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The Latest Trends in Language Education in Japan in the Age of Globalization

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Key Words : language education, curriculum, action plan, remedial courseware,
e-learning, education reform, English proficiency

Ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed an honour for me to have been invited to talk to you in this way at the first International Conference of APAMALL.

1. Introduction

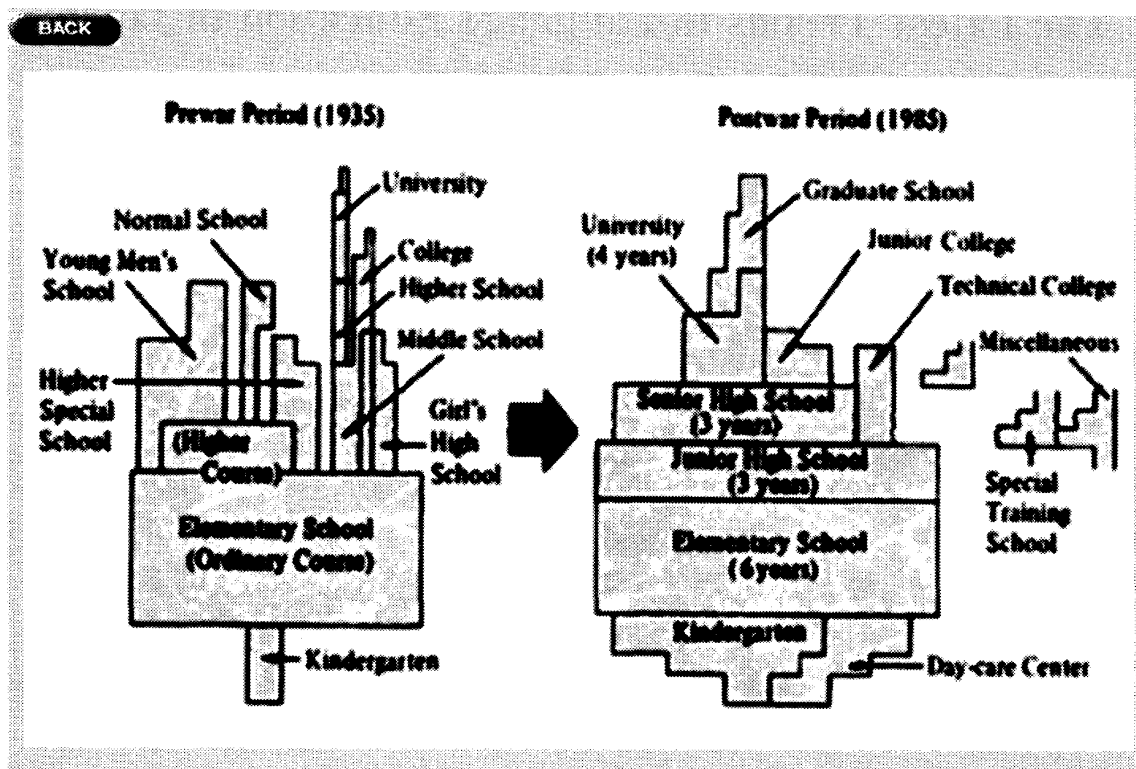
As is shown on the screen, the title of my speech for this afternoon is “The Latest Trends in Language Education in Japan in the Age of Globalization”. I think I am going to deal with a number of items related to the changes and problems we are facing in Japan today. And here is the order of those items.

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Now, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, let me give you a general idea of the education system in Japan. Please have a look at this on the screen.



The Ministry of Education

Fig. 1 The School System in Japan

As you can see, we have adopted the American system of 6-3-3-4 years (6 years of primary or elementary school, 3 years of junior high school or lower secondary school, 3 years of senior high school or upper secondary school and 4 years of university). Much simpler than what it used to be before the end of the World War II. 9 years is the period of compulsory education; 6 years of primary education and the first 3 years of secondary education. The percentage of school attendance at both is 99.8 percent.

Though not compulsory, senior high school education, which is the second part of the secondary education, is now so popular. Nearly 97% of the boys and girls who finish junior high school education go up to a senior high school after taking entrance examinations. Senior high schools are divided into three types: schools for general education, vocational schools that teach practical knowledge and techniques in industry, agriculture, commerce, etc., and schools combined with junior high schools.

About 46% of the senior high school graduates go on to a university or a junior college. Today in Japan, there are altogether 649 universities including 99 national universities, and 572 junior colleges. So many indeed, though the number will be decreased a little because a certain number of national universities are now planning to merge in the very near future.

