

The Australian Teaching Practice (ATP) Programme: What did it achieve?

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Introduction

In June 2012, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) published the “University Reform Implementation Plan”¹ which called for the development of human resources who can play an active role in 2global affairs and who can communicate across different languages, generations and roles.

The five pillars of this plan were:

- Efforts to improve language skills through entrance exams and classes
- Expansion of study abroad and exchanges
- Strengthening the global educational capabilities of teachers
- Flexibility during admission and graduation
- Expansion of recruitment of foreign faculty members

Prior to the publishing of the MEXT plan, forward-thinking faculty members of the Foreign Languages Education Department at Aichi University of Education (AUE) had established the ‘English Education Support Center’ (2010), and also applied for and received MEXT funding for its own “Global Human Resource Development” project under the

¹ 大学改革実行プラン

² グローバル化に対応した人材育成

auspices of a “Special Expense Project”³. The aims of this project were to develop and implement various programmes that, in hindsight, went some way to encompassing aspects of pillars 1 through 3 of the MEXT plan. Specifically, the 5 strands of the AUE project were:

- (1) to advance the English communication skills, and teaching skills of the student-teachers through overseas teaching practicums,
- (2) to implement Internet-based English language proficiency and evaluation programs (e.g. ALCNetAcademy, TOEFL & TOEIC),
- (3) to develop teacher-training curricula based on theories of communication and English language learning and teaching,
- (4) to develop quality pre-service English teacher education 4-skill-based programmes for primary and secondary school teachers, and
- (5) to develop and strengthen the cooperative networks among English educators between elementary, junior high, high school and university through public symposiums and seminars.

Within each of these broad strands, specific goals were formulated and various initiatives implemented including the addition of the TOEIC test to the English language education curriculum, the establishment of annual in-service English education training seminars, and weekly visits to schools by trainee-teachers (among others). This study reports on strand 1 of the AUE project, namely, the implementation of the overseas teaching practicum and its goals to advance the English communication skills and teaching skills of the participants.

Background

³ 文部科学省特別経費プログラム 2010 年

Between 2012 and 2017, the “Australian Teaching Practice” (ATP) programme dispatched 100 Aichi University of Education student-teachers to Australian primary and secondary schools in Queensland and Victoria for two- and three-week teaching practicums and homestays with Australian families. In all, 29 Australian schools accepted student-teachers over the six years of the programme. In schools that had established Japanese language courses taught by either non-native Japanese-speaking teachers or native Japanese speaking teachers, the student-teachers were tasked with assisting the language teacher/s and also delivering self-constructed lessons on their own at times. In other schools without Japanese language courses (another language such as Indonesian, German, Italian and Chinese was part of the curriculum), the participants introduced simple Japanese language lessons focusing on vocabulary (such as language for counting, animals, colors, etc.) and taught culture-based content such as lessons about seasons, festivals, music, dance, traditions, manga and origami, etc.

Motivations and Goals of the ATP

In Japan, practicum lengths are set by MEXT and actual practicum periods are determined by the university liaising with local and prefectural boards of education. Adding length to domestic teaching practicums was out of the question, hence the application for funding included international practicums. When funding was approved, the AUE project team was then able to dispatch student-teachers on international/overseas teaching practicum: in this case, to Australia.

As stated above, a primary rationale for the overseas teaching practicum was to improve the English communication skills of the participants by supplementing the limited opportunities that all EFL students have to communicate in English outside classrooms with non-

Japanese speakers of English. It was felt that one way to ‘kickstart’ the use of student-teachers’ stored knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar would be by immersing them into an English-speaking environment where they would have little choice but to use English. Moreover, and in contrast to a ‘traditional homestay’, placing the participants in schools meant that they not only had opportunities to interact with all age groups from children to adults, but also to learn and utilize profession-oriented language. Due to the fact that all the student-teachers volunteered for this programme, it is clear that the student-teachers recognized this chance to do just that.

The second motivation for dispatching student-teachers overseas was to supplement the brevity of the teaching practicum period for student-teachers at AUE (*author’s opinion*), and in some small measure improve the teaching skills of the student-teachers. Japan’s practicum system compares unfavorably internationally in terms of length of time spent in schools by teacher-trainees during their undergraduate studies. For example, among AUE’s international university partners, student-teachers at Newman University, Hanoi National University of Education, and the Education University of Hong Kong spend 16, 16 and 15 weeks in schools on professional experience respectively. In Singapore, Goodwin (2012) reports that student-teachers complete 10 weeks of teaching practice. In Australia, the author’s niece, a recent graduate in primary school education from Australia Catholic University, spent 16 weeks in schools on teaching practice and another 14 weeks on field experience during her 4-year undergraduate course. Under the present system at AUE, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year student-teachers engage in *field experience* (i.e. observation and participation) for a total of 75 hours, plus there are 5-weeks of *professional experience* (i.e. teaching practice) in 3rd and 4th year. To the author, whose surveys of Japanese teaching practicum students

revealed wildly disparate numbers of individual lessons taught (a range of 2 – 44) by student-teachers while on practicum, 5-weeks was inadequate in terms of equipping ITE graduates with both the necessary teaching skills and the necessary self-confidence in those teaching skills to levels needed for “work ready” performance from day 1 of a school year. Although longer periods of time spent in schools on *field experience* (used here to mean observation and participation) or *professional experience* (used here to mean teaching practicum) in and of itself is not necessarily a guarantee that student-teachers will develop superior teaching skills should they have had less time in schools (the *quantity vs quality* debate, Zeichner, 1990), an argument can be made that even if the trainees are not engaged in professional experience activities (i.e. teaching lessons), the longer they are on school placement the greater the time they would have to undertake field experience and learn by observing in-service teachers in action.

