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From the Editor

Friends and Colleagues,

Thank you for your support of this twelfth issue of *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*. This journal is a peer-reviewed publication of the Literature in Language Teaching group (SIG) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT).

Leading off, in *Mapping the Heart of Shakespeare*, **Ben Crystal's** unconventionally stylized, highly animated commentary about interpreting Shakespeare is sure to rejuvenate, astonish and possibly even provoke enthusiasts and scholars of the Bard's oeuvre. It complements his June 2018 presentation in Shikoku (https://jalt.org/events/east-shikoku-chapter18-06-03).

In *Literature in the L2 Classroom: addressing communicative and policy goals*, **Sue Fraser** examines recent studies on literature in language teaching, MEXT policy recommendations, and presents a theoretical rationale for using literature in ELT in general and specifically for the Japanese context.

Next, in Literature in Practice, **Wenqi Cui** and **James Clifford Swider** report on *The Cognitive Processing of Paratextual Impacts on Reading Responses to Poetry*. Certain types of bias may affect readers' understanding and attitudes toward reading poetry. They utilize a quantitative approach to study how three types of paratextual information—authorial attribution, biographical information, and genre label—affect students' reading responses to poems.

Then in *Using Roald Dahl's Matilda to develop reader identities and student-teacher rapport* **Lorraine Kipling** details her course design to advance the view that, in part, authentic texts are an appropriate complement to graded readers for somewhat advanced learners of English.

Tara McIlroy and **Simon Bibby** delineate recent LiLT events held in Tokyo and Yokohama.

Donna Tatsuki summarizes her June 2018 presentation, *Teaching Narratives: Intentionally Ambiguous*, to LiLT and Yokohama JALT members. She explains about the value of teaching stories or narratives in the English (EFL) classroom and of the value of listening to and understanding narratives about teaching.

John Maune briefly sketches some of the goings-on at the 49th Annual Convention of the Northeast Modern Language Association *Global Spaces, Local Landscapes and Imagined Worlds* held in Pittsburgh. Finally, **Susan Laura Sullivan** describes a recent publication she co-edited: *Women of a Certain Age*.

The **2018 JALT Conference** will be held from November 23–26 in Shizuoka at Shizuoka Granship. Please refer to https://jalt.org/main/conferences for full details.

LiLT members and readers and researchers from around the world are invited to submit their own observations and findings, as well as their commentary about any of the articles published to date.

The next issue of *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching* is expected to be published at the end of the year and **submissions are being accepted until October 20, 2018**. Further information is available at the LiLT SIG website http://liltsig.org and from the editor of this journal via email: liltsig@gmail.com. You can also submit directly to greggmcnabb@gmail.com.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the contributors who have published in this journal and, as always, to the conscientious, thoughtful people who took time out of their busy schedules to help with editing, proofreading and mentoring. Perhaps you may also want to help us in our double-blind review process and enable us to proceed more efficiently through the publishing process. Most of all, as always, we thank you, our readers.

Gregg McNabb — Editor

About the Literature in Language Teaching Special Interest Group

Literature in Language Teaching (LiLT) is a Special Interest Group (SIG) within the NPO JALT. We established this group in 2011 to encourage and promote the use of literature within language classes. The group coordinates with other groups to hold events, publishes a peer-reviewed journal and publishes several newsletters per year.

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Mapping the Heart of Shakespeare

Ben Crystal
Shakespearean actor, producer, author
http://www.bencrystal.com

I'm lucky to say I've spent the last few years travelling the world, talking about Shakespeare, meeting folk interested in Shakespeare - and some not - acting the Bard's works, and writing about him.

Shakespeare truly is universal. I mean that partly in so far as his works are never about what it is to be from Stratford upon Avon, or to be British - he writes about what it is to be *human*; and so wherever I go, I hear, *Shakespeare is ours*.

The Germans say, *Shakespeare IS German*. The Kathkali actors in Kerala say, *Shakespeare is of India*. And over the last two month long trips to Japan, over 2017-18, I have realised, Shakespeare is Japanese.

The practice of *ma* (間), of peacefulness, of mindfulness, of dedication to one task at a time - of standing by the vending machine to drink your drink, rather than the Western walking and phoning and eating and drinking, and then (at least in Japan) spending a little while looking for *another* vending machine to deposit your empty bottle or can…

I adore the attention to detail in Japan, in the day to day way of life. The dedication and love of craft that permeates every level of society. I learnt the word *shokunin* (職人), in my newly beloved second home of Kochi, on this last trip, and I believe I understand the word deeply and profoundly.

My 2017 TEDx Bergen talk was called, *Shakespeare's Craft: Original Practices*. Shakespeare was a *playwright*, and the only other familiar use of the second half of that word is *shipwright*.

Consider the craft that goes into building a ship, that most important Elizabethan method of transportation, of carrying merchandise, of travel, of war. The science involved. The maths, physics, and team-manship. The bear brute strength and resourcefulness. The problem solving.

Shakespeare and his actors dismantled their theatre when their landlord wouldn't renew their ground lease; but some wily actor pointed out that while they didn't own the ground, *they owned the wooden structure on it.* So they physically moved their performing space to the south side of the River Thames, and rebuilt it as the Globe. Actors did this.

I'm an actor. I can't put up shelves. But I am a craftsman. I've dedicated my life to honing and refining crafts that move forward the acting, the performing, the producing, and the pedagogy and the teaching of Shakespeare's works.

When Will Shakespeare turned his hand away from acting to wrighting, it so befell he was really very good at it.

Not just very good, he was so fine at manipulating the favoured poetic form of the time that he was able to coax it, teasing it to reflect and refract the earthy pace of modern language - while with the very same sharpened feather ink-dipped quill, he reached up to soaring heights, painting end-of-the-day sky-scapes of the heart, the soul, and the human condition.

This is familiar territory. Less known, are that he folded into these thoughts, soliloquies, and conversations the most beautiful directions to his actors; detailed manuals to his friends and colleagues who made his (sometimes lunatic, often never-before-seen-on-stage, always proactive) ideas come to life.

They are as brilliantly complex, infuriatingly open, devastatingly simple stage directions as Miller, Beckett, and Pinter's can be - the problem is, you can't see them on the page, you have to lift up the hood. Or rather, the bonnet.

They are the motor underneath the words, the engine that runs it all, the mechanics of Shakespeare. By the time they had performed *Hamlet* his actors had been learning, playing and tinkering with this engine for over ten years.

He wrote so that they would have understood within the blink of an eye the kinds of things you and I need to analyse, break down, and tear apart.

They would have understood, it was their job. Not only that, they were working on parts tailor-made for them. Ever worn a bespoke suit? A dress made to your exact body measurements? Imagine

being the actor that gets handed the part of Lady Macbeth for the first time. Not only that, *having had it written, especially for you.*

There are great tools to break open Shakespeare's craft-works, to help us get to a similar place of familiarity, and the emotional map is one. I learnt it from the extremely talented actor Emma Pallant, and she learnt it from the amazing educational artery that is Globe Education at Shakespeare's Globe, London, and I take every opportunity I can to further disseminate their sharing of this beautiful tool.

I use this every time I work on a Shakespeare part as an actor, I teach it in as many workshops as will listen, and I spend idle hours on public transport applying this tool to Shakespeare speeches at random, partly because I'm a geek, but mostly because it's the best tool I know. It makes any part of Shakespeare accessible, and easy to analyse, and anyone can do it if they can count to ten.

Shakespeare, when he was writing in poetry, wrote in lines of ten syllables.

As you follow his twenty-year career, the number of syllables in his poetry alarmingly, increasingly wobbles. There are frequently lines of 4, 5, or 6 syllables, as well as lines of 11, 12, or 13 syllables.

The former allowing a pause, a second of thought; the latter indicating the thought being conveyed is flexing against the structure of the poetry, the ideas struggling to be contained by the form.

So a line of less than ten syllables provides a moment for reflection, for consideration, to allow the hurt to hurt, the audience to laugh. The beat stops. The heartbreak.

A line of more than ten syllables yields a flash of pain, a moment of ache, a sudden sweat amid feverish excitement, underneath the words being uttered. The pulse quickens. The heartbeat.

Take a speech, any one at random. I like to use the Folio version of the text, it's the edition edited by two of his actors in the years after he died, and tends to be easier for actors to understand; plus, the Folio version is freely available online.

Enter Hamlet.
Ham.
To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,
Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them: to dye, to sleepe
No more; and by a sleepe, to say we end
The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall shockes
That Flesh is heyre too? 'Tis a consummation
Deuoutly to be wish'd. To dye to sleepe,
To sleepe, perchance to Dreame; I, there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,
When we haue shufflel'd off this mortall coile,
Must giue vs pawse. There's the respect
That makes Calamity of so long life:
For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time,
The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay,
The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes
That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,
When he himselfe might his Quietus make
With a bare Bodkin? Who would these Fardles beare
To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The vndiscouered Countrey, from whose Borne
No Traueller returnes, Puzels the will,
And makes vs rather beare those illes we haue,
Then flye to others that we know not of.
Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,
And thus the Natiue hew of Resolution
Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard their Currants turne away,
And loose the name of Action. Soft you now,
The faire Ophelia? Nimph, in thy Orizons
Be all my sinnes remembred.

I've underlined the last three words of every thought. There are six thoughts before Hamlet turns his attention to Ophelia. Five of them end half way through the line of poetry (thoughts called mid-line endings, a sign that the character is changing tack, interrupting themselves to begin again in a different direction). Two of Hamlet's thoughts are questions, there are no exclamations, and no emotional words like *O, Alack, Woe, or Alas*.

It takes him thirty-three or so lines to say six things, keeps changing tack, doesn't exclaim (get excited), nor does he become obviously emotional: it has the structure of someone exploring a big idea for the first time.

But we want to know what he *feels* about it, and without an emotional word (compare his previous speech, *O what a rogue and peasant slave am I* which is filled with emotional words) it's hard to tell what piques him - so we have to lift up the hood, and here's one way of doing that.

Using the ruler in your word processor, justify the speech more to the centre of the page, and write the numbers 8 9 10 11 12 to the left of the speech, next to the character name, like this:

8	9	10	11	12	
					Enter Hamlet.
					Ham.
					To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
					Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
					The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,
					Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
					And by opposing end them: to dye, to sleepe
					No more; and by a sleepe, to say we end
					The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall shockes
					That Flesh <u>is heyre too?</u> 'Tis a consummation
					Deuoutly <u>to be wish'd</u>. To dye to sleepe,

Now, my favourite Sudoku-like game: count the syllables of each line on your fingers.

The first line has 11 syllables, so I'm going to put an X under 11, next to that line.

The second line has 11, so I'll put an X under 11.

The third has 11, so X under 11.

8	9	10	11	12	
					Enter Hamlet.
					Ham.
			X		To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
			X		Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
			X		The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,

And so on, until you get something that looks like this:

8	9	10	11	12	
					Enter Hamlet.
					Ham.
			X		To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
			X		Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
			X		The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,
			X		Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
			X		And by opposing end them: to dye, to sleepe
			X		No more; and by a sleepe, to say we end
			X		The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall shockes
			X		That Flesh <u>is heyre too?</u> 'Tis a consummation
		X			Deuoutly <u>to be wish'd</u>. To dye to sleepe,
		X			To sleepe, perchance to Dreame; I, there's the rub,
		X			For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,
		X			When we haue shufflel'd off this mortall coile,
X					<u>Must giue vs pawse</u>. There's the respect
		X			That makes Calamity of so long life:
		X			For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time,
			X		The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely,
		X			The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay,
		X			The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes
			X		That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,
		X			When he himselfe might his Quietus make
			X		With <u>a bare Bodkin?</u> Who would these Fardles beare
		X			To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,
		X			But that the dread of something after death,
		X			The vndiscouered Countrey, from whose Borne
		X			No Traueller returnes, Puzels the will,
		X			And makes vs rather beare those illes we haue,
		X			Then flye to others that <u>we know not of</u>
		X			Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,
			X		And thus the Natiue hew of Resolution
		X			Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
			X		And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
		X			With this regard their Currants turne away,
		X			And loose the <u>name of Action</u>. Soft you now,
					The faire Ophelia? Nimph, in thy Orizons
					Be all my sinnes remembred.

Remember: the line next to the speech should be straight - he's supposed to be writing in regular iambic pentameter. It does settle down towards the end, but evidently the ideas he's conveying in the speech keep trying to burst out of the poetic form. Well, what happens after we die *is* a big idea, so that makes sense. But how does Hamlet *feel* about it?

Turn the page through 45 degrees, and - these metrical irregularities become the character's heartbeat.

Just like a heart rate monitor in a hospital, spiking in moments of distress, lulling in moments of reflection.

This is the character's pulse, flickering, rising and falling, an indicator of their feelings towards their subject matter.

Was Shakespeare that good? Yes, it seems that he was.

Doesn't this make Shakespeare constrictive?

No, this is the framework, the scaffold tower to support your building of the speech. Then once you're in front of an audience you must trust your own instincts rather than have them watch you remember numbers on a scale.

This is the beginning, a suggestion, a nudge in the right direction from your kindly, helpful playwright.

How does he feel about the items in the list he makes: *the oppressor's wrong, the poor man's contumely, the pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay, the insolence of office and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes*?

Most folk would answer he might feel the most about *The pangs of dispriz'd love*, because of Ophelia. But it's a line of ten. His pulse flickers on *The oppressors wrong…* and *The spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes,* both lines of eleven; perhaps this a speech about killing Claudius than it is about suicide.

He sets up the discussion of what happens after we die, then says such a thought *must give us pause*. So Shakespeare breaks the metre, giving a line of eight syllables, allowing a pause after the word *pause*.

With no rehearsal time or space available to him, he wrote directions into his actors' speeches so he wouldn't need to see them rehearse through the whole thing twenty times over; they'd intuit so much that the first run-through would be pretty close to perfect.

The complicated bits, the dances, the fights and big group scenes might need a neaten and polish, but aside from that - would Shakespeare's actors have had to do an exercise like this? They were working on this type of poetry every day; they would've sensed the wrinkles in the verse as they would the time of the day from the sun in the sky.

When I'm not touring schools or emotional-mapping speeches I love, I have been researching and building new tools. The one: we relaunched our website, shakespeareswords.com in April 2018.

This third iteration rebuilt the base search engine that our 2002 book was built on, and over six months we made it 6-10 times faster, and made the search engine bullet proof like Google's (so no user is ever faced with a No Results page, but instead a friendly, Did you mean…?). We added Folio and Quarto texts, made our famed relationship Circles interactive, added the ability to look at a Character's Part in isolation, as well as a slew of other new features that will provide a couple of MA theses on ground breaking computational linguistics, thanks to my 75 year old genius Papa's ability to keep up with new-fangled ways.

In fact, there's a one-month free trial for your exploration associated with this piece. Simply send a message with your name and e-mail address to bard@shakespeareswords.com mentioning this article. This offer expires at the end of October.

The second is in original practices - exploring the ways Shakespeare's company rehearsed, performed, and generally produced his plays, each new works dropping every six months or so for twenty years, and adapting these methods for a modern Shakespeare ensemble, and their global audiences.

The-handed-down-from-generation-to-generation-craft of Kabuki is for another time.

Elizabethan English law insisted on all-male casts; we raise our Ensembles unisex. We use Elizabethan-style cue-scripts (so our full play is in the hands of no one single actor), no set, minimal props, and hardly any costumes. We raise our shows in three days; they raised theirs even quicker than that.

We are reliant on a beautiful space (generally not an actual theatre), the words, and an audience's hungry, thirsty imagination.

We have been fortunate to break new ground in the well-trodden path of Shakespeare research. Only 15 of the 30 plays have been explored in original pronunciation, the reconstruction of the accent they spoke in.

How do we know what they sounded like? Three sources of data take us nearly all the way there. The rhymes tells us. Two thirds of Shakespeare's 154 sonnets don't rhyme in RP, the standard, expected accent of Shakespeare for the last 100 years. *Sonnet 116* ends

If this be error and upon me
proved I never writ, nor no man
ever loved.

