The Japan Foundation conducts a global survey every three years in order to gather data on the state of Japanese language education abroad. This report is a collection of the U.S. data gathered by the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles in 2015 and 2016. I encourage you to purchase the official book of global data and analyses, available on the main website of the Japan Foundation Tokyo Headquarters, jpf.go.jp.

Director Hideki Hara
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MAIN SURVEY
DESCRIPTION

Objective

To understand the present condition of Japanese language education in the United States.

Purpose

• Use the data for needs analyses: decide grant allocations, create new support programs
• Give legitimacy to Japanese language teaching

Survey Target

Organizations which conduct Japanese education in the United States, including primary, secondary, higher education, and non-academic institutions.

• 50 states + Washington D.C.
• U.S. Navy, Marine, and Army bases in Japan

Definitions

• Primary: elementary schools
• Secondary: middle and high schools
• Higher Education: universities
• Non-Academic: language schools, preschools, etc

Survey subjects do not include the following:

• Organizations which do not physically exist
• Schools for children of Japanese nationals residing overseas
  • Some of these schools offer classes of Japanese as a second language; Only these classes are included
• Broadcasting stations and websites which provide Japanese-language education for an unspecified large number of people
• Very short, hands-on Japanese activities/experiences
Survey Period
September 2015 to March 2016

Survey Method
• By online questionnaire
• By phone, entered into the online questionnaire (Minimal)

Cooperating Organizations
• Japanese Language Teachers’ Associations
• Japan Embassy and Consulates
• Various State Departments

Survey return rate: 78%
(number of surveys returned / number of institutions we believe teach Japanese)
• Number of questionnaires returned: 1,462 institutions
• Number of non-responders: 378 institutions
• Declined to be surveyed: 31 institutions

"We have never taught/no longer teach Japanese"
= 250 institutions contacted

Survey Universe

Institutions contacted: 2,121

"We no longer teach/never taught Japanese": 250

Non-responders: 378

Declined to be surveyed: 31

Institutions submitted surveys: 1,462
IN THE PAST 40 YEARS, LEARNERS, TEACHERS, AND JAPANESE-TEACHING INSTITUTIONS HAVE INCREASED.

HOWEVER, SINCE 2012 JAPANESE-TEACHING INSTITUTIONS HAVE EXPERIENCED NO GROWTH AND JAPANESE TEACHER NUMBERS HAVE DECLINED.
SINCE 2003, THERE HAS BEEN A 22% OVERALL INCREASE OF LEARNERS.

2006 SAW A 34% DECREASE IN K-12 LEARNERS.
The top five states share 49% of all learners.

- **Washington**: 11,048
- **Hawaii**: 16,096
- **Michigan**: 6,642
- **New York**: 8,860
- **California**: 41,462

The east and west coast states reported the highest numbers of learners.
WHETHER LEARNERS INCREASED OR DECREASED SINCE 2012 VARIED WIDELY BY STATE, BUT WEST COAST STATES ALL EXPERIENCED GROWTH.
"INTEREST IN JAPANESE POP CULTURE" HAS BECOME THE MOST POPULAR REASON TO STUDY JAPANESE FOR LEARNERS.

FOR PRIMARY AND NON-ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, "JAPANESE IS THE FAMILY LANGUAGE" RANKED HIGH.
MORE THAN A THIRD OF ALL INSTITUTIONS REPORTED AN INCREASE IN JAPANESE ENROLLMENT COMPARED TO THREE YEARS AGO.

Q: Has there been any change in the number of Japanese-language learners at your institution (or department) compared with three years ago? Select: Enrollment has increased; Enrollment has remained the same; Enrollment has decreased.

Q: Has there been any change in the number of Japanese-language learners at your institution (or department) compared with three years ago? Select: Enrollment has increased; Enrollment has remained the same; Enrollment has decreased.
FACTORS WHICH CAUSED AN INCREASE IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE LEARNERS (FREE-WRITTEN RESPONSES)

\[ n = 273 \text{ institutions} \]

- Advocacy/Recruitment efforts: 12%
- Increasing interest in Japan/Japanese culture/lang: 16%
- Japanese teacher(s)/program is excellent: 12%
- Local connections with Japanese businesses: 2%
- Japanese program started recently: 4%
- Institution/District/State issue (unrelated to Japanese): 5%
- Other: 19%
- College/HS requirements: 2%
- I don't know: 3%
- Increase in Asian exchange students: 7%
- Increase in Japanese courses/teachers: 8%
- Increase of student population: 6%

FACTORS WHICH CAUSED A DECREASE IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE LEARNERS (FREE-WRITTEN RESPONSES)

\[ n = 176 \text{ institutions} \]

- Japanese is too difficult: 8%
- Institutional/district/state issue (unrelated to Japanese): 8%
- Decrease in school population: 7%
- Decreasing interest in Japan/culture/lang: 5%
- Graduation/college entrance requires fewer world language credits: 5%
- Competition with another institution/language: 6%
- Other: 19%
- Lack of administrative support: 9%
- Lack of Japanese teachers/teacher retention: 3%
- Poor teaching practices: 3%
- Decrease in Japanese courses/teachers: 3%
- Japanese program will close: 5%
- Japan's economic struggles: 4%
- Budget cuts: 7%
Q: Which of the following statements best describes the prospects of enrollment in the Japanese language programs at your institution in three years’ time? Select: Enrollment is likely to increase; Enrollment is likely to stay the same; Enrollment is likely to decrease; Do not know.
MORE THAN 75% OF JAPANESE LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN AMERICA ARE NATIVE SPEAKERS OF JAPANESE, EXCEPT IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS WHERE THE RATIO IS MORE EVENLY SPLIT.

