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## **Picking Through Our Baggage: A Duoethnography of Japanese L2 Learning**

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## **Picking Through Our Baggage: A Duoethnography of Japanese L2 Learning**

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### **Abstract**

Across our lifelong learning journeys, we encounter countless positive and negative experiences that come to shape our evolving perspectives. As language learning can certainly be viewed as a lifelong endeavor, this accrued emotional “baggage” (Falout et al., 2015) will conceivably affect the way we perceive the act of learning or, indeed, the target language itself. In this duoethnographic study, the authors, two learners of Japanese, explore the ways in which their attitudes towards language learning have been shaped by their historical life trajectories. The authors recorded critical conversations, took reflective notes, and collaboratively analyzed this data using reflexive thematic analysis. Through the juxtaposition of their backgrounds and unique struggles with Japanese, the authors attempted to engage in transformative dialogue that challenged established personal narratives and facilitated deeper self-understanding. Through this duoethnographic study, the authors discovered that their attitudes towards standardized testing and communicative proficiency in Japanese were profoundly shaped by historical and sociocultural factors that even predated their arrival in Japan. In a concluding discussion, some implications of this study, as well as duoethnography more broadly, were also examined by the authors.

*Keywords:* language learning histories, duoethnography, Japanese, learner beliefs, transformative dialogue

Language learning is an emotional journey of both acquiring knowledge and cultivating new identities. As one’s competence in another language develops, they are not simply remembering words, but rather creating new selves and perspectives as well as challenging past ways of being. To explore and transform our understanding of our lives as Japanese learners and users, we (Phill and Dan) decided to conduct a duoethnographic study based on our language learning journeys. Duoethnography is a relatively new research methodology that focuses on juxtaposing researchers’ internal curriculum or *currere* that has formed through their learning histories. In our duoethnography, we focused particularly on Breault’s (2016) call for duoethnographers to eschew *parallel talk* - a simple sharing of

experiences - and instead critically interrogate instances of experiential difference with the goal of catalyzing perspective change and transformational growth.

We first give a brief self-introduction and then move on to give a description of the tenets of duoethnography based on the existing literature. From there, we outline the methodological steps we followed in our duoethnography. Subsequently, our findings sections represent the two key themes - **the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)** and **attitudes towards Japanese communication** - that we collaboratively developed based on multiple data collection and analysis stages. In the final section, we summarize our personal discoveries from our duoethnographic journey and suggest some implications and points for consideration relating to both language learning and teaching.

### Who Are We?

#### Phill

In 2004, through the JET Programme (JET), I had the life-changing experience of working as an assistant language teacher (ALT) in a Japanese high school. The JET is a competitive program that hires people from around the world to work in various governmental environments. JET's aim is "to promote internationalization in Japan's local communities by helping to improve foreign language education and developing international exchange at the community level" (JET Programme, n.d.). Prior to that time, I had no formal Japanese language education, although I did buy a CD Rom with language activities when I found out I was coming to Japan. Although I had not studied Japanese, I was not completely ignorant of the language, and like many people from my generation who came of age in the 1990s, I was exposed to the Japanese through video games, *manga*, and *anime* (referred to at the time as "Japanime"). I was also fascinated by and practiced martial arts, so I was aware of the Japanese styles (e.g., judo, karate, kendo, etc.) but never specifically practiced any of them. My interest in Japan also led me to write a final report on Bushido for an undergraduate anthropology course. Despite my superficial interest in Japanese (pop)culture, I never considered learning Japanese, and I was positive it would have no utility in my life. Buying a ticket to Japan or even working in an environment with Japanese speakers was unfathomable to me—I might as well have planned a weekend at the international space station right after visiting Tokyo. So when I stepped off the plane at Narita airport to work and live in Japan, I was, by all metrics, my own personal Neil Armstrong.

