



10-1-2012

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Rocha, Fabiano Takashi (2012) "Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop Report & Survey Results," *Journal of East Asian Libraries*: Vol. 2012 : No. 155 , Article 6.

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Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop Report & Survey Results

Fabiano Takashi Rocha, Japan Studies Librarian, University of Toronto Libraries

The Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop took place at the University of Toronto Libraries on March 12 and 13, 2012 as a pre-Council on East Asian Libraries / Association of Asian Studies annual meeting workshop. In this report, I would like to give some background information about the development and implementation of this project, followed by a discussion of the results of the survey that was conducted in the end of the second day.

Background

The Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training was developed to address the increasing demand for training opportunities for librarians who joined the workforce in the recent years. Unlike the JF-NDL JSIST (Japan Foundation – National Diet Library Japan Studies Information Specialists Training) conducted in Japanese, the Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop that took place in Toronto in March 2012 was conducted in English with the objective of including East Asian Studies Librarians who may not be fluent in Japanese, and yet are still responsible for building and maintaining Japanese collections. Many librarians belong to small institutions in rather isolated areas. The major goal of the project was to equip the junior librarians (North America and worldwide) with the essential skills required to better serve their faculty, graduate students, researchers, and community users at large. The Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop aimed to provide training on essential areas of Japanese librarianship that included bibliographic (reference materials) training, collection development, cataloguing, information literacy, archival access and use, non-traditional library practices, North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources (NCC) initiatives, vendor presentations, and round table session to promote the interaction between experienced and junior librarians.

In order to organize the workshop, a taskforce composed of Japanese studies and East Asian studies librarians from universities across Canada was formed. The members of the taskforce (in alphabetical order) were Louis Chor (University of Alberta), Shirin Eshghi (University of British Columbia), Jack Howard (Royal Ontario Museum), Fabiano Rocha (chair, University of Toronto), Asako Yoshida (University of Manitoba), and Macy Zheng (McGill University). The composition of the taskforce was not only addressing the balance between Japan and East Asia area studies but also varying sizes of collections of Japanese materials. Vickey Bestor (NCC President), Keiko Yokota-Carter

(NCC Chair), Setsuko Noguchi and Keiko Suzuki (former NCC Librarian Professional Development Committee co-chairs) also worked closely with the members of the taskforce in developing the content and overall organization of the workshop.

In November 2010, an application by the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library (University of Toronto) was submitted to the Grant Program for Intellectual Exchange Conferences [for] Japanese Studies and Intellectual Exchange. The generous financial support of the Japan Foundation was used to provide accommodation for 23 participants and 14 out-of-town trainers. Ten selected participants were also awarded a travel allowance of up to C\$500 to cover some of their higher travel costs and/or lack financial support from their home institutions. The participants came from libraries in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The success of this two-day workshop was only possible with the enthusiasm and dedication of eighteen experienced Japanese studies librarians working in numerous institutions across Canada, the United States, and Japan who volunteered to share their expertise. For a complete list of participants, trainers and organizers, please see appendices A and B.

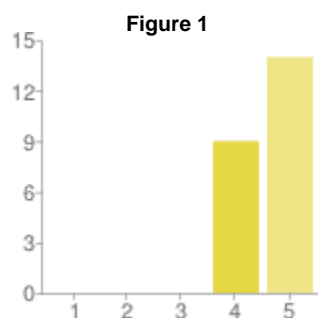
Survey Results & Analysis

Following the workshop, a link to the JJSLT Survey created with GoogleDocs was sent out to all participants:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dFVsRXNPNkU1Q0pjLUtLMFJNT1I30VE6MQ#gid=0>

The survey solicited the participants' feedback, so that the data could be used to assess the effectiveness of the workshop, as well as to ensure the improvement of future training initiatives. A combination of quantitative and qualitative questions made up the survey. The quantitative questions were mainly asking the participants to rate the individual sessions of the workshop using a scale of 1 to 5: 1=poor, 2=needs improvement, 3=good, 4=very good, and 5=excellent.

Participants were given three days to submit their responses. The total number of participants to attend the workshop was 23. The participation rate in the survey was 100%. All 23 participants, without exception, completed the survey. Overall, the workshop was extremely well perceived. 14 out of 23 (61%) indicated the overall quality of the workshop was excellent (5 on the scale). The remaining 9 participants (39%) indicated the workshop was very good (4 on the scale).



None of the 9 sessions were rated as “poor” (1 on the scale) by any of the participants as shown in the figure 1 on the left. Three sessions were given “needs

improvement” (2 on the scale) type of rating. The participants’ rationale for giving this rating was made clear through the written-out responses. Many participants stated the workshop was everything they hoped for – and for some, it surpassed their expectations. “As a junior librarian, one does not always have a chance to learn from these trainers. It was truly amazing to see these librarians share their knowledge so eagerly and readily, and I will treasure the workbook and use it as a reference tool for years to come.”

