

December 18th, 2010

ELT • NEWS

The Website for English Teaching in Japan



Merry Christmas!

iEnglish.com launches new iPad learning app for kids.



MORE INSIDE 

A look back at ELT in Japan in 2010...

Russell Willis takes a look at some of the top stories that **ELTNEWS.com** has featured over the last year.

JANUARY

The *eikaiwa* chain **Geos** was denying that it was in financial difficulty and continued to do so when 8 of their schools in Australia went into liquidation. Elementary schools started thinking about April 2011 and 40% of them had introduced English tests for their teachers. The year started off well for our parent company **eigoTown.com** with our audio books being chosen by **Apple** as “Best of 2009”.

FEBRUARY

ABAX announced the release of the world’s first Creative Commons English text, *Whodunit?* by Gray and Benevides... More on this later... Fortress Japan *eikaiwa* was ordered closed for “**coercive sales practices**”; one potential student “ended up being confined in a small room for three hours and was cajoled into signing a contract.” An elementary school in Wakayama started lessons based on the iPod touch. Korea went one further with Hyundai predicting that by 2018 **robots would be able to teach on their own** in the classroom... METI released figures showing students of English dropping from 9,562,427 in 2006 to 4,213,365 in 2009.

MARCH

The Fukuoka General Union attacked the outsourcing of ALT jobs to dispatch companies whilst a high school English teacher organized a Dolphin Peace Picnic attended by *Heroes* star **Hayden Panettiere**. Speculation about a pill for language learning started as researchers discovered that “a novel brain receptor emerges at puberty in the part of the brain that controls learning and memory.” The **TESOL conference** was held in Boston and everyone from Birmingham behaved impeccably. The **Yokohama College of Commerce** started lending iPhones to all of its students.

APRIL

Aeon started running a TV campaign showing a good reason for learning English: helping lost gaijin grandmas so you can chat up their cute grandsons. This finally silenced critics of *eikaiwa* for specializing in EFNAP (English for No Apparent Purpose). The UK introduced visa rules making it harder for Japanese students to study there. The EL Gazette was quoted as reporting that language schools in the UK could **lose up to 25% of their business**. Despite the rumors, it still came as a shock when **GEOS filed**



for bankruptcy with 7.5 billion yen in debts (around \$75 million). GEOS had around 37,000 students. The company was taken over by G.Communication (and after various corporate maneuvers, by G.education), the same company that took over Nova. Later in the year would see G.education launching “**Nova X Geos**” branded schools.

MAY

The number of Japanese children continued to decline with only 8.68 million boys aged 14 or younger, compared with 8.26 million girls. The average age for men and women had increased by approximately 20 years since 1950.

JUNE

The debate about the **JET program** got underway with the cabinet office questioning its necessity. ELTNEWS.com columnist Mike Guest also felt the program should be done away with. The Dalai Lama, no less, urged young Japanese people to speak English. Young Japanese people responded: “Gaijin da!” The **Dean of Temple University Japan** asserted that the government should “get out of the business of keeping these [struggling, private] universities on life support and get them on quality control” and noted that of around 40 US colleges in Japan in the 80s Temple was the only one still running. **eigoTown.com** and **Oxford University Press** launched the new line of Oxford Bookworms SuperReaders at the Apple Store in Ginza. Their Alice app went to No.1 in the iPhone and iPad education charts.

JULY

Rakuten followed **Uniqlo** by announcing that English will be their official in-house language. A poll revealed that “not being able to give directions when asked by a foreigner” was considered to be the most **shameful thing** about a Japanese person’s lack of English ability. **Tweeting** was said to be a popular way of studying English in Japan -- in the press release of an author about the subject... An English teacher was criticized for playing **Hangman** at a school where a student had hung himself. TOEIC subcontractor ICS was in hot water with the taxman for **hiding over 100 million yen** in income. Despite the concerns of the cabinet, Japan invited another 4,334 JET teachers to Japan.

AUGUST

ELTNEWS.com was on holiday in August and so the ELT world stopped and nothing happened.

