

[Summary]

Research on Second Language Teacher Education

— With a Focus on In-Service Non-Native Language Teachers —

YOKOYAMA Noriko

The objective of this article is to delineate the “state of the art” of second language teacher education through a review of recent research. This review focuses on in-service non-native language teachers in an attempt for the Japan Foundation to provide better support for Japanese language education overseas. First, the article overviews current perspectives on the global field of second language teacher education. Second, it reviews contents and methods of the research in this field. Third, it discusses the particular research on in-service non-native language teachers. The article concludes with evaluation of the articles having been published in this *Nihongo Kokusai Center Kiyō*, which forms a considerable part of the research in this field of non-native language teacher education.

The Change of Awareness of Non-Native Teachers of Japanese in the Graduate Program

— Through the Analysis of Students’ Journals —

KITANI Naoyuki, YANASHIMA Fumie

Japanese-Language Institute provides a graduate program (Master’s course) for non-native teachers of Japanese in liaison with two other institutes in order to foster future leaders of Japanese language educational communities in their own countries.

In this paper, the change of awareness of four students, who did classroom research, was examined through analyzing their journals. Three most common themes shown in their comments were:

- (1) Approach toward their research
- (2) Difficulties and importance of the collaborative activities
- (3) Changes of their teaching and learning beliefs

The analysis showed that their change of awareness occurred beyond anticipation. At the same time, the diversity of the changes was also apparently found. These findings coincide with the approach of the teacher education that has begun to garner attention recently. Based on the philosophy that teacher development can be realized in their own contexts, we would like to consider how to encourage student self-reflection and awareness.

How L2 Learners Read a Text

— Activating Knowledge and Forming Consistency in Reading Comprehension —

OSUMI Atsuko

Schema Theory has influenced how to teach reading comprehension for L2 learners, and a variety of means to activate learner knowledge have been attempted in classroom reading activities. On the other hand, there have been arguments about Schema Theory. For example, there are some doubts about how a schema is initiated and whether the schema can be flexible once it is formed.

In this research, 20 JSL learners were requested to read a rewritten simplified version of “Chumon no Oiryoriten” by Kenji Miyazawa. The analysis is based on the data obtained from their memos and their responses in the follow-up interview. The results show that the readers with reading difficulty adjust their comprehension each time a cue phrase or expression appears and fail to form a story consistency.

In reference to reading process, Kintsch (1995) states that the proposition in the text and the previously acquired knowledge such as schema are integrated into a consistent unified whole. This, along with the research results, indicates that forming consistency as well as activating knowledge such as schema is crucial in the process of reading comprehension.

Three Viewpoints for Creating Japanese Learning Materials

— Application of Instructional Design, Attention to Learning Process, Task Analysis —

SHIMADA Noriko, SHIBAHARA Tomoyo

We propose three perspectives for creating Japanese language learning materials based on the present state of materials creation at the The Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute Urawa.

First of all we propose to use concrete methods called “clarification of a study target”, “learning task analysis”, and “instructional strategy” based on the instructional design theory of an educational technology in addition to material creation procedures that have been used to date in Japanese language education.

Next, we follow this up with a reconsideration of how to create materials outlining the learning process based on second language research from the point of view that it is important to consider how to integrate the situation of the learning process.

Finally, we propose a simplification of the indices proposed by Littlejohn (1998) that analyses existing Japanese learning materials. These indices can make it easier to understand the relationship and layout of learning activities as an index for designing classroom activities.

The Process of Setting Research Questions in JSL Research by Non-Native In-Service Japanese Language Teachers

— A Case Study of the In-Service Japanese Teacher Master Course of the Beijing Center of Japanese Studies —

SHINOZAKI Setsuko, HAMADA Mari

The present paper examined how the non-native in-service Japanese language teacher graduate students of the Beijing Center of Japanese Studies set their research question for the master thesis. The concept of ‘research cognition’ was introduced and the interview with the students was examined from the viewpoint of research cognition.

The result endorsed the appropriateness of the goal of the course, “Enhancing non-native teachers who have little experience or knowledge in JSL research area, to set a research question closely related to their teaching experience by doing various tasks, empirical and non-empirical, given during the course, and to make the research questions more specific by engaging in bibliographical survey and supervision”.

It also showed that some of the students were facing difficulties in the process of specifying their research questions. The major causes of the difficulties were that their prior image of the master thesis was different from reality, and failure in transferring their problems in teaching experience into research questions. The paper also presented an action plan for course improvement.

