



Japanese-Language and Japanese-Language Education Policy

1 Enhancing Policy Related to the Japanese Language

Improvements have been made in the description in Japanese language based on the results of the discussion by the Japanese Language Council. The council has issued resolutions regarding the Japanese writing system, including the *joyo*

kanji-hyo, or national list of Chinese characters in common use, *gendai kana zukai*, or modern kana usage (contemporary Japanese syllabic writing), and the notation of borrowed foreign words as a guideline or standards in general social life.

Major Reports and the Status of Their Implementation

(1) The reports concerning Cabinet notifications or directives

Japanese Language Council						Subdivision on Japanese Language of the Council for Cultural Affairs		
Consultation	Report	Cabinet Notification/Directive	Consultation	Report	Cabinet Notification/Directive	Consultation	Report (Council for Cultural Affairs)	Cabinet Notification/Directive
1. Matters related to control of national language	<i>Toyo kanji-hyo</i> (Nov. 1946)	<i>Toyo kanji-hyo</i> (Nov. 1946)	Concrete measures for improving national language (Jun. 1966)	<i>Joyo kanji-hyo</i> (Mar. 1981)	<i>Joyo kanji-hyo</i> (Oct. 1981)	Modality of kanji policy for the information age (March 2005)	<i>Revised Joyo kanji-hyo</i> (June 2010)	<i>Joyo kanji-hyo</i> (Nov. 2010)
2. Matters related to surveys of kanji	<i>Toyo kanji on-kun-hyo</i> (Sept. 1947)	<i>Toyo kanji on-kun-hyo</i> (Feb. 1948)						
3. Matters related to the revision of use of kana	<i>Toyo kanji jittai-hyo</i> (June 1948)	<i>Toyo kanji jittai-hyo</i> (April 1949)						
4. Matters related to improvements in style (Mar. 1935)	Modern kana usage (Sept. 1946)	Modern kana usage (Nov. 1946)		Revised Modern kana usage (Mar. 1986)				Modern kana usage (Jul. 1986 part rev. Nov. 2010)
				Notation of borrowed foreign words (Feb. 1991)				Notation of borrowed foreign words (June 1991)
	Recommendation			Revised Guide to the use of <i>okurigana</i> (June 1972)				Guide to the use of <i>okurigana</i> (June 1972 part rev. Oct. 1981, part rev. Nov. 2010)
	Guide to the use of <i>okurigana</i> (Nov. 1958)	Guide to the use of <i>okurigana</i> (July 1959)						Uses of Roman alphabet (Dec. 1954)
	The integration of uses of Romanized Japanese words (Mar. 1953)							

(2) The reports not concerning Cabinet notifications or directives

National Language Council	
Consultation	Report
Modalities of the Japanese language policy to suit a new age (Nov. 1993)	Honorific expressions in modern society (Dec. 2000) Fonts for characters not listed in the <i>joyo kanji-hyo</i> (Dec. 2000) Modalities of the Japanese language corresponding to the global society (Dec. 2000)

Subdivision on National Language at the Council for Cultural Affairs	
Consultation	Report (Council for Cultural Affairs)
Japanese language proficiency which is required for the future (Feb. 2002)	Japanese language proficiency which is required for the future (Feb. 2002)
Formulation of concrete guidelines regarding honorific expressions (Mar. 2005)	Guidelines on honorific expressions (Feb. 2007)

The Subdivision on Japanese Language of the Council for Cultural Affairs, which was established by reorganizing the Japanese Language Council in January 2001, has sought a response to the consultations from the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology on (1) "the formulation of concrete guidelines concerning honorific expressions," and (2) "the modality of the kanji policy for the information age" in March 2005. As regards item (1), the Subdivision submitted a report titled Guidelines for Honorific Expressions on February 2, 2007 and presented guidance on

the basic concept and specific uses of honorific expressions.

In order to publicize the content, the Agency for Cultural Affairs produced a web edition of the short film "*Keigo Omoshiro Sodanshitsu*," or Consultations on Honorific Expressions, published on its website. With regard to item (2), we have received the June 2010 report on the Revised Joyo Kanji-hyo, and after some alterations in consultation with the stakeholders, the Joyo Kanji-hyo was announced to the public by the Cabinet on November 30, 2010.

In addition, necessary measures are implemented to deepen

the entire Japanese public's interest and understanding of the Japanese language through the holding of Conference on Japanese Language Issue and the opinion survey on Japanese language, and furthermore the offering of the Japanese Language Policy Information System available on the Agency for Cultural Affairs website.

ACA is also conducting a study on the status of the

eight languages and dialects that UNESCO announced in February 2009 were in danger of extinction in Japan including the Ainu, the Hachijo, the Amami, the Okinawan and disaster-affected area of Tohoku languages as well as initiatives to preserve and transmit the languages to successive generations.

2

Promoting Japanese Language Education for Foreigners

Though the number of non-Japanese registrants and Japanese language students peaked in FY 2009 before starting to decline due to the financial crisis associated with the Lehman Brothers collapse and also to the Great East Japan Earthquake, nearly 130,000 people are learning Japanese for many different purposes as of November 2011.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs implements a range

of initiatives for facilitating education on Japanese language as a means of communication and the basis for dissemination of culture, based on recommendations from the Liaison Committee among Ministries and Agencies on the Foreign Workers Problems and the Council for the Promotion of Measures for Foreign Residents of Japanese Descent.

Name of Policy	Overview
Discussion at the subdivision of Japanese Language of the Council for Cultural Affairs	With consideration of the tendency toward an increase of non-Japanese settlers and the growing need for their involvement in society, the subdivision of Japanese Language of the Council for Cultural Affairs summarized a standard program of Japanese language education for non-Japanese residents. In FY 2012, the evaluation of skills in teaching Japanese to non-Japanese residents will be discussed and issues concerning Japanese language education will be put into order.
Japanese language education for non-Japanese residents	This program supports efforts to set up and run local Japanese language classes, train teachers and create teaching materials, and develop a local system for Japanese language education so that the non-Japanese permanent residents can live in Japan as members of Japanese society. Training workshops are organized for coordinators who will be the core of local efforts for Japanese language education.
Cross-ministerial collaboration in the development of foundation for Japanese language education	This program facilitates exchange of opinions and information about Japanese language education by organizing such activities as the Conference on Japanese Language Education, which consists of people from related organizations and ministries. Also, we are creating a database that can be used in a cross-disciplinary manner by gathering the Japanese language education contents (e.g. teaching material, activity report) held by organizations inside and outside government.
Japanese language education for treaty refugees and third-country resettlement refugees	As part of a program for helping settle treaty refugees in Japan, Japanese language education is provided at school-type institutions. Similar education is also given to third-country resettlement refugees, a type of refugee Japan began accepting in October 2010. Support is given to volunteer groups, and consultation on Japanese language training and learning for refugees who have already left the facilities is conducted.
Research on Japanese language education	Research is conducted on the current situation of overseas practices for national language education and dissemination for foreigners, as a reference of endorsing Japanese language education policies for non-Japanese residents. Research is also conducted to collect the basic data on Japanese language education.
Conference of Japanese Language Education	Conference of Japanese Language Education are organized with the aim of increasing understanding about, improving and facilitating Japanese language education. The Council provides explanation about policies concerning Japanese language education and information about related efforts in the local community. Training workshops are organized for officers in ordinance-designated cities, aiming to improve Japanese language education in local communities.

Transition of the Number of Japanese Language Teachers and Instructor, Learners, and Japanese Language Education Institutions in Japan

