

Free Conference
Proceedings and Poster

On CUE

For the Language Professional in Higher Education

Winter 2000 Volume 8, Issue 3

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Japan Association for Language Teaching College and University Educators Special Interest Group
Retail Price for Non-Members: ¥700/ \$7

Conferences

American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL) 2001 Annual Convention,

Feb 24-27, St. Louis, Missouri
E-mail: aaaloffice@aaal.org
Web: <http://www.aaal.org/>

TESOL Gateway To The Future

Feb 27-3, St. Louis, Missouri
E-mail: conventions@tesol.org
<http://www.tesol.org>

Developing Autonomy, IALT CUE conference 2001,

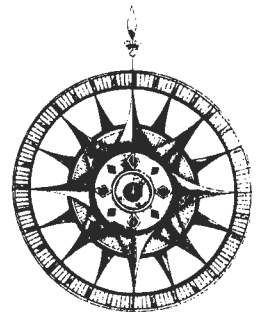
May 12-13, Shimizu Shizuoka, Japan.

Deadline for submissions January 31st

E-mail: asm@typhoon.co.jp or
eamon@gol.com
<http://www.wild-e.org/cue/conf>

Thoughts to Ponder

*I look into the window of my mind,
Reflections of the fears I've left behind.
I step out of the ordinary,
I can feel my soul ascending.
I am on my way,
Can't stop me now.
And you can do the same.
What have you done today to make you
feel proud?
It's never too late to try.
You could be so many people, if you just
make the break for freedom.
Heather Small & Peter-John Vettese,
Proud*



Magellan K.K.

Magellan K.K. are Independent International Investment Advisers. We advise the long stay Educational Professional working in Japan, of whatever nationality, whether Language Teacher, Lecturer or University Professor on how best to use their privileged expatriate status to achieve their long term financial objectives.

As an Educator living and working in Japan you have joined the ranks of the long stay Educational Professionals who choose to live and work overseas. The motivations to do so are many and complex but common to most is the opportunity it provides by way of an income higher than could be enjoyed at home to accumulate some sort of wealth. One of the prices that all expatriates pay for the benefits of living and working overseas is that they lose the advantages of the Retirement, Medical and Healthcare arrangements that their domestically based counterparts continue to enjoy.

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On CUE Call for papers

Aims: To provide a forum for the presentation and discussion of research, ideas and curriculum activities of broad interest to College and University Language Educators.

Types of Articles Sought:

Features

APA referenced articles with a focus on language education and related issues at tertiary level of up to 2,000 words

Criteria for feature articles

- consideration of issues likely to be perceived by college and university educators as relevant to language teaching in Japan
- well designed and well reported empirical research.
- writing that situates issues within the context of relevant previous work, while refraining from quoting for the sake of quoting
- thought-provoking theoretical papers, provided clear practical implications are fore-grounded

From the Chalkface

classroom applications, techniques and lesson plans, usually up to 1000 words.

Contact section editor: Andrew Obermeier, andrewa@gol.com

Research Digest

summaries of research published in university in-house publications, of broad interest to college and university educators

Conference Reports, Eamon McCafferty, eamon@gol.com

News and Announcements: Alan Mackenzie, asm@typhoon.co.jp

all other queries to Michael Carroll, uncue@carroll.frehosting.net

Professional Development

1-2000 words on further education and gaining employment.

Contact section editors: Debra Pappler and Mark Weinkle, loonntrads@hotmail.com

Opinion and Perspective

650 words; longer, coordinated, point-counterpoint articles are possible.

Contact section editor Keith Ford, jfbk-ford@esahi-net.or.jp

Reviews

reviews of books, textbooks, videos, presentations/workshops, films, etc. 600 words, 1500 words for scholarly review essays.

Contact section editor: Steven Snyder, snyder@phoenix.ac.jp

Cyberpipeline

descriptions of websites that might prove useful for language teaching and professional development; length depends on how many sites are reviewed

Contact section editor: Steven Snyder, snyder@phoenix.ac.jp

Focus on Language

a column in which the writer may ask/answer common questions about language that are of interest to teachers and learners. 250-600 words

Approximate Publication Dates:

April 15, July 15, January 15
(Deadlines: Feb 25, May 24, Nov 18)

Officer Contact Information for 2001: Feel free to contact board members about your SIG

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Editorial

This issue of On CUE has been delayed but I hope it's worth the wait. Our main feature articles in this issue may at first seem rather far from the daily concerns of language teaching in Japan. Robert Mahon's account of some of the differences between Irish English and other varieties of English may not have a direct application to English classrooms in the universities and colleges of On CUE readers, but it does give us food for thought. What kind of English should we be teaching in Japan? What role do other Englishes have in our classrooms? Is there a role for a Japanese English? And aside from these questions, is it useful for us as language educators to carry out this kind of micro analysis? Joseph Dias and Eamon McCafferty's review of this year's IATEFL panel discussion on varieties of English considers some of these questions, and suggests ways of harnessing the vitality of linguistic variation and the excitement of investigating people's individual use of language, so as to allow learners themselves to discover the language around them.

A special feature of this issue is Alan MacKenzie's interview with Neil Cowie and Alison Martin about their respective College and University Discussion groups, CUDs for short. These groups are an important way in which teachers in Japan can get around the teacher privatism that is so embedded a part of the university culture of Japan, and so potentially limiting of teachers' professional development. The article ends with a call for any other CUDs there may be out there to let us know, so that we can notify other CUE members. This kind of sharing of information is surely one of the most useful ways in which CUE can serve its membership.

Eamon McCafferty, together with Susanna Phillippoussis, also contribute to this issue a review of September's KoTESOL conference. Having discovered something of a passion for conference reporting, Eamon has agreed to edit a new regular conference report column in future On CUEs. If you've been to a recent conference and would like to disseminate some of the things you heard or saw there, please contact Eamon.

There are a few other changes to On CUE for this and subsequent issues. One more editorial change is that Keith Ford will be joining the team and taking on the editing of the Opinion and Perspectives column, leaving Debra Pappler and Mark Weinkle to concentrate on the new Professional Development column. A more substantial change is that the proposal for peer referring, raised in the last issue and canvassed through CMN-Talk, was approved by the AGM at Shizuoka. We are therefore going ahead with this and would like to create a process which retains our concern to support writers editorially and facilitate publication, while accrediting the quality of the finished work through the rigor of the peer review. (Incidentally this would be a good point to correct a misprint in last issue's editorial. The phrase '...so the aim would not be so much to acknowledge the quality as to enhance it' despite conveying the exact opposite of my intention, unfortunately went undetected by our proofreading. (For 'our' read 'my'.) The phrase should have read, '...so the aim would be to acknowledge the quality as much as to enhance it'.) Suggestions, nominations for review board members and so on are very welcome.

On CUE Volume 9 Issue 1: Special Pre-conference Issue Call for Papers

The first issue of On CUE 2001 will be dedicated to the theme of the coming mini-conference on autonomy. The purpose of this is to provide a rough frame of reference for the conference, to give us some ideas to start off with. If you're planning to present at the conference, we're looking for short (500-1000 words) 'conference tasters', mini-articles (appropriate for a mini-conference) giving a brief introduction to the issues addressed by your presentation. If you are not presenting, but want to raise an issue related to autonomy submissions are also welcome. Deadline for expressions of interest Feb 1, 2001.

For more information on the conference, please contact:
Eamon McCafferty
e.mccafferty@shizuoka.ac.jp

CUE 2001 Mini-Conference: Developing Autonomy

Alan S. Mackenzie

CUE coordinator and co-conference chair

Our first conference was a huge success. With this issue of On CUE, you should have received a copy of the conference proceedings which shows the diversity of approaches to content being taken at universities in Japan and elsewhere. At some point in the future, we would like to return to this topic. However, our second conference moves away from teaching material (though not entirely) to focus on development of learner and teacher autonomy.

There is widespread agreement in educational circles that fostering student autonomy should be a primary purpose of education systems. Increasing learner autonomy is said to increase student motivation, develop character, and aid learning. However in Japan, the promotion of learner autonomy is very recent and many teachers and administrators are still searching for what exactly it involves, how it can be taught and how its benefits can be measured. Indeed a major topic of debate is whether it is culturally appropriate.

- Under what conditions is more or less autonomy, more or less desirable?
- How appropriate is the development of autonomy across cultures?
- Is autonomy a human right, or is it an imposition of western cultural values on Asian societies?

The CUE conference 2001 in association with the Learner Development, Teacher Education (soon to become Teacher Development), and Materials Writers SIGs aims to explore issues involved in defining, promoting and implementing autonomous learning in the colleges and universities of Japan from both the students' and teachers' points of view.

- What is an autonomous teacher/ learner?

- How can teachers and learners be autonomous within the given framework of the university/ college?
- How can teachers foster our own autonomy as learners learning about teaching?
- How can we foster autonomy in our learners? How desirable is this?

A further thread within the conference is assessment.

- What does autonomous assessment involve?
- What assessment methods can develop autonomy?
- How can autonomous assessments be integrated into current course frameworks?
- What outcomes result from the use of autonomous assessment methods?

The questions involved in thinking about autonomy are diverse. Some of the questions we wish to explore involve the examination of individual experience in the hope that that experience will help others to change their thinking, situations, and practice.

- How are your ideas of what autonomy means in your teaching/ learning situation developing?
- How is autonomy developing in your teaching/ learning situation?
- What language and language-learning theories lie behind autonomous learning and teaching approaches?
- What techniques, methods, materials and ideas can we use to enable ourselves and

our students to develop their own sense of autonomy?

- What opportunities are there for autonomous development within faculties and departments?

We encourage presenters to add depth to their chosen topic and to actively demonstrate autonomous classroom activities through their presentations. Discussion sessions and the use of novel presentation formats are also encouraged.

We hope that by providing a platform for teachers from colleges and universities at different stages of autonomous development, we will discover the range of forms autonomous teacher and learner development take and the outcomes that result.

Submission of presentation proposals is open until the end of January and should be made online at the conference website <<http://www.wild-e.org/cue/conferences/autonomy.html>>.

If you are interested in attending the conference, we recommend that you pre-register before March 31st. This year, we are in Shimizu, Shizuoka at the Miho Kenshukan of Tokai University. This is a self-contained facility with accommodation, presentation rooms, and restaurants in one. Because of this, we have arranged a conference package which includes shared accommodation for two nights (Friday May 11th, Saturday 12th) and five meals over the weekend (breakfast, lunch on both days and evening banquet Saturday) as well as conference fees for 20,000yen. Combining conference and retreat, this event will provide many opportunities for interaction, discussion, and making connections with others involved in similar teaching and research situations. Having said this, there are one-day registration options available for those in the area. Discounts are available for members of participating SIGs and students.

Also included in this issue is a conference poster. Please display this in a prominent place where both full and part-time faculty can see it. Please also spread the word on e-mail mailing lists, and by word of mouth about the conference so that we can duplicate the success of last year.

We hope to see many of you, your colleagues and your students in Shimizu on May 11th-13th.

Research Report

Carroll, Michael, (2000). A competency-based approach to assessing language skills: A case study. *Kyoto University of Education Bulletin A (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 96, pp39-48.

Abstract:

Language skills can be conceptualised in various ways. The definition we choose is important because it has a decisive influence on the way we teach and assess language use. The term *competency*, now increasingly used in British, Australian and North American discourse on language curricula, represents a broad shift of understanding of the nature of language use and its assessment.

This paper examines what it means when a curriculum is described as competency based, and what are the claimed advantages of such curricula. It then describes the implementation of an innovative university preparation curriculum which was predicated on the principle that the more the learning context of a language course resembles the 'target' situation, the more effectively students are able to prepare for that target.

The costs of pursuing such a high level of assessment validity are manifest in the strain imposed on reliability. Authentic-like tasks necessitate more subjective judgments than do conventional test items, and the amount of time required for assessment is high, and thus costly. This paper evaluates the costs and benefits of this competency-based curriculum.

Key words: competency-based assessment (CBA), curriculum, validity, reliability.