Education System (6-3-3-4 System)		SCHOOL EDUCATION (2000)		
			schools	students
Elementary School (小学校)	6 years	Total	63,352	21,598,920
Lower Secondary School (中学校)	3 years	Kindergarten	14,451	1,773,682
Upper Secondary School (高等学校)	3 years	Elementary school	24,106	7,366,079
University (大学)	4 years	Lower secondary school	11,209	4,103,717
Junior College (短期大学)	2 years	Upper secondary school	5,478	4,165,434
Graduate School (大学院)		Secondary school	4	1,702
		Special education school	992	90,104
		College of technology	62	56,714
		Junior college	572	327,680
		University	649	2,740,023
		(of which, Graduate school)	(479)	(205,311)
		Specialized training college	3,551	750,824
		Miscellaneous school	2,278	222,961

Source: Ministry of Education, 2003

Fig. 2 School Education

2. English Education at Public Elementary Schools

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology – this official full name is too long for me to refer to it, so from now on let me just say ‘the Ministry of Education’ – the Ministry of Education once again revised the “Course of Study”, the official guidelines for primary schools, and it was put into force last year, in 2002. With this, the Ministry of Education allowed public elementary schools to start teaching English in the regular class hours for the first time after the war in what is called the “Period for Integrated Study” or in the “Special Activities Hours”.

At private primary schools, however, English language teaching has been rather common. At 87% of the private primary schools English was being taught as a regular subject according to the survey study conducted in 1996. At one of the private institutions, ‘Kato Gakuen Primary School’ in Numazu, Shizuoka Prefecture, even the English immersion programme has been adopted. And it has been reported successful. However the number of private primary schools is quite small in Japan, only 172 schools out of 24,106, almost negligible.

Now, let me talk briefly about how English language education has come to be introduced to public primary education in Japan.

Here is a story. Around in 1970, the then Chiba Prefectural Governor Mr. Tomono and the then Superintendent of Education, Mr. Ohashi, happened to visit the United States together. They were dismayed, however, that they could not communicate with their hosts well enough in English. They both studied English very hard while in school and both were very good at ‘English’ as a subject. They had been rather proud that they were educated men from a modern, developed country. Something was wrong they thought, and talked about it on the plane back to Japan. And they knew what it was. Besides,

the new Tokyo International Airport was to be opened in Narita in Chiba prefecture in a few years. It was urgent they thought. And they made strenuous efforts to persuade the Ministry of Education to accept their idea, and were successful in starting the public "Elementary School English Class", outside of the school curriculum, in 1972 for the first time after the war in Japan, in Chiba Prefecture where I live.

As many as 18 schools were selected and once every week children of the vicinity of the selected school came to the class and studied English with a native English language teacher and a Japanese English language teacher sent specially by the prefectural board of education. All the teaching materials including the sound tapes were developed and made by the prefectural board of education. At Faculty of Education, Chiba University, I myself helped them make especially the recorded materials for this "Elementary School English Class". This programme continued without much change other than the increase of the number of schools to 22 until 1980's.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, so far, in Japan as well as in other parts of the world, not a few people have presented their opinions, claims, or requests concerning the need to start teaching English to children earlier than when they become the first year students of the secondary school. I am proud to say that I have been one of them. In 1985, to the National Council for Education Reform JACET (the Japan Association of College English Teachers) submitted a paper entitled "Request for the Advancement of Foreign Language Education". And at its hearing session, three people representing the Association went and explained their ideas to the council members there. I was one of them. One of the items in the request paper that dealt with earlier start of English language education, which was in my charge, attracted the members quite a lot. I still vividly remember the scene. According to the record of the Council, they themselves discussed the matter. They must have eventually influenced the Central Council for Education, the Curriculum Council, and others. In fact, there has been a lot of discussion about the matter on every side.

A kind of yearning for English teaching at elementary school level was again aroused in many parts of Japan in the 1980's. And Chiba Programme was regarded as the model case. A lot of elementary school English classes were started at the time though the names were varied. As the years turned to 1990's the number increased more and more, and the places dispersed all over the country. But in all these, English was taught in what was called the 'special activities' hours, not as a regular subject.

In 1991, the Osaka Municipal Board of Education submitted to the Ministry of Education a plan to carry out experimental English language teaching for the academic years 1992-94 at two of the local public primary schools in Osaka Prefecture. This was accepted and government-sponsored experimental English language teaching at primary school level started in April, 1992. Following this two others were

accepted for the academic years 1993-95. One of these was Tokigane Primary School in Togane City in Chiba Prefecture. As I was working at the Faculty of Education, Chiba University, I was asked to work on its steering and advisory committee by the Ministry of Education. As a result I was fairly deeply involved in this experimental work. The number of the experimental schools has been increased to 47, one school out of each of the 47 prefectures in Japan.