However, there were also many comments that suggest the need for improvement in certain areas. More sessions should have allowed for more active participation from the trainees, as well as hands-on training exercises to break the predominant top-down, teacher-student model of teaching and learning. For instance, highly-rated sessions such as the Bibliographic (Reference) Materials session received “needs improvement” (2 on the scale) by a couple of participants. They recognize the value of the information presented in the training materials and the efforts the trainer made to compile such valuable reference sources. However, the participants also wished that in addition to the presentation of the resources, they had more exposure to the physical items and had some instruction, or tips, on how to use some of the sources such as geographical names dictionaries or Japanese chronologies. The collection development session was also very highly rated. Nevertheless, a few participants expressed their wish to hear more about negotiation strategies, useful tips on working with vendors, and more discussion on non-traditional materials such as manga, genre fiction, and visual materials, among others.

The Most Useful Part Of The Workshop

Participants were asked to tell us what they found most useful about the workshop. People’s interests were varied, and I believe it has to do with the current positions they hold and the level of applicability to their jobs. Sessions such as bibliographic (reference) materials, collection development and archives allowed participants who are cataloguers to understand more about selection of resources and provision of services to the public. Similarly, those who have public service oriented positions were introduced to cataloguing tools, Romanization standard and future developments in technical services. Thus, the exposure to different aspects of librarianship was crucial in broadening their horizons and complementing the skills they already have. Participants were also pleased to learn from people’s experiences and network with junior and experienced librarians. Participant 19 mentioned that becoming aware of other the particular strengths of some librarians in the field would be extremely useful for the times that particular questions come up. Overall, the workshop was most useful in exposing the participants to new skill sets, creating or enhancing professional networks, and inspiring participants to take up on new professional challenges.

The Least Useful Part Of The Workshop

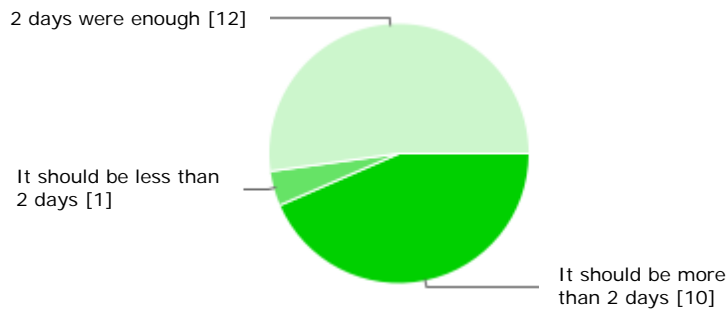
The selected participants of the JJSLT had a wide range of experiences and responsibilities in the positions they currently hold in their institutions. Keeping in mind that the program was designed for junior librarians, there were instances when some participants may have needed more advanced level of training for particular disciplines. The sessions that were listed as not useful in the workshop had to do with individual participant's experience and need, or lack thereof, for a specific skill set. For instance, information literacy did not come as a top priority or interest to some librarians who do not, and do not intend to, consult with the public. Others felt that they benefited a lot from this session. Another example is how more experienced cataloguers benefited from the majority of the sessions, but the basic level of cataloguing training provided in the workshop proved to be not challenging enough for them.

The session that was relatively considered the least useful was the conducted by the vendors. Many participants were already familiar with the resources introduced. On top of that, the resources tend to be costly and not affordable to those librarians working in smaller institutions. Participants also felt that vendors can be contacted at any time outside of the workshop schedule, and for that matter, the time allocated for the vendors' session could have been used for something else. Having said that, there were still many participants who saw some value in this session. Based on the examples above, it is impossible to generalize and name the least useful part of the workshop, as the interests of participants were varied and subject to their levels of experience and what they expected to learn from the Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop.

Networking

Without any doubt, one the most important outcomes of this workshop was the establishment of professional networks among the participants and trainers. Some East Asian Studies librarians regarded the workshop "as excellent venue to make connection here. To pair up librarian with Japanese librarian with language expert [was] very thoughtful. I can't imagine how I can ever find this kind of opportunity to be so close with my Japanese studies colleagues, especially when we all worked together for two days." It was also refreshing for a few to be exposed to librarians outside of the United States. One participant states that she got most out of "networking with Canadian and European librarians; [it was] interesting to hear about the differences in approaches and local country-based practices." The establishment of the networks with both experienced librarians and their peers will be instrumental for the junior librarians in finding answers to work-related questions, developing their careers and coordinating with others in collaborative projects they may engage in the future.