Please submit brief summaries of current in-house publications and abstracts of research reports to the editor:

Michael Carroll (oncue@carroll.freehosting.net)

Conference Calendar

Edited by Alan Mackenzie

February 2001

- 7-9 Alaska Association for Bilingual Education and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. 27th Annual Bilingual Multicultural Education Equity Conference, "Multicultural Education: Partners in Learning,"** Anchorage, Alaska. Contact Logistics, LLC, 329 F Street, Suite 206 Anchorage, Alaska, 99501. Tel. 907-276-6060. Fax 907-276-6061. E-mail bmeec@logisticsllc.com
- 10 Hawai'iTESOL Roundtable,** Honolulu, Hawai'i. Contact Patricia Reiss, Transpacific Hawaii College, 5257 Kalaniana'ole Highway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96821-1884. Tel. 808-377-5402. Fax 808-373-4754. E-mail reiss@cchono.com. Web <http://lc.byuh.edu/HawaiiTESOL>.
- 12-14 Mofet Institute, Israel. First Virtual Conference, "Opening Gates in Teacher Education,"** Online. Contact Jean Vermel, Co-convener. Beit Berl College. E-mail jean@macam.ac.il. Web <http://vcisrael.macam98.ac.il>
- 18-23 British Council. Seminar, "Quality Management in Language Training,"** Sheffield, United Kingdom. Contact Information Manager, International Networking Events, The British Council, 1, Beaumont Place, Oxford, OX1 2PJ, United Kingdom. Web <http://www.britishcouncil.org/networkevents>
- 21-24 Language Media Center, University of Iowa. 23rd Annual Language Testing Research Colloquium, "Language Testing and**

Technology," St. Louis, Missouri. Contact Craig Deville, LTRC 2001 Program Chair, Iowa Testing Programs, University of Iowa, 318 Lindquist Center, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. Tel. 319-335-6424. Fax 319-335-6038. E-mail craig-deville@uiowa.edu. Web site <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/ELI/ilita/ltrcmail.html>

- 24-26 Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA). Eighth International Conference, "Classroom Research in ELT,"** Kathmandu, Nepal. Contact Ganga Ram Gautam, General Secretary, NELTA. GPO BOX NO. 11110, Kathmandu, Nepal. Tel. +977-1-330243. E-mail qep@wink.com.np

- 24-27 American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL). AAAL 2001 Annual Convention,** St. Louis, Missouri. Contact AAAL, PO Box 21686, Eagan, Minnesota 55121-0686. Tel. 612-953-0805. Fax 612-431-8404. E-mail aaaloffice@aaal.org. Web <http://www.aaal.org/>

- 27-3 Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL). Annual conference (including pre- and postconvention institutes, and extensive exhibition), "Gateway To The Future,"** St. Louis, Missouri. Contact TESOL, 700 South Washington St., Ste. 200, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Tel. 703-836-0774. Fax 703-836-7864. E-mail conventions@tesol.org. Web <http://www.tesol.org>

March 2001

- 5 Heartland Area Education Agency 11. Professional Educators' Convention, "2001: A Literacy and Learning Odyssey,"** Des Moines, Iowa. Contact Heartland AEA11, 6500 Corporate Drive, Johnston, Iowa 50131-1603. Tel. 800-362-2720 or 515-270-9030.

Fax 515-270-5383. E-mail hkaplan@aea11.k12.ia.us. Web <http://www.aea11.k12.ia.us>

- 7-9 Travelling concepts: meaning, frame, metaphor, Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

Contact ASCA, t.a.v. Joyce Goggin, Spuistsraat 210, 1012 VT Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Fax: +31 20 525 3052. Email: asca@hum.uva.nl; Web <http://www.hum.uva.nl/~asca>

- 8-10 Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics (GURT). Conference, "Linguistics, Language, and the Real World: Discourse and Beyond,"** Washington, DC. E-mail gurt@georgetown.edu; Web <http://www.georgetown.edu/events/gurt>

- 8-10 Conference on paradigm uniformity, Berlin, Germany** Contact CPU Organisers, Zentrum fuer Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft, Jaegerstr. 10-11, 10117 Berlin, Germany. Fax: +49 30 20192 402. Email cpu@zas.gwz-berlin.de; Web <http://www.zas.gwz-berlin.de/>

- 11-14 ACM Symposium on applied computing: special track on coordinated models, languages and applications,** Las Vegas, Nevada, USA .

Web <http://lia.deis.unibo.it/confs/SAC01>

- 13-17 CALICO. 2001 Annual Symposium,** Orlando, Florida. Contact CALICO, 214 Centennial Hall, Southwest Texas State University, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, Texas 78666. Tel. 512-245-1417. Fax 512-245-9089. E-mail info@calico.org. Web <http://www.calico.org/CALICO01/>

- 14-16 TESOL Arabia. 7th International Conference, "Challenges in the New Millennium,"** Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Contact Sandra Oddy, PO Box 17258, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. E-mail sandra.oddy@hct.ac.ae. Web <http://tesolarabia.uaeu.ac.ae>
- 14-17 National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). 52nd Annual Convention, "Conference on College Composition and Communication,"** Denver, Colorado. Contact NCTE, 111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801-9981. Web <http://www.ncte.org>
- 16-18 Workshop on formal pragmatics, Berlin, Germany** Web <http://www.rz.hu-berlin.de/asg/blutner/dialog/work2.html>
- 23-25 The Second International Conference on Contrastive Rhetoric, "Linguistics, Culture, and Teaching,"** The American University in Cairo, Egypt. Contact The American University in Cairo, 113 Sharia Kasr El Aini, Cairo, Egypt. E-mail CRCONF@aucegypt.edu. Web <http://www.aucegypt.edu>
- 23-24 TexFLEC (Texas Foreign Language Education Conference). 2001 Conference, "Bridging the Gap: Theory & Practice in the Language Classroom,"** Austin, Texas. Proposal Deadline January 15, 2001. Contact TexFLEC, Foreign Language Education Program, University of Texas at Austin, D6500 SZB 528, Austin, Texas 78712. E-mail TexFLEC@ccwf.cc.utexas.edu Web <http://www.utexas.edu/students/flesa/textflec>
- 23-25 3rd North Americal Symposium on corpus linguistics and language teaching,** Boston, Massachusetts, USA Contact Corpus Linguistics Conference, Applied Linguistics Program, University of Massachusetts at Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd, Boston, MA 02125-3393 USA. Web <http://www.cs.umb.edu/~meyer/conf/index.html>
- 29-1 NECTFL. Northeast Conference on Teaching Foreign Languages, "Changing Contexts in Language Learning,"** New York. Contact NECTFL, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013-2896. Tel. 717-245-1977. Fax 717-245-1976 E-mail nectfl@dickinson.edu. Web <http://www.dickinson.edu/nectfl/>
- 29-1 Oxford Conference Management Conference, "Language, the Media, and International Communication,"** Oxford, United Kingdom. Contact Oxford Conference Management, 10b Littlegate Street, Oxford OX1 1QT, United Kingdom. E-mail oxconf@pop3.hiway.co.uk. Web <http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/language>
- 30-1 TESOL-Spain. 24th Annual Convention, "2001: A Quest for Teacher Development,"** Seville, Spain. Contact Tammi Santana, Convention Coordinator, American English School, Edificio Viapol, Portal A-40 #13, 41018 Seville, Spain. Tel. +95-492-5224. E-mail tammisantana@jazzfree.com. Web <http://www.eirelink.com/tesol-sp/>
- 30-1 International Linguistics Association. 46th Annual Conference,** New York, New York. Contact Johanna J. Woltjer, 511 West 112 Street, #14, New York, New York 10025-1634. Tel. 212-749-3366. E-mail ilaconf.woltjer@gte.net. Web <http://www.ilaword.org>
- April 2001**
- 4-6 11th Colloquium on generative grammar, Zaragoza, Spain** Contact 11th Colloquium on Generative Grammar, Depto. Lintuistica General e Hispanica, Univ. de Zaragoza (Fac. Filosofia y Letras), Pedro Cerbuna 12, 50009 Zaragoza, Spain. Tel: +34 976 761 000, ext. 3965; Fax: +34 976 761 541. Email cgg2001@posta.unizar.es; Web <http://fyl.unizar.es/CONGRESOS/cgg/cgg-zaragoza.htm>
- 5-7 4th International conference on researching and applying metaphor (RAAM IV), Tunis, Tunisia** Contact Zouhair Maalej, Dept of English, Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Tunis-Manouba, 2010, Tunisia. Tel +216 1 600 700; Fax +216 1 520 910. Email zmaalej@gnet.tn
- 6-7 The Mid-Atlantic Association of Language Learning Technologies (MAALLT). Annual Conference, "Language Instruction in the Digital Age,"** Durham, North Carolina. Proposal Deadline December 18, 2000. Contact Rachel Saury, President, MAALLT, P.O. Box 400784, Charlottesville, Virginia 22904-4784. E-mail res4n@virginia.edu. Web <http://www.duke.edu/~ssarp/maallt2001/>
- 9-11 University of Strathclyde. British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP) Conference, "EAP: Directions for the Future,"** Scotland. Proposal Deadline February 1, 2001. Contact Dr. Leslie E. Sheldon, FBIELT, Conference Chair, English Language Teaching Division, University of Strathclyde, Livingstone Tower, 26 Richmond Street, Glasgow G1 1XH, Scotland, United Kingdom. Tel +141-5483065. Fax +1411-582209. E-mail l.e.sheldon@strath.ac.uk Web <http://www.strath.ac.uk/Departments/ELTD/baleap2001.htm>
- 17-21 IATEFL. 35th Annual Conference,** Brighton, United Kingdom. Contact

- Alison Medland. E-mail 114563.1723@compuserve.com. Web <http://www.iatefl.org>
- 18-20 Third International Symposium on Bilingualism**, Bristol, United Kingdom. Contact Jeanine Treffers-Daller, University of the West of England, Bristol, Faculty of Language and European Studies, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol BS16 1QY, United Kingdom. E-mail jeanine.treffers-daller@uwe.ac.uk Web <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/facults/les/research/bilingual/frames.html>
- 19-21 IADA 2001: Recent trends in dialogue analysis — the 8th Biennial congress of the International Association of Dialogue Analysis**, Goteborg, Sweden. Web <http://www.hum.gu.se/~engadel/IADA/>
- 19-22 Cognitive linguistics in the year 2001**, Lodz, Poland. Contact CLY 2001, Institute of English, University of Lodz, Kosciuszki 65, 90-514 Lodz, Poland. Tel/fax: +48 42 636 6337. Email cly2001@krysia.uni.lodz.pl
- 26 Saudi Association of Teachers of English (SATE). Annual Conference, "Information & Communication Technology: Its Relevance to Language Learning,"** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Contact Sayed Abdel Hamid, Dar Al Fikr School, P.O. Box 14279, Jeddah KSA, Saudi Arabia. Tel. +966-2-6800005 x 227. Fax +966-2-6800808. E-mail sate2001@hotmail.com
- 26-29 HUPE-IATEFL Conference**, Zadar, Croatia. Contact Bozana Knezevic. E-mail bknez@pfri.hr
- 29-4 International Reading Association (IRA). 46th Annual Convention, "For the Love of Reading and All That Jazz,"** New Orleans, Louisiana. Contact IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, Delaware. Tel. 302-731-1600. Fax 302-369-8476. Web <http://www.reading.org>
- May 2001**
- 3-5 2nd Annual ELT Conference, "Creativity within Constraints,"** Istanbul, Turkey. Proposal Deadline February 16, 2001. Contact Carol Gitzendanner or Burcak Gurkaya, Isik University, EFL Department, Buyukdere Caddesi 80670, Maslak, Istanbul, Turkey. Tel +90-212-286-2961. Fax +90-212-285-2875. E-mail cgitz@zdnetmail.com; bgurkaya@isikun.edu.tr
- 6 University of Cyprus and CyTEA (Cyprus Teachers of English Association). Conference, "Implementing CALL in EFL: Living up to Expectations,"** Nicosia, Cyprus. Proposal Deadline January 30, 2001. Contact Organizing Committee, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, University of Cyprus, PO Box 20357, 1678 Nicosia, Cyprus. E-mail ppavlou@ucy.ac.cy
- 11-13 Semantics and linguistic theory (SALT) 11**, New York City, USA. Contact: Anna szabolcsi, Dept of Linguistics, New York University, 719 Broadway, #501, NY, NY 10003. Tel +1 212 998 7956; Fax +1 212 995 4707. Web <http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/lingu/>
- 12-13 Developing Autonomy, JALT CUE conference 2001**, Shimizu Shizuoka, Japan. Deadline for submissions January 31st. Contact Alan Mackenzie asm@typhoon.co.jp Web <http://www.wild-e.org/cue/conferences/autonomy.html>
- 17-19 University of Minnesota, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). Conference, "Building on our Strengths: Second International Conference on Language Teacher Education,"** Minneapolis, Minnesota. Contact Conference Planning Committee, CARLA, University of Minnesota, 617 Heller Hall, 271 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455. Tel. 612-626-8600. Fax 612-624-7514. E-mail lteconf@tc.umn.edu; Web http://carla.acad.umn.edu/conference2001/CALL_FOR_PAPERS.html
- 18-19 University of the Americas-Puebla. Sixth Conference on Applied Linguistics, "Technology and Education in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching,"** Puebla, Mexico. Proposal Deadline January 15, 2001. Contact Virginia LoCastro, Universidad de las Americas-Puebla, Departamento de Lenguas, Sta. Catarina Martir, 72820 Puebla, Mexico. Tel. +52-(2)-229-31-05. Fax +52-(2)-229-31-01. E-mail locastro@mail.udlap.mx
- 22-26 International Association for Language Learning Technology (IALL) 2001 Conference**, Houston, Texas. Contact Claire Bartlett, Language Resource Center, Rice University, MS 37, Houston, TX 77525-1892. Tel. 713-737-6157. Fax 713-737-6168. E-mail iall@rice.edu. Web: <http://lang.rice.edu/iall2001>.
- 29-31 Language Center, Hong Kong Baptist University. Conference, "Culture, Communication and Language Pedagogy: Building Bridges and Meeting Challenges,"** Hong Kong, SAR, China. Contact Derrick Stone. Tel. +852-2339-5825. Fax +852-2339-5936. E-mail lc2001@hkbu.edu.hk Web <http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~lc2001>
- June 2001**
- 1-2 Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Conference, "IT & Multimedia in English**

