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## Mapping the Factual Genres of the Japanese Workplace

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### Abstract

This paper<sup>1</sup> reports on the research project, *Mapping the written genres of the Japanese workplace* which set out to identify, taxonomise and describe the kinds of factual genres used in the Japanese-speaking workplace. The motivation behind this study originates from a desire to know, understand and ultimately, teach authentic genres which have vocational significance for students of Japanese as a second and or foreign language. The study interviewed and surveyed 21 non-Japanese speaking background employees in Japanese speaking workplaces both in Japan and Australia and collected over 127 workplace documents. This paper will report on the kinds of Japanese language skills these employees are expected to use in their day-to-day working life and the kinds of Japanese documents they read and write. The documents are organised as a taxonomy based on a framework of administrative text types. This framework has three main genres: specifically genres of Records; Provisions and Directives (Disadvantaged Schools' Program 1995).

### Introduction

One way to view language is as a form of social behaviour, albeit, a very complex and sophisticated form.<sup>2</sup> From this point of view, what is important about language is that it is instrumental in enacting our social relationships and social behaviour.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, our relationships and behaviour are dictated by cultural paradigms, that is, 'culture and language co-evolve in the same relationship as that in which, within language, meaning and expression co-

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<sup>2</sup> Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic: the Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*, 36-39.

<sup>3</sup> Halliday, *Explorations in the Functions of Language*, 11.

evolve'.<sup>4</sup> As such, each culture embodies a set of behavioural choices which are all 'potentially' possible, 'potentially' acceptable. This potentiality applies to all forms of behaviour including linguistic behaviour. In this behavioural sense, language is viewed as a resource for making meaning within the constraints of the culture in which it is embedded. This context of culture can be considered as 'the institutional and ideological background that gives value to the text and constrains its interpretation.'<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, we communicate within an immediate context of situation. The context of situation consists of the people involved (tenor), the topic of the interaction (field) and the channel of communication such as a speech, or as a newspaper story etc. (mode).

So it is both within the context of culture and the context of situation that we use language to accomplish things. For example, children use it to regulate their environment, to interact with others, to shape their identity, to explore their environment and to create imaginary worlds.<sup>6</sup> This 'use' of language as behaviour is purposeful and therefore fulfils a social function. And of course it is no surprise that language is used purposefully within social organizations whether they be informal gatherings say, as a social dinner, semi-formal clusterings say, as in a volunteer club situation or highly institutionalised contexts such as in business, education and government.

It is the social function of language in the highly institutionalised contexts of business, education and government that is of interest in this paper. It is here that people are organised to do certain kinds of work and these activities are mediated through language. For example, the humble office memorandum uses language 'either "for action" or "for information"'.<sup>7</sup> This kind of language is characterised as the language of administration.

As suggested above, language unfolds in a context, both cultural and situational. And this is indeed the case, when attempting to understand the language of administration. The institutionalised organization of people relies on the language of administration in order to construct and maintain the organizational structure.<sup>8</sup> It is thus useful to consider the nature of the cultural

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<sup>4</sup> Halliday, 'The Act of Meaning', 11.

<sup>5</sup> Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context and Text*, 49.

<sup>6</sup> Halliday, *Explorations in the Functions of Language*.

<sup>7</sup> Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context and Text*, 44.

<sup>8</sup> Iedema, 'The Language of Administration: Organizing Human Activity in Formal Institutions'.

and situational context in which administrative language is embedded before moving on to the nature of the language use itself.

### **The Workplace Context**

When describing the workplace, it is helpful to conceive the workplace from three different but related perspectives, that of *field*, *tenor* and *mode*.<sup>9</sup> This kind of characterisation has been used in relation to workplace contexts in the past.<sup>10</sup> Firstly, the workplace can be considered from the point of view of *field*, that is, the *what* of the workplace. This perspective considers what work gets done, the kinds of activities which are conducted in the workplace. In the context of education, the field is teaching and learning of children, teenagers and adults depending on the education sector. In the context of government, the field is social policy and the creation of laws to ensure society functions smoothly and safely for its citizens, while in the context of business, the field is any kind of activity associated with the exchange of goods and services predominantly for financial gain. Within the workplace, an important activity is the practice of administration. Administration is the process which ‘controls people (others) by means of the information gathered about them and it controls people (workers) on the basis of detailed prescriptions as to how that information is to be gathered, stored and used’.<sup>11</sup>

Secondly, the workplace can be considered from the point of view of *tenor*, that is, the *who* of the workplace. The perspective considers the kinds of relationships between people in the workplace. Depending on who you are, you may be in an equal or unequal relationship with your work colleagues. How you behave will depend on the nature of your relationship with the people you are working with.

