

# Japanese Language Education for Other Asians in Japan Today — As Seen and Considered from the Viewpoint of Cross-cultural Communication

Naoyuki HAGIWARA

## The Study and Research of Japanese by Foreigners in the Past

When we think seriously about Japanese language education for other Asians in Japan today, we find it necessary to go back into the distant past and see how in Japan or in Asia the Japanese language was studied by non-native speakers, and to investigate the circumstances in which Japanese was researched or studied by Asians and Westerners inside and outside Japan. We should concentrate on the Meiji era, when Japan first came to have a great influence in Asia, and continue down to the end of World War II.

First of all, we should touch upon the study of Japanese in Asian countries in the remote past. In the case of Japanese envoys to China in the Tung dynasty, the descendants of Chinese visitors to Japan accompanied them to serve as 'Yakugo,' or interpreters. In 1371, during the reign of Yoshimitsu Ashikaga, the third shōgun,

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Keywords: ①近來の対アジア人日本語教育の膨張と墮落 ②「民族の本体」を損なわれるアジア人親日家 ③アジア人留学生への単位取得上の特例措置 ④アジア人の日本語学習を促す別の実益 ⑤異文化間伝達と日本語の改善

Japan detached a delegation to the Ming dynasty, and thus the Chinese acutely felt the necessity of having interpreters for the first time. One hundred years later there were some sixty interpreters all over China, four of whom were for the Japanese language. Another factor was that *Wakō*, or Japanese pirates, coming down upon the coasts of Korea and China from the 13th to 16th century, created a need for the Ming dynasty to have specific information concerning Japan. The Chinese thus began to publish Japanese-Chinese dictionaries and books concerning Japan. In Korea as well, books on the Japanese language were published from the 15th to 17th century, of which the most conspicuous was *Shōkai-shingo*, or *Handy Commentary on New Words*, representing Japanese phonetic symbols in the Muro-machi Period by using Korean letters. This spread of Japanese in China and Korea, however, stopped suddenly just after the beginning of the seclusion of Japan in the 17th century.

On the other hand, some Portuguese drifted ashore on Tanegashima in 1543 and some missionaries, including Francis Xavier from Basque \* in Spain, visited Kagoshima in 1549, both of whom very energetically collected Japanese vocabulary from children and fishermen and soon went as far as to write Japanese language textbooks and grammar books for themselves, often based on Latin grammar. Silva's *Arta da Lingua Japanese* (1551), Kampinus' *Portuguese-Japanese Dictionary* (1551), Roderiguez's *Japanese Grammar* (1608), Juliad's *Japanese Grammar* (1632), *Japanese-Portuguese Dictionary* coedited by Jesuit missionaries (1603) and many other books on the Japanese language were published between 1500 and 1600. With the beginning of the seclusion of Japan, however, the study of Japanese by foreigners very rapidly fell into decay and only a few books were

produced, such as Kaempfer's *Records on Japanese* (1727), Oyaanguren Melchion's *Arte de la Langua Japona* (1738), Siebold's *An Epitome of the Japanese Language* (1826), Curtius' *Japanese Grammar* (1857) and Hoffmann's *Japanese Grammar* (1867) during the next two hundred years or so. When the seclusion of Japan came to an end, Western study of Japanese began to be revived at an astonishing rate. Goshikevich's *Wa-Ro Tsūgen Hikō, or Comparative Study of Japanese-Russian Communication* (1857), Pajes' *Japanese-French Dictionary* (1868), Opfitzmier's *Über Japanischen Dialekt* (1876), Vollar's *Demonstration of the Japanese Language's Belonging to Ural-Altai Family of Languages* (1857), and Aston's *Grammar of the Japanese Written Language* (1872), various works of Hepburn, Samson, Pearson et al, plus the famous Palmer's *Principle of Romanization* (1933), were published at successive intervals as the result of the energetic study of Japanese by Westerners.

What we must bear in mind is that behind present-day study of Japan or Japanese by Westerners in the West or in Japan lies this long and conspicuous history of their earlier studies and that also in China and Korea the study of Japanese was very widespread from the 15th century to the establishment of Tokugawa Government in the 17th century. However, study or research by Japanese of Western languages or the Chinese or Korean language was quite limited with the single exception of Genpaku Sugita's *Rangaku Kotohajime, or An Introduction to the Study of Things Dutch*. In the same way, while many Asians today are studying Japanese very hard in their home countries or in Japan, there are still very few Japanese studying Asian languages outside of those who do belong to some particular course of study in colleges or universities.

(\* A Japanese professor, Yūzo Wada, once asserted that one of the possible reasons why Francis Xavier became so proficient in Japanese very soon after his landing in Japan was because the syntax of the language of the Basque district, where he was born and brought up, had much in common with that of Japanese.)

### Reformation of Traditional Japanese\* and Japanese Language Education for Chinese in the Meiji Era

To put our study forward to the Meiji era, the scholars, missionaries, diplomats or traders who came to Japan in the Meiji era studied Japanese mostly by themselves just like the Westerners who had visited Japan in the past. In 1896, Japanese classes for Chinese students were begun in Japan. The arrival of Chinese in Japan after the Sino-Japanese war naturally formed the background for this fact, but in those days there was very little distinction made between traditional Japanese and modern Japanese\*. However, as a result of a movement for reformation of traditional Japanese because of the advance of compulsory education, identity of the written and spoken language, simplification of Chinese characters, research and education in the grammar of traditional Japanese, Romanization of Japanese and other factors, began to be realized. We can say that in accordance with this change Japanese language education for foreigners gradually began to change from the study of traditional Japanese to modern Japanese. Naturally, in this Japanese language education for foreigners a tendency toward using Romanized letters began. The advantage of using Romanized letters was that foreigners could study the rhythm and vocal feeling of Japanese in a more direct way. It also enabled them to become more aware of Japanese syntax because

they studied with Japanese written with a small gap between the words, which was different from the ordinary Japanese writing method. Thus, it was very effective for teaching Japanese to foreigners.

After the middle of the Meiji era, Japanese scholars seriously began to investigate Japanese. In the 18th year of Meiji, the school course of *Hakugengo*, or philology (later to be known as *Gengo*), was set up at Tokyo Imperial University, and the comparative philology and historical study of Japanese was promoted, causing a great deal of discussion concerning the origins of Japanese. The belief that Japanese belongs to the Altaic family of languages became prevalent, and the relationship between Japanese and Korean began to be discussed. Particularly conspicuous among these studies were Bimyō Yamada's study of Japanese accent, Hideyo Arisaka and Shinkichi Hashimoto's study of *Manyō-kana*, or Japanese syllabary in the *Manyōshū* anthology, which included the assertion that the number of vowels in ancient Japanese must have been eight.

(\*The author understands that in the early years of the Meiji era there appeared a very faint sign of the division of Japanese into the ideas and facts of so-called *kokugo* and *nippongo*. *Kokugo* at that time was inextricably connected with the traditional Japanese language which began with the dawn of Japanese culture and naturally included very old meanings or remnants of archaic or even obsolete words, whereas *nippongo* at that time was expected to be rather the means of communication in the daily life of the Japanese people. Since then, the former has thoroughly been regarded as comprehensible and usable only for the Japanese, while the latter, especially since the end of the war, has come to be expected to be comprehensible and usable not only for the Japanese but also for the foreigners. Although this fact and concept of

the intrinsic division of the Japanese language might be hard for foreigners to accept, we cannot help asserting its manifest existence. Then, *kokugo* could be translated in English by 'traditional Japanese' and *nippongo* by 'modern Japanese,' though the author is not quite satisfied with the translation.)

