

Perceptions of the JET Programme

Part Three*

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CROSS COMPARISON OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

JTE's and STUDENTS

In this section, data obtained from the JTE questionnaire and those from students are compared and contrasted to see if the perceptions of teachers on some of the issues relating to the JET Programme are matched by those of the students. This kind of cross comparison is necessary because the nature of this study is to measure the subjective views of people who are living, thinking and feeling, not an objective state of affairs as in the field of pure science. This is indispensable in the field of education, for decisions concerning educational programmes are often not based solely on observable data, but also on those relating to the more amorphous areas of emotions or attitudes. Therefore, the perceptions of the parties involved ought to be examined in order to prevent those involved in language education from jumping to inaccurate conclusions.

As has been mentioned repeatedly, both JTE's and students share opinions leaning toward agreement with the continuation of the JET Programme. Although JTE's do not necessarily wish the number of team teaching hours to increase at present, their perceptions of the JET Programme as a whole are encouraging to those who support the system. In a similar vein, the students' responses also lean toward the agreement side when a statement refers to the implementation of team teaching in class. We have also seen in the Analysis of Student Questionnaires section that students are behind the team teaching scheme across all school and grade levels. Given the results on Item 12, the students might have motives for supporting the team teaching system different from those of JTE's. However, the results at least show that

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they are enjoying the classes with ALT's.

Aside from the general comments made above, we are going to compare and contrast data from two groups in terms of two different yet interrelated domains of the student: first, those related to the affective area of the learner, and second, the area encompassing the cognitive aspect of the learner.

The responses to Item 17 in the JTE questionnaire bear on Items 6, 9, 11 and 13 in the student questionnaire.

In Item 17 of the JTE questionnaire, we have witnessed that 90.8% of all the teachers polled agree with the statement, saying that, in effect, team teaching can motivate students into studying English harder than ever. In the student questionnaire, a statement of a similar nature is included, not in one question but in several. In the following tables, the figures for options 1 and 2 have been combined, as have those in 4 and 5, in order to show overall features, leaving the figures in option 3 as they stand.

First, the results of Item 6 in the student questionnaire read as follows:

Item 6

The presence of an ALT in class is an incentive to study the subject harder.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	44.4	36.5	18.8
SHS	40.6	37.4	21.8
JHS	47.1	36	16.5
AC	45.3	35.9	18.5
N-Ac	36.4	38.6	24.7
3S	48.5	33	16.8
2S	35.4	42	21.6
1S	39.8	36.9	22.9
3J	43.5	36.8	19
2J	44.9	37.9	16.7
1J	51.4	33.2	14.7

As the table above shows, the teachers' perceptions are borne out by the students to some degree. In all school categories and grade levels, the agreement side has collected higher return rates than the disagreement side. This table apparently shows that quite a large proportion have opted for column 3. How the figure in this slot might move one way or the other is a topic of future research, for such a change in the results will tell us how effective team teaching will be in this respect.

Item 9 in the student questionnaire is virtually the same as Item 6, only with different wording. This kind of overlap is called for before a stronger assertion is made. The results for Item 9 are summarized as follows:

Item 9

As a result of exposure to ALT-participated class hours, I am now more interested in learning about foreign cultures and countries.

	1 + 2	3	4 + 5
All	29.6	36.4	33.4
SHS	29.1	36	34.4
JHS	29.9	36.7	32.7
AC	40.1	34.6	24.2
N-Ac	19.5	36.8	43.2
3S	30.5	37.2	29.7
2S	23.2	35.7	39.7
1S	30	35.3	34
3J	29.3	36.9	32.3
2J	30.1	36.8	32.5
1J	29.6	35.9	33.2

What remains the same in relation to the result reported in the previous table is the large proportion of responses option 3 has collected. The difference, on the other hand, is the reversal of the figures in the agreement group and in the disagreement group: now the larger percentage figures have found their ways into the latter group, with the exception of the AC category. The result here is not in accordance with the expectation of JTE's. Only in the category of academic senior high school have more students replied that the presence of an ALT in class helps increase their interest in people and things foreign. The result stands out especially when it is placed side by side with the result from the N-Ac category, which reports only a small change in their view, even after exposures to ALT's.

Next, the perceptions of JTE's are examined by looking at the result on Item 11, which again relates to the affective area of the student.

Item 11

I like ALT-participated classes because they provide an opportunity to be exposed to real English use.

	1 + 2	3	4 + 5
All	39.9	34.4	25
SHS	40.8	33.2	25.3
JHS	39.1	35.2	24.8
AC	56.8	27.2	14.9
N-Ac	27.4	37.9	33.9
3S	42.2	36.4	21.4
2S	33.4	37	28.2
1S	41.7	30.8	25.7
3J	41.9	32.1	24.5
2J	38.2	36.7	24.5
1J	37.9	35.3	26.1

The table above shows us that JTEs' expectation is matched by the responses from the students more positively than is the case with Item 9. Even for the N-Ac group, the figure has gone up from 19.5% to 27.4% in Item 9, up by 7.9%. For the AC category, we have as high as 56.8% on the agreement side. From these results, we can propose here that effects on the affective area of the students have taken place largely because the students appreciate the opportunity to be exposed to "real English use" by an ALT in class. It has been suggested in the analysis of student questionnaires that the students may be just passive recipients of the information in this situation; nonetheless, the psychological effect on the students is positive enough to assert that exposure to an ALT, even without active participation, would be likely to result in an increased amount of interest in the subject they are learning in some learners, as is expected by practicing Japanese Teachers of English.