The third perspective on the workplace context is that of *mode*, the *how* of the workplace. Mode relates to the ways and means of communicating with each other in the workplace. We communicate through both spoken and written language while using language to either accompany our actions or to constitute our actions. This means that we can talk around what we are doing, for example saying, ‘Here you are’ as a customer is served a hamburger, or we can talk in a

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<sup>9</sup> Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context and Text*.

<sup>10</sup> Ghadessy, ‘On the Nature of Written Business Communication’.

<sup>11</sup> Disadvantaged Schools Program (N.S.W.). Metropolitan East Region, *Write It Right: Literacy in Industry Research Project, Stage 3: Literacy of Administration*, 56.

way that constitutes the actions, for example saying, ‘You are fired’. The action of firing only exists through the saying, while the hamburger sale would have occurred with or without the wording.

These three contextual variables of field, tenor and mode are one way to describe the context of situation. But the context of situation resides within a cultural context. We cannot just understand the context of situation of workplace without considering it within the context of its culture. The following section will briefly describe the Japanese cultural context in which all Japanese workplace reside.

### **The Japanese Workplace**

The context of culture in Japan is known for its hierarchical social relationships.<sup>12</sup> Japanese society was once organised around a very strict feudal social order. Compared with Europe, Japanese feudalism only ended rather recently, around 150 years ago. Not surprisingly, the remnants of the feudal order are still features of the contemporary social order. When Japan was feudal the hierarchy depended on inherited social class, that is, once a farmer, always a farmer; once a warrior, always a warrior etc. These days high status social roles are not determined by birth so much, but rather by demographic variables such as age and gender and by education and social standing. For example, doctors, teachers, politician etc. are afforded high respect. This historically hierarchical social order is a distinctive feature of the workplace in Japan.<sup>13</sup>

Thus the *tenor* in the context of situation of the workplace in Japan can be characterised as hierarchical. Consequently, the social hierarchies of the workplace are constructed and perpetuated by an elaborate set of paradigmatic choices in the language system in terms of politeness and the respectful language of honourification. In particular, when Japanese is being used to request and command, the speaker must select appropriate terms of address and appropriate morphological verbal forms to indicate their place in the vertical social order and the place of the addressee in order to maintain the social order.

In Japanese, ... [politeness] encompasses showing respect (with a strong nuance of vertical respect involved) and consideration towards the position and quality of character of others, and modesty about oneself.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Nakane, *Japanese Society*.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Haugh, *Revisiting the Conceptualisation of Politeness in English and Japanese*, 85.

Typically the language of request and command is found in the language of administration which is discussed in the following section.

### **Language of administration**

The fact that language is used to regulate and control is well known.

Discourse functions ideologically in society to support and legitimate the exercise of power, and to naturalize unjust social relations, making them seem the inevitable consequence of common sense necessity.<sup>15</sup>

This function of language is one of the primary features of the language of administration in the workplace context.<sup>16</sup> Administrative practice achieves its goals of control via the deployment of the language of administration, that is, the particular language which it used to make requests and demands of people.

In terms of research, institutionalised, administrative contexts have been looked at from a sociological point of view<sup>17</sup>, but less attention has been paid to the kinds of language used in the these contexts. ‘Although a lot of attention as been given to the vocabulary and grammatical structures used in written business communication, the analysis of discourse patterns has lagged behind’.<sup>18</sup> Of particular note is the work commissioned by the NSW Department of School Education which set out to understand the language of administration for teaching purposes. Their research demonstrated that language use is organised around three main administrative practices<sup>19</sup>. These are the practices of guidance, surveillance and compliance. Intrinsic to each administrative practice is a particular kind of text type or genre. The notion of genre is understood as a ‘staged goal-oriented social process[es]’<sup>20</sup>. Essentially, a genre is a ‘population’ of texts, variations exist, but the obligatory features of each genre serve to define the population as one kind of population, for example, a population of narrative texts, of newspaper texts, or of administrative texts. Each population serves a particular social purpose and has particular elements

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<sup>15</sup> Lemke, *Textual Politics: Discourse and Social Dynamics*, 20.