### Prewar and Wartime Japanese Language Education outside Japan

What strikes us most is what came after these Japanese studies, which was the teaching not of modern but of traditional Japanese to Asians in Japanese colonies, mandates or overseas areas of occupation. In Formosa in 1895, in Saghalien in 1905, in the Kwantung province in 1909 and in Pacific mandated territories in 1919, Japan began a policy of teaching traditional Japanese. The most striking fact is the compulsory study of Japanese in Korea, which was a colony of Japan from its annexation in August, 1910 up to the surrender of Japan in August, 1945. Many elderly Koreans today can understand Japanese, but they invariably pretend not to know Japanese when addressed in Japanese, since in the past days of colonization they were highly praised for speaking Japanese and severely punished for speaking Korean at school. When Manchoukuo came into being in 1932, Japanese, along with Manchu and Mongolian, was treated as national or quasi-national language of Manchoukuo and taught at all educational levels from primary school to university. After the Japano-Chinese Incident occurred, Japanese language education was begun in occupied areas and various places on the continent. The method of teaching was at first the so-called translation method in which Chinese was used to teach Japanese to the Chinese, but gradu-

ally the so-called direct method, or natural method in which only Japanese was used began to be employed. This caused the teaching method to become Japanese centered, but many Japanese teachers sent to teach Japanese did not know the direct method well enough to produce satisfactory results. They keenly felt that the Japanese language of that time was too complex for the Chinese, and hoped greatly for the simplification of Japanese. In 1939, Japanese Ministry of Education debated upon the problem of Japanese language education in overseas areas for the first time. An ironic fact was that just a year before the outbreak of the war between Japan and America, NHK conducted Japanese courses by radio for Americans for one year.

After the outbreak of the Pacific War, 69 members of committee for Japanese language education in the South Sea area were sent to the Philippines in 1943, and unlike the situation in China, Filipinos were trained to be teachers of Japanese, which had a great effect on Japanese teaching there. The Association for the Advancement of Japanese Language Education, which started as an auxiliary organ of the Ministry of Education one year before the outbreak of the war, taught Japanese to many Chinese students studying in Japan at that time and trained teachers of Japanese. This program continued until January, 1945, the year that the war ended. During the Pacific War, Japanese language teachers were sent to the Philippines and to Southeast Asian countries as well. Japanese institutions that taught and researched Japanese at home and in overseas areas before and during the war were Kahoku Nippongo Kyōiku Kenkyūjo (North China Institute for the Research into Japanese Language Education), Kokusai Bunka Gakkai (International Culture Society), Kokusai Bunka

Shinkōkai (Association for the Advancement of International Culture), Kokusai Gakuyūkai Nippongo Gakkō (International Student Society Japanese Language School), Kokugo Bunka Kenkyūjo (Institute for the Research into the Culture of Traditional Japanese), Kahoku Nippongo Fukyū Kyōkai (North China Japanese Language Diffusion Association), Nippongo Bunka Kyōkai (Association for the Culture of the Japanese Language), Nippongo Kyōiku Shinkōkai (Association for the Advancement of Japanese Language Education), Nippongo Kyōiku Kenkyūjo (Institute for the Research into Japanese Language Teaching), Nippongo Kyōshi Renmei (League of Japanese Language Teachers), and numerous other institutions. They were very many.

Before the war, except for Chinese students, missionaries, diplomats or army language officers whose work required it, few foreigners studied Japanese. There were even fewer foreigners who studied very deeply Japanese culture, society, politics or economy.

### Reformation of Traditional Japanese in Postwar Days and Opening of Japanese Language Education for Foreigners

Taking advantage of the end of the war, a reformation of Japanese began, and simplification of writing, standardization of pronunciation, simplification of expression, disuse of difficult Chinese words, use of loan words, and changing and lessening of honorifics proceeded. Naoto Naganuma, a researcher of the Japanese language, was engaged as a language officer and chief for Japanese language education in the Occupation Forces to carry out a drastic reform of Japanese. In 1948, the Tokyo Japanese Language School Affiliated to the Foundation of the Institute for the Research into Japanese Culture was established. In 1946, Kokugo Shingikai, or the Council on Traditional

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Japanese submitted a report on the list of Chinese characters for daily use and the contemporary orthography of *kana*, and at successive intervals studied such problems as the simplification of the system of spelling of Romanized Japanese and the way of putting declensional *kana* to Chinese characters. Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūsho, or the State Institute for National Language Reform, which started in 1948, began to research on the actual condition, gather the statistics, and make reports concerning Japanese. In 1953, I.C.U. opened an intensive Japanese language educational course for foreign students and obtained sanction from the Ministry of Education for the first time for Japanese courses at a university. The students of this Japanese course were mainly students from Hong Kong on four year scholarships. They were only permitted to use their scholarships to study Japanese for only one of the four years of study, so their Japanese courses were intensive. Later, this period was changed to two years, and continues to be so now. In addition, the Taigai Nippongo Kyōiku Shinkōkai, or the Association for the Advancement of International Japanese Language Education, Bunkachō, or Culture Agency, Waseda University's Institute for the Research into Linguistic Education, Keiōgijuku University's International Center and other institutions became the main institutions for the education and research of Japanese for foreigners.

## Popularity of Japanese Arising from the Occupation Forces and the United States

Many Westerners who remained in Japan after the war and those who has studied Japanese very intensively in the American army or navy during the war devoted themselves to Japanology to put their

Japanese experiences and language to use. Donald Keene and Edward Seidensticker are the best examples. Not only Westerners but also Southeast Asians especially began to come to Japan to study Japanese, as they, through the Japanese language education they received during the war, gained confidence that they could at least study Japanese though they had thought it was a difficult and mysterious language. Thanks to scholarships from NDEA (National Defense Education Act) many Americans entered universities, and this further accelerated the popularity of Japanese in America. NDEA stated that the most important languages for Americans were Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish (in alphabetical order), but if effort should be concentrated on the languages that had not been much studied so far, French, German, Italian and Spanish would naturally be excluded. This meant that Japanese was regarded as one of the most six important languages for Americans.

### Japanese Language Education for Other East and Southeast Asians from the Last Years of the 1960's to the First Half of the 1980's

In 1969, the Japanese Language School Affiliated to Tokyo University of Foreign Studies began to teach Japanese to foreign students wishing to study at Japanese universities using Japanese government funds. Kokusai Gakuyūkai, or the International Students' Society, which was created during the war to choose candidates for admission to Japanese universities as its main object, was restored and began teaching Japanese mainly to Southeast Asian students at private expense under the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Of

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all the candidates for admission to Japanese universities who were under the charge of these two institutions, Viet-Nameese students were greatest in number until the fall of Saigon. In Southeast Asian countries, Japanese, which had spread during the war, declined in importance with the end of the war, but the need to study Japanese again arose there because of the technological assistance that was adopted as part of Japanese war reparation. As trade with Japan grew owing to the rise of Japan as an economic power, the importance of Japanese grew and this tendency was seen even in the Philippines and Korea which were replete with strong anti-Japanese feeling.

