

Languaging!

The Exploratory Learning and Teaching Newsletter of
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Plus Website Recommendations, Reader's Forum, Thank You's and more!

Welcome to Languaging! No. 9!

This issue is dedicated to our helpful friends in the Teachers' Room and Lecturer's Lounge at the reception desk and support desk. Languaging! says, どうもありがとう! *Meet these wonderful ladies on page 13.*

We have put together quite an issue this summer! It starts out with a series of student articles. In the first, **Iwasaki**, a 3rd year English Major and teacher-in-training, interviews a former Dokkyo University exchange student for a different perspective. Next, **Ono**, a graduate student at Hawai'i Pacific University, tells us of his many experiences studying abroad. Finally, **Aizawa**, a graduate student at the University of Tsukuba, gives us a great tip about how to stay abroad on a budget ... and he tells us in three languages!

The next section of articles deal with classroom topics. **Waldman** shares a fascinating lesson using folk music. **Nfor** enlightens us and his students on the realities of his native Africa. Then, two articles treat raising critical awareness in students: **Stillar**, investigating critical issues while developing a critical rapport with his students, and **Christie**, using community action projects to bring reality into the classroom.

This semester in the Readers Forum, we received a letter from **Kiuchi** who asks, What is education?

Next, investigating an issue critical to teachers' livelihoods, **Fukuda** talks to two teachers about their experiences working for agencies as outsourced instructors.

In a section on education topics, **Schmidt** explores the application of can-do objectives developed for foreign language teaching in the European context. **Murphey** and **Carpenter** explore the value of writing collaboratively. And finally, **Sugawara** reviews Dornyei's fantastic book on motivational strategies.

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We would like to thank our many guest editors, Tetsuya Fukuda, Thomas Karrer,

Takeshi Kikuchi, Yuko Nakanishi, and Jerry Waldman, for helping to make this such a fabulous issue. Also we want to thank the many contributors from the University of Tsukuba and our special Ibaraki editor, Markus Rude.

Happy reading and have a great summer!
The editors of Languaging! No. 9

Christopher Carpenter
Tim Murphey
Markus Rude

* * *

Ye Olde Standard Disclaimer: The opinions and views expressed in Languaging! do not necessarily reflect those of the editors nor of Dokkyo University (and maybe not even of the authors - after all people change their minds all the time!). Nevertheless, we hope you enjoy!

* * *

Share your learning and teaching explorations!

Languaging! is a place to experiment, not just write about experiments. Think about your favorite ways of teaching and learning - fun ways to learn that could help others. Think about the data you might collect: keeping a journal, recording your changing feelings and ideas, having friends observe your classes, visiting friends' classes, quizzing yourself, recording yourself, getting feedback from students on your classes, your materials, or the whole education system! Read a good book? Write about it. Have a good idea? Write about it. Had a good conversation? Write about it!

Get your ideas out in Languaging! Ask your students to submit their ideas, too!

Send submissions for Languaging! No. 10 by October 30th to the editors at languaging@yahoo.com

A Foreigner's View of Japan

An Interview with Michael Franchino

Yuko Iwasaki • Dokkyo University



I had studied about American culture before (the differences between Japan and America, etc.), but when I went to the U.S. last summer, I experienced the gap more than I thought I would. Because of this, I thought about foreigners living in Japan.

How about them? Do they have the same kinds of problems? I had an opportunity to have an interview with Michael Franchino. He was a Dokkyo University student two years ago and was also one of our tennis circle members.

Michael comes from Toronto, Canada. He's lived in Japan for two years since returning from Canada where he lived for half a year after graduating from Dokkyo. He now lives in Matsudo, Chiba, and works there as an English teacher at a conversation school.

Because it's been about five years since he first began studying Japanese and Japanese culture, sometimes it seemed hard for him to remember his first impressions, but I think it's

interesting to learn a different point of view for Japan. It went like this:

First, I asked him whether he studied about Japan before coming. He answered, "Yes, I've studied for three years in university. My teacher was Japanese and he was strict." He told me

about his class. He said that the most impressive cultural difference the teacher had told him about was that eye contact makes Japanese people uncomfortable.

As for grammar, he said that expressions like "ii-desu (which means 'No thanks')" were difficult for him at first because 'ii' means 'good' in English. Once he had a listening quiz and that phrase was used in a

shopping situation. He thought that the customer would buy something. This is wrong, of course. He said it still makes him confused sometimes. I also still make mistakes in English, especially when I'm asked as "Don't you~?" I sometimes can't answer correctly. Sometimes when the appropriate answer is 'No', I answer 'Yes' and the

“I think it’s interesting to learn a different point of view. I can see the same thing from a different side and in fact, I nodded with some of his opinions.”

person who asked me gets confused. These mistakes happen because of different pragmatic rules between English and Japanese.

As for Michael's first impressions of Japan, he thought Japan is a strict society because his Japanese teacher was strict. He also had the image of cities crowded with people and polite personalities. When he came to Japan, he noticed these two images were correct but the strict image was wrong.

He told me that he loves Japan and when he was a student at Dokkyo, he thought if there is a chance to return to Japan, he would like to visit or even live here someday. So, now he would like to live in Japan as long as he can, and he also thinks of moving to other places in Japan to have different experiences. For example, he thinks of moving to Fukushima or Osaka someday. I had never heard him say that before, so when I heard, I was surprised.

He was surprised about many things when he came to Japan. He explained to me three main points. He first told me about the snow. When it snowed in winter here, he wondered why people hold their umbrellas. He never held an umbrella when it was snowing in Canada. So he didn't do that here either. But soon he learned the reason, when he noticed that his jacket got wet in Japanese snow.

Second, he told me he was surprised about smaller things and bite-size foods. He said that he was surprised to see bite-size foods one day when he ordered Tonkatsu at a restaurant (his favorite food). I never saw bite-size foods when I was in the

U.S. so this fact was surprising for me, too. Also, department stores have narrower floors and taller buildings in Japan, but in Canada and the U.S. they have larger floors and shorter buildings.

He also talked about coffee shops and restaurants, because we were at a restaurant for about two hours (we met at dinner time and had dinner together). In Canada, if we stay at a restaurant for such a long time, we would be kicked out. But in Japan, this kind of thing rarely happens. When we have drinking parties, some stay for all night and enjoy with karaoke, talking etc., but no one disturbs them for staying so long, as long as it's not crowded.

Other than Japanese cultural things, I also asked him about his job. As I wrote before, he is a teacher at a conversation school, and I'm interested in teaching, too. He said he likes his job because he gets the chance to meet and talk to different kinds of people. Sometimes it can be a good thing and sometimes a bad thing depending on the person, but he enjoys it very much. He teaches not only adults but also kids, and it is one of his favorite parts.

As for teaching, he said the most difficult part is grammar, because he's a native speaker of English, and just as most Japanese people can't explain Japanese grammar well, he doesn't really understand English grammar and it's hard to explain. It becomes easier after he gets to know students well. At first, it's hard for his students to talk with someone in other languages, and I can understand how they feel. Also, it takes time to make a relaxing atmosphere. It's easy to teach

Learning on Four Continents ***Practical Reflections on International Education***

Tomonori Ono • Hawai'i Pacific University

I have been fortunate enough to study on four continents thus far in my life. Let me take you on a whirlwind tour of some of the ups and downs, in hopes that it might give you more information about the options everyone has for study abroad and at home.

High school study: Wavre, Brussels and Waterloo, Belgium.

The contrast between public, private, and international schools in Belgium is quite pronounced in terms of language curricula. Having had the chance to experience all three institutions as a student, I found that public schools tended to put an emphasis on bilingualism at the superficial level. Flemish (or Dutch) is taught as a prerequisite in French-speaking schools but students show little interest in its mastery and teachers are obliged to condone their attitude. Flemish is not identical to Dutch, although the differences appear mainly in pronunciation which is quite distinct. Conversely, students who attend public schools in the Flemish region are better motivated to learn French, because it will improve their job prospects.

“Looking back, I must say the experience of being an international student ... in a rural city in Australia’s outback was an exciting and positive experience for me.”

The private schools in the French-speaking region focus mainly on the in-depth study of the French language and introduce English early on. Although I met a few native English-speaking pupils in the classroom, the majority of pupils were Belgian. In

my early schooling days at a public school, I had attained a basic grasp of Flemish yet it did not progress further, and later on the Flemish that I learnt in public school was largely lost. However, my father complained once that I had adopted a Flemish accent when pronouncing German words. I had learned a little German in my preschool years when I was living in Berlin. After I went to a private school, my

fluency in French improved significantly, however, an even bigger improvement occurred after I moved to international schools, since I was now completely immersed in two target languages: French and English.

The international schools in Belgium strongly promoted bilingual education in French and English, with an optional third language that is often Spanish, German, or Italian, but nothing fancy such as Chinese or Japanese. I did not take the option of a third language, my

family was speaking English at home and I had already learned Japanese from my mother since I was a toddler. My parents felt that other subjects like math and science were of greater importance and that learning an additional language might distract me and jeopardize my performance in those subjects.

**Undergraduate study (BA):
Rockhampton, Australia.**

The major academic institutions in Australia are mainly on the East Coast, from Townsville, Queensland, in the North, to Melbourne, Victoria, in the South. The most reputable universities are The Australian National University, U. of Melbourne, U. of Sydney, U. of New South Wales and U. of Queensland to name a few. These institutions are located in the major city centers and are not often the best place to study field subjects as Australia possesses a large number of universities specializing in different subjects. Therefore, I chose to attend Central Queensland University on rural Central Queensland's Capricornia coast. Its main campus is located in Rockhampton or Rocky for short, which is reputed as Australia's largest cattle raising region. Since I initially wished to major in aquaculture biology (which is the study of fish farming), I thought it a good idea to study in a remote location, where I would have to deal with water quality, native parasites, and toxins which might affect the fish.

