

Report

Report on Vocab@Tokyo, September 12–14, 2016

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Vocab@Tokyo—an international conference on vocabulary acquisition and learning—was held at Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo from September 12–14, 2016. The conference organizers, most of whom were present at the very excellent Vocab@Vic Conference in Wellington, New Zealand, in December 2013, were united in their commitment to try to keep alive the spirit, energy, and atmosphere of the conference. Thus, Vocab@Tokyo was born.

One of our main priorities was to make sure that Vocab@Tokyo was not a series of one-way presentations but that every part of the conference maximized opportunities for presenters and the audience to interact. Thus, we were very fortunate to be allowed to hold the conference at Meiji Gakuin University which had large presentation rooms and a huge area for posters, morning and afternoon breaks, and the evening banquet. These excellent facilities allowed for fluid conversations to take place from morning to evening on each day of the conference. On the second night, many of the participants were also able to enjoy dinner on a boat on Tokyo Bay.

More than 200 participants, with 40% of them coming from overseas, were able to enjoy the 60 papers and 36 posters given over the three days of the conference. The plenary speaker was Tess Fitzpatrick, who talked about *Profiling word retrieval behaviour: generic patterns and individual differences*. She was kindly sponsored by the JALT Vocab SIG. The featured speakers were Tom Cobb, Batia Laufer, Paul Nation, Dianne Schmitt, Norbert Schmitt, and Yukio Tono. The poster format was very well received with participants actively engaged in discussions in the two sessions.

The post-conference questionnaire revealed that Vocab@Tokyo was very warmly praised by the participants, not only in terms of the organization leading up to the event but also the quality of the event itself. Coming in for special praise and ably led by Nick DiNunzio were the cheerful and helpful volunteers, all of whom were EFL teachers-in-training. They certainly helped to give our conference a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

The participants seemed to appreciate the 15-minute presentation–10-minute Q&A format as it allowed for lively exchanges at the end of each session. The participants also welcomed opportunities for lengthy discussions and networking in the long session breaks, during the banquet, and at the poster sessions, which were purposely timetabled at key times in the schedule and positioned in the center area of the conference near the publishers' booths and refreshments.

Overall, it seems that the conference was a huge success with many participants saying it was the best conference they had ever been to. The conference committee would like to thank the following people for making it the success it was—the participants and presenters; JALT Vocab SIG and its officers; the publishers who came on Day Two; Brandon Kramer and his handbook team; Motoko Yoshikawa on registration; the staff at Meiji Gakuin University, and the wonderful helpers.

We are glad to announce that there was a small surplus from the conference. This money is being held by the Lexical Research Foundation for the promotion of second language vocabulary research and pedagogy and to assist any future Vocab@ conferences. We hope that Vocab@ conferences can be held every three years or so, but this needs people to step forward. If any reader is interested in organizing the next Vocab@, we encourage them to contact Rob Waring at waring.rob@gmail.com for more information.

Once again, thanks to all for a wonderful conference!

The Conference website: <https://sites.google.com/site/vocabattokyo/>

The Conference Handbook: <http://vli-journal.org/wp/vocab-at-tokyo-handbook-2016/>

The Conference Committee

Chair: Rob Waring

Program Chair: Laurence Anthony

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