Beliefs about Language Learning of Japanese-Language Learners in the Philippines

— From the Survey of Japanese-Language Learners at the University of the Philippines —

KATAGIRI Junji

This paper shows the nature of Japanese-language learner beliefs in the Philippines from a survey conducted at the University of the Philippines by using the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). The BALLI consists of seven areas; 1) the role of the teacher, 2) preference of teaching methods and classroom activities, 3) the nature of language learning, 4) learning Japanese characters, 5) communicative orientation, 6) language learning and Japanese, 7) language learning and culture. Analysis of the results and comparisons with precedent researches suggests that “repetition and practice are important” is widely believed among the learners across cultures. As to the nature of Filipino learners, “grammar is important”, “spending one hour a day learning for 1-2 years enables them to speak the language very well”, and “language is interrelated with culture” are well-supported beliefs. Additionally there is a preference for various classroom activities and an intolerance of errors. The longer-period learners have a more positive attitude towards language learning.

An Interim Report of Supporting Program for Developing Network of Japanese Language Teachers and Institutions in Sumatera, Indonesia

MATSUMOTO Koji

This is an interim report of the supporting program for developing (or improving) the network of Japanese language teachers and institutions in Sumatera, Indonesia by the author who was sent as an adviser on Japanese language teaching from the Japan Foundation.

In his opinion, the network of Japanese language teaching and institutions is not only simply connections of Japanese language teachers and institutions, but also it means how the attendants are arranged and involved each other in it. To actualize this definition of the network in the Sumatera Area, he is trying to improve the already existing groups or institutions by using the idea of Haruhara (1992)'s "networking strategies". He considers that the problems of the already existing groups or institutions are in their stagnation. To improve the situations (to activate these groups or institutions) he is trying to put various realistic strategies into practice in many ways.

The Possible Outcome of Introducing Native Japanese Speakers into Secondary Schools in South Korea

SAWABE Yuko, KIM Hoegyem

This paper details the possible outcome of introducing native Japanese speakers into secondary schools in South Korea.

Native speakers are introduced into lessons as teachers, guests, and Internet partners. In 2003, a Japanese teacher of the Japan Foundation, Seoul taught together with a Korean teacher at a high school.

As a result of this one year team teaching exercise, it has been suggested that the introduction of native Japanese speakers could

- 1) Raise the Japanese communication competence of Korean students.
- 2) Increase teacher and student awareness of cultural similarities and differences that exist between Japan and Korea.

One of the principals of "the 7th curriculum" is "educating students to understand different cultures and to contribute to international exchange." The introduction of native speakers would help this to be practiced in an effective way. It is hoped that more Korean teachers will understand the purpose and the significance of introducing native speakers. Consequently, both Japanese and Koreans respect each other's culture.

An Approach Combining Lectures and Lesson Demonstrations in Teaching Methodology Class in Multi-National Teacher Training Programs

— Focusing on ‘Teaching Japanese Scripts and Vocabulary’ —

KIDA Mari, FURUKAWA Yoshiko

When designing the curriculum for the teaching methodology class of the Short-Term Courses for multi-national Japanese language teachers, we need to give special consideration to the diversity of participant-teacher needs, readiness and objectives. This paper reports a practice of teaching methodology class for teachers who are proficient in the Japanese language. This class includes lectures on teaching language skills and other related topics. Lectures in the first half of the class set its goal of raising awareness of association between classroom activities / teaching materials and background theories. We focus on a lecture, ‘Teaching Japanese Script and Vocabulary’, as an example, and report its contents and procedures and evaluation of this lesson from participant-teachers. Moreover, one lesson demonstration and teacher’s reflection notes are examined to see how a teacher intakes new pedagogical knowledge and applies it into their teaching context, and how the class works to promote the teacher’s reflection on their teaching practice.

A Pre-Class Meeting Focusing on Grammar by Incorporating Error Analysis

— Drawing on the Strength from Both Japanese and Malaysian Teachers in Teachers’ Training —

MORI Michiyo, TODA Toshiko, TAMURA Yumie

During session 2002/2003, teachers of Japanese Language at Ambang Asuhan Jepun, University of Malaya have consolidated an effort to collect samples of ungrammatical sentences made by Intermediate Level students. These samples are reproduced for error analysis during the weekly pre-class preparatory discussion.

The driving force behind this concerted discussion is to improve teaching through a close analysis of student weaknesses. Not only have we achieved this purpose, we have also observed that in these meetings, both the Japanese and Malaysian teachers have established a conducive atmosphere which draws on one another’s strength to foster effective teaching experience.

Enclosed is an exercise introduced to facilitate effective Japanese language teacher training. It is an approach which differs from the conventional methods; whereby non-native teachers are taught by native teachers. It is hoped that this new approach will pave the way toward an ideal means for the training of teachers overseas.

A Report on the Use of Technical Japanese Subjects for the Japanese-Language Program for Librarians

NOBORIZATO Tamiko, KAMEI Motoko

This report overviews the history of the Japanese-Language Program for Librarians and the introduction of some new technical Japanese subjects.

We developed four new subjects, “Vocabulary for Librarians”, “Conversation for Librarians”, “Reading for Librarians” and “Japanese Culture and Society”, and completed associated teaching materials. As a result, there has been a three-fold increase in teaching hours allocated to the new subjects.