- Language Teaching 2001 (ITMELT 2001),** Hong Kong, China. Contact Bruce Morrison, ELC, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China. E-mail itmelt2001@elc.polyu.edu.hk. Web <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/conference/>
- 2-7 Language technologies 2001: 2nd meeting of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics,** Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
Contact: Kevin Knight, Program Chair, USC/ Information Sciences Institute, 4676 Admiralty Way, Marina del Rey, CA 90292 USA. Web <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~ref/naacl2001.html>
- 14-16 Bi-Dialog 2001: 5th workshop on the semantics and pragmatics of dialogue,** Bielefeld, Germany *Deadline for papers: 15 February '01*
Email bidialog@uni-bielefeld.de Web <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/bidialog>
- 17-20 1st conference of EATAW: The European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing — Teaching academic writing across Europe,** Groningen, The Netherlands Fax +31 503 636 855. Email eataw.conference@let.rug.nl Web <http://www.hum.ku.dk/formidling/eataw/>
- 26-30 Technology in Language Education: Meeting the Challenges of Research and Practice.** Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Language Center and Nanjing University's Department of Applied Foreign Language Studies. Hong Kong, SAR, China. Contact the Conference Committee, Language Centre, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Clear Water Bay, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Tel. +852-2358-7850. Fax +852-2335-0249. E-mail lconf@ust.hk. Web <http://lc.ust.hk/~centre/conf2001/>
- July 2001**
- 5-7 The Association of Language Testers in Europe. Conference, "European Year of Languages,"** Barcelona, Spain. Contact ALTE Secretariat. Fax +44-1223-553036. E-mail alte@ucles.org.uk
- 6-11 ACL and EACL Association for computational linguistics,** Toulouse, France. Web http://www.irit.fr/ACTIVITES/EQ_ILPL/aclWeb/acl2001.html
- 8-21 Carleton University. Systemic Functional Linguistics Summer Institute,** Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. E-mail lsfc28@carleton.ca. Web <http://www.carleton.ca/lsfc28/>
- 9-11 Interdisciplinary conference on aphasiological, computational and neuroimaging approaches: the neurological basis of language,** Groningen, The Netherlands
Email nbl@let.rug.nl; Web <http://www.let.rug.nl/nbl/>
- 12-15 BRAZ-TESOL and Southern Cone TESOL. 4th Southern Cone TESOL Convention,** Curitiba, Puerto Rico. E-mail braztesol@nox.net
- 19-22 4th International conference of the Association for Linguistic Typology (ALT IV),** Santa Barbara, California, USA
Contact: Casper de Groot, Chair, Program Committee, ALT, Leerstoelgroep Theoretischetaalwetenschap, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Spuistraat 210, NL-1012 VT Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Fax +31 20 525 3052. Email casper.de.groot@hum.uva.nl; Web <http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/alt>
- 22-28 Carleton University. 28th International Systemic Functional Congress, "Interfaces: Systemic Functional Grammar and Critical Discourse Analysis,"** Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Proposal Deadline December 31, 2000. E-mail isfc28@carleton.ca. Web <http://www.carleton.ca/isfc28/>
- 22-27 7th International cognitive linguistics conference, Santa Barbara, California, USA To be held in conjunction with the 2001 Linguistics Institute**
Web <http://www.unm.edu/~iclc/abstracts.html>
- 22-28 International systemic functional congress, Ottawa, Canada**
Email isfc28@carleton.ca; Web <http://www.carleton.ca/isfc28>
- 24-28 8th International conference on cross-cultural communication: communication and cultural (ex)change,** Hong Kong
Deadline for abstracts: 1 February '01
Contact Dr Shiwen Pan, English Dept, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Tai Po, Hong Kong SAR, PRC. Tel: +852 2948 7242; Fax: +852 2948 7270. Email span@ied.edu.hk; Web <http://www.louisville.edu/~mstc01/icc.html>
- 28-30 International symposium on language planning and lexicology, Zagreb, Croatia**
Deadline for abstracts: 30 November '00
Contact Prof. Christer Kiselman, PO Box 480, SE-751 96 Uppsala, Sweden. Email kiselman\@math.uu.se For papers: Prof. Geraldo Mattos. Email mattos@super.com.br
- 25-29 Whole Language Umbrella of National Council of Teachers of English. Annual Conference,**

Chicago, Illinois. Contact NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801-1096. Tel. 217-328-3870. Fax 217-278-3761. E-mail covreg@ncte.org. Web <http://www.ncte.org>

August 2001

- 27-31 3rd International conference on cognitive science (ICCS2001)**, Beijing, China
Deadline for abstracts: 30 April '01

Contact Beijing Laboratory of Cognitive Sciences, University of Science and Technology in China, Graduate School, Academia Sinica, PO Box 3908, Beijing, 100039 Beijing, P. R. China. Email iccs2001org@etang.com ; Web <http://www.iccs2001.com>

- 30-1 Storytelling in the Americas, St. Catherine's, Ontario, Canada**

Contact Storytelling in the Americas, c/o Dr. Mark Anderson. Email ics@www.brocku.ca

- 31-2 IATEFL GI and TT SIGs. Joint Workshop Conference, "The Integration of Global Issues into Teacher Training: Awareness Raising, Methods, Contents,"** Bielefeld, Germany. Proposal Deadline March 31, 2001. Contact JWH Ridder, MA, Beethovenstr. 5, D-33604 Bielefeld, Germany. Tel. +49(0)521-521-24-40. Fax +49(0)521-6-62-09. E-mail jwh.ridder@t-online.de.

September 2001

- 1-3 University of Exeter. Ninth Biennial International Exeter CALL 2001 Conference, "CALL: The Challenge of Change,"** Exeter, United Kingdom. Contact Keith Cameron, School of Modern Languages, Queen's Building, The University, Exeter, United Kingdom EX4 4QH. Tel +1392-264221. Fax +1392-

264222. E-mail K.C.Cameron@ex.ac.uk

- 21-23 Panama TESOL. 15th Annual Convention,** Panama City, Panama. Contact Christopher C. McLean, President. Tel. 507-442-0210. Fax 507-443-4629. E-mail cmclean@pancanal.com

October 2001

- 4-7 University of Hawaii at Manoa. Pacific Second Language Research Forum (PacSLRF) 2001 Conference,** Honolulu, Hawaii. Proposal Deadline April 2, 2001. Contact Jim Yoshioka, PacSLRF Conference Co-Chair, c/o National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawaii, 1859 East-West Road #106, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822. Tel. 808-956-9424. Fax 808-956-5983. E-mail pacslrf@hawaii.edu ; Web <http://www.LLL.hawaii.edu/pacslrf>

November 2001

- 16-28 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Annual conference,** Washington, DC. Contact ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, New York 10701-6801. Tel 914-963-8830. Fax 914-963-1275. E-mail actflhq@aol.com ; Web <http://www.actfl.org/>

- 22-25 Japan Association for Language Teaching . Pan Asian Conference 3 at JALT 2001, "A Language Odyssey,"** Kitakyushu, Japan. Contact David McMurray, Japan Association for Language Teaching, Urban Edge Building, 5F, 1-37-9 Taito, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0016. Tel +81-3-3837-1630. Fax +81-3-3837-1631 E-mail jalt@gol.com ; Web <http://www.jalt.org>

January 2002

- 3-6 Linguistic Society of America. Conference,** San Francisco. Contact Margaret Reynolds, LSA, 1325 18th Street, NW, Suite 211, Washington, DC 20036. Tel 202-835-1714. Fax 202-835-1717. E-mail isa@lsadc.org ; Web <http://www.lsadc.org>

April 2002

- 6-9 American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL). Annual conference,** Salt Lake City, Utah. Contact AAAL, PO Box 21686, Eagan, Minnesota 55121-0686. Tel. 612-953-0805. Fax 612-431-8404. E-mail aaaloffice@aaal.org Web <http://www.aaal.org>

May 2002

- 2-5 Dickinson College. Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages,** New York, New York. Contact Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, PO Box 1773, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013-2896. Tel 717-245-1977. Fax 717-245-1976. E-mail nectfl@dickinson.edu ; Web <http://www.dickinson.edu/nectfl/>
- 7-11 Organization in Discourse II: The Historical Perspective: An international conference on historical discourse linguistics,** Turku, Finland. Web <http://www.utu.fi/hum/engfil/oid2002.html>

Beyond Artificial Flowers: The Challenge of Catching Language in Full Bloom

*Joseph Dias, Kitasato University
Eamon McCafferty, Tokai University*

The following article is a review of a panel discussion held at the annual IALLFL conference in Dublin in March 2000. The panel was titled 'Varieties of spoken English: Same difference?', and included four speakers: Anne O'Keeffe of the University of Limerick, Almut Koester and Michael McCarthy of the University of Nottingham and Luke Prodromou of the British Council, Greece. The discussion lived up to its billing and raised many important issues and concerns in relation to recent research by the speakers. Breaking with usual practice for a co-authored piece, we have decided to put our names to each half of the article by reviewing two speakers apiece. Although we both contributed to the other's section, we decided that this method would allow us to keep the personal anecdotes that sprang from our original individual pieces. Dias reviews O'Keeffe and Koester. McCafferty reviews McCarthy and Prodromou.

Anne O'Keeffe, of the University of Limerick, started off the panel discussion by providing an overview of the bountiful varieties of spoken English that exist. These include, among many others, American, Australian, Canadian, Indian, British, Irish, Singaporean, South African and West Indian.

She then presented David Crystal's useful 'Tri-English World' model (Crystal, 1995). In this scheme, English is organized in concentric rings: the outermost being the international level, characterized by a high degree of uniformity and regularity; the middle being the national level, most strongly influenced by media; and the third, innermost (base) level representing localized varieties and even language unique to particular families. It is at the base level where language is arguably at its richest and most diverse, as expression is not constrained by the need to bridge gaps in values, cultural identification, religious affiliation or socio-economic background. Family is a place where

an expression such as *Remind me to punch your lights out later* is understood instantly as playful banter, and is countered in kind.

