

Setting Standards for Japanese



Kate Green from the DfES addresses the Roundtable

As the development of standards for foreign language learning gathers pace around the world, inspiring projects such as the EU's Common European Framework of Reference, the Japan Foundation has taken the lead in an initiative designed to explore the options for establishing standards in Japanese language education.

The latest Japan Foundation Survey shows that the number of people studying Japanese worldwide reached 2.36 million in 2003. The fact that over 60% of learners are currently of school age has meant that the reasons for studying the language are changing, with an interest in Japanese culture and a desire to communicate being increasingly important motivating factors. Ensuring a smooth transition between different sectors has also become a pressing issue.

Against this background, the Japan Foundation decided to revise the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), which was taken by more than 300,000 students last year. It is hoped to make the test more accessible to learners by increasing the emphasis on communicative skills and demonstrating what candidates will be able to accomplish with each level of proficiency attained.

As part of this process, it was felt that there was a need to research the standards that currently exist in the teaching and testing of foreign languages and how these relate to proficiency assessment. In order to explore these and other related issues, The Japan Foundation decided to host three International Roundtables in the Financial Year 2005, with the process due to culminate in a public symposium at which the results will be summarised.

The first Roundtable, held in May, was attended by prominent academics and experts in the field from the US, Australia, South Korea, China and Europe.

Participants explored new ideas for formulating national curricula and standards with an emphasis on communicative ability,

as well as reviewing leading examples of proficiency assessment tests reflecting those standards. As part of this process Kate Green, Project Director of The Languages Ladder at the UK's Department for Education and Skills (DfES), gave a presentation on the National Recognition Scheme launched in May. Discussion then focused on identifying key issues for setting proficiency and assessment standards for Japanese.

Centre Director Harufumi Murata, who participated in the first Roundtable, described it as a very significant event for the future of Japanese language education. "Given the current trend for establishing frameworks for the learning and teaching of foreign languages around the world, it is important for Japan to be involved in this process and to develop standards for Japanese which reflect the needs and interests of learners."

EUのCEFにみられるように、外国語学習のスタンダード(基準)の開発が世界中で進められています。国際交流基金も日本語教育の共通基準構築にむけて動き出しました。

国際交流基金海外日本語教育機関調査(2003年)によると、世界の日本語学習者数は約236万人にのぼり、その60%以上は初・中等教育の学習者です。学習動機も日本文化への関心や日本語によるコミュニケーションに変わりつつあるといえるでしょう。また、早急に解決すべき問題として、それぞれの教育段階間での連携が指摘されています。

このような状況を踏まえ、国際交流基金は日本語能力検定試験(JLPT、昨年

は30万人が受験)の改訂を決めました。コミュニケーション能力を重視し、日本語の到達レベルとの関係を示すことで、学習者にとって利用しやすくしようというものです。

JLPTの改訂を進めていく中で、外国語の指導とテストについて現在ある基準とこの両者と外国語能力の評価がいかに関連しているかということ調査する必要があると考えられました。そこで、国際交流基金では、2005年度に3回にわたって国際会議を実施することになりました。最終的には一般公開シンポジウムを開催し、成果をまとめる予定です。

5月に開かれた第1回ラウンドテーブルには、米国、豪州、韓国、中国、ヨーロッパの著名な専門家の方々が出席。コミュニケーション能力を重視した国際レベルのカリキュラムや基準の開発をめぐる新しい考え方と、この基準を反映した外国語能力評価テストの先例について話し合いました。英国教育技能省からもKate Greenが英国の外国語能力認証制度ランゲージラダーについて発表しました。その後、日本語の能力と評価の基準を設定するにあたっての問題点が話し合われました。

第1回ラウンドテーブルに参加した村田春文主幹は、現在外国語学習と指導の共通基準構築に向けた世界的動向があることを考えると、日本がこの流れに乗って、日本語の学習者のニーズと関心を反映した日本語のスタンダードを構築することはとても重要なことだと述べています。

The Power of Speech

YOUNG LEARNERS COMPETE IN NIHONGO CUP



Young learners of Japanese from around the UK gathered at the Embassy on April 23 to compete in the Finals of the second annual Japanese Speech Contest for Secondary Schools (Nihongo Cup).

