking. In high school, students who devote much time and effort to pass the arduous university entrance examinations, may also lack the opportunity to develop their social skills (Kelly, 1993). In university, most students slowly mature as they explore wider interests and the attitudes of a teacher could have a profound influence on their development.

Problems in the university language classroom

It may seem obvious for educators to familiarize themselves with student backgrounds, motivations, and abilities in order to assess their language level and set realistic goals for them. However, university language teachers often have many large classes and can count themselves lucky if they know the names of most of their students, even by the end of term.

In addition, as Nozaki (1993) explains, Japanese university students often lack motivation. One reason is that they know, even with minimal effort, they will most likely graduate due to the "escalator system." Since "passing courses is mostly a formality," Nozaki notes that students often choose to socialize and

focus their attention on non-academic pursuits, such as part-time jobs, extra-curricular activities, or personal interests rather than study.

University teachers in Japan are accorded respect and status by society at large. Although, theoretically, democratic philosophy has permeated and altered Japanese social structures including the educational system, in the classroom, teachers are in control – they talk and students listen. This may not be the case in every classroom but it is the model for most. Many Japanese students have been taught to respect authority from a young age, to observe the teacher quietly and follow instructions. They have little experience in asserting themselves verbally and are reluctant to raise questions or even answer them unless provided with a well-established routine for such behaviour (Anderson, 1993).

Bailey (1990) discusses the inculcation of values, such as neatness and uniformity, in primary school and points out that "routines, once established, are maintained not by the teacher but by the children." Furthermore, Bailey explains that, "students police each other, and so they become extremely self-conscious." If they do not conform, "they risk becoming

ostracized or worse, victims of ijime, a brutal form of persecution by peers." It is no wonder that many students remain inhibited throughout their school life.

Traditionally, Japanese culture has focused on perfection in every detail. As a consequence, students may feel intimidated because they lack confidence in their language ability. Moreover, six years of studying English may actually have undermined their ability because the focus on grammar translation does not prepare students to speak (Bailey, 1990). Yet making and correcting mistakes is an inherent aspect of language learning.

Stereotyping is a common source of cultural misunderstanding and may also contribute to students' silence by increasing their confusion. For example, students, who know the clichés about Japanese behaviour, may be reluctant to give their opinions to a foreign teacher to avoid being labeled. Furthermore, the same students who are hesitant to speak in class are often quite talkative among friends and even enthusiastic when singing karaoke, dispelling the notion that 'Japanese are shy' by nature.

Classroom management is usually not a major problem at university. A teacher

enters a classroom with a curriculum to follow and expects students to participate. However, if students remain silent, the teacher may misinterpret their behaviour as defiance, become upset, and use forceful methods to get cooperation, thereby alienating students. On the other hand, some teachers frequently use aggressive tactics in dealing with minor infractions, such as students arriving late or talking quietly during class. Embarrassing a student in front of the class may set an example but it will also diminish student trust in the teacher's good will.

Some students may already subconsciously regard the teacher as a language opponent, someone to avoid or ignore, and, in the worst case scenario, a foreign teacher might actually become an adversary, trying to impose a difficult language on reluctant pupils and failing those that give up. To prevent this from happening, foreign teachers should reconsider their pedagogical expectations, especially in view of the academic realities of most Japanese universities (Kelly, 1993). If teachers can recognize and reduce their cross-cultural anxiety and maintain a relaxed attitude, minor disturbances can be dealt with efficiently and without repercussions.

Advocating Participation - creating a positive classroom ambiance

There are various ways to encourage participation and develop a friendlier relationship with students. One simple method is to occasionally use a Japanese word or phrase, in context, as an explanation. This cross-cultural, sympathetic act engages their attention and interest. Although the debate on the appropriateness of L1 in the classroom remains unresolved (Ellis, 1994), the purpose here is not the use of L1 as a pedagogical tool, but to improve classroom ambiance.

The teacher can also occasionally ask a student to translate an English term into Japanese. This expresses interest in the student's culture and models language learning. Also, it may help students realize that language learning is an ongoing effort on the part of every learner, since the teacher is still interested in learning.

Talking with students on a familiar level, especially about the teacher's homeland or personal viewpoints, is another method to establish closer ties. Essentially, foreign teachers are diplomatic representatives of their country's culture

and powerfully shape the impressions of students whose only previous exposure to foreign cultures probably came via the influence of media.

Teachers do not need to probe personal issues but by stating their viewpoints about their own society and its values, and referencing their own experiences, they can personalize general topics and communicate their concerns. Despite the lack of language skills, many Japanese students can intuitively understand that the teacher is trying to empathize and establish a personal connection with them. This may be, in part, due to their high context culture (Hall, 1990) which places greater emphasis on deducing intentions than direct expression. Thus, students can grasp the teacher's deeper message from the emotional content.

Classroom ambiance can also benefit from a variety of stress-reducing approaches. 'A busy mind is a distracted mind' - this phrase exemplifies Krashen's affective filter hypothesis (1982), which suggests that the mind can absorb and retain information more efficiently in a relaxed state. For example, teachers may feel pressure to cover the required contents of the syllabus. Yet, it is important to realize that there is nothing wrong with review. Teachers may assume that students know material taught earlier in the course only to discover the opposite is true. Allowing more time for review and reinforcing concepts will decrease the anxiety level in class and provide teachers with a gauge to assess student progress.

Meditation in the language classroom

Teachers may wish to explore meditation as a relaxation method in class. There are several reasons for choosing this technique. To begin with, practising meditation may help students feel more comfortable in class. Also, students will probably appreciate a mental break in their study routine, and it shows the teacher is interested in their welfare. As an added bonus, students may discover that meditation is useful in their daily life because it helps reduce tension and reenergizes the mind and body.

However, before exploring the uses of meditation in the classroom, there are several caveats to consider. First, many Japanese students have tried zen meditation during high school and rejected the practise because of its rigour. Second, students are often tired and may lapse into sleep at the earliest opportunity

- this danger increases during meditation since many meditative techniques are performed with closed eyes. Finally, meditation is a solitary experience and it may be difficult to check if students are practising it correctly.

I have been interested in meditation for over twenty years but have been reluctant to teach it to students because of these objections. However, I have given students a handout on 'relaxation' techniques (See Appendix 1) and, after a brief explanation and training session in class, suggested they continue to practise on their own. Further questions that remain to be explored are whether students' attitudes towards meditation have been biased by previous experience or by the media censure of cults, and whether students derive observable benefits right from the start of practising meditation.

