

## **Suggestions for the Training Program of Primary Or Secondary Education Japanese Language Assistants**

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According to the statistics (as of 1998) released by the Japan Foundation, the ratio of the learners of Japanese abroad of each school level are as follows: Primary and secondary education 66.0%, Higher education 20.0%, Others 13.2%. In Australia, 96.6% of all the learner of Japanese are those of primary and secondary education. This means that for those who finished the training program for the teachers of Japanese, the availability of assistantship of primary or secondary schools is higher than that of universities. In order to find a regular teaching position of a primary or a secondary school, usually one needs a teaching certificate issued by the Ministry of Education of the state or of the country which administrates the school. Thus, in Japan, the necessity of the training of assistants of this level of education has been increasing.

I visited the assistants working at 7 colleges and 2 primary schools in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, Australia and also Japanese language advisors working at the Department of Education of each state. In this paper, I discuss the problems, which the assistants have been facing in the view of improving the teacher training program for them.

For assistants, in order to adjust themselves to new environments, it is essential to understand the differences in various concepts, such as learners of primary or secondary schools or town lives, between Japan and Australia. They also need clear and detailed job orientation on assistantship, since most of them have been trained to become "teachers". They should understand the responsibility of signing a contract, which, in Japanese society, is not very widely practiced.

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