Was it *proooved* and *loooved* or *luvd* and *pruvd*? Analysing the rest of the sonnets, Shakespeare's rhyming plays like *Dreame* and *Richard II,* as well as his long poems, are the main source of data (so this reconstruction is the sound of Shakespeare's theatre, rather than Elizabethan London).

The second, is the spellings, thanks to the onomatopoeic Elizabethans, spelling a lot more cloesly to how they used to speak. So a word like *film* in Mercutio's Queen Mab speech, in the First Folio (1623) edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, is spelt Philome. Describing the lash of the whip Queen Mab wields, it is less the fantastical female, and more a two or three syllable pronunciation of film.

Indeed, *fil-um*, is a common enough pronunciation in Ireland still to this day, a hangover from Elizabethan times.

The third source I tend to say is less reliable, as history is written by the history makers, and it's likely things are included for preference rather than science. Still there were linguists - early orthoepists - who wrote books about the accents of the time. Ben Johnson, Shakespeare's play-wrighting contemporary wrote a pronouncing dictionary, and goes through the alphabet, letter by letter, describing the pronunciation of each. When he gets to the letter *r,* he makes it clear it's rhotic. Thank you Ben!

Each of my international actors speaks 90% the same as their fellow, but that last 10% is filled in with - well, what? The last missing 10% drives my Dad wild, but not only is it not bad for 400 years, it's actually a boon. Each learner of OP fills in that last 10% with their only natural speaking voice, their accent, the accent of their heart, their home, their life experiences to date. Whether from

Delhi, Canada, Britain or America they craft a truly individual yet universal sound, an acoustic expression of their life melded with Shakespeare's imagination.

Shakespeare's universality is ironically never more so than in his histories. The English histories have little to do with English history - one only has to consider the heroics of Talbot; the molehill speech, the word torture and killing of York; the devastating characters of the Son That Has Killed his Father, and the Father that has Killed the Son.

His characterisation of Richard III, some say, is a careful blend of fiction and history, making the protagonist villain far more interesting than his historical counterpart.

We performed *Richard 2* last year in OP in Prague, and, having cut the play as the Elizabethans did, removed the complicated English history bit, and the Czechs adored the fall of a foolish leader, and the rise of a pragmatist. Was the Original Pronunciation a barrier to second-language speakers of English? On the contrary, they said it was the clearest and most engaging Shakespeare they had ever seen.

Macbeth, now that's a play that does well from the rhymes of OP, and as Ninagawa Company proved recently in London and New York, has little to do with being Scottish, and quite a lot to do with being Japanese.

OP makes for a truly unique sound, and in Autumn 2019 I will bring my Ensemble together to tour Japan with a professional original practices production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, spoken in OP. It will be a first ever for Japan - unless Shakespeare toured further than we thought in his missing years of the 1580s, that is…

Copyright Ben Crystal 2018. This article has been adapted from Ben Crystal's writings for his forth-coming new book.

Literature in the L2 Classroom: Addressing Communicative and Policy Goals

Sue Fraser
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Abstract

The purpose of language learning is to communicate, yet English education in Japan generally focuses on receptive skills and assessment, rather than on target language production. One way to provide opportunities for learners to convey their ideas in spoken and written modes, while increasing motivation and developing cultural awareness and critical thinking, is to adopt communicative methods for employing literary texts in the foreign language classroom.

After a review of studies on literature in English language teaching, current literature courses at Japanese universities are examined, and recent policy recommendations for change are detailed. A theoretical rationale for using literature in ELT in general and specifically in the Japanese context is presented, and learner attitudes to reading for pleasure are investigated. The paper concludes by considering how communicative goals may be achieved by designing literature courses which engage foreign language learners in interpretation, discussion and creative writing tasks.

Key words: literature courses; policy changes; communicative methodology

The undisputed purpose of language is to communicate with others, and thus "the ultimate goal of language teaching" should be "to develop both the oral and written communication skills of L2 students" (Iida, 2013, p. 5). However, despite frequent calls for change by the Ministry for Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2003; 2013) and by educators within the system, English language teaching (ELT) in Japan continues to focus on accurate memorisation of structures and vocabulary, which restricts communication in the classroom. Such problems have been well documented (in Fraser, 2010; see also Gorsuch, 1998; Lamie, 2005), with frequent reference to the "long-standing frustration over Japanese people's inability to communicate sufficiently in English, which is shared by learners and teachers" (Sakamoto, 2015, p. 197). Yet, if Japanese learners are to take their place in a globalised world, an ability to interact internationally and interculturally in both speaking and writing is required. Thus, English language teaching in Japan must be open to change, to find ways of enabling learners to put to practical use their store of

English resulting from years of passive L2 learning.

One way to activate this linguistic knowledge is to take the emphasis off language learning *per se*, and to present learners with texts and themes that provoke a genuine reaction and that encourage a real communicative need to respond. Opportunities for such meaningful communication can be provided through innovative teaching techniques, classroom dynamics, and expectations for outcomes of using a source of textual input long available for education – Literature. It is therefore proposed that the potential of this often overlooked source for developing aspects of language, culture, and personal growth (Carter & Long, 1991) as a communicator in a foreign language be more fully explored and exploited in the classroom.

This paper commences with a discussion of studies to date involving literature in ELT. An examination is undertaken of ways in which literature is currently being taught in Japanese universities, then policy recommendations to take effect from this academic year are outlined. A theoretical rationale for using literature is presented before methodological concerns in the Japanese context are considered. The paper concludes by proposing how communicative goals and policy changes might by successfully achieved, illustrated by a brief overview of a current university course designed to develop spoken and written L2 output through the use of literature in English. A companion paper (Fraser, forthcoming) details and exemplifies course content and resulting student creative writing.

Literature in FLT cannot in itself be considered innovative as literary texts have long been studied in foreign language classes. Hence, justification for employing this source of input as a starting point for communicative output is required. The timeless qualities inherent in literature appeal to the universal interest in telling and hearing stories about the human condition acknowledged throughout the history of mankind. Even though these may now be manifested more through films, television, and social media rather than through reading fiction and poetry, the issues, emotions and crises present in literary texts still evoke a response and therefore provide a reason to communicate in a FL class.

Literature in Foreign Language Teaching

The many ways literature has been used in FLT over the years are well documented in reviews of research, classroom practice and materials (see particularly: Carter & Long, 1991; Gilroy & Parkinson, 1996; Hall, 2015a; Iida, 2013; Paran, 2008). Paran (2008) examines studies into areas including classroom interaction, language generated through discussions of literature, and views of teachers and learners on literature in language teaching. However, he emphasizes the need for

principled evidence "to support the claims that literature can contribute to language learning, that learners are motivated and interested in it, and that its study has something unique to contribute to language learning" (Paran, 2008, p. 16). Hall (2015a) presents details of a wide range of studies about literature in ELT in the revised edition of his frequently cited review. He likewise advocates more research to provide a clearer picture of classroom interaction, and to establish a closer link between the use of literature and the oft-claimed gains in L2 ability and cultural understanding, as affective, cultural and psychological arguments cannot just be "taken on trust" (Hall, 2015a, p. 112).

Renewed interest in literature is also apparent in the new companion volume to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (COE, 2018), recognising a role for literature in measures of language ability and therefore for identifying language learning objectives. Three new scales relevant to literature are now included in the expanded descriptors – reading as a leisure activity (p.64); expressing a personal response to (p.116) and analysis and criticism of creative texts (p.117). In addition, there is now a focus on mediation involving collaboration to construct and convey new meaning (p.103) and more detailed reference to creative writing (p.76).

While the use of literary texts in FLT in such contexts as Europe and the Americas is widely documented, (see Hall, 2015a; Paran, 2008), EFL learners in Japan have had more limited exposure to literature in language teaching, and therefore to its purported benefits. Indeed, as a result of recent and current MEXT (2003; 2013) courses of study objectives focusing on developing learners' communicative abilities, literature has been marginalized (Takahashi, 2015, p. 27). Textbooks for schools have greatly reduced their literary content, and few materials containing literature are published for the university level (Takahashi, 2015, p. 33).

The use of literature in ELT in Japan, particularly at the tertiary level, can offer much scope for innovations in course design and implementation, to develop overall language skills while motivating learners and encouraging active participation in class through this valuable resource. However, in order to contextualise suggestions for course content, classroom practice, and learner outcomes, it is first necessary to examine current uses of literature in university language courses in Japan, and recent national policy recommendations for change.

Literature Courses in Japanese Universities

Undergraduate literature courses offered at Japanese universities range from those for students specialising in English language and literature, to optional courses, to obligatory components of high school English teacher-training programmes. Courses are "designed to expose students to a variety of literary texts and approaches, improve their linguistic and literary

understanding, and instil knowledge of literary history and writers and their works" (Nakamura, 2015, p. 151). Reported methods for teaching literature include close reading of the text to explain details and appreciate themes, with the teacher reading aloud, as in Japanese literature classes (Saito, 2015), and "the verbatim translation of a fragment of a work from English into Japanese" (Teranishi, 2015, p. 168).

The dominant mode of teacher-led lectures in teaching literature, with the traditional view of the teacher as the dispenser of knowledge holds true in many Japanese contexts, in which "students tend to be passive or even bored during the teacher's talk" (Teranishi, 2015, p. 174). Moreover, the language of instruction and response is invariably Japanese, as in almost all cases courses are conducted by Japanese professors. Overall, the "abiding image" for students is of "tedium, condescension and irrelevance" (Hall, 2015a, p. 126). Indeed, the observation that "[l]iterature easily turns into the study of dates, facts and plot summaries which will not in any obvious way support improved use of language, which is the aim of most students on a language course" (Hall, 2015a, p. 207) is reflected in reports of literature classes in Japan.

To further illustrate the current situation at Japanese universities, I undertook an analysis of twenty *English and American Literature* course syllabuses for the 2017-18 academic year from a random online search, to collate recurring features of content, teaching, student participation, and assessment. Multiple occurrences of such features within the syllabuses are presented in square brackets [ ], and other information identified is then summarised.

Course content

An examination of these twenty syllabuses revealed that one popular way for universities to structure their courses was to base the whole semester around a single book [10], such as *The Great Gatsby* (Fitzgerald, 1925); *Alice in Wonderland* (Carroll, 1865); *Richard III* (Shakespeare); *Paradise Lost* (Milton, 1667). Another fairly frequent arrangement was to specify certain themes, and to select extracts of literature related to each theme [5]. For example, to examine gender and race, suggested texts included *The Scarlet Letter* (Hawthorne, 1850) and *Gone with the Wind* (Mitchell, 1939). While others concentrated only on short stories [2], the focus of some courses was not explicitly stated [3].

Teaching

When considering the modes of teaching literature courses, of those specified, lecturing was the most common [12], while some mentioned using DVDs [5]. Although the language of teaching

was only sometimes clearly stated as Japanese [8], because of the ratio of Japanese to native-English speakers (19:1) it could be assumed that classes are more likely to be conducted in the learners' L1.

Student participation

The most frequent tasks for learners were to read, understand, analyse [16] and to translate into Japanese using dictionaries [5]. Written outcomes in the form of reports or essays were expected [12], two of which specified they were to be in English. Although discussion [5] and presentations [3] were listed, only one stated that active participation was needed [1].

Assessment

Evaluation of students was described as based on written reports [8], exams [6], or was not mentioned [5], with one course being assessed by presentations [1]. The language to be used for assessment tasks was not specified.

The emerging picture is that for learners literature courses are predominantly receptive in nature. Teachers appear to present background information and analysis of a single or limited range of literary sources, or at the other extreme, a surface description of a wide range of works impossible to examine in any depth in a single semester, almost exclusively delivered in Japanese. Furthermore, content is typically assessed via exams or reports written in Japanese. When group work is specified, learners are instructed which pages to read, translate or analyse and explain literary and stylistic features, and occasionally mentioned discussions are most likely conducted in their L1. Although original texts are recommended, translations, abridged and annotated versions and simplified graded readers are often solely relied upon. Arguments can be presented for using translated texts for quicker understanding of plots and content, and support for lower-level students, but they do not help with language awareness (Nakamura, 2015, p. 154). As such, literature courses focus predominantly on literary content, and very little language work in L2 is happening.

Although research in this area in Japan remains under-represented, there is evidence in this journal dedicated to the topic of literature in language teaching (LiLT) of an albeit small group of educators actively examining and experimenting with ideas for using literature for both content knowledge and L2 development and practice. In addition, a recent collection of papers (Teranishi, Saito & Wales, 2015) shows inroads have been made into exploiting literature more interactively in the Japanese context. Various activities stemming from literary extracts such as writing ends for stories (Kuze, Ch.12), free translations of Japanese poems (Sakamoto, Ch.13), and book reviews

(Kusanagi, Ch.14), written reflection (Nakamura, Ch.10) and commentary tasks (Sakamoto, Ch.13) undertaken in English are described. However, a reliance on lectures in Japanese is still noted, and discussion in class is rarely specified as in English. Indeed, much of the classroom practice outlined involves extensive reading, and is aimed at very high-level learners. It focuses on literary understanding and stylistic analysis, rather than literary content being a springboard for discussion, expression of opinions and to develop all aspects of communicative competence.

Recent Policy Changes

The foregoing notwithstanding, recent recommendations for change in some Japanese university classes may have a positive effect on how literature is to be taught in the near future. On account of conclusions of a MEXT out-sourced project by Tokyo Gakugei University, (hereafter, Gakugei, 2016), a shift away from traditional methods of teaching literature is intended, at least for the sector of university students aiming to become high school English teachers. This project on considering ways to improve English teachers' language and teaching ability resulted in a document on the core curriculum of English/Foreign Languages for initial teacher training courses in universities (Gakugei, 2016), setting forth recommendations for what should be taught and how under each course. In order to obtain a teaching licence, university students must take four English education courses: English Communication; English Linguistics; English Literature; Understanding Different Cultures.

The general goal for literature courses is that through learning about literature written in English students will improve their ability to express themselves in English, understand the cultures of countries where English is used, and be able to make use of literature in foreign language lessons in junior and senior high schools.

The content and goals for these three areas are specified as:

1. English expressions seen in literary works: Being able to understand various expressions used in literary works.
2. Diverse cultures seen in literary works: Being able to understand the cultures of countries and regions described in the literary works.
3. Main literature written in English: Being able to understand the main literary works written in English (Gakugei, 2016, p. 5).

More specific suggestions for teaching English Literature courses cover not only having students listen to the teacher's lectures, but based on what they have learned, students should have discussions or write an essay, and through such activities expressing themselves with more

perspectives they will be able to learn English. It is desirable to make students think of possibilities for using literature as teaching materials or making students write some literature teaching materials. It is desirable that teachers use some activities that students could use in their own future lessons (Gakugei, 2016, chapter 5, translated).

Despite these general goals for literature teaching styles at university to engage students in activities, creating materials and discussion, specific content goals are receptive in nature, stating only that students are "able to understand" the content. Furthermore, no list of writers and works nor textbooks or materials are specified, and the only sample syllabus – for a children's literature course – does not outline any activities.

This has resulted in MEXT requesting the renaming of university courses from 英米文学 (British and American Literature) to 英語文学 (Literature in English), and for their syllabuses to reflect these changes in delivery and approach from April 2018. It remains unclear how courses might change to accommodate these recommendations, or how class content will be affected, as no concrete guidelines for what and how educators should teach, nor specific teaching materials have been provided. Moreover, little indication is given on how these students might learn to make their own lessons interactive or to encourage productive skills among their future learners when they themselves become teachers. Nonetheless, by recommending change, MEXT has provided opportunities for innovation in literature teaching.

