

Journal and Proceedings
of the
Gender Awareness in Language Education
Special Interest Group

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Editorial Foreword

Thank you for reading this year's GALE Journal, a volume that observes another expansion in the editorial team as Kristie Collins and Aaron Hahn take on co-editorship of the journal and Kathleen Brown is welcomed on as associate editor. In this issue, we are pleased to offer three peer-reviewed research articles, an interview with Gerry Yokota—GALE's sponsored plenary presenter from the 2014 JALT International Conference—and three resource reviews. Each of the papers and reviews explores different aspects of the various threads that make up the mission of GALE: gender, language, and language instruction—particularly as they relate to the Japanese educational context.

Two of the articles examine the use of language (both visual and textual) in the creation of artistic works. Gwyn Helverson examines the creations of Yanagi Miwa—a photographer, performance artist, and video artist based in Kyoto. Miwa's work focuses on women's representations, and especially on the experience of womanhood in Japan—as it is and how she imagines it could be. Helverson pulls together a wide variety of critical voices on Miwa's work within which she deftly positions her own perspective. In the process of doing so, Helverson depicts not only the complexity of Yanagi's work, but also the range of often-conflicting opinions Yanagi receives from art critics.

Utilizing a different linguistic and artistic slant, Herrad Heselhaus looks at the works of Elfriede Jelinek, an Austrian author who has written dramatic texts related to the 2011 Tohoku earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident. Heselhaus describes the texts for those of us unfamiliar with them, and analyzes the way that Jelinek uses *Antigone* as the framing device for her emotional reflection/investigation of the disaster. Furthermore, Heselhaus discusses how she utilized these pieces in Japanese undergraduate and graduate German literature and culture classes. By showing us both the difficulty that students have with the texts, as well as the benefits they achieve in comparing German/Western "rhetoric of protest" with Japanese critical writing, we can obtain insight into ways to utilize these or other texts that are culturally distant from our students in useful ways.

Our third research article focuses directly on the classroom. Sara Hendricks describes a research project undertaken to determine if direct instruction on gender issues would have an effect on the tendency of university students to express or reject gender stereotypes, as well as how they personally relate to issues of gender inequality in Japan. While her findings question the likelihood that explicit instruction on gender issues have any substantive effect (at least in the short term), there are hopeful notes with at least some of the students. Of additional benefit to us as teachers is Hendricks's description of several of her gender-related classroom activities—something our members regularly ask for.

As a final paper contribution, Gerry Yokota's piece provides an overview of her plenary speech from last year's JALT International Conference, which was sponsored by GALE. She presents the speech through the framing device of an interview, allowing those of us who were absent the opportunity to get a glimpse of what she covered. Yokota's presentation and paper weave together three different ideas. First, she talks about her personal experiences with the imposition of gender and racial binaries as she attempted to negotiate a more complex identity while growing up. Second, she examines a few ways that gender operates in *anime*, as well as how she uses anime in her classes to discuss gender issues. Finally, she draws on the work of Susan Cain, who writes about the intersection between the introvert-extrovert binary and gender. In each part, Yokota asks us to question how binaries operate and limit our choices and how we perceive ourselves and are perceived by others.

The volume's resource reviews also engage with a rousing array of topics related to issues in gender and education. Including an examination of the emotional impact and repercussions of mobbing in the workplace, an appraisal of an anthology on queer-identified teachers and performativity in primary and secondary education, and a practical assessment of a gender studies resource textbook, these reviews address issues that speak to all of us as gender and language scholars, instructors, activists, and allies. Fiona Creaser starts off the review section with a critical response to Noa Davenport, Ruth Distler Schwartz & Gail Pursell Elliot's *Mobbing: Emotional abuse in the American workplace* (1999), and considers the text's utility beyond a strictly American work environment. The book's contents examine the definition of mobbing and why it occurs; its effect on people and ways they can cope; its effect on organizations; and the legal and social implications of mobbing—all issues that can be relevant in Japan and Japanese workplaces.

Shifting to the educational workplace context, Carey Finn-Maeda reviews Emily M. Gray and Anne Harris's (eds.), *Queer teachers, identity and performativity* (2014), a five-chapter volume that examines the professional identities and experiences of LGBTQ teachers in Australia, Ireland, the UK, and the USA. The anthology delves into issues such as the politics of visibility; the extent to which inclusive policies for students extend to teachers; and the ways that positive change in political and social fields is able—or unable—to translate to progressive change in schools. The review section wraps up with Gwyn Helverson's inspection of Mel Reiff Hill and Jay Mays's gender-related resource book, *The Gender Book* (2014). Released as both an online, downloadable, resource book and also as a hardcover textbook, this text provides discussion points, cultural and historical snapshots, and games and surveys that engage learners in gender studies in a fun and accessible way. Helverson helpfully provides various suggestions on ways in which readers can make use of *The Gender Book* in an EFL classroom, and offers recommendations for jumping-off points for both academic research projects and classroom activities.

While the editors believe that all of the reviews and articles in this journal will be valuable to both GALE members and other scholars, as we look forward to future years, we would like to draw especial attention to the content style of the last two papers. The GALE Journal has been and will continue to be a premier showcase for research related to gender and language, especially in relation to teaching in Japan. We believe, however, that the Journal can expand and accommodate more types of writing, and we've heard from our readers that they'd like to see additional topics and formats covered. So, as we look forward to receiving submissions for consideration for the 2016 issue, we'd like to encourage people to submit a wide variety of papers, including those that go beyond the traditional research paper genre. These can include conference papers, descriptions of teaching activities that have been successful for you (regardless of whether or not you have grounded them in a formal research process), reports on gender-related activities occurring in your institutions, and anything else you believe would be of interest to the GALE membership. Such submissions will still be subject to editorial review and approval, but, depending on their intent, may be exempt from the double-blind peer-reviewed process and could be published as other types of papers. Please check the GALE Journal website for further details on submission content guidelines.

Finally, Kristie and Aaron would like to thank our layout editor (and general advisor) Salem Hicks, our Japanese language editor, Reiko Yoshihara, our new associate editor Kathleen Brown, our team of reviewers, proofreaders, and everyone else who has helped make this issue possible. And we'd also like to encourage all of our members to join the journal team for 2016 and beyond. Not only will your participation ensure that the GALE Journal will continue to thrive, it will also hone your editorial skills and help our SIG to grow. We are certain that you will find the experience every bit as rewarding as it continues to be for us!

Kristie Collins
Aaron Hahn

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**Celestial navigation:
Japanese artist Yanagi Miwa's *My Grandmothers* series as positive agency for women**

**Gwyn Helverson
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Abstract

Yanagi Miwa is an internationally exhibited photographer, performance artist, and video artist whose feminist works seek to expand upon the limited roles for women in contemporary Japanese society. Her major series, *Elevator Girls*, is a commentary on the lost potential of women performing subservient roles, while *Fairy Tale* violently challenges traditional attitudes towards females. For the *My Grandmothers* series, the artist collaborated with volunteers on portraits representing their ideal lives 50 years in the future. The subjects' commentaries on their portraits are then analyzed: to what degree are gendered language markers employed in challenging or conforming to traditional Japanese concepts of womanhood? Similarly, Yanagi's application of aesthetics, including visual markers such as light, composition, and color in service of her overall vision, are examined. Although most critics continue to frame Yanagi within sexist and nationalistic binary systems, the artist is, in fact, attempting to transcend these frames via her artist/activist creations.

やなぎみわは世界的に活躍する写真家、パフォーマンスアーティスト、ビデオアーティストである。彼女のフェミニスト的な作品は現代日本社会の女性たちのために、限定された役割を広げることを探求している。彼女の作品「エレベーターガールズ」は従属的な役割をこなす女性たちの失われた能力を記録したものである。一方、「フェアリーテール」は女性に対する伝統的な態度に果敢に挑んでいる。「マイ グランドマザー」では、やなぎみわは50年後の理想敵な生活を創造している女性の肖像を集めた。その肖像の主体の記録は、ジェンダー化された言語がどの程度女性らしさという日本の伝統的な概念を形作ったり、挑戦したりする時に使用されるのかについて分析する。同様に、やなぎみわの芸術性—光、構造、色などの視覚—もまた分析される。多くの批評家が彼女の作品は性的、国家的二項対立の枠組みの中にあると言うけれど、彼女はアーティスト・アクティヴィスト的な創造を通してその枠組みを超えようとしている。

Historical Inquiry of Contemporary Feminist Art

This article on Yanagi Miwa's art as framework for female empowerment is informed by contemporary feminist art criticism drawn from both Japan and the West. Reilly describes the art historical canon as being white, Euro-American, privileged, "heterosexual and above all male" (Reilly in Helverson 2009, 59). Non-Western art has been deemed inferior (Mostow in Helverson, 2012, 59) with feminist art historians describing artists as being colonized by the Western art 'world' (Helverson, 2009). In order to counterbalance these biases, Chino and Kano recommended that power relationships between producers of art, commissioners, and consumers be studied (Kano in Helverson, 2009, 59). It is acknowledged here that applying the Western versus Japanese art historical binary may, in itself, reinforce the existence of that binary (Helverson, 2009, 60); yet, as this paper will show, female Japanese artists such as Yanagi are constantly judged according to these concepts. Japan's attempts to maintain its artistic cultural integrity despite Westernization (Helverson, 2009) have, in fact, solidified the gendered and cultured binary systems Yanagi attempts to overcome in her art. As will be explained, Yanagi repeatedly attempts to provide a framework for female empowerment in her imagery.

Confinement and Stagnation: The *Elevator Girls* Series: 1994-1999

Yanagi Miwa¹ was born in 1967 and raised in a stereotypical middle-class family of her generation: her father was absent and her older female relatives were Yanagi's primary caregivers (Elliot, 2009, 68-69). Since some were aspiring actors with a love for the female-only *Takarazuka* theatre (ART iT, 2009, 42), Yanagi seems to have become imbued with a love of performance as well. She chooses to be a resident of Kyoto rather than the art hub of Tokyo (Herbstreuth, 2004, 17), but despite this physical separation from the art 'world' (an ethnocentric term since the term 'world' still often refers to the Western-influenced art market in all its pomp),² Yanagi became well known outside of Japan for her elaborately-staged feminist photographs and performance projects.

During the boom of the 1980's Bubble Economy, hyper-consumeristic Japanese society projected its stereotype of ideal femininity onto a symbol of consumer worship: Japanese women of a certain look were employed as elevator operators in department stores. These women had to be young, beautiful, slim, and light-skinned with straight black-hair. They stood smiling like robots in Western-style uniforms to greet customers and guide them to their preferred floors for shopping. Via her digitally-altered photographs of groups of elevator girls staring at goods in eerie spaces (Image 1), Yanagi comments upon the isolated, repetitive, lifeless existence of "playing a role in a standardized society" as well as "the

pleasurable sensation of being part of a group” in a consumeristic culture “void of spirituality” (Wakasa & Yanagi, 2001, 1-4).



Image 1: *Elevator Series 3F*, 1998, 1800x2130mm, C-Print, plexiglass (All images courtesy of Yoshiko Isshiki Office)

According to many feminist theorists, the leisure-class housewife in Japan is entrapped by ‘golden handcuffs’: Japanese women are some of the best-educated in the world and many live in relative financial comfort, but they have been expected to conform to maternal stereotypes (Buckley, 1997) and, as such, continue to have low representation in political and economic arenas (World Economic Forum, 2014; Hicks, 2010; Skov and Moeran, 2003). Their energies and resources are said to be funneled into consumerism to prop up the postindustrial economy (McCormack, 1996). For some Westernized feminists, therefore, this series reinforces politically correct ideas about the commercialized oppression of Japanese women rather than acknowledges their agency (Favell, 2010).

However, Yanagi has stated that some male viewers told her they enjoyed the *Elevator Girls* series more than her other works (Gonzalez-Foerster, Obrist, & Yanagi, 2004), seemingly because the women depicted therein were stereotypically feminine and servile. Therefore, the series seems to have been well-received overseas, particularly in Western countries, for a reason completely opposite to Yanagi’s intent: the images were interpreted according to sexist Japanese stereotypes as well as Western fetishes about Japanese women

and concepts of Orientalism. Ueno (in Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 17) criticizes Orientalism as simply a binary construct of Western minds, but, as this example shows, it may still be a dominant version of reality in the Western-centric art world in which Yanagi competes.

Nonetheless, the *Elevator Girls* transcend reality: the depictions are figurative yet altered into infinite repetitions via computer graphics. Often, the elevator girls are surrounded by and stare into shining, circular shapes as if longing for a spiritual womb, or they stand lost at the end of a tunnel, not taking the opportunities for escape, a kind of possibility of rebirth that exists visually in Yanagi's compositions. The palette is usually even, except when the artist depicts red uniforms dissolving into a blood-like puddle on an elevator floor. This image, called *The White Casket* (1994), is one of the first in which the color red is a symbol for death. While Yanagi may in fact have intended mortality as a theme for this series, she surely did not intend for *Elevator Girls* to be fetishized and 'Orientalized' by viewers and critics.

Rebellion: The Fairy Tale Series: 2004-2006

Yanagi depicts well-known fairy tales, mostly from the West, in this black and white studio photo series. She states that such tales are "deeply imbedded" in "girls' trauma" as "a kind of historical DNA" (Okabe, 2004, 1). Notably, as part of her theme of diversity, Yanagi employed bicultural Caucasian-Japanese children as models. One typically violent image shows both the grandmother and Little Red Riding Hood after having been swallowed whole by the big bad wolf. In the traditional Grimm Brothers' version, the story ends horrifyingly. Yet in Yanagi's version, death is transformed into life. The beast's stomach becomes a womb since the two females are emerging from it reborn. In a similar fashion, Yanagi deliberately reverses stereotypes of the old, evil witch, and the young, innocent girl in additional works based on *Sleeping Beauty*, *Rapunzel*, and *Snow White* (Yanagi, 2007).

The elaborateness of each photo in the *Fairy Tale* series is certainly indicative of Yanagi's stature. She is a successful artist in a wealthy country meeting the demands for the kinds of art favored by the art 'world.' In addition, with her feminization of traditional sexist fairy tales, Yanagi confronts contemporary Japanese stereotypes about young girls as well. Yanagi has turned *shoujo*, or young female heroines of *manga* and *anime* with their fetishized innocence (Elliot, 2009, 68),³ into assertive players in their own worlds. The *Elevator Girls* were lifeless and trapped, maternal and sexualized servants of consumeristic culture. The females in the *Fairy Tale* series; however, are in rampant rebellion against their usual limiting roles of youthful purity and aged evil.

A major motif seen in Yanagi's images is a female covered by a tent who has the hands of an elderly woman but the body of a young girl (Image 2). Yanagi says of the tent woman, "Monsters are anomalies on the edge of society, and that exemption from social constraints in

a way mirrors the freedom of children and the elderly” (Maerkele, 2009, 3). Tents are temporary, mobile, and changeable, yet to Yanagi, they also symbolize a contradiction: they are “closed spaces...like the world she finds herself in” (Uematsu, 2009, 123). This tent woman is reminiscent of the historical *camera obscura* used in the early era of photography in which the photographer remains hidden behind the camera under a dark cloth (Yanagi and Pizan, 2007, 70).



Image 2: *Fairy Tale Series*, Untitled I, 2004, 1400x1000mm, Gelatin Silver Print

The studio space of the *Fairy Tale* series indicates the inner workings of the mind, since it is obvious to the viewer that despite the elaborate sets of sand, snow, hearths, and so on, the site of these photographs is the very same corner of the same room: Yanagi is the actual ‘tent woman’ photographing these scenes. Yanagi has said, “this series is the closest to my essence,” because issues of dissatisfaction with the self in the form of negativity and violence are represented there (ART iT, 2009d, 70). Her comments hint at the binary of the so-called schizophrenic age, the affliction of the modern era. If Freud and the Victorians, and therefore the Meiji Era (1868-1912), were hysterical, then we are schizophrenics (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 7): a rigid, rule-bound society has become one of black-and-white binaries, yet neither is sufficient nor satisfactory. In fact, Yanagi states ironically that hiding herself as a tent

woman is actually an attempt to show herself (*jibun no koto wo miseru you na ki ga shitan desu kedo...*) (Yanagi *et al*, 2004, 4).

Fantastical Contemporary ‘Reality’: The My Grandmothers Series: 1999-present

“The more grandmothers there are, the better.”

– Yanagi Miwa (Niwa, 2009, 62)

First in a magazine, then on-line, Yanagi advertised for volunteers who would imagine their ideal life 50 years in the future (Grigoteit & Hutte, 2004, 4). She says that while most people wrote to her about stereotypical matriarchal roles, Yanagi chose those who were opinionated, nonconformist, and therefore intrigued her. She deliberately selected participants who envisioned lives of “power,” “adventure,” with “strong wills and free expression of emotion” (Uematsu, 2009, 123). When first glancing at these portraits, a viewer may think that the participants are actual elderly women. In fact, they range from age 19 to women in their 40’s. They are not only women, since Yanagi accepted a few male volunteers for the series. One commonality was positivity of vision—each participant had to believe that she or he would still be alive in 50 years— to make these images reality (Yanagi *et al*, 2004).⁴

Accordingly, Yanagi became a kind of counselor, talking each participant through their visions and giving them representation as personal totems. She notes that she attempted to influence the participants according to her personal ideals of womanhood during these consultations; “I cannot deny that I lead my subjects in the direction I wish to take them” (Uematsu, 2009, 123). As in *Fairy Tale*, “in the *Grandmothers* pieces, there are not truly evil or villainess old women ...That’s because both the models and I worked on the basis of a positive approach in which we thought people could start their lives afresh and continue to grow even after becoming old women” (ART iT, 2009d, 70). The series currently consists of 25 images, but Yanagi says she will continue with it indefinitely (ART iT, 2009d, 70). In addition, each image includes accompanying text written by each participant, making for fascinating parallels and contrasts between image and language. Yanagi’s success is again evident with this series: the elaborate sets and texts require tremendous human and financial resources, and, significantly, time, to complete.

