全国語学教育学会

The Japan Association for Language Teaching

College and University Educators Newsletter

ON CUE

[See Back Cover for Table of Contents]

A MESSAGE FROM CUE CO-COORDINATORS:

1998 has been an energetic year for CUE. (1) Expansion of ON CUE's original-content format has produced a surge in submissions by college educators from Japan and abroad. (2) Launch of the CUE Members Network (CMN), CMN-Links and CMN-Talk has created CUE-specific Internet facilities to put teachers in touch with teaching resources and other teachers. (3) The CUE Merit Award, new this year, provides public recognition of outstanding professionals who have recently entered college or university education. (See page 3~ and 5~ for essays by this year's two Award recipients.)

As we approach JALT98, we are planning a greatly augmented CUE presence, including CUE-sponsored workshops and presentations, inauguration of the CUE Forum on Higher Education (previews from each Forum presenter begin on page 18), as well as CUE's Annual General Meeting (AGM). (Refer to page 2 for schedules and further details on all these events.)

We want to call particular attention to the AGM, since we both are committed to handing over responsibilities to a new team of CUE folks. This year's AGM will present a perfect opportunity for fresh voices and ideas to take CUE forward. Voting for the coordinator position(s) and other offices takes place at the AGM, Sat. Nov. 21, 6:15~, Room 901, so we invite you to come and let your voice be heard. We really hope you can make it. And thanks for particpating with us in this enjoyable year.

Hugh Nicoll & Jack Kimball

ON CUE

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Visit CUE Online: <http://interserver.miyazaki-med.ac.jp/~cue/1.html>

CUE AT JALT98

Sonic City, Omiya, Saitama

FRIDAY, NOV 20, 11:30 ~ 14:30, ROOM 905
DR. AMY TSUI
CUE-sponsored Workshop:
Understanding Classroom Discourse

SATURDAY, NOV 21, 16:15 ~ 18:00, ROOM 901
CUE FORUM ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Cheiron McMahill, David McMurray, Brian McVeigh

SATURDAY, NOV 21, 18:15 ~ 19:00, ROOM 901
CUE'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Vote for Officers, Welcome Merit Award Winners, Meet Amy Tsui

Join CUE colleagues right after the AGM for Dutch-treat drinks and dinner:
Totally informal and fun!

MONDAY, NOV 22, 9:30 ~ 10:15, ROOM 601
DR. AMY TSUI
CUE-sponsored Featured Speaker Presentation:
Cognitive Dimensions of Classroom Interaction

"Are You Experienced?"

A CUE Merit Award winning essay on student reticence.

Alan MacKenzie,
Sophia University

I always wondered why employers of teachers so often ask for two years experience on the job. Well, nothing could have demonstrated the reasons for this requirement to me more clearly than the last two years of my own experience. It's been quite a trip!

Having moved from a language school to working part-time in universities and colleges, I was initially stunned by the lack of oral communication ability in my new students until I discovered that they had never had oral communication class before--certainly not one in which they were asked to speak to each other or the teacher in English at more than the word, or short sentence level. A survey of forty first-year students at Sophia University revealed that not one of them had ever had an oral English class in high-school before. Some of them said that they had had a class called oral communication, but the bulk of the class was studying written dialogs of people having a conversation rather than actually speaking or constructing conversations by themselves. They had no experience of speaking English. Their consequent reticence to speak, then, was no real surprise, but this reticence must have been fueled principally by affective factors, since they had all passed a very tough entrance exam and had all had eight years of English instruction of some kind.

So, how could I find my way past barriers that the students put up to keep me out and them in? My experience has taught me that I don't. Their learning is not about me as a teacher, it's about them as learners. They put the barriers up, so they have to take them down. I cannot force them to do that; they must do it for themselves by building on their own previous learning experiences and simultaneously using their new learning experiences to wear down whatever is blocking their progress.

I started using two aids to help students open up and make learning more interesting and enjoyable for them: experiential learning and self-assessment. These two pillars have been the main supports around which I have, and am going to continue to base my teaching, and my learning about teaching and learning. These learning experiences have taught me that these tools are necessary for the development of well-balanced speakers of English who are aware of their abilities, their strengths and their weaknesses, and are able to find their way around any problems they come across when they are learning.

I am talking about activities that involve students discovering something about themselves, their classmates, or the outside world.

Some might say that all learning is experiential, but I am talking about a specific group of activities that involve students discovering something about themselves, their classmates, or the outside world. One activity that illustrates what I mean is conducting a survey. Students in groups decide on a topic for a survey (perhaps chosen from a broader topic field), they design their own questions, conduct the survey in class and each group then prepares a presentation of what they have found. Useful language can be taught at different stages of the project to help students communicate their ideas to each other in English. In most classes the whole process takes two to three class periods (including the final presentations) and students are totally involved in the activity from beginning to end. Often they work on it independently outside class and are already working on it when I

walk into the classroom. This is not a special activity that I always do that always works but it does typify the kind of activities that I am using more and more in class, because they provide real-life experiential learning opportunities which are neglected by most currently available EFL textbooks.

Experiential tasks involve the whole person. They appeal to the intellect, stimulate the imagination and involve the students being creative not only with language but also with the content of the task. They also necessitate utterances of longer than one word and can help to stimulate real, meaning-centered exchanges. This focus on meaning generates real language for a real purpose. Students find the tasks difficult but interesting and become involved in them often to the point where they cannot be stopped even if I want them to!

Watching students who went through this process of self-examination was wonderful. They opened up and allowed themselves to "make mistakes." They laughed more, not at each other, but because they were finding interesting and enjoyable things to say.

Another whole-person-centered activity is self-assessment, which is an integral part of learning anything. Whenever we are in a learning situation (which is most of the time, if we are honest with ourselves), we are constantly subconsciously examining our performance: "I didn't do that very well"; "I am quite happy with that"; "I wish I hadn't done that." Making this a conscious act, opening wounds up to air and letting them breathe, allowing successes to be acknowledged and developing a sense of self-awareness within students is the purpose of self assessment. This can be done formally or informally, after a task, a lesson, a number of lessons, or as part of an end-of-term assessment. I try to incorporate some form of self- or peer-assessment on all these levels at different points during the term in an attempt to help students look more closely at themselves to see what they can do to improve their own English ability. When students have to explain what they did, how well they did it and how they think they can improve or continue their current level of performance in the future, they seem to see that they need to open themselves by bringing down their personal affective barriers and allowing themselves to learn. It also appears to help break down the reliance on the teacher as the center of all knowledge and to help students become more independent by allowing them to see that I cannot learn for them. They have to do it themselves, and the only way they can gain experience in speaking English is by taking and making opportunities for communication both inside and outside the classroom.

Watching students who went through this process of self-examination was a wonderful experience. They truly blossomed. They opened up and allowed themselves to "make mistakes." They laughed more, not at each other, but because they were finding interesting and enjoyable things to say. The classroom became noisier as more and more students realized from watching their classmates that it was okay to "sound stupid" and that trying was more important than "getting it right". More students stayed in English for longer and we actually managed to have three weeks of student-generated discussions on current topics of interest to them. In the final evaluation of self and course, it was evident that many students realized they had come some distance. Some said they had taken a first step, others that they had come a long way. These views were both right. They had come a long way, and they did still have a long way to go, and so did I.

If students are not learning, giving them more to learn is not going to help them.

