The Path of Integrating Japanese Folk Culture into Japanese Language Teaching

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Abstract. With the deepening of cross-cultural communication, Japanese language teaching is no longer limited to the cultivation of linguistic competence but pays more attention to the improvement of students' cross-cultural communication ability. Japanese folk culture, as an important part of Japanese culture, contains rich linguistic connotations and cultural values, which have important guiding significance for improving the effectiveness of Japanese language teaching. Based on the analysis of the connotation of Japanese folk culture and its inherent connection with Japanese language teaching, this paper explores the practical difficulties in integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching, and puts forward targeted integration paths from the aspects of curriculum design, teaching method innovation, teaching resource development, and teacher team construction. It is expected to provide theoretical support and practical reference for promoting the reform and development of Japanese language teaching and cultivating compound Japanese talents with cross-cultural communication ability.

Keywords: Japanese folk culture; Japanese language teaching; Integration path; Cross-cultural communication; Curriculum design.

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization, the frequency of economic and cultural exchanges between China and Japan is increasing day by day, and the demand for compound Japanese talents who are proficient in Japanese and understand Japanese culture is also growing. Japanese language teaching, as an important way to cultivate Japanese talents, has been focusing on the teaching of vocabulary, grammar and other linguistic knowledge for a long time, ignoring the infiltration of cultural elements, which leads to the phenomenon that many students have "linguistic competence but lack cultural literacy". They can skillfully use Japanese grammar and vocabulary, but often make inappropriate expressions in cross-cultural communication due to a lack of understanding of Japanese folk customs and cultural connotations, which affects the effectiveness of communication [1-3].

Japanese folk culture is the accumulation of the life experience and cultural psychology of the Japanese nation for thousands of years, which is closely related to the Japanese language. For example, the honorific system in Japanese is closely linked to the hierarchical concept in Japanese folk culture; the seasonal words in Japanese are derived from the folk customs of the Japanese nation's emphasis on the seasons. Therefore, integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching is not only an inevitable requirement for improving the quality of Japanese language teaching, but also an important way to cultivate students' cross-cultural communication ability.

At present, although some Japanese language teaching institutions have realized the importance of cultural teaching, there are still many problems in the process of integrating Japanese folk culture into teaching, such as the lack of systematic curriculum design, the single teaching method, the shortage of high-quality teaching resources, and the insufficient cultural literacy of teachers. These problems restrict the effective integration of Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching. Therefore, exploring the effective path of integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching has important theoretical and practical significance.

This study enriches the theoretical system of Japanese language teaching. At present, the research on Japanese language teaching mostly focuses on the improvement of linguistic teaching methods,

and the research on the integration of folk culture and language teaching is relatively scattered. This paper explores the inherent connection between Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching, constructs the integration path of Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching, which helps to supplement and improve the theoretical research on cultural teaching in Japanese language teaching. At the same time, this study also provides a new research perspective for cross-cultural language teaching and has a certain reference value for the integration of folk culture and language teaching in other foreign language teaching fields.

In practice, this study can provide practical guidance for Japanese language teachers, help them solve the difficulties encountered in the process of integrating folk culture into teaching, and improve the effectiveness of Japanese language teaching. By integrating Japanese folk culture into teaching, students can not only deepen their understanding of Japanese language knowledge, but also improve their cross-cultural communication ability and cultural literacy, so as to better meet the social demand for compound Japanese talents. In addition, this study can also promote the exchange and integration of Chinese and Japanese cultures, and enhance mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples.

Foreign research on the integration of culture and language teaching started earlier. As early as the 1960s, American linguist Edward Sapir put forward in "Language" that language is a part of culture and is closely related to culture. Since then, foreign scholars have carried out in-depth research on the relationship between language and culture. In the field of Japanese language teaching, Japanese scholars have paid more attention to the infiltration of cultural elements.

Japanese folk culture is an important carrier of the Japanese language, and integrating it into teaching can help students understand the cultural connotation behind the language and improve their cross-cultural communication ability. Some scholars have also explored the integration path of Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching. For example, Wang Wei put forward that we can integrate Japanese folk culture into the teaching of vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing through curriculum design.