In another example of Yanagi’s blending of Western and Japanese influences, she chose to use the English loan words for ‘my’ and ‘grandmothers’ for the Japanese title of this series, read as *mai gurandomaza-zu*. To native English-speaking Westerners, the title may imply blood relations only. Given Yanagi’s ultimate theme of creating a ‘family’ of female spiritual guides, she seems to use the word ‘grandmothers’ in the traditional Japanese sense: any

elderly woman can be respectfully addressed as ‘grandmother’ in public, and in the past, all were expected to guide the younger generation with their wisdom.



Image 3: *My Grandmothers/YUKA*, 2000, 1600x1600mm, C-Print, plexiglass

At first glance, the woman in the portrait entitled *YUKA* appears to be confronting limiting stereotypes as a hedonistic grandmother (Image 3). In the accompanying text, *YUKA* writes that she has given up her role as a biological grandmother to be passively driven around by a rich boy-toy companion who is in pursuit of his dreams. The image uses one of Yanagi’s typical compositions: the grandmother is front and central, her form along with the sidecar making a triangular shape, while the male figure is peripheral and blurred. The vertical lines of the bridge contrast with the horizon line in the distance so that the road behind the couple is visible, but the progress of their journey is yet to be determined. The horizon line is also tilted to throw what would be a stable composition off-balance and indicate the forward motion of the pair. *YUKA* says that she has left her ‘real’ family to be reincarnated, and in the Japanese version, her companion thinks that *YUKA*’s laugh reminds him of a *megami*, or goddess of good fortune.

This image of *YUKA* breaks all conventions associated with docile Japanese grandmothers. Her hair is dyed bright red, she is smoking, and she wears a tight, lacy, low-cut shirt. Her head is thrown back and she guffaws open-mouthed, a gesture formerly taboo

for polite women in Japan who covered their mouths with their hands when giggling. YUKA also has a glittering diamond on her front tooth. Yanagi states that these shocking and humorous details, which garnered this image much mainstream attention as an atypical grandmother, were the participant's ideas (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 2).



Image 4: *My Grandmothers/MIKA*, 2000, 1600x1600mm, C-Print, plexiglass

Another image in the series presents a woman called MIKA (Image 4). MIKA is the central figure surrounded by her pupils in a rocky sea. Her figure appears as a triangular shape in the foreground to contrast with the high horizon line, thereby symbolizing the power and isolation of the maternal leader. Yanagi has chosen to use red here as well, although not in the negative sense of destruction as in *Elevator Girls*, but in what MIKA would say is a life-affirming vision of the future.

Yanagi says she is critical of this kind of “pure, stout-hearted, motherly” female (Niwa, 2009, 59) made popular in *manga* and *anime* such as those by Miyazaki Hayao, the internationally renowned animator of films such as *Nausicaa* and *Princess Mononoke* (Yanagi et al, 2004).⁵ While some consider Miyazaki's heroines to be feminist role models (McCarthy, 1999), Yanagi says,

I just don't care for the girls in Miyazaki films (laughs). At some point people started referring to his work as Japan's national anime, the people's anime, but I find the idea that children might be influenced by the extraordinarily maternal girls he chooses as heroines a little dubious. Parents need to explain to their children that those just happen to be the kind of girls Mr. Miyazaki favors. (ART iT, 2009b, 055)

Despite Yanagi's disavowal of 'Miyazaki-type' females, and her claim that she tried to influence participants according to her own feminist vision, this "significant" type (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 1-2) appears numerous times in the *My Grandmothers* series. Ueno (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004) also rejects the Miyazaki-inspired image of a return-to-the-Stone-Age-future in which there are no men, but women are somehow going to reproduce on their own to rebuild society. This segregated fantasy world seems representative of the segregation of gender roles in contemporary Japanese society. In fantasy, some of the grandmothers in this series care for large broods of children. In reality, Japan continues to have one of the lowest birth rates in the world (Ochiai, 2005), which Ueno says has apocalyptic implications (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 8).

However, the artist's self-portrait in *My Grandmothers* depicts her in a similar 'caretaker of the children' image: MIWA herds a group of children across a flat, barren, wintry landscape with a fearful expression on her face as she turns to look back into the camera. Yanagi comments that her generation, although raised during flush times with high expectations, now has a sense of negativity because of economic decline, the Kobe earthquake, the rise of the deadly AUM cult, and so forth (Yanagi *et al*, 2004, 8-9). Nonetheless, Yanagi seems to have not given up on a brighter future in the distance. The clear sky at the top of MIWA's image toward which the children are heading may signify hope, literally, on the horizon.

The portrait entitled HYONEE depicts a woman of Korean descent, living in Japan, who imagines becoming a media mogul. The text accompanying her portrait therefore reads as a resume of education and career success, although it must be noted that the system she envisions is a continuation of the one currently in existence. As the "oldest and first foreign woman head of a television station in Japan," HYONEE's portrait is a reflection of the sexism, racism, and ageism she has overcome to achieve her position. She is the dramatic focal point in the center of her own world, demanding the attention of not only the busy assistants, but also respect from the viewer of the artwork below. The color red is a visual accent here; the chair, shoes, and lipstick enliven the palette. Whereas some of the other grandmothers seem infantile in their images of hedonistic lives devoid of responsibility, HYONEE is remarkably adult. Discrimination still exists against persons of HYONEE's background in Japan in another manifestation of postcolonialism (Fukuoka, 1996), which, in

combination with discrimination for being a woman, makes HYONEE's vision remarkable in this series.



Image 5: *My Grandmothers*/HYONEE, 2000, 1600x1600mm, C-Print, plexiglass



Image 6: *My Grandmothers*/AI, 2003, 1800x2400mm, C-Print, plexiglass

As a final example from this series, the composition for fortune-teller AI's portrait is unique, given that her outlook differs from the other grandmothers (Image 6). AI may be a traditional female figure offering spiritual guidance, but she is intensely cynical. In the text accompanying her portrait, Ai claims that the only reason she is searching for her successor is so that the next generation of women and girls can be mesmerized into hearing their dull fortunes. AI believes that this is an essential part of getting trapped into typical boring female lives. Although AI claims to be disinterested in her job, in this image she seems to be gripping the young girl's arm tightly to pull her closer to a dismal fate. Yanagi seems frustrated when she describes AI as "mean" ("*ijiwaru*"), and as one of the "waiting" ("*matte iru*") types (Yanagi *et al*, 2004, 3).

The interior view comprises two rooms with diagonal lines of perspective; the children are on the right near the light, AI is on the left, closed in, reclining in feigned boredom. In this composition, there is no red used. However, there is light. In her compositions, Yanagi often symbolically uses light from windows, spotlights, and/or distant horizon lines. In this image, the composition gives the impression that the artist is more optimistic than the grandmother and the girls about their potential. The girls are focused on the malicious AI but could simply turn towards the light and walk out the door to create different futures.

When discussing *My Grandmothers*, Yanagi negatively labels some participants as "waiting" or passive types (Yanagi *et al*, 2004). And yet, Yanagi continually offers hope to viewers via her display of composition, light, and color. In one work, a woman is said to have gone to the forest to wait for inspiration for 10 years (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 3), but Yanagi's composition of a triangular central figure pointing towards the light is as hopeful as the expression on the woman's upturned face. In another portrait, the pilot shown therein is smiling up at the blue sky (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 3).

One work in the series is inspired by a story by the Nobel Prize-winning Japanese author Kawabata Yasunari in which women are drugged into unconsciousness and used as prostitutes by male patrons (Ueno, 2004; Kawabata, 1967). In Yanagi's image, however, the patrons simply sleep next to the focal woman and she gives them fantastic dreams. Once again, Yanagi takes a future self-portrait which seems to be sexist and passive, but utilizes a bright red cloth and an interior view with a low horizon line to symbolically emphasize the breadth of dreams in this image. She states that the color red depicts the potential for agency (Yanagi *et al*, 2004, 2), if not agency itself, in making the sleeping elderly woman seem vital and alive as a dream guide.⁶

These grandmothers' images can be grouped according to their representation of feminine stereotypes. Many of the portraits represent women defined by the presence—or lack—of nurturing relationships to others, such as spiritual guides, caregivers, or lonely hearts. A smaller group depicts independence and/or leadership.⁷ Nonetheless, the language

used by many of the grandmothers to describe their ideal futures is contemporary ‘standard’ (non-gendered) Japanese. It utilizes mainstream, relatively neutral *ru-* and *ta-* verb forms, sentence endings, vocabulary, and so on, which can no longer be gendered or classed. This usage echoes that found by other studies in which males and females in contemporary Japan are said to be speaking in an increasingly similar manner in general, although the mass media continues to employ stereotypically gendered language for effect.⁸

The exceptions here also employ gendered, classed, and regional language in a deliberate manner. For example, one work utilizes the formal language of Japan’s traditional *geisha* performers. In another portrait, a woman imagines herself as a mentor for young male comedians and uses the rough language of a working-class Osakan. However, in another image, a dominatrix lectures her own granddaughter about the toughness of the old days in stereotypically feminine language with sentence endings such as *ne*, *yo*, *nano*, *dakara*, *wa*, and *no*. Although one participant is actually a male dressed up as a grandmother, he chooses to use the feminine form of “*aishiteru wa* (I love you)” in his text. ‘Educated’ and therefore classed literary forms such as tanka and haiku are also employed by some of the participants. One participant uses her native Chinese.⁹ Alongside diversity of vision, Yanagi has also encouraged diversity of language in including this variety of voices.

Only two main types of backgrounds are employed in this series. However, the contrast of the interior images with the landscape images can be seen not only as a reflection of the participants’ visions, but also of Yanagi’s intent of providing inspiration for viewers. Yanagi has, as such, attempted to give these grandmothers visual freedom from their current reality of confinement in female stereotypes and infantilization in modern consumeristic society: freedom to create actual opportunity in the future. The series may be “a stylized fantasy” of being aged rather than portraying being aged itself and therefore, it serves as “a potent reminder of mortality,” as Herbstreuth (2004, 21) claims. Yet Yanagi has not only transcended time in a manner never done before (Elliot, 2009), she has done so specifically for Japanese women. Because Yanagi willingly accepted male and international participants, her *Grandmothers* series is an indicator of her developing ideal of multiplicity: inspiration by and for all.

Politically-Incorrect, Spiritual, Essentialist Inspiration: Windswept Women: 2009

In the *Windswept Women* series, chosen to represent Japan at the Venice Biennale in 2009, Yanagi created portraits of a traveling troupe comprised of women with old and young features (Yanagi, 2009a, b, and c) who “enact scenarios that would never be a part of family photographs” (Uematsu, 2009, 125)(Image 7). The ecstatic figures seemed somehow rooted in their stances despite the wild wind blowing their hair and the crazed music playing in the

exhibition hall. Yanagi utilized a low viewpoint for the images to further emphasize the height; that is, the mystical power of these *Windswept Women*. The giant photo frames holding the portraits were carved with Chinese symbols of good fortune and, in some exhibits, were arranged in such a way that the viewer could become lost in the *Windswept Women*'s world, unable to locate the exit.



Image 7: *Windswept Women V*, 2009, 300x400cm (with frame), Framed Photography

Yanagi's motif of the small tent also reappeared in this exhibition. This time, however, the viewer had to crouch down and look inside a tent to view a black-and-white film entitled *Suna Onna* (literally, Sand Woman). *Suna Onna* is a mythological spirit guide of Yanagi's reappearing often in her art who is also a reworking of Abe's *Suna no Onna (Woman of the Dunes)*. In Abe's story (1962), a woman trapped in a seaside village serves as a sand-cleaner: if she stops her daily work of dusting and sweeping, the entire village will soon be enveloped in sand. While the woman accepts her fate, a new male character who also must shovel sand fights desperately against this entrapment in violent misogynistic ways. This book is an infamously cynical commentary on gender roles, the confining specialization of modern industrialized society, and mortality in its portrayal of the futility of shoveling sand in the face of certain annihilation.

In Yanagi's film version of *Suna Onna*, however, numerous girls scurry along the dunes, hidden under a tent. The film is visually beautiful, but has no standard plot: the girls put

down the tent periodically, but then pick it up and run from place to place accompanied by quaint music recalling the era of the advent of film. Yanagi's *Suna Onna* therefore confronts and accepts mortality with a kind of essentialist sisterhood. Mortality is not only an oppressive crusher of plans, which Yanagi says is how male participants seem to view it (Yanagi *et al.*, 2004; Yanagi, 2002), but inspiration for the dreams of women who cannot yet realize them.

Significantly, the background seen in each portrait of *Windswept Women* is in fact composed of one long continuous landscape (Yanagi, 2009b, 29). The studio portrait can be described as a micro- or personal artwork, whereas the landscape is a macro- or external political one. The continuous *Windswept Women* landscape, then, is a unique combination of the two as a creation of an entirely new world outside of traditional concepts of time.

Critics' Responses: Sexist, Nationalistic, and Ethnocentric Conundrums

Minamishima Hiroshi, the curator and professor of art who chose Yanagi to represent Japan at the 2009 Venice Biennale with her *Windswept Women* series, seems to promote a new kind of sexist universalism in his support of Yanagi's work. He is avidly positive about her work overall, yet denies the validity of its feminist intent (ART iT, 2009c; Minamishima, 2009). He believes that Yanagi's "superficial motifs" may be feminist, but feminism does not lessen her art's impact (ART iT, 2009c, 062). Yanagi's art is valuable because of its focus upon the issue which affects both genders: mortality (ART iT, 2009c, 062).

Minamishima remarks on the preoccupation with death that appears in other works by Yanagi, such as the ascent and descent seen in *Elevator Girls* (ART iT, 2009c, 062). He continues by stating that the absence of mothers in her work is another example of the hatred towards mothers expressed universally in the arts since Ancient Greece, with its current manifestation in the impermanent tents and frames of *Windswept Women* (ART iT, 2009c, 062). The pendulous and aged breasts of *Windswept Women*, since they neither nurture babies or sate men's desire, are of a third gender (Minamishima, 2009, 23) "beyond the definition of man and woman" (Minamishima, 2009, 21). Minamishima thereby combines traditional sexism (women as hated mothers *or* as sex objects for male enjoyment) and essentialist feminism (the "old girl" goddess) in a surprisingly new way. Whereas many feminist art historians find the Venice Biennale to be Western-centric, Minamishima lauds it as "a fundamentally human-affirming place" (ART iT, 2009c, 062) within the problematic world of humans ("*ningen no mondai*") (ART iT, 2009c, 060).

Yanagi is an artist who during her entire career has only portrayed women. Even in the *My Grandmothers* series, the few male participants are dressed up as women. Men are described as "accessories...peripheral if seen at all" (Herbstreuth, 2004, 16). Yanagi depicts

‘gender performativity’ (Butler, 2004) not only to indicate the universality of mortality as Minamishima claims, but also the specific sufferings of women. The giant ‘old girls’ in Yanagi’s work are females, after all, though perhaps not the kind of women accepted as such by contemporary Western or Japanese society.

Conversely, Ben Davis (2007), a Western art critic, writes about Yanagi’s “circling limbo.” He claims that she cannot decide between critiquing society as it exists, as seen in the *Elevator Girls* and *Fairy Tale* series, or reveling in fitting into that same society as seen in the trappings of “power feminism” in *My Grandmothers* (Davis, 2007). No distinction is made between the *My Grandmothers* participants’ visions for their future selves and Yanagi’s goal of feminist multiplicity. In other words, it is implied that since Yanagi is a Japanese artist, succeeding at Westernized feminist standards is to be avoided.

In a personal interview, Ueno Chizuko seemed to want to provoke Yanagi with traditional sexism by asking her if she was a *make inu*, or loser, for not having children (Yanagi & Ueno 2004, 6).¹⁰ Ueno continued to play devil’s advocate in her discussion with Yanagi by commenting upon the difficulty of trying to succeed in and change a society without being “auto-intoxicated” by it (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 6-9).

However, Ueno and other Japanese female critics celebrate Yanagi’s international success. Okabe (2004), an art professor, appreciates Yanagi for her ‘*guro-caru*’ vision. ‘Glocal,’ a combination of the words global and local, describes the current trend of micro-cultural and -political themes that also attempt to foster universality in an increasingly globalized world (Aguilar & Lacsamana, 2004). Ueno describes Yanagi as a pilot flying over the world with her international success as a ‘*guro-caru u-man*’ (glocal woman) (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004, 1). Another art historian states that at events such as the Venice Biennale, “there will be artists who as women of non-Western origin – thus a minority in two ways – will deploy every means at their disposal to achieve recognition” in the Western art ‘world’ (ART iT, 2009, 060). Since Yanagi is a non-Western artist but does not “sell” herself as such to promote her artwork, she is to be applauded (ART iT, 2009, 060). The term ‘glocal’ may signify the attempt to transcend limiting categories, but at the same time it reinforces such categories. For Yanagi, the double bind here is that she is expected to act like a proper Japanese woman in Japan, but is deemed successful as a Japanese female artist when she does not necessarily depict being Japanese or female in her internationally exhibited artworks.

Minamishima states that “the limits of feminism are that it reduces everything to the sorrow of men and the sorrow of women, and in the context of such limits, Yanagi’s work isn’t accessible” (Minamishima, 2009, 062). However, he ignores the limits of both sexism and ethnocentrism. Sexism has historically invalidated the experiences of women as unworthy of attention, but considers male experiences to be authoritative. That is to say, male artists who depicted only males were/are considered universally relevant, but female artists

who depicted only females were/are not. Ethnocentricism has done the same to non-Westerners: Western works were/are universal, Japanese works were/are not. This refurbished categorization of a feminist Japanese artist like Yanagi as universalist, nonetheless, still enforces sexist and ethnocentric standards in the international art 'world'—which is, in fact, Western and sexist.

Envisioning a World Beyond Binaries

Yanagi often speaks of the difficulties in dealing with the Western art hegemony and the privileges and sense of entitlement for those born into it (ART iT, 2009b; Yanagi *et al*, 2004). Yanagi notes that Westerners have “faith in the unidirectional nature of time, and in fine art” that leads them to believe that they can be part of that one art historical timeline (ART iT, 2009b, 060). Contemporary Japanese art also has a “powerful elitism...designed with the Western bourgeoisie in mind” (ART iT, 2009b, 060).