In the end, I had a change of heart and switched my major half-way through the program to arts and social

sciences, majoring in world history and Japanese. Looking back, I must say the experience of being an international student studying biology, and later arts and social sciences, in a rural city in Australia's outback was an exciting and positive experience for me. Having been raised largely in big cities, Tokyo, Berlin, and Brussels, it was the first time for me to be exposed to nature on such a large scale. There were brightly colored parrots (called lorikeets) which would wake you at five in the morning with their coarse voices (not pretty at all), laughing Kookaburras (a kingfisher), ibises, wallabies (a small kangaroo), and a host of other wildlife around the campus. Waking at five in the morning is considered strenuous in most parts of the world, as students tend to work late at night and sleep in till noon the next day. In hindsight, what I did could be a fun way for foreign students to be exposed to English. What I liked about studying in Australia the most was the significantly smaller class sizes compared to the U.S. As a student, it was possible to get more individual attention and the staff was more readily accessible.

Overall, Australian universities have good undergraduate programs and tuition fees are not too expensive. It is generally less expensive to study in Australia than in the U.S. but tuition fees for foreign students have gone up significantly recently in Australia due to popular demand, and the cost of living has increased as well but is still reasonable by any means. Incidentally, American universities tend to enjoy a better reputation for their graduate

programs and are correspondingly more expensive than equivalent Australian programs. All said, undergraduate studies in Australia can be highly recommended.

Graduate study (MA): Honolulu, USA

I had worked as an English language teacher at a private high school in Fukushima for a year, and realized that I was ill-prepared for a long career in language teaching. Teaching is a tough job that requires proper training and a better understanding of the underlying theoretical concepts which then helps you to survive and enjoy the profession. Where would I go next? I had visited Hawai'i in the past and liked it.

Hawai'i has two major universities; the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (UH) and Hawai'i Pacific University (HPU). The former is a government-funded public institution whereas the latter is a private institution. Both institutions have an ethnically diverse student population, though I found that at HPU about 75% of students come from Asian countries, with Japanese, Koreans, and Chinese predominating. As a student in the MA in TESL program at HPU, I learnt that most of the linguistic courses offered tend to be more practical-orientated rather than theoretical. This differs from UH which offers more theoretical courses, including a thesis defense as part of the final assessment. As part of the final assessment for HPU, students are offered the choice between a portfolio of collected works or a comprehensive examination. Personally, I find the portfolio option more useful than the

comprehensive exam in terms of finding a job as you have prepared materials you could show with minor modifications at any interview. However, the fact that HPU doesn't offer PhD programs means that students wishing to pursue further education must eventually apply to another university.

Overall, the relatively high cost of living in Hawai'i makes studying at HPU quite expensive for international students and it is worth looking into state universities on the mainland. Quality of education is unlikely to differ much since nearly all universities in the U.S. have to adhere to national education standards for tertiary institutions. Furthermore, Hellstèn and Prescott (2004) mentioned that competition among international students for a place at American universities is quite high; it is recommended to make the most of it by weighing options carefully before applying. Admission to good European, Canadian and Australian universities is also restricted and preference is usually given to the country's own nationals in particular in the education field which is far less internationally minded than one might wish.

Further graduate study (PhD): Tokyo

Since I'm thinking of pursuing my education further and intend to work in Japan, I have been looking at a number of Japanese universities that offer PhD courses in Teaching English. Among the universities that I checked were Tokyo, Keio, Waseda, Sophia, ICU, Dokkyo, and Temple. The selection of potential universities was mainly based on the

fact that I intend to return and live in Tokyo and wanted to study close by. Based on information given on their respective websites, I found that:

1. The University of Tokyo offers no PhD program in language teaching. All courses are in Japanese. Entrance exam is required.
2. Keio has only a limited English PhD program, specializing in literary studies. Courses are in English and Japanese. Entrance exam is required.
3. Waseda offers choice and diversity in PhD programs, but does not offer a Teaching in English program. Courses are in English and Japanese. Entrance exam is required.
4. Sophia has recently opened a MA in TESL program. An equivalent PhD program is under construction. Courses are in English and Japanese. Document review or entrance exam.
5. International Christian University (ICU) offers a PhD in Teaching English program. Courses are in English and Japanese. Document review or entrance exam.
6. Dokkyo offers a PhD in English but not in Teaching English. Courses are

in English and Japanese. Document review or entrance exam.

7. Temple offers a PhD in Education, majoring in TESL. All courses are in English. Entrance exam is required.

This university list is not a rankings list, but merely helped me decide which universities to apply to. Based on my personal requirements, Tokyo area and English language teaching program, I am inclined to opt for ICU. As individual needs vary, I recommend to use this list only as a guide and to visit the relevant university websites directly. You will find that many a website is poorly managed and offers little or confusing information. Don't let this put you off and persevere, it is all part of the eco-system and life isn't easy.

About the writer

Tomonori Ono is finishing his graduate program in TESL at Hawai'i Pacific University, Honolulu, and plans to obtain his PhD in Japan.

Works cited in this article

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“Workcamp”

Stay abroad, make international friends

... but don't spend a lot of money

海外で安く、人と交わりながら滞在する“ワークキャンプ”

Auslandsaufenthalt mit internationalen Leuten

... und für ein wenig Geld

Kazuhiro Aizawa · University of Tsukuba

筆者 相澤和宏 · 筑波大学大学院体育研究科スポーツ文化

In this paper, I will introduce a way to stay in your favorite country, work with an international group of people, make friends, and all for not too much money. Staying abroad for an individual trip or a Language-learning-program during the summer vacation usually takes a lot of money. I recommend trying a “Workcamp” for about one month, because it is a great experience and you don't need to worry too much about money.

I stayed in Workcamp in a small town called Rangsdorf, Germany in the summer of 2005 for about 4 weeks. In my case, I could not afford to take part in a language learning program, because that was expensive, and I didn't have enough time to work part-time, since I was in a sports club of my university (6 days a week practice!). That is also why I could not be away from Japan for more than 1 month. Then I searched by

長い休みの間に、海外へ滞在したいと思っても、個人旅行や語学留学などのプログラムはお金がかかります。1ヶ月くらいの期間、お金を節約して海外に滞在をしたいと思う方には、ワークキャンプがおすすめです。僕は2005年の夏にドイツのラングスドルフ(Rangsdorf)という小さな町で、現地の仕事を手伝いながら約4週間滞在していました。憧れの国で、様々な国の人と仕事をしながら滞在ができる方法を紹介します。

僕の場合、体育会の部活に所属しており、アルバイトをする時間がなかったために、大学主催の語学研修プログラムに参加する金銭的な余裕はありませんでした。また1ヶ月以上の滞在は練習の都合上(それでもかなり無理をしましたが)不可能でした。そのため、期間が約1ヶ月で、値段が安く、人と関わりながら滞在できるようなプログラムをインターネットで検索をしたところ、たどり着いたのが「ワークキャンプ」でした。僕が参加したワークキャンプはIJGDというドイツの団体で、その他にも多くの団体が世界中にあり、様々な種類のワークキャンプを行っているようです。

Ein Auslands-Aufenthalt während der Sommerferien, z. B. eine Individual-Reise oder ein Sprachlern-Programm, benötigt eine Menge Geld. Ich empfehle das “Workcamp” für ungefähr einen Monat, weil du dich nicht zu viel um Geld sorgen brauchst. Ich war in einer kleinen Stadt, Rangsdorf in Deutschland, für ungefähr 4 Wochen im Sommer 2005 und habe in einem Workcamp gearbeitet. In diesem Artikel stelle ich diese Art vor, in ein Land nach Wahl zu reisen und mit internationalen Freunden zu arbeiten.

In meinem Fall konnte ich es mir nicht leisten, an einem Sprachlern-Programm teilzunehmen, weil das kostspielig war, und ich hatte nicht genügend Zeit, Teilzeitarbeit zu machen, weil ich im Sportclub meiner Universität war (6 Tage pro Woche Training!). Das ist auch der Grund, warum ich nicht länger als einen Monat aus Japan weg konnte. Dann

Internet. What I wanted was to stay less than a month, a low price, and a lot of communication with people. Then I found the "Workcamp". The association, which held the work-camp I took part in, was the IJGD (Internationale Jugendgemeinschaftsdienste), a German association. There are a lot of associations such as IJGD all over the world, and they organize many kinds of Workcamp.

A Workcamp targets youths around 16~26 years old, it is concerned with volunteer work or projects in regional areas, the members cook for themselves, and the accommodations are public facilities (e. g. a kindergarten schoolhouse). That is why the participation fee can be cheap.

Generally, a Workcamp program is 2~4 weeks. The participation fee depends on the association. In my case, it was 90 Euro (about 13,000 yen in 2005). If you are thinking of a 4-week stay with food and accommodation, with a cheap flight ticket, you can stay in Europe for around 100,000 yen. In the holidays during the work-camp, you can go sightseeing with other members. I went to Potsdam and Dresden, and to nightclubs on Saturdays. In my case, all these fees were included in the overall

ワークキャンプの特徴は、対象が世界中の青年であること(16~26才くらい)。現地の仕事のお手伝いをする。参加メンバーで協力して自炊などをする。宿泊は公共施設などを借りること。これらによって、参加費が格安になっています。

滞在期間は一般的に2週間~4週間くらいで、費用は、団体によって差があるようですが、僕の場合、90ユーロ(約13000円)でした。約4週間の滞在中で、3食寝床付きということを考えて、格安航空券を利用すれば、ヨーロッパでも10万円くらいで1ヶ月滞在できることになります。休日はメンバーのみんなで観光に行くこともできます。僕の場合、ポツダムやドレスデン、そして土曜の夜はナイトクラブへ。その際の移動費は参加費からでした。

参加の方法は、インターネットで連絡先を知り、団体に直接連絡をとるのが一番手取り早く、安いです。仲介してくれる日本の会社や団体もあり、もし不安であればそちらを利用することもできますが、仲介料がかなりとられるので、参加する団体の検索だけはそちらを利用して、いざ参加するときは直接連絡を取るという方法があります。

ワークキャンプは、選べる仕事の種類の多さも魅力です。僕の参加したワークキャンプは屋外での土木作業(森の中の道作り)だったので、かなりきつかったのですが、肉体的にハードなキャンプは本来、まれのようです。それに、基本的に日本人はヨーロッパの多くの人々より

suchte ich im Internet. Die Bedingungen waren: Aufenthalt kürzer als ein Monat, billig, und Kommunikation mit vielen Leuten. Dann fand ich das "Workcamp". Der Verband, der mein Workcamp organisierte, hieß IJGD (Internationale Jugendgemeinschaftsdienste), ein deutscher Verband. Es gibt eine Menge Verbände wie der IJGD auf der ganzen Erde, und sie organisieren viele Arten von Workcamps.