<sup>16</sup> Iedema and Wodak, ‘Introduction: organisational discourses and practices’.

<sup>17</sup> See Grant and Iedema 2005 for a detailed description of the kinds of studies undertaken in relation to organisational discourse studies and analysis

<sup>18</sup> Ghadessy, ‘On the Nature of Written Business Communication’, 149.

<sup>19</sup> ‘Their research’ refers to Disadvantaged Schools Program (N.S.W.). Metropolitan East Region, *Write It Right: Literacy in Industry Research Project, Stage 3: Literacy of Administration*

<sup>20</sup> Martin, ‘Grammaticalising ecology: the politics of baby seals and kangaroos’, 246.

of structure. Thus each kind of administrative practice has an accompanying genre.

An important point to note is that the language of administration is formally delivered in written mode. That is not to discount the importance and role of spoken language in the workplace, but when it comes to maintaining the hierarchies and institutionalised structures of the workplace such as management lines and committee structures, it is the written mode which is preferred. In other words, you do not receive reported, verbal minutes of a meeting. Minutes of this kind are not acceptable as they are not retrievable. People cannot go back and verify decisions, actions etc. In other words, spoken language does not function in the same manner as written language. The written word is far more valued by the institutions. So, given the predominance of written forms of administrative language, it is very important to understand the nature of this mode of communication in the workplace context.

Consequently, in this study, the classification system used for identifying the kinds of written documents is based on the DSP model. As mentioned, this system divides workplace documents into three kinds according to the three administrative practices. These are the practices of *surveillance*, *guidance* and *compliance*. In other words, institutions engage in three social activities in order to maintain power relations and enact the work of the institution. These three practices are explicated below.

*Surveillance* is the process of ‘recording past events and current states of affairs’.<sup>21</sup> Institutional supervision takes place by means of direct observation, tests, and intricate reporting structures.<sup>22</sup> The genre which is called upon to document this supervision is generally referred to as Records – records of both states of affairs and events. Table I outlines the different kinds of Records, those that record states of affairs such as Forms and Descriptions and those that record events such as Recounts and Accounts. Each of these different kinds has a specific social purpose in the institutional.

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<sup>21</sup> Disadvantaged Schools Program (N.S.W.). Metropolitan East Region, *Write It Right: Literacy in Industry Research Project, Stage 3: Literacy of Administration*, 227.

<sup>22</sup> Dunsire 1987 in Disadvantaged Schools Program (N.S.W.). Metropolitan East Region, *Write It Right: Literacy in Industry Research Project, Stage 3: Literacy of Administration*.

TABLE I. The genre of records

Genre	Sub-genre	Social Purpose		
Records: (surveillance)	States of Affairs:	forms	records specific states of affair as lists, tables, forms (pre-formatted text, where a member of an institute simply fills in information)	lists table forms
		Descriptions	record specific states of affair (non-preformatted)	information report
	Events:	Recounts	records events -Recounts are sequenced in time by means of various time expressions such as 'then', 'after', 'while', 'on Wednesday' etc.	logbook
		Historical Recounts	records events -Historical Recounts are set in time primarily by means of time expression such as 'on 12 March 1992 ...' etc. but also they evaluate the significance of the recorded event.	Ministerial comment
		Accounts	record past events that are recorded as being causally related	File-note

Adapted from *Write It Right : Literacy in Industry Research Project, Stage 3: : Literacy of Administration* 1994.

The second of the three administrative practices is *guidance*. It is the process of determining the institutional behaviour of the people in hypothetical situations.<sup>23</sup> For example, an employee might want to know the company's policy on sexual harassment. This kind of information is found in policy documents which employees consult for guidance. The genre which functions to enable hypothetical guidance is called Provisions. There are four sub-genres: those of Plans, Specifications, Procedures and Protocols, each having a specific institutional purpose as outlined in Table II.

