College Japanese Language Teaching in Chinese Universities: A Review of the Last Decade's Research

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Abstract: In recent years, the number of candidates taking Japanese as a foreign language in the college entrance examination has increased significantly, drawing considerable attention to the teaching of College Japanese courses in universities. Improving the quality of this course has become a crucial factor in cultivating well-rounded international talents. This study examines existing research results and analyzes their characteristics and concerns from five perspectives: teaching reform, adoption of cutting-edge educational theories and models, enhancement of special Japanese language skills, development of intercultural communication skills, and strategies for coping with the growing number of Japanese language students taking the college entrance examination. The objective is to provide theoretical and methodological guidance for the advancement of high-quality foreign language teaching and research in the new era.

Keywords: College Japanese; teaching research; review

Introduction

As an integral component of higher education, higher foreign language education bears immense significance owing to its expansive coverage, heavy responsibility, and large scale. This education acts as a crucial "bridge" and "link" to support the country's opening up to the global arena. Furthermore, it remains connected to China's participation in reforming and building the global governance system. Against the backdrop of the "four new" construction, the Ministry of Education has called upon universities nationwide to reinforce "big foreign language" programs with the objective of developing international composite talents - individuals who are proficient in at least one foreign language and capable of communicating in several foreign languages. To achieve this goal, foreign language teaching, encompassing both foreign language majors and public foreign languages, needs to proactively serve the strategic development of the country. This can be done by proposing countermeasures to deepen the reform of foreign language teaching and promoting its implementation through concrete measures.

College Japanese, as an essential component of public foreign language education, plays a crucial role in cultivating multi-disciplinary talents and is integral to the general education of colleges and universities. It is taught in two forms - mandatory courses for non-specialists learning Japanese as their first foreign language, and elective courses for those studying Japanese as their second foreign language. The number of candidates taking Japanese as a foreign language in the college entrance examination has increased annually due to the college entrance examination's leaning towards foreign language subjects, further increasing the pressure on teaching non-specialist Japanese in colleges and universities. According to data from the International Exchange Foundation, the number of high school students studying Japanese has been rising steadily, with a

surge from 89,317 in 2012 to 335,876 in 2021. Their proportion of the total Japanese language learning population in China has also increased from 8.53% to 31.77%.

To meet the foreign language learning needs of these learners, universities have implemented measures, such as including them in "College Japanese" courses, Japanese language major courses, and "College Japanese" elective courses. However, due to their weak learning foundation, class time conflicts with their majors, and overly basic teaching content, the results of developing Japanese language skills for these students are unsatisfactory (Zhang,2022). In 2021, the Steering Committee for the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Universities of the Ministry of Education issued the Guidelines for Teaching Japanese in Universities, which introduced new requirements for teaching public Japanese in universities in the new era and raised the importance of teaching Japanese in Universities to a new level.

To better meet the foreign language learning needs of Japanese high school students as they enter university, and to effectively implement the New Guide to Teaching Japanese at University requirements, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the existing research in this field. Moreover, there is a need to improve the quality of non-specialist Japanese language teaching in universities and to contribute to the cultivation of international composite talents. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the research achievements and existing issues of teaching Japanese at the university level in China over the past decade. This analysis aims to identify research lineages, explore research hotspots and trends, and make predictions about future research directions for teaching Japanese at the university level.