The purpose, merit, and relevance of international practicums are matters of contention in the literature. White and Forgasz (2016) comment on the recent rise of the international practicum as an “artefact of globalization” (p.245). “At one end of the spectrum, the international practicum is reviled as a form of educational tourism that threatens to reinforce cultural imperialism. At the other, it is touted as critical to the development of culturally sensitive, globally responsible twenty-first century educators” (p.245). Quite prominent in what little literature there is regarding international practicums organized by Japanese universities, is a programme that was implemented at Osaka Kyoiku University between 2002-2009. The programme was originally a joint-initiative between the university, the municipality in Osaka and its sister city in Vienna, but it expanded to include schools in New Zealand, Finland and Taiwan. When the programme was discontinued in that format it was moved over to the faculty of education at Chiba University. Honda,

Aoyama, Kida and Tadokoro (2019), report that over a period of 7 years between 2009 and 2016, a total of 64 student-teachers aiming to become English teachers after graduation, were sent for teaching practicums to schools in Austria and Czech by the faculty of education at Chiba University. While there, they visited local elementary and high schools and taught lessons on Japanese culture. The Honda et al. 2019 paper - obviously published prior to the 2020 pandemic - stipulated that the faculty were planning to add placements in Hungary, South Korea and Taiwan to the programme and offer it to students in the graduate school of education (author's translation , p.278).

As far as the author can ascertain there are very few other schools aside from Chiba University and Osaka Kyoiku University that have dispatched significant numbers of student-teachers (100) over such a lengthy period (6 years) of time as AUE. In the case of the ATP programme, the dispatched student-teachers were composed of 2nd to 4th year students with the majority coming from 3rd year cohorts. This was due to a number of reasons including preferences to send the older, more mature and independent students, as well as the difficulties associated with finding appropriate windows of opportunity in a busy senior student's final year. First years, having only had two months as university students were excluded from applying. The participants were selected for the programme after completing an online application form and a selection interview in English. One of the prerequisites for candidature was that the student had to select 'Yes' when asked if they were committed to taking the teacher licensing examinations in 4th year. In other words, we wanted to dispatch student-teachers as opposed to students. Moreover, as they were going into an English-speaking environment, they had to have a certain level of English ability as adjudged by Professor Robins and the author. Although exact numbers of applicants were not kept, each year the number of

applicants exceeded the number of available places. Planning for each Japanese academic year's cohort actually started in January of the calendar year and logistically in terms of implementation had to be well advanced by April: funding needed approval, candidate interviews had to be scheduled and completed, selections made, flights booked by June, a training and orientation programme completed, homestays decided, funds transferred to schools, and all before the dispatch period, which was between mid-August to mid-September of each year. Table 1 shows the number of teachers dispatched each year.

Table 1. Number of student-teachers dispatched per year.

Year	No. of STs
2012	21
2013	17
2014	21
2015	19
2016	9
2017	13
Total	100

Specific Aims of the ATP

Aside from the two general aims of the program listed above, specific objectives of the ATP were formulated. These were categorised into four types: (a) Educational, (b) Intercultural, (c) Personal Growth, and (d) English Proficiency. Each of these categories were sub-divided into specific goals or objectives. They were:

(a) Educational

1. to improve and develop the teaching skills of the student-teachers,

2. to give the student-teachers the opportunity to observe similarities and differences between the two educational environments,
3. to establish links between Australian schools and AUE,

(b) Intercultural

4. to give the student-teachers firsthand experience of a different lifestyle and culture through homestay,
5. to expand the student-teachers' knowledge of Japanese culture, develop their ability to talk about it in English, and motivate them to learn more,
6. to give Australian schoolchildren firsthand and personal contact with young Japanese,
7. to increase Australian schoolchildren's knowledge of Japan, Japanese, and Japanese culture,

(c) Personal Growth

8. to develop the independence, self-confidence and maturity of the student-teachers,
9. to develop the student-teachers' abilities to solve problems by themselves and become more self-reliant,
10. to motivate the student-teachers to travel overseas again in the future,

(d) English proficiency

11. to increase the English communication skills of the student-teachers by immersing them in an English-speaking environment
12. to increase each student-teachers's awareness of their actual level of English communication proficiency and motivate them to greater efforts into improving their English skills.

As can be seen, some of the objectives pertain to the individual's development in maturity, in terms of constructs such as self-confidence,

autonomy, independence and adaptability; all difficult and controversial constructs to define. Only an attempt at defining 'confidence' is made here. In social cognitive theory literature, one interpretation of 'confidence' sees it as colloquial term for the construct of 'self-efficacy', which Bandura (1995) defines as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (p.2). Bandura (1977) argues that people's beliefs in their efficacy are developed or influenced in four ways: (a) through performance accomplishments, (b) by vicarious experiences such as of a peer succeeding or failing, (c) by social persuasion via verbal support from others, and (d) by how they interpret their physiological and emotional states such as stress reactions, moods, and physical states. Of these four, Bandura argues that a performance accomplishment is "especially influential because it is based on personal mastery experiences" (p.195). Another way of saying this, is that a self-evaluation of performance accomplishment is the most effective way of creating a strong and robust belief in one's personal sense of efficacy. In a later iteration of the self-efficacy construct, Bandura (1982) relabels 'performance accomplishments' as 'enactive mastery' or 'enactive attainments', the latter term being the most common in use.

Purpose of this study

The research purpose of this study is to interpret participant-generated data that the students-filled out upon their return from ATP and make judgments about (1) the perceived benefits to the student-teachers by taking part in the ATP, (2) whether or not the *majority* of the objectives of the programme were achieved, and (3) the levels of the participants' self-efficacy in terms of English proficiency and teaching ability.

The attainment of objectives #3, #6 and #7 were not specific foci of the survey instrument as they incorporate the perspectives of other

stakeholders – namely AUE and the institutions involved and the Australian schoolchildren - and no data beyond anecdotal and personal communication to the author was systematically collected. A third purpose of the survey was actually institutional. As funding each year had to be negotiated with various administrative departments at AUE, evidence of the value of the programme was necessary in order to ensure its survival from one year to the next. However, this study makes no attempt to analyze the value of the programme to the administration, only the participants.

Method

Participants

The data analyzed here were collected from 50 of the 57 student-teachers that were dispatched between 2013-2015. Of these, 34 respondents were female (F1 through F34) and 17 were male (M1 through M17). They had spent 2 or 3 weeks undertaking Japanese 'language teaching' practicums or Japanese 'culture teaching' practicums at either primary or secondary schools in Australia. They were drawn from 2 – 4th year student cohorts of the English Education department and the International Culture department at AUE.