She has, in fact, internalized this conflict via dialogue with an inner critic in the form of a stuffed toy named Ubason (Yanagi *et al*, 2004). On the one hand, Yanagi says Ubason reflects the worship of Buddhist deities in the form of elderly women, yet on the other, is “a contrary and malicious representative” of the Western-centric art ‘world,’ (ART iT, 2009, 059). Yanagi reports that this internal art critic had berated her for not yet having works in the Venice Biennale, then wondered if contemporary art has any value at all (ART iT, 2009, 059). Ultimately, however, Yanagi reaffirms her transformational intent when she says, “...creating art for Uba-chan offers a kind of personal salvation, is for art itself too, for the grandmothers that raised me, and for the next generation” (ART iT, 2009b, 059).

More recently, Yanagi returned to feminist art activism with another performance piece: an ‘old maid’ café called *Café Rottenmeier* where waitresses dressed up like the strict grandmother of Miyazaki’s *Heidi* TV animation series (Mainichi Daily News, 2010). *Café Rottenmeier* is in direct contrast with the female stereotype of subservient, sexualized, young women presented in the fetishizing maid cafes now found throughout Japan’s capital city. The “job of art,” says Yanagi, is to show “the many different ways to live your life to society” (Mainichi Daily News, 2010, 2). Yanagi once again provided a set of instructions, some script lines, props, scenery, and costumes for women in direct contrast to prevalent stereotypes, but then stepped back to let the performances run their own courses. The ‘old maids,’ the actual customers, and the reviewers were free to ad-lib, to create their various alternatives to the typical sexist ‘maid’ image surrounding them.

Yanagi’s success, then, is in both destruction and reconstruction: of sexist Japanese stereotypes, of linear time, and of the predominant Western art historical narrative. Yanagi has given vision to “a permanent record of the track of the human mind” (Niwa, 2009, 58-

59); that is to say, to many female minds which have no other outlets. Yet since participants are fantasizing about ideal futures, this “permanent record” is of visions that do not, but could potentially, exist someday.

Yanagi has transcended her generation’s childishness and cynicism, fantasy and negativity, and nationalism and anger with images meant to inspire. The color red indicates life and creation. Studio photography has not only been extended into one long fantastical landscape as seen in *Windswept Women*, but with feminist activism as in *Café Rottenmeier*. Yanagi attempts to overcome sexist, nationalistic, and Western-centric binary systems with her *Grandmothers*, whom she describes as stars in the sky (Yanagi, 2012). *Grandmothers* become stars for navigation; once again Yanagi uses light to symbolize the potential for agency, if not yet actual agency. Yanagi implodes clichés of time, and of the Western male master and his young, nude, female muse. In Yanagi’s *Grandmothers* series, multiple aged muses inspire themselves via future self-portraiture in an art historical tradition which until recently has engaged in almost no self-portraiture (Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, 2007).

Thus, in a binary-based society that is mourning its own demise, Yanagi has created female role models that do not yet actually exist for women and men who must find new ways to exist.

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End notes

1. Yanagi’s major series are available for viewing on-line at www.yanagimiwa.net.
2. The following works deal extensively with androcentric and Western-centric prejudice as manifest in the Western art ‘world’: Reilly & Nochlin (2007), Kasahara (2007), Doyle (2006), and Mostow, Bryson, & Graybill (2003).
3. For detailed discussions of the *shoujo* phenomenon, see Kinsella (2003), Orbach (2003), and Lloyd (2002), among others. Nakamura (2010) also comments on the creation of the entity from the Meiji Era onwards as an increasingly powerful group perceived as threatening the male hegemony in Japan.

4. For information on how to use the *My Grandmothers* images in both conversational and academic EFL classes, please see Helverson 2012.
5. For more information on the world-famous animation artist, see his website at www.nausicaa.net.
6. These works are KAHORI, MINEKO, and AYUMI, respectively.
7. In addition, agency vs. passivity, childishness vs. adulthood, and positivity vs. negativity are also major categories.
8. Hiramoto (2010), Ehrlich (2008), and Endo (2006) are some of the sociolinguists who have noticed this trend.
9. GEISHA, YOSHIE, HIROKO, and ESTELLE, respectively.
10. Yanagi has since had a child.

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Discursive images of gendered agency and the 3/11 disaster in Japan: Reading Elfriede Jelinek's "Epilogue?" in the Japanese classroom

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Abstract

The article presents an example of how to adapt curricula in a university north of Tokyo to the traumatic situation and socio-political consequences in the wake of the Japanese triple disaster of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident on March 11, 2011. In this article the focus is on an extraordinarily critical literary text, "Epilogue?" by the Austrian Nobel-Prize winner Elfriede Jelinek, which allowed discussions in the Japanese classroom on political and historical awareness of gendered discourses and their relation to protest, authority, intellectual rhetoric, linguistic creativity and agency. The article shows how Jelinek adapts Sophocles' famous tragedy of "Antigone" in order to dismantle traditional concepts of gendered mourning and sisterhood, so strongly championed in interpretations by Hegel (Lacan, Žižek) and Romanticism. The article then introduces Judith Butler's deconstructive re-reading of such concepts as "kinship," "precariousness" and "grievability" in order to discuss alternative creative rhetorical attempts at gendered agency.

概要

本論文は2011年3月11日に起こった地震、津波、原子力発電所の日本の三重の災害の中で、トラウマ的な状況や社会政治的な結果を東京北部の大学のカリキュラムにどのように取り入れるかの例を示すものである。本論文では、オーストリア人のノーベル賞作家エルフリーデ・イエリネクの批判的文学作品「エピローグ？」に焦点をあてる。抵抗、権力、知的レトリック、言語的創造、エージェンシーと関連してジェンダー化された言説を通して政治的・社会的目覚めを起こさせるために日本の教室でディスカッションを行った。本論文はイエリネクが、どのようにソポクレスの有名な悲劇『アンティゴネ』を改作したのかを明らかにする。イエリネクの目的は（ヘーゲル（ラカン、ジジエック）やロマン派による解釈では強力に支持された）ジェンダー化された喪やシスターフッドという伝統的概念を分解することであった。本論文はジェンダー化されたエージェンシーの代替的かつ創造的なレトリックを議論するために、ジュディス・バトラーの脱構築的な読みを通して「絆」
プレカリアスネス グリーヴァヴィリティ
「危険」「悲しみ」のような概念を考える。

Introduction

As a political and academic reaction to the threefold disaster of earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident on March 3, 2011, I have been teaching graduate and undergraduate German literature and culture classes on this disaster and on national and international reactions to it at a university north of Tokyo for over four years now. Since German is often taught as a second foreign language at Japanese universities, starting from scratch, such literature and culture classes are predominantly concerned with understanding the foreign, i.e. German, language in its cultural and discursive dimensions. In these classes specific Japanese and German paradigms of dealing with such disasters became the focal point. Quickly it became clear that Japanese and German discursive responses to disaster are quite different, and that the class contents allowed my Japanese students not only to learn more about German (and other foreign) discourses in general and reactions concerned with disaster and disaster prevention in particular, but also to reflect on their own way of dealing with disastrous situations and expressing themselves in semi-private, political and classroom settings. Of particular interest were the following problematic aspects: political and critical expression of **protest**, use of political, historical and intellectual **rhetoric**, awareness of **discourse**, **gender** and structures of public and private **relations**, **authority**, and the possibility of linguistic **creativity** and **agency** in dealing with the traumatic events and their consequences.

One of the texts that turned out to be especially fruitful is the short dramatic text “Epilogue?” by the Austrian Nobel Prize winner Elfriede Jelinek. While this text is still available on her website, it unfortunately does not have any page numbering for quotation. This is a text that not only deals with all the above dimensions of post-disaster scenarios, but also offers an excellent opportunity to discuss images of gendered agency. Furthermore, and most important for such discussions in Japanese universities on all levels of education, a Japanese translation of the original German text has been available since 2012 (Jelinek, 2012a and 2012b).

Jelinek reacted immediately to the triple disaster of 2011. Her first text about the disaster, entitled “No Light” (German original: “Kein Licht”) in 2011 focused on the nuclear accident, the fear, the powerlessness, and the end of enlightenment. Though it is no traditional drama, it was written for the theater, and has already been staged in Germany and Japan (Inoue, 2013). Her second text from 2012, published in German on her Internet homepage, and already translated into Japanese, has the enigmatic title: “Epilogue?” (German original: “Epilog?”) (Jelinek, 2012a). Here, Jelinek enlarges the frame of time and space from today’s Japan to ancient Greece, and thus endows an anthropological and cross-cultural dimension to the disaster and its aftermath. In this text, Jelinek is not only using her favorite style, the montage, which pieces together various textual fragments and discursive phrases, but this time she has also practically created a palimpsest, a new text written over an ancient text. Momoko Inoue has provided us with a minute comparative analysis of both texts (Inoue, 2013). While the new text is trying to put into words what can and must be said about this

horrible disaster, the ancient text is nothing less than Sophocles' famous "Antigone," the desperate fight of a young woman against the classical Greek patriarch tyrant.

The Rhetoric of Protest

Before turning to the main issue of gendered agency as it unfolds in Sophocles' tragedy and in Jelinek's adaptation and interpretation, however, it will be necessary to present some background information concerning the status of "protest" and "rhetoric" both in Japanese discourses and in German (or Western) discourses. This will help readers not familiar with Japanese political and social life and communication habits to understand to what extent my Japanese students had to cope with cultural differences when reading Jelinek's text. In fact "Epilogue?" exposes Japanese students to a way of using language and expressing protest that is most unfamiliar to them. All my students, undergraduates as well as graduates, agreed that the scarce and weak public demonstrations in Japan after 3/11 showed how difficult it is for the average Japanese to express dissatisfaction, criticism and protest in public. Those students who had been more exposed to Western politics and societies deplored the fact that, in general, Japanese protesters fighting for their own political rights and attacking political adversities and shortcomings are more often than not denounced in public as egotistic, self-centered and anti-social. The students compared the protest situation after 3/11 to the one against U.S. military air base relocation plans at the time, which also encountered open disapproval and anti-demonstration sentiment in huge parts of the Japanese population. But later on in the classes, when my students were getting more familiar with Western outspoken criticism, such as that voiced in Jelinek's "Epilogue?," they showed their acute awareness of the precarious power structures in which they find themselves entangled in the university hierarchy. Many of my students are quite disillusioned when it comes to students' rights. Even when encountering academic and sexual harassment, most of them shrug their shoulders in despair and only complain on a very private level.

Concerning modes of criticism, my graduate literature students in particular frequently complain about the Japanese inability to voice Western-style academic criticism and they feel uneasy when asked to "criticize" literature. A minute analysis of critical language, for example comparing Japanese translations with Western original secondary literature, shows that these problems can even be found on the semantic level, where Western-style criticism more often than not turns out to be almost untranslatable into Japanese. Whenever the translation is forced upon the Japanese language, my students even point out the "Westernization" that Japanese sentence structure and semantics undergo. Japanese literary criticism seems to avoid this kind of intellectual rhetoric. This tendency is supported by the evidence that even political texts published in Japanese newspapers tend to aim at a straightforward, easy-to-understand language and argumentative structure. In contrast, German political protest expressions are marked by the typical European and Western long-

standing tradition of political debate and rhetorical exaggeration and outspokenness. This is especially so in the linguistic fireworks Jelinek is so famous for.

“Epilogue?” offers the Japanese language student a great opportunity to learn about German political language style and rhetoric because the text is set as a first-person political statement addressing the reader directly as a political counterpart. The commonality of the topic, the political situation in Japan after the 3/11 disaster, enables the students to easily relate to the problems discussed, yet at the same time confronts them with differences in comparison to Japanese political discourses and behavioral patterns. Jelinek’s text is abundant with critical comments concerning the disaster, the road to disaster and its excruciating political aftermath, all of which she highlights from diverse angles in various styles: humorous, tragic, satirical, and even trashy. Though the text undoubtedly has an underlying concept, its argumentative structures and thematic connections seem wanton and chaotic and thereby echo the *heteroglossia* of the multi-faceted political voices world-wide concerned with this, or for that matter any, disaster. A few examples here may introduce this text and its barely translatable wordplay, meter and rhythm, as well as its surprising use of thematic and semantic montage to those who have not yet had the opportunity to read it, especially since there is still no English translation available (all translations by author):

The earth trembled, but not because somebody was buried, not even because so many people were buried. Pickled like bits of fruit, but not to be preserved. The burial of so many people makes nothing tremble. No idea, why she is trembling, she does it all the time, good old Earth. Today she does not even tremble because of her own shock about the fact that she is constantly trembling (Jelinek, 2012a).

Many are hearing my words, they are even written in the newspapers, today everybody is in the newspapers, if they just try a little. I cry out loud, I mourn, but the invisible is stronger. The inaudible is the strongest. An invisible danger, shouted out loud by someone inaudible. Somewhat inaudible shouted by a danger that does not reveal itself. Everything is nothing (Jelinek, 2012a).

Death you can get in the north, those who live there should better move out. But we cannot order this. The area is too large and too domineering. This unlucky storeroom, it, too, belongs to us, but at least we do not need to pay for it, I hope, we don’t!, a storeroom into which no more light will shine. A storeroom underneath the earth also was prepared, thank you, fine, would you like some more sea salt? There are tons left of it after the cooling process, we can’t find a consumer yet, someone who would like to eat it, but maybe we will do so. Maybe it will turn out to be a delicatessen! We, however, we are concerned about the health of our children. We are concerned about our own health. On the whole, we are concerned. What fate is in store for us? No disturbing results are shown to us. What is shown to us is no cause

for concern, because nobody is thinking, and because nothing else is shown to us. There is no light anymore, that's for sure. Or not enough of it. We don't see enough. We had so much of it, but now nothing is left. Now we gain nothing from having had so much light (Jelinek, 2012a).

“Epilogue?” decries a world ruled by global capitalist mega companies and oligarchic meritocracies, who worship nothing but their own willpower, who distribute the riches among themselves and betray the people and send them to death. Comparisons with the Nazi tyranny and mass murder are widespread throughout the text. The key sentence of the whole text is undoubtedly: “Whatever pain we suffered, it was considered reasonable” (Jelinek, 2012a), attacking the corrupt, cynic and inhumane abuse of power by companies and governments which endanger all life in Japan. Jelinek's text, though based only on mass media and TV broadcasts from afar – “I've seen it with my own eyes, though on television!” (Jelinek, 2012a) – identifies with the sorrow, the pain, and the desperation of the victims on location, dead and alive. Yet, at the same time, this text allows a critical discussion of mass media representation, empty phrases, and openly displayed acts of fruitless political compassion. A large part of the text is dedicated to the men working in the devastated Fukushima nuclear plants, sub-contracted workers, deprived of means and rights, whose fate has been evaded so persistently and artfully in Japanese political debate until today. Jelinek mixes religious, spiritual and humanitarian discourses with the description of social and economic reality: “Only these men, someone should bless them, because their company doesn't do it, they have dared to risk their lives ... Anyway, nobody can endure that for more than four hours, and when they are finished, and when they are finished with them, they get themselves new ones. There are always those who want to eat” (Jelinek, 2012a.).

With her choice of the sub-text “Antigone,” Jelinek goes far beyond a mere comparison of ancient Greek conflicts as displayed in Sophocles' tragedy and modern-day post-Fukushima Japan and the implicit view that mankind is entangled in perpetual cycles of conflict and catastrophe, a structural repetitiveness that allows no ascent to more sophisticated ethical and political insights in spite of so-called historical advances. With the choice of “Antigone” and the adaptation of the specific political structural problems it is offering, Jelinek emphasizes the gendered discourses at work not only in Sophocles' play but also in its most famous interpretations, and in today's political debates and actions in Japan. Yet far from simply repeating gendered discourses, Jelinek deconstructs their argumentative effects. Thus the students not only have an opportunity to learn about gendered discourses inside and outside of Japan, but also to experience for themselves how to appropriate discursive language.

Discourses of Gendered Agency

Though “Epilogue?” has no traditional plot, it does incorporate the plot from Sophocles’ famous tragedy in its palimpsest bottom layer. In the Greek tragedy Antigone is mourning the death of her brother and against the expressed prohibition of King Creon, who denies the burial of the treacherous brother, she follows a higher, divine commandment and buries him in direct contempt of the king’s order. Antigone is defying the king, arguing her case and facing death. Antigone has become the female epitome of Western humanitarianism. Jelinek’s adaptation allows us to reread Sophocles’ play and the Japanese disaster as an outrageous abuse of power by a willful and egotistical tyrant (oligarchy), who openly commits not only acts of injustice but an outrageous blasphemy against the Gods, a tyrant who disrespects humanity and reason, and is confronted only by desperate acts of powerless female agency.

One of the topical elements that clearly connects “Antigone” to the Japanese disaster is the important role of “kinship.” This thematic nexus was immediately recognized by all of my students. The character for “kinship,” 絆 (*kizuna*) was voted “character of the year 2011” in Japan. This gesture was supposed to praise the support and rescue effort undertaken by many Japanese people individually throughout 2011. However, critical students pointed out that the gesture referred as much to the immense sorrow and hardship inflicted on the people directly hit by tsunami, earthquake and radioactive fallout in the Northeastern provinces as to the nationalist idea of a “self-sustaining Japanese nation.” Connected to this nexus of kinship are strict and complex ritual burial customs in exactly that part of Japan, which added to the practical sorrow of pecuniary shortcomings and psychological loss in the religious-spiritual dimension of being unable to bury and cherish the ancestors and next of kin according to ancient traditions (Suzuki, 2012). In spite of the ostentatious appraisal expressed by the ceremonial choice of character, however, the victims of tsunami, earthquake and radioactive fallout are ironically still restricted to temporary housing and welfare and, with very few exceptions, the tsunami-hit countryside has remained devastated.

In order to understand the discursive dimensions of “kinship” in a given culture, it was important for the students to learn about dominant historical concepts of kinship. In a class on German literature this is fairly easy, since it was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel who was the first to point out the importance of kinship in Sophocles’ tragedy “Antigone.” He interpreted the conflict between Antigone and Creon along these lines in his “Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion”:

The collision between the two highest moral powers is enacted in plastic fashion in that absolute exemplum of tragedy, Antigone. Here, familial love, the holy, the inward, belonging to inner feeling, and therefore known also as the law of the nether gods, collides with the right of the state (*Recht des Staates*). Creon is not a tyrant, but actually an ethical power (*eine sittliche Macht*). Creon is not in the wrong. He maintains that the law of the state, the authority of government, must be held in

respect, and that infraction of the law must be followed by punishment (cited in Steiner, 1984, p. 37).