Another important factor in my own experiential journey over the past two years has been time. "Time is of the essence." There is never enough, and I needed time to truly understand the nature of the situation I found myself in. It took a lot longer than I expected to settle in and find a path to move forward on. I took a lot of circular routes, encountered many dead ends and I was lost on a number of occasions. I dare say I will be in the future, too, but this also helped me to understand the position in which students in my classes find themselves. They also need a lot of time to process their thoughts and truly learn--often, a lot more time than I expect. I realize their learning at their own pace is more important than what I need to cover. If they are not learning what I cover, then giving them more to learn is not going to help them. Of course I also need time to assess how well they are learning and to decide where we go next.

The students experiences over the past few years have taught me that I can feel satisfied with my work when I see them becoming experienced language learners. When I could see that they were learning something and developing into more accomplished speakers, I felt that I was becoming more experienced because I knew I was doing something right.

So, where next? Sometimes teachers cannot control this so easily and maybe we should not try. I like to react spontaneously, to the best of my ability, and I keep looking for the paths that will be most interesting to my students and to myself for my own personal and professional development. Every minute of every lesson of every term adds up to a whole lot of experience, and I am only just beginning to explore the possibilities of this new teaching context.

Entrance Exams -- The Reading Example

A CUE Merit Award winning survey of student failure in reading.

Bern Mulvey,
Fukui University

Not many people would argue with the assessment that the majority of Japanese learners of English are unable to communicate effectively in English. Indeed, it is the growing national recognition of this problem that has led to an increasingly urgent demand for more of an oral communication-centered approach to teaching English in Japan, with a variety of suggestions being offered as how best to implement such reform. One such proposal focuses on making changes to the university entrance exams (i.e., both to the national entrance examination and to the various independently generated and separately administered individual college or faculty exams) as a means of forcing junior and senior high school instructors to make the curriculum changes necessary to improving student oral communication skills.

Advocates of such reform (see Brown, 1995; Brown & Yamashita, 1995; Ishizuka, 1997; McNabb, 1996; Shimaoka & Yashiro, 1990; Vanderford, 1997, etc.) point to the ostensibly powerful influence of these exams on junior and senior high school teaching methodology and classroom content as proof that, by instituting such changes to the exams, one will achieve changes in the educational system as a whole, but how strong is this influence really? Several reform proponents have noted (Leonard, 1998; Vanderford, 1997, p. 19) that success on the entrance exam is not the only way to get into a Japanese college. Furthermore, at least for entrance into non-elite colleges and universities, the exam scores (and this is based on my experience as both an exam grader and as a member of a college

committee that decides who gets accepted and why) are used more as a supplement to the quota system* that controls acceptance into such schools than anything else (for elite public and private colleges, the importance of succeeding at these exams is certainly greater). And, even granting the importance of the exam for many students, does said importance necessarily translate into pedagogical change in all cases? In other words, objectively speaking, the implied (and sometimes very overt) assumption of many of the writers referred to above -- i.e., that because of the importance of these exams, the presence of a more demanding oral skills diagnostic section (even one, say, with an interview requirement) will necessarily have a marked, nation-wide effect on improving either pedagogy or student abilities -- is a somewhat controversial premise worthy of a more open and critical debate.

English is taught the way it is because there is a centuries-old tradition of what and how teaching should be conducted in this country.

Indeed, it is the belief of this writer that English is taught the way it is in Japan not because of the influence of the post-World War II college entrance exams per se (after all, people have been criticizing English pedagogy in Japan -- and for the same reasons -- for over 100 years -- see Mantanle, 1996), but because there is an entrenched, centuries-old tradition of what and how teaching should be conducted in this country. Furthermore, that it is this archaic tradition -- and especially, the teacher-training in this country which perpetuates the old-fashioned methodologies and ways of thinking which form the foundation for this tradition -- which needs to be addressed before other systemic reforms can be considered. And while no one can argue with the overall intent of the reformists -- speaking skills do need to be improved, and at least in theory, a greater emphasis on speaking and listening practice in the classroom would go a long towards improving them -- what is disturbing is that members of this reform movement seem to be ignoring both the progressive and increasing failure of Japanese students to learn to read English -- supposedly their strong suit (see for instance Shimaoka & Yashiro, 1990) -- and especially, the lessons that this on-going failure might hold for them in their efforts to make English in Japan more communication-centered.

Certainly, at least with respect to reading, far from the test pulling the educational horse, the contents of the various Japanese university entrance exams seem to have had negligible effect on reading pedagogy and/or improving overall student capabilities. For example, despite there being adult level, well-written, grammatically and stylistically correct reading passages on the exams, the English reading materials used at the junior and senior high school-level in Japan remain simplistic and peppered with grammar and punctuation errors (Kimura & Visgatis, 1996; see also, Pai, 1996), and indeed, outside of college-prep classes at elite high schools (which also use old entrance exams), many Japanese students will never have exposure to adult level, well-written, and error-free reading passages before sitting for a university entrance exam (Pai, 1996, p. 153; see also, Kimura & Visgatis, 1996). Even in those programs which use old exams for teaching, most students will receive little training in the reading strategies (e.g., skimming, guessing from context, etc.) that might help them understand such passages or function as more competent readers of English (Kitao, S. K.,

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*E.g. Say High School A and High School B both have a long tradition of sending 10 students a year to College C -- even if one year High School A's students do very poorly on the exam compared to High School B's students, the 10 best students from each will still be accepted -- i.e. the acceptance ratio does not change.

Kitao, K., Nozawa, K., & Yamamoto, M., 1985; and Pai, 1996). Instead, and despite the fact that teacher-led and teacher-dominated line-by-line translation is an extremely inefficient and unreliable way to prepare for (or to teach someone to prepare for) answering content-based questions or to learn how to read (see Hino, 1988; Kobayashi, 1975; Tanaka, 1985), line-by-line translation remains the only method most students will encounter in the 6 years leading up to their entrance into college (Kitao, S. K., Kitao, K., Nozawa, K., & Yamamoto, M., 1985; also Robb & Susser, 1989), and many students will graduate college having received no other training in reading. Indeed, in a written survey given in Japanese to incoming freshman (312 students) at Fukui University over 2 years, 68% said that they had spent less than 2 hours a month reading English (in class or out) in junior and senior high, and a full 72% characterized what "reading" they had done as classroom translation exercises (Mulvey, 1997a).

A separate survey of Fukui University faculty -- home of both the only teacher-training program and the only advanced L2 reading/ literary studies program in the prefecture -- found 4 out of the 5 English literature professors at the university teach all their reading and literature classes both in Japanese and by the line-by-line translation method -- the one exception, one English native speaker in the literature faculty (Mulvey, 1997b).

Many Japanese students of English are not learning to read -- and in so much as the students of today become the English teachers of tomorrow -- their teachers are not learning the skills to teach them how. Indeed, reading skills analyses of Japanese students conducted by Hino, (1988), Kitao, K. and Kitao, S. K. (1995), Kitao, S. K., Kitao, K., Nozawa, K., & Yamamoto, M., (1985), Kitao and Yoshida, (1985), Nishijima, (1995), Takefuta, (1982), Tanaka, (1985), H. Yoshida, (1985), S. Yoshida, (1985), Yoshida and Kitao, (1986), to name a few, all point to the same conclusion: If reading is really, "the meaningful interpretation of written or printed verbal symbols" (Harris and Sipay, 1975, p. 5) -- or to put things more succinctly, really the ability to decode written symbols and reconstruct the meanings the writer had in mind (see Ortega y Gasset, 1959), the result is overwhelmingly that Japanese have not learned to read English, a conclusion further supported by the fact that the average TOEFL reading scores for Japanese learners in English remain among the lowest in the world (See Nishijima, 1995; and Saeki, 1992, p. 28), and indeed have continued to decrease steadily over the last 20 years (ironically, while speaking scores have gone up -- see Ishizuka, 1996).