Research Methodology

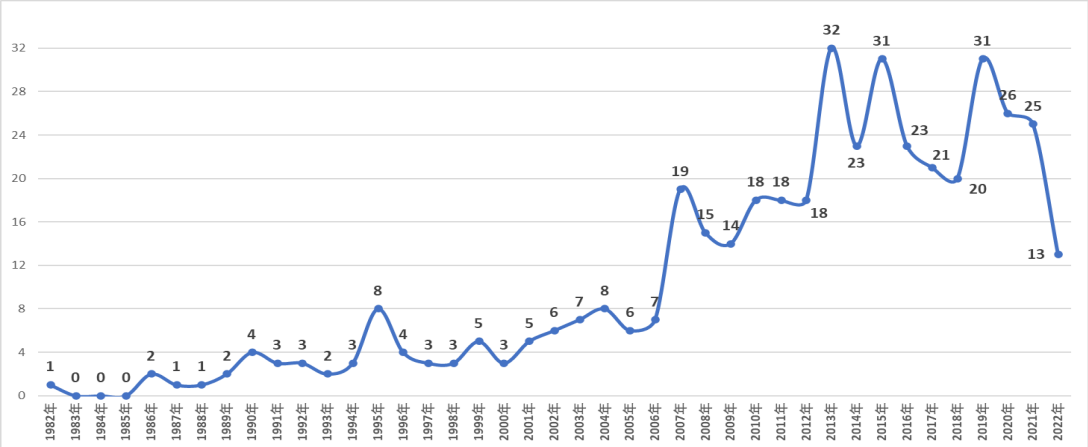
The data utilized in this study were obtained from the China Knowledge Network (CNKI) academic journal database. The advanced search was conducted using various search terms such as "College Japanese", "public Japanese", "College foreign language+Japanese", and " foreign language+Japanese". The search was conducted by utilizing the title, abstract, and keywords as the search subject terms and selecting the time frame of 2013-2022. The search date was set for December 15th, 2022, and a total of 841 journal articles were initially retrieved. As the search term was associated with various semantic terms, a secondary screening was necessary to identify the papers that precisely correspond to the study's subject. The secondary screening process was conducted by three Japanese language teachers at the university who reviewed the titles, abstracts, keywords, and texts of the papers selected in the previous screening process. The purpose of this screening was to determine whether the papers were suitable for the study's subject, which is the teaching of Japanese as a compulsory or elective course as part of general education in universities. Through these screening methods, a total of 240 papers were identified as the subjects of this study.

Research trends in the teaching of College Japanese

The results of the data analysis indicate that research on the teaching of Japanese at the university level in China began in 1982 and showed a relatively flat trend until 2007, indicating that relevant research was not active during this period. This situation may have been related to factors such as the small scale of College Japanese teaching in universities and the limited teaching staff. From 2007 onwards, the number of relevant research papers increased year by year, reaching a peak in 2013, after which there was a slight decline in the data, but also a relatively gentle wave-like development. The overall trend in the number of publications

shows that from 2013 to 2022, domestic research related to the teaching of Japanese at the university level has received increasing attention from the domestic Japanese language education community, and the research content has continued to deepen. This is partly due to the increasing scale of Japanese language teaching at the university level, as the Japanese examinations are relatively simple, and partly due to the expansion of the scope of research from discussing simple language skills training to introducing advanced educational theories and teaching models.

Figure 1 Trends in research on the teaching of College Japanese



Key elements of research on the teaching of College Japanese

Research on teaching reform of College Japanese

In the past decade, scholars both at home and abroad have conducted extensive and in-depth discussions on the teaching and learning of College Japanese. Among these scholars, some have focused on the issue of curriculum reform at the macro level. Drawing on policy documents such as the Guide to Teaching Japanese at University (2001 Edition) and the Opinions on Deepening the Teaching Reform of Undergraduate Education and Comprehensively Improving the Quality of Talent Cultivation, they have analyzed the problems in compulsory first-extension and second-extension elective courses of College Japanese, taking into account the needs of society and the cultivation of complex international talents in Sino-Japanese exchanges, and have proposed targeted solutions.

In terms of curriculum, the researcher recommends further clarification of teaching objectives, updating of teaching philosophies, taking the cultivation of international composite talents as the starting point for teaching, and combining foreign language education with professional education according to the characteristics of each major. Additionally, formulation of different characteristic talent cultivation plans is needed(Yang,2019). It is also important to pay attention to the cultivation of innovative consciousness in teaching ideology and to implement the positioning of the "College Japanese" course as "enlightenment education", "interest education", and "cultural education"(Jin,2019). Moreover, the course should be designed in such a way that it can serve as an "initiation", "interest", and "cultural education".

In the realm of foreign language teaching, scholars have highlighted the significance of intercultural educa-

tion as the essence of the subject matter. Thus, it is imperative that public Japanese language classes transform from single-language education to interdisciplinary competence and quality education. This shift necessitates the active integration of knowledge from relevant professional fields and the development of practical content suitable for students' growth(Sun,2022). Clarification of classroom objectives, emphasis on the integration of theory and practice, and augmentation of practical teaching and language application training are essential elements of the teaching process. Moreover, the textbook content should be tailored to include specialist foreign language information resources and engaging, lifelike content, enabling students to comprehend the role of Japanese in accessing cutting-edge academic and life information from abroad, thereby increasing their motivation to learn(Liu,2017).

