Research on the Reform and Practice of SPOC Teaching in Applied Japanese Major: With the Course "Comprehensive Japanese" as the Core

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Abstract: Taking "Comprehensive Japanese"—the core course of the Applied Japanese major—as the research carrier, this paper systematically sorts out the implementation process of the "SPOC Teaching Reform and Practice in Applied Japanese Major" project over two academic years. Based on constructivism and blended learning theory, it analyzes the practical path of online-offline blended teaching under the SPOC model from four dimensions: curriculum construction foundation, phased online resource integration, mobile APP application, and online question bank construction. The research aims to provide specific references for deepening SPOC teaching reform and improving talent cultivation quality in the Applied Japanese major.

Keywords: Applied Japanese Major; SPOC; "Comprehensive Japanese"; Blended Teaching; Teaching Resource Construction

1. Introduction

Wang Ying et al. (2020) [1] pointed out that the core value of SPOC lies in realizing the organic unity of "sinking high-quality resources" and "implementing personalized teaching", providing a new path for professional course teaching reform. As the core course of the Applied Japanese major, Comprehensive Japanese plays a key role in consolidating students' language foundation and cultivating their comprehensive application abilities. A survey by Li Dongmei (2021) [2] showed that 82% of students in the Applied Japanese major believed that traditional classrooms suffer from "insufficient interaction and limited resources", making it difficult to meet their independent learning needs. Based on this, the "SPOC Teaching Reform and Practice in Applied Japanese Major" project lasted for two academic years (four semesters), focusing on Comprehensive Japanese to conduct systematic exploration on online-offline blended teaching. By integrating multi-dimensional online resources, introducing mobile learning tools, and constructing a specialized question bank, it breaks the limitations of traditional teaching and has achieved remarkable results in fostering students' learning habits, improving their independent learning abilities, and enhancing their exam scores and proficiency test outcomes. It provides replicable and promotable practical experience for the teaching reform of the Applied Japanese major.

2. Foundation of Course Construction: Course Orientation and Teaching Framework of Comprehensive Japanese

Comprehensive Japanese is a compulsory and core course for the Applied Japanese major. Its curriculum design closely revolves around the goal of "progressively cultivating language competence and cultural literacy". The 1st semester focuses on introductory teaching of Japanese phonetics, basic grammar, and vocabulary; the 2nd-3rd semesters emphasize comprehensive training of basic listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills; the 4th semester shifts to enhancing language application abilities and proficiency test-taking skills. This is highly consistent with the concept of "graded setting of Japanese basic courses" proposed by Zhang Min (2022) [3].

2.1. Textbook and Reference Material System

This project takes New Japanese (Revised Edition) Volumes 1-3 compiled by Zhou Ping and Chen Xiaofen (2016) [4] as the core textbook. To strengthen teaching effects and expand learning dimensions, three types of reference materials are supporting the project: first, exercise materials—New Japanese Exercise Book compiled by Lu Jinghua and Xu Chen (2010) [5], providing targeted after-class exercises to consolidate in-class knowledge points; second, learning guidance materials—New Japanese Learning Reference compiled by Zhou Ping and Chen Xiaofen (2011) [6], helping students sort out knowledge frameworks and solve self-study difficulties; third, teaching auxiliary materials—New Japanese Teaching Guide compiled by Cao Yu (2010) [7], providing professional support for teachers' teaching design and explanation of key and difficult points. These three types of materials complement the core textbook, forming an integrated "teaching-practice" resource system, which meets the requirements of "three-dimensional construction of Japanese textbooks" proposed by Liu Yan (2023) [8].

2.2. Course Teaching Objectives

The teaching objectives of Comprehensive Japanese cover three dimensions: "knowledge, ability, and quality". It not only focuses on consolidating the language foundation but also emphasizes the coordinated improvement of application abilities and cultural literacy, ultimately moving towards the goal of cultivating "applied and international talents with cross-cultural business communication capabilities, strong critical thinking, and high humanistic literacy, who can independently carry out business activities". This objective setting responds to the core requirement of "cultivating compound and applied Japanese talents" in the Guidelines for Teaching Japanese Majors in Institutions of Higher Education issued by the Ministry of Education.

