

Preface

2020 will be remembered as a year of upheaval for us all, a year dominated by negative news on a scale relatively few of us have previously experienced. In such challenging times it is arguably more important than usual to remain forward-thinking and to persevere, as far as possible, with pursuits that hold value for us. While research into language, language teaching and learning cannot be considered a pressing concern in our present circumstances, in terms of the benefits it brings to the contributing scholars and members of their research community, it would be wrong to underestimate its value. It is therefore with no little pleasure that we are able to introduce the nine papers which make up Volume 6 of APLJ.

Luo Hua's paper focuses on how to develop an effective teaching method for three Chinese potential expressions: *neng*, *hui*, and *keyi*. For beginners, it is notoriously difficult to master these expressions. However, in this article, the author describes how, by reassessing the grammatical meaning of these expressions through a rigorous examination of a substantial corpus, including learner errors, she was able to propose new teaching methods. Moreover, the thorough and meticulous approach to research described can be of benefit to everyone involved in language education.

No less rigorous is Zhang's paper, which offers an excellent evaluation of the phonological similarity of two-letter semantically-overlapping homographs in Chinese and Japanese with Japanese native speakers. Utilizing an impressive amount of data, this is the first known study to provide basic data of isomorphous words for Japanese people learning Chinese and as such, this article is expected to contribute to the development of vocabulary research in the future.

Jung's paper is a narrative review of Korean language education utilizing ICT over the past 20 years, when Korean CALL / MALL study began in earnest. This article comprehensively covers previous studies without bias, shows various study methods and perspectives in Korean language education which uses ICT, and suggests new developments in language education. Jung's article is pertinent to Volume 6 of APLJ with 2020 being the year when online lessons have become standard practice worldwide.

Terajima & Itai's paper is a valuable contribution to the analysis and practical use of corpus tools. Teachers and learners must adapt to the development of information and communication technology and its applications to language education. With the aim of creating teaching materials to enable users to use corpus tools effectively, the authors conducted a series of workshops. Although various uses of ICT are practiced in these workshops, the originality of this article is its focus on improving the technical skills of the users. This is an ambitious article that highlights the prospects for the future of ICT and language education.

Inada's paper is an ambitious study that carefully describes the transformational views on their profession of non-native speaker Japanese teachers based on a qualitative survey and depicts the diversification of Japanese. As with the articles by Terajima & Itai and Jung, it encourages us to think deeply about the future of language education in a changing society, but its perspective is different with its focus on diversification of society, the reality of Japanese teachers in conflict, and

language education based on native speaker supremacy.

Kirisawa's paper is a potentially influential attempt to introduce VTS, one of the interactive art appreciation methods, into language education, and explore its effects and issues associated with it. Applying the apparently unrelated educational method of art appreciation to language education is an ambitious challenge, but this article nonetheless succeeds in convincingly describing the need for a new skill of "seeing" in language education. Through this paper, the reader's attention is drawn to VTS as a meaningful and motivating practice whose future development is an exciting prospect.

Hanae Yatsuda's paper addresses the transformational experience of the learner, an area of language education which is receiving increasing amounts of attention. Taking into account a range of scholarship, her small-scale study of exchange-student learners of Japanese demonstrates a replicable method by which research into transformative aspects of language learning, involving the development of cultural knowledge, can be conducted. This paper will be of interest to anyone interested in learning theory, evaluation methods, and intercultural communication.

The intercultural theme continues in Andrew McMahon's paper, which reports on the creation and teaching of a language course with a focus on Global Englishes, addressing the influence the course has on learners in terms of developing a sense of ownership of the language through reflection on their experiences and identity as non-native users of English in a global environment. With its practical suggestions for activities, this article will be of use to readers with an interest in introducing a Global Englishes perspective into the classroom.

Finally, Paul Seigny et al. report on a rigorous redevelopment of a teaching assistant (TA) programme for language classes. This highly informative paper will be of interest to anyone engaged in implementing a similar system as it describes the systematic identification of problems in the system, discusses the actions taken to address them, and evaluates the adjustments made. Related to the papers by Yatsuda and McMahon in this volume, it discusses the intercultural value of implementing TA programmes.

We would like to extend our thanks to all the authors who contributed towards Volume 6 of APLJ. Overall, the nine papers brought together here demonstrate the strength of research that exists at APU, as well as the diverse fields of interest represented by faculty within APU's CLE. We all hope that 2021 will provide us with a fresh start and a return to something like normality. It is our hope, too, that the adversity of 2020 will serve as a trigger to stimulate fresh research by APU faculty, both past and present, and that the results of that research will find its way into a future volume of APLJ.

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