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Editorial

Greetings for the International Year of Languages! While most of us have such a year every year, it is satisfying to see our area and our work being recognised, and to have the attention of those outside the field around the world drawn in to recognise and celebrate them in various forms.

The three articles in this issue all report studies of micro classroom behaviour, and the targets in each case are university students. Very different in focus and theoretical foundation, each illuminates the classroom learners' construction of positions and relationships through behaviour, especially the use of language, in their carrying out of joint tasks. Although concerned with learners of Japanese, the phenomena raised and discussed are directly and immediately pertinent to the 'diversity of needs' and 'individual variation' found in all our classrooms.

In the first article, Shima uses Vygotskian sociocultural theory to analyse and understand the interactions among members of pair and group work in a novice level course. Of particular interest is the evidence provided of the changeable nature of roles.

The second article brings to our attention to an art within the field that has been in many ways neglected for some decades, namely, translating. Based on current translation theory and poststructuralist perceptions, Machida's use of translation in teaching, however, is very much a re-creation rather than a turning back.

The third article puts under the spotlight a group very often thought not to need much help in learning: second generation Asian Australian students who have had long association with their mother tongue. As Yoshimitsu's research report makes clear, in reality these learners may have quite variable proficiency, and their potential to develop through socialisation in class may be deeply constrained by the supposed advantages of their heritage.

The issue concludes with two reviews, one by Ewing of a recent book of Indonesian newspaper articles intended for tertiary study, the other by McDonald of a recent Chinese pedagogical grammar.

Jane Orton
Guest Editor