

Thoughts on the Curriculum Construction of Japanese Majors Specialty Serving the “Belt and Road”

Wei Li and Xue Li*

School of International Studies, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin, China

Email: rii217@163.com (W.L.); lixuesnow@hit.edu.cn (X.L.)

*Corresponding author

Abstract—The training mode of Japanese majors must actively adapt to the strategic policy adjustment of national economic structure, closely meet the actual needs of national development and social progress, properly adjust the curriculum system and syllabus, and scientifically and reasonably formulate the development plan of characteristic majors, so as to promote their sustained and healthy development. This paper discusses the optimization and reform of the curriculum system for Japanese majors, actively introducing information technology into links of Japanese major teaching, the enhancement of the platform for improving the international ability and the construction of educational resources, and makes new thoughts on the curriculum for Japanese majors serving the “Belt and Road”. It is expected that this paper can provide useful reference for other colleges and universities.

Keywords—teaching reform of higher education, the “Belt and Road”, talent training methods for Japanese majors

I. INTRODUCTION

Japan is not only a neighbor of China, but also one of the important cooperation countries of China’s 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education, Japanese has become one of the largest language except English. The “Belt and Road” Initiative is an important deployment for deepening reform and opening up and promoting regional economic and cultural integration, which requires a large number of outstanding talents who can grasp the general trend of the world and have a global strategic vision. The contradiction between this urgent need and the shortage of talents with global strategic governance in China is quite sharp. Jiang Ping, director of CATTI Management Center of China Foreign Languages Bureau, pointed out that Japanese is one of the 30 key languages in foreign language talent planning at the second working meeting of the National Japanese Professional Alliance of Colleges and Universities. However, the existing simple Training Methods for the students of Japanese Majors can no longer meet the needs of the construction of the “Belt

and Road”. The Japan Foundation takes Japanese educational institutions all over the world (except Japan) as the object, and conducts a survey and statistics on the number of institutions, teachers and Japanese learners every three years. The results of the Survey of Overseas Japanese Education Institutions implemented in 2018 have been published on the website of the Foundation Headquarters. The results of this survey in China are as follows: the number of institutions is 2,435, the number of teachers is 20,220, and the number of learners is 1,004,625. Compared with the survey results in 2015, the number of institutions (2,115), teachers (18,312) and learners (953,283) have all increased. The number of teachers and learners is the highest in the world [1]. Although Japanese major is the second largest language in China, with 525 colleges and universities [2], and the number of teachers and students is increasing every year, the definition and setting of professional courses need to be uniformly deployed because most students learn Japanese from scratch. However, the existing simple Training Methods for the students of Japanese Majors can no longer meet the needs of the construction of the “Belt and Road”.

II. THE CURRENT SITUATION AND PROBLEMS OF THE TRAINING MODE OF JAPANESE MAJORS IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

At present, the training modes for Japanese majors in colleges and universities are roughly divided into the following three types:

A. Cultivate the Traditional Japanese Language Basic Skills-Based Compound Training Methods for Japanese Majors

In the initial stage of Japanese majors, this training mode has the advantages of training because it is not limited by teachers, hardware and other conditions. Especially in the early stage of reform and opening up, a large number of outstanding Japanese professionals have been trained. However, it is not attractive enough to improve students’ learning enthusiasm, especially in today’s information age, which can no longer meet the rapidly changing social needs [3]. However, in the

management of personnel training system, it is relatively mature. Some scholars put forward new thoughts on the basis of this model, for example, Sino-Japanese joint education [4], IT Japanese compound talent training model [5].

