

The Results of Japanese ACTFL Oral Proficiency Tests (2008-09 AY) ¹ -Funded by the National Resource Center East Asia grant-

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A summary statement

In 2008 fall and 2009 spring, 18 students who were completing Japanese 202/212 (baseline data) as well as 21 students enrolled in JPN 415/407 had an oral proficiency interview test with a certified ACTFL Oral proficiency interview (OPI) tester.² Among the 21 Japanese 415/407 students, 16 were majoring in Japanese BA of which 13 were seniors. The first OPI ratings were given by a primary tester, and the second ratings were confirmed by a different tester. Due to university regulations, I was not able to adopt a random sampling from the entire population; the participants were recruited on a volunteer basis.

Figure 1 on the next page compares the OPI results between JPN 202/202 and 415/407 students. I'm pleased to report that our Japanese 415/407 students (mostly senior Japanese majors) were not only performing significantly better than Japanese 202/212 students, but also the majority were performing at the Intermediate-High or higher levels. *Intermediate-High* seems to be the minimum level that satisfies the expected oral proficiency outcome for graduating Japanese BA majors (SLO #1).³ The backgrounds of the students who were able to perform at this level vary considerably (some are heritage students, and others are not; some have studied abroad, but others are not) (see Table 2 on p. 3).

This assessment process will be reported in the 2009 Assessment Report for Japanese BA.

Future agenda

1. We will need to discuss what the expected oral proficiency level should be for our graduating majors, and how to advise/guide students who are less likely to achieve at that level.
2. I suggest that the Japanese section continue to obtain OPI data from Japanese BA majors for assessment purposes. How can we sustain this assessment practice?
3. It is also advisable to obtain proficiency data on reading and/or writing proficiency from Japanese BA majors.

¹ The ACTFL OPI is the nation's most recognized oral proficiency test. The following ACTFL OPI certified testers in the Japanese section were involved in this project: Hiromi U. Kelly, Masami Lackmann, Kayoko Madsen, Miki Ogasawara, Waka Tominaga, and myself. Special thanks to Prof. Ogasawara for recruiting student participants.. I also thank Ms. Tominaga for her assistance in creating Tables 1 & 2.

² URL of ACTFL (American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages) OPI:
<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3348>.

³Also, following the NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) standards, the UH College of Education requires their students who wish to obtain teacher licensure in Japanese, to take the ACTFL OPI and demonstrate their ability to perform at this level.

Figure 1. Comparison of OPI Results between Japanese 212/202 Students and 415/407 Students

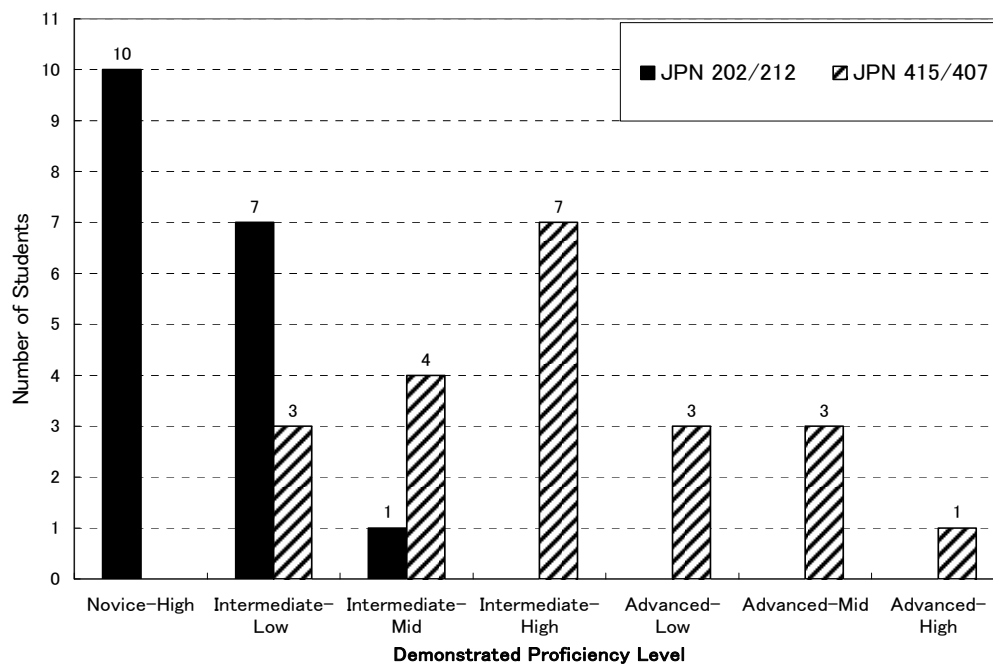


Table 1. OPI Results and Background Information of Japanese 202/212 Participants ($n=18$)

