

A Study on the Construction of Regional Country and Basic Japanese Digital Teaching

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Regional country studies and digital teaching resources are the focus and hotspots of teaching reform in Chinese universities. Regional country studies originated in the West and first rose in Japan after it was introduced into East Asia. At that time, the core content of regional country studies was to train master's or doctoral students in related majors. It is generally believed that a rather long undergraduate training stage is needed before entering the country studies. Based on a questionnaire survey of 136 students majoring in Japanese in Beijing International Studies University, this thesis explores the convergence of basic Japanese courses in universities and the cultivation of relevant competence in country studies, so as to study the construction of relevant digital teaching on the basis of the survey results.

Keywords: regional country studies, basic Japanese education, digital teaching

Questionnaire on the Correlation Between Regional Country Studies and Basic Japanese Curriculum

The author conducted a survey of the three majors of Grades 22 and 23 in the Japanese Language School of Beijing International Studies University on March 20, 2024. A survey was conducted on the integration of regional country studies with basic Japanese courses among 132 students from six majors. The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the attitudes and views of Japanese learners on the integration of country studies into basic Japanese teaching. The questionnaire covered the correlation between country studies content and language learning, the role of country studies in Japanese teaching, teaching application forms, integration methods, and teaching content evaluation methods. The results of statistical analysis are as follows:

The Correlation Between Country Studies and Language Learning

62.88% of the respondents believe that in-depth knowledge of the relevance of Japan-related content and language learning is very important. Another 33.33% think it is important, 2.27% think it is not important, and only 1.52% think it is not important. It can be seen that students have a strong recognition of the correlation between national studies and language learning from the statistical results.

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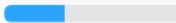
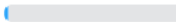
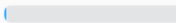
Option	Total	Proportion
A. Very important	83	 62.88%
B. Important	44	 33.33%
C. Ordinary	3	 2.27%
D. Not important	2	 1.52%
Valid responses	132	

Figure 1. Understand the relevance of Japanese-related content to language learning.

The Role of Country Studies in Japanese Language Teaching

Providing cultural background knowledge is considered to be the primary role of country studies in Japanese language teaching (70.77% of respondents ranked it as their first choice). Helping to understand Japanese language habits and expressions ranked second (60.31%). Cultivating learners' intercultural communication ability ranked third (62.1%).

Options	Overall score	1st Place	2nd place	3rd place	4th place	No. 5	6th place	Subtotal
A. Provide cultural background knowledge	5.42	92 (70.77%)	22 (16.92%)	8 (6.15%)	6 (4.62%)	2 (1.54%)	0 (0%)	130
B. Help understand Japanese language habits and expressions	5	34 (25.95%)	79 (60.31%)	9 (6.87%)	7 (5.34%)	2 (1.53%)	0 (0%)	131
C. Develop learners' intercultural communication competence	3.8	5 (4.03%)	21 (16.94%)	77 (62.1%)	17 (13.71%)	4 (3.23%)	0 (0%)	124
D. Improve learners' language level	2.54	0 (0%)	7 (6.67%)	23 (21.9%)	58 (55.24%)	17 (16.19%)	0 (0%)	105
E. Improve learners' research ability	1.86	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	10 (10%)	18 (18%)	70 (70%)	0 (0%)	100
Other	0.2	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	24 (96%)	25

Figure 2. The role of regional and country related content in basic Japanese teaching.

The Application Form of Country Studies in Japanese Teaching

Cultural curriculum is regarded as the most important form of application, with 46.49% of respondents ranking it as their first choice. Cultural event organization and cultural explanation in teaching followed closely, with 46.22% and 50.41% support, respectively.

Options	Overall score	1st Place	2nd place	3rd place	4th place	No. 5	Subtotal
A. Cultural curriculum	3.38	53 (46.49%).	20 (17.54%).	19 (16.67%).	22 (19.3%).	0 (0%)	114
B. Organization of cultural events	3.33	24 (20.17%).	55 (46.22%).	20 (16.81%).	20 (16.81%).	0 (0%)	119
C. Culture explanation in classroom teaching	3.24	28 (22.76%).	18 (14.63%).	62 (50.41%).	15 (12.2%).	0 (0%)	123
D. Cultural exchange activities	3.02	27 (22.88%).	32 (27.12%).	18 (15.25%).	41 (34.75%).	0 (0%)	118
E. Other (please specify)	0.14	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6.25%).	0 (0%)	15 (93.75%).	16

Figure 3. The application form of regional and country research content in Japanese teaching.

