

## A New Trend in Lexicography from Japan

Shin'ichiro Ishikawa



Shin'ichiro Ishikawa received his MA from Kobe University and PhD from Okayama University. He has written monographs in the fields of linguistics and literature, and co-edited several publications, including *English Lexicography in Japan* (2006). His current research interests include corpus linguistics, lexicography, and literary text analysis. Dr Ishikawa is associate professor of English and Applied Linguistics at Kobe University.  
iskwshin@kobe-u.ac.jp

The publication of an anthology of theoretical and practical English dictionary research in Japan has been anticipated for more than ten years, since the founding of the Society of English Lexicography as a Special Interest Group in JACET (Japan Association of College English Teachers, [www.jacet.org](http://www.jacet.org)).

When we learned that the world congress of applied linguistics (AILA Congress 1999) would be held in Tokyo, we asked some JACET members who specialized in lexicography and lexicology to form an interest group for the study of dictionaries and vocabulary. We hoped to give one or two symposiums and several paper presentations at the congress.

In September 1995, we discussed the purpose and activities of the interest group, and invited about 30 JACET members to form a lexicography society. Ten members attended the launching of the JACET Society of English Lexicography, held in the JACET office on December 20, 1995, where we finalized the purpose of the group and adopted official regulations.

At first we had rather small-scale meetings every other month. In order to generate greater interest we decided to hold a symposium. The first symposium was held the following December under the title 'Some Present Problems in English Lexicography', and 66 people participated in the discussion. This gave momentum to subsequent meetings, and since then 40 or more people have attended all society meetings.

Since the AILA Congress '99, where society members sponsored one symposium, invited one lecturer, and gave more than ten presentations, the JACET Society of

English Lexicography has grown steadily. We organized the international conference of the Asian Association for Lexicography (ASIALEX) in Tokyo in 2003, which attracted 234 attendants from 16 countries. It featured six plenary lectures, six symposiums, 54 paper presentations and 12 poster presentations. For the past ten years we have invited numerous eminent lexicographers and scholars in the related fields to Japan, including Dr. R.R.K. Hartmann, Dr. Tom McArthur, Mr. Michael Rundell, Dr. Adam Kilgarriff, Dr. Henri Béjoint, Dr. Anne Pakir, and Dr. Howard Jackson.

Additionally, the JACET Society of English Lexicography has hosted workshops almost every year since 1997. These workshops have provided opportunities for participants to give presentations and to acquire feedback from peer scholars. The seventh workshop was held in March 2006 with 42 presentations and 139 attendants.

The great success of our symposiums and workshops led us to the memorial project to publish a collection of papers on English lexicography in Japan. The society called for papers in June 2005. Among a large number of abstracts, 23 refereed and 2 invited papers were finally included in the book, which we believe shows how broadly and earnestly lexicography is studied in Japan.

Though they might not be a comprehensive representation of today's lexicography, the papers included in *English Lexicography in Japan* clearly exemplify the standard of dictionary studies in Japan. The editors believe that this publication will stimulate further discussion in the spreading branches of lexicography, and contribute to its advances in general.

### English lexicography in Japan and KDN

The following articles concerning aspects of English lexicography in Japan have appeared in *Kernerman Dictionary News* over the years:

- KDN2, 1995, included a reprint of 'Monolingual or Bilingual, that is *not* the Question: the 'Bilingualised' Dictionary', by Kyohei Nakamoto, originally published in *Lexicon* 24, 1994, and was accompanied by 'Answers to Open Questions', by Joseph A. Reif.  
<http://kdictionaries.com/kdn/kdn2-2.html> / <http://kdictionaries.com/kdn/kdn2-3.html>
- KDN6, 1998, included 'English Lexicography in Japan: its History, Innovations and Impact', by Shigeru Yamada and Yuri Komuro, which was reprinted later that year in *Lexicography in Asia*.  
<http://kdictionaries.com/lia-japan.html>
- KDN8, 2000, included 'Dictionary Use for Production among Japanese College Students of English', by Yuri Komuro and Shigeru Yamada.  
<http://kdictionaries.com/kdn/kdn8-3.html>
- KDN10, 2002, included 'English Japanese Lexicography and the *Unabridged Genius*', by Kosei Minamide.  
<http://kdictionaries.com/kdn/kdn10-5.html>