Explorations in Teacher Education
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the newsletter of the JALT Teacher Education SIG

Volume 9, Number 2 (November 2001)

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

Hi everyone! It's conference time again! This year's PAC3 at JALT 2001 Conference in Kitakyushu promises to be full of exciting programs and presentations from a truly international field of experts. Please look inside this issue for your guide to the TE SIG events at the conference, and join us in welcoming our Co-Featured Speakers: Nguyen thi Hoai An from UCLES, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and Naoko Aoki from Osaka University.

They will conduct the Featured Speaker Workshop – 'Towards Teacher Autonomy Through Writing: Your Story of Learning Autonomy', on Thursday morning, November 22. In addition, they will both participate in the TE SIG Forum entitled 'Developing Structures for Teacher Support', alongside other renowned teacher educators such as Tessa Woodward, Jessica Hsin-Hwa Chen, and Nobuyuki Takaki. Furthermore, do not miss our Co-Featured Speakers' own solo presentations in the main conference program.

Another important TE SIG conference event is the Annual General Meeting (AGM). This venue provides an excellent opportunity for members to meet and exchange knowledge. If you have an interesting idea for a mini-conference theme, a suggestion for next year's Featured Speaker, a TE SIG Forum topic, or want to become more involved in the running of the SIG as an officer, the AGM is the place to voice your views. In addition, a great way to meet people is to volunteer to sit at the TE SIG information table. Contact me at miriamblacktesig@yahoo.com if you are interested in volunteering a little of your time, and I will slot you in.

If all these presentations cannot fit into your hectic schedule, at some point during the conference take a few minutes to drop by the TE SIG information table, introduce yourself and relax for a bit. When you drop by, please sign up for the TE SIG party! It will be on Saturday night from 8:00pm at 'Kura', near the south exit of Kokura Station (tel: 093-551-0466). Also, check for any last minute changes in presentation times or venues.

For those readers who are new to the Teacher Education SIG, this SIG can best be described as a network of foreign language instructors dedicated to becoming better teachers and helping others teach more effectively. The TE SIG attracts teaching practitioners from diverse contexts and focuses on five areas of development:
--Action research
--Teacher reflection
--Peer-based development
--Teacher motivation
--Training and supervision

If this describes at least part of the work you do, or a direction in which you are heading professionally, please join us. And for current members, please renew your TE SIG membership when renewing your annual JALT membership. In that way you can ensure that you will not miss an issue of the newsletter or other important information throughout the year. See you all in Kitakyushu!
Miriam Black
TE SIG Coordinator
miriamblacktesig@yahoo.com

AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR ...
TE SIG Newsletter Coordinating Editor
Hello! I hope that you enjoy this issue, my first as Coordinating Editor. Please think about submitting to the Special February issue on the new JHS/SHS curriculum. Information is on page 43. I'm looking forward to meeting you all at the TE SIG AGM!
Robert Croker
TE SIG Newsletter Coordinating Editor
croker@nanzan-u.ac.jp

Teacher Education SIG Party
at PAC3 at JALT2001

Saturday 24 November, 8:00-10:00pm
at KURA (倉) (tel: 093-551-0466)
Please join us for our annual Teacher Education SIG Party!

Last year's party was a riot! This year's party will also be a great chance to unwind after two hard days of conferencing. Please make a reservation at the TE SIG information table by Saturday afternoon.

KURA is relatively close to the Conference Center, and is easy to find. Outside the south exit of Kokura JR Station, you'll see a deserted Sogo department store. Go around that building on the east side (left). You'll pass a park on your left. Across the street straight ahead to the south you'll find the building housing KURA, which is on the first floor. The entrance is in the northwest corner. Above the entrance there is a large rectangular lighted panel - - yellow background with black lettering; in the center is a black square with 倉 written in it in white. The reservation is under Teacher Education. A map to KURA is to the right.

Teacher Education SIG AGM
at PAC3 at JALT2001

Sunday 25 November, 12:00 midday-12:45pm, Room 21A
Please also join us for our Teacher Education SIG AGM.

This is an opportunity for members and others who share the same interests to meet and discuss the future of the Teacher Education SIG. The TE SIG currently addresses the following areas of development: action research, teacher reflection, peer-based development, teacher motivation, and teacher training and supervision. Reports on the past year's activities will be made, new officers chosen, and coming events organized. Bring your ideas and suggestions!
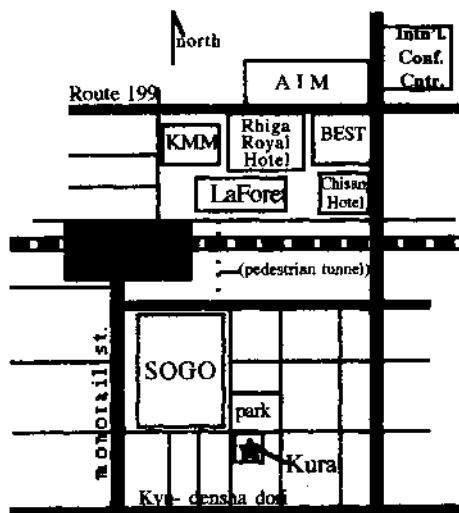
TE SIG at PAC3 at JALT2001
Teacher Education SIG sponsored Events Guide
for PAC3 at JALT2001

This year the conference organizers have streamed presentations thematically into different rooms. When you take a look at the conference schedule, please note that many presentations regarding teacher education and teacher development will take place in Room 21A. The following is a summary of this year's special TE-SIG sponsored events.

Thursday 22 November, 10:00am-1:00pm
Featured Speaker Workshop:
'Towards Teacher Autonomy Through Writing: Your Story of Learner Autonomy'
Presenters: Nguyen thi Hoai An and Naoko 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: http://jalt.org/jalt2001.

Friday 23 November, 6:00pm-6:45pm
Room 11 Presentation #1870
Featured Speaker Presentation:
'Shaping an Identity as Teacher Educator'
Presenters: Naoko Aoki, with Uichi Kamiyoshi, Rikako Maeda, Masanori Nagami, and Matthew Burdelski
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: http://members.home.ne.jp/swanson/2001 schedule/1870.html.

Co-Featured Speaker **Ngyyen thi Hoai An** works in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, as a Consultant to a number of different language organizations on language testing and learner autonomy. She first began teaching EFL in 1976 to high school students, and since 1994 has been working as a freelance teacher at various universities and language centres. She is presently a Consultant and Regional Team Leader for UCLES.

For further information on PAC3 at JALT2001, please visit the well-organised http://jalt.org/jalt2001 website. The conference schedule, and abstracts and summaries for all presentations, are all available there. There is also information about transport and accommodation, and local Kyushu links are provided.

Saturday 24 November, 9:00am-9:45am, Room 32B Presentation #1871

Featured Speaker Solo Presentation: 'Cultural Effects: Learning and Teaching in Vietnam'

Presenter: 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: http://members.home.ne.jp/swanson/2001 schedule/1871.html.

Saturday 24th November, 5:00pm-6:45pm, Room 21A Presentation #1554

TE SIG Forum: 'Developing Structures for Teacher Support'

Moderator: Miriam Black, with Nguyen thi Hoai An, Tessa Woodward, Naoko Aoki, Jessica Hsin-Hwa Chen, Nobuyuki Takaki

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.

For more information: http://members.home.ne.jp/swanson/2001 schedule/1554.html.

Co-Featured Speaker **Naoko Aoki** is an Associate Professor at Osaka University, where she leads pre-service JSL teacher training courses on learner and teacher autonomy. She taught JSL for 11 years before going into JSL teacher education in 1991. She co-founded JALT's Learner Development SIG with Richard Smith in 1994. Both Ngyyen thi Hoai An and Naoko Aoki are interviewed by Joseph Tomei in the following article.

An Interview with Nguyen thi Hoai An and Naoko Aoki

by Joseph Tomei, Kumamoto Gakuen University

Thanks to the wonders of e-mail, this 'interview' took place over the course of two months. It's been cut and pasted to make it seem like we were sitting round a table, (which we were unfortunately not) so any mistakes or errors should be attributed to my use of authorial powers rather than to Hoai An or Naoko. Naoko Aoki's introduction is presented in much more detail in her article that is to appear in Benson, P. & Toogood, S. (Eds.). Learner Autonomy 7: Challenges to Practice and Evaluation. Dublin: Authentik. This interview and Hoai An's participation in her joint featured speaker workshop with Naoko Aoki at PAC3 at JALT 2001 is partially supported through a research grant from Kumamoto Gakuen University.

Joe: Hello and thank you both for agreeing to do this interview. It's usual in Japan to begin letters with a reference to the weather and at the moment, here in Kumamoto, we are alternating between rain and heat, tied together by a clinging humidity. I trust that both north to Osaka and south to Vietnam, the weather is tolerable.

Even more usual is to begin the interview with a question about your background and influences, so concerning backgrounds, in the Language Teacher, your co-authored article speaks of the gradual change in becoming pro-autonomy teachers, which is a very good point. At the same time, you use the word 'crystallizing' and I'd like to take that image and ask if there was an experience or a moment in which both of you feel that various strands of your research could be seen as a 'crystallized' whole.

