

Student Evaluations of the Japanese Language Program : Report on a Survey
An attempt to link class evaluations with curriculum improvement

A Summary

The ICU Japanese Language Program has conducted end of term student program evaluations for each term since the winter 1990 semester. These evaluations were carried out using the form shown in Appendix 1.

The purpose of these evaluations was first of all to obtain subjective student evaluations of the new text, *Shokyu Nihongo Kyozaï*, and of the Basic Japanese course in which these materials were first used on a tentative basis in summer of 1990, which would in turn serve as the basis for revising the new text. At the same time, it was intended to provide the JLP course heads with information on the students' views and level of satisfaction with regard to the methods and curriculum of each course, and serve as a basis for reflection on and improvement of course organization.

The evaluations were completed in the instructor's absence in the classroom and collected by one student who delivered them personally to the secretary in the JLP office. The head of each course picked up the evaluations for the classes in his/her charge after the semester grades had been assigned, and all were required to present a summary of the results at a staff meeting.

The questionnaire included a survey of the students' learning environment, including the amount of time they spent studying and their language use outside the classroom, and open-ended questions on instructors, curriculum, materials, and on the students' overall opinions of the program as a whole.

One year has elapsed since the evaluations were first conducted, and data has been obtained from a total of over 300 students (see Figure 1 for precise details). Given that the JLP was under the pressures of curriculum revision during that time, it seems more meaningful to take another look at the questionnaires as overall evaluations of the program itself, rather than as reflections on the curriculum of each course. Thus, here the data heretofore summarized separately according to course has been gathered and summarized by category.

THE USE OF VIDEO IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Sayoko Yamashita

This paper discusses the possibility of the use of video in the language classroom. First, the roles of video is reviewed. Video represents the realistic situation, motivates students, shows paralinguistic elements, focuses on the learning objectives and familiarizes students with the culture of the target language. Secondly, the paper suggests effective methods of presenting and using video at the beginning level. Thirdly, various activities and techniques of using video are listed and discussed. Finally, the concept of designing a video-based syllabus is suggested.

Development of Learning Package for
Listening Comprehension of Television News

-Experiment and Evaluation-

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SUMMARY

News on air tends to have special structures and expressions compared to the Japanese used in ordinary conversation and in written form. In addition, a different set of vocabulary is used for different genre of news. With this as a starting point, learning material was selected from news on election and was organized for the development of CAI for training listening comprehension. Pilot experiment took place in summer of 1990.

The purpose of this study is to develop a learning package composed of 5 lessons based on the pilot experiment and to evaluate its effectiveness.

This learning package utilizes pictures, voice, and script where necessary. It is also programmed so that the sentence structures and expressions may be heard repeatedly and that vocabulary could be practiced for memorization. Since long noun phrases are thought to interfere the listening of news, three lessons focus on the listening practice of noun phrases using still pictures. In order to strengthen the memory of vocabulary, cloze procedure was also applied.

The subjects of the experiment were 14 students in the Advanced Class of ICU Japanese Language program. The effect of the learning package was studied based on pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire. The average scores of the post-test on the listening comprehension of noun phrases and on the vocabulary rose. According to the questionnaire, many positive evaluation were given by the subjects, where nine of them replied that they are now able to listen to news.

The result of the experiment shows the effectiveness of the learning package developed. However, improvement in the design of the courseware based on the replies on the questionnaire is necessary. Continued experiments are also vital for giving statistical conclusions. In addition, further research is necessary on the factors interfering listening comprehension and on the development of materials in other genres.

Abstract

An Experiment with Project Work in Intermediate Japanese(J6)

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This paper reports on the results of "Student-Directed Approach" (gakusei shudogata gakushu) in which foreign students, capitalizing on their being in Japan, carried out independent studies on themes of their own choosing. Details and outcomes of the entire process are discussed, examining each step from preliminary research and independent activities to final presentations .

Throughout this learning process, the following was observed on the side of the students.; an increase in reading comprehension ability and in the ability to scan and select the relevant information from massive amounts of materials; improvement of ability to understand audio-visual aids; improvement of strategies for creating an appropriate approach for interviewing and conducting surveys ; as well as in initiating conversations with strangers; the desire to seek out effective methods and techniques for better oral presentations; and an eagerness to write their reports at greater length.

On the other hand, there were problems such as a lack of readiness for unforeseen accidents which might occur during off-campus activities, the enormous amount of time and effort required for extra-class activities; failure to balance in-class learning with project work; and the absence of enough chances to utilize the fruits of their activities . We hope to come up with solutions to these problems while developing further techniques for learning through first-hand experience in authentic Japanese communication environments.

Abstract

ICU's Basic Japanese Materials : the Aftermath
How can we make the best use of student feedback?
MURANO Ryoko

Seven semesters have elapsed since we began trial use of the ICU Basic Japanese Materials (ICU初級日本語教材). Through an attempt at sorting and examining the problems found in the preliminary version of these materials, based on feedback from students who have been using them, I hope to come up with the key to their improvement. In this paper I focus particularly on the students' evaluations of the structure and content of the textbook, classroom activities, and teaching methods.

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