Theoretical Rationale for using Literature in FLT

It is now necessary to consider how the use of literature in language classes can achieve the goals of fostering the development of communicative competence. Language acquisition is considered to be input-driven, and to take place through exposure to the language, comprehension, and practice (Krashen, 1985). It is also thought to be promoted by activating the syntactic processing involved in production through learner output in the target language (Swain, 1985), which is especially enhanced through interaction and negotiation when a communication problem arises (see Long, 2015). If learners do subconsciously acquire new linguistic forms when they are able to understand input they are exposed to when it is at a similar or slightly higher level than their current ability (Krashen, 1985), literature would seem an ideal source of language for L2 classes. Thus, when planning literature courses and designing appropriate teaching materials, a basis of SLA theory should inform the adoption of elements from a range of inter-related communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches which aim to provide opportunities for encouraging this balance of input, output and interaction among learners.

Ways of structuring activities to maximise communication between learners could be drawn from task-based language teaching (TBLT). "Unfocused tasks," which "aim to stimulate communicative language use" (Ellis, 2003, p. 16), should be selected to encourage comprehension and production rather than focusing on specific linguistic features. In particular, literature lends itself to "open tasks," where learners are aware that there is no predetermined outcome or solution (Ellis, 2003, p. 89), and can thus offer their own interpretations of the texts. Following a meaning-based approach in which the teacher does not attempt to control learner output, the tasks should facilitate spontaneous exchanges of meaning. Success is then determined by how effectively learners communicate their ideas even when there are inaccuracies in the L2 produced (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 4).

When tasks are employed, they also allow for various forms of classroom dynamics beneficial to language acquisition, as learners often work in groups or pairs. The many potential advantages of group work over traditional teacher-centred instruction can include increases in learner output, motivation, independence, and decreased anxiety, all of which encourage learning (Jacobs, 1998). Collaborative learning, with its emphasis on learning outcomes gained through interaction and cooperation with peers, facilitates learner engagement with "more capable others… who provide assistance and guidance" (Oxford, 1997, p. 444). This encompasses Vygotsky's (1978) concept of "zone of proximal development" in which scaffolding helps learners reach their potential level. Furthermore, by adopting a learner-centred approach, collaborative tasks can provide the social interaction now considered necessary for learner autonomy to be nurtured (Murray, 2014). It is, however, the ways in which learners perform the tasks, not the tasks themselves, that enable opportunities for scaffolding, collaborative dialogue and instructive interaction to arise (Ellis, 2003, p. 183), and thus to ensure learners remain engaged with the tasks, motivating input is required. Whereas CLT activities are sometimes viewed by learners as requiring speaking for the sake of speaking (Ellis, 2003, p. 199), incorporating literature into language teaching can offer interesting and cognitively challenging input to spark motivation and maintain involvement.

By using the target language for both input and learner output, classroom interaction can provide opportunities for developing all four language skills. Tasks related to literary texts such as creative writing and making presentations involve the application of ideas gained through Bloom's (1956) higher-order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. What is more, critical thinking about input can be encouraged to raise intercultural awareness by reflection and interpretation in relation to the learners' own culture (see Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). As such, literature is a particularly appropriate source of materials for university students who already have

some level of general knowledge, learner autonomy, academic interest, and FL skills. However, even though there is a sound rationale for employing literature in the language classroom, there are several systemic issues which may make it difficult to do so in the Japanese ELT context.

Contextual Considerations

Much has been written in both academic publications and the media on the problems faced in English education in Japan, and reasons why Japanese learners generally do not attain high levels of English proficiency, with various suggestions to address these issues being proposed (for a detailed discussion, see Fraser, 2010). The traditional Japanese teacher-fronted, grammar-translation *yakudoku* method long criticized (Gorsuch, 1998) is still prevalent in many educational settings. Recent proposals by MEXT (2003; 2013) and subsequent changes in Courses of Study and textbooks at all school levels recommend solutions by increasing the number of English class hours, focusing more on learner spoken and written output, and providing more comprehensible input by advocating that greater proportions of English lessons be taught through English. The shift in focus from accumulating knowledge to thinking and problem-solving in all subjects is to manifest itself in the next curriculum for Foreign Languages, which is in effect for English. The intention is to create a more equal balance between all four skills, rather than mainly concentrating on receptive reading and listening. Even so, teachers wishing to adopt innovative methods may find resistance to their implementation of communicative classroom practice.

Although MEXT has long emphasised the importance of practical communication ability in an increasingly globalised world (MEXT 2003; 2013; see also Lamie, 2005), realistically, students in Japan have very little communicative need to use English, since almost all have a shared L1, and so any classroom interaction in L2 is artificial. In addition, to be motivated to speak, even in a classroom context, topics and activities must be of interest and relevance to learners. Yet, course books typically contain a similar, narrow range of themes, with activities unlikely to generate discussion (Glasgow & Paller, 2014), while often assuming limited L2 equates with limited cognitive skills, resulting in the inclusion of infantilised input for learner production. Likewise, writing is an overlooked skill, being controlled, modelled and produced at only sentence or paragraph level in English textbooks (Kobayakawa, 2011). To enable learners to communicate meaningfully in both spoken and written modes, more opportunities to express their ideas orally and in cohesive extensive written texts need to be incorporated into the Japanese L2 classroom.

Whereas at the high school level, constraints of class size, examination pressure, and traditional teacher-fronted methods continue to ensure adoption of communicative techniques is

limited, it is at the university level where there is more scope for innovations to develop learners' communication skills. Here, curricula are less fixed, more elective courses are offered, and students may have more specific or practical motivations for acquiring communicative skills. Once the exam barrier has been removed, teachers can be less strict about accuracy, and work towards developing fluency, and putting to use the store of language that university students have passively studied and absorbed through their six-plus years of English education.

To achieve MEXT's, and often learners' personal, goals, teachers need to create opportunities for active participation and L2 production. But, we can't talk if we have nothing to talk about! University students who have had few chances to discuss thought-provoking issues with their peers or attempt to write extended texts in high school English classes, need activities which allow for freedom of expression and to experiment with genres, forms, and content. Therefore, literature, if handled appropriately, is an excellent source of input for learners to interact with, to voice their opinions on, and from which to create original written output.

To Read or Not?

Moreover, nowadays, when young people are thought to read less and few opportunities are available for writing in the Japanese education system, innovative ways to inspire learners to actively engage with texts when reading, and to express themselves creatively in writing should be sought. To ascertain how much of an obstacle this supposed lack of interest in reading may be for teachers using literature in class, a survey was conducted in May 2018 to elicit reading habits and preferences among students at three universities in central Japan (see Appendix), to explore the claim that "[m]ost students read little in either the L1 or the L2 and they do not enjoy reading" (Grabe & Stoller, as cited in Hall, 2015a, p. 86).

In contrast to this statement, of the 237 second-year education, English, and engineering students surveyed, a large proportion like [51%] or very much like [22%] reading in Japanese, and even 35% like reading books in English. However, when asked about frequency of reading for enjoyment, the spread of answers indicated some agreement that "students read little" (Grabe & Stoller, as cited in Hall, 2015a, p. 86). Only 28.7% reported reading often or sometimes, with just 7.6% reading almost every day; and while 52.6% read occasionally or rarely, 12.2% declared that they almost never read for pleasure.

Findings from this research therefore suggest that the problem is not that young people dislike reading, but that they are not doing it very often, perhaps due to other pressures of being a student, or because of technological distractions of modern life. Additionally, although 60.8% of respondents had read books in English, which is perhaps on account of the increased interest in

extensive reading (ER) in ELT, only 7.6% had ever experienced writing stories or poems in English. It is essential, then, that literature be introduced to language learners in ways that will enable oral and written L2 reactions while also encouraging a lasting interest in reading, be it in L1 or L2, long after the classes have finished.

English through Literature

Numerous issues at the macro level in FLT in Japan indicate the need for change in policy, methodology, materials, and classroom implementation. Therefore, to address concerns over how literature is currently taught in Japanese universities, and how more opportunities for communication in class are needed, I created a semester-long course entitled *English through Literature*, which would fulfil university requirements of teaching about literature, while simultaneously developing L2 skills and generating motivation. For reasons of space, only a brief explanation is given here as an illustration of how literature can be incorporated into a communicative approach to language teaching. However, the rationale for designing this course, a detailed description of methodology, course content, text selection, learner reactions, and examples of creative writing produced by participating university students, along with ideas for further development and its relevance for the wider FLT community are all presented in a companion paper (Fraser, forthcoming).

The overall aim of *English through Literature* is to encourage participants to think critically about literary texts and themes, present their views in varied spoken and written modes, raise intercultural awareness, and nurture the desire to read. Based around linguistic, cultural, affective and literary objectives, each component of the course involves theoretical background and contextualisation of a selection of literary input, discussion of content and personal reactions to issues raised in the texts, followed by individual and collaborative writing activities related to and developing from the text types or themes.

The main purpose is therefore to encourage expression of opinions and to provide inspiration for creative writing through reading and reacting to a wide range of poetry, short stories, children's literature, extracts from novels, plays, and diaries, from canonical, modern, and lesser-known sources. In this way, learners are able to expand their literary, cultural, and general knowledge, while activating linguistic skills needed to discuss and write in the target language.

These creative writing tasks take many forms, including: updating, relocating, or changing the viewpoint; creating prequels or sequels; interacting with a character; writing in the style of the literature examined. All written work produced during the course is compiled into an anthology, and

distributed to each class member to form part of their university foreign language learning portfolio.

Concluding Comments

While several obstacles continue to face ELT in Japan, finding ways to motivate learners and encourage L2 communication remain major concerns for educators. Innovative uses of literary texts in English language lessons may provide some solutions, especially at the tertiary level. Furthermore, even though literature has traditionally been viewed as appropriate input for only the highest level learners (Hall, 2015b, p. 19), it can be repositioned so that many types of language students can benefit from its diverse opportunities. For example, to address teacher concerns that literature is inappropriate for non-specialist courses, larger classes, or younger learners, a description of how a literary text can provide the stimulus for a series of lessons at the senior high school level can be found in Fraser (2012), where a play script was adapted to encourage spoken production in a class of 40 students. Yet, although "it is clear that literature does have something very special to offer language learning" (Paran, 2008, p. 70) as it combines attention to meaning with attention to form, and appears to be motivating and engaging, there is still a need for much more research to show the benefits of using literature through "more systematic evaluation of courses, and systematic enquiries into the views of learners" (Paran, 2008, p. 68).

This paper has highlighted the potential for using literature as a stimulus for developing communication abilities of collaborative analysis, discussion, and writing. Through engagement with thought-provoking literary input, learners are motivated to express themselves and exchange views, which maximises opportunities for language practice. Classroom interaction then becomes preparation for actively utilising learners' L2 resources in future real-life situations. It would therefore be well advised for educators in Japan to be open to innovation in order to realistically enable citizens to pursue their professional and personal goals in a globalised world through English.

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Appendix

Survey: Reading and Literature

1. Do you like reading books?

   Very much [ ] Yes [ ] Not very much [ ] No [ ]

2. How often do you read books for enjoyment? Circle a number.

   Almost every day = 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 = never

3. Rank these types of books 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, according to how often you read them:

   Textbooks [ ] Novels [ ] Poetry [ ] Comics [ ] Non-Fiction [ ] Short Stories [ ]

4. What is your favourite genre of books? (e.g.: Science-Fiction; Romance…..)

5. In your free time, which would you prefer to do? Choose only ONE:

   Read a book [ ] Watch a movie [ ] Play computer/video games [ ]

6. Do you like reading books in English?

   Yes [ ] No [ ] If 'No', why not?

7. Have you ever read Novels or Poetry in English?

   Yes [ ] No [ ] If 'Yes', Where and When did you read them?

8. Have you ever written stories or poems in English?

   Yes [ ] No [ ] If 'Yes', Where and When did you write them?

[N.B.: *This is the English version of the survey conducted in Japanese in May 2018 on 237 second-year students of Engineering, English, and Education, at three different universities in central Japan.*]

The Cognitive Processing of Paratextual Impact on Reading Responses to Poetry

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the impact of paratextual information on students' reading responses to poetry as well as its cognitive processing. The researchers utilize a quantitative approach to study how three types of paratextual information—authorial attribution, biographical information, and genre label—affect students' reading responses to poems, specifically their emotional engagement, aesthetic judgement, comprehension, and quality evaluation of poems. The findings indicate that paratextual information affects some aspects of readers' experiences and that different types of paratextual information have unique effects. Further, the researchers describe the role of attention and memory systems when the paratextual information is detected and processed by the participants. The mechanisms of the attention and memory systems are applied to analyze and account for the consequences of the paratextual impact. The researchers argue that the provided paratextual information falls on a continuum from being ignored to detected/noticed. Only the detected/noticed information is further processed in the short-term memory where connections between prior knowledge or situations and current texts or contexts are activated and established, leading to different reading responses. Finally, the researchers propose suggestions for navigating the impact of paratextual information in literary education.

Keywords: paratextual information, attention system, memory system, reading responses, poetry, cognitive processing, literature in language teaching

Grabe and Stroller (2002) explained that the "reading process refers to cognitive activity involving skills, strategies, attentional resource, knowledge resources, and their integration" (p. 9). Readers' own experiences, knowledge, and their own ideas, together with the information gathered from texts (Aissati & Stokmans, 2015) and from paratexts (Dixon, Bortolussi, & Sopcak, 2015) are involved in interpreting texts. Therefore, in order to better understand reading processes, it is necessary to identify the cognitive processes of the interaction between readers, texts, and paratexts (Dixon & Bortolussi, 2011). There are a number of studies on literary reactions and paratextual impact (e.g. Arnold & Brooks, 1976; Bransford & Johnson, 1973; Dixon et al., 2015; Doctorow, Wittrock, & Marks, 1978; Dooling & Lachman, 1971; Hanauer, 2015; Harris, Mandias, Meerum Terwogt, & Tjintjelaar, 1980; Tajeddin, 2013), however, none of these studies examined the cognitive process of readers' reading reactions to poetry. Little is known about how paratextual information is processed by readers and how it influences their reading responses, particularly for poetry.

Dixon & Bortolussi (2011) thought that more research should be conducted on literary processing, cognitive processing, and literary reactions. This paper responds by attempting to describe the role of a cognitive mechanism implicated in paratextual impact on reading reactions to poetry through the attention and memory systems. This present study contributes to the growing field of the scientific study of literature, particularly poetry, by examining how knowledge extraneous to the poetic text itself influences reactions to the text and such cognitive processes.

This paper starts with a review of the literature on the paratextual impact on literary reactions, followed by the theories of the attention and memory systems. Then, the current study on the effects of three types of paratextual information is provided. Afterwards, the cognitive processes concerning the impact of the paratextual information on students' reading reactions are analyzed. Finally, the paper concludes by offering some implications regarding literary instruction and recommendations for future research.

Literature Review

The term *paratext* was first introduced by Genette (1997) and refers to various types of information accompanying a text, which are "both within the [text] and outside it, that mediate the [text] to the reader: titles and subtitles, pseudonyms, forewords, dedications, epigraphs, prefaces, intertitles, notes, epilogues, and afterwords" (p. xviii). Dixon et al. (2015) used the term *extratextual* to refer to the information outside a text yet still related to it, such as a review of a work, which may influence readers' evaluation or judgment of the text. Literary reactions are affected by textual

information, used by authors to shape readers' intentions and dispositions, as well as by [extratextual] information (Dixon & Bortolussi, 2011). In this paper, "paratextual" and "extratextual" information is utilized alternately, referring to the information outside a text and provided to readers to manipulate their reading responses and evaluations of a text. Paratextual/ extratextual information "is mostly provided even before the reader opens a book, through cover details, like the name of the author, the title or genre indications. Such signals provide key knowledge to the reader and trigger certain expectations" (Altmann, Bohrn, Lubrich, Menninghaus, & Jacobs, 2014, p. 22). In this case, readers' cognitive and emotional responses are to some degree dependent on paratexts that prompt readers' previous knowledge and direct or trigger their expectations.