However, there are still some deficiencies in domestic research. First, the research content is relatively scattered, and there is a lack of systematic research on the integration path of Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching. Second, most of the research is theoretical discussion, and there is a lack of in-depth empirical research. Third, the research on the development of teaching resources and the construction of teacher teams in the process of integration is relatively insufficient. Therefore, this paper will focus on solving these problems and carry out in-depth research on the integration path of Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching.

This paper adopts the methods of literature research, comparative analysis and case study. First, through literature research, we sort out the relevant research results at home and abroad on the integration of Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching, and clarify the research background, significance and status. Second, through comparative analysis, we compare the differences between Chinese and Japanese folk cultures and explore the impact of these differences on Japanese language teaching.

The main content of this paper includes the following aspects: first, clarifying the connotation and main characteristics of Japanese folk culture, and analyzing the inherent connection between Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching. Second, investigate the current situation of integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching in domestic Japanese language teaching institutions, and summarize the existing problems and reasons. Third, put forward the specific path of integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching from the aspects of curriculum design, teaching method innovation, teaching resource development and teacher team construction. Fourth, verify the feasibility and effectiveness of the proposed integration path through a case study.

2. Connotation of Japanese Folk Culture and its Connection with Japanese Language Teaching

2.1. Connotation and Main Characteristics of Japanese Folk Culture

Japanese folk culture refers to the sum of material and spiritual wealth created and inherited by the Japanese nation in the long-term production and life process, including folk customs, folk beliefs, folk art, folk literature, folk customs and other aspects. Japanese folk culture is rooted in the unique geographical environment and historical and cultural background of Japan. It has strong national and regional characteristics. For example, Japan is an island country with a narrow territory and many mountains. This geographical environment has shaped the Japanese nation's sense of crisis and respect for nature, which is reflected in many aspects of folk culture.

Specifically, Japanese folk culture includes the following aspects: first, traditional festivals, such as New Year's Day, Setsubun, Hinamatsuri, Tanabata, Obon and other festivals, each of which has unique customs and cultural connotations. Second, folk customs, such as the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, kimono wearing, etiquette and customs, reflect the Japanese nation's pursuit of beauty and emphasis on etiquette. Third, folk art, such as kabuki, noh, bunraku, folk songs, folk dances and other art forms, which are the crystallization of the Japanese nation's artistic creation. Fourth, folk literature, such as folk stories, legends, and proverbs, which inherit the historical and cultural memory of the Japanese nation [4-6].

The first characteristic is harmony with nature. The Japanese nation has a strong sense of awe and respect for nature. This is reflected in many aspects of folk culture. For example, in traditional festivals, there are many customs to worship nature gods; in folk art, natural elements such as mountains, rivers, flowers and birds are often taken as creative themes. The second characteristic is emphasis on etiquette. The Japanese nation attaches great importance to etiquette, and etiquette runs through all aspects of social life. For example, there are strict etiquette requirements in greeting, visiting, gift-giving and other aspects, which are an important part of Japanese folk culture. The third characteristic is collectivism. The Japanese nation emphasizes the sense of group and cooperation, and individuals are required to subordinate themselves to the group. This is reflected in folk customs such as community activities and family gatherings. The fourth characteristic is absorption and innovation. Japanese folk culture has absorbed a lot of cultural elements from China, South Korea and other countries in the process of development, and has carried out localized innovation, forming a unique cultural style.

Language is not only a tool for communication, but also a carrier of culture. Japanese, as the language of the Japanese nation, carries the rich connotation of Japanese folk culture. A lot of vocabulary, grammar, idioms and proverbs in Japanese are derived from Japanese folk culture. For example, the word "osechi-ryori" in Japanese refers to the New Year's food in Japan, which is a unique folk custom in Japan; the idiom "kitsune no yomeiri" (the fox's wedding) comes from a Japanese folk legend, which refers to the phenomenon of sun shower. If students only memorize the literal meaning of these words and idioms without understanding the folk cultural connotations behind them, they cannot really master and use them flexibly.

Understanding Japanese folk culture can help students better understand the meaning and usage of the Japanese language. For example, the honorific system in Japanese is very complex, including respectful language, humble language and polite language. The use of honorifics is closely related to the status, age, relationship between the two parties and the occasion. The formation of this honorific system is closely linked to the hierarchical concept and etiquette culture in Japanese folk culture. If students understand the hierarchical concept and etiquette culture in Japanese folk culture, they can better master the use of honorifics and avoid making mistakes in communication.

