

SPECIAL REPORT

A Cooperative Program in Chinese and Japanese
Language Teaching: The First CIC Far Eastern Language Institute
Held at
The University of Michigan
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THE FIRST of four rotating CIC Far Eastern Language Institutes, held at the University of Michigan in connection with its 1963 summer session, served not only its educational purpose of giving intensive instruction in the Chinese and Japanese languages; it becomes a means to explore the conditions under which interuniversity and intercollegiate cooperation in an educational program may be carried on.

Sponsored by the Committee on Institutional Cooperation of the Big Eleven (consisting of the Universities of Chicago, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Michigan State, Minnesota, Northwestern, Ohio State, Purdue, and Wisconsin), the Institute was supported by instructional and fellowship funds provided by the Ford Foundation, the U.S. Office of Education, the University of Michigan, and by a number of other participating institutions.

Preparation for the Institutes goes back to May 1961, when the teachers of Chinese and Japanese in the Big Eleven began a series of meetings designed to make for orderly expansion of Far Eastern language instruction in the member institutions. Resulting from these meetings was the formation of a CIC Far Eastern Language Instruction Committee, the "assignment" of a Korean language program to Indiana University, language-area liaison, the consideration of teaching procedures, and a program for the development of instructional materials, as well as the shaping of a proposal that was ultimately accepted by the Ford Foundation. Throughout these meetings the teachers, through their committee, received the support, advice, and encouragement of the deans of the liberal arts colleges of the Big Eleven.

Represented on the staff of the first Institute were 25 teachers from 14 colleges and universities, 17 from the universities of the Big Eleven and eight from non-Big Eleven institutions.

Participating in the Institute were 125 individual students who came from 41 institutions. The total enrollment in 13 courses was 145, with some 30 visitors in addition.

The program consisted of intensive first-, second-, and third-year courses, advanced reading courses in Chinese and Japanese, two linguistics courses in each of the two languages, and a joint faculty-student seminar in which the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean languages and their writing systems were contrasted with each other and with English. The third-year class in Chinese attracted 18 students--perhaps as large an enrollment as has so far been gathered in the United States for Chinese at this level.

Twenty-seven students received fellowships from the funds granted by the Ford Foundation; 15 graduate and 12 undergraduate students were awarded fellowships by the U.S. Office of Education under the terms of the National Defense Education Act; Indiana University supplied seven scholarships, Northwestern four, The University of Toronto two, Connecticut Wesleyan one, and the Co-operative Undergraduate Program for Critical Languages at Princeton University one. Cambridge University (England) provided four travel grants to supplement fellowships granted from Ford Foundation funds. Thirty-seven applications were examined for the 12 undergraduate awards granted by the U.S. Office of Education, and 67 for the 29 awards granted from Ford Foundation funds. The Institute thus began with an exceptionally gifted student body, highly motivated in its study of the Chinese and Japanese languages.

The program of the first Institute was coordinated by means of a pre-session conference of the staff, held between June 17 and 22. The discussions there initiated on the nature of the student body, on teaching procedures, and on the Institute's program for the development of instructional materials were continued in weekly staff meetings at which memoranda were also developed on the methods to be followed in the spoken language hours and on the use of a Japanese reader for the development, not of written, but of spoken language competence. An "open-door" policy was followed for classroom visits, and discussions were held on classroom practices. The seminar in Contrastive Studies in Chinese and Japanese became a measure of staff and student interest in the scientific analysis of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean.

Since the Institute had for its main purpose the furtherance of language competence, "area" courses were not scheduled. However, three Japanese movies and a series of Chinese "shorts" were shown and a number of Chinese dinners and evening get-togethers afforded extra-curricular opportunities to use the Chinese and Japanese languages.

The high scores earned by the students in the Carroll-Sapon Language Aptitude Test were repeated in their final grades. A "student questionnaire on courses and teaching" resulted in a number of suggestions having to do with the objectives of each course, the texts, examinations, language laboratory, drill sections, size of staff, the pace at which each course was conducted, the extra-curricular program, articulation with courses at the student's home institution, and the student questionnaire itself. The reactions to the program of the Institute were decidedly on the favorable side.

The summer's program did point to serious deficiencies in teaching materials, but if present plans materialize, the Far Eastern language teachers of the Big Eleven will produce spoken language texts for intermediate and advanced Chinese and Japanese, reading texts geared to "area" concerns, audio-visual aids (notably, annotations of movie scripts), lists of Chinese and Japanese dictionaries, and specialized glossaries based on the professional writings of Chinese and Japanese scholars. Also, twenty-one papers delivered in the Contrastive Studies seminar have now gone to press, the first tangible result of the Institute's program for the development of instructional materials. The specific needs of the CIC Institutes will be met as these materials are produced. The research program carried on by the U.S. Office of Education under NDEA will also provide, as it has already provided, materials that will contribute to the work of the Institutes.

Subsequent experience at Michigan and Iowa shows that the intensive summer instruction provided by the Institute is articulating quite well with the courses given during the academic year. If the students are able to enroll in the proper sequences of semi-intensive courses (covering two years in one) and are also able to return to a second Institute, they will telescope four years of language instruction into a space of fifteen months. The languages studied will be more firmly grasped since there will be less attrition through disuse. In any case, 125 students received during the summer of 1963 one year's instruction in the course of eight weeks and most of them have moved ahead in their further training.

The CIC Institutes will give each staff member an opportunity to compare and evaluate the programs in Chinese and Japanese at his home institution with the program of the Institute and of the other institutions represented on the staff. They will lead, it is hoped, to the upgrading of Far Eastern language instruction throughout the Big Eleven and possibly elsewhere, since a top-flight student body will provide abundant competition for itself and demand first-class performances from the staff. More instruction at more levels will be scheduled than can be provided in any single

institution. With encouragement given to undergraduate students--to a greater extent than to graduate students--Chinese and Japanese as critical languages will be driven down to the lower reaches of the undergraduate curriculum. Since large numbers of students are involved, the Institutes will help to establish norms of student performance and faculty effectiveness. The second Institute, to be given at Indiana University during the summer of 1964, will provide additional practice in the refinement of teaching procedures and programs, so important when so many institutions are straining to add a non-Western dimension to their curricula.