Again, this failure is occurring despite the presence of adult native speaker-level reading passages on the college entrance exams and the reading-centered teaching methodology that this presence ostensibly should have engendered. In a paper of limited size and scope, it is obviously impossible to discuss in detail all the research that has been done to explain this phenomenon -- especially given the current level of disagreement in the EFL field as to its nature and solution (see Januzzi, 1997; Susser & Robb, 1990, for further discussion of the literature surrounding this evolving controversy). However, as some of the problem areas documented so far have relevancy to the "oral communication" debate, below I provide a survey of the research into the inadequacies found in Japanese readers of English and some possible explanations.

Japanese students do not have enough vocabulary to understand what they read.

1) First, they read too slowly. Studies have found that the reading speed of most Japanese college students is below the threshold found by Smith (1982) and others to be the minimum necessary to effectively process written information (Yoshida & Kitao, 1986).

Explanations suggested for this phenomena are: problems recognizing the Roman alphabet (Weaver, 1980); problems due to an unfamiliarity with horizontal script (H. Yoshida, 1985); problems with regression (i.e. reading then re-reading the same words or phrases over and over again) due to an inability to relate the pieces of information they have read or to keep enough information in their short-term memory (Takahashi & Takanashi, 1984); problems processing English sentence word-order (Kitao, 1979); and finally, a lack of training in proper dictionary usage and guessing from context (Kitao, S. K., Kitao, K., Nozawa, K., & Yamamoto, M., 1985).

Text is used in an almost Confucian sense as a teaching unit to nudge students into personal reflection, with the teacher responsible for moral guidance.

2) Japanese students simply do not have enough vocabulary to understand what they read. Kitao, Kitao, Nozawa, and Yamamoto (1985) have shown that most Japanese students have learned less than 3,000 English words by the time they graduate from high school, a total made even less impressive by the fact that, for the purpose of the study, all forms of the same word were counted as separate words -- e.g., am, is, are, was, and were counted as five separate words. Also included in this total are many archaic or obscure words, and many words in common or daily usage are not included (Kitao & Kitao, 1985). Finally, student understanding of even these words is limited, both because many students learn only one meaning for each word despite the fact that even the most common words have many meanings, and because they do not learn the relationships among words -- such as among antonyms or synonyms (Kitao, Broderick, Fujiwara, Kitao, & Sackett, 1985).

3) Japanese students lack the reading training and cultural background knowledge necessary to understand meaning in English at the clause or paragraph level, and especially, have not learned to decode context or differentiate between literal and implied meaning (Kitao, K. & Kitao, S. K., 1995; and Kitao, S. K., Kitao, K., Nozawa, K., & Yamamoto, M., 1985). Despite an ability to translate individual words, these researchers believe that the majority of college-level Japanese students remain unable to decode the meaning of these same words when placed in context with other words. "What most Japanese students consider 'reading' is the finding of a Japanese equivalent for each English word. They know the meaning of each word in Japanese and of the Japanese sentence, but they do not understand how the individual sentences fit together and what the meaning of the passage as a whole" (Kitao et al ,1985, p. 133).

And while one can certainly argue that understanding implied meaning is a task difficult even for many native speakers, the relevancy of these comments and research should still be clear: as so much of reading comprehension (of both literary and more mundane work) depends on an ability to extrapolate, an ability to delve between the lines of a text in order to illuminate the blank areas of implied meaning latent in it, students lacking sufficient cultural insights or training to make such extrapolations will clearly be at a disadvantage.

4) Students with poor L1 reading skills or reading difficulties (such as dyslexia) receive no special assistance or even official acknowledgment of their existence, and the percentage of such students in the general population may be significant. This area is still in the beginning stages of research, but the research that has been done has been quite suggestive. For instance, it is widely believed, as Vogel says in his well-known

Japan as Number One, that the "inability to read and write is virtually absent in Japan" (1980, p. 161; cited in Susser & Robb, 1990, p. 172). However, Susser and Robb cite several studies that contradict this assertion (p. 172). Furthermore, a study by Hirose and Hatta (1988) has found that, despite officially being almost nonexistent, between 11% to 19% of the Japanese population may have reading disabilities -- a number in fact equivalent to the rates found in many Western countries. If the above findings are correct, the relevancy to L2 reading acquisition should be clear: if a significant percentage of the Japanese population is, for one reason or another, unable to fully comprehend texts written in Japanese easily, then there is the potential for an equally significant percentage of Japanese students in English classes to have similar difficulties, making their learning to read in the L2 language that much more difficult.

5) Finally, there is the question as to whether differing conceptions of the writer/reader/ teacher relationship might interfere with L2 reading acquisition. As Hinds (1983, 1990), Mulvey (1992), Ricento (1987), and Yutani (1977) have documented, Japanese and English native speakers have very different expectations as to preferred methods of explication and thematic development, often rejecting or misunderstanding texts on the basis of perceived structural defects alone.

The reading training Japanese students receive in their L1 (Kokugo) literature classes has a long history of being non-text driven, with the emphasis placed on using literature as a means of providing "seikatsu yomi" ("lifestyle reading" -- Inoue, 1993, p. 465) or teaching "shakai tsuunen, " or "social common sense" (Hatano, 1993, p. 458), as opposed to teaching students to analyze the text for what the writer is trying to say. In other words, the text is used in an almost Confucian sense as a teaching unit (tangen gakushu) to nudge students into personal reflection (through writing kansoubun, etc.), with the teacher as much responsible for moral guidance as for ensuring text comprehension. Called "dokusho shidou" (literally "reading guidance" or "reading instruction"), this teaching methodology is: neither "reading guidance" nor "reading instruction" in the sense that these terms would be understood in English. In addition to such activities as selecting and encouraging the reading of a suitable book, dokusho shidou includes encouraging a child to attain the author's presumed higher stage of character or personality by engaging in a mental conversation with the author during the process of reading (Sakamoto, 1995, p. 261).

Dokusho shidou includes encouraging a child to attain the author's presumed higher stage of character or personality by engaging in a mental conversation with the author during the process of reading.

Indeed, regardless of how one feels about the merits of dokusho shidou vis-a-vis traditional Western pedagogical practices, it should be clear that, at least with regard to reading, Japanese and Western teaching philosophy is very different. And this difference, coupled with the differing conceptions of preferred written structure referred to above, could possibly be having an effect on Japanese learners of English which so far has not been studied, but which may also be significant.

The implications in the above for those seeking to improve speaking skills in this country should be clear. Students unable to read a foreign language because of limited vocabulary and cultural background knowledge will have difficulties learning to speak it for the same reasons. Furthermore, just as the lack of training in their own language may make

learning to read in another more difficult for Japanese students, so might the lack of speaking opportunities in Japanese classes make them more hesitant and less able to speak out suddenly in a foreign language. And most importantly, in the same way that including native speaker-level reading passages and analytical reading questions on the entrance tests seems to have had a negligible effect on raising English reading skill levels in Japan, merely adding a more intensive oral/interview element to the test -- in itself-- will probably have a similar (i.e., negligible) result.

