

# BREEZE

Spring 1999/Number 19

Quarterly

## how do we look?

Since last spring, The Japan Foundation has been engaged in our worldwide Overseas Japanese-Language Education Organization Survey. In the United States alone, our Language Center in Los Angeles has received more than two thousand responses to the questionnaire; we are extremely appreciative.

We promised the respondents that we would share the survey results and some analyses in this edition of the BREEZE. However, we regret to inform everyone that publication of the results has been postponed until the summer issue. How are things on the Japanese education scene in the United States, anyway? I would say that Japanese language education in this country is in very good shape. All of the numbers of current learners, teachers, and organizations who offer Japanese courses exceed the numbers of previous surveys, excepting the figures seen in surveys representing only the collegiate level.

There is still a continuing increase in younger learners. One of the reasons may be that Japanese culture is now developing a stronger presence in American daily life. Further analysis is needed as to where Japanese culture stands. Stay tuned!

ISAO TSUJIMOTO, DIRECTOR

THE JAPAN  
FOUNDATION  
& Language Center  
in Los Angeles



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## A Study of Japanese FLES Programs in the United States

Hiroko Kataoka and  
Hiroko Furuyama with Sayuri Fretz

*Hiroko Kataoka and Hiroko Furuyama are Academic Specialists at the Japan Foundation and Language Center in Los Angeles. Sayuri Fretz is Assistant to the Academic Specialists.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Japanese language instruction in elementary schools was a rarity in the United States until recently. Since no historical study of Japanese language programs at elementary school is available, it is difficult to pinpoint when and where they started. Prior survey reports of the Japan Foundation Language Center in Los Angeles revealed that there were at least 48 elementary schools offering Japanese in 1992, and at least 68 in 1994. As we started to hear about programs and meet more elementary schools' Japanese teachers, we felt it was time to learn about elementary school programs, especially those categorized as "FLES" (Foreign Language in Elementary Schools).

### 2. GOALS AND PURPOSES

We began this study with three goals in mind. First, we wanted to produce some basic statistics regarding such issues as the number of elementary schools teaching Japanese, the ratio of FLES programs to

*(continued on page 2)*

Japanese-Language Proficiency Test  
Results in the US: Held December 6, 1998

Number of certified candidates  
(Total candidates in parenthesis)

	LA	Chicago	NY	Total
Level 1	16(47)	7(26)	10(29)	33(102)
Level 2	25(65)	7(39)	12(54)	44(158)
Level 3	52(64)	36(49)	21(41)	109(154)
Level 4	33(53)	15(44)	11(27)	59(124)
Total				
1998	126(229)	65(158)	54(151)	245(538)
1997	129(244)	42(110)	66(130)	237(484)

(continued from page 1)

FLEX (Foreign Language Experience) or to Immersion programs, the number of elementary school students studying Japanese, and the number of teachers currently involved in teaching Japanese at the elementary school level. Our second goal concerned answers to policy and content-related questions such as the goals of the programs, teaching materials, and administrative and parental support. The third goal was to find out who the teachers are, including their educational backgrounds, their native tongue, and the difficulties they face.

This report describes the study and shares some of the results relating to the first goal. A detailed report with complete results will appear at a later date.

### 3. STUDY METHOD

We began by compiling a list of 345 elementary schools that were known or thought to teach Japanese. The list came from several sources: the 1998 JFLC general survey list; the 1994 JFLC survey results; Japanese teachers, professors, and State Department of Education foreign language specialists in various states; and, the survey list of National Network For Early Language Learning (NNELL)<sup>1</sup>.

The next step was to see if those schools actually did offer Japanese as of the 1998-1999 school year. A limited number of schools was found to have programs according to the 1998 JFLC general survey, and colleagues in various states confirmed that some other schools offered Japanese. The rest of the schools, which numbered over 200, had to be contacted by telephone in order to find out if the information we had in hand was up to date, as well as to determine the type of program (i.e., FLES, FLEX, or Immersion).

