

BREEZE

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Reflections on the State of Japanese Language Education in the United States

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President Association of Teachers of Japanese

During the past decade or so we have witnessed unprecedented rise in the number of learners of Japanese in all segments of this society. As the field grew the problems and difficulties have also begun to emerge. Occasional review and critical self-analysis are indispensable for all of us who engage in Japanese pedagogy. It is to direct or redirect, change, and improve the field. In the following I present my perception and perspective of the state of the Japanese language education in the United States. I have summarized them in six points. They are my view. It is my sincere wish that this article would stimulate further dialogue and debate among ourselves. I hope this article is not going to be another voice in the wilderness that will be lost in the wind.

Richard D. Lambert, the former director of the National Foreign Language Center, begins his article "Implications of the New Dutch National Action Plan for American Foreign Language Policy" with the statement:

To many in the United States, to speak of a national policy for foreign language instruction is either oxymoron or a form of odious heresy. Our foreign language teaching system is not only decentralized but devoutly committed to fragmentation. The closest thing we have to national policy making lies in existing and proposed federal legislation providing financial support for a few segments of the system. We in the United States have what might be called a constrained free market system of foreign language instruction, as in much of education, one dominated by private choices made by states, school districts, schools, colleges, individual teachers, and students, but anchored firmly in what is already in place. Most foreign language teachers like it that way, and few

educational policy makers care enough to debate the virtues of such a system.¹

Although mine is a language specific concern, I agree with his general observation.

1) We have to keep in mind that in the United States we do not have a national foreign language policy. The situation of Japanese language education is the same. In Japan, the Ministry of Education issues, for example, English Curriculum Guidelines which all educational institutions and textbook editors are, without exception, to follow. Such phenomenon cannot and should not happen in the United States. Prevalence of principles and spirit of free market results in the production of large variety of instructional materials and advocacy of diverse and sometimes incompatible pedagogical methods. Nobody probably is able to clearly define the common goals of Japanese language instruction because both learners and teachers individually have different reasons for this educational activity. Such confusion and disorganization, however, is the source of energy of the field of Japanese language education. It is because competition encourages improvements and dialectic progress. Recently a friend told me, "I have decided to write a textbook because I was totally dissatisfied by the existing ones." This kind of healthy competitiveness must be promoted. On the other hand, competition has produced conflicts of dogmas instead of frank discussion and rational debate. There are those who believe in the absolute validity of a certain theory or method and attempt to proselytize their belief. I respect those who hold firm conviction and unshakable faith in a theory or method. But such "attitude" does not constitute evidence for the validity of a theory or method. Also there are those who blindly follow the views of an authority, a

teacher, or a scholar without questioning and without exercising their own judgments.² Both of these types of people tend to turn to be dogmatists. Strange tribal spirit develops. They even engage in personal attacks against each other and have created serious and destructive schism in the field. When a theory becomes exclusivistic dogma growth of individual is obstructed and the field of Japanese education suffers.

2) Recently conscious efforts have been made to overcome confusion and disorganization brought by excessive diversity. So-called guidelines or frameworks provide the field of Japanese language education with possibility toward certain uniformity and direction. The important point is that these guidelines or frameworks are not imposed from above, authorities or superiors. They are products of conscious and conscientious efforts of concerned teachers and scholars. Acceptance or adaptation of these guidelines or frameworks must be left to each school, program, and teacher's decision. Recent example is A Framework for Introductory Japanese Language Curricula in American High Schools and Colleges.³ This Framework is based upon research findings done by a team headed by Eleanor Jordan and an attempt to resolve various pedagogical issues.⁴ In conjunction with the framework, Education Testing Service developed a Japanese Achievement Test for the College Board. The framework and achievement test should stimulate self-evaluation of Japanese programs in this country. They themselves have to be continuously reviewed and revised. They suggest some helpful standards for Japanese language instruction in this country but they are not *sine qua non*.

3) Under the present economic circumstances, schools, school districts, colleges need considerable external funding to start and sustain Japanese programs. Without inducing external funds, particularly from the Federal Government, private foundations and organizations, initiation, sustenance and expansion of Japanese programs and pursuit of research projects are practically impossible. It is not wrong for the funders to try to create uniformity and direction for the Japanese language instruction in this country as exemplified by the above mentioned publication of the Framework. We Japanese language educators, however, should never yield our own initiative and pedagogical responsibilities. Uniformity and direction must be created by our vision, not funders'. There was a full participation of organizations of foreign languages including Association of Teachers of Japanese to develop

strategies for the National Security Education Act, commonly known as Boren Act, that was passed and budget was allocated by the Congress in 1992. It will be a crisis for foreign language education in this country if the Federal Government and the Congress dictate policies of foreign language education exercising their enormously influential funding power. The same has to be said to private foundations. Regardless of the nature of the funding source, public or private, providers of funds are cognizant of issues involved and recipients promise to address and solve them. Unless providers have clear grasp of issues by listening, discussing and responding recipients' views and needs, funding can be wasted and create further confusion and chaos in the foreign language education. The pressure from the necessity to cope with the increase of learners may result in disorderly competition among expecting recipients of limited funds. Such unsound squabble can be minimized if the provider respect views, judgments, and accept recommendations of academic organizations. In view of the fact that there are schools and colleges that try to establish a Japanese language program without a long term planning and perspective of self-funding, it is essential for the providers of funds to obtain peer evaluation of a proposal to institute a Japanese language program. If the program has to be totally reliant of external funding, the value of such program is questionable even there is a strong demand from students and often from parents.

4) As pointed out already, the increase in the number of learners of Japanese is noted widely by the educators of foreign languages. The total number of learners of Japanese in preschools, primary and secondary schools, and colleges and universities, according to the data compiled in 1990 by the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Japanese is ranked fifth after Spanish, French, German and Italian, followed by Russian then Chinese. The data also show that the combined number of Japanese learners in preschools and primary schools is after Spanish and French and exceeds German and Italian. It is not clear whether these numbers include distance learners, and adult learners at private programs such as Japan Societies, U.S.-Japan Societies, and Berlitz. Actual size of the learner population must be larger. We cannot congratulate ourselves, however, reading this kind of statistics. The increase in the number of learners can be seen primarily on the introductory level. The data do not indicate significant increase in those who have acquired at least minimally functional and active skills in Japanese. It has long been established that Japanese, along with Arabic, Chinese, Korean takes

four times as long for Americans to acquire proficiency comparable to Spanish or French.⁵ Since attrition rate from introductory to intermediate, and from intermediate to advanced⁶ is approximately 50%, the majority of learners do not continue their study of Japanese longer than one or two years, in other words, beyond the introductory level. Isn't it necessary for us to reexamine the purpose, content, method of Japanese curricula to make limited study of Japanese meaningful learning experience for the majority of learners?