SEPTEMBER

David English House filed for bankruptcy on September 1st shocking many English teachers in Japan. DEH owner David Paul said he would continue to support ETJ (which he founded) and teacher development in Japan. ELTBOOKS.com, whose fulfillment had been done by DEH, moved operations to Tokyo. Cambridge University was named the world's best. The number of Cambridge Exams taken in Japan doubled when a pensioner in Tohoku took one by mistake. The government realized that the cost of having **Eigo Noto** online and getting teachers to print it out themselves was more expensive than printing and shipping the books relieving the printed version. **Scott Thornbury** and **Paul Nation** were in town presenting at MASH. 67% of Japanese workers said they did not want to be posted abroad. The first episode of the English Teachers TV **comedy drama** was posted on the net. **Interac** was acquired by Advantage Partners. And a successful **ETJ Expo** was held in Sendai.

OCTOBER

That crazy Creative Commons experiment by ABAX? Well, the book **Fiction in Action:**



Whodunit? won an ESU award, it was announced. **Paul Riley** became OUP's ELT Development Director for Asia and **Kiyokazu Nakamura** was appointed president of the Japan office, filling Paul's shoes. Pearson Education Japan and Kirihara became as one after 10 years and is now known as **Pearson Kirihara**. In a deal that

puzzled many, **Nellies**, **Saxoncourt Publishing** and **Shane Language Services** were bought by cram school chain Eikoh for around \$12 million. David Nunan was in Tokyo for an event by Pearson and Raymond Murphy came over to cheer on the 25th anniversary of Cambridge's **English Grammar in Use**. Not celebrating were ALC who posted a **loss of 38 million**, but some relief was felt as they had lost 168 million yen the year before. ETS launched **TOEFL Junior**. A survey revealed that English was a hobby for most Japanese who chose to do it. Researchers claimed that **bringing up a baby bilingually** reduced the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

NOVEMBER

Berlitz won a nice contract to teach 2,000 Uniqlo employees (where English is the official language). RIC released a whopper of a catalog with literally something for everyone. Their Kitchen Sink readers are a favourite. The very first **ELT Charity Quiz** from ELTNEWS.com was held at the Tokyo ETJ Expo, attracting a full house. **Andy Boon, David White and John Moore** fought off Rob Waring's team and won 50,000 yen for their favorite charity. **Philip Shigeo Brown** won the iPad. NTT **invested \$1 million dollars in EnglishCentral**. Having received money from Google previously some asked why they needed the money. The study abroad market fell again, despite the strong yen. The bankruptcy of major player Gateway 21 in 2008 and the world economic slump were blamed. Two former **Macmillan** books went elsewhere: Tom Kenny announced that **"Nice Talking with You"** was now published by CUP and David Paul's **Communicate** is to be published by Compass in April. Finally making sense of their Nellies purchase in October, Eiko bought out the Shane English School's themselves for another \$12 million or thereabouts...



DECEMBER

Former Nova president **Nozomu Sahashi** was sentenced to a 2-year prison term after an appeal. The UK introduced **English tests for non-EU spouses** and partners. It was revealed that less than 20% of high schools follow **METI's English-only guideline** for oral communication classes. ETS launched a \$40,000 TEFL Scholarship program. iEnglish.com launched **"Sticktastic! Santa Magic"** for the iPad (buy it from iTunes) -- hence our wonderful cover by Jon Higham... and that, was that. Except that it wasn't. This has been just some the of the news from **ELTNEWS.com**: to see the full story for ALL the stories, visit our Archive page for 2010:

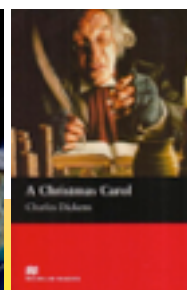
<http://www.eltnews.com/news/archives/2010/>

and we have archives going back to 2002 if you're feeling truly nostalgic.

Next year we will increase our news coverage. So send your news to editor@eltnews.com.

Have a great 2011!

Russell Willis, Founder, ELTNEWS.com



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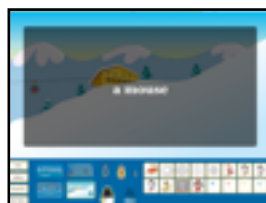


Sticktastic! Santa Magic



"Sticktastic! Santa Magic" is the perfect fun, educational application for your child this Christmas. Put a smile on the face of your child and watch as they play for hours learning English

words and using their creativity to make magical Christmas cards. And it won't be just your child who's smiling. Imagine the delight of a grandparent when they receive a card made specially for them.



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