## **Dan**

My first experiences learning Japanese started when I arrived at Narita Airport in October 2005. Although I had a childhood longing or *akogare* for Japanese culture through a love of martial arts, my upbringing in rural England made me feel like actually going to Japan was a mere pipe dream. That changed when I was accepted for an emergency position as an ALT in Saitama prefecture, and with two weeks of preparation time, my new life in Japan began. Initially, my time studying Japanese came not out of any intellectual curiosity but rather out of a need to negotiate day-to-day life. The dispatch company that hired me posted me in a city far away from the head office, and I was consequently just left to get on with things with little to no direct support. I studied Japanese every day in the teachers' room whenever I did not have classes, and my apartment walls were covered with notes about hiragana, katakana, and phrases that could enhance what I could accomplish in my daily routine. Looking back now, although that time was quite nerve-wracking, a sense of adventure also underpinned these early study efforts as each new word or phrase was like a key that opened a new door or area to explore. Over time, I began to take an interest in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), a test widely regarded by Japanese and non-Japanese alike as the standard measure for Japanese proficiency. All of my studies for the JLPT were essentially self-access endeavors. I started with basic textbooks and then moved on to flashcard programs on my PC. From there, I started extensive reading with children's books borrowed from the local library and began taking informal conversation classes online. Eventually, I passed the highest level of the JLPT (N1), but after a brief flush of pride, I quickly fell into a motivational slump. Why is my Japanese still not good enough? What do I do now? A sense of directionlessness and even resistance concerning my Japanese learning continued until I was thrown once again into a survival situation. I transferred from working in an international university with a predominantly English-only environment to a rural Japanese university where I was expected to use Japanese constantly and participate in much of the same administrative duties as my Japanese counterparts. Although this came with considerable anxiety, my passion for Japanese was rekindled, and I began regularly listening to Japanese podcasts, taking online classes, and studying for the Business Japanese Test (BJT). Despite this motivational resurgence, however, I still believe that I have a rather conflictual and messy relationship with Japanese and my identity as a Japanese user, and this became one of the key issues that I hoped to unpack with Phill's help within this duoethnography.

### **Antecedent Conditions of the Learner**

Within the educational psychology and motivation literature, antecedent conditions refer to the conditions that learners bring with them into each new learning environment. They can exist in the form of trait variables such as self-concept, subject-specific dispositions, desire for proficiency, or expectations for success (Gorham & Millette, 1997). These antecedent conditions have been described by Falout et al. (2015) as “academic emotional baggage” (p. 247) and have been found to influence the degree to which learners can maintain language learning motivation and develop proficiency in the L2 (Falout et al., 2009). Tied to a recognition of the impact that learners’ antecedent conditions can have on their future development is an increasing person-centered focus (Benson, 2017) within language education research. This “person-centeredness” (Benson, 2017, p. 6) foregrounds the value of learner histories and the need to analyze concepts such as autonomy or motivation in terms of a constant, dynamic process of renegotiation between individual agency and social context. In more concrete terms, this understanding has led to a number of researchers utilizing language learning histories (Murphey & Carpenter, 2008; Murphey et al., 2005) and language learning careers (Benson, 2011) in order to obtain deep and nuanced perspectives on learners’ long-term L2 attitudes and development.

Within the realm of self-access language learning, a movement away from SACs being regarded as materials repositories and towards being recognized as “person-centered learning environment[s] that actively promote learner autonomy both within and outside the space” (Mynard, 2016, p. 9) has also coincided with an enhanced focus on the antecedent conditions that learners bring with them into SACs. This increasingly person-centered perspective has catalyzed numerous self-access and out-of-class learning studies based on detailed learner narratives that highlight the complex interconnections between learner histories and their current attitudes and preferences regarding self-access learning (Avila Pardo, 2020; Hooper, 2023; Murray & Fujishima, 2016; Mynard et al., 2020). In the current study, in order to explore and reexamine our self-access and out-of-class experiences as Japanese learners, we adopted a duoethnographic approach due to its fundamental focus on accessible narrative accounts of language learning histories. In the following sections, we will provide a brief description of duoethnographic research and some of its key concepts.

### **Duoethnography**

Duoethnography is a research methodology that juxtaposes the subjective lived experiences of two researchers in order to explore different or shared meanings related to a

given phenomenon. Rather than searching for static “truths” related to a topic (as might be the case in positivist or post positivist paradigms), duoethnographers highlight the fluid and socially-shaped nature of human belief and experience (Lowe & Kiczkowiak, 2016). The co-constructed narrative accounts forming the basis of duoethnographic research are also accessible enough that readers beyond the sphere of academia can comfortably determine which elements are resonant with their particular context (Hooper & Iijima, 2019).

