ISSN: 2187-722X

The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching

Volume 9, Issue 1, 2020

Introduction

Feature article

Reader-Response and Stylistics Approaches to Literature in the Japanese EFL Classroom
By Steven Pattison and Jeremy Redlich……3-13

Book review

Lacan, Identity and Creative Writing in the Classroom: A review of Zoe Charalambous's *Writing Fantasy and the Identity of the Writer: A Psychosocial Writer's Workbook*
By Iain Maloney……14-15

Professional development

Opportunities for professional development with English conferences and online events
By Tara McIlroy……16-20

Conference report

LiLT SIG Forum at JALT 2019: Using Literature Effectively for Learner Agency
By Mary Hillis……21-22

Announcements

LiLT SIG forum at JALT 2020……23-25
Submission guidelines……26

Introduction

Welcome to the summer issue of *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*!

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a difficult time for students and teachers. Some are faced with learning and teaching in risky circumstances for themselves, their classmates and colleagues, and their families and friends. Others have to carry on educating through screens, at a distance, often isolated. All while some have had those they know fall sick and worse. It's been a difficult time to live full human lives. The value of artistic output, whether through films, broadcast theatre plays, music or literature in giving people comfort and helping them to make sense of the world around them has been clear. Hopefully, that's something we don't lose sight of in the years after this.

The feature article "Reader-response and stylistics approaches to literature in the Japanese EFL classroom" by **Jeremy Redlich** and **Steven Pattison** offers an elegantly structured approach to helping students analyse interactions between fictional characters to gain deeper emotional insight into those characters. Through promoting the idea of reading as a transactional process between reader and text, it encourages students to see how they are collaborators in making meaning of text, and how they can work together with others in doing this. It is an approach which can be made to work with students of a wide range of levels.

In "Lacan, identity and creative writing in the classroom", **Iain Maloney** reviews Zoe Charalambous's *Writing Fantasy and the Identity of the Writer* from the perspective of encouraging students to write creatively in a second language. He explores similarities between her Lacanian approach to writer identity to Zoltán Dörnyei's work on L2 identity and motivation. **Tara McIlroy** sees a bright future for professional development for teachers promoting literature in the virtual world in her upbeat summary of a number of conferences forced online by the pandemic, including the world famous Hay Festival. **Mary Hillis** reports from JALT 2019 on the use of ethnographic poetry in the classroom. Students take authentic voices from interviews and shape them into poems, discussing with their classmates the technical and artistic reasons for their choices.

This year's International Conference organised by the Japan Association for Language Teaching has also moved online. The Literature in Language Teaching Special Interest Group that produces this journal is holding its annual forum with a wide range of speakers. Chaired by **Susan Sullivan**, it features **Luke Draper** on the Practical Criticism approach to texts in the classroom, **Cristina Tat** on the use of creative writing to improve students' attitudes to "pleasure reading" (extensive reading), **Regan Tyndall** on examples of literature with diverse authors that aid students in discussions of discrimination in the students' second language, **Tara McIlroy** on how *The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time* can function as an "empathy machine" for students, and **John Maune** on the use of Cinderella to help students examine sexist tropes in stories.

Finally, a reminder that *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*, a peer-reviewed academic publication, accepts submissions from all around the world. Submissions are accepted at any time on a rolling basis, although those looking to publish in the next edition should try to submit by the end of October 2020. Submission details are given on the final page of this journal, and can also be found on the LiLT SIG website http://liltsig.org. Submissions can be sent to liltjournaleditor@gmail.com. You can also contact the LiLTSIG at liltsig@gmail.com.

Stay safe,

Cameron Smith
Editor, *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*

The Literature in Language Teaching Special Interest Group (LiLTSIG) is part of the Japan Association of Language Teaching. LiLTSIG was formed in 2011 to encourage and promote the use of literature in the language classroom.

LiLTSIG produces a newsletter and a peer-reviewed journal, as well as organising various literature-themed events.

Although based in Japan, the group and the journal welcome contributions and cooperation from around the world.

LiLTSIG Officers team (2019- 20)
Coordinator: Tara McIlroy
Membership Chair: Gregg McNabb
Treasurer: Vicky Richings
Program Chair: John Maune
Publicity Chair: Lorraine Kipling
Journal Editor: Cameron Smith
Journal Assistant Editor: Iain Maloney
Shadow Membership: John Maune
Members at Large: Atsushi Iida, Simon Bibby, Jane Joritz-Nakagawa, Paul Hullah, Quenby Hoffmann Aoki, Sue Sullivan, Jon Hendricks, Anna Walker, Mary Hillis, Kevin Stein

Contact LiLTSIG at liltsig@gmail.com

To contact the editor: liltjournaleditor@gmail.com

(cover photo: Anrita)

Feature article

Reader-response and stylistics approaches to literature in the Japanese EFL classroom

Steven Pattison
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Jeremy Redlich
Fuji Women's University

Abstract

This paper describes how reader-response and stylistics approaches can be implemented in a language teaching context as a means of deepening learners' understanding and appreciation of literature and language. Supported by experience of teaching university literature classes, and by research in literature and language learning, a simple guide for designing and implementing a literary text analysis task to English language learners of varying proficiencies is explained. First, with lower to intermediate proficiency language learners in mind, key concepts and practical approaches from transactional reader-response theories will be presented to show how reading and discussing literary texts can be an active, collaborative and emotionally-engaging experience. Next, because of its focus on analyzing the linguistic features of a literary text, this paper shows how key concepts from stylistics, in particular Gricean pragmatics, can provide higher proficiency students with a framework for close, analytical, and evidence-based readings and discussion of a short literary text through concrete examples of discussion activities.

本稿は、言語教育の場において、読者反応アプローチと文体論的アプローチが学習者の文学・言語を理解・批評する力を深める手段としてどのように導入されうるのかについて述べる。大学での文学の授業の経験と、文学を使った外国語教育の研究に基づき、さまざまなレベルの英語学習者を対象とした文学テクスト分析のタスクを考案・実施するための概要が説明されている。まず、初級・中級用には、交流読者反応理論の重要な概念と実践法を紹介した上で、文学のテクストを読解・議論することが学習者にとってどのように能動的、協同的、かつ感情を引き込むような経験になりうるかを述べる。次に、上級用には、文体論的アプローチ（特にグライスの語用論）の重要な概念を用いて、学習者が短編のテクストを厳密に、分析的に、証拠に基づいて読解・議論できるようになるための枠組みがどのように確立されうるのか、ディスカッション活動の具体例を使って示す。

Key words: literature courses; reader-response; stylistics

The use of literature in the language classroom has a long history in Japan (Teranishi, Saito & Wales, 2015). The often-cited drawback of using literature as the medium through which language is taught and learned is the excessive focus on the grammar-translation method (Hagerman, 2009; Yamaoka, 2010). The main criticism of this method is that it does not support communicative language use, which is the current overarching objective of Japan's educational policy with regard to language learning in schools and universities (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Extensive reading has a prominent place in many language classrooms (Bradford-Watts & O'Brien, 2007), but the use of ungraded literature has fallen out of vogue in most language classrooms in Japan (Teranishi et al., 2015).

Nevertheless, at the university level, at least, there are numerous advantages to the use of literature in the classroom. Among the benefits for the language learner is the building of linguistic, pragmatic and academic English competence, as it encourages the development

of analytical, discussion, and inferential skills (Bobkina & Stefanova, 2016), and deepens understanding of indirect and figurative language. Students can be guided through discussions of literary texts using extant theoretical approaches, thereby developing their critical thinking skills as they engage with the language of the texts through various communicative tasks. Examples of literary theoretical approaches that could be used to discuss texts in language classrooms are Reader-Response Theory (Mart, 2019; Van, 2009) and New Criticism (Lynn, 2016, pp. 45-6). Stylistic approaches to the analysis and discussion of language and marked features of literary texts also offer potential benefits, not least because they can complement discussions framed by literary theory. Widdowson's (1976) work has greatly influenced the practice of teaching literature through stylistics in the classroom, and, in the same vein, this paper argues that stylistics has its place in the language-learning process, especially with students at the more advanced levels of language programmes.

To demonstrate how literature can be used to good effect to promote both collaborative and communicative language learning, this paper focuses on a single short story. In the following sections, we explain the fundamental (albeit simplified) tools provided by reader-response and stylistics approaches. We then introduce some scaffolded discussion activities designed to enable students with varying English proficiency levels to use the tools in a meaningful way. Moreover, we discuss the potential benefits for the university language learner using these scaffolded approaches. The basic method of scaffolding can be compared with training wheels for initially engaging students with the fundamental concepts of the theories, though the expectation is that by the end of the course, in terms of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), students would have gained the necessary skills to generate their own discussions of texts using the analytical tools to which they have been introduced. It is further argued that both approaches support learners' *self-efficacy* and *agency* in that overcoming the linguistic and intellectual challenges of applying a theory to a literary text can have positive implications in regard to achievement, motivation and autonomy (Spratt, Humphreys, & Chan, 2002).