Hoai An: To begin with, it's a gloomy day today in Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City). The rainy season has 'officially' started in early June. The rain has brought some fresh air to the city. It's also 'romantic' riding a motorbike in the rain and feeling raindrops on the face. Of course only when it doesn't rain too heavily and the streets are not flooded.

I started my teaching career in 1976 in a small town in the highlands. Foreign languages taught at high schools and universities were Russian, English and French. Teaching English then meant

coping with the lack of facilities in classes of about 45 to 50 students, mainly focusing on reading comprehension and grammar. For ten years in that town, I taught at a junior high school, from grade 6 to 9, and then was transferred to the only senior high school, preparing students for their graduation exams. Not all the students at this senior high school could sit the English exam for their graduation because they came from remote villages where there were no English classes at all. So, I had to help them from the beginning, using the syllabus and textbooks for the sixth grade. When they finished the twelfth grade, their English level was equal to those at the eighth grade. For those who had studied English from their sixth grade, the three compulsory subjects for their graduation exams were Mathematics, Vietnamese Literature, and English. The 4th subject could be Physics, Chemistry or Biology depending on the decision of the Ministry of Education. For those who didn't study English for seven years before the graduation exams, the replacement for English was Geography. However, for about three or four years, English was not a compulsory subject for these exams.

Moving back to Ho Chi Minh City in 1986, I taught at a prestigious high school, where better facilities were provided though the classes were still of the same size. The first workshop on methodology given by the Australian Overseas Bureau (OSB) was in about 1990 or 91. I attended the one in 1992 and that was the first time I had ever heard of CLT. Since then, CLT has been mentioned in almost all language teaching meetings and the trend is to apply it to the language classroom.

Among other difficulties, the imposing of curricula and textbooks by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has restrained the development of language teaching and learning. The Grammar-Translation method is still popular and that has a serious impact on learner autonomy. From my own experiences of learning English, I have always wanted to advocate learners' more independent thinking and taking responsibility. I think it'd give Vietnamese learners more opportunities to make great progress, not only for their English learning but also for all the other subjects. It'd also help to improve the education system.

I was very glad, and have considered myself lucky, to be asked to collaborate with Naoko for the coming JALT conference.

Naoko: I came to learner autonomy first in the early 70's. Although I liked the idea I never made a connection then between learner autonomy and my teaching of English to primary and junior high school children as a part-timer. I taught in a teacher-fronted format, giving few choices to those I taught.

I started teaching Japanese as a second language (JSL) in 1980. I worked at a school that offered both EFL and JSL courses. Through my friendships with English speaking colleagues, I met JSL learners outside of the classroom and became aware of their frustrations with both traditional JSL classes and with Japanese society.

Through meetings with colleagues practicing a number of approaches from Suggestopedia to Silent Way, as well as through extensive reading of people like Earl Stevick, Mario Rinvolucri and Alan Maley, my own personal theory of teaching began to develop, but in retrospect I was still taking control of the learners' learning process. I had learned that the Communicative Approach was a way to democratize foreign language education (Brumfit, 1988), but I only had a partial understanding of what that really meant.

It was some encounters with students again that gave me a clearer awareness of my role and responsibility. I moved on to teacher education in 1991 and taught a small JSL teacher preparation programme. Many of the students were not in the programme because they planned to go into the teaching profession. This forced me to transform my original objective. I started providing students with opportunities to reflect on their learning experiences and introduce alternative ways of learning rather than focusing on pre-determined knowledge and skills.

Around this time I started coordinating JALT's Learner Development SIG jointly with Richard Smith. Through my work as a co-coordinator I met a lot of learner autonomy practitioners and researchers. Communication with them stimulated my thinking and their interest in my practice encouraged my development.

Joe: First of all, Hoai An, you noted that the rainy season was starting in Vietnam and here in Japan, we are (or seem to be) on the last part of it. This reminded me of one of the points that I hoped to explore in this interview and that was the cultural component (or lack of it) in learner (and teacher) autonomy, especially viewed in the 'Asian' context. As you probably know, a lot of articles

have discussed the validity of autonomy for 'Asian classrooms'. A couple of references would include Littlewood's 'Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts' in Applied Linguistics and Jones' 1995 ELT Journal article and the CUE SIG's conference proceedings of Autonomy 2000: The Development of Learning Independence in Language Learning.

The two positions (and this is an oversimplification, so I wouldn't attribute these positions to any particular writer, but this is just to lay out the two sides) are that 1) autonomy is essential to learning versus 2) autonomy is a Western concept and is not conducive to more group oriented societies, such as the kind we find in Asia.

Here in Japan, we seem to be on the verge of a period of 'doi moi'* in that the Ministry of Education (which was named Monbusho, but is now called Monbukagakusho) is calling for privatization of National universities and a number of other 'reforms', though many of these reforms seem designed to keep the same oversight in place with less budget. In the TLT article, it noted that the period of doi moi began in 1986 and that at this time syllabi and textbooks began to be less restricted. As we approach changes here in Japan, what sort of

lessons should we take away from Vietnam's experience?

(Note for readers, an online bibliography of autonomy research is at http://ec.hku.hk/autonomy/bibliog.html, maintained by Phil Benson, the author of 'Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning' and 'Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning', both published by Pearson)

Hoai An: What I've found out from 50 students at different schools and levels is that the majority think they need to carry out outside class activities such as reading English books/magazines, listening to the radio, practising with their friends, and so on. Mainly, their teachers make suggestions and encourage them not only to study when they're in class. These are not compulsory at all. These students are willing to do whatever they can to improve their English. However, they feel much better with their teacher guidance and think their teachers know what should be learned and taught better then they do. Though the sample is small, I think it's possible for students to follow the track and gradually change their way of learning to become more independent. I believe it's better for the learner to discover their own way of studies and learn to think independently. It certainly

takes time and Vietnamese needs to make big changes in the whole education system, not only in English teaching and learning.

This leads to a personal experience. In about 1991, when I was teaching at a language centre where most of the learners were high school and university students, I was impatient with a group of pre-intermediate level students because of their shyness, and tried to urge them to do more work on their own. I gave them the task of making short presentations about themselves and their families. They were allowed to prepare at home and the other students might ask questions after each presentation. To my surprise and frustration, several of them didn't come to class and then even dropped out later when it was their turns to make presentations! I was hurt also. But then I learned from that: without careful preparation from the teacher, students in such an environment like Vietnam would feel unsafe by such an experience. Sudden freedom would not be welcome and certainly, there is no short cut for autonomy without raising the learner's awareness. When they haven't trusted the teacher yet and if the bond is not close enough, there won't be any success. I did feel rejected though!

We should not forget that these students of mine were mainly high school and university students and in their study situation, creativity and individualism were not, and still haven't been, encouraged.

It was true that for a long time after 1975, Russian got all the priority. It was said that the ratio for Russian, English and French was 2/2/ 1 with the tendency to reduce English to 1, French to 0 and raise Russian to 4. When the country began to show approval for English again in about 1988, Russian teachers had to face the issues of teaching a difficult language not many people wanted to learn. The number of students of English increased dramatically while the number of Russian students just fell sharply and these teachers had to go back to colleges and universities to be retrained. With the help of their schools, they were allowed to teach fewer hours, and in fact, in many schools, there were almost no students of Russian after 1990. Most of them were trained for 2 years and then attended courses called 'transferred programme' to get their university degree, equal to the BA in teaching English. The time and other work they had to do at the same time with their studies did not guarantee adequate training. Anyway, when they

finished their re-training, most of these teachers were allowed to teach senior high school students and prepare 12th grade students for their graduation exams. You can imagine how the system may suffer from this. It was not these teachers' fault and of course, like everyone else, they had to earn a living, for themselves and their families.

Joe: Your last comments are of special interest to me because, as I understand it, Vietnam had Russian as the primary foreign language and it was mandated that all these teachers were to begin teaching English. One of the most exciting things about the PAC event is that we will begin to make comparisons across Asia.

To keep in that vein, do you feel your definition of autonomy is general enough to be applied anywhere or that it exists in the context of the Vietnamese or Japanese system

Naoko: Each teacher has their own definition embedded in the context of their work and it is always in flux. That's the nature of a teacher's personal theory of teaching and that's what teachers use in their teaching. Your question seems to me that you assume teachers in one country will have one and the same

definition.

Hoai An: I don't think it's necessary to apply the same concept of LA in different places though Asian countries seem to have several similarities. Several years ago, without taking different learning styles into consideration, I forced my students to take part in the class activities I thought beneficial for them. It did not work well! Our students' reactions will decide what should be done to help them. I've tried to put myself in their shoes so that I can partly make anticipation.

Joe: So, this leads to the question of how do you define autonomy?

Naoko: Defining learner autonomy is a very difficult task. For one thing definitions tend to contain other concepts that need further defining. Teachers and researchers also have different interests that they think LA should serve as Phil Benson observes. Having said this, I'd define LA as a capacity to make choices concerning one's own learning, implement the plan and evaluate the outcome in the service of one's own good.