Co-organised by the Japanese Language Committee (JLC) of the Association for Language Learning, the Embassy of Japan and the Japan Foundation London, the event provided the opportunity for 18 finalists, selected from more than 100 entrants, to present their speeches on the theme of 'Friends.' In the audience were more than 120 fellow pupils, parents, teachers and key figures from the language and Japan-related fields.

Participants were divided into three categories according to their year group. Stephanie Tress from Kingston Grammar School won the Key Stage 3 category, with Paul Whitling from South Wolds School coming second and Nerina Orton from Tile Hill Wood School in third place.

First prize in the Key Stage 4 category was awarded to Miriam Starling from Hendon School, with Josh Campion from South Wolds and Edward Sargent from Katharine Lady Berkeley's School in second and third place respectively.

This year, a Key Stage 5 category, for pupils aged 16 to 18, was added for the first time, thanks to collaboration with the Japanese Speech Awards (JSA). The winner in this category was Lee Anderson from Harris City Technology College, with Victor Chuah from Dame Alice Owen's School coming second and Sandeep Mohan from Queen Mary's High School in third place.

All first prize winners received engraved trophies to be kept by their schools for a year, in addition

to notebook computers donated by Toshiba and gold medals. Those in second place won digital cameras donated by Ricoh UK Ltd and silver medals, while third prize winners received electronic dictionaries courtesy of JP-Books (UK) Ltd, who also donated goody bags to all Key Stage 5 finalists, and bronze medals. All finalists and reserves went home with a range of items from the Embassy of Japan.

In addition to these prizes, Lee Anderson was delighted to win the chance to participate in the JSA Cultural Programme in Japan. "It has always been my dream to go there," he later commented. "I have never travelled further than France so it's a wonderful opportunity for me to experience Japan for myself and to use my spoken Japanese." Lee, who took up Japanese at the age of 15, was initially attracted by its difference to European languages and by the writing system. Learning the language deepened his interest in the culture and he plans to continue studying Japanese at university level and to go on to a career in translating, interpreting or linguistic science. "I couldn't believe it when I won my category, because I had paused a few times and thought that would have lost me the contest, though I felt I answered the questions afterwards quite well - I had practised this part with my teacher every day," he said. "The Nihongo Cup definitely gave me the incentive to work on my spoken Japanese because most of my course focused on reading, writing and listening."

In his speech to participants, Guest of Honour Dr Lid King, National Director for Languages, posed the question of what motivates young people to learn languages. "There are many reasons," he suggested, "but underlying it all is the theme of today's contest, friendship. Through language you can make friends and explore opportunities that you would never otherwise have."

NEW CONTEST FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Application forms are now available for the *Speech Contest for University Students*, launched by the British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language (BATJ) and the JFLLC to promote and improve Japanese speaking skills at higher education level.

The contest is open to undergraduates studying Japanese on an accredited course at universities in the UK and Ireland, provided that they have not spent more than three years living in Japan or more than one year attending a Japanese school (nursery, primary or secondary). The deadline for entry is November 20, 2005.

All applicants will be contacted by a native Japanese speaker, who will conduct a telephone interview consisting of general conversation and subjects such as your interest in and experience of Japan and the Japanese language. There is no need to have prepared your speech at this point, but it would be useful to have some idea about what you plan to talk about.

Eight candidates will then be selected and invited to the finals of the contest, which take place at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, on Saturday January 28, 2006. Finalists will be invited to make a 10-minute speech in Japanese on a subject of their

choice, to be followed by 5 minutes of questions and answers. Awards will be made for the first, second and third positions, with the first prize winner receiving a return flight to Japan, £1000 to cover accommodation and a Japan Rail Pass. Second and third prizes will be a laptop computer and a digital camera respectively.

Further information about the contest can be found on the websites www.jpjpf.org.uk and www.batj.org.uk. To request an application form, contact the JFLLC by calling 020 7436 6698 or sending an email to: speechcontest@jpf.org.uk.

SIR PETER PARKER AWARDS

As the Sir Peter Parker Awards for Spoken Business Japanese reach their 15th year, the format and timing of the contest have been reviewed. As a result, this year's event, jointly organised by SOAS and JETRO (Japan External Trade Organisation), will take place on Wednesday November 9. The contest will now be targeted at postgraduate students and those who use Japanese in their professional lives, while undergraduates will be catered for by the new *Speech Contest for University Students*, described above. For further details on the Sir Peter Parker Awards, log on to www.soas.ac.uk/languagecentre/japanese/sppa.

ANNUAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

Training Programmes in Japan for Teachers of Japanese

A unique opportunity to improve your Japanese language skills and teaching methodology at the Japan Foundation's Japanese Language Institute in Urawa. There are three programmes for non-native speaking teachers - 6-month courses (once a year); 2-month courses (three times a year), and a 3-week summer course. There is also a 1-month course for native-speaking teachers. A 2-month advanced course, catering for both native and non-native speaking teachers with advanced Japanese and teaching skills, was introduced in 2003.

Japanese Language Programmes for Specialists

These programmes are designed for people who need Japanese language skills for vocational or academic purposes. Intensive language training is provided in Japan with curricula tailor-made for each different vocational or academic speciality. The Programme for Librarians is 6 months, while Researchers and Postgraduate students have a choice of 2, 4 and 8-month courses.

Materials Donation Programme

This scheme enables educational institutions teaching Japanese to apply for a wide variety of teaching resources including textbooks, dictionaries, cassettes and flashcards.

Salary Assistance Programme

Designed to help create new full-time teaching positions at universities and other higher education institutions teaching the Japanese language, this programme provides salary assistance for up to three years.

Japanese Language Education Fellowship Programme

Open to educational institutions and publishers who wish to develop Japanese language materials, this scheme enables one author to stay at Urawa for up to 8 months, or a team of two writers to stay for up to 3 months. Round trip airfare and monthly stipend included.

Assistance Programme for Japanese Language Teaching Materials

Open to publishers and educational institutions, this programme supports the production of resource materials in various media by covering up to a quarter of the total publishing costs. Materials must already be written at the time of application.

Support Programme for Developing Networks of Japanese Language Teachers and Institutions

Provides partial aid for seminars, workshops, training courses, and academic meetings relating to Japanese language education carried out by overseas teachers' associations, academic societies and higher educational and research institutions, for the purpose of developing networks of Japanese language teachers and institutions outside Japan.

Japanese Speech Contest Support Programme

Local non-profit groups can apply for grants to cover part of the cost of hall rental and prizes (not cash) for Japanese language speech contests.

The application deadline for all the programmes listed above is Thursday December 1, 2005. Application forms can be downloaded from www.jpjpf.go.jp/e/about/program/japan.html. Please contact us to confirm your eligibility before sending in application forms.



Teacher's Page



みなさん、こんにちは！夏休みは
 どうでしたか。日本語の先生も夏休
 みはゆっくり休んで、リフレッシュ
 したことと思います。さて、みなさ
 んの生徒さんたちはどうでしょう
 か？夏休みは、自由ないろいろな
 ことを経験したり、考えたり、若
 い人たちにとっても大切な休みで
 すね。今回のTeacher's Pagesは、
 ある中学生の悩み相談を読解文に
 してみました。先月と同様、今月も
 GCSEぐらいのレベルです。さあ、
 日本人中学生たくやくんの悩みを
 よ読んで、生徒たちとついに解決
 方法を考えてあげてください。

Hello everyone! I hope all of you feel refreshed after the summer holidays. What about your pupils? With enough time for them to experience many different things for themselves, the long break is important for young people's personal development. For this issue's Teacher's Pages, I have prepared a reading task in the form of a Problem Page dealing with dilemmas that teenagers face. We continue to focus on GCSE-level resources, but this activity can also be adapted for AS students. So, take a look at Takuya's predicament and see if you and your pupils can come up with a solution for him.

Dealing with Dilemmas

Aims

- 1 To practise reading comprehension, in particular:
 - expressions used to explain a situation
 - expressions for giving advice
- 2 To revise a range of GCSE grammar structures in context
- 3 To learn about the types of problems faced by Japanese teenagers

Level

GCSE, AS

Procedure

- 1 Have a classroom discussion in English about what kind of problems or dilemmas pupils have come across in the past.
- 2 Pre-teach any difficult vocabulary, giving pupils an idea of the themes that will come up in the reading passage on page 5.
- 3 Ask pupils to look at the first part of the text (Problem). Read it together and ask them to answer comprehension questions 1 – 4.
- 4 Discuss as a class what kind of advice might be given in this case.
- 5 Ask pupils to look at the second part of the text (Advice). Read it together and ask them to answer comprehension questions 5 – 7. Answers to questions on page 5 can be found on our website.
- 6 Discuss as a class how advice given may differ according to cultural context.

