

Program and Conference Summary:
The 111th Conference on Higher Education for the Next Generation
Philippine-Japan International Roundtable Conference on TESOL in ASIA
- Connecting the Philippines and Japan through English Education -

November 7-8, 2015
Waterfront Cebu City Hotel & Casino

Risa SHOJI

Sponsorship and Financial Support

This conference was sponsored and held as part of "The 111th Meeting on Higher Education for the Next Generation, which intends to establish a new vision for the future of university education with innovative ideas and technologies. The conference was cosponsored by the Philippine Association for Language Teaching (PALT), Japanese Society for Learning Analytics, Philosophical Association for Language Teaching, JELES (The English Language Education Society of Japan). We are particularly grateful for the financial and logistical support extended by the Institute for Service Innovation Studies of Meiji University/Uchida Yoko Co., Ltd., Takushoku University and QQ English.

1. Objectives

More and more Japanese students are learning from Filipino teachers in various modes of delivery. Some Japanese students enroll in Intensive English courses offered by various universities and language schools in the Philippines. Others learn English on-line with native Filipino teachers based in the Philippines via Skype.

As it situates itself in diverse cultural contexts, ELT provides opportunities for inquiry into the pedagogy and methods of teaching and learning the English language. What variety of English should be taught? What is the role of the mother tongue in learning a second language? What methods are effective in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)? These are some of the issues that this conference hoped to address.

The conference brought together more than fifty educators, policy-makers, industry practitioners, and scholars from Japan and the Philippines to discuss English Language Teaching in Asia, focusing on the Philippine-Japan experience.

2. Program Detail

2.1 DAY 1

13:00 - 13:30 Opening remarks

Mr. Raiko FUJIOKA, CEO of QQ English

Dr. Natsumi ARATAME, Professor at Takushoku University

13:30 - 14:00 Keynote address

Dr. Ma. Milagros LAUREL, Associate Dean and Professor at University of the Philippines, Diliman
“TESOL IN Asia: The Philippine-Japan Experience”

14:00 - 15:30 Panel 1 English in the Educational System: Language Policy in the Philippines and Japan

Dr. Editha ATENDIDO, Assistant Superintendent at Department of Education, Cavite

“English in the Educational System: Language Policy in the Philippines”

Dr. Shigeru OZAKI,

Professor at Takushoku University, Visiting Researcher at Ateneo de Manila University

“English Language Education Policy and Practice in Japan”

Dr. Margarita BALLESTEROS

Vice President at PALT, Philippine Commission on Higher Education.

15:30 - 16:00 Short break

16:00 - 17:30 Panel 2 English in Business and Professional Usage

Mr. Naoto KATO, President at Sky Cruising Co., Ltd.

“Guide to non-TOEIC English needs in the international business scene”

Mr. Hiroyuki MIURA, UI&UX designer at Castalia

“Persistent Learning with Goocus, Mobile Learning Platform”

Dr. Sterling PLATA, Professor at De La Salle University, Manila

“English for Business and the Professions in the Philippines”

17:30 - 18:00 Closing Remarks

Dr. Yasuhisa TAMURA, Professor at Sophia University, Japan

2.2 DAY 2

09:00 - 10:30 Panel 3 Varieties of English – World Englishes: Japanese, Philippine, and American/British

Dr. Ma. Lourdes TAYAO, Retired Professor at University of the Philippines, Diliman

Dr. Marilu MADRUNIO, Dean and Professor at University of Santo Tomas

“Some Lexical Features of Complaint Letters in Philippine English”

Dr. Janice C. GABAYAN, Assistant Professor at Cebu Normal University

“Prosodic Interference Affecting English Communication Among Cebuano-Visayan Speakers
in Southern Cebu”

10:30 - 11:00 Short break

11:00 - 12:30 Panel 4 English Language Teaching Trends and Approaches: Traditional and New Methods 1

Ms. Bernadette SUMAGUI, Principal at Lumil National High School, Cavite, Philippines:

Dr. Noriko Arai, Professor at Takushoku University

“The English Program in the Faculty of International Studies”

Dr. Makoto Shishido, Professor at Tokyo Denki University

“Improving Oral Proficiency through the Callan Method”

12:30 - 13:30 Short break

13:30 - 15:00 Panel 5 English Language Teaching Trends and Approaches: Traditional and New Methods 2

Dr. Michiko NAKANO, Professor Emeritus at Waseda University

“English Language Teaching Trends and Approaches: New and Traditional Methods from the Perspective of Waseda University”

Mr. Hiroshi YOSHINO and others, Tsukuba University

“On the Quality Assurance of Academic Degrees”

Mr. Yoshito MIYOZAWA, Director at QQ English:

15:30 - 15:45 Short break

15:45 - 17:15 Panel 6 Beyond ELT: Challenges, Techniques and Strategies

Dr. Yasushi TSUBOTA, Professor at Kyoto Institute of Technology and Ms. Yumiko KUDO of QQ English and D's Dual Studio