In *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (Chapter V) Hegel (1970) tries to reconstruct a political divide between *oikos* (family, motherhood, women) and *polis* (state, fatherhood, men), according to which Antigone represents and enacts “the essence of divine law and the realm below the earth.” While man leaves the hearth for the political realm, woman stays behind as “head of the household and guardian of the divine law” of the Penates and Lares. Only after death does man return home into the bosom of the family. In Hegel’s understanding the rites of burial, enclosing the dead in the earth, the netherworld, are the particular tasks of woman. “Where this task falls upon a sister, where a man has neither mother nor wife to bring him home to the guardian earth, burial takes on the highest degree of holiness. Antigone’s act is the holiest to which woman can accede” (English quotation in Steiner, 1984, p. 34).

Hegel’s interpretation both influenced and reflected widespread conceptualizations of gender and kinship roles in and after his times. The outstanding status that was granted to “sorority” could be found in many philosophers and poets in Romanticism and beyond:

It is the relation of brother and sister, of sister and brother. In the love, in the perfect understanding of brother and sister, there is eros and *agape*. But both are *aufgehoben*, “sublated”, in *filia*, to the transcendent absoluteness of relation itself. It is here, and here only, that the soul steps into and through the mirror to find a perfectly concordant but autonomous counterpart. ... Thus sisterliness is ontologically privileged beyond any other human stance. In it the homecomings of Idealism and Romanticism are given vital form. This form receives supreme, everlasting expression in Sophocles’ *Antigone* (Steiner 1984, pp. 17-18).

Though it was envisioned as a relationship between brother and sister, “sisterliness” only describes and prescribes the female pole of the relation. It is quite different in its conceptualization from “fraternity” as a bond of male agency (Sedgwick, 1985). And the “sister” was in spite of her symbolic familial role nevertheless open to male erotic desire. Percy B. Shelley was stunned by Sophocles’ *Antigone*: “how sublime a picture of a woman! Some of us have in a prior existence been in love with an Antigone, and that makes us find no full content in any mortal tie” (cited in Steiner, 1984, p. 4). Shelley echoed Hegel’s own admiration in his lectures on philosophy: “the heavenly Antigone, the noblest of figures that ever appeared on earth” (cited in Steiner, 1984, p. 4).

This discursive idealistic transfiguration of Antigone as “sister” and “woman” is also visible in the broader gendered conceptualizations in anthropology, philosophy and psychology. Kojève (1947) radicalized Hegel’s reading of “Antigone” in his *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*: “Woman is the concrete embodiment of crime. The family is the internal foe of the antique state; the family which this state destroys and the private person which it

does not recognize, but it cannot do without them” (cited in Steiner, 1984, p. 35). Jacques Lacan (1986) and Slavoj Žižek (2004) emphasize the negativity of the female. While Lacan gives a complicated interpretation of “Antigone,” focusing on the limit of the symbolic order, neither he nor Žižek can envision any affirmative action for female agency. The conceptualizations of woman’s ontological place as guardian of the tomb, the netherworld, and death leads as much to her ousting from the political arena as to her epitomization as death and nothingness. It echoes Lacan’s famous verdict “LA femme n’existe pas.” In Žižek’s interpretation of “Antigone” her actions are seen as negative and destructive, which was ultimately understood as leading to her own death (Butler, 1998, p. 68).

Therefore the language most becoming for woman in these gendered discourses is “mourning” – a speech act entirely dedicated to death, the radical expression of helplessness and passiveness, without any perlocutionary power at all, except in its abuse, when trespassing the laws of the *polis* – as in Antigone’s case. But even then the effect of her usurpation of political speech, according to Hegel (1970), Kojève (1947), Lacan (1986), Žižek (2004) and so many others, is her own death. Jelinek’s choice of “Antigone” as palimpsest to her own text brings to the fore the complex and limited function of kinship as agency and the frail voice of the mourning female, while at the same time opening up the discussion to an orientalist dimension by relocating Antigone to disaster-ridden Japan. Unfortunately, my Japanese students have had little exposure to these kinds of discourses, which made teaching in the undergraduate classes very difficult, while most of the women in the graduate classes responded with interest to psychoanalytical and anthropological material. However, it was difficult for them to extrapolate Western findings to their own cultural constructs of relationships or semiotics of mourning, which they had so far hardly questioned.

Judith Butler (1998) points out that mourning is not a speech act in a power vacuum. Displaced and disinherited, the corpse of Antigone’s brother becomes a test to the rules of grievability – as are the sub-contracted workers, the “living dead” in the Fukushima nuclear plants in Jelinek’s text. Though Butler’s argument is concerned with transformations of kinship in the narrow sense of the word, Jelinek’s text embraces the much wider meaning of kinship close to the Japanese use of “kizuna” in reaction to the 2011 disaster:

For those relations that are denied legitimacy, or that demand new terms of legitimation, are neither dead nor alive, figuring the nonhuman at the border of the human. And it is not simply that these are relations that cannot be honored, cannot be openly acknowledged, and cannot therefore be publicly grieved, but that these relations involve persons who are also restricted in the very act of grieving, who are denied the power to confer legitimacy on loss (Butler, 1998, p.79).

In *Antigone’s Claim*, Judith Butler (1998) gives a convincing and thorough deconstructive re-reading of all the influential interpretations of “Antigone.” Not only does she criticize old-fashioned concepts of kinship based on heterosexual prejudice and replace

them with new and queer models, she also dismantles the power play between Creon and Antigone, showing the twistedness and complexity of the latter's speech act and attempts at agency. Butler focuses on Antigone's acts and speech acts. Her argument circles around the central word "claim" that she has put into the title of her book. According to Butler, Antigone is not only claiming "political speech" and the "meaning" of her deed (the forbidden burial of her brother), she is most of all showing her clear awareness of the claims she is making, and of what is at stake. The pivot of Butler's argument is the subtle complexity of Antigone's utterance. In Butler's interpretation, Sophocles' Antigone is not naively fulfilling her familial duties, nor is she naively affirming the crime she is accused of. Butler gives a careful close-reading analysis of Antigone's words, which I will quote here in all its length because it is a perfect example of how carefully a reader (learner, recipient) should deal with language, wording, translation, and concepts. In my classes, this passage became the focus point of attention. It drew the students in, offering them a perfect example of the act of understanding and interpreting, and showing them how to use language themselves for critical or political purposes:

Through what language does Antigone assume authorship of her act or, rather, refuse to deny that authorship? Antigone is introduced to us, you will remember, by the act by which she defies Creon's sovereignty, contesting the power of his edict, which is delivered as an imperative, one that has the power to do what it says, explicitly forbidding anyone to bury that body. Antigone thus marks the illocutionary failure of Creon's utterance, and her contestation takes the verbal form of a reassertion of sovereignty, refusing to dissociate the deed from her person: "I say that I did it and I do not deny it", translated less literally by Greene as "Yes, I confess: I will not deny my deed" [in Greek, Creon says, "*phes, e katarnei ne dedrakenai tade*" and Antigone replies: "*kai phemi drasai kouk aparnoumai to ne*"]. "Yes, I confess it", or "I say I did it" – thus she answers a question that is posed to her from another authority, and thus she concedes the authority that this other has over her. "I will not deny my deed" – "I do not deny," I will not be forced into a denial, I will refuse to be forced into a denial by the other's language, and what I will not deny is my deed – a deed that becomes possessive, a grammatical possession that makes sense only within the context of the scene in which a forced confession is refused by her. In other words, to claim "I will not deny my deed" is to refuse to perform a denial, but it is not precisely to claim the act. To say, "Yes, I did it," is to claim the act, but it is also to commit another deed in the very claiming, the act of publishing one's deed, a new criminal venture that redoubles and takes the place of the old (Butler, 1998, p. 8).

Butler uses this passage to explain the intricate way in which Antigone is asserting herself in language, and how, by refusing the denial, she is appropriating the rhetoric of agency from

Creon himself: “Her act is never fully her act, and though she uses language to claim her deed, to assert a ‘manly’ and defiant autonomy, she can perform that act only through embodying the norms of the power she opposes” (Butler 1998, p. 10). Butler’s argument thus undermines the opposition of *oikos*/woman and *polis*/man so artfully constructed by Hegel and his followers. Antigone’s speech act performs two deeds at the same time: it wrenches the authority to speak from the other while at the same time casting doubt on her own authority and authenticity.

This kind of deconstruction of language is exactly what Jelinek’s texts are famous for, and therefore it does not surprise that she takes a similar starting point for her own theater text, appropriating this time Sophocles’ speech: “Not one word of truth did they leave unspoken, say those who could not have seen it. As an eyewitness I say: Every word of truth was left unspoken” (Jelinek, 2012a) – a sentence replete with fragmentary literal quotations from Sophocles’ play. Jelinek begins her text with the same gesture but adds to the speech act the problematic concepts of “testimony” and “authenticity,” so central in the public handling of the Fukushima nuclear crisis and in the uncertainty of exposure to radioactive fallout invisible to the naked eye. The message of both thinkers is clear: There is no authentic language. The rhetoric of agency is marked by the reduplication of language and the displacement of meaning.

And, uncannily, Jelinek seems to displace even Butler’s argument of “claim” by exploiting its other meaning of “staking out territory.” “Epilogue?” is indeed a text about displacement in the literal as much as the metaphorical, illocutionary sense: the ground lost to the tsunami, burial grounds washed into the sea, temporary shelter, no-entry zones, and, of course, the victims – the dead washed away, the living homeless, displaced and disinherited. A language trying to express in words this overall displacement, of grief and grievances – must it not in itself be subject to displacement?

In a more subtle way than might be noticeable at first sight, the concepts of territoriality and autonomy play an important part in the discourses on disaster and disaster prevention. There is one outstanding example of transgression in “Epilogue?” that reduplicates Butler’s argument of displaced agency and Sophocles’ Antigone. Seen on TV, it must have been a younger Japanese woman near the no-entry zone around the Fukushima nuclear plant; in Jelinek’s text, however, this woman is endowed with the first-person pronoun: “Me, for example. I have to go and feed my dogs every day. Who else would care about them? I don’t lose my self-control, I try to look stylish, I wear my close-fit jeans and pointed patent-leather shoes, sometimes even stiletto heels. ... There, I mourn, alone. Later I have to go and feed the dogs, on secret paths because I am not allowed at all to be there” (Jelinek, 2012a). These secretive activities not only echo Antigone’s burial transgression, the dogs themselves recall the common Western traditional symbol of the netherworld in antiquity. The feeding of the dogs – sustaining life, instead of honoring its finality – is thus artfully transformed into an ironic response and clandestine political action.

In “Epilogue?” Jelinek explicitly elaborates on the complexity of every speech act, so reminiscent of Antigone:

I am not even a miserable predictor of fortune, for everything has already happened. When I began to speak, everything was already over. I am a postdictor, constantly adding something, following the victims and carrying their lives for them, but they are unable to slip back into them (Jelinek, 2012a)

Jelinek’s performance is full of wordplay, here on the theory of speech act: from *wahrsagen* (“prediction”) to *nachsagen* (a word with two meanings in German: “to add something” and “to speak ill of someone.” I translated this into English as “postdictor” in analogy to the English word “predictor”). Epilogue, literally in Greek: *epi-legein* (“to say something afterwards”) is a term that linguistically defines the speech act, any speech act, as subsequent and “in answer to something,” i.e. as “epilogue”. Jelinek’s choice of words corresponds to Bakhtin’s (1981) concept of *heteroglossia* and Butler’s (1998) idea of displaced political speech appropriation, so convincingly developed in her book on Antigone. But moreover, Jelinek’s text makes the gender of this political appropriation of speech act explicit: all first-person nouns are subsumed under the female agent referred to in the text’s first line after the title: “A mourner, no matter what she does” (Jelinek, 2012a). Jelinek’s text “Epilogue?” in its entirety – the title’s question mark not only spurs inquisitiveness but forestalls any attempt at closure – presents a thorough rhetorical analysis of power structures in the political, intellectual and economic arena from Sophocles’ Greek antiquity to post-Fukushima Japan, and of the stakes involved. Yet at the same time it also offers the reader, in an explicitly “female” gendered scenario, the rhetorical means to put an end to enforced self-denial and instead to (mis)appropriate the power of speech and claim one’s own position, however displaced that may be.

Though many of my Japanese students understood this, they were nevertheless almost all very clear about their doubts concerning any successful appropriation of such political positioning in their own everyday surroundings. They did, however, show more awareness of and interest in gendered discourses and positioning in connection with themselves – some of them very eager to use extra time to discuss their own situations as young academic Japanese women. And they asserted their right of choice more outspokenly than before, aware of their own “displacement” in a gendered society.

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Increasing gender equality in the second language classroom: A study at a Japanese university

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Abstract

Although Japan is a world leader in industry, economics, and education, it lags significantly in gender equality. This study identified viewpoints on gender roles held by students enrolled at a private university in Japan. It tested the ability of classroom activities and discussions to change students' stereotypical views as well as any effects male versus female instructors might have on that change. Students were asked to complete grammar practice activities that revealed gender stereotypes. Students then participated in six classroom activities, group discussions, and were asked to write reflective journals constructed to reduce belief in gender role stereotypes. Lastly, the students completed a final grammar practice worksheet, which was designed to reveal any change in gender role expectations. Students stated a high desire for personal and societal change, but showed only slight improvement in reducing stereotypical attitudes due to the activities. Students with female instructors, however, showed significantly fewer stereotypical responses throughout the semester than students with male teachers. This information can be used to guide hiring decisions, curriculum development and classroom activities as educators strive to increase gender equality.

概要

日本は産業、経済、教育面では世界を牽引しているけれども、男女平等においては遅れている。本研究は日本の私立大学生がもつ性役割に関する視点に焦点をあてた。男性教師と女性教師が与える影響と同時に、学生の固定観念を変える授業活動やディスカッションのあり方を検証する。学生はジェンダーの固定観念に関する文法練習活動を行う。そして、6つの授業活動やグループディスカッションに参加し、性役割の固定観念を軽減するためのリフレクティブ・ライティングを書いた。最後に、学生は性役割の中の変化を表すために作られた文法練習活動のワークシートを行う。学生たちは個人的、社会的変革に対して高い興味を示したが、授業活動による固定観念的態度の改善はわずかしか見られなかった。しかしながら、女性教師に教わった学生たちは男性教師に教わった学生たちよりも明らかに固定観念的な応えが少なかった。このことは、教師が男女平等を促進する時、採用、カリキュラム改革、授業活動に示唆を与えるものである。

Introduction

Gender roles are particularly strong and prevalent in Japan today. In June of 2014, in Tokyo, Assemblywoman Ayaka Shiomura (2014) was publicly jeered at by fellow politicians after speaking about improving services for women. Men shouted at her amid laughter, “You should get married!” and “Can't you even bear a child?” (Ripley & Henry, 2014). This sort of situation is all too common in Japan where gender roles are strongly reinforced at home, school, and work. Despite being a modern, economic powerhouse, Japan ranks 104th out of 142 countries in terms of gender equality based on research from the World Economic Forum (2014 Global Gender Gap Report, pg. 127). This phenomenon has been studied by many people, including the Japanese government itself. However, despite passing two laws, The Equal Employment Opportunity Law in 1986 and the Childcare Leave Law in 1992, cultural and societal pressures still encourage people to conform to stereotypical gender roles (Kitamura, 2008 p. 70). According to Kitamura (2008), a woman's stereotypical gender role includes being a wife and mother, which means being responsible for housework and caring for children. A man's role is to work long hours in order to support his family financially. Kitamura also states that “men impose restrictions on women and women themselves limit their own choices significantly.”

Educators, parents, and organizations around the world have studied gender roles and the effects of sexism in people's lives. However, there has been little study on people's willingness to change their attitudes regarding gender roles. This is a crucial element of helping to affect change in society. In this research, I investigated whether or not English as second language classroom activities could change Japanese university students' stereotypical viewpoints on gender roles.

Literature Review

There has been a significant amount of research into gender roles in the English Language Learning (ELL) classroom. Most research until this point has focused on gender stereotypes in ELL textbooks, gender inequality in teacher-student interaction, or inequality in student-to-student relationships (Duffy, Warren, & Walsh, 2001; Lee & Collins, 2008; Otlowski, 2003; Pavlenko and Piller, 2007; Porreca, 1984; and Sunderland, 1992). Educators and researchers have shared ideas of how to combat sexism in the classroom (Cochran, 1996; Frawley, 2005; Mathis, 2003; McMahill, 1997; and Norton and Pavlenko, 2004), but how effective are these attempts?

There are many different ways teachers address inequality in the classroom. Bach (2011) describes how she has her students use "gender metaphors to critically examine gender assumptions and the way they impose limitations on women and men"(p. 22). Other studies focus on teacher/student interactions, pointing out that boys generally "receive more consideration, acclamation, and constructive feedback...are called on by name more often and are asked more complex and abstract questions" (Frawley, 2005). One way to combat stereotypes that Frawley mentions is by keeping students from self-segregating into single gender groups. He warns against popular "Boys vs. Girls" contests in the classroom. He asks, “Would you separate by other attributes, such as race, religion or physical features?” (p. 227).

Another common stereotype in language learning is that women are better at learning languages than men. Schmenk (2004) points out that if today's educators want to see gender as a "socially and culturally constructed dynamic category, one of the key questions that emerges is how to deal with commonsense notions of masculinity and femininity in language learning environments" (p. 515). Schmenk goes on to explain that there are recent studies refuting the claim that women learn languages better than men and that the fact that more women than men study languages comes from cultural stereotypes rather than an inherent knack for language learning.