With regard to teaching mode, it is recommended that College Japanese adopt the "student-centered" approach, establish and introduce a diverse hybrid teaching mode supported by the Internet and modern educational technology, and establish an online teaching space. Advanced teaching methodologies such as the contrast teaching method, group discussion method, scenario interpretation method, and collaborative learning should be introduced to create interactive and engaging teaching approaches that enhance students' interest and participation. Additionally, the creation of high-quality teaching resources such as multimedia courseware, micro-lessons, and MOOCs is necessary to provide resources that support the implementation of new teaching modes such as the flipped classroom and ubiquitous teaching reforms.

Regarding course assessment, the researcher proposes maintaining the advantages of large-scale specialized examinations, which have a countervailing effect on learning. Additionally, it is recommended to establish a diversified assessment model that meets the needs of teaching and learning. This model should include more practical Japanese language application skills tests, more subjective questions, such as essays and translations, and stronger management of the learning process.

From a fleeting perspective, some issues in this field have been resolved through the development of a new syllabus, the adoption of modern educational teaching concepts, and the advancement of educational technologies and tools. However, problems such as curriculum development, teaching staff recruitment, and teaching material construction still hinder further improvements in the College Japanese teaching standards. Although numerous curriculum reform proposals have been put forward by researchers, empirical research to substantiate their implementation effects remains lacking, necessitating further strengthening in the future.

Research on the introduction of cutting-edge educational theories and teaching models

Prior to the release of the 2021 Edition of the Guide to Teaching Japanese at University, College Japanese education had been following the teaching objectives and requirements outlined in the "Teaching Requirements for College Japanese Language Courses in the New Era (2008)" for daily teaching. This requirement aimed to develop students' comprehensive Japanese language skills at different levels to enable them to perform various tasks in their future work and social interactions. The teaching approach also emphasized effective independent and cooperative learning and maximizing students' motivation to learn Japanese to enhance learning efficiency. It highlighted that College Japanese language teaching should leverage multimedia and network technologies and actively develop computer-assisted Japanese language teaching to extend students' learning beyond the classroom.

In order to achieve the teaching objectives of College Japanese education, practitioners have implemented

various cutting-edge educational theories, models, resources, tools, and methods. The aim of these efforts has been to improve the current state of College Japanese teaching and overcome teaching dilemmas, resulting in positive reform outcomes.

Regarding the implementation of educational theories, the researcher has integrated communicative teaching methods, situational teaching methods, cultural difference teaching methods, the concept of "whole-person education," the idea of "whole-language teaching," cognitive theory, "scaffolding teaching methods," and "anchoring teaching methods" guided by constructivist theory, cooperative learning theory, and second language acquisition theory into the teaching of College Japanese under the guidance of sociolinguistic theory. By integrating the "scaffolding teaching method," "anchor teaching method," cooperative learning theory, and second language acquisition theory, among others, into the teaching of Japanese in University, a new teaching framework has been established under the guidance of advanced theories. This has effectively addressed the traditional teaching mode that emphasizes grammar over application, resulting in a disconnect between teaching content and real-life applications.

This new teaching framework has effectively resolved existing problems associated with the traditional teaching mode, such as the weak ability to solve practical problems, the lack of intercultural communication skills, the low interest in learning, and the weak sense of participation in the course. The results of experimental studies indicate that the relevant teaching reforms have significantly improved students' language proficiency, interest in learning, and collaborative skills.The present study aims to respond to the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) by exploring various teaching models that align with the plan's objective of enhancing teachers' ability to apply information technology and improve their teaching methods. Relying on information-based teaching tools and resources, the researcher has developed a range of innovative teaching models, including multimedia, contextual/experiential, group learning, flipped classroom, and online/offline hybrid models. While the names of these models may differ, they share several common features.