Closely related to Item 11 above, which tries to find out possible reasons for their interest in ALT-participated classes, is Item 13 which is intended to measure the degree of change in attitude toward studying the subject matter as a result of having gone through team teaching in school. At a glance, this question also bears a resemblance to Item 6, but Item 13 tries to discover the degree of influence on the students' long-term study habits which goes beyond the attitude of the students in one lesson.

Item 13

I would like to study English more as a result of the exposure to ALT-participated classes.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	15.7	45.4	48.1
SHS	16.2	43	39.7
JHS	15.4	47	32
AC	23.3	47.3	28.2
N-Ac	10.2	39.1	49.7
3S	15.9	40.2	41.4
2S	14.8	42.6	41
1S	16.6	43.2	38.8
3J	15.1	44.6	39.1
2J	15.1	47	37
1J	15.6	48.2	35.4

The results here may be a disappointment to JTEs who might have expected a much more positive return in the agreement section, for more than 90% of all the JTEs polled agreed with the statement in their own questionnaire. As the result on Item 11 shows, the presence of an ALT does provide motivation in terms of interest and participation. In addition, as the result for Item 6 has indicated, the presence of an ALT more or less affects how students behave in class. In contrast, however, it is not forceful enough to encourage the students into improved

study habits. Aside from the commonly held view on how hard the Japanese student has to study in school, the meagre agreement rate here reflects the fact that effective teaching methods have yet to be introduced to students. As the results on Items 18 and 19 in the student questionnaire indicate, they have to go through team teaching lessons without satisfactory methods to make the most of the experience. We have suggested in the Analysis of Student Questionnaires section that unless students are given a specific task to do, they usually give little thought to what to prepare for the scheduled class. Given the results above, then, what practicing teachers must provide is some of the study skills specifically aimed at team teaching lessons. With some pragmatic advice from JTE's, enjoyable classes with an ALT would become a guided course instrumental in fostering better study habits in the learner. Such devices would be particularly appreciated by the large number of students who have placed themselves in column 3, for they might end up with their attitude in this regard swayed in a more positive direction, but only if they are assisted in going about team teaching lessons more effectively, with a little help from their teacher.

Items 19, 20 and 21 in the JTE questionnaire address the issues of the cognitive changes in the student. In Item 19, 40.9% of all the JTE's polled have agreed with the statement that underlines positive effects on underachievers (as opposed to 29.5% who have chosen other alternatives). When JTE's are divided into the respective school levels at which they teach, 41.6% have chosen the agreement side at the junior high school level, whereas 40% did so at the senior high school level, almost the same number. Item 19 in the JTE questionnaire is duplicated, in essence, in Item 7 of the student questionnaire. First, asked if they feel more confident in their English after having lessons with an ALT, 13% agreed with the statement while only 10.6% did so at the senior high school level, as has been reported previously. In order to see the perceived effects on underachievers predicted by JTE's, we will now divide these students according to the different levels of confidence in English reported in the results for Item 4, coupled again with the figures obtained for Item 7.

JHS students who answer 1 or 2 on Item 4. (JHS-1)

	0-NR	1	2	3	4	5
Item 7	0.2	7.2	17.9	52.7	15.2	6.4

JHS students who answer 4 or 5 on Item 4. (JHS-2)

	0-NR	1	2	3	4	5
Item 7	0.6	1.1	5.2	41	31.9	20.2

SHS students who answer 1 or 2 on Item 4. (SHS-1)

	0-NR	1	2	3	4	5
Item 7	0.3	5.1	18	48.4	19.9	8.3

SHS students who answer 4 or 5 on Item 4. (SHS-2)

	0-NR	1	2	3	4	5
Item 7	0.4	1.4	4.5	34.4	29.5	29.7

As we can see in the tables above, the percentage who choose 4 or 5 (that is, poor in English) have a stronger tendency to choose 4 or 5 in Item 7 as well. In combined terms (1+2 and 4+5, respectively), the results above are represented in descending order as follows: 25.1% to 21.6% for JHS-1, 6.35% to 52.1% for JHS-2, 23.1% to 28.2% for SHS-1, and 5.9% to 59.2% for SHS-2. As is indicated above, only for the group JHS-1 does the figure in the agreement group exceed that of the disagreement group. In the groups JHS-2 and SHS-2 (which are supposed to include students who are not competent in English), the figures in the disagreement group exceed those in the agreement group as much as 8 to 10 times. This certainly does not corroborate the perception of JTE's on this score. On the contrary, the teachers' perception is the opposite of the reality: according to the analysis here, the students who are most likely to benefit from team teaching lessons cognitively are those who are good at English in the first place. JTE's, then, are compelled to change their view on the relation between the level of confidence of the students and the degree of usefulness of team teaching lessons for the students. In addition, JTE's are also compelled to find approaches to make team teaching lessons useful for every student, including underachievers.

