

# Joint Mini Conference of JALT's Accessibility in Language Learning & Lifelong Language Learning Special Interest Groups

February 26, 2022 (Saturday) — ONLINE through Zoom

RSVP using this form:  
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Program: [Times listed according to Japan Standard Time (JST)]

10:00 - 10:05 — Intro and Welcome [Zoom Room open from 9:50]

10:10 - 10:50 — Educators' Retirement Planning: Pensions and Other Income (Gregory Strong)

10:55 - 11:25 — Lifelong Learning and Retiring Retirement Stereotypes (Steve McCarty)

11:30 - 12:00 — Meeting the educational needs of neurodiverse and neurotypical students through technology (Alexandra Burke)

12:05 - 12:35 — Meeting Halfway: Supporting learners who have difficulty attending English conversation classes (Michael Y. Yap)

12:40 - 13:20 — Extended Q&A and Free Discussion



10:10 - 10:50

## Educators' Retirement Planning: Pensions and Other Income

— Gregory Strong

Talking about money is something few teachers do well but this conversation is worth having. Drawing on his own experience, and documentation, the presenter will outline several different pensions that educators may benefit from. These are 国民年金, kokumin nenkin, the national pension plan, 厚生年金, kosei nenkin, the employee pension plan, potential foreign pension plans, as well as the mechanics of how contributions are made, calculated, and paid out. In addition, the presentation will look at sources of income such as 退職金, taishokukin, the retirement or severance money paid to a faculty member on retirement, and longterm tax-efficient investments such as The Nippon Individual Savings Account (NISA), and 個人型確定拠出年金 iDeCo accounts as well as personal investments in equities. A final source of potential income, often overlooked, is rental income, and here, too, the presenter will provide an overview of his experiences. Finally, the presentation will conclude with a round-up of various resources.

**Presenter Bio:** Gregory Strong has been a professor, program coordinator and curriculum writer in Japan for 26 years, and for the 11 years prior to that, a teacher educator, tester, and instructor in Canada and China. Now retired, he divides his time between consulting and writing, and activities such as hiking, kayaking, and travel. His research interests include curriculum design and teacher professional development. His numerous publications include chapters in TESOL Voices: Insider Accounts of Classroom Life, Applications of Task-Based Learning in TESOL, Authenticity in the Language Classroom and Beyond, and Adult Language Learners: Context and Innovation, which he co-edited, a biography, Flying Colours: The Toni Onley Story, and graded readers, including the award-winning Battle for Big Tree Country.

10:55 - 11:25

## Lifelong Learning and Retiring Retirement Stereotypes

— Steve McCarty

Whether citizens, sojourners, or immigrants, most employed residents of Japan will be unable or unwilling to retire. The natural desire to choose the terms of transitions, however, runs into customary age limits, around 65 for full-time and 70 to 75 for part-time employment in the case of higher education. Combined with stereotypical dismissiveness towards older people, a sudden loss of status can be vertiginous. Yet there is a great demand for the services that older language teachers in particular can perform in Japanese education, society, and academia internationally. This presentation illustrates how teaching duties can be gradually decreased and improved in quality, while the teacher remains at least as active outside of institutions. Many suggestions will be offered: how to have a better quality of life than ever, contributing valuable services where needed, and enjoying more free time to create and curate. Lifelong learning can accord with lifelong interests.

**Presenter Bio:** Steve McCarty lectures for Osaka Jogakuin University and the government foreign aid agency JICA. He is the World Association for Online Education President. At Kansai University from 2015-2020 he taught international ICT classes and held a unique Global Faculty Development position. In JALT he was a Chapter founder, Bilingualism SIG President, and Executive Committee SIG Representative. His highly cited publications on e-learning, bilingualism, language teaching, Japan, Asia, and the academic life are available from <https://japanned.hcommons.org>.

12:05 - 12:35

## Meeting the educational needs of neurodiverse and neurotypical students through technology

— Alexandra Burke

Some students need a wide range of study methods to demonstrate their ability. In this session, the speaker will show how software tools such as FlipGrid, Duolingo, Padlet and Quizlet can be used to accommodate the needs of both neurodiverse and neurotypical students with a minimum of fuss and management demands. Based on wide reading of international best practice on inclusive teaching, in collaboration with Japanese colleagues, the speaker had the chance to trial a number of culturally appropriate changes to methods and classroom management that promote inclusion. She will share some of those in this presentation as well.

**Presenter Bio:** Alexandra Burke is the Publications Chair of the Accessibility in Language Learning SIG. Since 2005, she has taught at all levels of the Japanese public education system, from kindergarten to university, including thousands of hours of team teaching with Japanese colleagues. In that time, has had the opportunity to closely observe classroom interactions, and talk with students about which activities and methods increase their autonomy and confidence. She noticed that some methods created barriers for neurodiverse students in mainstream classes.

Her interest in this topic stems from having grown up in a multigenerational neurodiverse family. Always learning from her students, she is interested in the long-term socioeconomic and health differences of neurodiverse and neurotypical students and how to improve their learning experience.

Her professional background is in public policy, health economics, systems and equitable access to services. She presents regularly on neurodiversity within Japan and presented at the Extensive Reading World Congress in Taiwan. She currently teaches at three universities in the Tokai Region. At JALT 2020 she won two Michele Steele Best of JALT Chapter Awards for inclusive teaching presentations and Best Poster awards at the 2019 and 2020 JALT International Conferences, sharing the 2019 award with co-presenter Kirika Kushiyaama.

11:30 - 12:00

Meeting Halfway: Supporting learners who have difficulty attending English conversation classes

— Michael Y. Yap

During, or following, an extended absence from school, students must make up for missed schoolwork. To do so, they need to cope not only with the cause of their absence—whether it be adjustment difficulties, household issues, or medical concerns—but also with the struggle to retain motivation in the face of the daunting amount of work they need to catch up on. Over the last two academic years, the English conversation teachers of Meiho Junior and Senior High School have been devising ways to support these learners. This presentation will share what has been learned from the process and its evolution.

**Presenter Bio:** Michael Y. Yap, a lecturer at Meiho Junior and Senior High School, investigates the application of differentiated instruction, self-paced learning environments, and the provision of support systems to learners in Japanese secondary EFL classrooms.