Another area to consider when discussing gender stereotypes in the classroom involves students' comfort. Gary and Leith (2004) point out that a portion of educators, "feel that gender stereotypes are a product of the early rearing practices in the home environment and that schools should remain neutral" (cited in Frawley, 2005 p. 223). We may also feel hesitant to push our beliefs about equality on our students, especially if we are teaching in a different country with different expectations about gender than the one in which we were raised. However, Yoshihara's (2011) study on gender and sexuality in the classroom led her to conclude that while teaching these issues is challenging to educators, the students were interested in the topic. Furthermore, she states that the language classroom should be, "a site for consciousness-raising and personal and social change" (p.15). Some students may feel uncomfortable with the topic, or even feel attacked. In Yoshihara's study, a few male students felt blamed, defensive, or as though the topic was a waste of time (2011, p.12). Similarly, in a study by Spender in which teachers spent between 34 and 42% of class time focusing on female students, "one teacher who had spent 34% of her time with the girls reported that 'the boys...were complaining about me talking to the girls all the time'" (as cited in Sunderland, 1992, p. 88). Even when the teachers are aiming to simply treat students equally, ingrained ideas about gender can occasionally lead to uncomfortable or even angry students. This is not necessarily a bad thing, however, as students can learn and grow from experiences that cause them discomfort and force them to face and possibly change long-held beliefs.

The effort to achieve equality between the genders is a worldwide struggle. "Researchers have shown repeatedly that stereotypical beliefs about gender are largely identical in many different cultures" (Breakwell, 1988; Franzoi, 2000, as cited in Schmenk, 2004, p.516). Tsuya, Bumpass, and Choe (2000) found after researching gender, employment and housework in Japan, South Korea, and the United States that although the cultures of these three countries are very different, "married women's employment is bounded by their family situations in a way that men's is not" (p. 216). In all three countries, "traditional gender role assignments of breadwinning primarily to husbands and housework to wives are still prevalent, affecting wives' employment patterns" (216). There are no countries in the world where men and women are perfectly equal, so educators and students can learn and grow together as they study gender role stereotypes.

This is an issue particularly salient to Japan, as its citizens continue to conform to traditional gender roles. From 2006 to 2014 Japan fell from 80th to 104th in the Global Gender Gap (Global Gender Gap Report, 2014). The gender gap focuses on men and women's equal access and success in education, politics, economy, and health. Japan has fallen 24 places in 8 years and there are a number of theories as to why. Perhaps the most cynical interpretation comes from North (2009), who asserts, "Open talk threatens the tacit foundations of male supremacy. In current government deliberations about work-life balance, the talk is mostly about doing things to enable women to work and care rather than helping men to care" (p. 25).

Japan's birth rate is one of the lowest in the world at 1.41 children born per woman in 2014 (2014 Global Gender Gap Report, pg. 128). Because of this, the country needs both men and women in the workforce to support the aging population. Also, if the birth rate doesn't rise, Japan's population will continue falling and gender issues will strongly impact Japan's future. It may be that the stabilization of the population may come about through reinforcing the idea that women must choose between work and family or through encouraging men and women to achieve a more realistic or fulfilling work/life balance.

Fujimura-Fanslow (2011) notes that while some Japanese colleges have had some women's studies classes in place since the 1970s, at the earlier levels of education, "gender stereotypes and bias persist in textbooks, teaching practices, and guidance/career counseling" (p. xiii). These early biases persist to adulthood and are present in the workplace. An example of bias at work is shown in North's (2009) article, "Negotiating What's 'Natural': Persistent Domestic Gender Role Inequality in Japan." North summarizes work reports to find that in 1985, 68% of working women were normal, full-time employees. That number dropped to 46.5% in 2007. During that same period, the portion of women who worked part-time doubled. The portion of women who worked on fixed-term contracts tripled. A large portion of the overall workforce is female—43%—and these facts may prove discrimination against women in the workplace (p. 24). A different report by Ishiwataku found that in 2006, 36% of research facilities (out of a sample of 860) "expressed overt reluctance in hiring women researchers" (cited in Hayes, 2012, p. 8). As well, Kitamura (2008) notes that it is common for companies to refrain from hiring or training female employees for more than secretarial work because they believe that the women will quit their jobs after getting married or having a child. Sometimes women are even forced to resign (p. 69). Finally, although Japan has a nearly equal number of university-educated men and women, women earn just 68% of what men earn for similar work (2014 Global Gender Report, pg. 127).

Rather than adopting ineffective government policies, what else can foster improvement in gender equality? Results of a study undertaken in New York City (Dasgupta & Asagari, 2004) showed that when students were taught by female instructors, they had a lower level of automatic gender stereotypes. The results were the opposite with male instructors; the students showed an increase in female stereotypes (p. 654). Currently in Japan, only 10 to 20% of faculty members at universities are women (Inuzuka). In a related topic, Tsuya et al's study of families in Japan, South Korea, and the USA (2000) showed that the higher level of education that the husbands completed, the more involved in housework they would be (p. 214). These two studies show that university education can have a powerful impact on equality, both through lowering female stereotypes by exposing students to female instructors and equalizing housework through higher education for men.

My research asks if it is possible to change student stereotypes and improve gender role equality at a Japanese university. Participating teachers and I asked our students about their thoughts on gender roles, taught about feminist topics and conducted activities that specifically attempted to change their attitudes towards gender stereotypes. I then attempted to assess changes in attitudes. This project aims to show whether gender equality education, female instructors, or a combination of both can have a positive impact on changing attitudes toward gender equality.

Methods

The students in this research study were all first year students at a private University in Japan with a large population of international students. The students were all enrolled in an intensive Elementary English class, which met four times a week for 95 minutes. The study took place during the spring semester of 2014. There were two groups of students, distributed as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Student Demographics

Group A	122 Total Students	61 Male students	114 Japanese Students
	7 classes	61 Female Students	8 International Students
Group B	19 Total Students	11 Male students	19 Japanese Students
	1 class	8 Female Students	

Note: Student genders were determined by university records.

The Group A classes were taught by female instructors while four Group A classes were taught by male instructors. The single Group B class was taught by a male teacher. I was one of the female instructors included in this study.

Out of a desire for the students' genuine opinions, the students were not informed of the study until after it was completed. My fear was that the students would answer in the way they thought the teachers wanted them to answer if they knew their answers were being recorded or studied. Therefore, the students were given consent forms after the study was completed, and 13 students who opted out had their data removed from the study.

At this university, the curriculum is coordinated by teachers to ensure uniform study within and throughout levels. All students within a level use the same textbook and syllabus, follow the same calendar of lessons, and take the same tests. Therefore, every gender role activity was designed to very closely match and complement the grammar or vocabulary that the students were already scheduled to study in the curriculum. As these 141 students had not volunteered to participate in this study, I was very careful that they didn't miss any regularly scheduled English lessons in order to do these gender role activities. Group A completed about six weeks' worth of activities, journaling, and discussion. Group B participated in only the first and final activity, without any journaling, discussion, or gender equality lessons. I provided detailed lesson plans and any necessary materials to the participating teachers. Although the activities had to be done in order, there was a lot of freedom in exactly when the teachers felt these lessons would best fit into their schedule. Most teachers, including myself, did about one lesson every two weeks. The first and last activity, to allow time for reflection on the homework, had to be spread over two class periods, though they did not need the full time from both classes. For most teachers, the second through fifth activity used only one class period with the journal writing assigned as homework and due the following class period.

The six lesson activities with their corresponding language target are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Gender Studies Lessons

Activities	Language Target
1) Women Must _____ / Men Ought to _____	Modal Verbs
2) Boys' vs. Girls' Toys	There Is / There Are
3) Stereotypes About Women's Appearance	Non-Action Verbs
4) Career and Wage Gaps	Job Names Vocabulary
5) Think About Your Life as the Opposite Gender	Simple Past
6) Match the People to Their Houses/Cars/Careers	Pronouns

The first activity asked students to complete sentences combining gender pronouns with modal verbs such as *"Women must...."* and *"Boys ought to...."* Each answer was then marked as either matching a stereotypical gender role, being neutral, or opposite. I personally coded students' responses. I was born and raised in the USA, but have taught and lived in Japan for five years. Occasional questions were diverted to Japanese co-workers for clarification. All examples that follow are written exactly as the students wrote them, with errors uncorrected. The answers were coded by an in the following manner:

Stereotypical answers, such as *"Women must not talk loud voice."*, *"Men ought to drink alcohol."*, and *"Girls ought to play with a doll."* were each marked: +1.

Neutral answers such as *"Boys should hand in homework."*, *"Girls should wear the school uniform."*, and *"Men don't have to put on a tie."* were each marked: 0.

Opposite of a stereotype answers such as *"Men should know how to cook."*, *"Girls must not avoid to play sports."*, and *"Women ought to get the good job."* were each marked: -1.

Some answers were difficult to discern, either because the students' English level was so low as to make the answer incomprehensible, or because the answer didn't clearly match one option or the other. One example was *"Men must not be sad."* Although the case could be made that this is a gender stereotype, as 71% of the people who commit suicide in Japan are men (Lewis, 2008), this was scored as neutral. Other subjective examples include students who wrote *"Girls must not smoke."* Normally, this would be marked as a stereotype, unless the student also wrote *"Boys must not smoke."* In this case, both would be marked neutral. Whenever there was some level of doubt, the answer was marked as neutral.

After the initial activity, the students in group A were informed that they would begin to study gender roles along with their standard curriculum. Although there were five different teachers participating, all with different teaching styles, most of the lessons followed a similar format. The teacher presented the language target and reviewed the necessary grammar and vocabulary. The students then did an activity, usually in pairs or small groups. Following the activity, the teacher asked groups of students to discuss questions which asked them to reflect on their attitudes concerning equality. The teacher then led a whole class discussion asking for groups to share their thoughts. The teacher occasionally shared personal opinions/anecdotes. Finally, the students were asked to type a journal entry about stereotypes and their thoughts about the activity. This journal entry was often assigned as homework. A sample lesson plan is available in Appendix A.

The teachers sent me updates after each lesson briefly describing the lesson. Most discussions (pair/small group/whole class) took 15-20 minutes. It's difficult to tell exactly what anyone was thinking, but many teachers guessed that students seemed "interested." In the initial discussions, students also seemed, according to one teacher, "constrained, reluctant to contribute, or shy." I felt that my students behaved in similar ways. As the semester continued, students participated and contributed to discussions more freely. For the final discussion, teachers related that students seemed, "interested," and that they "shared their opinions, and spoke up" freely. This is most likely due to a number of factors, including the fact that throughout the semester students became more comfortable talking with their classmates and interacting with the teacher. In addition, their English skills improved so that they could express themselves more clearly. They became more comfortable with the educational style at this university and university life. Finally, they also became more comfortable discussing their ideas and opinions on gender roles.

The final activity asked students to match various people with cars, houses, pets, toys, and jobs using the correct pronouns. This activity was similar to the first in that students were not reminded of the gender role stereotypes they had studied previously. I hoped they would see this activity as a grammar and writing exercise only. In this activity the students had to match a person or people to a specific toy, car, pet, house, or job and then write their reasoning behind each match. The toys, cars, pets and houses were not clearly for one gender or the other, so the students were only marked on the reasoning behind the match. The results were collected and marked similarly to the first activity, with a +1 for a stereotypical response such as *The pink car is theirs [girls] because they prefer to pink.* or *The minivan is hers because she have to drive her children to elementary school.* Neutral responses included *The puppies is hers because she likes dogs.* or *The parrot is their because they can talk with it.* Finally, a -1 was given for opposite stereotypical responses such as *The big house is hers because she makes too much money* or *The small car is theirs [boys] because they like pink color.* The jobs were stereotypically female or male jobs: nurse, teacher, CEO and doctor. The students were marked here as whether they gave the stereotypical male jobs to the men and boys (CEO and doctor) and the stereotypically female jobs (nurse and teacher) to the women and girls.

Results and Discussion

First Activity (Women must....Men ought to...) Versus Final Activity (Match the Car, Career, Etc. to the People)

My hope in carrying out this study was that students show a desire for more modern attitudes towards gender equality due to the discussions, journals, and activities. However, I did not observe a significant change from the gender role activities. The students were never told that the first or the final activity was related to gender role discussions and activities, so the students answered in ways that were (hopefully) similar to the ways they would respond in their real lives outside of the classroom. Although most students stated in their final journal entries that they had changed their minds about stereotypes, or that they wanted to work towards a more equal world, the answers on their final worksheet did not match the strength of their declarations.

When the classes are separated by female teachers and male teachers, there is a significant difference in initial stereotypical responses. Classes with female teachers (3

sections with a total of 52 students) responded with an average of 3.61 stereotypical answers while the students with male teachers (4 sections with a total of 66 students) answered with an average of 6.25 stereotypical answers. See Figure 1.

Students in Group B decreased their stereotypical responses by an average of over two responses each. Why would Group A show more stereotypical responses than Group B? Group B did not participate in equality discussions, lessons, journals, or do any study of gender equality. It's possible that Group A's focus on gender roles may have increased their gender role related responses by causing them to focus unconsciously on them. Also, Group B had a relatively small sample size. Due to absences, only 16 students completed both the first and the final activity.

Journal Entry Questions

The results from the journal entries and discussions showed that students were largely interested in the topic and seemed to have strong views about the issues. The sample journal results included below show some typical responses. They are copied exactly as the students wrote them, without modifications to grammar or spelling.

Do you think stereotypes are good or bad?

The students' journal articles often showed a strong desire for personal and societal improvement in terms of equality. For example, 70% of students stated that stereotypes were bad, while only 17% of students believed that stereotypes were good. Many students wrote things such as, *I think it is bad because it changes persons portraits. For example, when we meet person first if we have that person's stereotype we can see that person distortly. (Japanese, Female)* A typical student who wrote that stereotypes are good shared opinions such as, *I think stereotype is not bad way of thinking. Because the gender related difference exists by all means. So, we should think that the stereotype is one of the right ways of thinking. (Japanese, Male)* Female and male students answered the question similarly. The percentages were also similar whether the students had male or female professors (see Figure 2). Some students mentioned having studied equality and gender roles in middle or high school. Although most students stated that stereotypes are bad, many of the same students cavalierly made statements about what men or women "should" do. A female Japanese student wrote, *I wrote man should bring a lunch that was made by their wife. I think stereotypes are bad.*

Do you see examples of inequality around you?

The fourth journal entry asked students if they saw examples of inequality around them. Male and female students said that they observed inequality at nearly the same rates; 57% of male students answered "Yes" while 55% of female students answered "Yes." Some students wrote things such as, *Yes, I see. My father is somestimes is interviewer at recruitment exam. Then he intend to sign lots of men. Because women inclined to get off their jobs. For the good reason they married and care for children. (Japanese, Female)* Another female Japanese student wrote, *Yes, I did. My mother has good ability for job, but hers salary is very low.*

The students' answers built on the previous journal entry and showed that many of them didn't quite understand what inequality is or isn't. For example, some students wrote about the women's only subway or train cars that help women avoid being sexually harassed. The students thought that was unjustly biased in favor of women. Many students were unaware of sexism, stating that while it might be the case in other countries, there was no inequality currently in Japan. *No, I don't [see inequality]. I think the thing is about old era in Japan. (Japanese, Male)*

Some students wrote that they did not see examples of inequality, and then immediately listed examples from their personal experiences. *No. But I have seen the pay gap in Joyful [a Japanese Family Restaurant]. On the front door, there was the paper which hourly wage was written. When I saw, men's wage was higher than women's wage. (Japanese, male)* The same phenomenon was noted in the study at a University by Morrison et al (2005). The authors stated, "despite recounting direct experiences of discrimination or sexism, most of the students interviewed stated that they did not perceive the University as a place where gender inequalities exist...in several instances, such a statement about the equal treatment of women even directly preceded the narration of what we interpreted as a sexist or misogynist experience" (157). Some students defended inequality; for example one Japanese male wrote, *I think most people that engineering works should be man. This is because when it is not a strong person, the person cannot carry supplies. Even if there is power, there is dangerous for a woman...Also she has to do housework. Because of the fatigue of the work, she will not be able to do it. It gives stress mentally. In addition, a woman tends to be nervous in a state of skin. This is why a woman should not do the work.*

Do you think you would be happier if you were the opposite gender? Why or why not?

The students' answers about whether they would be happier as the opposite gender showed some insight regarding their thoughts about the opposite gender, how they felt they were restrained in their lives, and what aspects of inequality were important to them. One female student wrote, *I think I would be happier if I were a boy.....If I were a boy I would have more possibilities than I have now. I would be able to travel anywhere by myself. I might live in a foreign country. I would sure go out to the concert of my favorite musician alone. Even if it would be held at night or in a place faraway from my house.* Many women wrote about loving sports and feeling unable to play them either currently or when they were children. Men wrote that if they were women they wouldn't be able to play sports. Men wrote about loving fashion, but being unable to dress in the ways they want to, *If I am a woman, I would be happy because I can put on make up my face and wear girl's fashion. I like fashion so I want to a lot of type of fashion... (Japanese, Male)* Many women wrote about what a hassle long hair and make-up are, but saw them as absolute necessities, as well as describing the importance and difficulty of staying slim. *If I was a boy, I would be happy. This is because if I was a boy, I don't have to take too much time to choose clothes. I can go slow every morning. Second, a boy is hard to gain weight. I love eating. If I was a boy, I can eat a lot of food. (Japanese, Female)* Men wrote about the pain of childbirth and the (often used wording) tiresome duties in being a homemaker as reasons why they wouldn't want to change genders. A male Korean student wrote, *If I was the opposite gender, I am not happier...Women is so tired. For example, Man just making a money. But woman is Cleaning*

house and taking babies. So I think I don't want to opposite gender. Well over half of women, 67%, said they would rather be a man. Only 17% of men who answered said they would be happier as women; see Figure 3. One Japanese male wrote, Yes. Because I will be gentle by a men. And I will be bought something by a man. I can eat food free on a date. I don't have to bring money. I don't have to drive a car. We can see that only 33% of female students were satisfied being women. One woman explained, If I was a boy, I would no be happy. First reason of it, I am really enjoying my life now. I like to do housework, especially, cooking. So, I would like to married someday. (Japanese, Female)

Did you change your mind about any stereotypes?

