

PREFACE

Tadashi Shiozawa
Chubu University

It is our great pleasure to launch the first issue of Reports from English Teachers' Seminar (RETS). It's so named because the main contributors of articles to this online journal are those who presented practical reports and innovative ideas in language teaching at our English Teachers' Seminar held once a year in the Nagoya area and because the journal intends to provide a practical, rather than theoretical, forum for English teachers at both the high school and college level. Thus, the focus of RETS is more on the practical side and small reports on practical ideas/methods although it also welcomes academic research papers as well.

RETS is supported by the Department of English Language and Culture at Chubu University and run by the RETS committee. We have been holding an English Teachers' Seminar for high school as well as university teachers once a year since 2005 with the intention to better serve the language teaching community in the Chubu area, central Japan. It started small, with only several high school teachers and some students and staff members from Chubu University, and it has grown into a large forum where English teachers in the area gather around to share ideas and concerns and discuss ongoing issues in English language education.

English education in Japan is at the turning point where all classes are expected to be conducted in English even at the junior high and high school level, and English education at elementary schools is officially about to start in the third grade. Speaking and listening components will also be tested at high school as well as college entrance exams in the near future. World Englishes are also gradually being recognized among English teachers. Thus, the learning and teaching environments are drastically changing and it seems that language teachers also have no choice but to change accordingly in this

rapidly changing world of English education in Japan, which has been subject to inevitable, but often ungrounded bitter criticisms.

It would be our great pleasure if this small online journal could provide a forum to discuss effective teaching methods and approaches as well as current issues in English language education in Japan and worldwide in a small but effective way.

In the end, I would like to thank those who have presented at our past seminars and those who have helped us organize the seminars including Chubu University students and participants from the Chubu area. My special thanks goes to Greg King, David Laurence, Pat Maher, Ashley Ford, Less Smith, Hitoshi Mikami and OPELT staff members at Chubu University who have presented repeatedly, helped organize the seminars and worked hard to put together this journal.

Tadashi Shiozawa
RETS Committee Chair