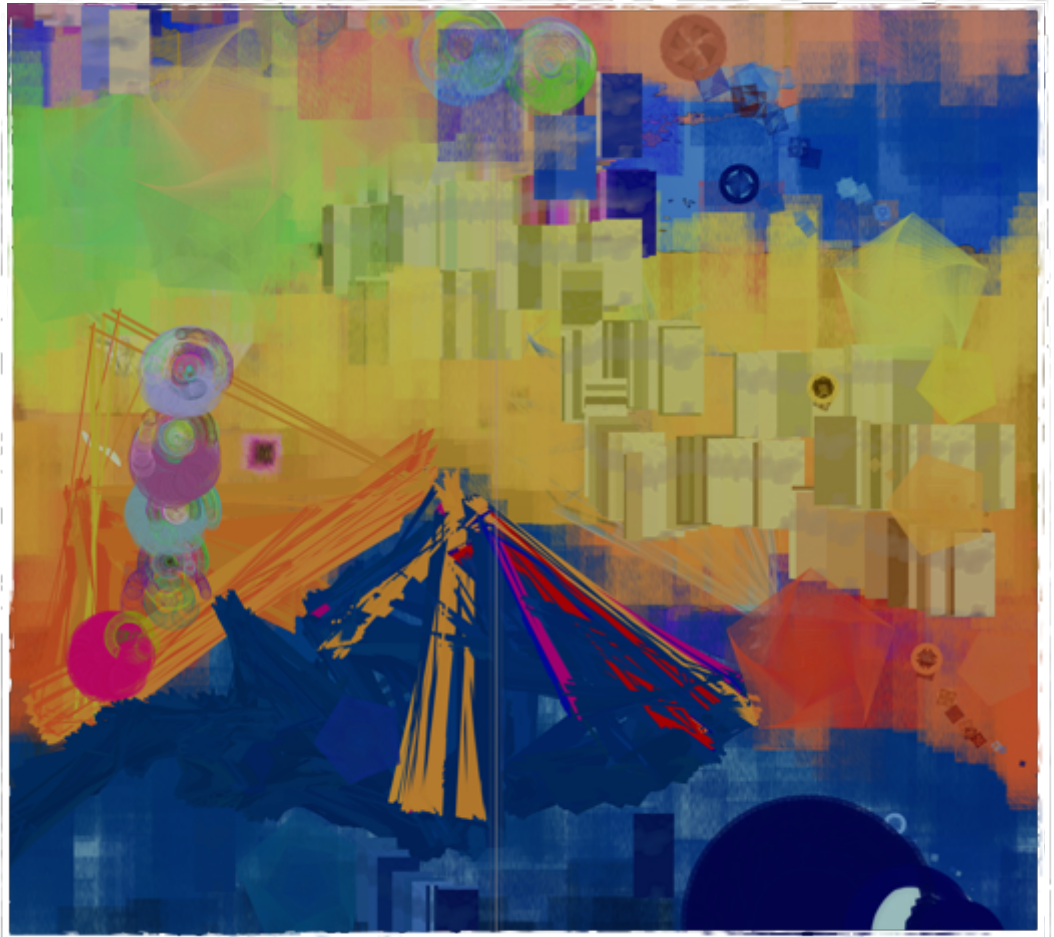


VOLUME  
**27.2**  
(2019)

# Between Keys



## A publication of the JALT Materials Writers Special Interest Group

The Materials Writers SIG was established for the purpose of helping members to turn fresh teaching ideas into useful classroom materials. We try to be a mutual assistance network, offering information regarding copyright law, sharing practical advice on publishing practices, including self-publication, and suggesting ways to create better language learning materials for general consumption or for individual classroom use.

[WWW.MATERIALSWRITERS.ORG](http://WWW.MATERIALSWRITERS.ORG)



# Table of Contents

## Foreword

|   |   |
|---|---|
| From the Publication Chair (Robert Dykes) ..... | 3 |
|---|---|

## Officer Reports

|  |   |
|--|---|
| From the Coordinator (Adam Murray) ..... | 3 |
|--|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| From the Treasurer (Marcus Grandon) ..... | 4 |
|---|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| From the Program Chair (Lindsay Wells) ..... | 5 |
|--|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| From the Membership Chair (Forrest Nelson) ..... | 6 |
|--|---|

## Article

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Creating Effective Learning Activities for Returnee Students (Niall Walsh & Brian Cullen).. | 7 |
|---|---|

# Foreword

Robert Dykes (Publication Chair)