Hoai An: I quite agree with Naoko that it's not easy to define autonomy in a clear-cut way. Each teacher has his/her own

'definition' and their own ways to carry out their different roles in their own classroom. I started teaching without any idea about LA, but just with some gut feeling of what I needed to do for my students. I've gradually realised that learners need to develop their ability of thinking independently and learn to take responsibility for their learning. Littlewood emphasised learner's responsibility and I think it nicely fits in with the Vietnamese context. Along the way of practising LA, individuals should be respected. In the 'family' classroom in Vietnam, each individual is usually be hidden behind the whole group. While this may give a sense of security to some individuals and help with their cognitive development, it may also hinder their progress.

Joe: This brings up an interesting question. Hoai An is a teacher trainer and Naoko used the word 'mentor' in discussing her personal history. How is it that we train people to teach autonomy? For me, teaching students to develop their interests is part of the enjoyable part of being a teacher. But when one has to teach someone else to teach someone else, things get a bit tricky, especially when it's done in the framework of teacher training here in Japan (oftentimes a 3 hour Saturday afternoon workshop) I

know there's no magic solution, but what thoughts do you have about training teachers to be autonomous?

Hoai An: You were quite right when you said that teaching someone to teach someone else was tricky. And I doubt if we can train our students to be autonomous. What's important to me is their intrinsic motivation. Confucius taught his disciples not to do to others what they didn't want others to do to them. I just hope my students will choose to pass on to their own students what they like in my way of working with them. Time is another element that makes a pro autonomy teacher's role more difficult. I would like to point out the important influence of the whole education system, especially in Vietnam, where students do need to be allowed to think independently.

Naoko: I don't think training is a right word to go with teacher autonomy. (Autonomy can't be taught either for that matter.) Teacher autonomy is inextricably related with personal autonomy and it should be discussed in terms of professional and personal development. Obviously a three-hour Saturday afternoon workshop can't do much. But action research, which some teacher

educators advocate for fostering teacher autonomy, is so time consuming that it is an unpractical suggestion for many practicing teachers. What seems to be promising is teachers' conversation groups which meet regularly, perhaps once a month, where teachers tell their story and give new meanings to their experience. I facilitate such a group. I try to help the teachers assert their own autonomy and I do not give priority to learner autonomy there. One reason I don't is simply the group consists of my students who do not necessarily come to my class because they know about or are interested in learner autonomy. Making learner autonomy an issue would be an imposition of my values. The other reason is I think teachers need to come to terms with their individual selves in order to cope with the uncertainty any kind of development always involves.

"Mentor" is a word I used in talking about working with pre-service student teachers, and I don't think my role in working with experienced teachers should be called as such.

Joe: I really appreciate the call, perhaps the necessity, of fitting the teaching to the students rather than the students to the teaching. But part of education is to establish benchmarks, goals that mean

that the student passing English 1 class this year will have the same basic skills that a student passing the class 5 years from now. How do we manage this flux so that we establish standards?

Naoko: The concept of standards needs to be reconsidered if we are to foster development of learner autonomy. Each learner has their own agenda of development which should be respected. Evaluation should be carried out according to the criteria each learner sets.

Hoai An: About establishing benchmarks, the nature of this task is a real flux, so it has a relative value as no one can be nicely fitted into one category and always stays there. Goals need to be set up but each individual has his/her own way of achievement.

Joe: The role of foreigners is one that gets a lot of attention here in Japan. What is the view from Vietnam?

Hoai An: It seems to me that Vietnamese learners are quite willing to seize opportunities to make contacts with foreigners. Several foreign teachers have said that Vietnamese learners are 'lovely', in the sense that they are eager to

practise. It may not be very typical to say so to the majority of Vietnamese students, but at least, in Ho Chi Minh City, it's quite common to see that the language schools where many foreign teachers teach alongside with Vietnamese teachers are in good business. Walking along a street, it's easy to see some Vietnamese talking to foreign strangers, Asians as well as Westerners, in English. These Vietnamese may be trying to do 'business' with these foreigners but they may also be people who are ready to help just to take an opportunity to speak English. Just yesterday, an Australian teacher at SEAMEO told me that he enjoyed taking his students to a nearby coffee shop, where they conversed with him much more freely than in class! It's not only inside a classroom that people think it's important to contact foreigners. Almost all foreigners take this as a nice surprise welcome, compared to some other Asian countries where foreigners may have difficulties if they do not speak the local languages. There isn't such a problem in Vietnam though Vietnamese would love to hear foreigners speak their tonal language and make terrible mistakes! Maybe we can say Vietnamese are more outgoing than some other Asians?

Of course, there are various purposes in learning a language and native speakers are extremely helpful in gaining better insights of a language but should not be and can never be the only resource. As a trainer for UCLES oral examiners of different exams, I've heard complaints from some British, Americans and Australians about each other's accents, vocabulary and grammar! How can we solve this problem if we just rely on native speakers? And what is wrong if a non-native speaker can make him/herself understood in the target language though he/she cannot reach the level of a native speaker? We do not learn a language to become a native speaker of that language, do we? Of course it is wonderful to know a non-native speaker who can use a target language very well but with English as a lingua franca, as long as people can use it to communicate at different levels, it should be good enough.

Joe: There is so much more to ask, but I think that the newsletter editor will be a little unhappy. However, can you give us a preview of your featured speaker workshop?

Naoko: Hoai An and I discussed this by e-mail and, in reflecting on our histories of development, we realised that quite a

lot of people and events had been influential in shaping our thinking of learner autonomy and the ways to implement our ideas: family, teachers, school experiences, other language learning experiences, colleagues, learners we taught among other things. We also learned that writing is very helpful in the process of exploration in the past. In our workshop we shall share more episodes from our histories and invite the participants to reflect on their histories and share their new insights with the others both orally and in written form. We are hoping that participants will come up with some new understanding of their thinking and feeling about learner autonomy through this process.

*doi moi – initiation of open door economic policies in Vietnam aimed at revitalising the economy, see http://www.findat.com/cats/cat01/top04/vt/intro.htm & http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/vietnam.htm for more details.

NOTICE

Getting Published Internationally

Really want to get published internationally, but don't know where to start?

Brad Deacon suggests that you check out

http://www.tesol.org/pubs/author/books/demystify1.html.

This useful URL page on the TESOL website lists information on 52 international journals, including a short description of the journal, contact details including e-mail and URL address, the number of issues per year, article length, whether it is refereed and how, style used, and average period from submission to review and publishing.

This information is also available in down-loadable PDF format.

The TE SIG Newsletter, 'Explorations in Teacher Education',
also welcomes contributions for essays, articles, book reviews, conference reviews, and the inciting professional development series.

Please send contributions to Robert Croker at croker@nanzan-u.ac.jp.

The deadline for the special February 2002 issue is 15 January 2002

(see page 43 for further details),

and for the June 2002 issue 15 May 2002.

What It Takes for a T.E.A.M. to Teach

Takahashi Shintaro and Amy E. Hawley, Shizuoka Futaba Gakuen

Introduction

In one of the most interesting explanations of team teaching it is compared to "a semester-long jam session, where musicians who share a deep love for the material they play decide to explore its possibilities with little regard for the dangers" (Beavers & DeTurck, 2000). Team teaching is a duet in which both teachers have a part to play. It requires careful attention to one another's melody, to harmonise. If teachers are not able to find the acceptable consonance among their team, they will find it difficult to "jam" together for a long period of time. This level of collaboration requires what we refer to as T.E.A.M. (Transmission, Exploration, Association, Modification).

Background

We are both teachers in the English department at Shizuoka Futaba Gakuen, a private Catholic girls junior and senior high school. Since 1999, we have been in charge of teaching and organizing the school's French club together. It was this initial collaboration that gave us the idea of teaching an English class together. Soon we had our opportunity. From the spring of 2000, we have team taught the highest level of the twelfth grade *enshu* English classes, which prepares students studying to enter private universities. This particular class was chosen because the English department felt the students' levels of motivation and English were high enough that they might be more comfortable in a team-taught environment than students in the lower classes. The course is 100 minutes a week and is a non-credit, non-graded course.

From the very beginning, it became quite apparent to us that there were a number of issues to consider regarding team teaching and that creating a greater sense of teamwork would take a great deal of perseverance from both of us. After working together for nearly three years, our main concerns are compatibility and incompatibility, planning, our roles in the classroom, and students' reactions. In the rest of the paper, we will address these concerns under the four headings: Transmission, Exploration, Association, and Modification.

Transmission

The melodies that team teachers convey in the classroom as well as among their team should overlap and

create harmony - compatibility - among the teachers. When their transmission produces a dissonance - incompatibility - their melodies, the teachers themselves, have failed to collaborate with one another. Teachers must strive to find the balance that works best for their team. This level of compatibility is something that comes from a willingness to listen, learn, and adapt to one another; and is one, if not the most important issues, of team teaching that needs to be addressed from the time a team is formed.

Communication can help to establish a greater sense of compatibility within the team. Even though there may be two different mother tongues, as well as age and gender differences, if the teachers are willing to make themselves understood, the end result is one of learning that benefits both teachers and students. Asking the other teacher to clarify something, sending e-mails to one another, saying something in several ways, or even simply writing something down for the other to read and think about lay the foundation for better communication. Communication of any kind can cause conflicts and misunderstandings, but working through them can result in a stronger compatibility. Finding what kind of communication -

letters, notes, e-mails, phone calls, faxes, face-to-face meetings - work best for your team takes time, but it establishes a more harmonious working relationship.