B. The Training Mode for Applied Japanese Majors

The Training Mode for Applied Japanese Majors is mainly to cultivate application skills. This training mode mainly cultivates students' ability to use Japanese language and outstanding skills in a certain aspect. The deficiency lies in paying too much attention to "application" and lacking in the cultivation of other abilities and qualities [6]. Under the training mode for Applied Japanese Majors, some courses need one or several colleges or departments, and need the cooperation between majors and disciplines. Some scholars have compared the compound training mode, and put forward that it should meet the needs of the development of the times, and change from a single language type to an applied type [7], etc. However, some scholars have pointed out that most students of Japanese Majors in colleges and universities are zero-based, and it is not easy to learn the basic knowledge of Japanese well in the four-year undergraduate stage [8]. In recent years, with the development of society and economy, this model has been set up to meet the needs of the times, paying more attention to the cultivation of students' ability, quality and international vision, aiming at cultivating innovative training mode for Japanese Majors talents with solid basic skills, broad knowledge, strong ability and high quality. Some scholars have made beneficial explorations on the reform of Japanese curriculum under the training mode of applied talents [9] and the training of innovative and entrepreneurial talents for Japanese Majors [10]. Because of the students' self-learning ability and the high requirements of teaching software and hardware, it is difficult to implement it.

In addition, the openness of its management system puts forward higher requirements for teachers' level and students' quality, which is still in the stage of exploration and practice. The above three modes have the following space for further discussion and research. Firstly, too much emphasis on innovation and internationality, to a certain extent, ignores the importance attached to improving talents' independent training ability on the basis of facing the world, the future, and the demand. For example, some scholars believe that the training mode of innovative talents in Chinese universities needs to break the tradition and look internationally, and finally cultivate high-quality new innovative compound talents who are brave in exploring and innovating, have interdisciplinary knowledge reserves and international vision [11].

C. Innovative Training Mode for Japanese Majors

There is room for further expansion in the exploration of building a characteristic education mode with core value guidance, linkage inside and outside the classroom, and mutual promotion between teachers and students. It is necessary to adhere to the positive value orientation, integrate value into language teaching, thoroughly

implement the fundamental task of cultivating people by virtue, and integrate moral education, cultural knowledge education, and social practice education. For example, some reports are based on the enrollment of large categories in their universities, It is proposed to establish friendly schools with universities in Japan to realize the "3+1" joint training mode, aiming at breaking through the geographical restrictions in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence, cultivating fluent intercultural communicative competence with international vision and internationalized talents who understand the society and corporate culture of Japan. Due to the lack of planning from the perspective of promoting the development of new interdisciplinary fields and the support of teaching practice and management experience in the construction of related minor majors and emerging majors, some of the proposed teaching methods and teaching methods lack operability. For example, it is mentioned that to innovate the training mode for Japanese Majors, we should break the tradition, look at the world, and cultivate innovative Japanese comprehensive talents through interdisciplinary training, but the specific implementation path is not mentioned.

III. THE ERA CONNOTATION OF SERVING THE "BELT AND ROAD" JAPANESE EDUCATION UNDER THE BACKGROUND OF INTERDISCIPLINARY INTEGRATION

A. The Optimization and Reform of the Curriculum System for Japanese Majors

Entering the 21st century, the country puts forward higher requirements for foreign language education. The Outline of the National Medium-and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010–2020) puts forward that it is necessary to adapt to the requirements of the country's economic and social opening to the outside world, carry out multi-level and wide-ranging educational exchanges and cooperation, and improve the internationalization level of China's education [12]. Since 2018, the Ministry of Education has comprehensively promoted the construction of new liberal arts. In November 2020, it issued the Declaration on the Construction of New Liberal Arts, requiring foreign language disciplines to play an important role in the construction of new liberal arts, using strategic innovative thinking to reform the training mode of foreign language talents, and promoting the connotative development of foreign language disciplines. In view of this, foreign language education should shoulder the heavy responsibility of talent support, ability blessing, and communication.

