

**14<sup>th</sup> Autumn Workshop**  
Research Group for Teaching Oral Communication in Japan  
第14回表現主体の外国語教育研究会

The Autumn Workshop is an annual gathering aimed at sharing practical solutions and classroom research on the common challenges we face when teaching oral communication in Japan.

**Seinan Gakuin University  
Fukuoka**  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**10:00 - 12:00 A framework for conceptualizing oral communication best practices**  
Over the years, the following three principles have emerged to form the basis of our approach to teaching oral communication:  
1. Building speaking skills for real-time conversation on everyday life topics  
2. Regular oral testing  
3. Raising awareness of cross-cultural differences in speaking styles and how to overcome them  
In this morning session, Jerry Talandis Jr, Bruno Vannieu, and Jean-Luc Azra will summarise this general framework and consider some of its implications and potential benefits.

**13:30 - 17:00 Classroom practice & research**  
The following presenters share successful lesson activities or report on their classroom research projects:  
**Alex Bodnar** (University of Nagasaki): Keeping it real! True speed listening and fluency practice  
**Jonathan Britten** (Seinan Gakuin University): My Experiences with Conversations in Class  
**Richard Lee** (Kumamoto University): Increasing Participation Among Reticent Students  
**Hiroshi Miyakoshi** (Aichi Shukutoku University): Study Abroad pre-departure training for intermediate level students  
**Michael Stout** (University of Tsukuba): Getting students to speak: an action research approach

Seinan Gakuin University  
Academic Research Building, Room 2, 1F  
〒816-8502 福岡県北九州市小倉南区1-1-1  
Subway: Minami Station  
19 minutes from Fukuoka airport  
13 minutes from Hakata Shinjuku station

Dinner party: 17:30 - 19:30  
For information & registration:  
www.an.almapub.com  
Tel: 092-2107-5321

# 14<sup>th</sup> Autumn Workshop

## of the Research Group for Teaching Oral Communication in Japan

## 第14回表現主体の外国語教育研究会

**Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016**  
**Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka**

[Register here to attend the Autumn Workshop](#)  
(you can also access this link from the Alma Publishing homepage)

The Autumn Workshop is an annual gathering aimed at sharing practical solutions or classroom research on common challenges we face in teaching oral communication to Japanese students. Teachers not interested in presenting are also more than welcomed to attend. The main goal is to provide a forum for teachers to share insights, best practices, and research that can enhance how speaking skills are taught in this country.

The Autumn Workshop is sponsored by Alma Publishing.

### 10:00 - 12:00 A framework for conceptualizing oral communication best practices

Over the years, the following three principles have emerged to form the basis of our approach for how best to teach oral communication in any language:

1. Building speaking skills for interactive, real-time conversation on everyday life topics
2. Regular oral testing
3. Raising awareness of cross-cultural differences in speaking styles and how to overcome them

In this morning session, Jerry Talandis Jr, Bruno Vannieu, and Jean-Luc Azra will summarise this general framework and consider some of its implications.

### How to test speaking skills in Japan

Jerry Talandis Jr, University of Toyama



The main aim of this presentation is to encourage teachers to conduct speaking tests in their oral communication classes. After highlighting the benefits of in-class speaking tests, I will explain key concepts such as positive washback, validity, reliability, and practicality. Next, after going over some general test administration tips, I will cover several in-class testing formats suitable for different size classes. Finally, I will give advice for how to mark speaking tests. Since no previous testing experience is necessary, this session is especially open to teachers new to oral testing.

*Jerry Talandis Jr. has been teaching English in Japan since 1993 and is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Toyama. His research interests include pragmatics, materials design, language testing, and professional development through classroom-based research. He is also co-author of the textbook "Conversations in Class, 3rd Edition" and the author of the forthcoming "How to Test Speaking Skills in Japan: A Quick-Start Guide".*

### Using cultural codes to our advantage

Bruno Vannieu, Kobe University



Cultural styles of communication affect the typical university oral communication class in two ways: classroom interaction and the way students sound when they are having conversations. How can we best use our understanding of various cultural factors to avoid problems of miscommunication and deliver successful classes? This presentation will summarize 15 years of applied research in this area.