Self-Efficacy and Agency

Two central attributes of learners are efficacy (Bandura, 1997, p. 3) and agency (Vitanova, Miller, Gao & Deters, 2015, p. 3-4). According to Vitanova et al. (2015, p. 5), agency in the classroom involves three main characteristics: "the learner's ability to self-regulate, the socially mediated nature of sociocultural context and an awareness of one's own acts." Gao (2010, p. 27) elaborates on context, suggesting that it involves the source of learner strategy use and choice, the learner's will, and their knowledge. This definition of agency can be useful in terms of guiding the approach to reading and discussing short stories in the classroom from the perspective of the learner. Closely related to agency is self-efficacy which, according to Bandura (1997, p. 3), underpins human agency. Bandura's focus on "regulating one's own motivation; and applying metacognitive skills to evaluate the adequacy of one's knowledge and strategies" (1997, pp. 174-5) provides a useful backdrop for understanding the importance of a structured and carefully guided approach to learning and applying new theories when engaging in academic discussions of literary texts.

This paper begins with a brief synopsis of the short story "The Bread". It then provides, first, a guide to utilizing Rosenblatt's transactional reader-response approach to engaging with literature, and secondly it introduces a stylistics analysis, with a particular focus on the application of Grice's *Communicative Principle* and its four associated maxims (Grice, 1989).

Synopsis of "The Bread"

Wolfgang Borchert's "The Bread" is a short story about an aging married couple's late-night encounter in the kitchen. Each plays a role in deceiving the other, while both privately confront a time in their past when the husband was possibly engaged in adultery or some other form of deception. The couple have grown old and apart. They meet in their kitchen at 2:30 a.m. where the husband seemingly lies to his wife about having heard a noise. The wife humours her husband as he elaborates on his fabrication. The bread, which he has snuck in to eat, takes on an unwelcome significance for the wife because of its associations with past indiscretions, or even infidelities. Finally, she challenges him to eat four slices of bread, apparently in an effort to satiate his appetite and to make him feel ashamed.

Reader-Response Theory

What Is Reader-Response and Why Is it Useful?

Loosely defined, reader-response or reader-oriented theories represent a reaction against 19th century author- or biographically-centered approaches to criticism, and the text-exclusive approaches of the 20th century (in particular Formalism and New Criticism, and especially

Wimsatt and Beardsley's concept of the "affective fallacy"). Reader-response theories instead focus on the reader as a thinking, feeling, and individual subject, and on the reader's role in constructing not only textual interpretation, but even in co-creating the text itself. While there is some dispute regarding which texts are most central to its canon, there is nevertheless considerable agreement on reader-response's utility for engaging with and analyzing literary texts (Beach, 1993; Freund, 1987; Hall, 2015: Holub, 1984; Naji, Subramaniam, & White, 2019; Parkinson, & Reid Thomas, 2004), especially for language learners in EFL contexts (Mart, 2019; Van, 2009). For the purpose of this article and for reasons to be discussed in this section, the basic premises and relative strengths of Louise Rosenblatt and Wolfgang Iser's contributions to transactional reader-response theory are presented with suggestions for how aspects of this theory can be fruitfully applied to a university literature class for lower to intermediate level (CEFR A2 – B1) English learners.

Because of its intellectual complexity and diversity, two keys to incorporating basic premises and concepts from reader-response theory into a language and literature class comprised of lower to intermediate level students are *simplification* and *focus*. Based on our experience teaching university seminar courses that focus on applying literary theories to text analysis, we have found that most students seem less interested in developments and debates in multi-disciplinary intellectual history, and more interested in how selected concepts or approaches can help them deeply and concretely focus on engaging with literary texts beyond a standard written interpretation. First and foremost, students must understand that as readers they have active roles in co-creating textual meaning, and that neither the meaning nor interpretation of the text are static or singular. Implicit within this approach then is that their *engagement* with the text – which could include their understanding of the text's meanings or themes, their emotional responses to a particular character or event, associations or memories elicited by the text, or even how they picture the spatial, cultural or historical setting – will likely be different from how their peers engage with the same text. Their responses will be variegated and subjective, but they still must be based on content within the text (textual evidence), and they will need to provide explanations for *why* the text has triggered the response that it has.

In accord with the transactional approach, students would read the text collaboratively – pausing after words, sentences, paragraphs or sections – and practice communicating their reactions to their partners. A short story like "The Bread" works well for such a task:

1. It is short enough (769 words) to read together during class time;
2. The language difficulty is low enough (CEFR B1, IELTS 4-5) that students with A2-B1 proficiency will be able comprehend enough of the story's setting, mood, plot, tension, and characters to discuss their responses without much preparation time;
3. Its length allows students to read it multiple times, which is a prerequisite for a deeper engagement with its plot and themes.

The reading process as a transactional relationship between reader and text involves what Rosenblatt (1988) terms an "aesthetic stance," which means the reader consciously and reflectively takes into account the "sense, the sensations, images, feelings, and ideas that are the residue of past psychological events involving those words and their referents" (p. 5). For our purposes, students will attempt to communicate in English some of the feelings and images evoked by the text as part of the reading process.

One simple way to promote students as agentic readers participating in reading-as-action is to do the following:

1. The instructor reads the first paragraph of the short story aloud (helps students to become more familiar with pronunciation and prosody);
2. The students then verbally confirm understanding of the content with a partner;
3. Next, they anticipate what will happen in the following section and discuss why they believe this;
4. Finally, they communicate any identifiable emotions, associations or memories they experienced during the reading.

This process will repeat after each paragraph or section of the text as it is read aloud, and will involve students reflecting on whether or not their expectations were met as they proceed through the text. The goal of this approach to reading is, first of all, to confirm, adjust or correct the students' understanding of the content while practicing English communication. Secondly and significantly, it is a way of connecting the story with students' lives, namely with their experiences, memories, opinions, and even worldviews. The idea is to have students situate themselves in a dialogue with the

content of the text, and to embrace whatever affective or subjective responses they may have as worthwhile rather than dismissed as ancillary to an "academic" reading of literature. This approach, moreover, makes learner *agency* an explicit aspect of the activity, insofar as students are made aware of their ineluctable role in co-constructing textual meaning, and that their own affective and subjective responses to a text are points to be explored rather than discarded. Put another way, the *effects* of a text become the focus of discussion, as a literary text's "effects, psychological and otherwise, are essential to any accurate description of its meaning, since that meaning has no effective existence outside of its realization in the mind of a reader" (Tompkins, 1980, p. ix).

Readers Responding in the Classroom

In line with this transactional approach to fostering students' reader-response engagement with literary texts, another possibility is to employ Iser's (1980) related notions of textual "indeterminacy" and "blanks" or "gaps." Once a text has been read collaboratively, ideally multiple times, and students have discussed at length their understanding and reactions to events, characters, and possibly even key themes, they will be prepared to engage in more creative and imaginative communicative activities that involve going beyond what the text actually says. Any literary text, be it a poem, short story, novel or otherwise, contains gaps that require the reader to make assumptions, connections, or interpretations as part of the reading process. While smaller gaps certainly exist within texts themselves (e.g., readers are not privy to every thought, gesture, or feeling a character may experience), they also exist as much larger information gaps that fail to explain the characters' pasts and futures (e.g., what experiences from their past might explain their current behavior). This collaborative and speculative information-sharing approach is often particularly well-suited for short stories, which often jump into a single event without much background provided, and then conclude without discussing the aftereffects of the event. For our purposes, "The Bread" is a good example of such a text. We are presented with a brief, although deeply illuminating, snapshot of the couple's marriage that hints at its problems and gives insight into their individual characteristics. That brevity pushes readers to speculate on what preceded and what precipitated the events in the story. Such glaring blank spaces within this fictional world present a rich source for creative speculation and inquiry on the part of the reader, yet it is still speculation that is tied to the evidence within the text, and therefore requires plausible textual justification. Furthermore, by developing an imaginative narrative that precedes or succeeds the events of the story, students are effectively interpreting and foregrounding what they consider to be the significant themes, meanings and messages in the text itself. For example, in order to speculate on why the wife might go looking for her husband when she wakes up in the middle of the night, students might imagine their past: has he been absent from the bed before? Why does she find it suspicious that he is not next to her? Where might he have been when he was absent from bed in the past? By formulating an imaginary narrative to the couple's history, readers are foregrounding possible key themes and meanings in the story: (dis)trust, (in)fidelity, and (dis)honesty in marriage, and relationships in general, to name a few. Such emotionally charged yet universally relevant themes can then form the foundation for more personalized reflections and opinions to be discussed by the students.

Table 1 shows examples, some of which have been adapted from Tyson (2011; 2015), for promoting reader-response engagement with "The Bread."