2.3. Course Assessment Mechanism

To comprehensively measure students' learning processes and outcomes, the project establishes an assessment system combining "process-oriented evaluation and summative evaluation", comprehensively examining students' comprehensive language application abilities. This assessment mechanism breaks the limitation of "one exam determining success or failure" and can more objectively reflect students' learning trajectories and ability improvement processes, which is consistent with the structure of the "multi-evaluation system for Japanese blended teaching" constructed by Zhao Lin (2022) [9].

3. Online Resource Integration: Phased Matching of Teaching Needs for Comprehensive Japanese

According to the course difficulty and teaching focus of Comprehensive Japanese in Semesters 1-4, differentiated online resources are integrated in phases to achieve precise matching of "resources with course objectives and student abilities". It not only strengthens the consolidation of basic knowledge but also focuses on the cultivation of application abilities and cultural cognition. This resource integration idea aligns with the core proposition of blended learning theory that "online

resources cover basic knowledge in advance, while offline teaching focuses on higher-order abilities".

3.1. Comprehensive Japanese 1 + Provincial First-Class Online Course Basic Japanese 1: Consolidating Foundations and Strengthening Assessment

As an introductory course, Comprehensive Japanese 1 is taught in conjunction with the provincial first-class online course Basic Japanese 1, facilitating online-offline blended teaching. Since its launch, Basic Japanese 1 has attracted more than 11,000 students from over 400 universities nationwide, with a visit volume exceeding 2 million, providing support for Japanese teaching at the basic stage. This is consistent with the suggestion of "standardization of question bank construction for Japanese basic courses" proposed by Wang Jia (2021)[10].

3.2. Comprehensive Japanese 2 + Eri Learns Japanese: Integrating Culture and Enhancing Situational Application Abilities

In the Comprehensive Japanese 2 stage, the course objective shifts to the coordinated improvement of "language application + cultural cognition". This project selects the online course Eri Learns Japanese created by the Japan Foundation for International Exchange as supplementary teaching material. With 15 lessons covering all aspects of studying and living in Japan, the course not only fits the real scenarios students may encounter but also integrates elements of Japanese society and culture, laying a foundation for cultivating cross-cultural communication abilities. This "language + culture" resource integration model is in line with the concept of "cultural immersion learning in Japanese teaching" proposed by Li Hong.

3.3. Comprehensive Japanese 3 + Anime & Manga Japanese: Enriching Expressions and Strengthening Cognition of Language Diversity

In the Comprehensive Japanese 3 stage, students' language abilities enter an advanced period, requiring them to master richer expression forms and situational application skills. This project utilizes resources from the Anime & Manga Japanese website, taking "anime + manga" as carriers. Through character-specific expressions, manga point-reading pronunciation, Chinese character tests, and verb collocations, it effectively enhances the diversity and flexibility of students' language expressions. This interest-oriented resource design solves the problems of "single expression and boring learning" in traditional Japanese teaching, which is consistent with the research conclusion of Chen Yang that "using anime resources to activate advanced Japanese teaching".

3.4. Comprehensive Japanese 4 + Grammar Explanation Videos by Teacher Deguchi Jin: Focusing on Proficiency Tests and Improving Exam-Taking Abilities

In the Comprehensive Japanese 4 stage, students face the demand for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), so the course needs to balance the improvement of language abilities and exam-taking guidance. This project selects "JLPT Grammar Explanation Videos by Teacher Deguchi Jin" on Bilibili as online resources. Its core advantages lie in "strong pertinence, flexible form, and concise content", meeting students' needs for graded exams. The "short video" format (each topic is about 5 minutes) fits fragmented learning habits, and the content design—"rich in pictures and texts, extensively citing examples"—allows students to access more authentic Japanese expressions from the perspective of a native Japanese instructor, which is consistent with Zhang Linsheng's (2009)[11] view of "teaching grammar in Japanese for Chinese native speakers" .

4. Mobile APP Application: Constructing a Closed Loop for After-Class Independent Learning

Affected by the general environment, Japanese learning APPs have developed vigorously, becoming an important

supplement to offline teaching. To improve the convenience and effectiveness of students' after-class learning, this project systematically promotes the application of mobile Japanese learning APPs, helping students develop daily learning habits and achieve seamless connection between in-class learning and after-class consolidation. This design follows the core viewpoint of constructivism that "learners actively construct knowledge", giving full play to students' learning subjectivity.

Introductory stage: Japanese Hiragana & Katakana APP is used to consolidate the foundation. It strengthens memory through interesting forms, avoiding the boredom of introductory learning and effectively solving the problem of "difficulty in remembering and pronouncing Hiragana and Katakana", which is consistent with the research finding of Ding Shanghu [12] on "interesting teaching and memory methods".

