

Tokai University European Center (TUEC)

Japanese Language Education Workshop Spring 2015



A two-day Japanese language education workshop was held at TUEC on the weekend of May 2-3. The workshop was the eleventh, so far, in TUEC's series of Japanese language education workshops aimed at Japanese language teachers in the Nordic countries, and held twice annually (in the spring and fall) since 2010. The workshop series targets institutions offering Japanese language education with primary focus being on universities with Japan studies programs.

The eleventh workshop, entitled "*Considering the Form and Content of Grammar Education Aimed at Achieving Behavioral Objectives*," was a call to re-examine the claims of a "new Japanese grammar education" that breaks with the traditional approach of giving primary attention to sentence structure, and instead places emphasis on communicational objectives. The workshop endeavored to uncover which aspects of this 'new approach' can actually be considered original contributions to the field of Japanese grammar education.

Associate Professor Sumiko Tonosaki of Tokai University was featured as main speaker and contributed with a lecture, "*Finding a Working Balance between the Achievement of Behavioral Objectives and the Acquisition of a Systematic Knowledge of Grammar*," and two subsequent work sessions. The lecture advocated a move towards a learning style where behavioral objectives are of primary concern, with grammatical structures being introduced, secondarily, as a means to achieving these objectives. Prof. Tonosaki argued that in order to achieve communication-oriented grammar education there is no need to discard a systematized approach and its focus on accuracy from grammar teaching altogether. Instead, a model where grammatical structures play a supporting role to behavioral objectives and supply the necessary structural framework to language comprehension is ideal. In this way, grammatical knowledge is stored and becomes a reservoir of linguistic know-how that can be utilized actively in communication.

Supplementing the featured lecture and its related work sessions, six participants also contributed with presentations. Topics included, 1) use of the *Genki*-textbooks, 2) an introduction to the Japanese language program at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, 3) a presentation of the Japanese textbook *Marugoto: Nihon no Kotoba to Bunka*, 4) an introduction to the Japanese language program at a Finnish folk high school, 5) an examination of self-presentations at first-time meetings between native and non-native Japanese speakers, and 6) perceiving grammar as an inherent part of language instead of as an external tool for understanding.

As with the previous workshop, participation once again exceeded more than 20 Japanese language teachers. From university-level institutions, participants came from the University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, and from Lund University, Stockholm University and KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden. In addition, teachers from language schools, secondary educational institutions, adult education centers, as well as freelance language teachers also attended.

TUEC is currently in the process of producing the workshop proceedings which will report in more detail on the content of the workshop (please direct any inquiries in this regard 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.

TUEC's spring 2015 Japanese language education workshop was supported by the Japan Foundation.

The date for the fall 2015 Japanese language education workshop at TUEC has been set for the weekend of October 31st-November 1st.



Associate Professor Sumiko Tonosaki.



Work Session.



Presentation.



All Workshop Participants.