Although the participant’s workload became heavier after the introduction of the new subjects, participants gave the new subjects a higher evaluation than had been given to the previous subjects. Possible reasons for the increased questionnaire score are as follows;

- ① Technical subjects were clearly subdivided and systematized.
- ② New textbooks and study materials were introduced in 2003.
- ③ Students were able to balance 1st and 2nd term workloads.

During 2004-2005, we hope to make the following changes;

- ① Establish a system by which teachers can evaluate participants’ progress in learning the content of the new subjects.
- ② Develop a listening subject for librarians.
- ③ Write a textbook which explains the Japanese library system.

Developing Evaluation Criteria for the Oral Communication Test for Basic Level Japanese-Language Program for Specialists

—For Foreign-Service Officers / Public Officials—

KUMANO Nanae, ISHII Yoko, KAMEI Motoko, TANAKA Tetsuya, IWAZAWA Kazuhiro, KURIHARA Yukinori

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai has developed an Oral Communication Test together with evaluation criteria for Foreign-Service Officers and Public Officials. The Japanese-Language programs for Foreign-Service Officers and for Public Officials focus on developing communication skills in their work. In this paper we consider how we can best assess oral communication skills by analyzing the 2002-2003 final oral test for Foreign-Service Officers and Public Officials.

Our analysis shows that;

- 1) even at the beginners’ level, it is possible to convey the contents of their special field by using high-level vocabularies in the basic sentence patterns and by making paragraphs with cohesive sentences.
- 2) key expressions to start and spread conversations are important to carry out their job duties.

Examining the results of the analysis we have revised the evaluation criteria of oral communication.

An Attempt to Interpret Japanese Grammar in Serialized Articles on a Newsletter for Non-Native Japanese Language Teachers

— After Writing the Series, “Approachable Japanese Grammar” of NIHONGO-KYŌIKU TSŪSHIN —

ARAKAWA Midori, KIYAMA Tomoko

We serialized articles named “Approachable Japanese Grammar” on NIHONGO-KYŌIKU TSŪSHIN, a newsletter for non-native Japanese language teachers (NNTs) for 3 years.

More than half of NNTs are presumably occupied with those at or under an intermediate level of competence. For them, reference books in Japanese are not approachable, obstructed by the language incompetence.

Our attempt was to serve them interpretative articles in simple Japanese, in a teachers-talk-like style, also with visual aids such as illustrations, etc..

Answers on questionnaires in 2003 tell us it attracted not only NNTs including those under intermediate level, but also native teachers as the readers.

Accepting difficulty to detour technical terms demanding vocabulary beyond intermediate level for its interpretation, we wish our attempt may suggest a way to make Japanese grammar more comprehensible for teaching and learning.

Producing Materials for Developing Organized Speech Skills

— What Have We Learned Out of Developing and Producing “Speech for Basic Level Japanese for Organized Oral Presentation of One’s Country, Culture, and Society” —

IZUMIMOTO Chiharu, UOZUMI Etsuko, KUMANO Nanae, HABUTO Sono, MIURA Takashi

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai has developed and published ‘Speech for Basic Level Japanese’ for teaching organized oral presentation.

This material guides the students through the process of speech making -recognition of story development→Q&A→confirmation of the story development→writing a speech manuscript→present a speech-, in order to bridge the gap between the student’s actual ability and the level of language required. The students can acquire needed vocabulary and expressions as well. In addition, the selected topics are those likely to meet their interests and social needs.

As a result of using the book at the Institute, we have recognized the four positive effects in users: 1) improvement of linguistic proficiency, 2) acquirement of new information about a given topic, 3) self-confidence in Japanese language use based on their satisfaction from achievement, and 4) building good relationships with classmates or a teacher through the course activities.

A Report on the “Ready Steady NihonGO!” Project

— Japanese Language Education at Primary Level in the U.K: from Research to Provision —

NAKAGOME Tatsuya, Kornelia ACHRAFIE

In December 2002, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) announced that ‘by 2010 all Primary School children will be entitled to learn a Foreign Language’ (National Languages Strategy for England). Developments in the introduction of languages are now thriving at the Primary Level throughout the country.

The Japan Foundation London Office, eager to be involved in the promotion of Foreign Languages, launched the ‘Ready Steady NihonGO! (RSN) Project in January 2003.

This paper reports on the findings from the first phase of the RSN project including ‘Japanese Studies at the Primary Level’, ‘Primary Japanese Language Education as experienced by Nottingham University PGCE Graduates’ and ‘Curricular Models in Primary Japanese Language Teaching’, and it further examines policies for the support of Primary Japanese Language Education. For the second phase of the project, the RSN Course, which will be team-taught by Primary teachers and Japanese volunteers, has been in the development stages since April 2004.