Duoethnography is a relatively new qualitative methodology, and it is therefore unsurprising that there are still comparatively few duoethnographic studies in the field of education (Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018). However, due to its transformative potential in deepening the understanding of multifaceted, complex social phenomena for both readers and, indeed, the duoethnographers themselves, a number of recent studies have highlighted duoethnography’s potential in language education and self-access research (Ahmed & Morgan, 2021; Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018; Wongsarnpigoon & Imamura, 2021). In the following sections, we will outline three key concepts relevant to duoethnography in general and, more specifically, to our study - *currere*, transformative dialogue, and parallel talk.

### **Currere**

Central to the conceptual foundations of duoethnography and its purpose of facilitating self-discovery and reflection is Pinar’s (1975) notion of *currere*. *Currere* is another form of the word “curriculum” and refers to a method of exploring autobiographical experience within education in order to interrogate how one’s understanding of the world has been formed. The analytical process underpinning *currere* proposed by Pinar substantially overlaps the duoethnographic method in that it includes 1. reassembling and reflecting on past experiences, 2. considering one’s future desires, 3. analyzing both past and future in terms of the sociocultural environment that shaped them, and 4. unifying these reflections and realizations to bring about positive personal and social transformation (Baszile, 2017; Pinar, 1975).

[*Currere*] is a process through which one seeks to answer the questions: What has been and what will be my educational experience? How have and how will these experiences shape who I have been and who I hope to be as a student, educator, scholar, activist, advocate? and so on. (Baszile, 2017, p. vii)

Duoethnography, in essence, takes *currere* a step further by making the process dialogic. By combining and contrasting the *currere* of two (or more) researchers, reflection takes place within a “third space” between spheres of individual experience (Norris, Sawyer, & Lund, 2012). Within this space between individuals’ beliefs and lived experiences, just as in the case of reflective practice, dialogue can facilitate the discovery of new knowledge and realizations (Mann & Walsh, 2017; Lowe & Lawrence, 2020). Duoethnography, therefore, serves to shine a light on blind spots that we have, even when engaging in deep introspective analysis of our *currere*.

### **Transformative Dialogue**

Duoethnography is conceived of as fundamentally a transformative act (Sawyer & Norris, 2013). Although duoethnographic studies may help us to become aware of blind spots related to differences in lived experience, this alone is insufficient. Breault (2016) asserts that it is important that duoethnographers do not “simply retel[l] the past,” but rather “question the meanings about and invite reconceptualization of that past” (p. 3). This notion of challenging and reframing established narratives is widely regarded as a central tenet of duoethnography. In numerous studies, this has resulted in a duoethnographic approach being utilized in order to unpack “common sense” beliefs within areas such as race, sexuality, native-speakerism, and language policy in language education (Hooper & Iijima, 2019; Hooper, Oka, & Yamazawa, 2020; Lowe & Kiczowski, 2016; Norris, Sawyer, & Lund, 2012; Wongsarnpigoon & Imamura, 2021). The transformative dialogue in these studies simultaneously facilitated the disruption of dominant metanarratives relating to the research foci and, in many cases, led to personal growth on the part of the researchers.

Norris and Sawyer (2012), the fathers of duoethnography, assert that rather than acting as simply a means of sharing stories, duoethnography should lead researchers to recognize that “the frames they hold are inadequate and the Other can assist in a reconceptualization of self” (p. 25). Because duoethnographic enquiry lacks and, in fact, eschews clearly defined, prescriptive research procedures (Norris & Sawyer, 2012), a number of existing duoethnographies may have arguably veered from its central transformative tenets. In particular, Breault (2016) highlights the concept of “parallel talk” (p. 6) as one potential pitfall that may result in duoethnography being stripped of its transformative potential. Parallel talk refers to instances where duoethnographic research leads to a mere “sharing of experiences” rather than “a shared, interactive probing” (p. 6) of the issues being focused on. Although the process of researchers simply sharing their learning histories may

indeed confer certain therapeutic benefits, Breault contends that the transformative tenet at the center of duoethnography may be neglected as no new discoveries have been made. In this sense, the notion of duoethnography challenging established narratives is relevant. Duoethnographers should not solely engage in the disruption of grand ideological narratives such as native-speakerism or sexism but also the narratives that we have constructed in our own minds to account for our lifelong learning trajectories.

