

Tokai University European Center (TUEC)

Japanese Language Education Workshop Spring 2013



A two-day Japanese language education workshop was held at TUEC on the weekend of April 27-28. The workshop was the seventh, so far, in TUEC's series of Japanese language education workshops aimed at Japanese language teachers in the Nordic countries, and commenced in the spring of 2010. The workshop series targets institutions offering Japanese language education, with the primary focus being on universities with Japan studies programs.

The theme of the spring 2013 workshop was collaborative learning processes, and aimed at examining the validity and applicability of newly emergent teaching techniques that endeavor to break away from the much criticized passive learning methods of the past. Under the title, "Designing Processes for Collaborative Learning: Collaborative Reading in the Classroom," the workshop examined and discussed new approaches to teaching that are taking a fresh new look at the fundamental elements of the learning process, while highlighting the importance of concepts such as 'interaction' and 'process'.

Ms. Yoko Tateoka of Waseda University's Graduate School of Japanese Applied Linguistics was featured as main speaker, and delivered a lecture outlining the theoretical framework of so-called "peer learning" with collaboration as the keyword. The lecture expounded on the benefits of peer reading exercises designed not only to generate understanding of a text via dialogue and cooperation between students, but also in an international setting to achieve the added bonus of increased insight into culturally determined value judgments and interpretations. Two work sessions conducted by Ms. Tateoka followed up on the lecture, and enabled workshop participants to test and evaluate the peer reading techniques.

In addition to the main lecture, three presentations were also contributed by workshop participants. The first examined the effectiveness of project work centering on the production of videos, and the role of the teacher in such assignments; the second discussed the challenges

Swedish students face when learning Japanese relative clauses; and the third introduced the concept of “Shien Gaku” followed by a short work session.

Universities represented at the workshop this time around included Aarhus University and Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, Lund University in Sweden and Shizuoka University in Japan. In addition, language schools in both Finland and Sweden were also represented by participants.

TUEC is currently in the process of producing the workshop proceedings, which will report in more detail on the content of the workshop presentations and work sessions (please direct any inquiries in this connection to TUEC). The proceedings will be made available on TUEC’s website upon completion (www.u-tokai.dk), alongside all previous Japanese language education workshop proceedings already available online.



Ms. Yoko Tateoka.



Work session.



Group photo of workshop participants.