



Accessible Language Learning Review

Accessibility in Language Learning Special Interest Group

Japan Association of Language Teaching

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A welcome message from the coordinator

I would like to thank you for joining us in practicing and researching accessible language learning. I strongly believe in the importance of building an accessible learning environment for students with special educational needs. It is my sincere hope that they will be able to enjoy learning languages with their peers without barriers. In this newsletter you'll find out about this SIG, our executive board and our projects.

I am always happy to communicate with ALL SIG members in any way that I can. We are looking for more volunteers who are interested in sharing their experiences with special educational needs students. If you are interested in being part of this, please send us a message. The best way to reach me is by email all@jalt.org. My hope is that the ALL-SIG will become a resource for you to accommodate students with special educational needs in the classroom. Thank you again for joining us.

Ryota Moriya 森谷 亮太

all@jalt.org

Why form the ALL-SIG?

In 2016, the Act for Eliminating Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities became Japanese law. This change mandates that teachers and teaching organisations are aware of and use accessibility pedagogies, materials, and strategies to optimize educational outcomes for learners with special needs including psychological, physical, cognitive, and communicative disabilities and learning differences. However, as learner needs are diverse and vary by context: no "one-size-fits-all". In 2017 an informal group was formed and was accorded SIG status by JALT in February 2021. The purpose of the ALL-SIG is to improve educational equity by providing a focus for current and future members for collaboration, sharing of experiences, practices, theoretical perspectives, and research to target compliance with the EDPD Act. The ALL-SIG community would also like to offer insights to JALT regarding contemporary best

practice such as increasing awareness among teachers, and school administrators on accessible design in materials and methods.

Introducing our Executive Board



Ryota Moriya 森谷 亮太 **Coordinator**

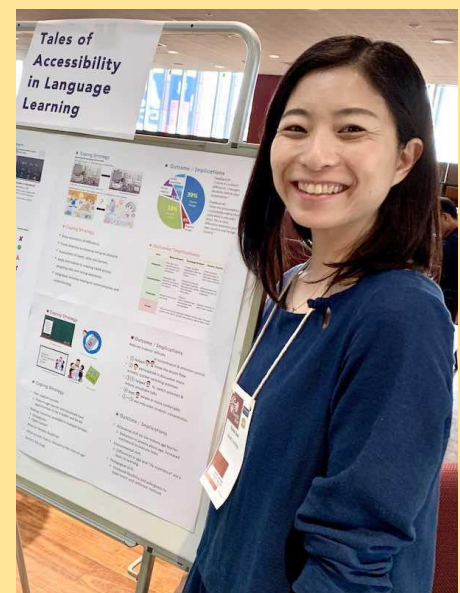
I am currently a lecturer in the Global Education Division of the Center for Global Strategy at Otaru University of Commerce in Hokkaido. I have a PhD in International Studies.

My research interests include color-blindness, disability studies in education, accessibility in language learning, and Foucauldian genealogical discourse analysis.

Ryoko Sato 佐藤 良子 **Treasurer**

I am a lecturer of English in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Reitaku University and also specialize in how to create teaching materials using a Universal Design (UD) perspective. My research interests include UD and second language vocabulary acquisition in foreign language education. My current research focuses on vocabulary acquisition and reading and writing instruction for Japanese learners of English with specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia and ADHD.

I hold an M.A. in English Education and I earned my TECSOL Certification in Canada. Early in my career, I taught at a children's English school in Saitama, Japan, working with children ranging in age from 3 to 18, which sparked my interest in neurodiverse learners. Initially, I did independent research into teaching methods, the body of literature and contemporary Internet data. Consequently I found that teaching English to learners with developmental differences was still very much uncharted territory. So I decided to do more formal research at graduate school.



Currently, I am also studying to become a vision training instructor, because of the critical role vision plays in learning. Eventually, I plan to use this qualification in the development of learning activities and materials to make English education more truly a UD process.

Andrew Reimann アンドリュー・ライマン **Program Chair**



I teach and research intercultural communication, comparative culture studies and media literacy at Aoyama Gakuin University. I hold a PhD in Applied Linguistics. I'm originally from Vancouver, Canada and currently live near Tokyo. Growing up in a bilingual family (English and German) and in a multicultural country (Canada), I was interested in how people could connect and communicate across differences. Intercultural communication uses language, observation and experimentation to unlock, explore and understand hidden differences for mutual benefit and exchange. I am looking forward to making new connections.