Table 1

Promoting reader-response engagement with "The Bread"

Personal-identification exercise	Personalizing key themes
• What emotional responses do you have to the characters? To the setting? • In what way do you sympathize, understand, or feel a connection with a character? • In what way does a character make you feel angry, cynical, or unhappy? • In what ways do you identify with a character or event in the story?	• Lie (what causes the lie, what does this tell us about the husband? The wife? Their relationship? Relationships in general?) • Truth (what is the importance of truth and trust? Is it sometimes better to lie?) • Love (her kindness and sympathy, supporting his lie, his feeling of guilt and sadness when the lie is exposed?) • Coldness vs. warmth – light vs. darkness?

Questions like these can be introduced to students at various stages of the reading process, and for various purposes. For example, one approach (also identified by Van [2009]) to raise awareness and deepen understanding of key textual themes, is to discuss generalized "personalizing key themes" questions even before the students begin reading the text. Discussing their opinions on these issues in advance better prepares students to be able to recognize how these issues are treated in the text. The result is that often their previous assumptions and opinions on things like love, lies, and truth are challenged and possibly revised.

A Stylistics Approach

What Is Stylistics?

Stylistics can be understood as the application of theories, often linguistic and pragmatic, to analyse the effects of texts on the reader (Short, 1996, pp. 1-10). Stylisticians might consider their approach to literature to be more scientific than that of their literary-critic counterparts. For instance, a stylistics approach can be used in support of our intuitions about a text and may also be used effectively to complement analysis conducted within the broad field of literary criticism (Short, 1996, pp. 2-3). The purpose of the following sections is to show how the introduction of a stylistics analysis into the language classroom can encourage a closer reading and guide readers to draw more from the language choices present in the text. With sustained practice of this kind of analysis, students are able to make gains in respect to self-efficacy as their confidence in understanding the writer's linguistic choices and their effects on the reader develops. Hence, the learner's linguistic and analytical competencies increase in unison.

Because of its relative straightforwardness and accessibility, pragmatics – the study of language as it is used in context – can serve as a profitable basis for stylistics analysis and discussion of texts. Moreover, in terms of language learning, the pedagogical merits of this approach to texts recommend it, since according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (n.d., p. 33), pragmatic competence is one of the main pillars of communicative language competence. It often, though not exclusively, focuses on spoken language. Hence, one reason for using literature in the language classroom is that, when it involves extended passages of dialogue, it can be used to help learners to develop pragmatic competence in the TL. There are a number of prominent pragmatic frameworks which could be used in the language classroom. These include Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1995), Speech Act Theory (Leech, 1983; Searle, 1969), and the frameworks developed by Levinson (2000) and Horn (2007). Each of these frameworks has its merits in terms of the analytical findings it can produce. However, due to the balance between its relative simplicity and explanatory power, Grice's (1989) *Cooperative Principle* and its attendant maxims are the tools chosen for shaping the discussion activities introduced below.

Introduction to Grice's Cooperative Principle and Maxims

Grice defines the Cooperative Principle (CP) as follows:

> [..] a rough general principle which participants will be expected (*ceteris paribus*) to observe, namely: Make your conversational contribution such as is required at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice, 1975, p. 45)

In short, the CP describes communication as a cooperative practice, whether participants are involved in a discussion, interview, argument or other speech event. The CP is intended to be understood as a norm or ideal view of communication and Grice did not mean for it to be taken as an absolute rule or law to be adhered to. Although originally developed as a framework for understanding spoken interaction, the CP has been used extensively to analyse a broad range of texts, including written texts.

Adherence to the CP varies depending on a range of factors, including the context, the participants and their relationship(s), and the amount of shared knowledge and common ground. These factors influence the behaviour of communicators, including the author/narrator of a text. Within Gricean pragmatics, the communicative behaviour of participants is interpreted in relation to four categories of maxim: quantity, quality, relation, and manner (Grice, 1989, pp. 26-7). See the Appendix for an explanation of these maxims and how they could be introduced in an accessible scaffolded way prior to their application to examples from the literary text.

Practicing Close Reading

One of the advantages of a stylistics approach to discussing texts is that it slows down reading by forcing the reader to think carefully about the marked features of the text and the effects they produce on the reader. Applying the tools of Grice's CP and the four categories

of maxim encourages a slower, analytical and systematic approach to reading certain passages of a text. Naturally, at the early stages of introducing students to a theory and having them practice it, the instructor must provide ample support, guidance and feedback by selecting appropriate passages for analysis, providing structured discussion questions, and offering constructive feedback. This is important in order that students' sense of self-efficacy is fostered and they are able to acquire agency to later identify, discuss and analyse passages with confidence, independently of the instructor.

There are many ways in which the instructor could approach this scaffolded approach to guiding the students in their analyses and discussions. One simple approach, which the authors have used in a literature-focused advanced-level course for CEFR B2+ students is to have students engage with different aspects of the theory by providing them with a range of questions, beginning with straightforward multiple-choice questions, moving to multiple-choice inference questions, and then finally having students discuss open-ended inference questions. Some fundamental questions which underpin the analysis of many passages are given below:

1. Who is the "speaker"?
2. Who is the audience?
3. Where are they?
4. Why are they communicating?
5. What are they communicating about?
6. When does the act of communication occur?
7. What maxims are involved here?
8. Does it involve an observance, flout, violation, infringement or opting out? Why?
9. What implicature(s) is generated as a consequence of this? [There could be more than one, some stronger than others.]

Example Discussion Questions for "The Bread"

In this section, sets of discussion activities, in the form of guided questions, are introduced for selected passages from the short story "The Bread". Before discussing passages from the story in groups, it is important to provide time for students to share their intuitions about the whole story to ensure the students have an adequate common understanding of the text.

Example 1.

When they went to bed at night, she always made the table-cloth clean. Every night. But now there were crumbs on the cloth. And the knife was lying there. She felt how the cold of the tiles crept slowly up her. <u>And she looked away from the plate</u>.

This excerpt helps to establish the current status of the relationship between husband and wife. Being relatively straightforward, it also enables the teacher to determine whether the students have grasped the fundamental ideas of the theory.

Q1. Why does the narrator tell us that she looks away from the plate?

a. She is upset that her husband has made a mess.
b. She is interested in what her husband is doing.
c. It is associated with her husband's past sexual indiscretions.

The teacher might ask the students to consider this sentence in relation to the maxim of relation and whether it is observed, flouted, or broken in another way. This and the main question might produce a range of answers. For example, as a straightforward observation, students might naturally select interpretation (a). However, other students might argue that, taking contextual factors into account, (c) is a valid interpretation of this apparently innocuous description, since we tend to look away from objects that we cannot bear to face for whatever reason. Both of these interpretations of the excerpt are valid and demonstrate an understanding of the theory.

Example 2.

"<u>I thought there was something here</u>," he said <u>and looked around in the kitchen</u>.

This passage continues on directly from Example 1. After presenting the question, the teacher might ask the students to consider which of the maxims are involved in the interpretation of the selected part of the passage.

Q2. How does the description of the husband looking around the kitchen affect our interpretation of his utterance?

a. It adds strength to what he is claiming.
b. It is not important.
c. It is a dramatic gesture which does not seem natural.

As with Q1 the character's way of looking, as described by the narrator, though apparently innocuous, can add substance to the reader's interpretation of the text. Option (a) depends on the husband observing the maxim of quality, option (b) appears to depend on there

being no relation between the description of the husband and what he says, while interpretation (c) leads to the identification of the husband's utterance as a violation of the maxim of quality; that is, an attempted deceit.

> **Example 3.**
> "I heard something, too," she answered and at the same time she thought that he really looked pretty old already, at night in his shirt, he really looked quite old.
>
> Q3. How do you interpret the wife's utterance?
> a. She accepts his explanation (she observes the maxim of quality).
> b. She does not accept his explanation (she also violates the maxim quality).
> c. She is being sarcastic (she flouts the maxim of quality).
> d. She does not accept his explanation, but wants to avoid any conflict (possibly a kind of infringement).

Depending on the students' previous answers and the degree of established common ground between group members, their interpretations of the wife's utterance will vary. This may depend on whether they believe that (a) the husband is guilty of some misdemeanour, and (b) the wife is aware of this. Though the text is highly ambiguous the close reading provides an opportunity for students to contemplate the possibility of the husband's suspicious behaviour and possible infidelity. As such, any of the four interpretations can be argued for, therefore generating a potentially rich discussion.

Having provided students with a guided discussion of a series of interrelated, apparently marked characteristics of the text, the teacher might challenge the students by asking them to consider the narrator's representation of the wife's thought and its relation to her utterance:

> Q4. How does the representation of her thought relate to your interpretation of her utterance?