O'Keeffe noted that varieties of English can be further subdivided into areas that cut across national and regional boundaries, activity type, age group, profession, and culture. Viewed from this perspective, it is clear that varieties of spoken English do not readily lend themselves to being labeled, categorized and simplified in dictionaries, grammars, or even in computer corpora. It was at this point that the speaker evoked John Sinclair's provocative question: "Why would one look at artificial flowers to study botany?" This metaphor became the glue that stuck the four panelists' talks together. Whether it is a grammar, a textbook, a corpus or a dictionary based on a corpus, O'Keeffe reminded us that it is useful to ask ourselves "Are we dealing with language itself or some sort of lifeless approximation, an artificial flower if you will?" The question kept the subsequent talks, given by Koester and McCarthy on their interesting findings based on the study of spoken corpora, in humble perspective.

Almut Koester, who, like Michael McCarthy, is based at the University of Nottingham, discussed her work on a corpus of British and American "office talk." She further narrowed her focus to one type of task: giving directions. Her research question was "Do Americans express themselves more or less directly in this context?" The relative use or avoidance of hedges was studied. She qualified her results by saying that the corpus was not huge and the area of interest narrow, so it was not possible to make any blanket statements about differences between British and American English. She reported the following:

Really tended to be used as a hedge in British English rather than an intensifier (21 incidences to 3) but the reverse was the case in American

English (17 to 5). However, she noted that the total incidence of hedges of all sorts (as she measured them) were not different. She found that there were different preferences in the two cultures for particular hedge wordings. For example, whereas Americans preferred *a little* to *a bit* (20 incidences to 9), British people opted for the latter (21 to 6). *Like* was found to be used in American English (38 incidences to 4) in the same way that *sort of* (23 to 1) is used in British English.

Modals such as *have to*, *must*, or *should*, were avoided in giving instructions in both cultures. Instead, indirect expressions were used, especially if utterances or the use of *we* as opposed to *you should*. For example, in British *Then we go onto the June ones* or in American *Then we wanna keep the 2 cover sheets*.

Koester was justifiably cautious in her provisional conclusions on whether British English was less direct than American English in the narrow context studied. She noted that the database was small and the samples not necessarily representative. Also, from the perspective of someone interested in conversation analysis (talk in interaction), it is clear that much can be missed by isolating elements of language and putting them in a priori categories. Subtle interactional differences at work in the two varieties of language, which may be responsible for the widely held perception that British English is less direct, might be missed. This illustrates the danger that corpus linguistics may be producing fascinating pressed flowers that lack the scent and bee-attracting allure of the real McCoy, that is, talk in its turn-by-turn, technicolor context.

Perhaps I was more sensitive to this issue after the panel discussion, but as I was leaving Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport a week after the conference on a British Midland jet, I heard the British pilot use (in his opening announcement) one of the most impressive strings of hedges imaginable. "As you know, flying into any airport in the European corridor is subject to rather long delays," he began. The passengers grew visibly tense as the pilot continued what seemed to be a preamble to disastrous news. We expected that the flight would be delayed, canceled, or worse. The upshot of his long digression, however, was that we would be about 10 minutes late. On the words *10 minutes* most of the passengers visibly relaxed and broke into

smiles. I turned to the Dutch man sitting next to me and said "That was an amazing explanation and apology for a 10-minute delay." He said "The English have a word for it, waffling." That incident made me realize that it might be the placement of hedges in contexts where they are not expected (or deemed to be warranted by people of other cultures), rather than their relatively higher frequency, that gives non-British people the impression that British English is less direct and more prone to *waffling*. Although difficult to prove, this speculation would not have easily arisen from the sort of decontextualized analysis described by Koester. I do not mean to suggest that her findings are not interesting. They do capture something that is going on in language, and they are sensitive to measurable differences. However, the question remains: "Are these the important differences and the ones relevant to the questions at hand?"

Joseph Dias

Michael McCarthy and Luke Prodromou continued the discussion on varieties of spoken English, although both paid less attention to their own research in favor of posing some of the questions they see as central to the issue of *the place of* different Englishes within language teaching.

McCarthy began by focusing on the dichotomy between written and spoken language. Whereas written language is *centripetal* orienting us towards the standard or norm, spoken language is more democratic in its *centrifugal* orientation. *Homogeneity* in written language is replaced by *heterogeneity* in the spoken word, *models* are exchanged for *samples*, *attested* becomes *authenticated* and *presentation* is traded for *exposure*.

McCarthy candidly admitted to being "infected" by exposure to Irish English since his arrival in Dublin a few days before and saw this as positive. He believed a major criticism of language teaching textbooks today is that publishers do not cater to these different types of English. The big question is, which type should they use?: American? British? Or maybe a nice 'balance' with the use of so-called *International English*? The point McCarthy was making here is that language has always been used as some sort of model, but it need not only exist in this way. Rather, he argued, we should look at varieties as a set of samples. With an example that had local audience mem-

bers nodding their heads in agreement, he pointed to the uneasiness that might exist in Ireland with the use of models of 'good' English in the post-colonial context.

In answer to the questions, "What about the authentication process?" and "To what degree can learners take these texts unto themselves?" McCarthy encouraged teachers to breathe new life into the 'dead flowers' that spoken words become when transcribed or taken out of context. This could be construed as an unusual comment from a man working on a dictionary based on the findings of spoken corpora. After all, a dictionary is generally used independently, thus making the comment about breathing life into its entries seem rather redundant. However, it may well be that he was anticipating Prodromou's criticisms of corpus linguistics' 'fruits', and was subsequently toning down what he could have said about its potential. It is clear from listening to McCarthy on several other occasions that he believes the copious examples of how English is used by native speakers can be beneficial to both native and non-native speakers of English (not to mention students).

Continuing on an upbeat note, McCarthy suggested that it is commonalities in the varieties of spoken English that we should explore. With the use of corpora he believed it possible to move towards establishing a core English rather than a model to be followed. He urged us to look at other varieties. Indeed, he claimed this to be "crucial". With this, McCarthy gave closure with a championing call tempered by classic British understatement: "Varieties? Yes. Differences? Indeed. Commonalities? YES!" Maybe this final word, in a raised voice not typical of the man I had listened to on previous occasions was due to his passion on this particular topic. Personally, I believe that Michael had indeed been affected a little more strongly by the Irish variety of spoken English than he might have realised!

Luke Prodromou was a stimulating, final speaker on the panel of four. He skillfully wove the ideas that had come before him into his own call for more emphasis to be given to the many wonderful varieties of spoken English that exist among those speech communities speaking English as a second language.

Alerting us to the dangers of focusing too much on language description per se, Prodromou re-

minded us that although this is not unimportant, it is simply one part of a very large puzzle. Some of the hazards he warned of are: native speakers remaining the 'authority', thus peripheralising non-native teachers; academic power remaining the privilege of the so-called BARNAs (British, Australian and North American) countries; teacher-training remaining in the hands of native 'expert users'; and, a contradiction between the autonomy of the learner and the inauthentic texts served up to them, with learners being encouraged to be autonomous on the one hand and, on the other, being yoked to endless varieties of language that are probably divorced from their contexts and are more of a burden than a mind-expanding exercise.

Prodromou suggested that there may be an "idiomatic common core" that we can concentrate on. Echoing Sinclair's (1991) point that native speakers command that aspect of language (idioms) with aplomb, and Carter and McCarthy's research (1997) showing that idioms are often elliptic, involving lots of punning and wordplay within the same speech community, he pointed out something that as teachers we should easily recognise. That is, non-native speakers have difficulty knowing where to draw the line on creative play. But, he argued, non-natives are busy generating their own norms often with the use of transfer from their mother tongue, and it is this kind of creative word-play that we should use in our classes.

This idea of making use of corpora from other areas of the world where speakers use English as a second language is a powerful one, and can, as Prodromou mentioned, be used most effectively as consciousness-raising activities for our students. Drawing on O'Keeffe's by now popular metaphor, Prodromou cautioned us, though, that these 'dead flowers' cannot be used as models, since, after all, they've been uprooted from their pragmatic contexts.

Eamon McCafferty

Concluding remarks

Prodromou finished his talk with some advice that resonated strongly with our own attempts at trying to nurture autonomy in the classroom: namely that we should encourage each of our learners to become a *Sherlock Holmes* of language. We feel that this may be the best way to make use of the

rich and wonderful varieties of spoken English that exist. After all, for the majority of our students in Japan, the most likely arena for the employment of their English skills will be with other non-native speakers. Therefore, to make direct use of the pressed blossoms found in North American, British or Australian-based corpora (by incorporating them into students' personal repertoires) is not appropriate. We can be of better service to our students by showing them how they themselves can discover the features that make a 'variety' of English unique — whether it is the English of bilingual speakers in their midst or that of doctors they hear on videotapes recorded in doctors' offices. We would like to give accounts of a few ways we have turned our students into linguistic sleuths by equipping them with ways they can 'freeze-frame' linguistic events and put them under their magnifying glass.

Eamon's experience

Students become sleuths in my classroom with the use of project-based learning where they are encouraged to take the output of one lesson and use it as the input for the next. One way I do this is by having students participate in encounter style projects in which they interview and record bilingual speakers of English before analysing their data and presenting it to other groups in the class (for a brief description of the mechanics of such a project see McCafferty and Ford, 2000). Another project that I use in writing classes is to involve students in an extended email exchange with an overseas group of ESL/EFL learners. Much of the dialogue is built around the topic of language learning itself and includes readings on aspects of intercultural communication to help students reflect on what they are doing as well as giving them language and ideas for discussion. The project culminates with a final essay that asks students to critically analyse the email exchange itself.

Joseph's experience

Making use of a marvelous corpus of videotaped medical consultations between British GPs and their patients, I guide my students in becoming increasingly sensitive observers, transcribers and, ultimately, *conversation analysts* [see Dias, 1999]. The insights of others (medical sociolinguists, for

example) about how medical discourse works — or does not work — can be of some use to students, but I believe the discoveries student sleuths make themselves will be the most meaningful and memorable. As the field of ESP and those engaged in research on professional discourse recognize, job and profession-related English often constitute varieties of the language that can best be studied in their own milieu. Getting students to recognize the relevancy of focusing on an area of discourse that will be an important part of their working lives is not a difficult task.

Making discoveries for oneself is a way of taking ownership, or at least, joint ownership, of the learning process. In that sense, Eamon and I strongly believe that sleuthing tasks must be incorporated into any curriculum that attempts to deal with varieties of language. This is one way to ensure that the flowers in our increasingly unwieldy corpora gardens are showered with the attention they deserve, without being selectively picked, pressed and dried.

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KoTESOL Conference Report

Eamon McCafferty, CUE Program Chair
Susanna Philippoussis, CUE Publicity Chair

The Eighth annual KoTESOL Conference was held at Kyongbuk National University in Taegu on the weekend of September 30th-October 1st. The conference had a strong attendance from many countries including Japan. The attendees and the presenters seemed generally pleased with both the venue and the cultural events arranged by the KoTESOL organizing committee. Perfect autumn weather coincided with Taegu's annual festival to create a warm and welcoming backdrop to the conference. Two plenary speakers headed the presentation lineup, Dr. Leo van Lier of the Monterey Institute, and Dr. Dick Allright of Lancaster University. We review their plenary speeches below.

Perspectives on the role of interaction in classroom language learning

Dr. Leo van Lier
Monterey Institute of International Studies, US

The audience waited patiently for the opening ceremony speeches to end in order to hear Dr. van Lier's plenary that would herald the true commencement of the conference. Dr. van Lier (incidentally, a previous student of Dr. Allright's at Lancaster) began with a historical perspective on the role of interaction in classroom language learning before quickly moving on to an ecological perspective containing four points: emergence, affordance, triadic interaction, and quality. The phenomenon of the ecological perspective, according to van Lier, is that language emerges from social activity. Social activity involves perception, and perception means that we notice things. The physical environment provides the affordances for our activities to be valued.

Throughout his presentation, Dr. van Lier stated that projects are key to classroom language learning. Projects encourage conversation and

conversation helps negotiation. He developed this point further as he described student navigation as just "getting by" and student negotiation as "getting on" and made the distinction between tasks and conversation. He stipulated that conversation uses more complex language, is far more intricate and much more challenging to the student than tasks, which alone can be too restrictive. However, tasks in a project lead to negotiated interaction, which in turn leads to activity and then to exploratory and dynamic interaction. The project is the "cumulative" outcome.