Firstly, the new teaching models adopt a student-centred approach that shifts the focus of teaching from teachers to learners. This approach challenges the traditional model of teacher-dominated instruction and promotes an emphasis on students' experience and practice of the language, thereby moving towards higher-order educational goals.Secondly, the introduction of new teaching models extends the learning process beyond the classroom and makes it more flexible. By leveraging digitized resources and technology, students can now learn anywhere and anytime, while teachers can provide targeted guidance and monitor the learning process through various platforms. This extension of learning time and space has significantly enriched students' learning resources and opportunities for language practice. Thirdly, the evolution of teaching assessment from a summative to a formative approach has been influenced by changes in the learning process. The new approach has led to greater diversity and richness in teaching assessment, resulting in a more thorough examination of the learning process, heightened attention to learning among students, and an improved balance between assessment and learning. Additionally, this new mode of teaching has expanded the range of learning resources available to students, while re-establishing the primary role of students as learners. It has also provided increased opportunities for language practice, extended the scope of learning time and space, and emphasized the significance of the learning process. Overall, the implementation of this new approach has yielded positive results in the practice of teaching reform.

When it comes to evaluating the effectiveness of teaching, the majority of existing research results are based on theoretical frameworks developed by educators. Analysis of teaching effectiveness tends to rely on qualitative methods such as teacher observation, with few quantitative analyses based on questionnaires or final re-

sults. The limited quantitative analyses available typically present data in a simple listing and comparison format, lacking rigorous statistical analysis and persuasive power. Furthermore, the application of cutting-edge pedagogical concepts such as deep learning and peer assessment in teaching and learning design is an area that requires further exploration by researchers.

In terms of teaching resources, researchers have focused on multimodal teaching resources such as multimedia courseware, digital resources, and catechism resources. Studies have shown that digital technology-based resources, such as audio, video, text, and images, can visually present key course concepts and information about Japanese society and culture, enhancing students' sensory stimulation and facilitating better understanding. These new teaching resources effectively expand the scope of knowledge, open up students' horizons, and stimulate interest and initiative. Introducing digital teaching resources also extends learning time and space, freeing up classroom time and increasing the efficiency of knowledge transfer. This greatly supports the implementation of practical language activities and new teaching models in offline classes. However, it is important to note that the rise of new media such as self-media has resulted in an explosion of multimodal digital resources. Therefore, teachers need to carefully screen and select resources based on knowledge accuracy, student acceptance, and value orientation. Objective conditions allowing, teachers may also organise teams to produce school-based SPOC digital teaching resources that are more relevant to teaching objectives. In addition, teachers can leverage the online teaching platform's discussion forum to invite students to share their learning experiences and exchange learning experiences, building digital implicit teaching resources.

In addition to introducing innovative teaching concepts, models, and resources, researchers have also explored new teaching methods to focus on cultivating students' interest and motivation in learning. These new teaching methods include fun competitions on Japanese language knowledge, professional skills competitions, live digital lectures, virtual Japanese corners, school-enterprise cooperation, on-the-job practice, Japanese cultural clubs, the introduction of Can-do assessment indicators and graded teaching, and multiple language learning environments. These approaches provide useful references for improving teaching effectiveness. Although the ideas proposed by researchers are rich, the actual effectiveness of the various new teaching methods and activities requires further examination in subsequent studies. During implementation, teaching activities should align with educational objectives, improve the relevance of teaching activities, and achieve efficient and flexible use of classroom time.

Study on the improvement of specific Japanese language skills

The teaching of public foreign languages in universities involves the instruction of specific language skills. Within this context, the College Japanese Course is primarily focused on fostering Japanese language proficiency. The course syllabus emphasizes the acquisition of necessary linguistic knowledge, the development of language skills, and the improvement of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation skills in Japanese. Such an approach has garnered significant attention from scholars.

However, the current state of neglect regarding communicative skills cultivation in College Japanese courses, compounded by the challenge of conducting group teaching activities in a single Japanese language environment, hinders the development of conversational skills. To address this issue, Squire et al. propose an extra-curricular Japanese practice session as a means of promoting a diverse communicative environment, integrating language theory and practice, and incorporating Japanese cultural background into practice(Ye,2017). Additionally, Liang introduces the concept of conversation analysis (CA) into classroom conversation teaching and builds a conversational environment outside the classroom to aid in improving students' conversation-

al skills(Liang,2014). This two-pronged approach can enhance conversational skills development.

Given the diverse learning backgrounds and schedules of College Japanese students, there is insufficient time allocated for classroom speaking instruction, and the methods employed may lack flexibility. To overcome these constraints, instructors can leverage information technology to expand the time and space for speaking practice, incorporate cutting-edge teaching concepts such as task-based teaching and cooperative learning theories, and employ various methods and approaches, including shadow reading, Japanese drama dubbing, and online Japanese corners, to engage students' interest and broaden the scope of conversational practice. These measures can help improve students' conversational skills.