Japan began to send technical experts abroad in 1964, and an advance party of young technical experts were detached to Southeast Asia, of whom seven worked in Japanese language education. This program attained great success and was welcomed in each country. It developed into fullscale government organization called Nippon Seinen Kaigai Gijutsu Kyōryokutai, or the Japan Overseas Volunteer Corps, a kind of Japanese Peace Corps, and gradually expanded its activities. Furthermore, the Colombo Plan, which is now practically nonexistent, was an economic development project for South and Southeast Asian countries superintended by the British Commonwealth of Nations, and in 1954 Japan joined this project by giving technological assistance. Specialists in Japanese language education were sent to Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and other Asian countries, where they conducted Japanese language courses at universities, language schools, Japanese government-run culture centers, and other places. Furthermore, with a lectureship set up by the Japanese government Japanese courses were instituted at universities in Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the

Philippines and Thailand, and energetically pursued. In Australia and Taiwan as well, many people studied Japanese hard at Japanese language facilities centering around universities, and the popularity of Japanese courses sponsored by the Japanese embassy or consulate was like that of English schools set up in Japan immediately after the war.

At these universities, there were many students who studied Japanese as a second foreign language without majoring in it or intending to study in Japan or to use it in the trade with Japan. Of the foreign students studying Japanese in Japan, Taiwanese have always been the greatest in number, but since the second half of the 1970's up to the first half of the 1980's Korean students have increased rapidly, indicating the sudden improvement in the Korean economy. In the meantime, the Indo-China peninsula and islands in the adjacent seas that had always had a lot of students studying in Japan gradually had fewer due to political instability. In Asian countries in general, however, not only university students and adults, but also senior and junior high school students have come to study Japanese as a second foreign language. Incidentally, although they are still in the experimental stage, the United States and Hungary \* have recently begun Japanese courses at the primary school level.

(\* Hungarian is, like Japanese, an agglutinative language using particles to construct its syntax.)

### The Extraordinary Expansion and Degradation of Japanese Language Education for Other Asians in Japan since the Middle of the 1960's

To retrogress, there was very little Japanese language education

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for Asians in Japan during the war, except for Chinese students. However, after the war there was a phenomenal rise in the number of Asians coming to Japan as students or potential students at Japanese universities. This tendency has sharply accelerated during the past few years, and together with the rise of the international status of Japan and a plan advocated by former Prime Minister Nakasone to have one hundred thousand foreign students in Japan within ten years has created a rapid increase in the number of Asians who hope to study Japanese in Japan. Their reasons for studying Japanese, too, have become very diverse. In most cases, they study it not only to study, like Westerners, the culture, accomplishment, society, economy, politics, etc. of Japan or too to study at Japanese higher educational institutions, but also to acquire practical business skills and technology, or find employment at Japanese companies. Moreover, Asians who come to Japan are not necessarily potential students at Japanese universities or shūgakusei\* students, but are often people who are already out in the world. This recent situation has caused a phenomenal expansion in the number of Asians studying Japanese in Japan.

Therefore, recently Japanese language schools in Japan have been popping up like mushrooms after a rainy day, and according to National Language Section of Culture Agency, the number of educational institutions conducting Japanese language courses in Japan as of November 1, 1987, has become an amazing 496, with 43,000 students. In addition, as of March, 1989 the number is estimated to be over 650. This is because according to the above-mentioned 1987 investigation, 255 of the 496 schools were ordinary language institutions with about 35,000 students rather than universities. About 80%

of these schools have more than 400 students. Compared with 5 years before, the number of schools had increased by 58% and the students by 77%, meaning that the number of students not studying Japanese to enter a university had rapidly increased. Many of these language schools are totally commercial, which regularly exceed the official number of students allowed. They employ many part-time instructors, many of whom are inexperienced housewives, and frequently hold no classes, causing, in extreme cases, problems in our relations with other countries because of their unfair practices in issuing visas to shūgakusei students. Many of these problems occur at hastily founded schools, although they also exist at schools with a long past.

( \* Ryūgakusei student and shūgakusei student are defined differently by immigration laws. A ryūgakusei student is a foreign student who studies at an academic institution such as a university or junior college, while a shūgakusei student is a foreign student who studies at other types of educational institutions, that is, a so-called kakushu gakkō, or non-regular school, language school, or other non-academic schools.)

### Dishonest Japanese Businessmen Blackmail Chinese Coming to Japan to Study with Mixed Motives

What is increasing is not ryūgakusei students but shūgakusei students, especially those from the Shanghai area who account for 82% of all Chinese students coming to Japan. Many of them come to Japan to work, not to study. The reason for this will be stated later, but because acquisition of a visa is difficult in China, a Shūgakusei student visa is the most popular. As a result of this Japanese businessmen have even forged visas, and there has been an increase

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in sham language schools which do not really teach. Chinese shūgakusei students from Shanghai find no instructor or that classes that should have 50 students usually have 300 and these situations, which are by no means uncommon, bewilder them. Nevertheless, the greatest reason for Chinese to be interested in coming to Japan is the great difference in the Japanese and Chinese economies. When Chinese with what they have saved after working a year in Japan go home with these savings, it is enough for them to live for five or even fifty years in China, strange as this may seem. Such being the case, 38,000 candidates for shūgakusei visas are now waiting in Shanghai for them. However, in the past, when a passport was granted to a Chinese, the Chinese government contacted his place of employment and had him fired. At present this no longer happens, but did occur until around the autumn of last year. The Japanese consulate in Shanghai, on the other hand, cannot issue so many visas without permission of the Japanese Ministry of Justice, which in turn cannot give clearance on visas since there are so many illegal counterfeit identification cards made by dishonest Japanese businessmen among the document submitted. These Chinese in Shanghai had already been fired at their places of employment. Therefore, this unhappy visa applicants rioted last November by thronging to the Japanese consulate in protest. Furthermore, some Japanese businessmen taking advantage of Chinese hidden reasons for going to Japan, committed further offense by collecting entrance fees or tuition fees for some months in advance before giving the applicants their student cards and papers needed to obtain visas. The number of these applicants exceeded the total enrollment of all Japanese language schools in Japan. They thus created a national disgrace by being arrested by

the Chinese authorities. As Japanese language schools admit Chinese students far beyond the capacity of their classrooms, students cannot really study and are automatically forced to find work instead. However, they do not mind because a year's work in Japan means that they can save enough money to live for a long time in China. There are even some schools that take a rake off from the earnings of the illegal labor of the Chinese shūgakusei students.

### Asians Study Japanese as an Expedient and Aim at Other Material Gains

Meanwhile, ryūgakusei students and shūgakusei students from Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and other Asian countries have recently been decreasing because of the appreciation of the yen, economic development of their home countries, lack of advantages in their having studied in Japan, and other reasons. Malaysia, for instance, has come to have a considerably high GNP, so that even if her students work for a year in Japan, the amount that they earn may not last so long in their own country. Young Filipinos and Indonesians are still setting their eyes on America or Europe, and therefore are not as eager to come to Japan as the Chinese. What attracts attention is that only Chinese from the Shanghai area, being very eager to come here, line up for flights to Japan. From Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and other countries many people other than ryūgakusei students and shūgakusei students come to Japan on three month sightseeing visas, earn a small fortune working illegally, and then go home. They leave with very little knowledge of Japanese, which of course cannot be called Japanese language study. However, their short stay in Japan has

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created a big Japanese language boom in many Asian countries.