<sup>23</sup> Disadvantaged Schools Program (N.S.W.). Metropolitan East Region, *Write It Right: Literacy in Industry Research Project, Stage 3: Literacy of Administration*, 181.



In order to understand the vocational language challenges that NJSB employees will face, answers to the following questions are needed:

- *What kind of Japanese language do NJSB employees use in the workplace?*

And specifically,

- *What kinds of written administrative genres do NJSB employees need to be able to consume and produce?*

And of them,

- *Which are the most commonly used and most institutionally valued?*

In our view, knowing the answers to these questions affords teachers of Japanese language new insights into what they should be teaching in the classroom if indeed, they intend to teach vocationally relevant genres of Japanese. Students do not learn to construct genres without exposure and practice.<sup>25</sup> Exposing students to the language of the workplace and then scaffolding them to understand its structural elements and guiding their writing practice should be a major component of the learning/teaching cycle. This study set out to discover the workplace Japanese literacy demands of non-native students of Japanese.

The following section outlines the methodology used to answer the research questions.

### **Methodology**

The respondents of this study were BA graduates of Japanese language from the University of Wollongong, their workplace colleagues and other recommended people. The respondents were all working in a Japanese speaking workplace either in Japan or Australia. Each respondent was interviewed and asked to fill out a survey and supply workplace documents which were typical of their workplace context and job description. Of the twenty one respondents,

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<sup>25</sup> Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context and Text*, 69.

seventeen were interviewed in Tokyo, Japan and four were interviewed in Sydney, Australia.

The survey questionnaire consisted of twelve questions and is provided in the Appendix. The final two questions were concerned with seeking permissions and so are not analysed. The survey results are outlined in the following section.

### Survey questionnaire results

Of the 21 respondents, 13 worked in the Education Sector. They identified themselves as either an academic, a university instructor, an assistant English teacher, or as a University Director. Five respondents worked in Government identifying themselves as either a government researcher/analyst, a personnel manager, an administrator or as a translator. The remaining 3 three respondents worked in the Business Sector as either a proof-reader, a stock and account manager or as a financial stock advisor.

While all of the respondents worked in a Japanese speaking workplace, 12 (57%) participants said that Japanese was the preferred language of the workplace, while 8 (38%) said that it was not. One participant answered that both English and Japanese were equally preferred.

Twenty respondents (95%) said that they used Japanese at work, explaining that they all used Japanese listening and speaking skills. Seventeen (85%) said that they used reading skills, while only 12 (60%) answered that they used their writing skills. Of the 21, 11 respondents answered that they use all four macro-skills.

Each respondent was asked to estimate which of the four macro skills they used most frequently. Nineteen respondents answered the question. Among them, 13 (68%) said listening, followed by speaking. Writing was the least frequently used. The results are summarised in Table IV. A point system was used to assign a value to the frequency of use. Four points for 1<sup>st</sup> place (e.g. if 13 people choose listening as 1<sup>st</sup>, this equates to 13 people x 4pts totally 52 pts), 3 points for 2<sup>nd</sup> place etc. This table clearly shows that listening and speaking are required the most, however, even if less frequently, reading is still required.

TABLE IV. Required Macro Skill

	listening	speaking	reading	writing
most	13 (68%)	5 (26%)	1 (5%)	0(0%)

frequently	{52pts}	{20 pts }	{4 pts }	{0 pts }
second	4 (21%) {12 pts }	10 (53%) {30 pts }	4 (21%) {12 pts }	1 (5%) {3 pts }
third	1 (6%) {2 pts }	4 (25%) {8 pts }	11(69%) {22 pts }	0 (0%) {0 pts }
least frequently	1 (9%) {1 pts }	0 (0%) {0 pts }	0 (0%) {0 pts }	10 (91%) {10 pts }
total points	<b>67 pts</b>	<b>58 pts</b>	<b>38 pts</b>	<b>13 pts</b>

Each of the respondents was asked to list the types of Japanese written materials that they used at work. The following list of written materials was elicited.

e-mails, order forms, work schedules, letters, journal article, manuals, instructions, financial documents, duty statements, request forms, memos, reports, invitations, general administrative document such as pay slips, taxation forms etc, posters, policy documents, budgets, textbooks and meeting summaries.

