

Research on the Training Mode for Applied Talents of Japanese Majors in Local Undergraduate Colleges

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Abstract—According to the strategic deployment of the state to promote the classification management of higher education, it is inevitable for local undergraduate colleges to shift to applied universities. In the context of the new era, this paper analyzes the current development status of Japanese majors in local undergraduate colleges and explores new ideas for the training of Japanese-language applied talents in local undergraduate colleges combining with the new needs of higher education in the new era.

Keywords—local undergraduate colleges; Japanese majors, applied talents

I. INTRODUCTION

With the in-depth development of Sino-Japanese economic and trade cooperation and the popularity of Japanese pop culture in China, Japanese has become a long-term popular minority language major in colleges and universities in recent years. However, because there are a large number of Japanese language graduates entering the market every year, coupled with the impact of the booming machine translation and speech recognition technology on the job market, the employment situation of the Japanese graduates is still severe and not optimistic. Is it due to changes in the times, or is it that the Japanese language education in Chinese universities has not cultivated talents that meet social needs? Faced with this situation, how local undergraduate colleges and universities can cultivate Japanese professionals who meet market needs in the complex competitive environment is a major issue related to the survival of this major.

II. THE STATUS QUO OF DOMESTIC HIGHER EDUCATION

In recent years, since the State Council issued the “Overall Plan to Promote the Construction of World-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines”, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance and the National Development and Reform Commission have successively issued the “Measures for the Implementation of the Construction of World-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines (Provisional)” and “Notice on Promulgating the List of Universities and Subjects for the Construction of World-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines”, promoting the construction of world-class universities and first-class disciplines in an all-round way, with a view to achieving the goal of making the number and strength of China's top universities and first-class disciplines

enter the forefront of the world by the middle of this century, and achieving a historic leap of China from a large country with higher education to a powerful country in higher education. The discipline is the foundation for the construction of first-rate universities and first-class disciplines. The construction of disciplinary can fully promote and enhance the level of personnel training, scientific research, social services, cultural heritage and international exchanges of universities. Looking at the list of first-class universities and first-class disciplines, most of them are specialties of key institutions directly under the management of the Ministry of Education, the provinces or the municipalities directly under the Central Government. In the context of the “double first-rate” construction in China, how to develop Japanese majors in local undergraduate colleges, the author will start from the analysis of current Japanese majors in local undergraduate colleges and strive to explore a professional training model of Japanese language suitable for local undergraduate colleges.

III. CHARACTERISTICS AND CURRENT STATUS OF JAPANESE MAJORS IN LOCAL UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGES

A. The Precursor and Future Development of Local Undergraduate Colleges

Since the 1990s, the reform of higher education system has entered a new stage. And in order to realize the leapfrogging of higher education from “elitization” to “popularization” as soon as possible, the Ministry of Education has adjusted its guidelines and policies to encourage the upgrading of competent specialized secondary schools to specialty or undergraduate colleges and universities. By the spring breeze of reform, the provincial education bureaus have used ways of merger of schools and other means to rearrange the local specialty schools and rebuild a group of local undergraduate colleges. Up to now, there are a total of 646 local undergraduate colleges in China, accounting for more than 50% of the undergraduate universities in China. In March 2014, Vice Minister of Education Xin Lu revealed at the China Development Forum that China's higher education will undergo a revolutionary adjustment. After the enrollment expansion of the universities in 1999, more than 600 local colleges and universities upgraded from junior colleges will gradually transform into the vocational and technical colleges and carry out modern vocational education, focusing on training engineers, senior technicians and high-quality laborers.

At this point, some undergraduate colleges in higher education will be converted to offer vocational education. The path of it has been clarified at the policy level, which also marks the beginning of the transformation of the local undergraduate colleges into the application-oriented colleges. Then, the state proposed to promote the strategic deployment of higher education classification management, guide the scientific positioning of higher education institutions, strengthen their connotation construction, highlight the characteristics of running schools, and improve the quality of personnel training and service capabilities. The colleges and universities are classified scientifically according to the main functions of personnel training and the concentration of major disciplines and specialties, and a classification system with the basic framework consisting of research-based universities, applied research-oriented universities, applied-oriented colleges and vocational-skilled colleges is formed. The above-mentioned local undergraduate colleges are basically defined as applied undergraduate colleges, which also clears the direction for the development and positioning of local undergraduate colleges.

