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Reflections on its original mission
and current status after 25 years

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The Life and Times of the Integrated English Program: Reflections on its original mission and current status after 25 years

By Joseph Dias, Gregory Strong, Andrew Reimann,
and Hiroshi Yoshiba

Introduction

Gregory Strong, Joseph Dias, Hiroshi Yoshiba and Andrew Reimann

I. What is the IE Program?

The Integrated English (IE) Program in Aoyama Gakuin University's English Department is now in its 26th year. It is an intensive English program for freshmen and sophomores that prepares students to thrive in English-medium courses they will take in their fields of concentration—literature, linguistics, communications, or teacher education—during their junior and senior years. Students are streamed into one of three levels on the basis of their scores in the TOEFL ITP at the outset of their studies. The heart of the IE Program is a suite of three courses: a 4-skills Core course, an IE Writing course, and IE Active Listening. These courses are followed by an academic listening course known as Academic Skills, and a more advanced expository writing course, Academic Writing, which helps students develop longer essays, practice critical thinking skills, and introduces them to the conventions of academic

writing in greater depth. Finally, IE Seminars are either 90- or 180-minute classes that allow students to put into practice the four skills they have honed in their basic IE courses through a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach in courses that draw on the areas of expertise of IE teachers. Some of the current IE Seminars are on such fascinating topics as: "Blood Gothic: Literary Origins Of The Victorian Vampire," "The Elements Of Film," "Classical And Modern Mythology," and "Disney And Concept Formation In Early Childhood Education."

II. Scope and Sequence of This Paper

Although this introduction has been jointly authored, each of the subsequent sections will be written by individual authors, identified at the beginning of the respective sections in order to preserve their unique perspectives. This paper will provide an account of the history of the IE Program which we acknowledge to be incomplete based as it is upon the recollections of professors Hiroshi Yoshiba and Gregory Strong. Regrettably, some of the earliest records of the program have been lost since no one saved early planning documents or other records that might be easily stored in Google docs or by other electronic means today. We will touch upon the aspects of the program that differentiate it from intensive English programs that are now at other universities in Japan. These include:

- 1) Encouraging collaboration by having three teachers teach different IE sections (Core, Writing, and Active Listening) to the same students, with the same four themes for a particular level.
- 2) Creating as much variety as possible in the choice of tasks and activities to stimulate students and foster an active learning environment.
- 3) Establishing a culturally rich milieu by having teachers who hail from a wide variety of countries—currently, Britain, Canada, America, Australia, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, and Germany—not to mention students of diverse cultural backgrounds and international experience.
- 4) Asking teachers in the program to share their teaching innovations

and knowledge of new teaching technologies at annual orientations and faculty development symposia.

- 5) Providing a curriculum, with a number of well-developed in-house texts and AV materials, but allowing teachers to introduce their own supplemental materials and styles of teaching.
- 6) Evaluating and reevaluating courses and conducting periodic needs analyses to stay abreast of the changing needs, desires and proclivities of students and the changes occurring in their potential workplaces.

Recent innovations in the program will also be explored, such as the establishment of a plagiarism policy and database of student writing (<http://www.ap.agu4u.org/users/login>), the use of online tools for both extensive listening (EnglishCentral) and extensive reading (Xreading), the creation of a program website (<http://www.aogaku-daku.org/>) where teachers can download texts and find resources, a blog (<http://www.agu4u.org/>) for announcing events, and a Google Group the dissemination of program-related information to teachers in a timely way.

III. What Makes the IE Program "Integrated"

The "I" in the IE Program (standing for "integrated" rather than the more common moniker for academic English programs of this nature, "intensive") was not chosen arbitrarily. The most obvious integration is that the four skills are brought together in all of the courses, not just in the Core course that has clearly stated directives for formal and informal writing and speaking, intensive and extensive reading, as well as structured and less structured listening opportunities. We also see all four skills brought into the IE Writing and Active Listening courses. In IE Active Listening, for example, students write listening logs to record their extensive listening experiences and lead discussions on streaming media they have selected, which might include TED talks, National Geographic videos, or domestic and international news podcasts.

Another aspect of the program demonstrating integration is that 4 themes run through the 3 levels of each of the IE courses, making it possible for

students to revisit familiar themes and vocabulary that they encounter in Core, for example, in their Writing assignments or as an aid to their listening in the IE Active Listening tasks. The themes for each level are:

IE I: Childhood, Urban Life, Food, Travel

IE II: Changing Times, The Workplace, Geography, Autobiography

IE III: Psychology, Cross-Cultural Values, Environment, Media

The IE program is also integrated in that the final mark that students receive for a given level of IE is a composite grade reflecting their achievements in each course (with Core representing 40% of the mark, and 30% each for Writing and Active Listening). The consistency of grades, given to the same students by three different teachers, across the IE courses is gratifying and it is another indication of the level of integration in the program. This is achieved by having teachers use detailed grading rubrics drawn up for each course, ensuring that the common tasks carried out system wide are given the same weight. The program coordinators review IE grades for all classes at the end of each semester to check for anomalies and it is heartening how consistent they are, with most discrepancies not going far beyond 3 or 4 percentage points, and class grade averages reasonably consistent, as well.

Integration also extends to the behind-the-scenes day to day administration of the program as the IE Committee works to insure that all aspects of the program function seamlessly. They do the important work of helping with the placement of students, fairly assigning students to IE Seminars based on their preferences, and resisting administrative pressures to unbundle the IE courses in a way that would allow students, for example, to take one IE course independently of the rest, should they fail one, which would have the effect of removing a vital aspect of the program's integration. Currently, students must achieve a minimum grade of "50" in any single IE class (Core, Writing, or Active Listening) and an average grade of, at least, 60 in the combined grade in order to get credit for a particular IE level.

Course evaluations administered at the end of each semester, which had been conducted in the IE Program long before the university-wide evaluations

were introduced, also make it possible for the IE program to be so well integrated. Through monitoring the situation by means of these evaluations, the IE co-coordinators are provided with important clues about what needs to be tweaked, what should be abandoned, and what new features of courses might need to be created or further explained. They offer a window into what is being done consistently across courses. For example, they revealed to us that peer feedback and editing in the IE Writing classes is both popular with students, perceived as being effective by them, and is actively encouraged by both native and Japanese Writing teachers. It would have been difficult for us to learn this if it were not for the evaluations and it gives us confidence in continuing to include peer editing as a vital part of our writing classes.

Finally, one of the keys to the program's integration is that there are a dedicated core group of teachers (both full-time and adjuncts) who have been a part of it for a large part of its history, providing the glue that holds it together and allowing it to operate smoothly. Teachers in the program have been generous in offering the fruits of their experience and expertise that has contributed to all of the courses. Also, by introducing us to teachers they believe will embrace the ethos of the program, it can be carried forward into the future through a sort of apprenticeship system.

IV. Offering Thanks for Past Contributions to the Program

The Integrated English Program developed through the efforts of several key professors with the support of many others in the English Department, including the adjunct or part-time faculty members who taught in it, and the university administration of Aoyama Gakuin University. Our work on this program also led to a number of contributions to the field of English language education in the form of presentations and publications, some of which are referenced in this article. It is impossible in a single article to name everyone let alone to describe how they contributed to the program. For one thing, with some 600 students and 41 adjunct or part-time teachers, and three professors, a program this size needed the support of the entire department. In the early years of the IE Program, the assistance and support of our English Department

chairs—Minoji Akimoto, Osamu Nemoto, and Kyosuke Tezuka—was crucial.

Over time, numerous practical ideas came from adjunct teachers working in the program and were passed on to the IE Program coordinators through casual conversation (often between classes), through telephone calls, via emails, or at the annual program orientation. For example, the late Tom Anderson (a.k.a. “Tom Terrific”), a longtime adjunct faculty member, provided numerous activities for the IE Writing course and even coined the acronym “IEP” for the IE Program. The idea of creating the permanent student course booklets that helped standardize the courses came from Alexandra Shiga, another veteran teacher who suggested that if we made booklets we could cut down on the photocopying required of teachers. The suggestion also helped us standardize the courses despite having so many different teachers in the program. Deborah Bollinger introduced the idea of the learner profile to help teachers get to know their students better and later she was instrumental in creating a plagiarism policy with Professor Joseph Dias. Among many helpful suggestions from Melvin Andrade, now professor emeritus of Sophia University Junior College Division, was that we create rubrics for teachers to use in marking book reports and in assessing student discussions, so these were added to subsequent teacher guides. In addition, Professor Andrade suggested that we rebrand our annual program orientation as the “IE Orientation and Annual Faculty Development Symposium” as the orientation covered more than just IE courses and offered a valuable opportunity for adjunct lecturers, and our full-time colleagues from other departments, to share their professional knowledge. Finally, Professor Andrade made important contributions as a key investigator in our recent research on online extensive reading.