Merkmale des Workcamp sind: Es zielt auf junge Leute ab (um 16~26 Jahre alt), es betrifft Hilfsarbeiten oder Projekte in der Region, die Mitglieder kochen für sich selbst und die Unterkünfte sind in öffentlichen Einrichtungen (z. B. Kindergärten). Darum wird die Teilnahmegebühr billig.

Normalerweise dauert das Workcamp Programm 2~4 Wochen. Die Teilnahmegebühr hängt vom Verband ab. In meinem Fall war sie 90 Euro (etwa 13.000 Yen, 2005). Bei einem 4-wöchigen Aufenthalt mit Essen und Unterkunft und einer preiswerten Flugkarte kannst du für etwa 100.000 Yen nach Europa. An arbeitsfreien Tagen während des Workcamps kannst du Sightseeing mit anderen Teilnehmern machen. Ich ging nach Potsdam, Dresden und Samstagabend in

participation fee.

The easiest and cheapest way to take part in a Workcamp is probably to contact the association directly by email. There are some Japanese agencies, which mediate between you and the Workcamp association. If you are nervous about dealing with the associations by yourself, you can use these agencies, but they are costly. I can recommend you to search the Workcamp associations through agencies first, but then try to contact them directly.

One attractive point of the Workcamp is the many kinds of work. My Workcamp was quite tough since it was outdoor and related to civil

engineering (making roads). But actually, physically hard Workcamp are rare. And I got the impression that Japanese are more diligent than many European people, so if you work as usual, your work will be appreciated.

You don't need to worry about meals and hotels, and what to do in the

も勤勉だという印象をうけたので、普通にやっていたら仕事は評価されるでしょう。

食べ物と寝床が確保され、日々のやることがあるため、一人旅を好む人は窮屈を感じるかもしれません。しかし、多くの国の人、現地の人と関わりながら、安く滞在したいのであれば、これほどいいプログラムはあまりないと思います。

僕はワークキャンプを通して、多くの国の人と仲良くなり、次回は那些人たちに会うためにヨーロッパを旅する、ということも考えています。今から考えただけで楽しみです！

相澤和宏 (筑波大学大学院体育研究科スポーツ文化コース1年、スポーツ社会学 (特にスポーツ環境論))

Workcamp. If you prefer to be a solitary traveler, you might feel it cramps your style. But if you enjoy communicating with people from a lot of countries for a little money, the work-camp might be a great program for you. I made many friends through the work-camp. Now I'm thinking about the next

Nachtclubs. Bei mir waren alle diese Gebühren in der gesamten Teilnahmegebühr eingeschlossen.



For more information about Workcamps in Germany, visit http://www.pro-international.de/workcamps_in_germany.htm

trip: going around Europe to see these friends!

About the writer

Kazuhiro Aizawa is a student in the Master's Program in Health and Physical Education at the University of Tsukuba. His research is in the field of Sports Sociology, focusing on sports and environmental issues.

ILA 2007

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Hey Teachers!!! Have you heard?

Kanda University of International Studies
Chiba, Japan, **October 5-8, 2007**

Hope you will join us! For more information:
<http://www.independentlearning.org/>

サポートの皆さんに:

お世話になります! どうもありがとうございます!

To the Teachers' Room Support Staff *Languaging!* says, Thank you!

今回の『Languaging!』は獨協大学講師室ならびに第2講師室の素晴らしいスタッフのみなさんに捧げたいと思います。みなさんのサポートと忍耐力には本当に感謝しています。もっと多くの講師たちが、ちゃんと感謝の気持ちを伝えられるように、この会報でみなさんを紹介したいと思います。いろいろとありがとうございます。

敬具

Languaging! 編集者一同

This issue of *Languaging!* is dedicated to all of the wonderful support staff in the Lecturers' Room and the Lecturers' Lounge at Dokkyo University. Without your kind help and patience, the teachers at Dokkyo would surely be lost! We introduce you here (in alphabetical order) so that more teachers can thank you properly. Thank you for everything you do!

Sincerely,

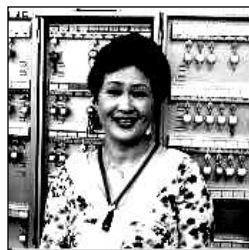
Languaging! Editors

受付・ Reception Desk Staff



林 美智子
Michiko Hayashi

Ms. Hayashi says, "Hello!" She is interested in botanical arts and handicrafts. She says, "I want to remember all of your names and faces!"



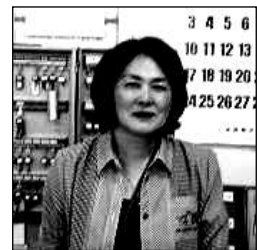
石村 かよみ
Kayomi Ishimura

Ms. Ishimura says, "Buenos dias!" (and quite a few other words in Spanish). She likes to travel, party, and eat MIKI Prunes! She is a health enthusiast and has good advice for everyone: "Don't forget STRESS: sports (S), travel (T), rest (R), eating (E), smiling (S), and sleep (S)!" Now that's the kind of stress we like!



亀島 泰子
Taiko Kamejima

Ms. Kamejima says, "Aloha!" She likes traveling, singing, and hoola dancing!" To the foreign teachers she says, "Although we are not used to communicating with you, we really appreciate your warmth and kindness."



川端 富士子
Fujiko Kawabata

Ms. Kawabata says, "Hello!" She enjoys reading and flower gardening. To the teachers she says, "If you need anything, please don't hesitate to ask!"

受付・ Reception Desk Staff (Cont')



中西 裕子
Yuko Nakanishi

Ms. Nakanishi says, "Merhaba!" She lived in the San Francisco Bay area for a number of years and fondly remembers the Golden Gate Bridge. She says, "I hope you all enjoy teaching at Dokkyo. ☺"



大澤 美智子
Michiko Osawa

Ms. Osawa says, "Hello!" She loves reading, traveling, mountains and the countryside. To the teachers: "I'm still new here and I don't know my way around well yet, but I'm looking forward to working with you all!"



山田 桂子
Keiko Yamada

Ms. Yamada says, "Hello!" She likes music and sings in a chorus. She says, "I've only been here for half a year, but I'm trying my best! I am happy to be working with you."



依田 正子
Masako Yoda

Ms. Yoda says, "Hello!" She loves sports, watching them and doing them! To the teachers she says, "I haven't learned everyone's name and face yet, but I am trying and I really enjoy working with you!"

講師室サポートデスク・Teacher's Room Support Desk Staff

青木 敏子
① Toshiko Aoki

Ms. Aoki says, "Hello!" She likes Japanese flower arrangement. She says, "Linguistically speaking, my language proficiency is limited, but I am happy and willing to help you. So please say hello!"

宮良 昌希
③ Masaki Miyayoshi

Ms. Miyayoshi says "Bonjour!" She likes to make classic Japanese drawings in the "sumi-e" style and enjoys going to see Art Nouveau and Art Deco works in museums. She says, "Anytime, for any reason, please feel free to call or say hello!"

御園生 由香
④ Yuka Misanou

Ms. Misonou says, "Hello!" She enjoys playing the piano. To the teachers she says, "Feel free to stop by and say hello."



① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

丹治 徳子
⑤ Noriko Tanji

Ms. Tanji says, "Bonjour!" She likes to play PC games and watch anime. And all customers get a special deal: "SMILE ¥0"

雨宮 理絵
② Rie Amemiya

Ms. Amemiya says, "Bonjour!" She loves dogs. To the teachers she says, "Thank you all very much for your cheerful greetings."

渡邊 慶子
⑥ Keiko Watanabe

Ms. Watanabe says, "Ciao!" She likes watching movies and anime and playing tennis. To the teachers she says, "I'm not bilingual and I'm not an AV expert, but I look forward to helping you however I can!"

吉川 典子
⑦ Noriko Yoshikawa

Ms. Yoshikawa says, "Hello!" She likes tennis and delicious food! To the foreign teachers she says, "Although I'm not good at foreign languages, please don't hesitate to ask me questions!"



④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

A Wandering Minstrel I

Using Folk Songs in Class

Jerry Waldman • Dokkyo University

We have begun the second year of the content-based courses that were started in the spring of 2006 at Dokkyo University by Tim Murphey. These courses have generated excitement with both teachers and students mainly because the students get a diversity of content and the teachers can choose the subject matter. Teachers meet the students once a week for only six weeks, so there isn't time to lose enthusiasm.

One popular activity that I have been using in my content-based course, American History and Music, is the ubiquitous jigsaw activity, but applied to two old British folk songs. Here is an outline of what I do. First I give a mini lecture on the wandering medieval minstrels who would travel the countryside relating events or human-interest stories through songs about people or places they had been. The songs have traveled from England to America and are still sung today. This brief background information immediately engages the students, since the stories seem current enough to come out of today's newspapers. They can't imagine that this was how news traveled once upon a time and that these songs also traveled through the

“The beauty of the lesson is the simplicity of the songs, and the ability of the students to relate to such old but timeless stories.”

centuries and are still sung today.

After the mini presentation, the class is divided into two groups, and half get a copy of one song while the other half get the other song. The students spend ten to fifteen minutes in their groups reading their story aloud and helping each other try to understand it, stanza by stanza. As they wander

through the lyrics, I wander around helping them. I help them as a group rather than individually. At first reading, the lyrics are difficult, due mainly to the little bit of archaic English. I put these words on the board, like “thee” and “dwell” so that on the second

reading the songs are totally understandable.

Then the students from each song group pair up and tell each other their stories. Since both songs are basically simple narratives the students get a certain satisfaction from being able to tell the stories.

The two songs I have been using are, *John Riley*, a story with emotional impact of a lost love that is found again after many years and *Railroad Boy*, a story of unrequited love and death. The lyrics are on the Internet. One is a happy song, the other is a sad song, and with the students the happy ending is

always the most popular. The beauty of the lesson is the simplicity of the songs, and the ability of the students to relate to such old but timeless stories.

After the activity is finished I then play the songs for the students. Both songs are sung by Joan Baez, whose beautiful and clear voice the students never fail to comment on. Both songs are about three minutes long, and this brevity is another reason for their appeal. Longer narratives don't work as well.