The respondents were then asked to rank their nominated list of written materials in order of most to least read. Table V summarises the results. The most frequently read kind of written material was e-mail, chosen by 8 (35%) participant, followed by letters chosen by 3 (13%). The respondent explained that e-mail was chosen mostly because it was used as the main mode of communication both between employees internally and externally with clients and other institutions

TABLE V. Most frequently read material

emails	8	35%
letters	3	13%
financial documents	2	9%
memos	2	9%
reports	2	9%
manuals	2	9%

Similarly, the respondents were then asked to rank their nominated list of written materials in order of the most frequently written, summarised in Table VI. The most frequently written material was e-mail followed by order forms

and reports. Again, the respondents explain that e-mail seemed to be not only the main method for receiving information but also for sending information both internally and externally. Forms were chosen as the next because they were used for requesting equipment, funds, commuting cost, etc.

TABLE VI. Most frequently written material

e-mails	7	54%
order forms	2	15%
reports	2	15%
textbooks	1	8%
instructions	1	8%

Respondents were asked to rank their workplace documents from *most to least commonly used*. Again a point system was used with the following results. The memo (101 points) as most frequently used, followed by the e-mail (78 points), then the report (38 points). Interestingly, there is a significant gap of 40 pts between the email and the report. Reports while useful in the workplace, are clearly not as frequently used as memos and emails. Results are below in Table VII.

TABLE VII. The list of most frequently used material

Ranking order	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	total pts
Points awarded	10 pts	9 pts	8 pts	7 pts	6 pts	5 pts	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pts	
memo	1 (10)	3 (27)	2 (16)	6 (42)	1 (6)	0	0	0	0	0	<b>101</b>
e-mail	5 (50)	0	2 (16)	1 (7)	0	1 (5)	0	0	0	0	<b>78</b>
report	0	3 (27)	0	0	1(6)	1 (5)	0	0	0	0	<b>38</b>
invitation	0	0	1(8)	2 (14)	1(6)	1(5)	1(4)	0	0	0	37
forms	0	2 (18)	1(8)	1(7)	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
letters	0	1(9)	1(8)	0	2(12)	0	1(4)	0	0	0	33
news letters	1(10)	0	1(8)	0	1(6)	1(5)	0	1(3)	0	1(1)	33
instruction	1(10)	2(18)	0	0	0	0	1(4)	0	0	0	32
manual	2(20)	1(9)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29
journal article	0	1(9)	1(8)	1(7)	0	0	0	1(3)	0	0	27

Similarly, respondents were asked to rank their workplace documents from *most important and highly valued to least*. Again a point system was used with the following results. Like the most commonly used material results, e-mail (94) and memo (83) were the ones that were most highly valued. And similarly, they were followed in priority order by report (45) and invitation (39). The detailed result is shown in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII. The list of highly valued materials

Ranking order	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	total points
Points awarded	10 pts	9 pts	8 pts	7 pts	6 pts	5 pts	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 point	
e-mail	6 (60)	0	2 (16)	1 (7)	1 (6)	1 (5)	0	0	0	0	<b>94</b>
memo	0	3 (27)	3 (24)	3 (21)	1 (6)	1 (5)	0	0	0	0	<b>83</b>
report	1 (10)	1 (9)	1 (8)	1(7)	1(6)	1(5)	0	0	0	0	<b>45</b>
invitation	0	2(18)	1(8)	1(7)	0	0	1(4)	0	1(2)	0	39
text book	1(10)	2(18)	0	0	1(6)	0	1(4)	0	0	0	38
instruction	0	1(9)	1(8)	2(14)	1(6)	0	0	0	0	0	37
letter	1(10)	1(9)	0	1(7)	0	0	2(14)	1(3)	0	0	37
newsletter	1(10)	0	1(8)	0	0	1(5)	0	0	0	1(1)	24
journal article	0	0	1(8)	1(7)	0	0	0	2(6)	1(2)	0	23
financial documents	1(10)	0	0	0	1(6)	1(5)	0	0	0	0	21

To sum up the survey results, the non-native Japanese speaking employees identified listening and speaking as the most important macro-skills in the workplace. Speaking and listening skills have been traditionally taught in JFL/JSL classrooms. There is a lot of literature and learning/teaching materials on Japanese for Business Purposes. However when it comes to reading and writing, the number and quality of learning/teaching resources is limited. Yet NJSB employees are still expected to be able to read and, in some cases, write Japanese. Typically, what they read are emails and letters, while what they write are emails and forms. When asked to identify the most frequently used workplace document type, the email and memo featured most prominently followed by the report and invitation. In addition they identified both emails and memos as the most important and valued documents that they engage with. These were again followed by the report and invitation.