From our experience teaching French club together, so we had a rather concrete idea of what to expect from one another. We also had a great deal of respect for one another from the time we initially met. Both of us had studied linguistics, education, and English in university, so we had quite similar backgrounds. In addition, we have had the chance to work together in the same *gakunen* for the past year and a half. Working together in different areas of the school has forced us to communicate on issues outside of our team-taught class. Discussing these issues, such as disciplinary rules, students' backgrounds, and school policies, have given us a deeper understanding of our complete role as teachers. It has allowed us to know each other better, thus it has enabled us to feel more acquainted with one another in the classroom.

What has proven to be points of incompatibility for us? It was not until we entered the classroom that the answer to this question started to become apparent to us. Without a doubt, our greatest point of incompatibility has been how to discipline students. Each of us has a

different standard of when we should scold or not. It is very difficult to scold some students when the other teacher is doing his/her best to make the class enjoyable. Some teachers resort to sternness to control the students while other teachers tend to be easier on them.

Ms. Hawley chose to stay completely out of the discipline of the students initially, thinking that it was Mr. Takahashi's job since he was the Japanese teacher. Although she disciplined students regularly in her own classes, she never really disciplined the students in this class strictly except to tell them to be quiet in class now and then, which was not very often.

Mr. Takahashi wanted Ms. Hawley to take more responsibility for the discipline and finally asked her to do so. Ms. Hawley, not being very comfortable with disciplining the students in front of a Japanese teacher for fear that she might be doing something culturally wrong, has begun to discipline students, but still not as much as Mr. Takahashi would have liked her to do.

The issue of discipline has still not been fully resolved between us, although we do communicate about it more now. Ms. Hawley has been trying to discipline the students in a sterner manner, but she is still not very comfortable doing so. Mr. Takahashi reminds her, and encourages her to use discipline especially when students fail to do their homework or are misbehaving during class. Ms. Hawley has begun to realize that her discipline of students does encourage them to exert themselves more, and it also supports Mr. Takahashi.

Our advice to other team teachers in regards to discipline is:
1) Watch the other teacher's individually taught classes to get an idea of how s/he disciplines on his/her own. This not only helps to give you ideas about discipline, but it is effective in understanding the difference In teaching styles.
2) Talk about it among your team and try to think of ways to find a middle ground. With different cultures come different ideas on discipline. In discussing what one might think to be differences, similarities often become apparent. How can you use the differences and the similarities to establish a disciplinary policy you both agree on?
3) Support one another when disciplining. Never let the students know that you disagree about what you are doing in the classroom. Save your disagreements for outside the classroom, away from the students.

Exploration

While the compatibility and incompatibility of team-taught classes needs to be carefully addressed, the benefits of being part of a team can far outweigh any negative effects. One such benefit is the pairing of teachers together from the same field, with different specialties in that field. This improves teaching because the same topic can be looked at in a myriad of ways (Buckley, 2000). We have come to have somewhat, albeit not always, fixed roles over the past year and a half, because we bring to this class our own areas of expertise. Mr. Takahashi's area of expertise is English reading and grammar, and Ms. Hawley's English conversation and writing. It depends on the day and the lesson, but in general Mr. Takahashi teaches the translation sections, grammar sections, and parts of the vocabulary sections. Ms. Hawley teaches pronunciation, vocabulary, listening, and writing. There are very few opportunities for freer speaking activities in class, but when there are, we tend to take equal responsibility for them. Very seldom do we speak to each other in Japanese in the classroom, in an effort to try to encourage students to speak more in English. When one of us is not teaching, that person is often circulating among the students, encouraging them to participate and stay on task.

Even though teachers may have a certain area of expertise, exploring something other than what one is most comfortable with helps a teacher to grow and adds another dimension to the team. Over the past year and a half, we have explored different roles in regards to teaching and preparation. On certain occasions, Mr. Takahashi has taught pronunciation and writing while Ms Hawley has taught reading and vocabulary. Translation has always been left to Mr. Takahashi although Ms. Hawley has learned a great deal from him and is now able to teach simple translations for another *enshu* class that she teaches alone. Usually the teacher who teaches a certain section of the class is responsible for its preparation. Therefore, when we try different teaching roles, we also allow ourselves to try different preparation roles. Team teaching allows for this kind of learning among teachers and it is also of great benefit to be able to apply what one learns from team teaching in other classes.

Here is some simple advice about exploring roles in the classroom:
1) For each class, know what each member of your team is going to do. Don't be afraid to change the roles on

your team now and then. Pay attention to what the other is doing so that you understand how it fits in with your role or how you might be able to use that particular method later.

2) When you are not teaching, how can you support the other teacher? Circulate and encourage the students. Listen and offer additional explanations when the opportunity arises.

3) Remember that preparation is a part of exploration. What teachers plan for their classes will shape how they teach that particular class. Try different ways of both teaching and preparation so that you have more well-rounded team members.

Association

Since Mr. Takahashi is Japanese, there is naturally a deeper association between him and the students. In addition to that, his twelve years of teaching experience give him a better insight into their attitudes. He feels that it is still really difficult to motivate students who are reluctant to study without the pressure that they will not pass the entrance examinations. We can expect very few of them to study English without that kind of pressure. Before we started team teaching, this was the main difficulty he had to deal with on his own. Even some very competent students were reluctant to study because the material was too

difficult, too boring, or not for their entrance exam preparation.

Weak students and slow learners tend to hesitate at being taught in English. They wonder why a native speaker is teaching them a course for passing the university entrance examinations, which is not the reaction that Mr. Takahashi had anticipated. The students honestly do not realize how much they will benefit from being taught by a native speaker.

Ms. Hawley attempts to associate with students by motivating them through the use of English activities that reinforce what they are learning in their books. This is done through activities as simple as cloze exercises to more complex activities such as group speaking activities and essays. Since the students have had six years of English instruction, it is hoped that they will want to try to use their English to communicate with one another about the topics that they are studying for the entrance exams. Of course, the majority of students choose to focus mainly on the questions in the book, but some students are motivated by the all-English activities and try their best to write essays every week or to speak in their groups. Some students even enjoy speaking in English to Ms. Hawley outside of class about

certain issues that were taught.

In one sense, we still have not succeeded in motivating some students to study without the pressure that they will not pass the entrance exam. In other words, we have not yet succeeded in convincing them of the significance of being taught in this style. On the other hand, we can say that our style of teaching has gained a good reputation among those students who really want to study English. The keen students definitely understand the significance of being team-taught and it is a good feeling to know that we have been able to reach these students.

While motivations of the teachers and students may differ according to the difference in association among the groups, here are some important things to keep in mind:

1) Clearly discuss and be aware of the goals of the other teacher on your team. It helps during planning meetings to remind one another about what those are. Find a way to help each other strengthen those goals. We find that choosing activities together helps us clearly understand each others' intentions for class.

2) Talk to your students. Find out what they want to study and why they want to study it. We have used both informal questionnaires and class feedback forms

to ask students for their input about the class. Last year, having both been in the twelfth grade *gakunen*, we had the added advantage of knowing more precisely what the students' motivations for entering a particular university were. This year, it is a bit more difficult for us, but we do communicate with the twelfth grade teachers about our students and what their specific needs are.

Modification

On any kind of team, plans are made and then modified, sometimes over and over. Teamwork has just as important role in planning and modifying those plans as it does in the actual classroom. "If the teachers do not meet outside class to discuss a common agenda and evaluation, no real teamwork is involved" (Buckley, 2000, p. 5). It should be noted that neither the school nor the department require us to have planning meetings. Therefore, from the very beginning, we allotted one hour a week to meet, but we often found that that hour turned into two or three hours. While the actual planning was only about 45 minutes, we also found our planning meetings as a time to evaluate what happened in the previous class. By the end of last year, our planning time was about one hour a week and this year it is about the same. Occasionally, however,

our meetings are still long because we need to resolve certain issues which can range from anything as simple as how to better explain a certain idiom to something more complex such as how to better discipline the students. We now see this as a benefit as these discussions have strengthened our planning, which in turn has strengthened our teaching.

This is what we keep in mind when planning:

1) Planning does not stop the minute teachers leave the meeting room. More often than not, modifications will need to be made. Find a way in which your team can make these changes and inform the rest of the team about them.

2) Be flexible! Even if you feel you both have planned the best lesson ever, once you enter the classroom, it won't go exactly the way you had it planned. The students may be unresponsive. You may forget to do something you had planned to do. There could be a communication problem. Go with the flow of the class. It comes with practice, planning, and lots of communication both in and outside of the classroom.

3) Be willing to try new ideas. Remember that there are two cultures working together and there will be differences. Listen to one another carefully - don't just simply dismiss what the other teacher suggests because it would never be done in your culture. Instead, think of a way that you could compromise and adjust each others' suggestions so that they reflect both teaching styles and/or cultures. Use the difference in your cultures as a strength to make you more compatible, not as a division to make you incompatible.