How can teachers who have been educated in only one way be suddenly expected to change methods in mid-career?

This latter point, perhaps, represents my most serious qualm with the exam reform movement: How can teachers who have been educated in only one way -- and one which almost has preordained them to having serious deficiencies in L2 reading and speaking skills -- be suddenly expected to change methods in mid-career and begin teaching successfully in the very subject areas they are personally weakest? The problem with improving student oral communication ability is that, in my opinion, due to the nature of the training and education they received, many Japanese teachers of English may not have the ability to change even if asked. Hence, as they do now with reading instruction, and regardless of whatever is actually on the test (or how accurate that test may be as a diagnostic tool), Japanese instructors in oral communication classes will probably continue to teach in the way they know, and achieve similar results.

If I do have a suggestion to make, it is this: reform in Japan needs to begin with changes in the training and qualifications needed to become teachers -- for example, demanding that would-be teachers meet much stricter requirements in reading and oral competency before becoming teachers -- and these stricter standards need to be imposed without regard to race or gender. Raising (and equalizing) the qualification bar for those wishing to become teachers in Japan would go a long way to ensuring the kinds of results that exam reformers hope to achieve.

-- With much thanks to Bernard Susser and Charles Jannuzi for their advice on earlier drafts --

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Note: The CUE Merit Award is granted to newcomers to college teaching who have been nominated by CUE members. Recipients in 1998 are Lawrence MacKenzie and Bern Mulvey.

Who Owns the Process?

Further critical reaction to David Noble's "Digital Diploma Mills."

Kevin Ryan,
Showa Women's University

The Argument

Two issues ago an essay by David Noble, professor at York University in Toronto, was reprinted here. Noble decried the commodification of education, turning learning into a product. He saw the administration of large universities allying with large corporations to strip faculty and staff of copyright to course materials so that they could be peddled electronically. He cited a teacher strike at his university and a negative student response at UCLA to electronic delivery of course materials as proof these changes were being forced on classrooms. He saw this information revolution as a smoke screen to tip the balance of power from pedagogy to business at institutions of higher learning.

Noble saw the trend start with research universities, changing from "pure" research funded by no-strings government grants to corporate sponsors that were looking for commercial applications. Often agreements were drawn up stating that any resulting patents were the property of the source of funds, not the university. The problem is that the patents belonged to the discoverers, the faculty. Normally negotiation for patent ownership has been done on an ad hoc basis between individual faculty members and their administrations. See below for a link to the entire article, a chilling indictment of educational institutions today.

Noble has since written a second essay, more specific and easier to understand than the first. Three examples of what he sees as corporate intrusion into education comprise the bulk of the paper: UCLA's deal with The Home Education Network (THEN), UC Berkeley with AOL and the University of Colorado with Real Education.

Common to the three situations is the fact that the university administrations are signing over something they don't have, copyright to course material. Noble states that a dangerous precedent is being set when universities make copyright forfeiture a condition of faculty employment. Another commonality is that the corporate info-pirates do not have educational backgrounds; one from the cable industry, another an Internet provider and the third a former attorney and university counsel.

The situation in Colorado is most clear cut, with language in the agreement that places copyright of course material in the university's hands, development responsibilities and most of the economic benefit with the company. The faculty must sign over their copyright before developing materials for on-line courses. Participation is voluntary now, but according to Real Ed, the university can designate which professors will participate. One dean is studying the feasibility of using "teaching associates" to teach on-line courses.

The Rebuttal

I was asked to present some controversial topics on cultural issues in educational Information Technology (IT) at a US Government sponsored conference at Temple University in April, so I chose Noble's assertions. One participant, Dr. Richard Lytle vociferously disagreed with Noble. I noted a bias, as he was formerly Dean of Drexel University's Information Science Department, and currently director of the educational section of the CoreTech Consulting Group. He explained that at Drexel, they were finding that online participation between students and faculty caused an increase in the workload, making the teacher even more necessary. He foresees a general increase in the need for

education overall (ongoing throughout life) that eliminates any fear of teachers losing their jobs. Drexel saw that the online courses were serving a student body that would not have access to the traditional class, thus opening a "new market" and increasing the need for teachers. Less convincing, though, he also thought of the market as a good arbiter of educational quality.

The Educom Review is an online journal for online education, one of the companies Noble mentions in his first essay. As a response to Noble, the editors assembled four leaders in the field to comment. Ben Schneiderman, well known for his pioneering work in hypertext and current explorations of interface design, says Noble is "Whipping the Boogie Monster" of technology. He brings forth many historical examples of corporate "meddling" in education. Schneiderman thinks this discussion is distracting us from the important task of integrating technology into education so that teachers may more effectively evaluate materials, innovate, guide, motivate, and mentor-things technology cannot do. Richard Herman, also from the University of Maryland, concurs with Dr. Lytle in that online delivery will increase the need for teachers. He rather dubiously quotes Vannevar Bush, science advisor to F.D. Roosevelt, saying that scientific investigation should not be so pure as to be useless to society.

Online participation between students and faculty makes the teacher more necessary.

Peter Denning, of George Mason University had the longest rebuttal, asking us to "Skewer the Stereotype." He divides Noble's arguments into two categories. First is the administrator's desire to control the educational process and take power from the faculty. Denning follows with the (what I consider misinterpreted) assertion that Noble thinks that technological advances will put undue pressure on faculty to become technologically literate and distance students from faculty. He dismisses these arguments by stating that most administrators are former faculty and understand their plight. Pressure for computer literacy comes not from corporate pirates or mean-spirited administrators, but from the world at large.

The stereotype of the individual scribbling profundities at his desk in an ivory tower and later "professing" them to the world is long outdated.

Phil Agre, professor at UC San Diego (now at UCLA) who has written for WIRE and often comments on Internet developments with a clarity I find in few other places, wants Noble to "Meet Me at the Crux." He says that focusing on the technological or economic aspects of Noble's arguments will yield the least results. Agre thinks Noble is not looking at the relationships between the forces at work in education and how technology might be used, as it has in other professions. Instead, Noble only looks at how computers replicate brainpower cheaply and restrict power of the worker. "Noble's argument likens higher education to factory work, an analysis some may find offensive" (Agre, 1998). The crux between technological and economic understandings is a clear conception of higher education as a place to develop meta-skills such as analytical thinking and working in a social network. Traditional study is not going away, it will just be augmented by technology.

Other Thoughts

Technology exponentially complicates traditional relationships in education. Before, all a teacher had to worry about were the students and administration (and sometimes, to

a lesser extent, the parents). With a computer in between, there are worries about being able to deliver material and the resultant dependency on the technical people that manage the network and create the software. Faculty depend on the administration to act as intermediaries in acquisition of technological capabilities. This dependency results in more input by those involved, a team effort at a unified curriculum. Thus the stereotype of the individual scribbling profundities at his desk in an ivory tower and later "professing" them to the world is long outdated, but still enticing.

We have seen the assembly-line approach introduced to manufacturing in the early 1900s (Ford), to restaurant (McDonald's) and hospice (Howard Johnson) in the 50s, to entertainment (sitcoms) in the 70s, and to financial services in the 90s. Many of these involved adding technology. Undoubtedly, we will see a continuation of the increase in technology in learning, but some aspects of education cannot be assembled.

