

Japanese Language Stumps Army

Training Linguists Is Big Job



Although Frances Cole was born in China, Chinese characters in the Japanese language are unfamiliar to her. Miss Cole, 4515 21st Ave. N. E., is one of a dozen students at the University of Washington who are studying Japanese in preparation for positions as Japanese linguists, seriously needed by the Army and various departments of the government in the war program. Miss Cole came to the United States when three months old. She is shown receiving instruction from Nobutaki Ike, instructor.

"Scuse please, coming again. No catchem."
 Just in case you no catch'm either, that represents about the biggest stumbling and mumbling block in the entire national war

effort—the critical need for Japanese linguists to act as interpreters and translators for the Army and various government agencies.

It also represents a problem that has placed the University of Washington pretty close to the top of the list of a limited number of universities where emergency training of linguists is being rushed at the request of the government.

About a dozen students already have begun studying the course, which is under the direction of Frederic D. Schultheis, assistant professor of Oriental studies of the Far Eastern Department, and Henry S. Tatsumi, Seattle-born Japanese and veteran language instructor.



HENRY S. TATSUMI
 "Streamlined Japanese" approved

Shortage of Linguists
 The seriousness of the shortage of linguists, Professor Schultheis explained, probably can best be realized in the fact that last year only about 40 students in the United States were studying the Japanese language.

At the same time, Germany was able to put 3,000 agents and military men in Japan who speak the language fluently and have a fair reading knowledge of the language for the purpose of collaborating with Japan.

Joseph K. Yamagiwa, who teaches the language at the University of Michigan, Professor Schultheis said, has pointed out that existing facilities will afford only a mere trickle of men and women with a vague knowledge of the subject.

The language is taught at only a few universities, including Washington, California, Chicago, Columbia, Yale, Harvard and Michigan by a handful of teachers, whereas hundreds are needed, he said.

Tatsumi Originated System

Therein lies the importance of the work that now has begun out at the University, Professor Schultheis said.

"The system we use here in teaching the language was originated and outlined by Tatsumi," he said. "We already have been told by the government that Washington students show a much more thorough understanding of the subject than those from other universities."

Professor Schultheis declared that Tatsumi's method of teaching has been so simplified that it has been blueprinted and adopted by the Army. It places within reach of the average high-school student a speaking knowledge of the subject in a relatively short time and a thorough understanding of the

grammar structure in a few evenings of study.

The method used involves a chart called a "Simplified Grammar Table of Spoken Japanese," which gives the student a "birdseye view" of the entire language before he is asked to construct sentences in it.

Tatsumi said the system can be best described as a "total method," rather than "piece-meal methods," which have been practiced in the past.

The system enables a student to learn the language with the same amount of study required for French or Spanish and even affords familiarity with about 5,000 Chinese characters (used by the Japanese) "which a student can get along pretty well with," Tatsumi explained.

Now under consideration for adoption at the University also are intensified courses in Russian and Chinese and Japanese, in which students would devote their entire time, Professor Schultheis said. These probably will be opened in the spring or summer quarter.

Continuation of the courses in Japanese depends largely on whether the threatened evacuation of all Japanese from Western Washington, American-born and aliens alike, is carried out. For the teaching staff at the University consists entirely of Japanese instructors.

Tatsumi, 14 years on the faculty at the University, native of Seattle, whose father came here when Washington still was a territory, summed the situation up in a simple manner, shaking his head gravely:

"It would be too bad."
 Tatsumi served in the Army during the First World War.

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