

Words of Appreciation

I first met Professor Alan Hunt when we both joined the faculty in 2003. Having just completed graduate school, I was inexperienced both as a teacher and as a researcher. Alan, on the other hand, had already built a solid career as a scholar and educator in Japan—a country not his own—and I naturally regarded him as a respected senior colleague. His field of expertise is English vocabulary acquisition, and even the inclusion of the word “vcb” in his email address left a strong impression on me; it seemed to perfectly symbolize his dedication to his area of research.

I still remember how, in those early days, some colleagues commented on his resemblance to Christopher Reeve—the actor who played Superman—which became a small topic of conversation at the time. Over the years, I have found myself running into him quite often in unexpected places: at a park near my neighborhood station, or at a lively outdoor event in Osaka’s Umeda area. Perhaps we are drawn to similar environments when we seek to refresh ourselves—open spaces, cheerful atmospheres, and the sense of freedom they bring.

Alan has offered me generous support in both research and administrative work. When I planned an experimental study comparing two approaches to writing instruction, he kindly agreed to try one of the methods in his own class, which made it possible for me to carry out the research as intended. I remain truly grateful for his cooperation and encouragement.

We also worked together for many years on the university’s entrance examination committee—a role that requires great attention to detail and carries considerable responsibility. Because we often relied on native speakers to ensure the linguistic precision of English questions, I am sure the workload was quite heavy for him. Even during times when his health was not at its best, Alan continued to carry out his duties with care and integrity, earning the deep appreciation of all committee members.

In recent years, I have heard that his health has not been ideal. Now that he is stepping away from his responsibilities at the faculty, I sincerely hope he will take ample time to rest, regain his strength, and enjoy the days ahead in comfort and happiness. We are deeply grateful for his long years of service and contribution to our department, and we wish him continued good health and fulfillment in the next chapter of his life.

Alan, thank you very much for your dedication to our institution. We wish you all the best in your retirement!