5) Increase and spread of learners at all segments of the society have resulted in the shortage of qualified teachers. This problem cannot be solved soon and by any short term measure. For about two decades after the War, a similar shortage occurred. Any native speakers of Japanese, at that time were enticed to teach Japanese. The present situation, although availability of qualified personnel is definitely insufficient, is better than the previous period because (1) masters programs in Japanese pedagogy are established at a few universities, (2) many native Japanese who come to this country to teach Japanese have received training and advanced degree in Japanese pedagogy in Japan, and (3) short term intensive teacher training workshops become available to native speakers of Japanese. Unfortunately, acute shortage of teachers failed to eradicate from the minds of many, particularly school administrators, the notion that any native speakers of Japanese can teach the language. Those native speakers of Japanese who have previous training and attend intensive workshops are potentially well qualified teachers. But in the case of teaching Japanese at primary or secondary schools, the fact that trainers are usually college instructors who have never taught at the pre-college level is a serious defect. Especially if trainers are native of Japan who were educated in Japan and did only graduate work in this country, they lack empirical ground to deal with pre-collegiate level instruction. Close cooperation between precollege and college teachers of Japanese is essential particularly in a training program for pre-college level teachers.

I believe we need a long-term strategy to train American teachers of Japanese creating favorable conditions that would encourage Americans to enter the field of Japanese teaching. Our continuous use of and dependence on native speakers of Japanese who stay in this country for a short period of time is merely a temporary solution of teacher shortage. Even though their contributions have to be fully appreciated they cannot be expected to build the true

foundation of Japanese instruction in this country. Many job opening announcements of colleges and universities nowadays specify an M.A. in Japanese or Japanese studies as a minimum requirement. Unless the institution has an established tenure policy for M.A. holders, we cannot expect these institutions to develop solid Japanese programs.

6) Diversity and variety of teaching methods and resulting conflicts were touched upon in 1). I would emphasize the point that teaching method should primarily teach sufficient conditions based upon inductive (empirical) reasoning, that is, stating "if you employ this method, perhaps such-and-such will be the results." Pedagogists often teach methods as necessary conditions, that is, "unless you use this method, you are unable to produce such-and-such expected results." Theory oriented pedagogists thus tend to be dogmatic. What needed is a good balance between theory and practice. Practice without theoretical background is haphazard and unsystematic. Theory without the evidence of practical application is abstract and ineffective.

I have presented problems that I perceive in the field of the Japanese language education today. The field, despite the pains and difficulties it has been experiencing, are blessed with vigorous and rigorous educators. There is every reason for me to be optimistic about its future

Footnotes

¹Richard D. Lambert, "Implications of the New Dutch National Policy Action Plan for American Foreign Language Policy." Washington, D.C.: National Foreign Language Center, Position Papers, June 1991, p.1.

²Motoori Norinaga's advice, "Do not blindly follow your teacher's view," (*Shi no setsu ni nazumazaru koto*) in his Tamakatsuma is valuable.

³Funded by the National Endowment for Humanities and published by National Foreign Language Center in 1993.

⁴Eleanor Jordan and Richard Lambert, Japanese Language Instruction in the United States: Resources, Practice, and Investment Strategy. Washington, D.C.: National Foreign Language Center, 1991.

⁵The study was done by the Foreign Language Institute (FSI). Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean thus are called the Class Four the levels are left undefined.

The Japan Foundation Language Related Programs for Fiscal Year 1994/95

Guidelines

Obtaining & Submitting Application Forms

Application forms for the language related programs described below are available from The Japan Foundation Language Center upon written request specifying the name of the program. (Request may be sent by facsimile). Completed application should be submitted to The Center.

Deadline for Applications

Completed applications must be received no later than December 1, 1993. Earlier submission is encouraged.

Selection and Notification

The applications will be screened by The Japan Foundation by March 1994, and results will be announced in April or May.

1. Salary Assistance Program for Full-Time Japanese Language Teachers

This program is designed to assist in the creation of full-time teaching positions at secondary and higher educational institutions offering instruction in the Japanese language by providing salary assistance for up to an initial three-year period.

Grants are made with the understanding that the position involved is incremental and that the applying institutions plan to maintain the Japanese language course and to employ full-time teachers at their own expense.

For grants to assist staff expansion in the area of Japanese studies, please apply to the Japan Foundation's **Staff Expansion Grant Program**.

The Foundation's contribution will not normally exceed two-thirds of the sum of direct expenses: (1) salary and (2) social-welfare expenses paid to the appointee. The applicant's contribution each year is expected to be no less than one-third of the project's annual budget.

Such items as the allowance to cover housing and relocation costs, and the salaries of research assistants or secretaries, are determined here as indirect costs

and are not included in the above cost-sharing.

2. Training Programs for Teachers of the Japanese Language

The following programs have been designed to provide teachers of the Japanese language at educational institutions abroad with an opportunity to improve their skills and deepen their knowledge of Japan. Individual grantees are invited to Japan as members of a group to take part in a program of intensive lectures on language, teaching methodology, and life in Japan.

- **Short-Term Training Program for Foreign Teachers of the Japanese Language**

A two-month intensive course in teaching methodology will be conducted three times a year. The three courses for fiscal 1994 (April 1994-March 1995) include: the spring course (April-May), the summer course (July-August), and the winter course (January-March), for about 200 teachers from abroad.

- **Training Program for Teachers of the Japanese Language (For Japanese Abroad)**

A one-month intensive course in teaching methodology will be conducted in December 1994, for about 40 teachers.

- **Long-Term Training Program for Teachers of the Japanese Language**

A nine-month intensive course in the Japanese language and its fundamental teaching methodology will be conducted—both for teachers without a great deal of teaching experience and for students expecting to graduate from a Japanese language or other Japanese study program and to teach in the coming year—from September 1994 to June 1995, for about 60 teachers.

3. Japanese Language Study Program for

Librarians

This program is designed to provide librarians of secondary and higher educational institutions, academic and cultural institutions, and libraries that own Japanese books and materials with an opportunity to attend an intensive course in the Japanese language, in order to improve their ability in dealing with Japanese language materials. Librarians and those who are expected to become librarians in the coming year will be invited to Japan for 6 months, upon requests from the institutions. About 12 persons.

4. Assistance Program for the Development of Japanese Language Teaching Resources

Aid is provided for part of the expenses for the creation of Japanese language teaching resources (textbooks, dictionaries, supplementary materials, teachers' manuals, audio-visual materials, etc.) that are of demonstrable merit and that have not been produced previously. Institutions granted this assistance must complete production of the teaching resources within the fiscal year in which the grant is offered. Applications will be accepted only from institutions offering Japanese language courses, publishers, and production companies. Books on Japan in foreign languages are beyond the scope of this program; those interested should apply to the Japan Foundation's **Publication Assistance Program**.