Certainly, these new courses developed on-line will change education as we know it, and great teachers will still be in demand for they will be the ones to create and manage new courseware. Good teachers will be in demand because they will know how to change their style to work with new material. Some teachers will excel at advising, evaluating and guiding students, individualizing each software course. Students will be able to do remedial work when necessary.

As these electronic materials become prevalent, we should see students (or their parents) making choices, and the educational "market" will work its way toward a purer economy where information about the product (education, whatever that is) will become closer to the ideal of transparency. Once students have that information more readily available, they can make better choices, and determine what kind of education they need. Like TV Guide, the most profitable part of television, information about courses and institutions will become more valuable.

Those fearing being left behind in a technologically sophisticated educational process seem to parallel the buggy whip makers at the turn of the century. Their fears of loss of employment went unfounded when industries like car manufacturing, gasoline retailing, and road construction employed far more people than horse-based transport.

Like TV Guide, the most profitable part of television, information about courses and institutions will become more valuable.

But the Big Question is who owns the material and how does that benefit students? We have worked on the first part of this question here. It will ultimately be up to the student to decide whether one can learn better from a course delivered by its owner or by some purchaser of expertise. This decision solves the issue of who is higher on the food chain, the creator or the packager of the ideas. Undoubtedly, the most acceptable courses will be ones created by teams that have resolved the issue first.

Perhaps we are farther than we think along this road toward a clear partnership. Noble has found that at Colorado "In return for developing a typical three-credit course and assigning copyright on all course materials to the University, the faculty member receives one thousand dollars plus royalties of ten percent of revenues up to $125,000 and fifteen percent thereafter. (Real Ed receives five thousand dollars for each course developed plus one hundred dollars per student.)" (Noble, 1998). This may seem unbalanced at first glance, but when you consider that Real Ed is taking the raw material and making it deliverable electronically, delivering it through their system of hardware and software, evaluating the students, taking attendance,

handling the mundane aspects of classroom learning, we get some perspective. The actual pay of 10% of revenues may actually be quite lucrative, considering the material is developed only once and the course may be taught many times. Updating material is another consideration. But the writing is on the wall. As the saying goes, any teacher that can be replaced by a computer...should be. That works both ways.

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Response by a team of educators at Educom:
<http://ivory.educom.edu/web/pubs/review/reviewArticles/33322.html>

Other Web Sites

Students "revolt" against online requirements at University of Washington:
<http://www.idg.net/idg_frames/english/content.cgi?vc=docid_9-62655.html>

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Are Textbooks Meeting Needs of Target Markets?

A wake-up call to publishers.

Ian Richards,
Tottori University

[The author responds to 'Rube' Redfield's piece in June's ON CUE, where he reviewed Atlas: Learning Centered Communication.*]*

'Rube' Redfield's recent criticisms of the Atlas series of textbooks in the June issue of *ON CUE* was a useful attempt at providing practical feedback for a book which looks fine in theory. Teachers are often given very little information about what sort of 'road-testing' a textbook has had, and thus published feedback --the more critical the better--is an important responsibility for teachers. Textbooks are big business for publishing companies these days, and teachers should be encouraged to be choosy. Redfield is right about transparency, which he defines as when 'the activity sequencing and set up are self-explanatory and require little or no pre-lesson preparation'. In fact, most teachers would choose transparency above any sort of methodological correctness.

That said, I haven't used Atlas, so I do not plan to contribute to any debate on the relative merits, or otherwise, of the book. It was Redfield's comments about the usefulness of textbooks that seemed most significant in his article, especially when he stated that he tried the book on a large class (100 students) and two smaller classes (5-15 students). It is, of course, hard for a textbook to be expected to provide conversation material and activities for a class of 100 or so students, but it is not unfair. That is the type of class which most university English language teachers face. Textbooks along the Atlas line may, or may not, work satisfactorily for small, well motivated classes at, say, a private language school. Nevertheless large university classes,

with their potentially big sales, are an important target for most textbook publishers.

At Tottori University I have two English conversation classes of near 30 students, some of whom are motivated, and some not. I also have one class of 55 engineering students: the sort of class everyone complains about--but nobody ever writes a book for. It is difficult to find textbooks which are even partly transparent for large groups. An introduction and then dialogue, followed by half a dozen questions--the standard sort of layout for a conversation textbook--isn't designed for a large class. A teacher may not find such a layout difficult to adapt, but already transparency has vanished. The problem comes with the production activities, which are invariably an information-gap exercise.

I have used conversation textbooks (the Headway series and occasionally the Interchange series) with multi-first language classes at the Massey University English Language Centre in my own country, New Zealand. There they have worked well. With a group that shares a common first language, however, information-gap style production activities depend heavily on the students' motivation. Students have a hundred ways to subvert these kinds of exercises. Teachers don't enjoy playing policeman, and it is impossible to do so with a large class. Not surprisingly, at Tottori University as I struggle at the end of each lesson or unit to come up with workable ideas of my own, I begin to feel that I'm writing the textbook myself.

Sooner or later, most teachers feel that they would indeed like to write their own textbook. A Materials Writers NSIG workshop on the 'Professional Critique of Preliminary Textbook Manuscripts' at the JALT 1996 conference was extremely well attended--so much so that Jim Swan, the organizer, expressed his surprise. One of the main messages of the workshop was: we hire big-name textbook writers because they know how to produce. A visit to any bookshop reveals rows of conversation textbooks which show little variation in their form of presentation, their topics, or even in the writers' view of the in-class situation of the target students. University teachers of large classes will look in vain for a textbook which even attempts to meet their needs. At the same JALT conference a presentation by Colin Toms, 'Scaling Up: Small Class Activities for Big Classes', was lapped up by its audience. I sat next to a JET-program teacher who was taking copious notes for his 30-student high school classes.

Publishers apply hard sell, rather than looking for niche markets.

The response of publishers to the increasingly competitive nature of the textbook market seems to involve applying more marketing savvy and hard sell, rather than looking for niche markets. I would love to see a textbook which I could present to 55 multi-level, variously-motivated engineering students. I don't pretend such a book is easy to write, but that is what I'm willing to pay the big-name writers for. Now that the Eikaiwa boom is over, and the number of students is declining who are learning in small classes, or man-to-man situations, in private language schools, publishers should rethink their target markets. They should think about supplementary books for large high school classes, and transparent textbooks for large university classes.

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CUE Forum Preview...

[What follow are previews of CUE's Forum on Higher Education featuring Cheiron McMahill, David McMurray & Brian McVeigh. The Forum takes place at JALT98, Sat., Nov. 21, 4:15~6:00, Room 901.]

Feminist Contributions to ELT: A Critical Approach to Language Learning

Cheiron McMahill,
Gunma Prefectural Women's University

As many have observed before me, the role of foreign teachers at Japanese universities is akin to that of jesters and movie stars. We tend to dance in the margins of our academic communities on short-term contracts, sometimes renewable, sometimes mysteriously not. We are invited to meetings or we are imperiously "excused." Our sincerest efforts to speak up in Japanese may be greeted with chuckles of laughter. Every day is an adventure, as no one is sure how we fit in or what our rights are. There are roughly three foreign men for every one foreign woman teaching at a Japanese university (1996 Gakko kihon chosa hokokusho). This means foreign female faculty are even more of a rarity, the proverbial talking dogs and wise parrots. We add a bit of diversion and color. But what advantages are there to living on the margins this way? What can we do, in our positions, to subvert, to transform "our" universities?

