Preface

Volume 5 of *The Asia Pacific Journal of Language Research* (APLJ) marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU). As such it is a special volume and it is therefore apposite that the articles herein reflect the history of research among APU's language faculty, both past and present. In particular, we are honoured to be able to publish a typically erudite article by the first director of the then Language Institute at APU, Katsuhiro Ohashi, who was also editor-in-chief for many years of *Polyglossia*, the predecessor of *APLJ*. The five articles brought together in Volume 5 represent the research interests APU's language faculty are engaged in, the different languages taught at the University, and the spirit of collaboration which characterizes language education and research at APU.

The first article, by Katsuhiro Ohashi, presents a fascinating discussion within the field of historical linguistics, arguing that certain internal changes observable in the English language at present – what the author terms 'self-regeneration' – mirror features of the language from the past. The author shares a wealth of examples of this linguistic change, or linguistic cycling, to illustrate his thesis, which he develops through the key concepts of *remaking* and *spiral development*.

The article by Derrick Apple and Benjamin Rentler focuses on the role technology plays in language teaching by reporting the findings of research conducted with stakeholders affected by the use of a learning management system (LMS). They use a Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) survey to determine how favourably the institution's choice of LMS has been received by students and teachers. The results have practical implications for the future enhancement of education at the institution because, as the authors argue, for its full potential to be utilized, the LMS users' acceptance of the technology is crucial. This paper will be of interest to any institution considering the adoption of a LMS as it presents a rigorous method for understanding the perceptions of e-learning and the technological tools which support it.

Anthony Diaz's contribution to this volume is a sister article to the one published in Volume 4 of *APLJ*, extending his pilot study involving the development of a corpus of students' written work. Here, the author takes a closer look at the APU Corpus of Japanese Learner English and examines how the written English of Japanese APU students differs from that of native users. In doing so, the author presents a method for determining students' needs with respect to writing.

The fourth paper, by Tamiko Itabashi, Erina Kirisawa, Ryo Takada and Wakana Watanabe, reports on the results of research on the implementation of a language education programme involving students learning Japanese out in the local area. The effects of this programme, which made use of the service learning framework in its design, are analyzed from three perspectives: the enhancement of academic performance, the cultivation of citizenship, and personal growth. Their paper provides specific details to further promote two of these objectives of service learning: the cultivation of citizenship and self-development. The information provided by this research will be of great use when introducing service learning into language education programmes in the future.

Finally, complementing her article published in Volume 4 of *APLJ*, Luo Hua's paper focuses on the most important grammar point in intermediate-level Chinese grammar, "Le". The author describes how she collected data from essays of intermediate Chinese students studying at APU and subsequently developed an effective method of teaching "Le" through an in-depth analysis of cases of its misuse by learners.

It is hoped that readers will find plenty of food for thought and practical advice in the research articles presented in Volume 5 of *APLJ*. A wealth of research has been conducted by APU faculty over the past 20 years, as evidenced by the number and variety of articles published in both *Polyglossia* and its recent successor, *APLJ*. If the next 20 years of research comes close to matching this output, it bodes well for the future of language education in the Center for Language Education at APU.

Steven Pattison

Chief Editor

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