

Tokai University European Center (TUEC)

Japanese Language Education Workshop Spring 2014



A two-day Japanese language education workshop was held at TUEC on the weekend of May 3-4. The workshop was the ninth, 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 thematic focus of this workshop was on examination and evaluation, often considered necessary evils by language teachers. With the title, "*Constructing Evaluation Methods with Motivational Factors for Learning*" the workshop aimed at rethinking examination and evaluation methods so as to allow students more accurately to grasp their actual level of language ability, stimulate study with a firm sense of purpose, and instill motivation by providing tangible results of study effort. In order to maximize the effects of evaluation in education, the workshop identified key points of importance and formulated a relevant evaluation methodology.

Professor Kyoko Murakami of Nagoya University's International Language Center was featured as main speaker and contributed with a lecture and two subsequent work sessions. The lecture provided insight into self-evaluation methods based on "can-do statements" and "portfolio evaluation" both of which are designed for the purpose of helping students to identify their desired skills and working towards these predetermined goals. Work session 1 introduced a rubric-based standardization method for evaluation criteria which effectively minimizes subjectivity and arbitrariness in the evaluation process. Work session 2 introduced a method for localizing problematic areas in tests, enabling continual optimization of testing methods and maintaining effectiveness as evaluative tools.

In addition to the featured lecture and its related work sessions, the workshop program also included four presentations by participants. The first presentation introduced the grading scale used in Danish higher education, the so-called "7 point scale." The second presentation took a look at "formative evaluation" and its use in native language education. A third presentation outlined the Japan studies program at Lund University in Sweden, and the final presentation was a free

discussion session intended for the participants to share information on developments in Japanese language education at their respective institutions (the session began with a brief presentation of the Japanese language education program at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark).

Teachers from five Nordic universities attended the workshop this time around including the University of Copenhagen, Aarhus University and Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, and Lund University and Stockholm University in Sweden. In addition, teachers from language schools also attended, along with freelance language teachers from both Finland and Denmark.

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 2014 Japanese language education workshop was supported by the Japan Foundation.



Professor Kyoko Murakami.



Work Session.



Presentation.



Workshop Participants.