INTRODUCTION

"One can't see the forest for the trees." To my mind, never is this saying more true than when a person sets out to learn to read Chinese and Japanese. Many a student, overwhelmed with the vastness and complexity of these two orthographies, has simply given up. Charged, in 1969, with the task of developing a "crash" course in reading Japanese for 100 high school juniors in the State of Hawaii, I decided that I would make an all-out effort to consolidate my experience and research of the foregoing ten years to help them see both the forest and the trees, through a program based on sound principles of linguistics and language education. That program turned out to be only a beginning toward such an ambitious goal, but it did prove to be the impetus needed for the completion of this manual, nearly three years later.

It was in 1958 that I decided a systematic and scientific presentation of the complex Japanese writing system was needed. But in order to produce it I had to wait twelve years, drawing upon work and study experiences at Waseda University, Georgetown University, the Peace Corps Training Center of the University of Hawaii at Hilo, the State of Hawaii Department of Education's high school pilot project, and, finally, my Japanese language course at the Hilo College (University of Hawaii at Hilo). At the critical time when authentic samples of the language needed

to be supplied and the final manuscripts prepared, my long-time friends and colleagues, Mr. and Mrs. Yoshiyuki Kawata, were in Hawaii and offered to undertake the enormous task that lay ahead.

*Language research
and principles
of learning psychology*

Although various measures have been taken to simplify the task of reading Japanese (and, therefore, *learning* to read it), none to date has taken advantage of the most significant research in history on the frequency of occurrence of Chinese characters in Japanese orthography, as well as the frequency of occurrence of words that are formed by combinations of the characters. The studies to which I refer were published in Tokyo by the National Language Research Institute, an agency of the Japanese government: *Research on Vocabulary in Cultural Reviews*, Part 1, Vocabulary Tables, 1957; and *The Use of Written Forms in Japanese Cultural Reviews*, 1960. (Note: Instead of "Cultural Reviews" in the titles of these two reports, a more accurate translation is "General Magazines.") By combining the results of these two studies, it has been possible to identify a list of the most frequently occurring words that are formed by the most frequently occurring characters. (Obviously, we can expect a high correlation.) The next step to make this information useful to students of the language would be to present these characters and character compounds in a systematic, functional way.

*Function
as a factor
in efficient learning*

The discipline of educational psychology tells us that when the student knows *what* he is studying (the content of the course) and *why* (function, usefulness, etc.), he can enjoy a productive learning experience. Therefore, based on the NLRI investigation, the student of Japanese reading can be apprised of the relative importance of every character and word that he studies, and this, I insist, is important when one is confronted with such a vast system of written symbols as Japanese.

For example (and it should be of some consolation to the student of Japanese reading and writing), one-fourth of all the characters used in modern Japanese occur in three-fourths of all the most frequently occurring words. This means that by concentrating on learning approximately 500 select characters, the student is assured of being able to read 75 percent of all the high-frequency words he will encounter in modern literature. No one would argue, of course, that the 500 are sufficient; obviously, however, they constitute a good beachhead to establish.

*Aural-oral
base*

It is not that a list of words in the traditional orthography of a language is the language. Not at all. The author is deeply committed to the principles of modern aural-oral peda-

gogy. But he has discovered with many others that the secondary code system of a language--its orthography--is best learned through the medium of its primary code system, the sounds and patterns of speech.

*Purpose
of the manual*

The rationale underlying the development of this manual is very simple, but compelling--that every student of Japanese should have at his fingertips immediate access to information about the relative importance of the characters and character compounds used to represent the language, as well as to all the most germane facts about each character. This goal is achieved by featuring each character on a separate page, by ordering the pages according to the frequency rank order of characters as determined by the NLRI study, and by including on each page numerous facts about how the character occurs and is employed to represent spoken forms.

Therefore, through this manual, the serious student of Japanese can know immediately, with the turn of its pages, the relative importance and scope of use of a particular character, as well as other important characters that occur with it in compounds.

*Significance
of the NLRI study*

No one would insist that the National Language Research Institute's ranking of characters is sacred or inviolate, or unchangeable. Neither would anyone maintain that character 134 is really significantly more important than 144. Everyone would agree, however, that the characters in the second hundred (101 to 200) are certainly more important for the student to concentrate on in the beginning stages of language study than those in the fifth hundred (401 to 500) and that those are likewise more important than the characters in the twelfth hundred.