Everyone must have a different answer to this. For me, the parallel with the jester holds the key: he was the only one allowed to mock the king. Who is the king? Patriarchy in all its manifestations, the least of which is the university. What is the jester's language of mocking (consciousness-raising)? Radical pedagogies that tenured and/or Japanese faculty may feel they couldn't "get away with". Feminist, critical, queer pedagogy, subverting the institution through the minds of its students. Creating our own "utopia" now.

The first step in teaching feminism is to raise our own consciousness, and become more sensitive to the male bias and sexism in teacher training, methods, texts, and in language itself. The second step, which I will focus on in my presentation, is to use our power as teachers in the classroom to create alternatives. I have been devoting myself to the creation of a feminist approach to teaching English in Japan for the past five years. It has been a group effort in a sense, as I have been nurtured in my effort by the members of Women in Education and Language Learning (WELL). This group of women teachers and students meets once a year for three days and has a lesson and materials swap. Throughout the year, we share ideas and materials for classes over E-mail and our newsletter. One on one, we read each others' papers and talk over our struggles. So I want to make it clear that I am very indebted to these women for the ideas and examples I will share with you (McMahill, 1998; Vandricks, 1994, 1995).

In my presentation, I'll explain the following characteristics of feminist language teaching:

1) A focus on women; women are taken as the standard and not as the exception.
2) The use of non-sexist language.
3) The spirit of egalitarianism.
4) The creation of a safe space within the classroom.
5) Learning from personal experiences and emotions.
6) Multi-sensory learning.
7) A critical approach.
8) Starting where the students are.

Next I'll explain some concrete activities which I have used. The activities contain all or most of the elements of feminist language teaching I have shared above.

1) Critiquing media images of women using women's clothing catalogs.

2) Interviewing and roleplaying three generations of women in one's family.

3) Writing and performing poetry as a response to movies.

4) Observing, charting, and analysing the division of housework in one's family.

5) Analysing gender differences in spoken discourse. Let me explain this one here as an example. Students tape all or part of a TV show in which both men and women appear. They transcribe the conversation in Japanese and analyse in English any gender differences in the amount of speech, register, use of clearly gendered language, conversational roles, and any other factors that interacted with these gender differences, such as class, status, age, region, topic, situation, and so on. They then prepare and give a group summary of their key findings, with examples performed in Japanese, to the class.

We found that men spoke more than women. But the amount of conversation between men and women depends on the topic.

One student, for example, recorded one scene in the TBS drama, "Best Partner." She summarized her individual findings as follows:

"1. I found that men speak more than women. Men speak 2 minutes 30 seconds. But woman speak 30 seconds.

"2. I also found that men and woman speak with different intonation and pitch. For example men speak very fast.

"3. We also noticed that men and woman use different words. For example men use "Ore" or "Boku." Woman use "Watashi" or "Atashi." But they used similar words. For example, in ending of conversation they use "-da yo ne" or "-na no yo."

"4. We discovered different roles between men and woman in the conversation. Men play a role of M.C., but woman only chime in.

" 5. The amount of woman's speech depended on the topic, situation, relationship of speakers. For example when woman talk the first meeting man, she will be speechless."

Comparing her findings with other students, she came up with an expanded report:

"1. We found that men spoke more women. But the amount of conversation between men and women depends on the topic that they talk about. For example, if they talk about the situation of Japanese women today, women can talk about themselves actively. But, if they talk about the sexual problems, a prejudice against women, women talk about it passively.

"2. We also found that men and women spoke with different intonation and pitch. Generally speaking, men speak faster, ruder, and harder than women. That is, women speak slowly and peacefully. But the intonation and pitch depend on the situation. For example, when we discuss something seriously, needless to say, we talk in the sharp tone, not only men but also women. On the other hand, when we talk about a funny story or something we like, we all talk peacefully.

"3. We also found that men and women use different words. For example, a man use the words, "Ore" or "Boku." But women use the words, "Watashi" or "Atashi." But they also use similar words. For example, we use "ne" or "yo" in the ending of conversation.

"4. We discovered different roles between men and women. For example, in Japanese TV program like a debate, news, quiz show, men generally play roles of MC, and women serve as assistant. She just chime in with MC or other cast without expressing her opinions. But a few women express their opinion in their programs. For example, Yuko Ando, Yoko Tajima, and Yoshiko Sakurai does it. Their opinions have influences on women. Recently that sort of women has increased more and more. Women also have opinions, so they had better express them.

"5. The amount of women's speech

depended on the topic, situation, or relationship or speakers. For example, the female assistants of TV programs in Japan generally talk with reserve to give the male MC the credit. For that reason the female assistants use the polite words for the male MC. And most women negatively talk about the sexual topics. Some women are not good at talking with the strange men. When a group consisted of men and women discuss something, some female members are shy of expressing their opinions."

"The amount of women's speech depended on the topic, situation, or relationship or speakers. Some women are not good at talking with the strange men."

As you can see, students were able to intelligently create critical theories of how gender influences conversational participation, similar to the latest research of linguists. They were guided in how and where to look, but their conclusions came from their own observations and lived knowledge. You can see how in collaborating on group summary they began to develop their own critical opinions. I hope this increased awareness will help them in the future to recognize when they are not taking an active role in conversations, to think about why, and to develop counter-strategies. Subsequent to this class, one exceptional student has decided to leave our university and go to Brazil to study ethnology. It would be particularly nice if some join me in faculty meetings as colleagues some day!

Feminist pedagogy, as one of a variety of critical approaches, has the potential for exposing the hidden power relations in communicative English teaching as well as in society as a whole. Yes, there are obvious contradictions in the ideals and ideas, but I also think as foreigners in Japan we have learned to hold many contradictions in our mind at the same time, and see the worth of what we are doing in spite of them all.

Women have been primarily responsible for organizing feminist language teaching as a movement.

As Janis Joplin sang, "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose." Foreign teachers, with our marginal positions in Japanese universities, may feel disempowered but at the same time have less to lose in experimenting with feminist, gay, and other radical approaches to language teaching. Also, while women have been primarily responsible for organizing feminist language teaching as a movement, men have been attempting to incorporate gender awareness into their classes as individuals and there is no reason why men can't be feminist teachers (Hardy, 1996). I would especially like to hear about more activities developed by male feminist teachers for raising the consciousness of male students about the male gender role and male privilege.

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CUE Forum Preview...

Japan's Search for Creativity

David McMurray,
Fukui Prefectural University

Can Japanese university students be creative? Or is it too late for them? Popular psychology asserts that all children possess the potential for considerable creativity, which diminishes as they grow older. Rigid education and the imposition of adult standards too early are frequently cited as the culprits in a child's loss in creativity. The average child is not creative. To the western educator, Japanese education could never allow the flowering of creativity. This conclusion may be the result of ethnocentric assumptions about the source and meaning of creativity (White, 1987).

Defining Creativity for Japan

Creativity is a term defined by culture. Differences in culture help to determine how a society values creativity. Academic psychology in America contends that creativity is a desirable individual trait. In America there is respect for individual differences. That has lead to the presumed link between creativity and individualism. In the mass education system, higher degrees and education at an elite university are the goals of those who want to stand out from the crowd. An accompanying belief to individualism is that unique accomplishments are better than those that resemble efforts of others. Creativity leads to Nobel prizes and productive basic research. American society believes it moves forward on breakthroughs, innovations and discoveries of people like Henry Ford, Albert Einstein, and Bill Gates.