Of course, many adjunct instructors have provided superlative teaching in the program and showed such rapport with their students that they helped make the program both effective and popular. Veteran teachers, Jeff Bruce and B.J. Butler, helped tweak features of both our IE Core and Writing classes. Most memorable was the late Richard Basso, Associate Professor at Rikkyo Jogakuin Junior College, who taught more than 38 years in the English

Department and was described by Joseph Dias as having “near rock star status” among students.

The History and Evolution of the IE Program

Gregory Strong

I. Preparing for the IE Program

Planning the program began in the fall of 1990 when Professor Hiroshi Yoshiba made a proposal to reform the English language curriculum to English Department professors, Minoji Akimoto and Tsutomu Makino, respectively, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the College of Arts (2019, Yoshiba). He had spent many years in graduate school at the University of Washington in Seattle. While there he realized that his reading ability was good enough to understand theoretical books but his oral communication skills were much weaker. Replying to an emailed question about the history of the IEP, Professor Yoshiba recalled, “Our English curriculum hadn’t changed since my student years and the courses weren’t effective.” Secondly, he found that students had very few contact hours in learning English “compared with those in Kokusai Seiji Keizai Gakubu ‘the School of International Politics and Economics.’” His plan called for developing a completely new curriculum and very substantially increasing the allotted classes (koma-suu) for English.

“I made the proposal right after I came back from my first sabbatical at MIT. I believe that without this particular timing, when Professor Makino was the Dean, the proposal—especially the drastic increase of classes (koma-suu)—wouldn’t have been successful.”

Professor Yoshiba’s plan for an intensive English language program prioritized four features: (1) that students be placed in classes based on their language abilities, not their student number or year of study, (2) that courses would be semester-length, not year-long, (3) that class numbers would be smaller than 20, and (4) that there would be a combined skills class of 90 minutes five days each week. The next step was to hire two specialists to

coordinate the program, and, in 1992, the English Department hired James Ellis, a charismatic young Canadian college teacher from Vancouver, fluent in French as well as English, with a background in TESOL, research interests in intercultural communication, and experience in working with Japanese students, and a second hire, an educational textbook editor and teacher, who later declined the position for family reasons. I applied for her position while finishing a contract involving language teaching, teacher training, and curriculum development at the Canada-China Language Centre in Beijing for St. Mary's University, Nova Scotia, and joined the Aoyama Gakuin University's English Department in 1993. With a graduate degree in second language education from the Centre for Curriculum Studies at the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Education, and experience as a freelance editor for the B.C. Ministry of Education, I was familiar with curriculum design and with setting teacher and student goals for course work. Eventually, we would create a teacher guide for each new course and six student booklets, IE Core and Writing, IE Listening I, II, and III, Academic Skills, and Academic Writing.

Besides Professor Yoshiba, the English language education program committee included more senior professors, Hiroko Sano, Don Smith, Minako Tani, and two very new sennin taiguu, or assistant professors, Professor Ellis (who served as IE coordinator from 1992-1997), and myself. We subsequently spent much of 1993 in a series of long and very technical meetings with the kyoumuka at the university. Often, Professor Ellis and I operated by convincing the committee of the merit of an idea, then advocating for it in the department, and in some cases, even taking it to the university administration. Together, we built a schedule for a new program for freshmen and sophomore students at the Atsugi campus.

One of the most important and controversial features of the program was to stream students into classes based on their abilities rather than their year of study or student number. Although this feature of language classes is very common in the U.S. and in Canada where it is seen as an aid to study, at the time few programs in Japan were organized this way. Therefore, the issue

became not only pedagogical but also socio-cultural, with the arguments against it being that it might encourage elitism and that students in the lower level classes might become depressed and dis-incentivized in their studies. Long hours were spent arguing its merits. When this innovation was accepted, Professor Smith, who had undertaken his PhD at the University of Michigan, suggested using the language test used at that university to stream students into the classes appropriate to their abilities. We used this as a placement test until some years later when Professor Matsuo Kimura introduced the Institutional TOEFL Placement test (ITP), a reading and grammar test based on past TOEFL exams, and therefore predictive of students' TOEFL scores.

In the end, some of Professor Yoshiba's plans for an intensive English language program had to be modified. Class limits were set at 24 students—not 19. And, with so many adjunct teachers commuting from far-flung parts of Tokyo to work in the program it was impossible to devise a schedule where the same teacher would travel to the Atsugi campus to meet with the same class of students for just one single class for five days each week. Instead, the IE classes were broken up so that on one day there would be one double-koma (180-minute) IE Core class, and on two other days, the same class of students would have their IE Writing and Listening classes. Because the IE curriculum was distributed across the Core, Writing, and Listening courses, it was possible to provide students with classes on three different days and adjunct instructors with two or three different classes. A teacher could teach a Core class with one group of students, and a Writing class with another, and possibly a fourth class with still another group of students. But because students would not be taking IE courses five days each week, or even four days, the program no longer could be called “intensive,” so we began referring to it as the “Integrated English Program,” highlighting the integration of the three different classes: IE Core, IE Writing, and IE Listening.

Now the great challenge Professor Ellis and I faced was to create ways to integrate the Core (4-skills), Writing, and Listening classes with each other meaningfully. After reviewing many organizational models for our curriculum, we selected a thematic approach such as that suggested by Brinton, Snow, and

Wesche (1989). The core class, and the writing and listening classes would share themes and vocabulary integrated by a new combined skills textbook, *Interchange*, with several different levels, and offering supplemental materials such as videos and cassettes. Next, we had to describe the differences in terms of classes and program objectives and do so before the program began in 1994, the following year. Fortunately, Professor Ellis and I had similar educational backgrounds, had worked together briefly in Vancouver, could discuss our ideas freely, and had complementary strengths. He was a great communicator and helped promote and communicate our ideas. Much of my work, as it would be for the next 24 years of the program, was to write course descriptions as we began creating our own unique activities, including student journals that were shared with peers, and oral and written book reports in which students employed literary terms such as point of view, conflict, climax, symbols, irony, and theme.

II. The IEP in Operation

In those days, before the Internet and e-mail, with so many different teachers coming to the campus only once each week, we soon realized that another critical challenge for the program would be communication with the teachers. Telephone calls or faxes to each teacher would be too time-consuming. Recalling "pigeonholes," or teachers' mailboxes, that I had seen elsewhere, I suggested buying a big plastic mailbox with a drawer for each instructor and a bulletin board outside the department office. Resistance came from every direction. Criticisms included "No one would use it."; "Student papers left there would be stolen."; "Standing in the hall, it would become a fire hazard." Even the cleaning staff complained that the mailbox would obstruct their vacuum cleaner. I told Professor Ellis, "If we can't even get this, we won't be able to do anything!" So, we pressed even harder for the mailbox. Department chair, Professor Akimoto, approved it, and one day, two movers carted in a beautiful, custom-built wooden structure that stood one meter high, two meters across, and contained 60 mail slots. Alarmed, I turned to the department secretary, Masami Kawaguchi, and commented "This must have

cost a fortune!" She whispered, "Don't ask the price." However, once teachers' names were placed on the mailboxes the system worked. We left notices, students dropped off their assignments, and within days, the complaints were forgotten.

The other essential components of the IEP were (a) a pre-service orientation for new teachers where the program co-coordinators introduced them to the program by meeting with them individually, providing them with course books, and answering their questions about the program and their courses; (b) an annual orientation in which new program initiatives were introduced; (c) a professional library of materials such as videotapes and cassettes and teacher reference books, which also accommodated teachers' lockers for their books and teaching materials; and (d) course evaluations for each class that were to be completed by students at the end of each semester. This latter innovation although very common in the teaching environments familiar to Professor Ellis and me, was still relatively new in Japan in 1993. At last, in March 1994, the Integrated English Program was introduced in a teacher orientation session. Afterward, Professor Yoshiba served on the IEP committee for many years. Later, Professor Teruo Yokotani took his place on the committee, assisting with the invaluable, behind-the-scenes work of program administration.

Curriculum development can sometimes be favorably altered by timing. A critical event in the history of the IEP was when Professor Peter Robinson joined the English department in 1995. His expertise in task-based learning, his standing in the field of Second Language Acquisition research, and his knowledge of task-based syllabus design laid the framework for some of our best work. His example and suggestions, and the influence of two conferences he arranged at Aoyama Gakuin University, "The 3rd Pacific Second Language Research Forum" in 1998 and "Individual Differences in Foreign Language Learning," led to research-based innovations in the IEP, and the use of needs-based analyses instead of simply acting on perceived needs. His influence led us to redevelop the IEP into a combination of both thematic and task-based approaches. Figure 1 shows how the four themes of the IE I level classes

(Core, Listening, and Writing) relate to the tasks for each course.