Extension

- Get pupils to write advice for Takuya in Japanese, encouraging them to think about how he might be feeling. Read out a selection of work.

- AS/A2 pupils should try writing advice using the conditional:

～たら／～ば

e.g. たくやくんはファーストフードの店で勉強したらいいと思います。

もっとよく話し合えば、お兄さんはしずかになると思います。

- Ask pupils to make a note of some possible dilemmas (these do not have to be real personal problems!). In groups of three, take turns to explain the problem, with the other two offering advice.

Background notes

- Many pupils in Japan use fast-food and family restaurants, as well as public libraries, as a place to get some work done. In addition to burger bars, there are many self-service coffee shops these days. Such places often have the advantage of being air-conditioned in the summer, as well as being open from early in the morning until late.
- In Japan, relations with family and friends, love life and school work are the source of most young people's problems. When they need advice, they tend to turn to close friends rather than parents and teachers. These days many people post their problems on internet chat rooms, perhaps because it's easier to ask strangers for advice.
- Entrance exams for senior high school and university usually take place between January and February. To be able to get into their first-choice school or university, pupils need to start studying the previous summer.

Structures

V-たり、V-たりします	V-たほうがいいです
V-dic.ことができます	……から、……。
V-てください	……かもしれません (AS)
iAdj.-くて、……。	……しなければなりません (AS)

Vocabulary

なやみ		problem/dilemma
アドバイス		advice
じゅけん生	じゅけんせい	exam candidate
入学しけん	にゅうがくしけん	entrance exam
わがままな		selfish
なかがわるい		on bad terms
ロックバンド		rock band
しかる		to scold, tell off
中3 (中学3年生)	ちゅうがくさんねんせい	third year, junior high school
男子	だんし	boy
ファーストフード		fast food

Dealing with Dilemmas

中学3年生のたくやくんのなやみとアドバイスを読んでください。

なやみ「家で勉強ができません！」

はじめまして。ぼくは中学3年生で、じゅけん生です。もうすぐ高校の入学しけんをうけます。いい高校に行きたいですから、学校でも家でもよく勉強しなければなりません。

でも、ぼくにはわがままな兄がいます。ぼくたちはなかがわるくて、よくけんかします。兄は高校1年生です。ロックバンドに入っていて、毎日、音楽を大きい音で聞いたり、ギターの練習をしたりします。ぼくの家は小さいですから、うるさくて、うるさくて、ぼくはぜんぜん勉強することができません。

ぼくは兄に何回もうるさいと言いました。そして母も兄をきびしくしました。でも兄はおこって、もっと大きい音で音楽を聞きました。

今、ぼくはぜんぜん勉強ができません。いい高校に行くことができないかもしれません。ほんとうにしんばいです。いいアドバイスをおねがいします。

(たくや 中3 男子)

アドバイス「ほかの場所を見つけましょう」

たくやくん、入学しけんの勉強はたいへんですね。お兄さんがたくやくんの勉強のじゃまをして、ほんとうにこまりますね。勉強を家ですることができませんから、家の外にもっといい場所を見つけたほうがいいです。たとえば、ファーストフードの店はどうですか。ファーストフードの店は食べ物や飲み物を買わなければなりません、安いんです。そして夜10時ごろまであいています。お母さんにもよく話して、家の外で勉強してください。がんばってくださいね。

質問

1. たくやくんは、なぜいっしょうけんめい勉強しますか。
2. たくやくんは、なぜ家で勉強することができませんか。
3. たくやくんとお母さんが話したあとで、お兄さんはしずかになりましたか。
4. お兄さんはどんな人ですか。
5. たくやくんはどんなアドバイスをもらいましたか。
6. なぜファーストフードの店はいいですか。
7. あなたはたくやくんにどんなアドバイスをしたいですか。





BATJ Update

The British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language (BATJ) was set up in 1998 with the aim of encouraging and promoting Japanese language education in the UK, particularly at higher education level. BATJ organises a wide range of activities for teachers of

Japanese, many of which are presented together with the JFLLC – see page 3 for details of the Speech Contest for University Students, a recent joint initiative.