4) Evaluate. Don't teach a class and then forget about it. Keep a journal. Talk to one another. Talk to other teachers. Talk to the students. Why did some things work? Why did some things not work? Apply what you learn from each class you teach to future classes. Be willing to adjust and look ahead to what new knowledge you can apply to future classes.

Conclusion

From next year, our school will incorporate a team teaching component in its junior high school English curriculum. As members of the English department, we plan to work closely with the other teachers in an effort to make this transition to team-taught classes one that can benefit both the teachers and the students involved. We know that not every team will be as fortunate as we have been. The best thing we can do is to support the other teachers and help encourage as much discussion as possible on this topic so as to create

greater harmony and teamwork among the teachers involved.

It can be difficult to create a good team as it requires teachers to be highly motivated and to really want to work together (Matsuda, 1996). Our advice to teachers who are "jamming" together or may be in the future is to remember "TEAM."

1) Transmission: Is your team producing a pleasing harmony or an unpleasant dissonance? Find a balance among your team that allows for greater communication and understanding.

2) Exploration: Are both team members aware of each others' melodies? Talk about how teaching and preparation roles can be altered so as to make your team as well-rounded as possible.

3) Association: How does your team motivate students? Discuss how teachers relate to students so teachers are aware of one another's goals.

4) Modification: Does your team plan and adjust those plans when needed? Listen to one another and discover the most effective ways for communicating changes among your team.

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Power of Networks: Creating Continuous Learning Opportunities

Kazuyoshi Sato, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Introduction

A communicative language teaching (CLT) approach has been emphasized in Japan since a new syllabus was introduced into junior high schools (JHSs) in 1993 and senior high schools (SHSs) in 1994. Subsequently, regional seminars and in-service programs by Boards of Education, and informal workshops have been held to promote CLT. However, many teachers continued their routine practices, even though they were excited to learn fresh approaches at workshops (Sato, 2000).

Fullan (1991) concludes that prepackaged training or one-shot workshops which ignore ongoing professional development in school contexts are not necessarily successful because "most forms of in-service training are not designed to provide the ongoing, interactive, cumulative learning necessary to develop new conceptions, skills, and behavior. Failure to realize that there is a need for in-service work *during implementation* is a common problem. No matter how much advance staff development occurs, it is when people actually try to implement new approaches and reforms that they have the most specific concerns and doubts. It is thus extremely important that people obtain some support at the early stages of attempted implementation" (1991, p. 85, italics original).

Unfortunately, many schools do not have learning-enriched teaching cultures (see Rosenholtz, 1989). Without school improvement, substantial teacher development cannot be sustained (Hawley and Valli, 1999). In other words, the school context is a major determinant of teacher development. A school context where teachers collaborate with colleagues, and norms of collegiality and experimentation are prevalent, is the optimal environments for teacher development (Kleinsasser, 1993; Little, 1982; Sato, 2000).

If this is the case, how can teachers be motivated to implement innovative ideas from workshops? How can they create learning opportunities in their school contexts? How can they improve both their classrooms and schools? Lieberman & McLaughlin (1992)

suggested that networks are a successful alternative. Networks are informal groups of teachers that meet on an ongoing basis. They attract more teachers than conventional knowledge-transmission in-service workshops, because they focus on specific activities, establish a climate of trust and support, offer intellectual and emotional stimulation, and provide leadership opportunities. However, little is known about the effects of networks, and the power of networks has been underestimated (Lieberman and McLaughlin, 1992). This paper attempts to describe how a particular network based in Aichi Prefecture - Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) *Kenkyukai* - has developed, what kind of activities are carried out in its regular meeting, and what kind of difficulties participants have in their working environments.

What is CLT *Kenkyukai*?

As a former SHS teacher, struggling to teach English, I met a group of teachers who together had formed an informal study group. I was encouraged by them and became interested in innovative ways of teaching (Sato, forthcoming, 2002b). I hoped to create such a learning community among teachers myself in the future. Later, when I became a university lecturer, I had such

an opportunity. CLT *Kenkyukai* started in May in 2000 as an informal study group with six teachers from the Aichi area. Most of them were colleagues from my former high school. They were highly interested in sharing new ideas and agreed to establish such a study group. Five more teachers joined after I introduced CLT *Kenkyukai* to participants in a three-day Nanzan University summer workshop in August 2000. I was an instructor for one day and demonstrated how to implement CLT. I took advantage of the opportunity and advertised the study group. So far, 13 teachers have attended, including university instructors, SHS teachers (our major participants), and JHS teachers.

The general goal of the CLT *Kenkyukai* is to improve our teaching by sharing ideas, materials, and teaching problems. More specifically, we wish to improve our practice by using the ideas of CLT. At the first meeting, I talked about some of the issues of CLT and proposed how the monthly meeting would be held. I stressed the importance that all the participants would have equal opportunity to share their ideas and teaching problems in this meeting, not like a formal workshop which focuses mainly on the transmission of good teaching techniques and knowledge. Then, we talked about

teaching issues and decided our goals. Particularly, we found that almost all teachers in participants' SHSs had not changed their teaching practice, even though the new CLT syllabus had been introduced in 1993/1994 by the Ministry of Education. For example, in many SHSs, classes in the new subject, oral communication, often semi-officially became grammar lessons designed to prepare students for university entrance examinations. Moreover, teachers in their regular classes focused mostly on translation and grammar points, ignoring CLT principles. Participants showed keen interest in how to change their practices by incorporating innovative CLT ideas.

The monthly meeting is held either on the second or on fourth Saturday at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies (NUFS). This two and a half hour meeting includes 1) a report from the textbook; 2) sharing risk-logs (see Murphey, 2000), and discussion about teaching issues.

1. Textbook report (1 hour): we use "Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen" (1995, Lee, J., & VanPatten, B., McGraw-Hill) as our main textbook. A reporter summarizes the main points from an assigned chapter and presents a couple of discussion questions. We started to use this book in

May this year; we did not use any textbook last year. A majority of the members toward the end of the last school year indicated that they wanted to focus on CLT. I recommended this book as it integrates theory and practice well and includes many sample activities.

2. Sharing risk-logs (1.5 hours): This is the main activity of our meeting. Each participant takes turns sharing a risk-log, and others make comments. A risk log is a journal about teaching experience. Teachers are asked to take one small risk when teaching each month, and to write about it (see Murphey, 2000, p. 108). Some teachers were too busy to write a risk-log and reported orally, but we accepted it. Ellis recommends teachers to try out a micro-evaluation as one form of action research. Compared with a macro-evaluation, which aims to evaluate a whole book or a whole set of materials, a micro-evaluation involves teachers in evaluating "the materials they use retrospectively on a day-by-day basis" (1997, p. 230). Therefore, it helps them "examine and reconstruct their own pedagogical values and develop their own personal theories of language teaching" (ibid., p. 231). Following his proposal, we write a risk-log in terms of (1) activity; (2) what happened/results; (3) what you learned/findings; (4) how to

modify the activity/possible solution. Examples of risk logs are available at http://www.nufs.ac.jp/~yoshi/pages/clt.dwt.

Recently I had a chance to talk with one of the Kenkyukai members about the effect of the study group. She noted that she had received many practical ideas from other teachers, and was encouraged by the other teachers to try them in the classroom. When she returned to her school, she tried out several new ideas. She reported that she could use half of the ideas soon but had to modify the other half, and saved them for later occasions.

Summer Workshop

The first summer workshop for English teachers, featuring Tim Murphey, was held at NUFS from August 1 through 3 this year. Last year, several new teachers had joined CLT Kenkyukai, after the summer workshop at Nanzan. I wanted to hold such a workshop at NUFS, hoping to attract more teachers to our study group. I persuaded the university administration that this workshop would be a good opportunity to advertise our university, and the university decided to support this program and to make it an annual event. The theme of the workshop was "How to integrate language skills in classroom". I chose this theme, because it was one of the main issues in our

monthly meetings. A total of 36 teachers, mainly senior high school teachers, participated, including eight teachers from CLT Kenkyukai.

On the first day Tim Murphey (Yuan Ze University) demonstrated how to build English-speaking classroom communities. Tim introduced simple activities that would allow students to feel successful participating in using English. On the next day, in the morning session, Nancy Mutoh (NUFS) made a presentation on new ways of teaching vocabulary. She demonstrated many hands-on activities for integrating various language skills. In the afternoon, Yukari Aoki (NUFS) demonstrated how to incorporate reading strategies into reading class by using activities from her homepage. On the third day, Brian Cullen (Nagoya University of Technology) focused on how to teach oral communication, highlighting the use of conversation strategies. In the afternoon, I demonstrated how to integrate language skills in regular SHS class, incorporating many ideas presented in this workshop.

Participants were actively engaged in hands-on activities and shared their ideas and the issues they face. In particular, teachers from CLT Kenkyukai introduced to other participants what they had learned from

the study group, and how they actually implemented those ideas in their classes. Here are some participants' comments:

· I would like to use all the interaction activities I learned today. Especially shadowing must be useful to the students. I love TPR, too. Near peer role modeling is a new idea to me.