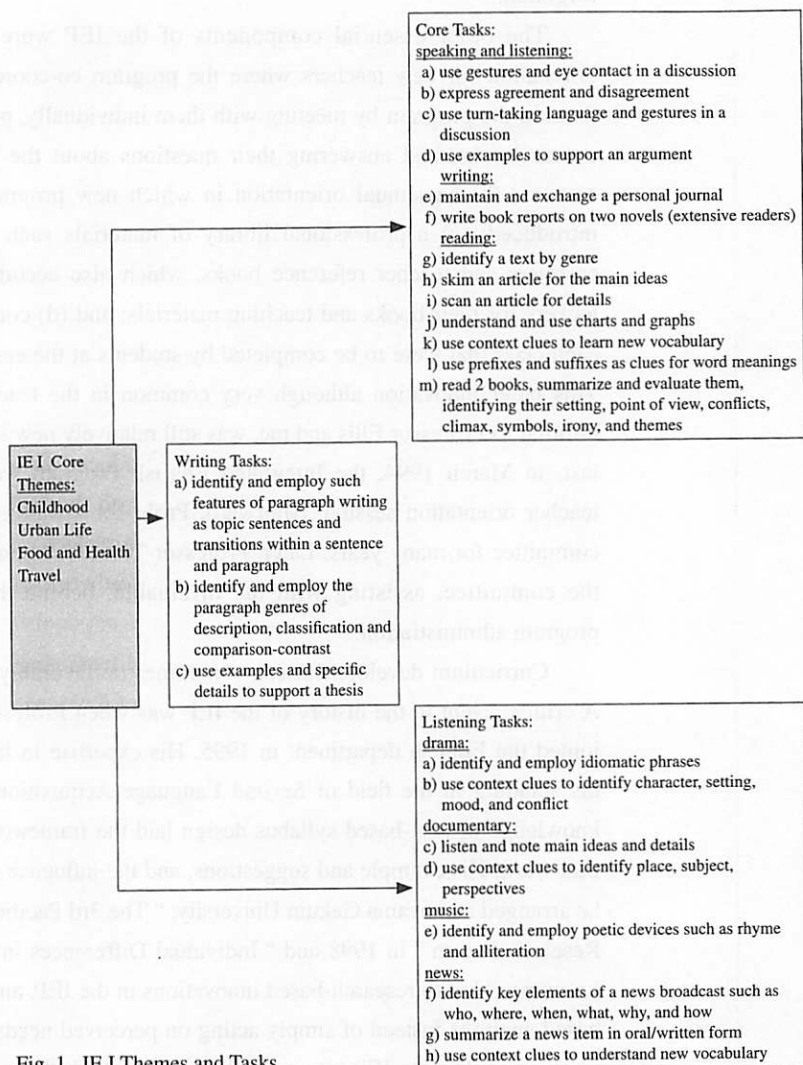


Fig. 1 IE I Themes and Tasks

III. *Development of the Small Group Discussion Task*

The best single task we developed in the IEP was the small group discussion task, which had a strong theoretical and research base, drew upon the contributions of numerous teachers, and was very popular with students because they immediately saw its value. The task had its origin in students' short improvised talks of three or four minutes, which had been a regular classroom activity in the classes of an adjunct instructor, Emiko Horton, a professor at Shibaura Institute of Technology. As Professor Ellis left the university to work in Australia, a new co-coordinator, Professor Jennifer Whittle (who served from 1997 to 2002) joined the department, bringing with her a strong background in teacher training. Professor Robinson and I began developing the group discussion task, focusing on skills such as the use of turn-taking language, eye contact and gestures. Acting on a suggestion by Dr. Robinson, professors Robinson, Whittle and myself put together a research project measuring the development of student participation in discussion groups. Later, we were joined in that project by our English Department Communications colleague, Professor Shuichi Nobe. This led to a joint publication on the development of effective ways to foster more natural and productive group discussions among EAP students (Robinson, Strong, Whittle & Nobe, 2001). Following the task-based model approach suggested by Willis and Willis (1996), we developed pre-, during task, and post-task phases for the discussions and gradually added more components to the task. Student group leaders prepared for the discussion by choosing a newspaper article of interest to them, then reading it, summarizing and citing it, and preparing questions.

Next, Todd Rucynski, later Associate Professor at Surugadai University, who was developing his expertise in educational film-making, urged us to create a DVD explaining how to teach student-led discussions in class. Together, he and I chose sample discussions and created a rubric to score the student discussion leaders. In one of those marvelous cases of serendipity, after viewing the footage from a number of classes, we noticed that the best leaders came from the class of another adjunct teacher, Dr. Hamilton Armstrong. Dr. Armstrong whose graduate degrees were in theatre, explained

that he had his students rehearse before the discussion. A review of the literature showed research supporting this approach (Bygate, 1996; 2001; Lynch & Maclean, 2001) and we quickly added repetition to the task. Several students led discussions at the same time. Discussion leaders would lead a discussion with three other students and then move to another small group, then to another. Because the students in each group had a different leader every 15-20 minutes, and the student leaders had different groups each time, the repetition did not bore anyone and the discussion leaders grew more confident and better at speaking after each iteration.



Fig. 2: Still Photos showing Turn-taking Language and Gestures from the IE Core DVD

IV. Program Assessment and Addition of More Advanced Listening and Writing Courses

Another significant development was the program evaluation performed by Alister Cumming of the prestigious Ontario Institute of Education in 1999, a visit arranged by Professor Robinson (Strong, 1999). His very favorable evaluation covered not only the IEP, but also two newly developed courses for IE students, one of which was Academic Skills, in which students learned listening strategies, then listened to academic lectures by professors in the department (Professors James Ellis, Luther Link, Elin McCready, Wayne Pounds, Peter Robinson, Don Smith, and myself). Later several guest lecturers' work was added to the materials for Academic Skills. The second course was Academic Writing, which remains the single most difficult course in the IEP, and entails having students carrying out original research on a topic of their choice, studying the structure and format of a research essay, creating a bibliography of their sources, discerning when it is appropriate to use direct

or indirect quotes, learning to paraphrase and make use of in-text citations, and writing a 2,500 word essay. For each of these courses, we created extensive teacher manuals and student booklets, such as the booklet I created for Academic Writing which incorporated suggestions from numerous other teachers, student model essays, and eventually totaled more than 100 pages.

V. *Listening and Blended Listening Classes*

The listening part of the IE Program remained consistently weak in student evaluations and also had been identified as being the weak link in the curriculum in Professor Cumming's assessment earlier. He commented that the multiple choice question format of the course materials was more appropriate for testing than teaching. At best, these types of questions might be used for student self-access materials. The multiple choice questions may have assisted students in improving micro-skills, such as identifying contractions and reductions in speech, but they did not lend themselves to active learning and communication in the classroom.

Earlier, Professor Yoshiba had contributed materials, such as high interest videos from National Geographic and American TV sitcoms such as the Wonder Years, and Professor Ellis, and then Professor Whittle and I, had done extensive work with the video material by transcribing the dialog and creating questions and vocabulary activities. Despite these major revisions, students still seemed to lack engagement with the material. We encouraged an English Department graduate student, Keita Kikuchi, studying with H.D. Brown at the University of Hawaii, to examine the course. His needs analysis using data from 585 students and 9 teachers, questionnaires and interviews, led him to determine that students found the class too passive, the course seemed impractical, and the materials were not interesting to students, and, most condemning, the students felt that they made little progress over a term (Kikuchi, 2001).

At about this time, the university moved its freshmen and sophomores to its brand new Sagamihara campus. The facilities had beautiful views of the mountains and state of the art classrooms. As Professor Whittle moved to



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Australia, I was joined by a new IE co-coordinator, Professor Joseph Dias, who had been serving in the English Language Unit of Kitasato University's Department of Liberal Arts. He had already been working as an adjunct instructor in the IEP for many years and had research interests in computer assisted language learning (CALL), in particular with mobile platforms, as well as an interest and experience in curriculum design. We were to enjoy a close friendship and 14 wonderful and productive years working together until my retirement in 2019.

Professor Dias and I expanded our listening materials to incorporate scenes from popular films, TV news, and music videos. We also expanded our listening tasks and question types, emphasized idiomatic language and reductions, included post-listening as well as writing-in-role activities, along with those that involved summarizing and evaluating listening content. We had all of our video material transferred to DVD format. Finally, we offered sessions on the teaching of listening at the annual IEP teacher orientations. Then we evaluated the changes using questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups that investigated the attitudes and experiences, respectively, of 325 IE Listening students, 15 teachers, and 26 randomly selected students. Later, Dias and Kikuchi (2010) found that there had been little change in the student evaluations of the course between 2000 and 2005, the period when the changes had been introduced.