Another issue of interest is the relationship of Item 23 in the JTE questionnaire and Item 14 in the student questionnaire. In Item 23, JTE's are asked to state how effective an ALT being present in class is in holding the attention of the students. To this question, 43.2% of all the JTE's have chosen either 1 or 2 in their questionnaire. At the junior high school level, the response for the agreement side amounts to 49.9%, while at the senior high school level 35% fall into the agreement side. The student response to this effect is tabulated as follows:

Item 14

I try to concentrate hard and understand every word spoken when an ALT speaks.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	53	28.2	18.2
SHS	51.1	26.8	21.6
JHS	54.3	29.1	22.2
AC	68.9	19	11.3
N-Ac	36.1	33.2	30.3
3S	54	23.8	20.5
2S	38.3	32.4	27
1S	53.7	25.5	20.1
3J	59.9	24	14.7
2J	52.4	30.2	16.5
1J	52	31.1	16.3

In this instance, the perceptions of JTE's are matched by those of students: even more students than expected tend to listen attentively to what an ALT is saying to them in class. Even for the N-Ac group, the agreement side has 36.1%, quite a large figure in view of the rather negative results in other questions. As this result shows, teachers are right to assume that a good number of students are at least eager to know what an ALT is talking about. This might prove to be a way into the complicated job of creating a successful teaching programme.

Last, use of Japanese by an ALT in class is considered, for the use of the vernacular language, or the lack of it, also seems to have certain effects on the learner. First, according to the JTE's polled in Item 31, 70.4% answer that if an ALT uses Japanese the lessons would benefit. The response at the junior high school level is 74.9%, and that for the senior high school level 65%, down by 9.9%. For the similar statement, the results from the students are as follows:

Item17

Even a small amount of Japanese used by an ALT will help me understand the lesson better.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	64.9	21.4	12.9
SHS	63.9	20.8	14.5
JHS	65.6	21.7	11.8
AC	63.6	20.4	14.9
N-Ac	64	21	14.2
3S	65.2	16.7	15
2S	59.3	24.9	14.1
1S	64.3	20.3	14.6
3J	69.5	17.4	12.1
2J	63.5	23.9	11.5
1J	64.5	22.1	12.1

In this last instance, the perceptions of JTE's are again corroborated by the responses from the students. The student replies are consistent and show a similar result across all the school levels and grade levels. The results being one-sided, JTE's and ALT's should provide an occasion in every lesson when an ALT squeezes in a comment or an explanation in Japanese, no matter how poor he or she may be in the new language. It probably promotes understanding on the student side, and hopefully helps create an atmosphere in class where it is not only students that are engaged in learning but ALT's, and even JTE's, are trying to do their best to learn and understand.

ALT's and STUDENTS

A cross comparison of the ALT and student questionnaires reveals some interesting points of agreement, but also some inconsistencies in the opinions of the two groups. All the groups surveyed in this project have a fundamentally positive attitude to the Programme, but in the case of the students the reasons for this may differ from the other two groups. They are, after all, the group who stand to ultimately benefit most from the Programme; they are numerically the largest section, but nevertheless the group with the least direct control over the Programme. How they perceive the Programme is largely the result of what other people have chosen to exert upon them. Unlike the JTE's and ALT's, they have no professional interest in team teaching, and unlike the other groups their view is not an adult one, however mature some individual students may be. It is not surprising, therefore, that students, like young people everywhere, tend to value present enjoyment and novelty over long term benefit. Thus, their replies to Item 20, where they express a desire to help ALT's with Japanese, or Item 25, where they show willingness to take part in extra curricular activities with the ALT's, display the usual openness and friendliness of most young people. In the respect of intercultural activity outside the classroom all groups have expressed agreement, although the ALT response to Item 2 on their questionnaire, for example, seems to indicate that they would prefer that the classroom side be emphasised. It is in the classroom, however, that the greatest divergence lies.

The greater part of student time in junior and senior high school is taken up with preparation for entrance examinations. In most countries preparation for public examinations is burdensome, but most observers would agree that it is especially so in Japan. Consequently, the student notion of education is spending time in preparation for approaching exams, and doing so in the traditional, time honoured way. Given the pressure students are placed under it is not surprising that classes which are seen as a relaxation of the daily routine are welcome. The response for Item 12 on the student questionnaire (combining the agree options 1 and 2, and the disagree options 3 and 4) confirms overwhelmingly that ALT classes are seen as less hard work:

Item 12

I think classes with an ALT are easier than regular classes.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	61.1	23.2	15
SHS	72.2	15.6	11.9
JHS	53.4	28.4	17.1
Ac	76.4	13.7	9.5
N-Ac	68.2	17	14.1
3S	77.4	10.5	9.6
2S	68.2	17.7	12.8
1S	71.4	15.9	12.2
3J	56.5	23.6	18.3
2J	52.5	29.5	16.9
1J	51.9	30.2	16.6

Not surprisingly, senior high school students feel the strongest about this, as the preparation for the university entrance exams intensifies as they progress up the school, and the above table shows that indeed the sub-group who are most in agreement are the third grade of SHS. Apart from the slight aberration for 2S, there is a year on year increase in options 1 and 2. Student responses to Items 18 and 19 show that they by and large do not prepare for or go over what they have done in the ALT class. No doubt this contributes to the feeling of an easy break from regular work. There is no need to study hard because for the most part the oral work done in team teaching classes is not tested in any way, and is therefore seen as not relevant to the task of passing exams at whatever level, however enjoyable those classes may be. ALT's feel that this marginalisation of their efforts could be rectified if they were involved in testing students, as is shown by the response to Item 15 on their own questionnaire.