The new liberal arts is characterized by openness and integration, while the training of Japanese talents with remarkable industrial characteristics should promote the opening of the talent training system to realize the intersection of arts and sciences, and on the other hand, enhance the interaction between the subject and object of education to realize the substantial improvement of the quality of talent training. After the promulgation of "National Standards for Teaching Quality of Undergraduate Majors in Ordinary Colleges and

Universities” and “Teaching Guide for Undergraduate Foreign Language and Literature Majors in Ordinary Colleges and Universities”, they have attracted much attention and brought new opportunities and challenges to the curriculum of Japanese majors. The development of education must adapt to the development of society. In particular, the cultivation of the students of Japanese Majors should be compatible with the “Belt and Road”, a global governance concept and measure with overall, strategic and contemporary characteristics. China and Japan still have many problems to be solved not only at the economic level, but also at the political level and at the international exchange level. For example, the demarcation of the East China Sea, the cooperative development and utilization of Arctic routes and so on. Therefore, in the future, in the process of promoting the construction and development of the “Belt and Road”, China need a large number of strategic talents who are proficient in language and culture, understand the actual national conditions along the route, understand the regional economic and trade rules and international rules, and are good at negotiation and communication. At present, China is vigorously implementing the strategy of “going out” of culture, carrying forward Chinese excellent culture, and improving the country’s cultural soft power. Therefore, adding Chinese cultural content to foreign language teaching meets the needs of national development strategy. Wang Ning pointed out that when Chinese culture “goes global”, foreign language disciplines will have great potential [13].

B. Active Exploration of Teaching Reform in Harbin Institute of Technology

Facing the great needs of the country and the needs of economic and social development in Heilongjiang Province, Harbin Institute of Technology will lay out interdisciplinary and cross-platform construction such as integrated circuit science and engineering, carbon neutrality research institute, and modern agriculture research institute, so as to accelerate interdisciplinary integration and promote the overall leap of discipline competitiveness. Cultivate interdisciplinary directions such as rural sewage treatment, drinking water safety and computational social sciences, promote the deep cross-integration and development of arts and sciences, arts and sciences, and foster new discipline growth points. In order to strengthen the overall planning of discipline resources and give full play to the catalytic role of interdisciplinary integration.

According to the professional clusters of the four major disciplines of engineering, science, management, and literature, we will promote the construction project of professional clusters and basic platform courses for the majors, set up joint curriculum groups across colleges and departments, improve the training mode of “first-and second-grade public basic courses + third-grade major platform courses + fourth-grade professional direction courses”, lay a solid foundation and strengthen general knowledge. The total credits of four-year undergraduate training are 140~165 credits, including 160~165 credits for engineering majors, 150~155 credits for science and

management majors and 140~145 credits for humanities and social sciences majors [14]. The curriculum teaching system consists of public basic courses, large-scale platform courses, professional courses, and independent development courses. Public basic courses are school-level platforms, including ideological and political courses, foreign languages, physical education, computational thinking, and information foundation, basic courses of establishment and natural science, military theory and military skills, national security education, mental health education, writing, and communication, etc. According to the new requirements, Japanese majors adjust the curriculum system and syllabus in a timely manner, gradually build a content-based professional curriculum system, and actively study the scheme to promote the steady development of Japanese majors in Harbin Institute of Technology.

IV. THOUGHTS ON THE CURRICULUM CONSTRUCTION OF JAPANESE MAJOR SERVING THE “BELT AND ROAD”

Talent training mode is closely related to the optimization of curriculum, the construction of teaching staff, the construction of curriculum system, the renewal of teaching content, and the reform of teaching methods, which can be said to be a systematic project. It is necessary to thoroughly implement and improve the training mode of core value shaping, comprehensive ability training, and multi-dimensional knowledge exploration, and actively explore and optimize the curriculum system integrating general education, professional education, practical innovation and personalized development.