The 8th BATJ Annual Conference was held at Cardiff University from 2 to 3 September. The event was very successful, attracting over 50 enthusiastic participants from Ireland, Turkey and Japan as well as the UK.

In addition to a series of presentations on topics of interest to teachers of Japanese, the keynote speech was made by Dr Yukiko Abe Hatasa, Associate Professor at the University of Iowa. Addressing the theme 'Form-focused instruction in the communicative language classroom,' Dr Hatasa discussed the ways in which learners acquire grammar in classroom settings, focusing in particular on grammar instruction, communicative tasks and interaction, and corrective feedback. A lecture was also given by Dr Gordon Tucker from Cardiff University, on 'Thinking Functionally and Systemically About Language in the Language Learning/Teaching Context.'

Full details of the conference will be available in the next BATJ Newsletter, due to be published in November. Membership of BATJ is open to individuals who support the Association's aims, and in principle those who are engaged in Japanese language education in the UK. For further information about how to become a member, please visit the website (see below for address).

To find out more about BATJ's activities, please visit www.batj.org.uk or contact the Chair, Kazuki Morimoto, at: Department of East Asian Studies, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT; tel: 0113 343 3460; fax: 0113 343 6741; email: kazuki_bueno@hotmail.com.

JLC News

The Japanese Language Committee (JLC) was pleased to see many of you at the Nihongo Cup Finals in April. Please see page 3 for a full report.

Among the Committee's recent activities was a workshop for primary school teachers, organised jointly with the JFLLC and held at York St John College. The event was designed to respond to interest from schools in introducing Japanese at this level, reflecting the government's policy to encourage the study of languages from an earlier age.

Anne Rajakumar, who presented the workshop together with Kornelia Achrafie from the JFLLC, provides the following report:

"We were delighted that as many as 20 Japanese teachers and related professionals attended the workshop on the introduction and teaching of Japanese at primary level.

Kornelia began by describing the various agencies, including the JFLLC, Japan 21, the Embassy of Japan and the British Council, who can support the teaching of Japanese at primary level. She also introduced *Tobu*, the interactive on-line Japanese teaching programme developed by the BBC and the Japan Foundation.

I then demonstrated teaching techniques, which have proved successful in motivating primary Japanese learners, including the use of vocabulary flashcards in a variety of games and some simple ways to make these using the internet. I also presented songs to support vocabulary learning and demonstrated a simple technique for creating Japanese language teaching songs.

The response from teachers to the workshop was very positive and participants were particularly surprised by the extent of support available for teaching Japanese at primary level."

JLC, as part of the Association for Language Learning, aims to represent the views of Japanese language teachers at schools and colleges in the UK. To find out more, log on to the website at www.jlcweb.org.uk or contact the Chair, David Farrell (rdfarrell@aol.com; tel: 028 9332 2610).

Summer Diary

As usual at this time of year, there is a considerable amount of activity to report in the Japanese language teaching world. To keep you up-to-date, here are just some of the changes and developments that we have heard about.

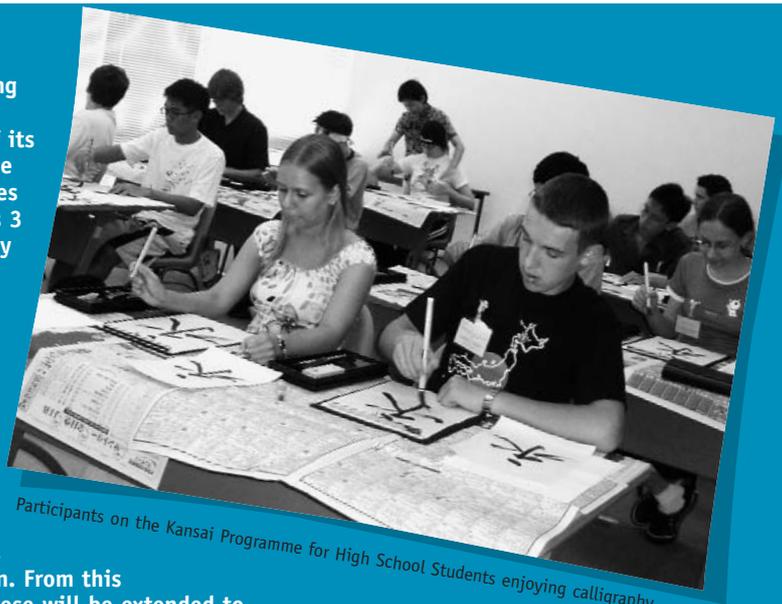
Tanja Rees (previously based at Dartford Grammar) joins Whitgift's Japanese Department this term. Whitgift offered IB standard level Japanese for the first time this academic year, with the first cohort due to sit the exam in May 2006. Tom Bond, one of the pupils following the IB course, won a place on the Kansai Programme for High School Students (see photo) and spent two weeks in Japan during the summer.