The sixth and final journal entry asked students if they thought gender equality was important, if they had learned anything new from the class activities, and if they had changed their minds about any stereotypes. A great percentage of students stated that they had changed their minds concerning stereotypes, as shown in Figure 4. They said things like, *Yes, I try to change my mind about stereotype. It is very difficult to change stereotype mind because the world still have a word "discrimination". I expect that I still have stereotype which I do not realize (Japanese, Female)*. The statements they made were encouraging. Many students referenced job opportunities for men or women that they hadn't considered before. *If I want to become women job, I will be able to become it.....My stereotypes was broken.(Japanese, Male)* Also, *I change my opinion. The past, I think "police officer is the man's job", "super hero is the boy", "teacher is the woman job" (Japanese, Female)*. Many students talked about wanting to make a change in the future, or aiming for a goal they may not have previously considered possible. A small group of students, 8%, who stood by their attitude that stereotypes are good shared attitudes such as, *I think gender is not equality. I think a man should to the heavy labor. It is the fact that a man is in power than a woman. In addition, a nurse must be kind. I think a woman is kind. However, the sex has nothing to do with most occupation (Japanese, Male)*. Another student answered, *I don't change my opinion very much. It is because, I found that changing each stereotype difficult. Ways of thinking from person to person I think we can't change (Japanese, Female)*.

Of the students who wrote that stereotypes are good, 65% of them assigned stereotypical jobs to the people during the final project (CEO and Doctor to the men, Teacher and Nurse to the women). However, students who wrote that stereotypes are bad also assigned stereotypical jobs to people at the rate of 65%. Their initial attitudes towards stereotypes did not appear to affect career assignment in the final activity.

I was surprised to find that of the students who stated in the journals that they had changed their minds, 64% of them still assigned stereotypical jobs during the final activity. Of the students who stated that they had not changed their minds, 75% assigned stereotypical jobs. Perhaps this means that the students felt obligated to write that they had changed their minds about stereotypes (the journals were not anonymous after all) even when they hadn't.

Conclusion

This research was conducted to test the hypothesis that students who examine the issues of gender, then discuss, and journal about gender equality issues will exhibit fewer gender

stereotype beliefs. Although students stated interest in the subject and wrote in journal entries that their viewpoints had changed and that they would like to make a difference, their responses to the final gender role activity showed that they still subscribed to strong gender stereotypes, especially if they had a male teacher. The results of this study seem to suggest that students—like everyone—need to see gender equality, not merely hear about it. Students who learned from female teachers showed fewer stereotypical responses from the beginning than students who had male teachers. This suggests that universities could encourage gender equality attitudes through ensuring an equal number of male and female teachers.

Educational Implications

Students are open to discussions focusing on gender, and seem to be interested in learning more and sharing their opinions about this topic. Teachers shouldn't be afraid to discuss these types of issues, because in this case, the students eventually felt confident enough to share their opinions and debate the topic with classmates and through journal entries. It was a good way to add variety into the standard classroom routine and include personal and current events in the curriculum.

While six short lessons may not have been enough to drastically change students' opinions, it is possible that occasional discussions, activities, and models of gender equality by educators spaced throughout a 4 year university career could have a strong impact on students' viewpoints.

Recommendations for Future Research

This type of research warrants further study. One limitation of this study was the use of only English in class, both in ensuring that the students understood the target information and in interpreting their responses. It's unfortunate that responses were occasionally incomprehensible. In future studies, it might be helpful to periodically include information in the students' native language or allow responses in the students' native language.

More activities that require objective responses would make the results easier to interpret. While journal answers showed an outward desire for equality, the real-life responses to gender role situations showed that students need extra help applying classroom lessons to their lives. Activities where the students apply equal minded viewpoints to real-life experiences might help them better translate their lofty ideals into everyday life.

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Appendices

Figure 1. Students' Stereotypical Responses Depending on Teacher's Gender

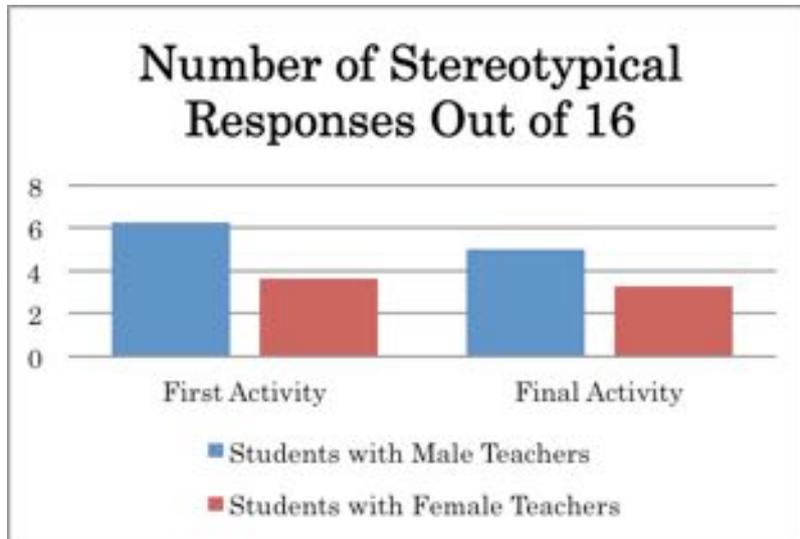


Figure 2. Student Answers to, “Do you think stereotypes are good or bad?”

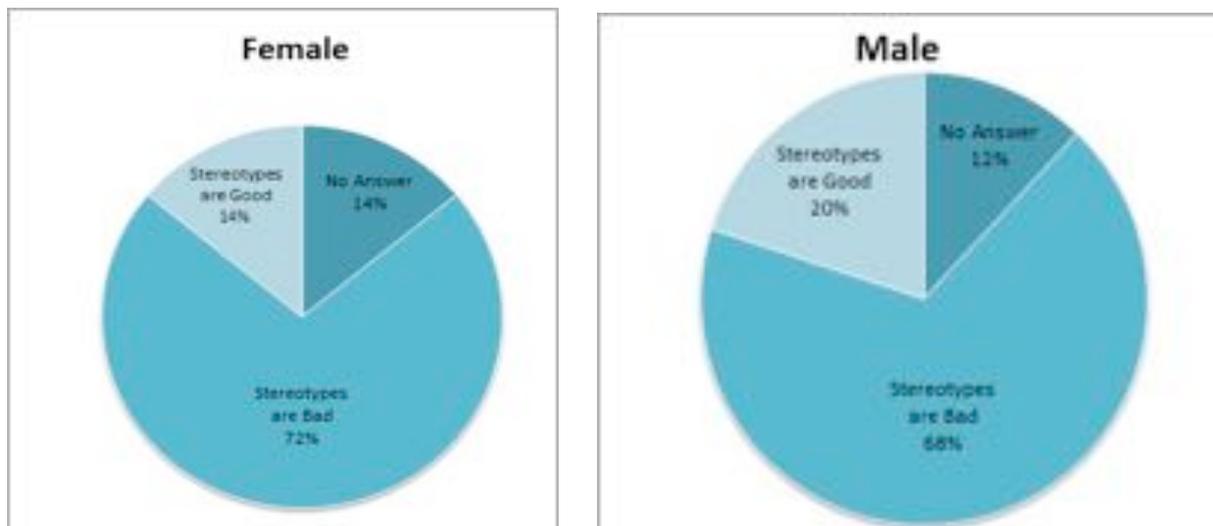


Figure 3. Student Answers to, “Would you be happier as the opposite gender?”

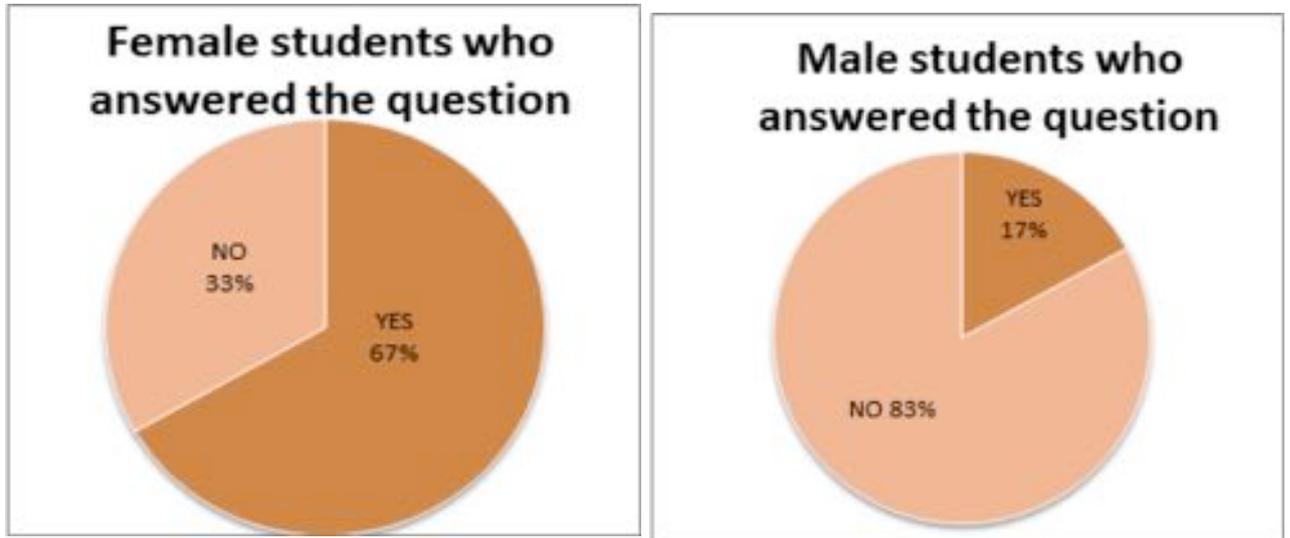
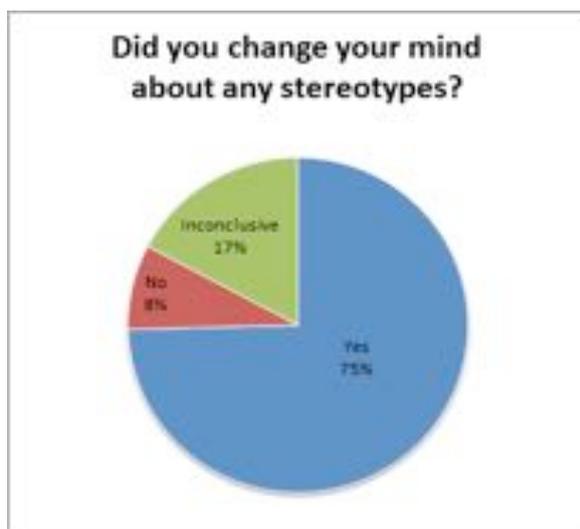


Figure 4. Student Answers to, “Did you change your mind about any stereotypes?”



Appendices

Simple Past Listening Exercise
Think about Your Life as the Opposite Gender - *Teacher's Guide*

Students will do an imagining activity where they must rethink their life as the opposite gender. First, please review asking questions in simple past. Review the pages in the textbook which explain this grammar.

Journal Entry: Do you think you would be happier if you were the opposite gender? Why? How do you think your life would be different if you were the opposite gender?

The teacher will ask the students to close their eyes and listen carefully to what the teacher says. The students will hear many examples of questions in the simple past. The students should listen to those questions as they try to imagine what the teacher describes. (Do what you can to keep them awake...!) The following can be simplified or changed based on the students' level.

The teacher reads,

Think about yesterday. What did you eat for breakfast? What clothes did you wear? Look at your feet, what shoes were you wearing? How much time did you spend choosing your clothes? Did you comb your hair? Did you brush your teeth? What did you do during your free time? Did you go to a part-time job?

Now, think about your first day at APU. What did you wear? Did you talk to someone new? Did you join a club? Did you play sports? Did you talk with your roommate? Did you call your parents? Look around your room. What did your room look like?

Now, think about your first day at Junior High School. How did you feel? Did you like your teacher? Did you know your classmates? What did you wear? Did you like your clothes? What did your hair look like? Did you mom or dad make you breakfast? Did you like your classes? Which class were you best at? Which class did you hate?

Now think about your first day of school. How old were you? Did you miss your mom or dad? Did you like your teacher? Who was your best friend? Did you like your school lunch? What did you do after lunch? Did you play sports? Did you read a book? Did you talk with your friends?

Now, think about the day you were born. What was the date? What time was it? Think about when the doctor handed you to your parents. The doctor said, "It's a boy!" or "It's a girl!"

Now wait. Think about that moment. Imagine that the doctor said the opposite thing. You're NOT a boy. Imagine you're a girl. You're NOT a girl, imagine you're a boy.

Now, are you still awake? Raise your hands if you're awake. Everyone open your eyes and stand up. Stretch. Smile. Shake your arms. OK, sit down and let's continue.

Now think again about your first day of elementary school. Think about what is different now

that you changed genders. Do you like your teacher? Who is your best friend? (Do you have the same best friend?) What do you do after lunch? Do you do the same thing?

Now, think again about your first day at Junior High School, remember you are the opposite gender! How do you feel? What do you wear? Do you like your clothes? What does your hair look like? Which class are you best at? Which class do you hate?

Now, think again about your first day at APU. What do you wear? Do you join a club? Do you play sports? Do you call your parents? Look around your room. What does your room look like?

Now, think about yesterday, live yesterday again, but as a boy or a girl, whichever is different. What do you eat for breakfast? What clothes do you wear? Look at your feet, what shoes are you wearing? How much time do you spend choosing your clothes? What do you do during your free time? Now, open your eyes.

Take ten minutes and write down the ways that your life is changed now that you are a boy or a girl. Think about when you were young AND think about yesterday.

The teacher may want to post the following on the projector to help students stay on task.

If you are a girl—now you are a boy!

If you are a boy—now you are a girl!

Think, “How is your life different?”

Elementary School

Who is your best friend? What do you do after lunch?

Junior High School

Which class are you best at? Which class do you hate?

First Day at APU

What do you wear? Do you join a club?

Yesterday

How much time do you spend choosing your clothes?

What do you do during your free time?

After students finish writing the things they think are different, have them share with a partner and think about four things (between the two of them) they want to share with the class. Then have the pairs stand up and read their comments.

Ask students to think about the responses. The teacher should point out comments that might be gender stereotypes, for example, “If I were a girl, I’d have to spend more time on my makeup.” Or, “If I were a boy, I could play soccer instead of volleyball.” The teacher should ask if the students think that’s fair, if girls or boys should be able to do whatever they want even if it’s not their gender norm. Every class will be different, the teacher will have to listen and lead the discussion based on the unique responses.

Finally, ask the students to write a journal entry. They should type the differences they wrote down initially and then answer these questions, “Do you think you would be happier if you were the opposite gender? Why? How do you think your future would be different if you were the opposite gender?”

**Beyond the Binary:
An Interview with JALT2014 Plenary Speaker Gerry Yokota**

Abstract

Japanese anime and manga are fertile sources for prompting classroom discussion and critical thinking. But educators are justly concerned about their frequently problematic representations of gender, sexuality and violence. In her plenary talk at JALT2014 in Tsukuba, Gerry Yokota introduced recent examples from three prominent subgenres of anime (mechas, cyborgs and beautiful fighting girls 戦闘美少女) and proposed her ideas about how to address such concerns. We hope the publication of this reflective post-plenary interview will stimulate ongoing discussion about possible approaches, pitfalls, outcomes and alternatives. We especially encourage readers to follow the links provided in order to appreciate her emphasis on the importance of gendered images and symbols.

概要

日本のアニメや漫画は授業ディカッションや批判的思考を促進するためのすばらしい供給源である。しかし、教育者は往々にしてジェンダー、セクシュアリティ、暴力の表象の扱いについて躊躇う。JALT 2014筑波のプレナリートークで、ジェリー・ヨコタはアニメの中の3つの副ジャンル（メカ、サイボーグ、戦闘美少女）からの例を紹介し、このようなものを取り上げる方法について彼女の考えを提示した。私たちは、プレナリー後のリフレクティブ・インタビューの出版が可能なアプローチ、隠れた危険性、成果、代替案に関する議論を深めることになることを希望する。ジェンダー化されたイメージやシンボルの重要性を彼女が指摘したことに感謝するためにも、引き続き関連した研究をすることを特に読者の方々に奨励したい。

GALE Journal (GJ): “Conversations across Borders” was the theme of the JALT International Conference held in Tsukuba in November 2014, and there was a strong focus on the power of stories and music to open up hearts and minds to new horizons and new connections. You also began your plenary talk with a story. Why did you choose to tell that very personal story?

Gerry Yokota (GY): I began with that story in the hope that it would effectively communicate the feminist truth that the personal is the political. And I hoped it would vividly illustrate something I very strongly believe: that gender issues are best discussed with as

much conscious reference as possible to intersections with the wider social context—especially race, ethnicity, nation, and class. The title of my plenary talk was "Beyond the Binary: Anime, Gender, and the Multicultural Subject," but I didn't want "binary" to remain a dry, theoretical concept. I wanted to emphasize the way simplistic binary thinking affects real human beings. I wanted to encourage a wider, deeper vision of a social context which is usually extremely complex, but which we tend to process in extremely simplistic binary heuristics, as explicated by Daniel Kahneman in *Thinking, Fast and Slow*: binaries like black and white, male and female, straight and gay.

GJ: Please share that story with us here.

GY: I grew up in Frankfort, the small-town capital of the state of Kentucky, in the U.S. For members of the audience who might not have been familiar with that regional culture and who find it helpful to think in analogies to Hollywood movies (and frankly it's a little scary to think how hard it is for me *not* to think in such analogies sometimes), I suggested imagining the world of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, maybe adding a little *Fried Green Tomatoes* or *Driving Miss Daisy*. I talked about how, growing up in that world, I *thought* I was white. But sometime around the fourth grade, in the early sixties, I started realizing that people didn't quite treat me the same as the other girls.

1964 was the year that the Civil Rights Act was passed, and the year that my formerly all-white public school was integrated. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a March on Frankfort that year. A few African-American kids joined our class, and whenever we did group work, I was placed in their group. At the time, I was quite proud of myself for this. I thought I was the smartest kid in the class, and at first, in my immature racist arrogance, I thought surely the teacher was placing me with them because she wanted me to be her teaching assistant and help them, because they may not have had the same educational advantages that I had had at glorious Elkhorn Elementary School. (Later I found out their education may have been far superior to my own, as they had previously attended the school attached to a historically black college, Kentucky State College for Colored People, now Kentucky State University.) Fortunately, I soon outgrew that worse-than-naïve assumption—maybe not perfectly, but I like to think I have made some progress. There were a few pointed experiences along the way that helped me grow up in that regard.