And at last in 1998 the Curriculum Council submitted its report "National Curriculum Standards Reform" in which they suggested to set up a "Period for Integrated Study" in the primary school as well as secondary school curricula. In the report they said, "Much value will be set on the improvement of fundamental and practical communicative competence in foreign languages and the subject of 'Foreign Language' will be a required one at lower and upper secondary schools. Elementary schools will provide hands-on learning activities to expose children to foreign languages and help them get familiar with foreign life and culture in the 'Period for Integrated Study'".

And in due course, as I have said, the Ministry of Education revised and published the Course of Study, the official guidelines for primary schools that allowed public primary schools to teach English in what is called the "Period for Integrated Study", which was implemented from 2002, last year. And, yes, English is now actually being taught at approximately 60% of the local public primary schools in Japan. Really it took a long time.

Regarding the European consensus of the development of communicative competence and proficiency as the central aim of language learning and teaching, Professor John Trim, one of the leaders of language education in the Council of Europe, said in *AILA REVIEW 1992*, "It is very rare for any innovation in educational practice to achieve general acceptance within ten years of its first introduction. A consensus has been largely achieved, at least in Europe, in the past ten years, but its origins are some 20 years back and its roots a century ago."

Professor John Trim was right when he said this. Indeed it takes a long time. Perhaps too long in Japan. Anyway, though on a very limited scale, I mean not as a regular subject entitled "English", for the first time after the war, in public primary schools, English is being taught in the regular class hours. Usually one class hour a week. And, yes, at approximately 60% of the public primary schools in Japan today, according to the latest report.

3. Introduction of Varied Systems to Secondary Schools

Much against the world trends, the class hours for English teaching at public lower secondary schools in Japan were decreased from 4 to 3 hours a week from 1981 to 1991. The Ministry of Education forced all the national or local public schools to adopt the curriculum with the motto that sounded rather

nice, “Yutori no Kyoiku” or “Education with a Sense of Latitude”. Their idea was to loosen up and relax the children so they could lead freer and more fruitful life. This mistaken policy lasted ten years and after all played an undeniable role in deteriorating the English language education at secondary school level in Japan.

The “Course of Study” revised and issued by the Ministry of Education in 1988, and was implemented from 1991, should have been the result of many discussions that took place in the latter years of the 1980’s, especially after the publication of the final report of the National Council on Education Reform in 1987. This “Course of Study” allowed lower secondary schools to teach English 4 or even 5 class hours a week. Incidentally, ten years of anachronism could not be remedied so easily in a short period of time.

The Japanese expression ‘komyunikeishon’ borrowed from English appeared for the first time in the foreign language subject section in the “Course of Study” this time. The ‘Communicative Approach’ and the ‘Learner-centred Approach’ became more and more popular among English language teachers of secondary schools in Japan. Not a few teachers attempted to introduce the idea in their classroom teaching. They tried to make use of games, plays, or simulations. All for the development of what is called ‘communicative competence’.

Eventually such practices as ‘pronunciation practice’, ‘repetition’, ‘sentence pattern practice’, ‘recitation’ and ‘reading aloud exercise’ have come to be regarded as ‘meaningless’, ‘unimportant’, or even ‘harmful’. As a result, these types of practices seem to have almost disappeared from their English class work.

Indeed in the classrooms, boys and girls look more relaxed and happier. They seem to be enjoying their time with their teacher. But is it all right? How about their English ability? Do they really understand English? Can they make themselves understood by native English speakers? Do they enjoy reading English stories? Can they write letters in English? I am sorry to say that the answer is a negative one. Generally speaking the situation is much worse than we would have expected.

Under these circumstances, the Ministry of Education once again called “Round-table Committee for the Improvement of English Teaching Methods” as well as “Round-table Committee on English Education Reform”. They said they listened to the opinions of a considerable number of experts in various fields, ascertaining the ideal reform of English education system. Last year, in July 2002, they issued a document entitled “Developing a Strategic Plan to Cultivate ‘Japanese With English Abilities’ – Plan to Improve English and Japanese abilities –”.

In the Objectives they say Please have a look at this.

Developing a strategic plan to cultivate “Japanese with English Abilities”

— Plan to improve English and Japanese abilities —

July 12, 2002

1. Objectives

With the progress of globalization in the economy and in society, it is essential that our children acquire communication skills in English, which has become a common international language, in order for living in the 21st century. This has become an extremely important issue both in terms of the future of our children and the further development of Japan as a nation.