Two quick comments from students who wrote in their action logs (student responses to the class) are quoted here. One is on *John Riley*. "If I was her, I could not wait for him. If he loves another woman I could not congratulate them. She is great!! True love is this

John riley

As sung by Joan Baez

*Fair young maid all in a garden
Strange young man, passerby
He said, "Fair maid, will you marry me?"
This then, sir, was her reply:*

*Oh, no, kind sir, I cannot marry thee
For I've a love who sails all on the sea.
He's been gone for seven years
Still no man shall marry me*

*What if he's in some battle slain
Or drowned in the deep salt sea
What if he's found another love
And he and his love both married be?*

*Well, if he's in some battle slain
I will go and mourn all on his grave
And if he's drowned in the deep salt sea
I'll be true to his memory*

*And if he's found another love
And he and his love both married be
I'll wish them health and happiness
Where they dwell across the sea*

*He picked her up all in his arms
Kisses gave her: One, two, three
Said, Here am I, my own true love
I am your long-lost John Riley!*

song. I feel happy to hear this song." And on *Railroad Boy*, "I would never kill myself for a man. I would kill him first. (Ha ha!)"

About the writer

Jerry Waldman is a walking library of American music history and New York stories. Go browse his mental shelf and you never know what you might find.

Lyrics to the songs can be found online:

John Riley -

<http://www.stlyrics.com/songs/j/joanbaez2038/johnriley96486.html>

Railroad Boy -

<http://www.stlyrics.com/songs/j/joanbaez2038/railroadboy96544.html>

The title of this article comes from a song of the same name in the comic operetta, *The Mikado*, by Gilbert and Sullivan.

Railroad boy

As sung by Joan Baez and Bob Dylan

*She went upstairs to make her bed
And not one word to her mother said.
Her mother she went upstairs too
Saying, "Daughter, oh daughter, what's troublin' you?":*

*"Oh mother, oh mother, I cannot tell
That railroad boy that I love so well.
He courted me my life away
And now at home will no longer stay."*

*"There is a place in yonder town
Where my love goes and he sits him down.
And he takes that strange girl on his knee
And he tells to her what he won't tell me."*

*Her father he came home from work
Sayin', "Where is my daughter, she seems so hurt"
He went upstairs to give her hope
An' he found her hangin' by a rope.*

*He took his knife and he cut her down
And on her bosom these words he found:
"Go dig my grave both wide and deep,
Put a marble stone at my head and feet,
And on my breast, put a snow white dove
To warn the world that I died of love.*

Demystifying Africa in EFL classes

Samuel Nfor • University of Tsukuba

In the past, students in my EFL classes have demonstrated certain weaknesses in gaining an awareness of the cultures and traditions of African people. The goal of this paper therefore is to help them acquire an insight particularly on the way the background of African countries has affected their own development, and to urge them gain tolerance of the habits and customs of people of other cultures.

Japanese ESL learners have often peppered me with received and misconceived beliefs about the African continent, and I always try to find a unique way, to tackle their misconceptions about my people in a bid to help them learn the products, contributions and perspectives of the African culture. This has been a relevant and meaningful experience for my learners, and me.

I am from Cameroon, and I consider myself a mouthpiece of my country of ancestry and the continent of Africa. Cameroon is bounded on the North by Lake Chad; on the East by Chad and the Central Africa Republic; on the South by the Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea; and on the West by Nigeria. I find it necessary to include this brief lesson in Geography because,

throughout my stay in Japan, I have realized that very little is known about Cameroon and the continent of Africa by Japanese students.

The one thing that my country appears to be known for is the success it has achieved in the world of soccer.

“I saw a living, breathing lion for the first time in my life at a zoo in Japan.”

Cameroon by any standard is a household name in the world of soccer. Soccer greats like Roger Milla, Patrick Mboma, and Samuel Eto all have forced Cameroon into the thinking and consciousness of millions of people around the world who otherwise saw my country through the tainted, negative

lenses of the western media, at first.

My experience is that, most students here have an incredible interest in, and a commanding knowledge of the statistical data of the Cameroon national soccer team. Sadly though, the same students have some stereotypical and misleading beliefs about our customs, history and geography. I have, on several occasions, found part of my English instruction focused on providing information and understanding about the habits and customs of my people with the view of addressing myriad misconceptions and falsehoods that have become part of Japanese students' appreciation of the contemporary lifestyles in Africa.

This has been achieved with audio-visual materials like short movies or plays on Africa that help elicit and improve conversational or speaking skills/competence in communication on a wide variety of issues about Africa. I set up some of my ESL classes in small roundtable formats where participants discuss and debate African perspectives. I spread myself around all assigned conversation groups and act as a group leader or prompter, inspiring and challenging students to revisit some of their not-so-impressive beliefs about Africa. This student-centered approach and a teaching style that emphasizes competence in communicative skills in ESL helps me divert from the teacher in the traditional sense that most foreign language learners find frightening.

Through my pilgrimage with these students, I have expanded my worldview and improved the students tolerance of other ways and other races. Perhaps the greatest lesson learned thus far is the destructive and misleading power of generalizations. Examples of generalizations and stereotypes I have come across among my students include: (a) lions are domestic animals in Africa, (b) there are no tall buildings where I came from, (c) Africans live in trees, (d) the entire continent of Africa is a jungle, (e) people still walk naked in Africa, (f) most Africans have tails and are not too different from monkeys, (g) Africans drink urine for medicine, (h) Africans hunt and eat chimpanzees, etc.

I won't set out to verify or dispel the preceding perceptions because the truth appears to be so obvious. But I would like to make two interesting

observations: (1) I have actually never seen a lion in Cameroon my whole life, though some people think fun and games in Africa involves fighting with lions. I saw a living, breathing lion for the first time in my life at a zoo in Japan. (2) I only saw elephants in movies and television until I visited Thailand in the summer of 2001.

Students here are usually surprised and bewildered when I speak candidly to them about these experiences. I am intrigued, but I certainly never get offended when students tap dance around me with these questions pregnant with racial and cultural innuendoes. I understand full well that their prejudices are informed by a blistering western media campaign that portrays Africa as a do-nothing continent.

The students' knowledge of Africa is a toxic combination of exaggerated and farcical television documentaries about famine and disease on the continent. Reports by explorers like Mungo Park (1771-1806) and Henry Morton Stanley (1841 - 1904) who wrote about Africa after their visits there only added more salt into injuries. The flawed reports of these explorers made Africans appear warlike and/or childlike. The explorers wrote unchallenged accounts and gave lectures that popularized the notion of Africa as "the dark continent." Consider this relatively favorable quotation from a first-time visitor to Africa, and see how it illustrates the prevailing beliefs among Japanese students:

"As we steamed into the estuary of Sierra

Leone on November 18th [1889], we found Africa exactly as books of travel had led us to anticipate--a land of excessive heat, lofty palm-trees, gigantic baobabs, and naked savages. At five o'clock we dropped anchor at Free Town, called, on account of its deadly fevers, the 'white man's grave.' Immediately, our vessel was surrounded by boats filled with men and women, shouting, jabbering, laughing, quarrelling, and even fighting. ... Without exception it was the most confusedly excited and noisy lot of humanity I have ever seen." (Brown, 1970).

I am not suggesting in any way, that the African continent does not face massive challenges. Africa is beset by rashes of criminal violence on its city streets, where charges of corruption are running to the highest levels of government, and worries about killer diseases and insufficient medical attention are weighing on the minds of many. I will not also argue that the opportunities available to the average Japanese citizens are of the same quality or quantity as those available to the average Cameroonian or African. Yet, you will, perhaps, agree that many countries of Africa have made aggressive gains in education and economic development. It is a continent where the bonds of family keep old people from feeling useless or dying alone in nursing homes and guarantee that no child is an orphan.

I believe the first question to ask about Africa is about people, not animals. Africans and people around the world find more and more value in the authority, knowledge, and skills of the celebrated South African opponent of Apartheid, Nelson Mandela. He is one of

the greatest campaigners of freedom the world has ever known.

Nigeria, another country in Africa, has world-class wealth. It is the world's ninth largest oil producer and ranks fifth in natural gas reserves. Above ground, there is a wealth of well-trained academics in Africa. The works of Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe are taught actively in American Colleges, and have been translated in about 40 different languages. A growing number of world-class novelists and poets are Nigerians.

John F. Kennedy, addressing the American Society of African Culture in June 1959 stated inter alia that: "...Africa is a land of rich variety, of noble and ancient cultures, of vital and gifted people..." He was right through and through. Thousands of Americans, Europeans, Chinese, and Japanese tourists flood into the game parks of the nation entity of Kenya alone every year. In view of this therefore, to focus entirely on African's misfortunes is to do great injustice to the millions of Africans who are working tirelessly to bring visible change and a brighter future to the continent.

About the writer

Samuel Nfor, came to Japan six years ago. He studied Kyogen and Noh for a year on a scholarship awarded by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan. He has since had the occasional opportunity to share the flavor of his talents as an actor with different theatre companies in Japan. He currently teaches English, part time, at the University of Tsukuba.

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Treading Lightly

Building critical rapport in order to promote healthy discussion of critical issues in Japanese EFL

Scott Stillar • Nihon University

As a practitioner of critical pedagogy/multicultural education in Japan, from time to time the discussion topics in my EFL classes, despite being well within the boundaries of the intended curriculum, have upset students. While discussion of various critical issues in other cultures always seem to evoke a genuine sense of interest, upon relating the discussion topics to issues in Japan, even many previously outgoing students become shy and class participation halts to an awkward silence. However, as an educator and long-term resident of Japan, I strongly feel that lack of critical discourse regarding issues in Japanese society is possibly a major limiting factor to confronting some of the most pressing problems in the coming decades. Thus, I feel it is necessary for EFL educators in Japan to find a means by which to evoke meaningful, critical discourse without causing the students distress which can severely inhibit further participation and learning.

In this paper, I will begin by discussing my method of building

"critical rapport" in order to evoke greater student participation in the discussion of critical issues close to home while taking great care as to not cause offense. Secondly, I will discuss pedagogy which I have found successful in developing critical rapport.

“By having the students be the first to mention critical issues within their own culture, they tend to feel less of a sense of being attacked by an “outsider” and are more willing to engage in critical discourse ...”