The teaching of listening in College Japanese is constrained by various factors, including limited teaching materials, content, and environments, as well as the dominance of test-based listening teaching models. Such models undervalue the significance of listening skills and pose challenges in ensuring the quality of teaching. Given the increasing importance of listening scores in the International Japanese Language Proficiency Test (IJLPT) and the growing social demand for language application skills, the researcher has endeavored to develop effective strategies for teaching listening skills.

One approach proposed by Chen involves reforming the course content by focusing on phonological knowledge, including easy mixes and phonetic conventions. The researcher suggests emphasizing the teaching of homonyms, proper nouns, foreign words, and idiomatic expressions to build a solid foundation in vocabulary and grammar, as well as increasing students' background knowledge of genres, text composition, and sequences(Chen,2013). The course will be taught using three methods, which include introducing original Japanese movies, TV dramas, and exam simulations as supplementary materials, as well as designing listening tasks such as listening to lines, retelling, role-playing, and writing to improve both listening and speaking skills (Dong,2013). This approach has shown promise in increasing students' participation in class, deepening their understanding of Japanese culture and way of thinking, and improving their listening and speaking skills.

Furthermore, the use of multimedia teaching tools and NHK teaching software has been proposed as an effective way to enhance students' audio-visual skills and improve their listening abilities(Jin,2015). The researcher also recommends emphasizing phonological knowledge, such as the number of words, phonetic symbols, and tones, teaching background knowledge, such as Japanese society, culture, and language habits, and instructing semantic inference strategies to improve students' listening skills(Jin,2017).

However, due to reduced class time, listening is no longer offered as a stand-alone course. As such, researchers have yet to introduce new teaching tools and platforms for listening teaching, which would expand the time and space for training this skill. This is an area that requires further research. Additionally, the effectiveness of the proposed listening strategies in real-life teaching contexts has not been quantified, and their role in teaching effectiveness requires further investigation.In response to the syllabus requirement of writing a short, logical essay of 300-350 characters within 30 minutes, the researcher investigates the teaching of writing in College Japanese. The researcher analyses the common problems in writing in College Japanese, including the use of simplified and honorific styles, errors in formatting and punctuation, illogical and inappropriate writing, heavy thinking in Chinese, and confusing sentence patterns and word structures(Gao,2013). Xiao also suggests ways to improve writing skills, such as adding targeted practice and guidance, summarising essay outlines and paragraph ideas, and strengthening cultural knowledge. Xiao addresses the shortcomings of traditional writing teaching in terms of low participation and lack of interaction and writing, and introduces WIKI technology to build a College Japanese writing community, and carries out peer-to-peer writing training through the classroom teaching section and the extra-curricular learning section. The results of the one-

year programme show that the model has improved students' performance and interest in writing, increased effective teacher-student interaction, broadened students' thinking about writing, and contributed to the development of critical and creative thinking(Xiao,2013). The programme has been well received by students. As the International Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) and the College Japanese Level 4 and 6 exams do not involve the testing of writing skills, the number of related studies is small, and there is a need for researchers to increase their research in this area in the context of the urgent need for a large number of people with language and writing output skills in the cross-border e-commerce industry.

Regarding the development of reading skills, Li addresses the issue of learners' tendency to stay at the surface level of understanding. To tackle this issue, Li introduces discourse analysis into the teaching process, encouraging students to analyze the genre structure, narrative position, articulation, coherence, and other elements to guide them in connecting the micro-analysis of sentence and inter-sentence association with the macro-analysis of text structure and writing purpose. This approach helps students to correlate the micro and macro levels of analysis and deepen their understanding of the text(Li,2016).

Using the hierarchical analysis method, the study involves 20 peer experts in evaluating the quality of reading teaching and identifies three primary indicators and nine secondary indicators to provide a framework for assessing and improving the quality of reading teaching(Gong,2018).

Despite the importance of reading skills, the number of studies on improving reading skills is relatively small compared to those on listening and speaking skills training. To address this gap, researchers may refer to task-based teaching methods and other professional reading skills training methods and ideas to conduct relevant studies in the context of College Japanese teaching.