Though this may be a little misleading, the fact that Asians studying Japanese on a full-time basis in Japan or at home are not always very different from those working illegally in Japan, is worth serious consideration. In other words, even though Asians have various reasons for studying Japanese, they generally have little interest in Japanese culture or Japanese society. They are studying Japanese for material gain, for success in life, or for vocational purposes. Therefore, if Asians become good in Japanese while working here, then the Japanese ability of ryūgakusei students and shūgakusei students will also become better. If their Japanese ability becomes better, more Asians will become interested in studying Japanese. Therefore, the wide range of Asians studying Japanese in earnest, can be said to be just a single group of Japanese learners. People coming to Japan from Asian countries not on sightseeing visas but on shūgakusei student visas, though they have not thought of their lives after going back home to places like Shanghai, are anxious to come to Japan at all events. Though they are without any real will to learn Japanese or about Japan, or to enter Japanese universities, they always come to Japan in order to enter Japanese language schools.

### Creation of an Educational Standard for Controlling Japanese Language Schools by 'Cooperators' Council for Investigation and Research'

To meet the exigencies of the phenomenon, Japanese language schools in the Japanese territory have tripled at a bound during the past three years, amounting to about 500 at present. Among these

Japanese language schools, we can even find some that are operated by managers of factories or pubs and make students of their schools work at a low wage at their factories or pubs. Japanese preparatory schools too began teaching Japanese, as a countermeasure to a tendency toward a decreasing number of students. In this way, Japanese language schools have been established excessively without any proper supervising authorities, and about thirty thousand Chinese, a ratio of 4 to 1 compared with the previous year, were in Japan as of March, 1989. A document to countermeasure this fact, the draft of which was prepared by the Ministry of Justice and which was finally completed by the Ministry of Education, 'A Report concerning the Management Standards of Japanese Language Education Facilities by the Cooperators' Council for Investigation and Research into the Standards of Japanese Language Schools' was made at the end of last year to respond to the social and international problems associated with Japanese language schools in Japan.

To paraphrase what was said in the report: So far, Japanese language schools have been private business with no control over educational standards, able to decide their policies independently. However, at present, there are many schools which have low educational standards, poor management and other problems, or are really only fronts to allow shūgakusei students to work illegally. Therefore, it is necessary to elevate the quality of Japanese language schools and to lay down some guidelines for their management. Hereupon, 'Cooperators' Council for Investigation and Research into the Standard Yardstick of Japanese Language Schools' has been investigating, firstly, into Japanese language schools teaching Japanese to foreign potential students at Japanese universities and to foreigners living in

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Japan and, secondly, into those teaching business Japanese and daily Japanese conversation to foreigners coming to Japan on business and the like. The Cooperators' Council, however, has felt it necessary to lay down guidelines requiring immediate attention concerning the ideal way of teaching Japanese to foreigners staying in Japan mainly to study Japanese. Thus, it has stated: 'It hopes the government, making use of these guidelines, will take appropriate action hereafter.'

The following is the content of the guidelines: The period of school attendance should be one year, or six months depending on circumstances. In this way, the standard in these guidelines is considerably easy. The number of hours of studying should be more than 760 hours a year and more than 20 hours a week, whereas at universities they are more than 1320 hours a year and more than 22 hours a week. The number of students who can be admitted is up to the independent judgment of each school based on the number of instructors, facilities, and other factors. This creates a loophole. The number of students in each class should be less than 20 for conversation classes and less than 40 for other subjects. The number of instructors should be 3 when the number of students is less than 60, and when the number of students is more than 60, one instructor should be added for every increase of 30 students. These proposals are valid. One half of the instructors should be full-time, but temporarily only one third may be. As most instructors are now housewives \* working part-time, this situation will not be easy to change. As for qualifications for instructors, the best is, first of all, to be a person who has majored in Japanese language education at a university, that is, a person who has graduated with more than 45 credits of Japanese language education. Then the level is gradually

lowered. The next best qualification should be to have succeeded in 'the examination for the license of Japanese language teaching ability.' This proposal is quite valid. However, thirdly should be to have expert knowledge and ability of teaching Japanese, have a Bachelor of Arts degree, or experience in the business of teaching or researching Japanese at a school, special study school, or non-regular school for more than two years after graduating from a junior college or a senior high school. Therefore, even a person who has only taught Japanese as a side job is fully qualified as a regular teacher of Japanese after two years of teaching experience. Furthermore, the council states that a person who has engaged in the education of or research into Japanese at school or the like after completion of a speciality course at a special study school, having spent more than four years altogether with enrollment in a special training course and engagement as an instructor, is considered qualified. Thus, great importance is attached to the term of service. Fourthly, it refers to teachers with high school teaching experience, so even a former high school science or physical education teacher may teach Japanese. As for the principal, it states that principals must have opinions of their own on education. (The rest of the report is omitted.)

(\* Though this may give the impression that only in Japan housewives are teaching their native language to foreigners, at a small number of English language schools in Cambridge, England, for example, housewives also work part-time as English teachers, only the dimension of the matter there is different from that in Japan where an abnormal state of affairs at Japanese language schools has led to social and international problems.)

## The Morals of Japanese Language Schools and Their Surveillance by a Particular Institution is Expected to Combat Their Lenient Educational Standards

However, the educational standards of the report have no binding power, so that many Japanese language educators are greatly dissatisfied with it saying that it is far from the guidelines needed to obtain a higher quality of Japanese language school. It really proposes a haphazard standard of a very low level, but if the standard were raised existing Japanese language schools would decrease sharply to twenty or thirty, meaning there are really very few good Japanese language schools now. Being an interim report, it can be modified if it is criticized or the situation changes, but if its standards are put into operation as they are, it will sanction most of existing Japanese language schools and not improve matters. Therefore, the only way that the situation will improve is for school owners to change their ways. The National Association for the Advancement of Japanese Language Education Institution was set up in March, 1987 for full-time Japanese language education institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, and the Council on Reception Organs for Foreign Shūgakusei Students was set up in December, 1986 in cooperation with the Immigration Service Board, Ministry of Justice to create a sound structure and system of reception for shūgakusei students. These two organs should fully check the standard of Japanese language schools through mutual agreement and cooperation.

Asians Studying English in the U.S.A. Compared with  
Asians Studying at Japanese Language Schools in Japan

Now, let us compare foreign students studying Japanese in Japan with those studying English in the United States. Japan is expected to have one hundred thousand foreign students around 1994 according to a remark made by former Prime Minister Nakasone. As of 1989, the number of ryūgakusei students in Japan is about 25,000, not including shūgakusei students. On the other hand, the number of foreign students in the United States was already 340,377 in 1986, of which Southeast Asians were 156,330, meaning that some half of the foreign students in the United States are Southeast Asians. In Japan, according to an announcement of the Ministry of Education in May, 1988, the number of foreign students from all of Asia is 22,808, of which those from Southeast Asia are 3,089, showing that most of the foreign students in Japan are from East Asia, namely, Korea, the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

In addition, in the United States most language programs are part of a university program, unlike Japanese language schools in Japan, and English language classes are conducted by 143 university level institutions based on the TESOL system, or Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages. Also, the American government is extremely careful about allowing foreigners other than students to enter, so that if a foreigner who has entered America on a sightseeing visa is caught working there, not only the foreigner himself is deported but also the American who hired him is prosecuted. Accordingly, it is more difficult to enter the United States in hopes of finding work, though the illegal entry or labor of Mexicans at the southern tip of California is an exception.

The Study of Japanese by Asians Still Spoiling their 'Na-

tional Identity' and Japan's Subterranean New 'Colonial Policy (?)'