South Wolds School's teaching of Japanese is becoming more and more extensive with courses being provided this term for Years 7 (Beginners), 8, 9, 10, 12 (both AS and Beginners) and 13. The majority of

pupils are studying the WJEC Level 1 course. As part of its outreach work, the school also teaches Japanese to Years 3 to 6 at Willoughby Primary School.

At Queen Mary's High School in Walsall, Jane Rutherford has been promoted to Language College Director and a new Japanese teacher, Sachiko Okumura, has been taken on. From this September, Japanese will be extended to two classes per year group starting with Year 7, which in the long run will double the number of entries for Japanese.

Japanese continues to move forward in leaps and bounds at Jack Hunt School in Peterborough, from where Alison Safadi reports that, for the first time next year, pupils will study for GCSE. When the school became a Language College in 2002, there were only 10 students in Year 12 studying for one hour a week as beginners. This number has risen to an impressive 110 students in Years 8 to 12



Participants on the Kansai Programme for High School Students enjoying calligraphy.

and the school aims to have an AS level group in 2007.

We are always keen to hear from new colleagues and were pleased to receive news from Julie Manning who has been teaching German, French and Japanese at Barton Court Grammar School, Canterbury, since January. Julie will be starting a new class for Japanese GCSE this term and there is also a possibility that the school will offer an IB in Japanese ab initio in the future.

In this issue, Japanese Language Advisor Rochelle Matthews describes how manga and anime can be used to motivate learners of the language at all levels, drawing on resources that are available in the library. Library closing dates this term are September 23, October 10, and December 26 - 31, in addition to UK bank holidays. If you have any enquiries relating to the Library, please contact the Librarian (tel: 020 7436 6698; email: library@jpf.org.uk).



Exploiting manga and anime in your classroom

Some of the most proficient students of Japanese that I have taught initially became inspired to learn the language due to a fledgling interest in manga and anime. It was not that these students were more capable than others, but their intrinsic interest in Japanese pop culture spurred them on. From my teaching experience, I found that exploiting this genre in the classroom had a resounding effect, with the majority of students finding new motivation. Many modern day textbooks focus on traditional Japan and date quickly. What better way to supplement lessons than to explore the real culture of Japan by taking a look at what millions of Japanese read each week? Let's face it, modern day pop culture is cool and it frequently contains references to classical culture too!

The following are some new additions to the library that might help you tap into the potential of this growing phenomenon. These resources fill a void in the market, making manga accessible even for beginners.



Rochelle and pupils show off their manga mural

Howl's Moving Castle (ハウルの動く城)

Tokuma Shoten
徳間書店

アニメージュコミックススペシャル、2004
Volume 1, ISBN 4-19-770128-4
Volume 2, ISBN 4-19-770129-2
Volume 3, ISBN 4-19-770130-6
Volume 4, ISBN 4-19-770131-4

The latest film release from Hayao Miyazaki, director of the Academy Award winning *Spirited Away*, tells the tale of Sophie, transformed into an elderly woman by a mysterious curse cast by the Witch of the Waste. Embarking on an incredible journey to reverse this ancient sorcery and return to her normal self, she finds refuge in Howl's moving castle, powered by a fire demon named Calcifer. The dashing Howl is the only wizard powerful enough to set her free.

While the film itself is not available in the library, volumes of the new film comic series of the same title are, along with the more familiar *Spirited Away* (千と千尋の神隠し). Taking frames from the movie, this series tells the tales in true manga style, making it ideal to use as a teaching resource.

Anime can be used to complement a lesson by introducing a new grammar point in a way that grabs the attention of young learners. Selecting a frame that illustrates usage of the structure being taught while providing students with additional vocabulary that interests them will motivate them to take note of that structure far more than an uninspiring textbook introduction.

