

Make a Contribution to ATJ

Like most other nonprofits and professional organizations, ATJ needs all the help we can get in these challenging economic times. The Association has an ambitious program of publications and activities that support the Japanese language education field, and we appreciate the contributions that more than 100 individual members and several institutions have made to our Endowment fund since it was established.

The Endowment Fund now contains more than \$27,000, and we hope to increase it to at least twice that amount over the next year or two. The Endowment funds are saved and invested for a modest annual return, so that they can grow and continue to nurture the organization. There are several ways you can contribute:

1. Visit the "Donations" page on our website (www.aatj.org/donate.html) to see how you can assist the Association to serve members, promote professional development, and offer scholarships to students for study abroad in Japan.

2. Become a lifetime member. The Board has decided to place lifetime membership fees into the interest-bearing Endowment account so that they continue to support ATJ for its lifetime as well as yours.

3. Remember ATJ with a bequest. We have received several donations from past members through their wills, and we would be happy to tell you how you can include ATJ as a beneficiary of your estate.

For more information on contributing, please contact the ATJ office.

Bridging Project News

Bridging Scholarships Awarded for 2010-II

Ninety-six undergraduate students from colleges and universities across the United States have been named recipients of Bridging Scholarships for Study Abroad in Japan. The winners will receive awards of up to \$4,000 to assist with their living

ことばのコーナー

クラスの恥はかきすて “When in the classroom abandon all embarrassment and focus on learning”

Perhaps you have asked yourself pedagogical questions such as, “Is the task which I am providing students in the classroom meaningful?” or “Do students need to interact in Japanese in order to accomplish the task?” Language teachers’ vital concern is students’ progress in the target language, Japanese in our case. As educators, we tend to consider language learning a conscious form of knowledge building, which includes learning grammar and rules. As a result, we are likely to believe that we should teach students grammar and vocabulary explicitly. Furthermore, we may view students’ errors negatively. Students’ difficulties in conveying their messages in Japanese, however, may relate to the development of interactional competence, which is achieved through interactions with peers and teachers within the classroom setting. In one way or another, L2 acquisition is similar to L1 acquisition, and language learning is a developmental process that involves a great deal of error, which should be seen as a sign of reorganizing knowledge. We should always bear in mind that language learners are active participants rather than passive observers of classroom activities, testing their own hypotheses about the target language, even if they fail to provide an audible answer or raise their hand in the classroom. Recall the expression 旅の恥はかきすて, which in translation is something like “The freely moving traveler can easily abandon feelings of embarrassment incurred on the journey.” Applying this expression to the classroom, then, we may be able to say クラスの恥はかきすて, which in English might be “When in the classroom abandon all feelings of embarrassment and focus on learning.” We should keep in mind (1) the importance of pragmatic development, which unfortunately is not always emphasized in traditional classrooms, and (2) the importance of co-construction among peers and teachers (the collaborative construction of sentences in conversation through which different individuals become co-creators of a turn at talk). Overall, what is important is that language proficiency develops through the process of internalizing the language of social interaction.

Masahiko Minami

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Do you have a word or phrase in Japanese that informs your teaching? Please share them with other teachers of Japanese. Submit your essay (maximum of 300 words) to atj@colorado.edu.

expenses while they study in Japan during the 2010-11 academic year. Since 1999, 1,055 scholarships have been awarded by the US-Japan Bridging Foundation to students studying abroad in Japan.

The Japan-US Friendship Commission, an independent federal agency promoting mutual understanding between the United States and Japan, in an effort to highlight public/private partnerships, initiated the Bridging Project scholarship program and established a 501(c)(3)

private foundation, the US-Japan Bridging Foundation (www.bridgingfoundation.org), to accept contributions.

ATJ administers the Bridging Scholarship program. For their tireless work on the committee that selected the 2010-11 recipients, we are grateful to the following members: Masako Beecken, Mahua Bhattacharya, Holly Didi-Ogren, Joan Ericson, Pamela Fields, Janet Ikeda, Akiko Kakutani, Mariko Karatsu, Masaaki Kamiya, Hiroaki Kawamura,

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