The above was a discussion of the transition of Japanese language education from the distant past to the present with the awareness that prewar and wartime Japanese language education in Asian countries outside Japan was conducted, in short, in the interests of Japan. To those who received the education, though they might have on rare occasions thought it profitable, it was generally and essentially very resented, full of insult, forced on them, and went very much against their national identity. Through the study of Japanese, Asians never became mentally opulent and mutual understanding in the profound sense of the word never developed between Japanese and other Asians. To add to this, in the Japanese language classes being conducted at present to many Asians in Japan, we are certainly aware of the nuance that Japanese language education that was conducted from the beginning of Japanese colonization in East Asia down to the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War, has simply switched the education from its colonies to Japan. Does this mean that Asian peoples are now willingly or unwillingly being overwhelmed by Japanese economic power and technology? In terms of this aspect, the state of Westerners studying Japanese to study the Japanese culture, art, religion, society, economy, politics and so forth unconnected with any material gain, is something altogether different from the state of Asians studying Japanese. In the case of Westerners, their learning Japanese, in many cases, promotes cross-cultural communication. We would assert that both the study of Japanese by Asians and Japanese language education for them should have this cross-cultural communication as their foremost goal.

However, what could be called Japanese ideology seems to have worked, and continue to work, based on Japanese language education for Asians in Japan. We do not think Japan is creating a new East Asia Greater Co-prosperity Sphere, but we cannot be free from the impression that Japan's intention of building up an Asian Community is gradually but steadily being disclosed. The Pacific Economic and Cultural Enclave, or PEACE for short, advocated by the then Prime Minister Nakasone in 1983, the Pacific Economic Community promoted by the Japanese economic community, the Circum-Pacific Techno-energy Cooperation Conception, and Asian Manpower Cultivation Basic Project, which was a result of the agreement on economic and scientific cooperation centering around Japan and ASEAN — these and other such projects make us wonder whether they will develop into true international cooperation or not be allowed to develop because of being cultural offensive to people in the Asian-Pacific sphere. Although the Look East Movement, advocated by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir in 1981, aimed at economic development and scientific and cultural advancement using Japan and Korea as examples rather than Western Europe, we are certainly apprehensive lest the above-mentioned Asian-Pacific projects centering around Japan create antipathy in various countries. Considering that it has been said that TESOL, or Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages, might be a new hidden colonial policy of the United States, we must be fully aware that Japanese classes for other Asians in Japan, as Teaching of Japanese to Speakers of Other Languages, or TEJASOL (!), could be the beginning of a new secret colonial policy of Japan. However, TESOL has been instituted mostly at the university level and its quality is generally very high.\*

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(\* The author must confess that this is not 100% correct, because some American schools are said to have begun TESOL programs just to make money with very poor inexperienced teachers and homestay programs hastily set up with very poor English classes taught by housewives who have no TESOL training. However, he is sure that the situation is not as bad as in Japan.)

### The Japanese Grammar in the Making which Causes Problems for Japanese Language Instructors Aiming at Cross-cultural Communication

Japanese language education for other Asians may set its ultimate goal as cross-cultural communication between Asian countries and Japan, but this will not be easy to actually realize. To be more precise, can Japanese language instructors today truly make their way of life coincide with that of their Asian students and behave like Sorai Ogyū, who read aloud Chinese writing using not Japanese but Chinese pronunciation as the first attempt in Japan in order to be tainted with Chinese mind in every aspect of his life? This is impossible, and besides it is not permissible to give up our Japanese national identity so much. On the other hand, even if Asian students may try to live and think like Japanese there is a limit to how much they can. Furthermore, it is not permissible that other Asians should lose their national identity. A Belgian missionary Willem Grootaers, having stayed in Japan for many decades, once wrote in Japanese a book entitled '*Watashi wa Nipponjin ni Naritai*, or I wish I could be a Japanese,' in which he confessed, '*Ishikika no kuni ni oite tōtei nippon no kokuseki wa tore sō mo nai*, or I don't think I can acquire Japanese citizenship in my subconsciousness,' which is a

very significant remark. We believe that cross-cultural communication in the true sense should be to try to merge into other culture to the utmost possible limit, but adhere to one's own cultural identity at the very end of the effort. So Japanese language instructors ought to teach Japanese while understanding the national identity of their students. The best education of Japanese should not center around Japan, but be based on cross-cultural communication.

As for a concrete teaching method, the so-called direct method which uses only Japanese to teach Japanese is a good one, as long as Japanese language classes for Asians are conducted in Japan. Yet for a Japanese to teach Japanese to foreigners in Japanese is far more difficult than generally imagined. The study of modern Japanese grammar is still far from completed, and since the Shōwa era English grammar has been very much used to explain Japanese grammar. Since the end of the war, Susumu Kuno, in the United States, has been trying to introduce transformational generative grammar into the study of Japanese grammar and Akira Mikami has developed his unique hypothesis that Japanese has no subject. Thus even for Japanese, clear grammatical explanation of Japanese is difficult at present. It is much more so for foreigners, who find Japanese full of contradictions, so that readjusting grammar and explaining it clearly to foreigners is an extremely difficult task. Although Western learners of Japanese point out the irrationality of Japanese as contrasted with the rationality of Western languages\*, Asian learners of Japanese worry about other aspects of Japanese. A Taiwanese woman in her twenties has anxiously said: 'Japanese is difficult, not because the words are difficult, but because the Japanese word I know is not used in the meaning that I know. When what is said is not

really what is meant, I feel uneasy since I wonder how Japanese can understand my Japanese.'

(\* Nowadays, there are many Western scholars who do not agree to this way of thinking. They assert that Westerners have not felt this way in modern times and that all languages are equally rational for their own speakers and all grammar is not rational, since grammar does not really exist but was only invented by men to explain language.)

### Precaution against the Possibility of Domination of Asia by the Japanese Language

When we consider Japanese language education for other Asians in Japan, we must consider at the same time Japanese study of other Asian languages. Though it may seem that only recently this situation has changed, the Japanese are still basically not interested in studying other Asian languages. This is quite similar to the fact that since English has become the primary international second language in this century, Englishmen have been stopping studying European languages such as German, French, Italian and Spanish, and more so Russian and other Slavonic languages. Some Englishmen say, "We are lazy. We don't study any other European languages," and shrug their shoulders, but at the bottom of their hearts take it for granted that they do not need to study other languages.

When the Soviet Russia invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, I watched on T.V. in England a scene in front of the Czechoslovakian embassy in London, which some press corps and demonstrators stormed and asked the Czechoslovakian ambassador about the invasion. His first words were — hark! — 'I,I,I, er. . . ,' and what was more, we saw an English girl sitting on the wall surrounding the embassy

building laugh at him. This was not because she was being rude, but because the linguistic domination of English internationally placed him below her.

If the popularity of Japanese study in Japan continues, such a relationship as developed between English and Czechoslovakian could develop between Japanese and other Asian languages, but it is very unlikely. If it does develop, it will mean that Japanese has taken a very dangerous course.

### Special Measure for Foreign Students — Up to 26 Credits for Important Subjects that can be Substituted for by the Credits for Japanese and Japanese Studies

Now, let us show a concrete example that can be regarded as Japanese language education for other Asians being conducted for Japanese interests. Foreign students at Japanese universities can substitute Japanese and Japanese studies credits for credits in general education, viz., humanities, social sciences and health and physical education. This special measure was established by the reform of the University Chartering Standard, applied nationwide to national, public and private universities, and carried out first at national universities. To be more precise, as a special measure for credits needed for graduation by foreign students only, for up to 16 credits out of the 36 needed for graduation by Japanese students in humanities and social sciences in general education, up to 8 out of the 8 credits needed for it in the subject of foreign languages, and up to 2 out of the 4 credits needed for it in health and physical education, foreign students are permitted to substitute Japanese and Japanese studies credits. The subjects of general education have great significance in the cur-

ricula of universities under the new system, and according to this special measure, students could get up to 16 credits out of the 36 required for humanities and social sciences in general education, even if they were not taken. The University Chartering Standard states that students are expected to study two foreign languages. So, many universities have provided so-called second foreign language courses, and virtually made 12~16 credits the credits for foreign languages needed for graduation resulting from combining the second foreign language credits with the first foreign language credits. The special measure made 8 credits out of the above-mentioned 12~16 credits for foreign languages usable even if they were not taken.