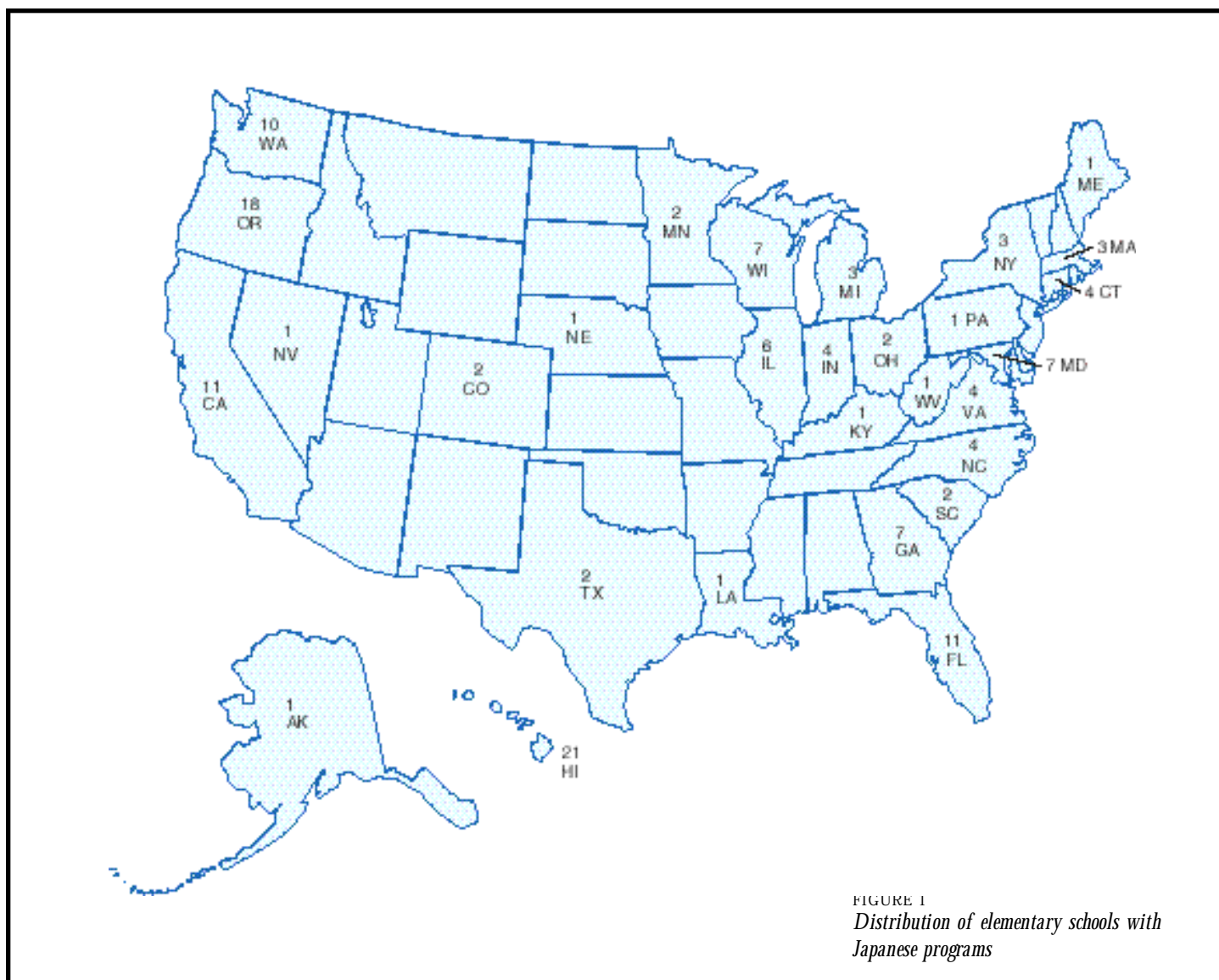


FIGURE 1  
Distribution of elementary schools with Japanese programs

Once the Japanese teaching schools and program types were identified, we contacted by phone Japanese teachers or those in charge of coordinating the Japanese program in order to learn about the content of their programs in detail, using a prepared set of questions. Each interview lasted from 20 to 40 minutes. In total, we interviewed 74 teachers, of whom 47 were teachers involved in FLES programs. The collected data were recorded in a data base, which was then analyzed.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### 4.1. Types of Japanese programs in elementary schools<sup>2</sup>

We found that 141 elementary schools are offering Japanese in one form or another during the 1998-99 school year. These Japanese programs can be roughly categorized in three types: Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES), Foreign Language Experience (FLEX) and Immersion. Although there is more than one definition for each of these program types, we followed the definitions provided in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**  
**DEFINITIONS OF LANGUAGE PROGRAMS**

	<i>Class hours per week in a year</i>	<i>Contents of the class</i>
FLES	More than 60 minutes	More focus on language
FLEX	Less than 60 minutes	More focus on the familiarization of culture
Immersion	More than half of instruction is conducted in Japanese.	Content based

We found that more than one half of the Japanese programs in elementary schools are FLES. The number of Japanese programs in each category is shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**  
**NUMBER OF SCHOOLS**

FLES	75
FLEX	46
IMMERSION	12
UNKNOWN*	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>

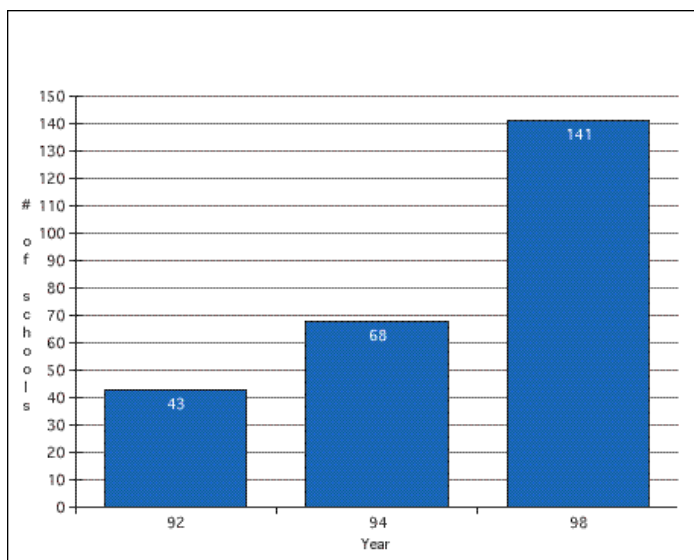
\*We were not able to get detailed information from these schools, therefore could not identify a program type.

The geographical distribution of Japanese programs in elementary schools is indicated in the map on page 2 (Figure 1). It shows that the majority of Japanese programs are on the West and East Coasts. This tendency matches that of high school Japanese programs. (See BREEZE #10)

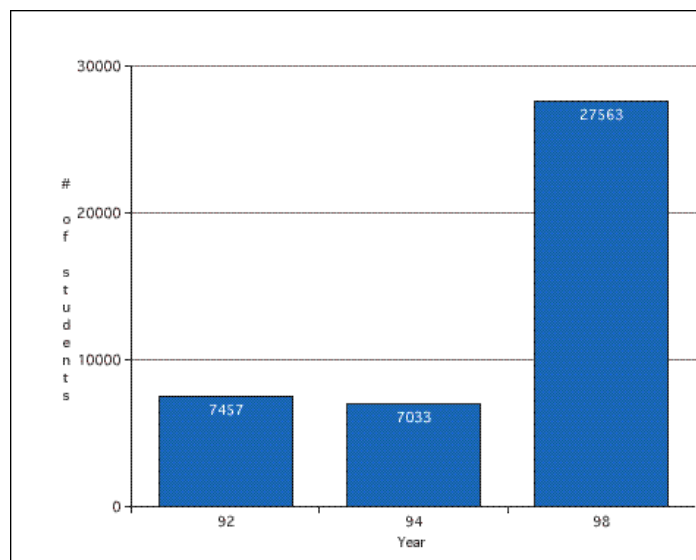
##### 4.2. Changes observed in the last six years.

The JFLC conducted a similar but less detailed survey in 1992 and again in 1994. A comparison of the 1998 data with those of previous years shows a clear increase in both the numbers of schools and students: in the last four years the number of schools offering Japanese doubled and the number of students, quadrupled. (See Graphs 1 and 2.) (1992 and 1994 data are from BREEZE #1 and #10 respectively.)

Graph 3 (page 4) depicts the change since 1994 in the number of schools in each state where Japanese is offered. The main increases occurred on the



GRAPH 1  
Number of elementary schools offering Japanese by year.



GRAPH 2  
Number of students studying Japanese in elementary schools by year.

(continued from page 3)

west and east coasts of the United States, where the majority of the programs are located, although the emergence of new Japanese programs is not limited to those areas.

We cannot, however, be simply overjoyed by the increase in the number of schools offering Japanese language programs and the increased number of students studying in them. A further comparison of the schools revealed that only one half of the 64 schools that offered Japanese in 1994 did so in 1998, implying that half of the programs died out in the last four years. Of the 141 schools that currently offer Japanese, only 23 per cent of them have been in existence since 1994; these are new programs that are popping up like mushrooms after a rain. (See Graph 4.)

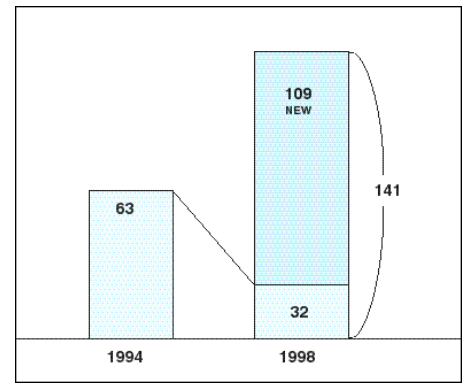
### 4.3. More about FLES programs

Although we conducted a general survey of all elementary school Japanese programs (FLES, FLEX, and

Immersion), we would like to focus on FLES programs for several reasons. FLES is the most common of the programs; FLES is generally classified as “foreign language education” (while FLEX is not); and, not much is known about FLES programs in contrast to immersion programs, which have been surveyed through the Japanese Immersion Network Project<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 2 depicts the distribution of Japanese FLES programs in the United States. The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of students studying Japanese in those states. This distribution parallels that of all elementary Japanese programs.