Previous studies have explored the diverse effects of paratextual information on literary responses. Some scholars have studied how paratextual information influences participants' comprehension, retention, and evaluation of a text. For example, providing readers with paratextual information such as visuals, titles, and the setting could help them make correct inferences (Arnold & Brooks, 1976) and recall the texts (Arnold & Brooks, 1976; Bransford & Johnson, 1973; Doctorow et al., 1978; Dooling & Lachman, 1971; Harris et al., 1980) as well as better comprehend the texts (Bransford & Johnson, 1973; Doctorow et al., 1978; Harris et al., 1980). Likewise, Hanauer's (2015) study indicated that the paratextual knowledge about an author's professional background—whether or not the author is a published poet—significantly influenced participants' beauty judgement, quality evaluation, and emotional responses. Additionally, some research revealed that the impact of paratextual knowledge was contingent on participants or contexts. For example, according to his study of the effect of three paratextual aids—titles, prefaces, and pictures —on comprehension and recall, Tajeddin (2013) argued that paratextual impact varied depending on the EFL readers' language proficiency.

According to our knowledge, only a limited number of studies have investigated the cognitive processes of reading narratives and novels with additional paratextual information. Altmann et al. (2014) applied a psychological approach to study the neurocognitive processes of reading responses to novels. Their study demonstrated that different brain activation patterns were observed depending on whether a short narrative was labeled as factual or fictional: "an action-based reconstruction of the events depicted in a story" and "a constructive simulation of what might have happened" (p. 22). Similarly, Dixon et al. (2015) applied two mechanisms, process orienting and evaluation adjustment, to examine and explain the effect of extratextual information, in this case critical reviews, on readers' evaluation of novels. Their study indicated that extratextual

effects differed depending on whether the review was read prior to or after the novel. When extratextual information such as a review was read before a text, the readers' attention could be oriented to certain aspects of the text, influencing the readers' evaluation of the text. If the review was read after a text, readers adjusted or modified their evaluation of the text.

Building on the previous literature, the aim of this study is twofold. The first goal is to further explore the impact of diverse types of paratext on reading responses to literary work. In particular, this study attempts to survey whether three types of paratextual impact—authorial attribution, biographic information, and genre label—affect participants' reading responses to poetic texts. Additionally, this paper endeavors to explore the "causal insight" (Dixon & Bortolussi, 2008, p. 75) of the paratextual impact on literary responses by describing its cognitive mechanisms—the attention and memory systems.

The Attention and Memory Systems

Reading responses are contingent upon textual and paratextual information as well as how this information is processed by readers. To better understand how paratextual information plays a role in reading processes, it is essential to learn how paratextual information is processed in the attention and memory systems.

Attention System

People "are bombarded with overwhelming amounts of sensory and cognitive information" (Tomlin & Villa, 1993, p. 184), but only part of the information is accepted, processed, and stored in memory. It is the human attention system that controls "the quantity and quality of information that enters the individual's mind" for further processing (Hanauer, 1999, p. 17). The three functions of the attention system—alertness, orientation, and detection (Hanauer, 1999; Posner & Petersen, 1990; Tomlin & Villa, 1993) allows it to act as the filter and determines what information is important to be noticed. Tomlin and Villa (1993) argue that alertness, orientation, and detection are separate but interrelated. Alertness prepares readers to cope with information and data, which may or may not be attention-oriented. Orientation allocates attentional resources to a specific type or class of sensory information, which may be further detected and then processed. Detection, similar to Schmidt's (1990) conception of "noticing," refers to the process that attention resources are actually committed to select and engage specific information. Among the above three functions, detection is the most crucial for information processing or learning because only when information is detected can it be processed and registered in memory (Tomlin & Villa, 1993).

On the one hand, the attention system is capacity-limited (Robinson, 1995; Tomlin & Villa, 1993), therefore, "information competes for limited attentional resources" (Robinson, 1995, p. 290). Eventually, some information is "detected" (Tomlin & Villa, 1993) and "noticed" (Schmidt, 1990) and then "is elaborated or rehearsed," while the perceived unimportant or irrelevant information is ignored and "forgotten" (Robinson, 1995, p. 290). On the other hand, "attentional engagement is established, coordinated, maintained, interrupted, redirected, [and adjusted]" (Allport, 1989, pp. 662-663). In other words, the attention system can be directed or manipulated to specific information or knowledge through heightening alertness, orientation, and detection or via enhancing its "noticeability" (Schmidt, 1990). For example, Tomlin & Villa (1993) suggested applying certain instructions or instructional techniques such as input flooding or explicit instruction; Schmidt (1990) proposed maneuvering expectations, frequency, perceptual salience, skill level, and task demands to enhance noticeability.

Memory System

Together with the attention system, the memory system is involved in the information processing. Short-term memory is considered as "the site of control processes such as directing focal and peripheral attention, rehearsing current information, and coding new inputs" (Robinson, 1995, p. 304) as well as "the interface between everything we know and everything we can see or do" (Cowan, 1993, p. 166). In the short-term memory, all the detected information from multiple sources is processed, elaborated, rehearsed, and prior knowledge is activated. Depending on whether readers can find connections or associations between their prior knowledge and current texts, contexts, or task demands, the detected information is either further processed or ignored and forgotten, leading to various reading responses. We propose a diagram illustrating the cognitive mechanisms concerning how textual and paratextual information might be processed in the attention and memory systems (see Figure 1).

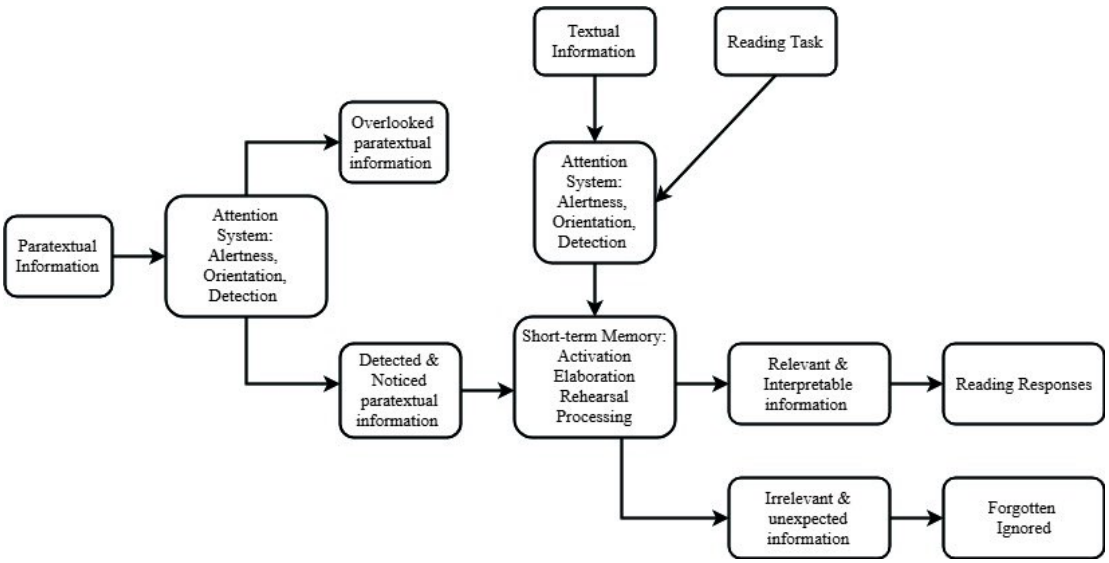

Figure 1. Cognitive Mechanism.

When reading, readers need to deal with copious amounts of information, both textual and paratextual. Since this present study is interested in how the mechanisms of attention and memory function in paratextual information processing, the textual information remains unchanged.

Methodology

Study Design

The purpose of this study is to examine whether the presence or absence of three types of paratextual information — entailing authorial attributions, biographical information, and genre labels — influences reader response to poetry. The current experiment was conducted through online survey software, Qualtrics. Each participant first read an instruction with or without one of the above three types of paratext, then, read a poem and rated 12 statements pertaining to their emotional engagement, aesthetic judgement, quality evaluation, and comprehension of the poem. Each participant read the same three poems in varying order regardless of the presence or absence of prior paratextual information. Consequently, the participants were randomly classified into two groups that were treated with different paratexts (see Figure 2).

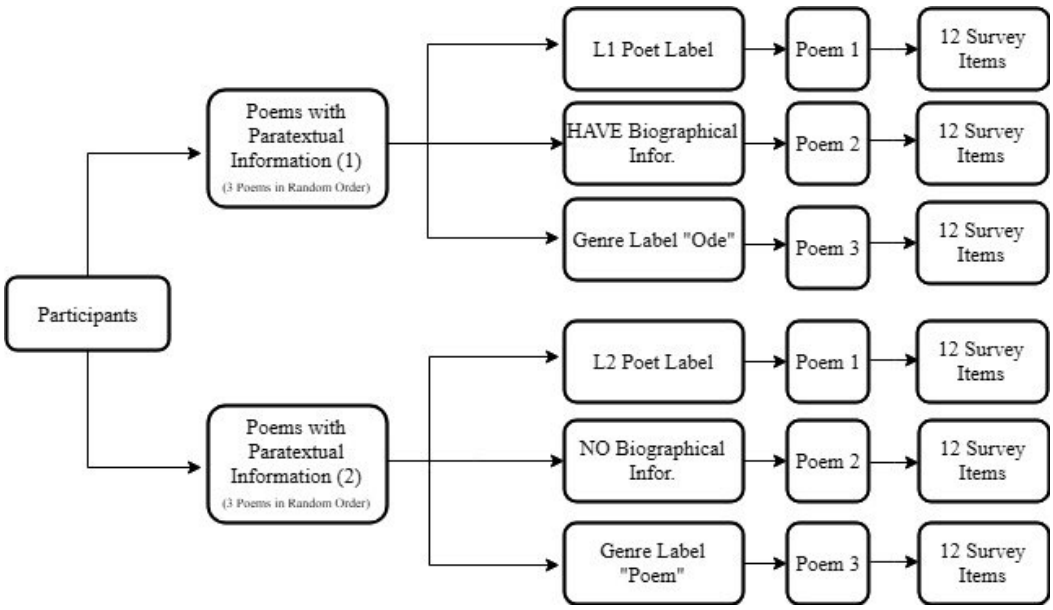

Figure 2. Research Design.

To direct participants' attention to these paratextual elements, techniques were employed to foreground the paratextual information. For example, the paratextual information was displayed on a separate screen before the corresponding poem. In addition, together with the paratext, there was a sentence reminding participants to read the given information before moving on to the page containing the poem. Participants had to click the button labeled "next" when they finished reading the instructions to move on to the page containing the poem.

Regarding the effects of authorial attributions as paratextual manipulation, the researchers were interested in whether and how a poet's language background influenced participants' reading responses. Therefore, participants were provided with the paratextual information highlighting the poet's language background. The two sets of paratext that participants read were *(1)* "The following screen contains a poem by Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge, who is a poet born in Beijing, China. She uses English as a second language;" or *(2)* "On the next screen, you will read a poem by Christine Smith, who is a poet born in New York. She uses English as a first language." Afterwards, participants were presented the poem "From The Field for Blue Corn" written by Berssenbrugge (2016). The first piece of paratextual information, from the introduction to poets on *Dusie* (19), a poetry *kollektiv* —Berssenbrugge uses English as a second language—is real, while *(2)* is false. Our hypothesis was that participants would experience a higher degree of comprehension and emotional response when they read the poem by a poet who shared the same language background and culture with the participants.

The effects of biographical information were studied for the poem "At Toomebridge". Two different reading instructions were displayed respectively: *(1)* "The following screen contains

biographical information about Seamus Heaney—a poet. Please read the entire instruction. Seamus Heaney is widely recognized as one of the major poets of the 20th century. A native of Northern Ireland, Heaney was raised in County Derry, and later lived for many years in Dublin. He was the author of over 20 volumes of poetry and criticism and edited several widely used anthologies. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995 'for works of lyrical beauty and ethical depth, which exalt everyday miracles and the living past.' Heaney taught at Harvard University (1985-2006) and served as the Oxford Professor of Poetry (1989-1994). He died in 2013;" or *(2)* "The following screen contains a poem". Seamus Heaney's (2003) biographical information was collected from the *Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry* (3rd ed. Vol. 2), where his poem "At Toomebridge" was published. Hanauer's (2015) study suggested that novice reader reviewers based their emotional response, quality evaluation, and beauty judgement to poetry on "a sense of authority assigned to the writer" (p. 197). Thereby, the researchers hypothesized that emotional engagement, quality evaluation, and aesthetic judgement would be scored higher after being informing of the poet's biographical information emphasizing his achievements.

Paratextual effects of genre labels were examined using the third poem "Manhole Covers" by Karl Shapiro (2003). The two different reading instructions were presented: *(1)* "The following screen contains information about a poem written by Karl Shapiro. Please read the entire introductions. The following poem is an *ode*. An ode is a formal, ceremonious lyric poem that addresses and celebrates a person, place, thing, or idea. Its stanza forms vary;" or *(2)* "The following screen contains a poem. Please read the entire poem". Our hypothesis was that words such as "ceremonious" and "celebrate" within the description of the genre label "ode" would lead to higher emotional engagement or comprehension.

Participants

After obtaining approval from specified by the Institutional Review Board (IRB, IUP Log # 17-259), an online survey (Qualtrics) was distributed to Chinese and American undergraduates through a letter of invitation to professors in China and a medium-sized research university in Western Pennsylvania in America. In addition, the online survey was posted on student social media pages (WeChat and QQ) in China. The participants in this study were all college students enrolled in either a university in China or the aforementioned university in Western Pennsylvania. 63 students reported that they used English as a first language, 73 used English as a second language, and 3 students did not state English as a first or a second language. 142, 152, and 149 students completed the survey for the three poems respectively.

Instruments

Poems. The three poems for the study were randomly selected from the *Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry* (3rd ed. Vol. 2) (Contemporary Poetry) and *Dusie* (19), a poetry *kollektiv*, based on the following criteria: 1) the poems had to be in English; 2) the poems had to be contemporary; 3) the poems had to be less than 100 words in length. The poems were selected according to the page number within each collection, given by the Google random number generator (See Appendix A).

Measures. After finishing reading each poem, participants were presented 12 statements with a 5-point Likert agree/disagree scale and two open-ended questions. (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Somewhat Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Somewhat Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). These 12 statements measured participants' self-perceived emotional engagement, aesthetic judgement, quality evaluation, and comprehension of the poems (See Appendix B). These items were adapted from the survey created by Hanauer (2015); Kuijpers, Hakemulder, Tan, and Doicaru (2014); and Miall and Kuiken (1995).

Demographic questions. Per the IRB protocol (Log # 17-259 IUP), in addition to the three poems and 12 survey items, participants were asked to answer multiple choice questions concerning their gender, age, educational level, residence, major, and the language they used. All incomplete surveys were deleted prior to analysis of data.

Data Analysis and Results

The collected data consists of the participants' responses to the 12 survey items and their demographic information. First, descriptive analysis was conducted on collected data in SPSS (the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, a software package used in statistical analysis) to obtain the overview of the dataset and to examine the assumption of normality; the data was not normally distributed, so, the Mann-Whitney U test was utilized. In statistics, the Mann-Whitney U test is a test used to compare differences between two independent groups when the dependent variable is not normally distributed. Independent Mann Whitney U tests were run to compare the effect of presence/absence of paratextual information on reading responses.

The Mann-Whitney U tests indicated that the impact of the three types paratextual information negated our hypotheses and were inconsistent with the findings from previous literature. The three types of paratextual information indicated either no impact or reverse impact on the participants' reading reactions. That is to say, the participants who did not read paratextual information indicated higher degree of reading responses compared with those who did; this

discrepancy could be the result of the processing of paratextual information in their cognitive mechanisms.

Authorial Attribution

The Mann Whitney U test indicated that there was no significant difference in reading responses to poetry between the presence and absence of paratextual authorial attribution—the poet's language background. The participants were not influenced by the author's language background in terms of their emotional engagement, aesthetic judgement, reading comprehension, and quality evaluation. The participants appeared to notice and process the poem itself rather than the given paratextual authorial attribution in their attention and memory systems.