B. The Development of Japanese Majors in Local Undergraduate Colleges

According to the data of China Higher Education Student Information Network, there are currently 510 universities offering Japanese majors nationwide, and Japanese has become the second largest foreign language major after English. The development of Japanese majors in Chinese universities can be roughly divided into three stages. The first stage is in the period from the establishment of New China to the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations in the early 1970s, Peking University, Shanghai International Studies University, University of International Business and Economics, etc. firstly opened the Japanese major and met the need for talents in Sino-Japanese exchanges. The second stage is the period from the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations to the end of the 1990s. With the friendly development of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations, the domestic climax of Japanese learning was initiated. The third stage is in the dozen years of entering the 20th century. Taking the chance of the healthy development of political, economic and cultural exchanges between China and Japan and the reform dividends of enrollment expansion of domestic higher education, the development of Japanese majors in Chinese universities has gone into a golden period. The number of students majoring in Japanese in Chinese universities exceeds 600,000, ranking first in the numbers of abroad students studying Japanese.

Since 2011, due to the new changes in the international situation, ups and downs in Sino-Japanese relations, and the promotion of higher education teaching reform in China, the Japanese language education in colleges and universities has been affected to some extent, especially the talent training of Japanese majors in local undergraduate colleges is facing a reorientation and choice. Affected by the reduction of domestic Japanese enterprises and the return of overseas talents, the employment situation of the Japanese language professionals trained in the traditional teaching mode is not optimistic, which has led to the reduction of enrollment of students

majoring in Japanese in some universities, and even the direct cancellation of the Japanese majors. At this stage, in the face of the new round of reform of China's higher education, the country strives to carry out the "double first-rate" construction, while local undergraduate colleges need to actively adapt to the needs of industry and regional development, and promote the integration of the discipline chain, professional chain and industrial chain, improve the capabilities of technology accumulation, technology transfer and application innovation, and build preponderant and characteristic disciplines and majors which serve the development of the region. Local undergraduate colleges are mostly in economically underdeveloped cities. The economic development of the regions requires not many Japanese professionals. There is even no Japanese-related company in some places. Therefore, how to construct the training model for applied Japanese talents in the new era will become a new topic.

IV. SUGGESTIONS ON THE TRAINING OF JAPANESE PROFESSIONAL TALENTS IN LOCAL UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGES

A. Optimizing the Curriculum System and Highlighting the Training of "Language Plus Skills"

The Japanese language courses set up by the Japanese Language Teaching Guidance Committee of the Ministry of Education are divided into two major categories, namely, core courses and professional direction courses. In accordance with the requirements of the new era, the Japanese majors of the colleges and universities should cultivate the Japanese professionals with good humanistic literacy, good understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures, solid professional foundation and the ability to think, analyze and innovate. For local undergraduate colleges that aim to cultivate new applied Japanese professionals, they should base on the revision of the training program, start with the curriculum design, analyze the characteristics of students, effectively bridge the curriculum, enrich the teaching resources, and unify the horizontal correlation and vertical capability standards among the subjects, and quantify the requirements of the capabilities into the curriculum system settings. The setting of core curriculum should emphasize the basic characteristics of humanistic Japanese, and improve the students' Japanese proficiency and basic research ability through the teaching of courses such as basic Japanese, advanced Japanese, Japanese national profiles, and Japanese language listening and speaking. The setting of professional directional courses should focus on expanding the professional fields of students and highlighting professional characteristics, which could be achieved through the teaching of courses such as economic trade Japanese, business Japanese, travel Japanese, and translation Japanese. And for the professional development courses, college teachers often have little or no experience of working in enterprises, and they can only conduct scene simulation training for students, in which there is a lack of business connotation. And this cannot present the market's actual demand for talents to students. The school should hire front-line staff to teach classes, introduce specific projects into the classes, bring students into the actual scene, and highlight the training of

“language + skills” level to improve students' practical application skills in their field of work.

B. Improving the Practical Teaching System and Expanding the Scope of School-enterprise Cooperation

The Japanese majors of local undergraduate colleges focus on the cultivation of applied talents, and the practical teaching system that is compatible with the training objectives is indispensable. The combination of the practical teaching system and professional directional courses should be paid attention to and the local regional economic development resources and advantages should be made full use of. With the off-campus practice base and school-enterprise cooperation units as the platform, the schools should carry out various practical training such as skill competition and internship training, and actively introduce scientific and reasonable practical teaching evaluation mechanism to ensure the quality of practice education.