Through analysis of the data, we found that not every school offers Japanese at all grade levels. Of the 75 schools, 41, or 55 per cent, have a K-5 program. The rest offered programs that were shorter than six years. Over

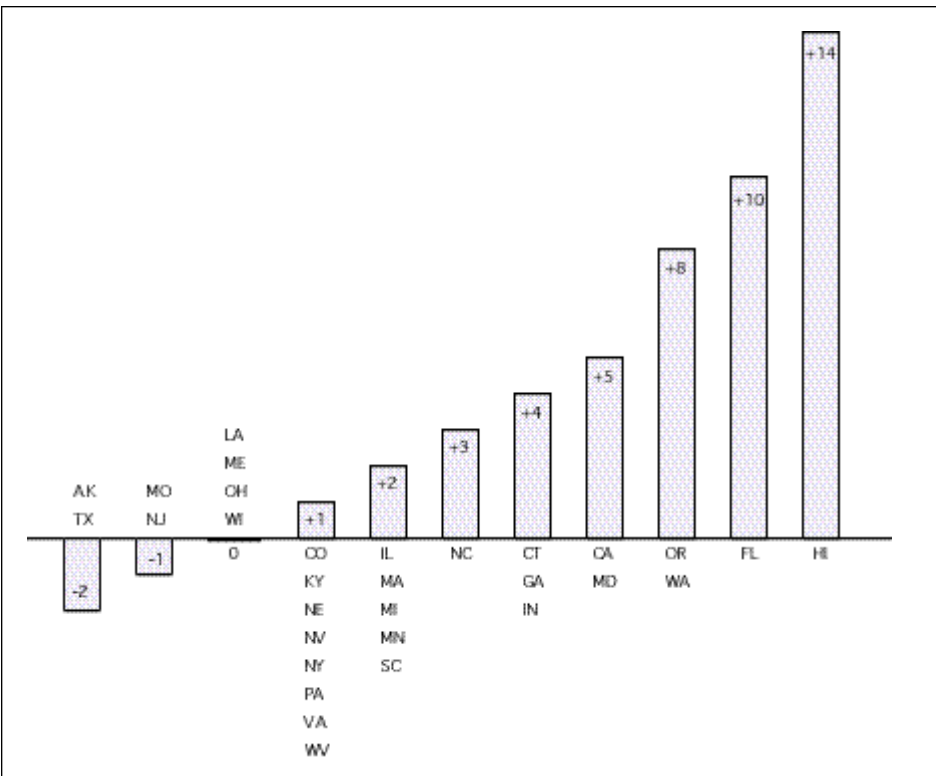


GRAPH 4  
Continuity and change in the total number of schools that offer Japanese between 1994 and 1998

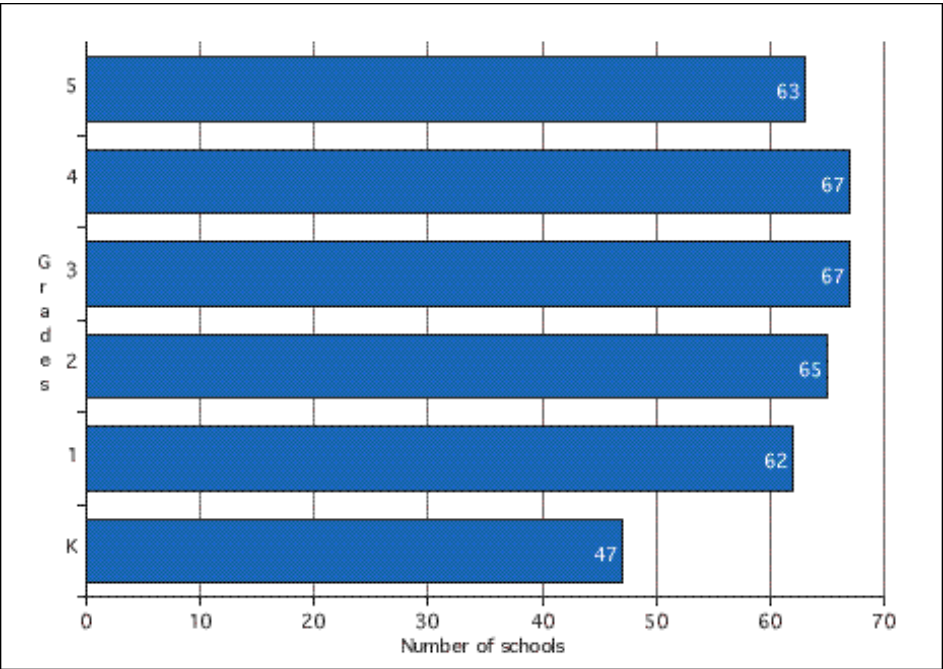
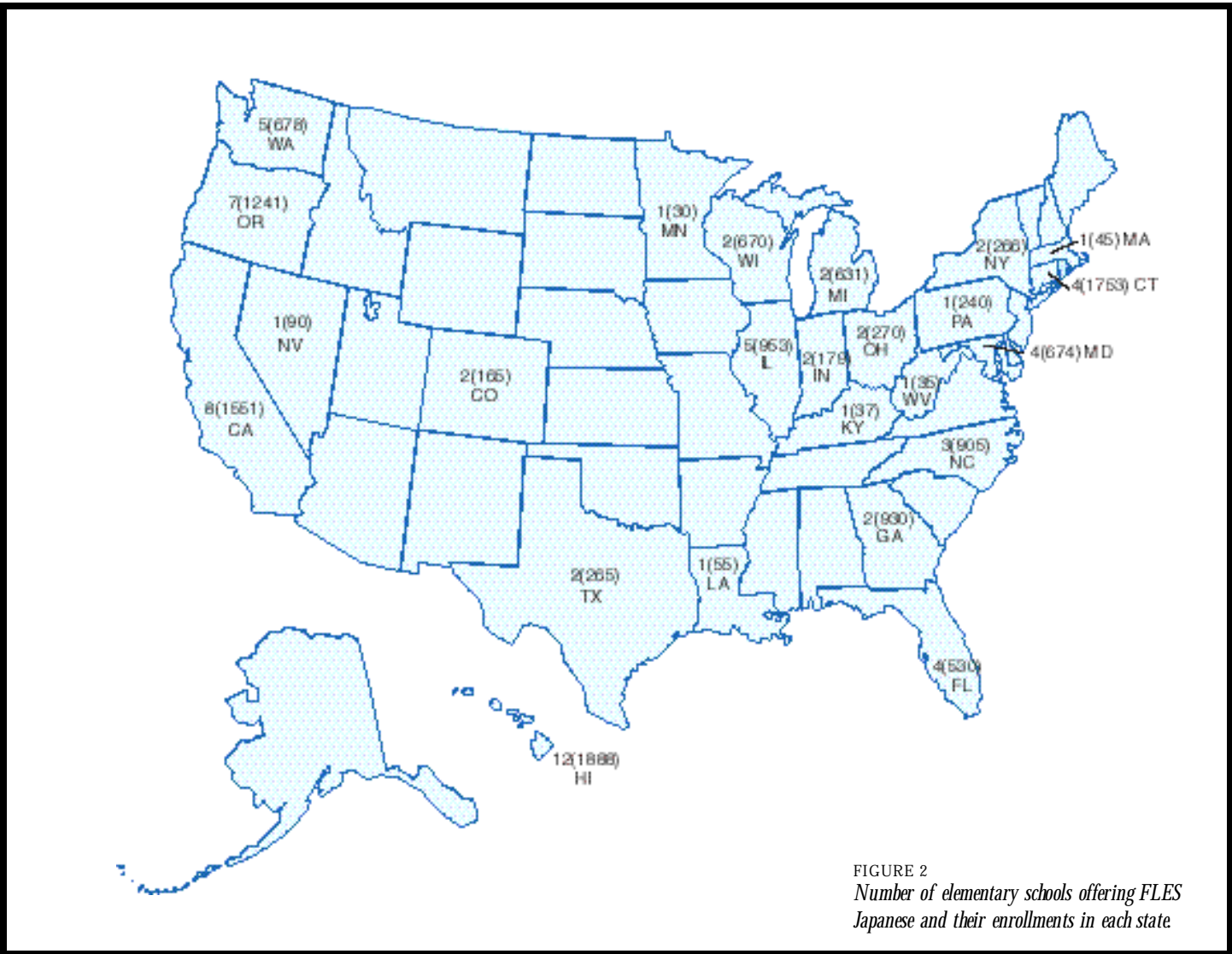
one third of the schools (28 out of 75) did not offer Japanese in kindergarten. The 34 schools that did not offer a K-5 program offered combinations of several grade levels. (See Graph 5 on page 5.)

