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Title: Junji Sarashina Interview
Narrator: Junji Sarashina
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 4>

JS: So my mother said, alright, if you want to get smart, you got to learn Japanese grammar. So I started to study, she taught me Japanese grammar from the second grade on. And because of that type of education, like you have to memorize certain things, after 80 . . . 78 years, I still remember some of the grammar that I learned from my mother. *Ga-no-o-ni-he-to-kara-yori-de-ba-to-kemo-kirido-ga-shi-te-nagara-tari.*

NW: Oh! Very good! [laugh, applaud].

JS: But anyway, that's how she taught me. I remember stuff like that, hm, that's the only way to learn. But certainly grammar is very hard, you know. You're a teacher, so you know. [laugh].

NW: I don't teach language. I think it would be really hard to teach language.

JS: But it's hard to learn for young kids. But that's how she taught me. Singing along, made a song like that. Then, after the third grade, I used to call them "*baka.*" [laugh].

NW: [laugh]. Now you are much superior, I guess.

JS: Even though I didn't understand Japanese, at least some of this when it comes to grammar. Because, in Japan, kids don't have to learn grammar. They get it automatically; they speak the language. But kid from Hawai'i, some of those thing, when it comes to a question, when teacher asked what is this, and I could answer before any so-called native Japanese students, so I call them "*baka!*" Yeah, that's, I remember that.

NW: So do you think teachers, or I guess the school kids, your friends, first treated you differently because of where you're from?

JS: The first year.

NW: What about teachers? Do you think they were . . .

JS: They were very kind to me, they were tremendously nice and kind. Maybe because we, my mother rented a house right in front of the school, so she was involved in the grade school a lot, for being so close. And she had get to know the teachers, because it was right there. And of course my brothers and sisters, they are all in the, you know, in the same school.

NW: When you say involved, exactly what do you mean?

JS: Well, she was, when they had to do some clean up, she was out there helping. And when teachers need some help, preliminary form of PTA.

NW: Oh, I see.

JS: She volunteered to do those things.

NW: She sounds, surely she sounds like a very active woman.

JS: So the teachers know me, and naturally all the teachers were very kind.

NW: Yeah, that's nice.

JS: And then of course, as I started to go to school, I had older brothers, who were much stronger than I am, so kids didn't want to tease me a lot . . . I'm going to tell my brother! [laugh]

NW: That would be the last, the last word you'd have!

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