Meditation techniques

Although teachers may not wish to teach meditation to students, they can still gain from practising it themselves. Teachers are invited to try the following three techniques to evaluate their potential advantages.

(1) A simple meditation procedure is focusing on the breath to calm emotions and reestablish mental clarity. While breathing, the mind concentrates on a specific point, such as the tip of the nose, and observes the breath as it passes through the nasal cavity, with no attempt made to control it.

(2) Another procedure is to pay attention to the forehead while imagining an idyllic scene in nature, such as a quiet tropical beach. This helps relax the body because of the tranquil imaginary setting while using visualization to achieve mental concentration.

(3) Finally, sound can also be employed as a focusing tool, using a mantra to concentrate attention. Surprisingly, mentally repeating a word, such as relax, can often produce a swift calming effect.

After sufficient practise, these techniques can be used in daily life situations, such as waiting in lines, and can provide immediate benefits by inducing a peaceful state of consciousness.

Meditation is also useful as a psychological tool to probe the way the mind functions and arrive at a deeper understanding of one's motivations. By

focusing attention on body sensations meditators learn to recognize emotional reactions and how they trigger inappropriate behaviour. In her insightful master's thesis, "Awareness: A powerful tool to improve classroom management and influence student attitudes," Barque (1990) describes introspective meditative techniques that helped her clarify classroom management issues and achieve perspective. At first, she explains the technique used to observe the connection between body sensations and emotions.

"I learned to scan my body in just a few seconds - I usually found some part which was tense - I was contracted, which indicated resistance - I recalled the events of the class - to detect which events had provoked a negative reaction in me. I began to detect a correlation between the degree of expansion and contraction of my body and my emotional state." (pp. 7-9)

Initially, Barque assumes that students provoke her emotional reactions by misbehaving. Eventually, she begins to take responsibility for her feelings and adopts a more positive attitude towards her students. She recognizes that "presence in the moment is a vital factor

in teaching", and that she gets distracted from this state of consciousness by her reactions. She goes on to describe these emotional triggers and their negative effect on her ability to remain focused in the classroom.

"I saw that fear, which I often felt because of insecurity, put me into the future. In class, when I was trapped in the insecurity mode, my attention was partially focused on what was going on and partially on the next activity ··· Feeling anger meant wanting things to be different from the way they were. It was another way of not being in the present." (p. 14)

There are alternative relaxation methods that teachers may prefer, such as biofeedback, tai-chi, and yoga. The main idea is thatteachers often have a large influence on students and, by being relaxed, they help improve the classroom atmosphere.

Reasons for pair and group work

However, even if teachers follow these suggestions, they may still find that some students are reluctant to answer questions. These students may hesitate to offer an individual opinion or venture a

response because they wish to avoid embarrassment in front of their peer group (Anderson, 1993). Anderson suggests that students need to feel safe before they will respond and goes on to describe characteristics of the Japanese communicative style that exemplify this behaviour in class, including group-mindedness and consensual decision-making. Anderson concludes that the best way to encourage student talk is through pair work and group work with tightly controlled tasks because this will minimize individual risk.

Student educational experience in Japanese high schools is varied but not necessarily stressful in all cases (Rohlen, 1983). However, many students do suffer great hardships in the effort to pass university entrance examinations. The successful students, who enter university, have probably been subject to strict control and regimentation throughout their high school education. Having them work in small groups occasionally will help develop their self-reliance while they explore a topic. This will also enliven the class atmosphere because students are more willing to express themselves in front of a small group of peers.

Even though there is a legitimate concern that students may not always stay on task during group work, it does give the teacher an opportunity to circulate between groups, answer questions, or initiate discussions on a one to one basis. Most importantly, the focus shifts from the teacher to the group. As a result, groupwork often reduces class tension because most students feel more comfortable talking in a small group among their peers than answering the teacher's questions in front of the whole class. Students learn about each other while working together and thus create a feeling of community. This helps them develop greater confidence in speaking together.

Conclusion

Of course, the easiest way to create a positive atmosphere is by engaging student interest. Teachers of young children use games, media, and realia to capture and maintain student attention. However, there is a trend at some universities to stress academic content objectives which are often beyond the language abilities of most students. Striking a balance between these lofty goals and student interest requires flexibility, imagination and patience. However, a positive classroom ambiance

can be a motivating factor for students. As McInnis (2000) writes, "Increasingly, language educators are committed to the belief that the teaching of caring communication skills is crucial."

This article considered the implications of classroom ambiance on student learning. After considering the negative factors, it suggested ways that teachers can develop a closer relationship with students. These included using Japanese expressions occasionally, talking with students on a personal level, avoiding forceful behaviour when dealing with classroom management issues, encouraging student participation through group work, and reducing teacher tension through meditation. This article proposed that by exploring these ways, teachers may create a classroom ambiance that enhances their students' ability to learn a foreign language.

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Appendix 1: Relaxation Exercises

Relaxation is important for many reasons - it helps us enjoy life and get over boredom or difficulties we face daily. It is also vital for our physical, mental and emotional health. We can perform better when we relax and use our energy more effectively. It can also save us in dangerous situations when we remain calm but alert.

Even in class it can help to stay relaxed while practising speaking in English - it is easy to get tense and confused when we try to speak a foreign language. Remembering to relax can change the atmosphere from being tense and serious. Learning improves when we have fun while trying our best.

Here are a few ways to relax - try them in your spare time and practise them often, especially whenever you feel tired, upset, or tense:

1) Close your eyes and imagine a beautiful natural scene, for example, a tropical beach or a picnic by the river etc. Picture yourself in the scene enjoying yourself with friends or just relaxing in the sunshine etc. Breathe slowly as you imagine how much you enjoy this experience. Breathe in the fresh air and notice how much energy each breath is bringing to your body and mind. Experience the sensation of warmth and relaxation.

2) Concentrate on your heart - notice how it moves as you breathe. Slow your breathing and feel your heart slow down. Feel the warmth in your heart as you allow the sun's bright energy to enter and revive your spirit. Concentrate on this bright energy as you breathe and notice that it enters and expands inside you until

it fills up your body. It brings healing everywhere and you feel great strength and calmness throughout your body and mind.

3) Feel a pulse of energy in your hands. Notice this pulse gets stronger when you think about it. Feel how it connects both hands and then imagine a ball between your hands. Hold the ball with your hands and feel its energy by imagining that it is turning around and around. Now you can place this ball anywhere in your body where you feel tense and use it to relax and get rid of pain. Try expanding the ball until it covers your whole body. The ball turns around in a clockwise direction just like the earth.