Survey instrument

Prior to the return of the 2012 cohort, a questionnaire had been devised by the ATP administrative team leader Professor Takahashi Miyuki, and administered by the personnel of the English Support Center, in order to gather data about their perceptions of the programme. At the conclusion of each practicum every year, the survey was electronically transmitted to the participants once they had returned to Japan from their ATP practicums. They were asked to (a) make a Likert-scale selection

corresponding to their attitude toward a statement, and then write a short reason as to why they had given the item that rating. They were then asked to free-write comments to 3 or 4 further items. Over the years, these final items varied but they included items such as, ‘What were the good points of the ATP?’, ‘What difficulties did you encounter during the ATP?’, ‘What were the good points of the homestay?’, and ‘What differences did you notice between Australian and Japanese education?’, among others.

Because the 10 survey items were written in Japanese, the respondents wrote reasons in Japanese. The English translations below each item are for convenience for this paper, but were not included in the questionnaire itself. Respondents made a selection from 1 to 5 for each item and then wrote reasons for their choice. Table 2 shows the specific items.

Table 2: The ATP questionnaire

	Item	強くそう思う Strongly think so/It strongly applies to me	思う I think so/ If anything, it applies	ふつう No opinion either way/I can't say either	思わない Don't think so/ If anything, it doesn't apply to me	強くそう思わない Strongly don't think so/It does not apply to me at all
		5	4	3	2	1
1	海外での教育実習に参加して良かったと思う。[理由] I think that it was good to participate in teaching practice abroad.(Reason)					
2	参加したことで、自身の英語コミュニケーション能力が向上したと思う。[理由] I think that I have improved my English communication skill. (Reason)					
3	参加したことで、英語を人前で話すことに自信がついたと思う。[理由] I think I gained confidence in speaking English in public. (Reason)					
4	参加したことで、英語で生徒や児童に指導することに自信がついたと思う。[理由] I think I gained confidence in teaching students and children in English. (Reason)					

5	参加したことで、自身の授業実践指導力が向上したと思う。[理由]
	I think that my practical teaching skills have improved. (Reason)
6	参加したことで、今後、日本の英語の授業に役立てることができると思う。[理由]
	I think that I can use this experience in English classes in Japan in the future. (Reason)
7	参加したことで、日本の言語・文化についても詳しく勉強したいと思う。[理由]
	I would like to learn more about Japanese language and culture. (Reason)
8	参加したことで、グローバルな視点から、児童・生徒を指導することができると思う。[理由]
	I think that I can teach children and students from a global perspective. (Reason)
9	参加したことで、より一層、英語の学習をしたいと思う。[理由]
	I would like to learn more English. (Reason)
10	教師になった時に、この海外教育実習のことを児童や生徒に体験を話したいと思う。[理由]
	I would like to talk about ATP to my future students. (Reason)

Item 1 simply asked to what extent they enjoyed their participation in the programme. Items 2 through 5 were aimed at gauging the participants' levels of self-efficacy regarding their English ability and teaching skills. Item 6 asked if they thought they could use this experience to help them in Japan. As the student-teachers were also tasked with introducing Japanese culture and also language (in some cases, the students tasks were to support and teach Japanese language lessons) to the children, item 7 asked about their personal level of knowledge of Japanese culture and language. Item 8 asked whether or not the participants were more confident in teaching English from a global perspective. Item 9 asked them to rate the extent to which they thought they wanted to learn English in the future, while item 10 asked whether or not they would tell their future students about this experience. The short answer format items were not mandatory but asked them to free write on the topic.

Admittedly, the Likert-scale questions within the survey instrument were devised without the input of the author and the internal reliability of the instrument was not considered in its construction. That said, no hypotheses of relationship or difference between items are made, so internal reliability is not such an issue. Responses to each item are considered as just being indicative of the particular item itself. In terms of the relevance of the items to the goals and aims of MEXT and the project, items 2 and 3 (communication skill & speaking English in public) and items 3 (teaching in English) and 4 (practical teaching skills) pertain specifically to the first strand of the AUE project: (1) to advance the English communication skills, and teaching skills of the student-teachers through overseas teaching practicums. Moreover, item 8 (global perspective) pertains to pillar 3 of the MEXT 2012 plan (Strengthening the global educational capabilities of teachers). An increase in 'Self-Efficacy' through performance accomplishment is gauged by responses to items using 'confidence' (#3 & #4) and 'improved' (#2 & #5) as well as the qualitative data in the 'reason' statements of all items. Additionally, items 7 and 9 specifically pertain to motivation in asking respondents to comment upon their desire to learn more about Japan and English respectively. Finally, item 6 judges the perceptions of the usefulness of the programme in their future careers as English teachers.

Of note is that the data analyzed here in this survey is only from the 2013-2015 questionnaires, and only from items 1-10. There are a number of reasons all the data are not analyzed here. Chief among them is the sheer volume of data that were gathered. The open-ended nature of the items numbered 11-13 in the format of the questionnaire (above) often produced responses that ran to quite lengthy texts; too much data for a single researcher working alone and looking for patterns between the largest number of respondents as possible. Additionally, the 2016 and

2017 versions of the questionnaire omitted the requirement for the respondents to give a reason for each of the questionnaire their Likert-rating. In regard to the omission of data generated by the 2012 cohort, the open-ended items differed in number and content from later versions. Moreover, only questionnaire data from 6 of the 21 participants could be traced prior to the writing of this paper.

Data Treatment and Analysis

The questionnaire instrument generated both quantitative (in the form of a Likert-scale questionnaire) and qualitative (in the form of written responses) data. The data were compiled in Excel format for ease of access and statistical analysis. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis measures of means and modes. The qualitative data was analyzed following qualitative data coding systems (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2013).

The treatment and analysis procedure is shown below in Table 3.

Table 3. Data treatment and analysis procedure

original	Software translation	English adjustment	Identify key words & phrases	First cycle coding	Second cycle sub-coding
ICT を用いた授業方法を学ぶことができたため。	Because I was able to learn the lesson method using ICT.	Because I was able to learn how to use ICT in a lesson	Use of ICT	Educational	ICT usage

The categories of aims – Educational, Intercultural, Personal Growth, English Proficiency – were used as the initial basic descriptive codes (i.e. category) into which to classify the comments written as ‘reasons’. A further category, ‘Negative’ was added to incorporate negative attitudes, dissatisfaction or hedging of perceptions that the respondents held. That

said, many comments were multi-faceted and therefore could be classified into more than one thematic category. For example, a statement such as “I don’t think my speaking improved that much, but I think my listening did,” falls into two categories: the improvement in listening would come under ‘English Proficiency’ and the opinion about not improving speaking that much is categorized as a ‘Negative.’ Sub-categories of each were added if deemed necessary. For example, a comment such as “I realized that it was important to try to communicate even though I was worried about grammar” falls under the category ‘English Proficiency,’ sub-category ‘Willingness to communicate.’ In other words, the number of categories a reason comment was classified into depended upon not only the length of the comment, but its nature. Some respondents wrote rather lengthy comments in which the content was classified into 2 or 3 subcategories within or across 1 or more categories.