The ultimate goal of Japanese language teaching is to cultivate students' ability to communicate with Japanese people in real situations. Cross-cultural communication not only requires students to have proficient linguistic competence, but also requires them to have a certain understanding of the cultural background of the other party. Japanese folk culture is an important part of Japanese culture.

By integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching, students can understand the thinking mode, values and behavioral habits of the Japanese nation, so as to avoid cultural conflicts in cross-cultural communication and improve the effect of communication.

3. Current Situation and Problems of Integrating Japanese Folk Culture into Japanese Language Teaching

In order to understand the current situation of integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching in domestic Japanese language teaching institutions, the author conducted a questionnaire survey and interview survey on 100 Japanese language teachers and 500 Japanese language students from 10 colleges and universities and 5 language training institutions in China. The results of the questionnaire survey show that 85% of teachers believe that it is necessary to integrate Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching, but only 35% of teachers have systematically integrated Japanese folk culture into their daily teaching. Among the students, 78% of students are interested in Japanese folk culture, but only 42% of students have learned relevant Japanese folk culture knowledge in Japanese language courses.

The interview results show that most Japanese language teachers have a certain understanding of Japanese folk culture, but the depth and breadth of their understanding are insufficient. They often only understand some common folk customs, such as Japanese traditional festivals, but lack an in-depth understanding of folk beliefs, folk art and other aspects. In terms of teaching methods, most teachers still adopt the traditional lecture method, and rarely use interactive teaching methods such as case analysis, role-playing and group discussion to integrate Japanese folk culture into teaching. In terms of teaching resources, the existing teaching materials mostly focus on linguistic knowledge, and the content of Japanese folk culture is relatively scarce and scattered. There is a lack of systematic and targeted teaching resources for Japanese folk culture [7].

At present, most domestic Japanese language teaching institutions have not included Japanese folk culture in the formal curriculum system. The teaching of Japanese folk culture is mostly carried out in the form of extracurricular lectures or temporary supplements in class, which lacks systematicness and continuity. The content of teaching is also random, and there is no clear teaching goal and teaching plan. This leads to the fact that students cannot systematically learn Japanese folk culture knowledge, and the effect of cultural teaching is not ideal.

In addition, the connection between Japanese folk culture teaching and linguistic knowledge teaching is not close enough. Most teachers only teach folk culture knowledge independently, without integrating it with vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing and other linguistic knowledge. This makes students unable to realize the inherent connection between language and culture, and they cannot apply the learned folk culture knowledge to language communication.

In the process of integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching, most teachers still adopt the traditional lecture method. Teachers simply tell students about Japanese folk culture knowledge, and students passively accept it. This teaching method is boring and cannot arouse students' interest in learning. In addition, there is a lack of interaction and participation between teachers and students. Students cannot deeply experience and understand Japanese folk culture, which affects the teaching effect.

Although some teachers try to use some new teaching methods, such as playing Japanese folk songs and videos in class, these methods are mostly superficial and cannot let students deeply participate in the teaching process. For example, when teaching Japanese traditional festivals, teachers only play videos of festival celebrations, but do not organize students to carry out role-playing activities such as simulating festival customs, which makes students unable to truly experience the cultural connotation of the festival.

The shortage of high-quality teaching resources is an important factor restricting the integration of Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching. At present, the existing Japanese language teaching materials in China mostly focus on the teaching of linguistic knowledge, and the content

related to Japanese folk culture is relatively scarce and scattered. Most of the materials are simple introductions to folk customs, lacking in-depth analysis of cultural connotations and connection with language knowledge. They cannot accurately grasp the differences between Chinese and Japanese folk cultures, and cannot effectively guide students to understand and adapt to these differences. This leads to the fact that in the process of integrating Japanese folk culture into teaching, teachers cannot accurately convey cultural connotations, and cannot effectively solve the cultural conflicts encountered by students in cross-cultural communication.