Item 15

ALT's should be involved in testing students.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
0	85.4	12.2	2.4

The disagreement figure is negligible here. Clearly ALT's feel that if they test what is covered in their classes then students will accept them as more integral to the process of education in Japan. This is reinforced by the response to Item 6 on the ALT questionnaire which asks whether ALT's can be useful in preparing students for exams. There is less certainty here but the agree side (1+2=48.8%) is more than double the disagree side (4+5=21.9%). There is a measure of uncertainty also amongst students when a similar question is posed to them:

Item 16

Lessons with an ALT are also useful when I sit an examination.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	14.1	38.6	46.5
SHS	12.6	37.8	49.1
JHS	15.3	39.1	44.7

The large number in the neutral column can perhaps be explained by the fact that students can not envisage the ALT in the role of preparing them for exams as they have never experienced it, or are not conscious of the effect the team teaching classes have had upon their exam performance. However, options 4 and 5 constitute the largest group and are clear evidence that most students do not think ALT's are helpful in this respect. When asked about the ALTs' contribution to helping them understand the textbook, around which exam

preparation is centred, the same pattern is repeated (Item 21). It seems to be the case that students do not want ALT's to be involved in their "real" work. On the one hand this may be a reaction to the usual style of class and students may be welcoming something different, or it may show a lack of confidence in ALT abilities to take a useful part in anything other than conversation type classes. The former explanation is given a measure of support by the response to Item 8 on the student questionnaire.

Item 8

I hope there will be more ALT class hours.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	43.4	33	23.1

This would seem to be encouraging to ALT's, although the large group of students who are indifferent is troubling. Nevertheless, a good proportion of students would like more contact, for whatever reason. Conversely, that students do not see ALT's as valuable in the regular day to day work, which does not include much oral activity, is very discouraging for the great number of ALT's who do not want to be confined to conversation classes, a topic covered by Item 20 on the ALT questionnaire.

Item 20

ALT's should only be used for conversation classes.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
2.4	19.5	9.7	69.3

ALT's realise that to play a real part in the English education system in Japan they can not be confined to the periphery, and conversation classes in Japan are peripheral, because competence in oral/aural skills is not a requirement in the exam system.

As team teaching classes have for the most part been confined to teaching oral skills, problems have arisen because the materials, which have been devised for grammar translation methods working towards the exams, have proved unsuitable for the task in hand. This is probably the most important reason why the textbooks in use have been rejected by ALT's, shown by the following table summary.

Item 16

The Monbuscho approved textbooks are suitable for team teaching.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
4.9	12.2	26.8	56.1

In this area, there is agreement between the students and the ALT's. When a similar question is posed to the students they answer thus:

Item 22

I think we should not use regular course books when we have an ALT class.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	43.8	37.2	18.1
SHS	49.5	37.8	11.7
JHS	39.9	36.8	22.5
Ac	49.8	37.6	11.7
N-Ac	49.3	37.5	11.7
3S	61.1	26.4	8.4
2S	47.5	39.3	10.8
1S	47.2	39.4	12.2
3J	45.5	32.3	21.1
2J	38.5	38	22.5
1J	37.5	38.1	23.4

Although the "neutral" group is large it is clear that, once again, as students progress through the school the greater number reject the textbook for team teaching classes. This rise may be indicative of over-familiarity with the textbooks and the procedures adopted to use them. Even students at first grade of junior high, however, do not want to use them at this early stage in their school careers. This may partly reflect the above mentioned idea of relaxation from the usual hard routine, but it is certainly indicative also of the difficulty of finding a way to use the books presently available for team teaching in a way which is useful, or fun, or both.

When it comes to the manner in which classes are conducted there is once again disagreement, this time on the fundamental issue of the use of Japanese. In the student questionnaire students expressed a desire for the use of some Japanese to aid comprehension.

Item 17

Even a small amount of Japanese used by an ALT will help me understand the lesson better.

	1+2	3	4+5
All	64.9	21.4	12.9

Almost two thirds feel that some Japanese use by an ALT is necessary. This is not surprising given that they are plunged from a situation in their normal classes where little English is spoken, other than repetition of the textbook material, to a situation with the ALT where they

are expected to deal with the extensive utterances of a native speaker. Some help in their own language would seem to be welcome. What is to be hoped, however, is that the use of Japanese acts as an aid and not a substitute for developing the skills of understanding in the foreign language. The ALT questionnaire also dealt with the topic of use of Japanese in the classroom, and the result is indicative of a divergence from the student view.

Item 9

In lessons with the ALT only English should be used.

0-NR	1 + 2	3	4 + 5
4.9	46.4	12.2	36.5

This question does not specifically address the question of by whom Japanese is to be used. Almost half the ALT's believe that for all groups only English is acceptable in team teaching classes. While just over a third do accept the use of Japanese, this may indicate acceptance of use by students or JTE's, but not themselves. This may be a point of conflict, or at least difficulty, if most ALT's do not wish anyone to speak Japanese in class, but other parties involved expect ALT's to use at least some. Further elucidation on ALT's' views here is necessary, but it is safe to say that, for whatever reason, ALT's are out of step with other groups in this respect.

To conclude, then, there is basic support for the Programme from both students and ALT's, but to a great extent there is a mismatch between the perceptions of the two groups, particularly relating to the teaching role of the ALT. However, this may be resolvable because to some degree ALT's are thinking about their potential use in the Programme, whereas students are not considering potential use but commenting on the situation as they are experiencing it now: given a new set of circumstances they may alter their opinions.

