



2026



TITLE:

THE VOCABULARY REVOLUTION: HOW CORPUS TOOLS, EXTENSIVE READING, AND AI CAN TRANSFORM LEARNING

SPEAKER: CHARLIE BROWNE

PRESENTATION TYPE: PLENARY

Abstract

Vocabulary knowledge is the single strongest predictor of reading success, yet many learners spend years studying words they seldom encounter. This plenary argues for a more efficient, evidence-based approach—one that brings together corpus research, extensive reading, and emerging AI technologies into a coherent system for accelerated language growth.

We will examine how high-frequency word lists such as the NGSL can provide a powerful backbone for instruction; how extensive reading offers the volume of meaningful input essential for mastery; and how new AI-enhanced tools can support teachers by generating level-appropriate materials, profiling texts, and personalizing learning pathways in real time.

Rather than overwhelming learners with complexity, this integrated approach creates clarity, efficiency, and momentum—giving teachers more time to teach, and students more opportunities to enjoy using English. Participants will leave with practical techniques and free tools they can immediately apply in their classrooms.

Biography

Dr. Charles Browne is Professor of TESOL & Applied Linguistics at Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo, where he directs the English Department's MA and PhD programs and founded its EFL teacher-training track. He is internationally recognized for his contributions to second language vocabulary research and as co-creator and Director of the New General Service List (NGSL) Project. His corpus-based word lists and more than 15 freely available online tools are used by teachers, researchers, ministries, and publishers around the world.

Across four decades in Japan, Dr. Browne has shaped research-informed approaches to vocabulary development, extensive reading, and technology-enhanced language learning. In recent years he has become a leading figure in integrating AI into principled pedagogy, developing NGSL-aligned text-creation tools, lexical profilers, and digital resources that support teachers while expanding learner autonomy.

A sought-after speaker, he has delivered more than 75 plenary and keynote addresses internationally and has presented two TEDx Talks on vocabulary acquisition. As CEO of CBC Consulting, he advises publishers, boards of education, EdTech companies, and global organizations on designing effective, scalable language-learning systems—and remains open to new collaborations that advance innovative, research-driven English education.