During the negotiation for meaning, pragmatic monitoring can be done in three ways, reactively, concurrently, and proactively. Reactive monitoring leads to repair and correction. Concurrent monitoring induces back channeling and signals understanding through gazes and turnover signals. Proactive monitoring has two stages, strategic planning and predicting. This of course begs the question, is speaking "bad" good for the student in the classroom? Dr. van Lier said yes and emphasized that speaking is good for peer relations and also develops the less proficient students in the classroom.

Dr. van Lier ended his presentation with remarks about quality. He left us with two memorable quotes. The first, "There are remarks that sow and remarks that reap" and second "Good teaching is in the creation of memorable events". Dr. van Lier's presentation was one such event.

Although his time had been arbitrarily cut, Dr. van Lier addressed the audience with a delivery that was quick yet easy to understand. The unanticipated time factor also meant that his presentation ended before he could impart all that he wanted. It was difficult to tell who was more disappointed, the audience or the presenter. He did however leave us with his web address: <http://maxkade.miis.edu/Faculty_Pages/lvanlier/index.html> and the promise that he will post his paper there.

Classroom language learning

*Dr. Dick Allright
Lancaster University, UK*

Dr. Allright belies his softly spoken manner in a way that conveys the passion he obviously has for the professional development of language teachers. Also concerned with quality, he began with two basic propositions: firstly, for teacher education, job satisfaction is more important than teaching efficiently; and secondly, for classroom language learning, precision teaching "efficiency" is less important than general lesson "productivity". It is misguided, he contended, to operate under the assumption that teaching has a direct one-to-one causal relationship with learning. Teachers stand a better chance of educating by providing rich lessons, and in this sense it is infinitely more important to strive to be an "interesting" teacher and an "alive" teacher than to be a "precise" one. Since there will inevitably be thirty-one separate and unique 'lessons' happening in any class of thirty students, any attempt to quantify will result in the disappearance of quality.

Turning to the role of students' learning, the Lancastrian scholar reminded us that being a classroom learner is essentially a public matter, while actual learning is a private one. The actors in the classroom are essentially 'putting on a show' for the benefit of the other cast members. The importance of this is that you can't predict what people will actually learn from

their public behavior, and, Dr. Allright asked, does it really matter, and if so, what can we do about it? Are learners ever really learning what the "efficient" teacher is trying to impart? He suggested that they probably aren't and therefore, as teachers, it is more important for us to find an understanding of what we are doing rather than chase new ways to teach something.

So, asked Dr. Allright, what can we do? One suggestion is to develop learner autonomy. By getting learners to teach themselves we can hope that they are more efficient at it than we are! We can also develop teacher understanding through exploratory practice. Dr. Allright listed the defining characteristics of such practice as practitioners working to understand what they want to understand following their own agendas but not necessarily in order to bring about change and certainly not primarily by changing. One way that he suggested we do this is by harnessing typical pedagogical practices as investigative tools, so that rather than being an extra activity, working for understanding is part and parcel of teaching and learning.

Taken together these two plenary presentations might provide an appropriate starting point for thinking about the forthcoming CUE mini-conference on autonomy, by reminding us that while teaching and learning may be different things, good teaching (creating memorable events and working to develop teacher understanding) does lead to effective (autonomous) learning.

Content in Language Education: Looking at the Future

Proceedings of the JALT CUE Conference 2000

Edited by Alan S. Mackenzie

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Varieties of English: Irish English

Robert Mahon, Osaka City Board of Education

Introduction

A regional dialect is a variety of a language specific to a given geographical region. The regional dialect I discuss here, Irish English, is usually classified as a variety of British English, but it also shares certain features with General American English.

Irish English is not the only dialect spoken in Ireland. There are four present-day linguistic configurations in southern Ireland, the area comprising of the counties Leinster, Connacht and Munster. These are Irish Gaelic (mainly confined to rural areas of the West and Southwest), Irish English (spoken mainly in Cork and tracing its roots back to the Elizabethan period), Received Pronunciation (spoken by older, aristocratic families) and finally Standard English with an Irish Accent (spoken by most people in Ireland nowadays).

A personal anecdote can illustrate the origin of my interest in this particular topic. I remember distinctly an episode from Summer Camp in 1984 when I roomed with two boys from Dublin city. After I made some folksy statement like, "and what did she see there, only a rat!" They laughed, saying "this fella talks funny". We were all aware that a Dublin accent is very distinct from a provincial one, but there we were realizing that the way we say things is also different.

To put this in a historical context, the fact is that English became and remained the vernacular of Dublin city hundreds of years before it took over the rest of the country, and that has affected how English is spoken there right up to the present day.

In this paper I want to review briefly the most prominent features of Irish English which distinguish it from other varieties of spoken English. These are in the areas of Grammar, Lexicon and, principally, Pronunciation.

Grammar

We can find many examples of non-standard grammar in this particular dialect. Many re-

searchers agree that non-standard characteristics of Irish English can be directly attributed to substantial transfer from Gaelic. Interestingly, though, studies from University College London have challenged this assumption. Harris (1991, p.41) comments

It has been argued that many of the non-standard characteristics of Irish English which were previously attributed to the extensive influence of Irish are more likely to represent archaic English forms. In some cases it seems necessary to view particular features as reflecting a convergence of substratal and earlier superstratal inputs.

As we will see later, Irish English has quite a few lexical items which are archaisms, so it seems plausible that it retained grammatical constructions in addition to vocabulary, which later passed out of standard English.

The Finnish linguist Markku Filppula (1991) completed a study which investigated the incidence of three linguistic features:

1. Clefting, a device to give special thematic and focal prominence to a constituent placed in the hinge position of the sentence; for example, *It was the window that Sean broke.*
2. Topicalisation, where a constituent is moved to the very beginning of its clause for prominence, in a way very similar to clefting, for example, *The window Sean broke (not the chair).*
3. Subordinating *and*, where *and* is used to introduce a subordinate clause lacking a finite verb, for example, *He fell and him crossing the bridge, for He fell while crossing the bridge.*

Of course, clefting and topicalisation can be heard in other parts of the British Isles, but much less. Filppula found that in a sample 1,000 words, Educated Spoken English (ESE) yielded 0.7 ex-

amples of clefting, Dublin 1.3, Wicklow (just south of Dublin) 1.8, and the southwest 2.8. As regards topicalisation, ESE yielded 0.4, Dublin 0.9, Wicklow 1.4 and the southwest 1.4. Finally, regarding subordinating *and*, ESE yielded zero, Dublin 0.09, Wicklow 0.31 and the southwest 0.32. This result (that subordinating *and* was the least common feature of the set) was surprising because in my home area (rural east) the use of subordinating *and* appears to be very common. It would be interesting to see if the result could be replicated in further studies.

In any case, Filppula concluded that rural dialects and the urban speech of Dublin are significantly different but that otherwise, Irish English dialects are relatively uniform.

In addition to the three features highlighted by Filppula I would postulate various other examples of distinctively Irish grammatical constructions, which can be attributed to the substratal influence of Gaelic, rather than to archaic forms of once standard English:

- *BIONN SIAD ag caint sa rang*
THEY DO BE talking in class
- *Tar anseo IONAS GO taispeainfidh me duit*
Come here TILL I show you.
- *Tusa ata ann an ea?*

Is it yourself that's in it?

A study by a linguist from Trinity College Dublin, Jeffrey L. Kallen (1991), investigated the incidence of another well-known syntactic feature, the use of *after* as a perfective marker.

Kallen conjectures that the origins of this feature may lie in the large-scale contact between English and Irish speakers in the seventeenth century. Kallen's study was confined to the Dublin city area; he notes that it is "a large urban centre in which the Irish language can effectively be ruled out as a direct influence on the modern use of English" (p. 61).

He found that *after* covers the range of semantic functions for the perfect as described in languages generally:

1. Universal perfect in which a state of affairs prevailed throughout some interval stretching from the past into the present e.g. *All the week is after being cold*
2. Existential perfect denoting the existence of past events e.g. *Three times she's after changing it.*
3. "Hot News" perfect based on relative recency and the presupposition that the addressee does not yet know the news, e.g. *Leo! I'm just after sending a lady up that way.*
4. Stative perfect indicating that the direct effect of a past event still continues, e.g. *What your after gettin' in the Budget is nothing.*

It is also interesting to note the variety of usage categories for *after*

1. Giving Out (a rebuke). Immediate reference to a concluded action or event, with speaker expecting an apology or change of attitude/behaviour by the listener, e.g. *You're after breaking the gate!*
2. Announcement. Immediate reference to a concluded non-durative action/event, e.g. *I'm after spilling a drop of that in the saucer.*
3. Report. Proximate reference to a concluded action/event (non-durative) or state of affairs (durative), e.g. *She's only after joining.* Non-durative; *They're just after being used up.* Durative.
4. Comment. Reference to a state of affairs which continues from a non-proximate past through the moment of speech; shared knowledge of the state of affairs is presupposed, e.g. *It's after getting real long.*
5. Narrative. Narration of past event; typically using past tense (pluperfect), e.g. *I was just after saying to Aine.*
6. Non-factual. Hypothetical/counterfactual related uses, e.g. *A student will be after accomplishing an academic task.*
7. Reported speech. Quoted uses of categories 1 and 4 above, with embedding as appropriate, e.g. *I wouldn't want you coming*

over and saying, "Look, what you're after doing to it."

Kallen concluded that *after* "is favoured for use in contexts where the relationship between the designated event/state of affairs and the time of speaking... is fairly recent" (p.72). Regarding conditioning by discourse factors, it is favoured in "friendly" and family domains. Kallen also found that *after* is not confined to any particular age or social group.

Lexicon and prosody

When we consider lexicon and prosody, we can certainly find evidence of how earlier forms which are now archaic in standard English were preserved in Irish English. *Rapscallion, delph, lad, mangey, ye, cobbler, aye, cur, cog, mannerly, whelp, perch* (for distance) etc. are all words very familiar to me (a native of a rural area in the east of Ireland) but not, I think, to many speakers of standard English!

In Gaelic, schwa insertion or epenthesis occurs between liquid or nasal consonants, and is seen in Irish English in words such as *film* and *form*. This phenomenon also occurs between a plosive (including theta) and a liquid or nasal, e.g. in *petrol* and *Dublin*. The two processes combined can give a distinctive pronunciation to words such as *apron*, or the name *Charles*. Plosive epenthesis makes homonyms of *false* and *faults*, *scents* and *sense*.

And if we consider stress for a moment, certain words can take on a non-standard form, e.g. *committee, architecture, lamentable, educated, discipline*, etc. Commenting on this phenomenon, Wells (1982) notes that in Ireland word stress is more flexible than in Standard English. The same speaker might use both stress patterns interchangeably for the same word. Also, the addition of an unstressed pronoun can trigger a stress shift, e.g. standard pronunciation of *educated* would change in a statement like, *He educated her and recognized her talents*.

We can also advert here to one more prosodic feature, namely that Yes/No questions may have a falling intonation in Irish English, in contrast to both Standard English and Standard American English.

One final point on lexicon. As is obvious from words like *behaviour* and from other examples in this paper, British spelling conventions predominate and the American English forms are, perhaps ironically, stigmatized in Ireland.

Pronunciation

Our final section reviews dialect pronunciation in southern Ireland. If we consider segmental features, the following observations can be made.

Irish English is firmly rhotic. It has a complete range of vowel oppositions in the environment of following /r/. Hence, all the following minimal pairs are distinguished from each other: *mere/myrrh, care/Kerr, pour/per, horse/hoarse, born/borne*, and *Mary, marry* and *merry*.

This /r/ has a strikingly dark resonance, particularly in final and pre-consonantal environments. As for the other liquid, /l/, in Irish English it is generally clear in all environments..

Regarding weak vowels, it can be noted that phonologically there is only one reduction vowel in Irish English. The weak form for *my* pronounced as *me* extends far up the social scale. *By* pronounced as *be* is more likely to be a "conscious Hibernicism" (Wells, 1982).