The survey thus identified the kind of written workplace document which an employee needs to know, understand and produce as part of their everyday work life. It follows then that a Japanese language curriculum needs to include learning/teaching materials which present these kinds of material, i.e., emails, memos, reports and invitations so that they can operate comfortably and effectively in a Japanese vocational language environment.

As part of the interview process, the respondents handed over examples of their workplace documents. These 127 examples needed to be classified. The process of classification and the subsequent taxonomy is outlined in the following section.

### **The workplace texts**

As indicated in the survey results, the respondents identified each of the workplace documents using commonsense terms such as letter, memo, newsletter, textbook etc. The task of the analyst was thus to identify the genre of each document according to the DSP classification. For example, a memo can be used to record a state of affairs like a stock-take list, but could also be used to give a directive. The kind of document does not necessarily conflate with genre type. In some cases, a document, such as a financial report can have a number of purposes. It will of course record the current financial state of affairs of a company, but it also may explain company activities and justify board decisions. Accordingly, each document in the corpus was looked at from

the point of view of purpose and classified firstly into either the main genres of Records, Provisions and Directives, and then further sub-classified as appropriate.

The emails and memos were predominately Directives. The classification as a Directive was determined on the basis of whether or not direct or indirect requests were contained in the document. The example reproduced in the Appendix contains the following request, *2004nen no Nation C no kokuritsu kinenbi o oshiete kudasaimasu yo onegaishimasu* (I was hoping that you could inform me of the National holiday of Nation C for 2004). As a result of this selection criterion, 15 out of 19 (79%) emails were Directives as were also 7 out of 8 memos.

Overall, of the three main types of the administrative genres, the most frequently utilised genre was the genre of Records (52%), followed by Directives (26%) and indicated in Table IX. Within the genre of Records, the most common sub-genre was Forms at 22%. It therefore appears that the two most common genres are Directives and Forms. An example of a directive email and form are provided in the appendix. These results correlate with the survey results in that email and memo were considered the most frequently used and most highly valued. The non-native Japanese speaking employee is thus expected to be able to read and write Directives and Forms.

TABLE IX. Classification of 127 texts

genre type			total
directives		23 (26%)	<b>26%</b>
provisions	plans	8 (6.3%)	15%
	role specifications	2 (1.6%)	
	protocols	0 (0%)	
	procedures	9 (7.1%)	
records	affairs: forms	28 ( <b>22.0%</b> )	52%
	descriptions	9 (7.1%)	
	event: recounts	4 (3.1%)	
	Hist. Recounts	15 (11.8%)	
	Account	10 (7.9%)	
mixed genres	report	8 (6.3%)	7%
	application	1 (0.8%)	

The survey results further indicate that the different genres are used with different frequency in the three industry sectors of education, government and business. In the education sector, Directives are the most common genre type

(50%), followed by Forms (34%). In the government related occupations, it is the genre of Records that is most common (65%) followed by Directives (12%). The use of the mixed genre report is also a feature of the government sector. In business, the genres of Provision and Record are used equally (47% each). Of the sub-genres of Provision, Plans (18%) and Procedures (12%) are used, while in the genre of Record, Forms are most frequently utilised (29%). Table X shows the classification of the 127 texts according to the industry sectors.