Coming back from summer vacation on my grandparent's farm, for example, I ran up against a deacon from the welcoming committee who tried to bar me from entering church on Sunday morning, saying, "We don't allow no n-----s here." I guess my pure white dress only served to accentuate the dark tan my Asian skin had gotten over the summer (I am a quarter Japanese). To this day, I'm still not sure whether he was serious, or was just trying to make a feeble joke.

In high school, there was more than one white girl who had a relationship with an African-American boy, including myself. Most of them kept it secret out of fear of

punishment. I was very fortunate. My mother thought nothing of me dating Jimi who, like myself, was also mixed race—half black, half Hispanic. My teachers didn't care, either, which I found a bit strange considering how strict they were with the other white girls. But I somehow managed to avoid thinking about it—until I got to college. There, it finally hit me. It was because no one else considered me white.

So this was my first experience of how the facile use of a simplistic binary heuristic often works. The only categories they had were black and white, and since I wasn't white enough for the white category, the only other category they could put me in was black. These were, after all, the days before Toyota, Nissan, Honda, and Mitsubishi had started building their factories in the heartlands of Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio and Illinois. We didn't even have a Chinese restaurant. So that's why it was no problem for them to send me to KSU for Advanced Placement classes because I was so bored in high school, but they would not have dared to send any of my white girlfriends, even though they too might have benefited from the educational advantage that I enjoyed as a result. There is a group photo in my senior yearbook posed to demonstrate the racial harmony at my high school, showing white boys holding hands with black girls, but no black boys holding hands with white girls. Hmm... wonder why...

And then the same thing happened in college, but with a new twist. Wishing to renounce my misidentification with white society, I joined the Asian American Student Association and this time fell in love with a handsome Japanese-American guy from Hawaii. I successfully petitioned to get a course in Asian American studies added to the general curriculum, and served as a teaching assistant to the sociology professor who sponsored it. But most of the Japanese-Americans at that time were still relatively "pure"-blooded. The only reason I am so mixed at my age is because my grandparents married back at the turn of the century in New York, the only state in the Union at the time that legally allowed interracial marriage. But the Japanese-American students in the AASA would not recognize me as Japanese-American. The simplistic binary heuristic this time was Japanese or not Japanese, and I had more going against me than for me, being three-quarters Caucasian.

So here was my quandary. I wanted the white boys in high school to see me as Natalie Wood, while they saw me as Suzie Wong. I wanted the Asian boys in college to see me as Tamlyn Tomita, while they probably saw me more as Hanoi Jane at best ("Hanoi Jane" being Jane Fonda in one of her less glamorous manifestations). And I must confess it was largely out of revenge that I ended up majoring in Japan Studies and coming to this country in my frustration at being excluded, my chosen identity rejected.

GJ: And clearly the Asian stereotype people were operating from in their interactions with you was strongly gendered. But your talk was mainly about Japanese anime, wasn't it? What's the connection?

GY: Many anime present a fantasy world that at first glance may seem to be far removed from everyday reality. But in the relationships among their characters, they often reproduce stereotypically gendered social structures, though perhaps with a bit of superficial window dressing. I introduced this real-world example of the intersection of gender and race or ethnicity in my life in the hope that it would provide a useful point of reference for people to think about two things: first, how racism and sexism are actually very closely related in structural and theoretical terms, as systems of power with real effects on real people; and second, how even the most fantastic or futuristic world presented in many anime are highly advanced technologically but display little progress in social relationships.

GJ: So what sort of anime did you introduce, and what were your criteria for their selection?

GY: I introduced scenes from three genres of anime: mecha, cyborgs, and beautiful fighting girls. My choice from the mecha group was *Gundam*, which started airing in 1979 and thus recently celebrated its 35th anniversary. I presented two examples, one from the original series, which was broadcast in the seventies and one from the 27th series, which just recently ended. My choice from the cyborg group was *Ghost in the Shell*. My choice from the beautiful fighting girl group was *Madoka Magica*.

GJ: A lot of people think of *Gundam* as the sort of entertainment that glorifies violence and war. Why would anyone want to introduce it in an English language classroom, especially an educator who is concerned about the glorification of macho masculinity and violence against women?

GY: I realize many people have that impression. It might have been more politically expedient to avoid it! But my aim was threefold. First, I think it exemplifies the problem of stereotyping, the Kahnemanian heuristic that leads us to classify things too rigidly as good or bad, when perhaps it's not quite that simple. We all know the perfect media for discussion is a Holy Grail! All we can do is work conscientiously and creatively with the flaws in any text. Second, even if you have no intention of ever introducing anime into your lesson plans, I hope at least some familiarity with this extremely popular cultural phenomenon will enhance people's understanding of the culture that many of our students are coming from. In the case of *Gundam*, it may turn out to be a family heritage passed from grandparents to parents to the third generation and beyond! And third, I know many educators have very clear boundaries that they want to draw in their classrooms and in their homes in terms of depictions of violence and sexuality. But I also believe we need to consider the possibility that it is disempowering for us to simply avoid these popular cultural phenomena. We cannot keep our students or our children in a safe bubble forever. Rather I argue that it is essential for us to teach them gender literacy, the same way we teach media literacy. I think it's better to

introduce carefully selected examples of anime, with awareness of their potential effects, and problematize any biases they contain, in order to raise consciousness about issues such as the social construction of gender.

GJ: Which episodes from *Gundam* did you introduce in your plenary talk at Tsukuba?

GY: I first introduced Episode 41, “A Cosmic Glow,” from the original 1979-1980 *Gundam* series. It involves four main characters. Amuro Ray and Sayla Mass are civilian pilots for the Earth Federation, mobilized during a state of emergency. In this episode, they battle against Lieutenant Char Aznable and Ensign Lalah Sune from the Principality of Zeon. The battle is complicated by the fact that Sayla and Char are sister and brother in disguise (in hiding after the assassination of their father, the founder of the Principality of Zeon) fighting on opposite sides. The battle is also complicated by the fact that Amuro and Lalah are Newtypes—that is to say, they possess special telepathic skills.

The official English-language website is rather limited, but the following wiki is relatively stable if you would like to familiarize yourself with the *Gundam* world and especially these four characters:



<http://gundam.wikia.com/>

In perhaps the most famous scene from this original series, Char and Amuro are sent out to battle, with Lalah supporting Char and Sayla supporting Amuro. In the heat of battle, when Char is distracted seeing his sister in the fray, Amuro sees his chance to attack Char. But Lalah intervenes to protect Char, and Amuro inadvertently kills Lalah. Char then escapes unharmed. But before Amuro kills Lalah, these two telepathic exchanges take place between the two of them:

Lalah: Why do you fight like this? Why? You have no one. Nothing to fight for.

Amuro: What do you mean?

Lalah: I can see it. You have no home, no family, you love no one.

Amuro: What difference does that make? Is it wrong to fight when you've nothing to

fight for?

Lalah: It isn't natural.

Amuro: Then why do you fight?

Lalah: I fight for the one who saved me.

Amuro: Is that all?

Lalah: People are changing. Becoming like us.

Amuro: You're right, Lalah.

Lalah: Do you really believe that, Amuro?

Amuro: I do. Because you and I were able to understand each other. Perhaps someday people will even be able to control time itself.

Lalah (dying): Oh, Amuro, I can see time.

Amuro: I've done something I can never make right. I've killed Lalah.

Char (retreating): I can't beat the Gundam. Not like this. Not now. Lalah, show me the way.

I encourage everyone to consider how these dialogues might be effectively used in the classroom to get a discussion going about traditional and popular Japanese culture, about gender stereotypes, and about mixed messages. As I suggested earlier, I made no attempt to argue that this proves *Gundam* is really an anti-war anime. All I argued is that it is not a simplistic pro-war anime, either. It contains a number of mixed messages that can offer stimulating food for thought about a number of issues, including gender. For example, when Lalah says Char saved her, she's referring obliquely to the storyline that he rescued her from a brothel, although this is never stated explicitly in the TV anime, only in the novel upon which it is based.

By the way, the music in anime is also often a fruitful source for stimulating thought and discussion in the classroom. I particularly recommend the popular opening and ending themes of the 1979 *Gundam* series for starters. The opening is a vigorous call to rise up and fight. The ending is a quiet, more reflective song with another mixed message, saying "men never show their tears, men never show their loneliness, ever." But in fact, the anime includes scenes of both Amuro and Char showing their tears upon the death of Lalah. Here is a stable link from the official Japanese Gundam site to the classic first episode, including the opening and ending songs:

http://www.b-ch.com/ttl/index.php?ttl_c=929

Although the wiki tends to be more informative, one area of the official English-language site that readers may wish to explore is the section called Gundam School, a collection of trivia. See for example Lesson 9, about the main female characters:

<http://en.gundam.info/contents/white/19450?region=all&cat=21&bigcat=gundamschool>

GJ: What was the other episode you introduced from the more recent *Gundam* series?

GY: I introduced a scene from Episode 1 of *Gundam Unicorn*, “Day of the Unicorn.” *Unicorn* was released in seven segments in OVA format between 2010 and 2014. Here is a stable link to an official 100-second trailer in English for context:



<http://en.gundam.info/movie/white/52?region=all&cat=9&bigcat=contents>

Unicorn features a young man named Banagher Links, who eventually becomes the pilot of the Unicorn mobile suit. He first appears as a common student at a technical school, but is eventually revealed to be the son of the head of the Vist Foundation. His father, Cardeas Vist, has been entrusted with a mysterious item called Laplace’s Box, which is believed to be a deterrent to world war. Another principal character is Princess Mineva Lao Zabi, who is introduced in this episode as Audrey Burne, because when she met Banagher and he asked her name, she concealed her royal identity by taking the first name she could come up with, from a billboard for the movie *Roman Holiday* (about another princess hiding her royal identity). Banagher rescues Audrey from a dangerous situation and accompanies her to the Vist Foundation, where she hopes to persuade Vist to remain neutral in the conflict between the Earth Federation and the Principality of Zeon. She asks Vist to guard the box and not to hand it over to anyone, even her own side. Vist knows who Audrey really is. Banagher does not. Vist also knows who Banagher is, that they are father and son. Banagher does not know Vist is his father, nor does Audrey. It’s fascinating for students and educators to think together about how these various power relationships based on access to information and knowledge as well as gender nuance the following dialogue, which takes place when Audrey and Banagher meet Cardeas Vist:

Audrey: Go home, Banagher. I appreciate all you’ve done for me thus far. I can take it from here.

Banagher: But Audrey, I can still help. So please, let me...

Audrey: Banagher...

Banagher: Just say that you need me and I'll... Just tell me...

Audrey: I don't need you. Now go. The best thing you can do is forget about me.

It can be very fruitful to compare scenes like this with traditional *Gundam* storylines, characters and visual styles, focusing especially on the dynamics of gendered relationships. It can also be a fruitful source for developing multicultural literacy. This conversation takes place in an elegant room at the Vist Foundation where the walls are decorated with the famous medieval tapestry, *The Lady and the Unicorn*. In the *Gundam Unicorn* world, this famous tapestry is owned by the Vist Foundation, and is the source of inspiration for the latest mobile suit. Entering the room, Banagher has a sense of déjà vu, and dimly remembers seeing it as a child (foreshadowing the revelation of his paternity). The unicorn, of course, is one of those mythical symbols that is often if not always strongly gendered: here as usual it is seen as a symbol of masculine virility. In space battle scenes, the single horn of the mobile suit is split into two as the Unicorn transforms from Basic mode into what I must sadly but truthfully report is officially called Destroy mode, though I would have wished for a different name. How might students interpret this sort of metamorphosis? Images like this can stimulate all sorts of discussions about myths, metaphors and symbols in different cultures.

GJ: You said the example you chose from the cyborg genre was *Ghost in the Shell*. People concerned about the objectification of women's sexuality might find this selection even more problematic than *Gundam*, which appears downright tame in comparison.

GY: Certainly this work requires even more careful handling with its highly sexualized images. But I do believe, as I said earlier, that we have to be careful not to simply avoid such problematic issues in ways that perpetuate taboos and deny sexuality. Rather, I hope we can find ways to raise awareness by the judicious use of carefully selected images, placed in context, to highlight the issues of sexualization, objectification, and censorship. It is possible to edit how much you show in the classroom; it is impossible to completely censor. Misogyny is real. It's out there, and we can't just bury our heads in the sand about it. Instead, I would argue we can engage with it as an instructive example of how easily we may be socially conditioned to accept and assume a lot of things are "natural" and "normal" just because we've been exposed to them so relentlessly. You may have very strong ideas about where you think the line should be drawn on issues such as child pornography and hate speech, but until the day these things actually disappear from the bookstores and video rental stores, I would argue it's best to work with young people to figure out effective ways to deal with them.

The main character of *Ghost in the Shell* is a woman named Major Motoko Kusanagi, head of a SWAT team that works for a secret organization, Section 9 of the police in the Japan of the near future. One important thing to remember about the members of this team is

that their roles and the range of actions they are capable of are dependent upon the degree to which their bodies are cyberized. Motoko's body is often highly sexualized: in the anime business it's called fan service, T&A (tits and ass). But here again we have a case of mixed messages. The major's T&A are not flesh and blood. Her entire body is prosthetic. Of course, the images on the screen can still be objectified and fetishized, and we should not dismiss or underestimate that risk. But the story also presents at least some degree of resistance to facile objectification. The questions to ponder and discuss are these: How much resistance is possible? And how we can intervene to tip the balance?

Ghost in the Shell treats many, many fascinating social issues such as refugees and illegal immigrants, illegal organ trade, hackers and net addiction, and many episodes have a strongly foregrounded gender element. There are episodes about sexual slavery, about a war veteran's PTSD, and if you want a more positive empowering image for your female students, there is a female prime minister who is far more than mere decoration or passive puppet.

GJ: What episodes from this series did you choose, and why?

GY: Whereas the aim in my choice of the two *Gundam* episodes was to give a sense of the chronology of the three decades of that long-running series, my choice in this case was to show *Ghost in the Shell's* more sophisticated depiction of gender diversity. The first example shows a stereotypical heterosexual love triangle. The second example touches, however obliquely, on the issue of gender dysphoria.

Episode 25 of the second season, "To the Other Side of Paradise," builds upon a romantic tension between Kusanagi and her teammate, Batou, that runs throughout the series. This tension is brought to a climax when Kusanagi and Batou are sent to capture a revolutionary leader, Hideo Kuze. Kusanagi and her quarry Kuze are temporarily trapped under a collapsed building until they are rescued by Batou. Kuze turns out to have been Motoko's first love as a child.

To get a good grasp of this substory, I recommend a classic piece of fan art, a YouTube video with a collage of famous scenes from the series, with the theme song "I Do" (lyrics and vocals by Ilaria Graziano, music by Yoko Kanno). Although, of course, I cannot promise that a piece of fan art will be available on YouTube forever, it has been allowed for so long that I surmise that the original artists (of both the anime and the music) have decided to allow it because it is so clearly a work of respectful homage. The video shows how Kusanagi and Kuze first met, as the first children to be given cyberized bodies when the experimental technology was just first being developed. And it highlights Kusanagi's mixed feelings for the two men. The song is sung in Italian, with only one refrain repeated in English: "I do." The phrase works subtly together with symbolic images such as the steel girder in the shape of a cross, which Batou uses to rescue Kusanagi and Kuze from the rubble, and the Biblical apple, to reinforce the narrative of conventional heterosexual romance:



<https://youtu.be/LTRI3qac0F0>

But *Ghost in the Shell* also includes scenes that offer paths into a discussion about gender beyond the binary. Episode 2 of the first season, “Runaway Evidence,” is a story of a young man who died of a medically incurable disease that could have been treated with cyberization if his parents had not been opposed to the technology for religious reasons. Kusanagi’s team was drawn into this situation because the young man had left secret instructions for his brain to be implanted in a military tank after his death, and the tank went on the rampage. The theme song for this episode, “Beauty Is within Us” (lyrics by Chris Mosdell, music by Yoko Kanno, vocals by Scott Matthew), suggests the reason for his rampage. It opens with these lines:

O mother dear
Look what you've done
To your forlorn and once beloved son
Why was I born at all?
O mother dear
I'm such a freak
A mutant man, a woman underneath
Why was I born at all?

It ends with this refrain:

O beauty is within us, mother knows
O beauty is within us, like a rose
O beauty is within us, let it grow
O mother dear, let me out of here!



GJ: Wow, that was really powerful. So why did you end with cute schoolgirls in miniskirts twirling magic wands?

GY: Because *Madoka Magica* (TBS and MBS, 2011) invites viewers to consider issues of power in far more profound ways than those superficial images suggest. Here is a link to the official English-language website introducing the five main characters as context for this discussion.



<http://madokamagicausa.com/character-default.php>

To give just a glimpse of the show's complexity, I introduced Episode 9, "I'd Never Allow That To Happen." The main character in this series, Madoka, is the most stereotypically feminine-looking character of the group of five magical girls, despite the fact that she comes from a family where the mother is the breadwinner and the father is a full-time househusband. But Episode 9 features Sayaka, who comes from a conventional family, and Kyoko, an orphan who lives on the streets. All these girls have unwittingly sold their souls in exchange for a wish. All struggle with the question of power and how to use it responsibly, the theme of the entire series.

Kyoko and Sayaka have a confrontation after a long period of rivalry. Kyoko finally explains to Sayaka that her father was the pastor of a church, but no one was interested in his sermons. He lost his job and the family was starving, so Kyoko made the wish that people would listen to him. Her wish was fulfilled, and people flocked to his church. But when he

found out the reason for his sudden popularity, his pride was hurt and he called Kyoko an evil witch, threw her out, and then went berserk, killing the rest of the family and finally committing suicide. After telling Sayaka this story, Kyoko says this:

I brought all this suffering down on my family because I made a wish for my dad without knowing what he really wanted. So right then and there, I promised myself I'd never use magic to help anyone else ever again. This power is mine, and I'll use it for me and me alone.