Good luck! If you have any questions, please ask me to explain.

IMPROVING PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHER TRAINING: LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING PERSPECTIVES

Anthony S. Rausch
Hirosaki University, Faculty of Education

Introduction

Pre-service teacher education and training determines not just the quality of future in-service teachers, but also the character of education as a whole. Teaching a foreign language is difficult, demanding training which addresses pedagogical understanding, target language grammatical knowledge, oral proficiency, and target culture awareness. However, Powell (1997) noted an increasing shift in ESL/EFL acquisition research, from a focus on pedagogy, the teacher and the mechanics of teaching, to a focus on learning, the student and the process of learning. This paper considers what constitutes important teacher training curricular elements of this shift specific to Japan.

The survey

A five-point Likert-type survey was used to illuminate similarities and differences regarding the objectives of English education and conceptions of effective English education between participants in English teacher training and English education in Japan. The survey respondents were: (1) university faculty in English education departments (hereafter designated as UFAC: n=31, 48% return); (2) high school English teachers (HST: n= 86, 76% return); (3) junior high school English teachers (JST: n= 55, 53% return); (4) high school English students (HSS: n= 763); (5) junior high school English students (JSS: n= 406). The survey consisted of an 'Educational Objectives' section and an 'Effective

Education' section. The objectives section asked respondents to consider objectives both for the course and as seen by the students (seven identical prompts each). The section on effective education asked respondents to consider effective education with regard to materials (six prompts), learning activities (teacher-centered: four prompts; learner-centered: seven prompts; interactive activities: six prompts), and the teacher (teacher attributes: six prompts; teacher tasks: seven prompts).

Survey Findings

Figures refer to the mean response by the respondent group (averaged where appropriate; five: important, three: neutral, one: not important).

1. Objectives

Course objectives as seen by the UFAC and HST-JST focused on four skills (4.9), communication (4.6) and intercultural understanding (4.5). The HSS-JSS response was spread among all responses, but slightly higher for four skills (4.4), grammar (4.2), and communication (4.0).

Student objectives as seen by the UFAC and HST-JST focused on four skills (4.6) and communication (4.4). HST also saw entrance exams as being a student objective (4.4). HSS-JSS saw four skills (4.4) and grammar (4.0) as primary objectives, followed by communicative (3.9).

2. Effective Education

Effective education as a function of materials as considered by the UFAC and HST-JST was concentrated on the Japanese teacher (4.6) and to a lesser degree the text (4.4) and the ALT (4.3). HSS-JSS saw the ALT (4.4) as being more important than any other element, followed by the text (4.2) and the Japanese teacher (3.9).

The teacher-centered learning activities response for HST-JST was spread uniformly across the four activities: model reading (4.3), reading material content explanation (4.2), grammar explanation (4.2), and vocabulary introduction (4.1). HSS-JSS prioritized reading material content explanation (4.3) and grammar explanation (4.4), with JSS also focusing on vocabulary introduction (4.2).

The primary student-centered activities as considered by UFAC and HST-JST included silent and choral reading (4.5), dictation (4.5), pronunciation practice (4.5), and self expression/presentation (4.5). HSS-JSS prioritized dictation (4.3), translation (4.4) and grammar practice activities (4.3) and to a lesser degree pronunciation practice (4.1) and silent and choral reading (4.0).

The interaction-based activities considered most important by UFAC and HST-JST centered on comprehension checks in English (4.5) and ALT interaction (4.3). UFAC and JST saw pair and group activities (4.5) and role play and drama activities (4.2), while HST saw

comprehension checks in Japanese (4.1) as important. HSS-JSS viewed ALT interaction (4.1), as well as comprehension checks in English (3.9) and in Japanese (3.9) as being important.

All respondents saw the important attributes of a teacher as knowledge of English (4.7), teaching knowledge (4.7), and human relationship skills (4.7). UFAC saw overseas experience (3.8) as more important than did other respondents on the one hand, while HSS-JSS saw entrance exam focus (3.3) as more important than other respondents on the other.

All respondents saw addressing students' specific language-related difficulties (4.7) as an important teacher duty, with UFAC and HST-JST also prioritizing developing appropriate learning materials (4.5), organizing students' learning activities (4.4), and evaluating students' English competence (4.4). HSS-JSS, on the other hand, saw error correction (4.0) as more important than both the faculty group and the teacher group.

Survey Findings Summary

The overall survey findings can be summarized as follows:

(1) There was general agreement by all respondents confirming the importance of four skills and communication (although to a lesser degree among students) as an objective for both course and student. This consensus may be indicative of a shift away from the common focus on grammar on the part of teachers and recognition of that shift by students. However, the focus on grammar exhibited by students may be indicative of their perception of the continuing importance of exams (both in course grades and in university entrance), the reassuring solidity of grammar-based study as opposed to communication-based learning, and a lack of acceptance of communication as a viable or valuable objective.

(2) Teachers stressed the importance of the Japanese teacher of English and the textbook, while students stressed the importance of the ALT. This may suggest a subtle contradiction on the part of students between the prioritization of grammar over communication as course and personal objectives (above) versus the opportunity for real communication with the ALT as a part of learning English.

Explanation of reading content and grammar was seen by all as the primary teacher-centered learning activity. Students focused on dictation, translation and grammar-practice activities while teachers prioritized reading, dictation, and pronunciation activities as student-centered learning activities. Teachers saw comprehension checks in English as important, whereas students prioritized ALT interaction as an important interaction activity. This suggests that teachers, while maintaining their traditional teacher-centered instructional

manner, are also using a range of student-centered learning activities. Students, on the other hand, again exhibit contradiction as they prioritize translation and grammar activities as principal student-centered learning activities on the one hand, while also setting ALT interaction as the principal interactive activity on the other.

Finally, while there was general agreement as to what constitutes a good teacher, teachers saw the duties of a teacher as being concerned with education, while students saw evaluation and correction as important teacher duties.

What is the Message for Teacher Training?
Theme 1: Learning Objectives and Justification for Learning
A Shift in Focus from *What to Teach* to *Why to Learn*

There is indication of a shift on the part of teachers in focus in course objectives from concentration on 'what to teach' (grammar) to consideration of 'why to learn' (four skills and communication). However, the notion of communication as an educational objective is still underdeveloped among students. Thus, we can ask whether such objectives have been communicated to the students and reified in the practice of teaching.