At the same time, taking the implementation of practical teaching as an opportunity, schools should gradually expand the depth and breadth of the cooperation with enterprises, and build a platform for cultivating applied Japanese professionals by introducing embedded teaching and hiring industry elites to give lectures.

At present, the labor force in Japan is decreasing, and the demand for high-level Japanese talents in Japan is increasing. With the gradual improvement of Sino-Japanese relations and the deepening of China-Japan economic and trade cooperation, colleges and universities can use the current political environment to actively seek opportunities for students to go to Japan for internships and to study in Japan during their studies. But some issues about internships also need to be paid attention to. There are many domestic intermediaries introducing students to go for internships in Japan. Before entering the company, students can't directly interview with related personnel in the company. It often happens that the information that students learn from the intermediary is inconsistent with the actual treatment and the environment. Moreover, the intermediary fee needs to be borne by the student, and the enterprise also needs to pay the intermediary company. Intermediaries make profits by transferring Chinese students to Japan, so they often avoid mentioning the unfavorable situations. I once participated in a briefing session. The person in charge himself even did not know much about the local situation in Japan. For example, he did not clearly tell the students that the traffic around the company was actually very inconvenient. The same is true for headhunters in overseas intermediaries. They even said that the hourly wages for working in Japanese drugstores could reach 300 yuan. Probably for these reasons, many Japanese companies hope to directly interview students, accurately introduce the internship treatment and environment, and then invite interns to join the company. On the other hand, whether students have the consciousness of entering the society, whether they fully understand Japanese culture and rules, and whether they want to come to Japan just because they want to play in Japan instead of practicing in companies, these are also important factors that companies need to measure, so students need to consider how to answer these questions. If the school signs

internship agreements with trustworthy Japanese companies and regularly visits the internship environment in Japan, it may be safer and more efficient. In addition, it is also important to provide students with a one-year study abroad opportunity during their school days. The current mainstream is to cooperate with Japanese universities and sign exchange study agreements with them, but Japanese university students rarely come to study in China, and Japanese universities also suffer from this imbalance. Japanese universities usually have a tuition fee of 30,000-60,000 yuan a year, which is cheaper than that of universities in Europe and the United States, so there are many Chinese students who want to study in Japan even at their own expense. It is a very important topic for the universities to strive for better exchange colleges according to students' personal wishes and intentions. Students can also use the internship and study period to find ways to directly work in Japan after graduation.

C. Strengthening the Construction of the Teaching Staff and Improving the Level of Education of Teachers

Teachers are the foundation of the development of a major. To train applied Japanese professionals, the professional teachers themselves should have applied thinking and ability. This also puts forward new requirements for the construction of teacher teams in local undergraduate colleges. The improvement of the faculty's ability can be achieved through the training of internal teachers and the introduction of foreign talents. Schools should investigate the market demand for Japanese professionals, clarify the specific direction of professional development, rationally utilize resource advantages, and formulate long-term and stable faculty construction plans to lay a solid foundation for personnel training. The enterprises need fresh graduates or cross-professional talents with strong work ability, but university teachers often have no experience in working in enterprises, and their knowledge structure is specific but not broad enough. The universities attach importance to scientific research, and it should be the original intention for setting the curriculum to let the teachers teach their professional knowledge. And the appointment of teachers is also based on their degrees and research results. While the market has new demand for Japanese professionals, it also puts forward higher requirements for professional teachers' professional ability. Teachers should not only adapt to the new teaching methods of the network age and multimedia age and master advanced teaching methods such as MOOC, micro-lecture and APP, but also possess the practical ability of enterprise practice and translation experience and integrate the training of abilities demanded by enterprises for talents into the actual classroom teaching, bearing the role of linking market demand and classroom teaching.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the construction of “double first-rate” universities of the Ministry of Education, I have focused on the development of Japanese majors in local undergraduate colleges, analyzed the current status of Japanese majors in local undergraduate colleges, and provided suggestions for local undergraduate colleges to train applied Japanese

professionals. However, because the regional economic developments and quality of students of different local undergraduate colleges are different, their orientations of talent training and paces of reform are also different. However, in the face of the challenges of the new era, the schools must deepen their thinking and accelerate reforms, so that they can cultivate applied Japanese professionals who meet the needs of the times.

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