### Basis for the Special Measure is Smoothed over about its Weakness for Intruding on Important Subjects

To quote what is said in the University Chartering Standard about the reason and basis for this special measure: 'This ministerial ordinance, by laying down a special case in the University Chartering Standard so as to be able to form a reasonable educational course of study for foreign students conforming to their purpose of study, aims at raising the collective effect of their study as well as facilitating their studies.' We question the quite ambiguous reasons for the special rule, such as 'reasonable educational course of study for foreign students,' and 'collective effect of their study.' The University Chartering Standard further declared what universities should take into consideration when they try to help foreign students by applying this special measure: '. . .not to speak of trying not to make the special measure lead to the lowering of the scholastic ability of foreign students, universities are expected to try rather for the eleva-

tion of their all-round scholastic ability by filling up the education of fundamental subjects making use of the reserve and margin caused by the special measure and all that.' As may be expected of the Ministry of Education, we can understand that it was well aware of the lowering of scholastic ability of foreign students by the application of this special measure, but at the same time we consider that there is a problem in its changing the awareness into self-righteousness that strongly aims at raising the collective scholastic ability of foreign students. Why was the number of the credits for general education, to which much importance has been attached due to its widening students' culture, decreased only for foreign students to half of that for Japanese students? Since all of the 4 to 8 second foreign language credits or, plus them, as many as 2 to 4 of the first foreign language credits, as they can be used for credit if the number of second foreign language credits is less than 6, can be substituted for by the credits in Japanese and Japanese studies, what has occurred so far is that foreign students have graduated from universities without studying German or French, as a second foreign language, though they have continued studying English as a first foreign language.

In 1961, Kyūshū University, taking the initiative among Japanese universities, established the subjects of Japanese and Japanese studies, but at that time they were electives outside the regular course of study. However, in 1962, the Ministry of Education reformed the University Chartering Standard, and Japanese and Japanese studies began to replace the existing subjects of general education, foreign languages and health and physical education.

Japan Expects to Foster Philo-Japanese Asian Elite by

## Sacrificing Their Culture

What is probably the real intention of the Ministry of Education in passing the special measure is to make foreign students improve their Japanese language ability and cultivate a better understanding of Japan during their stay in Japan so that they will become Japanophiles. This, of course, does not appear at all in the University Chartering Standard. What is written clearly in the University Chartering Standard is lessening of the study load of foreign students, but what on earth is the study load of foreign students in the subjects of general education? As for their study load in the subjects of foreign languages, since foreign languages are mostly taught in Japanese and students mostly take their examinations in Japanese, the study load of foreign students could be regarded as double that of Japanese students. So it is fairly understandable to say that their study load in foreign languages should be eased.

Even so, is this special measure truly beneficial for foreign students, especially for Asian students? If we turn our attention to a more basic question than the immediate difficulty of acquiring credits, the fact is that this special measure has made Asian students deviate from the true interests of their home countries. To speak more plainly, are the Japanese at all aware of the dangers of the hidden latent colonialism of this special measure? If Japan makes Asian students, who on their return to their home country are sure to become the intellectual elite, study Japanese and Japanese culture as much as possible and sacrifice their study of general education and Western languages, they may become all the more riveted to the interests of Japan after returning to their home country.

A knowledge of Western languages and their culture is something

which Asian students as well as Japanese students must consider important. When we think what a great loss not only to Asian foreign students but to their countries it will be in the future if they graduate from Japanese universities without any contact with German or French and just with English, we can conclude that this special measure attaches importance to Japanese interests to an undue extent.

### Past Teaching Method Centering around the Interests of Japan and Present Teaching Method Coping with the Immediate Situation the Learner is in

Here we consider from the viewpoint of teaching method that Japanese language education for other Asians in Japan has the tendency to center around Japanese interests. In the days of Japan's colonial period, language teaching method changed gradually from the translation method to the direct method, that is, the method which fundamentally uses only Japanese, including Romanized Japanese for pronunciation acquisition at the first rudimentary stage, and in some cases to a method centered around Japan because of teaching traditional Japanese. During war time, a kind of translation method was also adopted in the Philippines, where Philippine teachers of Japanese were used by Japanese teachers of Japanese because of the need to consider the general feelings of Filipinos. Furthermore, in Southeast Asia, where teaching traditional Japanese was impossible because Chinese characters could not be used as in China and the Roman alphabet was not widely known, the joint use of the direct method without using Romanized Japanese and a kind of translation method, namely, training native Japanese language teachers, was the teaching method most advantageous to Japan.

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Today, the method of teaching Japanese in a class for foreigners which is sometimes held at the Institute for National Language Reform, for example, is not grammar explanation but a 'coping with the immediate situation' type of method. Does this method, revolving around such problems as how foreigners can cope with various situations in Japanese at their work places, benefit them in the true sense? This is very doubtful. This 'coping with the immediate situation' type of method, too, though it of course comes in line with the greatest concern of students about their ability to communicate in Japanese as smoothly as possible, is at least half in line with Japanese interests. To ignore grammar never leads to understanding Japanese very well and retaining Japanese for a long period. Nevertheless, this so-called 'coping with the immediate situation' type of teaching method has recently come to be the general trend at many Japanese language schools in Japan.

## English is the Language used in Technological Education for Asian Employees in Japanese Companies, which Gives the Greatest Priority to Material Gain

When we consider, concerning Japanese enterprises, the fact that Japanese language education for other Asians centers around Japanese interests, we must keep in mind that though many Asians study Japanese expecting to be employed by Japanese companies in Japan, these companies seldom hire Asians. At Matsushita Electric Industrial Company, there are no non-Japanese Asian regular employees. There are about ten regular Caucasian employees but non-Japanese Asians cannot become regular employees but can apply to be in a training program. Matsushita does not conduct Japanese classes for

these trainees. The language used for Asian trainees at Matsushita's factories in Japan or for trainees sent there from Matsushita's factories in other Asian countries centers around English in almost all cases, unless they are very good at Japanese. The language used in the technological courses for Asian employees at Matsushita's factories in other Asian countries likewise centers around English, and local languages are sometimes used. By the way, Japanese enterprises going forth into Asian countries conduct beforehand intensive local language classes for Japanese workers who need to get along with the locals at work.

In these classes, which mainly use English and subsidiarily the local language, we can see their utilitarian purposes because language is needed as a means of communication. Asians who come to Japan as foreign students expecting to work in Japan, must be good in Japanese from studying Japanese in their home country, then study Japanese again at universities and language schools after coming to Japan, and further study Japanese and Japanese life and culture by living in Japan. Yet, the main language used for Asians working for Japanese companies in Japan or overseas is not Japanese. If Japanese companies were to use Japanese for the technological training for Asian employees who are not as good as the Japanese employees in Japanese, they would find that their training programs will take a long time. So, they cannot use Japanese mainly for training programs for Asian employees, and this is a good example to show that their policy is based on material gain.

