

# The LLL SIG Newsletter

## *A Conference fit for a Daimyo: Pan-SIG 2011 in Matsumoto, Nagano*

*Joseph Dias (JALT LLL-SIG Program Chair)*

The 10th Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference was held this year on May 21st and 22nd at Shinshu University in Matsumoto City, Nagano. The first day of the conference was unseasonably warm and the second day quite wet, but the heat and rain did not wilt the spirits of the participants nor dampen their enthusiasm. With a few hundred people in attendance from all corners of Japan, representing more than 20 of JALT's SIGs (special interest groups), networking opportunities were many, as were chances to reconnect with old colleagues and friends.

In addition to excellent, well-attended talks by the conference's three plenary speakers--John Read, from the University of Auckland, Rob Waring, of Notre Dame Seishin University, and the local representative, Hideki Sakai, of the hosting institution, Shinshu University--there were action-packed, day-long schedules of parallel sessions, conveniently divided into rooms dedicated to the respective SIG strands. With the publishing booths and SIG tables on the first floor of one building, and all the talks given on the two floors above, navigating the conference venue seemed effortless. If only all conferences could be as "user friendly." Such attention to detail was shown that, outside every lecture room--in addition to a schedule showing that room's program--a beautiful tag cloud, with all of the room's speakers and presentation titles, was considerably displayed.

On Saturday night, a rousing, if not slightly rowdy, social program was held, featuring a blues band, with special guest performances by some of JALT's own, a seemingly bottomless cask of sake, and delectable treats that even provided ample selections for the vegetarian/ vegans among us. The site chair, Mark Brierley, must be congratulated for leading the team that put on one of the most enjoyable and academically/ pedagogically useful Pan-SIG conferences ever.

Although we will have more speakers representing us (i.e., the LLL-SIG) at the LLL-SIG Mini Conference at Tokyo Keizai University on October 1st of this year, at the Pan-SIG we had only two speakers presenting on our behalf, my colleague, Gregory Strong, and myself. The title of our talk was "Reading for Life: The making of lifelong readers." There were approximately 15 participants in attendance, including the plenary speaker, Rob Waring. We discussed the groundwork of a reading curriculum revision project at Aoyama Gakuin University, by presenting the results of an investigation of current teaching practices there, along with an exploration,

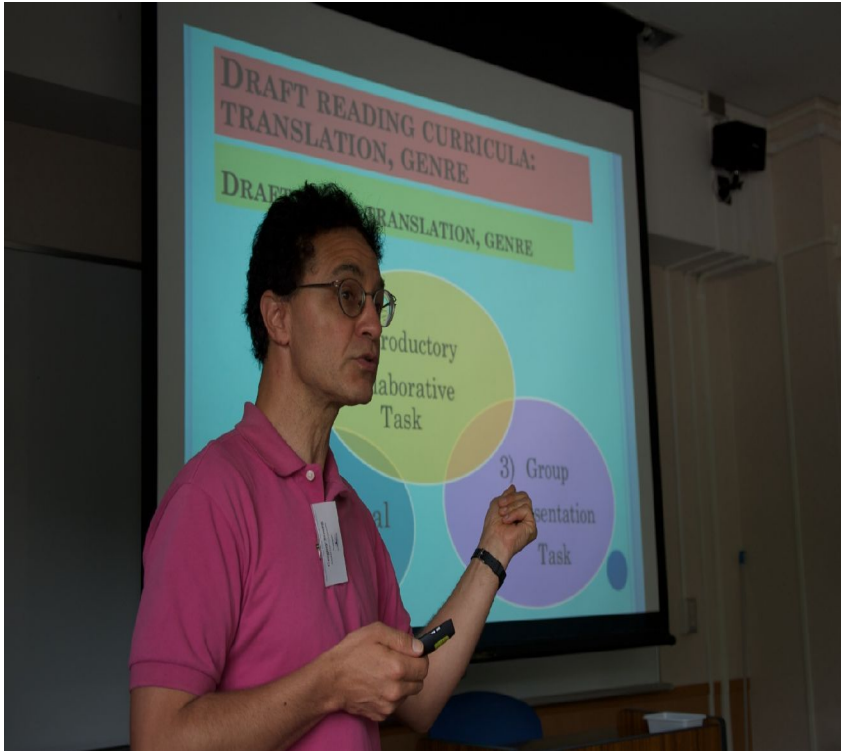
# The LLL SIG Newsletter

through online surveys, of all aspects of our students' reading: both in the L1 and L2, online and off, mobile and static, for pleasure and required, current and projected. Particular attention was focused on how reading instruction can be made relevant to digital natives who prefer YouTube to Hugo, Facebook to Fitzgerald, and Twitter to Twain. We also discussed how the practice of reading could be made into a habit and carried beyond the temporal and physical confines of school life. The participants punctuated the talk with many questions and accounts of experiences in programs at their own universities, making the session truly interactive and enjoyable. The PowerPoint that accompanied this talk can be accessed at:

<http://www.slideshare.net/giuseppedias/reading-for-life-matsumoto-jalt-pansig-conference-presentation>

The next event that our LLL-SIG members may be interested to participate in is our Mini Conference at Tokyo Keizai University on October 1, 2011. The conference will coincide with the ETJ (English Teachers of Japan) Expo, so, in addition to our LLL-SIG strand of six sessions, there will be many publishers' displays and talks organized by ETJ. We hope to see you there!

# The LLL SIG Newsletter



*Gregory Strong, presenting with Joseph Dias, in an LLL-SIG sponsored presentation: Reading for Life: The making of lifelong readers.*

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*Irises growing in one of the beautifully kept gardens on a backstreet of Matsumoto.*

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*Joseph Dias (LLL-SIG program chair) taking a break from the conference to enjoy Matsumoto Castle and its undulating reflection.*

# The LLL SIG Newsletter



*Photo taken at the entrance gate of the castle. The lower walls of the castle have space left between them and the stone wall so that stones can be dropped on the heads of enemies attempting to scale the castle wall. [Samurai apparently sometimes had to make a quick retreat by motor boat.]*

# The LLL SIG Newsletter



*Morten Hunke, representing the OLE (Other Language Educators)-SIG in an interesting talk on "Audio applications for improving pronunciation/fluency."*

# The LLL SIG Newsletter



*The daimyo's commanding view of now peaceful Matsumoto.*