5. Japanese Language Education Fellowship Program

Professionals in the field of Japanese language education are invited to come to Japan in order to participate in cooperation with, or under the guidance of, Japanese professionals, in the following categories:

- (1) Development of Japanese language teaching resources that meet the needs of their own countries
- (2) Development of teaching methods based on concrete teaching resources and themes that meet the needs of their own countries; and
- (3) Research in a field that is relevant to Japanese language education.

Applications from individuals cannot be accepted.

There are two types of fellowships: the short-term fellowship, which lasts from one month to less than three months, for one or two persons per project; and the long-term fellowship, which lasts from three months to eight months, for one person per project.

If the fellowship is for the development of Japanese-language teaching resources, it is expected that the results of the fellowship will be published within the next fiscal year after the invitation and be utilized in the classroom.

6. Japanese Language Teaching Materials Donation Program

The Foundation will consider requests for Japanese language teaching materials from secondary and higher educational institutions offering Japanese language courses. Requests from individuals cannot be accepted.

Among the materials provided are (1) textbooks; (2) dictionaries; (3) reference materials and handbooks; (4) audio-visual materials, such as cassette tapes, slides, and video tapes; (5) supplementary readers; (6) teaching devices, such as word processors; and (7) miscellaneous teaching aides. Donations are, in principle, limited to items on the list of materials attached to the application forms.

7. Japanese Language Research Grant Program

This program is designed to provide support for research projects on Japanese language conducted by educational institutions or associations other than higher educational institutions (from university and up). Higher educational institutions should apply to the Japan Foundation's **Institutional Support Programs for Japanese Studies**. The project should not be the work of a single individual.

The projects should be:

- (1) Research on teaching methods
- (2) Research on development or practical use of teaching materials
- (3) Development of curricula or syllabi for state programs, school districts, or consortia of schools, and
- (4) Research in a field that is relevant to Japanese language education.

The projects must start from April 1, 1994 to March 31, 1995. The Foundation's support can only be granted for up to a maximum of 12 months. The greater part of any project should be carried out in the United States.

Support will be given on a cost-sharing basis. The Foundation's contribution will not exceed \$15,000. The Foundation may, however, give support exceeding \$15,000 (maximum \$20,000) for projects that require survey trips to Japan, and/or the invitation of Japanese cooperators.

Approximately three institutions are granted annually from abroad.

8. Japanese Language Conferences/ Seminars/Workshops Grant Program

This program is designed to provide support for conferences, seminars, and workshops on Japanese language education conducted by educational institutions or associations other than higher educational institutions (from university and up). Higher educational institutions should apply to the Japanese Foundation's **Institutional Support Programs for Japanese Studies**.

The projects should be:

(1) Conferences, seminars or workshops on teaching methods

(2) Conferences, seminars or workshops on development or practical use of teaching materials

(3) Conferences, seminars or workshops on development of curricula or syllabi for state programs, school districts, or a consortia of schools, and

(4) Conferences, seminars or workshops in a field that is relevant to Japanese language education.

The projects must be conducted during the Japanese fiscal year, which runs from April 1, 1994 to March 31, 1995. Support will be given on a cost-sharing basis. The Foundation's contribution will not exceed \$15,000. The Foundation may, however, give support exceeding \$15,000 (maximum \$20,000) for projects that require the invitation of Japanese cooperators. Approximately three institutions are granted annually from abroad.

Current Reports on Japanese Language Education in Several States

1. Texas

Progress in Japanese Language Instruction in the Public Schools of Texas

Carl H. Johnson

Texas Education Agency

Enrollments in Japanese language instruction in Texas public schools have grown dramatically over the past several years. Data showed only 43 students enrolled in 1987-88, 22 students in 1988-89, 77 students in 1989-90, 212 students in 1990-91, 193 students in 1991-92, but 1,102 students in 1992-93. Enrollments have now made Japanese the fifth most studied language in Texas public schools (after Spanish, French, Latin, and German).

Robert LaBouve, Director of Languages for the Texas Education Agency (TEA), believes the Foreign Language Assistance Act (FLAA) program for critical languages is largely responsible for the dramatic increase in Japanese enrollments in the state. Nine projects were funded for the first year of the program in 1992-93, eight of which provide Japanese instruction. All but three of the programs operate at the secondary level, grades 9-12. One of the programs is also open to students in grades 7 and 8, and two of the programs begin Japanese instruction in the elementary grades.

Among the successful program models for Japanese language instruction are: a national distance learning program enhanced by strong participation from the Japanese community for cultural knowledge and language practice; an intensive Japanese program for students at the middle school level; a locally developed interactive television instructional program in the language broadcast to multiple sites within a school district or region; a program in the elementary grades with emphasis on listening and speaking Japanese taught by the regular (trained) classroom teacher, with supplemental Japanese summer camps for the students.

The Director of The Japan Foundation Language Center, Mr. Yasuaki Kaneda, met with directors and Japanese teachers for the Foreign Language Assistance Act programs at a meeting in Austin in April 1993 designed to provide direction and technical assistance to those programs. This effort

was significant in that the teachers and directors became familiar with the multiple resources of The Japan Foundation Language Center, including consulting services, training seminars, library and information services, and the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. The relationship established there will improve access for Texas Japanese programs to valuable materials and services that will serve the present and future programs in Japanese.

The implementation of successful Japanese programs in Texas has been greatly dependent on qualified teaching personnel to provide instruction in the language. Since there are currently no teacher preparation programs in Japanese in Texas, there is no formal certificate for individuals to teach Japanese language courses. We currently have in place the following as an interim policy: 1) a teacher certified in another subject in Texas and with 24 semester credits in Japanese may be assigned to teach Japanese courses; 2) an individual without a certificate but with a baccalaureate degree and 24 semester credits in Japanese may also be assigned to teach Japanese courses with a letter for that person's personnel file from the state education agency. For the future, we

are trying to find a way to provide some kind of procedure that would allow individuals with a baccalaureate degree but without the formal 24 semester credits of Japanese to demonstrate an acceptable level of proficiency in Japanese language skills on a proficiency test. Such a test and the acceptable standard to be obtained in this testing might reasonably be determined and set by a committee consisting of the Japanese teachers now staffing the model language programs under the Foreign Language Assistance Act.

We look forward to such a procedure and policy to allow qualified candidates access to teaching Japanese in Texas. This, in turn, along with access to materials and services from the Japanese communities in Texas and the Japan Foundation Language Center in California will allow substantial growth in both the quality and quantity of Japanese instruction in our state. For more information about Japanese language programs in Texas, contact Mr. LaBouve, TEA, Division of Curriculum Development and Textbooks, Austin, TX 78701.