The importance of informing students of the learning objectives has been established and is considered to be an integral part of the educational process (Graham, 1997). The survey seems to indicate that this very important step is not being sufficiently undertaken or reified in the practice of teaching to the degree necessary to make it a relevant component of the students' conception of their learning experience. Perhaps more important however, is the question as to justification for learning English in Japanese schools. Thus, we must consider how we can justify to students the effort of learning English. From Brown, "above all, we need to work towards a new and shared understanding of the full potential of language teaching and *learning*" (184; italics added). I would add that such an understanding must be created by the students themselves.

Theme 2: Perspectives and Effectiveness
A Shift in Focus from *How to Teach* to *How to Learn*

There is indication of a shift in focus regarding what constitutes effective education, from that which focuses strictly on 'teaching' to that which also includes 'learning'. Unfortunately, this shift is not seen among the students. It appears that while teachers are increasingly prioritizing student-centered educational activities and see their duties as educational, students are still prioritizing teacher-centered educational activities and see the teachers' duties as being primarily evaluation and correction. Thus, we can ask whether we can

replace the notion of 'studying English' with that of 'learning English' in the minds of students.

In addition to helping students to generate reasons for why to learn, teachers can teach students how to learn. While on the one hand, university faculty and high school/junior high school teachers view their job as including developing appropriate learning materials and directing students learning activities, they saw only limited importance for student self-study and homework, and very little importance for student-produced study materials, such as journals and personal learning organizers. Teachers, taught to think in terms of teaching, are rarely prepared to discern learning difficulties among students nor able to give advice to students about effective language learning strategies. As for how to address this, Brown (2000) asserts that:

"What is emerging ... is that student teachers (pre-service teachers) of the future will need to know about research in broad educational areas as well as those specific to language learning. ... They will need to have experience of different teaching and learning styles and active learning strategies; they will need to know about the research on multiple intelligences and emotional intelligence; ..." (p. 190)

Summary

The present survey speaks to concerns

regarding overall educational objectives and the contrast between a teaching perspective and a learning perspective in English education in Japan. I believe we can improve English education by clarifying English educational objectives that justify English education for students. I believe we can bring about this improvement by ensuring that our future teachers are aware of the need to continually provide clear objectives for students which justify English learning. I also believe that we can improve English education by focusing less on teaching students and more on ensuring that students know how to learn. I believe we can bring about this improvement by ensuring that our future teachers are taught not only how to teach, but also *how to learn* and *how to teach how to learn*.

Implications for Further Research

The implications of the survey and the conclusions drawn in this paper can be outlined in four research questions for further consideration:

1) To what degree can incorporating a 'Why to Learn English' component in the teacher training program improve English education?

2) To what degree can incorporating junior and senior high student input into the 'Why to Learn English' component improve English education?

3) To what degree can incorporating a 'How to

Learn English' component in the teacher training program improve English education?

4) To what degree can incorporating a 'How to Learn English' component in the classroom improve English education?

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TELL ME ABOUT YOUR LIFE: Narratives of language teacher development

Neil Cowie

Saitama University

Introduction

Numerous authors have explained why narratives are useful methodological tools for teacher research (see Carter, 1993; and, Connelly and Clandinin, 1990 for examples). Kelchtermans (2000), however, gives three compelling reasons that are focused more on teachers rather than researchers: "Narratives constitute a powerful starting point for broad and deep reflection. Narratives seem to be the way in which teachers tend to talk spontaneously about their work. It is their natural voice. Telling stories and sharing narrative experiences can be fun and teachers are easily motivated to take part." (p 18)

Despite their apparent usefulness it is difficult to find many reports of narrative research about language teacher development. One example is found in the work of Johnston (1997) who conducted interviews with seventeen, mainly young, EFL teachers in Poland. The interviews provide a fascinating, if disturbing, insight into the realities of being a teacher in Poland, where it is fairly clear that, unfortunately, many of these young teachers will soon leave the field. Useful and interesting as these stories are the voices of more experienced EFL and ESL teachers are largely absent.

In this article I would like to make an initial attempt to represent the voices of eight experienced teachers as they talk about their own development. The teachers featured are all highly qualified people who have continued to show an enthusiasm and curiosity for teaching through their careers. Through interviewing them I have gained considerable insights into how they have sustained their motivation for such a long time, as well as identifying common features of their

development. The one feature I wish to focus on in this article is the key role that talking about teaching plays in promoting growth. In addition, I found that by articulating their own theories of teaching, and that through talking about their careers these teachers revealed that a narrative interview in itself can be a very effective tool for reflection and professional development.

Data collection and analysis

The eight English language teachers, with an average age of 42 and an average of 15 years teaching experience, are from various countries and have taught across the world in both EFL and ESL. They were all doctoral candidates attending a residential course as part of their studies, after which they all returned to their respective home institutions in various parts of the globe. My interview questions were:

What's your background and how did you get into teaching?

What type of teaching have you done?

How have you developed as a teacher?

After asking these three initial questions I saw my role in the interviews as an active listener; to reflect and reformulate what the participants said, and try to be an 'understander' (Edge, 1992) in the way that I prompted or probed with further questions. My goal was to find out how a successful group of teachers had developed and whether there were any

lessons for others, particularly less experienced or novice teachers. At this stage I was not using the interview itself as a developmental tool. The realisation that it could be used in this way only came later in the research process when the teachers wrote back to me by email reflecting on what they had learnt from being interviewed.

I initially analysed the transcribed interviews using a 'grounded theory' approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). In contrast to fitting the data into an 'a priori' framework I attempted to produce my own framework grounded in the data itself. I did this by repeatedly looking through the transcripts to categorise statements, gradually building up a set of codes with which to form the basis of an analysis. Eventually I identified three main topic areas to use as a basis for description: methods of teacher development; feelings about teaching; and, descriptions of work contexts. Within each topic area there were a number of smaller sub-categories totalling about twenty in all.

My next step was to develop a profile of each interview which I sent as part of an 'interpretive letter' (Golombek, 1998) to each teacher in order to solicit further comments and to confirm or disconfirm my analysis. These replies then became a further part of the interpretive process, and it was at this stage I started to realise that the interviews

had provided an opportunity for the teachers to reflect critically on their careers.

One teacher wrote the following which I think illustrates the growth potential of a narrative interview very succinctly:

"... after that interview I really did begin to reflect on my own behaviour (and have continued to do so) and this has helped me significantly in my relationships with my colleagues at work. Actually voicing what I believe in and how I see myself helped me to critically examine my role in departmental affairs and see myself as others must see me."