Length Of The Workshop



Participants were given the following choices to comment on the length of the workshop: 1) it should be more than 2 days, 2) it should be less than 2 days, and 3) 2 days were enough. 12 out of 23 (52%) felt that two days were enough; 10 (43%) felt it should be

Figure 2

more than 2 days, and 1 felt it should be less than 2 days as shown in Figure 2. A participant noted, “[Two days were] perfect -- we stopped just as I was on the brink of information overload.” It seems that the 2-day workshop model is workable, but it would have been more effective to have fewer sessions and reallocate the time for longer sessions that included more group exercises and group discussions. Although more than half of the participants (52%) thought that two days were enough, almost half (43%) suggested it should have been longer. If we were to include, as some suggested, visits to other libraries with Japanese collections, have longer breaks to promote more networking, and have lengthier sessions to explore some of the topics in more depth, the ideal number of days for a workshop would be 2 and a half to 3 days. It is worth pointing out that two days was ideal amount of time in making the JSLT a pre-Council on East Asian Libraries (CEAL) annual meeting workshop, as all the trainers and the majority of the participants were already planning to attend the annual event. Holding longer workshops on dates that do not coincide with the CEAL annual meeting may prove to be challenging in terms of availability of time for participants and trainers, as well as the accommodation, transportation, and other costs associated with events of longer duration.

Suggestions For Future Workshops

A participant expressed her interest in hearing from experienced librarians about their career paths, the challenges of building a Japanese collection, building trust with faculty members, and getting small tips and keys for survival. These were all topics that could have been brought up at the Voices of Experience session, but we recognize that many junior librarians did not feel comfortable asking some of these questions within a large group. We also recognize that the time for such fruitful discussions was scarce, and more time should have been allocated for the Voices of Experience session. Other suggested topics include grant writing, conducting original research, handling of antiquarian materials (*kotenseki*), negotiating with vendors, forming consortia, handling of donations, and fundraising and outreach. Some of above mentioned suggestions will be particularly helpful in determining how to reorganize or improve

some of the sessions at the junior level. Some other suggestions will be used in the development of training programs at a more advanced level.

Conclusion

As the data suggests, the level of satisfaction with the Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop was extremely high. Every participant was able to get something new out of the workshop. From the organizer's point of view, I can think of a few things I would have done differently. I would have selected a smaller pool of participants with up to 16 people. That perhaps would have allowed for more active participation from the trainees, manageable size for trainers to include more group exercises and discussion, and longer sessions for disciplines that required more than the allocated time. I would have also increased the number of the days of the training to three days to accommodate activities such as visits to local libraries with Japanese collections.

The Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop achieved its objective by providing trainees with essential skills in Japanese librarianship, exposing the participants to new skill sets, creating or enhancing professional networks, and inspiring participants to take on new professional challenges. The pool of participants was very diverse. It welcomed librarians and library staff from institutions of various sizes and with various responsibilities. The single non-librarian participant noted, "[the workshop] definitely helped [her] better understand what Japanese librarians do." The inclusion of an Information Studies faculty member in the pool of participants was an attempt to bridge the gap between academics and library practitioners, as the academics are responsible for educating the next generation of librarians. The international participants from the Netherlands, United Kingdom and Switzerland recognized that the understanding of North American practices, such as cooperative cataloguing, will increasingly have an impact outside of North America, and it is to their advantage to be aware of and adaptable to global practices and trends. A few applications were not accepted at this time, as we were over capacity. Among the applicants, there were a number of Master of Information Studies students who will soon be graduating and entering the workforce. It is clear that training opportunities similar to the Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop for the next generation of Japanese Studies librarians should be developed to address the ongoing demand for professional development and mentoring programs.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: JJS�T SelectedParticipants

Appendix B: JJS�T Trainers&Organizers

Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop University of Toronto Libraries March 12 & 13, 2012

Day 1

- **all sessions on Day 1 will take place in the computer lab at the iSchool**
- **refreshments and lunch in the lounge outside of the lab**

- 8:30 to 9:00 **Registration**
Fabiano Rocha (University of Toronto)
- 9:00 to 9:10 **Opening Remarks**
Fabiano Rocha (University of Toronto)
- 9:10 to 10:40 **Session 1: Bibliographic Training**
Yasuko Makino (Princeton University)
- 10:40 to 11:00 BREAK**
- 11 to 12:30 **Session 2: Collection Development**
Sachie Noguchi (Columbia University)
- 12:30 to 13:30 LUNCH**
- 13:30 to 15:00 **Session 3: Cataloguing**
Keiko Suzuki (Yale University)
- 15:00 to 15:20 BREAK**
- 15:20 to 16:50 **Session 4: Information Literacy**
Sharon Domier (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) & Shirin
Eshghi (University of British Columbia)