*The nature
of the present work*

My manual is not another book on Japanese writing, stroke counting, or stroke order. Neither does it present the traditional or a novel way to classify and locate characters. Such a shy and ill-equipped person as I would never have the temerity required to offer the public another book on these subjects when there are already so many good ones available. Neither is it a textbook, or series of lessons, as such. Lexicons and manuals usually do not have lessons appended.

Every author must decide what limitations and constraints he will work within. I decided that this work would be a reference manual, filled with thousands of bits of absolutely essential information about how Chinese characters and the words they represent occur in both spoken and written Japanese.

*Who should
use it?*

Since this manual is not a textbook, there is no clear guideline as to when the student of the language might begin using it most profitably. The only rule of thumb is, we might say, that when the student of Japanese is sufficiently advanced in beginning conversation and sufficiently curious and motivated to learn to read the language, he is then ready to take advantage of the features of the manual and use it efficiently and profitably. (Some have suggested that the greatest users of the manual will be the youngsters of Japan's elementary schools!)

FEATURES OF THE MANUAL

*Page numbers
correspond to
frequency of occurrence
ranking*

Characters are presented in the manual in the order of their frequency of occurrence in modern Japanese literature, as determined by the NLRI investigation. This system is considered by the author to have valid pedagogical implications. The relative position that a character occupies in the manual immediately suggests its comparative importance in the language and to the language learner.

The frequency rank order number is cited twice on each page--in an upper corner for quick location and in the data list for quick reference.

Occurrences per 1000 (in the NLRI research sample) are listed in the data list for those who are interested in these statistics.

*Cross
references*

The page on which the character is treated in one of Japan's most popular compact lexicons, Sanseido's *Kanwa Jiten*, is cited in the data list, for quick reference.

The page on which the character is treated in a popular lexicon designed for foreign students of Japanese, Nelson's *The Modern Reader's Japanese-English Character Dictionary*, is cited in the data list. (Searching for characters is not particularly easy in this lexicon. It is a valuable work, however, and the citation will make quick reference possible.)

*Related
morphographs*

Characters that exemplify certain identical orthographical elements and that are used to represent the same homophonous morpheme are listed at the top of each page, if there are such. If the character was assigned a frequency rank number in the NLRI investigation, that number is noted.

(Note: *Character* and *morphograph* are synonymous. In my thesis, done at the Georgetown University Graduate School, Institute of Languages and Linguistics, I suggested the word *morphograph* to best describe the function of Chinese characters

in modern Japanese. Since the characters are not *logographs* or *ideographs* in the strict sense of these words, I had hoped that *morphograph* might catch on as a more scientific and convenient designation. If we are to be precise, we must say that the Chinese characters that occur in Japanese writing are used to represent approximately 3,000 *morphemes* of the language.)

*Character
categories*

If the character presented on a particular page is among the 996 Educational Characters, the letter *A* appears in the lower left- or right-hand corner of the small character box. (*Educational Characters* are the *KYOUIKU KANJI* that the Japanese Ministry of Education has decided children must learn during their first six years of school.)

If the character is among the 1850 Current or General Use Characters, but not among the 996 Educational Characters, the letter *B* appears in the box. (*Current Use or General Use Characters* are the *TOOYOO KANJI* that the Japanese student must master during the remaining years of his compulsory education, especially if he wishes to progress to high school and college. Most publishers of books, magazines, newspapers, etc., restrict their use of characters to those in the *TOOYOO KANJI* list. *Important note: The 996 Educational Characters are included among the 1850 General Use Characters.*)

If the character is not among the 1850 the letter *x* appears in the box.

Under the small character box, the *KUN-yomi* (historical Japanese reading, or readings) and the *ON-yomi* (borrowed Chinese reading, or readings) are listed, and some, if not all, of the basic meanings of the character are cited.

*Compounds and
cross references*

Under "High Frequency Compounds" the words in which the character in question appears most frequently in modern Japanese literature are listed, with their English meanings.

(Note: Since it is probably impossible to render isolated Japanese words into English with the precise articles, determiners, or part of speech in every instance, the student is advised to view the definitions of single words and syllables as parts of an area of general meaning and to strive, as the years go by, to learn the whole range of meanings represented by a character in a variety of contexts. Whether the English translation should be a noun or verb, or a singular, plural, or mass noun is not always clear or important. The general concept of the wide range of meaning is.)

Under the same category and directly under the other character in each compound ("the other" meaning the character not under consideration on a particular page) is the frequency of occurrence rank number of that character. This gives another

indication to the student of the relative importance of the compound and provides a valuable, quick cross-reference system for the study of compounds.