At present, though, the English-speaking abilities of a large percentage of the population are inadequate, and this imposes restrictions on exchanges with foreigners and creates occasions when the ideas and opinions of Japanese people are not appropriately evaluated. . . .

(An excerpt)

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2002

And they said, “Accordingly, we have formulated a strategy to cultivate ‘Japanese with English abilities’ in a concrete action plan with the aim of drastically improving the English education of Japanese people.”

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the time does not allow me, I am afraid, to deal with this ‘action plan to drastically improve the English education of Japanese people’ in detail, so let me just point out some of the more important items in the plan. They are;

Action Plan to Cultivate “Japanese with English Abilities”

March 31, 2003

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

I. Goals to Cultivate “Japanese with English Abilities”

English language abilities required for all Japanese people

【Goals】

English language abilities required for all Japanese nationals

“On graduating from junior high school and senior high school, graduates can communicate in English”

- On graduation from a junior high school, students can conduct basic communication with regard to areas such as greetings, responses, or topics relating to daily life. (English-language abilities for graduates should be the third level of the Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP) on average.)
- On graduation from a senior high school, students can conduct normal communication with regard to topics, for example, relating to daily life. (English-language abilities for graduates should be the second level or the pre-second level of the Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP) on average.)

English language skills required for specialized fields or for those active in international society

“On graduating from university, graduates can use English in their work”

- Each university should establish attainment targets from the viewpoint of fostering personnel who can use English in their work.

II. Action to Improve English education

1. Improvement of English classes

[Goals]

“Cultivating communication abilities through the repetition of activities making use of English”

- The majority of an English class will be conducted in English and many activities where students can communicate in English will be introduced.
- Small-group teaching and the streaming of students according to proficiency in the English classes of junior and senior high schools will be positively adopted.
- Progressive schools in terms of English education will be formed within local communities.

[Promotion of innovative English education]

○ **Promotion of the Super English Language High School Program**

By 2005, a total of 100 schools will be designated as Super English Language High Schools².

Innovative English education will be promoted

- **Promotion of the system of pilot schools for research purposes**

- Promotion of the “Program Supporting Distinctive University Education”
- Promotion of participation in special courses taught in English

2. Improving the teaching ability of English teachers and upgrading the teaching system

【Goals】

- Almost all English teachers will acquire English skills (STEP pre-first level, TOEFL 550, TOEIC 730 or over) and the teaching ability to be able to conduct classes to cultivate communication abilities through the repetition of activities making use of English.
- Centering on leading teachers at the local community level, the improvement of English abilities in the community will be enhanced.
- A native speaker of English will attend English classes at junior and senior high schools more than once a week.
- People living in the local community proficient in English will be positively utilized.

【Promotion of intensive training for English teachers】

- Promotion of intensive training in a five-year plan

【Promoting the fostering of leading teachers in local communities】

- Implementation of the course for Educational Leadership on the Teaching of English

The scheduled number of teachers for this course in 2003 is 1,000.

- Enrichment of overseas training for English teachers with advanced abilities

The scheduled number of teachers for overseas training in 2003:

12-month duration = 15

6-month duration = 85

2-month dispatch (new) = 200

- Promotion of study at overseas graduate schools utilizing the unpaid sabbatical system for the completion of graduate school

3. Improving motivation for learning English

【Goals】

- 10,000 high school students will study abroad every year.
- Opportunities to use English outside the class will be enhanced.
- International exchange will be further developed through such means as communicating with the world using English.

【Promotion of international exchange】

- Promotion of activities to provide information to pursue international exchange
- Promotion of the creation of homepages to introduce schools in English

4. Improvement in the evaluation system for selecting school and university applicants

【Goals】

- Communication abilities, including listening and speaking, will be appropriately evaluated.
- Utilization of listening tests or external proficiency examinations will be encouraged for entrance examinations of universities and high schools.

【Improvement in the selection of applicants】

- Introduction of a listening test in the University Center Examination (targeted for implementation from 2006)

Etc.,etc.

That is all, ladies and gentlemen, let us hope that these ambitious goals set up by the Japanese Ministry of Education will be successfully achieved in five years' time as scheduled. Let us hope for the best.