The average class time per week for all schools offering FLES Japanese was 114.3 minutes. The average class time per week increased as grade level rose, and grade 5 Japanese classes on average met 1.4 times longer than kindergarten classes. Graph 6 (page 6) indicates the average amount of class time for each grade level.

The length of class time varied from school to school, from 30 minutes to 600 minutes per week. (Our definition of FLES is that the class meets 60 minutes per week minimum, but we included all schools in the FLES category as long as at least one grade level met more than 60 minutes per week. As a result, some schools having certain grade levels whose Japanese classes met less than 60 minutes per week were nevertheless included in the FLES category.) Graph 7 (page 6) shows the variation on the length of the third grade Japanese classes as an example. Other grade levels have similar distributions:



GRAPH 3  
Change in number of elementary schools offering Japanese since 1994, by state.



the most frequently observed class time was 60 minutes for all grade levels, followed by 90 minutes and 150 minutes.

FLES programs are offered not only at public schools but also at private schools. Approximately 70 per cent of FLES programs were held at public schools, and, of the 24 private schools that offered FLES Japanese, exactly one half belonged to the Association of Waldorf Schools.<sup>4</sup> (See Table 3 on page 6.)

(continued from page 5)

**TABLE 3**  
TYPES OF SCHOOLS THAT OFFER  
JAPANESE FLES

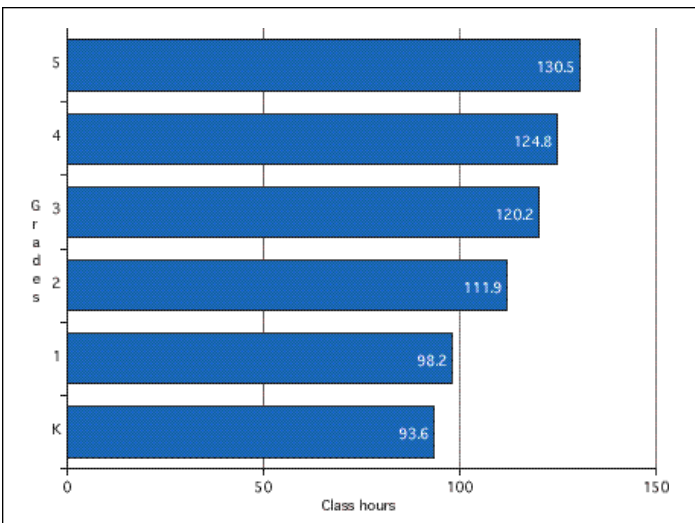
PUBLIC	51
PRIVATE	24
TOTAL	75

Since many school districts do not require FLES, not all the foreign language programs are incorporated into regular class periods. Japanese was no exception, and 10 of the 75 programs were offered as before or after school programs. (See Table 4).

**TABLE 4**  
INCORPORATION OF JAPANESE FLES IN  
REGULAR CLASS PERIOD

Regular Class Period	65
Before/after school	10
TOTAL	75

Unlike secondary school programs, in which foreign languages are often electives through which students can take the foreign language of their choice, elementary school programs often do not offer such a choice. Japanese was compulsory in 46, or over 60 per cent, of the 75 schools, as seen in Table 5.



**GRAPH 6**  
Average class time per week by grade level

All of the “before/after school” category schools in the Table 4 offered Japanese as an elective course.

**TABLE 5**  
COMPULSORY VS. ELECTIVE  
JAPANESE FLES PROGRAMS

COMPULSORY	46
ELECTIVE	29
TOTAL	75

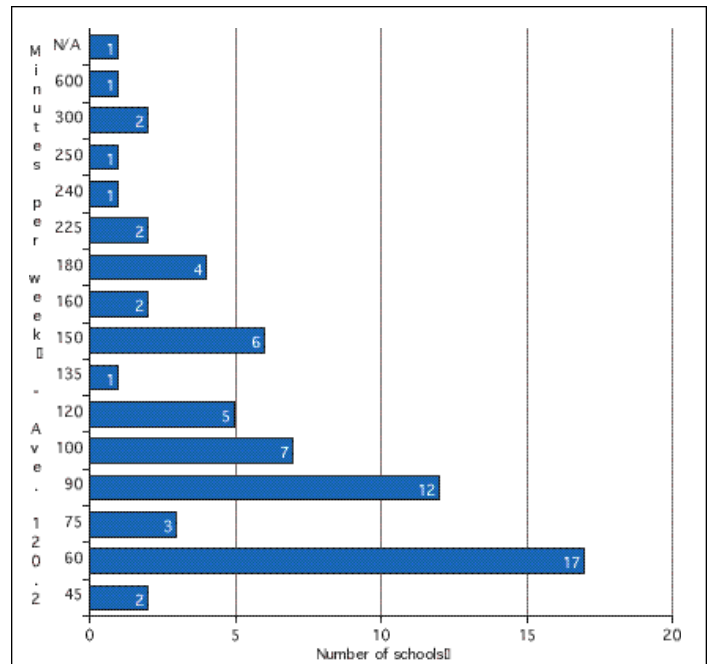
### CONCLUSION

As mentioned previously, this article reports only a part of our survey research. We are now looking into the teachers’ backgrounds and the difficulties they face. We are also learning about program goals and objectives, teaching materials, and cooperation from administration and parents. We have been visiting some FLES classrooms so we can report on what goes on in the classrooms also. The rapid increase in the number of such programs may be exhilarating news, but the large number of programs that

have evidently disappeared should be a sobering indication of the challenges these programs face. We hope that our further study will shed some light on the nature of these challenges and the ways in which we can meet them.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> We would like to thank Nancy Rhodes of Center for Applied Linguistics for generously sharing the NNELL data before they were made public.
- <sup>2</sup> Although the definition of elementary/primary school may differ by state and school district, in this study the grades of elementary school are defined as k-5.
- <sup>3</sup> An NEH funded project at the University of Oregon, 1994-1997, Hiroko Kataoka, PI.
- <sup>4</sup> According to their educational philosophy, the Waldorf Schools require two foreign languages, and they also train Japanese people from Japan to become educators at Waldorf Schools.