JTE's and ALT's

In this section, the perceptions of ALT's are placed alongside those of JTE's so as to see to what extent responses to similar statements correspond or conflict. The cross comparison assists us in recognising and comprehending several facets of a single issue, as we would appreciate a painting with multiple dimensions by a cubist artist. The second, more subtle purpose in this section is to see how differences in response patterns might reveal different notions or beliefs which are rooted in the diverse experiences of individuals brought into contact with each other through the JET Programme. Some of the constraints innate in the questionnaire format almost automatically exclude the finer points of the sentiments of respondents from the results of such research. Presumably, however, difference in the results of items might provide us with clues as to particular patterns of thought cultured in the peoples of the West and Japan.

The analysis in this section deals with matters related to team teaching, of the perceived relationship between ALT's and JTE's, and of the use of Japanese by ALT's. As with the comparison between JTE's and students, the figures on the agreement and disagreement sides are combined to show an overall preference one way or the other.

First, several aspects pertaining to team teaching itself will be touched upon. We have noted in the analysis of the ALT questionnaire that Item 1 supports the JET Programme as a whole, in spite of some mixed responses therein. The result for Item 1 in the ALT questionnaire is as follows:

Item 1

Team teaching is the best method for maximising the ALT's effectiveness.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
0	48.1	29.3	22

In the JTE questionnaire, the statements 1 and 2 correspond with the item above to a large degree, and we have reported that 86.4% of all the JTE's agree with the statement when it refers to the significance of the JET Programme in today's English education. Recall, however, that JTE's did not necessarily show a clear-cut preference for an increased number of team teaching lessons. The results on Item 2 for JTE's are as follows:

Item 2

I am in favour of the number of team teaching classes being increased.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
0	43.2	25	31.8

Here we have a striking similarity between the two results, indicating that ALT's have not yet been made the most of. This view is supported by the fact that almost identical figures appear in the neutral and disagreement options, as well as on the agreement side. Given the fact that the participants in this research have not only varied lengths of time in teaching but also diverse backgrounds, the data above represent a widespread concern for the present teaching arrangements. How we should go from here is one of the focuses of this section; the team teaching system could be improved further with more discussion based on research results and data.

One such discussion could centre on the quality and appropriateness of the course books in relation to team teaching. When asked the suitability of current textbooks for team teaching classes, ALT's answered as follows:

Item 16

The Monbusho approved textbooks are suitable for team teaching.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
4.9	12.2	26.8	56.1

The result here is not encouraging to those who are involved in textbook or manual writing. Moreover, JTE's have demonstrated that they share this opinion with ALT's. Issues related to the course book and team teaching are dealt with separately in Items 9, 10 and 13 in the JTE questionnaire. In Item 9, for instance, JTE's have admitted the lack of compatibility between the content of the course book and team teaching activities (1+2=63.6%). The incongruity between the two is such that team teaching activities often result in a delay in the progress of the course book (1+2=63.6%), which does not necessarily please the majority of JTE's. As a result, most JTE's have come to the conclusion that effective materials specifically targetted at team teaching are not available (1+2=93.2%). The result on Item 16 above obviously underlines the opinions expressed by the JTE's. When the figure for option 3 is added to that of the disagreement side, those ALT's who either do not find any use for the available course books, or find only a limited role for them, reach as high as 82.9%, producing another striking similarity between the two groups of teachers.

Frustrations felt against current textbooks lead some of the ALT's to feel that ALT's themselves should be allowed to decide the materials to be used in class (Item 7, 1+2=70.8%). What they would use is uncertain, but one possibility may be offered in the responses to Item 26.

Item 26

I would like to teach English in the subject in which I have a degree.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
7.3	29.2	26.8	36.5

In the result above the figure on the disagreement side is larger than that of the agreement side by 7.3%. Those who have decided to place themselves in the neutral slot are not to be ignored, either. Nonetheless, 29.2% of all the ALT's polled showed an interest in teaching English through the content subject in which they have academic qualifications. It takes more than the expression of an interest to produce viable teaching materials, of course, but when the writing of effective teaching materials are at this stage of development, any suggestions for improvement should not go unheeded. We must bear in mind that the teaching materials best suited for team teaching should take the students into account as well as those who have to teach them. The history of English education in Japan tells us that there have already been phases in which native speakers of English and their accompanying teaching materials have dominated the

teaching scene, the Regular Method in the Meiji Period being just one example. Applying Darwinian theory to language education, however, it may be that the books in use are those which have survived as most fitted to the immediate needs of the students, in spite of their faults in a more general teaching context. Otherwise, they would have fallen out of use much earlier. Ideally, therefore, effective team teaching materials should be matched by the level of linguistic, cognitive and affective development of the students. The prevalent use of current textbooks necessarily entails a teaching method focusing on grammar exercises, rote-learning of vocabulary, and skills in translating English into Japanese. It follows that the tilt towards the disagreement side in Item 16 above spells in effect ALT objection to the current teaching style as well. Item 27 in the ALT questionnaire touches upon this aspect of team teaching.

Item 27

The grammar translation method used in Japanese schools should be replaced with a method more suitable for developing oral skills.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
2.4	87.7	9.7	0

It is clear that more than one explanation is possible for the outcome above. One is the interpretation which emphasizes the lack of direct relevance of the exercises in the written language to developing skills in the spoken language. Nobody could dispute this successfully. Thus the high agreement side in Item 27 is almost self-explanatory.

Another possible source for the one-sided result in responses might be traced to the frustration many ALT's feel at their exclusion from the core of language education. If the ALT's primary function were to instill in the student oral skills in English alone, the responses above could be ignored as a casual remark on an aspect not relevant to team teaching. The responses to Item 20 indicate that the opposite is the case, however.