*Bruno Vannieu is a tokunin professor at Kobe University, where he just had the pleasure of receiving the Best Teacher award for the 5th time. He is a co-author of 12 French and English textbooks.*

## Models and algorithms in the language class

Jean-Luc Azra, Seinan Gakuin University



Our Japanese students have trouble mastering communication in a foreign language for a number of cultural reasons, but recently I have come to think that communication is also a process with its own quantifiable rules that can be expressed mathematically. If taught in a clear, step-by-step manner, these formulas can benefit students in a number of ways. In this short presentation, I will show how mathematical models and algorithms can be used to radically improve students' spoken and written expression in another language.

*Jean-Luc Azra has been living in Japan since 1995. He teaches French at Seinan Gakuin University. His focus is mainly spoken and written expression, as well as intercultural*

*communication.*

## 13:30 - 16:30 Lesson ideas and classroom research

After lunch, participants will share successful lesson activities or research projects, request feedback on potential research ideas, or simply attend and learn from peers.

### Keeping it Real: True Speed Listening and Fluency Practice

Alex Bodnar, University of Nagasaki



It is rare to find authentic materials for listening practice which are teacher-friendly and student-friendly. In this workshop, I will demonstrate how students can learn independently or with teacher guidance using the website [goldfish365.com](http://goldfish365.com). Students listen to natural, unscripted English conversations and use them as a base for speaking fluency practice.

*Alex Bodnar is from Toronto, Canada. He studied Journalism and Communication at Carleton University in Ottawa. He has been teaching English at the post-secondary level in Japan for nine years.*

### Study Abroad pre-departure training for intermediate-level students

Hiromi Miyakoshi, Aichi Shukutoku University



I will describe an experiment in helping lower-intermediate English level students (mostly CEFR A2) increase their confidence for English speaking before their departure while using a combination of hospital English and the textbook *Conversations in Class*, 3rd Edition. After a period of conversation practice, students had the opportunity to hold real English conversations with native speakers.

Presentation format: before-after

*Hiromi Miyakoshi is in charge of the study abroad program at Aichi Shukutoku University. She has sent more than 100 students to the UK, Australia, and the United States.*

### My Experiences with *Conversations in Class*

Jonathan Britten, Nakamura University, Seinan University



This lecture is a simple discussion of my own fortuitous -- and fortunate -- introduction to the *Conversations in Class* textbook. It includes some thoughts on the original textbook versus the new version, and some comments about the appropriate kind of class and learner this system is best suited for.

Presentation format: before-after.

*Jonathan Britten started teaching at the university level in Japan in 1989 after being hired on the JET Programme. Since 1992 he has worked at Nakamura University in Fukuoka. He has used *Conversations in Class* in several university classes for many years.*



### **Increasing participation among reticent students**

Richard Lee, Kurume Institute of Technology; Kurume National Institute of Technology

This presentation focuses on the use of self-report participation cards to motivate low-level / reticent students to participate in oral English classes. I will describe the participation coding system, report on students' reactions to the self-report cards, and discuss the implications they have for improving in-class participation. Finally, time will be made available for sharing other strategies for improving in-class participation among reticent/low-level students.

Presentation format: Class management technique / activity

*Richard Lee is an English Lecturer at Kurume Institute of Technology. He is interested in study abroad and pragmatics.*

### **Getting students to speak: an action research approach**

Michael Stout, University of Tsukuba



This presentation will reflect on a series of action research projects with students taking required English speaking classes. The presenter will discuss ways in which course methods and materials were modified through action research, and how this led to improved student performance. Also, specific practical implications for classroom-based research will be discussed.

*Michael Stout is an Associate Professor at the University of Tsukuba. His primary research interest is reflective practice.*

## **From 17:30: Dinner party**

[Drink, eat and socialise at a nearby restaurant.](#)

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