Under the list of compounds on many pages is another cross-reference, to additional compounds in which a character occurs, introduced by *See* or *Also*, or both. The number or numbers after *See* are the pages on which additional compounds that feature the character in question are found. The compounds after *Also* are compounds of relatively high frequency but not dealt with elsewhere in the manual.

*Typical usage
in phrases and sentences*

Under "Typical Phrases and Expanded Compounds," expressions that one might use or hear used in conversation are listed. (This is only a small sample of the possibilities, of course. Native speakers of Japanese can offer many others for reference and study.)

Under "Typical Conversational Usage," conversational sentences that demonstrate the use of the character or its compounds are listed. (This, likewise, is only a small sample of the possibilities.)

(Note: The thousands of examples of usage of Japanese lexical and orthographical items in this manual are fully authentic and rich in idiomatic and cultural content. Every typical phrase and sentence in the pages that follow were cre-

ated by native speakers of Japanese who were instructed to put the compounds into the most commonly occurring and natural-sounding contexts imaginable. I myself am amazed as my mind flashes back to familiar scenes and cultural situations in Japan through the stimulation of these living examples of Japanese usage. Thus the student is well advised not to pass lightly over the typical phrases and conversational usage sections, but to store them away for certain future reference.)

The phrases and sentences in the first one hundred pages are slightly simpler than those in the following pages of the manual.

*Romanized version
of typical usage*

Following the basic section of the manual, which demonstrates the use of Japanese orthography, is a section that presents the Romanized version of all the phrases and sentences on the pages of the basic section. The Romanized versions are thus separated from the main body of the manual to minimize the "crutch effect" of Romanization. The student is advised to use these pages sparingly.

Romanization is useful, however, in making it possible for the student to consult a dictionary when information is needed on unfamiliar items that come up in the typical phrases and sentence sections. The tradition of representing *ON-yomi* with

capital letters and *KUN-yomi* with lower-case letters is followed in this section.

*Translations
and lessons*

Translations of the "Typical Phrases and Expanded Compounds" and "Typical Conversational Usage" sections appear in a separate volume, together with situational lessons (dialogues and narratives) based on the sequential listing of the characters.

*The
Index*

One of the first needs that I recognized as a student of Japanese was for a comprehensive, alphabetical listing of all the words and syllables that were officially selected by the Ministry of Education to be represented by the 1850 General Use Characters.

Indeed, speakers of other languages often have clues to the identification of Chinese characters that amaze even native speakers of Japanese. One category of such clues is the recall of syllables by their sound and corresponding Romanized spelling. Access to an alphabetical listing of the syllables and words that are represented by Chinese characters would, then, save the student many hours of painful searching through other unfamiliar arrangements of the characters. Of course, if the student prefers or is forced to identify a character by its

radical, number of strokes, etc., he can do so and then very quickly find its page in this manual through the use of the alphabetical index.

*Early preparation
for the Index*

In 1963, with the assistance of Mr. Hiroshi Kubo, I produced the first complete alphabetical listing of the morphemes represented by the 1850 General Use Characters. The purpose of that effort was twofold--to serve as a tool in the development of this *Manual for Reading Japanese* and as a feature to be included in it.

*Features
of the Index*

The following features of the Index of this manual should be noted:

1. It is an alphabetical listing of the morphemes (words and syllables) that are represented by the 1850 General Use Characters, to be used as a quick way to locate the page on which a character is treated. A Romanized morpheme is listed with each entry in order to provide an additional visual stimulus for learning.

2. Borrowed Chinese morphemes (*ON-yomi*) are spelled with capital letters. Historical Japanese morphemes (*KUN-yomi*) are spelled with lower-case letters.

3. When similarly spelled morphemes are represented by the same character, not every morpheme is listed, since the purpose of the Index is merely to locate the page on which complete listings can be found. Invariably, such similar spellings would be located in close proximity, such as *agaru* and *ageru*. Thus a character that is used to represent similarly spelled morphemes is immediately locatable.

4. The first number following the listing is the frequency rank order of the character, as determined by the NLRI study. For those characters from 1 to 500, the number in the first column is also the page in this manual on which the character, its usages, etc., are treated. Characters over 1417 are not assigned a number, since the NLRI study did not rank them.

5. The second number following the character listing is a cross-reference to Nelson's *Japanese-English Character Dictionary*, indicating the page on which the character is treated in that work. Since Nelson has now included a similar listing, this feature serves just a single purpose--the immediate identification of those characters that are among the 1850 General Use Characters. (Nelson's work lists 5000 characters.)

