

Preliminary Report on Japanese Teaching Assistants Interviews with Teaching Assistants, Australian Teachers and Students in Toowoomba, Australia

L. Dennis Woolbright*, Hisayo Yokobayashi**

<Abstract>

The purpose of this paper is to act as a preliminary report on the authors' joint research project: Developing a Program for Japanese Language Teacher Training for English Speaking Learners. This paper examines the experiences of eleven Japanese teaching assistants (JTA) in four private Catholic high schools in Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia. It presents results from 1. Interviews of the JTA concerning their inter-cultural adaptation and experiences as assistant language teachers. 2. Interviews with Australian teachers about their expectations, in and outside the classroom, of the JTA, as well as their evaluation of the overall performance of the JTA. 3. Interviews with the Australian students about their feelings about Japanese learning and the JTA.

Key words: Japanese Teaching Assistant, Japanese, LOTE, TOEFL, and inter-cultural adaptation.

Background of Japanese Education in Australia

In 2003, the Japan Foundation conducted a new survey on overseas educational institutions offering instruction in the Japanese language. Australia maintained its third place position after Korea and China with 381,954 of its 20 million population studying Japanese. Of these learners, 97% were in elementary or secondary schools. Interest in Japanese culture was listed as the main reason for studying Japanese.

All languages apart from English in the context of Australian school study are referred to as LOTE (Languages Other Than English) and Japanese occupies a unique position as the most popular foreign language. In a recent report released by the Ministry of Education, Minister of Education, Nelson stated that the Howard Government would provide \$110 million over the next four years for the teaching of languages in Australian

schools. This represents an increase of \$21 million — or 23% — over the previous four-year funding period. In mainstream schools more than 90% of the students were studying one of the following six languages — Japanese, Italian, Indonesian, French, German or Chinese.

As of February 2004, Japanese language education was being offered in eleven primary public schools and sixteen secondary schools of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia and surrounding areas. Among these sixteen high schools, ten were private Catholic high schools. Other languages taught as subjects in elementary schools were German, Indonesian, and Chinese. In high schools, languages taught other than Japanese were German and French. In the four colleges (high schools) involved in this research, there were a total of 669 students studying Japanese taught by six teachers. Japanese language study is compulsory for all year eight students after which it is an elective.

* Professor Department of Humanities Faculty of Humanities

** Professor Department of Humanities Faculty of Humanities

Purpose and Method

The purpose of this paper is to examine the experiences of Japanese teaching assistants (hereafter referred to as JTA) in four private Catholic high schools in Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia. Interviews were carried out both in Australia and Japan from September 2003 through September 2004. The subjects were eleven JTA in four private Catholic high schools in Toowoomba. All but one were junior college graduates. Only one was a graduate of a university and had previous training as a teacher of Japanese. The present report presents results from ; 1. Interviews with the JTA, to examine their adaptation to Australian life, culture, and their experiences as assistant language teachers, 2. Interviews with four Australian teachers, to examine the teacher's expectations and evaluation of the JTA, 3. Interviews with twenty-two Australian students about their feelings concerning Japanese learning and the JTA. Videotaping, tape recording and note taking were used for the interviews.

Assistant Japanese Teachers Interviews

A portion of the following survey was adapted from the one developed by Tanaka (1980, p.80). The oral interview survey was done in English although the interviewees were able to see a Japanese copy of the interview (see appendix A). A majority of the JTA had TOEFL scores in excess of 400 while the remaining scores were in the 360 ranges.

Questions on Inter-cultural Adaptation

Part I dealt with the degree of stressfulness the JTA felt in different situations. (I-1) As far as Australian communication style in everyday life was concerned a majority of JTA experienced little or no stress with the exception of one JTA who had difficulty ordering food. (I-2) In the area of interpersonal relationships with

Australians, home-stay family, students, and teachers, most JTA reported low stress levels while two JTA reported very high stress levels in interpersonal relationships with teachers. These two students had the lowest TOEFL scores. (I-3) This item dealt with speaking English in the following situations: Daily conversation topics, problems in getting information or help in English such as traveling, or talking on the telephone. The students felt very little stress in this area except for talking on the telephone, which all but one JTA reported as being very stressful. (I-4) Only one JTA reported a high level of stress about her being treated differently because of her nationality. (I-5) Getting sick in Australia was very stressful for half of the JTA. (I-6) Only two of the JTA felt much stress at being rejected, or discriminated against.

