

university demonstrated strong determination and dedication to meet both challenges, coping with the influx of students and responding to Australia's particular need of Japan-related education, the support within the institution was not always forthcoming. In these universities, the coordinator of the Japanese program had the most difficult task of sorting out priorities. The majority of the program coordinators, however, managed to put forward some initiatives to expand their program beyond the perimeter of language and culture teaching, and to provide students with opportunities to develop vocationally relevant skills.

In 1992 Marriott surveyed the general picture of Japanese programs in Australian universities. In her article, she reported that the integration of a Japanese language program with other disciplines was largely proceeding in three ways (Marriott 1992:21-32). First, an increasing number of universities began to allow students to undertake Japanese studies courses with a major study offered by another faculty, such as economics or law.

Second, a double or combined degree program was increasingly available. These programs allowed students to study two programs concurrently, resulting in many cases of an extended period of study beyond the normal three years at undergraduate level.

Third, an increasing number of vocationally oriented programs offered by various universities began to include Japanese units in their programs. Examples included the Griffith University's program leading to the degree in International Business Relations. This requires a compulsory Asian language component, one of which is Japanese. Another is Monash University's program leading to the degree in International Trade which requires a study of Japanese or Chinese as a component.

4.5 Teacher Education

The rapid growth in national demand for Japanese language and literacy was felt not only at universities. Significant impact had been felt for some time at secondary schools and, in some districts, primary schools. Under the environment in which Australia was trying to forge ever stronger links

with Asia, with Japan in particular, Australian parents were increasingly aware of the advantage of their children being trained in Japanese language from early age. They were demanding that their local schools provide such training in the curriculum. The schools were, however, not at all well equipped to respond to the demand. The shortage of qualified Japanese language teachers was the principal difficulty.

In the early 1980s, on a per capita basis, Australia was already placed third in the world, after Korea and Singapore, in the learning of Japanese. Of the estimated total of twenty thousand (20,000) Australians who were learning Japanese, approximately seventeen thousand and five hundred (17, 500), or eighty seven percent (87%) of the total, were studying Japanese at primary and secondary schools (Embassy of Japan 1984). By far the largest proportion, approximately ninety per cent (90%) of the total pre-tertiary students of Japanese, were at the secondary level. This unusually high proportion of Japanese education at pre-tertiary level has become a uniquely Australian feature.

After the 1988 *Tsunami*, Australia's Japanese learning population increased threefold to an estimated 61,478 in 1990, of which 55,091 were studying Japanese at primary and secondary schools (The Japan Foundation 1992). The figures alone clearly explain the critical shortage of Japanese language teachers.

The most critical issue in the development and expansion of Japanese in recent years has been the supply of teachers for the secondary level. (Marriott, et. al. 1993:62).

Providing the community with well-qualified teachers of primary and secondary schools is one of the universities' principal responsibilities. This is one of the key areas in terms of universities' contribution towards Japan-related education in Australia. The 1989 *Ingleson Report* stated that 'the key to creating Asia-literate Australians lies in the schools', and commented on the inadequacy of teacher education in the area of Asian studies and languages:

Teaching about Asia or its languages is largely absent from the curricula of most primary teacher education courses. ... the situation for secondary school teachers is only a little better. (Ingleson, et. al. 1989:15)

Producing well-qualified teachers ensures the teaching quality in the school system. Many of the existing Japanese departments at universities had been fulfilling this responsibility for some time, by utilising their expertise in the training of Japanese language teachers. The *Tsunami* onslaught, however, placed teacher education in a totally different dimension, both in its scale and urgency.

Supplying sufficient numbers of teachers was one problem, ensuring the quality of teaching was the other. In 1989, the Australian Government commissioned a Review of the Teaching of Modern Languages in Higher Education. An extensive survey was conducted under the leadership of Barry Leal and resulted in the report titled *Widening Our Horizons*, which was submitted in 1991 to the Department for Employment, Education and Training (DEET). Sitting in one of the preliminary meetings for the survey, the author was astounded to learn that amongst the teachers who were teaching Japanese in 1989 at New South Wales secondary schools, less than ten had completed a Japanese major at university.