(Note: Long vowels are spelled with the double vowel but are listed immediately after the short-vowel syllables, despite the fact that other morphemes might occur in between in a strict alphabetical sequence. For example, *DOO* follows *DO*, then comes *DOKU*.)

*Additional comments
on the NLRI listing
of lexical items*

Since this work claims to be based on a scientifically determined selection of vocabulary, the following must be understood:

1. Although this manual presupposes conversational usage as the medium for learning reading, it must be remembered that the popularly read journals of the 1950s were the basis for the NLRI investigation, not conversational samples.

2. There are many orthographical items that represent everyday conversational usage but that do not appear early in the frequency of occurrence list--such as, *nomu*, *machi*, *o-ma-tsuri*, and *kuwashii*. All such words are usually presented rather early in popular conversational courses, of course, and the student would do well to identify their corresponding Chinese character and make a list of such words. (Also in this category are compounds that appear frequently in signs but infrequently in the National Language Research Institute's sample, such as *kin'en* 禁煙 "No Smoking.")

3. A few characters and character compounds that came up in the NLRI research are not officially recognized by the Ministry of Education. Such characters are included in this work, nevertheless, identified by an x in the character box (e.g., No. 143). Most unrecognized "readings" of morphographs, such as *ikaga* are enclosed in parentheses.

4. In some cases, I selected words to demonstrate meaning and usage that do not appear in the NLRI research, simply because I knew intuitively that they were high in conversational occurrence. (See "For the Future," No. 4.)

5. Current preoccupations at the time of the research dictated the extreme use of certain characters and words. 戦前 SENZEN, 原子 GENSHI, and 共産 KYOOSAN are typical examples. But it should be remembered that these kinds of words are still used heavily and should be added early to the student's conversational and reading tools.

6. Frequent references to former Prime Minister Yoshida (吉田), and the then Prime Minister Ikeda (池田) resulted in a heavy use of certain otherwise less-used characters, such as 田. There are similar examples throughout the manual. (See "For the Future.")

*Pedagogical advice
for teachers
and students*

Basic assumptions:

Speech is the fundamental form of language.

Japanese writing is a system for recording Japanese speech.

In learning to read, the voice and ear must guide the eye.
(Teachers in Japan require children to read orally.)

Only through frequent, repeated attempts at reading the same material over and over again can a person acquire the skill of reading new materials.

Practice in reading can and must contribute to the strengthening of conversational skills.

Implications:

The student should have a native-speaker guide to read the "Typical Phrases and Expanded Compounds" and "Typical Conversational Usage" sections of each page, especially as a beginner in the language.

The student should read the phrases and sentences orally, character by character, repeating after the native-speaker guide and concentrating on the meaning.

The student's goal should be to read orally and fluently, and with full understanding, the phrases and sentences on each page that are commensurate with his own level of proficiency. More difficult items should be postponed until a later date.

As each page is studied, the teacher should create additional examples of how a character and the words in which it occurs can be used in speech and writing, by writing them on the chalkboard, by reading them aloud for the student to hear, and by having the student practice reading aloud.

Not too much time should be spent in class learning to write the characters. Students should be encouraged to buy any of the excellent books that have been written to guide the learner into the proper method of writing Japanese *kana* and Chinese characters.

As the examples on each page are mastered and as additional examples of usage are supplied the student, the student and the teacher should engage in free conversation in order to put acquired skills to use. Functional communication is the ultimate purpose of language study.

During periods of time when the student will be using this manual as a reference work for self-study, examples should be read aloud, the Romanized versions should be referred to when necessary, companion lexicons should be referred to frequently, and all cross-reference systems of the manual should be utilized.

Rapid silent reading with full understanding is the goal of readers of any language. But in order to reach that goal in Japanese, persistent, continual *oral reading* is unquestionably the most powerful and productive device at the student's disposal.

*Conventions:
The system
of Romanized Transcription
employed*

The guiding principle in this work is the convenience of the learner and the practical accuracy of the materials to be learned. Therefore, strict adherence to phonemic transcription, or an exclusive use of any one of the systems of Romanized transcription, was decided against. Note:

1. *sh* is used for the *s* in /si/, and in analogous syllables.
2. *ch* is used for the *t* in /ti/, and in analogous syllables.
3. *ts* is used for the *t* in /tu/, and in analogous syllables.
4. Nasal-final syllables are spelled with *M* or *N*, depending on the homorganic consonant that follows. *N* also occurs before consonants *K* and *G*, as in *GENKI* and *BENGI*.
5. /hu/ is used throughout simply because it reflects the articulatory realities more accurately than the more popular *fu*.