TABLE X. Classification of the texts according to occupation

genre type		education	total	government	total	business	total
directives		22 (50%)	<b>50%</b>	8 (12%)	12%	3 (17.6%)	18
provisions	plans	2 (4.5%)	16%	3 (4.5%)	11%	3 (17.6%)	<b>47%</b>
	role specifications	1 (2.3%)		1 (1.5%)		0	
	protocols	0		0		0	
	procedures	4 (9.1%)		3 (4.5%)		2 (11.8%)	
records	affairs: forms	15 (34.1%)	34%	8 (12.1%)	<b>65%</b>	5 (29.4%)	<b>47%</b>
	descriptions	0		6 (9.1%)		3 (17.6%)	
	event: recounts	0		4 (6.1%)		0	
	Hist. Recounts	0		15 (22.7%)		0	
	Account	0		10 (15.2%)		0	
mixed genres	report	0	0%	7 (10.6%)	12%	1 (5.9%)	6%
	application	0		1 (1.5%)		0	

Looking at this pattern, it is possible to make some generalisations. For examples, it appears that in Education, administrative texts are all about directing teachers what to do; in Government, administrative texts are concerned with recording activities, while in Business, they are used to record, plan and direct with less emphasis on day to day directives than the other two sectors. This is an interesting trend which should be tested on a larger corpus of administrative language taken from the three sectors.

#### **Implications for Teaching Japanese as a Second/Foreign Language.**

The results of this study have a number of implications for Japanese as a Foreign/Second language teaching and learning. These implications relate to the

nature of vocational curricula for adult learners in the tertiary sector. This study has demonstrated that Japanese speaking employees from non-Japanese speaking backgrounds (NJSB) mostly listen to and speak Japanese in the workplace, with listening being the most frequent of the four macroskills. Employees appear not to read or write very much in comparison to what they listen to and speak. However, when employees are required to read and write, it is reading which is more frequently performed than writing. Writing was the least performed of the four macroskills.

In terms of curriculum development, it is essential then that listening and speaking skills are addressed, which they are. Speaking and listening courses of Japanese for Business Purposes have been available throughout Australia in the University system, the Tertiary and Further Education (TAFE) system and the adult learning sector offered by organizations such as the Workers Education Association (WES). Yet, along with speaking and listening, reading needs to be included. The study shows that reading cannot be ignored. But in order to teach the relevant kinds of texts which NJSB employees are expected to read, teachers need to know what these texts are. This study has demonstrated the kinds of workplace text types or genres which students need to learn to read in order to function successfully at work. Most notably, it is the genre of Directives which is the most used and one of the most valued. A curriculum which introduces the genre of Directives would be targeting appropriately the workplace literacy needs of future NJSB employees in the Japanese workplace. Written Directives appear as emails and memos and so both modes should be introduced and taught. In short, the study indicated that employees have to write emails and order forms and they have to read email and letters most frequently.

The introduction of genres into the curriculum prompts a genre approach pedagogy which is built around a cycle of modelling, deconstructing, jointly and then individually reconstructing.<sup>26</sup> This approach to language teaching has been employed in both teaching English in the NSW School system and in English Language Teaching (ELT) to non-English speaking background students.<sup>27</sup> Further, the application of a genre based approach to Japanese as a second language teaching is being trialled in various tertiary programs around

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<sup>26</sup> Cope and Kalantzis, *Powers of Literacy: a Genre Approach to Teaching Writing*.

<sup>27</sup> Perrett, 'Researching Second and Foreign Language Development'.

Australia, most notably Ramzan has successfully taught the reading and writing of Japanese nursery tales using the genre approach at the University of Wollongong.<sup>28</sup> While using a genre based approach to Japanese language teaching is not new, if the emphasis is more on reading than writing, then emphasis in the teaching cycle would need to be more on the modelling and deconstruction than on reconstruction. In other words, by knowing what students will be expected to do in the workplace, teachers can tailor curricula to teach the kinds of literacy expected. This can only better prepare graduates of vocational Japanese language programs for employment in the Japanese speaking workplace.

### **Conclusion**

This paper set out to identify and taxonomise the kinds of factual genres used in the Japanese speaking workplace. Toward that end, the workplace was firstly described as a site for the deployment of the language of administration which is used to enact the administrative practices of surveillance, guidance and compliance. A study of 21 NJSB employees was described and their examples of written, workplace, factual genres were organised into three genres: Provisions, Records and Directives. The study showed that most NJSB employees speak and listen to Japanese rather than read and write it. However, when they are expected to read and write, they engage mostly with the genre, Directives, the genre used to organise people in time and space in immediate and direct forms – comprising of proposals, or requests for goods and/or services. Interestingly, it was found that Directives are used more in the education and government sectors than in the business sector where planning and recording are more frequently used. The point of the study lies in the motivation to know, understand and teach authentic genres which have vocational significance for students of Japanese as a second and or foreign language. These genres should be taught in the second language classroom thereby producing vocationally literate graduates of Japanese language.