### **Methodology**

Data collection for this study consisted of three separate video chat sessions over a roughly two-month period. Each session lasted approximately two hours and was recorded and subsequently transcribed. After concluding each session, both of us would examine the raw transcribed data individually for themes and points of difference or congruence that we felt warranted further discussion. Upon comparing our individual analyses of the preceding session's data, we collaboratively decided which themes we felt were particularly interesting, and these formed the basis for the next discussion. In addition to our analysis of the raw conversational data, we also shared other insights via a shared online document that acted as a research diary. Stemming from our examination of existing literature on duoethnographic research, we elected to focus specifically on points of incongruence between our experiences as Japanese learners so as to stimulate deeper self-exploration and avoid the risk of simply producing parallel talk or theory confirmation.

Based on a gradual process of thematic analysis, we eventually identified the two themes that form the basis for this paper: 1) the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) and 2) our attitudes to Japanese communication. From there, by refining the raw transcribed data, we co-constructed semi-fictional dialogues that encapsulated our key themes whilst maintaining readability. It is these dialogues that form the basis for the following findings section of this paper.

### **The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)**

The JLPT is currently the most recognized standardized test of Japanese in the world. Starting with just 7,000 examinees, the number of test takers of all five levels (N5 - beginner to N1 - advanced) stood at almost 1,400,000 in the spring of 2019 (JLPT, n.d.). Despite claims on its official site that the test has been made more communicative, there have arguably been few changes made to the test itself as it still relies purely on receptive (listening and reading) skills while neglecting to measure productive communicative



competence (Masheter, 2022, December 2). In this section, we discuss our differing experiences relating to the JLPT and explore the factors behind why our success with the test varied despite our comparable practical Japanese proficiency.

Dan: I saw that the JLPT was a poor test, but for me it wasn't so much the test itself which I found useful but what symbolically that test represented. When I was younger, what that test stimulated me to do by myself was a ridiculous amount of vocabulary and grammar study. Flashcards, iPhone apps, you know? I wonder, if I didn't have the JLPT, would I have been able to direct that energy? Because I remember that when I finished N1, I had kind of post-JLPT depression. Yeah, because I lost that goal. As flawed as that end goal was, I was affected when I lost it.

Phill: I think my perspective on the JLPT was based on trauma from my past learning. It just reminded me of the NY state tests that I had to take when I was in high school. I was able to use mathematics to help my dad do tilework and even recently I designed and built this desk that I'm now using for my computer. But learning trigonometry in high school with tangents and cosines and stuff, I never really got it because it was not a part of my reality. I learned math by doing and I had hands-on interaction—I needed to make mistakes to learn. So when I was doing the JLPT I was reminded of being in high school trying to understand abstractions and tricky questions and it was distracting and demotivating. Do you know what I mean? I had this kind of trauma because the tests made me feel my skills were worthless.

Dan: It's really interesting. It makes sense. Because from my upbringing, even though I wasn't from a very wealthy area, I had no barriers in my school. My school wasn't great, but most tests up until high school, I didn't study and still got As. But that's not because I'm smart. That's because I had been socialized into that system. More to the point, I was *allowed* to be socialized into that, whereas maybe you were not. It challenges a conservative narrative of all of this just being based on hard work and stuff. It's not that simple because I don't have a history of trauma being attached to that goal. You linked the JLPT to issues of self-worth and frustration from your past. On the other hand, I particularly struggle with the areas of Japanese which you find easier. I mean, I struggle with communication in Japanese more than formal Japanese study. Because on paper, I am allowed to succeed, because I'm good at tests.

Phill: I think it's also belief. Because I think anybody can pass a test. It's just you have to put effort, right?

Dan: Yeah, of course, it's effort. But we could also think about the affective dimension of language learning. If you have negative affect tied to a particular endeavor, it's obviously going to be a lot harder for you to sustain motivation.

Phill: So what was your motivation for the N1? Was that purely for employability, or did you just, you know, find enjoyment?

Dan: I didn't enjoy it. It was symbolic. You know me, I like training. I like working towards a goal. It's like getting a black belt in a martial art. When you get your black belt you realize you may still be bad at fighting. I liked the metaphor you used, JLPT being like *kata* (set sequences of movements). I'm good at *kata*. But I can't street fight. I feel like while my *kata* has good form, you can communicate or “fight” better than me. On the other hand, you have trouble remembering your *kata*, right?

Phill: Yeah, exactly.