Globalization, interconnectivity and access to information have created both challenges and opportunities. Success requires being able to adapt, predict, improvise and pioneer new ideas while challenging old ones. Connecting with others and creating ideas that spread is the heart of intercultural communication. Appreciating diversity, enabling accessibility and viewing differences as resources rather than obstacles are all key to becoming actively engaged global citizens.

My background and research interest is in sociolinguistics, with particular emphasis on intercultural communication. Although English is a universal language, to communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds, we need to understand their culture, values and perspectives. In class we work towards cultural awareness and global understanding by looking at examples in language, religion, history, culture, media and current events. Recent projects and areas of interest include Media Literacy, cross-cultural humor and communication strategies.

Natsuki Suzuki 鈴木 菜月 **Membership Chair**

I am teaching at several public elementary schools in Tokyo while completing a master's degree in early childhood education in the English Department at



Aoyama Gakuin University. I teach English to 3rd graders and create most of my own materials to produce innovative and inspiring lessons. Positivity and curiosity about teaching and learning are very important factors in determining our success. As teachers, always questioning “How can we gain and maintain children’s interest in the classroom?” is the key to helping as many children as possible.

I want to foster a love of learning as the essential element for guiding all children to be autonomous, lifelong learners. By placing ourselves in the shoes of our students and seeing the classroom from their perspective, I believe that teachers can create the best methods and materials to accommodate challenges, difficulties, differences and distances. My main research examines the motivation among Japanese children learning English at a public elementary school. I am also interested in using storytelling, music and magic as ways to teach, inspire and make children smile.

Alexandra Burke アレクサンドラ バーク Publications Chair



Since 2005, I have 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, I had the opportunity to closely observe classroom interactions, talk with students about which activities and methods increase their autonomy and confidence. I could also notice that some methods created barriers for students who appear to be neurodiverse mainstream classes. I've always been interested in this topic, having grown up in a multigenerational neurodiverse family. I'm always learning something from students. My interest is in the long term socioeconomic and health differences of neurodiverse and neurotypical students and how to improve the experience.

Based on wide reading of international best practice on inclusive teaching, in collaboration with Japanese colleagues, I had the chance to trial a number of culturally appropriate changes to methods and classroom management that promote inclusion. My professional background is public policy, health economics, systems and equitable access to services. I present regularly on neurodiversity within Japan and presented at the Extensive Reading World Congress in Taiwan. I currently teach at three universities in the Tokai Region. At JALT 2020 I 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.

Recommended websites

[Color Universal Design Organization Website](#)

[Reading Barrier-free Legislation](#)

[Free Teacher Training on Dyslexia](#)

[Understood.Org: information for teachers](#)

What's coming up with ALL-SIG?

We have three major projects that we are currently working on.

Project 1 Build a SIG website which has both a repository of resources for the information to our SIG members and also create a database which allows you to share your issues and experiences with special educational needs students. The goal is to be able to easily find strategies or resources to better accommodate these students. Our intention is hopefully, sometime later in the academic year, we will be able to make our website public.

Project 2 is to create an easy to use TO / NOT TO DO List to to create inclusive classrooms and online accessible language teaching. This would be for the use of ALL-SIG members and also for other SIGs and chapters to consider how to improve the accessibility of their events.

Project 3 is a collaboration with Lifelong Language Learning LLL-SIG. We are planning to co-host a joint-forum with LLL SIG at PanSIG 2022. At the conference, we are hosting breakout rooms focusing on accessible language learning. A priority is making these sessions bilingual so that not only English teachers, but also Japanese teachers are welcome to join us. More on this soon.

ALL SIG Members' Presentations at JALT 2021

We will also have a presence at the JALT International Online Conference on November 12-15 2021.

Perspectives on Accessible Language Learning in the Post-pandemic Classroom

Combined SIG AGM/Forum; Language Classroom Content & Pedagogy — General

Presenter(s): Moriya, Ryota - Otaru University of Commerce; Reimann, Andrew - Aoyama Gakuin University; Suzuki, Natsuki - Aoyama Gakuin University; Burke, Alexandra - University of Shiga Prefecture

Day: Sunday, November 14th

Time: 12:45 PM - 2:15 PM (90 minutes)

Students Who Learn Differently: Towards a Discrimination-Free Classroom

Presenter(s): Burke, Alexandra - Gifu Shotoku University

Day: Sunday, November 14th

Time: 10:45 AM - 11:45 AM (60 minutes)

Please join us.



About our Logo. It's Ally, the ally of learners. This design is the work of Ryoko Sato. We like it because it feels happy, trusting and inclusive!

There are no masks in our photos as they were taken before the pandemic. Until it is safe again, you can see our smiles here.

[Please follow our website to see events and updates](#)