2. Washington

The Foreign Languages Assistance Program in Washington State in 1992-93

Joe Dial, Ph.D.

Former Supervisor, Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Four school districts in the state of Washington—Chimacum, Colville, Soap Lake, and Yakima—received federal assistance through funding obtained by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction under the Foreign Languages Assistance Program to operate model foreign language programs during 1992-93.

Chimacum School District, on Washington's Olympic Peninsula, has a total enrollment of around 1,200. During 1992-93, the district increased the number of students receiving Japanese language instruction by satellite. Introductory Japanese language and cultural experiences were extended to all students. Staff also received training in the Japanese language.

Colville School District, north of Spokane, serves about 2,500 students. During 1992-93 the district set up a state-of-the-art computer-assisted language learning laboratory. Students used the laboratory for class work as well as for individual work outside of

class. Instruction was available in both Russian and Japanese.

Soap Lake School District, near Moses Lake and Japan Airline's pilot training facility east of Spokane, serves 325 students. During 1992-93, instruction in Japanese (by satellite) and Russian was available for high school students. There was a foreign language exploratory course for junior high students, and elementary school students participated in a foreign language experience.

Yakima School District, in central Washington, enrolls around 12,000. During 1992-93 Japanese language instruction was extended to middle school students and three years of Japanese were offered at the high school.

Following is an article describing the Chimacum

program, which appeared in *Education News*, July

1993.

Chimacum students CHAT with Japan

Mike O'Donnell

Special Services Director for Chimacum S.D.

Konnichiwa is a common expression on the Chimacum S.D. campus these days. The district has taken a bold step in intercultural exchange by implementing a comprehensive K- 12 Japanese language program called CHAT with Japan (CHimacum Assesses Technology with Japan). The program draws from a variety of resources to create a multifaceted approach of formal Japanese language classes, video production and cultural immersion.

At morning and afternoon recesses, groups of students converge on a small office in the elementary school for informal *origami* (paper folding) lessons taught by a guest teacher from Japan. Meanwhile, Chimacum junior and senior high school students practice Japanese *kanji* and *hiragana* written characters, using a computer software program that "speaks" the *kana* syllables and "draws" the characters. The program began with the secondary students studying first and second year Japanese language through the Star Schools satellite program broadcast from Spokane. Using modem and an interactive toll-free telephone line, students send and receive homework, practice conversation, and ask questions of a teacher 300 miles away.

These students then become teachers of groups of elementary students in a program called Chimacum Choice. The young students receive 12 hours of instruction in concepts such as numbers, colors, foods, animals, common expressions and culture from the junior and senior high school students.

As a spin-off of Chimacum Choice, there is an ever-

growing group of students desiring to learn more about the culture and the language. These students join "Choice 2" Japanese classes taught by Shino Homma, a guest teacher from Japan.

Homma, who hails from Aichi, Japan, is sponsored by a private foundation called the International Internship Program. Her mission is to help build appreciation for Japanese culture while learning about America.

With the help of the Hyogo Cultural Center in Seattle, and a federal Foreign Languages Assistance Program grant which covers 50 percent of the program costs, Chimacum students will soon be directly linked with their counterparts in Japan through a computer network bulletin board. Local levy monies and state Highly Capable funds cover the remainder of the program expenses.

CHAT with Japan has introduced a cultural explosion to the rural Chimacum Valley. With student-produced CTV programs and newsletters, and the rich experience of the host families who share their homes with Homma, this program has touched every home in some way. It's an incredible opportunity for students to be able to experience Japan here in Chimacum. The program has definitely increased our students' awareness level of other cultures and other countries.

For more information about Chimacum's CHAT with Japan program, contact me at (206) 732-4285.

3. Wisconsin

The Flowering of Japanese Language and Culture in Wisconsin's Schools

Paul Sandrock, Foreign Language Consultant

Madeline Uraneck, International Education Consultant

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Japanese language and culture is playing a part in education in Wisconsin. Though the percentage of our total student population studying Japanese is low, the growth from 50 students to over 1,100 students in less than seven years, makes Japanese our fastest-growing language program. While this Japanese initiative has been strongly supported by the State Department of Public Instruction (DPI), the growth has also received direct support in various ways from Japan.

Superintendent's Advisory Council:

The first step to consciously develop programs in Japanese language and culture was the formation of our State Superintendent's Advisory Council for Japanese Language and Culture in 1986. This council brought broad-based support through the inclusion of the various groups to be impacted: business representatives; school administrators; university and senior high Japanese educators and other foreign language educators; representatives from the governor's office, the state senate and assembly; school board, technical college, and school of engineering representatives; and various consultants. These contacts made the mission of the council visible statewide and brought business and industry into partnership with the education community.

The recommendations of the Advisory Council put into motion activity around six areas of emphasis:

1. Establishing Japanese language in the schools
 2. Enhancing instruction in Japanese history and culture
 3. Developing internships and exchange programs with Japan
 4. Establishing a sister state relationship
 5. Meeting the concerns and needs of the Wisconsin business community
 6. Meeting the needs of children of Japanese citizens
- The harmonious and simultaneous efforts in these areas have led to the high level of activity around Japanese language and culture in our schools.

Teaching Culture

School programs have moved along a developmental

continuum with one end being sporadic activities creating awareness of Japanese culture and the other end being K-12 Japanese language and culture programs. Movement along this continuum has been helped with district, state, federal, and international funding sources. School districts have begun their programs at different points along the continuum. Progress along the continuum has been slow or fast, depending on the availability of resources and on district commitment from both individual staff members and school board and/or administrators.

Culture programs are a common beginning point for many school districts. Focused activities, such as a week-long emphasis on Japan, are an easy first experience. In one rural school, the entire faculty focused on Japan as the theme for their instruction for one week. The English department read stories in translation and learned *haiku* first through hearing and seeing the original Japanese, then having students create their own. The art department taught brush calligraphy and *origami*, inviting several interns from around the state to teach *origami*, through instructions in Japanese. Students stopped looking up on hearing the instruction to fold over or turn upside down, because the Japanese expressions had been learned through the immersion demonstration and participation. The physical education teachers used the week to teach, with interns' help, Japanese *kendo*, *judo*, *aikido*, and *naginata*. The whole school became focused on the language and culture of Japan, making a strong impact on student attitudes and knowledge.