Table 1

Mann-Whitney U Test of Paratextual Authorial Attribution

Dependent Variables	Grouping	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Engagement	L1 Poet Label	69.99	2413.50	0.885
	L2 Poet Label	70.98		
Aesthetic Judgement	L1 Poet Label	71.72	2365.00	0.728
	L2 Poet Label	69.35		
Comprehension	L1 Poet Label	75.24	2126.00	0.168
	L2 Poet Label	66.03		
Quality Evaluation	L1 Poet Label	70.61	2440.50	0.975
	L2 Poet Label	70.40		

***Note*:** *p<.05

Biographical Information

A Mann-Whitney U Test indicated that confidence in comprehension of the meaning of the poem was greater for participants who viewed no biographical information (Mdn = 84.13) than for participants who did view biographical information (Mdn = 69.07), U = 2315.5, p=.029. No other significant differences were found based on the presence or absence of biographical information.

Table 2

Mann-Whitney U Test of Paratextual Biographic Information

Dependent Variable	Grouping	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Sig. (2-tailed)
Comprehension – "I have an idea of what the poem is about while reading it."	Biographical Information	69.07	2315.00	0.029*
	No Biographical Information	84.13		

***Note*:** *p<.05

Genre Information

The Mann Whitney U test indicated that emotional engagement was lower for participants who viewed a specific genre label (Mdn = 66.87) than for participants who did not (Mdn = 83.24), U=2165.00, p=.015. Specifically, this test indicated that participants felt less connected to the poet when presented with a genre label "Ode" prior to reading a poem. The Mann Whitney U test also indicated that aesthetic judgement was lower for participants who viewed a specific genre label (Mdn = 66.91) than for participants who did not (Mdn = 83.20), U=2168.50, p=.018. Specifically, this test indicated that participants felt the poem was less rhythmic when presented with a specific genre label prior to reading a poem. No other significant differences were found based on genre label provided prior to participants reading the poem.

Table 3

Mann-Whitney U Test of Paratextual Genre Labels

Dependent Variables	Grouping	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Engagement – "I felt how the poet was feeling."	Ode Genre Label	66.87	2165.00	0.015*
	Poetry Genre Label	83.24		
Aesthetic Judgement – "The poem had rhythm."	Ode Genre Label	66.91	2168.50	0.018*
	Poetry Genre Label	83.20		

***Note*: ***p<.05

Discussion

In reference to paratextual impact, the results indicate that the three types of paratextual information do have a limited effect on how readers respond to poetry, and different paratextual elements appear to affect different responses.

Firstly, the poet's language background did not result in significant differences in reading responses. According to the cognitive mechanisms—the attention system, what the participants in the current study might have experienced was that the paratextual information was either overlooked or detected/noticed and then forgotten. Although the current experiment was designed to enhance the "alertness" and "orientation" via foregrounding the paratextual information and demanding participants to read through it, participants possibly remained unaware of the given information because it was not salient enough nor evident. In addition, our online survey actually required the participants to give immediate responses in a short period of time; thus, the participants possibly did not have time or opportunities to closely read and then notice the paratextual information. Further, the participants may not have realized that they were expected to connect the paratextual information to the poem. That is, the participants failed to notice the given information when "the input can[not] be organized within a current context" (Baars, 2007, p. 268). Consequently, they may have dealt with the two types of information—paratextual and textual—separately.

There exists another possibility that might explain why the participants were not influenced by the given paratext: the paratextual information provided was initially detected by participants but

subsequently eliminated from their attention system or was forgotten. In that case, their detection system of attention decided that the given information did not conform to their criteria in relation to what was and what was not worthy of noticing (Baars, 2007). Further, the "limited capacity of short-term memory" (Robinson, 1995, p. 318) might account for why some information was forgotten. In short-term memory, prior knowledge is activated and supposed to connect with the current text or context. If the paratextual information provided did not activate participants' prior knowledge and previously experienced texts; and/or failed to enable the readers to compare with the current attended context or to recall the previous context; and/or could not trigger the associations with the current texts, participants were likely to consider the paratextual information as irrelevant, hence eliminating it from their attention and memory systems.

Secondly, biographical information impacted the participants' reading processes to some degree. The participants who did not view biographical information before the poem perceived greater degree of comprehension than those who did. This finding suggests that the information about the author, which highlighted his/her achievements and reputation, may make the participants think that his/her poem has more underlying meanings. The previous study by Hanauer (2015) examined the impact of authorial attribution on quality evaluation, suggesting that the poem by a published author was positively related to its quality. However, the results of the current study challenge this claim. There was no significant difference between the independent variable—biographic information—and the dependent variables: entailing emotional engagement, aesthetic judgement, and quality evaluation, except for "comprehension." That is, the biographic information did impact the participants' reading experiences, but in a reverse direction—it suppressed reading comprehension, opposing the positive paratextual effects of promoting reading comprehension (Bransford & Johnson, 1973; Doctorow et al., 1978; Harris et al., 1980).

Lastly, in a similar fashion, in this study the impact of genre labels was verified, though in a different way from the findings in previous literature. Our finding echoes the influence of a genre label in the study by Altmann et al. (2014) and by Piters and Stokmans (2000). However, the genre label in our study affected participants in a contrary direction: the genre label "Ode" restrained readers' emotional engagement and aesthetic judgement. The participants who did not read the genre label "Ode" before reading the poem felt more emotionally connected to the poet and the rhythmic beauty compared with those who viewed the genre label. In contrast, the study by Piters and Stokmans (2000) suggested that genre label identified by a book cover engaged readers' emotions in helping them sort out their preferred books.

With regard to different types of paratextual information, some were "allocate[d] [more] cognitive resources [by] attention system, leading to noticing, and subsequent encoding in memory" (Robinson, 1995, p. 286), while some were ignored or forgotten. Dixon and Bortolussi (2011) contended that paratexts "would be particularly relevant if the reader needed that information to appreciate the text and if the reader was willing and able to use that information" (p. 82). For example, in this study, authorial attribution—author's language background—may be perceived as irrelevant to understanding or appreciating the poem. Therefore, this type of information was not detected nor processed, thus having no influence on the participants' reading responses. Paratextual elements affect readers' responses to texts via triggering their expectations and prior knowledge (Dixon & Bortolussi, 2011; Altmann et al., 2014). However, if the given paratextual information fails to activate readers' prior knowledge or expectations and connections to the texts or contexts, readers may not react in the anticipated way. Accordingly, paratexts are either unable to impact readers or, in this case biographical information and genre labels, influence readers in an opposite direction.

There are limitations in this study. First, the detection and noticeability of the three paratextual elements could have been enhanced more. For instance, in this study, the paratexts only appeared on the screen once, so some readers may not have been able to notice them well. A future study could also consider boosting the factors put forward by Schmidt (1990)—expectations, frequency, perceptual salience, skill level, task demands—to increase the noticeability of paratexts. Second, this study was limited by the number of poems used. In a future study, we would like to use more poems randomized in the survey, thereby negating the chance that responses are related to specific poems rather than paratextual elements. Finally, the current study was limited in its research method and selected participants. Future research could include more types of paratextual elements and involve more participants, as well as employ additional research methods such as functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) along with think aloud and interviews to collect data so as to acquire more thorough and comprehensive understanding of the impact of paratextual information and its cognitive processes.

Conclusion

In spite of the limitations, our findings suggest insights concerning the impact of paratextual knowledge and its cognitive processes. The impact of three types of paratextual elements — authorial attribution, biographical information, and genre label — on reading responses to poetry were limited. The knowledge concerning poets' language backgrounds did not influence reading

reactions; the presence of biographical information and genre label did not positively correlate with emotional engagement, aesthetic judgement, comprehension, and quality evaluation; rather, they suppressed comprehension, emotional engagement, and aesthetic judgement. Consequently, in literary education, paratexts should be carefully selected depending on specific teaching objectives. Additionally, this study explores the cognitive processing of paratextual impact on reading experiences of poetry. The attention and memory systems play a key role in manipulating paratextual impact. The limited capacity of attention and short-term memory as well as personal differences of readers in relation to their prior knowledge or expectations also affect what and how much information is detected and processed, which indirectly sways paratextual impact. As a result, to ensure a particular type or class of paratexts is detected in the attention system, techniques and approaches pertaining to instructions, quantity of information, awareness, and repetition could be deployed. Furthermore, to help readers capitalize on paratextual knowledge effectively, paratexts should be able to activate readers' expectations or help establish a connection between their prior knowledge and current text or context.

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Appendix A (Three poems)

Poem 1

From The Field for Blue Corn
By Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge

Certain colors are the conversation
we held one dusk, that altered
from the violent afterglow of fresh bones
to the gray corolla of old ones, only minerals
as restless matrices in blue sage dissolved
a horntoad ran under a bush. I insisted it was
a baby bird. Then a baby bird *and* a horntoad
ran out. Now, on a hill I never noticed
between two close ones we've climbed, I see
at an altered angle. Some small shift in refraction
has set the whole plain trembling and hostile

Poem 2

At Toomebridge
by Seamus Heaney

Where the flat water
Came pouring over the weir out of Lough Neagh
As if it had reached an edge of the flat earth
And fallen shining to the continuous
Present of the Bann.
Where the checkpoint used to be.
Where the rebel boy was hanged in '98.
Where negative ions in the open air
Are poetry to me. As once before
The slime and silver of the fattened eel.

Poem 3

Manhole Covers by
Karl Shapiro

The beauty of manhole covers—what of that?
Like medals struck by a great savage kahn,
Like Mayan calendar stones, unliftable, indecipherable,
Not like the old electrum, chased and scored,
Mottoed and sculptured to a turn,
But notched and whelked and pocked and smashed
With the great company names
(Gentle Bethlehem, smiling United States).
This rustproof artifact of my street,
Long after road are melted away will lie
Sidewise in the grave of the iron-old world,
Bitten at the edges,
Strong with its cryptic American,
Its dated beauty.

Appendix B

The 12 statements measuring participants' reading responses and two open-ended questions (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Somewhat Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Somewhat Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

Category	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Emotional Engagement	1) When I read the poem, I visualized the places described in the poem.					
	2) I saw what happened in the poem through the eyes of the poet.					
	3) I felt how the poet was feeling.					
	4) When I read the poem, I felt I was in the poem's world.					
Aesthetic Judgement	5) The poem had rhythm.					
	6) The poem had features of poetry.					
	7) The poem was beautiful.					
Comprehension	8) The meaning of this poem is hard to understand.					
	9) I had an idea of what the poem is about while reading it.					
Quality Evaluation	10) The author put a lot of effort into writing this poem.					
	11) The poem could be published in a book.					
	12) Overall, the poem is well written.					
Open-ended Questions	Please list the emotions experienced while reading the poem.					
	Please use two or three sentences to describe how you feel about this poem.					

Using Roald Dahl's *Matilda* to develop reader identities and student-teacher rapport

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Abstract

Roald Dahl's *Matilda* (1988) is a popular and engaging narrative about how a gifted child uses her wits and talents to overcome challenges at home and at school. It is appropriate for readers from late elementary school age onwards, and has many charms that might appeal to older readers as well. For learners of English, especially young adults and university freshmen, who are still negotiating their identities as students and readers, it can be an accessible gateway text for those who are getting ready to transition from graded readers to more authentic texts. The themes, characters, and plot of this story are relevant and appropriate for promoting a positive attitude towards reading for pleasure, as well as exploring teacher-student dynamics; two factors that can have a dramatic impact on students' motivation and participation in courses with a reading component (Ro & Chen, 2014). This article will outline the author's experience of using *Matilda* as a class novel, including teaching context, the rationale for using an authentic novel in the EFL classroom, the rationale for using *Matilda* in particular, and some practical points for making the most out of the novel in terms of content-based, and language-practice activities.

Keywords: authentic texts, children's literature, class novel, motivation, reader identity, reading skills

Teaching context

Matilda has been the class book in the second semester of the author's Freshman Foundational Literacies: Reading & Writing courses for the past two years. This amounts to four Advanced-track level classes of 19-20 students in total.

In this course, extensive reading is a major component (10% participation grade), and students are encouraged to develop a habit of reading for pleasure. To this end, they are loosely required to read an average of one graded reader book every two weeks and, in the case of the authors' classes, work towards or beyond a modest word-count target of 75,000 words in the first

semester, and 100,000 words in the second semester. To develop reading fluency, students are advised to read graded reader books at, or preferably below, their reading comfort level, following the headword, or "basic word" principle (Nation, 2009, p. 52). These can be self-selected from the teacher's class library, or from the university's library or Self-Access Learning Centre (SALC).

As the extensive reading grade is based on participation rather than attainment, students are assessed holistically according to how frequently they are working towards their target, as opposed to the exact number of books or words they read. As such, the number of books a student reads may vary depending on their reading proficiency, book choice, and effort. Participation was monitored initially by using paper Reading Records, in which students recorded the book titles, reading dates, level of difficulty, etc, in tabular form. In 2017, the electronic platform MReader (mreader.org) was adopted, with similar data being logged digitally when students pass short reading comprehension quizzes.

Through this monitoring of Reading Records, classroom observations, and conversations with individuals, it was evident that some students were becoming avid readers, keen to move on to the "next step" (i.e., authentic texts). However, some individuals started to lose motivation to read as the semester progressed, either not fully participating, or only doing the minimum requirement to meet the extensive reading target. Aside from the usual time-constraints and workload issues which are faced by many students towards the end of the semester (Ro & Chen, 2014, p. 59), hindering their ability and motivation to practice reading outside class, one of the main challenges students reported was comprehension of detailed narratives.

Despite having access to graded reader texts that were adjusted to a variety of levels, students talked about struggling to follow complex plots, and stories with multiple and secondary characters. In addition, they also complained that unknown vocabulary was frustrating their reading fluency. A low tolerance for ambiguity may be anticipated when unknown words are encountered in any context, and some dictionary use may be inevitable, since "learning [in extensive reading programmes] may at times be incidental and at times deliberate" (Webb & Chang, 2015). However, some students were still resorting to *consistently* using dictionaries while reading, and this was impeding their reading fluency. Although students were reminded of the extensive reading principle of selecting easy books, it seemed that they maintained ambitions to read books at a higher level than their fluency competency.

In the second semester of 2016, *Matilda* was introduced as a class novel, to be read in addition to the regular extensive reading requirement. It was hoped that this would not only provide the "level-up" to an authentic text, as desired by keen readers, but also allow for more scaffolded

input for those students who were still learning how to appreciate longer and more detailed narrative texts. It was also hoped that the choice of book would provide plentiful stimulus for in-class discussion, and reflection on, the themes of reader identities and teacher-student models.

Using an authentic narrative text (*Matilda*) in the EFL classroom

Hall (2005) summarizes the broad benefits of using authentic literature in the language classroom into three categories: affective, cultural, and psycholinguistic (i.e., linguistic processing, p. 48). These three factors seem to be symbiotic, since learners' access to the cultural and linguistic benefits of reading may only be truly accessed when the affective filter is lowered. When reading is meaningful and interesting, students develop intrinsic motivation and enjoyment in the activity of reading, and this can have a profound effect on language and literacy development (Lao & Krashen, 2000, p. 262). Meanwhile, raising learners' awareness of the cultural and linguistic advantages of reading can help them to appreciate and enjoy the reading process, and feel encouraged and motivated to participate in reading activities.

In order to make the most of the advantages of using authentic literary texts, it is important to select a text that is accessible in terms of learners' skill levels, schematic understanding, and interest. It should also have sufficiently challenging material to develop learners' growth, and to stimulate creative, critical, and reflective responses. *Matilda* satisfies these requirements effectively, offering a rich resource of cultural, social, and personal themes for learners to discuss, as well as plentiful examples of interesting and creative language use, and implicit encouragement for learners to be ambitious and resilient learners and readers.