In the classroom, is spontaneity more important than skill? Self-expression can be confused with creativity, placing the greatest value on spontaneity rather than on taking pains. Hard work has also lead to creative success. Engagement is what counts: positive, whole-hearted, energetic commitment while at work on a task to produce a result. Creative people are motivated (Rothenberg, 1980). That is why MBA programs select motivated and hard-working students. Interview and personality tests reveal MBA students have one common trait. They are all very driven.

Universities in Japan have been slow to offer Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs so popular elsewhere in the world, because Japanese companies still want to mold their own managers. Representatives from the business schools of over 90 universities from 12 countries attend the annual Japan MBA Forum in Tokyo. Most programs are provided in English. Of these, only three are provided by Asian universities: Asian Institute of Management, Philippines; Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, School of Business and Management; International University of Japan, Graduate School of International Management, Niigata. 60 of the schools are American and the remaining from Canada and Europe. The majority of overseas students applying to enter the MBA programs are from Taiwan, China, and Japan.

Differences in the meaning of creativity, can also be explained in terms of task completion. Japanese culture puts less emphasis on individual than on group accomplishments. Classroom teachers do not expect students to develop a novel approach or contribution and instead foster the development of memorization. Traditional forms of learning - in crafts and arts - emphasize the old-style creativity respected in Japan. Apprentices and novices can spend years sweeping the floors, preparing the master's brushes, and clapping out rhythms. Before students can become creative, or even express themselves, they must be taught possibilities and limits. Routine

is important. The student must follow the steps of the master. Each repetition is thought to contain something of value. The result is a high degree of analytic and creative problem solving. And that probably helps quality control and leads to perfection and improvements in the arts and technology that others have developed.

Criticism of Japanese education focuses on the suppression of genius.

Criticism of Japanese education focuses on the suppression of genius. It is insupportable to say that the current Japanese education system has too many barriers to allow their student's individuality and to encourage the geniuses who make scientific breakthroughs. But it can be safely said that there is little provision for tracking the super bright to their best advantage before the graduate school level. The bright are not expected to break records early in life. Accelerated learning, the skipping of grades by intelligent students, hasn't been possible. The 1998 curriculum was the first time that a handful of bright and hard working science students were allowed to enter university at 17 years of age, one year earlier than their peers. The students were still required to finish all the required high school credits.

Japan's Objectives for Higher Ed

Japan dearly wants to promote research and development. Japan has been eager to shed its reputation as a non-creative adopter of other people's ideas. It now intends to do more basic science itself and more of it in a university setting. Creating new businesses oriented toward R&D is an important way to recover from the economic slump. In the 1990s, America effectively rode the waves of financial, information and communication revolutions by focusing on starting over and entrepreneurship. In America, academia and business are closely linked, and there is a well-established system for providing funds to entrepreneurs. Creative business adventurers can take advantage of government-offered funding. 70% of R&D funding is awarded to business.

Japan's venture business boom started in 1993 when central and local governments started to promote R&D and entrepreneurship. At the same time, the Ministry of Education announced they also wanted to encourage creativity. The original drive for this came from industry efforts to shift emphasis from product development to research on new technologies. Initial attempts were stymied in the university system which the Japanese government considers insufficiently creative. The July, 1998 University Council interim report advisory committee to the Education Ministry recommends students be evaluated more strictly, review their roles and expand their graduate schools. The Council thinks that American higher education provides rich opportunities for creative talent to bloom and therefore suggested that Japan's universities make themselves more like those in the U.S.

Creative EFL and ESP in Japan

Will EFL and ESP teachers encourage change in the education system and help to encourage creativity? The 1991 Revised Standards for Colleges and Universities led EFL teachers to fear for their jobs (Oda, 1995). Perhaps it became a form of motivation intended to improve foreign language teaching. More criticism and stringent reviews of universities will come with the release of the University Council's 1998 report. Universities will be expected to reevaluate their curricula, professors will be required to submit syllabi in addition to updated research lists, and tenure will depend upon proficiency in teaching as well as research. University management will continue replacing teachers who no longer have "freshness" and offer short term university contracts. The bankruptcy of many Japanese corporations has

Students reflect on how to become more creative. They are encouraged to take risks in order to become accustomed to the feeling so they won't be afraid to go out and try again. They take photos of creativity in action, write poetry, and do 10 new things a day.

International University of Japan, in Niigata Prefecture, encourages their MBA students to gain on-site experience in companies. Much of the work is done in English. Teams of IUJ students study the operations of small industries by observing and interviewing employees in the finance, manufacturing and sales departments. Then they apply the concepts learned from textbooks and case studies to their findings. Students discuss the strong and weak points of the companies and how improvements can be made. The course integrates knowledge from different disciplines. In 1997, McGill University launched an MBA program in Tokyo designed for students with varying backgrounds and work experience. Their courses often ask students to form study groups to encourage creativity. Diversity is synergistic if there is a common vision and common purpose agreed upon by the group. Then it is possible for diversity among the group members to unleash talent, potential, and creativity.

Fumie Otsuka teaches a class called Creativity and Communication in Ibaraki Prefecture. She introduced the new course, which has been adopted by other teachers in Ibaraki, because she found there was no room for creativity in previous courses. Students had little chance to work on their own ideas, instead they were instructed to repeat new words and sentence patterns until they had memorized them. Her students lacked analytical and reasoning skills because they only knew how to absorb knowledge through memorization. She now emphasizes group learning and team presentations, although some students are very nervous to learn this way. English ability varies among students. She says that the most important thing is for students to do their best. She encourages students to speak in a loud clear voice. Some students are not good at paper tests, but can speak in a lively active voice. These students receive higher evaluation than quiet students.

There is opportunity for foreign language teachers who also have the skills and understanding of how to encourage creativity to take the lead in adoption of the teaching methods and management styles currently sought by the Ministry of Education. Change in higher education continues to depend on political and business support. Finding ways to foster creativity will benefit students, corporations and Japan as a nation.

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CUE Forum Preview...

Gender, Higher Education, and Reform: Some Thoughts on Genuine Improvement

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In my talk I plan to explore two topics which, though they may not seem related at first glance, are all interlinked: (1) the female genderization of Japan's higher education; and (2) discussions and discourses about educational reform and the role of non-Japanese instructors in it. I will suggest that these three areas of concern, all problematic in their own ways, are different facets of a larger, more abstract issue of what may be termed a dogmatic national identity ("Japaneseness") which is deeply embedded in educational institutions. Until problems associated with the three aforementioned topics are recognized as being driven by political-not pedagogical-forces, positive changes cannot occur.

Before proceeding, just a few words about my own stake in what I have to say. My current research interests concern Japanese education. But at the same time, as a full-time instructor at a Japanese university, I am "part of the system." Thus, my views are shaped both by an interest in objectively understanding Japanese education and by fulfilling my duties as an instructor. Theories of "outsider" and "insider," of course, cannot be neatly separated in any endeavor; indeed, they can fruitfully improve and aid each other.