Part II dealt with how well the JTA felt they had adapted to their new surroundings in several areas. (II-1) All JTA reported adjusting well to their overall life in Australia. (II-2) Only one student reported some adjustment problems in their work as an assistant Japanese teacher. (II-3) Three JTA reported having no problem in improving their English while half said they had some problems with improving their English. Again there was a close relationship between perceived difficulty in learning English and their TOEFL scores, with those having the lower scores feeling they had more difficulty. (II-4) Except for one exception all the JTA reported no adjustment problems in understanding Australian culture. (II-5) In general the JTA felt that their physical health was fine. However one gained ten kilograms in the year she was there, while others gained an average of three kilograms. One student felt that the food and climate didn't agree with her thus she reported some problems with her physical health. (II-6) All JTA reported that their mental health was fine while they were in Australia. (II-7) The JTA reported that they felt they had adapted well in the area of getting along with other people.

In part III. JTA were given choices and asked

which described them best. (III-1) When asked which they liked, working with other people or working alone, most of the JTA reported, that they enjoyed working with other people, while two said they preferred working alone at their own pace, and one said she liked both. (III-2) When asked which they liked, staying at home more or going out more, the majority of the JTA said they enjoyed going out much more than staying at home, while two said they liked both. (III-3) All the JTA said they had more friends than before they came to Australia, with only one saying she had fewer friends than before. (III-4) All JTA reported that they needed many Australian friends. They seemed very pleased with their Australian friends.

In Part IV. The JTA were asked to what degree they experienced several different emotions. (IV-1) Most of the JTA said they felt very satisfied with the quality of their lives in Australia with one student reporting that she hadn't felt very satisfied in Australia. (IV-2) Most JTA felt very much at ease while two reported not feeling at ease. (IV-3) Only one JTA felt very homesick while most reported never feeling homesick. (IV-4) Three JTA reported often feeling irritated while most never felt irritated. (IV-5) All of the JTA felt tired at times with one feeling tired almost all the time. (IV-6) Two JTA said they never felt worried, while most said they felt worried part of the time, with one saying they felt worried most of the time. (IV-7) When asked whether they ever felt nervous (sick at your stomach, headache etc.) most JTA said they hadn't, while three said that they had felt nervous sometimes.

In Part V. The JTA were asked when feeling stress how they coped with or handled it. (V-1) Most JTA asked for advice when they were in a stressful situation, while four said they had a hard time in asking for advice. (V-2) To some degree almost all JTA changed their behavior when faced with a stressful situation, while two of them often changed their behavior to adapt to a stressful situation. (V-3) All of the JTA felt

that just accepting things as they were was the best way of adapting to a stressful situation. They seemed to have the attitude that "It can't be helped so I just accept things the way they are." (V-4) Most of the JTA often used some coping behavior when dealing with a stressful situation. (V-5) When asked if they compensated by doing something they were good at when they were in stressful situations most JTA said they did and listed, making dolls, shopping, singing, sports and writing a diary as some of the activities they did when feeling stressed. (V-6) The majority said they never cried, screamed, exploded, didn't talk to anyone or hid in their rooms. Two students said they felt like doing so at times but very rarely resorted to these behaviors.

This section suggests the possibility of a relationship between TOEFL scores and inter-cultural adjustment as the students with lower scores reported more difficulty in adjustment. However they also reported that as their English ability improved so did their ease of adjustment.

