

## **Message from the Coordinator**

Joseph Dias

Lifelong Language Learning SIG Coordinator

### **Your continued patronage and participation in LLL activities are greatly appreciated**

Thanks to the loyalty of continuing members and an influx of new members, our Lifelong Language Learning SIG's numbers are not just staying steady, but they are growing slightly. From 8/31/2023 to 4/30/2024, the membership of SIGs went down from 2,708 to 2,651, a loss of 57 members in total. Despite that drop, from the end of April 2024 to this writing (mid November 2024), our SIG has gained 6 members. Most of the members of the LLL-SIG chose to join the SIG by virtue of selecting it as their complimentary SIG that is offered with JALT membership. Many have been with us since the SIG's inception nearly 20 years ago.

I would personally like to thank all of our continuing members for staying with us through thick and thin, attending our programs, and even joining some of our forums and events as presenters. A hearty welcome to new members as well. They should know that being part of our SIG brings with it special consideration for inclusion in our panels and forums at JALT's nation-wide conferences and at our Mini (SIG) Conference, usually held each year in February.

### **Call out for officers and SIG representatives at the EBM**

Those who would like to play a larger role in the SIG by becoming an officer are encouraged to come forward. Initially, you may work together with a more experienced SIG officer as a Program, Publicity, Membership, Publications, or Treasurer Co-chair, before, eventually, assuming the role of chair yourself. This apprenticeship system has worked well in our SIG and there is also the option of maintaining co-chair roles indefinitely to lighten the load of more

demanding assignments, such as leadership positions in publications.

New members, or continuing ones for that matter, may wish to take part in the bi-annual Executive Board Meetings (EBMs) as a SIG representative to see how JALT decisions are made at a national level. Such meetings are wonderful opportunities for networking. You can also learn about the workings of a large-scale NPO from an insider's point of view through your participation. The events are not at all passive as they are punctuated by breakout sessions and offer constant chances to give feedback to the national officers. Participation in EBMs can be online even when they are held at a particular physical location (some are entirely online affairs). Any LLL SIG member can attend as our SIG's official representative if we sign a power of attorney authorizing you to do so.

### **Trying to provide options to maximize accessibility to our SIG's events**

At the national level, JALT has still not recovered membership numbers, and revenues, that were lost after the pandemic led some to shy away from F2F events such as the PanSIG, the annual national conference, and more local events. Fortunately, as a lasting legacy of the need to move events to online platforms from 2020, SIG and chapter events are now often entirely online or hybrid.

As the LLL-SIG members are widely distributed geographically, we are trying to hold more of our events with an online option. With the high in-person turnout for our program last December (2023), featuring how role-playing games can be brought into the classroom, we realized that our members, and the wider community, have an appetite for getting back together in the flesh, so we will not be moving entirely online for our Mini Conferences or other relatively small-scale events.

## **Upcoming SIG attractions**

The LLL SIG held a forum at the JALT National Conference at the Granship in Shizuoka on the topic “Creativity and Imagination in Lifelong Language Learning.” In the remainder of the 2024 calendar year, there will be an end-of-the-year SIG event in December at Aoyama Gakuin University (details to be announced). In addition, we are planning a Mini Conference, in conjunction with English Teachers of Japan (ETJ), at Otsuma Women’s University that is scheduled to be held on February 9, 2025. Speakers are still being solicited for that event, and will continue to be so through early December 2024. If you wish to give a talk at that event, or conduct a poster presentation, please get in touch with our program chair, Chiyuki Yanase, as soon as possible.

Here were details of our LLL SIG forum at the JALT 2024 National Conference:

**Theme:** Creativity and Imagination in Lifelong Language Learning

**Abstract:** In our fast-evolving world, traditional lifestyles and work models are becoming obsolete. Eagleman and Brandt (2017) contend that to succeed in this new era, learners must develop the ability to establish fresh social conventions. This necessitates nurturing their imagination and creativity. This forum seeks to investigate how language classes can cultivate these vital skills, offering ideas and activities for consideration, and encouraging participants to contribute their perspectives and inquiries.



**Facilitator:** Chiyuki Yanase (Keio university)

She will present the theme of the forum and its rationale. Then, she will introduce each panellist and their topics. At the end of the forum, participants are invited to join the Q&A session to engage in discussions.

**Speaker 1:** Marc Doyle (Sophia University)

His presentation will advocate for the use of Arts-Based Curriculum *and Pedagogy* within the EFL classroom. An Arts Based Pedagogy can empower students to move from resistance, and even compliance, to commitment towards their EFL study. After a brief introduction of Arts Based Research (to provide a framework), he will present this approach through sample assignments. Examples of student work will be used to explore the use of vulnerability and its role in fostering both engagement & empowerment.

**Speaker 2:** Ruth Iida (Rainbow Phonics English School)

Is encouraging drawing during class worth the time on task? Is getting an early start on Eiken exams more valuable than reading or listening to stories? In an Eikaiwa environment, children begin learning English through play before beginning primary school. These same children often continue for years in an environment of “playful learning”, giving them a solid four-skills base with which to begin communicating in their second language. For these children, English can also be the key to understanding themselves more deeply. My presentation will highlight a simple low-tech project designed for upper elementary age learners with a solid four-skills base, nurtured by years of playful learning. The project, designed to replace the commonly-used conversation starter, “When I grow up, I want to be a...”, encourages children to think more deeply about themselves rather than checking a box containing a standard occupation.

**Speaker 3:** Joseph Dias (Aoyama Gakuin University)

Language educators benefitted from the collaboration and sharing of online teaching expertise in preparation for emergency remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. By virtue of those experiences, they are now well positioned to engage in what has variably been referred to as (foreign language) Telecollaboration, Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE), or Virtual Exchange (Guth, Helm, & O'Dowd, 2012; O'Dowd, 2018). These negotiated exchanges are generally arranged by like-minded teachers who bring their geographically distant classes together to enhance the language development and cultural awareness of learners. The speaker will show how he has included photographed and videoed creative content in his exchanges, such as tableaux vivants and pantomime