4. Language Education Suffering in Universities

Now, let us turn to language education at university level. Language education is now suffering, I should say, in universities in Japan. According to the recommendations given by the National Council on Education Reform (1984-1987), the University Council was established in 1987. And in 1991, the University Council submitted its report on the "Improvement of University Education." In this they

proposed a big change in the curriculums for university education. Their suggestion was to reform the Standards for the Establishment of Universities so that universities can develop curriculums that reflect their own educational ideals and objectives, and introduce a self-monitoring or self-evaluation system. As a result, the division of 'general education' and 'specialized education' courses was abolished. From almost all the national universities 'schools of general education' for freshmen and sophomores have disappeared. The standards of the credit counting system and of class hours were loosened. Accordingly, in almost all the universities and junior colleges in Japan, reorganization of the foreign language curriculums has been carried out. We have to say that language education has fallen sharply into a decline in the majority of universities in Japan. This may well be a phenomenon we see in the process of reorganization. In fact there are those where language education is much more emphasized than before, though the number is small. At those universities the required number of credits for English language has been increased from 8 to 12 or 14 or even 16, for example, while at others they have decreased the number to a considerable degree – from 8 to 6, or 4 or even 0. It is a pity to say that generally speaking the latter type is the majority.

Among those that have adopted the curriculums in which English language education has been strengthened are Asian University, Keio University Shonan Fujisawa Campus, and others.

For example, in Asian University, according to their curriculum for English language education, the students are to take in their first year the 'Freshman English Course' and in their second year they are sent to the universities in the United States for five months to take 'American History' (4 credits), 'The Human Environment' (4), 'International Sports' (1), as well as four courses of 'English' (8). All the students of the International Relations Study Department, and approximately half of those who belong to others are sent to either one of the four universities in the United States; Western Washington University, Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, or Oregon State University. There are a variety of optional English courses as well.

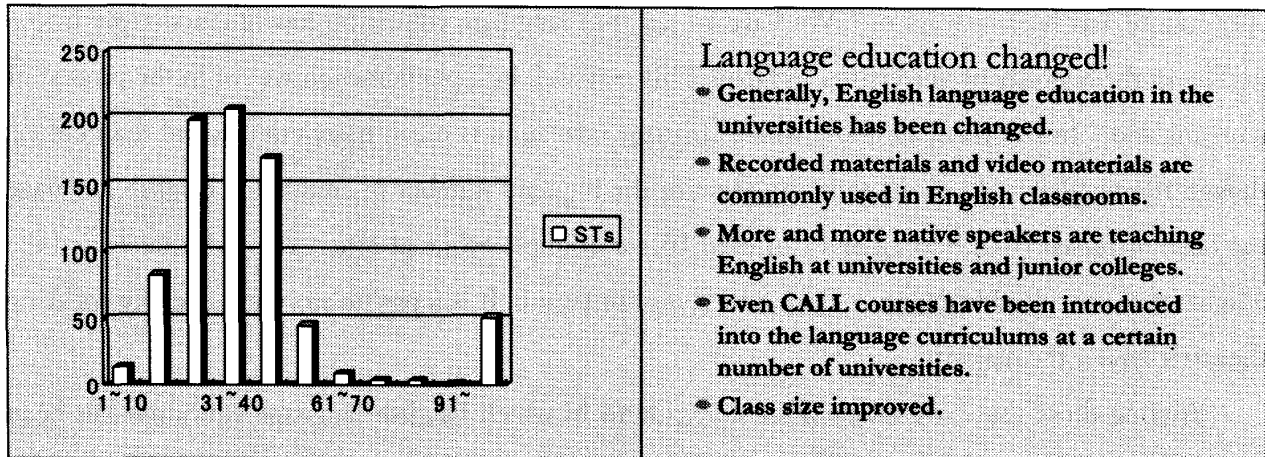
Generally, however, especially at national or state universities, the required number of credits has been reduced from 8 to 6, or 4, and other languages have become optional. We have to say that foreign language education has been weakened to a considerable degree. Chiba University, one of the biggest national universities in Japan, for which I myself worked for many years, for example, belongs to this group.

However, with these big changes in the curriculum, more or less stubborn university professors of foreign languages seem to have changed their attitude. Generally, English language education in the universities has been changed. Instead of teaching written English in the old fashioned grammar-translation method, spoken English teaching has become more and more popular. Not only recorded

materials but also video materials are quite commonly used in English classrooms today. And more and more native speakers are teaching English at universities and junior colleges. Even CALL courses (usually of Spoken English) have now been introduced into the language curriculums at a certain number of universities. And according to a survey recently carried out by JACET Survey Study Group, language class size has become smaller. Much more improved than before.

Q: How many students are there in your class on average?

N = 787



Language education changed!

- Generally, English language education in the universities has been changed.
- Recorded materials and video materials are commonly used in English classrooms.
- More and more native speakers are teaching English at universities and junior colleges.
- Even CALL courses have been introduced into the language curriculums at a certain number of universities.
- Class size improved.