First, the influence of traditional teaching concepts [8]. For a long time, Japanese language teaching has been dominated by linguistic knowledge teaching, and cultural teaching has been ignored. Many teaching institutions and teachers believe that the main goal of Japanese language teaching is to enable students to master linguistic knowledge and pass exams, and there is no sufficient attention to the cultivation of students' cultural literacy.

Second, the lack of relevant training for teachers. At present, most domestic teacher training programs for the Japanese language focus on the improvement of linguistic teaching ability, and there is a lack of training on Japanese folk culture and cross-cultural teaching ability. This makes it difficult for teachers to improve their cultural literacy and cross-cultural teaching ability, and affects the integration of Japanese folk culture into teaching.

Third, the lack of policy support and funding investment. The integration of Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching requires the support of relevant policies and sufficient funding investment, such as the development of teaching resources, the construction of practice bases and the training of teachers. However, at present, there is a lack of relevant policy support and sufficient funding investment in domestic Japanese language teaching institutions, which restricts the smooth development of the integration work.

4. The Path of Integrating Japanese Folk Culture into Japanese Language Teaching

First of all, Japanese language teaching institutions should clarify the goal of integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching, which is to improve students' cross-cultural communication ability and cultural literacy on the basis of cultivating students' linguistic competence. On this basis, according to the different learning stages of students, formulate a systematic teaching plan. For example, in the primary stage of Japanese learning, focus on teaching common Japanese folk customs and basic etiquette knowledge, such as greeting etiquette, gift-giving etiquette, etc., to help students lay a foundation for cross-cultural communication; in the intermediate stage, focus on teaching Japanese traditional festivals, folk art and other content, and integrate it with vocabulary, grammar and other linguistic knowledge teaching; in the advanced stage, focus on teaching Japanese folk beliefs, values and other deep-seated cultural content, guide students to conduct in-depth analysis and thinking on cultural differences, and improve their cross-cultural communication ability[9-11].

On the basis of the original Japanese language courses, set up special Japanese folk culture courses, such as "Japanese Folk Customs", "Japanese Traditional Art", "Japanese Cultural Communication" and other courses. These courses should be included in the formal curriculum system, with clear credit requirements and teaching hours. The content of the courses should be systematic and in-depth, covering all aspects of Japanese folk culture. At the same time, pay attention to the connection between the courses and other Japanese language courses, and realize the organic integration of cultural teaching and linguistic teaching.

In addition to setting up special courses, Japanese folk culture should also be integrated into each teaching module of Japanese language courses, such as vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, listening and speaking. For example, in vocabulary teaching, when teaching words related to Japanese folk culture, such as "chado" (tea ceremony), "ikebana" (flower arrangement), "kimono" (kimono), etc., introduce the cultural connotations and usage scenarios of these words; in grammar teaching, combine the honorific system with Japanese etiquette culture to help students master the use of

honorifics; in reading teaching, select reading materials related to Japanese folk culture, such as folk stories, legends, etc., and guide students to analyze the cultural elements in the materials; in writing teaching, let students write articles about Japanese folk culture, such as introducing Japanese traditional festivals, folk customs, etc., to improve their ability to express cultural content in Japanese; in listening and speaking teaching, design dialogue scenarios related to Japanese folk culture, such as simulating visiting Japanese families, participating in Japanese traditional festivals, etc., to improve students' ability to communicate in cross-cultural situations.

Teachers should change the traditional lecture method and adopt more interactive teaching methods, such as case analysis, role-playing, group discussion, etc. For example, when teaching Japanese traditional festivals, teachers can select typical festival cases, guide students to analyze the customs, cultural connotations and historical origins of the festival; organize students to carry out role-playing activities, such as simulating the process of celebrating New Year's Day, Obon and other festivals, so that students can deeply experience the folk customs of the festival; set up discussion topics, such as the differences between Chinese and Japanese traditional festivals, the impact of Japanese folk culture on modern society, etc., guide students to conduct in-depth discussions, and improve their ability to analyze and solve problems.

With the development of modern information technology, teachers can make full use of multimedia, network platforms and other resources to enrich teaching methods. For example, use multimedia equipment to play Japanese folk songs, folk dances, documentaries about folk culture, etc., to make teaching more vivid and intuitive; build online teaching platforms, upload teaching resources related to Japanese folk culture, such as courseware, video materials, reading materials, etc., to facilitate students to learn independently after class; use online communication tools, such as WeChat, QQ, etc., to carry out online discussions and interactions between teachers and students, and solve the problems encountered by students in the process of learning.