Results

This section outlines the quantitative and qualitative results of the analyses item by item.

Item 1:

“I think that it was good to participate in teaching practice abroad”

(a) $n = 50$

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 50 4 pts = 0 3 pts = 0 2 pts = 0 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 5 Mode = 5

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (44 responses coded)

The most frequent reason was that the experience proved of value in deepening their understanding of Australian or foreign education (9). Second-most frequent were reasons indicating that the experience highlighted to them the differences in education and school culture between Japan and Australia (7). The usefulness of the experience for their futures as teachers and/or teachers of English came in third with 6 responses.

(ii) Intercultural (16 responses coded)

Most frequent reasons coded as intercultural referred to the experience as deepening their understanding of Australian or foreign culture (5), and to deepening their understanding of their own culture (3). A further 4 responses were coded as learning to interact in a foreign culture.

(iii) Personal Growth (8 responses coded)

Eight (8) responses were coded as reflecting the respondents' impression of personal growth including "It enriched my thinking," "I was able to find importance in life," "I improved my self-confidence," "You can change yourself by knowing what you can do now and what you lack," "I learnt to adapt" and "I developed independence and flexibility."

(iv) English Proficiency (14 responses coded)

In terms of English ability, 6 responses were coded as a belief that they had improved their ability to communicate in English.

(v) Negative (8 responses coded)

In contrast to the above, 6 responses stated that the experience exposed their 'lack of ability' or 'weaknesses' either in English or emotionally. While on the surface, this is coded negatively here, having a weakness brought into stark relief can actually be a source of motivation for change. An example from M14 brings this out: "Being able to experience what I

could do for my students in an environment surrounded by English was the best way to expose my level of self-confidence and my weaknesses at the same time.”

Noteworthy responses included:

F2 (2013): “By interacting with Australian children, I was able to grow as a teacher and as a human being.”

F11 (2014): “By practicing in an education system different from Japan, it was an opportunity to think about the education system in Japan again. In particular, being aware of Australia's highly flexible education was a great stimulus.”

F15 (2014):” Before joining ATP, I had the image that to be a "teacher" was painful and difficult. However, I feel now that it is a more rewarding job. I was really happy to be able to participate and it became a treasured memory.”

M13 (2016): “I felt that my thoughts changed drastically and I was able to find something important not only in education but also in my life.”

F18 (2015) “By putting myself in a different and unusual environment, I was able to develop independence and adaptability.”

Item 2:

“I think that I have improved my English communication skill” (Reason)

(a) n = 50

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 16 4 pts = 27 3 pts = 6 2 pts = 1 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 4.1 Mode = 4

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (2 responses)

Two responses from 3rd year student-teachers indicated that they had gained confidence in their ability to teach English during their upcoming teaching practicum in Japan.

(ii) Intercultural (none)

(iii) Personal Growth (19 responses)

The most frequent with 15 responses was coded as the experience bringing about an increase in their 'willingness to communicate' in English. One respondent said she had felt a "drop in resistance," while another wrote she had "she lost her fear of speaking and it broke my shell." One wrote that "I haven't become more fluent in communication but I think I've gained the courage to speak in English." Another two stated they had tried to communicate "positively." Respondent M11 wrote that "I learned the attitude of trying to communicate was important."

(iv) English Proficiency (48 responses)

The most frequent response coded here with 10, was an improvement in listening ability. Six (6) felt they had improved on how to speak to children in English in lessons as opposed to conversation with adults. A further 6 attributed a perception that their communication ability had improved to the necessity of daily usage or being in an environment where they had "no choice but to use English.". Moreover, 6 remarked on specifics about their improvement with comments concerning the expansion of their range of classroom expressions, backchannels, and ability to give instructions and offer praise to children. Four respondents mentioned their use of alternative "strategies" when their vocabulary was insufficient to convey their meaning, including drawing pictures and using gestures.

(v) Negatives (9 responses coded)

Five respondents felt they had not made great change in their ability to communicate although many of these comments were tempered with added information such as “but it’s important to try,” and “but it was an opportunity to work harder.” Another commented on the difficulty she had communicating with her host family, while another remarked that the three short weeks was too short a time to result in improvement in her ability. Two expressed experiencing frustration of sorts with one saying “My communication ability improved but I could not understand conversations between native speakers at the end of 3 weeks.” The other said he “couldn’t convey 100% what I wanted to say, but it was important to try.”

Noteworthy responses:

M1 (2013): “Classes about Japan lowered my affective filter for speaking English.”

F12 (2014): “For three weeks, I was able to live surrounded by English at my school and homestay. Thanks to the environment where I had to listen and speak English without relying on anyone, I was able to use English positively.”

M8 (2014): “Even if it was difficult to convey, I managed to convey it if I had a desire to convey it. If you think the other person doesn’t understand it, it’s important to make gestures, write on paper, or express it in a different way. I felt that communication ability is more important than language ability.”

F16(2014): I knew that nothing would change if I didn’t move, and I felt strongly that I wanted to communicate, which led to an improvement in my communication skills.”

Item 3:

“I think I gained confidence in speaking English in public” (Reason)

(a) $n = 50$

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 16 4 pts = 25 3 pts = 9 2 pts = 0 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 4.1 Mode = 4

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (7 responses coded)

Five mentioned that being able to speak English in lessons or teach in English resulted in an increase in confidence. Two remarked that their usage of ICT in English lessons had helped improve their confidence.

(ii) Intercultural (none)

(iii) Personal Growth (34 responses coded)

Similar to responses to item 2, gaining the courage to speak, that is, increasing their willingness to communicate, was mentioned by 6. Another 5 remarked on the importance of attitude to trying to communicate, while 5 attributed their increase in confidence being due to the fact that they had realized they could be understood by native speakers. Another 4 attributed it to the number of opportunities they had been given to do lessons and so they had increased their confidence through this avenue.