In this dialogue, we began to examine perhaps the most significant divergence in our histories as Japanese learners, our perspectives on the JLPT. The nature of the test and the skills that were required to be successful in it gelled well with Dan's antecedent conditions of learning - his socialization and relative success in traditional models of school learning. Conversely, Phill's experience of formal schooling was tied up with feelings of trauma and challenges to his sense of self-efficacy. This meant that the JLPT symbolized at once both a confirmation of or antagonism to our respective self-worth as language learners. It was this oppositional framing of the JLPT that opened the floodgates in our duoethnography and catalyzed transformative dialogue that uncovered a deeper divide in our language learning journeys - our starkly different comfort levels with Japanese for academic or communicative purposes.

### **Attitudes Towards Japanese Communication**

Phill's struggle with the JLPT stood in contrast to a persistent anxiety and resistance that Dan experienced in relation to communicative (and particularly oral) use of Japanese. In the following dialogue, we attempted to unpack what contributed to this negative affective response and why this did not apply to Phill's language learning trajectory.

Dan: I feel this is a big difference between the two of us. Engaging in Japanese conversation and also interacting with Japanese people. I feel like you have little to no resistance to it whereas I have a lot.

Phill: It's because I've experienced discrimination and different levels of anti-blackness in the States. So I will never be treated like an N-word here and experience outright discrimination and violence due to my skin color, hair texture, or facial features.

Dan: So you've experienced much worse, whereas I've never experienced racial discrimination in my home country. You've already had, like, 23 years of it before you came here?

Phill: Yes. I don't fear for my life in Japan. When I go back home, I'm literally afraid. Every time I go outside in the US, I'm afraid.

Dan: While in Japan the worst thing you're gonna get here is a weird look.

Phill: Yeah, a weird look or someone will make fun of my pronunciation or something.

Dan: In terms of language acquisition, do you think that your position coming from much worse and not feeling the same pressure as I do now, has helped your language acquisition in terms of your communicative ability in Japanese?

Phill: Yeah, living in (the countryside), all of my friends at the time were working class, like none of my friends have gone to college. So I had to learn Japanese to speak with them.

Dan: That's important. But also I'm coming from a position of privilege into this kind of minority status now, and I'm not used to it, right? I have all of this language anxiety and social anxiety, which holds back my Japanese conversational development. I should be better. Whereas you came from a position of oppression where you feared for your life. Then you came to Japan, and your situation seemed way better. So you could relax and talk with people.

Phill: That's the keyword, *relax*. I was able to finally relax. My Japanese learning was connected to my interests, I played basketball twice a week with Japanese speakers and my friend who spoke Japanese as a heritage language. I also played soccer with the high school students almost every day of the week. On the weekends I would help my friend DJ in hip hop nightclubs in Gunma. Later on, I was a bartender in an *izakaya*. I also played video games in Japanese which in retrospect helped me learn kanji. I did my best to immerse myself in the language. But I never really looked at it as learning - living was primary and “learning” was secondary.

Dan: Self-access is another big difference between us. My self-access learning was stuff like going to the library. It was *study*. I think this ties into the JLPT thing, too. That's why I was always studying. And I think this comes back to me feeling isolated. I'd never experienced being outside of the majority before. I guess I never really considered the idea of me being integrated into Japanese society. Even though it would have been nice in theory, from the start I felt that wasn't even a possibility. Whereas you felt it was possible because of your attitude and your different perspective, right?

Phill: Probably because of JET as well because there was a lot of encouragement, support, and opportunities for us to enter in our local communities.

Dan: I feel that one key point is that if I'm studying from a textbook, or I'm doing flashcards on my phone, or I'm going to the library, I do not need to integrate with anyone. Like, obviously I've been here long enough that I picked some conversational Japanese up through basic social interaction. So, you know, I couldn't avoid picking

up some conversation ability. But all of my deliberate effort was not tied to entering Japanese society, that wasn't even a consideration.

Phill: Yes, that's funny. I'm completely the opposite, in that way.

Dan: We had different sorts of self access we used, and the self access we sought out and we felt worked for us was shaped by our different backgrounds. So, like you said, you can tile a room.

Phill: But I didn't do well on a math test.

Dan: It's just, it's what we've been socialized into. There were these power relations we've experienced in our home countries that have influenced our reactions to a new culture and the self-directed learning we did.

