Can Japanese Pop Culture Enthusiasts be Considered as Potential Japanese Language Learners?

KONDO Yumiko, MURANAKA Masako

In order to understand whether Japanese pop(or "J-pop")culture enthusiasts will become Japanese language learners, this paper considers the relationship between interest in J-pop culture and the interest in learning Japanese by focusing on individuals with no prior Japanese language learning experience("non-learners").

Specifically, a survey was carried out targeting 83 visitors to Japanese culture-related businesses at the Japan Cultural Institute in Paris. Spearman's rank-correlation coefficient was used to analyze the strength of interest in J-pop culture, Japanese language learning and learning objectives among on-learners.

Results showed that non-learners with a strong interest in J-pop culture tended to have a strong interest in learning Japanese. In addition, learning objectives set by these non-learners leaned toward contents related to J-pop culture.

Though the results of this study support the assumption that targeting those with a strong interest in J-pop culture is effective in popularizing Japanese, the problem of how to best support continued learning of the language remains unsolved.

Analysis of Can-do Statements Indicating Language Proficiency : Towards the Development of Guidelines to Create JF Can-do

SHIOZAWA Maki, SEKIJI Eri, SHIMADA Noriko

In developing the JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education, The Japan Foundation (below, "the Foundation") is creating a website called "Minna no Can-do Website" as a framework for Japanese-language proficiency, with the purpose of supporting Japanese-language education practices such as course development and student assessment. This website will provide CEFR's 493 illustrative descriptors,as well as new illustrative descriptors created by the Foundation that are easier to use in Japanese-language classrooms. This report focuses on the results of an analysis of CEFR's Common Reference Levels and the illustrative descriptors at each level,which the Foundation conducted to better understand the characteristics of each level and the differences across levels. By breaking down and analyzing CEFR's illustrative descriptors into four components [condition], [topic/setting], [object] and [action], it was possible to make considerations about a guideline for creating new illustrative descriptors.

Designing a Japanese-Language Program for Care Giver Candidates from Indonesia : Connections between Specialized Japanese Language Education for Medical, Nursing and Care Giving Fields and the Japanese Language Education Policy of The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai

NOBORIZATO Tamiko, ISHII Yoko, IMAI Hisae, KURIHARA Yukinori

In August 2008, 208 Indonesian nurse and care giver candidates came to Japan under the Japan-Indonesia Economic Partnership Agreement signed in 2007, with 56 of the care giver candidates attending "The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai"("KC")for Japanese language education.

As a result of looking into previous cases and studies, we found that no Japanese language programs had ever been offered for absolute beginners intending to work for approximately six months as care workers. Due to this situation, we designed a language program using KC's language education policies, know-how, and, moreover, "Nihongo de Care-navi, " its data base released in 2007.

This paper will focus on the Japanese-language education for Indonesian care worker candidates conducted at KC, with a particular emphasis on "Specialized Japanese for Beginners, " while reporting the results and problems of our program design and offering recommendations on specialized Japanese-language education for the care giving field.

Teaching Non-Native Japanese-Language Teachers How to Train Interpreters

NAGASAKA Miaki

This paper reports on an "Introduction to Interpreter Training" course for non-native Japanese language teachers. During class, instructor tried out monolingual exercises encountered in interpretation(rephrasing Japanese into Japanese), and participants had talked about the goals and advantages of the exercises. They completed exercises in Japanese aimed at building skills in listening comprehension, memorizing, self-expression, summarizing and strategies for interpreting. In a questionnaire given at the end of the course, participants said they felt more confident about teaching interpreting skills and Japanese courses in their home countries. Additionally, all participants felt their Japanese language abilities had improved despite the short period of time. And though abilities varied among the teachers, all participated well in group exercises and formed good relationships. The results obtained from the course demonstrate that interpreter training skills can and should be addressed in training programs for non-native Japanese language teachers through experiential, analytical and discussion-based courses.

The Japanese Exchange Student Dispatch Program for Korean Secondary Education Schools : An attempt to Dispatching Japanese Native Speakers from The Japan Foundation, Seoul

OSADA Kanako, NAKAZAWA Noriko, KITAMURA Takeshi, SOGO Shunsuke

In 2007 and 2008, The Japan Foundation, Seoul implemented a dispatch program in which Japanese exchange students participate in Japanese language classes at Korean secondary education schools. (This program was extended to approximately 50 schools with 64 exchange students dispatched. Around 8,000 students participated in Japanese language classes attended by exchange students.)This paper reports on administrative procedures and results of the program. Exchange students attended classes as guests, with the results being a livelier classroom atmosphere and increased student motivation and interest in Japan. The survey results from Korean students and the exchange students were positive overall. Additionally, in class reports, instructors told us that through thinking about and conducting classes in which exchange students participated and leant their cooperation, it gave instructors an opportunity to reconsider communication-oriented classes and rethink their typical classes. We also touch on issues encountered during the program and ways to handle them such as how exchange students who are inexperienced at teaching can participate and lend cooperation. This program was very well received by participants and we recommend it as a prototype for native speaker participation in Japanese language classrooms overseas.