Expected Content of Integrated Country Studies

Culture-related studies are the most anticipated, ranking first in a couple of questions. Studies related to literature and arts as well as studies related to sociology also gained considerable attention. Historical studies and political economy studies received some support, but relatively little.

Options	Overall score	1st Place	2nd place	3rd place	4th place	No. 5	6th place	Subtotal
A. culture-related studies	4.86	23 (57.5%).	11 (27.5%).	3 (7.5%).	3 (7.5%).	0 (0%).	0 (0%).	40
E. Literature and arts related research	3.73	10 (25%).	7 (17.5%).	9 (22.5%).	5 (12.5%).	9 (22.5%).	0 (0%).	40
D. Research related to sociology	3.41	4 (11.11%).	8 (22.22%).	15 (41.67%).	8 (22.22%).	1 (2.78%).	0 (0%).	36
B. History-related research	3.14	5 (14.71%).	11 (32.35%).	3 (8.82%).	11 (32.35%).	4 (11.76%).	0 (0%).	34
C. Political economy related research	2.23	2 (7.41%).	5 (18.52%).	9 (33.33%).	3 (11.11%).	8 (29.63%).	0 (0%).	27
F. Other (please specify)	0.07	0 (0%).	0 (0%).	0 (0%).	0 (0%).	0 (0%).	3 (100%).	3

Figure 4. The expected value of national research related content integrated in basic Japanese teaching.

Evaluation Methods of Teaching Content

Assessment of assignments and projects, assessment of classroom performance, and learner self-assessment are the most important assessment methods cited by respondents. Assessment in the form of an examination was relatively less supportive.

Options	Overall score	1st Place	2nd place	3rd place	4th place	No. 5	Subtotal
C. Evaluation of assignments and projects	3.13	34 (32.69%)	38 (36.54%)	27 (25.96%)	5 (4.81%)	0 (0%)	104
B. Assessment of classroom performance	3.11	37 (36.63%)	38 (37.62%)	22 (21.78%)	4 (3.96%)	0 (0%)	101
D. Learner self-assessment	2.83	41 (42.27%)	22 (22.68%)	12 (12.37%)	22 (22.68%)	0 (0%)	97
A. Assessment in the form of an exam	1.74	20 (29.85%)	14 (20.9%)	11 (16.42%)	19 (28.36%)	3 (4.48%)	67
E. Other (please specify)	0.1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (30%)	7 (70%)	10

Figure 5. Country study related teaching content in basic Japanese curriculum assessment methods.

Integration of Country Studies Content

Practice was regarded as the most ideal integration method, which was supported by 41.67% of respondents. The mixed online-to-offline model also gained 30.3% support.

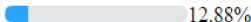
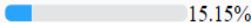
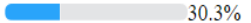
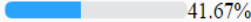
Options	Subtotal	Ratio
A. Online learning	17	 12.88%
B. Classroom learning	20	 15.15%
C. Mix online and offline	40	 30.3%
D. Practice	55	 41.67%
This question is valid to fill in	132	

Figure 6. How to integrate basic Japanese with the relevant content of country studies.

Attitude Towards the Integration of Country Studies in Basic Japanese Courses

86.36% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the relevant content of country studies should be incorporated into basic Japanese teaching. Only 1.52% of the respondents disagreed.

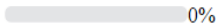
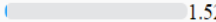
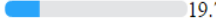
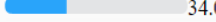
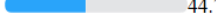
Options	Subtotal	Ratio
Strongly disagree	0	 0%
Not agree and quit	2	 1.52%
General	26	 19.7%
agree	45	 34.09%
Quite agree	59	 44.7%
This question is valid to fill in	132	

Figure 7. Do you agree to integrate country studies into basic Japanese teaching.

To sum up, most respondents strongly agree with the importance and role of country studies in basic Japanese teaching. Culture-related research is the most anticipated content of country studies. The combination of classroom task completion and students' self-evaluation is the most popular. Research practice is considered to be the best way to integrate the content of the country studies.

Construction of Regional Country and Basic Japanese Digital Teaching

Based on the results of the questionnaire survey, the author made a series of reflections on the existing teaching framework based on modular teaching method according to the needs of students. The specific contents of the reflections are as follows.