As a result, Professor Dias and I completely re-thought the course and, after much discussion, created a new course called "Active Listening" which incorporated four different types of activities in a blended instruction approach that combined new technologies in a computer lab where the teacher used some traditional pedagogies for instructing the students in listening techniques. Some of the new activities were to be carried out "in-class," with the teacher continuing to give instruction in listening skills, using authentic interviews, documentaries, and short feature programs from ABC News which were part of Summit TV 1 and 2, a then-new commercial textbook with accompanying DVDs. Another new in-class activity came to be called "interactions," a popular listening and discussion task with group leaders

summarizing and describing something that they had listened to on YouTube, similar in some respects to the group discussion in IE Core. “Teacher-monitored tasks” were those in which students had to complete a number of units from an online course, “Practical English,” produced by Reallyenglish, a company specializing in web-based language courses. This online course featured units focusing on listening, grammar, and reading—with question types similar to those on the TOEIC exam. Finally, in the “self-directed” part of the course, students listened to podcasts and watched streaming media before summarizing and writing reaction paragraphs on what they had heard or watched. At the time, most of the course teachers were Japanese who were accustomed to teaching listening comprehension by playing a sequence of video segments, providing students with associated questions, and then supplying correct answers, often employing video and textbook series. Therefore, a re-adjustment period was necessary for these teachers to move to a more active learning approach. Kazuko Hoshizaki and Kazuko Namba, veteran teachers in the English Department, quickly embraced the new methodology and proved instrumental in our efforts to implement the new course by mentoring their peers. They helped Professor Dias and me to explain to other teachers how the activities and tasks in the new course could be taught, in particular the small group discussions that were based on listening, notetaking and questioning. A year after the new Active Listening course was introduced, we surveyed teachers (16 of them) and students (from 17 classes) to evaluate the course and, much to our relief, found that most of the students approved of the changes—particularly the small group discussions—and the teachers not only accepted the changes but were convinced of the pedagogical value of the new approach as they saw positive improvements in student attitude, levels of engagement, and learning outcomes.

VI. *New Directions for the IEP: Teacher Education and Collaborative Research*

In more recent years, Professor Dias and I became interested in teacher

education and curricular change through collaborative research projects. With the help of a faculty development grant in 2012, and again in 2018, we were even able to provide a small honorarium for adjunct instructors or pay for their attendance at teachers' conferences. In 2012, we collaborated with Todd Rucynski in creating a teacher education DVD on different approaches to teaching reading with the help of Professor Junichi Miyazawa from Sougou Bunka Seisaku Gakubu (the School of Cultural and Creative Studies) whose contribution involved making movie subtitles, Professor Mitsue Allen-Tamai from the English Department (Teaching Students How to Re-tell Stories), Professor Joseph Dias (Jigsaw Reading); and that of five adjunct instructors who contributed their techniques, Vivien Cohen (Teaching Literary Terms), Arno Fuhlendorf (Vocabulary Learning Apps for Cellphones), Tamiko Hanaoka (Encouraging Critical Reading), Kazuko Namba (Group Work), and Yoshiho Satake (Randomizing Pairwork in a CALL Classroom.)

Over the last three years, we began researching the effectiveness of smart phones and tablets as "mobile learning platforms." We obtained a second faculty development grant to explore student use of extensive reading (ER) through Xreading.com, a commercial provider of an online digital library and LMS (learner management system) that keeps track of the graded readers students read and are tested on. For this project, we devised three different action research projects in which adjunct faculty would help us in piloting potential curricular innovations and then assist in data collection and interpretation with the assistance of then English Department chair, Professor Mitsue Allen-Tamai (Allen-Tamai et al., 2018, Strong et al., 2017). Thereafter, the adjunct faculty would mentor other teachers in using ER with an online platform. Through the corporate sponsorship of Xreading.com we also provided the funds for a number of adjunct teachers to attend conferences and co-presented with them to share our research findings with the wider academic community.

Extensive reading in English language education is based on the idea that students read as much high interest material as possible—appropriate to their ability—in order to improve their reading speed, fluency, motivation to read,

and general comprehension. Despite the potential benefits, it is often difficult to implement ER in university classes in Japan. Robb and Kano (2013) note that “factors such as book acquisition and management, student motivation and record-keeping” militate against the widespread adoption of ER (p.235). Our two research projects sought to explore the benefits and limitations of students using an online provider that could offer them access to hundreds of graded readers through the convenience of their smart phones or tablets. The online provider, Xreading.com, also tracked student effort in terms of time spent reading, numbers of words read, and a rough gauge of their story comprehension.

We piloted the use of Xreading.com as part of a course with two different groups of students, over one semester in one case, and over an entire academic year for the other. In both cases, ER contributed to a small percentage of the course grade and we hoped to see improvements in the amount that students read, vocabulary acquisition, and hopefully—once students could comprehend texts better—in reading enjoyment. We also surveyed the students on their attitudes towards this use of ER and asked teachers to give their impressions of the adoption of ER in their classrooms. Neither over a single term, nor over a year, did we find any significant and consistent improvements in students’ comprehension, reading speed, or vocabulary. These results were not surprising since the ER was mainly given as a homework task and only done in class for 15 minutes each week. However, because of the convenience, many students expressed a preference for reading books on their smart phones and they felt that ER was assisting them in becoming better readers. We have yet to measure the cumulative effects of longer term use of ER in our program. Teachers noted that there were some technical glitches and sometimes students tried to “game the system” by choosing books that were based on films which they had already watched, giving them an advantage when answering comprehension questions. But, overall, teachers appreciated the convenience offered by Xreading.com’s management system because it tracked student efforts. In addition, the classroom intervention we piloted whereby students spent 15 minutes reading in class, followed by 15 minutes discussing what

they had read in small groups, seemed to motivate students to read more and we later adopted this approach in introducing Xreading.com into all IE I and II Core classes.

Finally, in 2018, Professor Dias and I, along with two IE Active Listening teachers, Hamilton Armstrong and Kazuko Namba, investigated a single semester use of extensive listening (EL) through a commercial provider, EnglishCentral, which offers a library of more than 10,000 short videos deliverable to students on their PCs, smart phones or tablets, and an innovative vocabulary learning app. EL is similar to ER in several key ways in that learners listen to large amounts of content that is within their comfort level (i.e., easily comprehended) so that they are able to listen with interest and enjoyment, and they can be accountable for their listening (Mayora, 2017:102). EnglishCentral not only offers students an extensive library of high interest video clips on a wide variety of topics, but also provides pronunciation practice as students repeat aloud sentences that they have just heard on the video and have their pronunciation compared to the model they were trying to approximate. In addition, for each video, students complete substitution and sequencing exercises to help them remember the sentences they have heard, and they are quizzed on the vocabulary through an integrated vocabulary app. A learning management system tracks which videos students watched, how much time they have spent on the website, which vocabulary items they have learned, and how many lines presented in the videos they practised speaking. To give IEP students sufficient motivation to engage with the EL component of the course, it accounted for 20% of the students' Active Listening grade.

The initial adoption of EL in the Active Listening course was evaluated through a student survey aimed at assessing attitudes toward using the online library and doing the activities associated with it. In addition, in each class, the two students who engaged with the most videos and the two students who engaged with the least number of videos were interviewed. Most students had a favorable impression of EnglishCentral, found the variety of listening content interesting and topical, and appreciated the convenience of accessing the site through their smart phones, which was the students' primary method

of access. In terms of student engagement, those who had the most engagement tended to access the site regularly (often on a daily basis), while those with the least engagement were also less engaged in the class as a whole, missing many classes and finding it hard to catch up or even to use the system properly. In one case, a student had such weak listening skills that she had trouble selecting content appropriate to her level. As a result of these findings, we decided on a limited introduction of EL into just the highest level (IE 3) of the Active Listening course. Just as with the other providers of online tools we have used in the IE Program—such as Reallyenglish and Xreading—the developers have been responsive to our feedback and have been making gradual and welcome improvements to the interface, content, and tracking ability of the programs. In the case of EnglishCentral the integrated vocabulary learning app was particularly welcome.

**The Integrated English Program: Perspective of an adjunct and from
new role as co-coordinator**

Andrew Reimann

I. How the IE Program Stands Out from Other Programs

Having joined the IE program in 2003, which was close to the beginning of my teaching career, I was inspired by the professionalism and organization of the program. I had been working in several university English programs as an adjunct instructor and few of them paid the attention to detail, engaged in the sophisticated program building, or went the extra mile for teachers that was characteristic of the IEP at AGU. That was my first impression and that image of the IE Program's high standards endured.