[1-10] 14 (1.8%), [11-20] 83 (10.5%), [21-30] 198 (25.2%), [31-40] 207 (26.3%),
 [41-50] 170 (21.6%), [51-60] 45 (5.7%), [61-70] 9 (1.1%), [71-80] 4 (0.5%),
 [81-90] 4 (0.5%), [91-] 2 (0.3%), [others] 51 (6.5%)

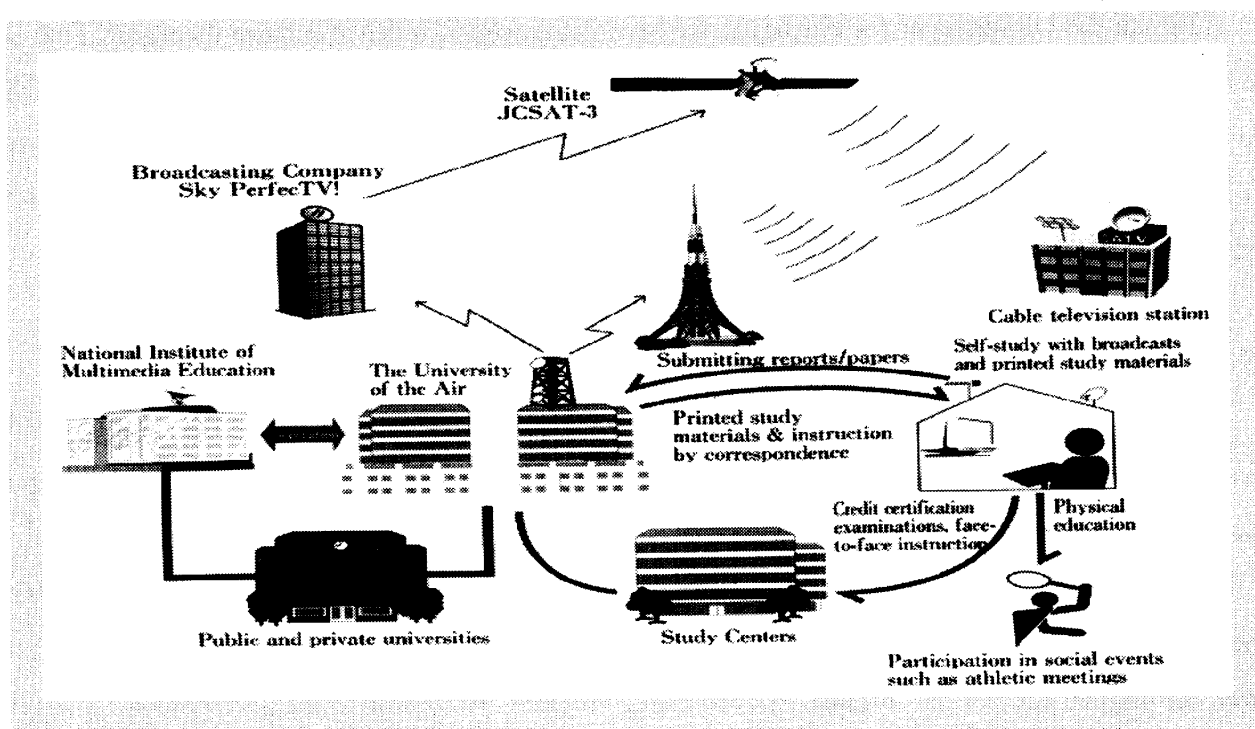
JACET Survey Study Group, 2003

Fig. 3 University Language Education

Some of the bigger problems that exist are related to a) class size: though much has been improved, still majority of the teachers are feeling the necessity of reducing the class size, b) teachers: the ratio of part-time to full-time professors is very unsatisfactory, c) the number of qualified native speakers is still quite small, and d) the low level of the students' English proficiency: due to the inadequacies of the classroom English teaching at secondary schools and to the popularization of university education or to the decrease of the population of the students. You know the demographic reality has been influencing the university curriculum so much, especially of local private institutions.

5. Expansion of the "University of the Air"

Now, let me talk about the 'University of the Air'. 'University of the Air' was founded in Japan as a new type of university. It's a Japanese version of the British 'Open University'. I myself was involved in the development of the TV course programs "English I" and "English IV" as well as in their schooling



The University of the Air, 2003

Fig. 4 The University of the Air

(face-to-face instruction). The University of the Air started to enroll students and to broadcast lectures through its own radio and TV broadcasting facilities in April 1985. After thirteen years, in January 1998, they finally expanded the range of their broadcast area (which had been limited to seven prefectures in the Kanto region, most densely populated area in Japan) to the entire nation through CS (communications satellite) digital broadcasting by Sky Perfect! TV. Today they are sending out as many as 298 course programs. 23 are language course programs including six for English. They are English (6 courses), Chinese (3), German (3), French (3), Russian (2), Spanish (2), Korean (2), and Japanese (2).