This structured approach to discussing passages from the text can be repeated with a mixture of multiple choice and open-ended questions, with the balance shifting towards open questions after students have gained sufficient experience of analysing the text through the given tools. Hence, when the teacher judges that the students have sufficient pragmatic competence and linguistic proficiency, it would be appropriate to challenge them with more open-ended questions, such as those which follow Example 4.

> **Example 4.**
> "You can go ahead and eat four," she said and moved away from the lamp. 'I cannot take this bread all that well. Go ahead and eat one more. I can't take it all that well."
>
> She saw how he bent deeply over the plate. He didn't look up. At that moment she felt sorry for him.
>
> (i) "You can't eat just two slices," he said to his plate.
>
> (ii) "Sure. In the evening the bread doesn't agree with me. Go ahead and eat! Eat!"
>
> Q1. What can you infer from what the husband says (i) and how he says it?
> Q2. Which of the maxims is involved in this example?
> Q3. Which parts of the wife's utterance (ii) are interesting? Why?
> Q4. Which of the maxims do you think are involved in interpreting it? Why?
> Q5. Does she observe the CP and maxims? If not, in what way(s) are they 'broken'?
> Q6. What additional information can you infer from her utterance?

Potential Benefits of the Stylistics Approach

As mentioned above, the approach described provides opportunities for learners to develop their communicative competence, especially in terms of pragmatic competence. Moreover, the close reading associated with this method encourages learners to deepen their understanding of the language and how linguistic choices generate certain effects on the reader, which guide and underpin our intuitive interpretations.

Conclusion

It has been argued that reader-response and stylistics approaches to discussing literary texts offers multiple benefits for the undergraduate language learner in terms of:

1. providing a semi-controlled environment for using academic English;
2. encouraging the development of analytical skills, discussion skills, and inferential skills;

3. building linguistic understanding;
4. developing pragmatic competence in English; and
5. deepening understanding of indirect / figurative language and texts characterised by such language.

Since this paper describes straightforward approaches to introducing learners to reader-response and stylistics and their use in facilitating engagement and framing discussions of literary texts, there is much room for further research. In particular, it would be interesting to collect feedback from students on their perceptions related to self-efficacy and agency as a result of using these recommended methods. Moreover, since it is argued, for example, that these guided approaches help to develop pragmatic competence in the learner, an instrument for measuring any such gains, and methods for addressing any observed shortcomings in the approaches, are potentially interesting avenues for further research.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Jacob Pattison for the considerable time and care he invested in helping to write the Japanese abstract.

Author Biographies

Steven Pattison is an Associate Professor in the Center for Language Education, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. His research and teaching interests include L2 reading; pragmatics; and stylistics. He is also interested in the intersection between stylistics and cultural analysis of literary texts as a medium for language learning and teaching. <steven@apu.ac.jp>

Jeremy Redlich is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Culture at Fuji Women's University. His research and teaching interests include German language literature, especially the works of Yoko Tawada, and also the application of literary theories to engaging with literature and film. <jredlich@fujijoshi.ac.jp>

References

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* W.H. Freeman and Company.

Beach, R. (1993). *A teacher's guide to reader-response theories.* NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English).

Bobkina, J. & Radoulska, S. (2016). Literature and critical literacy pedagogy. *EFL classroom: Towards a model of teaching critical thinking skills. 6*(4). 677-696. <http://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2016.6.4.6>

Borchert, W. (1971). The bread. In *The man outside.* (D. Porter, Trans.). (pp. 255-256). New Directions.

Bradford-Watts, K., & O'Brien, A. (2007). Interview with Rob Waring and Marc Helgesen on extensive reading. *The Language Teacher, 31*(5), 3-6.

Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (n.d.). <https://rm.coe.int/16802fc1bf.>

Freund, E. (1987). *The return of the reader.* Methuen.

Gao, X. (2010). *Strategic language learning: The roles of agency and context.* Multilingual Matters.

Grice, P. (1989). *Studies in the way of words.* Harvard University Press.

Hagerman, C. (2009). English language policy and practice in Japan. 大阪女学院大学紀要 6 号 (2009).

Hall, G. (2015). *Literature in language education.* (2nd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Holub, R.C. (1984). *Reception theory.* Methuen.

Horn, L. (2007). *Neo-Gricean pragmatics: A Manichaean manifesto.* In N. Burton-Roberts (Ed.) *Pragmatics* (pp. 153-183). Palgrave.

Huang, Y. (2007). *Pragmatics.* Oxford University Press.

Iser, W. (1980). *The act of reading. A theory of aesthetic response.* Johns Hopkins.

Jeffries, L. & McIntyre, D. (2011). *Teaching stylistic*s. Palgrave Macmillan.

Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics.* Longman.

Levinson, S. (2000). *Presumptive meanings, the theory of generalized conversational implicature.* MIT Press.

Lynn, S. J. (2016). *Texts and contexts: Writing about literature with critical theory.* Pearson.

MacWhinnie, S.G.B., & Mitchell, C. (2017). English classroom reforms in Japan: A study of Japanese university EFL student anxiety and motivation. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* 2, 7 <http://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-017-0030-2>

Mart, C.T. (2019). Reader-response theory and literature discussions: A springboard for exploring literary texts. *The New Educational Review 56*(2), 78-87. <https://doi.org/10.15804/tner.2019.56.2.06>

Naji, J., Subramaniam, G., & White, G. (2019). *New approaches to literature for language learning.* Palgrave MacMillan.

Parkinson, B., & Reid Thomas, H. (2004). *Teaching literature in a second language*. Edinburgh University Press.

Rosenblatt, L. (1988). *Writing and reading: The transactional theory*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. <https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/18044/ctrstreadtechrepv01988i00416_opt.pdf>

Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge University Press.

Short, M. (1996). *Exploring the language of poems, plays and prose*. Longman.

Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics: A resource book for teachers*. Routledge.

Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1995). *Relevance, communication and cognition* (2nd ed.). Blackwell.

Spratt, M., Humphreys, G., & Chan, V. (2002). Autonomy and motivation: Which comes first? *Language Teaching Research*, 6, 245-266.

Teranishi, M., Saito, Y., & Wales, K. (Eds.). (2015). *Literature and language learning in the EFL classroom*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Tomkins, J.P. (Ed.). (1980). *Reader-response criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*. Johns Hopkins.

Tyson, L. (2011). *Using critical theory. How to read and write about literature*. (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Tyson, L. (2015). *Critical theory today. A user-friendly guide*. (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Vitanova, G., Miller, E. R., Gao, X., & Deters, P. (2015). Introduction to theorizing and analyzing agency in second language learning: Interdisciplinary approaches. In P. Deters, X. Gao, E.R. Miller, & G. Vitanova. (Eds.). *Theorizing and analyzing agency in second language learning: Interdisciplinary approaches*. Multilingual Matters.

Van, T.T.M. (2009). The relevance of literary analysis to teaching literature in the EFL classroom. *English Teaching Forum, 47*(3), 2-9, 17. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ923454.pdf>

Widdowson, H.G. (1976). *Stylistics and the teaching of literature*. Routledge.

Yamaoka, K. (2010). The current state and future prospects of Japanese English teaching. 立命館言語文化研究 22 巻 1 号.

Appendix: Grice's Maxims

Each of the four categories of maxim (Grice, 1989, pp.26-7) is introduced below with an illustrative example of its application.

The Maxims of Quality

Do not say what you believe to be false.
Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

(1) She's literally a walking Japanese dictionary.

It is probable that the recipient's interpretation of (1) would involve the judgements that the statement is false (the person referred to is not actually a walking dictionary), and that the speaker does not possess evidence for her being a dictionary.

(2) Boris Johnson has said he would "rather be dead in a ditch" than agree to extend Brexit.

Likewise, in (2) few people familiar with Boris Johnson took him at his word because his record of political maneuvering provides evidence to the contrary. A common interpretation of statements that appear to break one of the maxims of quality is that what is communicated counts as deceit. However, in both examples, rather than reaching this conclusion, we would assume that the CP is being adhered to and that the apparent breaking of the maxim is for rhetorical effect to emphasise the referents linguistic ability (1) and the politician's resolve (2) respectively. Such ostentatious breaking of one or more maxims to produce an effect beyond what is straightforwardly communicated are referred to as *flouts*. Further examples of how flouting the maxims can communicate information in addition to what is said are used to illustrate the remaining three maxims.

The Maxims of Quantity

Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of this exchange.
Do not make your contribution more informative than is necessary.

(3) A: "What are you doing?"
B: "Oh, I just tidied up the kitchen. You know just emptying the dishwasher, putting the dishes away in the cupboards, wiping the table, putting the caps back on the sauce bottles, cleaning the sink, washing up the pots and pans..."

(4) A: "What are you doing?"
B: "Reading." (Short, 1996, p.245)

In (3), rather than simply respond to A's enquiry by saying they were tidying up, the over-informative response flouts the maxim of quantity to emphasise just how much B has done, presumably in stark contrast to A's contributions to the household chores. The distinctly uninformative response of B in (4) [A can observe for herself that B is reading], when taken as a flout of the maxim of quantity, might lead A to interpret B's utterance as communicating their desire to be left undisturbed to concentrate on their book.