“Collaborative Activities with English Teachers in the Philippines”

Ms. Shoko FUKUNAGA, Takushoku University, QQ English, and Daredemo Hero

“Learning Experiences in Cebu”

17:15 - 17:30 Closing Remarks

Dr. Natsumi ARATAME, Professor at Takushoku University

3. Summary

3.1 Day 1

After the opening remarks by Dr. Natsumi ARATAME, a session organizer of the conference, Mr. Raiko FUJIOKA, the CEO of QQ English language school in Cebu, a sponsor of the conference, and Ms Grizette E. PONCE, an academic manager of QQ English delivered a welcome speech.

Following their message, Dr. Ma. Milagros LAUREL, who is the Associate Dean and a professor at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, gave the keynote address. Dr. Laurel has been involved in language research for many years. In addition to teaching at the university, she has contributed to language education in the Philippines as a chairperson of the PALT. Dr. Laurel explained why Japanese people choose the Philippines as their place to study English. She also explained how Philippine professors teach in the classroom by considering the characteristics of Japanese students.

3.1.1 Panel 1 English in the Educational System: Language Policy in the Philippines and Japan

In Panel 1, three speakers gave a talk on language policy in Japan and the Philippines. Dr. Editha ATENDIDO, an assistant superintendent at the Department of Education, Cavite, introduced the Philippine language education policy called “K to 12” (kindergarten to high school, totaling 13 years of compulsory

education) which started in 2013. This policy aims at educating students to attain bilingual proficiency both in English and Filipino. Unlike Japan, five English skills, namely, reading, speaking, writing, listening, and viewing abilities are taught in an integrated manner.

Dr. Shigeru OZAKI, a Professor at Takushoku University, spoke about Japanese English education policy. Dr. Ozaki explained the reasons why many Japanese people couldn't speak English. According to Ozaki, since English wasn't necessary for those living in Japan, there was a lack of English classes and teachers. Furthermore, current English courses are very much focused on passing the university entrance examination. He maintained that changing the nature of English examination might change what is known as the "washback effect" in English courses.

Dr. Margarita BALLESTEROS, a Vice President at PALT and the Philippine Commission on Higher Education emphasized that the use of open education resources and ICT would make the collaboration between Japan and the Philippine more effective and efficient despite the distance between the two countries.

3.1.2 Panel 2 English in Business and Professional Usage

In Panel 2, three speakers gave a presentation on business English. Mr. Naoto KATO, President of Sky Cruising Company, pointed out that TOEIC had negatively impacted the English speaking skills of Japanese people, because it is used to test an English ability of employees in Japanese business communities. Mr. Kato suggested that "reproduction" (a method of repeating the English heard in the ear) could be a more effective learning method for business people who must learn English in a short period of time.

Mr. Hiroyuki MIURA, a UI&UX designer at Castalia, introduced "Goocus", a new mobile learning platform on which "persistent learning" becomes possible. He explained that completing online courses on mobile devices is not easy for many reasons. Goocus makes it possible to develop interactive learning materials using various data formats. It automatically sends notification to learners when learners are behind schedule. The progress can be made visible among learners to motivate each other. This system would also help turn the application into a marketable educational product very easily.

Dr. Sterling PLATA, a professor at De La Salle University, Manila, made suggestions for practical English lessons and teaching strategies appropriate in various business situations, to specific occupations and a more specialized field of activity.

Questions and answers were given regarding how each speaker conceived ESP (English for Specific Purposes), and how and why the TOEIC test came to be emphasized in Japan.

Dr. Yasuhisa TAMURA, a professor at Sophia University, gave the first day's closing remarks. He said that collecting and analyzing data for individual learners had become possible and such a demand was growing due to the widespread availability of mobile devices such as tablet PCs. Dr. Tamura suggested the needs of learning analytics that optimized pedagogic methods for individual learners as well as the integration of wearable devices.

3.2 Day 2

3.2.1 Panel 3 Varieties of English – World Englishes: Japanese, Philippine, and American/British

The second day opened with Panel 3, English as it is used around the world. The first speaker, Dr. Ma. Lourdes TAYAO, an authority of Philippine languages, explained that English speakers in the Philippines could be categorized into three groups. Dr. Tayao pointed out that not all the Filipinos could speak fluent English. She also explained the differences between Philippine and American English, and maintained that Filipinos had a unique accent when speaking in English.

Dr. Marilu MADRUNIO, from University of Santo Tomas, analyzed what is considered as standard English from different perspectives. Also, Dr. Madrunio described the characteristics of Filipino English by comparing English complaint letters in the Philippines and Singapore.