In the late 1980s, the number of graduates coming out of Australian universities with a major in Japanese language and Japanese studies was still limited. In addition, the demand for these graduates from areas other than teaching was increasing. Attractive career opportunities were opening up for graduates with Asian literacy as Australia's involvement with Asia, with Japan in particular, increased. The problem was common across all Asia-related studies.

A more fundamental problem is that too few Asian language graduates wish to become teachers. (Ingleson, et. al. 1989:15)

In the face of tens of thousands of secondary students commencing the study of Japanese language nation-wide, how then did Australia cope?

Part-time teachers were recruited from the field of people with varying degrees of Japanese language competency, such as former exchange students to Japan, undergraduate students in Japanese studies and local Japanese residents, with or without formal teacher training.

The majority of full-time staff were, however, recruited from the teachers of other languages, or sometimes, other subjects. Many schools preferred this option, and it was generally encouraged by the Department of Education in many States. The Department of Education in each State was by far the largest employer of teachers.

The rationale behind this option was the efficient utilisation of the existing teaching staff. If enrolment in one subject increases without a matching increase in total student numbers, there will be teachers in other subjects with decreased teaching load. When the student number in Japanese drastically increased, other languages such as French, German and Latin, the traditional language subjects, saw a marked decrease in student numbers. As a consequence, in the late 1980s and early 1990, it was a frequent practice for teachers of French or German, for example, to be assigned to teach Japanese. Although these teachers had had training and experience in language teaching, very few had any knowledge of Japanese.

These teachers commence learning Japanese themselves prior (occasionally simultaneously) to teaching the language.
(Marriott & Spence-Brown 1995:155)

This situation called not only for the immediate increase in the number of Japanese studies graduates who would enter the teaching profession, but also for the facilities to retrain existing teachers. This task had to be carried out by universities. Consequently, from the late 1980s, teacher training for both categories became a major undertaking of Japanese studies departments in many Australian universities. It is worth noting that, during this period, these university initiatives were often supported by government funding.

By 1993, thirteen tertiary institutions had been involved in the training

and retraining of primary and secondary teachers of Japanese (Marriott, et. al. 1993). In 1989, Monash University changed its post-graduate regulations to allow practising teachers to undertake undergraduate Japanese language units towards their Graduate Diploma in Applied Japanese Linguistics. This was further expanded to the Masters course. The Victorian State Department of Education assisted the scheme by granting study-leave to teachers who wished to up-grade their qualification through the scheme.

In Queensland, Griffith University organised a special year-long intensive course during 1990 and 1991 to train teachers of Japanese. In 1992, the University of Queensland offered a part-time training course for practising teachers.

In New South Wales, Macquarie University and the University of Newcastle expanded respective Japanese programs to accommodate teachers seeking retraining. These initiatives were made possible by the Asian Studies Council funding awarded to the two universities through the New South Wales Department of Education. The University of New South Wales also introduced a new Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education program to facilitate teacher training.

Many other initiatives towards teacher training/retraining were taken by universities across the nation during the five-year period after the tsunami. The results were impressive. In the early 1990s, a major survey of Japanese education in Australia was commissioned by the National Languages & Literacy Institutes of Australia (NLLIA), as part of a NLLIA project profiling the nine key languages taught in Australia. The survey results were published in the 1993 publication titled *Unlocking Australia's Language Potential: Vol.7-Japanese*.

In this publication, the survey found that, of the five hundred and twenty six (526) pre-tertiary Japanese teachers who responded to the survey, three hundred and seventeen (317) had undertaken Japanese courses as part of their undergraduate degree. Furthermore, of the 317 teachers, almost seventy eight per cent (78%) had already completed a three-year major or

four-year Honours degree in Japanese. Only a small percentage, 3.5%, had studied less than one year at the university. Two hundred and nine (209) teachers answered that they did not study Japanese at undergraduate level in Australia. They included the teachers who studied in Japan and also those who undertook Japanese at the post-graduate level as part of a retraining program.

In terms of teacher training/retraining, the above figures represent a remarkable achievement in the short period of five years after the tsunami. Australia in the early 1990s, however, still suffered a great shortage of trained Japanese language teachers in the secondary schools, and also increasingly at the primary school level. The NLLIA survey found approximately half of the schools had experienced difficulties in filling Japanese teaching positions during the previous three years.

