

## BATJ-JF Japanese Language Education Seminar

### Nature of Language: How Language was born and has evolved.

This Seminar will be organised by the British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language and the Japan Foundation, London. Each year, we use these seminars as an opportunity to explore practical, every-day themes that apply to both younger and older learners, studying at all types of educational institutions. We invite educators at the forefront of their fields to provide a novel and exciting learning opportunity.

This time, we have invited Professor IMAI Mutsumi, author of one of the best-selling books of 2023 in Japan - "Nature of Language: How Language was born and has evolved." We believe that as A.I. evolves, there will be those who are experiencing increasing opportunities to re-think what it means to learn a language. What are the differences between A.I. and people? How did language come to be and systemise? What are the fundamental characteristics of language? Professor Imai will discuss all these themes using onomatopoeia as a starting point.

We look forward to receiving your applications.

#### Event Outline

**Date/Time:** 4<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (Sunday), 10:00 to 12:00 GMT

**Theme:** Nature of Language: How language was born and has evolved.

**Speaker:** Professor IMAI Mutsumi (Faculty of Environment and Information Studies, Keio University)

#### Target audience:

Japanese language educators and post-graduate university students specialising in Japanese language education who are based in the United Kingdom and Europe.

(Applications from those in other regions will also be accepted if places are available)

**Maximum number of participants:** 80

**Location:** Online seminar using Zoom software

**Spoken language:** Japanese

**Cost of seminar/applications:** Please visit [the link here](#).

**Application deadline:** 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024 (Tuesday), 12:00 GMT

\* Once the number of places has been filled, applications will close.

**Organisers:** The British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language and the Japan Foundation, London.

**Speaker Profile:**

**Professor IMAI Mutsumi**

Faculty of Environment and Information Studies,  
Keio University

Ph.D (North Western University, 1994). Areas of expertise:  
cognitive science, cognitive psychology, developmental  
psychology and psycholinguistics).

In addition to her large body of academic writing in English, a  
selection of Professor IMAI's publications in Japanese include:

『人が学ぶということ—認知学習論からの視点』(北樹出版), 『算数文章題が解けない子どもたち—ことば、思考の力と学力不振』(岩波書店), 『英語独習法』(岩波新書), 『学びとは何か—<探究人>になるために』(岩波新書), 『言語の本質 ことばはどう生まれ、進化したか』(中公新書). Her writings have also appeared in several Japanese national language textbooks in primary and high schools in Japan. Furthermore, Professor IMAI is involved in working with the Hiroshima Prefectural Board of Education to expose the causes of educational difficulties faced by children who are struggling with learning, and to develop tools and educational materials to support them.

As part of her outreach work, Professor IMAI runs ABLE (Agents for Bridging Learning and Education), a series of workshops for thinking about learning across international borders. Distinguished researchers of cognitive science from both Japan and abroad are invited to take part, creating opportunities for participants to be able to learn about the latest research in learning and education, as well as exchange opinions with other participants.

(<https://cogpsy.sfc.keio.ac.jp/ablearchives/en/>)