Intern Program

Wisconsin organized its own intern program called the Japanese Language and Culture Assistant Program (JALCAP) through the efforts of the state's longest-serving Japanese teacher, Yukio Itoh, and tremendous support from JALCAP/Japan-side. What began with 12 native interns from Japan volunteering to serve in Wisconsin schools for one year, grew to 33 native interns serving our schools in 1992-93, the fourth year of the JALCAP program. While districts originally viewed JALCAP as effort to bring cultural programs to Wisconsin's students, the program

became a vehicle for many schools to develop Japanese language programs. In 1992-93, 13 of these interns were assisting in schools with either a licensed teacher of Japanese or with distance learning classes of Japanese. The JALCAP program served to give a tremendous boost for districts to move from dabbling in Japanese culture, to commitment to a Japanese language sequence.

Distance Learning

Distance learning has also been one step along the continuum for smaller districts to develop Japanese language programs. In 1992-93, nineteen schools offered their students instruction in Japanese through the Satellite Educational Resources Consortium (SERC, broadcast from Nebraska) or through TI-IN, (broadcast from Texas). In addition, one consortium of schools hired an instructor to teach Japanese face-to-face with students in one building, while simultaneously transmitting the interactive broadcast to students at six other school sites.

Pairing with JALEX

For 1993-94, Wisconsin has stretched again, to become an integral partner with the Laurasian Institute (TLI) to host 20 teaching assistants from Japan through the Japanese Language Exchange (JALEX) program, funded by the Center for Global Partnership of The Japan Foundation. This continues our movement from cultural efforts to sequential Japanese language programs. Rather than turning over all of the support of the native-speaking assistants to TLI, Wisconsin's DPI worked out a memo of understanding to cooperate with TLI, keeping Wisconsin's interns connected to our statewide efforts at developing language programs. In addition to two in-service programs provided by ml, Wisconsin will offer two additional workshops during the school year for mentor teachers and the teaching assistants from Japan.

State Legislative Support

Funding support for these developing language programs has come directly from district budgets as well as through grants. At the state level, the Wisconsin legislature has approved since 1990 grants of \$25,000 for each of two districts annually to begin or enhance Japanese language programs. Money has been used to train teachers of other languages to learn Japanese through summer immersion programs in Japan or at Beloit College (WI), to purchase satellite or computer equipment to enhance the teaching of Japanese, to develop initial curriculum, and to purchase and develop materials. In addition to this state money, the federal Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) has had similar impact in supporting the

growth of Japanese language programs in our state.

Staff Development

Supporting the professional growth of our teachers of Japanese are workshops, travel/study experiences, and a teachers organization. With state and federal money, plus a generous workshop grant from the Japan Foundation, a two day seminar was held in 1992 for four groups involved in teaching Japanese: licensed teachers, teachers facilitating (and learning) distance education in Japanese, native interns, and students in teacher preparation programs. The focus of the seminar was proficiency-oriented instruction and issues of teaching a less-commonly taught language. The unique twist was that most of the seminar was conducted in Japanese. Even teachers with only a beginning knowledge of Japanese said that the immersion weekend was invaluable. Ms. Hiroko Furuyama, advisory lecturer of the Japan Foundation Language Center, was the main presenter, adapting well to our focus and format.

Another joint project with the Japan Foundation was arranging for ten Wisconsin teachers to attend the 1993 summer teacher program at the Japanese Language Institute in Urawa, Japan. DPI provided the teachers' airfare to Japan, and the Japan Foundation funded the eight-week course. The teachers returned with enhanced language ability, teaching skills, and enthusiasm.

Broadening the circle of educators involved in Japanese language and culture has been the focus of the Great Lakes Japan in the Schools project. A collaborative effort between Minnesota and Wisconsin, the project entails an intensive summer workshop and a series of school-year participant-designed workshops. The "ripple effect" approach of training small groups of master teachers to instruct their colleagues has put valuable curriculum materials into the classrooms of numerous Wisconsin schools.

Professional Support

An essential step in the professionalization of Japanese teaching in Wisconsin occurred in 1991 with the formation of the Wisconsin Association of Teachers of Japanese (WATJ). After a few years of informal networking, the organization became officially incorporated last year and is an equal partner joining six other language organizations in the statewide Wisconsin Association of Foreign Language Teachers. WATJ arranged with the National Council of Secondary Teachers of Japanese (NSCTJ) and with the Japanese Language Teachers Network based in Urbana, Illinois, to receive their newsletters. Such collaborative activity is essential in

order to conserve energy, combine resources, and provide mutual benefit. No one organization can do it all, or should feel it must go it alone.

WATJ has been instrumental in initiating proposals for Japanese sessions at Wisconsin's foreign language teachers' convention. A full slate of quality sessions attracts Japanese teachers from neighboring states and insures that the convention is an important annual meeting place for our assistants, teachers, and university educators. In 1992, over 60 Japanese educators were in attendance.

Sister Schools with Chiba Prefecture

Another key ingredient in building our Japanese programs has been the establishment of a sister state agreement between Wisconsin and the prefecture of Chiba.

Besides business and cultural benefits and activities, twenty Wisconsin schools are developing collaborative relationships with twenty partner schools in Chiba. The pairings involve elementary, middle and senior high schools. On one level, the schools have engaged in awareness activities, exchanging audio and videotapes, pen pal letters, artwork, and even recipes. To tie the sister school to the school curriculum, joint projects have begun which take advantage of exchanges of "ambassador" students and/or teachers. One example was elementary schools in Wisconsin and Chiba simultaneously doing a unit on family life, each student drawing a picture of and writing about his/her family. A videotape of each student talking about the illustration was also made. When these items were exchanged, the discussion was non-stop! At the middle school level, units on surveying the environmental condition of each school community resulted in learning which went far beyond "quaint" clothing or food.

One round of teacher exchanges has also occurred. A group of twelve educators first came from Chiba to visit Wisconsin, including homestays and visits to sister schools. A Wisconsin group of twelve visited Japan last January, spending two weeks absorbing life in Chiba, including four days at the sister school. The Wisconsin group included teachers of social studies, learning disabilities, elementary grades, and only one teacher of Japanese. Each Wisconsin teacher had prepared lessons which brought the sister school relationship and cultural curiosity to new heights.

Curriculum Development

In the area of curriculum and materials, DPI developed a resource and teaching guide entitled Classroom Activities in Japanese Culture and Society. Information, ready-to-use materials, and teaching units are made available to teachers in this

publication. Currently under development is a project called Japanese for Communication. The first phase of the project is the creation of a thematically-centered curriculum for the teaching of Japanese, appropriate for programs which begin in elementary, middle, or senior high schools. The focus is to allow students to function in listening to, speaking, reading, and writing Japanese. All curriculum decisions flow from the thematic center, with clearly identified outcomes. The second phase of the project is the development of actual teaching units and materials to implement the curriculum through selected themes. The units will show how the language is developed in a spiral fashion as the theme is revisited at higher levels. Funding for this project was kindly provided by the Japan Forum, an educational foundation in Tokyo.