(iv) English Proficiency (9 responses coded)

Various different responses were assigned to this code, with 3 stating the daily necessity of communicating in English gave them confidence. Another 2 referred to pronunciation, with one remarking “forced me to pay attention to pronunciation”

(v) Negatives (10 responses coded)

Three respondents mentioned that they were still poor at English or not confident but willingness to try had increased. Another 3 remarked that their confidence to speak English with Japanese remained low but not with native speakers.

Noteworthy responses:

M2 (2013): “I was able to speak without fear of mistakes or grammatical mistakes.”

F6 (2013): “I talked to the teachers, children, and family at the homestay and realized that they understood the English I spoke.”

F7 (2013) “I realized the importance of speaking with the intention of communicating regardless of the correctness of pronunciation and grammar.”

F11 (2014): “I’m still poor at English, but when I speak English in public, I’m more confident and can speak louder than ever.”

F14 (2014): “I was able to communicate in English with someone who couldn’t speak Japanese at all, and I was able to teach lessons. However, the confidence to speak English in front of Japanese people remains the same.”

F15 (2014): “I was not good at speaking in public and was not the type to speak positively. Also, I was not confident in my English pronunciation. However, seeing the reactions of the children made it fun to speak English day by day. I also had the experience of giving a speech in front of all the students, and I feel like I broke my shell.”

Item 4:

“I think I gained confidence in teaching students and children in English”
(Reason)

(a) n = 50

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 11 4 pts = 30 3 pts = 8 2 pts = 1 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 3.9 Mode = 4

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (29 coded)

The increase in ability to use classroom English expressions and give instructions was cited as reasons for an increase in confidence by 10 respondents. Another 4 said they were confident of being able to use their experience to teach English in English in the future. Three mentioned they had become confident in their ability to attract the interest of and keep the students engaged in a lesson. Other reasons cited included they had learnt how to keep the lesson moving in the face of many questions asked by students.

(ii) Intercultural (none)

(iii) Personal Growth (4 coded)

There were three different reasons given for the increase in confidence in this item, including their repeated efforts to communicate (2), the number of opportunities to teach, and the realization of being able to mistakes.

(iv) English Proficiency (10 coded)

Four respondents mentioned their abilities with classroom English increased their confidence, while another 2 cited their range of English expressions had expanded. The latter were not classified as classroom English because the respondents may have meant expressions in the home.

(v) Negatives (10 coded)

Three were not confident that the teaching methodology could be applied to Japan due to the difference in education systems. Another cited trouble with responding to questions being the reason for giving a lower rating. Others included trouble with giving instructions, and not being able to master 'scolding.'

Noteworthy responses:

M11 (2014): "After giving 15 lessons, I gained confidence. I learned that if you prepare well for lessons, the students will respond."

M12 (2014): "I gained confidence in the lessons in English. I was able to learn what kind of questions should be asked to attract the students' interest."

F16 (2014): "By seeing the native use of classroom English, which is difficult to master, and actually using it, I think I've become more capable than before."

F28 (2015): "I think I was able to give instructions on what to do next, but when I was asked a question, I sometimes couldn't communicate well in English, so I thought I needed more practice."

F31 (2015): "I was able to teach in all grades and I think I could use the English that suits them."

Item 5:

"I think that my practical teaching skills have improved" (Reason)

(a) $n = 50$

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 11 4 pts = 26 3 pts = 12 2 pts = 1 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 3.9 Mode = 4

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (48 responses coded)

The most common reason (14) cited here was ‘understanding of children’ with 6 mentioning the phrase directly and another 8 saying they had learnt how to gauge reactions, engage (and keep the attention) of children, or involve the students in the lesson. The next most common reason was coded as lesson structure and management’ with 12 responses classified as such. There were references to the flow of the lesson, being able to deal with many questions but keep the lesson moving forward, and increased skill in to managing time. Another 4 respondents mentioned that they were now more aware of lesson materials and activities.

(ii) Intercultural (2 responses coded)

These were that it deepened an understanding of different culture for one respondent and that it led to an interest in teaching Japanese culture for another.

(iii) Personal Growth (2 responses coded)

One student remarked that the experience had improved her self-confidence but exposed her personal weaknesses. The other gained confidence from the many opportunities to teach.

(iv) English Proficiency (3 responses coded)

Two responses remarked their confidence was due to an improvement in English ability in general, while the third was happy with his ability to ‘ad-lib’ in English.

(v) Negatives (4 responses coded)

Similarly to item 3, 3 respondents also mentioned they were unsure if their teaching had improved due to differences in education systems, while the 4th mentioned being embarrassed at not being able to answer questions about his culture.

Noteworthy responses:

F1 (2013): "I think my practical leadership skills have improved in Australian classes. However, since the learning environment is different from that of Japan, not all of this practical leadership can be fully utilized in the current Japanese-style class, so I rated this 4.

M1 (2013): "I was able to learn how to attract the attention of students and how to use time in class."

F2 (2013): "During my classes, I was able to realize how the reactions of the children changed drastically depending on how I asked questions, my facial expressions, and the ingenuity of the activities. I think it's an experience that can be used when teaching in Japan."

M8 (2014): "There were a lot of questions during class but it was necessary to proceed with the lesson while answering the questions. Depending on the number and content of the questions, there were times when I couldn't complete the lesson and I had to change the content a little. Even when I devised a lesson plan, I had to actually change the content flexibly. Even when I did the same lesson in different classes, it didn't follow the same flow. Also, I was asked a lot more than what I had prepared, so I felt that a lot of knowledge was needed."

Item 6:

"I think that I can use this experience in English classes in Japan in the future" (Reason)

(a) n = 50

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 29 4 pts = 15 3 pts = 6 2 pts = 0 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 4.5 Mode = 5

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (42 responses coded)

The most frequent reason cited by 13 respondents was that they found many useful ‘activities and techniques’ they thought they could use in teaching in Japan. Another 6 mentioned they definitely found it useful for teaching English in the future, with another 8 adding details such as that its usefulness would be in telling their future students about the differences in the education systems and raising interest in school life in overseas countries or motivating them to learn English. Techniques to maintain student engagement appeared in 4 responses. The remaining 11 educational-coded responses included increased awareness of student-centered lessons (2), questioning techniques (2), and an increase in their ability to use ICT (2).