In those days, the AGU English Department had a standing call for new teachers in every issue of *The Language Teacher*, the professional journal of the Japan Association of Language Teaching. As part-time positions were becoming scarce, this gave the impression that there were always positions available in the English Department and anyone might be hired there. This

was, as I quickly found out, not the case at all. From the first interview, I discovered that the IEP was indeed a different and unique program. Professor Strong, one of the most important mentors and influences in my life, initially hired me, and I was immediately struck by his sincerity, kindness and dedication. In the almost 20 years that we worked together, he was constantly supportive and encouraged me to publish, present and develop my professional qualifications. The interview was both professional and friendly, an opportunity to share insights as well as to learn. It felt more like joining a community rather than applying for a job. I was greatly impressed. Although I was not able to start teaching for 2 years after the initial interview, I was able to develop collaborative relationships with members of the program that have lasted to this day. Interviews I experienced at other institutions were either cursory affairs lasting as little as 5 minutes, or even group interviews that operated as "meet and greet" occasions for checking boxes and screening personalities or personal appearances. Pedagogy, program development, or teaching methods were seldom brought up at those interviews. My initial impression of the quality and professionalism of the IEP was accurate and my estimation of it has only improved over the past 18 years.

The IE Program at AGU stands out from other, similar programs in three distinct ways. First, it provides communicative and engaging classes that allow students to fully take control of their learning and extend it beyond the classroom. Secondly, there is a unique network of teachers with well-established personal and professional relationships that facilitate sharing, collaboration and program building. Thirdly, the level of support from coordinators and the accommodations made for students with special needs are rare but essential components of this successful program which inspires professionalism, empathy and dedication.

II. Classes

The classes in the IEP are well designed, planned and coordinated to give students, as well as teachers, the best possible experiences, resources, and pedagogy for facilitating language learning. The courses are constantly

evolving and incorporating the latest technologies and methodologies. Using a variety of resources and approaches to support four skills, students can develop comprehensive language proficiency. IE Core is a primary example of this system. Many teachers, myself included, are initially daunted by the length, scope and rigorous requirements of IE Core. However, after participating in the meticulous orientation, and reading the extensive guidelines and supportive materials, everything falls into place seamlessly. This course has become one of my most enjoyable and rewarding teaching experiences. The amount of work students are able to accomplish in IE Core, combined with the quality of assignments and enthusiasm they bring forth, never ceases to amaze me. Teachers have often commented on how they notice positive changes in students that carry over into their other classes for the entire four years of study at AGU, and probably well beyond, into their working lives.

Advanced Academic Writing was one of the first courses I taught at AGU and it provided a window into how well the IE Program prepared students for more advanced studies in their third and fourth years. It was in this class that I was able to see firsthand the range of interests and capabilities of students as well as their connection with teachers. One of the main goals of the course was to support students writing graduation theses. This required serving as a bridge between students and their supervisors while offering them support and advice. It was an interesting challenge, allowing me to learn a great deal about the students, their teachers, and the English Department. I was impressed by the depth that students went into their research and the extent of support many professors provided. Combined with the resources available in the Academic Writing Center—and the guidance, workshops and tutorials offered by the university library—an ideal atmosphere was fostered for producing quality research and writing. It was a supportive environment and the sense of accomplishment I saw when students completed their thesis was one of my best memories as a teacher.

The Night School was another unique and important experience for me. Although it has been discontinued, the English Department's Communicative

English (CE) course offered a concentrated version of some of the best features of the IE Program for those, mostly, mature students. It provided a rich opportunity to experiment with the pedagogy and adapt methods to the diverse range of students in the program. The Night School was different in that it included students with a range of experiences, backgrounds and demographics. These students brought a high level of motivation and experience to their classes, making every session an interesting and exciting learning experience.

III. Teacher Networking

The connection and rapport among teachers is one of the most important features of the IEP. This cannot be planned or written into a program, but must be carefully cultivated over time. Loyalty, dedication, and appreciation are key elements of this dynamic. Most adjunct instructors have been teaching in the IE Program for over five years, with many having taught longer than 20 years. This has the added benefit of creating a community of collegial professionals and mentors; a great value to the program. An important feature of this is that new teachers are able to receive the scaffolding, support and mentoring essential for entering a new program and teaching smoothly, successfully and with confidence. The development of this community is dependent on three components. First, platforms such as Google Groups, blogs, and the old-fashioned cubby holes in an IE Resource Center that provide teachers with information, as well as networking and professional development opportunities. Second are the frequent social activities which bond teachers together. These include a New Year party to show appreciation for adjunct teachers, to welcome new teachers, and to say farewell to retiring teachers. During this event, teachers who may otherwise never meet, are able to socialise, network, exchange ideas, and celebrate accomplishments and milestones in their professional lives. Throughout the year other events are also scheduled to encourage socialising and professional development, including lunchtime workshops, presentations, colloquia, excursions, and school festivals. The final element of community and professional

development is the Spring IE teachers' Orientation. Held at the beginning of each academic year, this orientation has the dual role of introducing new teachers to the program and allowing veteran teachers to share their experiences as guides and mentors. The communicative and participatory nature of this event ensures that it is well attended, enjoyable and relevant to the development of teaching skills and professionalism. Important aspects of the IE program are explained and demonstrated. Veteran teachers can share ideas, techniques, and strategies and new teachers can orientate themselves into an unfamiliar program and teaching environment, and also offer their experiences and insights. The lasting benefit of the IE Orientation is that teachers feel a sense of community, support, and appreciation that lasts the entire academic year, building networks, friendships, and the confidence to participate actively and effectively.

IV. Support and Accommodation

Finally, the effective communication, support, and professionalism of the coordinators, the department, and university administration make teaching in the IE program a uniquely positive experience. The IE program coordinators always went above and beyond what was required to make sure that teachers had the resources they needed, an accommodating teaching schedule, and a complete understanding and confidence in teaching any aspect of the program. This often involved personal communication and specialised efforts, including private tutorials, meetings, and guidance. These provided the best support possible and cultivated a deep level of commitment and respect for the program and its goals. The enthusiasm of teachers in the program has led to the development of numerous secondary support networks. "Trioing," an example of this, is a system in which teachers responsible for the same group of students in their Core, Writing, and Listening classes, share information, strategies, and advice. This has become vital in helping students with social, personal or communication difficulties. As teachers increasingly find a range of students with special needs in their classes, this network of support in the IEP is essential. Now counselors at the Student Counseling Center and the

new Support Center for Students with Disabilities are also available to provide assistance for students while allowing teachers to more confidently guide these students. These interrelationships are fostered by the supportive administration of the program. The IEP at AGU is more than just the sum of its parts; each person, whether student, teacher, coordinator or administrator, plays a vital, supportive role in this very positive educational environment.

Connecting with Teachers and Students with New Tools and Traditional Ones

Joseph Dias

I. Legacy of Professor Strong

No single person connected to the creation, evolution, and day-to-day running of the IE Program has made more contributions to it than Professor Strong. His highly developed emotional intelligence and “people skills” were soon apparent to me when I began teaching in the department as an adjunct lecturer. I shared Professor Reimann’s experience of being made to feel, almost immediately, like an important and valuable member of the faculty who had something to contribute. This talent of bringing out the best from other teachers was on full display until his retirement from the university in March of 2019. Those skills allowed him to develop a wide web of professional and personal relationships that are as deep as they are broad. He was ingenious about finding funding that enabled adjuncts (who had no access to research grants) to attend conferences, join us in academic presentations, and even co-author publications. These experiences helped some of our adjuncts to secure full-time employment at other universities.

In addition to his many other roles, in the final years of his tenure at AGU, Professor Strong chaired the university’s Presidential Advisory Committee for English Education and International Exchange. In that capacity, he facilitated the sharing of ideas, policies, and materials related to IEP in the English Department and the English teaching expertise and curricula that had

been independently developed in other university departments. This has greatly contributed to inter-departmental cooperation.

Lovingly guiding the IE Program through its first twenty-five years, Professor Strong was its chief materials writer, advocate, defender, and innovator, embracing new technologies as the program entered the 21st century. Innovations were always made with care given to retaining those elements that fostered engaging activities and tasks, and worked well to prepare students for their upper level courses in literature, linguistics, and communications.

II. *My Path to the Role of IE Program Co-coordinator*

Before joining Aoyama Gakuin University as a member of the full-time faculty, I taught for 14 years at Kitasato University, while serving as an adjunct instructor in the IE Program for eight of those years. All of my students at Kitasato majored in pure science (chemistry, physics, biology) or in human/animal health sciences. Most of those students had a fairly clear idea of what they wanted to become and what they wanted to do with their lives. They expected to become pharmacists, physicians, physical therapists, nurses, or veterinarians. In contrast, students I came to teach in the English Department at AGU are less sure of their future. Of course, this is partly because they chose a course of study that provides paths to many possible destinations—from teaching, academia, and public administration to business and the service industry. I find that this lack of career determinism makes our students more willing to take chances, try unfamiliar modes of learning and more active in making the curriculum relevant to their particular ambitions and interests. That makes teaching here somewhat more of an adventure and pleasantly unpredictable.

