

Chapter 6

Challenges in the New Century

Meeting the different needs of students entering the university Japanese program with varied levels of advanced knowledge is but one challenge that Japanese studies departments will continue to face in the 21st century. There are a number of other issues which require on-going attention in the new century. One of them will be the internationalisation of education and the other, the development of IT-based teaching practices.

6.1 Internationalisation & Student Mobility

Internationalisation of education is in the mind of every university administrator today. The recent survey undertaken by IDP Education Australia found that between 1998 and 1999, the number of international students studying in Australian universities increased by seventeen percent (17%) to an estimated 93,424. This figure included an estimated 25,158 students studying in Australian university programs offered offshore, mostly in students' home countries. As the student number in Australian universities in 1999 was estimated at 722,629, the number of international students represented nearly thirteen percent (13%) of the total student population.²²

Students of today are increasingly mobile. Students' mobility is particularly noted amongst the Asian countries. The same IDP survey found that, of the total number of international students, 73,281 students, or seventy eight percent (78%), are from Asian countries, with Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong forming the top three locations from which students originated.

Students' mobility also include increased opportunities for Australian students to go abroad. In terms of strengthening students' Japan skills and literacy, sending them to Japan is a most logical component of any curriculum. In-country study opportunities, however, were not widely exploited by Australian universities until the 1990s. In 1989, Stockwin