Questions on being an Assistant Language Teacher

Part VI. Asked about their work as a JTA. (VI-1) Concerning the Japanese classes in Australian schools, most of the comments were very positive. Three of the JTA simply replied, "Great!" another commented, "Sometimes the students are really immature and annoy me, but it doesn't matter. I really love them. They are good students." Several JTA expressed similar thoughts regarding grade levels, with one student saying, "It's O.K. in 11th and 12th grades. Great! They were my friends but 8th grade was terrible." One JTA said, "Teacher A's classes were always very interesting, but Teacher B's were different and it was difficult." All the JTA said their students were very cute, asked many questions and were cheerful.

(VI-2) When asked what they taught the, JTA reported a wide range of teaching activities,

including, grammar, hiragana, katakana, kanji, reading, listening, vocabulary, conversation, pronunciation, Japanese culture and communication. Some reported that they didn't teach Japanese so much, but taught Japanese culture, including food, origami, songs and other activities. The reason for such a wide variety of responses for this question may well have been due to the different teaching styles of the Australian teacher of Japanese in charge of each JTA.

(VI-3) When asked about their use of English in the classroom the JTA were widely divided, with about half saying they used English often when teaching, while others said they used only a little, and one JTA said her Australian Japanese language teacher wanted her to use only Japanese. Another JTA confessed, "I wanted to (use English) but at first I couldn't then at the last I could use more."

(VI-4) In discussing the biggest difficulty in teaching Japanese the JTA made the following observations. "I think not being able to understand English and communicate with the students is the biggest problem, so that you don't make mistakes and tell them the wrong information, because of your not being able to communicate in English." Others reported problems such as not knowing Japanese grammar points very much, teaching articles, not being aware of the students grade level and the student's different attitudes at different levels, and difficulty teaching correct Japanese and culture.

(VI-5) The following are the JTA self-evaluations in five different areas.

- A. Japanese teaching ability : The JTA were evenly divided, half thinking there was no problem and the other half thinking they were poor to very poor at teaching Japanese.
- B. Knowledge of the Japanese language : Three of the JTA felt they had enough Japanese language knowledge while the rest felt they needed much more Japanese language knowledge.
- C. Knowledge of Japanese culture : One JTA said "Now I know a little bit, but I didn't

know much before I went to Australia." Most thought they had sufficient knowledge of Japanese culture.

D. How to teach Japanese culture : Three JTA admitted to not knowing how to teach Japanese culture, while the majority said it was no problem.

E. How to manage or control the class : Responses were quite insightful and depended on a variety of factors such as, the school, grade level and the Australian teacher's teaching style : "That's really difficult, cause you know, I am not Australian, near their same age and a woman so maybe they don't think I'm a good teacher." "My students are very nice so if I ask them to do something they try to do that." "They are always talking so it is difficult." "Yes, it was really difficult." "The teacher controlled them so I didn't need to." "No, I couldn't do that." However several JTA said student behavior was good and they had no problems.

(VI-6) In making an effort to teach Japanese, the JTA felt the following were the most important points to remember. Don't care too much about the students making mistakes. Know more and more about Japanese culture and language. Have a good Japanese vocabulary. Teach the rhythm of Japanese. Try to make the classes interesting and fun for the students. Smile!

JTA Advice to Future Japanese Teaching Assistants

(VI-7) The following is some advice given to future Japanese Language Assistants by the eleven JTA :

1. a. It is better to study Australian slang words before they come. b. Don't care about your English ability. c. Don't be scared.
2. a. Please study very hard about your own culture. b. Learn more English words. c. Please be positive.
3. a. Take care of your health. b. Keep your stress down. c. Smile.

4. a. Learn more Japanese culture. b. Learn more English c. Learn more about the culture of the country you are going to teach in.
5. a. Be "genki" (lively) b. Have good knowledge of Japanese culture. c. Know Japanese grammar.
6. a. Smile, b. Know Japanese culture c. Have Japanese language skills.
7. a. Smile b. Don't worry about your English. c. Read about Japanese culture.
8. a. Keep smiling. c. Be outgoing c. Keep good communication with students
9. a. Enjoy yourself b. Learn lots of information on Japan. c. Learn language and culture
10. a. Bring a jacket. b. Smile c. Keep doing something to keep yourself up.
11. a. Study English more b. Do some extra activities. c. Learn correct Japanese.