Item 20

ALT's should only be used for conversation classes.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
2.4	19.5	9.7	68.3

The result on Item 20 clearly informs us of ALT eagerness to participate in language teaching in a much more substantial manner, and yet are unable to do so because of the prevailing teaching materials and preferred teaching style in schools. This situation also helps prevent the function of ALT's in a team teaching lesson from being adequately defined. Complex though this situation may be, a hint for a solution has been offered on Item 26 in the JTE questionnaire.

There, 35% of all the high school teachers polled answered that they have used ALT's in writing activities, another common feature of the old method. Changes are slow, but some ALT's along with JTE's are making steady progress into the mainstream of language education.

In the discussion that follows, the focus is on how ALT's perceive JTE's, and their working relationship. Here again the perceptions of ALT's are cross compared with those of JTE's when such comparison is called for.

When ALT's were asked about their role in improving the English abilities of JTE's, they answered as follows:

Item 24

An important part of my job is to improve the English of the JTE's.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
7.3	70.7	14.6	7.3

The result above shows that the majority of ALT's are on the agreement side and, as has been reported in the analysis of the JTE questionnaire, they seem to be successful in this regard (Item 8, 1+2=72.7%). Aside from teaching routines, ALT's tend to acknowledge that support from JTE's is satisfactory (Item 13, 1+2=60.9%). Interestingly, in terms of the performance of JTE's in class, the perceptions of ALT's and JTE's do not tally with each other. For Item 15, only 48.7% of all the ALT's evaluate the performance of JTE's positively, whereas 75% of all the JTE's polled have replied that they know well enough and can do what they are supposed to do in class with ALT's. It may be this difference in the perceptions here that has prompted some ALT's to shift their opinion to the agreement side in the next item.

Item 10

ALT's should be allowed to teach without a JTE present.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
2.4	68.3	19.5	9.7

As has been pointed out in the analysis of the ALT questionnaire, it is difficult to implement this intention under the present law. ALT's have to possess a teacher's license from an accredited college in Japan before he or she can teach in a public school on their own. Possible or not, the result above does indicate that some ALT's are entertaining the notion of teaching individually.

What is more interesting in terms of different thought patterns between the West and Japan is manifested in the responses on Item 25, where ALT's are asked their willingness for their teaching performance to be evaluated by others.

Item 25

ALTs' performance should be regularly evaluated.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
7.3	82.9	7.3	2.4

The attitude reflected in the result above makes quite a contrast with that inherent to most Japanese people. As was pointed out in the analysis of the ALT questionnaire, people tend to avoid direct criticism against each other, so much so that a system of evaluation by others has barely got under way in only a very limited number of colleges in Japan. In addition, there is a matter of pride involved here. College graduates with a teaching certificate must first sit an exam before they can be a full-time teacher. The success in the exam results in a tenured teaching position in most public schools and in a pride often associated with a professional career. These two factors have ensured that the necessity for further evaluation has remained foreign to most JTE's. On the other hand, the overwhelming result for the agreement side in Item 25 above shows that ALT's manifest a conviction rooted probably both in a different employment system and in the much deeper principle of one's value hierarchy. What we have in the summary table above then mirrors one cultural feature prevalent outside of Japan. Whether or not the desire of ALT's will be acted upon, the team teaching system as a whole would certainly benefit if the parties involved can understand each other at this level as well.

In spite of the differences in cultural traditions between the West and Japan, one fortunate example of mutual agreement is shown in the results of Items 15 in the ALT questionnaire and in Items 33 and 34 in the JTE questionnaire. In Item 15, ALT's express their desire to be involved in testing students:

Item 15

ALT's should be involved with testing students.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
0	85.4	12.2	2.4

This is a clear indication of recognition of the responsibility accompanying a teaching career. Although most ALT's may not be around as long as their Japanese counterparts and may not have the qualifications which are needed to make them qualified teachers in legal terms, they are nonetheless as much teachers as JTE's are. This is how most ALT's see themselves in their capacity as participants of the JET Programme. Thus, the majority of ALT's feel that the relationship in the class between the ALT and the JTE should be an equal one (Item 8, 1+2=73.1%). Further, they feel satisfied when they are treated as an equal partner in the class by the JTE's (Item 19, 1+2=60.1%). It makes sense, therefore, that any individual employed as a teacher, Japanese and non-Japanese alike, should shoulder the responsibilities of teaching

all the way through. The accountability of a teacher entails preparing for the class, giving a lesson to the class, and testing the students' achievements in order to evaluate the levels of success of the student and of their own teaching effectiveness. Refusal to allow an ALT to do so would be tantamount to denial of the ALT's role as a teacher. This sense of responsibility is generally acknowledged by JTE's, who respond to the following statements as follows:

Item 33

I would prefer ALT's to participate in marking exams.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
2.3	65.9	15.9	15.9

Item 34

I would prefer ALT's to participate in giving final grades.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
2.3	75	15.9	6.8

Although neither Item 33 nor Item 34 mentions specifically the making and administration of exams, these items and the degree of agreement on the JTE's part strongly indicate that for the JTE respondents in this survey foreign teachers are welcome to the entire process of education, in spite of their lack of experience and Japanese teaching licence. Again, since the present study taps the perceptions of parties participating in the JET Programme, it remains to be seen to what extent such proposals would be implemented in schools across the country. But the consensus of opinions found here attests to the fact that JTE's are beginning to recognise an integral aspect of a successful team endeavour across cultures. This in itself is a small step; but it is a step forward toward the betterment of the JET Programme.