Dr. Janice C. GABAYAN, an assistant professor at Cebu Normal University, pointed out that the English variety as spoken in the southern towns of Cebu was not seriously affected by their native language; the phonological interference identified was phonemic, not prosodic. She recommended further investigation of the phonemic structure of the Cebuano-Visayan Southern Variety to form a useful basis in teaching a second language.

3.2.2 Panel 4 English Language Teaching Trends and Approaches: Traditional and New Methods 1

Panel 4 discussed English language teaching trends and approaches, including traditional and new methods. Ms. Bernadette SUMAGUI, Principal of Lumil National High School, Cavite, described the effective use of the audio-lingual method with repetitive grammar practices in the classroom.

Dr. Noriko ARAI, a professor at Takushoku University, introduced the present situation at her university; English classes were managed by Japanese and native speakers of English; the English speech contest and overseas study program motivated students to learn English; students' proficiency was measured by TOEIC, although the method of evaluating students' proficiency needed to be improved. Dr. Arai suggested, based on a survey on student attitudes, that more attention should be given to develop effective teaching strategies to motivate and empower students to learn English.

The next speaker, Dr. Makoto SHISHIDO, a professor at Tokyo Denki University, gave a presentation on improving oral proficiency through the Callan method, an English teaching method which was developed in the UK in 1959. In this method, the teacher asks the student the same question twice, and the student must instantly give an answer, accurately and with full sentences. The teacher speaks much faster than the native English speakers do (220 to 240 words per minute). According to research conducted at several universities in Japan, the students' TOEIC scores improved by 110 points, which indicated that the Callan method was quite effective in improving English skills within a short period of time.

In the question and answer session, there were questions on the Callan method mainly from Filipino participants and those who were interested in the effectiveness of repetitive learning methods.

3.2.3 Panel 5 English Language Teaching Trends and Approaches: Traditional and New Methods 2

The session on English language teaching trends and approaches continued in Panel 5. Dr. Michiko

NAKANO, a professor emeritus from Waseda University, introduced the innovative teaching methods that had evolved over time at Waseda. Instead of emphasizing grammar and reading comprehension, Waseda now offers a variety of learning programs such as “Tutorial English” (1:4 practical conversation) and “Cross-Cultural Distance Learning” (CCDL) which allows Waseda students to talk with students in other countries, in addition to a variety of language learning systems for mobile devices. Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is used in each program to measure the students' ability to communicate. The number of C1 level students has increased as a result. The effort to monitor students' achievement and to improve teaching strategies is a continual process at Waseda.

A research group led by Mr. Hiroshi YOSHINO, Teaching Fellow at the Department of Risk Engineering, The Graduate School of Systems and Information Engineering, described an achievement evaluation system used in the department to ensure the quality of academic degrees. The design and operational forms of the system are under review and revision so that it can reflect teacher evaluations as well as students self-assessments.

Mr. Yoshito MIYOZAWA, a former diplomat and the director at QQ English, was the last speaker in this session. He explained why Japan had the lowest score in the TOEIC and TOEFL tests; the Japanese government adopted the grammar translation method after the Meiji Restoration so as to catch up with Western Civilization as quick as possible, rather than emphasizing oral communication. Mr. Miyozawa is currently developing new teaching materials that incorporate the element of practical conversation.

In the question and answer session, questions were asked why the academic language in Japan wasn't English, what kind of English skills were needed for conducting business and academic research globally, and the environments that would be conducive to improve English skills.

3.2.4 Panel 6 ELT: Challenges, Techniques and Strategies

Dr. Yasushi TSUBOTA, a professor at Kyoto Institute of Technology, and Ms. Yumiko KUDO of QQ English, gave a presentation on language anxiety, an important factor that affected Japanese students when learning a foreign language. They examined its effect by testing "audience design" (a teaching strategy in which various listeners joined the English communication class directly or via Skype) to relieve any anxiety and tension while learning English.

The last speaker was Ms. Shoko FUKUNAGA, a Japanese Government Tobitate Scholar, and a junior student at the Faculty of International Development, Takushoku University. She worked as an intern at a Cebu-based Japanese NGO, Daredemo Hero, while studying English at QQ English. Ms. Fukunaga's account as an intern reminded all the participants in this conference of the meaning of learning English in the Philippines: to gain a deeper cross-cultural understanding and work better for the poor people.

3.2.5 Closing Remarks

Dr. Natsumi ARATAME, a professor at Takushoku University, gave the closing remarks of the two-day conference. He summarized the conference from empirical, methodological and theoretical points of views. The conference, he said, was able to address language policies in Japan and the Philippines,

characteristics of Philippine English, effective teaching strategies including the Callan method, and new software applications and testing tools. He concluded by suggesting that developing intrinsic motivation was very important for Japanese students in learning English. Dr. Aratame argued that intrinsic motivation would be more likely to develop when students were put in an environment where they had to communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds. In his opinion, studying in the Philippines or learning from Filipino teachers was not only an effective way but enjoyable experience for many Japanese students.

About the author

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