Criteria Development for "The Japanese Speech Contest of Far East Russia and East Siberia"

NARITA Takahiro, IKARI Hidemi, MORIMOTO Yukako, SAKAMOTO Yuko

This paper reports on the development of new criteria for "The Japanese Speech Contest of Far East Russia and East Siberia" as well as the trial results. The Japanese Speech Contest for university students is alternated annually between Vladivostok, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk and Khabarovsk thanks to a grant from The Japan Foundation. Since the criteria used varied according to the venue and were also ambiguous, the development of common criteria became a necessity. Completion of common criteria had the goal of providing a tool for highly reliable evaluation, but additionally contributed to assisting in learning and instruction. The trial results showed that the new criteria are highly reliable when the appropriate procedures are followed. However, a further qualitative assessment of the new criteria is still needed in order to corroborate the findings.

Analysis of "Grammar" Questions in the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test : The Relation between the Way to Ask "verb + TEIRU" Questions and the Degree of Difficulty

KUWANA Shota, ONOZAWA Yoshie, KITAMURA Naoko

If both targets and distractors use a grammatical item according to the corresponding level when questions for The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test(JLPT)"Grammar" section are set, it doesn't necessarily mean that the question will always correspond to the level. For instance, "verb + TEIRU" is assumed to be a grammatical item for Level 4 according to the "Standard for setting questions" in JLPT's "Grammar" section. However, when analysis data over the last 23 years for "verb + TEIRU" was referred to, it became obvious that questions were difficult for not only Level 4 but even for Level 3. After carefully analyzing this situation, it is clear that there is an element involved that raises the degree of difficulty at each level. Specifically, when combined with "SHIKA, " questions are difficult for Level 4 ; when asking questions combined with "TEARU, " "TEOKU, " intransitive verbs, transitive verbs, "MADA, " "GARU" and "TAGARU, " questions are even difficult for Level 3. In this way, the degree of difficulty differs depending on the way a question is asked even for Level 4 grammatical items. Test takers' ability should be able to be measured accurately by keeping in mind both the level setting for individual grammatical items as well as the level setting for the way questions are asked.

Development of Resources for Secondary Learners to Read about Life and Culture in Japan : "CHIKARA for READING, " a Japanese Language Resource for Secondary Learners in the UK

KIJIMA Hiromi

This paper reports on "CHIKARA for READING, " part of the "CHIKARA" Japanese resources based on the syllabus for the GCSE examinations in the UK. "CHIKARA for READING" was developed to teach basic facts about life and culture in Japan through reading.

"CHIKARA for READING" contains seven subtopics such as "A Homestay" and "Japanese Celebrations. " Besides the main text, audio to it and comprehension questions, subtopics include kanji & vocabulary exercises, structure exercises, extended tasks, and more. In order to make reading activities more appropriate for beginning level students, the main texts consist of small paragraphs of independent contents which are related to the theme. Also, structure exercises are written using the context of the main text so that the learners can use or develop what they learned. This paper reports on the development process of "CHIKARA for READING" as well as the content and structure.

An Attempt at Designing a Learning Environment that Promotes Autonomous and Collaborative Learning through Peer Learning : The "Japanese Conversation Club, " Exchange Activities between Japanese Language Learners and Japanese Residents in Azerbaijan

TATSUMA Satoko

This paper reports on exchange activities over a 13-month period between the students of the Department of Japanese Language in Baku State University and Japanese residents in Azerbaijan.

In an overseas environment, it is difficult for Japanese learners to establish clear goals for continuous learning since there are no specific social or cultural needs for the language. In such an environment, directionless learners find meaning in their study of Japanese through viewing it as self-development or mental growth. However, teachers confront difficulties in designing a learning environment without clear ideas for their students' development or growth.

This study analyzes the learning environment of Japanese language learners at Baku State University and identifies the trends of the beliefs learners have in language learning. It also presents a design example for a learning environment that supports the social contextualization of teaching Japanese language in foreign countries, especially in Azerbaijan.