For many of us in southern Ireland, theta and eth are impossible to get right. They are released as dental plosives rather than as interdental fricatives; they are not distinguished and in some cases may not even be perceived. Personal experience is relevant here. While engaged in phonemic transcription I found myself relying on familiarity with Irish "mistakes" to transcribe theta and eth. For example when faced with a new word like *throw* or *thousand* I would have no idea if the initial sound was voiced eth or voiceless theta. I knew, though, how the words might be mispronounced. Thus the initial sound was recognized as theta. Similarly I could tell that words like, *thus, though* or this contained initial *Th*. In intervocalic positions where Standard English would have /t/ and General American English would have a flap, Irish English can have a voiceless, alveolar slit fricative similar to *esh* in words like *bottom, jetty, hit*, etc. This kind of lenition can lead (at a further stage in the process) to /h/ which is in fact the phonologically lenited form of /t/ in Gaelic.

Irish English has no glide cluster reduction; /h/ is kept in the environment of a following /w/. Its phonological distribution is wide and is probably due to the substratal influence of Gaelic. Again, though, it's possible that a superstratal element is also involved. The first community of English speakers on the island of Ireland was established in the twelfth century when the British English /h/ was also aspirated much more strongly than today,

and was kept in the environment of a following /w/.

To quickly summarise these segmental features, glance back over what you've just read and try making this statement with a rustic Irish lilt!: *Those boys there are whelps; they better give back the thirty-three pence I lent them.*

In Irish English you still may hear the lax vowel /ey/ substituting the tense vowel /iy/ (We preserve a feature that disappeared in standard English, probably, in the late 1700's. We can refer to Shakespeare's rhyming of *case* with *ease*, or *grease* with *grace*, and we also have Alexander Pope's couplet "Here Thou, great Anna whom three realms obey, dost sometimes counsel take ? and sometimes tea."

Wells (1982) quotes findings by Bertz that this feature is most frequently heard in the items: *leave, meat, eat, beat, cheat, tea, mean, easy, quay, treat* and *Jesus*. However, this it is often done as a concious joke or Hibernicism.

Secondly, in Gaelic, /s/ followed by "t" or "e", before "t", and at the end of a word, is pronounced as *esh*, giving an initial "shushing" sound in words like, *steal* and *stairs*.

Gaelic slender /t/ is very close to the affricate "t-esh ligature." Also, /aw/, not /ow/ occurs before /-ld/. Finally, as we saw earlier, though Irish English may pronounce a word like "educate" as in Standard English, adding a preceding unstressed pronoun can trigger a stress shift. How does all this affect a statement like, "Matthew is very bold; he shows his old fella no thanks though he educated him and reared him."

In conclusion, then, we can say that substratal influences from Gaelic and superstratal influences from British English seem to have been significant factors in the creation of Irish English, a regional accent which is very distinctive as regards grammatical constructions, lexicon and intonation patterns. The degree to which substratal or superstratal influences determined the nature of spoken English in Ireland is open to further research and could yield valuable insights.

As Harris (1991) puts it: "Future empirical research into this area is to be welcomed not only for the light it may shed on the complexities of the sociolinguistic situation in Ireland but also for the contribution it may be expected to make to a general understanding of the role played by sociopolitical factors in shaping the course of linguistic change" (p.46).

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Chewing the CUD with Alison & Neil: the WAFFLErs

Alan S. Mackenzie, CUE Coordinator

Introduction

CUD's or College and University Discussion groups are small, informal groups of college and university educators that decide on setting aside time in their busy schedules for some form of cooperative development. The following is the result of an e-mail interview conducted with Alison Stewart (AS) of Waseda University School of English Literature and Neil Cowie (NC) of Saitama University, both of whom have started their own groups on their own initiatives. The main difference between them is that the Waseda group consists of teachers from within the Waseda School of Literature alone, while Neil's group is a collection of teachers from different institutions with a similar research focus.

Both of you groups have similar acronyms. What are they? What do they mean and why did you choose them?

AS: Before it first got off the ground nearly two years ago, the name WAFFLE was bandied about, for no particular reason other than that the object of the meetings was talk, and because of a vague assonance with TEFL. To be honest, I'm still not sure what it should be called, since naming it will probably entail determining its purpose more clearly, something that at present none of the usual participants seem to want, and which might turn off other participants from joining in in the future. In the email notices of meetings that I send out to all the English teachers in the department I generally call it a *seminar* or *discussion group*, although I also try and make it plain that a (the) major reason for the meeting is the beer afterwards. It worries me that 'seminar' comes over as 'hard work', whereas the real object is 'focused talk'.

NC: WAFFLE - Writing and Feedback for Language Educators. Apart from the obvious double meaning we started off talking about writing and feedback in particular - we have carried on with that ever since the first meeting.

What is the purpose of the group and why did you start it?

AS: The idea to set up a special group for teachers to meet and talk grew out of a situation that was going on naturally in the staffroom. A change in the timetable at Waseda meant that a number of new teachers were taken on at the same time to teach the same slots on Monday and Tuesday mornings. For whatever reason, a great rapport developed between many of these teachers and the talk before and between classes was something that many of us found very stimulating. In addition, at the time, a number of us were preparing to give papers at JALT and other conferences, so one of the initial ideas was to create a forum for rehearsing presentations and getting constructive feedback from peers.

NC: About three years ago three of us; Ethel Ogane, Andy Barfield, and myself all were on the same small group at a Teacher Education SIG sponsored weekend workshop on action research. There were about six groups all looking at different topics. I think it is probably fair to say that our focus (on writing) was the most fruitful one because it is such a rich and complicated topic but at the same time a very focused one - we found we had a lot we could share and learn from each other. Later we met several other teachers through the Tokyo Foreign Languages University and expanded a bit.

I guess each person would probably view our purpose differently but to meet and talk about teaching writing, and researching writing methodology is the general aim. Of course we are good friends so it's not as dry as that sounds - we meet for a whole day usually and get a lot of eating and drinking done together.

Where do you meet?

AS: We generally meet round a table in a room in the English department. However, what goes

on after the meeting (in the pub) is also important to the aims of the group, i.e. talking shop.

NC: We all live in the Kanto area: Tokyo, Tsukuba, Saitama, Kawasaki. We take it in turns to go to each others' houses/offices I guess we have averaged about four meetings a year and we decide the topics one meeting at a time. The office meetings are probably the most effective from a 'getting things done' point of view. We probably focus too much on socialising in a house.

How many people typically attend?

NC: Usually around four, five or six.

AS: I would say there is a core group of four of us. The largest meeting had eight, the smallest only two, though it was no less stimulating for that.

What has been discussed in the last few meetings?

NC: We did a joint presentation at JALT, 2000 so planning for that was a big item: the connecting theme was about how to recycle student ideas into current classes. At next year's JALT we aim to present on how we have researched about weaker students and their writing.

AS: The shape and content of these meetings has changed considerably over the two years of its existence. For one thing, half the people coming to the meetings this year are new to Waseda and to this group, and have brought with them a range of new interests and concerns. In our first year, some of us were motivated to use the meetings as trial runs for conferences (student self-assessment, content-based teaching in writing classes) or for new research plans (introducing controversial subjects in the classroom). We also used the group as a basis for our own development as teachers in the classroom, with three of us video-ing each other's classes for our own benefit as well as for wider discussion. This semester we've done a workshop on using projects in writing classes, which in turn led to the topic of the next meeting: how to get students to talk and participate in class.

How do you choose your topic focus?

NC: Writing has always been the focus, although we have talked about other issues (teach-

ing British studies for example). However, we have tried to stick to the original theme of feedback: initially we looked at different ways for teachers to give feedback, and have widened that to feeding back student ideas into subsequent lessons. Our next topic, on weaker students, is an extension of the feeding back process because it has arisen out of our reflections from the JALT 2000 presentation including feedback given by participants. So far we have tended to look at better students and we felt it was time to look at ones who may be struggling more.

AS: To begin our topic focus was entirely up to the people who were leading each discussion. This semester the three of us who have taken part in the video project will identify a problem in our own class, and we'll leave it to the workshop to discuss what was interesting or different about other people's classes. Generally, like Neil's group, we take one meeting at a time. The theme for the next meeting usually grows out of the meeting we are having.

Participants obviously spend a lot of time coming to these meetings on weekends, why do you think they attend?

NC: They are productive and good fun. We always learn something from each other and have a good laugh.

AS: Mostly, I suppose because we are all fairly motivated as teachers and because we get on quite well. As a full-time teacher, I feel slightly ambivalent about my role in getting people to come. I do want more people to be involved but I don't want to badger anyone. It has to be purely voluntary, and the risk then is that it just drifts apart.

How do your respective institutions view these groups?

NC: They are not involved at all.

AS: My institution is aware of the existence of the group to the extent that I book a room through it; otherwise, it has no interest in it. I've tended to limit the meetings to the English-speaking teachers, mainly because they all knew each other and felt comfortable with each other already. In a way, the formation of this group is simply the consolidation of an informal group-

ing that already existed. I've wondered whether I should try to open it up more: the dilemma then is, how to balance an atmosphere of trust and mutual support with new and different ideas and perspectives.

What problems have you had setting up your groups?

NC: No problems at all.

AS: The main problem is one of keeping up the momentum. Last year, it took ages to get off the ground again after the summer break. So far, the meetings have been on Saturday afternoons, since this coincides with the teaching schedules of two of the core participants. However, there have been suggestions that a weekday evening would be better. The question is, which weekday?

One of the main issues affecting the group now is that even the core members have pressing commitments elsewhere which means less time for the group.

Generally, I think that any group needs some direction and coordination and I feel that I should be doing more to provide that if the group is to continue as a forum for all the English teachers. If it ends up (as it seems to be at present) as a small but stable teacher self-development support group, then that direction and coordination would presumably be a more collaborative effort.

What advice would you give to people wanting to start their own CUD?

AS: It depends very much on individual circumstances. In this case, the group was set up to extend the opportunities for teachers working in the same department to talk about what they do. The aims of the group have so far deliberately lacked any focus, because the idea has been to include more teachers with different interests and objectives. Other groups might decide from the outset to work towards specific goals. Either way, the important thing as I see it is to stimulate good teacher talk.

NC: Find people who are genuinely interested in a topic(s), make the meetings purposeful and social, and see if you can gel with each other. Share the work of organising and writing up around - if it rests on one person then it prob-

ably won't last long. We have found presenting at the JALT conference (and proceedings) to be a good focus on which to organise ourselves - it is an external stimulus to make sure things get done.

Conclusion

The main points that come out of this interview are that any group of committed teachers who are interested in talking about teaching can come together in small groups to discuss what they are doing and how they wish to change.

The success of the groups mentioned above rely on:

- regular meetings at mutually agreed times
- having a theme set before the meeting
- sticking to the theme in the meeting but allowing flexibility for thematic development
- arranging the theme for the next meeting during the current one
- combining "business" with a social event
- having a concrete goal such as a paper or a presentation helps
- creating a friendly, cooperative, respectful atmosphere
- having group members take turns to direct meetings

If you are interested in starting your own CUD, all you need is one other person and you are a group. Start talking, give yourselves a witty acronym, and send us a brief report of what you are doing so that we can share your activities with other CUE members.

The Sudden Job-Opening

Debra Pappler and Mark Weinkle

Even though most administrators diligently sort out their spring schedules in the early fall, it seems that every year one hears of surprise openings; some occurring only weeks before the term is about to begin. While this is bad news for the schedule-maker, it's good news for the part-time teacher looking to fill out his or her schedule. So if you haven't yet worked out all your jobs for next Spring, don't fret: This issue's Professional Development Page will offer tips for picking up those last minute positions.

By their very nature unexpected openings are not predictable, but according to the administrators contacted for this article they generally occur in December, January and February. Though it's less common, some positions become available as late as March. Two of the most prevalent causes of openings are teachers leaving to accept full-time positions and ones leaving Japan altogether; sickness and accidents can also be factors.

When unexpected openings happen, schools consistently look first to their current teaching staff to fill the positions. "We ask existing staff to help out, and then search for new faces," says A.R. Campbell of Tokyo University of Technology. If no one can cover the courses, the school generally asks teachers if they know other instructors who might be interested or refers to its stack of CVs. If the position can't be filled through these methods, the school might place an advertisement in *The Language Teacher* or another educational publication. Part-time teachers trying to pick up positions after the regular hiring season has ended can maximize their chances by following some simple advice.