Japanese Language Consultant

One of the last pieces of our development, symbolic of how far we have come with this state initiative, is the sponsorship of a Japanese language consultant with funding provided by The Japan Foundation. As the second state to receive such an appointment (following the arrival of Washington's consultant earlier this year), Wisconsin is very pleased to see its efforts supported in this way. Ms. Hisako Yoshiki will begin work at DPI early in 1994. DPI's experience of six years hosting a German language consultant provided by the German government has demonstrated the powerful impact of such a position.

Keep Encouraged

It is clear that many simultaneous efforts are needed to develop effective new programs of Japanese language and culture. No single focus will create the necessary buy-in which must come from all members of the education community and even from the community-at-large. Through multiple program directions, awareness begins and commitment grows. The vision must be large, but any single step can be, and often is, small. When we become discouraged or experience budgetary setbacks, we must remember the cumulative progress possible from these small steps. Our goal is starting to be realized: that all students in Wisconsin will relate to Japan from a base of experiences in language and culture, creating an understanding of the common issues our countries face.

(For more information on the development of Japanese programs in Wisconsin, please contact Paul Sandrock, DPI foreign language consultant (608/266-3079), or Madeline Uraneck, DPI international education consultant (608/267-2278), or write Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841)

Recipients of The Japan Foundation Language Center Grant Programs

August 1992-December 1993

Workshops/Conferences Grant Program

1. *Teachers of Japanese in Southern California*
1992 Fall Workshop
"Japanese Language Competency Assessment" Nov.
1, 1992 \$2,240.00
2. *Seminar for Japanese Teachers in Wisconsin*
Dec. 4-5, 1992 \$2,000.00
3. *5th Annual Lake Erie Teachers of Japanese Conference*
Apr. 9-10, 1993 \$2,000.00
4. *2nd Meeting for the Northeast Association of Secondary
Schools of Japanese*
Apr. 17, 1993 \$1,700.00
5. *Teachers of Japanese in Southern California*
1993 Spring Workshop "Assessment in the Japanese
Classroom" Apr. 18, 1993 \$500.00
6. *Workshop on Communication and Use of Grammar in
Classroom Teaching for Teachers of Japanese in Northern
California*
Apr. 23, 1993 \$600.00
7. *3rd Annual Workshop on Japanese Education in Virginia*
May 29-30, 1993 \$1,500.00
8. *13th Annual Mountain Interstates
Foreign Language Conference at Clemson Univ., SC*
Oct. 7-9, 1993 \$1,500.00
9. *4th Japanese/Korean Linguistic Conference at UCLA*
Oct. 15-17, 1993 \$1,500.00
10. *2nd Annual Conference of the Northeast Association of
Secondary Teachers of Japanese*
Nov. 6, 1993 \$2,000.00
11. *Teachers of Japanese in Southern California*
1993 Fall Workshop
Nov. 14, 1993 \$500.00

Association Grant Program

1. Japanese Language Association of Georgia
\$2,000.00

2. Missouri Association of Japanese Teachers
\$1,210.00
3. Assoc. of Teachers of Japanese in North Carolina
(ATJNC)
\$1,270.00
4. Northeast Assoc. of Secondary Teachers of
Japanese
(NEASTJ)
\$1,000.00
5. Assoc. of Teachers of Japanese in Oregon (ATJO)
\$1,800.00

Travel Grant Program Within The United States

1. **Ritsu Shimizu**
Shaler Area Middle School (Glenshaw, PA)
Participation in the AAS/Mid-Atlantic Conference
Oct. 30-31, 1992 \$104.00
2. **Kimiko Nakayama Nordstrom**
Career Enrichment Center (Albuquerque, NM)
Participation in the Southwest Conference on
Language Teaching (SWCOLT)
Apr. 1-3, 1993 \$267.50
3. **Yukiyo Moorman**
Walt Whitman High School (Bethesda, MD)
5th Annual Lake Erie Teachers of Japanese
Conference
Apr. 9-10, 1993 \$117.50
4. **Majoice Thomas** (Greenville, MI)
Participation in the National Symposium on Critical
Languages Education
Oct. 22-23, 1993 \$242.00
5. **Yasuko Nadayoshi Walcott**
Montgomery County Public Schools (New Market,
MD)
ACTFL '93 Annual Meeting "Teaching Chinese &
Japanese in the Elementary School; Methods,
Materials, and Assessment"
Nov. 20-22, 1993 \$478.00

Reports of The Recipients of JFLC Grant Programs

Workshops/Conferences Grant Program

The Fifth Annual Lake Erie Teachers of Japanese Conference (LETJ)

Mutsuko Endo Hudson
Michigan State University Dept. of Linguistics and Languages

The funding from the Japan Foundation Language Center made possible the Fifth Annual Lake Erie Teachers of Japanese (LETJ) Conference. The meetings were held at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan on April 9-10, 1993.

Background

The LETJ is a regional organization established by scholars and teachers mainly in Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, for the purpose of promoting mutual educational and scholarly support. Most members are employed by universities, but some teach at junior colleges and secondary schools. The group's first meeting was hosted by Case Western Reserve University in 1989; the second by the Ohio State University in 1990; the third by the University of Pittsburgh in 1991; and the fourth by Case Western Reserve University in 1992.

The 1993 Conference

The theme of the 1993 conference was "Communication: Among Students, Among Teachers" to promote teaching Japanese for communication and exchange of ideas and materials among teachers. The conference provided a forum for the discussion of five major issues in Japanese language instruction in the United States today: (1) effective communicative activities, (2) smooth transition from high school to college Japanese courses, (3) incorporation of cultural content in our curriculum, (4) technical and business Japanese, and (5) the present and future of computer-assisted instruction in Japanese. The invited speakers were Seiichi Makino (Princeton University), one of the leading figures in Japanese language instruction, Yasuhiko Tohsaku (the University of California-San Diego), a renowned specialist in second language acquisition and teaching, and Shohei Koike (American Graduate School of International Management in Arizona), an expert in business Japanese instruction. Approximately seventy scholar-educators and prospective teachers attended the meetings from Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin, as well as two visitors from Japan. Kimiko Kabutomori of the Japan Foundation Language Center in Santa Monica, California, and John Chapman of the Michigan Department of Education also participated and gave brief remarks. Eleven 20-30 minute papers were presented, each

followed by 10-minute discussion, focusing on a number of issues that involve the quality and future of Japanese language education in the United States.