· At first I myself got nervous when I spoke in English. But today I could relax and enjoyed learning English even if my English is not so good. I hope I will change my English class little by little.

· Teachers are learners. I sometimes hear this phrase, but I forget soon and I try to be a teacher. I remember teachers should learn from both students and colleagues.

· It was a nice experience to join this workshop. When I work at school, I'm too busy and forget what I want to teach. But this workshop gave me a lot of power.

At the end of the workshop I advertised CLT *Kenkyukai*. Knowing the limitations of short-term workshops, I hoped that the participants would join this continuous learning group. Happily, one teacher came to the following monthly meeting, and several teachers have subsequently joined our study group.

Future issues

Those who participate in CLT *Kenkyukai* and the summer workshop are highly motivated teachers. Although not all teachers attend the every meeting, the number of members has increased from six to twenty. However, teachers still face some difficulty in changing their classroom practice. The most difficult issue is to change the teaching culture each teacher belongs to, and to help teachers face the challenges these teaching cultures pose. In other words, "how can networks both support teacher participants in their efforts to bring new ideas and practices into their schools and protect them from potential ostracism?" (Lieberman & McLaughlin 1992, p. 675).

For instance, members tried to invite their colleagues to CLT *Kenkyukai* from their different schools. But so far, only two teachers from the same HS school have joined CLT *Kenkyukai*. If teachers are more or less isolated in their school contexts, how can they share new ideas they have learned from CLT *Kenkyukai* with their colleagues? In fact, a couple of teachers complain that in their school contexts, many teachers have given up trying out new ideas. Most colleagues just hope to transfer to better schools, not face their present difficulties.

Furthermore, many teachers in CLT *Kenkyukai* allude to the difficulty of changing assessment in their schools. Students in their schools are assessed

only by term tests that focus on grammar points and translation. Consequently, every teacher is busy keeping pace with other teachers for the common test (see Sato, 2000). To many teachers, there seems little room to incorporate innovative ideas. One HS teacher said that it was very difficult to try out new ideas without changing assessment.

A further challenge lies in the study group itself, because maintaining the quality of innovative programs is not easy. Although we started to use the textbook this year and decided to take turns being a reporter, I have reported three times. Other teachers were not willing to be a reporter. Thus, I am concerned with how to motivate busy teachers to take more leadership in our study group. Without leadership by these teachers, the study group "can fall prey to the myopia of familiar practices and the misdirection of unchallenged assumption" (Lieberman & McLaughlin 1992, p. 675).

Nevertheless, there are other teachers who have been implementing new ideas little by little in their school contexts, and have tried to communicate with other teachers. For example, one HS teacher proposed to incorporate a writing question (a short essay) into a term test in an English department meeting. Her proposal was accepted and she could motivate her students to write a short essay in her class. Another HS teacher took advantage of her third year elective class of about 18 students, where she had freedom to develop materials. She tried out recitation and speech contests, and found that her students gained confidence in using English.

In summary, CLT *Kenkyukai* has been evolving into a small community of inquiry, incorporating more teachers who might have been isolated in their working environments. Such a study group has provided continuous learning opportunities for the participants. We are now working on our homepage, collecting many teachers' ideas and teaching practices. We are also planning a study trip so that we can have a long discussion about our teaching issues. We hope such a small community of inquiry will spread and help teachers to become life-long learners in a collaborative environment.

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Please join us at these next CLT *Kenkyukai* meetings!!

Saturday 10th November, 2:30pm-5:00pm, Room K-101

Saturday 8th December, 2:30pm-5:00pm, Room K-101

at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies (tel.: 05617-4-1111).

For further information, and dates for the January and February meetings,

please e-mail Kazuyoshi Sato at yoshi@nufs.ac.jp,

or see the CLT *Kenkyukai* homepage at

http://www.nufs.ac.jp/~yoshi/pages/clt.dwt

NLP- Not that YOU WANT to read this

By Mathew White, Chukyo University

This article reviews the 26-hour NLP workshop based on the book, Transforming Communication by Richard Bolstad and Margot Hamblett, conducted at Nanzan University campus in Nagoya under the instruction of Mr. Bolstad. The course took place from July 28th through July 31st and was perceived by many of the 26 participants who attended as a farewell gift from organizer Tim Murphey immediately prior to his departure for Taiwan. Tim has contributed enormously to teacher education and development in Japan, and we anticipate that we will continue to hear from him, and hope to see him often.

For those of you unfamiliar with NLP, let me begin by explaining that NLP stands for neuro-linguistic programming. Do you get the picture? I didn't find the breakdown of the acronym as clear as a bell, either. A much more lucid definition is provided by Richard Bolstad in the book Transforming Communication, which he co-authored with Margot Hamblett. NLP, they explain, is the study of how people do things well. Originally, linguistics professor John Grinder and graduate student Richard Bandler laid out the foundation for the field through their research in the 1970s on the specific communication skills used by excellent communicators. Since then, NLP has evolved to encompass the observation and analysis of successful people in all walks of life in order to make the techniques incorporated by those who excel in a particular area available to everyone. The best news is that we all use the techniques already. NLP just empowers people with a higher awareness and understanding of what they are, so they may employ the techniques to their best advantage.

You'll appreciate NLP a lot more when you're provided with some concrete examples. As teachers, we are all familiar with the self-fulfilling prophecy. For instance, if students constantly tell themselves 'I'm bad at English' or 'I'm going to do poorly on a test', it is highly likely that they will indeed do so. Take two students of similar ability, only one of whom believes that they are good at English, and you will find that student more likely to perform better and achieve higher scores.

One of the first activities Richard Bolstad walked us through demonstrated

how the language and visual cues he selected in setting up an exercise could affect the outcome. Sound simple? It is. For instance, most people would agree that if you told a group of people at a party not to look behind them, the entire group would probably immediately check to see what they shouldn't be looking at. NLP asserts that the subconscious only recognizes statements in the affirmative. This alone provides many implications for teachers. How often have you said, 'don't forget your homework' or 'don't turn the page over yet', when we could have selected, 'remember your homework' or 'leave the paper alone'? NLP just brings it all to our attention and helps us make better use of these observations.

The brevity of this article will only allow me to give you a few tasty little samples of what NLP has to offer. So, I'd like to go ahead and dip into the next entre. One of the skills NLP provides which has incredible potential for application by teachers and teacher trainers is in the area of rapport building. Communicators in all fields and people in all walks of life need to develop rapport in order to be successful. Researchers in NLP have observed what people who are successful in building rapport do. For the teacher trying to build rapport with or among students or the trainer/leader trying to build rapport with or among a particular

group, the ability to facilitate rapport can have enormous effects on the outcomes of the course. One highly applicable technique is the group contract. The group contract involves having the members of the group or class involved in determining the rules and aims of the course in order to enhance their commitment to the rules. (For those of you shaking your head in disbelief about allowing the learners determine the rules and aims of the class, keep in mind that the group, including the teacher/leader must unanimously agree to the rules and aims.) As teachers, you have probably already found that students tend to enforce their own rules more enthusiastically than any rules you provided on your own. How wonderful would it be if students could commit to a 'no keitai' rule in class.

The workshop also provided some hands on experience in developing an initial sense of the class as a community. The activities began by getting the class to form a circle. Bolstad pointed out that the circle is a symbol commonly associated with community. From the circle, tasks were given which involved the whole group, and successes were therefore successes for the entire community. For instance, the group stood in a circle and each member shook hands with people on either side. They spoke briefly, then had to try to remember about

that person. Next, participants were asked to walk around the room freely. Suddenly, the participants were told to freeze. They were then instructed to link hands with the people who they initially had been standing next to while making as little movement as possible. This resulted in a tangled web of arms. As you have probably already imagined, the next step was to untangle the web without breaking hand contact. In addition to being a lot of fun, these and other activities worked to foster an atmosphere of cooperation and to promote group coherence.

Another technique used in NLP which many successful teachers already make use of is the association of location and teacher role. Everyone would probably agree that the position in the classroom from where learners are addressed has an effect on how the teacher is perceived. We often position ourselves in front of the class when we wish to have a position of authority. NLP encourages us to incorporate other positions in order to facilitate associations for the students of other roles we play. For instance, we might consciously choose to use one particular location in the classroom for storytelling. As mentioned previously, forming a circle is another technique that not only changes the perception of the teacher's role, but also goes back to the issue of overall class

rapport due to its association with community.

Addressing the role of the teacher also provides an ideal springboard into one of the most empowering elements of the course. One of the greatest skills the course provides valuable practice in and insights about is conflict resolution. The course illustrates how many situations that we perceive as conflicts are opportunities for win-win outcomes. A fundamental skill involves establishing the parties involved as a partnership in aiming to reach the desired objectives of all members involved. As teachers, coordinators, or parents, it can be life changing to realize that many of the conflicts we experience involve people who desire the same outcomes as ourselves. Many of the role-plays that participants experienced illustrated how greater skills in conflict resolution can lead to successful negotiation in situations that previously had resulted only in an exercising of one's authority. For example, teachers had to address students who didn't do homework or talked excessively in class. Instead of distancing themselves from the students, those in the role of teachers addressed such situations by first identifying that the goals of the students and the teachers were often the same. The teachers wanted the students to be successful learners and the students

also wanted or at least needed to successfully complete the course. Miraculously, the students and teachers began working together to find solutions while minimizing the negative feelings usually associated with the display of power.