Finally, the perceptions of ALT's and JTE's on the knowledge and use of Japanese are referred to.

In Item 9 of the ALT questionnaire, use of Japanese in and out of class was raised. The responses from ALT's are summarised below:

Item 9

In lessons with the ALT only English should be used.

0-NR	1+2	3	4+5
4.9	46.4	12.2	36.5

Based on the data here, we have commented earlier in this survey that perhaps a limited amount of Japanese will be useful to the student. As if to prove the point, the majority of JTE's

have agreed that lessons would benefit if an ALT has some knowledge of Japanese (Item 31, 1 + 2 = 70.4%). In practice, most ALT's will stay here long enough to pick up only the most basic parts of the language, no matter how hard they may try. It would be unfeasible for anyone to exhibit an unfettered flow of Japanese given the short period within which to learn. Therefore, the emphasis on the knowledge and use of Japanese by an ALT should not be on the amount or even the quality of their knowledge, but on the intent to learn by the ALT. The following table shows how JTE's feel on this score.

Item 32

ALT's should try to learn Japanese.

0-NR	1 + 2	3	4 + 5
4.5	75	13.6	6.8

It has been mentioned previously that the above result may be related both to the effectiveness of lessons by an ALT and an alleviated sense of burden on the JTE side. In addition, the majority of ALT's do admit that with a knowledge of Japanese they can perform their job more effectively, which may include a better relationship not only with teachers in school, but also with people in the community (Item 21, 1 + 2 = 80.5%). The combined results for these statements show that many Japanese are prepared to make contact with a visiting foreigner if he or she indicates willingness by uttering a word or two familiar to Japanese people. Without the apparent indication of interest, most Japanese are introverted enough to suppress their possible desire to be receptive to people from other countries. In a way, attempts to learn even the most basic form of the language are a signal to the people here that foreigners are no more dangerous or different than themselves. Although ALT's and JTE's do not meet eye-to-eye on the use of Japanese in class, as is shown in the respective results, mutual agreement on Items 21 and 32 are well founded because it bears out one cultural aspect of people in Japan.

CONCLUSION

This survey enables us to draw a number of conclusions on a variety of issues concerning the JET Programme. The point has been reached where the Programme needs to be reexamined to ensure that the vast amounts of resources, human and economic, which are being expended on the Programme are used in a way which most effectively satisfies the needs and desires of the participants, and serves the ends of English education in Japan. This is a complex and difficult task. Nevertheless, the consensus shown on a number of issues covered by this study gives a mandate to those who would initiate change. Moreover, this mandate is given legitimacy because it derives from an expression of opinion by all parties actually involved. Further, the study exhibits a degree of reliability in its confirmation of attitudes expressed in the Pilot

Study.

This does not deny the need, however, for extensive further research into the Programme. One study can only reveal part of the picture. It may be difficult, of course, to measure the extent and efficacy of cultural exchange, but for the language teaching aspect of the Programme the research procedures available are not being implemented. In particular, there is pressing need to find out what exactly is taking place in the classrooms, to investigate how the Programme is actually operating on a day to day basis. This has been done in a limited way in this study, and some information may also be implicit in the replies of participants, but the focus of the study is on attitudes, and more specific research has to be carried out. One often hears the assertion that "every JET participant's situation is different", but it is a safe prediction that if empirical research were to be carried out on a large scale, patterns could be identified and assessed. This study itself has been performed in a rural prefecture and may benefit from comparison with similar studies from large, metropolitan areas.

This conclusion will first of all give an overview of the questionnaires in terms of the Programme as a whole, followed by a more detailed look at the central issue of team teaching, and finally some related issues.

The JET Programme as a Whole

The responses to the related statements show that the majority of the participants on the JET Programme are supportive of the nationwide project, yet at the same time betray their sentiments for the necessity for change. Students, regardless of the age group and respective levels of competence in the language, welcome the opportunity to be with a native speaker of English. While the students tend to be passive when an ALT joins the class, this is not surprising as they have been the passive recipients of knowledge from teachers throughout their school careers. These students want to participate in the team taught class to the extent that, in the case of failure of comprehension, they wish the vernacular language to be used to assist their understanding to enable them to continue to take part. At the same time students are likely to show an extended concentration span when an ALT speaks to them. Unlike previous generations, these future adults will surely experience less frustration in dealing with people from foreign countries.

JTE's also are enthusiastic about having a native speaker of English in school. They feel they have a better command of English because of the ALT presence, and with more JTE's who can take pride in their English skills it is hoped that the level of English of the students can eventually improve as a consequence. The students can be assured that they are being exposed to refined forms of English in schools today. JTE's can therefore be viewed as not only skilled educators, but also as skilled language users, a skill which is much coveted in any occupation in today's society.

Similarly, ALT's are eager to help JTE's to depart from the kind of English teaching which may remind them of the way of teaching Latin in the West. Although their motives for coming onto the JET Programme are somewhat ambivalent, once assigned to schools they believe that

their efforts can be extended to all aspects of language education. In most cases they seem to be enjoying a good working relationship with their Japanese counterparts and would like to become an integral part of what takes place inside and outside the classroom. Young as most of them may be, they display maturity in their desire to embrace responsibility.

Team Teaching

This is the central issue of the Programme, and in this section what follows is a discussion and presentation of various viewpoints and suggestions of possible alternative approaches. Contradictory views are inevitable with a programme very much still in the process of modification, and this highlights once again the need for further research and experimentation before a fully fledged scheme can come into being.