Rating	Class standing	Major	L1	Placement	Japanese at UH	Japanese in High school	Heritage student?
Novice-High	Freshman	Biology	English	202	1 semester	4 years	No
Novice-High	Junior	Graphic Design	English	102	4 semesters	5 years	No
Novice-High	Freshman	Computer Sci.	English	202	1 semester	3 years	No
Novice-High	Junior	Japanese	English	100/101	4 semesters	N/A	No
Novice-High	Junior	Economics	English	101	4 semesters	2 years	No
Novice-High	Senior	Engineering	English	100/101	4 semesters	2 years	No
Novice-High	Sophomore	Japanese	English	102	3 semesters	(unknown)	No
Novice-High	Freshman	Business	Chinese	202	1 semester	4 years	No
Novice-High	Graduate	Linguistics	Chinese	101	4 semesters	N/A	No
Novice-High	Junior	Education	Chinese	101	4 semesters	(unknown)	No
Intermediate-Low	Freshman	Nursing	English	202	1 semester	6 years	Yes
Intermediate-Low	Junior	Japanese	English	(unknown)	(unknown)	(unknown)	No
Intermediate-Low	Sophomore	Int. Business	English	102	3 semesters	3 years	No
Intermediate-Low	Senior	Nursing	English	201	2 semesters	6 years	No

Intermediate-Low	Senior	Computer Sci.	English	100	4 semesters	4 years	No
Intermediate-Low	Senior	Business	Chinese	201/202	1 semester	N/A	No
Intermediate-Low	Senior	TIM	Korean	101	4 semesters	1 year	No
Intermediate-Mid	Graduate	English	English	102/201	4 semesters	6 years	No

Table 2. OPI results and background information for Japanese 415/407 students ($n=21$)

Rating	Class standing	Major	L1	Placement	Years of Japanese studies before UH	Study abroad	Heritage
Intermediate-Low	Senior	Japanese	English	201	2 yrs (univ.)		No
Intermediate-Low	Senior	Japanese	English	301	4 yrs (HS*, CC)		No
Intermediate-Low	Senior	Japanese	English	101	1 yr (CC)		No
Intermediate-Mid	Senior	Japanese (double major)	English	201	1 yr (CC)	4 months	No
Intermediate-Mid	Senior	Japanese	English	301	4 yrs (HS)		Yes
Intermediate-Mid	Senior	Japanese	English	101	2 yrs (CC, other)		No
Intermediate-Mid	Senior	Japanese	English	202	? yrs (Kumon)		No
Intermediate-High	Junior	Japanese	English	301	3 yrs (HS)		No
Intermediate-High	unclassified	n/a	English	101	None	1 year	No
Intermediate-High	Senior	Japanese	English	101	4 yrs (HS)		No
Intermediate-High	Sophomore	Undecided	English	420	13 yrs (HS, Rainbow)		Yes
Intermediate-High	Senior	Japanese	English	307	4 yrs (HS, CC)		Yes
Intermediate-High	Senior	Japanese	English	201	4 years (HS)	Summer	No
Intermediate-High	Senior	Japanese	English	201	4 years (HS)	Summer	No
Advanced-Low	Senior	Psychology	English	301	6 yrs (HS, other)		Yes
Advanced-Low	Senior	TIM	English	101	Unreported	1 year	No
Advanced-Low	Senior	Japanese (double major)	English	305	Unreported		No
Advanced-Mid	Sophomore	Japanese	Portuguese	407	5 yrs (HS)		No
Advanced-Mid	Graduate	Asian Studies	English	407	4 yrs (univ.)		No
Advanced-Mid	Junior	Japanese	English	421	11 yrs (HS, Rainbow)		Yes
Advanced-High	Senior	Japanese (double major)	English	307	? yrs (Rainbow)		Yes

*High school