**GRAPH 7**  
Distribution of class time per week for third grade FLES programs

# The Seventh Summer Workshop for Pedagogy -Bringing Standards into Japanese Language Classrooms-

For K-12 School Teachers of Japanese at the Japan Foundation and Language Center in Los Angeles  
<Application already closed in March>

## Goals

Workshop participants will improve their everyday teaching practices by learning about the Standards for Japanese Language Learning and how to apply the Standards to their classrooms.

## Objectives

At the end of this workshop, successful participants will be able to:

- (1) demonstrate their knowledge of the Standards for Japanese Language Learning;
- (2) create usable Standards-oriented learning scenarios which are appropriate to their programs;
- (3) develop lesson plans and assessment tools based on the learning scenarios that they have created;
- (4) create activities that enable the use of the learning scenarios; and,
- (5) adapt current textbooks based on the Standards.

## Content

The 10-day workshop will cover:

- (1) **Principles:**  
Participants will become familiar with basic principles for standards-oriented instruction.
- (2) **Application:**  
Participants will explore through demonstrations and discussions how to apply principles for Standards-oriented instruction to their own teaching contexts.
- (3) **Text Analysis and Supplementary Materials:**  
Participants will analyze textbooks and supplementary materials including the ones currently used in their schools. Participants will also create their own activities to supplement commercially available materials.
- (4) **Teaching Plan Design:**  
Participants will set their own goals to improve their teaching, create a teaching plan to achieve their goals, and implement the plan in simulated teaching.
- (5) **Simulated Teaching Practice:**  
Each participant will demonstrate his/her teaching in 25 minutes presentations at the conclusion of the workshop; the session will be videotaped and given to the participant as a resource for self-evaluation.
- (6) **Self-Evaluation:**  
Each participant will view his/her own teaching demonstration video and reflect on the teaching in relation to the goals he/she had set before creating the teaching plan.

## Duration

Session 1 (main focus on **K-8 teachers**)  
6/21 (Mon.) - 7/1 (Thurs.)

Session 2 (main focus on **9-12 teachers**)  
7/26 (Mon.) - 8/5 (Thurs.)

10 days (excluding Sunday)

9:00 AM-5:00 PM

## Eligibility

In-service K-12 school teachers of Japanese, both native and non-native speakers, who reside in the United States and Canada are eligible to apply.

*(Please note: Teaching assistants are not considered in-service teachers.)  
Priority is given to those who have never attended any previous pedagogy workshops at the JFLC.*

## Venue

The Japan Foundation & Language Center in Los Angeles  
(Santa Monica, California)

## Teaching Staff

Academic Specialists of The Japan Foundation & Language Center in Los Angeles.

HIROKO KATAOKA

HIROKO FURUYAMA

The workshop will also feature the following guest lecturers who are experts in the field, with extensive experience in K-8 and 9-12 curricula.

YASU-HIKO TOHSAKU, University of California at San Diego

JUNKO HANAI AGENA, Aina Haina Elementary School, Hawaii  
(Session 1)

PATRICIA THORNTON, University of Minnesota (previously  
Minneapolis Public Schools), Minnesota (Session 2)

## Credit

Participants can earn university credits from UCLA Extension (Education) or California State University, Long Beach (Japanese) upon completion of this course. Details will be announced later.

# *The Mary Tsukamoto California Language Academy is recruiting potential Japanese language teachers*

## *You can get a teaching credential to teach Japanese in just one year!*

The Mary Tsukamoto California Language Academy, in cooperation with the Teacher Education Institute, seeks to place six candidates in an accelerated credentialing program. Prospective teachers are able to earn a California State University teaching credential in just 11 months, rather than the 1.5 to 2 years required by traditional programs. TEI is a joint project between CSU, San Francisco and the Elk Grove Unified School District. It allows all coursework and field experiences to be conducted within the Elk Grove Unified School District.

## *You can get high quality instruction tailored to the demands of teaching Japanese!*

Through a partnership with the Japan Foundation, the Mary Tsukamoto California Language Academy will supplement TEI's curriculum so that candidates meet high quality standards for teaching and learning Japanese.

## *You may receive assistance with job placement!*

There is currently a critical shortage of Japanese language teachers in California's public schools. The Mary Tsukamoto California Language Academy is developing a program of assistance in California's public schools and will promote the placement of its successful graduates statewide.

## *Who are potential candidates?*

- The Academy is looking for proficient speakers of Japanese who might like to teach Japanese at the middle or high school level.
- The Teacher Education Institute's next program begins in June 1999. Graduates could begin teaching in July 2000. Applications are due immediately. Background information, application forms and checklist may be downloaded ([www.tsukamoto.org](http://www.tsukamoto.org)) or are available by calling the Academy staff at (916) 686-7797 ext. 7560 or writing to

The Mary Tsukamoto California Language Academy.

Attn: Mike Bott, Acting Director

9510 Elk Grove-Florin Rd.

Elk Grove, CA 95624

Telephone: (916) 686-7797 ext. 7560

Fax: (916) 686-2889

E-mail: [mbott@edcenter.egusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:mbott@edcenter.egusd.k12.ca.us)

Potential teacher candidates include individuals proficient in Japanese who have a desire to teach young people in California schools. The required proficiency level of Japanese for non-native speakers of Japanese is 1) an oral proficiency rating of Advanced or higher in ACTFL's OPI (submit formal test results) and 2) Second Level performance in the Japanese Proficiency Exam. Native speakers of Japanese must obtain a minimum TOEFL score of 580.

- You need not have majored or minored in Japanese, but you should have some experience with the American school system, either as a student, a parent, or as an assistant.



- U.S citizens, permanent legal residents and international students with proof of valid visa status issued before the start of the program.

### **What are financial costs?**

Tuition for the program is based upon a schedule established by California State University (CSU). For California residents the tuition is approximately \$7,000. Tuition for out-of-state residents is approximately \$17,000. Standard CSU financial aid and loans may be available upon application through the University. For more information, please call TEI at (916) 681-7512.

### **When does the program start?**

The Teacher Education Institute's next program begins in June 1999. Graduates could begin teaching in July 2000. Applications are due immediately. Background

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The Mary Tsukamoto California  
Language Academy.