In terms of the team teaching approach there are two discernible views. On the one hand, team teaching classes have become something separate from the regular English lessons and in this respect those involved may have painted themselves into a corner. This situation may be a natural outcome of the original purpose of the Programme: to foster the speaking abilities of the students. Since aural/oral components play only a limited role in any examination format at present, the purported aim of team teaching receives less attention relative to the conventional form of study, as in the reading class for example. Students have recognised this dual standard and are likely to regard classes with the ALT as a welcome break from the rigours of customary lessons. With this attitude it is not surprising that students have not devised effective study skills for ALT classes and the JTE's in this study have largely failed to provide them with the means to make the most of team teaching classes. This has resulted in a divergence in the perceptions of the two groups of teachers.

If the aim of the Programme is to be strictly pursued then it will be necessary to place more emphasis on the aural/oral components in the examinations, both at high school and college levels. However, the huge number of students involved pose problems in administering any form of examination with an oral component, if not with an aural one. Nevertheless, difficulty is not the same as impossibility. More likely, there is little impetus for large scale change because there is no broad agreement that change is desirable, and it is in the interests of many parties to preserve the status quo. However, there is clear indication that ALT's feel marginalised and this marginalisation needs to be addressed. The difficulty of this may inspire alternatives, such as integrating an existing evaluation criterion into the various school examinations. For example, the Monbusho-sponsored STEP includes an oral interview as part of its assessment system. Currently the number of applicants for STEP exceeds three million annually. Given the above, incorporating the STEP results into school examinations would be likely to result in more respect for oral skills and the team teaching classes which focus on these skills. It would not be unreasonable, either, to widen the ALT role to encompass the teaching of all four skills. The limiting of the ALT to spoken English may be unnatural and can only contribute to the notion that ALT's are not "real" teachers. This follows on from the mistaken notion that "communicative" language teaching applies only to conversation skills, and the

belief that choral repetition or drills, for example, are in some way communicative because students are making oral utterances.

Contrary to the view which relegates team teaching and ALT's to an isolated and less relevant function, the questionnaire results have given some signs that many JTE's are willing to invite ALT's into every phase of education, including the marking of examination papers and the grading of students. In terms of intention, then, ALT's coming to school have been accepted to the extent that a number of JTE's feel that ALT's should be part of a process of establishing themselves as solid members of the school system. In terms of practical teaching procedures we have found that some high school teachers are experimenting with team teaching writing courses. Since writing exercises are one cornerstone of traditional language teaching here, this too points to some integration between new ideas and conventional language teaching. JTE's and ALT's have yet to figure out how to employ team teaching in reading courses; given the fact that more and more schools acknowledge the necessity of the ability to cope with extensive reading as well as intensive reading, a newer approach using team teaching may produce a method with less emphasis on the translation aspect of reading.

Related Issues

The following are a list of points which deal with issues raised through examination of the questionnaires and which have not been addressed directly in the discussion of team teaching. They take the form of a series of recommendations.

1) Provision must be made to give JTE's adequate time to prepare for team teaching.

To some degree this relates to the above discussion on team teaching. Whatever path the Programme follows, if the ALT role is peripheral, and JTE's are already overburdened with their normal duties of preparing students for exams, it is not surprising that JTE's must give priority to their usual duties, and therefore find it difficult to allocate time for effective team teaching preparation. However, bringing ALT's into the mainstream would make team teaching an integral part of JTE's duties rather than an unwelcome addition to the workload. There must be recognition also that two people preparing lessons together may be more time-consuming than a teacher working independently.

2) Suitable materials for team teaching need to be devised.

This is the item on the questionnaire which showed the greatest consensus. The lack of teaching materials is clearly a fundamental problem and one which should be resolved urgently. To this end Monbusho should take immediate measures, perhaps by formally devoting resources to a project to find or create materials.

3) ALT's should be prepared to speak some Japanese in class.

Although the ALT questionnaire showed some doubts amongst the ALT community in this regard it seems to be clear that students and JTE's would welcome this. This would require,

of course, better Japanese language preparation for ALT's, as well as the ability to decide when its use would be judicious in a language teaching context. This is expanded upon in (4) below.

4) Orientation procedures must be improved.

Orientation procedures are inadequate at present. If the role of the ALT is to be expanded then the need becomes even greater. Therefore, better preparation before ALT's begin work in schools is necessary in respect of the teaching of English as a foreign language and Japanese language preparation. Otherwise, recruitment procedures have to be altered to employ only those who have prior training and experience in teaching English. Subsequent to orientation, inservice training for ALT's and JTE's is essential to enable teacher development and the dissemination of knowledge gained through experience.

5) There needs to be a clear definition of goals and the respective roles of ALT's and JTE's in the team teaching classroom.

It seems apparent that in seeking to preserve flexibility there has been instead a vagueness about how people should operate and why. This is perhaps seen most clearly in the ALT desire for evaluation. A measure of security is promoted if ALT's have some idea what they are expected to do and get unambiguous feedback as to what extent they are fulfilling their duties satisfactorily. Given the cultural divide on the issue of teacher assessment, great care has to be taken to initiate a system which is acceptable to all those involved.

It is hoped that this study will go some of the way to satisfying the need for empirical research on the JET Programme. In such a way a very courageous teaching initiative can be developed to fulfil its as yet unrealised potential.

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