Female Genderization of Higher Ed

After briefly discussing how many Japanese women are socialized to accept jobs as low-paid "office ladies" that supplement a male-dominated core labor force, I will approach the issues of gender and education from two angles. First, I will illustrate the female genderization of Japanese education, that is, how women's roles are reinforced at the tertiary level. I will do this to show how deeply structural the sexual segregation of the educational system and labor force is. Second, I will discuss the belief, advocated in certain circles that Japaneseness is inherently linked to notions of gender. The logic that connects national identity and gender states that "if one is born a female Japanese, then one should not only act Japanese but should also be feminine because one is born Japanese."

I should stress that the point of my analysis is not to suggest that women in Japan (or in any other place for that matter) should not be socialized to be feminine or "ladylike," or that there is something inherently wrong with expressions of femininity. Rather, my contention is that we should all be aware that being "ladylike" is neither innate nor determined by nature. It is a social and political construction, reproduced by schooling practices and embedded within economic structures. Therefore, to be or not to be "ladylike" should be viewed as something that can be selected as an individual prerogative and re-configured in different ways. Femininity should be a matter of personal preference and style, not political prescription and demand. Everyone, whether male or female, has choices, and society should allow us to exercise our choices.

The Role of Non-Japanese Instructors

What is the meaning of all the talk about educational reform in Japan? How do non-Japanese instructors fit into efforts to genuinely reform Japanese education? Any analysis of the discussion about educational reform in Japan must adopt a historical perspective. For decades the leading business organizations have regularly published reports about what kind of worker the educational system should be producing. Corporate

culture has often requested that the educational system produce more disciplined and obedient workers instilled with the proper attitude toward labor, especially during the high-speed economic growth period of the 1960s. Official reports, along with the general public discourse about reform, employ terms that, while high-minded sounding in themselves, evoke a strong sense of déjà vu since they have been recycled through the postwar decades. Thus, I would suggest the avoidance of terms such as "creativity," "individuality," "liberalization," "diversification," "flexibilization," "internationalization," "cross-cultural understanding," and "world peace." These terms are worn-out clichés, and have become too abstract, sterile, and stuck in the official discourse to be of any use. What is needed are more genuine, down-to-earth, and concrete words. Because discussions and discourses about reform in Japan's educational system is infested by a tyranny of buzz words, I suggest we call a spade a spade. For example, consider "creativity." The problem is not that Japanese students lack "creativity" (as if more classes in art are needed), but that they are given too few opportunities once the examination race begins in middle school to be spontaneous, self-expressive, and free of the demands of examination pressures. Another example: the incessant sloganeering about the need for "internationalization" and "cross-cultural understanding" have numbed many inquiring minds about the importance of genuine tolerance, open-mindedness, and progressive thinking. Rather than engaging in an exchange of platitudes and mutual "feel goodness," instructors should point out instances of racism, ethnocentrism, and chauvinism (in and outside Japan).

Many of the problems we witness in Japanese education are not pedagogical, but political. By political, I mean to say that the purpose of education in Japan have been so thoroughly monopolized by business interests that individual students and their families have very little participation in the learning process, unless one considers excessive exam-preparation, cram schools, and anxiety about test scores genuine learning. In other words, we should ask: who is education for? For students? Or for corporations and Japan the nation-state? Because so many assume that "being Japanese" overrides other concerns, it is the corporations and Japan the nation-state that often win out.

We are all aware of the serious legal and personal problems facing many of our non-Japanese colleagues working in Japanese universities and junior colleges. Such problems are only the most obvious aspects of a much deeper and disturbing predicament which is driven by an unhealthy segregation of those who "Japanese" and those who are not. Whether one explains this segregation as racism, nationalism, ethnocentrism, or bureaucratism (or by pointing out that such segregation exists in other societies as if this excuses discriminatory practices in Japan), it is destructive of open, liberal, tolerant societies (not to mention truly enlightened learning).

My point is not that women in Japan should not be socialized to be feminine or "ladylike." Rather, we should be aware that being "ladylike" is neither innate nor determined by nature.

Though there are some schools that have made genuine efforts to integrate non-Japanese into their programs, unfortunately at some places non-Japanese instructors are not regarded as full-fledged faculty members. Because of the Japanese/non-Japanese distinction, the role of foreign faculty is either idealized or denigrated. We have all heard about the latter. But the effect of the former is just as baneful. This is because non-Japanese are sometimes regarded as "cultural ambassadors," who symbolize,

exemplify, typify, or represent "foreign" cultures. They become human tokens of some idealized, exoticized, and occidentalized land. This fantasy view of non-Japanese instructors also encourages the view that they are entertainers, "activators," and "energizers"of students, a cure-all for whatever ails an institution. They are expected to perform miracles. But I think the role of non-Japanese instructors should be viewed in a more realistic light. After all, real "internationalization" will begin when non-Japanese instructors are regarded as merely instructors, not "foreign instructors."

Conclusion

What do the genderization of Japan's higher education, the role of non-Japanese instructors, and the discourse about educational reform have in common? As already suggested, they all spring from a sort of cultural determinism: Japanese must act a certain way because they are Japanese" ("shy," group-oriented, hierarchical, consensus-seeking, etc.). This cultural determinism sometimes links up with and bolsters (1) racialist thinking: "Japanese must act a certain way because they were born Japanese"; and (2) nationalist sentiments. Of course, concerns with national identity run the danger of becoming nationalist everywhere. In Japan, such a danger is salient because, in attempts to answer the question, "what does it mean to be Japanese?" confusion often reigns. Are we talking about ethnic and ethnocultural heritage? Or are we talking about citizenship (political affiliation)? Or are we talking about "racial" characteristics? Because so many people, in and outside of Japan, confuse these three forms of identity, "being Japanese" or Japanese identity becomes mystified, and unfortunately, it often sinks to the most obvious though superficial aspect of Japaneseness: being "racially" Japanese. Consequently, many issues involving the Japanese/non-Japanese become racialized. What is needed, then, is a more open form of Japanese national identity which does two things: (1) unpacks the three forms of identity that are too tightly interwoven together; and (2) recognizes the Japanese for who they are: an extremely heterogeneous, complicated, and diverse people. This is not a suggestion to cast off Japanese identity, but rather to explain it by injecting strong doses of tolerance and recognizing its richness, rather than falling back on politically controlling myths about the "homogeneity" of the Japanese. Until Japanese recognize diversity within Japan, diversity outside Japan will continue to come in stereotypes, slogans, and myths, thereby supporting the dogmatic Japanese/non-Japanese distinction because after all, domestic and overseas stereotyping reinforce each other.

Because so many confuse these forms of identity, "being Japanese" or Japanese identity becomes mystified.

At a more practical level, the place to initiate useful discussions and understandings is in the classroom. Also, writing and publishing which offers fresh perspectives (rather than repeating tired clichés) should be pursued with the aim of reaching a wider audience. Unfortunately, all the conferences, government reports, and editorials in the world will not aid in the reform of Japanese education. Real change will come from the private sector and individuals unconnected to centers of power. I am not suggesting that we naively resist or assault the bureaucratic centers of power, but rather, where possible, simply ignore and work around them. Many feel that since few are aware of the more abstract and deeply structural level of educational problems in Japan (i. e. Japanese/non-Japanese distinction), no one should be obliged or held accountable for analyzing these problems. But such thinking is a cop-out. The point is this: precisely because certain unhealthy forms of thinking are difficult to see we should endeavor to confront, dissect, and rectify them.

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