*The use
of the apostrophe
to separate morphemes*

The apostrophe to separate morphemes (often employed following nasal-final syllables) is used sparingly, and only when necessary to avoid ambiguity. Examples: *KEN'I* (though the knowledgeable student would never say *KE'NI*); *HAN'EI* (though *NEI* is a very uncommon morpheme in Japanese); and *KI'NEMBI* (though it is doubtful that a student would "naturally" say *KIN'EMBI* "smoking prohibition day," simply because of the articulatory difficulties inherent in such a variation). The use of the apostrophe after all nasal-final syllables, as in words like *KENRI*, is avoided.

As a matter of fact, the use of the apostrophe is, in most cases, unnecessary for one reason or another. The guidance of a native speaker, as suggested earlier, will help preclude mispronunciations.

*Variant
pronunciations*

Although the process becomes automatic in time, the beginning student is advised to consult the following chart when searching for syllables, the first consonant of which might have undergone a change because of its occurrence as the second or third syllable in a multisyllabic word.

日, for example, is listed *hi* on page 3, but when it occurs in the days of the week it becomes *bi*, as in *NICHIYOobi*. The spelling, or pronunciation, *bi* is not, however, listed in the Index. The following key should be kept in mind:

Syllables beginning with <i>b</i> , check under <i>h</i> . Ex.:			三本
			SAMBON
"	<i>p</i> ,	"	<i>h</i> . Ex.:
			発表
			HAPPYOO
"	<i>d</i> ,	"	<i>t</i> . Ex.:
			一粒種
			hitotsubudane
"	<i>j</i> ,	"	<i>sh</i> . Ex.:
			患者
			KANJA
"	<i>j</i> ,	"	<i>ch</i> . Ex.:
			一日中
			ICHINICHIJUU
"	<i>z</i> ,	"	<i>s</i> . Ex.:
			青空
			aozora
"	<i>z</i> ,	"	<i>ts</i> . Ex.:
			力強い
			chikarazuyoi
"	<i>g</i> ,	"	<i>k</i> . Ex.:
			手紙
			tegami

It must be remembered that not all syllables that begin with the consonants in the left column above are variations of related sounds in the second column. As a matter of fact, most are not. Compare the listings under *CHOO*, *SHOO*, and *JOO* in the Index, for example. By and large, Japanese words and syllables

maintain their dictionary forms regardless of the position of their occurrence in compounds. The most notable exceptions to this rule are among *KUN* readings and in proper names, as in

本田 *Honda*.

*Appendix--
Changes made in 1971
by the Ministry of Education*

After two decades of pressure and the evidence of irreversible reading and writing tradition, the Ministry of Education published a list of changes in the 1946 promulgation of accepted usage of Chinese characters.

For the most part, these changes fall into two categories: The reinstatement of certain readings, or pronunciations of characters (*ON-yomi* and *KUN-yomi*), and the reinstatement of words formed by compounds. All of the reinstated words in both categories were a part of accepted usage prior to 1946 and continued to be used by educated people even after the 1946 ruling.

The news of this change came too late to be incorporated into the main body of the *Manual for Reading Japanese*, but the Appendix features the complete list of changes.

FOR THE FUTURE

I am not fully satisfied with this manual and propose the following.

*Research
and
curriculum development
proposals*

1. An updated investigation of the occurrence of characters and compounds in Japanese popular literature and a revision of this manual based on it.

2. Research based on the hypothesis that the governmental mandate embodied in the determination of the categories of General Use Characters and Educational Characters has continued to have a drastic and measurable effect on Japanese orthographical usage during the decade since the NLRI investigation.

3. A study of the frequency of occurrence of Japanese lexical items in speech and a study of the correlation of conversational and written usage.

4. A reading manual based on the frequency of occurrence of lexical items in conversation (not popular literature), since the effect of the multisensory stimuli of the same items in speech and reading would be even more powerful than the approach followed in this manual.

5. The completion of a page, or portion of a page, devoted to all the General Use Characters through 1850. As one approaches character 1850 there is usually *only one* important word for which the use of the Chinese character is retained! It would be valuable for the student of the language to have such information for all the characters at his fingertips.

Dale P. Crowley

Hilo, Hawaii
October, 1971