Great Difference between the Hardness and Easiness of Japanese Taught and Difference in the View of Japan

### between Asians Taught

In addition, when we consider Japanese for Asians, we must not overlook the fact that there is a great difference between language level due age differences, standard of education and reasons for studying Japanese. What country the Asians are from is also important. For example, Taiwanese studying Japanese do not have much ill feeling against Japan even though Taiwan was once a Japanese colony, but many Koreans studying Japanese, whose ancestors experienced foreign invasion 896 times, do bear a strong grudge against the past Japanese colonization, although they may not express it openly. Incidentally, 51% of Koreans at present do not like Japan. The Japanese, therefore, should be well aware that the reasons for studying Japanese may differ with nationality.

### Aid from Japan's 'International Exchange Fund' to Japanese Language Education in Asian Countries

In spite of the title of this paper, 'Japanese Language Education for Other Asians in Japan Today,' here we should like to touch upon the Japanese language courses in other Asian countries, because today they are still considered to be an extension of Japanese language education for other Asians in Japan. Other Asian countries expect and rely on Japan to bear the expenses for Japanese language education. Even the United States, where Japanese classes have been conducted very independently, has recently come to expect a lot from Japan, since American government and foundation aid has been discontinued due to economic slump.

The International Exchange Fund founded in 1972 as a special organization belonging to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs looks to

the on-the-spot initiative as the ideal, and expects that people of each Asian country will conduct Japanese classes by and for themselves, base the curriculum on their own respective ideas, and train their own nationals to teach Japanese. At present, however, part of this International Exchange Fund is giving concrete support to Japanese language education in other Asian countries. The total amount of the International Exchange Fund is 50 billion yen, and of the 5.5 billion yen spent yearly, 2.9 billion yen is allocated to the support of the worldwide Japanese language education. The distribution of this 2.9 billion yen to various districts of the world is: 24% to East Asia, 24% to Southeast Asia, 5% to South Asia, 11.5% to North America, 9% to Central and South America, 8% to West European countries, 2.3% to East European countries, 3% to Middle and Near East and Africa, 4.5% to Oceania. Thus, about 50% is used for Asia. The International Exchange Fund is used for sending teachers of Japanese to other countries, for designing and making teaching materials, but it is also disbursed for subsidizing a small on-the-spot allowance for Japanese instructors of Japanese, for holding related councils or conducting Japanese language education research at universities in each country, or for bringing people related to Japanese language education to Japan. The extent to which the International Exchange Fund has been assisting Japanese language education is almost the same for each Asian country.

The Japanese Ministry of Education has not been providing funds for Japanese language education overseas, but solely for Japanese language education at home, of which expenditure the key object has been the State Institute for National Language Reform. Thus the Ministry of Education has been assisting it with its framing of

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Japanese language education curriculum or with its research related to the Japanese language. Meanwhile, a few prefectural governments, Hyōgo, Kanagawa, Shizuoka, Fukuoka and Hokkaidō, have been conducting Japanese language programs mainly for Chinese in the People's Republic of China.

## Expansion and Internationalization of Japanese and its Improvement for Cross-cultural Communication

In his '*Kokugo no Sekaiteki Hatten, or The Worldwide Expansion of the National Language,*' Mr. Hiroshi Shimomura, the author, has said: "In order for a given language to advance into other countries there needs to be three conditions. One is influence of politics, another is influence of culture, and yet another is excellence of the language." Looking back in history, Latin of the Roman Empire was the language that most spread over the world. Next was probably English because of Anglo-American power. However, toward the 21st century, when countries will not be able to survive without mutual coexistence and co-prosperity like the symbiosis between the hermit crab and sea anemone, to think it good that the language of any country should intrude on other languages is ridiculous as well as dangerous. We must think carefully about Japanese language education for foreigners, concentrating on this fundamental point.

Although Japan's internationalization is praised these days and it is always thought to be the establishment of communication between the Japanese and the people of various countries, the thought is frequently not only shallow but also piteous. We should consider the Japanese identity seriously and that human activity is confron-

tation and antagonism between a centrifugal force extending outwardly and a centripetal force pushing inwardly. The internationalization that is turning us outwardly must be carefully considered. We must examine the overseas expansion of our language, which we are doing very little now. We must consider again that the push of the Japanese language into Korea from 1910 to 1945, into Manchoukuo from 1932 to 1945, and into Southeast Asia and China during the war, despite some difference, was done as a result of political and military power in the last analysis. We know that Japanese in those days was treated as national or quasi-national language in each of the Japanese colonies, which caused us to think for a time that Japanese would become the language of 200 million people, but such state of affairs will never arise in Japan in the future. Then, how will the expansion of Japanese be influenced by culture or linguistic factors? Moreover, are we justified in considering such expansion? If we try to expand Japanese overseas by force, it will be arrogant and seem as if we were about to try to create an Asian Community, or even recreate the East Asia Greater Co-prosperity Sphere. We must have cross-cultural communication with other nations thoroughly on an equal footing, and grasp the overseas expansion of Japanese as a form of cross-cultural communication. We should not force Japanese identity or the Japanese language on foreigners through the overseas expansion of Japanese or through teaching Japanese to them on Japanese soil, but try to impart to them a Japan which can be universally esteemed. Through Japanese language instruction for foreigners, the essential qualities of Japanese can be newly realized by Japanese instructors of Japanese, by researchers of Japanese language instruction, by Japanese language researchers, and by all Japanese.

Then the merits and demerits of Japanese will also come to be more clearly understood. Therefore a policy which will improve the demerits and spread the merits among foreigners should be adopted.

### Improvement of Japanese to Make it Understood and Used More Correctly by Foreigners

Limitation of the use of Chinese characters, simplification of *kana* spelling, and the restriction of the honorific\* (which, if used excessively, will make the language deviate from the common and average state of affairs of languages in modern industrial nations), and other reforms were enacted especially during the Meiji era and again after the war to modernize Japanese and correct its demerits. Such reforms have changed Japanese to make it more current with the rest of the world. Japanese, without losing its identity, should continue to be improved to fit modern conditions.

Just as Japanese like to think that Japanese art can never be truly appreciated by non-Japanese, they often think that Japanese also is very difficult for foreigners. However, if they are aware that there are eight kinds of stress in Viet-Nameese and a Viet-Nameese word can have eight meanings depending on the difference in stress, they will understand that Japanese is not such a difficult language. If the research of modern Japanese could progress, and there were better descriptions of Japanese grammar, there would be few problems in the learning of Japanese by foreigners. Problems of notation and style would still remain, but if different ways of reading the same character, the homonyms like *hashi*, or chopsticks and *hashi*, or bridge, and words that have different sounds but have the same characters and meaning like *fūfu* and *myōto*, or man and

wife were more eliminated, and standard pronunciation established, Japanese would not be so difficult compared to other languages. However, even then, there would still remain numerous obstacles in present-day Japanese to be fully understood and correctly used by foreigners.