Cultural benefits

Authentic narratives provide exposure to new cultural and social contexts through texts situated *within* the culture itself, as opposed to ones created specifically for language learners looking in from *outside*, thus helping to develop students' personal L2 identities. Part of the appeal of *Matilda* is no doubt due to the entertaining and accessible presentation of relatable cultural, social, and personal themes. A child's journey through the first year of school, including encounters with other children, teachers, new rules, expectations, and activities, should be familiar and sympathetic to anyone who has experienced formal education. Meanwhile, Dahl's narrative is firmly situated within the generic cultural context of a small English village, in a time before internet and smartphones, thereby providing cultural insights and points of comparison to explore in the EFL classroom. The content of the novel therefore provides stimulating themes that can be

explored in discussions about family life, school experiences, and personal relationships, as well as in creative and critical responses (including writing projects, role plays, and debates), and individual personal reflections.

Authentic texts also build learners' cultural capital by accessing genuine and verifiable cultural artefacts available in the target culture. As Cook (2000) explains, "literary texts have the advantage of being attested instances of communication [which] do not lose authenticity in the classroom." (p. 195) In the thirty years since its publication, *Matilda* has proved hugely popular with a wide audience. In 1996 it was adapted into an award-winning movie (Devito, et al). A musical adaptation (Kelly & Minchin), also award-winning, has toured internationally since it premiered in 2010, and is due to be released as a motion picture sometime after 2019 (Gilbert, 2013). In 2016 Matilda was voted second (below Harry Potter) in a list of the UK's favourite children's book heroes, with the antagonist Miss Trunchbull being voted the fifth most "evil villain" (World Book Day). Offering *Matilda* as a text to explore in class offers learners an opportunity to enhance their cultural capital by reading a famous and celebrated narrative, one which they may already have heard of and be interested in.

Psycholinguistic benefits

The psycholinguistic benefits of using authentic narrative texts are as varied as the language features available in literary works. Widdowson (1975) argues that exposure to the lexico-grammatical forms, idiomatic language and creative deviations of literature helps to expand not only learners' linguistic awareness, but also their productive ability, while Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) offer an extensive list of common literary devices (including metaphor, simile, imagery) which could prompt engaging and enriching in-class focus (p. 246). Cook argues that language play, or "the fascination with the manipulation of linguistic form," is the "single underlying phenomenon" relevant to all individuals and societies (2000, p. 4). This key difference between authentic and graded narratives is what readers of all ages and backgrounds often find engaging in Roald Dahl's work. Dahl was renowned for being a master of wordplay (Roald Dahl's Wordplay), and *Matilda* is densely packed with nonsense words, creative metaphors, similes, onomatopoeia, idioms, and slang, for readers to explore.

Longer authentic texts, such as novels, provide immersive linguistic exposure, and reading for pleasure offers substantial gains in both reading speed and vocabulary growth (Lao & Krashen, 2000, p.265). Through practising extensive reading skills, readers develop the ability to "make inferences from linguistic clues, and to deduce meaning from context" (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.

5). Developing more nuanced interpretive skills while reading authentic texts can encourage a wider-reaching tolerance of ambiguity, which can have additional benefits not only in learners' academic studies in other classes, but also in linguistic and cultural literacy beyond the classroom (Hullah, 2012, p. 33). *Matilda* provides an accessible transition from smaller, graded reader texts to longer, authentic novels. As Day and Bamford explain, while children's novels (at over 100 pages) may be longer than learners have read before, "the print is large, the margins generous, and – very important – the chapters short" (1998, p. 104). The chapters of *Matilda* range between 4 and 18 pages, with an average of 11 pages. This is not an unreasonable amount of text for learners to approach in one sitting. In addition, Rennie (2016) argues that Dahl's "joyfully inventive use of language" was Dahl's way of ensuring that his readers didn't get bored and stop reading, and that learning to appreciate the whimsical and nonsensical features of his work prevents the reader from taking language too seriously (para. 11). In the EFL classroom, such language can raise students' awareness of the malleability of linguistic forms, and encourage them to experiment and play with language in their own speaking and writing, while also reinforcing skills of inference and understanding the meaning from context.

Affective benefits

Day and Bamford (1998) cite a number of influencing factors that can affect learners' motivation and self-efficacy towards reading, including the appropriacy of materials, their current reading level, attitudes towards reading, and socio-cultural factors (p. 28). Although many authentic texts may offer a lexicogrammatical challenge to learners' current reading levels, the fact of their authenticity can attract students to rise to this challenge, offering a sense of personal satisfaction that is reinforced by the cultural and linguistic benefits cited above. Engaging with stimulating and culturally situated narratives develops confidence and personal growth, as well as key skills for reading and understanding texts and contexts (Hedgcock & Ferris, 2009, p. 247-254). Providing students have enough vocabulary and grammar to get started, as they become involved in reading for pleasure over time, the affective filter of unknown or challenging lexicogrammar may become sublimated by "pursuing the development of the story" (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 6). This, in turn, helps learners to appreciate that "the contingency that foreign language use in the real world is often likely to involve the need to deal with unpredictable situations and events beyond the current level of linguistic proficiency," and to develop strategies for dealing with challenging and authentic materials (Hall, 2005, p. 51).

Meaningful and interesting reading for pleasure also has a generally positive effect on

students' feelings towards reading novels (Lao & Krashen, 2000, p. 267). In addition to the general sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that comes with reading an authentic text, readers' affective filters may also be lowered by exploring some of the key themes of the narrative, and through observing attitudinal and behavioural models of readers, education, and student-teacher relationships. Since attention is focalised through the protagonist, the reader's perspective adapts to the values and ideology presented by the author, and this can have a potentially powerful effect on reader identity (Stephens, 1992, p. 68). For example, the characterisation and narrative events of *Matilda* highlight the values of intellect, creativity, and kindness, which a reader may hope to emulate. Matilda is identified by her precociousness, with her frustrated and superabundant intelligence eventually finding a telekinetic outlet. This is an exciting and perhaps enviable gift. However, it is her natural curiosity, her sense of fairness, and her appetite for literature, which make her a compelling role model. In contrast with her vociferously anti-intellectual parents and the belligerent Miss Trunchbull, Matilda presents an attractive alternative.

Matilda also provides some interesting models of students, teachers, and classroom behaviour. As a student in class, Matilda is diligent and curious, eager to challenge her own intellect. In her own time, she actively pursues her supernatural talent, honing it to reach a self-directed goal. Meanwhile, Dahl's depiction of students who do not engage with their learning is far less generous. In the opening pages of the novel, the narrator muses on writing reports for unpleasant students, who lack potential or ambition ("won't get a job anywhere"), don't pay attention ("has no hearing organs at all"), or show no character ("still waiting for him to emerge from the chrysalis") or humanity ("unlike the iceberg, she has absolutely nothing below the surface") (p. 8-9). Matilda's teacher, Miss Honey, is considerate and thoughtful, showing genuine interest in her students, and finding creative solutions to support their learning. The traditionalist, dictatorial educational philosophy of her counterpart, Miss Trunchbull, seems antiquated and counterintuitive by comparison. By ridiculing or scorning the anti-intellectual mindset, *Matilda* may encourage readers to not only sympathise with positive teacher-student models, but also to reflect on their own identities as readers and students.

Pedagogy

Despite the many advantages of extensive reading, and/or using authentic narrative texts such as *Matilda*, there is still a risk that introducing it to learners in the wrong way can be counterproductive, and actually raise their the affective filter. As Hall (2005) explains, language learners can remain "relatively unconvinced of the point or value of literature in second or foreign

language learning" and literature should be incorporated into the class with sensitivity, "its relative advantages demonstrated rather than asserted, assumed, or left implicit" (p. 114-115). While devising materials to introduce *Matilda* to advanced-level Freshman Foundational Literacies students, it was important to offer scaffolded learning that would elicit understanding of the narrative content, themes, and language of the novel, rather than explicitly telling students what the book is about.

In order to establish a comfortable reading routine, while also offering stimulating and varied ways for students to engage with and respond to the text, the semester followed a standard, basic weekly format which was usually followed by supplementary focus on literary forms and devices, narrative content, and/or creative and critical production. The basic weekly format was for students to read 1-2 chapters of the book as homework, and come to class ready to summarise and discuss their understanding of the events in those chapters, before working on a handout of comprehension and discussion questions. The purpose of the oral summaries is for students to refresh their memories, check any points of confusion with their peers, and encourage a sense of being part of a reading community, in which peers discuss their reading experiences.

The comprehension and discussion questions on the weekly handout were devised to draw students' attention to significant details of the narrative, character and plot development, which will inform their understanding of future events in the book. The handout for the first chapter "The Reader of Books" (Appendix A), for example, aims to establish characterising features of Matilda and her family as well as the key themes of intelligence, learning, and bibliophilia. Some questions on the handouts require students to practice note-taking, summarising, and paraphrasing skills, since the relevant information in the text is long, and the space for answers on the handout is limited. Other questions ask students to speculate on what might have happened in the past, or what might happen next, or to read between the lines to understand the subtext. In the handout for the second chapter, "Mr Wormwood, the Great Car Dealer," students are asked why it is ironic that Matilda's father tells Matilda "Supper is a family gathering, and no one leaves the table till it's over!" (p. 28) Students can then appreciate the hypocrisy of Mr Wormwood, a model of bad parenting, espousing family values and table manners when they are actually eating TV dinners while sitting on the sofa. Learning to understand irony through concrete examples such as this helps students to pay attention to the importance of reading critically.

In addition to the comprehension and discussion questions described above, supplementary activities were also incorporated to provide a variety of exposure to literary and creative language use, scaffolded understanding of narrative features and devices, and opportunities for creative,

critical, and reflective practice. A supplementary linguistic focus, for example, might include short extracts with highlighted vocabulary, asking students to glean the meaning of the words from the context, and cloze review activities of idiomatic language discussed in the previous week (Appendix B). Students can find it useful to have a focused explanation and examples of wordplay in context, as it helps them to visualise abstract expressions and appreciate how they might be amusing to a fluent reader. In one lesson, a discussion of the creative use of language to characterise Miss Honey and Miss Trunchbull segues into a focus on similes (Appendix C), while in another lesson, students are asked to discuss (and perhaps look up) what Roald Dahl suggests to his readers about characters through the playful use of names (e.g., Mrs Phelps the librarian "helps" Matilda), before moving on to a more in-depth character analysis (Appendix D).

To help build students' confidence in reading stories with complex plots and multiple characters, focused narrative analysis activities were also incorporated to demystify this process. Students deconstructed the narrative features of the novel, including characters, setting, plot (using a Plot Mountain diagram, with rising action, climax, and falling action/resolution), conflict, and themes. This helped them to check their understanding of *Matilda* specifically, and also develop their schematic understanding of narrative patterns more generally. Character and dialogue studies included Readers' Theatre, and Role Play activities. In Readers' Theatre, students first parsed the dialogue and narration of a scene (from the ninth chapter "The Parents," when Miss Honey visits Mr and Mrs Wormwood at their home), colour coding the speech of different characters and focusing on the attitudes and emotions expressed by different characters during this confrontation. Students practiced the scene in small groups before participating in a whole class 'tag team' performance, in which individuals took turns to perform different characters. For the Role Play activity, students speculated on what might happen after a dramatic scene, when Bruce Bogtrotter defeats Miss Trunchbull by eating an enormous cake. Students then scripted and performed an extra scene (Appendix E) with original characters and dialogue, of the dinner conversation in the Bogtrotter family later that day. These collaborative and immersive activities help to bring the text off the page, deepening understanding of characterisation and plot as well as providing a breadth of interactive language skills practice.

Other critical and reflective production activities include writing book reviews, writing a comparative evaluation of a scene as depicted in the book and in the movie adaptation, and writing an essay on the role of one of the key characters in the narrative. Students tend to approach these written tasks willingly, since they are keen to express their thoughts about a text which they have

been meaningfully engaged in. Their evaluations tend to be enthusiastic, and their reflections thoughtful and insightful.

Conclusion

The above activities were used with the intention of providing students with scaffolded support for reading a longer, authentic narrative text, helping them to develop their reading skills and lexicogrammatical awareness, as well as an appreciation of the rich potential for language play. *Matilda* was chosen for its reputation as an entertaining and engaging narrative, with pertinent and accessible themes and creative use of language. It also serves to promote reading as a joyful and beneficial pursuit, and explores the role of teachers and learners, and how methods and rapport affect learning progress. Through reading *Matilda*, students gain an appreciation of reading for pleasure as a positive and rewarding pursuit, and are able to engage in a dialogue with their classmates and teacher about learning, behaviour, relationships, and education. *Matilda* is therefore an ideal text to incorporate into the EFL classroom, engaging students in the process of reading, enjoying, and talking about books.

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Appendix A

Chapter 1: The Reader of Books

1. According to the narrator, do parents usually believe their children are *more*, or *less*, intelligent than they really are?

2. The narrator fantasises about writing school reports for bad students. He makes some very honest suggestions about some children.
    i. Which child….
        a. doesn't pay attention in class?
        b. will never get a job?
        c. has no personality?

3. What skills has Matilda developed by the following ages?:
    a. 1 ½
    b. 3
    c. 4

4. How do the following characters usually spend their day?
    a. Mr Wormwood
    b. Mrs Wormwood
    c. Matilda

5. What is Matilda's favourite children's book?

6. What type of book does she want to read now?

7. What does Mrs Phelps the librarian think about Matilda's parents?

8. Have you heard of, or read any of, the books or authors mentioned on page 18?

9. What advice does Mrs Phelps give about reading difficult books?

10. What effect does reading books have on Matilda?

Appendix B

Chapter 5: Arithmetic

1. Matilda has to follow the family rules. What helps her to keep sane?

2. Why is Mr Wormwood in a good mood?

3. What skill does Mr Wormwood want to teach Mike, and why?

4. Why does Mr Wormwood sell a car for £999.50, rather than £1000?

5. Mr Wormwood tells Matilda to "Stop guessing and trying to be clever." Why is this ironic?

6. How does Mr Wormwood think Matilda got the correct answer to the sum?

Chapter 6: The Platinum Blonde Man

7. Who does the hair dye belong to?

8. What does Mr Wormwood think his healthy hair says about him? How does Matilda show this to be nonsense?

9. What does Matilda do with the bleach?

10. When Mr Wormwood comes for breakfast, why does Matilda keep her head down?

11. What does Mr Wormwood have to do to fix his hair?

Vocabulary Focus: Understanding Meaning from Context

Without using a dictionary, can you explain what the words in bold mean, in context?

A. "But the new game she had invented of punishing one or both of [her parents] each time they were **beastly** to her made her life more or less **bearable**." (p49)

B. "For **sheer** cleverness she could **run rings around** them all." (p49)

C. "Her **safety-valve**, the thing that prevented her from **going round the bend**, was the fun of **devising** and **dishing out** these **splendid** punishments." (p49)

Vocabulary Review

1. The lock on my desk drawer had been _____ with, and some of my papers were missing.
2. I haven't the _____ idea what you're talking about.
3. I'm worried about my little brother. He spends all weekend with his eyes _____ to the _____, and never does any exercise.
4. The poor child was in _____ of _____ when he couldn't find his favourite teddy bear.
5. Where the _____ have you been? We were supposed to meet half an hour ago!
6. I was having a miserable day before you _____ it _____ with your good news.
7. When she heard the shocking news, she _____out crying.
8. My cousin made a _____ on the stock market.
9. The teacher _____ to us about the importance of independent study.
10. The two boys threw stones because the other children had _____ them _____.
11. He's very angry right now. I won't talk to him until he has _____ _____.
12. I have to visit my grandmother, because she's a bit _____ the _____ at the moment.

foggiest	**mint**	**tears**	**glued**	**down**
heck	**floods**	**up**	**weather**	
burst	**preached**	**under**	**on**	**brightened**
egged	**simmered**	**tampered**	**telly**	

Appendix C

Chapter 7: Miss Honey

1. What advice does Miss Honey give to the children about Miss Trunchbull?

2. Why does Miss Honey want to help the children to learn?

3. Why, do you think, does Miss Honey take care not to show her surprise at Matilda's mathematical ability?

4. In what ways does Matilda demonstrate her literacy skills?

5. Do you agree, that "all children's books should be funny?" Why?

6. Throughout this chapter, what different emotions do you think Miss Honey feels?

Chapter 8: The Trunchbull

7. Why does Miss Honey go to see Miss Trunchbull?

8. What are the typical qualities of a head teacher? Which of these qualities does Miss Trunchbull have?

9. How does Miss Trunchbull know Matilda's father?
   What is her opinion of:
   a) Mr Wormwood
   b) Matilda?

10. What is Miss Trunchbull's view about little girls?

11. What is Miss Honey's opinion about Miss Trunchbull?

12. Why, according to Miss Trunchbull, does Miss Honey want Matilda to move to another class? Why is this ironic?

Character Focus: Thematic Associations

What words do you associate with the following characters?