(ii) Intercultural (2 responses coded)

These were that the experience deepened their understanding of foreign cultures and their own culture.

(iii) Personal Growth (1 responses coded)

The M8 (2014) respondent here wrote that “I think that participating in the programme has enriched my own thoughts.”

(iv) English Proficiency (5 responses coded)

Four respondents mentioned that their range of expressions such as backchannels and praise increased, with the final respondent saying they had become motivated to study English.

(v) Negatives (2 responses coded)

The two negative responses both expressed doubt on what was transferable to lessons in Japan.

Noteworthy responses:

F1 (2013): "I feel that the "communication-oriented lessons" that are often referred to today are like lessons in Australia. So, I feel that it was a very useful experience because I can have lessons like that in the future."

F12 (2014): "I felt once again that it is effective to have lessons where students have more opportunities to speak and where teachers and students are involved together, rather than one-sided lessons where teachers only explain."

F15 (2014): "This training was a very valuable experience for me to aim for an all-English lesson."

F21 (2015): "My range of ways to ask questions and praise students in English has expanded."

F32 (2015): "Through class observation, I learned the good points that Japan does not have and the good points that only Japan has."

Item 7:

"I would like to learn more about the Japanese language and culture"
(Reason)

(a) n = 50

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 34 4 pts = 8 3 pts = 6 2 pts = 0 1 pt = 2

(c) Mean = 4.4 Mode = 5

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (none)

(ii) Intercultural (48 responses coded)

Fully 19 of the 48 responses coded under intercultural made reference to the respondents citing a lack of knowledge of their own culture at particular times during the ATP. Another 11 responses indicated the necessity or the motivation to learn more about Japanese culture had increased. Seven respondents wrote about feeling embarrassment at not being able to answer particular questions from the children. Six responses said the experience had increased their understanding of or sense of pride in their own culture. Three said they had increased their interest in teaching about Japanese culture.

(iii) Personal Growth (none)

(iv) English Proficiency (none)

(v) Negatives (2)

One male respondent said that his lack of knowledge about Japan's culture led him to find "it inconvenient to talk to people overseas." Another wrote "I don't know much about Japanese culture, but I found foreign cultures more interesting."

Noteworthy responses:

F1 (2013): "I feel that I organized my Japanese lessons by always thinking about what "Japanese-ness" is. I felt that "Japan" can only be known by looking at it from overseas."

M1 (2013): "There were many embarrassing scenes where I couldn't answer questions from students."

F3 (2013): "During the ATP, I was able to reaffirm the goodness of Japan. That made me think many times that I was happy to be born

in Japan. I want to convey the goodness of Japan not only to foreigners but also to the students I meet in the future.”

M8 (2014): “Even though I had prepared for Japanese language and culture in advance, I was often surprised by the children's questions and discovered new things. It was very interesting to know Japan from the outside.”

F32 (2015): “Going abroad is also about teaching others about Japan, and this training made me realize my ignorance of Japanese culture. I became genuinely interested in Japanese culture, and the more Australians became interested in Japan, the more I wanted to know and teach.”

Item 8:

“I think that I can teach children and students from a global perspective”

(Reason)

(a) $n = 50$

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 20 4 pts = 18 3 pts = 10 2 pts = 2 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 4.1 Mode = 5

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (20 responses coded)

Six responses indicated that their newly-acquired knowledge of differences in education systems was the reason for their rating of 5. Another 3 responses mentioned that the knowledge of different activities in Australia would allow them to teach from a global perspective. Four responses said that they now understood how children were the ‘same’ across the world, while a further 2 realized that students talked more than teachers in Australian classrooms. One mentioned that his “horizons for

lessons” had expanded due to his observation of other subjects such as drama and religion.

(ii) Intercultural (15 responses coded)

Five responses indicated that a knowledge of differences in cultures was the reason for their rating of 5. Three said they had acquired activities or techniques in Australia to enable them to teach from a global perspective. Two mentioned the multiculturalism of Australia while 2 more stressed the need to develop their knowledge of where Japan was situated in the ‘global perspective.’

(iii) Personal Growth (5 responses coded)

Four responses cited ‘broadening their horizons’ as making them capable of teaching from this perspective. Yet another wrote that it changed her perspective so that she was no longer “obsessed with the Japanese way of thinking.”

(iv) English Proficiency (none)

(v) Negatives (5 responses coded. Two left blank)

Three negative responses mentioned that the write was unsure as to what the concept of ‘global perspective’ entailed. As 2 did not fill in a reason for this item, it can be surmised that they also did not know. Of the two others, one said directly they found the concept ‘vague.’

Noteworthy responses:

F11 (2014): “I think that participating in ATP has broadened my horizons considerably. I would like to provide instruction that incorporates the Australian education system.”

F14 (2014): “By learning about Australia and its schools, I thought that I wouldn't be obsessed with the Japanese way of thinking and the way of education in Japan.”

F20 (2015): “I feel that your perspective changes greatly depending on whether you have experiences of overseas or not.”

F22 (2015): “Looking at education in Australia, I got the impression that it is more relaxed than in Japan. Because of that experience, I would like to be able to teach from a broad perspective without sticking to Japanese education.”

Item 9:

“I would like to learn more English” (Reason)

(a) n = 50

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 47 4 pts = 3 3 pts = 0 2 pts = 0 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 4.9 Mode = 5

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (none)

(ii) Intercultural (none)

(iii) Personal Growth (2 responses)

Two respondents said they were now motivated to go abroad to study English.

(iv) English Proficiency (48 responses coded)

In terms of English proficiency and communication ability, 24 comments stated that the ATP had exposed their weaknesses and lack of ability. On the surface, this should be classified negatively. However, this exposure of the lack of ability served as a motivational spur, as 19 reported

specifically that they were motivated to study English more. This is the reason it is not classified negatively.

(v) Negatives (16 responses coded)

Eight responses indicated the respondents held feelings of regret and disappointment at not being able to deepen relationships due to weaknesses in communication ability. Six respondents expressed similar emotions such as frustration because of not being able to convey their exact feelings. Two specifically cited a lack of vocabulary.

Noteworthy responses:

M13 (2014): “I think that if you can use English, you can enrich your life.”