*Attn: Mike Bott, Acting Director*

9510 Elk Grove-Florin Rd.  
Elk Grove, CA 95624

Telephone: (916) 686-7797 ext. 7560

Fax: (916) 686-2889

E-mail: [mbott@edcenter.egusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:mbott@edcenter.egusd.k12.ca.us)

## **The Japan Foundation Urawa's Journal "Japanese-Language Education Around the Globe"**

### **Tenth Call for Papers**

The tenth volume of Japanese-Language Education Around the Globe, an academic journal issued by the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa, is scheduled for publication in June 2000.

The Institute is now inviting contributions from around the world. Anyone is qualified to submit papers, regardless of nationality, sex, age, or affiliation. Contributions from non-native speakers of Japanese are especially welcome. In order to include papers from as many different contributors as possible, those who wrote papers for the last issue (including co-authors) may not contribute to the next issue.

Contributors must request a copy of our Style Guidelines and submit a clear description of their proposed contribution to Japanese-Language Education Around the Globe.

**DEADLINE: SUBMISSIONS MUST ARRIVE NO LATER THAN JULY 30, 1999**

***Submissions or inquiries should be sent to:***

Research and Information Division

The Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute, Urawa

5-6-36 Kita Urawa, Urawa, Saitama 336-0002, JAPAN

Tel: 048-834-1184 Fax: 048-830-1588

# THE NATIONAL HERITAGE JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The California Association of Japanese Language Schools (CAJLS) will host a national heritage Japanese language education conference on May 27 and 28 (Thursday and Friday) at the Japanese American Cultural Community Center (JACCC) and Japan-America Theater in Los Angeles.

The objective of this conference is to ascertain the status of heritage Japanese language education in the United States and thereby establish a common base for the formation of a national organization for the promotion of heritage Japanese language education in the United States

The two-day conference will be comprised of five parts.

## PART I - Plenary Session

(1st Day - 12:10 p.m. ~ 2:50 p.m.)

"THE CONTEXT OF JAPANESE AS A HERITAGE LANGUAGE"

**Dr. Richard Brecht** (*The National Foreign Language Center*), **Professor Hiroko Kataoka** (*CSULB/Japan Foundation*), **Professor Kazuko Nakajima** (*University of Toronto*), *plus three additional speakers presenting the Japanese American perspectives (the JANM, the JACL, and the vernacular paper)*

## PART II - Panel Discussion

(1st Day - 3:00 p.m. ~ 5:15 p.m.)

"THE REALITY OF JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE FIELD - DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES"

## PART III - Panel Discussion

(1st Day - 7:00 p.m. ~ 11:45 p.m.)

"JAPANESE LANGUAGE IN THE JA LIFE - TODAY AND TOMORROW"

**Professor Yuji Ichioka** (*UCLA-History*), **The Rev. Mas Kodani** (*Senshin Buddhist Church*), **Professor Karen Yamashita** (*UCSC-Literature*), *and two additional speakers (each representing the JACCC and the business or legal community).*

## PART IV - General Discussion

(2nd Day - 9:15 a.m. ~ 12:00 noon)

**General discussion on the question of the NAHJLE formation - with the discussion focusing on (1) objectives, (2) organizational structure, (3) timetable, (4) identification of interim officers (or steering committee members) and their tasks, and (5) finance**

## PART V - Reception

While the primary host of this conference is the CAJLS, many organizations will be involved in this conference in various capacities. The supporting organizations include the following: Hawaii Nihongo Kyoiku-kai, JACCC, JACL (PSW District), JANM, Japan Foundation (Los Angeles), JCCSC, JETRO (Los Angeles), National Council of Organizations of Less Commonly Taught Languages, National Foreign Language Center, Nanka-Kenjin-kai Coordinating Council, Nikkei Federation (Coordinating Council of Japanese Community Centers), TTB ("Ties That Bind") Conference, and others.

All concerned parties, particularly those involved in the hoshukou and nihongo gakkō operations and teaching are urged to attend this very important conference. The registration fees are: \$ 20 for individual registrants (including a box lunch on the second day), \$50 for schools, and \$100 for institutions not identified officially as supporting organizations. For those interested in attending the Part III portion only, tickets will be sold at the Japan-American Theater for \$5 each.

***For more details about the conference, please contact:***

THE NHJLE CONFERENCE

Attention: Dr. Itsuki C. Igawa, President-CAJLS  
3929 Middlebury Street, Los Angeles, CA 90004  
TEL (562) 402-4315 Direct  
FAX (562) 402-8394 Direct  
E-Mail <icigawa@kincyb.com>

# JETRO to Conduct the “JETRO 4TH Business Japanese Language Proficiency Test”

WORLDWIDE ON SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 1999

The JETRO test is designed to objectively measure and evaluate the proficiency of the non-native Japanese speakers who are using Japanese for business communication. Realistic situations in business are reflected. It is the first international test certifying Japanese listening and reading skills for business organizations and academic institutions. Please visit our web site at [www.jetro.org/losangeles/](http://www.jetro.org/losangeles/) for further information.

**Date:** Saturday, June 5, 1999

**Fees:**

Level I	\$50.00
Level II,	\$35.00
Level III	\$35.00
Level I & II	\$70.00
Level II & III	\$60.00

**Application Period:**  
Wed., 2/8 to Fri. 4/9/99

## Test Locations (Contact):

Atlanta	JETRO, Atlanta Tel:(404) 681-0600	Fax:(404) 681-0713
Chicago	JETRO, Chicago Tel:(312) 832-6000	Fax:(312) 832-6066
New York	JETRO, New York Tel:(212) 819-7762	Fax:(212) 819-7781
Los Angeles	JETRO, Los Angeles Tel:(213) 624-8855	Fax:(213) 629-8127
Honolulu	JETRO, Los Angeles Tel:(808) 395-2314	Fax:(808) 396-7111
Salt Lake City	JETRO, Los Angeles Tel:(801) 585-3651	Fax:(801) 585-3351

## APPLICATION REQUEST FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

# JLS Foundation

## *Japanese Language Scholarship Foundation*

*February 1, 1999*

The JLS Foundation is currently accepting applications for the year 2000 scholarships. The JLS Foundation was established in 1998 to encourage teachers of the Japanese language as well as to generate international cultural exchange. The year 2000 scholarships, which will be presented on Saturday, September 4th, 1999 by Masashi Sada, will be the first awards. These awards will enable the awardees to experience residency in Japan. Each awardee will receive a \$5000 value scholarship which includes roundtrip airfare from the USA to Japan (coach class). Opportunities to participate in educational programs and activities in Japan may include:

- 1) The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa's short term training program. This is a two month intensive course for foreign teachers of the Japanese language. The Spring session (starts in mid-May) is designed for teachers engaged in primary and secondary education and those who teach younger children. The Winter session (starts in mid-January) is designed for teachers engaged in higher education and adult education. The Summer session (starts in the first week of May) is open to teachers of any level education.
- 2) Hokkaido International Foundation - Homestay and Study Program in Hakodate, Hokkaido Japan. The Japanese Language and Culture Program is an intensive eight week language course which begins in mid June. Academic credit may be possible for this program. Cultural courses such as calligraphy, flower arrangement, tea ceremony, and martial arts are also available.
- 3) Attend Masashi Sada's summer Peace concert in Nagasaki on August 6th.