Dear Readers,

Welcome back to *Between the Keys*. Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Robert Dykes and I have taken over for Matthew Keighley as your new Publications Chair. I wear a lot of hats within JALT, but this is my first time as Publication Chair. Luckily for me, he and the rest of the officers have a solid system in place for BtK. In the 26.2 issue Matthew laid out a workflow model to get your ideas from concept to printed (digitally) in BtK. If all positions came with a literal map like Matthew has left, it would make a lot of officers' and volunteers' lives easier. I don't have much confidence in my writing, and the overwhelming number of rejections and pages of bleeding red I have shoved in a drawer don't help my confidence. Oddly, despite being a bad writer, I think I am a half decent reviewer. I do enjoy this type of work: revising, editing, and working with authors. I find copy-editing enjoyable like it's a word search. Combing the pages for that extra space that snuck in there or a synonym that fits just a little better. I've also been on the receiving end of not helpful and condescending feedback, so I appreciate this opportunity to offer you the opposite and will be here to help you get published in BtK.

Besides content submissions we could also use your help on our editing and proofreading team. It is not a problem if you have no experience proofreading or editing; this is a great place to get started. I am still learning and will be for a long time to come. This is very much a team effort and we will do our best to help you learn the process. (You can also add it to your CV). If you are interested or have any questions you can send me an email by the MW SIG homepage.

## From the Coordinator

Adam Murray

I am happy to report that our SIG is doing reasonably well. As the report from the Member Chair shows, membership is fairly stable, although there has been a slight decrease. While I am disappointed, it is worth mentioning that most SIGs experienced membership decreases in 2019. In 2019, we did a variety of activities such as co-sponsoring a conference with Okinawa JALT and the PIE SIG and offering iTDi scholarships. 2020 looks like it will be an exciting time to be a SIG member. In addition to our annual forums at PanSIG and the JALT International Conference, we are thinking of some new ways to make YOUR SIG even better. In the upcoming months, we will keep you informed via the Members' Mailing List. If you are interested in becoming more active in your SIG, please don't hesitate to contact me through the MW homepage.

# From the Treasurer

Marcus Grandon

I'm pleased to report that our SIG is in healthy financial condition. So far in 2019, we've received operating funds from JALT National and program fees for participating in PanSIG. In line with our financial strategy to be conservative with spending, over the past year we've kept spending to a minimum. The medium-term reasons for being conservative are: 1) we wanted to return the SIG to a healthy financial state, and 2) we'd like to sponsor a speaker at the international conference. Frankly, we've had enough in the bank since 2018 to sponsor a local person at the annual conference. Unfortunately, JALT turned down our speaker's proposal for the conference in 2018, and we didn't sponsor a speaker at the annual conference in 2019. So, we saved the money, and now it looks like we even have enough money to bring someone from overseas in 2020. We discussed potential people to sponsor at our annual meeting in November, and are in the process of reaching out to check on the availability of these speakers.

New this year, we co-sponsored the 2019 OKINAWA JALT Summer Language Teaching Symposium with Okinawa JALT, the Speech, Drama and Debate SIG, and Pearson Japan. For this conference, we did sponsor Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto to present, and we recorded her presentation, which we plan to make available to JALT members. The conference generated additional income for our SIG. While we do not have the totals on what we earned from the conference yet, we do expect additional funds to be paid. At the symposium, we also purchased scholarships for professional development courses at iTDi that were made available for free to four SIG members.

Please keep in mind that the SIG funds are our funds. If you have any ideas on how we can spend the money, please contact me or any other officer through the MW homepage so that we can further discuss it.

# From the Program Chair

Lindsay Wells

JALT 2019 was as exciting as always. This year, our forum was a panel discussion on the topic of collaboration. Writers Mayumi Hamada, Richard Walker, Simon Fraser, and Walter Davies, as well as publisher Takahiro Imakado, shared their experience and advice on subtopics such as contacting publishers, how to start off on the best possible foot, and best practices for working together. We hope next year's forum will be an even more lively discussion, and we look forward to even more of you attending.

As 2019 comes to a close, it is time to turn our attention to events being planned for next year. First will be our forum at PanSIG 2020 in Niigata city from May 30<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>.



The title of our upcoming forum is: Trends in Commercial Teaching Materials

As society, teaching methodologies, and the needs of students change over time, so must the materials that we use in the classroom evolve. These changes can affect a number of aspects of teaching materials, from the contents to be covered, to the skills to be focused on, to issues of diversity and inclusiveness, to how linguistic ability is described and assessed. This poses a challenge for materials writers who seek to create materials that are current and innovative. In this forum, we will look at some recent trends in commercial teaching materials in order to better understand what publishers, teachers, and students are looking for today.

