

CONFERENCE REPORTS

FLEAT (Foreign Language Education and Technology) II, Nagoya, Japan, August 4-7, 1992

Sponsored by the Language Laboratory Association of Japan (LLA) and the International Association for Learning Laboratories (IALL)

The second international FLEAT conference, which took place in Nagoya and Kasugai, Japan, was a memorable experience for the many IALL members who attended. Not only was the professional relationship between the two associations strengthened, but, in the words of Willard Daetsch, "Most of us, Japanese and visitors, came away from the conference with stacks of calling cards and many friendly contacts which we shall no doubt maintain."

Comments in the conference program by the presidents of the two sponsoring organizations, LLA Japan and IALL, sum up the themes of the conference:

I would like to emphasize one point: we should become masters of technology rather than being enslaved by it. We need to establish our own teaching goals, and then make use of technology to attain these goals. To my mind, this is the crux of our discussions and exchanges at FLEAT II. On the inter-

action between LLA and IALL in the years to come, I am confident we will be able to more fully integrate the goals of language teaching and technological innovation.

—*Yoshinobu Niwa*
President, LLA Japan

Foreign language education and technology—why are these two areas so closely interwoven? One obvious reason is that technology now permeates the fabric of our daily existence. However, there's a more telling reason, and that lies in the fact that the goal of foreign language education and the end results of technology (email, teleconferencing, distance education, for example) are one and the same; that is, to bring people together. Thus technology is a natural tool in support of foreign language education.

Bringing people together is what FLEAT II is all about as well; ...As you review your program, you will see that this conference brings people together from across national borders and across disciplines to share the best of what each has to offer.

—*LeeAnn Stone*,
President, IALL

FLEAT II Report

by Warren B. Roby
Washington State University

[A version of this report first appeared in the
NWALL Forum.]

The theme of FLEAT II was "Internationalizing Foreign Language Education through Technology," and thanks to the generous financial support of numerous organizations and individuals in Japan and the United States, including travel support provided by the Sony Corporation of America, the conference was truly international: 400 people from at least six countries attended. The conference began with a keynote address, "Prospects for Foreign Language Education," by Soichi Iijima, former president of Nagoya University. Iijima's address focused on the history of language study in Japan and concluded with suggestions on how technology can now add to the record. His address was given in downtown Nagoya at the International Center, and was followed by a panel on Machine Translation. The new and beautiful Miura Kohei Memorial Hall on the Chubu University campus was the site for the remaining plenary sessions and keynote speeches. ACTFL president Gerard L. Ervin of Ohio State University asked "Can Technology Fulfill its Purpose?" He emphasized that the question cannot be answered easily, but offered seven principles to be considered to properly integrate technology into language instruction. A special moment in the conference was when Ervin played a song written for the Japanese *shakuhachi* on his flute to illustrate the international language that music is. Scott Windeatt, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, spoke on "New Technologies, New Methodologies." He stressed that any methodology can be used with any technology, but proposed that computer technology will lead to new methodologies.

Computer topics dominated the concurrent sessions. There were several demonstrations of authoring systems and multimedia configurations. Many of these were also shown in the Showcase sessions which were held during the lunch hour in the same room with the vendor exhibits. There were several sessions which dealt with the methodological issues surrounding technology use. Networks, such as the INTERNET, and electronic bulletin boards and email were treated as well. Appropriately, attendees were allowed to send email messages from a machine in the exhibit area. The presenters I heard were well-prepared and had good handouts. Many participants encouraged the inclusion of more research-focused presentations for FLEAT III. It is research which can resolve the many questions raised at FLEAT II concerning the proper use of technology in language teaching.

Much of the success of the conference was due to the gracious hospitality of the Japanese hosts. They arranged comfortable hotel accommodations for a reasonable price and provided train and bus instructions in English. On Wednesday evening the overseas attendees were treated to a sumptuous welcoming banquet. There were two opportunities to participate in a tea ceremony and an optional cormorant fishing party was organized for Thursday night. English-speaking guides were ever-present to direct the attendees and run errands for presenters. Each IALL member was given a FLEAT II souvenir T-shirt. One of the kindest gestures was the personal gift from LLA president Yoshinobu Niwa of a woven fabric picture by the famous 19th century artist, Hiroshige Ando. Yet perhaps most gracious of all was the use of English for the majority of presentations. When one notes that the Japanese outnumbered the overseas attendees seven-to-one, the generosity of this gesture is all the more apparent.