The lessons to be learned from NLP probably look or sound familiar. Reflecting on my own experiences as a learner, a teacher, a child and now as a parent, I find it reassuring that the positive experiences I have had involved people utilizing many of the skills NLP places in your hands.

For many, this short review on NLP probably creates more questions than answers. The following are a few questions that I thought might best be answered by Richard Bolstad himself (note that some of the answers have been summarized):

Mathew: You consider the effects of culture in your book (with Margot Hamblett) *Transforming Communication.* How can NLP be applied to a Japanese teaching context?

Richard: NLP is based on the notion that leading someone somewhere new (as we do in teaching) can only be accomplished to the extent that pacing or sharing their own way of being has been achieved. NLP gives teachers tools to detect some of the cultural differences that must be paced if learners are to feel understood. Some research has suggested that 93% of communication is non-verbal. Using NLP gives the teacher more sensitivity to this 93%. I would expect an NLP trained teacher to begin by aligning themselves non-verbally to a more Japanese style (e.g. in terms of politeness, formality, etc) and gradually leading to their (the teachers) more usual style (which the Japanese learner is aiming to experience in English study).

Mathew: On a similar note, specifically how do learners in Japan (where the teacher often has a highly authoritarian role) respond to the idea of a group contract in which they are involved in determining the rules and aims of the class?

Richard: This task presents students with a paradox. They are being told by their teacher that they are to tell their teacher what they want as learners. To break down the challenge of the task for Japanese students, I have them talk in

pairs or threes first and report back to the group the results (not their individual opinions). My experience is that they are quite successful at doing this. If I get less than the response I desire at first, then I give them a more thorough task to start them thinking (for example, asking them to discuss in pairs what they liked or didn't like about previous classes).

Mathew: How could NLP assist teacher trainers?

Richard: In Christchurch, New Zealand, where I do most of my training, this NLP-based communication skills model is part of general teacher training. One advantage of NLP in training language teachers is that NLP was created by people who understand the structure of language, Dr. John Grinder, professor of linguistics at UCLA, and his graduate student Richard Bandler. There is a certain precision in teaching the effective use of language in NLP. It gives teacher trainers some new ways of explaining what makes teaching really work. It adds some science to the art of inspiring others.

Mathew: What developments have been made in NLP since the initial discoveries in the 1970s, and in what directions will it be heading in the future?

Richard: NLP is the study of success. That means it is a continuously evolving discipline studying actual results in a variety of fields, and its primary activity requires constant re-evaluation of its own assumptions and techniques. One of the big changes since NLP first emerged has been the shift away from what people are suggesting that people are either visually, kinesthetically or auditorally oriented, for example) to more precise analysis about what people do in certain situations. Another important change has been the increased emphasis on ethics in the use of what are, in cases, almost alarmingly powerful techniques of influence.

On a final note, reading this article you will have tuned into the fact that many forms were used to illustrate the value the field of NLP places on sounding out the preferred sensory systems of your audience. We are often reminded of how individuals vary in their preference to visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning. Bearing this in mind, we can make all of our communications more effective. With that, I will take a step back to let you come to your own conclusions on the value of NLP.

BOOK REVIEW by Tim Murphey of Zoltan Dornyei's

Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom

Cambridge University Press 2001, 155 pp.

hardcover: (GBP35.00) ISBN 0521790298 paperback: (GBP12.95) ISBN 0521793777

"Teachers are supposed to teach the curriculum rather than motivate learners, and the fact that the former cannot happen without the latter is often ignored. For example, I am not aware of a single L2 teacher training programme worldwide in which the development of skills in motivating learners would be a key component of the curriculum" (p. 27).

Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom by Zoltan Dornyei is a delightful quick read. It flows and excites us with many of the familiar psychological concepts that most of us have had in bits and pieces spread out over our careers. The book collects all these together in an orderly framework, and goes further by offering a process-oriented conception of motivation, one that contests the idea of a pre-set and constant motivational disposition in students. This process-model allows us to understand more completely the "roller coaster of language learning" (Murphey 1998, p. 1) that not only students but also teachers seem to be on. After briefly reviewing previous theories and concepts in chapter one, Dornyei organizes the rest of the book in terms of his process model

in the next four chapters: (Ch. 2) Creating the basic motivational conditions, (Ch. 3) Generating initial motivation, (Ch. 4) Maintaining and protecting motivation, and (Ch. 5) Rounding off the learning experiences: Encouraging positive self-evaluation.

After the first thirty pages, I had already decided to use this book in my next professional development course for teachers. I predict it will be a best seller in teacher education courses worldwide. Far from proposing a magic pill for motivation, Dornyei has his finger firmly on the pulse of research. He solidly states that no matter how competent a motivator a teacher is, if his/her teaching lacks instructional clarity and the learners simply cannot follow the intended programme, motivation to learn the particular subject matter is unlikely to blossom (p. 26).

Throughout the book the prose is refreshingly interspersed with interesting quotes from teachers and researchers that reinforce or highlight the concepts. There are also boxes listing practical strategies, useful lists, further reading, and asides.

Two caveats that Dornyei presents concern learner autonomy and the overgeneralization of strategies to contexts. We need not think that motivation solely comes from the teacher, method and materials; we can teach learners to be at least in part self-regulated as they learn certain self-motivating capacities themselves (i.e., teaching them about self-talk and asking them to practice). He also stresses that not every strategy works in every context and the need for teachers to adapt and adjust what they do based on the changing contexts in which they teach. Going beyond merely the teacher-student relationship, Dornyei also refreshingly and systemically writes of the cohesive learner group (group dynamics) and good relationships with parents (obviously not applicable in all cases).

Finally, far from getting lost in psychological abstractions, the book is firmly located in the practical. For confirmation of this, the reader need only turn to the last pages of the book. Here is a list of 35 suggested strategies, conveniently organized in a grid, for teachers to tick off if they have tried out or made each strategy a part of their teaching. Careful not to de-motivate readers with an overload, Dornyei admits he regularly uses only a handful of the strategies himself and suggests trying only a few more out at a time, advocating quality over quantity.

While the book is short and easy to read, the ideas are not necessarily easy and quick to apply. Many good things in the classroom take time to develop. The book is not a quick-fix, but rather advocates the development of quality teaching through relationship-driven teaching (Rogers & Renard 1999). I found myself getting more motivated just reading it and identified a few areas that I would like to explore in my own teaching. Unavoidably as teachers seek to motivate with this quality information and strategies, we will motivate ourselves. Perhaps the best test of teacher education materials is their ability to teach the teachers in addition to simply demonstrating new techniques, in what Tessa Woodward calls 'Loop Input' (1991). Dornyei's book may very well make motivational strategies a key component in many teacher education programmes worldwide.

References

Murphey, T. (1998). *Language Hungry!* Tokyo: MacMillan LanguageHouse.

Rogers, S. & Renard, L. (1999). Relationship-driven teaching. *Educational Leadership* ASCD. September.

Woodward, T. (1991). *Models and metaphors in language teacher training.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Upcoming Japanese Conferences

There are many opportunities for Tokyo-area teachers to seek training. Two institutions organising programmes over the next few months are the Institute for the International English Education of Children (IIEEC) and the British Council. The IIEEC is offering a 4-part MAT Teacher Training Seminar for kindergarten and primary school teachers, and the British Council twelve evening seminars for junior and senior high school teachers.

IIEEC MAT Teacher Training Seminars

MAT stands for 'Model, Action, Talk', an approach developed for Japanese children learning English by Ms. Ritsuko Nakata. Ms. Nakata is the chairperson of the Association of English Teachers of English (ATEC), and the author of 'Let's Go' (Oxford) and Koushite Oshieru Kodomono Eigo (Apricot). The four MAT Teacher Training Seminars will be personally conducted by Ms. Nakata. They will cover basic phonics, reading, writing, class management, and student interaction.

Session 1: Sunday, 9th December
9:30am-4:30pm
AA Building Comfort in Gaienmae
(ph: 03-3479-3345)

Session 2: Sunday, 27th January
9:30am-4:30pm
Athena Holistic in Osaki
(ph: 03-3490-7601)

Session 3: Sunday, 17th February
9:30am-4:30pm
AA Building Comfort in Gaienmae
(ph: 03-3479-3345)

Session 4: Sunday, 10th March
9:30am-4:30pm
Athena Holistic in Osaki
(ph: 03-3490-7601)

Cost: IIEEC members 20,000 yen for one session (65,000 for all 4 sessions, with 2 payment installments possible); Non-members 25,000 yen for this session (65,000 for all 4 sessions, with 2 payment installments possible).

The IIEEC also invites teachers of young children to join their next Tokyo Study Group meeting, which will be held on Thursday, 6th December, 9:45am-12 midday, at Nakano Sunpiaza (03-3388-1151). Cost: IIEEC members 1,500 yen; non-members 3,000 yen.

