



In Appreciation of Professor Mary Goebel Noguchi

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It has been my greatest pleasure to work with Professor Mary Noguchi in the Department of English Linguistics and Literature over the past 13 years. Actually, my association with her stretches back much longer. I first became aware of Professor Noguchi's academic work in the late 1980s and 1990s, when she was involved in developing the field of bilingualism in Japan, and especially the study of child bilingualism in the context of multicultural families. As one of the earliest English-native scholars in this field, she helped establish the Bilingualism Special Interest Group (Bilingualism SIG) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT), of which I was also an active member. Then, as the SIG increased in membership, it was able, in 1995, to launch an annual refereed journal, *Japan Journal of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism*, of which Professor Noguchi was one of the founders. She served as the first editor of the journal, a position which she held for many years. Both the Bilingualism SIG and the journal continue to play important roles in Japan bilingualism studies today, especially among the younger generation of international teachers, researchers, and parents.

Despite my earlier awareness of her work, my first real contact with Professor Noguchi came in the late 1990s. At that time she was co-editing a volume of case studies on bilingualism in Japan, to which I contributed a chapter on Ainu language revitalization with an anthropologist collaborator, Masami Iwasaki-Goodman. The book, *Studies in Japanese Bilingualism*, was published in 2001 by the international publisher Multilingual Matters (Mary Goebel Noguchi & Sandra Fotos, eds.). It has over the ensuing two decades served as a major reference for those seeking information in English about multilingual and minority language communities in Japan. Professor Noguchi's stamp on the establishment and maturation of the field of Japanese bilingualism/multilingualism is thus clear.

Professor Noguchi and I continued to collaborate in various capacities after our respective moves to Kansai University—mine in 2007 and hers in 2008—where we had become colleagues in the Department of English Linguistics and Literature, Faculty of Letters. Our collaboration was natural, as we shared many interests in the fields of sociolinguistics and language education. Professor Noguchi contributed a study on language and identity among Korean (*Zainichi*) residents of Japan to a volume on minority language education in the Asia-Pacific region (published by John Benjamins in 2015), which I co-edited with Craig Alan Volker, who himself has been invited to our department as a visiting research for this fall semester, 2021.

But my collaborations with Professor Noguchi were not only related to research; we also shared many ideas about teaching, and on a few occasions held joint retreats (*gasshuku*) with our fourth-year seminar (*zemi*) classes. Because many of our academic interests overlapped, similar types of students would apply to our respective zemis—to the extent that it sometimes felt like we were competing to get the most serious and interesting students to join our zemi. But for my part this was all positive, as it encouraged me to continually rethink and refine my teaching and supervision techniques. Particularly, I was influenced by observing Professor Noguchi's meticulous correction of the drafts of her students' graduation theses (*sotsugyo ronbun*) through various stages of their development.

Over time, we came to draw distinctions between our specialties for students who were trying to decide which zemi to take. Those whose main interests were in pragmatics or gender studies (areas in which Professor Noguchi had been increasingly focusing since coming to Kandai) were encouraged to apply for her zemi, and those with a main interest in English education or second language studies tended to take mine. Students with interests in world Englishes or in cross-cultural studies, in which we were both actively working, would apply for one or the other of our zemis. Despite some differences in our approaches to supervision, we were able to bounce ideas off of each other and work out techniques for getting our students to produce graduation theses of a higher quality (or so we hoped) than those from our early days at Kandai. This led us to do a joint presentation at a JALT conference in Akita in 2017, with the aim of helping less experienced non-Japanese teachers in Japanese universities work out their own techniques for graduation-thesis supervision. Our presentation was followed up with a co-authored paper published in the conference proceedings volume the following year.

Professor Noguchi will be dearly missed by many upon her retirement from Kansai University: by me, as a fellow American educator and as an academic collaborator; by all of her colleagues for her positive outlook and boundless energy; and by her students for her devoted efforts to ensure that they receive a university education of the highest quality. I expect that her future endeavors will involve, to various extents, aspects of academia, community, and family. I, and all of her other colleagues at Kansai University, wish her the best in whatever direction she should take from here.