Arising out of this study are two future research directions. Firstly, the fact that Directives appear to be used more in education and government than in business needs to be tested on a larger corpus of administrative language taken

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<sup>28</sup> Ramzan, 'Applying a systemic-functional linguistic approach to the teaching of reading and writing in Japanese, in Systemic Functional Perspectives on Japanese: Descriptions and Applications'.

from the three sectors. Secondly, the language features of the genres of Directives, Records and Provisions need to be closely studied in order to be able to describe the language choices of each genre in detail and relate them to the textual organization, that is, to the elements of structure of each genre. This is something which will be pursued in a subsequent research project.

### **Acknowledgements**

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**Appendix 1: Questionnaire**

Q1: Do/Did you work in a place where Japanese is the preferred language of communication?

Q2: Do you use Japanese at work?

Q3: In what employment sector do you work?

Please describe your job

Q4: Which skills do/did you use at work? (please tick as many as appropriate)

Speaking skills  
Listening skills  
Writing skills  
Reading skills

Q5: List the skills in order of frequency of use. 1 (most frequent) to 4 (least frequent)

Speaking skills  
Listening skills  
Writing skills  
Reading skills

Q6: Which types of Japanese written materials do/did you use at work (Please choose as many as appropriate)

Manual  
Specification  
Text Book  
Report  
Policy Document  
Invitation  
Memo  
Instruction  
Budget  
E-Mail  
Letters  
Journal Article  
Newspaper  
Other:

Q7: Of the ones ticked, which do/did you read most often and why?

Q8: Of the ones ticked, which do/did you write most often and why?

Q9: From the list above, please choose and number the 10 most commonly used to the least, starting with 1 as the most used. If 10 is too many, please choose what is applicable.

Manual  
Specification  
Text Book  
Report  
Policy Document  
Invitation  
Memo

Instruction  
 Budget  
 E-Mail  
 Letters  
 Journal Article  
 Newspaper  
 Other:

Q10: From the same list, please choose and number the 10 most important and highly valued to the least. If 10 is too many, please choose what is applicable. The value relates to the importance of the text to the operation of the business and to your particular job.

Manual  
 Specification  
 Text Book  
 Report  
 Policy Document  
 Invitation  
 Memo  
 Instruction  
 Budget  
 E-Mail  
 Letters  
 Journal Article  
 Newspaper  
 Other:

Q11: Are you available to be interviewed by the researcher?

Q12: Are you able to give the researcher typical examples of 5 text types that you have ticked?

Appendix 2: Example of Directive

*Letter to Embassy*

# FAX Cover Sheet

## ファクシミリ送付状

TEL XX-XXXX-XXXX

FAX XX-XXXX-XXXX

Institute A

Address of Institute A in Japanese

Address of Institute A in English

Attn / ご担当 : Dr. XXXXXXXX 様

Fax # / ファクス番号 : XX-XXXX-XXXX

From / 発信人 : XXXX XXXX

Re / 件名 : XXXX カレンダー

Date / 月日 : XXXX年XX月XX日

Pages / 枚数 : 2

Comments / 備考 :

はじめまして。Institute A のB と申します。いつも、Institute A を応援していただき、ありがとうございます。

現在、新しいInstitute A のカレンダーを作っております。例年通り、Institute A、参加者各々の国の国立休日を載せたいと思っておりますので、御多用中とは存じますが、2004年のNation C の国立休日を教えてくださいようお願い申し上げます。

今後とも、変わらぬご協力を賜りますようお願い申し上げます。

Name of Sender

Translation of Directive

*My name is B and I am a member of INSTITUTION A. Thank you for your continuing support and assistance with this programme.*

*Currently, I am compiling the annual INSTITUTE A calendar. Every year we note the national holidays of the countries of the INSTITUTE A participants. As there are currently participants from the NATION C, I was hoping you could inform me of the National holidays of the NATION C for 200X.*

*Thank you again for your assistance with this matter.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*B*

*INSTITUTE A*

*E-mail: XXXXXXXXXX*