Content of the Sessions

Following a half-hour registration period, the conference commenced at 6:30 pm on April 9th with my opening remarks regarding Michigan State University and its Japanese Language program. The first session with the theme "Communicative Activities and Teaching Culture" subsequently ensued. Maki Nakamura (Michigan State University) first spoke on "Some Communicative Activities in First-Year Japanese at MSU," illustrating some of the effective classroom activities at college level. He also explained briefly the philosophy of proficiency-oriented instruction, which promotes incorporation of culture, and on which his activities are all based. The second presentation was by Yukiyo Moorman (Walt Whitman High School and Paint Branch High School), entitled "Context/Content-Based Curriculum for Communicative Competency: Lessons for High School Level Japanese." She discussed the standard set by the State of Maryland for high school language courses and demonstrated some of the ways to achieve the goals effectively and realistically in the case of Japanese. The third presentation was "Proficiency-Oriented Material Development for Beginning Level Japanese" by Yukiko Hataha (Purdue University). She talked about the content and philosophy of the first-year textbook for college students which she is currently co-authoring. The ideas and techniques discussed are useful in developing material at other levels as well. The final speaker of the night was Ann Dundon (Case Western Reserve University), who spoke on "Networking with a Japanese University: The Waseda/CWRU Project." She explained how this remarkable project was started and implemented. Now the students at Case Western Reserve University and Waseda University in Japan can correspond to each other freely via electronic mail which includes not only computer graphics but also voice and sounds.

At 9:15 am on April 10th, Session II, "Proficiency Examination and Japanese Language Instruction" was held, following welcoming remarks by the chair of the Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages of Michigan State University. Three papers were presented dealing with

one of the most important issues today, namely, articulation between secondary and post-secondary schools: first "Current State of High School Japanese Education" by Akiko Kakutani (Earlham College), who has been commissioned by the State of Indiana to investigate high school Japanese instruction in Indiana, second "Entrance Examination at Indiana University: What High School Teachers Must Do to Prepare the Students" by Yasuko Ito Watt (Indiana University) and third "Graduation Examination at the University of Minnesota: What the Students Must be Able to Do" by Yuki Johnson (University of Minnesota).

Session III "Technical and Business Japanese Courses" then followed, addressing extremely timely topics. Keiko Unedaya (University of Michigan) first presented a paper "The Technical Japanese Courses at the University of Michigan," illustrating her materials and techniques with a video presentation of actual classroom activities. Next, one of the three invited speakers, Shohei Koike, presented "Establishment and Curriculum of a Business Japanese Program." He offered insights into the mechanics of establishing and maintaining such a program, and discussed, also with a video demonstration, the materials and techniques he has developed. The development of technical and business language courses has been receiving more and more attention in recent years as the demand has skyrocketed due to internationalization at economic scenes and, needless to say, Japanese is regarded as one of the critical languages in this regard.

The afternoon session began with Yasuhiko Tohsaku's keynote presentation "Communicative Process and Experience in Language Classroom." He discussed, among others, the results of his experiment of teaching one group of students by the communicative approach and another group by the audio-lingual method, the former group reached a higher level of proficiency than the latter group. He stressed the importance of teaching for communication and offered specific ideas and techniques. Following his stimulating, as well as informative, presentation, the participants were broken up into small groups (about eight people in each) and exchanged thoughts for half an hour. They were then brought back to plenary discussions for another half-hour to report some of the issues and questions raised in the small group discussion. This format was adopted to help the participants to meet new people and stir candid discussions in a friendly atmosphere.

Session IV "Teaching Japanese Language and Culture with Computer and Video" then followed with two presentations:

"Development of Computer-Assisted Technical Japanese Reading System (CATERS) and

Multimedia Resource Library for Teaching Japanese Language and Culture" by Kazumi Hatasa (Purdue University) and "What Can Machines Do for Japanese Language Teachers?" by Ken Ujiie. The speakers discussed and demonstrated a variety of computer software that they each developed (some collaboratively with others) for teaching Japanese, which were simply awesome. After a dinner break, the second keynote speech was presented by Seiichi Makino, entitled "*Miren* and Japanese." His illuminating presentation touched on the intersection of the language and culture, an important issue not only in language teaching but also in linguistic analyses of Japanese. The same format as for Tohsaku's presentation (half-hour each of small group discussion and plenary discussion) was employed for Makino's. The finale of the conference was the business meeting. The conference adjourned at 9:30pm on April 10, 1993.

Project Evaluation

According to the post-conference survey, the conference was a great success. The participants remarked that it was educational, informative and stimulating, and commented favorably on the "non-threatening" atmosphere. It provided them with the opportunity to meet and exchange opinions and information with colleagues from other institutions in the region. In addition, the participants benefitted greatly from hearing the ideas of well-known experts in the field. The small group format allowed for frank discussion of pressing issues and sharing of solutions and methods in the field of Japanese language pedagogy. The running of the conference also went smoothly with no problem arising and the participants were satisfied with the physical facility used. A follow-up questionnaire will be administered this summer.

Future Activities

The organizers of the past LETJ meetings (1989-1993) have volunteered to form a steering committee in order to lend advice and assistance to the organizers of the 1994 conference, to be held at Purdue University (all the 1993 materials, including the survey sheets, have already been sent to the 1994 organizers). 1993 participants unanimously agreed on the importance of holding annual meetings. Such small regional conferences are easily accessible to all and provide forums for sharing of pedagogical methods and scholarly findings, which is indispensable especially in the relatively young field of Japanese language education.

1993

1993 Japanese Language Education Organization Survey

In 1991, The Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute published the list and the statistics of Japanese language education organizations worldwide. The Institute is now conducting the second survey. The information obtained hereby will be published with the aim of promoting networking among institutions throughout the world. In the United States the following associations are conducting the survey:

ATJ Colleges, universities, junior colleges, community colleges

NCSTJ Precollegiate institutions

JFLC Other institutions

In September 1993, each organization sent out questionnaire forms to your institutions. If your institute has not yet received these forms, please contact each organization.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation toward Professor Ann Sherif of Case Western Reserve University for her great assistance for my report.

Workshop: Communication and Use of Grammar in Classroom Teaching

Fumiko Grant

The Northern California Japanese Teachers' Association

Date: April 23, 1993 (3:00pm.-6:30pm.)

Location: San Francisco State University
Seven Hills Center

Presenter: Prof. Seichi Makino

(elementary, secondary, and college) gave a short demonstration, the participants shared and discussed the problems about how and how much grammar should be taught in Japanese classes. As preparation for the workshop, the session was very successful.

The April workshop given by Prof. Makino contained two parts: 1) presentation-how can we develop students' proficiency and 2) demonstration-how can we teach grammar in Japanese classes. 80 participants actively engaged in this workshop and serious discussion was exchanged through the entire period.