In summary, the existing research on the improvement of professional Japanese language skills primarily focuses on the period before 2017, reflecting the trends of that era. Additionally, given the importance of listening and speaking skills in society's demand for applied talents, most research has centered on enhancing these skills. On the other hand, there is limited research on improving reading and writing skills, and the teaching methods and concepts remain underdeveloped. Consequently, researchers must expand their ideas and undertake practical research, leveraging information technology tools, to address the distinctive features of the "College Japanese" course.

Research related to intercultural communication

As globalization continues to expand and exchanges with Japan increase, the Chinese state has recognized the need to cultivate international composite talents who possess language proficiency and intercultural communication skills. In response, traditional language skills training is no longer sufficient, and it is necessary to enhance learners' abilities to engage in cross-cultural communication. Specifically, the Teaching Requirements for College Japanese Language Courses stipulate the need to improve students' cultural literacy and communicative competence to actively participate in Sino-Japanese exchanges, which are essential for China's social development and international interactions.

Despite their geographic proximity, China and Japan have distinct cultural origins, ways of thinking, habits of life, and religious beliefs. Consequently, there is a growing interest in how to develop composite talents who can understand both cultures, utilize language and non-verbal communication to convey information and emotions effectively, and possess professional skills.

As such, there has been a shift in foreign language teaching from language skills training to the cultivation of communicative competence. This approach recognizes the importance of developing learners' abilities to

communicate effectively across cultures and fosters their appreciation of the richness of cultural diversity.

In response to the insufficient cultivation of intercultural communication skills in traditional teaching, the researcher proposes several reform paths. First, teachers' teaching concepts should be updated to move away from traditional teaching strategies that focus solely on vocabulary, grammar, and reading. Instead, intercultural communication scenarios should be created through well-designed teaching methods that provide students with opportunities to engage in cross-cultural communication.

Secondly, intercultural communication awareness and cultural sensitivity should be prioritized in teaching to enhance the development of students' intercultural and comparative cultural awareness. To accomplish this, non-linguistic knowledge should be incorporated into teaching, and the proportion of teaching on communicative culture should be increased to reduce communication barriers(Xu,2015).

Thirdly, a communicative environment should be established both inside and outside the classroom through various means, such as the use of Japanese corners, lectures, interest groups, second classroom activities, Sino-Japanese exchange activities, international competitions, role-plays, trips to companies or foreign countries, as well as recreation and performance of cultural knowledge from classical literature. This will enable students to take a more active role in their learning, encouraging their desire to communicate, and complemented by targeted guidance from teachers on communicative knowledge, correcting issues, and reinforcing accurate forms of communication(Jing,2013).

Fourthly, teachers should introduce multimodal and diversified teaching resources, such as pictures, audio and video, books, songs, films, and audio-visual works to immerse students in the culture and understand real communicative habits and ways of thinking, such as body language and gestures.

Fifthly, the researcher suggests investigating the differences between the two cultures in terms of vocabulary, linguistic habits, and ways of thinking through interpretive, comparative, and practical methods. Specifically, attention should be paid to vocabulary homonyms, ambiguities, honorific expressions, repeated acknowledgments, ways of thinking related to superiority and inferiority, and respect for elders and children. This will promote a deeper understanding and respect for cultural differences and enable students to communicate effectively in different cultural contexts(Yang,2014).

Lastly, students should be provided with systematic and targeted guidance in absorbing the essence of traditional culture through recitation of Chinese cultural texts, etc., to strengthen their native language literacy and cultural inculcation(Zhang,2016).

In the context of the approach mentioned above, it is imperative for educators to reinforce their scrutiny of pertinent resources in terms of value orientation and knowledge accuracy, while simultaneously incorporating Chinese culture into the course material in a timely manner. By engaging students in group activities and other interactive forms of learning, they can facilitate a comparative analysis of diverse cultures, thereby enabling students to gain a deeper understanding of Chinese and Japanese cultures while simultaneously strengthening their cultural identity. The cultivation of Chinese cultural awareness can also be augmented through this process, which will subsequently bolster cultural confidence. However, it should be noted that existing research predominantly takes a theoretical approach and proposes strategies for cultivating intercultural communication skills. Unfortunately, the examination scale for intercultural communication skills has limitations that preclude a detailed evaluation of the teaching effectiveness.