The JTA seemed to feel that overall they had adjusted quite well to their circumstances and felt comfortable with their work. They have come to think that a smile, knowledge of Japanese language and culture are very essential to becoming a good JTA.

Classroom observation and Interviews with Australian Teachers

In the classroom observations of all four high schools we found that the teachers seemed to be capable language teachers with good Japanese proficiency. It was interesting to see the variety of teaching styles and classroom atmospheres.

The teachers were former French or German teachers who had all taught Japanese for over fifteen years. Most had changed languages, because of the demand for more Japanese teachers and less demand for French or German teachers. They attended training sessions to gain fluency and all had spent some time in Japan studying their new language. There was one native Japanese teacher who established and has coordinated the Japanese program in the Catholic private school system in Toowoomba since 1988.

Activities of JTA in four Catholic High Schools

In Part I and II of the Australian teacher interviews we were interested in just how JTA were used in the four different high schools. We used a modified form of the list of activities preformed by JTA in the Melbourne area prepared by Asaoka (1981, 1987) in Neustupny (1992 : 201) for the recorded interviews with the Australian language teachers in charge. (See Appendix B)

In Part I of the interview the Australian language teacher in charge was asked if and to what extent JTA preformed the following activities in the classroom :

1. Act as a model of correct pronunciation. All teachers except the Japanese native speaker reported always using the JTA for this activity.
2. Correct student's pronunciation. Teachers said the JTA only occasionally correct pronunciation of the students.
3. Conduct oral exercises. Some teachers said the JTA did this, but most said not often.
4. Take part in conversation in small groups. All but one of the teachers reported using this activity. The native Japanese teacher used it most frequently.
5. Conduct comprehension exercises for final examinations. Two of the teachers reported that JTA did this while two said they did not.
6. Play games with students. All teachers reported JTA often do this activity.
7. Present new kana and kanji. All JTA performed this activity frequently.
8. Tell students traditional Japanese stories. The Japanese native teacher used his JTA for this activity often while the Australian teachers rarely used their JTA for this activity
9. Teach Japanese songs, dances, and origami. This type of activity was widely used.
10. Show Japanese films, commenting on them

and answering students' questions. Two of the Australian teachers never used their JTA for this kind of activity while the native Japanese teacher and one Australian teacher sometimes did.

11. Demonstrate Japanese cooking, tea ceremony, and calligraphy. This seemed to depend on personality and skill of the JTA in this area. Some JTA often presented traditional Japanese culture while others did very little.
12. Maintaining discipline in the classroom. All Australian Japanese language teachers reported that the JTA were never called on to maintain student's discipline while the Japanese native language teacher often called on his JTA to maintain discipline in class.

In Part II the Australian language teacher in charge was asked if and to what extent JTA performed the following activities outside the classroom:

1. Record tapes for comprehension exercises. Most of the JTA did this, but one teacher said, "No because she is always there. I just love having an assistant ; it is the best way to teach."
2. Produce various types of handouts for classes. All teachers often had their JTA do this. Some were also in charge of making Japanese newsletters.
3. Produce questions for exercises, tests etc. JTA were not often asked to do this.
4. Mark compositions and assignments. JTA were asked to mark compositions and assignments but usually with the Australian teachers.
5. Guide students who participate in Japanese speech contests. JTA were asked to do this if there was a student who participated in a Japanese speech contest.
6. Prepare games. JTA were sometimes asked to prepare games.
7. Accompany students to a Japanese restaurant. Most JTA did this.
8. Prepare Japanese exhibits for the school festival and open campus. All JTA were asked to prepare the Japanese classroom for "Open Days".
9. Attend language camps with advanced students. No
10. Help Australian teachers practice Japanese conversation. Australian teachers reported that this was not done in any formal way. One teacher reported, "Yes, sometimes, just for fun a couple of teachers on staff (have a Japanese conversation). I have her speak Japanese to me because it is good for my Japanese, doesn't threaten her to always use English and best of all it is good for the students to see their teacher model her communication skills."
11. Respond to inquiries by Australian teachers concerning the Japanese language, culture, and society. This seemed to depend on the Australian teacher and the JTA.
12. Participate in teacher's meetings. JTA sometimes attended the morning gathering or teatime but did not actually attend formal faculty meetings.
13. Participate in teacher's seminar. No