I was thrilled at the chance to apply for a full-time position at AGU in 2003 to serve as a co-coordinator of the IE Program because I admired the camaraderie among members of the faculty at AGU, the fine, gentle character of students, its excellent support given for research, and its efforts to gather a varied student body by welcoming returnees, auditors, transfer students and

foreign exchange students. I was also eager to make further contributions to the Integrated English program as its co-coordinator after having had the privilege of bearing witness to most of its first ten years of existence.

III. *Helping to Bring the Program into the 21st Century*

IIIa. Development of IE Website and Google Group

Professor Strong laid the firm groundwork for close relationships to form among the faculty members teaching IE courses, between the coordinators and teachers, and even between all of us and the wonderfully supportive administrative staff at Kyomuka, such as Ms. Mukai, Ms. Hamada, and, currently, Ms. Sato and Mr. Motoi. In the early days of the IE Program numerous phone calls and face-to-face meetings were necessary to maintain these channels of communication. The late 1990s saw the increased use of email, including primitive mailing lists, to exchange critical program-related information.

The screenshot displays the Google Groups interface for the 'IE Program' group. On the left is a sidebar with navigation links: 'Starred', 'Favorites' (containing 'IE Program'), 'Recently viewed', 'Recent searches' (listing 'TCCUJAA', 'ishiwata (in ie-program)', 'kato (in ie-program)', 'Yuki Takahashi', and 'Yuki Takahashi (in ie-...)'), 'Recently posted to' (containing 'IE Program'), and 'Privacy - Terms of Service'. The main area shows the group name 'IE Program' with 'Shared privately' and '351 of 351 topics'. A list of messages follows, each with a checkbox, a profile picture, the subject, and the sender with post/view counts.

Starred	IE Program	Shared privately	351 of 351 topics ☆
	<input type="checkbox"/>		Saturday March 31st Orientation By Gregory Strong - 1 post - 3 views
Favorites	<input type="checkbox"/>		Classes possibly becoming available in IE Program and Ed/psych Dept. By me - 3 posts - 2 views
IE Program	<input type="checkbox"/>		New job postings Daito Bunka and Tokyo Univ. Science By Gregory Strong - 1 post - 0 views
Recently viewed	<input type="checkbox"/>		Re: URL for uploading papers -- for IE Writing & Academic Writing students By me - 1 post - 1 view
Recent searches	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reminders--Evaluation--Grading By Gregory Strong - 1 post - 2 views
TCCUJAA	<input type="checkbox"/>		Opportunities to present at conferences -- need short proposal by Jan. 9th By me - 1 post - 0 views
ishiwata (in ie-program)	<input type="checkbox"/>		class available in the upcoming academic year By me - 1 post - 3 views
kato (in ie-program)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reminder to reset your LDAP password ASAP By me - 1 post - 1 view
Yuki Takahashi			
Yuki Takahashi (in ie-...)			
Recently posted to			
IE Program			
Privacy - Terms of Service			

Fig. 3: Archive of messages sent out to teachers using the IE Program Google Group.

As we entered the 21st century, I established a Google Group that greatly facilitated the way we communicated about IE Program matters, particularly

those of a time sensitive nature, such as last-minute changes to the location of a plenary talk offered to IE Program students or the announcement of the schedule for tutorials given by librarians for students in our Academic Writing classes. We also posted information about teaching positions available at other departments of AGU or even ones we heard about at other universities (see Fig. 3). From the autumn semester of 2019, an official IEP Instagram account (https://www.instagram.com/agu_eng/) was established to convey program-related matters as we found that students seldom accessed their official email accounts or even the student portal. Hopefully, our embrace of social media tools will facilitate more effective communication and ensure that vital information is not missed.

In 2012 we inaugurated our IE Program official website (<http://www.aogaku-daku.org/>) using WordPress open source software and hosted on an external Dreamhost server (see Fig 4). This made it easier for those outside the university (e.g., prospective students or IEP candidate teachers) to learn more about the program, while greatly facilitating our ability to make resources—particularly textbooks and teaching manuals—available to both students and teachers in an efficient manner rather than by sending them by email or by printing them out, as we had done in the pre-Internet days, allowing us to move toward our goal of a paperless program (Fig. 5).

Integrated English Program

Integrating speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills

Home Courses Teachers Texts & Documents FAQ

2019 IE PROGRAM ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

Posted on March 30, 2019 by J. Dias

Here is the schedule for the 2019 IE Program Orientation for Teachers and 26th Annual Faculty Development Symposium on University English Teaching.

IE Orientation and 26th Annual Faculty Development Symposium on University English Teaching
From 8:30 AM, Saturday, April 6, 2019, Building 17, 8F

Time	Activity	Room
8:30 - 8:45	Integrated English Program 101: Strong	COFFEE Room 808
8:45 - 9:15	Results of the X-reading Interviews and Surveys	Room 17-819
9:15 - 9:20	Workshop Session	

Archives
Select Month [v]
English Across ACU
Global Festa 2019 - Learning about the World
UNHCR WILL2LIVE 映画祭 2019
Ocean Day Event at AGU
Lecture on Improving Japan's Economy
tag cloud

Fig. 4: The homepage of the IE Website showing the schedule for the IE Program teachers' orientation.

Home Courses Teachers Texts & Documents FAQ

IE Program Textbooks, Guidelines, and Handbooks

DOWNLOADS FOR STUDENTS

2018 IE Core Writing Textbook - Still current (PDF) / DOC

2018 Academic Writing Textbook (PDF) / DOC (Most up-to-date edition)

Academic Skills Student Book (PDF) / (DOC) (to be updated by end of summer)

REFERENCE GUIDES FOR TEACHERS

2019 English Department Handbook (PDF) / (DOC)

2019 IE Core Scope & Sequence (PDF) / (DOC)

Fig. 5: In-house produced course textbooks and teaching manuals available for download as MS Word docs and as PDFs.

The website also features brief biographies of IEP teachers and messages they might want to impart to incoming freshmen (Fig. 6). Descriptions of the (required) elective classes in the program, IE Seminars, are available on the website under the “Courses” tab (Fig 7).

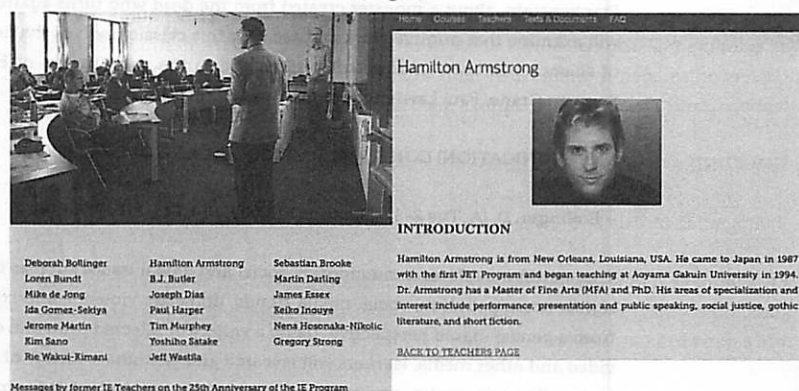


Fig. 6: Students may click on the name of their IE Teachers to learn more about them.

By clicking on the “Texts and Documents” tab and scrolling to the bottom, links can be found to PDFs of every article published in *Thought Currents in English Literature*, the English Department’s professional journal. This particular resource on the program website is a very special one. Unusually, among academic departments, the English Department encourages adjunct faculty to contribute to this publication and therefore provides them with an important opportunity for personal and professional development. These articles go back to 1994 and relate to many aspects of the IEP as well as to the professional interests of adjunct and full-time faculty. Articles published in other journals or books, by both full-time and adjunct faculty, on any topic connected to the IEP, or that the program might benefit from, are also available as PDFs on that page (<http://www.aogaku-daku.org/thought-currents/>). Also included are exceptional contributions from past and present adjunct faculty, such as Nicole Takeda’s guidelines for doing the small group discussion, teaching literary terms, and conducting student presentations.

(LITERATURE) FRANKENSTEIN: THROUGH MYTH AND MEDIA

– Armstrong, H. (A, Tue 2-3) [Same as in F14, F15, F16, F17, F18]

This class will examine the literature that sprang from Mary Shelley's gothic novel, *Frankenstein*, about a monster created from the dead who turns against humanity. We will examine that original work and see how this classic myth of the destructive power of science has been interpreted in films and in the short stories of Herman Melville, Stephen Crane, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, and Hanns Heinz Ewers.

(COMMUNICATION) CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL AND GLOBAL ISSUES

– Bollinger, D. (A, Tue 2-3) [Same as F12, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18]

This seminar explores contemporary social and global issues such as fair trade, animal rights, noise pollution, social media trends, domestic violence and conflict resolution from a gender-based perspective. Using a variety of selected print and online resources, video and other media, learners will research and examine a variety of student-selected topics through group projects and presentations, student-led group discussions, interviews and individual research projects. Throughout the semester, students will keep a language journal to record their ideas and opinions, to reflect on issues explored in class, and to acquire and practice using new vocabulary related to class topics. In lieu of a final exam, students will prepare a final portfolio containing project reports, group and individual presentations and a self-assessment of their learning in the course.