In each of these four examples, the additional information communicated is an implicature, to be inferred by the recipient (a listener or reader). As shown above, the maxims serve as interpretative tools that lead to inferences associated with what is not explicitly stated in a text. As Huang (2007) points out, inferences are "derived from the saying of what is said via the co-operative principle and its component maxims of conversation." Implicatures, then, are meanings that are inferred from the context of the utterance and the knowledge shared between narrator/speaker and narratee/hearer rather than what is said directly. The notion of meaning more than what we say is familiar to learners from their L1. However, related to self-efficacy, having the assurance to go beyond the surface meaning of an utterance in an L2 and infer this additional meaning, especially in a longer literary text, requires sufficient scaffolded practice with accessible and relatively straightforward examples.

The Maxim of Relation

Be relevant.

(5) A: What did you think of their presentation?
B: They were dressed very smartly.

Although the response of B in (5) does not appear to be a typically relevant answer to the question asked by A, when a comment on the content of the presentation or the style of delivery might be expected, assuming that the CP is adhered to and A interprets B's utterance as a flout of the maxim of relation, implicatures will be generated. Based on their own experience of delivering and attending presentations, students might infer that B has nothing good to say about the content and delivery; that is, for B it was a poor presentation.

The Maxims of Manner
Avoid obscurity
Avoid ambiguity
Be brief
Be orderly (Grice, 1989, p. 27)

(6) [Parents discussing preparations for their child's upcoming birthday party]
"I've arranged the prestidigitator." (Short, 1996)

(7) [A parent at the dinner table addressing his teenage children]
"I'm sorry to bother you, but if it is not too much trouble, would you mind awfully passing me the receptacle in front of you which contains the tomato-based condiment?"

"Prestidigitator", meaning magician, is clearly a very obscure choice of word to use in everyday conversation. In (7), the parent would like one of their children to pass the sauce, a simple request that they make in a very verbose way and in a register which makes the request somewhat ambiguous. By having students consider whether these constitute straightforward breaks or flouts of the maxims of manner, and subsequently exchange their opinions about the possible implicatures generated by these utterances, the teacher can confirm the students' comprehension and application of the theory, provide them with feedback and reinforce their self-efficacy, which is fundamental to agency. Students might interpret the speakers in (6) as taking pains to conceal the birthday party plans from their child, whilst the parent in (7) implicates their displeasure with their children for ignoring an earlier request for the tomato ketchup to be passed.

In the brief analyses of the above examples, the situational context of utterance is accessible and students can practice applying the theory in a controlled way, focusing on implicatures generated by flouts. However, the ultimate goal of having students practice the above analysis with short examples and longer literary texts is to develop their pragmatic competence as an essential part of their general communicative language competence. Further contextualised practice of applying the four maxims is therefore necessary so that students can gain proficiency in distinguishing among different breaks and observations of the maxims. These are as follows:

1. *Observations* are when we follow the maxims.
2. *Flouts* are when we break or exploit the maxims in a way we expect the hearer/reader to recognise in order to convey additional meaning, known as implicatures.
3. *Violations* occur when the maxims are broken in a way that is not intended to be recognised by the recipient, such as when telling a fib.
4. *Infringement* are when we unintentionally fail to observe a maxim, which could happen, for example, when inebriated
5. *Opting out* is when the speaker/writer openly refuses to communicate cooperatively, such as might be the case when a politician has been asked an awkward question.

Book Review

Lacan, identity and creative writing in the classroom

A review of Zoe Charalambous's *Writing Fantasy and the Identity of the Writer: A Psychosocial Writer's Workbook.* Palgrave. ISBN: 978-3-030-20263-7. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20263-7

Iain Maloney
Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Zoe Charalambous's 2019 book is the latest addition to Palgrave's "Studies in Creativity and Culture" series, and the subtitle suggests it is among appropriate company: other books in the series include *Everyday Creativity and the Healthy Mind* and *Creativity, Wellbeing and Mental Health Practice*. Dr. Charalambous received her PhD in Psychosocial Studies from University College London in 2014, and this book derives in part from her doctoral thesis. The qualifier "in part" is there because while the book does tick all the thesis boxes—literature review, methodology, results and discussion—it aims to be much more. Charalambous's goal is to provide a tool with which creative writers can explore their authorial voice and identity through the utilisation of exercises Charalambous has tried and tested on her own students. It is also a guide for teachers of creative writing on activities that have worked for the author.

Given that her approach is psychosocial, the emphasis here is very much on writing as process rather than product. The aim is to explore and "find oneself" (p. 40) through the practice of creative writing. As Charalambous writes: "The stance of the Creative Writing exercises presented in this book can function like an analyst—triggering one's writer identity to manifest in different ways" (p. 69).

In the world of creative writing research, identity and authorial voice are thriving areas yielding many interesting studies, yet we seemingly have only scratched the surface, particularly in the field of creative writing as a tool in language acquisition. Studies by Schrader (2000), Iida (2010), Smith (2013), Sullivan (2015), and Maloney (2019), to name but a few examples, have pointed towards creative writing being a powerful tool in the exploration of L2 identity for language learners across the world, so this book at the outset promised much that readers of this journal could use in the classroom and as a prompt for further research. Charalambous taught creative writing in Thessaloniki, Greece, in the local language. She does not specify if her students were L1 or L2 Greek speakers. Her focus is on non-didactic forms of teaching, which echoes current creative writing practices, and the focus of her study is on pushing students to explore different voices and styles within their writing as a way of exploring their own identity.

The book is written more to guide writers working alone than teachers running a class, but as the study arose from the classroom, it doesn't take much effort to reverse engineer the activities and theory and apply it in a different context. The assumption made is that the readers are early-stage auto-didactic creative writers suffering from writer's block, and that these exercises, plus the scientific and philosophical rationale behind them, will break the block. It is further assumed that writer's block is caused by an inability to step outside the writer's own conception of their writer identity, a contentious assumption that a further study could explore. However, given the nature of L2 identity as outlined by Dörnyei (2005) and subsequent work in that field, perhaps for the purposes of an L2 creative writing classroom, overcoming a "block" can be usefully taken (with many caveats) is being analogous to overcoming the assumption of "correct" writing forms that certainly those of us who teach in a Japanese context have encountered. In both instances the student is being encouraged to explore new voices without fear of failure.

The book can be roughly divided into two parts. Chapters 1 to 4 provide context, justification and methodology, while chapters 5 to 9 each focus on a separate writing exercise. These exercises are freewriting, writing about an object, "Instructions from the Other" which means following a list of writing tasks such as giving voice to an object or writing a sentence with words beginning with the same letter, writing in the voice of someone "opposite" to yourself and describing what you see in a mirror.

The exercises themselves are well-known to creative writing teachers and are frequently used exactly as Charalambous intends: to short-circuit the "what should I write about?" fear of the blank page. As a result, there is little new here to aid the instructor, though the literature review in chapter 2 offers interesting avenues of further reading for those interested in creative writing pedagogy. These are the same activities available on many "how to" creative writing websites and blogs.

What is of use for the instructor using creative writing as a tool to language acquisition is the theoretical framework that underpins the study. Charalambous couches her arguments in the language of Lacan. The "fantasy" of the title is not genre, rather the Lacanian concept of identity formation—in short, an individual's personal narrative. By applying this concept to writing and combining it with exercises aimed at promoting ambiguity and otherness, the writer will move beyond a priori assumptions about voice and identity and produce new work in new voices.

How students write to the exercises reveals their writer identity and fantasy, and their continued writing to these exercises may produce a sudden momentary shift in how they write… causing them to discover a writing pathway that they had not "allowed" themselves before" (p. 71).

One of the most promising areas for L2 creative writing research going forwards is the connection between creative writing, authorial voice and L2 identity formation. Lacanian fantasy shares many points of contact with Dörnyei-led motivational theory—not least that identity formation, whether in L1 or L2, is an imaginative act, something that lends itself well to creative writing—and any contribution to strengthening the bedrock of theory of L2 creative writing is to be welcomed. Furthermore, the Lacanian approach offers something of a new avenue since the literature in this field tends to focus on identity expression rather than identity formation. Charalambous's focus on "fantasy" and otherness happily puts this work firmly in the latter camp.

Unfortunately, the author's desire that this book be both a rigorous academic study, a tool for creative writing instructors and a self-help guide for blocked authors, rather than producing something greater than the sum of its parts, ends up falling short of its targets. While the theoretical frame work is of academic interest, the activities themselves are nothing new, frequently mentioned on writing blogs and other "how to write" books, and there is little of practical value for the classroom which, at the end of the day, is what all the theory is supposed to lead to. In addition, the text swings wildly through colloquial, mystical and academic registers, dislocating the reader with each new turn and producing a work of uneven quality.