They have also established fifty Study Centers in major cities in every prefecture. In April 1999, the University of the Air began to operate a campus network system and TV telephone system that link the Study Centers to the University Headquarters. And in 2001, a distant-learning graduate school was established and they started the enrollment of the students last year, in April, 2002, in its four programs: Interdisciplinary Cultural Sciences, Public Policy and Management, Educational Development, and Clinical Psychology.

This year, the University of the Air has an enrollment of 86,036 students at Faculty of Liberal Arts, and 9,773 students at Graduate School. The total number of graduates is 25,813. And as many as 780,000 people have so far studied as a student.

I think the University of the Air has so far been doing well in order to achieve their goal. That is to become 'a symbol of lifelong educational institution close to the hearts of the people, through which anyone can study anywhere at any time'. Indeed there are lots of willing people everywhere. And plenty of quality university courses are at their disposal. Perhaps the biggest problem is the rate of successful students. So far less than 30% of the regular students registered have been successful.

6. "e-Japan Priority Policy Program"

Realizing that Japan, as far as IT revolution is concerned, is lagging far behind other industrialized countries, (they found Japan was placed 13th from the top), the government set up IT Strategic Headquarters in January 2001 and announced "e-Japan Priority Policy Programme" with 220 measures.

In order that Japan will be able to become one of the world's most advanced IT nations in 2005, the government has been pushing ahead with the implementation of the 318 measures (now expanded from the original 220) of the "e-Japan Priority Policy Program". According to the government the target of internet connection from all public schools has already been achieved and that of the development of IT literacy of all pupils as well as of all teachers at public schools will be achieved by 2005.

Of course this "e-Japan Priority Policy Programme" covers all the areas of social activities of the Japanese people, but let me confine myself to deal only with some of the things related to language education in schools.

How about the situation at secondary schools? Contrary to the expectations of the public at large, there is a rather calm atmosphere in secondary schools. One teacher of English who is working at a local junior high school in Suginami Ward in Tokyo says, "All the junior high schools in Suginami Ward now have classrooms furnished with multimedia facilities including computers. However, I am one of the very few in our Ward who are willing to use the computers for their English teaching." He says, "The situation is almost the same wherever you go."

Probably due to the government's policy, at universities, as far as multimedia facilities are concerned, there has been a remarkable improvement. And still it is true that making use of the government's subsidies, universities are struggling to build up up-to-date multimedia facilities in a more or less competitive way.

The problem is that university professors of languages are rather conservative. Mostly they are reluctant to use the machines, especially computers though they are available. The situation, however, is gradually changing. More and more professors, especially of the younger generation, seem to be interested in multimedia language education. It is not so rare now to hear that university professors are teaching with the CALL courseware materials at their schools, sometimes with the ones they themselves

have developed. And today there are a number of CALL courseware materials available on the market for university use. However, it is not yet easy for them to find ready-made CALL courseware materials appropriate for their students. Perhaps this is the biggest problem for them.

As I am working for National Institute of Multimedia Education (NIME) as a visiting professor, I am feeling a kind of obligation here to talk about the "Space Collaboration System" (SCS) that they have developed. SCS is an inter-university satellite network, The National Institute of Multimedia Education serving as its hub station. So far, as many as 150 earth stations called VSAT have been established in 123 universities and research institutes. Also transportable SCS stations, called *Shasaikyoku* are now available. Through this system, we can exchange audiovisual information between institutions across the nation. They say this expands NIME's mission to promote collaboration among universities in Japan.

As far as language education is concerned, last year an experimental English debate lesson carried out between three universities was reported at the LET Kanto Chapter research meeting.

I have learned that they are now sponsoring a research and development project of the integration of the SCS and the PEACESAT. PEACESAT covers twenty-two Pacific Island jurisdictions.

7. The Development of e-Learning Remedial English Courseware for University Students, "*University Voices*"

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have talked about a number of problems that have emerged in language education at universities in Japan. One of them is the low level of the students' English proficiency. There are a considerable number of students who are admitted without taking English language tests. This is due to the demographic reality we are facing today. And also perhaps we can say this is the reflection of the inadequacies of the classroom English teaching at secondary schools in Japan.

In order to solve this problem, The National Institute of Multimedia Education (NIME) decided to set up a project to develop and produce a CALL courseware material for university use in the academic years 2002-04. I was asked to work as the chair and I collected as many as ten competent and experienced university professors. After spending enormous amount of time and energy we have successfully developed and produced the e-learning remedial English courseware for university use entitled "*University Voices*".