Tokuma Shoten also publish the *Tokuma Anime Ehon Shirizu* (徳間アニメ絵本シリーズ) which includes such well know anime titles as *Tonari no Totoro* (となりのトトロ), *Tenku no Shirorapyuta* (天空の城ラピュタ) and *Neko no Ongaeshi* (猫の恩返し). All are recent additions to our library.

Kanji de Manga, Volume 1 & 2

Glenn Kardy, Japanime Co. Ltd
Volume 1, 2004, ISBN 4-921205-02-7
Volume 2, 2005, ISBN 4-921205-03-5

There are currently two volumes available in the Kanji de Manga (漢字でマンガ) series and a third volume is already on the way. The series bills itself as the comic book that teaches you how to read and write Japanese.



Volume 1 features all 80 kanji needed to pass Level 4 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. Volume 2 expands on this further by introducing 80 of the Level 3 kanji. Each page introduces a different kanji through a manga cartoon with a translation of the dialogue and selected onomatopoeia below. Other features include common definitions of a given character, its readings, examples of compounds containing the featured kanji and its stroke order.

Other books in the Manga University range can be found at www.howtodrawmanga.com including *Kana de Manga* and *How to Draw Manga: Getting Started*, as well as on-line drawing tutorials and computer colouring help.

Japanese in Mangaland – Learning the Basics

Marc Bernabe, Japan Publications, 2005
ISBN 4-88996-115-1

Finally a beginners' level textbook that attempts to teach the basics in a fun way! In the preface written by the creator of manga classic *Shin-chan* Yoshito Usui credits the book with filling a need generated by what he calls a small manga revolution.

The first five lessons and a summary of the contents can be downloaded from www.nipoweb.com/eng/ for assessment purposes. There are 30 lessons in all, with an appendix covering 160 kanji. Topics start with an introduction to hiragana, moving on to a wide range of grammar points such as *na* adjectives and verbs in the *te*, *masu* and dictionary forms. Other lessons cover topics more specific to manga such as *gion*, *gitaigo*, swearwords and insults. Japanese in Mangaland provides great insights into colloquial Japanese and grammatical structures unique to manga. While the lessons are not weighty enough to replace units of work in a more traditional textbook, it would work well as a supplementary resource. Given the uncensored nature of manga, you may want to select areas of study.

Manga on-line!

Check out the website Nihongo Kyoiku Network newly added to our links page on-line for an animated version of *Kobochan*, which appears in the Yomiuri Shimbun, complete with sound and lots more on *gion* and *gitaigo*.



We are delighted to welcome Fumio Matsunaga and Harufumi Murata, who took up their positions as Director General



and Centre Director in May. On this issue's front page, we introduce a significant initiative in the establishment of standards for Japanese Language Teaching, which is being led by the Japan Foundation. A special feature on page 3 reports on the success of the second *Nihongo Cup* and also provides all the details needed to enter the new speech contest for students in higher education, which takes place for the first time in January. From the tailor-made reading comprehension on the Teacher's Pages you will find that teenage problems are not as different in Japan and the UK as you might think! Don't miss the review of manga and anime-based resources in our library (p 6), which can't fail to inspire learners of Japanese of all ages. Finally, now is the time to start thinking about applying for the Japan Foundation annual support programmes (p 3) as well as the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (see below).



2006 NIHONGO SUMMIT

Following the success of the 2005 Nihongo Summit at the Aichi EXPO, the Japan Return Programme (JRP) is inviting learners of Japanese throughout the world to apply to be panellists in the 2006 Summit on the theme *Peace – Country and World*. Participants are sought in two categories (Junior 15-19; Senior 20-27) and should have a sufficient knowledge of Japanese (equivalent to the third grade of the Japanese Proficiency Test) to write an essay in kanji and kana and to take part in discussion and debate with Japanese counterparts. The event is scheduled for July 10 to August 8, 2006. For further details and to download an application form log on to the JRP website at www.bna.co.jp/jrp/2006/images/2006_outline-e.pdf or contact them directly at: 00 81 (0)3 3589 3587 (tel) or jrp@bna.co.jp (email).