Activity Report

Prior to this April workshop, NCJTA held a mini workshop on March 28th as a study session. The topic was "Teaching of Grammar in Japanese Classes." About 50 people participated in this session. After three presenters from different levels

Travel Grant Program: Report on The AAS/Mid-Atlantic Conference

October 30-31, 1992

West Chester University

Ritsu Shimizu

Shaler Area Middle School (Glenshaw, PA)

Part I

Evening, October 30, 1992

There was an Asian music and dance performance by Chinese elementary through secondary students from a nearby community, Radnor. They were joined by other students of Japanese from West Chester University.

Saturday, October 31, 1992

Morning Session: Title-Round Table-Issues in Teaching Japanese at the University and Secondary Levels

All participants introduced themselves, their Japanese program in terms of grade/level, enrollment, textbooks, and number of teachers/instructors in the same institution. Since the participants numbered more than 25 which included colleges and secondary schools, Dr. Kanagy took a record and promised to send a list of the participants' names later. Each participant described their teaching situation and presented their points of concern.

Specific to the instruction in secondary schools, Ms. Ushioda mentioned the Saturday program where she teaches. (She left the session earlier and I could not ask her about the program she teaches.)

Dr. John Flathmann, supervisor of social studies in the West Chester Area School district, described the West Chester Area School district's Japanese language program. Although his speciality is social studies, he majored in Asian studies as his academic discipline, and this is the reason he is initiating and overseeing the Japanese language program in his school district. One of the distinguished activities he conducted was that he organized and escorted a group of high school students to Japan last year for one month. The students had to pay only for their traveling fees, the rest was taken care of by the host family and the International Lion's club. He stated that the traditional foreign language teachers were feeling tremendous threat by the addition of the Japanese language in the school district curriculum.

Afternoon session: Classroom learners of Japanese-Acquisition and Attitude

"I can't get them to stop talking: Transforming non-speakers into speakers"

Yoko Koike, Haverford College

She presented her techniques of how to minimize the use of English, and increase spoken Japanese in classroom. For example, she established the rules of communication in Japanese by the utilization of "aizuchi," short phrases of Japanese confirmation marks, or making mutual agreement gestures with students. Later she extended her presentation to reading comprehension.

"How do classroom learners express negation in Japanese?"

Ruth Kanagy, University of Delaware

She stated that her presentation was a summary from her dissertation. She hypothesized progressive acquisition forms of negation based on the first language study. She took her data from a 10 month period with students, and drew the conclusion that the negation acquisition seems to follow a similar progressive way as the first language. (I had

questions to ask, but they didn't allow any time for questioning at the end of each presentation.)

"Social perception of people in Japan among American Students of Japanese"

Yukie Aida and Yoshiko Saito-Abbott, University of Texas

They conducted a survey of students who were enrolled in psychology and Japanese. They used the framework by Kats and Gilbert(?) in 1936 to investigate ethnic perception. Their conclusion was that the Japanese language students were more sociable to Japanese people than the psychology students. (I left the session at 3:10 while the session was still on).

Part II

Stated in the above, the participant's list is going to be prepared by Dr. Kanagy. When I receive it, I shall mail it to you immediately.

Kitty Taylor Mizuno does not teach at Princeton University any longer. I think she said that she teaches at a secondary school. She talked about the comparison of Jordan method and the Makino Seiichi teaching roach, and she didn't mention her current secondary school teaching. I wonder that talking about the secondary school teaching in front of college instructors made her feel very uncomfortable, or she didn't have intention to talk about her current teaching. There are many participants so I couldn't disrupt self-introduction session.

Ms. Sharley Ushioda teaches social study and the Japanese language half and half. I got an impression ~ her introduction that she didn't feel comfortable h so many college Japanese language teachers and the session earlier. I wonder whether she felt intimidated.

Dr. John H. Flathmann is definitely a pillar of the Japanese language program in West Chester Area School district. He gave his name card. His title and address is: Supervisor of Social Studies, West Chester a School District, 829 Paoli Pike, West Chester, PA 80. Tel: (215) 436-7122. Fax: (215) 436-0167. I am going to mail a copy of *The Breeze* and other pertinent information to him.

5th Annual Lake Erie Teachers of Japanese Conference 1993 Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

Yukiyo Moorman
Walt Whitman High School

"Context/Content-Based Curriculum for Communicative Competency Lessons for High School Level Japanese"

I briefly talked about the Montgomery County Public Schools' Japanese language curriculum. The handout listed themes for each level, as well as a list of French/Spanish for comparison. All foreign languages have developed their instructional guides from the generic curriculum and the Japanese language is one of them. Emphasis is for all language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, respectively.

The curriculum guidelines and lesson activities are developed within each theme. All activities are student centered and the contents are relevant to their daily life and interests/concerns. Remote concepts or situations are avoided as much as possible. For example, expressions or phrases used in students' daily life are given higher priority in lesson's objective. Something like Tokyo's subway system or the rental fee of 2-K apartments is a very remote concept for American high school students, thus it is introduced as a social issue rather than as a language learning objective.

All the themes of level one emphasize a large number of vocabulary words that are presented in the most tangible form of illustrations or pictures. Almost all

themes of level one are repeated in level two. The level two lessons thus contain level one's vocabularies and phrases as the basic foundation. It means level one's knowledge is thoroughly reviewed, and basic knowledge moves gradually towards generalizations and/or abstract concepts. Level three and level four are again repeated in a similar manner. This process has enormous advantages in learning *kanji*, since every year students review all the *kanji* they have studied in previous years. In addition, new *kanji* are added gradually.

If higher competency means automatic response, then the students must be given great many opportunities to practice. The minimum competency expected for high school students after four years of Japanese study is that students are able to express anything about themselves in Japanese, master *hiragana*, *katakana* and some *kanji*. Students should be able to manipulate the conjugation of adjectives and verbs, understand the basic sentence structure on syntax forms, such as noun-predicate, adjective predicate, non-action verb predicate and action verb predicate.

Breezy Message

In this special issue of *The Breeze*, we have brought you announcements of the Japan Foundation Grant Programs. Also, as befitting a special issue, we have a contribution from Dr. Miyaji on the current state of Japanese language education. At this time, when there is strong movement in Japanese language education in the United States, I believe that it would do for all of us to clearly rethink, through Dr. Miyaji's article, how to proceed on issues in this area.

On the current situation of Japanese language education in three separate states, we received articles from each state, written by the person heading foreign language education.

In the future, I would like to be able to provide even more of an exchange of information to all of you regarding what is presently going on in Japanese language education. In October, our Language Center's chief language specialist, Prof. Toshio Tatsuta's time here with us will draw to a close. For close to twenty years, Prof. Tatsuta has, as an expert of The Japan Foundation for Japanese language education, been active in many areas of the world, but he has said that now, for the time being, he will be taking a pause in his career. Thank you, Professor, for all you have done. Noriko Yokoyama from The Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute will be joining us as the next chief language specialist.