Miss Honey	Miss Trunchbull

Language Focus: Using Language creatively

Without using a dictionary, can you explain what ideas the following sentences are trying to communicate?

A. "She had a lovely pale oval **Madonna face**." (p66)

B. "She always marched **like a storm-trooper**." (67)

C. "If you **get on the wrong side of** Miss Trunchbull, she can **liquidise you like a carrot in a blender**." (p69)

Similes

Complete the following common similes using the words in the box (NB: you will need to use one word twice):

1. The presentation went well. It was **as smooth as** _____.
2. I slept really well last night, so now I feel **as fresh as a** _____.
3. My brother has terrible manners. He **eats like a** _____.
4. My brother has a very low appetite. He **eats like a** _____.
5. Carol has a beautiful voice. She can **sing like an** _____.
6. I don't mind carrying your bag for you. It's **as light as a** _____.
7. This homework is _____**hard**.
8. Time **flies like an** _____.
9. This cake is old and stale. It is **as hard as a** _____.
10. Your hands are **as cold as** _____.
11. I don't get on well with my brother. We always **fight like** _____.
12. My uncle has a terrible cough. It's because he **smokes like a** _____.

chimney	rock	silk	angel	pig	arrow	
cats and dogs		bird	daisy	feather	ice	

Appendix D

Chapter 18: The Names

1. What did Miss Trunchbull use to do to Miss Honey in the Bath?

2. Why does Miss Honey want to change the subject, do you think?

3. Why does Matilda want to go home?

4. What does Miss Honey ask Matilda to do? Does she agree?

5. What three pieces of information does Matilda ask from Miss Honey? What do you think Matilda might do with this information?

Chapter 19: The Practice

6. Where are Matilda's family when she gets home? How do you think she feels about this?

7. What does Matilda use to practice her powers on? Why does she choose this object?

8. After she manages to *push* the object, how does she feel?

9. What is her next goal? How successful is she, after an hour of practice?

10. How long does it take for Matilda to fully develop her ability? What can she do now?

11. What do you think she is planning to do?

The Characters of *Matilda*

Parents put a lot of thought into naming their children, and so do authors when they name their characters. What do you think the following names tell us about their owners?

- Matilda
- Miss Honey
- The Trunchbull
- Mr & Mrs Wormwood
- Lavender
- Mrs Phelps
- Hortensia
- Bruce Bogtrotter

Character Analysis

Choose one of the characters above, and complete the character analysis below:

Appearance:

Role in the narrative:

Personality:

Draw your character here:

Actions:

How other characters feel about them:

Thoughts/ feelings:

Appendix E

Chapter 10: Throwing the Hammer

1. How do Matilda's friends know that she is clever?

2. Why do Matilda and Lavender like each other?

3. What is The Chokey? Give two reasons why Hortensia has been put in The Chokey.

4. What do Matilda and Lavender think about Hortensia and her tricks?

5. Why is Miss Trunchbull good at throwing children?

6. Why does Miss Trunchbull punish Amanda?

7. According to Hortensia, why don't parents complain about Miss Trunchbull?

Chapter 11: Bruce Bogtrotter and the Cake

8. According to Matilda, how does Miss Trunchbull get away with behaving badly?

9. What is Matilda's opinion of Miss Trunchbull?

10. Why is Bruce Bogtrotter in trouble?

11. What is Bruce Bogtrotter's punishment? What, do you think, does Miss Trunchbull hope will happen?

12. Make a list of three things the children guess will be wrong with the cake.

13. What does Miss Trunchbull threaten will happen if Bruce doesn't finish the cake?

14. How does the atmosphere in the audience change throughout this scene? Make a note of three feelings they might experience at different moments.

15. How do Miss Trunchbull and Bruce feel at the end of the chapter?

16. Who do you think is meaner, Miss Trunchbull or Mr Wormwood? Why?

Readers' Theatre: Role Play

Imagine what happens when Bruce Bogtrotter goes home for dinner after school. With a partner, write a script for the dinner conversation between Bruce and his parents.

Report on LiLT SIG events in Spring, 2018: PanSIG Forum and Yokohama JALT

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In this report, we discuss two recent events organised and attended by members of the Literature in Language Teaching Special Interest Group (LiLT SIG) in the spring term of 2018. The presentations described here help to frame the SIG's place as a source of information for others wishing to teach with literature, in all of its various forms. Literature teachers (or perhaps "teachers using literature") in Japan may be working within literature departments, or may be teaching proficiency classes within second language (L2) programs. We encourage readers of this journal to consider joining us for a future event, reporting on their teaching of literature, or possibly also giving a presentation at a future event. As a SIG, we aim to support and offer publishing and presenting opportunities to all our members, and we particularly welcome submissions and participation from "new faces," and are able to offer necessary support to those who are relatively new who have ideas to share, but who may be somewhat new to academic publishing and/or presenting. Events at which members can present about literature are the two big events of the year, JALT International (usually held in November) and the PanSIG Conference, usually held in May. There are other local events as we describe below, where the SIG works with local chapters. Readers may have their own ideas for local events, perhaps with their local Chapters, or at their university, and different types of events can be made to happen. Do contact us at: liltsig@gmail.com.

First, we report regarding the forum at the PanSIG conference, held at Toyo Gakuen University, Hongo Campus, Tokyo from 19th-20th May. Toyo Gakuen's Hongo Campus in Central Tokyo was ideal for attracting a presenters from various corners of Japan, including the speakers for this year's forum. Several of the panelists travelled from Kansai for the event. In the second part of the report, we describe the talks given by two LiLT members at a special day with Yokohama JALT. In both presentations, a key theme was the interaction and involvement with the audience in

building and negotiating meaning with texts. Even though both presenters worked with different types of texts, varying from movies to short stories and poems, or to narrative in a general sense. In the tasks, these were all used in highly interactive ways and could be adapted for the benefit of students in different contexts. We look forward to more events through which SIG members can share their teaching experiences and methods with others.

LiLT SIG forum

The LiLT SIG forum at the PanSIG conference was held from 10:30-12 noon on Saturday, 19th May, 2018. In this Literature in Language Teaching SIG interactive forum, panelists discussed the opportunities and challenges of using literature in the language classroom here in Japan. The format was in two parts, the first of which was a talk from our 2018 recipient of the LiLT SIG conference grant, Vicky Richings. Following this, the forum was made up of a discussion by five LiLT SIG members. Paul Hullah, a tenured associate professor of British poetry and culture, works at Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo. Anna Husson Isozaki is based in Tokyo, and teaches at Juntendo University and researches second language literacy-building and aural literature's role in L2 learning. Vicky Ann Richings teaches English, Japanese, and cultural studies at Kwansei Gakuin University. Tara McIlroy is a co-coordinator of the Literature in Language Teaching SIG. She is teaching literature and academic skills at the School of Global Japanese Studies, Meiji University in Tokyo. Simon Bibby is a tenured faculty member of the English Department at Kobe Shoin Women's University, teaching a mix of language skills classes, business English and culture classes.

The forum began with a talk by Vicky Ann Richings entitled *Literature in JFL*. Richings noted the paucity of literary texts to be found in Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) textbooks. Richings notes that while there has been some research conducted into texts used in English as Second / Foreign language textbooks, there appears to be minimal (if any!) existing research into literary texts in JFL textbooks. Richings explained her research in this regard, for which she has received both JALT and LiLT research grants in 2017 and 2018.

The panel discussion began with a consideration of what may be meant and understood by the term “literature.” This may be a typical approach when introducing the topic of literature in language teaching, but there remain differing opinions, even amongst seasoned professionals who are teaching it. Hullah suggested that it is not always immediately clear what is meant by literature and that teachers of literature should be careful about what they present to their learners. Are the texts suitable, presented with the learner in mind, and are these texts useful for their learning goals? If so, then the learner should be able to work positively with literature and teachers should feel

confident about its inclusion. In attempting to define the slippery term literature, panelists posited a number of characteristics of something that is inherently "fuzzy," notably its "creativity" and 'arbitrariness."

In a connected digression, the panelists also considered the various opinions that teachers may have about literature, and that to some degree the topic may have negative connotations for some. This could be from teachers' own perspectives, learners' perspectives, or both. In a certain sense, the term "literature" can sometimes be off-putting for some people, for both teaching staff and for students, and has something of an unfortunate perception of being taught looking down from on high, by the already-cultured to the yet-unknowing (see the stage play and movie Educating Rita for an amusing example thereof). Hullah explained the ways in which teachers can consider their position, and argued that teachers should do their best to try to stay humble about the teaching of literature, knowing that it can provoke reaction and response in learners that should be managed carefully. Panelists appeared to agree on the need to be open to student opinions, and to welcome their input in reading, deciphering and seeking surface and deeper understanding. Next, each panelist discussed with the audience three questions which are important considerations for teachers using literature in language learning contexts. Each speaker responded in some detail to of these:

1. *What has been your experience of literature in your language teaching context, and why do you recommend it to others?*
2. *How can we engage language learners using literature?*
3. *What role may literature have in the future in teaching contexts in Japan, in your opinion?*

In their answers, panelists offered examples, and described their own choices and uses of literature in their respective teaching contexts. Richings noted the usefulness of literary texts in teaching Japanese honorific language (*keigo*), providing illustrations of real contexts for language learners in which they can see the correct use of the appropriate language forms. Husson Isozaki described using memoirs and popular best sellers, and the power of using moving texts. Bibby noted a range of texts he had used when teaching a Dystopia-themed literature-infused society and politics class in higher level tertiary classes. McIlroy described her current teaching context working with trainee teachers reading a class novel over one semester. In spring 2018 the class text was *The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night Time* by Mark Haddon. Her method of creating an active learning environment in order to encourage engagement with literature is to require the trainee teachers to prepare and deliver a lesson using the class text. Through sharing these various ways of teaching literature, we aimed to encourage others to do the same. A discussion with the

audience followed on from the panel talk, with several members of the forum audience sharing their own stories and experiences.

LiLT SIG at Yokohama JALT

Once again, the LiLT SIG worked with the Yokohama JALT Chapter in organising this event on the afternoon of 30th June, 2018. Just as in 2017, two presenters delivered workshop style talks on literature-related themes. In the next section, we provide a short summary of our impressions from these two talks. The first speaker of the day was Donna Tatsuki from Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. Professor Tatsuki is the director of the Graduate School for English Language Education and Research at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. Her areas of speciality include storytelling and narrative, as well as narrative inquiry and cross-cultural pragmatics. Additional themes which are related to her main areas of focus include English as a Lingua Franca and interaction in multiple languages. Her talk was entitled *Teaching Narratives: Intentionally Ambiguous* (see this issue), and from the title we could already predict that it would ask questions, as well as search for answers while telling a few stories along the way. In the first part of this presentation, Tatsuki explained three different ways to teach narrative:

1) The structural approach to teaching narrative, which includes the dramatic arc
2) Story grammar approach, which includes the setting, theme, plot, and resolution
3) Structural components approach using questions throughout while considering point of view

In each of these ways of teaching, we could see examples and think about ways to use them in our own contexts. One consideration when thinking about which one of these might be best suited for the class and setting would be which of these methods could be considered to be more suitable than the others, if any? In answer to this query, our presenter replied that all are equally useful and can be adapted to suit the group. The students may favour one over another, but that is simply an interesting aspect of this type of teaching which the teacher may like to consider. Tatsuki then went on to explain some specific ways in which various approaches available for the teaching of how to write and perform narratives. Story starters, for example, could be a way to get creative activities started with various possibilities. A linked idea could be to use the retelling of a story, or by using methods such as transformation to build new ideas into well-known stories. We also heard discussion of the uses of the seven basic plot lines approach, which can help to make connections between texts. Participants discussed the value of building in background activities, which can help support the understanding needed for today's young adult learners. Tatsuki emphasised the value of

storytelling as a life-skill, and one which could be useful for learners in different contexts, from interviews to work experience.

In the second half of this presentation, we could examine the ways, meanings and outcomes of the acts of sharing narratives on teaching, resulting in greater opportunities for L2 learning also. We considered these topics by evaluating narratives about teaching from three perspectives: 1) Student narratives, 2) Teacher-based narratives, and 3) Popular/Media-based narratives. The popular/media-based narratives included movies which present a particular type of person, which may be limited or two-dimensional, and without nuance. The examples given were all from movies where teachers were seen in different ways. Through these examples we could consider some dangers of uncritical acceptance of teacher-learner narratives. In the current issue of this journal, more details about Tatsuki's talk is given in a separate conference report. Finally, more details of Professor Tatsuki's work is available at <kobe-cufs.ac.jp/institute/faculty/tatsuki.html>

In the second talk of the afternoon, Atsushi Iida of Gunma University introduced *Teaching English-language Haiku: Articulating Voice in the Target Language.* Professor Iida has extensive experience as an L2 writing teacher, the pedagogy of which he extends to the L2 poetry-teaching classroom. This talk was one of praxis - part theory and part practice, with a focus on thinking and active participation. By the end of the session participants had all written their own *haiku,* using guiding principles from the talk, and using ideas which could be adapted to various contexts. One expressed aim of the presentation was to expand our knowledge on the teaching of *haiku* writing in the second language (L2) classroom. The presentation addressed the issue of voice in L2 writing and discussed how poetry writing helps to construct and develop voice. In particular, we could see how the use of poetry in L2 writing was an example of meaningful literacy learning in the Japanese EFL university classroom. Iida illustrated his theoretical approach in some detail and then went on to show exactly what is meant by *haiku*, and how the poetic form can be taught to Japanese students, making use of their prior learning of the topic. We could see examples of short poems written by students, and also some written by Iida, which we discussed with session participations. Participants in the session all learned something new through our discussion of how teachers can help students to make their L2 learning personal, meaningful, and humanistic. In the workshop section of the presentations, we were asked to follow the same processes which learners could also follow in a writing lesson of this type. These were 1) to make a list of memories of the season (spring, summer, rainy season). Through this we could select ideas for the next section. Next, 2) choose one memory and describe the situation. Put the detailed (visual and sensory) information of the moment in the text. In this section, I wrote the following:

In a summer trip to Aomori, my son wanted to swim in the lake. He had no swimming costume but went in the water anyway. But my daughter was too shy and instead caught a dragonfly at the edge of the lake. She just learned how to do that, and was amazed that these huge, flying insects would simply land on an outstretched finger so easily. The dragonfly was so easy to catch - it had no idea it was going to get caught after landing on her finger. The dragonfly had rainbow colours. I listened to them laughing. The lake was blue and it was beautiful.

While the story is not formed in much detail, the memory was remarkably clear for me. My own engagement with the task at the time of writing was high, due to the positive association of a memory which returned to me in detail. The encouragement to consider senses was useful here. Following on from this, we were asked in the next step 3) What was your state of mind at the time? Although this was difficult to do in a short session, we could make notes in this section also. Finally, we were asked to 4) write a haiku poem. My idea, taken from the memory above, became:

The dragonfly lands -
Those oversized blue wings are
So easy to catch

We could see, through this example of a guided task, that poetry writing can be broken into manageable and smaller chunks and we can begin to enjoy writing in a short time. Learning the guiding principles of *haiku* held our interest and was engaging. Several of us wanted to share our poems with one another after the session, which in turn helped to illustrate the meaningfulness of this type of writing. Poetry can be a useful activity for us as teachers as well as for our students. Many Japanese students are likely to have positive experiences of *haiku* writing from their childhood experiences, which can help to hook them in from the beginning. We left this session knowing more about the L2 writing sub-field of poetry writing, and could visualise more closely the use of haiku in our own particular contexts as a result. More details of Iida's work is available at <atsushi-iida.com>.