If you would like to participate in this forum, please contact me ASAP through the website.

Last year, the Materials Writers SIG co-sponsored the Okinawa JALT 2019 Summer Language Teaching Symposium in Naha. In addition, we sponsored event speaker Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto. The symposium was a success, with more than 70 attendees and 50 speakers, and we look forward to participating again in 2020. Details are forthcoming.

Finally, we held our annual SIG Forum at JALT 2019 from November 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> in Tsukuba. In all of our forums, we would like to showcase as wide a range of our work as possible. We welcome not only seasoned writers and presenters, but also members who may not yet have had the opportunity to participate in a forum and who have new and interesting ideas to share. Forums are an excellent opportunity to gain presentation experience, network with other materials creators, share your work, and get new ideas.



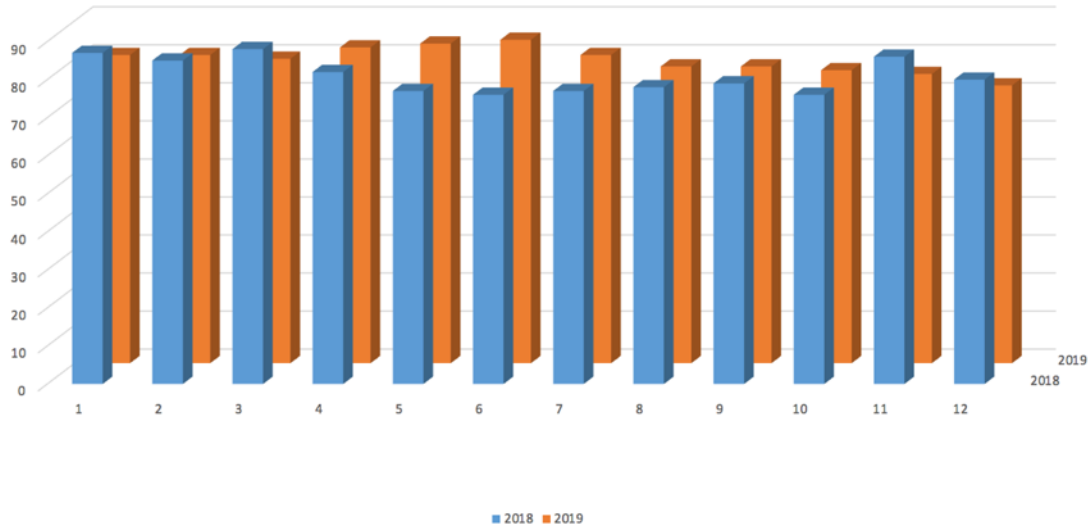
*Barbara delivering her featured talk*

If you have an idea or a project that you would like to talk about in upcoming forums, please do not hesitate to contact me through the SIG website.

# From the Membership Chair

Forrest Nelson

2018-2019 Membership Report



The chart above represents the monthly number of JALT MW Sig members. For 2019, the average membership was 80 members. The lowest membership was in the month of December at 73 and the highest membership was in June at 85. Comparing 2018 and 2019, membership began to decrease in July this year. Finally, there has been about 1.4% average decrease in membership in 2019 compared with 2018.

# Creating Effective Learning Activities for Returnee Students

Niall Walsh (Nanzan Kokusai Senior and Junior High School)

Brian Cullen (Nagoya Institute of Technology)

One area of pedagogical research that has been largely ignored in materials development is material focusing on the needs of returnee Japanese students who have returned to Japan after having spent at least one year of their education in another country. Recently, I had the chance to interview Niall Walsh about his experiences in this area which resulted in this co-written article.

Enomoto (2018) reports that a survey carried out by the Japanese government's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology estimated that in 2015, there were about 80,000 returnee students enrolled in the Japanese educational system from elementary school through university. Many returnee students, known as *kikokushijo* in Japanese, return to Japan with a highly developed English linguistic proficiency and a deeper understanding of foreign cultures. Unfortunately, most Japanese classrooms are insufficiently prepared to further develop the returnee's language ability because of the focus on beginner to intermediate non-returnee ESL learners. This paper briefly discusses some pedagogical issues that educators should be conscious of when teaching returnees and the kind of materials and learning activities that may be useful.

## The Materials Development Context

Niall started developing materials when he was working as an assistant language teacher (ALT) at an elementary school in central Japan and enjoyed creating materials to match context variables such as age, gender, and learning needs. He was also able to avail himself of the many other readily available teaching resources designed with a young ESL learner in mind. However, after commencing his current position at a high school which primarily consists of returnee students, he quickly discovered that there were no such materials specifically designed for this cohort of student.