The importance of developing critical rapport

Perhaps due to a lack of an educational precedent, discussion of critical issues within Japan oftentimes evokes an awkwardly defensive reaction from the students. These feelings, while completely natural, can severely hinder the language learning process by raising student's affective filters (Krashen,

1985) which reduces a key component in the language learning process, participation in production of the language. Thus, I feel that it is of the utmost importance that we take great measures to insure that we tread lightly and develop a rapport with the students before engaging critical issues close to home. I define "critical rapport" as a student's sense of trust in the instructor as both a professional, as

well as an unbiased advocate for equality.

Based on my experience, the key to building critical rapport has three parts. First, one must develop the student's sense of individual identity and understanding of its relation to pride. Secondly, upon beginning discussion of critical topics, one must begin by relating examples of the given issue to those outside of the student's immediate environment before engaging similar issues in their own culture. This way the feelings of defensiveness and awkwardness are lessened by maneuvering student's perspectives on their own culture into the third-person, outside of pride and personal connections before eventually confronting issues close to home. Lastly, it is important to hold a debriefing session after every class and have students relate how the discussion affected their pride in relation others. It is also key that the teacher use this time to reinforce the overall goal of emphasizing that the universality of inequity in all cultures is a staunch reminder of membership in an equally imperfect global community.

**Pedagogy of critical rapport:
Establishing individuality through
examination of identity and pride**

Before tackling discussion on any critical topics, I feel it is important to first establish a positive and enjoyable classroom environment while spotlighting what I believe to be two key constructs which will form the thematic viewpoint by which critical issues are observed in future classes,

identity and pride. That being so, upon my first encounter with a class, I begin by making my intentions and agenda clear, to promote greater equality and peace. From there, I begin by holding discussion on identity and having each student present an "identity map", a hierarchical visualization detailing things (nationality, race, gender, social grouping, etc) which they most closely associate with themselves. This is used to emphasize each student's individuality and to better reinforce the concept of identity in relation to the next topic, pride.

Once sure that the students have a clear idea of the concept of identity, I move on to the discussion of pride by having the students discuss and list the various things they are proud of. This discussion inevitably highlights the student's individual differences, most being simply benign things such as their hometown and/or favorite sports team, however others having far heavier implications, such as cultural pride, patriotism and ethnic pride (which for Japanese students are often one in the same). I then ask the students to discuss what kind of effect conflicting prides has between both individuals and the world in general. (Most classes generally come to a consensus that pride can be both a good thing and a bad thing, depending on how it is managed) Lastly, I have the students look at their previously created "identity maps" and note how the things listed as closest to who they identify themselves as often holding the most pride. From here, I have students compare and contrast their individual identities and prides in

order to further reinforce a sense that all individuals have specific sensitivities with regards to things that they most closely identify with themselves.

Upon completing the above, generally there is a positive class atmosphere and general sense of curiosity regarding future content. In the classes that follow, I begin having the students hold discourse on critical topics outside of their immediate culture. No matter the topic, I ensure that the students discuss both sides of a topic and focus on what sort of identity features may cause one's pride to be hurt by conflicting opinions on the topic. Once the topic has been relatively well discussed, I then ask the students to relate the topic to a similar issue in Japan. By having the students be the first to mention critical issues within their own culture, they tend to feel less of a sense of being attacked by an "outsider" and are more willing to engage in critical discourse despite awkward personal feelings. Finally, I hold a debriefing session where the students openly discuss the effect of the discussion on their own pride and relate it to previously discussed examples outside of their culture.

Conclusion

Of the many possible critiques of my methodology, the one which I find most blatant is the usage of diversion by first directing attention to issues outside of the students own culture. It is believed that by diverting focus away from the relation between one's own position of dominance in their own society, it instills of a sense of "false understanding" (Grillo & Wildman, 2000) of the issues which, in the end, fails to prepare students to confront issues close to home (van Dijk, 1993). However, I believe that due to the necessity of participation in EFL courses, focusing

completely on direct confrontation can be destructive to the goal of improving the student's communicative skills in English by nullifying their will to participate.

While I do not advocate that we as ESL teachers or learners spend every minute of class time attempting to cure all social ills, I think it is important that we provide an alternative discourse to aid in counteracting, what many see as, the inherent ideologies which accompany teaching the language of the dominant culture (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 2001). In fact, oftentimes my attempts to promote discussion of critical issues in Japanese ESL courses have been criticized as a grievous example of spreading unwanted liberal ideologies of the dominant global culture. Although I completely understand this perspective, I believe that critical discourse is necessary in order to confront serious, yet oftentimes completely uncontested, problems which exist in all cultures, in order to promote greater peace, equality and global citizenship.

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Critical Thinking and Community Involvement in Oral Communication Classes

Stephen Christie • Dokkyo University

I have always tried to integrate critical thinking skills into all my courses, but recently, in oral communications courses I teach at a university in Tokyo, I have started to implement a community involvement component, such as that recommended by the California State Board of Education in its standards for high school foreign language teaching (for more information see: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/fl/cf/>). Last year I presented a paper concerning this project (Christie 2006). I would like to give a brief background of the course and of the project and describe why I feel these types of projects are important to students' learning.

“For many, this is also the first time in their education they have been given an opportunity to actually go outside the school to engage the real world in their learning.”

First, I will give a brief background of the course. In this second year, oral communications course, my students are required to give three PowerPoint presentations to the class during the 24 week course, the first one being a self-introduction (where they can concentrate on the details of utilizing PowerPoint as the content is all about themselves). The next two presentations require the students to devote themselves to the content of

their presentations so it is good that by this point they already know the basics of utilizing PowerPoint. The second presentation is based on the community action project, which I will discuss further.

The community project involves the students utilizing their cellular telephones to go out into the surrounding community and ask

members of the community about the relationship of the university to the community and then report back to the class their findings. This particular topic has been assigned as it had been discovered that the university has a community relations problem with the neighboring community. By taking on this topic it gives

the students experience in problem identification (a critical thinking skill) and experience conducting real-life social science, which to date has been a first time experience for all of my students. For many, this is also the first time in their education they have been given an opportunity to actually go outside the school to engage the real world in their learning.

At first, most of the students express dismay that they will have to go

outside the school and interact with people to complete an assignment. However, by the end of the assignment most of the students feel a sense of having taken part in a real and meaningful event. They also have taken an active role in their education and have taken part in "authentic" communication (though usually not in the target language) rather than some irrelevant practice communication as prescribed in their textbooks.

This project has been made possible because the university has acknowledged the fact that teacher autonomy is important in addressing the individual needs of the students. The flexibility allows me to provide students an opportunity where they are allowed to think for themselves rather than always being told how to think. The students are exposed to real-world problems, which though there may not be an immediate answer to them, the students come away knowing that by identifying a problem more clearly they are at once learning and helping to solve the problem. I believe that this type of experience awakens students and gives them a deeper understanding of what self-actualization and student-centered learning is about.

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Readers Forum

On Education

Akiko Kiuchi

I'm a 4th-year student of politics in Dokkyo University ... I saw your poster on the door and felt like taking part in your thought-provoking challenge. I'm writing some ideas to your question "Education, whatcha think?"

Education is ... enlightenment, energy and a process to reach freedom; not to accept what there is without any skepticism, but to imagine the alternative; to be able to think critically; to build your own personality and improve it through idea-exchanges with others; to protest against the consumerist society and against the world in which money governs; to find a way out of the forever competition which breaks culture—money can never build culture—; to protest against all authority, opportunism and absurdity; to find a way out of immaturity and make diversity together; to live as you are!

Living in a big city like in Tokyo, I have to come to realize that society is becoming increasingly anonymous. Almost everyone has a computer and a cell phone. That means that you can reach any person anytime. Nevertheless people send short messages to each other but they don't talk face to face very often anymore. I think education entails conversation with others. However I see evidence that schools in

(Continued on page 35)

Outsourcing English Education

The Problems Revealed by Insiders

Tetsuya Fukuda • Dokkyo University

Recently more and more universities and colleges in Japan have been outsourcing English classes to language schools and agencies. The classes outsourced can be divided into two groups. One group consists of elective classes where students can get no credits. The classes tend to focus on specific purposes, such as preparing for TOEIC and engaging in English conversation with native speakers. In the other group, there are required English classes where students can get credits. It was once reported that out of the 50 or 60 universities to which one major Japanese agency is sending English teachers, approximately ten universities depend on the agency for their required English courses.

There do not seem to be any problems with the first group, because university lecturers are often unfamiliar with such an area as preparing for TOEIC and they tend not to be interested only in chatting with students. However, when it comes to outsourcing standard English classes for credit, we are faced with a lot of problems. Under the current Japanese labour law, it is impossible for universities to give directions, advice or

anything to the teacher sent from the agency. All they can do is ask the agency to send a teacher/teachers to be in charge of certain classes. As a result, teachers who may be inexperienced come to universities to teach English. Since it is also illegal for a university to

“According to the agency, another agency was cheaper, much cheaper than they were. So the university chose the cheaper one.”

interview the candidates, they cannot even know whether the teachers are qualified enough to teach at the university level. How can the university ensure the level of education naturally expected by their students? This is almost impossible.

This is not to say that all the teachers sent by agencies are incapable of teaching English well. There are also

experienced professionals who come to work for these agencies. I myself was once sent to a university to teach English by an agency. I did my best and my students seemed to be satisfied with the quality of my lesson, according to the results of the questionnaire we gave at the end of the year. It was a good chance for me to teach at the university level. Though the students were not always enthusiastic about learning English, I enjoyed working with them and learned a lot through the experience.

The working conditions, however,

can be very bad for these teachers. They usually get much lower salaries, which range between 2000 and 4500 yen per hour. Although it is difficult to compare them with usual part-time lecturers who get paid monthly, not hourly, it can roughly be said that teachers get paid less than half if they work through an agency. Even if they were to teach 10 classes per week, their yearly revenue would be 1 to 2 million yen, which would be too little to cover an individual's basic expenses, much less to support a family. Few lecturers can work permanently in this way.

It is obvious that universities benefit a lot by outsourcing English classes, because they can cut costs and they no longer have to worry about hiring and firing lecturers. They do not even have to worry about the curriculum! But in this system, teachers become a simple commodity with few rights. It is obvious the disadvantages outweigh the merits. If this trend of outsourcing English classes continues, both teachers and students will suffer. Below are two interviews I conducted in March 2007. Those teachers revealed the truth about how lecturers are being taken advantage of and they suggest in what way the students will suffer.