Some additional activities Australian teachers reported that the JTA were used for were, tutoring Japanese exchange students and socializing through casual chats with the students, so they could get to know a Japanese person. From our observations and the teachers' responses we found the major activity performed by the JTA was modeling the Japanese language in conversation and writing. JTA are also used, as sources for helping students understand current Japanese culture and society. To do so it is necessary for them to have some degree of socio-cultural competence and sociolinguistic knowledge.

Evaluation of Japanese Teaching Assistants by Teachers

In Part III of the Australian language teacher interview, we asked the teachers to evaluate their JTA by answering the following questions.

1. When asked if the JTA had been helpful this

year, all teachers said their JTA had been very helpful using adjectives such as "fabulous" and statements like, "I couldn't evaluate her highly enough."

2. In evaluating the JTAs' teaching skills, they all reported that they did not use their JTA as Japanese language teachers but as assistants. The native Japanese language teacher said that if a student was interested in becoming a language teacher that he helped train her. Most of the Australian Japanese language teachers felt that it would be better if the JTA had more training before coming to Australia.
3. In the evaluation of the knowledge and teaching ability of Japanese culture most teachers reported that at first the JTAs' English proficiency was not sufficient so it was hard for them to teach Japanese culture, but as the year progressed they became better.
4. The strengths of the JTA mentioned were, ability to interact, able to manage different age levels, very kind, patient, conscientious, works hard, outgoing cooperative, easy going, pleasant, and the ability to interact but kept a good distance.
5. The weaknesses mentioned most often were, shyness, quietness, lack of confidence, lack of initiative, no sense of pace, and failure to keep the interest up in the classroom.
6. All Australian teachers reported that the students absolutely loved their JTA.

Qualities of a Successful Japanese Teaching Assistant

In Part IV, the following qualities were pointed out as important factors in being a successful JTA.

Teacher A : 1. Be able to listen to what we are asking for. 2. Outgoing personality. 3. Being prepared to work. 4. It is not a holiday, so she should have initiative. Teacher A made the following comment. "The younger students see her

as an adult but I think she had trouble seeing herself as an adult. We have the expectation that they will behave as adults with adult expectations and they don't see themselves that way. Students expect them to be adults."

Teacher B : 1. Be enthusiastic. 2. Be eager. 3. Be conscientious.

Teacher C : 1. Kindness. 2. Good knowledge of Japanese and willingness to use Japanese in class. 3. Cooperation (pleased to do whatever is required), outgoing (able to connect with the boys), initiative. 4. It is best if they have had some teacher training.

Teacher D : 1. Be able to talk about Japanese culture in English. 2. Motivation is most important. 3. It is best if the JTA is interested in becoming a teacher.

These evaluations are very subjective and depend on many factors including school setting, personality match and teaching style. They give some possible clues for developing an appropriate Japanese teacher-training program.

Australian Japanese Student Interviews

Almost all of the Australian students that we interviewed expressed an interest in studying Japanese, because it is an exciting new experience. Some mentioned wanting to be able to communicate with Japanese exchange students and visitors who came to their the school. They also said it was an international language and thought they would be able to use it in the future because it was "good for business". Several students expressed an interest in being an assistant English teacher in Japan after graduation from university.

Most students liked having a textbook and workbook. Some students showed a preference for project-centered Japanese study so that they could study things that were interesting and related to their own lives. They wanted classes with a lot of activities. Some had studied other languages and said they preferred to study Japanese rather than another language. Most students thought that

two hours a week outside class was enough time to study Japanese. They thought that studying particles was the most difficult part of learning Japanese.