Author Biography

Iain Maloney is a lecturer at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies He is the author of five books including the critically acclaimed memoir *The Only Gaijin in the Village* (Birlinn, 2020) <maloney@nufs.ac.jp>

References

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition.* Lawrence Erlbaum.

Iida, A. (2010). Developing voice by composing haiku: A social-expressivist framework for teaching haiku in EFL contexts. *English Teaching Forum, 48*(1), 28-34.

Maloney, I. (2019). The place of creative writing in an EFL university curriculum. *Bulletin of Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, 4*, 229-251.

Schrader, R. (2000). Creative Writing With Young Immigrants. In G. Bräuer (Ed.), *Writing Across Languages* (pp. 25-40). Ablex.

Smith, C. (2013). Creative writing as an important tool in second language acquisition and practice. *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching, 2*(1), 12-18.

Sullivan, S. L. (2015). Student autonomy through creativity. *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching 4*(1), 35-53.

Professional development

Opportunities for professional development with English conferences and online events

Tara McIlroy
Center for Foreign Language Education and Research, Rikkyo University

In his book *Literature: Why It Matters*, Robert Eaglestone introduces an intriguing metaphor to describe the essence of literature: "literature is a living conversation" (Eaglestone, 2019: 21). Like a conversation, literature is concerned with communication, and thrives on interactions and dialogue. Usually in the classroom, the essence of literature as a conversation is clear to observe as learners read and discuss texts together, in groups, pairs and with their teacher. In literature conferences and other professional development events these conversations continue to shape thinking and understanding of literature. As with many other aspects of the novel coronavirus pandemic of 2020, conversations and communication in literature teaching are constrained by the distance format and must evolve in response. Related to constraints in the language and literature classroom which affect dialogue and interaction, professional development activities in 2020 are also beginning to adapt. The move online amongst academic conference planners has brought a shift towards innovative ways of delivering content, which matters for those of us working with literary texts and literary conversations in our online classes as well as in professional development during this unusual year.

This short article reports on three online conferences and professional development events which took place from May to July, 2020 which all share a need to engage with communication, now perhaps more than ever. While we may not be able to hold events in person at the current time due to concerns for safety, one of the benefits of the situation has been the richness of variety, as well as the potential for greater collaboration and international communication in the future. The information will be useful to those planning online conferences, and for anyone seeking to participate in online professional development through literature events.

Hay Festival Digital 2020
https://www.hayfestival.com/

The Hay Festival is one of the most important book events of the festival season in the UK. The speakers are typically some of the most important writers and journalists whose work has become culturally important in the previous year, and the event usually takes place in Hay, a small town filled with bookshops on the English-Welsh border. From May 22-31, over 100 festival events are available, subject to pre-registration. This year, for the first time, the entire event went digital and sessions were available free. The sessions had live question-and-answer sessions usually focusing on one recent publication, but sometimes with wider topical questions. Some sessions (David Crystal and Hilary Mantel, for example) were fully booked early, even with thousands of spaces available. However, it was possible to watch the talks later in the day because of the time-difference, which was a convenient feature of the playback platform used for this event.

A number of presentations were noteworthy and potentially useful for teaching purposes. The first was a session by Stephen Fry in which he read from his book from the third book in his Greek trilogy, *Troy* (2020). Fry's reading aloud became well-known from the *Harry Potter* books, but his appearances on radio and television mean that UK audiences have known and enjoyed Fry's writing and presenting for many years. The online format was successful in bringing the speaker closer to the audience, while viewers' questions were handled smoothly. Reading aloud is a familiar teaching approach and is one which requires careful planning (see Duncan & Paran, 2018, p.151-253 for a discussion of teachers' perspectives on read aloud practices in English classes). In the current online teaching situation, it may be easier than before to include reading aloud as part of the asynchronous course content, or as part of the homework schedule. While reading aloud may not be part of a typical live lesson, listening to readings before class or integrating listening elements into group work and homework are ways in which this approach may be adopted by English literature teachers in a variety of contexts.

Moving on to historical fiction, Maggie O'Farrell's novel *Hamnet* is an emotional and fictional retelling of the family life of William Shakespeare, centring on the death of his only son. At the Hay Festival, the timing of

the presentation on *Hamnet* coincided with the lockdown of schools and a nationwide furlough of workers in the UK, rendering cities unusually quiet, including London. The current pandemic therefore has echoes of Shakespeare's time, which was an era of societal worry and fear. As O'Farrell writes, *Hic incepit pestis* or "here begins plague" was written in the town records at Stratford only months after Shakespeare was born, and his life was spent in a time of endless rounds of outbreaks of the disease. Inclusion of pandemic reading will surely become part of English curricula in future years. Linguistically, O'Farrell used the Oxford English Dictionary to confirm the meanings or words in the book which were accurately used in the 16th century. While all the metaphors had to be checked for anachronisms, her aim was to try to be modern and try not to grate using language in ways that would contradict the flow of the story.

For second language (L2) readers of English literature, there are various reasons why *Hamnet* may be useful as part of a course of study focusing on English culture. The link between the son's name and Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* is explained in the opening pages of the novel. Important documents such as letters have not survived, however, and O'Farrell's novel is a clever work of imaginative writing. Details from the era have been meticulously researched, for example with the inclusion of details about the uses of medicinal herbs in Shakespeare's time. Teachers of creative writing are likely to be particularly impressed with the opening chapters of the novel and the world-building which transports readers into O'Farrell's fictional world. For close reading, teachers could draw attention to what Fowler (1996) called the *mind-style*, that is the "world-view of an author, or a narrator, or a character" (214). More recently, Semino (2008) specifies an individual's world view in relation to *mind-style* as being "personal and cognitive in origin" (Semino, 2008, p.269). Expressions of world view by Shakespeare's wife Agnes in *Hamnet* may be particularly suitable for shared reading, analysis and discussion. The later scenes of the book, taking place in London, contain further rich pickings for close reading and textual analysis.

The Hay festival, along with other online book events this year, is a rich source of material for teachers planning literature courses. Further themes in 2020 include moves to decolonize the English curriculum and pay greater attention to diverse literature. Overall, while Hay online may not be a free online event in years to come, regular online book festivals would be a welcome addition to the cultural calendar.

English Shared Futures
https://www.englishsharedfutures.uk/home/programme-2020/

English Shared Futures Conference is an annual event in the UK, supported by groups such as the National Association for Teachers of English (NATE) and the National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE), amongst others. Despite organisers increasing capacity to 700 participants for the live online conference, it sold out more than a month in advance. I was not one of the lucky ones with an official place at the conference. However, engagement with the talks and interaction with the conference was still possible through a number of routes. The first was the use of Twitter, as many attendees and speakers interacted online during the conference on 26th-27th June to share their experiences. The conference recordings were also available online after the live event. Over the next couple of weeks, I watched a selection of the recorded talks.

"The Discipline in 2020" was a session with a panel including leaders from NAWE and English department heads from various universities. The fallout of the pandemic is already affecting teachers in English and creative writing. One concern of the speakers at this session was that lecturers are becoming more embedded in the gig economy as part-time, adjunct staff, affecting the discipline of English. Several of the talks were concerned with how to respond to the current crisis, of urgent and immediate relevance to the audience.

"Future perfect: How applying linguistics in the real world moves the discipline forward" was a session in which three presenters shared their schemes of work, themed units and individual activities are taught in various levels of school English. David Adger (https://davidadger.org/) from Queen Mary University of London described uses of invented languages from fiction, such as teaching students to write their own names in the Elvish languages from Tolkien's (1962) *Lord of the Rings*. The activities could be adapted for young elementary learners, up to intensive summer school work, or integrated into the linguistics elements of English literature courses. In other summer school projects with particular schools, students developed imaginary languages and the rules for their own languages, creating presentations and posters using their projects. What may be particularly relevant for teaching

in Japan is that in the current move towards CLIL courses, it is not yet fully defined what integrated content means, and that language and literature may be more closely aligned than before.

Jennifer Smith from the University of Glasgow talked about sociolinguistics and the variation of Scots in use. The focus was on Scots specifically, although the topic of variation in language might be relevant for studies of sociolinguistics. One result of the heightened awareness of Scots on websites such as public websites and libraries having more visible uses of Scots. The Scottish government made a language policy in 2015 to forward this aim. With particular emphasis on the syntax (order of words) in Scots across the country, the project developed a project looking at variation and language change in Scotland: https://scotssyntaxatlas.ac.uk/. From this it is possible to see the change in language (defined as the difference between younger and older speakers). Applying principles of exploring language variation in Japan would be possible project work for students in the Japanese context, for example looking at linguistic variation in Japan, in literature, and in other creative texts, such as film and poetry. The third speaker in the linguistics session was Devyani Sharma from Queen Mary University of London who talked about the development of A-level (high school) English language teaching units from the London perspective. As English no longer belongs to any one geographical area, students examine English – including vernacular dialects of English – from around the world. Using the example of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is a way of discussing this variation, in part because of its familiarity for students and also for the potential uses of the topic in English classes.