Our collective SIG thanks are offered to presenters and participants at these recent LiLT SIG events, and to organisers from the PanSIG and Yokohama chapters respectively. Alerting readers to forthcoming events, JALT International Conference is in Shizuoka this November, and LiLT are working together with the Nara chapter for an event in December.

Conference Report

Teaching Narratives: Intentionally Ambiguous

Donna Tatsuki
Kobe City University of Foreign Studies
June 30, 2018, co-sponsored by Yokohama JALT and LiLT SIG

Stories and narratives serve important functions in human life: listening to stories can bring improvements in vocabulary and grammar (Paul, 2012) as well as increase levels of empathy (Zak, 2014), which has profound effects on the building of character (Kearney, 2001). Furthermore, sharing stories whether orally or in print yields improvements in speaking skills (Hwang, et. al., 2014), overall academic development (Figg & McCartney, 2010), and improved attitudes towards learning (Abdullah, 2012). For reasons such as these narratives and storytelling are important parts of education. The title of this presentation, "Teaching Narratives," was ambiguous, since the goal was twofold: 1) to explore how to teach narratives and 2) to consider what narratives can teach us.

The first section of the presentation explored the hows and whys of teaching stories or narratives in the English classroom. The teaching of narratives is not new but it has taken a number of different shapes. In order to appreciate the range of approaches one must also decide on the productive focus (written, or spoken) since the language choices and complexity vary in each. Whether it is a story to be told or a story to be read, however, creating a good structure seems to be a universally agreed upon requirement. Figures 1-3 depict different ways to introduce narrative structure.

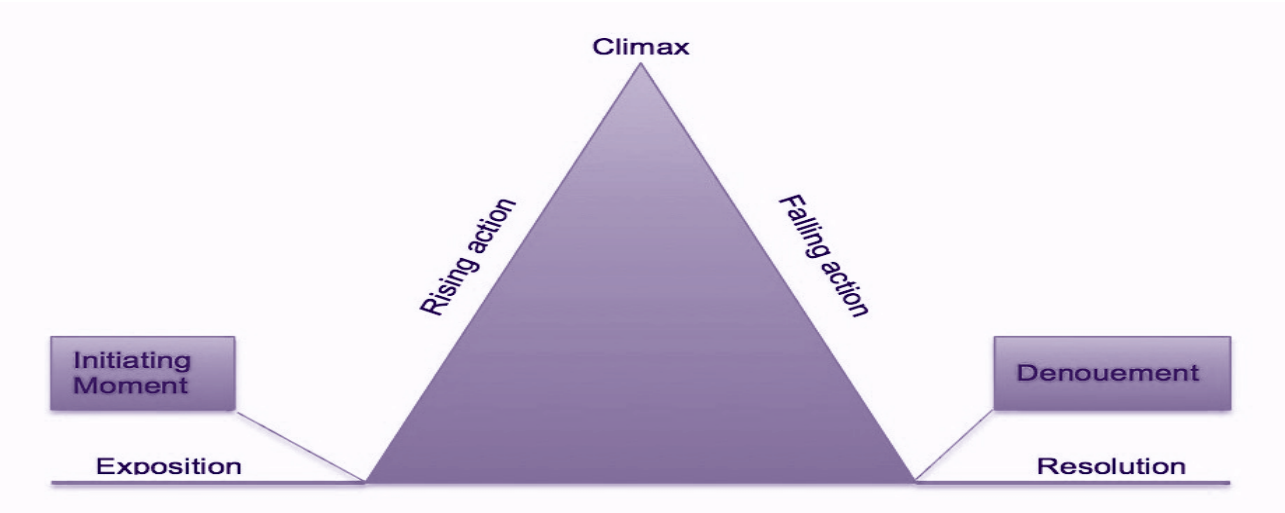

Figure 1 Dramatic Arc

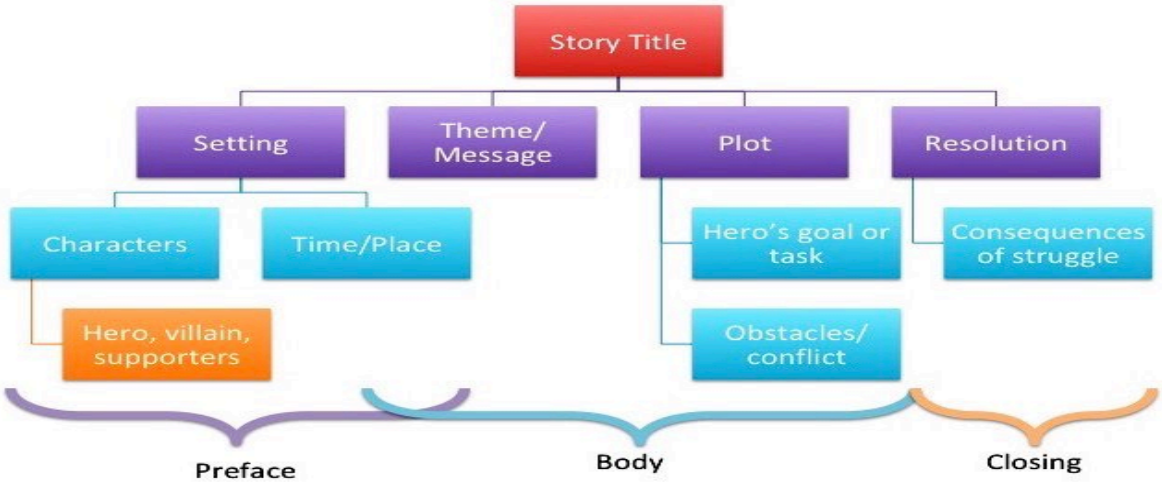

Figure 2 Story Grammar

Figure 3 Components

Other approaches to narrative creation involve prompts—the inspiration for a story or that initial "spark" to ignite writing and telling in a variety of ways. Among the most popular prompt

forms include visual, physical object, random component, initial sentence story-starters and questions.

Transformations or retellings differ from the previous approaches to story or narrative creation in a significant way—they assume the existence of a model or base story (usually well-known) upon which a new story is to be modeled, altered or augmented. Every time a story is retold verbally, one could say that the retelling makes it a new story even though the main story elements stay the same. However, skillful retellings require planning and should be considered creative works in their own right. The possible kinds of changes include setting shifts, character transformations and plot adjustments. The section closed with a short summary of the many ways that stories and narratives may be shared and concluded with a mild warning that the use of technology is never more important than a well-developed engaging story. (See the original paper at http://id.nii.ac.jp/1085/00001942/).

The second section reminded us of the value of listening to and understanding narratives about teaching as told by teachers, students and popular media. It is through the sharing of our stories (and helping others to find their voices) that we ensure continuity in the ELT community. (See the original paper at http://id.nii.ac.jp/1085/00001946/).

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Report on the NeMLA 2018 Conference, April 12-15, at the Omni William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

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The 49th Annual Convention of the Northeast Modern Language Association took place at the Omni William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania from April 12-15, 2018. This year's theme was *Global Spaces, Local Landscapes and Imagined Worlds*. A simple one-word take on this conference is expansive. Over four days there are more than 400 sessions covering a wide array of interests in literature and language, and in each time slot more than 20 sessions are running simultaneously. The topics covered are so expansive that nothing really stands out as a focal point. However, each year featured speakers include a few current authors from a variety of genres. All attendees receive the following year's book to be discussed by its author at the opening of the conference: next year Imbolo Mbue will speak about her recent and acclaimed novel *Behold the Dreamers*.

One featured speaker of interest to me was David Castillo whose topic was *Truth, Reality in the Age of Inflationary Media: Why the Humanities are More Important than Ever*, similar to his recently published book. In his talk he outlined his concerns that the humanities are shrinking at a time when well-turned lucid communication is most needed in order to educate and guide the public. The humanities, he feels, are better able than the ever-expanding sciences and IT fields to counteract rightist propaganda spewed from the Trump administration. He discussed cases where Trump manipulated public opinion, which he feels the humanities must counteract. Indeed, three conference sessions were specifically about Trump (*Trump Fiction; Trump* and *Feminism;* and also *Global Literature*, *in the Age of Trump*), as were papers in other sessions. I too was discussed in regard to the rightist agenda because during Castillo's talk my jet lag was so severe that my visible reactions were off, and my hair so short, which, together, made some worry that I was there to disrupt their liberal gathering. Luckily, I was (just barely) able to dispel their concerns at the reception that followed. A few other sessions that greatly impressed me were on teaching tone, culture, and close reading, the ethics of world literature, and politics in comics and graphic narratives. There were a few presentations on using literature in language teaching, which has been

the case for the past few years. For a better understanding of the scope of topics covered, refer to the program available at the NeMLA homepage.

I plan to attend next year's annual conference to be held in Washington, D.C. from March 21-24. A fairly new and expanding field of possible interest to JALT members is *South Asian Studies*. It has been underrepresented in the past but is seeing a surge in interest. It is just one of the many calls for papers for the 2019 conference that will close on September 30th, 2018. My concluding thoughts on this conference are best expressed by saying that the 50th conference in 2019 will be my fifth in a row.

Announcements

Women of a Certain Age

Susan Laura Sullivan
Tokai University

Women of a Certain Age (*WOCA*), published by Fremantle Press, is a recent, well-received anthology edited by Jodie Moffat, Maria Scoda and LiLT member, Susan Laura Sullivan. Fifteen creative non-fiction stories outline the journeys and experiences of women over forty and beyond. Many of the contributors are known within Australian and international literary circles.

Jeanine Leane is an award winning Wiradjuri writer from Australia. Her prose and poetry have won important state and national awards. She teaches creative writing and Aboriginal literature at Melbourne University. Her chapter in the anthology explores the perceptions white academia holds for indigenous academics within Australian tertiary institutions, and the obstacles she faced when researching the canons of white Australian literature for her Ph.D.

Krissy Kneen was shortlisted for the 2018 Stella Prize – a major literary award highlighting and celebrating women's writing – for her novel, *An Uncertain Grace*. Krissy's chapter in *WOCA* opens with the final processes of completing that book. The ideas featured in her novel are also included in her section. The representation of older male characters with younger female lovers in classical and non-classical literature is compared with that of older female characters with younger male lovers in the same. Her chapter references works of Gabriel García Márquez and Jun'ichirou Tanizaki among others. She zeroes in on the associated societal implications.

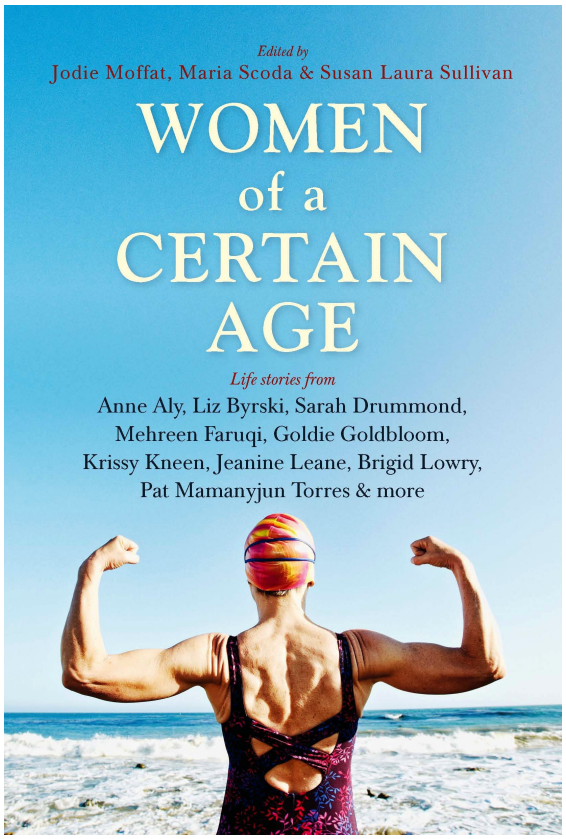
Sarah Drummond was long listed for the International Dublin Literary Award for her novel, *The Sound* in 2017. Sarah writes on people, place and our connection to both. Her work in *WOCA* traces the trajectories of secrets that restrict and bind, while revealing the ephemeral, seasonal beauty that also exists around us within nature *and* within secrets.

Goldie Goldbloom's first novel *the Paperbark Shoe* won the US Association of Writers and Writing Programs' Novel Award. It was also the Foreword Indies Book of the Year for Literary Fiction. A study of childhood is something that we and our students have experience with and in. It is relatable, no matter how harsh or sweet. Goldie's touching story about reconnecting and reconciling with her estranged father is relayed through a strong narrative voice that switches from

a child's perspective to that of a mature woman and mother; from a childhood in Australia to an adulthood in Chicago. Through personal memoir, we can mine and make our own creative expression to explore language and identity, regardless of which tongue we speak or where we live.

Finally, Liz Byrski has written ten novels with a particular focus on women over the age of fifty. She is also a well-known journalist and non-fiction writer. Japan is an ageing society, and her perceptive chapter on the things we lose as we get older, and how to best take care of those around us as they grow frail and weaken, are topics that literature in the form of memoir can perhaps express more directly and succinctly than any newspaper report.

WOCA contains tales from professional and lay writers on love and loss, hardship and happiness, identity and identification. Personal and global themes are discussed within a conversational framework. Stories delving into worlds of social and individual standing are accessible and useful to any LiLT member. Teachers seeking well-crafted stories that slip across cultural boundaries will find a wealth of material in *Women of a Certain Age*.



Moffat, J., Scoda, M., & Sullivan, S. L. (2018). *Women of a Certain Age: Life stories from Anne Aly, Liz Byrski, Sarah Drummond, Mehreen Faruqi, Goldie Goldbloom, Krissy Kneen, Jeanine Leane, Brigid Lowry, Pat Mamanyjun Torres & more*. Fremantle: Fremantle Press.

The **2018 JALT Conference** will be held from November 23–26 in Shizuoka. Please refer to https://jalt.org/main/conferences for full details. The deadline for submissions was **February 12, 2018**.

The 12th annual 2018 **Japan Writer's Conference** will be held from October 13-14 at Otaru University of Commerce in Otaru, Hokkaido. http://www.japanwritersconference.org

Editorial Policy

The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching, the refereed research journal of the Literature in Language Teaching (LiLT) Special Interest Group, invites research articles and research reports on using literature in language classrooms in Japanese and mainly Asian contexts. Submissions from international contexts are accepted based on overall interest and applicability to the journal's readership. Further details can be found at <liltsig.org>

The editors encourage submissions in eight categories:

- (1) FEATURE ARTICLES: Full-length articles, (Feature Articles, FA) detailing research or discussing theoretical issues. Between 2500-4000 words.

- (2) LITERATURE IN PRACTICE: Slightly shorter, more directly practical than Feature Articles. Descriptions of how teachers use literature in their classes. Explain clearly for other teachers to be able to readily apply. 2000-3000 words.
  Note: On occasion, select "My Share" style activities of how literature was used or advanced in your lessons may also be accepted (see [8] below).

- (3) Interviews with SIG members: about themselves, their ideas and their teaching experiences using literature. Maximum 2500 words.

- (4) Write-ups by presenters themselves of their recent presentations (format somewhat akin to proceedings)

- (5) Conference reports by attendees at literature-themed events.

- (6) Comments on previously published *LiLT Journal* articles (*Talk back*).

- (7) Book and media reviews (*Reviews*).

- (8) "My Share" description of original, effective activities for promoting literature.

Articles should be written for a general audience of language educators; therefore statistical techniques and specialized terms should be clearly explained.

*Authors are solely responsible for the accuracy of references and reference citations.

Style
With slight modifications, this journal follows the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition. We recommend that authors consult recent copies of this journal for examples of documentation and references. For consistency, please use American punctuation conventions. Carefully formatted submissions in Pages, MS Word or Libre Office are fine.