Under the circumstance, it seemed an obvious option to recruit trained language teachers from Japan. Although the possibility had always existed, this avenue had never been explored on a large scale. The 1993 survey found that, of the five hundred and eighty two (582) Japanese teachers who responded, only sixty two (62) or a little over ten per cent (10.6%) were native speakers of Japanese.

One difficulty was to have the respective State government recognise native-speakers' teaching qualifications obtained in Japan. Referring to this issue, the 1993 report recommended more flexibility in the government system to cope with the situation (Marriott, et. al. 1993:64).

Another difficult issue concerning native-speaker teachers trained in Japan was their effectiveness in the Australian classroom situation. A fundamental difference exists in the educational culture between Australia and Japan, and reflects in the classroom management. The classroom atmosphere of Australian secondary schools is generally much less formal compared with that of Japan. Interaction between the teacher and students and between students themselves is much more encouraged than in the classrooms in Japan.

In the language classrooms in Australia, interactive communication plays a much larger role compared with Japanese schools, where one-way delivery of information is still the predominant practice. In Australia, teachers who are able to create a vibrant and exciting learning atmosphere, without losing the control of young students, are considered good teachers. Few teachers from Japan were prepared for this type of classroom management, so different from their practices in Japan. The lack of English fluency added extra burden on the teachers and inhibited them from the spontaneous interactions with students. Consequently, many Japanese teachers found it difficult to adapt to an Australian classroom, and felt less effective as a teacher.

The issue was widely debated amongst education experts in Australia as well as language specialists in Japanese academia. Few dispute the value of students' exposure to native-speaker teachers. Native knowledge of Japan, as well as the language would be a valuable contribution towards students learning. The question was how best to utilise the knowledge and skills of native-speaker teachers in the Australian environment.

The 1993 survey investigated the situation in the schools where both native and non-native teachers taught. Three patterns emerged as the most commonly adopted practice. In the first case, each teacher taught his/her own class and the teaching of a class was not shared. In the second case, both native and non-native speakers regularly taught together in the same classroom. The third pattern was for the native speakers regularly withdraw small groups of individuals from the classes of non-native teachers. After an extensive study, the report strongly recommended the second pattern as most desirable, the combination of non-native and native teachers working together cooperatively (Marriott & Spence-Brown 1995).

Teacher education was one of the areas which received immediate attention after the *Tsunami*. Initiatives were taken not only by the universities, but also by the government departments. It took, however, some years before the increase in teacher training matched the even faster increase of student demand. In order to cope with the immediate situation, the 1993 report stated the following amongst its Key Recommendations:

The number of teachers of Japanese is totally insufficient. It is necessary to take immediate measures to recruit new teachers from among recent graduates and from Japan. There is a need to increase radically intake into teacher education courses for Japanese. (Marriott, et. at. 1993:vi)

4.6 New Japanese Programs

The *Tsunami* resulted in a great expansion of the existing Japanese programs in Australian universities. At the same time, the *Tsunami* brought with it the impetus to motivate other universities to introduce Japanese programs. Before the *Tsunami*, in 1984, eighteen (18) tertiary institutions offered Japanese programs in Australia (Embassy of Japan 1984). After the *Tsunami*, in 1991, the number increased to twenty four universities (24) and four (4) other tertiary institutions, including Institutes of Technology and Colleges of Advanced Education, many of which later became universities. (Leal, et. al. 1991). Within seven years between 1984 to 1991, therefore, ten new Japanese programs were introduced into Australia's tertiary institutions. Twenty eight (28) institutions in total represented a remarkable proliferation of Japanese programs, when one considers that Australia's tertiary institutions numbered a little over thirty at the time.

All new Japanese programs, small or large, faced the same set of problems as many of the established programs, including the lack of funding and the shortage of qualified full-time staff members. In addition, new Japanese programs faced different challenges. The largest challenge of them all was, perhaps, the lack of institutional interest in Japan. In retrospect, it is surprising that, given the increased demand on Japanese language and literacy spreading in the community, institutional awareness for Japan-related studies grew very slowly in Australian universities, excluding those which already had Japanese programs. It is even more surprising if one considers the fact that the government push, as well as industry sectors' demand towards Asian literacy, had begun as early as in the 1970s, more than a decade before the major *Tsunami*.