Kate Clanchy's presentation, "Write a poem about lockdown" was an interactive workshop in which she presented her teaching methods and also some poems by secondary-level students from the UK. Clanchy's interactive session, and her wider work on teaching poetry in schools, exemplifies how literature can be like a conversation, not only in that it involves communication, but also that it is a product of the environment. Clanchy has worked as a Writer in Residence in a multicultural school in Oxford and has, in 2020, been awarded the Orwell Prize for her book about teaching poetry *Some kids I taught and what they taught me* (2020). Her methods include writing alongside students and collecting their work (the excellent *Poems from a school,* 2018 is an anthology of student writing). In her latest book, *Unmute* (2020) we can read the poetry which resulted from writing from the lockdown. The lockdown workshop described the classroom writing process, showed work from students, and then invited participants to try the writing process for themselves. She used an environmental poem by Hirshfield (2017) as the basis for exploring the lockdown experience. The result was a series of lines which were read out as though they became a shared poem, written by everyone in the session. I thought that writing poetry at a distance in that way would be difficult, or even impossible. This session proved the opposite.

Action on teaching university English online
https://www.englishsharedfutures.uk/satellite-events/#english-online

This event was open-access, subject to pre-registration, with a video of the session available after the recording of the live session. As well as the national conference organised by English Shared Futures, I joined a live satellite event on the topic of online teaching on 3rd July. The format was mini-presentations of five or ten minutes each, and the speakers covered a variety of topics. Each of the speakers at this special event had a short time to briefly introduce how they have prepared for online teaching from September. The focus was on preparation for the new term in September. The focus was on discipline-specific training, relevant to all of the different branches of English study, including language and literature, as well as creative writing. However, a number of presenters already had extensive online teaching experience, so the session included a range of experiences. The following are a selection of the talks which were delivered at that event.

The first session was one hour long and included five speakers, with Robert Eaglestone from University of London introducing the session. Andrew Griffiths from the Open University gave some advice from a long experience of using online teaching materials. The Open University has been delivering online content for many years before our current situation of online teaching. In his talk he discussed the differences between online teaching and distance learning. He used the metaphor of a seance, suggesting that at the start of an online lesson we ask "can you hear me?" to students, many of whom may have their cameras switched off. Online literature conversations are not like those we are more familiar with, which can be disconcerting and even alarming. Griffiths' advice on getting past this is to embrace the

challenge of the unnatural element of one-sided communication inherent in online teaching. The surprising shift to online lessons may have been sudden for many of us, but we can learn from other situations who have been more prepared.

Benjamin Colbert from the University of Wolverhampton discussed virtual learning activities (VLEs) using examples from courses using literature which often have a thematic or chronological approach. Semester activities online could include online events, where students use a period or theme to create an online role-play activity. The example of William Wilberforce and the abolitionist era (as seen in contemporaneous literature) was used to show how historical periods could be enlivened through this method. Victorian studies could be used to ask students to gather information about the time, using newspapers and other primary sources in the classes and in group work. Students can gather resource banks (visuals, texts, and references) which can be relevant to the unit in question.

The second session was entitled "Reflective Online Practice: Teaching and Learning", and included talks on teaching tools and ideas. These included ways that teachers can engage with creative reading and creative writing activities through workshops. Marcello Giovanelli from Aston University demonstrated how to work with an interactive tool called Blackboard Collaborate, which allows for breakout rooms, interactive whiteboards and chat-style messaging. While many teachers are trying to gather information about teaching online from generic online training, it is also worthwhile looking at subject-specific activities which are relevant to English teaching at the current time.

In the third session, "Digital methodologies and approaches", the talks expanded understanding of how to build community in the digital space. Shelly Harris from the University of Reading talked about interpersonal connections while teaching creative writing. Looking to more established contexts could be helpful in developing creative writing in EFL classrooms in Japan. Other topics in session three included online writing days (Sean Sutherland, University of Westminster) and learning communities (Sophie Nicholls, Teeside University).

Overall, the satellite event from English Shared Futures was particularly interesting for the JALT audience who will likely be doing professional development online for some time to come. The ten-minute presentations were brief, with the five-minute talks possibly too short, but overall for audience experience the short talks were successfully pitched. Many of the presentations provided a rich opportunity for speakers to interact with online learning in a subject-specific way. There is a lot to like about the online format of webinars and conferences in which the intimacy of face-to-face interaction is retained and yet large audiences are possible.

Conclusions

At the beginning of the year when most of our teaching for 2020 was being prepared and planned, we could not have imagined that by summer we would be reflecting on several months of lockdown, cancelled outings, and online teaching. This unusual year, 2020, has the potential to bring about new conversations about literature, language learning and society. The relationships between writers, readers and language learning contexts may expand and evolve with these new developments.

The online conferences and other events which have unexpectedly become available during this time have been one of the few positive aspects about the global pandemic. Not only are these conferences now available, but most are free or at reduced prices, meaning that professional development of this kind may be evolving towards a more sustainable model. International travel was costly and environmentally unsound before the pandemic, but it seems reckless and impossible now. The appearance of online events for professional development may be a lasting change which English teaching requires to allow us to continue the connections and conversations we all need.

Author Biography

Tara McIlroy (PhD) is an associate professor at Rikkyo University in Tokyo. Her research interests include uses of literature in the language classroom, teacher education and language curriculum design.

References

Clanchy, K. (2018) *Poems from a school*. Picador.

Clanchy, K. (2020) *Some kids I taught and what they taught me*. Picador.

Clanchy, K. (2020) *Unmute: Young voices from lockdown*. Kindle edition.

Duncan, S., & Paran, A. (2018) Negotiating the challenges of reading literature: Teachers reporting on their practice. In Bland, J. (Ed), *Using literature in English language education*, (pp. 243-260). Bloomsbury.

Eaglestone, R. (2019) *Literature: Why it matters*. Polity Books.

Fowler, R. (1996) *Linguistic criticism* (2nd edition). Oxford University Press.

Fry, S. (2020) *Troy*. Penguin.

Hirshfield, J. (2017) 'On the fifth day' in *Ledger*. New York: Knopf. Accessed online from https://poets.org/poem/fifth-day.

O'Farrell, M. (2020) *Hamnet*. Tinder Press.

Semino, E. (2008) A cognitive stylistic approach to mind style in narrative fiction. In R. Carter & P. Stockwell (Eds.), *The language and literature reader* (pp.268-277). Routledge.

Conference Report

The LiLT SIG Forum at JALT 2019:
Using literature effectively for learner agency

Mary Hillis
Kwansei Gakuin University

Read, research, write:
Ethnographic poetry in the classroom

In the Japanese university context, English courses often focus on improving not only language skills, but also on developing global perspectives and academic skills. In a content-based poetry course, world literature in English translation was used to meet both these broad aims and the course-specific learning objectives. These objectives were to study a topic in English, use the language skills learned in other courses, do research on an academic topic, and participate in small group discussions.

The second-year policy studies students enrolled in this particular course read and discussed excerpts from two poems *House to House* and *Barjeel* by Shamma Al Bastaki (2018). These poems are based on transcripts from ethnographic research and interviews she conducted with people living in local communities in the United Arab Emirates. They were chosen because the author and the students are in the same age range and have similar academic areas of study. She wrote the poems when she was a university student, and one of her majors was social research and public policy. Furthermore, Al Bastaki's poems include familiar topics: memories related to food and home.

Before class, students completed a homework assignment to read information about the author and her writing process, and to preview literary terms and vocabulary included in the poems. At the beginning of the class, this information was reviewed and an additional activity to practice enjambment, when a sentence continues from one line to the next without punctuation, was done (see Hillis, 2019). Following the lesson plan Language in transit: Understanding ethnographic poetry (Asymptote for Educators, 2018), students read excerpts from the poems together in class, and then answered questions which prompted them to examine how enjambment, format, and language were used in the poem. After reading and discussing these poems, students began to plan their own poetry projects by choosing a topic and a person to interview. This project culminated with students writing a poem in the style of *House to House* and *Barjeel*. They presented their poems which were based on their own experiences or interviews with friends or family members.

As the original poems include the themes of food and housing, they were two of the student topic choices for the poetry project. In addition, students could choose another significant personal memory. The most popular topic was food, chosen by almost half the students. Most of the remaining students wrote about an important memory, such as an experience with club activities or study abroad. Only a few students chose to write about a memory related to their home or a special place in their house. Students brought their finished poems to class and read them aloud to a small group of classmates.

