

AATJ JSP SIG Newsletter: Issue no. 28, March 9, 2020

The AATJ JSP SIG Newsletter bi-annually highlights upcoming events and opportunities of interest. Notices appear under six headings:

- 1. JSP SIG Announcements**
- 2. Conferences and Workshops**
- 3. Grants and Awards Opportunities**
- 4. Other Information**
- 5. JSP Class in the Spotlight**
- 6. Member in the Spotlight (Not posted in this issue)**

If you have notices in these categories that you would like posted here, please send them to Tomoko Takami at ttakami@sas.upenn.edu. The next newsletter is scheduled to be published in September 2020. Information received by the end of August 2020 will be included in this issue.

(1) JSP SIG Announcements

The unusual warm winter is about to end here in Philadelphia. We had no snow day this year, which is unfortunate according to my younger son. With the evolving COVID-19 situation worldwide, there are more concerns and worries about traveling overseas and studying abroad. This is a difficult time, but I hope everybody is safe and stays positive.

This issue features The *JSP Class in the Spotlight* written by Mieko Kawai-sensei of University of Virginia. The *Member in the Spotlight* is written by Minako Kobayashi-sensei of Haverford College. I hope you will enjoy reading their articles.

Tomoko Takami, JSP-SIG Chair

(2) Conferences and Workshops

The 2020 AATJ SPRING CONFERENCE

The 2020 American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Spring Conference will be held in Boston, MA on March 19th. The conference will be held in conjunction with the Association for Asian Studies (AAS). For more detailed information visit:

<https://www.aatj.org/resources/conferences/2020/spring/AATJ2020SpringConferenceProgram.pdf>

JSP-SIG panels were accepted and will be presented. The titles of the panels and presenters are:

SESSION 1-C: SIG PAPERS (JAPANESE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES; JHL [JAMAICA POND ROOM]

Chair: Yukiko Hatasa, Hiroshima University

「研究・教育を目的としたアカデミック・スピーキングコーパスの構築とその活用方法」 (Academic speaking corpus for research and pedagogical purposes: its design and usage)

Chiemi Hanzawa, Yokohama National University; Katsuhiko Ito, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

「COIL型学習を用いた日米学生による協働ビジネスプロジェクトの取り組み」 (COIL project in Business Japanese class)

Tomoko Shimomura, Arizona State University; Chie Fujikake, Nanzan University

「日本語の Academic Speaking の評価と Good Speaking の特徴」 (Assessment of academic speaking skill and characteristics of good speaking)

Yukiko Hatasa and Chisato Yokoyama Hiroshima University

「南米日系社会における子どもの日本語教育の現状：現場の声を中心に」 (Japanese language education in the Japanese community in South America : From the local teacher's perspective)

Eriko Nakajima, The Japan Foundation, San Paolo

SESSION 2-B: SIG PANEL: JAPANESE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (JSP) [THE FENS ROOM]

Chair: Tomoko Takami, University of Pennsylvania

Panel Title: 「21世紀のビジネス日本語教育：現在と将来」 (Business Japanese Education in the 21st Century: Present and Future)

「グローバル社会に対応できる B.S. B.A. (理科系、文化系)専攻学生の言語教育のカリキュラムの構築：コラボレーションと課題」 (Collaborations and challenges: Designing curricular space for language education among B.S. and B.A. majors to meet the needs of a global society)

Yoshiko Saito-Abbott, California State University, Monterey Bay

「21世紀型スキルを取り入れた中級ビジネス日本語教育実践」 (Intermediate Business Japanese incorporating 21st century skills)

Tomoko Takami, University of Pennsylvania

「デジタル時代のビジネスの日本語教育」 (Business Japanese language education in a digital world)

Motoko Tabuse, Eastern Michigan University

Discussant

Hideki Hara, Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

(3) Grants and Awards Opportunities (no updates)

(4) Other Information (no updates)

(5) JSP Class in the Spotlight: Mieko Kawai –sensei

At the University of Virginia, “Japanese for Professionals” (JAPN 4801) was first offered in Spring 2016. Students enrolled in this 4th-year class have various backgrounds, with their majors ranging from Computer-Science, Government Policy, Business, Education, Engineering, and Japanese Language and Literature. Therefore, the course aims to cultivate, regardless of the academic field or career path the students are pursuing, future professionals’ cross-cultural awareness, so they can operate effectively in the global world, utilizing their advanced-level Japanese language skills and cultural knowledge.

One of the most important objectives for students in this course is to be able to become aware of potential communication conflicts that involve native and non-native speakers of Japanese at a workplace and propose solutions to those complex inter-cultural situations. Through a variety of case studies, they learn what (often covert) cultural values and communication styles Japanese people may have, such as reliance on non-verbal communication, strong preference for group-based decision, or avoidance of confrontation at workplace, as pointed out by researchers and business experts [JETRO 1999, Kopp 2015, and Mayor 2014].