A. The Optimization and Reform of the Curriculum System for Japanese Majors

Facing the diversified needs of high-quality development of Japanese undergraduate education and the rapid development of digital technology, it is necessary to gather digital consensus, change development concepts and innovative models, especially give play to the leading and supporting role of digital technology, and realize the docking of information technology, digitalization and Japanese undergraduate education in breadth and depth. We should construct a training system for Japanese majors that keeps pace with the times and is dynamically updated according to the needs of countries and regions for social and economic development. In terms of professional core courses, the 14 professional core courses in the Guide are compulsory courses, covering 9 Japanese skills courses and 5 professional knowledge courses [15]. Japanese skills courses include: Basic Japanese, Advanced Japanese, Japanese Conversation, Japanese Audio-visual Speaking, Japanese Speech and Debate, Japanese Reading, Japanese Basic Writing, Translation Theory and Practice, Interpretation Theory and Practice, with a total of 9 courses. Skills courses focus on cultivating foreign language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation. Professional knowledge courses include basic courses of language, literature, and culture,

as well as essay writing and basic research methods, including: Introduction to Japanese Linguistics, Introduction to Japanese Literature, General Situation of Japan, Cross-cultural Communication, Research Methods and Academic Writing, with a total of five courses. In order to promote the construction of Japanese major better, we should actively embrace technology. It is necessary to actively promote the education and teaching reform of the core courses of Japanese majors empowered by information technology. For example, natural language processing technology can be applied in the core course “Translation Theory and Practice” for Japanese majors. The language processing system is a system that performs an estimate of the Katakana translation of a foreigner’s name represented by the English letter. The original language cannot be inferred from words alone, so it should be inferred according to the nationality of this person. With the diversification of Japanese investment in China and the combination of Japanese talents required for corresponding posts, it is required that Japanese majors should tend to cultivate diversified and compound talents in the direction of personnel training. It is necessary to thoroughly implement the spirit of congratulatory letter, take the supply-side reform of personnel training as the starting point, strengthen the construction of teaching resources in different categories, levels and tracks, and actively build high-level experts to build courses for professional elective courses. Optimize the modular and track-oriented professional curriculum system, expand the proportion of minor professional courses, and provide a platform and create conditions for Japanese majors to choose their own professional development track and minor second major or degree. Relying on new minor majors, we should strengthen the teaching management mechanism such as major and minor academic system, credit mutual recognition system, exemption from courses and listening system. Encourage Japanese majors to make independent choices across disciplines and majors, meet students’ diversified and individualized needs, and promote students’ multi-type development.

B. Actively Introducing Information Technology into Links of Japanese Major Teaching

We should change our thinking and encourage cooperation in digital technology research and development and digital innovation environment. According to the characteristics of Japanese major, Actively carry out innovative translation practice, Integrate and optimize the existing practical teaching system, Cooperate with enterprises to carry out practical training, Expand online and offline practice bases, and build a progressive practical curriculum system of “project for freshman + innovative translation practice + practice training + graduation project”, which is organically combined with professional curriculum theory teaching. Starting from the freshman year project of Japanese major, it encourages interdisciplinary integration, colleges (departments), and majors. Taking innovation and entrepreneurship courses as an important lift, we should expand the breadth and depth of practical

courses, extend the time and space of teaching, and strengthen the training of students’ comprehensive research quality and innovative ability. Carry out in-depth cooperation with internship cooperation units, and build a communicative practice teaching platform based on information technologies such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and mobile internet. Case-based, task-based, and situational teaching methods can improve students’ cross-cultural communication ability in Japanese context, effectively train students’ communication ability in facing different cultural groups in the international environment, and help to realize multi-terminal data synchronization better, dynamic update, and mobile teaching. Enrich the education mode through online practice platform, online translation platform, and foreign language wisdom teaching platform, help students’ Japanese language and culture cognition, and further improve their ability of Japanese listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and effectively improve students’ international discourse ability and innovative practice ability.