Day 2

- **Sessions 5 to 8 will take place in the Map and Data Library Computer Lab**
 - **Joint Sessions 9A and 9B at the Media Commons Theatre**
 - **Morning refreshments and lunch at room 8051**
 - **Afternoon refreshments at Current Resources Centre (EAL)**
- 8:30 to 10:00 **Session 5: Thinking Outside of the Box**
Asako Yoshida (University of Manitoba) & Tokiko Bazzell
(University of Hawaii at Manoa)
- 10:00 to 10:20 BREAK (Room 8051)**

- 10:20 to 11:30 **Session 6: NCC Initiatives**
Keiko Yokota-Carter (NCC Chair); Fabiano Rocha & Jack Howard (IUP); Mari Nakahara (MVS); Michiko Ito (GIF-ILL); Chiaki Sakai (DRC)
- 11:30 to 12:30 **Session 7: Vendor Presentations**
Masashi Tanaka (NetAdvance); Mariko Horikawa (Yomiuri Shinbunsha); Kengo Sakamoto (Maruzen International)
- 12:30 to 13:30 LUNCH (Room 8051)**
- 13:30 to 15:00 **Session 8: Archives Session**
Izumi Koide Yasue (Shibusawa Eichi Memorial Foundation), Kuniko Yamada-McVey (Harvard University) & Terumi Fukushi (NDL)
- 15:00 to 15:20 BREAK (Current Resources Centre)**
- 15:20 to 16:20 **Sessions 9A & 9B: Voices of Experience**
Louis Chor (University of Alberta), Macy Zheng (McGill University), Keiko Yokota-Carter (Washington University)
- 16:20 to 16:35 **15-minute survey**
- 16:35 to 16:45 **Concluding Remarks**
Fabiano Rocha (University of Toronto)

VENUE INFORMATION:

iSchool: 140 St George Street
Robarts Library: 130 St George Street

Day 1 (March 12, 2012)

iSchool (Faculty of Information)
iSchool, 1st floor
Karen Melville Classroom: Room 116
*Take the elevator or stairs to the 1st floor

Day 2 (March 13, 2012) :

Sessions 5 ~ 8

Map & Data Library Computer Lab
Robarts Library, 5th floor
Room 5-053
*Take the P5 Elevator from 1st or 2nd floor to the 5th floor

Session 9A & 9B (joint session)

Media Commons Theatre
Robarts Library, 3rd floor
*Take the P5 elevator or escalators to the 3rd floor

Morning Refreshments and Lunch:

Robarts Library, 8th floor
Room 8051
*Take the Elevator P2 from the 2nd floor to the 8th floor

Afternoon Refreshment

East Asian Library (Robarts Library, 8th floor)
Current Resources Centre
*Take the P2 Elevator from the 2nd floor to the 8th floor

**Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop
Appendix A: Selected Participants**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Noriko Asato	University of Hawaii
Yuh-Fen Benda	Vanderbilt University
Sayako Bissig	Ostasiatisches Seminar der Universität Zürich Japanische Bibliothek
Xi Chen	Oberlin College
Yu-hui Chen	Albany University
Yoriko Dixon	Duke University
Lawrence P. Hamblin	Emory University
Kazuko Hioki	University of Kentucky
Mariko Honshuku	Harvard University
Hye-jin Juhn	University of Notre Dame
Marta Kule	Japan Foundation, Toronto
Kris MacPherson	St. Olaf College
Mieko Mazza	Yale University
Kevin McDowell	University of Colorado
Daniel McKee	Cornell University
Setsuko Means	Library of Congress
Yasuyo Ohtsuka	British Library
Mari Suzuki	University of Michigan
Saeko Suzuki	University of Washington
Azusa Tanaka	Washington University in St. Louis
Julie Wang	Bingham University
Karin Wijsman	Leiden University
Xian Wu	Michigan State University
Kelly Yuzawa	Library of Congress

**Junior Japanese Studies Librarian Training Workshop
Appendix B: Trainers & Organizers**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Tokiko Bazzell	University of Hawaii at Manoa
Vickey Bestor	North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources
Louis Chor	University of Alberta
Sharon Domier	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Shirin Eshghi	University of British Columbia
Michiko Ito	University of Kansas
Jack Howard	Royal Ontario Museum
Adam Lisbon	North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources
Yasuko Makino	Princeton University
Hajime Naka	University of Toronto
Mari Nakahara	Library of Congress
Sachie Noguchi	Columbia University
Fabiano Rocha	University of Toronto
Chiaki Sakai	University of Iowa
Keiko Suzuki	Yale University
Kuniko Yamada-McVey	Harvard University
Izumi Koide Yasue	Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation
Keiko Yokota-Carter	University of Washington
Asako Yoshida	University of Manitoba
Macy Zheng	McGill University

Vendors

Mariko Horikawa	The Yomiuri Shimbun
Kengo Sakamoto	Maruzen International
Masashi Tanaka	NetAdvance