FLEAT I (August, 1981) and II were held in Japan, but FLEAT III is slated for the University of Victoria in British Columbia in 1997. IALL members will again have the opportunity to interact with colleagues from around the world. Yet we need not wait until then to make contact with our peers. As was mentioned, a major topic of FLEAT II was electronic networking. Thanks to this resource we can share our questions, problems, and insights with our overseas counterparts now. By doing so we can put into practice the theme of FLEAT II, "Internationalizing Foreign Language Education through Technology." —W.R.

Willard Daetsch reports the following FLEAT II memories: [There was] the brass choir which welcomed us on the first morning, the delicious and artistic reception, the tea ceremony, the final party and the many informal meetings, late night talks, breakfast together every morning [at the IALL headquarters hotel], etc. Then there was the personal side which left [my wife] and me next to speechless. I expected to have a chance to see some of the family which I had met as an occupation soldier in 1945, but the extent and warmth of the reception was amazing. Apparently the memories of friendship which I have carried with me since leaving Japan in February of 1946 and which I renewed with Christmas cards, was felt also by the children of the family in Japan. Either I have to describe it with "WOW!" or with recourse to describing it as a spiritual experience. —W.D.

Notes from Jackie Tanner, who also attended FLEAT I in 1981: The Chubu campus is lovely, new, on a hill, modern buildings. Bright friendly young Chubu students clad in nifty blue FLEAT II t-shirts directed visitors from the trains to the buses and all around the campus. At 8:15 on opening day a large group of us trooped off to the train station (providing entertainment for the

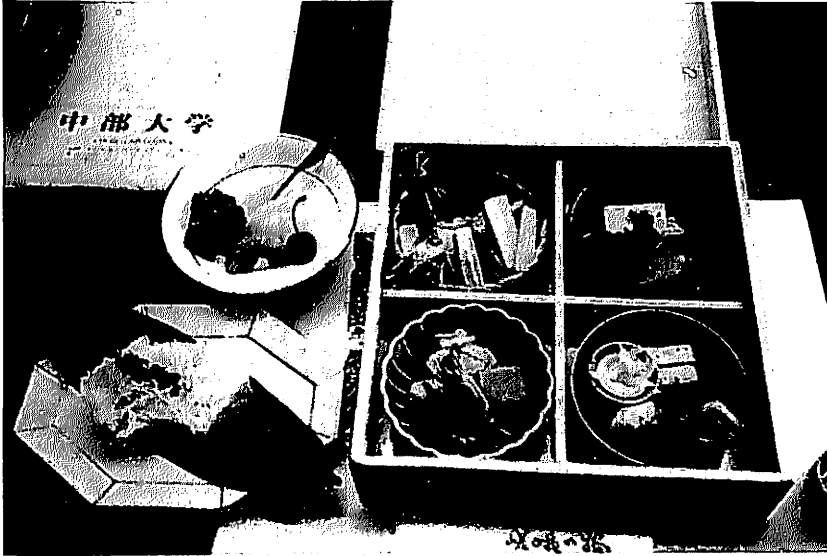
locals), made the bus transfer (encouraged by the students in the blue t-shirts) and welcomed cool drinks offered by Chubu staff—Japan in August is hot and humid, like D.C. The opening formalities provided recognition for the concerted efforts of LLA and IALL committee members who produced the conference. Jerry Ervin gave an appropriate and culturally sensitive opening address, and charmed both western and eastern members of the audience with his flute renditions.