Though the phrase *you have to know someone* has negative connotations, it couldn't be more true than when looking for work at universities in Japan. Many openings are never listed in any publication and are basically filled by word-of-mouth. Networking with colleagues and other CUE and JALT members is a good way to hear about sudden openings. If people know that

you still have openings in your schedule, they are more likely to think of you when they hear of a position.

Job-hunters who do hear of an opening and want to send a CV should be sure to get the name of someone in the department they are applying to. Letters addressed simply to the English Department don't always get to the correct person. In addition, many universities have a variety of schools (e.g. the School of Literature, the School of Foreign Languages) that use native English teachers. According to Greg Strong of Aoyama University getting a name may be the key factor in keeping your CV out of the rubbish bin. "There's always plenty of openings, provided that teachers looking for work ask their friends for the contact names in the particular departments. If you don't have a contact, then your resume may be simply passed down the line and even discarded." If your CV meets a school's criteria, it will usually remain on file until openings come up. This doesn't mean, however, that you should just assume that they will contact you as soon as they have an opening. Brief follow-up letters and calls can remind people that you are still looking (avoid making a pest of yourself, however). A time that you should most definitely follow-up is when you hear from a colleague that a school that you've sent your CV to has an opening. A quick note or call can bring your CV out of the file cabinet and into consideration.

It seems obvious but instructors on the lookout for new positions should always have an updated CV ready to be sent. When filling positions that have suddenly become available, time is an important factor. If you hear about a position, your CV should be in the mail the next day; better yet your CV should be in your briefcase to be immediately passed on to the person from whom you hear about the position. Because they are eager to fill unexpected openings, you should assume that a university will hire the first qualified person they find. If you have to spend time

updating your CV or working on your cover letter, someone else will pick up that job.

Though the process for picking up work out of season is similar to the regular application process, one important difference is timing. Last minute jobs are rarely advertised and fill quickly. They are also generally less flexible in terms of scheduling; therefore, it can help to include your availability in your cover letter. Doing so saves both you and the administrator the hassle of comparing schedules only to find out that they don't match. 'I think it helps to indicate available time slots,' says Hiroko Hagino, a part-time lecturer. 'for example indicating Tuesday afternoons 1-6pm and Thursday afternoons, etc. Giving a few options would help instead of giving only one available day.' Most of the advice offered above may seem obvious to those already working in university. For those just getting started, however, or trying to fill their schedules, employing the above tips can make a difference.

Tips for Job Hunting Out of Season

1. Network with people in who work at university and JALT and CUE members and tell them you still have openings in your schedule
2. Whenever you hear of an opening try to get the name of the person to whom you should send your CV
3. Always have current copies of your CV both at home and with you
4. Follow-up with letters or brief phone calls
5. Include your availability in your cover letters
6. Respond quickly

Useful Resources

<http://www.ohayosensei.com>

<http://www.eltnews.com/jobsinjapan.shtml>

<http://www.wizweb.com/~susan/mainpage>

<http://www.eslcanada.com/actj/>

<http://langue.hyper.chubu.ac.jp/jalt/features/jobs.html>

Don't you wish you could just sit in the sun, just having fun?

Pelican Pete and Japan's Generation Y.

Michael Carroll, Kyoto University of Education

Like many teachers, I often play songs in class. In a country where Karaoke is such a pervasive pastime, students are often highly attuned (no pun intended) to listening to the words of songs, as well as simply enjoying the relaxing effect of the music. Choosing the song though, is not entirely unproblematic. Unlike the generally clear diction of Japanese songs, the English of much popular music is sometimes difficult to process into words and phrases. Lyrics also vary at the level of discourse comprehensibility and in terms of whether they express any intrinsically interesting ideas. Some pop music scores highly in

terms of clarity of enunciation, and comprehensibility, but lower in terms of interest, while lyrics worth thinking about are often not so easy to actually hear.

A chance discovery made through my children a few years ago led me to a suite of songs that combine clarity and comprehensibility, and which appear to tap into a philosophy of life shared, or on occasion opposed, by many of my first year students. The songs come from a 1990s television animation popular in Australia among the under-5s, *Ferry Boat Fred*. The theme of friendship looms large in *Ferry Boat Fred's*

world: 'Everyone needs a friend, someone you can rely on; someone to stand beside you, sail along and guide you'. Though on the surface it's hardly a startlingly original sentiment, the songs develop the theme in various ways, looking at both the value of friendship and the responsibilities incurred by being someone's friend. Over the last three years of using these songs in classrooms I've learned an enormous amount about my students' personal philosophies through reading their responses to these deceptively simple songs. Every year there is a discussion around the socio-cultural implications of the indefinite article in 'everyone needs a friend'. Is it important to have one special friend or is it simply the case that *friends* are important? Is having a special friend an expression of group membership or of individuality? This in itself is a poerful demonstration of the connection between grammar and communicaion. Students often refer to other songs, for example Simon and Garfunkle's 'I am a rock', with it's quite different notion of the place of the individual in society. Even Donne ('No man is an island') has been brought into the discussions by well-read English majors.

There is another character in the story, Pelican Pete, who provides a different view of the relationship between the individual and society. 'Pelican Pete, he's got no worries, he just sits in the sun all day'. Pelican Pete 'makes no plans' for the future, he just 'sits and fishes all day'. He never hurries, he's always laughing, he greets passers by 'with a sparkle in his eye'. For him, 'every day is a holiday'. Of course for students in Japan, this kind of character is precisely the opposite of the salaryman stereotype, and even quite opposed to most of their own lives which are crammed with part-time jobs, club activities and fulfilling the requirements of their university courses. He arouses strong emotions. Some look at him with envy. 'He's my image of the typical Australian! I want to be like him.' Others question the desirability of a life in which 'everyday's a holiday'. 'It's true that life in Japan is too busy, but Pelican Pete's life is not the answer. If everyday was a holiday it would be boring. He seems lonely.' Still others comment on Pete's sense of responsibility towards the so-

ciety he lives in: 'Who would do the work we need for our lives if everybody lived like him?'

In the recurring debate about Japanese students' oft-positied lack of critical thinking skills and unwillingness to express individual opinions, these students' responses to *Ferry Boat Fred* and *Pelican Pete* seem to point to a quite highly developed capacity not only for serious thinking about their own and other societies, but also to a willingness to challenge majority opinions. The issues surrounding the place of the individual in contemporary Japanese society are clearly a major concern of today's generation of school-leavers and university students. Finding texts which can present these issues accessibly yet authentically has been a major discovery for me. If one of the marks of good writing is the avoidance of long words and sentences where short ones will do, the choice of the most direct route for one's purpose, then it's not surprising that these songs, in this context, achieve their communicative purpose so well. Nor is the irony lost on these students, that though the songs come from the radically different culture of Australia, they nevertheless seem to address issues which strike such a chord with young Japanese people. Of course at one level the lyrics are as banal as many long-forgotten pop-songs, but taken as instances of underlying cultural values they seem to provide an impetus for my students to think critically both about language and society, and genuinely to want to make use of their English resources to communicate something of importance. This is surely a basic goal for many of us teaching in Japan.

Reference

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FOCUS

Using Stories From the Newspaper: Predict, Listen, Read, and Role-play.

Ian Munby, Hokusei Gakuen University

Summary

Students predict contents of a newspaper story from the headline and write pre-reading or pre-listening task questions. Following the comprehension task, students assume roles of characters in the story and the reporter who wrote the article.

Focus:

1. Understanding the headline.
2. Preparation for listening or reading comprehension.
3. Comprehension task.
4. Role play.

Level: Intermediate

Materials: Newspaper article. Example "Giant Python Attacks Boy".

Time: 60 - 90 minutes.

Rationale

Native speakers rarely read every single item in a daily newspaper, but read selectively using headlines. The grammatical and syntactical patterns of headlines differ from common usage. Learners of English need to understand them in order first to decide if they want to read the article, and then to predict the kind of information and the manner in which it may be reported. Thinking about the situation in this light and activating students' background knowledge should motivate them to read, and assist in comprehension.

Procedure

STAGE 1: Understanding the headline

1. Write the headline on the board: "GIANT PYTHON ATTACKS BOY."
2. Ask "What is a python? Are they poisonous? Are they dangerous?"
3. Ask students to "translate" the headline into regular English: "a giant python has attacked a boy."

STAGE 2: Preparation for listening or reading comprehension

1. Tell the students that they are the reporters who wrote the article. What questions would a reporter ask? These should be elicited or constructed with the teacher's help, and displayed to the class:

Where did the attack happen?

When did the attack happen?

Why did the attack happen?

How seriously was the boy injured?

Was he taken to hospital?

What was his name?

How old was he?

What was the boy doing at the time of the attack?

Did anybody help him?

How did they help him?

What happened to the snake?

How big was the snake?

To help students make questions, suggest possible answers. For example:

Question: Where did the attack happen?

Answer: Thailand? India? South America?

STAGE 3: Comprehension tasks

Listening:

Read the text aloud to the class once, pausing after each sentence. Students answer the questions from Stage 2, and teacher writes answers on the board.

Reading:

Distribute copies of the text to the students. Students check their suggested answers again.

STAGE 4: Role play

Have students role play the dialogue between the newspaper reporter, the snake attack victim, and his parents.

Reflections

Eliciting questions is worthwhile for both teacher and students. When students have a part in the design of tasks, these become learner strategies which can be applied to other listening and reading comprehension activities. Repeated practice with eliciting questions about stories from headlines in subsequent sessions should result in learners becoming more adept at forming and confirming hypotheses about an article. Grammar problems may arise in constructing questions, but this creates ideal conditions for teaching grammar within the context of the task.

Students may make incorrect predictions, which may lead to them making irrelevant questions. Although these unanswerable questions may temporarily interfere with comprehension, they may result in a positive learning experience as students readjust their predictions when dealing with spoken or written input.

Variation: Guessing word meaning from context.

Between stages 3 and 4, hand out the same text with a matching exercise where students match difficult or potentially unknown words from the text with their definitions. The aim of this activity is to help students guess the meaning of words from context, without using a dictionary.

Text:

Associated Press, 1999

GIANT PYTHON ATTACKS BOY

CAIRNS, Australia (AP). The parents of a 7-year-old boy awoke to find their son smothered in the coils of a giant python and slashed the reptile with machetes until it slithered into the jungle, the boy's mother said Wednesday.

"It was like a horror movie. All I could see was my boy's head and toes," Kathy Dryden told the Associated Press by telephone from the tropical town of Innisfail, 1,150 miles (1,840 kilometers) north of Sydney, in Australia's tropical northern state of Queensland.

Dryden said her son was treated for lacerations to his legs, and bruises, but was not seriously injured. Innisfail police said the

incident had been reported to them but they did not plan to search for the snake.

Dryden said she was awakened early Tuesday by screams from the room of her son Bartholomew and ran to the son's room along with her husband Peter, a school teacher. There they found a four-meter (14-foot) long python crushing and trying to swallow Bartholomew.

"It was a hot night and Bartholomew was lying under a mosquito net. He suddenly started screaming. We rushed to the bedroom to find this huge snake trying to strangle him," she said. "It was coiled three times around his arms and neck and was going down his body."

From the Chalkface

To submit classroom applications, techniques, and lesson plans, up to 1000 words, contact section editor:

Andrew Obermerer, <andrew@gol.com>

The Fugitive: Teaching Reductions Using Authentic Material

Brent Poole, Human International University – Japan

Summary

This activity is designed to raise learners' consciousness by recognizing reductions. Intertwined with this is the goal of helping them to understand that there is a difference between written and spoken discourse.

Focus: Reductions in spoken discourse.

Level: Intermediate (TOEFL 450 +)

Material: A copy of the video *The Fugitive*; a section of dialogue; Q. and A. cards. The best way to make these cards is to print and laminate them. Each question and answer must be on a separate card.

Rationale: EFL learners in particular often have trouble recognizing and understanding authentic discourse. By making aspects of this discourse explicit, we may facilitate comprehension.

Time: 30-45 minutes.

Overview

The activity below can be used with any movie. First, the teacher explains the learning objectives of the lesson. Next, learners use the context from the dialogue to predict where the reduced forms will appear. By watching the movie clip, students check the accuracy of their hypotheses. After that, opportunity is given to act out the scene. Finally, an interactive game-like activity allows for students to practice the form while negotiating meaning.