The difficulty with developing material for returnees is that the term returnee itself masks the complexity of these students' English language proficiency levels. Those who lived in other Asian countries or attended Japanese schools abroad usually had an English proficiency level similar to non-returnees in Japanese public schools, but returnees who had lived in English-speaking countries or studied at international schools abroad had better spoken English ability. Niall soon realized, however, that being nearly bilingual is not the same as being biliterate. Both the lower- and higher-level returnees require language-learning materials to bring them towards what Cummins (1981) calls cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), and Cummins suggests that this is a level which immigrants to a country (of which returnees once were) need to attain grade norms in the target language. Cummins conservatively estimates that this takes five years of schooling in the target language. Therefore, a student who has returned to Japan after less than this time still may not have fully developed literacy skills in the language.

Materials for returnees also need to take account of students' extended period of study in cultures and classrooms where voicing opinions is common in contrast to a Japanese classroom where

vocalization of opinions is often discouraged. A teacher of returnee students should be aware that although research by Sasagawa, Toyoda, and Sakano (2006) found that many returnees appear to adapt to a Japanese classroom of non-returnee peers, the authors of that same research believe that many times, returnees are masking their individualism and trying hard to fit into their new environment. As a result, the classroom environment should be carefully managed with adequate materials designed to maintain a returnee on their learning trajectory.

### Materials for Returnee Students

Literature is often used as a primary tool in creating materials and learning activities that promote cognitive engagement for emerging bilingual students (Macleroy, 2013) and is an effective resource in a returnee language classroom. Niall also uses original literature texts as a starting point for creating interactive learning materials so that students have opportunities to produce language and to interact with others in the target language in a meaningful manner.

Appendix 1 shows an extract of the learning materials for a role play, a courtroom drama in which students carry out a mock trial. This activity enabled the students to explore the text while allowing the teacher to confirm that the students had mastered the material. The literature texts were *Romeo and Juliet* and *Wuthering Heights*, so he developed a sequence of materials that were carried out over three lessons, a total of three to four hours that aimed to develop returnees' linguistic ability and independent cognitive process. Depending on your context, you may choose to chunk it differently or spend more or less time on the activity.

Through the materials, each student was allocated a part or role of one of the characters from the story. Then, the student had to adopt the position of the character by understanding the intricate functions they perform in the story. For example, in *Romeo and Juliet*, one student took the role of Lady Capulet and another took the role of Romeo, and so on. The lesson culminated in the mock trial with Romeo, just after killing Tybalt, facing prosecutors whose roles were played by other students. Each student in their respective parts as jury, witnesses, prosecuting attorney and defense attorney had a role to perform based on the play. Stronger students can be assigned the roles of prosecutor and defense attorney or two students can be assigned for each of these roles. In a large class, you can divide the students into two groups, and while one group is performing, the other is observing as the jury. To mediate the courtroom drama and ensure for a smooth activity, the teacher also played the role of judge and was able to have fun hamming it up saying things like "silence in court" to maintain a good flow and interest level in the activity. The inclusion of the teacher as a character also enabled the teacher to monitor and assess the interaction of the students carrying out the task, and check that students were able to consolidate and extend their learning by putting each element and perspective of the narrative together in the activity.

Materials similar to Appendix 1 were also developed for *Wuthering Heights*. The character Heathcliff can be seen as the villain, and again a mock trial was held. In a previous lesson, before the trial, the teacher asked the class, by a show of hands, who thought Heathcliff was chiefly responsible for Catherine's death and who thought he was innocent. The majority thought he was largely culpable. But after hearing the evidence in the subsequent full trial, only a couple of students still believed he was guilty. The teacher then followed up this second vote with a discussion of "never judging a book by its cover." From this example, we can see how appropriate material design can facilitate an interactive learning consolidation task which supports not only retention and understanding of the material but can also help develop deeper critical thinking skills.



## Creating materials to support lower-level returnee students

Niall reports that the most difficult aspect of creating materials for returnee students is that the wide level of English ability of returnee students range from beginners to advanced. However, teachers can turn this challenge of varying levels into a positive by encouraging students to be caretakers of each other's language development. Inevitably, in a returnee classroom, each student will have acquired different levels of English ability from having studied in different language environments. The stronger language students can support and scaffold the weaker ones. Similarly, with an activity like the mock trial, the teacher can scaffold the less proficient students by providing additional support, for example discussion support language examples and exercises such as the following:

*Fill in the blanks based on your knowledge of the text and your own ideas. Then share with a classmate.*