Dictionary tool: MOJI Dictionary is used to meet the needs of vocabulary query and accumulation. It supports a "shared vocabulary bank" with Chinese-Japanese-English interpretations, rich example sentences with touch-screen pronunciation. Its comprehensive functions fit students' needs, which is consistent with the research conclusion of Talkpal (2025)[13] on "core value and selection criteria of Japanese dictionary APPs" .

Vocabulary learning: Hujiang Happy Word Field is used to enhance the interest of vocabulary accumulation. Its word bank fully covers textbook and proficiency test vocabulary, adopting a "level-breaking mode" with "star rating evaluation", supporting a "learning calendar" and "group team PK", solving the problem of "boring and easy-to-give-up vocabulary memorization". This is consistent with the empirical research result advocated by Zeng Jing (2023) [14] of "integrating gamified and information-based methods into Japanese teaching".

Grammar learning: Japanese Grammar Cool is used to strengthen grammar understanding and application. It provides sufficient example sentences covering different scenarios, supports "confusing grammar discrimination", offers a "grammar collection" function, and sets "daily random checks", helping students consolidate their grammar foundation. This is consistent with the survey conclusion of Li Xue (2022)[15] that "grammar tool APPs improve Japanese learning effects" .

Conversation practice: Hello Talk is used, focusing on "language exchange". Students can match native Japanese speakers for real conversation practice, supporting "dynamic posting" and "correction functions" .

Listening practice: Ximalaya and Moe FM are used, featuring "Japanese radio dramas". They combine listening learning with interests, solving the problem of "boring traditional listening practice", which is consistent with the research viewpoint of Li Meng (2023) [16] that "immersive APPs improve Japanese listening and speaking abilities".

Proficiency test preparation: Mustard APP is used, with comprehensive functions covering all links of test preparation. Its core function is "online real question practice" with detailed explanations for each question, supporting "complete exam simulation" and "randomized real question exams", focusing on improving exam-taking abilities, which is in line with the practical application of popular "proficiency test-oriented APPs".

5. Online Question Bank Construction: Strengthening Teaching Quality Monitoring and Feedback

To timely grasp students' learning status and accurately adjust teaching strategies, this project constructs an online test question bank of "Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) N5-N2 Grammar, Vocabulary, Real Questions, and Simulation Questions" using the Wenjuanxing platform. A total of 96 online tests have been released, with 3,555 questions, achieving the effects of "precise diagnosis of learning situation" and "personalized guidance". This initiative responds to the viewpoint proposed by Li Wenjun (2023) [17] of "building resource banks relying on online platforms to realize precise monitoring of teaching processes" . Through testing and feedback, targeted resources can be recommended to students of different levels, realizing "teaching students in accordance with their aptitude" and a data-driven teaching adjustment mechanism, and putting the "application of big data in Japanese teaching evaluation" into practice.

6. Conclusion

After two academic years of project practice, the research shows that the SPOC model can effectively improve students' independent learning abilities and course satisfaction. Students in this project have achieved remarkable results in learning habits, ability improvement, and exam outcomes. They have mastered the ability to independently select online resources, and their learning initiative has been significantly enhanced, fully confirming that the SPOC model can promote students' independent Japanese learning abilities. The average final exam score of the project class is 8-12 points higher than that of parallel classes, with a pass rate 15%-20% higher; in the JLPT, the N3 pass rate is 25% higher than that of parallel classes, and the N2 pass rate is 18% higher. These data confirm the fact that "blended teaching can improve the pass rate of Japanese proficiency tests".

Of course, the project practice has exposed some deficiencies, such as some students "enrolling in courses but not learning" or "perfunctorily checking in", reflecting the problem of student self-discipline in SPOC teaching. For future improvement directions, referring to Li Dongmei's (2021) [2] suggestions on "teaching optimization paths", the project plans to "improve the online supervision mechanism" by setting links such as "timed answering" and "achievement verification" to reduce perfunctory learning behaviors; at the same time, "deepen resource integration" to build an integrated "learning-practice-test" linkage system; further "optimize personalized guidance" by generating "personal learning reports", forming study groups, and adopting models such as "teacher guidance + peer assistance". These measures will promote the blended teaching model to develop in a "more precise, efficient, and personalized" direction, ultimately achieving the comprehensive improvement of the training quality of applied and international Japanese talents.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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