In the above dialogue, we can observe how the seemingly superficial issue of the JLPT was arguably one facet of a much larger phenomenon that had underpinned our respective language-learning histories from the start of our lives in Japan. Coming from a relatively sheltered existence and a position of relative power in his home country meant that Dan's first experiences of being an immigrant and minority in Japan contributed to considerable language anxiety. This caused him to embrace the "school study" that he had been socialized into in the UK, which, in turn, shaped his self-access learning practices. In Phill's case, however, his experiences of discrimination and marginalization in the US gave him a dramatically different perspective where the new environment and language he was faced with represented safety, freedom, and new possibilities. Here, we see how our antecedent conditions of learning can make a new culture or learning environment seem rich in either opportunity or threat. This reading of our linguistic surroundings then has profound effects on how we view the language itself, what we believe it can or cannot offer us, and what self-access language learning endeavors we choose to engage in.

### **Conclusions**

In this final dialogue, we reflect on some potential roles for duoethnography within the field of self-access practice or research. We also revisit the ways in which this study catalyzed transformative change within us as Japanese language learners.

Phill: I think that in self access and language learning, we have to be more aware about the kinds of resources that we offer students, because something that is published by a big publisher or something that has been kind of gilded by the mainstream is just giving one curated narrative of a country or even even a historical view. If students are trying to learn the language and plan to go out into the world, they're gonna have a very narrow view of what is out there. So, the resources that are used in self-access need to be expanded to things that are off the beaten path, things that are missing currently.

Dan: How do you think duoethnographies can play into this?

Phill: They could be used as resources for students. For example, we can show a duoethnography between two people from X background, and let students read it and come to their own conclusions. They'll see contradictions because each individual is not a monolith that represents the whole group. There's going to be very diverse voices, and sometimes it'll be uncomfortable to people and they might not agree with what they're reading. But isn't that what reality is? I think it would be beneficial having these kinds of narratives, where students can then talk with an advisor, and digest these ideas in particular ways.

Dan: You said it could be uncomfortable, but I would argue it could also be a source of solace. They might think, "I went through that too." or, "I'm always confused about that contradiction as well." It creates a sense of shared hardship or messiness. Also, duoethnographies being based on stories makes them accessible. This form of research is written in everyday language, so it's also going to be easier for students to resonate with that. From my perspective, I felt our dialogue drastically altered how I view the last 16 years trying to learn this language. Having dug into why you had issues with the JLPT, and from there exploring why I had issues with communicating in Japanese, I've looked at everything in terms of my language learning differently.

Phill: Yes, the same for me. I think I've had a transformation about how I view language learning. You said you saw it as a challenge, right? It was like training. Yeah, I have this trauma of testing as a gatekeeping tool and I never had the resources

to do well in standardized tests growing up. But looking at it from your perspective, it's just push ups, sit ups, or running. And that's something we both share, we both love training. Hearing that was a switch, and I was able to really look at the JLPT as not like a kind of bully, but just as trying to take five minutes off my 10k run time or whatever.

Dan: I felt similar when hearing about how communication for you here is just such low stakes because you've experienced another situation back home that was much worse. I could understand a different perspective that helped me get over myself a little bit. It reminded me there's bigger issues that people are dealing with, and that's given me a bit of strength by realizing, “Really, what's going to happen if I screw up my pronunciation, or if I stammer when I try to speak?”

Phill: I think, going back to self-access, if a student were to see this, they might resonate with your experience or they might have my perspective. I think this will do nothing but motivate them, or at least allow them to discuss those perspectives with a learning advisor. Also, if learning advisors share their own language learning histories like we just did, this will help learners not only get to reflect on themselves, but also understand their advisors better.

### **Notes on the Contributors**

Phillip A. Bennett is a Learning Advisor and Lecturer at Kanda University of International Studies. He has worked in a wide array of educational contexts in Japan since 2004, ranging from English language teaching in public schools to university graduate courses. His focus is on fostering learning environments that support learner autonomy and effective language learning through practitioner research.

Daniel Hooper is an associate professor in the Department of English Communication at Tokyo Kasei University. He has been teaching in Japan for 17 years in a variety of contexts, including primary/secondary schools, English conversation schools, and universities. His research interests include teacher and learner identity, reflective practice, self-access learning communities, and communities of practice.

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