It is often the case that students seem to have no trouble understanding a given situation involving the target culture. However, seeing the same phenomenon from the perspective of native speakers is a challenge. For instance, in the case below, taken from a real business conflict incident, sampled from “Case Studies for Business Communication” [Kondo et. al., 2015], all of my students are very enthusiastic about describing how Mr. Tanaka is an irrational and unreasonable boss, and no one, so far, has suggested at the outset what the underlying cultural assumptions might be that would make his behavior actually acceptable. What would you, a reader of this JSP Newsletter as well as Japanese language teacher, say about this situation?

I, Maha, have been working for an IT company in Japan for about a year. Last Thursday there was such a thing.....

At 5 p.m., Mr. Tanaka asked me to work on the data processing task, due the next day. I answered “Sure I will,” and returned to the seat. I worked on it until 6 o’ clock and went home. The next morning, I came to the office at 9:15 a.m. as usual and started to work right away. While I was responding to some emails, I noticed Mr. Tanaka walking around my desk for a while. Then I noticed he was looking into my computer screen over the shoulder! He asked me, “Have you got the data input done?”

It was 9:30 am! I answered, “It’s not done yet.” There were urgent emails to be taken care of, and they were there before Mr. Tanaka asked me the job. Mr. Tanaka said, “Please show me what you have done so far.” Then I thought, why do I need to show it now, when I have not completed it yet. I didn’t know what to do.

After that, being confused and concerned, I could not work on the task anymore. I cannot trust him -- Mr. Tanaka, my direct supervisor. What am I supposed to do now?

Through discussions, however, the students gradually become aware of the fact that there is the other side of the story. They slowly change the negative image they had toward Tanaka and start realizing how biased they were. Then we, the students and the instructor together, explore ideas for what could be done if we were colleagues of Maha's.

At the end of the semester, the students engage in a group project to develop half-an-hour cross-cultural workshops, as if they were hired as CIR (Coordinator for International Relations) in the JET Program who are placed in administrative offices of local governments in Japan. In a group of 3-4, they prepare a workshop that addresses specific cultural values and potential conflicts. First, they identify their targeted audience (background information needed: age-group, gender, experience, etc.) for the training session. Next, they create sample materials that can be used in the proposed workshop that involve hands-on activities for its participants (handouts, brochures, etc.) and the workshop plan. These student-designed workshops are shared in class, and their plans and sample materials are evaluated by the peers and the instructor, based on 1) ideas for engagement, 2) creativity, 3) socio-cultural appropriateness, 4) language sophistication, 5) organization, and 6) potential impact.

(6) Member in the Spotlight: Minako Kobayashi- sensei

Minako Kobayahsi sensei had an interesting path to her present position as Japanese Instructor at Haverford College from 2005. She has never imagined that she could have worked at such a prestigious college for a longtime like this in the USA. After graduating from Japan Woman's University with middle and high school teacher's certificate, she worked for two companies, Mercedes-Benz Japan and Road Facilities Association for 7 years. She totally enjoyed working in public relations and parts departments where she luckily learned customer management, communication and global networking skills.

She always tried to think about what she could do for students other than teaching Japanese language in and outside of classes. Then, she used to organize Shofuso Japanese Garden visit and Japanese style curry parties. As one of tennis fundraise organizers for Japanese Languages School of Philadelphia (since 2004), she kindly invited her students to join it for the sake of her students networking in future. Furthermore, though DVTJ (Delaware Valley Teachers of Japanese), she has organized Japanese speech presentations for students and many workshops for Japanese teachers with other DVTJ members for more than ten years. She really appreciates wonderful experiences by collaborating with local DVTJ members so far.

One of the most memorable events was "Kakehashi Project" in which American students visit Japan to 'promote mutual trust and understanding among the people of Japan and the USA to build a basis for future friendship and cooperation'. Through DVTJ activities, she initiated the communication with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) in May 2018. "Kakehashi Project" is funded 100% by MOFA for the students. She interacted tons of emails for the project and selected students from many applicants. Finally in March 2019 for 9 days, she had a great Kakehashi Trip to Japan with 22 students and 3 supervisors(including her), together with Haverford and Bryn Mawr College, Villanova University, Ursinus College. She was a coordinator

in four Schools. Tokyo in 3 days and Aomori prefecture in 4 days. She had a wonderful first visit to Aomori prefecture in her life like the students. Most of the student's best memories was homestay experience in Aomori. Moreover, families in Aomori who offered homestay for the students were so happy to meet our students. According to her point of view, "Kakehashi Project" proved to be a win-win project for both mentally and economically.

Her favorite words is "Once - in a lifetime meeting", 一期一会 in Japanese. Her stress free time is playing tennis, golf, meditation, movie watching, concerts, reading books, Japanese calligraphy and of course eating delicious food. She is into watching the clouds and enjoying strange shaped clouds, maybe she can find UFOs coming out from them in the future. Please come and talk to her about your own UFO experience if you have one or believe it !?



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