1. Give a brief explanation of what a reduction is (i.e. (have) got to in written discourse is often spoken as gotta) and have the students repeat the examples that are given in the handout. Give a synopsis of the movie and describe the scene that will be played later.

2. Have the students work in pairs and write in the reductions where they think they will appear. At this time, the teacher should mill about and answer any questions.

<u>Written</u>	<u>Spoken</u>	<u>Example</u>
(have) got to	gotta	I gotta find Dr. Kimble.
out of	outta	I gotta get outta here.
want to	wanna	I wanna find the suspect.
ought to	otta	I otta get outta here

Gerard: There's no way _____ this place!

Renfro: Yeah, we _____ go up.

Gerard: What?

Renfro: You go down that way!

Gerard: No, no.

3. Play the scene from the movie. It may be necessary to replay it a few times. Then elicit answers from the students.
4. Have students form groups of three and have them practice the dialogue. Make certain that everyone has the opportunity to be a different character. Next, ask for a group to volunteer in front of the class.
5. Each question and answer needs to be on separate cards and it is best if they are different colors. Distribute the cards and have students find their partners by asking and answering the questions. As students look for their partner, they are not only practicing listening to and producing reductions, they are also negotiating meaning.

Example:

Q: Didja see Dr. Kimbel on the train?

A: Yes, he was dressed in a blue suit.

Q: Doya gotta go now?

A: Yeah, but I'll call back soon.

Q: Ya, gonna give me money?

A: Not unless I hafta.

The questions and answers could be pre-viewed or it could be left up to the students to negotiate the correct answer.

6. As a review, the teacher can go over all of the reductions that were used in the dialogue and game.

<u>Written</u>	<u>Spoken</u>	<u>Example</u>
(have) got to	gotta	I gotta find Dr. Kimble.
out of	outta	I gotta get outta here.
get him	get'em	Getem here now!
want to	wanna	I wanna find the suspect.
what are you	wad'dya	Wad'dya out of your mind?
ought to	otta	I otta get outta here

Directions: With a partner, fill in the blanks the way you think they will appear in the dialogue.

Scene: Gerard's pursuit of Dr. Kimble continues. The Doctor enters a drainage pipe in the hopes of escaping but he soon realizes that there is no place to run.

Renfro: Yeah, we _____ go up.

Gerard: What?

Renfro: You go down that way!

Gerard: No, no.

Renfro: Go up! Go up!

Biggs: Up, up, up the stairs! Up Up!

Renfro: Poole, _____ down here now. Helicopters. Divers.

Poole, Newman and two state troopers come running toward Gerard's group. Gerard is giving orders over his radio.

Gerard: _____ on the telephone. _____ to turn that water off. Come over here, gentleman. Put two patrol cars on that bridge down there. Four patrolmen. Have them glass this river upstream and down. Next thing, I see a helicopter come over here, one hundred

feet off of this river. Make him aware of these wires.

Biggs: Sam! _____ out of your mind?! He's dead!

Gerard: That _____ make him easy to catch! Hounds, I want hounds on both banks of this river for two miles, upstream and downstream.

Gerard: You guys _____ search and rescue team in this county?

State Trooper: Yeah, we do.

Gerard: _____ down here and drag the bottom of this spillway.

Reflections

This exercise has been effectively used a number of different times. Students often comment that they found it to be useful in that they were learning "real English". By giving learners opportunities to move beyond "teacher talk," we can raise their level of consciousness and at the same we may be aiding in comprehension.

References

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A Social Perspective on the Recent Debate on Japan's Early Language Education Policy Shift

John T. Denny, Taiwan

In recent decades, the world has seen an unprecedented shift in favor of the use of English as a tool for international communication. It has resulted in a debate on the question of how, and when, the learning of this 'global' language should be introduced into any given nation's formal educational system.

Recently, this debate has been taken up in Japan, particularly by the Japanese media (for example, see *Japan Times*, May 2, 2000), and it shows that there is some opposition to the idea of introducing English language instruction at an earlier age. For example, an Education Ministry Advisory Panel has suggested that English instruction to those under the age of ten years old inhibits the process of learning the mother tongue.

This argument appears to be based on the view that knowledge of the native language is the basis for learning other languages, or for using words necessary for abstract or intellectual expression. While there is plenty of research supporting suggestions for delayed instruction, there is also a fair amount suggesting instruction at an early age is the key to multilingual competency.

Consequently, rather than argue about the timing of formal language education, I feel we should focus our attention on a much more fundamental issue regarding the Japanese national goal of English as a real second language that can be used rather than simply studied. That is, if Japan really supports a goal of English-Japanese bilingualism, there needs to be a major societal shift in terms of viewing how languages are learned rather than focus constantly on when they should be introduced to the school curriculum. We must realize the inefficiency of typical formal and mass education as a basis for foreign language study. In my view, it is not plausible to make the lack of early language education a scapegoat for the real issue, which is a lack of extensive exposure to the target language and a lack of intensive self-study.

The reality, in my opinion, is that formal education alone does not result in good learning. Therefore, I would like to see a greater effort focussed on creating an inclusive program of language learning at all ages and across all sectors of society, and so necessitating massive informal educational opportunities for self-study. Because of the inefficiencies of mass education I would like to see a de-emphasis on formal educational language learning in Japan, and elsewhere.

To exemplify this point, think for a moment about two imaginary cases of a child attempting language practice at home. Child A lives in a supportive environment where the parents are both bilingual, books in both languages abound, multilingual media is available and the parents encourage exposure at all points in the child's life.

In another scenario envision Child B. Child B lives without books, her/his parents speak only the mother tongue and she/he is not encouraged to communicate with the parents. I hope that you can see, through those two disparate examples, the shift from formal education as a stimulus for real learning. Child A has all the advantage of a healthy environment in which learning is supported by the family, while Child B is found to be at a terrible disadvantage due to the lack of environmental support for his/her learning.

The bottom line for Japan and other nations attempting the goal of mass-bilingualism is as follows: requesting more language education is like throwing money in the wind when a societal shift supporting the massive change is not present. A solution that creates massive exposure to and motivation for the target language while not burdening those who do not wish to partake in the language shift is paramount to the cause. My recommendation would include a directional change from rigorous exam-based learning. Thinking about when and where to learn the language should be superseded by thinking about *exposure*, and opportunity for self-learning at all stages in life.

Submissions are sought for the coming issue on learner and teacher autonomy.

In this issue, Tim Denny has argued for a fundamental change in attitude towards language acquisition, which recognizes that it results from individual motivation, effort, and massive target language exposure, rather than from formal education, and for a corresponding policy shift.

If you would like to comment on this view, or on other issues relating to learner or teacher autonomy, contact the new Opinions and Perspectives editor, Keith Ford.

All writers in On CUE have a right to reply to any reaction to their submissions.

Right to Reply

Colin Sloss replies to Bern Mulvey

I was rather surprised by Mr Mulvey's response to my letter (On CUE 8, 2) which had been written partly in response to his interesting article in the previous On Cue (8,1). Unfortunately, I feel he has some what misunderstood my intentions. I would like to stress that it is certainly not my intention to "demonize" the Monbusho.

The unremarkable point that I hoped to make is that I agree with many of our Japanese colleagues that the proposed reforms of the national universities should not primarily consist of cost-cutting measures. As I understand it from Mr Mulvey's article and response to me, he agrees with this point as well.

Teaching Second-Language Writing: Interacting with Text

Cherry Campbell, Heinle and Heinle, 1998. Pp xi + 95 (including references) ISBN 0-8384-7892-1

Teaching ESL Composition: Purpose, Process and Practice

Dana Ferris and John Hedgcock, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ, 1998. Pp xviii + 329 (including references). ISBN 0-8058-2450-2

*Reviewed by Alison Stewart,
Waseda University*

If, like me, you've been scratching your head over course descriptions and planning for your writing classes next year, you could do worse than to take a look at two books which, in their very different ways, reflect the state-of-the-art of teaching second-language writing. These books are written chiefly for novice teachers, but would certainly benefit experienced teachers too. Both start from the premise that writing itself is a type of social interaction, and from this much else follows: both in the way the authors conceptualise how writing is best taught as well as how they want to get this message across to you, the reader. Rather than laying down any hard-

and-fast rules, their aim is to engage with your experiences and practices as teachers, writers and language learners so as to give you support and encouragement for creating and developing methods that work for you and your students in the particular working situation you have to live with.

Of the two, it must be said, Cherry Campbell's *Teaching Second-Language Writing*, is the better read. Written in a light, breezy style, Campbell shows us what she considers to be the best in writing pedagogy through the voices of her students and inspirational colleagues, and her own experience. In her view,

“writing is like playing pinball” (p.12), a complex sequence of events that includes (for students) participating in the class, using the library, taking notes, brainstorming, listing, clustering, drawing mind-maps, talking to classmates, drafting, more drafting, revising, more revising, editing, proofreading and printing, although this sequence will never be the same on any two writing occasions. Accordingly, she sees little value in generalising about writing or teaching writing. Since the main characteristics of writing are that it is tough and it is unpredictable, it is by examining individual cases of teachers finding ways of teaching to students with specific problems and needs, that we gain insight.

‘The Class in a Box’, for instance, is KimMarie Coles’ solution to a problem of motivation in a content-based academic writing class. Finding her students unhappy with her choices of content in previous courses, she developed a kind of mini resource library ‘in a box’ filled with articles covering five broad content areas, which students could choose themselves as source material for their various assignments. Setting up the course involved a huge amount of planning beforehand, but this teacher felt that the effort was worthwhile. More than any other time in her experience, the students looked like they were ‘doing writing’ rather than just ‘doing school’. Other personal accounts by specific teachers, including the author, responding to their students’ needs in different circumstances cover a wide range of pedagogical issues from reading source texts to creative writing, computer-assisted writing instruction, workshops, conferencing, and portfolios.

Dana Ferris and John Hedgcock’s *Teaching ESL Composition* is by contrast a much heavier book, offering as it does a comprehensive review of second-language writing research, theoretical and practical issues. Much of the research is simply bewildering, largely because, as Tony Silva (1993) notes, “there is no coherent, comprehensive theory of L2 writing”. Research has shown, for example, that peer editing is effective and that it is ineffective, that teaching grammar is a waste of time and that it serves a purpose sometimes, that feedback doesn’t work and that it does. Wading through this morass of contradictions, Ferris and Hedgcock advise us that

the best policy is that “ESL writing should be cautiously eclectic” (p.34). In fact, the philosophy that underlies the practices they advocate is not as eclectic as this might imply. Like Campbell, they too are working within the latest paradigm of second-language writing instruction, which they term social constructivism. Rooted in the heavyweight theories of Vygotsky and Bakhtin, this view of writing emphasises such concepts as genre, purpose in writing and communities of writers, and these aspects are explored very thoroughly in chapters on reading-writing relationships, syllabus design and lesson planning, text selection, materials and task construction, teacher and peer feedback, correction, assessment and computer technology.

The wealth of detail is both the strength and weakness of this book. Like Campbell’s book, *Teaching ESL Composition* ends each of its chapters with questions for the reader to ponder and with applications and examples of the practices under review. Unlike Campbell’s book, however, the examples are general enough to serve without much adaptation as a reference and checklist for all kinds of course management, syllabus and task design, peer review forms, self-assessment questionnaires, rating scales and more. On the down side, the long lists of references to second-language writing research are both too long (the text occasionally reads like a PhD dissertation) and too short (there is hardly any coverage of extensive and pioneering research done in Australia and the UK).

Obviously, these are books written by Americans for ESL teachers in the United States, which is of course quite different from teaching English writing in Japanese higher education, not least because of the much lower priority set on English study by the majority of students and university administrators. There are still very few higher education institutions in Japan that provide even half the number of contact hours that are the norm where Campbell and her colleagues teach. This may change in the future, but in the meantime, these two books can still inspire us to look for better, more effective ways to help our students to write in English.

Learning to teach. Teaching to learn.



The School for International Training (SIT), an accredited college of World Learning based in the United States, is pleased to offer its TESOL Certificate Course this February in Kyoto. This four week 130 hour intensive course will cover the practical aspects of teaching English to adult learners and is grounded in SIT's philosophy of experiential learning. New and experienced teachers are both welcome. Reasonable accommodation can be arranged. Please see our website for details and an application.

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