In a brief article such as this it is impossible to cover all the issues that emerged from these interviews. Instead I would like to focus on just two connected areas: the importance of talk as a means of past development for these teachers, and talk through the interview itself which can act as a method of current development. I would like to illustrate with extracts from the interviews and email correspondence and intertwine with some commentary from the research literature. Although collapsing the voices of these teachers together means they are context free and anonymous, I have sought to find common ground across them. Some researchers in the narrative tradition are extremely critical of this approach (Denzin,

1989), but, I hope that the reader will find that these voices resonate with some part of their own teaching experience. As Sparkes (1994) points out: "Presenting moments from the lives of other teachers can fracture our taken-for-granted views and lead us to engage in some serious rethinking about ourselves and others as teachers. This in itself, for me at least, is justification enough for conducting life-history research.

The importance of talk as a development tool
Firstly, I will look at how co-operative talk is a 'valuable and obvious tool for developing teacher thinking' (Naysmith and Palma, 1997, p. 75). In order to maintain their enthusiasm for teaching over many years these teachers felt the need to be challenged outside formal courses and classroom experience. They built on their experiential learning through several methods including reading, writing, and action research, but one key method seemed to be through simply talking with other teachers, as these brief quotations illustrate,

"We share experiences and talk about materials, activities. We're teaching the same students and find out what works, any particular problems."

"It is formal but it is not so academic. It's more of a group of educators getting together to communicate their ideas."

"...we do a lot of discussion of this sort of thing, so that articulation of beliefs becomes

important."

Teaching is often a very private and isolating profession, perhaps particularly for language teachers who may well feel marginalised in some way. Work is often part-time or temporary, and even those with full time jobs are often left out of any decision making process or find it difficult to belong to a professional community. Feuerverger (1997) characterises heritage language teachers in Canada as 'wanderers in the educational landscape', and Johnston (1997) concludes 'EFL/ESL can be an unstable, marginalised, impermanent occupation'. In such circumstances talking with peers or colleagues can be vital. It is interesting to note that the contacts these teachers made were often outside their institutions through small and informal networks which may be less threatening or pressured. Through 'talk' they can begin a process of structured reflection which will help develop their own knowledge of what it means to be a teacher. One such way is to focus talk on specific 'critical incidents'. Here is one such example as a teacher remembers back to when they first began their ESL career,

"I guess I began to really see the importance of human relation interactions...I started working in small groups, started to make me connect with the learning...just to help students feel comfortable in the learning

situation...we'd go out into the communities and do some activities and using English as a medium versus working with the language. Then I began to think, oh that's the way it should be taught. Students more of a content oriented focus... English as a medium versus language as focus."

Kelchtermans (2000) argues that by exploring such critical incidents teachers may be able to reflect deeply on their experiences and use them to develop further. Such incidents are probably only identified in retrospect and are often seemingly trivial or at least non-dramatic. However, when explored in detail they can reveal choices and changes available to teachers and act as developmental tools. Conducting this kind of jointly constructed narrative interview may well be an effective way to identify and explore such incidents, and may be especially beneficial because talking about a past incident is perhaps less threatening and as a result more revealing than a focus on other more current issues where teachers may be reluctant to open themselves up to criticism. This is certainly one area of research that could be fruitful to explore, perhaps for example, looking at how more experienced mentor teachers can talk through their own critical incidents with novice colleagues.

A narrative interview as a development tool

Sparkes (1994) suggests, that for researchers, a life history approach (I am using life history as being synonymous with a narrative interview) can:

1). show the subjective reality of teachers;
2). take seriously the turning points and contradictions in teachers' lives;
3). give a totality of experience;
4). give insights into identity and self.

As I interviewed these teachers and later as I looked through the transcripts and email messages I certainly found that the four qualities Sparkes describes did emerge, giving me, as a teacher-researcher, rich insights into the lives of my participant teachers. However, it became clear that the narrative interviews were not just valuable to me as a research methodology but were also being used as a tool for the teachers themselves to use to investigate their own ideas and thoughts, and subsequently their own practice. Here is a brief example to illustrate.

One teacher came to a minor epiphany during a section of the interview about what her own experience of 'failure' meant. She said, " I discovered just now because you interviewed me that I have a prejudiced idea of the reason why I stopped being at university so this is a learning experience."

This teacher had always viewed her teaching experiences at different universities in the same light: as failures. But by talking about them she realised that they were not all the same. She had not 'failed' in all of her jobs. Later the same teacher responded by email on the same theme, this time taking her reflections further to include her students and to relate the topic to the classroom,

"I said that I related my university experience with failure. My thoughts developed on the theme of success and failure after that. I think what it is, is that, I can't stand failure in my work - failure is a disgrace to me. But I realised later that students will also have their own definitions of what success and failure is ... depending on what they are I think their performance and sense of importance in the result of what they achieve will be different... so the interview made me realise that our judgements on students can only be an indicator ... but what the students understand and value from the judgement may be a totally different story."

It is a large jump to say that reflection, growing awareness and an intellectual awakening will automatically result in improved classroom behaviour but I think this small episode illustrates the potential that is possible.

About one year after the initial interviews I had

a chance to interview several of the teachers for a second time. I asked them what had been the effect of the first interview and our subsequent correspondence. For some teachers there had been little impact; as might be expected, one hour long interview and a few emails had not led to any major changes; but there were also some very positive observations,

"It (the interview) helped a lot ...when you actually voice what you are thinking it's like reflecting on it out loud, it makes you go away and reflect more on what you said, examining yourself and how you sound to others ... it triggered off a whole new way of looking at myself because I hadn't done that before."

"... inevitably it makes you reflect on what you've said ... and it does try and make you make more sense of what you've said."

"... the kind of things I said made me think more or a bit further after the interview and I think for example ... that could be part of teacher education in a school ... I think you have to have the right kind of school culture to do it."

In this last quotation is a clue for why such a simple idea as talking about one's profession may not be so common in language teaching. In many schools there simply is not the supportive culture to allow regular opportunities to talk and reflect on one's personal development, but as these experienced teachers have shown it may be a vital mechanism for retaining interest and motivation in order to extend a career. A narrative interview can provide a framework for co-operative talk and if carried out supportively and with sensitivity can be an extremely useful way to help teachers grow. I suspect, however, that may be extremely difficult if not impossible in many schools and that many teachers, such as the ones in this study, will have to look beyond their own institutions to get such support.