Interview with Mr. A

Mr. A is a Japanese teacher of English. He has been teaching English for ten years at the high school and university levels. He once taught at a university in Kanto region through an agency, and he told us his experience.

Fukuda: First of all, could you please tell

me about yourself?

Mr. A: Sure. I have been teaching English ever since I received master's degree. I have taught at various schools, such as university, high school, training school (*senmongakkou*), and cram school (*juku*). I have had direct contracts with most of the schools I worked for, but sometimes I got my positions through agencies. I have taught at the university level both with a direct contract and through agency.

Fukuda: Can you tell me how you began teaching through agency?

Mr. A: Yes. One day, a friend of mine told me an agency was looking for a lecturer of English and I thought it was a good chance to work at the university level. In those days, I didn't have any classes at the level, and even though I knew I would not get paid well, I thought it would benefit my career as a teacher. I also like to try new things.

Fukuda: You knew you would not get paid well?

Mr. A: Yes, I did, because the advertisement on the website stated the salary. It was 4,000 yen an hour. I had two classes a week, and the agency also paid me for making and marking tests. In all, I got paid 318,000 yen for teaching the two classes. Compared with other teaching jobs, the rate was well below half.

Fukuda: Is that why you quit the job?

Mr. A: No. Not at all. Even though the pay was bad, I was going to renew the contract, because I really enjoyed teaching there. The students seemed to like my classes. According to the term-end survey, about ninety percent of my students answered they liked my class. I think it would be safe to say that the class was successful at least to some extent.

Fukuda: You mean you had another reason why you had to quit the job.

Mr. A: Yes, I did. The agency refused to renew my contract. They said they couldn't renew their contract with the university themselves because the university chose another agency.

Fukuda: I don't understand. Why didn't the university like you?

Mr. A: According to the agency, another agency was cheaper, much cheaper than they were. So the university chose the cheaper one.

Fukuda: Do you think you will ever teach through agency again?

Mr. A: That is a tough question. Even though I have my schedule filled with classes, I still want to have classes at the university level. So, if they call me and offer me university classes, I will accept it.

Fukuda: I see. But don't you think the agency may take advantage of you?

Mr. A: Not only me. Many other teachers wanted to have classes at the university level.

Fukuda: Thank you very much.

Interview with Mr. E

Mr. E is an American, who teaches English at a certain university in Japan.

He once taught at another university through an agency, and he says it was an interesting experience. This interview was done in March, 2007.

Fukuda: First of all, can you tell me a little about yourself?

Mr. E: I am an American and have been living in Japan for nearly 10 years. I have been teaching English in Japan for nearly the same amount of time.

Fukuda: And you once taught at a university through an agency?

Mr. E: Yes. Until this past year I had never taught on a regular basis at the university level. The position I took was through an agency. At first, I was not so concerned about the salary (¥4,500 per hour, 3 lessons a week). I wanted the experience as I was going through the process to be hired directly by a large university and thought it would improve my chances.

Fukuda: I see. What was your impression when you started the job?

“How can they prohibit teachers from talking with each other?”

Mr. E: Upon starting I was surprised at the low level of teaching ability and knowledge of English of other teachers. It made me think back to my interview and how the interviewer, who was very friendly and pleasant, did not ask any questions about my teaching method or anything whatsoever related to teaching. I assumed it was due to my experience. I was wrong. None of the other teachers were asked either and believe me some of them had no clue at all how to do an ESL lesson.

Fukuda: But you taught the classes, anyway.

Mr. E: Yes, I did my lessons and fulfilled my contract. At the end I was told that the agency wouldn't be sending us back for the following year. I was not disappointed in the least. A few weeks after the final lesson I received a call from the agency asking me if I was interested in going back to the university full time. I admit that I was interested because I knew what full time lecturers made as I had just received my direct appointment for 1 day a week at a large, reputable university. But when I received the details my jaw dropped!

Fukuda: Your jaw dropped? Why?

Mr. E: Because the pay was ¥300,000 per month with only half salary in August and the contract would have ended in January, so no pay for most of January, all of February and March, and no idea about the next term. How can one survive on such a wage?

Fukuda: Does the agency think people can make both ends meet with that amount of money?

Mr. E: Due to the ridiculous number of agencies in Japan now this is considered decent, or so the agency said. The agency

was not aware of my direct position and after I told her my salary for 1 day a week she laughed and said "I guess that means you can't. Do you know anyone who might be interested?" I would not recommend that position to anyone. More money can be made by working for a conversation school. There was one teacher there that was contracted by another agency contracted by my agency. His salary was ¥3,000 per hour. After hearing what we got paid he was livid and threatened to quit. They increased his salary to ¥3,500. After that we were told not to discuss our wages with other teachers.

Fukuda: That is out of the question. How can they prohibit teachers from talking with each other? So, now what do you think about getting a teaching job through agency?

Mr. E: The job did give me some experience and I enjoyed the students, but for someone staying in Japan long term with a family these agencies are saturating a very important education industry. Not only are these agencies at fault, but also the universities, elementary schools, etc that sacrifice quality to save money. To really get the English standard of Japan up to the levels of other Asian countries, dedicated, responsible teachers are needed and they must be given a fair wage and benefits.

Fukuda: Yes, I agree. Thank you very much.

Editors' Note:

The outsourcing of classes is a serious issue which threatens the job security of all non-tenured teachers, many of whom depend on these positions to support their families. Languaging! has learned that at least three different agencies are contracted by Dokkyo University for

classes, some of which are for credit. We encourage you to become informed on this issue.

On the other hand, we have met many of the teachers who work for these agencies, and they all seem like nice, hardworking professionals. To them, the editors extend our welcome along with this advice. Don't be silenced by your agency. Talk to people. Introduce yourself. Jobs at Japanese universities are often had through connections. Also, keep your eye on job lists such as the one on the *Japanese Research Career Information Network (JRECIN)* website. Almost all university positions are posted on this site at some point (go to <http://jrecin.jst.go.jp>). If you have

experience and a Master's degree (in any field) or, in some cases, a teaching certificate, you are probably qualified to work directly for a Japanese university.

* * *

The University Teachers Union (UTU) has recently been active in this area. A petition is being passed around to stem the tide of job outsourcing.

If you would like to add your name to this petition, tear off the bottom of this page and put the signed slip into the mailbox of our UTU representative, Milton Miltiadous: Box 537

安定した雇用の確保を求めます

内閣総理大臣安倍晋三殿

人材派遣を中止せよ！！！！

人材派遣会社からの教員派遣は、安定した雇いを破壊している。短期間の欠員を埋めるために派遣労働が用いられているが、これはリストラを増やし、賃金・福利厚生を減らすことが目的です。誰にでも安定した雇いを確保する権利があります。今直ぐ、人材派遣会社からの雇いを中止するよう申し入れます。

STOP OUTSOURCING! JOB SECURITY FOR ALL!

To Prime Minister Shinzo Abe:

Outsourcing is destroying job security. Agency workers are needed to fill temporary vacancies, but outsourcing is being used by employers to cut jobs, cut wages and cut benefits. We all have a right to secure employment. Stop outsourcing our jobs now!

Name 姓名: _____ Address 住所: _____

大学教員組合 (UTU) の方針は下記の通りです。「専門職教師の首切り、派遣教師の採用によって人件費を削減しようとしている大学があります。人材派遣会社からの教員雇用は、我々の安定した雇用や大学の教育水準に対して大打撃です。今直ぐ、人材派遣を中止して下さい。」

University Teachers Union says: Some universities are trying to cut costs by using agency teachers and dismissing experienced instructors. Outsourcing threatens our job security and educational standards. Stop outsourcing now!

Please return petitions to:
Nick Wood, UTU c/o NUGW Tokyo Nambu, Tokyo-to,
Minato-ku, Shimbashi 5-17-7, 〒105-0004

〒105-0004 東京都港区新橋5-17-7
小林ビル2F
全国一般労働組合東京南部大学教員組合 (UTU)
ニック・ウッド委員長行

Implications of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Japan

Maria Gabriela Schmidt • University of Tsukuba

What is the CEFR and what is it made for?

In the process of the unification of the European Union (EU) one central issue had been that people should be able to move freely inside the EU for professional and educational reasons. The Treaty on European Union stresses literally the cultural and linguistic diversity throughout the member states and the mobility. (Treaty of Maastricht 1992, Chapter 3 'Education, vocational training and youth', Article 126, 127). This has been confirmed and specified in the following meetings (Amsterdam, last in Nice 2000).

However, every country in Europe has not only a different language, but its specific educational system. This concerns the teaching of languages and foreign languages as well. How to compare the achievements made after studying a language in the different countries? To deal with this problem the EU asked the European Council to

initiate a commission for making language learning and teaching easier to compare.

The result was presented in 2001 - the European Year of Languages - as the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The concept is that people studying languages should be able to use the language and to act as a competent independent person in the society. The most important issue of the CEFR is the *transparency* for people studying foreign languages: they ought to get aware of their knowledge and of the lifelong learning process (with a personal portfolio of languages; 3.2 Self-evaluation). And those who are teaching languages should get plausible guidelines for every level.

The CEFR defines 3 main levels of language use for the abilities Understanding, Reading, Speaking and Listening, each with specified sub-levels:

Levels of language use as defined by CEFR

3 main levels		Specified sub-levels	
A	<i>Elementary</i>	A 1	<i>Breakthrough</i>
		A 2	<i>Waystage</i>
B	<i>Independent</i>	B 1	<i>Breakthrough</i>
		B 2	<i>Vantage</i>
C	<i>Competent</i>	C 1	<i>Effective Operational Proficiency</i>
		C 2	<i>Mastery</i>

The CEFR is accompanied by a complementary edition, the so called "Profile" for each language with specifications. It helps to apply the theoretical implications of the CEFR in the classroom. The Profile contains vocabulary, grammar etc. for every level from above and proposes a specific acting context by so-called *Can-Do-Statements* that practically support the transparency of teaching.