Thursday evening was highlighted with a special tour of a fortress and observation of the historic cormorant fishing. Mrs. Niwa sent cookies to everybody on the bus; what a treat! Many Japanese conference participants took part in the cormorant fishing trip, which gave us a chance to get to know each other better. Since this is a family vacation activity, while there were two boats of conference participants, there must have been thirty boats filled with Japanese families of all ages. In cormorant fishing, people and birds work together. The traditionally dressed fisherman sends the bird into the water with a cord on its neck, tight enough to allow small fish to go down, but not big ones. The fisherman usually controls twelve of the large black water birds at a time, and the fishing scene makes a beautiful night show with bonfires, fireworks, and a boat with music and dancers.

Friday, the farewell party was another example of outstanding hospitality: lovely flowers, lots of drinks, good food, music again from the talented Chubu University symphony, and new friends. —J.T.

Note: The conference proceedings and videotapes of the plenary sessions will be available soon from IALL Business Manager Robin Lawrason at Temple University.

Conference Reports



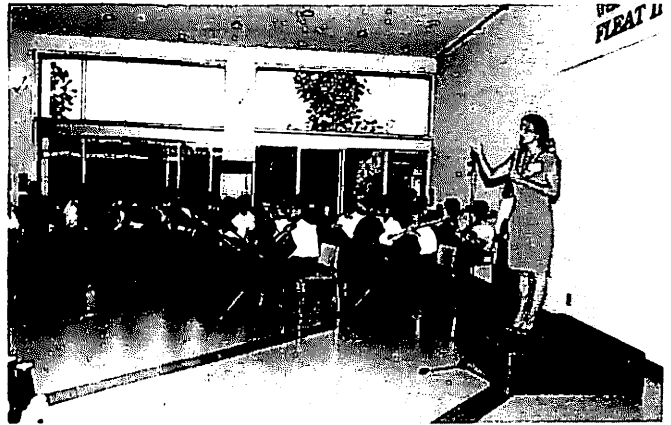
The beautiful bento box lunch served at the Planning Committee luncheon



L to R: Robin Lawrason, Nobushige Tadokoro, LeeAnn Stone, Pam Griffin-Castro, Marie Sheppard, Yoshinobu Niwa, Masao Takeuchi, Ruth Trometer



*Opening Ceremony, Nagoya
International Center
LeeAnn Stone, IALL President*



*Welcome Party,
Chubu University*



*Tea Ceremony at Chubu
University
Past-President Ruth Trometer,
Mim Grodberg, and Juliette Avots*

**ACTFL '92, November 20-22,
1992, Rosemont, IL
Report by Rose Chang
Federal Language Training Lab,
Arlington, VA**

Approximately 20 IALL members were in attendance at ACTFL '92.

Following are the titles of the IALL-sponsored presentations given by our members:

1. "What good is a language lab?" — Kathleen Ford/Susan Saley
2. "The do's and don'ts of producing video with one camera" — Victor Aulestia
3. "Computers in a business language course" — Sharon Scinicariello/Mana Derakhshani
4. "Multimedia: From the classroom to the lab" — Josy McGinn
5. "An anonymous feedback classroom" — Bill Caldwell

The IALL membership meeting was informative and productive, and was a highlight of this year's ACTFL conference. We were excited about how well attended it was—with 37 new and old members as well as members-to-be. Most of the new people came with "missions" from their schools to "find out more and make connections" for their newly funded language learning resource center/language lab. Participants discussed new and old problems and possible solutions such as where to go for help—regional groups, conferences, etc. IALL members gave an overview of our organization (structure, publications, etc.). We promoted IALL '93, passed out information on it and membership information as well.

We discussed IALL sponsored activities (regional meetings, conference reps, etc.)

The question of equipment rental fees at ACTFL for presentations was raised—the exceedingly high rental costs for computers, monitors, and VCRs might force presenters to "talk about" their projects, and consequently, the audiences are deprived of seeing the whole/correct picture. It was suggested that the IALL Board write to ACTFL and raise the concern.

IALL participated in the Tech Fair, and displayed IALL publications, information pamphlet, and call for proposals for IALL '93. With many visitors to the booth, our participation was a success—several completed or took membership applications and almost all picked up our publication list.