One example of this kind of teacher development, termed 'collaborative autobiography', was carried out by Raymond, Butt, and Townsend (1992) with groups of teachers in formal training situations (such as attending a masters course). It would be very interesting to see if this kind of collaboration is possible in less formal, less institutionalised circumstances.

Conclusion

In this article I have described how I interviewed a small group of experienced EFL and ESL teachers about their teacher development, terming these semi-structured interviews a form of narrative in which the teachers tried to make sense of their past teaching lives and the ones to come. One major feature underlying much of these teachers' development processes was the

opportunity to talk about their profession, often in small informal groups outside of their regular school environment. The narrative interview itself and follow up emails acted as a further opportunity for sheltered talk, and many of the teachers used this chance to reflect how and why they have developed, and in so doing may have grown still further. One teacher wrote about this process,

"I think it's difficult to say exactly what the effect of narration was. It was the first time anyone interviewed me. I tend to think a lot and talk to myself internally but it was different. I don't think any changes are due solely to the interview, but I would say that the process of interviews ... does create a process of change because they are about the communication of ideas to someone else ... I think over a period of time you could build up the trust and background to discuss ideas and that process of discussion and the evaluation of ideas ... would probably lead to change."

The results from this study are still very exploratory but I will certainly continue to follow this group of teachers to see how their development changes as they get older. I think that other groups of teachers who are not so geographically spread could benefit from interviewing each other in a more concentrated way, perhaps using written life histories as a starting point for discussion. Out of such narratives may emerge a number of educational issues, such as previously hidden 'critical incidents', which can act as a focus for further reflection and awareness raising, and which may in turn lead to growth and change.

In my introduction I quoted from Kelchtermans (2000) three reasons why narratives are a useful tool for examining teacher development: narratives are a powerful starting point for reflection; narratives are teachers' natural voice; and finally, that sharing narrative experiences can be fun and motivating. It has been my experience through this research that all three reasons were wholly justified and that exploring the narratives of fellow teachers has been a wonderful opportunity for my own development and motivation too. If only to hear such comments as,

"I think actually my challenge, I mean keeping interested is not my problem. The problem is having a life beyond it and that's my challenge really...I'm just endlessly interested...I think I have a passion for teaching it's what, you know, I just love it."

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INCITING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT a new column for the TESIG Newsletter

Robert Croker

In an effort to get you thinking about new and different ways to stimulate professional development (PD), we are starting a special column called 'Inciting professional development'. To start it off, Tim Murphey volunteered to write the first piece which appears below.

John McLaughlin incited Murphey's PD by sending him a chapter from the 2000 edition of the Handbook of Qualitative Research. (When was the last time you sent a colleague something that rocked your boat?) Then Murphey wrote a reflective review of the chapter (something any of you could do for us in the next TE edition). He also looped (Tessa Woodward's Looped Input Pigrims 1988) in the proposed autoethnographic style of the chapter into his piece, which the actual chapter does as well, and thus showed how we might develop ourselves through modeling the writing style of those we are reading in a small way.

I JUST READ THIS CHAPTER...it blew me away

Inciting professional development

Tim Murphey

"Did you finish the paper you were writing?" Naomi asked.

I shook my head and said, "No, John McLaughlin sent me this neat chapter called 'Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity' from the new *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. When I got it I thought, "That's all I need is another postmodern regressive deconstructionist picking apart abstractions of academic arcanicality." Naomi knew I had ten deadlines looming, a pile of papers to get through, and no food in the fridge.

"But I made the mistake of reading the first line," I continued, "which was a dialogue. Dialogues I love. People I love. They be real man!" I said doing my best Eddy Murphy. And then the right side of my brain said temptingly, "You need a small break into someone else's life. Go ahead and escape into the dialogue. It's good for you." Then my slave-driving left side added, "But only until the dialogue is over. Then back to work!" So I started reading. 'Only until the dialogue was over.' The trouble was that the dialog didn't end until two hours and three coffees later just before the references. Naomi laughs and smiles. She knows when I am excited about something and she knows she probably won't understand all that I say, but she still likes seeing me passionate about my work. Somehow I realize she likes seeing me talk this way but that she won't fully understand, and I appreciate her even more for giving me the space. Yet inside there is some part of me calling me 'egocentric' for continuing. So I stop and continue later typing in my computer's Endnotes.

There are parts of this that break into other genres at times. It isn't all dialogue. There's a professional development history, a draft of an introduction to the topic, a speech and debate, and a reality-up-close story of a graduate student grappling with investigating her own recovery from breast cancer and those of other survivors.

The goal and impact of the chapter is to actually show how 'to make the researcher's own experience a topic of investigation in its own right' (p. 733). The authors, Ellis and Bochner, walk their talk beautifully as they question the 'conventions' which 'militate against personal and passionate writing' (734) and demonstrate a form that allows 'readers to feel the moral dilemmas, think with our story instead of about it, join actively in the decision points that define an autoethnographic project, and consider how their own lives can be made a story worth telling.' (735).

Page 758 'As Ruth Josselson says, when we get to the writing stage, we tend to take ourselves out of relationship with our participants to form a relationship with readers. How can we help then but have feelings of betraying our participants.' TM Yes! I am in good rapport with my students often and wish to report how something occurred and then I often seem to change things to fit my imagined readers' minds. Change things to make them more abstractly appealing to the conventions of academia and my students' voices are silenced.

Autoethnographies seek to express their understandings in user-friendly terms (not what is known as traditionally academic discourse). They use 'I' and 'You' and dialogues and thinking and a host of other means that are normally only allowed fiction writers. Their prose is immensely more readable and accessible and exciting. They are challenging in that they invite the knowledge of emotions to scream passionately, 'I'm here! Use me! It's OK!'

What's more is that it is OK for writers themselves to be vulnerable: 'If you let yourself be vulnerable, then your readers are more likely to respond vulnerably, and that's what you want, vulnerable readers. I agree with Ruth Behar, who wrote in The Vulnerable Observer that social science 'that doesn't

break your heart just isn't worth doing." (p. 752). Wow!

And finally when speaking of 'ethnographers of the self,' they say

'And good teaching involves ethnography too. . . Over time you try to work your way through the barriers of unfamiliarity, distance, and difference toward a spirit of collaboration, understanding, and openness to experience and participation. When we learn how to open ourselves to ourselves and to each other, we find it easier to drop some of our resistance to different ideas. I like to think of this as working toward an ethnographic consciousness in the classroom that is personal, intimate, and empathic.' (p. 760)

Here, my brainrainbow flashed on my tools article (Murphey, 2001) and how the students and their understandings were the topic of the course for me, and them, and how I want to turn more of my classes into groups doing ethnographies of the self. I feel language learning can really deal with any topic, so why not add more value to the language learning endeavor and teach people how to get to know themselves situated where they are. I want to be more of an ethnographer of the students, and of myself. Naomi says, "Pizza?" with a gleam in her eye.