M15 (2015): “Although it was very meaningful, I also realized that I was weak, so I decided to study more after returning to Japan.”

M16 (2015): “I was able to communicate with the English I had learned so far, but I was not able to convey everything I wanted to convey. I want to learn more colloquial expressions and improve my English ability to a level where I can live overseas alone.”

F22 (2015): “In many cases, I couldn't convey what I wanted to say well. I want to improve my speaking and listening skills.”

F29 (2015): “I was very disappointed and sorry that I couldn't understand or express more, both in the classroom and in my daily life, so this was quite motivating.”

Item 10:

“I would like to talk about ATP to my future students” (Reason)

(a) n = 50

(b) Score distributions:

5 pts = 48 4 pts = 0 3 pts = 2 2 pts = 0 1 pt = 0

(c) Mean = 4.9 Mode = 5

(d) Analysis of Reasons for selection ranking:

(i) Educational (43 responses coded)

As for being able to use the ATP experience in the teaching, 20 responses indicated stories of the experiences would be used to raise interest the interest of their students in overseas countries. Four other comments specifically mentioned that stories of Australian primary schoolchildren's lives would be used in the same way. Another 11 responses indicated their experiences would be used to motivate their students to learn English. Two comments hoped to use the experience to motivate students to "look overseas like I do" and "travel overseas." Five mentioned the phrase "broaden their horizons."

(ii) Intercultural (7 responses coded)

Six of 7 responses coded as intercultural referred to using the ATP to deepen their students' interest in foreign cultures and their differences. The 7th hoped to teach the importance of spreading Japanese culture overseas.

(iii) Personal Growth (none)

(iv) English Proficiency (none)

(v) Negatives (none)

Noteworthy responses:

F3 (2013): "By talking about what kind of education children of the same generation overseas are receiving, I think that students can get a global perspective with a sense of intimacy. I want to convey a lot of experience and broaden their horizons."

F4 (2013): “I want to teach them the importance of transmitting Japanese culture overseas.”

M6 (2013): “I think it will lead to children's motivation to learn English, and I can also make it a part of international understanding education.”

M10 (2013): “I can travel abroad, but I never thought I would visit an elementary school. It's hard to find such a valuable experience. I think it's a waste not to tell the students.”

F13 (2014): “I could feel a lot of differences on my skin. Such cultural differences will surely lead to children's motivation to learn English.”

Table 4. Percentage of data per code type

Fist cycle code	Number	Percentage
Educational	235	39.2
Intercultural	90	15
Personal Growth	75	12.5
English Proficiency	141	23.5
Negative	58	9.7
	599	99.9

Table 4 shows the percentage of data per first cycle code classification. However, caution must be observed in comparing figures and percentages as the number and nature of the survey items that pertain to each code differed. For example, the survey was biased toward educational items, resulting in greater amounts of data coded as ‘educational.’ Of greater consequence to this study are figures for second cycle sub-coding data shown in Table 5. The table identifies the major sub-codes within each code into which the data were classified. While the numbers of each sub-code are of some interest in terms of rankings, the classification codes themselves are what interests us more, as they shed light on what the participants perceived as noteworthy or of benefit to them.

Table 5. Major sub-codes and their frequencies

First cycle code	Sub-code	Number
Educational (n = 235)	Source of knowledge: Australian education	11
	Source of knowledge: differences in education	18
	Useful teach English in English	10
	Useful teach English	14
	Improve classroom English	15
	Source of activities/techniques	14
	Source of engagement strategies/techniques	13
	Lesson structure & management	14
	Motivation for future students of English	12
Intercultural (n = 90)	Increase interest in foreign countries	16
	Source of knowledge: Australian culture	11
	Deepen knowledge: Japanese culture	11
	Source of knowledge: Cultural differences	9
	Awareness of knowledge lack: Japanese Culture	19
Personal Growth (n = 75)	Motivation to learn: Japanese Culture	15
	Source of willingness to communicate	11
	Source of change in attitude to attempt	10
	Source of courage to speak (no fear of error)	9
	Source of positive communication	4
	Realization of intelligibility	5
English Proficiency (n = 141)	Source of public speaking confidence	9
	Source of perspective change	4
	Awareness of lack: English proficiency	34
	Source of improvement: general English	9
	Motivation to study English	20
	Source of Improvement: Listening	11
	Source of Educational English	11
Negative (n = 58)	Source of Improvement: communication skills	7
	Source of knowledge: language expressions	12
	Source of regret: awareness of language ability	8
	Source of uncertainty: teaching competence	7
	Source of frustration: inability to convey	6

Discussion

The research purpose of this study is to ascertain using data (a) the perceived benefits to the student-teachers by taking part in the ATP, (b)

whether or not the *majority* of the objectives of the programme were achieved, and (c) the levels of the participants' self-efficacy in terms of English proficiency and teaching ability.

In regard to research question 1 and the perceived benefits that the ATP participants received, the qualitative data and the data in Table 3 show clearly that there were a considerable number of benefits to the students in terms of the development of their educational knowledge and skills, intercultural knowledge and skills, growth in their maturity, and improvement in particular areas of English proficiency. In terms of educational benefits, it is clear that the participants perceived ATP as a source of a great deal of knowledge including knowledge about the two education systems and their differences. However, the short answer data analyzed here does not contain many statements of actual difference; just that the systems are *different*. Some references were made to the widespread use of ICT, Australian education being more relaxed or free with greater levels of student-involvement, less teacher talk, and child-centered lessons. However, statements like this were not frequent enough in the data to have any confidence in making sweeping generalizations about educational differences. Obviously, there are clear differences but none can be justified by the data in this paper. That said, the data here represents just a portion of the ATP participant data that was generated over the six years of the programme and perusal of the longer responses to items 11 and 13 (not included in this data set) would shed greater light on the differences themselves. A second educational benefit evident in the data is that the ATP experience added a 'bank' of knowledge in terms of teaching activities, questioning strategies, student engagement techniques, and classroom English. Furthermore, by making presentations and giving lessons at schools in Australia, it gave the participants more chances (in addition to their teaching practice in Japan)