Awardees will have the liberty of selecting other study opportunities, or a free schedule in Japan. They are not obliged to participate in these programs.

After their Japan trip, each scholarship awardee will be required to submit a report to the JLS Foundation about

their experience in Japan. Each awardee will also have the (optional) opportunity to attend the annual ATJ Conference to address the conference about their scholarship experience in Japan.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Non-native Japanese speaker. It is desirable that candidates have a proficiency in Japanese of at least Level 3 in the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (Nihongo Noryoku Shiken) or its equivalent (intermediate - mid level according to ACTFL proficiency guidelines); AND
- 2.a. In-Service Japanese language teacher in any school level; OR
- 2.b. Graduate student studying Japanese language education
3. Must be available for an oral interview in person or by phone.
4. Must be able to attend the award ceremony to be held on Saturday, September 4th, 1999 in Los Angeles. Award will be presented on stage by Masashi Sada at his concert at the Japan America Theatre. (Roundtrip airfare and hotel for 2 nights to attend this event will be sponsored by The Japan Foundation and Language Center.)

### **REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

1. Completed application form
2. Current resume
3. Official college transcript sent directly from the college to the JLS Foundation
4. Two letters of recommendation
5. One essay on "What I will do in Japan if I win this Scholarship." The essay must be two typewritten pages (8-1/2" x 11", double spaced) in English.

### **DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION**

The deadline for submission of the required documents is May 15, 1999, to the JLS Foundation, 6630 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood California 90028. Two winners will be selected - one from the Southern California area and one from anywhere in the USA. Selection will be announced by July 25, 1999.

RE M I N D I N G   Y O U   O F

# *The Nihongo Library Opens Every Third Saturday of the Month*

*Beginning April 17, 1999, the Nihongo Library will extend its hours by opening on the third Saturday of the month. While this will make the library more accessible for our current users, primarily teachers and educators of the Japanese language, we are also happy to welcome the general public to come and use the library during our new hours.*

*The Nihongo Library's collection is focused on Japanese language teaching which includes reference titles and other materials on Japan related subjects. Users may access both language and culture related books, periodicals, and audio-visual materials. According to our current policy, the Nihongo Library card may be issued to teachers involved in Japanese language education in an educational institution (permanent card); and people who are involved in any cultural activities and programs with Japan (temporary card.)*

OPEN HOURS:            Monday through Friday, 10:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.  
                                  Third Saturday of the month: 10:00a.m. - 3:00p.m.

*Please note that for Saturday visits, you may be asked to sign in and sign out at the security desk located on the first floor of the Water Garden's East Tower building (2425 Olympic Blvd.) A security person will assist you to the sixth floor where the library is located.*

HOLIDAYS:                February 15, March 22, May 2, May 31, July 5, July 20.  
                                  (Fall and Winter '99 holidays will be announced.)

*Borrowing Items may be borrowed for up to three (3) weeks. The maximum number of items which may be checked at any one time is:*

- 3 books (monographs, flash cards, realia, maps, slides)
- 3 periodicals (magazines and journals)
- 2 audio-visual materials (audio cassette tapes, video cassette tapes, laser discs and CDs)

*Circulation by mail: The library is able to circulate materials by mail to serve members outside of the Los Angeles area. Members may request items by mail, fax, phone or e-mail with their library card number.*

*For more information, please contact the library via phone (310) 449-0027, fax (310) 449-1127 or e-mail [nihongolib@jflalc.org](mailto:nihongolib@jflalc.org) The Library Web page can also be found at <http://www.jflalc.org/nihongolib/nihongoliblibrary.html>.*

RIMI YANG, EIICHI ITO, *Librarian*  
KEIKO MARTIN, *Library Assistant*

# ASA GI

NEWS ON ARTS & CULTURAL PROGRAMS AT THE JAPAN FOUNDATION IN LOS ANGELES

## THE DAYS OF DISCOVERY : JAPANESE GENRE FILMS

by Chris D.

*Chris D. (aka Chris Desjardans) is a self-educated scholar on Japanese cinema, with particular focus on Yakuza (gangster), and period movies. He has also been a singer/songwriter/producer on at least 18 albums for his own bands The Flesh Eaters, Divine Horseman and Stone-By-Stone. In 1991 he began working on YAKUZA EIGA: A complete encyclopedia of Japanese Gangster Films, for which he received The Japan Foundation Artist Fellowship in the fall of 1997. Chris D. now plans to publish this voluminous work by the end of the year 2000.*

*He helped American Cinematheque in Los Angeles organize a series of retrospectives. In 1996, Hideo Gosha: The Days of Snow and Blood, The Bloody Trail of Spaghetti Westerns; in 1997, Outlaw Masters of Japanese Modern Filmmaking, and in 1998, The Wandering Gambler: The Films of Tai Kato.*

*He is currently a Co-Programmer and Shipping/Traffic Manager at American Cinematheque and is in preparation with Programming Manager Dennis Bartok for the Outlaw Series II, due out this coming May .*

*The series will be shown at the Cinematheque's newly opened franchise: the Egyptian Theater on Hollywood Boulevard. For the program and location information, please call American Cinematheque at 323-466-3456(FILM), at ex. 2.*

I HAVE BEEN INTERESTED in Japanese cinema since my college years in the early 1970s, but it wasn't until 1990 I really realized the scope, the variety, the very existence of thousands of films. Like many other American film students, I was introduced to Japanese film through the works of, first, Kurosawa, and later, such directors as Mizoguchi, Ozu, Oshima, Shinoda, Imamura, and Gosha. Seven very profoundly different directors. However, I had not been aware of the vast proliferation of Japanese motion pictures in a variety of genres.

Unfortunately, the academic and critical establishment has long looked down their noses at genre films. There were some exceptions such as Andrew Sarris and Japanese critic, Tadao Sato. But it wasn't until the last decade that a growing number of film scholars and critics have actually started to take genre films seriously.

Late in 1989, I drove down to Little Tokyo in Los Angeles in search of video stores featuring Japanese films unreleased here in the U.S. in subtitled form. Specifically, I was trying to find some critically respected horror films such as Shiro Toyoda's YOTSUYA K Aidan (*Yotsu-ya Ghost Story aka Illusion of Blood*) (1965), Satsuo Yamamoto's BOTAN-DORO (*Ghost story of Peonies and Stone Lanterns*) (1967), Nobuo Nakagawa's JIGOKU (*Hell*) (1961) and the two jidai-geki/chanbara film series KOZURE OKAMI (*Lone Wolf and Cub*) with Tomisaburo Wakayama and NEMURI KYOSHIRO (*aka Sleepy Eyes of Death*) with Raizo Ichikawa. Ultimately, I was looking for any *jidai-geki* not directed by Kurosawa or Mizoguchi (which were readily available elsewhere) and any Japanese horror film from the 1960s. I was largely frustrated in my mission.