The Establishment of New Modules and the Integration of Existing Modules

I have been engaged in the practical research of modular teaching concept and online and offline mixed teaching method for a long time. I have established a set of “four modules teaching method” with rain classroom as the teaching platform. The four modules are learning task guidance module, student self-study module, classroom practice module, and self-evaluation module. The four modules are related to each other and can adjust the online or offline teaching mode at any time according to external conditions. After years of teaching practice, they have been praised by students. As for the integration of national research content and teaching methods, the author believes that two forms can be adopted.

One is to establish a new “scientific research module” on the basis of the four modules, and guide students to conduct relevant background or current research on the relevant content of Japanese society and culture that they are interested in. It can mainly take offline forms such as scientific research practice bases as well as social and cultural lectures, and focus on them.

The other form is to combine the country research content with the original module, combining the relevant social and cultural content with the text, and add the content related to the country research to the task guidance module, the self-study module before class, the classroom practice module, and the evaluation module. The two forms can be carried out in parallel to cultivate students’ interest in language target countries and improve their research ability through daily accumulation.

The Teaching Content Is Set According to the Major

The School of Japanese Language of Beijing International Studies University is currently divided into three major directions: Sino-Japanese cultural exchange, Sino-Japanese simultaneous interpretation, and Sino-Japanese comic literature and creation. It can be seen from the questionnaire that students of different majors pay different attention to Japanese culture. According to the different directions, teachers can choose different topics accordingly.

For example, students majoring in Chinese and Japanese manga can appropriately increase their research on Japanese secondary culture and other topics. The cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and Japan can be analyzed and studied from the historical dimension and from the history of exchanges between the two countries to find topics that are highly related to the contemporary social and cultural relations between China and Japan. For the major of Sino-Japanese simultaneous communication, the understanding of the background knowledge of the translation object directly affects the quality of translation. Buzzwords and culture-loaded words, even if difficult in translation, are also the key to understanding the cultural characteristics of a country. To sum up, teachers can design relevant topics for national studies according to the characteristics and actual needs of each major. Through acquiring relevant knowledge and conducting practical research, students can improve their cognition of Japan and then enhance their ability to discover, analyze, and solve problems.

Set the Teaching Content According to the Characteristics of Grade

There are great differences in Japanese level and learning habits between the students of Grade 1 and Grade 2. In the process of teaching construction, teachers should fully consider the current Japanese level and learning ability of students, and formulate effective teaching programs. For example, most of the students in the first grade of basic Japanese are exposed to Japanese from scratch, and their study loads are heavy, and they need to adapt to the process of entering the university from high school. Therefore, it is not appropriate to add too much offline practice. The author believes that the country studies content of the first grade is integrated into the old modules, which fits the characteristics of the first grade students. Specifically, through the study of culture-loaded words, students can be guided to develop interest in Japanese culture, so as to mobilize students' awareness of independent problems and guide them to study related content. For example, when learning Japanese kinship appellations, students can be appropriately guided to compare the differences between Chinese and Japanese kinship appellations. Since the basic Japanese teaching in the first grade focuses on listening and conversation, audio-visual materials reflecting the social reality of Japan can be properly introduced to enrich students' basic knowledge of the target country.

On the basis of listening and speaking, the students of Grade 2 focus on the cultivation of reading and writing ability. In this stage, they can extend the relevant Japanese social and cultural content according to the content of the text. For example, the first topic of the textbook *Basic Japanese* is "Cashless Era". The text is about the history of the emergence and development of digital currency in Japan. In the learning task module, the investigation of the current situation of Japan's "cashless society" can be assigned to students as a topic. In the self-study module, students can obtain the corresponding data information through the Internet and compare it with the situation in China. In the classroom learning module, students have interactive discussions according to the content of the text, and in the final self-evaluation, they submit a report to make a full stop for their investigation and research.

Epilogue

At present, subject research from the perspective of regional country is still in its infancy, and relevant research results mainly focus on subject construction and theoretical construction, with few results related to practice, which are concentrated in English or the Middle East and other hot spots related to the Belt and Road Initiative. Japanese teaching practice results are still blank. The author puts emphasis on the teaching practice. The proposed module is a teaching method, based on the existing rain classroom teaching platform, and on the basis of fully understanding the students' learning willingness, the author tries to construct the corresponding teaching mode. In order to respond to the needs of the top-level design of education, it will contribute to the education plan of cultivating compound foreign language talents in China.

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