Kyoko makes fun of Sayaka for using her own wish not for herself but for the boy she is in love with. In response, Sayaka apologizes for not understanding Kyoko's situation and asks her forgiveness, but goes on to say this:

I don't have any regrets about using my wish for someone else. And I've decided that from now on, I'm not going to regret anything ever again.... Honestly, I don't think I paid too big a price for what I got. I think magic can be used for great things, depending on how you use it. ... I'll do things my way... and fight my own battles.

The other girls share similar struggles.

GJ: Clearly anime have great potential to stimulate thought and discussion on many of the sorts of issues that we hope our students think and talk about critically. Do you think there are any lessons we as educators can take from all this not only into the classroom but also into our workplaces?

GY: One more binary I talked about at Tsukuba, one that I view as significantly complicit in the workings of implicit gender bias, is the distinction between introverts and extroverts. I suggested that perhaps we should view this as yet another simplistic binary heuristic like black and white, male and female that forces people into boxes and closets.

Susan Cain calls it “the new groupthink” in her 2012 book *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*. Cain critiques the popular bias in our schools and workplaces that favors extroverts over introverts. She says that the second-class citizen status of introverts in the professional world today parallels the status of American housewives in the society described in Betty Friedan's 1963 *Feminine Mystique*, “the problem that had no name.”

According to Cain, psychologists say men and women are generally about 50/50 extrovert and introvert. But it often seems that men are mostly perceived as extroverts and expected to try to act like extroverts even when they're not. Conversely, women are often perceived as introverts, expected to act like introverts even when they're not. Cain says this pressure is not only causing great private distress that compels half of both types to often hide

in their closets and suffer in silence, but is also leading to a huge waste of talent. When a female introvert in an extrovert-dominated environment is criticized for being a poor leader, could it simply be because her leadership style goes against the pro-extrovert grain? How many organizations are letting the talents of their female extroverts go to waste because they are turning a blind eye to the way women are being pressured to act like introverts?

Cain, herself a graduate of Harvard Business School, introduces research showing extroverts are not necessarily always the best leaders – both have their fair share of equal potential. And Harvard Business School is beginning to make changes in response to analyses such as hers. Cain cites Harvard Business School professor Quinn Mills, for example, where he talks about the winner's curse, saying, "The risk with our [mostly extroverted] students is that they're very good at getting their way. But that doesn't mean they're going the right way."

So next time you find yourself thinking, "Ah, what do you expect, she's a woman," or "Ah, what do you expect, he's a guy," or, "If she had such a great idea, why didn't she say so earlier? It's her own fault. She shouldn't be so coy...." Think about it. Is it gender or is it introversion? Both carry a heavy load of social conditioning. Think about the faculty dynamics at your institution. Could you and your colleagues be losing more than you're winning by always blindly following the most spontaneous outspoken extrovert, instead of proactively creating an environment where everyone's ideas are shared and considered before you make your important organizational decisions?

GJ: In conclusion, what do you hope people took away from your plenary, and will take away from this interview?

GY: I hope people will be more sensitive to the way these various binaries combine to limit our potential as teachers and as learners, and possibly lead us to do a disservice to our students as well.

I hope people will consider that anime can be a fruitful field for explorations of the representation of gender, including debates about where to draw the line between censorship and freedom of expression.

I hope I have demonstrated the fun and the value of keeping an eye out for mythical symbols. If you look at the links I have provided to the images and clips, you will see not only the unicorn in *Gundam* but also Biblical imagery such as crosses and apples in both *Ghost in the Shell* and *Madoka Magica*. I hope educators will encourage the creative production of metaphors, even if they sound a little "unnatural." One of the other plenary speakers, Claire Kramsch, writes extensively about this in her 2009 book *The Multilingual Subject*, and with her I believe that students respond to the power of metaphor if you give them a chance.

I encourage people to remember that cynicism is not critical thinking. It's just the opposite extreme of naiveté. There is no such thing as a perfect text or image or story. They

all have flaws, so I urge people not to depend too much on your Kahnemanian heuristic and reject a text or image or story outright as soon as you find a flaw, but rather consider how you might use that flaw as a learning point.

Finally, I think we need to energetically promote the idea in JALT that gender literacy is a professional skill that will give you an advantage in this competitive world, and not just thanks to negative incentives like the fact that universities don't want employees who are at high risk for sexual harassment lawsuits, but for more positive, satisfying reasons. Gender impacts every aspect of our students' lives, private and public. When we are informed about gender, we are better equipped to empower our students to thrive as we enhance our own professional development. I encourage everyone to claim its power.

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Book Reviews

***Mobbing: Emotional abuse in the American workplace.* Davenport, N., Distler Schwartz, R., & Pursell Elliot, G. Ames, Iowa: Civil Society Publishing, 1999. 213pp.**

Reviewed by Fiona Creaser
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Noa Davenport, Ruth Distler Schwartz, and Gail Pusell Elliot have come together to write a very succinct and easy-to-understand account of mobbing in the workplace. This book is a must-read for anyone who is interested in or experiencing emotional abuse in the workplace. The intent of the book is to create public awareness about mobbing and is a self-help resource for victims of this type of behaviour. All three authors have extensive knowledge about emotional abuse in the workplace. In the authors' note at the beginning of the book all three authors explain:

This book came about because all three of us, in different organisations, experienced a workplace phenomenon that had profound effects on our well-being. Through humiliation, harassment, and unjustified accusations, we experienced emotional abuse that forced us out of the workplace (p. 14).

For anyone who has read *Sexual Shakedown: The Sexual Harassment of Women on the Job* they will be immediately struck by the chilling similarity of the words in the preface when Lin Farley (1978) wrote:

Still, when we had finished, there was an unmistakable pattern to our employment...Each one of us had already quit or been fired from a job at least once because we had been made too uncomfortable by the behaviour of men (p. xi).

Lin Farley recognised in 1974 that sexual harassment was forcing women out of the workplace and in 1999 Davenport et al. confess to being forced out of the workplace by behaviour Dr Heinz Leyman coined as 'mobbing.'

Dr. Heinz Leymann the German-Swedish psychologist who first defined the term mobbing and pioneered ground-breaking research in northern Europe about emotional abuse in the workplace wrote the foreword to *Mobbing: Emotional abuse in the American workplace*, in which he poses the following questions, “If one can identify mobbing as an extreme form of psychological pressure, how much of this pressure can a normal human being withstand? At what points does mobbing result in illness? Where are the limits?” (p. 16). The book *Mobbing: Emotional abuse in the American workplace* answers all of the above questions and more.

The book is divided into five parts including the introduction with nine chapters. The content breakdown is as follows:

Introduction

Part 1: What is mobbing, why it occurs and persists

Part 2: How mobbing affects people and ways people can cope

Part 3: How mobbing affects organisations, both as impact and for prevention

Part 4: Legal and societal implications of mobbing

In addition to taking a step-by-step approach to defining, explaining and preventing mobbing, Davenport et al. intersperse facts with their own research findings, namely, interviews from mainly professionals, men and women, in their 40s and 50s. Not only do the experiences of the interviewees give credence to the facts and theories espoused in the book they also make a lasting impression. For example Judy who was at the time of the interview recovering from second degree mobbing says of her experience:

It [mobbing] destroys you more than you know. I am scared to death to go back to work. I have this feeling I am not going to be successful anywhere. It damages you forever. I have no confidence. I really believe that now I am not as competent (p. 91).

After reading the personal experiences the effect mobbing has on people the reader is able to grasp just how devastating the experience is. Mobbing is not a workplace behaviour to be taken lightly, it does not discriminate, it can happen to anyone, female or male, at any age from any social, ethnic background.

One minor issue I found with the book is that as the title implies the book is about mobbing in the American workplace. At times I felt slightly distant from the some of the information presented simply because I have insufficient knowledge of American culture and at times it may be difficult to draw comparisons with the workplace in Japan.

Overall, this book is an excellent resource about mobbing for those people who want to know more about the behaviour and for those people who are experiencing mobbing. The bibliography on pages 204 to 208 covers a useful range of further reading about mobbing, bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace.

This book is also available in Japanese under the title; 職場いびりアメリカの現場か. More publications from the authors can be found on ‘The Mobbing Portal’ under the resources organized by author section.

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The Mobbing Portal at <http://www.mobbingportal.com/index.html>

***Queer teachers, identity and performativity*. Emily M. Gray and Anne Harris (eds). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 115 pp.**

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This short volume examines the workplace experiences of primary and secondary educators who identify with one or more of the categories in (and beyond) the LGBTQ initialism in Australia, Ireland, the UK, and the USA. It focuses on the way these educators’ performativity of queerness (in a very broad understanding of the term) contributes to a critical response to the silencing force of heteronormativity that pervades schools. The volume also considers some of the pressures that relate to being a “marked presence” (p. 5) in schools and queer teachers’ varied responses thereto. The book consists of five chapters, with a conclusion penned by renowned queer education and philosophy scholar Cris Mayo, who is referenced often throughout, and an introduction by editors Emily Gray and Anne Harris. Gray is a British transplant to Australia, where she is a Lecturer in Education Studies at RMIT University in Melbourne. Harris is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at Monash University in Melbourne. Both editors identify as queer and have considerable practical experience in the realm of education as well as the research of gender and sexuality therein.

A strong thread that runs through the chapters is that of a politics of visibility; what it means to be recognized as queer in different contexts. We are urged to move away from the common (mis)conceptualisation of coming out as a binary action. The book makes the case that the ability to challenge heteronormative social forces in education is not necessarily dependent on queer teachers being out of the closet. We might have one foot in and one out – or sometimes both and sometimes neither; but regardless, the complex space within the closet can potentially be used in active resistance.

The first chapter challenges the popular myth of social progress for transgender teachers, using a case study from Australia to show how inclusive policies designed to protect LGBT students don't necessarily extend to their teachers. This chapter also sharply criticizes the asexualization and perceived Haraway-esque (1991) cyborgification of queer teachers within neoliberal discourses of "professionalism," while heterosexual colleagues may not be equally affected by this.

Chapter Two takes a different tack, offering an alternative reading of this "teacher as sexuality-less professional" discourse (p. 38). The writer, Ferfolja, discusses the various ways in which queer teachers in Australia strategically position themselves within problematic heteronormative, neoliberal discourses, without necessarily being out or open about their sexuality. Many of Ferfolja's subjects choose to represent themselves as sexless educators, but their active choice to do so provides them with the opportunity and ability to be agents of change in their schools, whereas being out would, they believe, perhaps strip them of this agency. In reading their narratives, we are reminded of the pitfalls of perceiving people as victims lacking agency.

Chapter Three highlights the experiences of teachers in Ireland who have entered into same-sex civil partnerships. While acknowledging that this action imbued many of the teachers with a greater sense of legitimacy at their schools, the writer criticizes the unequal power dynamic and anxieties involved therein.

The fourth and fifth chapters look at policy and progress (or rather, lack thereof) in the United Kingdom, drawing on research to show how positive change in the political field does not always translate to improvement in schools. These chapters position British schools as forcefully heteronormatizing spaces where Othering frequently occurs.

The book concludes with a rallying call for continued engagement with queerness, queer theory and critical thought in education. Mayo reminds us of the complexities inherent in queerness and queer activism; how definitions and understandings shift over time, and how we need to constantly reflect on norms and issues to keep radical progress on the agenda.

Harris and Gray repeatedly push the internationality of the volume (p. 1, 10), but in reality it reflects only a narrow range of queer experiences; firstly, it excludes educators in Asia and Africa entirely, and secondly, it does not consider case studies from tertiary education. While the content is perhaps not directly applicable to many contexts, the Japanese one included, the book is still well worth a read. It is a valuable contribution to the

chronically under-researched field of queerness in education, and it provides food for critical thought that will hopefully inspire further studies that reflect greater diversity.

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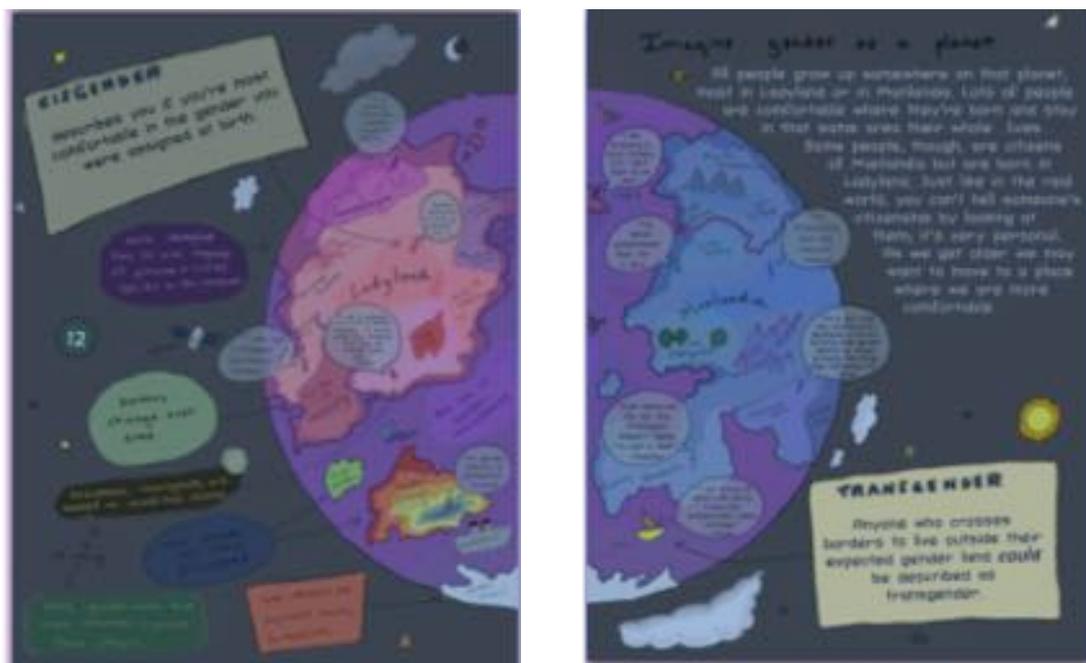
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“Try imagining gender as a 3D space. What would your dimensions be?” (p. 27). How might students respond to those questions? For *GALE Journal* readers who teach EFL, in Japan or elsewhere, it may be difficult to find materials about gender that are appropriate for beginner-level English learners. *The Gender Book* is therefore an extremely useful resource for instructors who wish to present the topic in an engaging and positive manner.

This *manga*-style book is available free online (donations welcomed) or in hardback as a Creative Commons publication [\$30], so that it can be used in classes without copyright infringement. It was created by four young Americans who describe themselves as ranging from “androgynous genderqueers to butches to drag kings to trans men” and promise that if you don’t know what those terms mean yet, you will by the end of reading their book (www.thegenderbook.com). *The Gender Book* addresses topics such as gender associations and offers advice on how to be an ally to gender minorities. Its contents are also easily adaptable to the EFL classroom via surveys and games, as well as a bonus pullout gender booklet that students can share with friends and family.

Instructors who teach gender-related materials in Japan may have noticed a cultural pattern: Many students believe that playing scripted societal roles is necessary to be a mature adult. They also believe that the gender binary is ‘natural,’ and cannot or should not be altered. These common assumptions, such as “Gender is the same as sex” and “Body parts have significance,” are challenged concisely in the introduction to *The Gender Book* (p. 9) and then discussed more fully in later chapters.

Cultural and historical snapshots (pp. 17-30) detail attitudes towards gender roles over millennia, from the inclusive beliefs of the Mayans to the misogyny of the ancient Greeks. This section introduces the varied treatment of “intermediaries” (trans and intersex people) in traditional cultures around the world. These pages could be utilized just as easily in a general studies university English class as in a Gender Studies class. Via vivid illustrations, gender is depicted as a planet with the countries of ‘Ladyland’ and ‘Manlandia’ (‘Viral Valley’ and ‘Macho Mountains’ are geographical details) (p. 29). In lower-level EFL classroom application, students could be asked to draw their own gender planets, and then could compare them to those in *The Gender Book*.



The differences between sexual identity and sexual orientation are discussed (pp. 38-39). The text includes a summary of current labels (from “cisgender” to “genderfluid”) while acknowledging that they are in flux (p. 52). The book provides nudges towards further research on the intersections of race, religion, and gender (p. 54), while the sections on brain and gender (p. 18) and intersex persons (p. 22) offer a gateway to scientific studies. Later, the

concept of non-oppressive masculinity is explored, as is “gender surfing” as a means to the end of staying alive: “Sometimes I have to hide under the pretext of being ‘male’ or ‘female’ for the sake of surviving...” (p. 55), says one interviewee.

While this book is often lighthearted, it takes a serious turn towards practical matters. Page 58 includes questions related to legal issues for those considering transgender options which could serve both as guidelines for students in transition as well as sensitivity training for their classmates. The section entitled “Walk in Our Shoes” (p. 58) includes shocking data on the real physical danger to those in high-risk categories: the suicide rate for trans people is 41% compared to 1.6% for the general population of the U.S. (p. 59). Asking students to research comparative data in Japan, as well as ways to transform it, could be an eye-opening strategy here.

While intermediate or advanced EFL students could use this book as a jumping-off point for academic research projects, beginner-level conversational classroom activities also could include:

1. An exercise in which students complete the sentence “Gender is...”, the results of which are then compared with those found on page 11.
2. Brainstorming adjectives associated with masculinity and femininity to compare with the illustrated text on page 12.
3. A drawing activity in which the students imagine a symbol, graph, or chart to represent a comprehensive gender spectrum (pages 27-28).
4. Since EFL study includes learning rules of polite conversation, page 64 is applicable. Asking for personal pronoun use is recommended (“Which do you prefer to be called, she, ze, he, ey or something else?”), but asking personal questions is rude (“What kind of genitalia do you have now?”).
5. Asking your students to imagine themselves as a gender superhero could be a fun yet thought-provoking activity which provides practice with conditional tenses (p. 67), as in “My gender superpower would be ...”

The Gender Book was not written specifically for use in EFL classes, but its philosophy could literally be lifesaving to students who may be feeling isolated in the gender binary system. Hill and Mays have done a commendable job of articulating complex concepts alongside the main theme of their book: “Your gender is where you feel the most comfortable, and it can grow and change just like the rest of you” (p. 11).