The reception of the CEFR spreads out beyond the EU and neighboring countries and their languages. In Japan the reception has been initiated by teachers of Japanese in Europe (Japanese as a Foreign Language). It has been translated into Japanese in 2004 by Yoshijima, Shigeru and Oohashi, Rie (外国語の学習、教授、評価のためのヨーロッパ共通参照枠). The implications of the CEFR are meanwhile discussed and used for projects on all educational levels in Japan. Some links to the Japanese discussion of the CEFR:

- AJE Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe ヨーロッパ日本語教師会 Homepage <http://aci-hayama.soken.ac.jp/~aje/> ;
- Symposium „A New Direction in Foreign Language Education: The Potential of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" 「これからの外国語教育の方向性 - CEFR が能性を考える -」 March 5th, 2006 Osaka University of Foreign Studies, Responsible

Majima Junko, for further information
<http://homepage.mac.com/jmajima1/bukosite/home.html>

Though the CEFR has gone a long way - both bottom up and top down - for more than 30 years, it has been finally compiled during intensive discussions of scholars throughout Europe in the 90s of the 20th century. I think it is worthwhile to be studied and discussed thoroughly. It should not be seen as a fixed and final result but as one important step with a dynamic future full of vivid discussions. The information about the CEFR is available online in all European languages through the homepage of the Council of Europe www.coe.int or just look for "CEFR", "European Language Portfolio" etc.

**And how does this apply to my class?
 Use Can-Do-statements!**

This is the question we are always asking, isn't it? The CEFR and the Profile contain a lot of good thoughts and materials for preparing our lessons, not only information about grading and testing. I would like to give one example how I intend to use the CEFR and the Profile Deutsch (for German language). In the Profile the biggest part are the Can-Do-statements (in German 'Kannbeschreibungen'). They describe for all levels what a student can do with language in different domains:

<i>Interaction</i>	<i>Listening and Speaking</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Reading and Writing</i>
<i>Productive</i>	<i>Speaking in a monolog</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Writing</i>
<i>Receptive</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Reading</i>
<i>Language mediation</i>	<i>Interpreting</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Translating</i>

A distinction is made between **Global** and **Detailed** Can-Do-Statements. Most text-books in Europe use these

Can-Do-Statements for reviewing what you can do after studying a given lesson, for example:

<i>Productive oral</i>	A 1	"Can tell his/her name."
<i>Receptive auditive</i>	A 1	"Can understand a time announcement."
<i>Productive oral</i>	A 2	"Can make a reservation in a restaurant by phone call."
<i>Productive oral or written</i>	B 1	"Can tell the story of a movie he/she has seen."

These examples show that the Can-Do-statements are not specified for just one language. The specific linguistic item which is necessary, adequate or proper is differing from language to language, but they may have a common core: the message and the will to interact through language. And they focus on the abilities, on social interaction with language, not on the performance in an exam. So the responsibility is to some extent handed over from the teacher to the student,

supporting his/her autonomy.

And in Japan?

On the other hand in Japan Can-Do-Questions are part of the education-system, not for exams and cognitive testing but for everyday life, behavior and body care, for example in kindergarten, at elementary school etc. For example, parents get a list from teachers with questions like the following:

早寝早起きができる。	"Is able to go to bed early and to get up early"
食事は 20 分くらいで食べられる。	"Is able to eat a meal within 20 minutes"
歯磨き、洗顔が自分からできる。	"Is able to brush his/her teeth, wash his/her face?"

As an evaluation of behavior in school:

げんきなあいさつやへんじができる。	"Can respond vividly to greeting"
はなすひとをよくみて、よいしせいで、はなしをきくことができる。	"Can look right a way, with a good gesture towards the speaking person and listening properly"
こまっているひとをたすけることができる。	"Can give a hand to somebody in trouble"

These kind of questions are not used for education in Germany (or elsewhere in Europe to my knowledge) but in Japan. Though the context of the questions is different, there is a similarity of the kind of question. So it is not unusual for a Japanese student to answer Can-Do-questions. I think these Can-Do-Statements can build a bridge from the European concept centering

upon the independent human being to the Japanese concept of education of a well-socialized human being. So I use them in class for repeating.

Can-Do-statements become "Dekiru-koto"

I combine this type of question with linguistic content, so it is easy for the students to check their own

knowledge. I call these questions できること *dekirukoto* "Can-Do-things". I have the impression that students accept this kind of transparency, self-control very well. Last but not least Japanese students like the feeling of having achieved something. This feeling is called in Japanese *tasseikan* 達成感. This is a very good feeling for Japanese. Can-Do-questions support this feeling

of achievement.

Now, here one example for Can-Do-questions after Lesson 1 (text-book for German as a Foreign Language Level A1/1 "Schritte International") are given in Japanese because the text-book is in German only. They are answering in two categories: 「できる」 (*can do*) and 「まだできない」 (*can not do yet*):

ドイツ語のできること (*What can you do in German language?*)
 ドイツ語のできるようになりませんか。Lektion 1 で繰り返しましょう：
 (*Are you able to use German language. Lets repeat Lesson 1*):

- 1) 一日のご挨拶とお別れの言葉 (*everday greeting and good-bye*)
- 2) 名前を教える、名前を聞く (*to ask for a name of someone and to answer*)
- 3) ご紹介をする (*to introduce someone: This is ...*)
- 4) 出身を聞く、出身を教える (*to ask for the homecountry (-town) and to answer*)
- 5) 言語/外国語について何う、それを教える (*to ask for a language and to answer*)
- 6) 謝罪と願いと感謝の言葉 (*excuse, to ask for something, to thank some one*)
- 7) 住所、ドイツの道路名 (*to understand an address in Germany, names of a road ...*)
- 8) コミュニケーション・ストラテジーがちょっと分かる：はい、いいえ、どうぞ など
 (*to understand communication strategies like yes, no, please, mh, aha, achso ...*)
- 9) Sie と du の違いと使い方 (*the difference to use „Sie" and „du"*)
- 10) ドイツ語で自分の名前をスペルする (*to spell your own name in German*)
- 11) 発音： ch: ich auch (*pronunciation*)
- 12) 発音： ei (*pronunciation*)

Lektion 1 のまだわからないところ、もう一度繰り返しがほしいところはこれです：
 (*Are there any items you do not properly know and that you want to repeat and have explained again?*)

Thus, this example is for a beginner-class in German language. You can make for every level a check-list to the corresponding level of the CEFR. Given a positive feedback by the students you will see that you will enjoy it, too. * * *

About the author

Maria Gabriela Schmidt is a linguist currently working as a contracted, full-time lecturer (German) at Tsukuba University, in Tsukuba, Japan. Her research interest includes Grammar as a pragmatic-semantic function.

Collaborative Writing and Languaging

Tim Murphey and Chris Carpenter • Dokkyo University

Vygotskian sociocultural theory starts from the premise that we learn socially with others and that through socialization we internalize ways of thinking and tools that we can later use independently. We naturally grow up not only with the language that is in our environment, but also the way of using that language for thinking about our world (e.g. our prejudices, our values, our understanding of ourselves and others, etc.). This is what is meant by socialization - the general understandings we have about our world through repeated exposure to the language in our environment. Language is not only one of the major tools we have to represent our world, it can also be used to question it, and to change our internalized conceptions of it. Using language critically provokes its improved capacity to both represent and change things. Using language critically can improve our use of it and ourselves. This, we think, is what Merrill Swain generally means by "languaging" in her research (2000).

Open collaboration with others in writing and research is a form of languaging in which we strive to bring our thoughts into some type of harmony with another's, adding a new dynamic dimension to the often solitary struggle of getting our thoughts out on the page. Engaging two minds on any line (of thought) refines not only the line but

the minds—it pushes the future capacity of the minds to create further ideas and conceptions. In other words, collaborative writing is not only a co-construction of prose but of the minds of the people involved and their languaging capacity. We write to change ourselves as much as we write to change the world. And changes seem to happen more readily when languaging with others.

Sometimes school gets things backwards and structures itself inefficiently. Most schools do start out socially and bring young people together to learn in one place. But then many systems of education tell students they must do their OWN work, and work ALONE, and be INDEPENDENT, which they then interpret as "solitary" and which is often realized as "isolated." We see this as training students to be inefficient. Of course when we work with others, we do need to acknowledge their collaboration in our work, to cite them and thank them. Likewise, many of us also need space for solitary reflection. But to NOT profit from the network of minds around us is foolish and tragic. And not teaching our students the great value of working, thinking and languaging together? Even more so.

This has become apparent to us recently as we have begun to collaboratively write more with others.

It is fascinating to take a voyage in the mind of another, realize their conceptions of things and to see fresh fields that you never would have seen without them. We wonder if teachers might invite students to do more of this collaborative writing with each other and enhance their dialogic learning.

About the writers

When Tim Murphey isn't ski-juggling, he can be found trying to get a perfect picture of the sunset behind Mt. Fuji from the roof top of the Central Building at Dokkyo University. He is also the author of the popular EFL series, Language

Hungry.

Christopher Carpenter is a teacher in at Dokkyo University until the surf comes up. Then he Dr. Jeckles into a mad surf fanatic, jumps on the Yamanote Line with his surfboard under his arm and disappears into the fury.

Works cited in this article

Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 97-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Continued from Readers Forum (page 24)

in Japan are not a place for conversation, but the opposite. Maybe you know one of the books of Erich Fromm, "To Have or To Be". In many schools in Japan their content is only "to have" and not "to be." Cram schools are the extreme examples. Even the cram schools encourage students to make their colleagues "enemies", to "win" to attend the top schools. Such education never makes culture, but it works the opposite way. You see that education is already a big part of business in Japan.

*Two further citations for you:
One of my favourite poets, Joseph Brodsky from former USSR, made a*

*great speech when he received the Nobel Prize in literature in 1987. Under this address you can read his whole speech in English, which I recommend:
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1987/brodsky-lecture-e-e.html*

Finally, have you ever heard of the book "Desschooling Society" by Ivan Illich? There you'll read his revolutionary ideas about education.

"If you lack courage, philosophy is always there for you."

-Albert Camus

Akiko Kiuchi

Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom

Makiko Sugawara • Dokkyo University

A review of *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*
by Zoltán Dörnyei, Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press (2005), vii + 155.