THE RATIO OF NATIVE-SPEAKING TEACHERS AND NON-NATIVE-SPEAKING TEACHERS IS ALMOST THE EXACT OPPOSITE FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD.
65 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS STATED THAT THEY TRAIN JAPANESE TEACHERS.

Q: Does your institution/department offer a teacher development program in Japanese language education?

n = 613 institutions
25% of institutions think they don’t have enough teachers for the number of students enrolled

- Not enough
- Adequate
- Too many
- Do not know

n = 1,436 institutions

29% think that there are not enough teaching resources available for the number of students enrolled

- Not enough
- Generally enough
- Enough
- Do not know

n = 1,428 institutions
SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEY 1
DESCRIPTION
米国日本語教育機関追加調査2015

Objective
To further understand the present condition of Japanese language education in the United States.

Purpose
• Ask further questions that directly relate to education issues in America, as opposed to only global issues.

Target
• Japanese-teaching institutions which also answered the Main Survey.

Response Rate
• Number of questionnaires returned: 664 institutions (45% of institutions which filled out the Main Survey)
THE MOST COMMONLY-USED TEXTBOOKS ARE *GENKI* AND *ADVENTURES IN JAPANESE*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genki</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventures in Japanese</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We do not follow a textbook regularly</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yokoso</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobira</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A textbook our staff created</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakama</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Integrated Approach to...</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese for Busy People</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ima!</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minna no Nihongo</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese for Young People</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marugoto</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doraemon No Dokodemo Nihongo</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kisetsu</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yasashii Nihongo</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese: The Spoken Language</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirai</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obento</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning (Intermediate) Japanese:...</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 659 institutions

Q: Which textbooks are your teachers mainly using to teach Japanese? [multiple response]
ALMOST ALL JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS MAKE THEIR OWN TEACHING MATERIALS.

Q: What other materials are your teachers using to teach Japanese? [multiple response]
88% of middle and high schools require their Japanese teachers to have a teachers’ license, credential, or certification.

- Yes
- No
- Some positions require one
- I don't know

Q: Does your institution require that its Japanese language teachers have a teachers’ certification/license/credential?

88% of middle and high schools base their curriculum on standards of language proficiency, but only 56% of colleges and universities do.

Q: Does your institution base your Japanese curriculum on any standards of language proficiency?
10% of surveyed institutions offer an online Japanese course of some kind. More than half of them are higher ed.

More than 40% of those institutions offer a hybrid course during which the instructor is sometimes in the room.

A hybrid/blended online course: There is an instructor who is sometimes in the room, and sometimes not.

A completely online course: There is an instructor, but he/she is NEVER in the room with the student(s) [ex: distance learning].

A completely online course: There is NO instructor at all [ex: Rosetta Stone].

Q: What kind of online course(s) are your students using?
AP DATA: HIGH SCHOOLS

Does your high school proctor the AP Japanese exam?
- Yes, every year: 35%
- Yes, sometimes: 12%
- No: 53%

Does your high school offer an AP Japanese course?
- Yes: 37%
- No: 63%

n= 288 institutions

INSUFFICIENT ENROLLMENT IN INTERMEDIATE COURSES IS THE MOST COMMON OBSTACLE TO OPENING AN AP JAPANESE COURSE

- Insufficient enrollment in intermediate courses
- Insufficient budget to open a new course
- Insufficient budget for teacher AP training
- Insufficient student/parent interest
- Teacher(s)/admin are not familiar with the AP exam
- Teacher(s)/admin think AP course takes too much time
- Not enough universities accept AP Japanese scores
- Cannot find a qualified teacher to teach AP Japanese

Popular “Other” answers:
- We are IB
- We do not offer enough years of study
- Our HS students get college credit directly

n= 178 institutions

Q: What is preventing you from offering an AP Japanese course?
AP DATA: HIGHER EDUCATION

Does your university accept AP Japanese test scores as college credit?

Yes 50%  
No 50%

n= 259 institutions

Why not?

I don't know  
Other  
Admin/profs are unfamiliar with the AP Japanese exam  
We don't give college credit for ANY AP exams  
AP Japanese students can't perform well enough in intermediate classes

Popular “Other” answers:  
• We give our own placement test  
• Not enough students took AP

n= 123 institutions
SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEY 2: SCHOOLS WHICH DISCONTINUED JAPANESE

- Not enough student interest/enrollment
- School budget is insufficient
- Other
- Not enough community interest
- Can't find a qualified teacher
- Admin is unaware of value of learning Japanese

*Note: This short survey was only distributed to institutions which responded, “We no longer teach Japanese.”

n= 49 institutions
This report was written by Amanda Rollins, Program Coordinator for Japanese language education programs at the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles.

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