The students thought that the ideal Japanese teacher was someone they could relate to and had a good personality. They said a good teacher should be good at Japanese and have a good sense of humor. Many thought the good teacher should be able to recognize the students' level and work with students at their own individual level.

The students all enjoyed working with the JTA for many different reasons. They served as a substitute teachers, were always there to help students with problems and the JTA could explain things in different ways. They also felt that the JTA could help them with their pronunciation because she is a native speaker.

Conclusion

The teaching of Japanese culture is listed as one of the most important aspects of teaching Japanese in the LOTE program in Australia. This, along with the large student teacher ratio makes the use of Japanese teaching assistants invaluable. Of course there are many valuable teaching materials such as texts, tapes and videos available to the Australian teacher, but a JTA serves to bring the language and the culture alive for the student. The JTA in this study have had little to no training as Japanese language teachers, but they were able to serve as effective language assistants. As mentioned earlier in this paper a wide variety of settings, and personal teaching styles accounted for the great variation as to how the JTA were used and evaluated by the Australian teacher in charge.

Most Australian language teachers don't expect the JTA to be trained as Japanese language teachers. Neustupny (1992, p.209) suggests that there is no need for training in grammar or linguistics for teaching assistants but the training they take should be simple and specific. He further stresses that training in language teaching is

not a bad thing but that it is not absolutely necessary. He suggested that the following points should be included in training Japanese language teaching assistants.

1. The nature of human interaction, with particular attention to communication.
2. The difference between native and contact situations.
3. The nature of foreigner talk.
4. Language, communication and interaction problems.
5. The society and culture, including the education system of the country in which they will be active.
6. How to behave as JTA

Most Australian teachers felt that some training in Japanese language teaching would be very helpful. Training also needs to be done in the areas of interpersonal communication, cross-cultural understanding, English, and Japanese culture. Overcoming shyness and knowing their role in the classroom is also a very important aspect of training.

This being a preliminary report, it is important to note that among other areas of further research, an analysis on the discrepancy between the assistants' views and those of the teachers concerning the understanding of JTA roles and their evaluation is necessary in the future.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions For Assistant Japanese Language Teachers

I. Please tell me on a scale from 1-5 how stressful the following things were for you: with 1 being very stressful and 5 being not at all stressful.

1. The Australian communication style in the following situations. Everyday life. Shopping, eating out, etc.
2. Interpersonal relationships with Australians; Home stay family, students, teachers.
3. Speaking English; Daily conversation topics; Problems getting information or help in English such as traveling, or telephone; Chances to practice English
4. Being treated differently because you were Japanese.
5. Getting sick in Australia.
6. Being rejected, or discriminated against because you were a Japanese.

II. On a scale from 1-4 how well did you adapt to the following areas with 1 being well adapted and 4 being not very well adapted.

1. Your life in Australia.
2. Your work as an Assistant Japanese Teacher.
3. Improving your English.
4. Understanding Australian culture.
5. Your physical health.
6. Your mental health
7. Getting along with other people.

III. Which describes you best?

1. I like to work with other people. Or I like to work alone at my pace.
2. I like staying at home more. Or I like going out more.
3. I have more friends than before coming to Australia Or I have fewer friends than before.

4. I needed many Australian friends. Or I didn't need many Australian friends.

IV. Did you ever feel the following? On a scale from 1-4 with 1, I strongly felt this way and 4 being, I never felt this way.

1. Satisfied
2. Very much at ease
3. Homesick
4. Irritated
5. Tired
6. Worried
7. Nervous (sick at your stomach, headache etc.)

V. When you felt stress how did you handle it?

On a scale from 1-4 with 1. Being, I often did this and 4. Being, I never did this.