We should give full play to the educational function of practice, Expand the platform and path of students’ social practice, create more opportunities for students to participate in social practice, and do a good job of support and guarantee. Foreign language learners must have cross-cultural communicative competence. Only by using foreign language as a “tool” to learn another skill can they truly become foreign language compound talents. With the help of multimedia network technology, we should create a virtual scene conducive to personalized development for language learners, so that they can learn and use language in a “real” language environment, and create a three-dimensional learning environment for students to combine learning with practice organically. Integrating traditional practical skills such as listening training, oral training, reading training, writing training, translation training, topic discussion, etc., relying on the online practical resource platform, VR practical exercises are conducted around topics and scenes such as Sino-Japanese cross-cultural communication, Japanese culture, Japanese affairs, Japanese tradition, and Japanese diet.

C. Strengthen Platform for Improving Internationalization Ability and the Construction of Educational Resources

How to effectively establish friendly and cooperative relations with famous universities in Japan in the post-epidemic era is an important issue. It is necessary to actively promote Japanese teaching and discipline development with personnel training as the core, help the international development and construction of schools, and cultivate international compound Japanese talents with Chinese characteristics. It is necessary to persist in educating people, pay attention to liberal arts education, promote the all-round development of students’ personality and accomplishment with diversified general education courses, and cultivate high-quality international talents with true humanistic feelings. Efforts should be made to train students into international talents who have both feelings of home and country and global vision, are

familiar with domestic and international rules and affairs, and have innovative, creative and pioneering abilities. Relying on the current cooperative relationship with six Japanese universities, we will continue to build a bridge for exchanges and cooperation in higher education between China and Japan. University has a complete range of disciplines, and it is also an important gathering place for intelligence and all kinds of talents. It is necessary to rely on the school's school-running characteristics and superior disciplines, innovative cooperation mode, broaden cooperation channels, actively explore and utilize foreign high-quality intellectual resources, We can take the construction of high-level experts to jointly build courses as an important starting point, actively explore the possibility of cooperation with the world's top universities, speed up the internationalization process of teaching staff, personnel training, scientific research, academic exchanges, etc., and further expand the channel for the first-class disciplines of schools to connect with the world frontier.

D. Focus on Digital Governance and Integrate Superior Resources for the High-Quality Development of Education

Under the background of digital transformation, data-driven educational governance has become an inevitable trend of high-quality development of foreign language education. The research on the curriculum of Japanese major serving the Belt and Road Initiative must rely on digital means, focus on digital governance, and enhance the governance ability of Japanese major education. Firstly, focus on enrollment propaganda, student training, teacher team construction, employment trend, comprehensive evaluation of education and other issues, and carry out the integration of various information resources to promote the high-quality development of Japanese professional education. For example, we can consider making full use of digital platforms such as understanding the virtual teaching and research section of contemporary China and the cloud lesson preparation platform of "New Era College Japanese" to realize cross-regional, cross-level, cross-departmental and interdisciplinary data sharing. At the same time, we should strengthen data security and privacy protection for teachers and students, and establish a unified data standard by constructing a cooperation mechanism of "government, industry, university and research" to form a high-quality development pattern that is compatible with the digital transformation of Japanese education. The construction of digital platform serving Japanese front-line teaching needs to rely on large-scale corpus and judge the difficulty. not unusual. Specifically, the Modern Written Japanese Balanced Corpus BCCWJ compiled by the National Institute of Mandarin of Japan. While strengthening the construction of digital resources, we should also strengthen data security and privacy protection of teachers and students, and establish a unified data standard to form a high-quality development pattern that is compatible with the digital transformation of Japanese education.

V. CONCLUSION

We should correspond to the national science and technology development strategy, give full play to the academic advantages of schools, and further improve the first-class "Japanese +" talent training system. Taking optimizing and reforming the curriculum system of Japanese major, actively introducing information technology into the teaching of Japanese major, and strengthening the platform construction of improving internationalization ability as an important starting point, we can cultivate elite talents with motherland feelings, international vision, and international competitiveness, and provide wisdom and strength of Japanese major for the construction of the "Belt and Road".

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Wei Li and Xue Li conducted the research; Wei Li and Xue Li analyzed the data; Wei Li and Xue Li wrote the paper; all authors had approved the final version.

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