Study of strategies to cope with the increase in Japanese language students in the GCE

To address the need for multilingual talent development in the wake of economic globalization and the diverse foreign language learning requirements of students at the basic education level, the Ministry of Education proposed a plan in 2013 to reduce the level of difficulty of minor language subjects in college entrance exams. This policy has led to an increase in the number of high school students selecting Japanese as a foreign language for the entrance exam, primarily due to its perceived similarity to Chinese, ease of learning, and the influence of Japanese anime, which has generated an affinity for the language among students. Against this backdrop, the present study examines ways to cater to the foreign language learning needs of such candidates when they enroll in university.Tan conducted a campus-wide questionnaire survey at Sanming College to investigate students' perspectives on the implementation of a public Japanese language course. The survey results revealed that over half of the respondents lacked confidence in their English language proficiency. Furthermore, most of the participants expressed a desire to enroll in public courses for other languages, while the overwhelming majority supported the introduction of a College Japanese language course. The respondents viewed College Japanese as a means to cater to the diverse needs of students and to provide an alternative pathway for those with a weaker foundation in English. They also recommended offering College Japanese courses to colleges with majors related to Japan, providing special classes for graduate students, and encouraging Japanese language learners to take proficiency exams(Tan,2016).

Meng conducted a survey to assess the willingness of students at Wanxi College to enroll in a public course on College Japanese. The results of the survey indicated that students were highly motivated to learn Japanese and had clear, pragmatic goals for doing so. Based on these findings, a blended teaching model was developed that catered to the specific needs of the school(Meng,2021).

Zhang conducted a questionnaire survey on the academic and living conditions of Japanese language students at the university level. The survey revealed that over 80% of the respondents expressed a desire to continue studying Japanese. However, 45% of the participants stated that the university did not offer Japanese language courses or basic English language classes at an appropriate level. The author suggests that universities and educational authorities should take into account the demands of such students and offer appropriate courses to help Japanese students attain proficiency in the language. This approach will not only give them a competitive edge in the job market, but also enable them to master multiple foreign languages(Zhang,2022). This underscores the need for the development of a new curriculum that includes a course in Japanese language at the university level.

In response to the impact of teaching Japanese for university entrance examinations, Qi analyzes the challenges posed by the rise in the number of students taking the exams and the traditional public Japanese teaching methods. These challenges include a significant gap in learning experiences and foundations, leading to clear polarization between the two levels; the unsuitability of the teaching materials for Japanese university entrance exams, which are often too difficult; and the utilitarian nature of choosing Japanese for university entrance exams, leading to a lack of interest, continuity, and motivation for learning after university. The low level of students' motivation for learning Japanese underscores the need for new approaches to address these issues(Qi,2018).

From an educational ecology perspective, Liu proposes raising awareness of the "language problem" and prioritizing the quality of training for small language talents. Integrating and optimizing educational resources

within the school and promoting the reform of Japanese general education is also essential. Finally, establishing a new model of joint training with domestic and foreign educational institutions is recommended for the sustainable development of Japanese language learning for Advanced Level Japanese students. These recommendations will provide a reference for the sustainable development of Japanese language learning(Liu,2020).

Building on this foundation, Yu proposes various strategies for reforming "College Japanese" at both macro management and teaching practice levels. These strategies include establishing an expert group to guide course construction, implementing tiered teaching, adopting the 3+1 teaching model (i.e., three semesters of language proficiency development followed by one semester of course expansion), and utilizing blended teaching based on new media, among others(Yu,2022).

The existing research examines the impact and challenges facing traditional College Japanese teaching in the context of a growing number of Japanese students taking Advanced Placement examinations. By analyzing the underlying causes, the studies propose reform strategies in teaching ideology, mode, and content. Additionally, given the diverse needs of university students for language learning, recommends offering a compulsory Japanese language course at the university level to cultivate composite talents in the category of "foreign language + major." Nonetheless, the existing research lacks a comprehensive tracking study on the performance of Japanese language learning beyond higher education. Furthermore, a detailed analysis of university-level students' learning goals, needs, and strategies is missing, which limits the provision of guidelines for the design of College Japanese teaching.

Therefore, future research should focus on conducting a longitudinal study of Japanese language learning performance beyond higher education and conducting a comprehensive analysis of university-level students' learning goals, needs, and strategies. Such research would provide valuable insights into the design of effective College Japanese teaching.