### **Making predictions**

I think that Romeo is not guilty because \_\_\_\_\_

I think \_\_\_\_\_ might \_\_\_\_\_ because I know that \_\_\_\_\_

If \_\_\_\_\_ then \_\_\_\_\_

### **Cause and Effect**

\_\_\_\_\_ is the most likely cause for \_\_\_\_\_

The effects of \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_

The reason \_\_\_\_\_ occurred was \_\_\_\_\_

That wasn't caused by \_\_\_\_\_. It was actually caused by \_\_\_\_\_

## Conclusion

This short article has offered some rationale and examples of materials for returnee students. If you are teaching these students, it is useful to keep several things in mind. First, being bilingual is not the same thing as being biliterate. Second, even if a returnee appears to be fitting in to a non-returnee classroom this does not always equate to their language needs being met. Third, returnee students can often learn more language from each other than they will learn from the teacher. To conclude, returnees often have large gaps in their English ability and materials are most useful when they integrate reading, writing, and interactive discussions that take returnees beyond the surface level of their bilingual ability to the deeper level of building on their existing language skills and world experience to also develop biliteracy. To that end, more resources must be invested in language learning materials that enable a returnee to continue their language learning journey.

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## Appendix 1 – Romeo and Juliet Mock Trial

Note: All writing areas and exercises have been abbreviated below to save space.

### Lesson 1 – Moving from the text to the trial

#### Remembering the Text

*With a partner, check your knowledge of Romeo and Juliet by answering the questions below.*

1. What were the names of the two families?
2. Where did Romeo first see Juliet?
3. Why was Romeo banished from Verona?

#### Preparing for Trial

*Write your answers to these questions. Then discuss them with your classmates.*

1. Have you ever been to a trial or seen one on television or in a movie?
2. Why does someone go on trial?
3. Do you know the characters in a trial? What does each do:

|                    |               |              |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| A judge            | The defendant | A prosecutor |
| A defense attorney | A jury        | A witness    |

#### Setting up the Trial

After killing Tybalt, Romeo has been put on trial for his murder. If found guilty, he will be executed. In this class, we are going to have a mock trial with each student being assigned a character from the play or a courtroom role. The teacher will assign your role from the list below, or you may be assigned the role of prosecutor or defense attorney.

Romeo Juliet Benvolio Friar Laurence Lord Montague Lady Capulet

Before the teacher assigns your role, please discuss the following.

1. *Discuss with your classmates what each character might think about Romeo's involvement in Tybalt's death.*
2. *Discuss the role in the trial of the prosecutor and defense attorney.*

#### Preparing Your Role

*Your teacher will now assign roles. Fill in the relevant information about your character below.*

Character Name: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe your character?

\_\_\_\_\_

What are your character's thoughts and feelings about Romeo's possible guilt?

\_\_\_\_\_

If you are called as a witness, what might you say?

#### Prosecutor Role

1. Write 2-3 lines as an opening statement to describe your view of the issue.

2. What questions are you going to ask the characters?

Example: To Lady Capulet - What type of person was Tybalt?

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#### *Defense Attorney Role*

1. Write 2-3 lines as an opening statement to describe your view of the issue.

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2. What questions are you going to ask the characters?

Example: To Benvolio- Do you think that Romeo would have killed Tybalt if Tybalt hadn't killed Mercutio?

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#### Lesson 2 - Trial rehearsal

*Work in groups to rehearse the mock trial.*

1. *Using your notes from the previous lesson (and your imagination), give a self-introduction to the members of your group as your assigned character.*

2. *The prosecutor and defense attorney will visit each group in turn and ask his/her prepared questions to the witnesses. Answer their questions fully.*

#### **Follow-Up/Homework**

Prosecutor and defense attorney: Prepare follow-up questions for the trial in the next lesson.

Other characters: Think about how you answered the questions today. Prepare better answers for the mock trial in the next lesson.

#### Lesson 3 - Mock Trial

Your teacher will lay out the classroom to replicate a courtroom.

1. Prosecutor: Make a simple opening statement describing your view of the issue.

2. Defense Attorney: Make a simple opening statement describing your view of the issue.

3. Take turns introducing yourself as your character to the court. Give your view.

4. Prosecutor: Call the appropriate witnesses and ask your questions.

5. Defense Attorney: Call the appropriate witnesses and ask your questions.

#### **Deciding the outcome of the trial**

1. Now that you have heard all the evidence, it is time to become a member of the jury and vote on whether Romeo is guilty.

2. If Romeo is found guilty, what is an appropriate punishment?

#### **Follow-Up**

1. Did you enjoy this trial? Why or why not?

2. How has this trial affected your understanding of Romeo and Juliet?