I should like to spend the final part of my talk today for this newly developed courseware entitled "*University Voices*" for a few minutes.

1) Purpose:

To develop e-learning English remedial courseware for university students so that those who have

not been successful in their English study during their secondary school years will be able to acquire fundamental English language ability in order to cope with their university English classes. The purpose is to develop natural, ever-growing fundamental English language ability. Keeping up the motivation on the part of the students with the help of the scrupulous study-control by teachers or mentors, the students are, when they finish this course, to acquire at least the level of English language ability equal to that of the successful students after finishing secondary school education.



Fig. 5 University Voices

2) Outline of the courseware:

Practice in spoken language should play a fundamental role in the development of linguistic competence. Not only because language is primarily speech, but also practice in spoken language makes language learning fruitful and more economical. Ability in written language should have the basic ability in spoken language on its foundation. We had this fundamental concept in mind when we prepared variety of tasks for the development of written English ability, as well, in this courseware.

The students we are aiming at are those who have received English education in their classrooms at secondary schools (Junior High and Senior High) but have not been successful in learning English in the right way. We want these students to get interested in English study and to get started to study English by themselves with ease, and finally to acquire the genuine, fundamental, basic ability of English language without their noticing it.

We decided to use the kind of materials that have the contents appropriate for the learners' mental age, lifestyle, and interest, and also that can present language activities carried on in natural spoken English.

3) Characteristics of the courseware:

The fifteen dialogues, Dialogues 1 – 15, form the core of this courseware, and they are mixed with five descriptive passages, Passages 1 - 5 in written English. One Passage is for every three Dialogues. The difficulty level of the courseware is similar to that of the materials used in the English classrooms of Junior High 1st, 2nd , 3rd Year, and Senior High 1st Year. The principle of 'From easier one to more difficult one' was taken into consideration, but not so strictly because this is a remedial courseware material. As far as the vocabulary was concerned, with regard to the students we had in mind, we were rather free-minded in its actual use. Though this is not a grammar-centred syllabus, we put emphasis rather on sentence structure practice and for each Part one sentence structure is selected with an explanation in simple, clear-cut words and variety of practices are provided for the students to be able to learn it.

<p>Theme I Leaving High School and Entering University Dialog 1 A High School Graduation Party Dialog 2 Student to Student International Calls Dialog 3 University Orientation Passage 1 Email Exchange</p> <p>Theme II First Year of University Dialog 4 The First Day of Class Dialog 5 Chat Room Research Dialog 6 What's Hip Internationally? Passage 2 Who's Who in International Pop Culture?</p> <p>Theme III Second Year of University Dialog 7 A Welcome Party for International Students Dialog 8 Dormitory Life in the US and Japan Dialog 9 Dating, Crafts and Hot Springs Passage 3 Culture You Can't Learn From a Book</p>	<p>Theme IV Third Year of University Dialog 10 Searching the Web Dialog 11 A City Slicker Goes to a Farm Dialog 12 An Australian Beach Barbeque Passage 4 A Letter to a Professor</p> <p>Theme V Fourth Year of University Dialog 13 A Health Center in Bangladesh Dialog 14 Human Rights and Trafficking Dialog 15 Tell Me About Your Skills Passage 5 A Child-Friendly World</p>
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Fig. 6 Contents

Each dialogue is divided into four, Parts 1-4, and each Part consists of 11 tasks: 1. Listening, 2. Keyword, 3. True or false, 4. Which one is best, 5. Pronunciation practice, 6. Shadowing, 7. Sentence structure, 8. Complete the sentence, 9. Word order, 10. Composition, and 11. Word game.

It was last May that we accomplished our work. At a number of universities this has been used on an experimental basis ever since. Generally we have received very fine results. Hopefully from next academic year, "*University Voices*" will be used widely in university classrooms in Japan.

8. Language Education in the Age of Globalization

With the ICT revolution the borderlines have diminished, almost disappeared. And thanks to

the development of transportation technology, people can move easily from one continent to another. We know that we are the people living on the earth who must share the same destiny wherever we are. Naturally communication between people has become more and more important, and language learning has become indispensable. Indeed we are living in the age of globalization. Why not live happily in the 'global village' ?

Thank you very much for your attention.

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(The Asia-Pacific Association for Multimedia Assisted Language Learning)
Conference Theme: Integrating Mall into Foreign Language Instruction
December 19~21, 2003
National Chia-Yi University, Taiwan

Keynote Speech
Saturday, December 20, 2003
International Conference Room
15:10~16:00

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