To take as an example, even when teaching Japanese to Chinese, who use the same script as us, misunderstanding often arises, since many Chinese words used in Japan are used in China with different meanings from those in Japanese. Chin Rou Ching, a Chinese, gives abundant instances of these misunderstandings in her book entitled *Japanese and Chinese Are This Much Different*, published in Japanese. To introduce only some of them, 'aijin, or sweet-heart' in Japanese means 'a spouse' in Chinese, 'Kaikai' or account' in Japanese means 'expectation' in Chinese, and the rest is 'saishi, or wife and children' in Japanese means 'wife' in Chinese, 'jōhin, or decency' 'a first-class article,' 'seiza, or quiet sitting' 'sit-down tactics,' 'tegami, or letter' 'toilet paper,' 'hinshitsu, or quality' 'character,' 'hon'yaku, or translation' 'interpretation,' 'majime, or seriousness' 'one's true character (in a bad sense),' 'yakusoku, or promise' 'restriction,' 'yasai, or vegetable' 'wild vegetable,' 'jiai, or self-regard' 'to be prudent and careful in thoughtless speech and conduct,' and 'meiwaku, or annoyance' in Japanese 'to perplex, to seduce' in Chinese. So if we say, "Gojiai kudasai" to a Chinese towards the end of our letter to him, something awful may happen. It is also common knowledge that when Prime Minister Tanaka, in his speech at a reception held during his visit to the People's Republic of China, said, "We gave much annoyance (*gomeiwaku*) to your country in war time," the late Prime Minister Chou En-lai was thrown into a very unhappy frame of mind,

because their interpreter translated the word '*gomeiwaku*' as perplexity.

Another problem is that there are many foreigners who can in no way understand Japanese modesty. Yet another problem is that Japanese are apt to nonchalantly use words unnecessary but satisfying to hear, which might cause misunderstanding between both sides. We hear people say, "See you later," in English, but however long you may wait, an Englishman or an American might not return. The same circumstances are in the amiable Japanese hackneyed expression, "*Mata yukkuri hanashimashō*, or Let's talk again at our ease," which sometimes stirs Asians to furious anger. We Japanese say, "*Arimasu*, or There is. . . ," as well as "*Arundesu*, or There is. . . ," or "*Ikimasu*, or I'll go," as well as "*Ikundesu*, or I'll go," using whichever expression almost unconsciously in many cases. \*\* However, Koreans or Germans, who are very strict about such differences, never accept it, and when a Japanese instructor of Japanese explains that both expressions are actually used, they continue to ask persistently how the meaning is different between the two cases. Another problem is between the sound 'n' in the letter 'an' in the word '*annai*, or guidance' and the sound 'n' in the letter 'an' in the word '*angai*, or unexpectedly,' as there is difference in tongue position. *Hirakana*, however, treats the two different sounds of 'n' in just the same way and represents them by the same 'n.' Foreign students of Japanese who point out this difference persistently ask the instructor if *hirakana* is not necessarily the exact method of representing Japanese sounds. A little different problem is that though we Japanese think that almost everybody knows the English alphabet, there are very many cases where students from Thailand or Mainland China have problems in the early stages of their study

of Japanese, since they do not understand well Romanization of the Japanese alphabet.

(\* In the Korean language, the honorific is much more used than in the Japanese language, and there are 26 kinds of Korean words for Japanese 'anata, or you,' which shows that there are many minute differences in the importance in the showing of respect.)

(\*\* A Japanese never says, "Arundesu" or "Ikundesu" but usually says, "Arimasu" or "Ikimasu" in the very beginning of conversation about whether or not something is there or whether or not somebody will go. When during the conversation he likes to reconfirm and emphasize that something is there unquestionably or somebody, other than anybody else, will go, he often says, "Arundesu" or "Ikundesu," though he sometimes says, "Arimasu" or "Ikimasu" once for all, often with a louder voice than in the beginning of the conversation.)

### Better Practice of Japanese by Japanese Individuals after the Example of Japanese Instructors of Japanese

Truly, when the problems mentioned above are pointed out by foreigners, it can certainly be said in a sense that there are few non-native Japanese speakers who think so little about Japanese as the Japanese. Japanese instructors of Japanese often come to understand the fine points of Japanese for the first time through exchange with foreign students in classes, which causes them to be lost in thought. So, if all Japanese become aware of this situation, try to make Japanese a universally agreeable language, and avoid using such expressions as could be regarded as good due to their nicety and ambiguity, then Japanese will become an even more excellent language in the future. If it should become so, communication in Japanese

between Japanese and non-native speakers would be facilitated.

## Towards the Further Improvement of Japanese Language Education for Other Asians

Recently, Japanese language research by non-Japanese has been increasing and also gradually improving in quality. Just as the language of Shakespearean drama was analyzed in full by the German scholar Alexander Schmidt to contribute greatly for the English people, Japanese language research by non-Japanese should now be accepted by us Japanese. The Japanese must make an incessant effort to further promote, in every aspect, Japanese language education for foreigners, especially for other Asians, for the sake of cross-cultural communication in the truest sense.

### Notes

1) This article is based on a lecture by the author, entitled "Aja-jin eno Nippon deno Nippongo-kyōiku, or Japanese Language Education for Other Asians in Japan Today," in St. Andrew's University extension course held 9 times from April 24 to May 19, 1989 at the Osaka Prefectural Culture and Information Center with the cooperation of the Osaka Prefectural Culture and Information Center, the Board of Education of Osaka Prefecture and others. A description of this university extension course was broadcast on May 17, 1989 by RADIO JAPAN, NHK overseas broadcasting, in 8 languages, including English, French and Chinese, under the title of "Publicly Opened to Citizens — Lectures on Asia." On March 15, 1990, the content of the university extension course was published as a book entitled "*Ajia to Nippon — Nippon no Kokusaiika*

o *Kangaeru*—, or *Asia and Japan — Thinking about Internationalization of Japan*—.” This article was compiled by using parts eliminated for want of time in the extension course and for want of space in the previous publication. It was written to emphasize the viewpoint of cross-cultural communication and to publish in English in the hope of a greater and wider range of readers than in Japanese.

2) Many of the statistical figures and other ones shown in this article were obtained from Culture Section 2, Department of Cultural Exchange, Bureau of Information and Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

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## Japanese Language Education for Other Asians in Japan Today — As Seen and Considered from the Viewpoint of Cross-cultural Communication

Naoyuki HAGIWARA

When we think about Japanese language education for other Asians in Japan today, it is absolutely necessary for us to consider some historical circumstances. One of these considerations would be that since the birth of modern Japan (i.e. the beginning of the Meiji era), Japanese language education for other Asians has been largely characterized by her ego-centric strategy aimed toward her national interest. It was more so when the education was conducted, as it often was, for Asians not in Japan but in the areas occupied or controlled by Japan. The most extreme case of this kind was in colonized Korea and Manchoukuo, which was in fact deprivation of the mother tongue and the forcing of Japanese as a foreign language.

After the end of World War II, however, the situation changed and defeated Japan had to cease her forcing of Japanese on Asians. Moreover, the phenomenon appeared that some elite Asians studying in Japan came to enjoy a sort of material gain, different in quality from that of learning Japanese itself. Taking advantage of this Asian desire to learn Japanese, Japan began, as she became an economic power, to seem to regard Japanese language education for other Asians as part of her new subterranean "colonial policy" toward other Asian countries. It became much more so after the middle of the 1980's, when Chinese hoping to study in Japan began increas-

ing explosively and dishonest Japanese businessmen began swindling them. To make matters worse, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, as if influenced by subterranean colonialism, adopted a special measure concerning school credit for Japanese and Japanese studies for foreign university students in Japan.

The writer of this article emphasizes that Japanese language education for other Asians, which deprives them of their national identity, should be improved and changed into one that can contribute toward better cross-cultural communication between Japan and other Asian countries. The writer also states that the conventional problems of Japanese should be solved and the language be improved so as to be more correctly understood and used by foreigners both inside and outside of Japan.