One point that could be improved upon for future lessons would be to spend more time in class to instruct students how to conduct an interview and to practice with classmates. This would give them the opportunity to have more experience and practice with the research skill of interviewing before starting their projects. Reading and writing ethnographic poems is one innovative way to encourage discussion, research, and creativity in the university language classroom.

Author Biography

Mary Hillis teaches English in the Law Department at Ritsumeikan University. She also volunteers as an Educational Arm Assistant for Asymptote an online journal of world literature in translation. Her interests are academic writing, writing centers, and literature.
<maryehillis@gmail.com>

References

Al Bastaki, S. (2018). "From House to house", *Asymptote*. https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-/shamma-al-bastaki-house-to-house/

Asymptote for Educators. (2018). Language in transit: Understanding ethnographic poetry. *Asymptote educators guide: The familiar with the foreign*. https://www.asymptotejournal.com/assets/educational/asymptote-guide-for-educators-2018-summer.pdf

Hillis, M. (2019, June 12). Transporting poetry across borders: On teaching ethnographic poetry in Japan. *Asymptote*. https://www.asymptotejournal.com/blog/2019/06/12/transporting-poetry-across-borders-on-teaching-ethnographic-poetry-in-japan/#more-20672

Announcements

JALT International Conference 2020
November 16 to 23, 2020

Literature in Language Teaching SIG Forum: Monday, November 16th
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. (90 minutes)

Forum Chair
Susan Laura Sullivan
Tokai University

Biography
Susan Sullivan is a co-editor of the award-winning anthology, *Women of a Certain Age* (Fremantle Press, 2018). She holds a Master of Creative Arts, and a Master of TESOL. Her research interests include fostering creativity, autonomy and innovation among learners.

The forum will be a live session featuring a variety of talks by LiLT SIG members:

The Author isn't Dead, Just a Little Shy: Practical Criticism and Workshopping in the EFL Classroom
Luke Draper
Kwansei Gakuin University

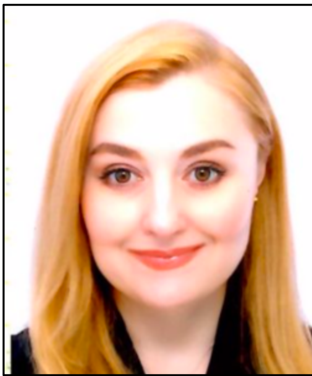
Summary:
Practical Criticism is a method of reading that separates the text from its social and historical context. It observes the Barthesian notion that literary analysis should focus on the language of the text rather than the author's intention and background. This approach, when applied to a workshop-style classroom activity, allows students to critically discuss the stylistic and narratological qualities of a text without authorial influence and may also encourage aspiring writers to produce content for an audience under the safe veil of anonymity. This talk will briefly introduce the theory behind the practice and argue for its inclusion in lang/lit-centered programs. Action research findings will also be drawn upon as evidence of its pedagogical value.

Biography
Luke Draper is a PhD student at the University of Surrey (UK). His thesis is on stylistic instruction in the Higher Education Creative Writing classroom and its impact on workshop peer feedback interactions and revisional decisions. He is an Associate Lecturer of English at Kwansei Gakuin University and specialises in writing pedagogy, material development and EAP teaching. He is interested in the potential function of literature in the language classroom and Creative Writing education for non-L1 speakers of English.

Reading to Write, Writing to Read

Cristina Tat
Kwansei Gakuin University

Summary
This presentation will describe an elective course that has been introduced with the aim of encouraging university students to read for pleasure and to become more actively engaged with texts by developing their writing skills. The required English courses in this EAP program focus mostly on intensive reading and academic writing and students` reading progress is actively tracked through MReader and Xreading. This setup had led to students viewing reading and writing as the necessary "obstacles" they have to overcome in order to pass and very few of them read in L1 or L2 in their spare time. It is hypothesized that through experiencing the process of creative writing, students can develop audience awareness from instructor and peer feedback, and also that they can use short works of fiction to develop their writing skills. It is the instructor`s hope that they will become more critical readers by learning to be better writers. The basic outline of the course as well as students` responses to surveys about their reading habits at the beginning and end of the course will be described in the hope of generating discussion and sharing ideas for further course development.



Biography
Cristina Tat is an Assistant Lecturer of English in the School of Policy Studies at Kwansei Gakuin University. She is a graduate of Vassar College and Baruch College Marxe School of Public and International Affairs. Her research interests include extensive reading and comparative education.

Reading about Discrimination and Diversity to Better Understand Ourselves

Regan Tyndall
Sophia University

Summary
I use my courses (in the Language Education & Research and the English Literature Departments) to engage students in studies of discrimination and diversity, such as that experienced by English-speaking people who are ethnic minorities in different parts of the world. Students explore this through texts such as the novel *Obasan* by Joy Kogawa and short stories such as "Indian Education" by Sherman Alexie. Aside from the obvious exposure to challenging and authentic English narrative prose, the purpose is to have students reflect on (and speak/write about) how discrimination occurs, what the good and/or challenging aspects of discrimination are, and how these might relate to Japan's present and future.

Biography
Regan Tyndall teaches academic skills in English, and English literature, at Sophia University. He holds post-graduate degrees in Education and in English Literature, and is currently a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership at the University of Calgary (Canada). His research interests include teacher training and professional development for Canadian public school teachers and the internationalization of Japanese university curricula.

Reading "Curious Incident": Micro Teaching Presentations and Reader Experiences

Tara McIlroy
Rikkyo University

Summary
In this short talk, I will report on teaching a young adult novel in the university context. *The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time* by Mark Haddon presents a challenge for second language (L2) readers due to its unconventional structure and subversion of genre conventions. The novel is also an example of neurodiverse young adult literature (NYAL), which features at least one adolescent character whose behaviour diverges from societal norms. I will report on course design and implementation, including micro-teaching presentations in which groups created lessons based on the contents of the novel to teach to their peers. The results of teacher and learner reflections suggest that NYAL novels can be empathy machines in the second language (L2) classroom and that real-world activities can positively augment reading experiences.

Biography
Tara McIlroy is an associate professor at Rikkyo University in Tokyo, Japan in the Center for Foreign Language Education and Research. Her research interests are L2 language acquisition, uses of literature in the language classroom, teacher education and language curriculum design.

Agency Via Cinderella

John Maune
Hokusei University Junior College

Summary
Cinderella is often seen as sweet—Disney—pap, but the many ways in which woman are stereotyped are staggering: low-lying fruit ripe for feminist criticism. It is also a good introduction to the formative power that words can wield when not critically examined. These issues are explored with an in-class reading of a low-level graded reader and a short animation of Cinderella. Students were initially unaware of any oppressive issues in the story, but following some prompting, were able to discern some sexist normative tropes. The lessons learned translate well to other activities and, hopefully, beyond the classroom.

Biography
John Maune is a professor in the Hokusei Gakuen University Junior College English Department, Sapporo, Japan, where he teaches content-based courses in both biology and literature. He has presented papers at conferences on literature, education, human evolution, and language teaching, covering a wide-variety of topics, ranging from knowing in Shakespeare, brain-friendly teaching hacks, the carnivalesque in *Coriolanus*, to human nature in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Submission guidelines

The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching, the refereed research journal of the Literature in Language Teaching (LiLT) Special Interest Group, invites research articles, research reports on the use of literature and literary forms (eg creative writing) in language classrooms, as well as book reviews, practice-sharing and relevant conference reports. Although we have a focus on Japan- and broader Asia-based language education, we welcome submissions from international contexts based on applicability to the journal's readership. Further details can be found at http://liltsig.org

NOTE: We are currently particularly interested in gathering the experiences of educators teaching during the pandemic. This interest includes issues around teaching literature online (both synchronously and asynchronously) as well as the use of literature to help students express themselves about the situation we find ourselves in.

There are, broadly speaking, seven categories of article. Word limits provided here are guidelines, not rules.

1) *Feature articles*, detailing in depth research, whether empirical or theoretical. These are generally between 2,500 to 4,000 words long.

2) *Literature in practice*, which describe the practical use of literature in the language classroom which teachers can readily apply. These are typically 2,000 to 3,000 words long. Although such articles detail classroom practice, it is preferred that they try to connect the practice to the academic literature in terms of why or how the practice helps educators and students.

3) *Reviews* of books pertinent to the field.

4) *Interviews*. These may be with members of the Special Interest Group detailing their research and practice, or prominent researchers/practitioners in the field.

5) *Conference reports* from literature-themed events and presentations.

6) *Presentation reports*. These are short write-ups of conference presentations given by the authors.

7) *Comments* on article previously published in the Journal.

We may also occasionally accept "My share" style activities describing original, effective activities for promoting literature.

Submissions should follow APA7 style, also known as the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition, particularly with regard to referencing. Submissions should be in carefully formatted MS Word, Pages or Libre Office, in Times New Roman size 12.

Submissions should go to liltjournaleditor@gmail.com