Fig. 7: IE Seminar short descriptions are available to help students make their selections and to allow teachers who are candidates to create seminars of their own view what others are doing.

IIIb. Project to establish a program-wide plagiarism policy and database for student writing: Creating the groundwork for a plagiarism detection system

Another use of technology in the program was meant to address a problem that had always been in the background but was exacerbated by the copy and paste potential of the Internet. After teachers in the IE Program, particularly Deborah Bollinger, reported an increased incidence of plagiarism—not only in “Core” book reports, “IE Writing” essays, and “Academic Writing” theses, but also in student journals and “IE Active Listening” listening logs—we decided to survey the attitudes toward, and experiences of, plagiarism among

the students (nearly 400 of them) and teachers in the IE Program. These online surveys were administered from the end of 2013 to the beginning of 2014. Results confirmed our perception that plagiarism is not practiced by the majority of students but it was found to be a significant problem that needed to be addressed in a systematic way to ensure academic integrity and fairness (Bollinger & Dias, 2015).

Thanks to a grant from the Information Media Center of Aoyama Gakuin University, the development of a database of student essays began in 2014 and the groundwork for an online system to detect plagiarism in the essays collected in that database began the following year. As of October 2019, the database contains approximately 10,000 student essays. The system allows teachers and administrators in the English Department to check the writing of students who have submitted written work against a collection of previously submitted ones using word strings in order to determine instances of plagiarism. The system also facilitates Google searches for potentially

UPLOAD A FILE

Please remove your name and student number from your document before uploading to ensure privacy.

Attach file

Browse... No file selected.

Microsoft word files only

Course

IE Writing III

Semester

2020 (Spring)

Teacher's name

B) Butler

Academic year (学年)

2nd

Experience abroad (海外経験)

Lived abroad for 1 - 3 years

Upload date

11/10/2019

Upload file

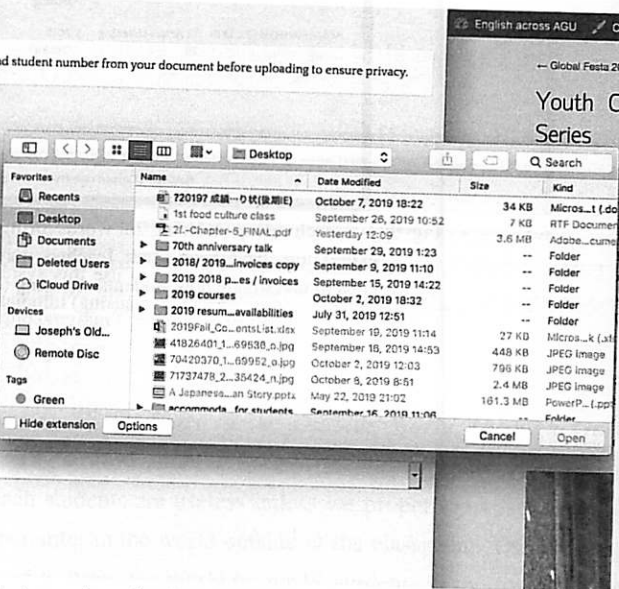
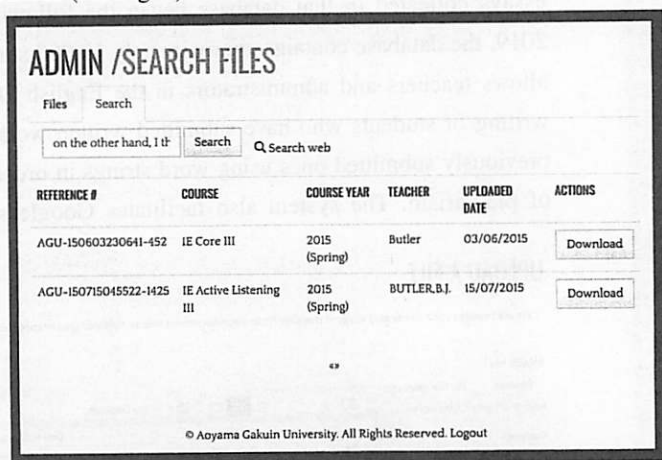


Fig. 8: Page that students use for uploading their written work to the database of student writing. Students browse for their essay on their local disk and upload it.

plagiarized content using the same word strings. The process begins with students uploading their essays on a web page that gives them straightforward instructions (see Fig. 8).

The students are issued a reference number for their uploaded essay which they later submit to their IE teacher with the hard copy of their work. The teacher then has access to the students' work on paper and electronically. By typing in a string of words that appear in a particular essay, other documents with an identical string of words can be detected and compared for overall degree of commonality in order to determine if a case for plagiarism can be made (see Fig. 9).



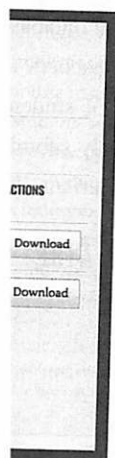
The screenshot shows a web interface titled "ADMIN /SEARCH FILES". It has two tabs: "Files" and "Search". The "Search" tab is active, displaying a search bar with the text "on the other hand, I th" and a "Search" button. Below the search bar is a table with the following columns: REFERENCE #, COURSE, COURSE YEAR, TEACHER, UPLOADED DATE, and ACTIONS. The table contains two rows of data. The first row has the reference number AGU-150603230641-452, course IE Core III, course year 2015 (Spring), teacher Butler, and upload date 03/06/2015. The second row has the reference number AGU-150715045522-1425, course IE Active Listening III, course year 2015 (Spring), teacher BUTLER, B.J., and upload date 15/07/2015. Each row has a "Download" button in the ACTIONS column. At the bottom of the page, there is a copyright notice: "© Aoyama Gakuin University. All Rights Reserved. Logout".

REFERENCE #	COURSE	COURSE YEAR	TEACHER	UPLOADED DATE	ACTIONS
AGU-150603230641-452	IE Core III	2015 (Spring)	Butler	03/06/2015	Download
AGU-150715045522-1425	IE Active Listening III	2015 (Spring)	BUTLER, B.J.	15/07/2015	Download

Fig. 9: A search using a string of words brings up essays in which those words or expressions have been used. Teachers may also use this system toward pedagogic ends to investigate how students are using (or misusing) idiomatic expressions.

process begins with
a straightforward

their uploaded essay
copy of their work.
and electronically.
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use for plagiarism



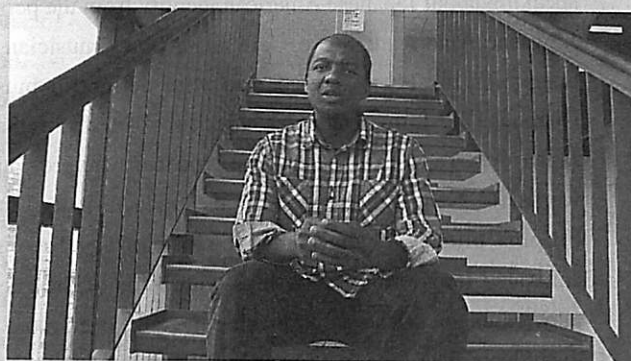
h those words or
toward pedagogic
expressions.

This project has been part of a comprehensive approach to student plagiarism that has included creating more effective materials to instruct students in the skills of properly citing sources, paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting; devising a plagiarism policy that may serve as a model for other departments of the university; and making available video tutorials (Fig. 10) that both warn of the disadvantages and dangers of plagiarism while constructively informing viewers of how it can be avoided (Dias, 2015; 2016).

TEACHERS INTRODUCE THE IE PROGRAM'S PLAGIARISM POLICY

Posted on March 31, 2016 by Jodias

These are instructors who teach for the English Department at Aoyama Gakuin University announcing the plagiarism policy of the Integrated English Program.



You can read the complete plagiarism policy by clicking [HERE](#).

Fig. 10: Video available on the IE Program Website that shows IE Writing teachers explaining the program's plagiarism policy.

IV. Connecting IE Students to the Outside World Through Guest Speakers

Our efforts to teach students are useless unless we properly prepare them for what they will encounter in the world outside of the classroom. Therefore, we have always strived to bring the world to our IE students in the form of well-chosen and inspiring guest speakers, hailing (so far) from Australia, the UK,

the United States, South Africa, and France. Each semester we strive to hold, at least, two plenary talks for gatherings of IE Program Core and IE Seminar students whose classes are scheduled at the same time as these special events. Teachers are informed long enough in advance for them to inform their students about the upcoming guest speaker and prepare them with activities, readings, and film clip viewings that correspond to the themes of the talk. We typically have 150-250 students and teachers (and sometimes guest audience members from outside the university) in attendance at the talks.