to use these activities and techniques in a lesson. Many of the participants also held the belief that their experiences would be useful for them in their future careers as teachers of English, and also be utilized as a possible source of interest and motivation for their future students. In regard to intercultural aspects, the ATP not only was a source of intercultural knowledge, it was also the instigator of cases of ‘culture shock’: shock that many of the participants realized they themselves did not possess enough knowledge about their own culture to answer all the questions of the Australian students. In regard to personal growth, although the data contain the fewest comments, the comments that are there are significant as for what they mean to the value of the ATP. teachers of English in Japan know that the affective filter (Dulay & Burt, 1977; Krashen, 1982) is an extremely powerful adversary when it comes to getting secondary school and university EFL students to communicate in English. That the ATP respondents identified positive change (in some case, changes) in their communicative behavior, is evidence of the lowering of resistance – the affective filter. One student specifically wrote about “the lowering of my affective filter.” In regard to English proficiency, clear performance accomplishments (Bandura, 1977) were mentioned by the respondents. These include improvements in listening, general English, communication skills and educational English. It also resulted in highlighting their weaknesses in their language ability and motivating them to study more. Finally, the programme also gave rise to some of the students-teachers experiencing regret, frustration at not being able to fully convey their meaning when speaking, and also uncertainty for some on whether or not they had improved their teaching skills.

In terms of research question 2 - whether or not the *majority* of the objectives of the programme were achieved – the qualitative data ends support to the quantitative data in terms of Objectives 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, and

12. A sample of some of the many comments from teachers and principals (below) received by the author lend support to the achievement of objective 7. The very presence of the student-teachers at schools in Australia fulfilled objective 6 by default. However, the weakest evidence concerns objectives 9 and 10. Though the personal growth anecdotes of the participants can be said to account for some aspects of objective 9, and two student-teachers did say they were motivated to travel more overseas, the questionnaire instrument did not include specific items that pertain to problem-solving, and self-reliance. Evidence had to rely on the incidental use of words like 'independent' among the data. In this regard the questionnaire was poorly designed. Moreover, the constructs themselves are vague, as was the construct of 'global perspective' for at least three of the respondents. Nevertheless, the two types of data do support the belief that the majority of objectives were achieved.

With regard to research question 3 - the levels of the participants' self-efficacy in terms of English proficiency and teaching ability - the quantitative data mean scores for items 2, 3, 4 and 5 show the students believed that they had improved their language and teaching skills. These figures were reinforced by the qualitative data accounts. However, no independent pre- or post-tests of either language proficiency or teaching skills were administered so conclusions cannot be drawn in terms of statistics. However, the construct of 'self-efficacy' is subjective and can only be adjudged objectively through statistical analyses of questionnaires. In our case, greater importance in assessing self-efficacy is given to the performance accomplishments of the student-teachers as outlined in the qualitative data. In addition to those accomplishments in English proficiency and teaching skills, the aspects of personal growth, particularly in regard to the ATP as a source of willingness to communicate in English and attitude change, as well as the general

positivity about trying to communicate, represents perhaps one of the greater performance accomplishments of the programme itself. Comments such as “I broke my shell” (F15), “I realized they understood the English I spoke” (F6), and “I realized that it's more important to try to convey than to always try to speak correct English, and to convey my feelings with only the words and grammar I know. I found that I could do it” (F12), are clear indicators of enactive attainment (i.e. performance accomplishment) experienced by many of the participants. Moreover, many credited their improvement in English to the fact they had been placed in an environment in which they had no choice but to communicate in English: “When I'm in Japan, I don't usually communicate in English, so I think that I improved by spending time in an environment where I had to speak in English” (F22). Coupled with an increased motivation to study more English, in respect of performance accomplishment, the ATP programme can be said to have overachieved.

Conclusion

As stated above, the ATP dispatched 100 student-teachers to Australian primary and secondary schools. For the administrators, as well as the participants, each dispatch of cohort brought its own challenges and without exception, each of these challenges came replete with its own *smorgasbord* of difficulties that generated stress and worry. However, as the author of this paper and the instigator of the ATP, I can say unequivocally that the benefits and the merits of the programme to the student-teachers, as evident as they are in this paper, in fact go beyond those stated here. This is because that the vast majority of the ATP-ers are now teachers and if even just one small fraction of what they are doing in their classrooms today can be derived from their experiences taking part

in this programme, then the ATP programme can be deemed undeniably worth all the stress and worry it generated.

White and Forgasz (2016) highlighted recent thinking regarding the value of the ‘international practicum’ as being positioned on a spectrum between educational tourism and critical to the development of culturally sensitive, globally responsible teachers in the 21st century. This study has shown the benefits of the programme from the perspectives of those that took part. One might question the findings as biased in that the data came from the participants themselves, and, having been wholly or partially-funded, they were not about to write an inordinate amount of negative comments . The simple answer to that is that of course this type of data is biased. However, such a criticism can be offset by a third party. Included here are just four of the many comments from some of the teachers and principals that took part in the programme as hosts. Furthermore, these comments also go some way to addressing the question of whether Aim 6 (to give Australian schoolchildren firsthand and personal contact with young Japanese), and Aim 7 (to increase Australian schoolchildren’s knowledge of Japan, Japanese, and Japanese culture) were achieved.

“Both EEE and YYY worked very hard to present wonderful lessons for all the classes at St XXX’s and the kids enjoyed having them there. I think they will make excellent English teachers wherever they end up. I hope that you are able to continue this exchange program in future years as I think it was a great success. Domo Arigato.”

“I just wanted to send you a quick note to let you know that it was fantastic to have ZZZ at the school. All the children loved having her in classes and around the school, she had a real following. She also became a local

celebrity when out with her host family. She was a great help to me in my Japanese classes and really did a great job.”

“It was a pleasure and a privilege for our school and staff and students to have AAA and BBB at our school. They were very keen to improve their English speaking skills and to even learn some of the Australian slang! I can confidently say that we learnt just as much from them as they did from us. We would love to accommodate students from your program next year as well. This cultural exchange is an imperative and can fit in very comfortably with our curriculum.”

“Congratulations on a very successful programme! We thoroughly enjoyed having CCC at XXXX College and found the three weeks went very quickly. CCC was a great help in the Japanese language classroom and I hope we were able to give him enough opportunities to see different aspects of our school life, along with different experiences outside of school.”

Finally, the data analyzed here represent perhaps half of the volume that were gathered and there remains a wealth of material untouched as yet and waiting for research.

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