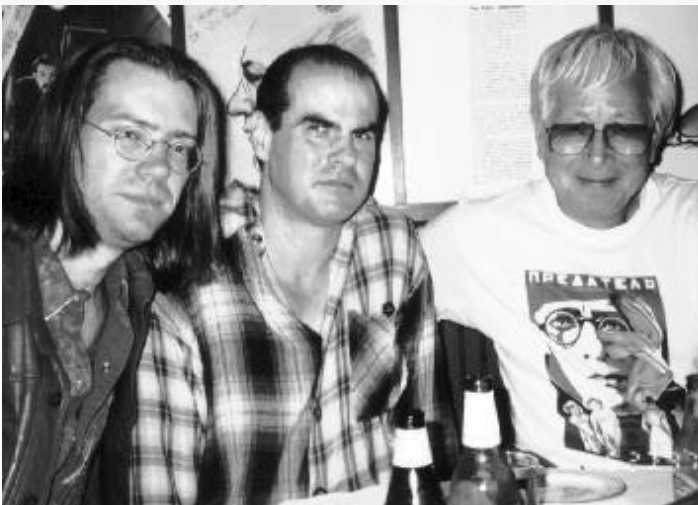
One thing I did discover was an amazing selection of *yakuza* (Japanese gangster) pictures from the 1960s-1970s period

There were movies from both types of *yakuza eiga* — the *ninkyō* (chivalrous) and the *jitsuroku* (true document). I rented a few on the sole basis of the astonishing video box art. I was stunned. Despite not being able to understand Japanese, I was mesmerized.

There was a certain intangible feeling in all of the films that hooked me unlike anything else. The only other films that could compare were *jidai-geki/chanbara* (samurai swordplay) opuses - also Japanese in origin.

Whether featuring the humble, noble outlaw (*ninkyō*) or the more contemporary, over-the-top, rage-filled losers unable to fit in even with other gangsters (*jitsuroku*), the *yakuza* film has a mythic, tall tale quality distilled through a transcendental nihilism and a set of formulas so rigid it all but confounds rational analysis. Director/screenwriter, Paul Schrader's comment on *yakuza* films: "The art of the genre occurs within its structures. Only when one understands that icons are supposed to be two dimensional does the study of their shape and form become interesting." is most appropriate.

It is fascinating to me that these films became so popular in 1960s Japan. Literally hundreds and hundreds were spawned before finally slowing down circa 1976. Why were they so popular? What collective chord did they strike in the Japanese — particularly the young Japanese male — psyche? Why do the films, even the more mediocre efforts, exercise such a profound charisma upon the viewer? Why do most of the *yakuza* films produced since 1985 not possess that same magic? I wished to at least attempt to answer these questions when I began writing my book, **YAKUZA EIGA: An Encyclopedia of Japanese Gangster Films 1956-1980**.



Chris D. (center) with director Kinji Fukasaku (*Battles Without Humanities*) and Dennis Bartok of *American Cinematheque*, during the *Outlaw Masters Series I of Modern Japanese Filmmaking series in Hollywood* summer 1997

I also wanted to address such issues as movie *yakuza* vs. real-life *yakuza*, the social, cultural and political ramifications of the genre, similarities to other tall tale genres such as American film noir, Italian spaghetti westerns and American black action films.

I took two semesters of Japanese language at UCLA Extension in 1991-1992. Although I'm still unable to speak more than a few words, I am able to translate film credits, recognize the names of hundreds of actors, actresses, directors, screenwriters, cinematographers and music score composers, pick out many film titles and key words, recognize from a synopsis/review (in Japanese) whether a film is *yakuza*, *jidai-geki*, home drama, comedy, etc., I understand stroke count in kanji and can use a Japanese-English kanji dictionary with increasing rapidity. I can romanize hiragana and katakana. All through the constant perusal of Japanese film, books on film and film journals (specifically KINEJUN 1950-1980 which is available in the USC Cinema/Television reference library).

When I first began work on the book I had no idea it would develop into such a massive undertaking. As it stands now with 95 % of the text completed, it runs approximately 500 pages. And that's before illustrations. I originally wanted to include a photo still or poster reproduction for every entry — something which is just not possible. Nevertheless there will be an abundance of pictorial material. It was to this end that I journeyed to Japan in the Fall of 1997 on a Japan Foundation fellowship grant, staying in Tokyo for two months collecting movie posters, photo books and photo stills that I can use in illustrating the encyclopedia. Although stills were hard to come by, I was very gratified to find an immense selection of *yakuza eiga* posters from 1960s-1970s era. That time was a real Golden Age all over the world for the now largely extinct painted film poster. Japanese movie studios, especially, employed a large contingent of unsung master illustrators during this period.

I believe that upon completion this book on *yakuza eiga* (which will also include such *jidaigeiki yakuza* as the Zatoichi film series and Jirocho film series) will be the most exhaustive work ever written on the subject in either English or Japanese. It is my hope and my goal that film enthusiasts, both the younger Japanese and the non-Japanese westerner, will rediscover what is truly one of the most lushly fertile areas of genre film — *yakuza eiga*. I hope to eventually do the same with a book on Japanese *jidai-geki/chanbara*.

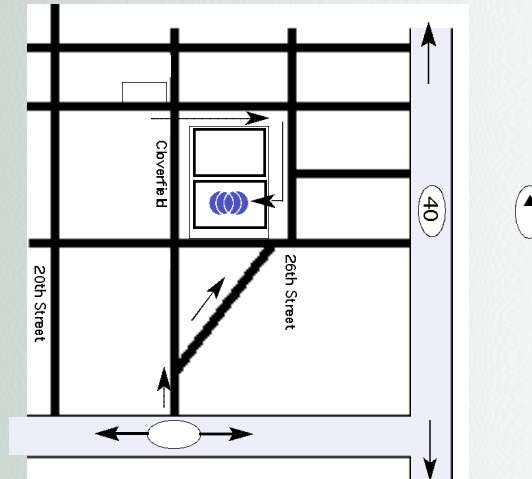
Japan is the only other country in the world that possesses a film legacy as old, as prolific in quantity and quality, as rich in diversity as the United States. I feel it is time for the rest of the world to realize it

# BREEZE

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*Voice mail is engaged after 5:30 in the afternoon until 9:00 in the morning. Telephone and fax number is the same for all staff.*

*The Japan Foundation & Language Center in Los Angeles announces the departure of Mr. Alan Kita, Program Associate on Arts & Culture Programs, as of February, 1999 and Ms. Naomi Iino, Assistant to the Director, as of March, 1999. The Foundation is grateful for Mr. Kita's service for the past six and a half years and for Ms. Iino's one year. We offer them best wishes for their future. As of April, the Foundation welcomes Ms. Naoko Watanabe, in the capacity of Program Associate. Ms. Watanabe has had a variety of successful experiences in international programs in the U.S. She will oversee the LA office's programs activities, with particular focus on arts and culture.*



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