British Council – Tokyo

Seminars for JHS and SHS teachers

The British Council Tokyo teacher development seminars are intended for teachers of English in the junior and senior high schools. 12 evening seminars will take place between October 2001 and June 2002. They are designed to assist teachers in their day to day teaching, and provide practical ideas for adapting communicative methodology to Japanese junior and senior high school classrooms.

All the Seminars will be held on Friday evenings, from 7:00pm to 9:00pm at the British Council, Tokyo, 1-2, Kagurazaka, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo.

These Seminars are designed to help teachers understand and implement the new 2002/3 Curriculum.

The dates and topics are:

November 9th, 2001: Skits and Speeches

November 23rd, 2001: Learner Training

December 14th, 2001: Extensive Reading

January 25th, 2002: Reading Skills

February 8th, 2002: Listening Skills

February 22nd, 2002: Teaching Writing

March 15th, 2002: Correcting Written English

April 26th, 2002: Using textbooks communicatively

May 10th, 2002: Tests for communicative learners

May 24th, 2002: Pronunciation

June 7th, 2002: Games and songs

Cost British Council members - 40,000 yen for all 12 seminars in the series. For non-members the cost is 4,000 yen per Seminar.

Upcoming Conference Information

There are lots in interesting events occurring around Japan and around the world over the next four months. Here are three useful URLs that list most EFL-related events.

For most JALT events, including chapter presentations and Four Corners Tours 2001, the http://jalt.org/calendar/ URL is organised by region and month.

The http://kyushuelt.com/calendar/index.php URL lists events that are organised by other groups in Japan, and also covers bookfairs. Groups listed include JACET, Tokyo IIEEC Study Group, Tokyo British Council Seminars, and Temple University Japan. The TESOL Worldwide Calendar of Events has an extensive listing of events, at http://www.tesol.org/isaffil/calendar/calendar-full.html.

Bookmark these URLs now, and check them regularly!

Upcoming International Conferences

Further details for all of these conferences are available on the TESOL Worldwide Calendar of Events website http://www.tesol.org/isaffil/calendar/calendar-full.html.

November

16-28. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Annual conference, Washington, DC. http://www.actfl.org/.

16-18. English Teachers' Association-Republic of China (ETA-ROC). Conference, "ELT in Taiwan: Retrospect and Prospect", Taipei, Taiwan. http://helios.fl.nthu.edu.tw/~ETA/.

December

13-15. Centre for Language in Education, The Hong Kong Institute of Education. International Language in Education Conference 2001, "Reflecting on Language in Education", Hong Kong, SAR. http://www.ied.edu.hk/ilec2001.

February

1-3. IATEFL Teacher Development and Teacher Trainers and Educators SIGs. Conference, "Becoming a Teacher: Exploring Training and Development", Barcelona, Spain. http://www.iatefl.org.

21-23. BC TEAL. 34th Annual Conference, "Professionalizing the Profession", Vancouver, BC, Canada. Proposal Deadline November 23, 2001. http://www.vcn.bc.ca/bcteal/.

March

2. Hawai'i TESOL. Annual Conference, Honolulu, Hawaii. Contact Patricia Reiss, reiss@flex.com.

14-17. California TESOL (CATESOL). Conference, "Learning with Purpose", San Francisco, California. Proposal Deadline November 1, 2001. http://www.catesol.org.

20-22. TESOL Arabia. 8th Annual International Conference, "Critical Reflection and Practice", Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Proposal Deadline November 14, 2002. http://tesolarabia.org.

The Journal of
Changing Asian Foreign Language Education

The *Journal of Changing Asian Foreign Language Education (CAFLE)* is a new journal, due out soon!

CAFLE seeks to study and explore the changing landscape of education in Asian countries, promote positive change, create awareness of needed change, suggest alternatives, and report on change efforts both successful and unsuccessful. We wish to give impetus to positive change through highlighting change efforts and innovation in the region and through giving contrast frames of reference. For this to happen, we will need contributions from many foreign language educators throughout Asia, and look forward to your contributions.

At its core, the purpose of CAFLE is to invite more open communication and appropriate risk-taking among the stakeholders who are presently involved in foreign language education in Asia. We hope especially to create a privileged place for the voices of students and teachers through their own narratives and reports about their own experiences.

This first issue is a special issue on entrance exams in Japan and highlights seldom heard students' and teachers' points of view. It is hoped that this CAFLE can create a forum for proactive change critical language teaching and testing and awareness-raising among the Asian academic community.

The first issue will be available at PAC3 at JALT2001. We hope that you will offer opinion pieces, articles, and book reviews to future issues!

Editors Hsin-Hwa Chen, Tim Murphey, Kazuyoshi Sato

Contact: Tim Murphey <mits@saturn.yzu.edu.tw>

Treasurer's Report for FY 2001-2002

Dear TE-SIG members,

This is your treasurer, Gordon Bateson, and I would like to bring you the latest information on the financial health of our group. I'll start by highlighting how recent changes at JALT HQ have affected our financial procedures, then I'll summarize our financial position and future plans.

JALT's recognition as an NGO (non-governmental organization) means stricter auditing of the accounts at HQ, and SIGs and chapters are also being more closely monitored. Monthly reports can no longer be batched together and must now be sent every month and treasurers are now required to send copies of receipts with the monthly reports. In addition, HQ has standardized all SIG and chapter PO accounts and a by-product of this, was that our main account and a secondary account, for sales of our anthology, were merged. To further assist HQ in following what I do, I have moved all our petty cash back to the PO account. As we entered the present fiscal year in April 2001, we had a respectable 300,000 yen to our name. I submitted a budget (see details at the end of this report) which forecast a modest surplus of 15,000 yen. This was based on the assumption that we would continue our activities of previous years, namely to publish three newsletters, hold

at least one workshop or mini-conference, and sponsor a featured speaker to come to the JALT conference. Since submitting the budget there have been a couple of items to add to our expenses. Firstly, there are the expenses for the British Hills retreat from last year. Although I stated in last year's report that this event had generated a small surplus of 15,000 yen, I subsequently received claims for the guest speakers travel expenses (20,000 yen) honorarium (20,000 yen) and accommodation (60,000 yen). Also, the committee has decided to increase the level of sponsorship of our guest speaker at JALT by 50,000 yen. I think you will agree that we are able to make this additional commitment. However, to continue to be able to sponsor guest speakers, we need to host well-attended workshops and conferences. The TE-SIG committee is continuing to work very hard to find ways of holding such events. If you have any ideas for speakers, venues or workshop formats please do not hesitate to contact our coordinator Miriam Black or other committee members. Also, I would welcome any comments or questions about how the TE-SIG money is spent to better serve our members.

Gordon Bateson

(gordon@kanazawa-gu.ac.jp)

Budget submitted for Teacher Education SIG

(fiscal year 2001-2002)

**** REVENUE (¥) ****		**** EXPENSES (¥) ****	
from JALT HQ	50,000	telephone, traveling, copying	0
member dues	165,000	refreshments, rent, honoraria	0
workshops	30,000	printing (3 x ¥20,000)	60,000
Miscellaneous	5,000	office Supplies (3 x 5,000)	15,000
TOTAL	250,000	postage (3 x 20,000)	60,000
		miscellaneous (featured speaker)	100,000
		TOTAL	235,000

**** NET SURPLUS (¥) ****

Revenue - Expenses: 15,000

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue of 'Explorations in Teacher Education':

Winds of Change: The New Curriculum

The February 2002 issue of 'Explorations in Teacher Education' will explore teacher development issues relating to the new JHS and SHS curriculum.

The new curriculum represents a major challenge to many teachers, but also an important opportunity for change.

The Editors are seeking short essays (approx. 1000 words) and articles (up to 2500 words) that consider how we teacher educators can respond to the new curriculum. We are also seeking accounts of pre-service and in-service teacher development networks and workshops, as part of the 'inciting professional development' series.

Conference reviews, book reviews, and announcements of future teacher development events and meetings related to the new curriculum are also welcome.

Contact: Robert Croker croker@nanzan-u.ac.jp. Deadline: 15 January 2002.

Explorations in Teacher Education

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newsletter of the JALT Teacher Education SIG

What is the Teacher Education SIG?

A network of foreign language instructors dedicated to becoming better teachers and helping others teach more effectively, the TE SIG has been active since 1993. Our members teach at universities, high schools, and language centres both in Japan and other countries. The TE SIG focuses on five areas: action research, teacher reflection, peer-based development, teacher motivation, and teacher training and supervision.

We welcome new members! We look forward to seeing you at our **SIG AGM** at PAC3/JALT2001 on Sunday 25 November from 12:00 midday to 12:45pm in Room 21A. For further information, please see page 3.

Also, please come to our **SIG Party** on Saturday 24 November, from 8:00pm at 'Kura' (093-551-0466), near the south exit of Kokura Station. For further information and map to get to Kura, see page 3. Make your reservation at the TE SIG information table at PAC3.

OR contact the TE SIG Coordinator, Miriam Black <miriamblacktesig@yahoo.com> or TE SIG Membership Officer, Tim Ashwell <tashwell@komazawa-u.ac.jp>!

See you at PAC3 at JALT2001!