I realize at the same time that there are

tensions in such decisions and that I tend to avoid conflict when possible. My academic self has invested heavily in certain ways of thinking and writing. There seems to be a certain systemically learned-helplessness that connects our expectations, beliefs, and behaviors to our past ways of doing things, no matter how inappropriate or unproductive they may be (just look at the entrance exam system in Japan!). I and my students, as well as other teachers and researchers, need ways to gently transform or we become radical conservatives fighting to hold on to the "known." Naomi knows I like ordering in a pizza while I work. I know she likes going out and I will learn more about us if I do. It's a small step. I say, "Let's go somewhere new and explore." The gleam in her eye becomes a beaming smile and in my mind I see her skipping like a child. Transformations can also happen quickly and smoothly.

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Thanks John, Naomi arigato

THE IDEAS BEHIND TESOL'S NEW

Professional development in Language Education *series*

http://www.tesol.org/pubs/author/books/calls/2001profdev.html#top

Tim Murphey, series editor

On February 27th, 2001 a dozen professionals met for a day-long meeting to discuss the past, present and future of TESOL Publications. One of the main topics was the discussion of a new series to promote professional development. The *Professional Development in Language Education* (PD) series was conceived somewhere in the misty past most probably by Kathleen Graves (out-going chair of the TESOL Publications Committee) and Karen Johnson (in-coming chair) and the much appreciated Marilyn Kupetz (staff liaison and managing editor of TESOL Publications). It was hatched and extensively discussed on February 27th with valuable input from the members present: Steve Cornwall, Joy Egbert, Alison Rice, Jill Burton, Kathryn Weed, Bill Johnston, Caroline Linse, Lin Lougheed, and I. Gail Weinstein also stimulated discussion greatly in the afternoon.

It was decided that the goals of the series would be to provide teachers with a multitude of ideas for professional development at various stages in their careers and to encourage teachers to think of their profession

as the 'learning-profession' (check out Darling-Hammond's books on Amazon.com) involving exciting continual development throughout their lives.

We not only wanted to get teachers excited about becoming contributing professionals in their own right, but also to get them excited about stimulating the development of other teachers. This can be done through publications, presentations, collaborations, and through organizing these things for colleagues, that is, access publications (in which teachers can publish short practical work they are doing in their classes) and presentation opportunities at small mini-conferences. Finally, we also wanted to find out for our own professional development what new and unique things our colleagues around the world were doing in the way of professional development. There was a real sense at the meeting that we going to explore PD more completely that we ever had, that we were going to activate creative minds and action, and that we would be able to stimulate collaborative professional development with this series.

We generally conceived of three levels of potential users, the professionals in their first few years, those in mid career, and those that have matured and continued to seek further adventures in the field. We also wanted to invite graduate and undergraduate students in TESOL to get professionally involved BEFORE they graduate/start teaching. Thus, we strongly encourage contributions from students who are getting professionally involved to especially write for the first volume. Initiatives by teacher educators that encourage such involvement will probably best fit in volume three.

It was also generally understood that teachers at any age or stage in their career could potentially learn from any of the books in the series. We found that many of the PD ideas were worthy of doing throughout our careers (e.g collaborating with others, writing reflection logs, and videoing our classes). There were also those that definitely did have a later-stage feeling to them (e.g. applying for grants, journal editing, directing a language program). Thus, we decided to remain flexible as we coordinated what PD activities might fit into which book and which ones might fit into all books with a different twist. We decided that working on this project would be professional development itself and a way to contribute to our profession. We have since recruited two excellent volume editors in Joy Egbert (volume 1) and Pat Byrd (volume 3) who are as excited as we are about the potential in the series. It will certainly be professional development for me as I learn from Joy and Pat and the rest of the TESOL team in my role as editor of volume 2 and series editor.

The call for contributors and rubrics for chapters was posted on the TESOL web page on June 2. (Web address at the top of this piece.) You may already be thinking about your favorite ways to promote yours and your colleagues' professional development. You might even be dreaming of some exciting and unique ways to develop that have escaped the literature so far. Visit the web page and explore. Contact us before December 15 with your ideas.

[And you might also be thinking of how you would write about these things for the new column on 'Inciting professional development' as illustrated on page 28. Ed.]

TEACHER EDUCATION SIG-SPONSORED FEATURED SPEAKER EVENTS FOR PAC3 AT JALT2001

November is conference time and this year's annual JALT Conference looks to be even more exciting and international than ever. Since this year's conference is so unique, many of you may have been wondering what special events the Teacher Education SIG will be sponsoring this year. The main events involve our Co-Featured Speakers, Nguyen thi Hoai An, UCLES, HoChi Minh City, Vietnam, and Naoko Aoki from Osaka University. They will conduct a special Featured Speaker Workshop on Thursday morning, November

22 and each have their own presentations in the main conference program. They will also be sharing more of their experiences in the TE SIG Forum entitled, Developing Structures for Teacher Support.

The biographical data or our speakers and presentation summaries can be seen below. In addition, handy links to more detailed conference program and schedule information are also given. Look for their article in the (month?) TLT.

If you would like to volunteer to help with making our speakers feel comfortable and welcome during their stay here, please contact me at <miriamblacktesig@yahoo.com> and I'll put you to work!
Don't forget to register early and see you in Kitakyushu!

Miriam Black, Teacher Education SIG Coordinator

Biographical Data:
Nguyen thi Hoai An started teaching EFL in 1976 to high school students. Since 1994 she has been working as a freelance teacher at various state and private universities as well as language centers in Ho Chi Minh City. From her work with University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), first as an Oral Examiner, then as a Consultant

and Regional Team Leader (Speaking Tests), Nguyen thi Hoai An has developed interests in the language testing system in Vietnam. Her concerns for testing also include teaching methodologies and positive backwash effects of testing on teaching and learning English. Even in the restricted situation of Vietnam, Nguyen thi Hoai An considers learner autonomy valuable and tries to implement and promote it in her classes. On the teacher education side, her collaboration with a colleague has involved her providing educational consultancy to different language organizations in HoChi Minh City and preparing the set-up of the first TESOL club in the city.