In addition, virtual reality (VR) technology can also be used to create a virtual Japanese folk culture scene, such as a virtual tea ceremony room, a virtual festival celebration scene, etc., so that students can have an immersive learning experience, which helps to improve students' interest in learning and the effect of cultural understanding [12-13].

Practical teaching is an important way to integrate Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching. Teachers should organize students to carry out various practical teaching activities, such as inviting Japanese foreign teachers or experts to give lectures on Japanese folk culture; organizing students to visit Japanese cultural centers, museums and other places to understand Japanese folk culture intuitively; holding Japanese folk culture theme activities, such as Japanese food festivals, folk art exhibitions, etc.; organizing students to carry out exchange activities with Japanese students, so that students can communicate with Japanese people face to face, and experience Japanese folk culture in real communication situations.

Relevant departments and teaching institutions should organize professional teachers and experts to compile targeted Japanese folk culture teaching materials. The content of the teaching materials should be systematic and in-depth, covering all aspects of Japanese folk culture, and closely linked to Japanese language teaching. For example, compile "Japanese Folk Culture and Language Learning" teaching materials, which integrate Japanese folk culture knowledge with vocabulary, grammar, reading and other linguistic knowledge, and include a large number of case analyses, practice questions and other content to help students master the connection between language and culture. In addition, the compiled teaching materials should be updated in a timely manner according to the changes in Japanese society and culture, so as to ensure the timeliness and authenticity of the teaching content.

Teachers should actively collect and sort out various teaching resources related to Japanese folk culture, such as Japanese folk stories, legends, proverbs, folk songs, folk dances, documentaries, movies, etc. These resources can be used as supplementary materials for classroom teaching to enrich the teaching content. At the same time, make full use of network resources to collect relevant information about Japanese folk culture from official websites of Japanese cultural institutions,

academic databases and other channels, and sort out and classify them to form a systematic teaching resource library.

Teaching institutions should strengthen cooperation with Japanese enterprises, cultural institutions and other units to build practical teaching bases for Japanese folk culture. For example, cooperate with Japanese restaurants to let students learn about Japanese food culture and service etiquette through practice; cooperate with Japanese cultural centers to let students participate in Japanese traditional art training and festival celebration activities. Through practical teaching bases, students can integrate theoretical knowledge with practice, and deeply experience Japanese folk culture.

Teaching institutions should regularly organize Japanese language teachers to carry out special training on Japanese folk culture. The training content should include the connotation, characteristics, and historical origin of Japanese folk culture, as well as the methods and skills of integrating folk culture into Japanese language teaching. Invite Japanese culture experts, senior Japanese teachers and other personnel to give lectures and share experience, help teachers improve their understanding of Japanese folk culture and their ability to integrate it into teaching [14-15].

Encourage Japanese language teachers to carry out academic research on the integration of Japanese folk culture and Japanese language teaching. Support teachers to participate in academic conferences and exchange activities related to Japanese culture and language teaching, and learn about the latest research results and teaching practices at home and abroad. Provide funding and time support for teachers' research projects, and encourage teachers to publish academic papers and monographs, so as to improve their academic level and teaching ability.

Promote the exchange and study of Japanese language teachers between domestic and foreign institutions. Organize teachers to go to Japan for further study and investigation, let them personally experience Japanese folk culture, and learn about the latest situation of Japanese language teaching and cultural teaching. At the same time, invite Japanese teachers to teach in domestic teaching institutions, carry out teaching exchange activities with domestic teachers, and share their experience and methods of integrating Japanese folk culture into teaching.

5. Conclusion

Japanese folk culture, as an important part of Japanese culture, has an inherent connection with Japanese language teaching. Integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching is an inevitable requirement for improving the quality of Japanese language teaching and cultivating students' cross-cultural communication ability. At present, there are still many problems in the process of integrating Japanese folk culture into Japanese language teaching in China, such as the lack of systematic curriculum design, a single teaching method, a shortage of high-quality teaching resources, and insufficient cultural literacy of teachers.

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