1. I asked for help or advice.
2. I changed my own behavior (self), I adapt.
3. I accepted things the way they are.
4. I used some coping behavior, listened to music, took a bath, ate etc.
5. I compensated by doing something I'm good at like sports, sewing, singing etc.
6. I cried, screamed, exploded, didn't talk to anyone, hid in my room.

VI. About your job as an Assistant Japanese Language Teacher.

1. What did you think of the Japanese classes in your Australian school?
2. What did you teach your students?
3. Did you use a lot of English when you were teaching your Japanese classes?
4. Tell me what was the biggest difficulty that you had teaching Japanese?
5. How do you evaluate yourself in the following areas?
 - A. Japanese teaching ability
 - B. Knowledge of the Japanese Language
 - C. Knowledge of Japanese culture
 - D. How to teach Japanese culture
 - E. How to manage or control the class
6. In making an effort to teach Japanese what

is the most important thing to do?

7. Give three pieces of advice to a future Assistant Japanese Language teacher.

Appendix B

Interview for Toowoomba Australian Teachers of Japanese about Seinan Jo Gakuin's Japanese Language Teaching Assistants (TA)
General impression as well as Class performance evaluation.

I Which of the following activities did your TA do and to what extent did they do them?

13. Act as a model of correct pronunciation
14. Correct student's pronunciation
15. Conduct oral exercises
16. Take part in conversation in small groups
17. Conduct comprehension exercises for final examinations
18. Play games with students
19. Present new kana and kanji
20. Tell students traditional Japanese stories
21. Teach Japanese songs, dances, and origami
22. Show Japanese films, commenting on them and answering students' questions
23. Demonstrate Japanese cooking, tea, ceremony, and calligraphy
24. Maintaining discipline in the classroom

II Which of the following work outside the classroom did your TA do?

14. Record tapes for comprehension exercises
15. Produce various types of handouts for classes
16. Produce questions for exercises, tests etc.
17. Mark compositions and assignments
18. Guide students who participate in Japanese speech contests
19. Prepare games
20. Accompany students to a Japanese restaurant
21. Supervising students
22. Attend language camps with advanced

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students

23. Help Australian teachers practice Japanese conversation
24. Respond to inquiries by Australian teachers concerning Japanese language, culture, and society.
25. Participate in teacher's meetings
26. Participate in teacher's seminars

III TA Evaluation

7. Do you think having a Teaching Assistant has been helpful this year?
8. How would you evaluate her Japanese lan-

guage teaching skills?

9. How would you evaluate her knowledge and teaching ability of Japanese Culture?
10. How would you evaluate her English speaking skills?
11. What were the strengths of your Teaching Assistant this year?
12. What were her weaknesses?
13. Did your students enjoy having your TA in the classroom?

IV In your opinion what are the most important three qualities of a successful TA?

報告

日本語アシスタントに関する調査報告
—オーストラリア、クィーンズランド州、トゥーンバにおける
アシスタント、教員、学生との面接調査から—

デニス・ウールブライト* 横林 宙世**

<要 旨>

本論は両筆者の共同研究「英語圏学習者を対象とする日本語教員の養成に関する基礎的研究」において2003年度に実施した調査研究結果の一部についての報告である。

本稿では英語圏の学校での日本語アシスタント（以下、アシスタント）の現状と問題点を考察するため、オーストラリア、クィーンズランド州、トゥーンバの4つの私立中高一貫校のアシスタントを対象として実施した授業観察、アシスタント、教員、生徒への面接調査の結果を考察した。授業観察は実地調査日にアシスタントであった4名について行った。面接調査は以下の3種である。1. アシスタントの滞在地での適応とアシスタントとしての経験についての面接調査。2. 教室内外でのアシスタントの役割とその評価に関するオーストラリア教員への面接調査。3. 日本語学習およびアシスタントについての生徒への面接調査。

これらの調査からアシスタントに必要とされる資質や能力、態度などが示唆された。

キーワード：日本語アシスタント 日本語 LOTE TOEFL 異文化適応

* 人文学部 人文学科 教授

** 人文学部 人文学科 教授