Mado Survey

Many thanks to everyone who replied to our Survey on *Mado*. We were delighted to find out that 99% of those who responded had used the Teacher's Pages at least once, and had found it useful in the classroom. Your individual comments will be very helpful when planning future teaching resources for *Mado*. We have also taken note of the fact that the majority of teachers would prefer to receive the newsletter in printed form. Unfortunately, due to continuing budgetary constraints, it will be necessary to produce the next issue (January 2006) in electronic form only. However, the situation will be reviewed in the future, and your feedback will certainly be taken into account.

ロンドン事務所では5月に新所長の松永文夫と新主幹の村田春文を迎えました。さて、今号トップでは、国際交流基金が日本語教育におけるスタンダード(基準)設定にむけて、主導的な役割をはたそうと取り組んでいるようすを紹介しています。3ページには、盛況だった第2回日本語カップの報告と1月に実施される大学生のためのスピーチコンテストの参加要項を掲載しました。そしてTeacher's Pageの読解問題。日本でも英国でも、十代の人たちの悩みがそれほど変わらないことがわかるでしょう。図書館(P6)の漫画やアニメを使った教材にもご注目下さい。どの年齢層の学習者も、やる気になるでしょう。最後に、今年も国際交流基金公募プログラム(P3)と日本語能力試験(p8)の申請時期が近づいてきました。どうぞご検討下さい。

TEST YOUR PROFICIENCY!

The Japan Foundation's Japanese Language Proficiency Test will be held this year at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, on Sunday, December 4. Completed application forms must be received by 4pm on Friday, October 7. Requests for application forms should be made in writing or by email to: SOAS Language Centre, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG; email: jlpt@soas.ac.uk; fax: 020 7898 4889. For further details, visit the website at www.soas.ac.uk/languagecentre/japanese/jlpt/home.html.

Youth Volunteer Mission UK

With a view to further developing internationally-minded and socially responsible young adults prepared to contribute to today's changing world, Osaka International House Foundation has set up 'Youth Volunteer Mission UK'. The aim of the programme is for Japanese high school students to carry out voluntary activities of benefit to the host region. Ten Osaka City High School pupils aged 15 to 17 accompanied by 2 teachers will visit the UK towards the end of March 2006 for a 10-12 day mission. If your school is interested in participating in this scheme – for example by providing host families and co-ordinating activities – contact Osaka International House Foundation directly at:

2-6 Uehommachi 8-chome, Tennoji-ku, Osaka, Japan 543-0001; tel: 00 81 (0)6 6773 8282; fax: 00 81 (0)6 6773 8421; email: reon@ih-osaka.or.jp.



EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES Monday 26 September

For more information and ideas on how to get involved, visit www.cilt.org.uk/edl/.

WJEC DAY Tuesday 4 October

A one-day course with practical workshops. For more information contact Ben Brailsford on 020 7436 6698 or at ben.brailsford@jpf.org.uk.

EDEXCEL A LEVEL DAY Wednesday 12 October

AS and Advanced GCE Japanese – feedback and guidance on the AS and A2 Units. For more info and to book, call Edexcel on 0970 240 9800 or visit www.edexcel.org.uk.

LANGUAGES SHOW November 4 - 6

Kensington Olympia
For more information visit the website at www.thelanguageshow.co.uk.

EDEXCEL GCSE DAY Monday 7 November

Feedback and guidance meeting on GCSE Japanese. For more info and to book, call Edexcel on 0970 240 9800 or visit www.edexcel.org.uk.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST (JLPT)

Sunday 4 December
See noticeboard for further details.

HEAD START

18 - 20 January 2006

An introduction to Japanese for Heads of MFL and senior managers in Secondary schools, and language co-ordinators at primary level. Visit www.jpf.org.uk/language or contact Ben Brailsford (see above) for more information.

SPEECH CONTEST FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS Saturday 28 January 2006

The finals of this contest, jointly organised by BATJ and the JFLLC, will be held at SOAS. The deadline for applications is November 20, 2005. For details of how to enter, see feature on page 3.

TOBU WORKSHOP 29 February 2006

Aiming for success in KS3 Japanese – using the BBC Tobu resources.
Contact the JFLLC for further details.

Please visit our website for more up-to-date information on courses and events:
www.jpf.org.uk/language.

Unless otherwise stated, all events take place at the Japan Foundation London Language Centre in Russell Square House. Please call us on 020 7436 6698 for further details.

The JFLLC reserves the right to cancel courses in the event of insufficient take-up.

MADO

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