Naoko Aoki taught Japanese as a second language and worked for a variety of in-service training projects for 11 years before going into pre-service JSL teacher education in 1991. She has always been interested in the issues concerning learner autonomy and started working on the topic almost exclusively when she co-founded JALT's Learner Development SIG with Richard Smith in 1994. Her publications include:

- "Examining definitions of learner autonomy." Handai Nihongo Kenkyuu,10, 129-148. 1998;
- "Affect and the role of teachers in the development of learner autonomy." In Arnold, J. (Ed.). Affect in Language Learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1999;

- "Learner Autonomy in Cultural Context: The Case of Japan." In Cotterall, S. & Crabbe, D. (Eds.). Learner
Autonomy in Language Learning: Defining the Field and Effecting Change. Frankfurt am Main: Lang. 1999
(Co-authored with Richard Smith).

Naoko is currently associate professor at the Graduate School of Letters, Osaka University, where she leads teacher training courses emphasizing both learner and teacher autonomy.

Featured Speaker Workshop:
Towards Teacher Autonomy Through Writing: Your Story of Learner Autonomy
Nguyen thi Hoai An and Noako Aoki
Just think of a few words and phrases that spring to mind when you hear or read the term learner autonomy. Both personal and professional experiences imbue our understandings of learner autonomy and our capacity to support our learners' developing autonomy. Here, we consider these interconnections more closely. In our workshop at JALT2001, we invite you to do so too, (re-) discovering your teacher autonomy through reflection on your own journey of learner autonomy.

For more information and how to register for

this event please go to
<http://jalt.org/jalt2001>

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Solo Presentation:

Shaping an Identity as Teacher Educator

Naoko Aoki, Osaka University with Uichi
Kamiyoshi, Osaka University; Rikako Maeda,
Osaka University;

Masanori Nagami, Osaka University; Matthew
Burdelski, UCLA

The presenters will address how teacher
educators develop their professional identity
by reporting on their experience of
collaboratively teaching a JSL teaching
practicum. The audience will be invited to
discuss their own experience of becoming a
teacher educator and explore what new
meaning our stories might add to their
experience.

For more information on this presentation
please go to <http://members.home.ne.jp/
swanson/2001schedule/1870.html>.

Solo Presentation:
Cultural Effects: Learning and Teaching in
Vietnam

Nguyen thi Hoai An

Where traditional ways of learning and
teaching coincide with social hierarchy, new
trends in teaching and learning foreign
languages, though welcomed by some, are
sources of conflict for others. This research-
based presentation gives an interpretive
overview of such cultural influences on the
ways learners and teachers work in Vietnam.

For more information on this presentation
please go to <http://members.home.ne.jp/
swanson/2001schedule/1871.html>.

TE SIG Forum:

Developing Structures for Teacher Support

Moderator: Miriam Black, Kyushu Lutheran
College, with Nguyen thi Hoai An, UCLES, Ho
Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Tessa Woodward,
Hilderstone College, Kent, England; Naoko
Aoki, Osaka University; Jessica Hsin-Hwa
Chen, Yuan Ze University, Taiwan, Republic
of China; and Nobuyuki Takaki, Kumamoto
University

Presentation Overview--Teachers who
participate in collaborative projects and have
the support of a wider community often have
greater professional satisfaction and
confidence in their teaching. However, where
no such structures already exist, the challenge
is to create such a community. In this forum,
an international panel of speakers will explore
different ways in which they and others have

collaboratively built structures of community, development and support for fostering improved teacher education.

Nguyen thi Hoai An: Working on projects outside of the traditional educational setting can be a catalyst for collaborative teacher development. In this presentation, one such collaborative project, the setting up of the first TESOL club in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, will be examined.

Tessa Woodward: This presentation describes contexts in Italy and India where educational professionals with little money, few resources, but much imagination have addressed the challenge of working together, and created a little magic for themselves and their classes.

Naoko Aoki: A professional support group can also exist in the form of an international network. In this presentation, the workings of this kind of network will be explored. Though only meeting once or twice a year at conferences, this kind of group provides immense support for professional development.

Jessica Hsin-Hwa Chen: One medium for teacher collaboration and support is through an electronic discussion group. Educators involved in such a group are international and bring various levels of expertise to the

discussion. The presenter will demonstrate how this is an effective and efficient channel for teachers to share information, experiences and ideas.

Nobuyuki Takaki: To address issues of professional isolation in education in Japan, the grassroots support organization, PIGATE, was established in 1993. In this group, pre-service and in-service teachers, as well as teacher educators work together to become better practitioners. In this presentation, the achievements and challenges that PIGATE faces will be examined.

For more information on the TE SIG Forum please go to <http://members.home.ne.jp/ swanson/ 2001schedule/1554.html>

TESSA WOODWARD WORKSHOP

Tessa Woodward will be presenting a workshop, "Lesson planning by 'threads'", from 1:00pm on November 17, 2001 at Tokyo Jogakkan Jr. College near Minami-machida. Her presentation is scheduled to last about two and a half hours.

She describes her presentation as follows:
"In this workshop I'll show you a way of saving time when planning lessons. "Threads" are activities set up by you and your students which, once introduced, can be picked up again in later lessons with a minimum of

explanation to run and rerun, reviewing and consolidating work on vocabulary, the four skills, social skills and/or language items. You'll have a chance to experience example activities and to comment on them."

The next issue is due out in October, so if you could send your pieces in by the middle of September, that would give the newletter team a chance to help you revise your work in good time, should that be necessary.

DISMEMBERED MEMBERS AND E-MAILLESS MEMBERS

Please could everyone check that their JALT and, more importantly, their TE SIG membership has been renewed and is up to date?

Could the following people also let me have their e-mail addresses if they have one?

baines robert/ kawaguchi ellen/ kurazumi osamu/ okada junko/ oostyen chris/ palisada maria eloisa/ yamazaki stella

It just helps to have everyone's e-mail address so that if the Coordinator wants to contact everyone in the SIG in a hurry, it is possible!

Thanks, Tim Ashwell (Membership) tashwell@komazawa-u.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 for details:

Robert Croker croker@ic.nanzan-u.ac.jp

Katie Datko kdatko@hotmail.com

Kazuyoshi Sato yoshi@nufs.nakanishi.ac.jp

Catherine Haigh Smith cathaigh@gol.com

Shinichiro Yokomizo yokomizo@educ. hiroshima-u.ac.jp

Explorations in Teacher Education

教師教育の探求他

the newsletter of the JALT Teacher Education SIG