The title is enticing. What teacher would not want to know of ways to stimulate their students' learning? In fact, many teachers believe that effective learning can only happen when students are motivated to learn. Like the old saying, "you can lead a horse to water, but you can make him drink" we can put students into language classes but that does not mean they want to be there. Thus, I am very interested in this topic and want to be able to help my students become more motivated to learn languages in my future career as a teacher. The book has five chapters with a conclusion and an index.

Chapter 1 Background Knowledge

This chapter is divided into three parts; Different approaches to understanding motivation, motivating people and motivational strategies. The first part starts with the basic approaches of motivation from Freud's theory at the beginning of 20th century and shows various approaches recently, such as Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, Gardner's basic notion of motivation or Dörnyei's framework of L2 motivation. Dörnyei stresses what is the most needed for motivating students are

teachers who feel responsible for their students' learning. Furthermore, some motivational strategies could work today, but not tomorrow because the dynamic conditions and the variety of L2 learning environments in the world. Dörnyei asserts that "motivation" is crucial for learners to achieve knowledge of an L2 in spite of their aptitude or other cognitive characteristics. He also presents many background studies concerned with motivation in the literature.

Chapter 2 Creating the basic motivational conditions

The basic motivational conditions entail:

- appropriate teacher behaviors and a good relationship with the students
- a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere
- a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms (p. 31)

These three conditions are absolutely essential for using effective strategies appropriately and are also of course interrelated. According to Chambers' survey (p. 31), it is the teacher that can affect learners' L2

motivation the most, both positively and negatively. In this chapter, four teacher factors are focused on:

- enthusiasm
- commitment to and expectations for the students' learning
- relationship with the students
- relationship with the students' parents (p. 32)

This chapter presents also the idea that teachers motivate well when they understand not only their students in class but their out of class experiences, i.e. their interests, their family life, etc. Teachers can also learn more about their students through communicating with their parents. Showing an interest in students out of class lives can develop more rapport and get students to invest more in their classroom endeavors.

This chapter presents the idea that teachers motivate well when they understand not only their students in class but their out of class experiences, i.e. their interests, their family life, etc. Teachers can also learn more about their students through communicating with their parents. Showing an interest in students out of class lives can develop more rapport and get students to invest more in their classroom endeavors.

Chapter 3 Generating initial motivation

Csikszentmihalyi and his colleagues in America found that most adolescents regarded schoolwork as "boring," "unenjoyable" or "strained" (p. 50). From this survey, Dörnyei insists that teachers need to encourage learners to accept what they have to do at school in

order to succeed. At first, teachers need to create an environment in which students can feel comfortable and supported with positive attitudes. Then, they can enhance learners' expectancy of success in a variety of ways. In short, "Provide sufficient preparation," "let students help each other" and "model success" are keys to generating initial motivation. Furthermore, inviting learners to make their own learning goals and to use teaching materials related to the learners themselves are also important for generating motivation. When possible, teachers should also attempt to release students from unrealistic established norms that could cause disappointment toward learning.

Chapter 4 Maintaining and protecting motivation

In the first three chapters Dörnyei suggested how teachers should prepare the environment so that learners have good chance of being motivated from the beginning. Then, teachers will want to increase student motivation more actively. Here, eight suggestions are described from the view of motivation maintenance:

- making learning stimulating and enjoyable
- presenting tasks in a motivating way
- setting specific learners goals
- protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence
- allowing learners to maintain a positive social image
- promoting cooperation among the

learners

- creating learner autonomy
- promoting self-motivating learner strategies (p. 72-116)

All of the points are very important to maintain learners' motivation. I wish to highlight the forth point, protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence. From my experience, working as an English teacher as a part-time-job, I was very gratified when I was able to encourage one student and see her confidence grow to the point that she was able to do well on her final English test. Both her self-confidence and her motivation for English learning increased together. I learned building confidence is very important.

Chapter 5 Rounding off the learning experience: Encouraging positive self-evaluation

In this chapter, Dörnyei introduces a way of helping learners to consider their own achievement in a more positive light. Many learners regard their failure as their lack of ability. In this case, teachers can promote "effort attributions" and refuse "ability attributions" offered by the students. Teachers need to give learners positive feedback on their development or attitudes. As Tom Peters says, "Celebrate what you want to see more of." However, rewards have potential dangers and can undermine existing

motivation. Here, there is a little section on "grades," representing all problems of contemporary education. "Grades" could be a trigger to demotivate learners but Covington and Teel conclude, "Teachers cannot be expected to defy such entrenched traditions. Grades and grading are here to stay." Hence, some applicable strategies to grading are also introduced at the end of this chapter.

Conclusion: Towards a motivation-sensitive teaching practice

Dörnyei strongly suggests a step-by-step approach and gives a table that lists the strategies from previous chapters. Teachers can check a box for "tried it out" or have "never done" it, then choose one or two strategies that to try. Thus, the table is a stepwise approach for teachers. As a conclusion, he states that teachers should aim to be "good enough" motivators who rely on a few basic techniques and use them appropriately. No one uses all the strategies all the time.

In conclusion, I want to read this book again and again. Especially when I start teaching I think it will help me become a better teacher. I wish all my past teachers would have had such a valuable resource.

Note: This book is also available in Japanese.

「動機づけを高める英語指導ストラテジー35」ゾルタン・ドルニエイ 著、米山朝二／関昭典 訳、大修館書店、2005年

*** Do not write your name on this sheet of paper. ***

Class Evaluation

Instructor's Name _____

Class Title _____

Student's Major _____ Year _____

Day _____

Time _____

Please rate each of the following statements about this class with numbers from 1 - 5. Record the comments you have on particular statements, especially those statements which are starred (*). At the bottom and on the back of this sheet, please write any general comments you have.

(5 = usually agree, 4 = often agree, 3 = sometimes agree, 2 = often disagree, 1 = usually disagree)

About the teacher

1. The teacher begins class on time.
2. The teacher is prepared for lessons.
3. The teacher presents the lesson material clearly.
4. The teacher speaks in the target language.
5. The teacher speaks clearly and at a good speed.*
6. The teacher is enthusiastic about the subject.
7. The teacher has a positive attitude toward the students.
8. The teacher encourages all students to participate actively.
9. The teacher motivates me to study and learn.
10. I would recommend this teacher to other students.

Rate	Comment
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About the content, structure and activities

11. The goals of the course are clear and appropriate.
12. The grading policy is fair and clear.
13. The level of the textbook and/or other materials is appropriate.*
14. The topics and themes of the class are interesting.
15. The activities are interesting and make me want to learn.
16. The activities are useful and help me learn.
17. The pace of the activities is appropriate.*
18. The amount of homework is appropriate.*
19. There are many chances to ask questions when I don't understand.
20. There are many chances to communicate in class.

Rate	Comment
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About the class environment

21. It is easy to communicate with other students in this class.
22. Other students in this class participate actively and enthusiastically.
23. I learn from other students in this class.
24. I do not hesitate to ask questions in this class.
25. I have made new friends in this class.

Rate	Comment
_____	_____
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_____	_____

Overall class evaluation

26. I am generally satisfied with this class.
27. My _____ skills improved in this class.
28. My interest in the subject grew because of this class.
29. My confidence grew in this class.
30. I would recommend this class to other students.

Rate	Comment
_____	_____
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Other comments or suggestions for the teacher

※ Teachers! Copy this questionnaire and use it to get the valuable student feedback you've been missing for four years. You will also find a customizable Word Doc version online at www.geocities.com/languaging/L9/feedback

The Efficiency Column

Student Feedback: Bad News, Good News

The word on campus is that course evaluations will be mailed out to students again this summer, satisfying MEXT regulations that say we must ask for feedback every semester. The fact that we only get 10 to 20% back from students (if that much), that we waste administrators', students' and teachers' time, not to mention lots of paper and stamps, none of it seems to matter. Administrivia marches on. That is the bad news this month.

The good news is that it will not happen again. Finally, after four years of ineptness, the committee of 20 some odd professors, who spend much of their time deciding dates for sending things out that will never be returned, have decided to go back to the old process of doing the evaluations in class at the end each semester, when most students actually fill them out and remember what their courses were about. So why couldn't we have done it this semester? Don't ask - administrivia takes time to do. Undoing takes at least 4 years.

Want feedback for your classes now? Have your students fill out the questionnaire on page 39. We recommend you leave the room while they fill it out. Have a volunteer bring the evaluations to you at the teacher's room in an envelope. This procedure guarantees anonymity and a return rate near 100%.

In Pursuit of Happiness ... Slowly

The May 7 issue of *Newsweek* was entitled "In Pursuit of Happiness," with the amazing subtitle, "Why politicians and CEO's are rethinking money as the ultimate measure of success." What? Success is not always MORE, BIGGER, and FASTER? Success could be about putting people, their happiness and health first? RADICAL!

For Japanese education it might be as strange as saying *hensachi* and entrance exams don't matter. Instead, let's actually learn something and be happier and healthier in high schools. And at the university level, let's not spend two years stressfully hunting for a job

that many of us will quit within 6 months after graduation. Let's enjoy learning and not miss half of our classes for two years. Let's not get more and more stressed with every classmate that gets a job. Why don't we join the rest of the world and get jobs after we graduate? Let's do one thing at time. Success meaning something other than "having a job before I graduate"? About time!

Another Example: The King of Bhutan 20 years ago decided his small country would not be a slave to Gross National Product (GNP) and be measured by others standards. He said they would concentrate on the GNH (Gross National Happiness). They did and they are.

Bigger, Newer, More Mall-like ... but Better?

On June 22, a *New York Times* article examined the current crisis in the declining student populations in Japanese universities. It has become a survival of the fittest contest, with a number of institutions having already fallen victim, filed bankruptcy and closed their doors. According to the president of Kansai University of International Studies, Atsushi Hamana, some institutions are beginning to realize that students may actually be interested in an education that gives them the skills necessary to compete in a globalized economy. Meanwhile, others are simply playing the consumerist game of bling and zing, hoping to attract students with lower fees, fancier sports fields, hot spring baths on campus, and, of course, ESCALATORS. Here is a simple mental exercise for you: How many things can you list in the next 60 seconds that would have benefitted this university more and cost less than the escalators in Amano Hall?

Do you have suggestions for improving the way we work, learn, and teach? Or do you just like to rant? Write for the Efficiency Column!

Disclaimer: Each author's content and ranting is her or his own and not necessarily that of the newsletter. Editors do edit out expletives like well you know.