These lectures are always delivered in English although English is the lingua franca for some of the speakers. Guest speakers we have featured in the program have included Vickie Skorji, the Lifeline Director of TELL; Professor Curtiss Takada Rooks of Loyola Marymount University (Los Angeles) speaking about Japanese American identity from the perspective of an African/Japanese American; Steve Gardner, a blues musician who lectures on the history of the blues interspersed with delightful musical interludes; Eric Ouannes, the former General Director of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Japan; Airi Yamawaki, a Japanese producer who grew up in South Africa and works for NGOs aiming to stop the trade in ivory; and Marinel Ubaldo, a Filipina climate change activist close in age to our students. We have cultivated long-term relationships with some of the guest speakers that have allowed us to collaborate in making the talks even more useful and accessible to students. The Japanese Canadian filmmaker, Linda Ohama, has been one of our most frequent, versatile, and popular speakers. She speaks about her current projects, already completed films, or, more generally, about the life of an artist and filmmaker. The IE co-coordinators work with the guest speakers to make sure their speed of delivery, choice of vocabulary, and audiovisual supports are appropriate so that the majority of students will understand the talk without difficulty and the weaker students will, at least, catch the main points and some of the supporting detail.

The talks are always followed by lively Q&A sessions and feedback sheets are distributed at the end of the sessions so speakers (and teachers, as well as program coordinators) can ascertain how much students learned from

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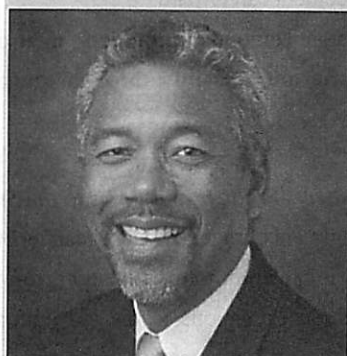
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the session. The students may also write down questions they did not have time (or were too shy) to ask. Perusal of these feedback sheets has shown that students are highly appreciative of the talks and they often take away from them more than their teachers expected. The questions noted on the feedback sheets are sent to the guest speakers and their responses are later posted on the IE Website. [A particularly good example of this can be found in a file attached to a blog entry (Dias, 2019) following up on a lecture by Professor Rooks of Loyola Marymount, who responded to audience members' questions in great depth.]

Talk on Japanese American History and Identity

Posted on May 7, 2019 by jodias



Dr. Curtiss Takada Rooks's lecture will incorporate Japanese American history and experience through the personal lens of his wife's family (She is a Sansei; third generation Japanese American), his family (an interracial "War Bride" family) and his family intersecting multiple communities within and outside of the Japanese American community. Ample time will be provided to interact with Dr. Rooks, so bring plenty of questions.

EVENT: Talk on "A Japanese America Story: Resilience, Retention and Revitalization"

WHEN: May 23, 2019 (Thursday), 1:20 PM ~ 14:50 PM (3rd period)

WHERE: Aoyama Gakuin University; Aoyama Campus; Building 9, Room 940 (On 4th Floor)

[Click here.](#)

LANGUAGE: English

TARGET AUDIENCE: All English Department IE students and any other interested students and faculty. Individuals from outside of the university are also welcome.

Fig. 11: A blog entry announcing a guest lecture especially intended for IE Program students.

A blog dedicated to announcing on-campus or outside opportunities to connect with the world through English (<http://www.agu4u.org/> — Fig. 11) is used to promote these talks and the IE Google Group has also been useful for this purpose. Also, with the announcement of the basic “when and where” of the talk are suggestions for how teachers can best prepare their students for it and which of the IE themes, at their particular level, relate to the topics covered in the talk.

We have found that these talks have the potential to...

- Inspire and motivate students.
- Plug students in to what is going on outside the classroom.
- Provide a life-changing experience.
- Help students decide a career path.
- Aid non-profit organizations in promoting their cause and support them through honoraria and possibly through the recruitment of student volunteers.

V. *Bringing Students to Plays and Plays to the Students*

We have always strongly encouraged IE Core teachers to take their students to plays performed by local community theater groups, trying as much as possible to connect these excursions to the curriculum by providing scripts and using a “reader’s theatre” approach to familiarize students with characters and plots. The Tokyo International Players (TIP), founded in 1896, draws its talent mainly from the Tokyo foreign community, including from among the IEP’s adjunct faculty. Students are particularly motivated to attend plays that their teachers have directed or appear in as actors. In 2007, one of our veteran teachers, Hamilton Armstrong, directed Bernard Pomerance’s “The Elephant Man” (Kenrick, 2007). As it was performed during our autumn term, many students and faculty members attended after spending the previous few weeks viewing scenes from the film version and performing parts of it in class.

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Drama "THE GOOD PERSON OF SZECHWAN"

Posted on September 17, 2018 by jodias

The Tokyo International Players invite you to enjoy their production of the comic play "THE GOOD PERSON OF SZECHWAN" (written by Bertolt Brecht, translated by John Willett, and directed by Graig Russell) from October 18th-21st at the Bonbon Theater in Nakano (Nakano St. on JR and Tozai lines). There will be five performances in total over four days.

2018年 10月18日 (Thu) - 21日 (Sun)

Nakano Theatre BONBON

Fig. 12: Promoting The Tokyo International Players' production of Bertolt Brecht's "The Good Person of Szechwan" on the IEP's website.

More recently, Black Stripe Theater (Parham, n.d.), cofounded by one of our adjunct instructors, Chris Parham, has staged adaptations of such classics as Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for assemblies of IEP students on campus.

We look forward to hosting more of their productions in the future as they help to bring literature to life for our increasingly visually oriented student body. These adaptations serve as bridges to the more challenging offerings that Black Stripe Theater has brought to Tokyo through their more than 20 productions of modern, contemporary and classic plays, including the works of Ionesco, Pinter, and Mamet. Our students also have the potential to gain valuable experience by working with either Black Stripe Theater or the Tokyo International Players as actors, backstage crew, or in front-of-house roles.



Fig. 13: Chris Parham and fellow actors perform a scene from Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" at AGU's Honda Memorial Auditorium for an assembly of IEP students.

Concluding words: The Voice of IE Teachers

This account of the history of the IE Program would not be complete without hearing the voices of adjunct instructors who have taught in the program and made valuable contributions to it over the years, some of them serving in it for most of its existence. Teachers in the IE program are carefully selected for their experience, their ability to think on their feet, and to adjust course content to suit the needs of an ever-changing student population.

Course evaluations show that most teachers are doing all of this beautifully, covering the basic features of the courses, while providing students with important value-added elements that are difficult to write into a curriculum: things like having the students feel listened to, sharing their own experiences with life and learning, giving students a passion to study more and open their hearts, assisting students in expressing themselves (which as we know, isn't just a language issue), and helping students learn the difficult balance between their new-found freedoms—some living independently for the first time—and the responsibilities of the adult world that they are

entering. Here are comments from some of the most dedicated of the adjunct instructors, all now retired:

Small Class Size — Joyce Taniguchi

“Quite a long while ago, I was already working for Aoyama when I asked to be transferred into the English Department’s IE program. I had heard that its smaller class size made it more possible to be the kind of teacher many would like to be. I have always been especially interested in the teaching of writing, and small classes are best suited to that skill. This emphasis on small class size is one of the strengths of the IE program. Teachers can take the time to give meaningful feedback to students, which will facilitate them in achieving the goals set for each class.”

A Coherent and Cohesive Program — Rachael Barat

“It was working at Aoyama that showed me what an English program could be. Not a scattering of unrelated classes that leaves the less able floundering in panic and fear, but a cohesive step by step development of skills. Students get good input with the knowledge that they are on a path to improvement; teachers know they are members of a team and developers know that their work will be put into action.”

Importance of Extracurricular Activities — Yoko Wakui

“I would like the IE Program to continue to encourage theater going. After going to the theater, the class atmosphere transforms radically, so the rest of the semester can be dramatically better. Students become more motivated than before, and above all, they come to enjoy using English.”



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Adjunct Instructors Valued and Their Ideas Incorporated Into the Program — Mariko Yokokawa

“Throughout the year I felt like a respected and valued part of the program. The opportunity to present my own research and experience as well as to listen to the innovative ideas of others made me feel like I was an important part of the program. The party at the end of the school year added to the impression that all of us were necessary and valuable in the program.”

A Program Where Teachers Can Become the Best Version of Themselves — Eiko Asoh

“A VERY GOOD PROGRAM. So I count myself lucky that I could teach in the IE program. It was a place of learning for me, where I have learned how to teach and how to prepare myself to teach.”

Getting Inspiration from Colleagues and High Quality Students — Melvin Andrade

“I am grateful to have had the opportunity to teach in this program. The coordinators and my colleagues have been an inspiring group of people and a pleasure to work with. Over the years, I have been fortunate to have taught some of the best groups of students of my career.”

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