

Wednesday 3 June

5:20pm - 6:00pm

Room: Block Y, Room Y304

Presentation Title: How Important is it to be Autonomous Learner?: The Case Study of Japanese EFL Teachers' Methods of Learning English in Their School Days

Presenter / Co-presenters:	Dr Chiharu Nakanishi, Kunitachi College of Music
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Theme:	Learner and teacher experiences
Presentation Type:	Paper presentation

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out the most essential factor of learning English by investigating Japanese college EFL teachers by taking a close look at how they learned English in their school days. The following three questions were asked to investigate this study.

Research Questions:

- (1) What were the characteristics of Japanese college EFL teachers when learning English in their school days?
- (2) What was the most effective way of learning English for them back then?
- (3) Were Japanese college EFL teachers autonomous learners in their school days?

A total of 22 Japanese college EFL teachers participated in this study. They were asked to answer questionnaires and were interviewed about their means of learning English in their school days. The means vary among them, yet a common factor was that most of them had a high motivation to learn, master or communicate with other people in English. And attending high school or college English classes did not help them learn English effectively and they were not autonomous learners back then. Their comments show that their main goal of studying English was for tests or for good grades at school, though they believed English had some special meaning for their lives other than getting good scores or grades. From the results of the survey, it is an essential task for EFL teachers to motivate students to learn but enforcing their students to be autonomous learners in their school days is not necessary to improve their English skills.

Biodata

Chiharu Nakanishi, Ph. D, is associate professor in the Dept. of Music at Kunitachi College of Music, Japan. Her research interests cover EFL writing as a thinking process, motivating students and teachers, and improving English of Japanese college false beginners. Her recent publications are The Effects of Different Types of Feedback on Revision (2007), and A Teaching Approach to Japanese College Students' EFL Writing (2006).