Existing problems in public Japanese language teaching research

Low number of studies and low level of results

The education sector in China has published a low number of studies and low level of results in the teaching and learning of College Japanese courses. This is mainly due to the late start and small scale of the College Japanese course in public foreign language education in Chinese universities, and the lack of attention it received until around 2017. As a result, there are only a few core papers published in this area, lagging behind the research output of University English in terms of quantity and quality.Moreover, the quality of teaching reform and scientific research results is affected by the shortage of full-time teachers teaching the course "College Japanese." Most of the teachers are part-time Japanese language teachers or young teachers who have heavy teaching duties and insufficient research experience.However, with the increasing scale of the College Japanese course and the professionalization of the teaching staff in the future, this situation is expected to improve significantly. This will lead to more quality research output in the field of teaching and learning of College Japanese courses in China.

Focus on teacher teaching and lack of attention to student learning

The existing studies in the field of teaching and learning of College Japanese courses in China have shown that some researchers adopt a student-centered teaching philosophy, which emphasizes the main position of students' learning. These researchers have attempted to introduce advanced teaching methods, such as flipped classroom, catechism, task-oriented teaching method, and blended teaching mode into daily teaching. They have also paid attention to the learning process and the adjustment of assessment methods, which have effectively improved students' interest and motivation in learning.However, there is a limitation in this research approach. The focus has been on how teachers adjust their teaching methods, design teaching processes, create teaching resources, and use teaching tools, while little attention has been paid to learner-related elements. These elements include students' learning needs, learning styles, learning behaviors, learning strategies, and learning assessments.This lack of analysis may lead to the inability to accurately determine the starting point of teaching and learning, and to design more targeted teaching strategies and processes. It may also make "student-centeredness" an empty talk and affect the persuasiveness of the research results of teaching and learning reforms.Therefore, it is important for future research in this area to pay attention to learner-related elements, to design more targeted teaching strategies and processes, and to achieve more effective teaching and learning outcomes in the College Japanese courses.

Lag in the Introduction of Advanced Teaching Concepts and Tools

The lag in introducing advanced teaching concepts and tools in the teaching of College Japanese is a concern for keeping up with educational development and research trends. While there have been efforts to introduce and utilize advanced teaching concepts and tools such as constructivist theory, cooperative learning theory, and blended teaching models, there is still a significant delay in their publication and adoption compared to similar research results in English or foreign language majors.

As foreign language teaching continues to evolve with cutting-edge concepts and methods such as deep learning, output-oriented methods, and peer assessment, it is essential to bridge this gap and incorporate these advancements into the teaching of College Japanese as well. The use of artificial intelligence applications such as Microsoft's ChatGPT also poses a revolutionary challenge to foreign language teaching and requires constant adaptation and innovation in teaching practices.

More theoretical research, less empirical research, lack of practical testing of teaching methods

Although the current research on the teaching of College Japanese has covered various aspects such as teaching models, teaching tools, teaching processes and teaching evaluation, the depth of the research is slightly lacking. Among them, most of the thesis results are biased towards theoretical analysis such as application of teaching theories, analysis of reform feasibility, curriculum model or process design, and fewer results carry out empirical research. Among the few empirical research results, although there are analyses of teaching effectiveness, their evaluations are mostly based on highly subjective qualitative data such as teacher observations or the results of teacher-student interviews. Very few papers analyse teaching effectiveness based on quantitative data such as students' grades or questionnaire data, but they are limited to average grades or per-

centage comparisons of a certain one-way value, without scientific and reasonable statistical analysis, resulting in research results lacking persuasiveness and affecting the credibility of relevant studies.

Conclusion

In this paper, we analyse and summarise the existing research findings and concerns in five areas: the teaching reform of Japanese at university, the introduction of cutting-edge educational theories and teaching models, the improvement of Japanese language skills, the study of intercultural communication, and the study of strategies to cope with the expansion of the number of Japanese students taking the Advanced Level Examination. At the same time, it points out the shortcomings of the existing studies in terms of the number of studies, research levels, research concerns, research frontiers and research aspects. With the increasing size of the student population and the increasing professionalism of the teaching staff, it is foreseeable that the number of reforms surrounding the teaching of this course will increase in the future, and that related research will also make greater breakthroughs in terms of depth and breadth, providing a strong impetus for the high-quality development of public foreign language teaching in the new era.

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