

The Language Elective Programme(Japanese) at Raffles Junior College in Singapore

Masako BANDO

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The aim of this study is to report the Language Elective Programme (Japanese);(LEP(Japanese)), having been conducted since 1992 at Raffles Junior College in Singapore.

The purpose of this programme is to enable outstanding students who have completed their Japanese language courses at Ordinary level (hereafter;O level) to acquire the higher level, Advanced level (hereafter;A level) of the Japanese. The course, designed in the A level covers the Japanese language as well as Japanese studies; Japanese history, economics and social life. Especially, Japanese Studies are the specific courses in this programme. As one of the staff conducting this programme, the further study of the students after their graduation is in my concern.

Therefore, Japanese Studies courses and the further study of the students will be reported in this study.

Japanese Studies and Course Works:

The Japanese Studies courses and their objectives are shown in the following:

I. History of Japan since Meiji Reformation (1868—)

Objective: To understand the development of Japanese history from Meiji Reformation to the modern period.

II. Japanese Economics

Objective: To understand how Japan uses its strategies to develop the country with its very few natural resources until it became one of the countries with economic power today.

III. Life in contemporary Japan

Objective: To understand the Japanese way of life and their social problems.

As I understand, Singapore has expected the students to study about Japan from its contents. However, considering the Japanese economy in the recent days, I still have doubted what on earth they could learn.

To complete this programme, the students must submit four pieces of small paper as their assignments, instead of examinations. The topics are based on Japanese Studies. As these papers are their first experiences in Japanese language, the students still need instructions and advices from their teacher as well. There are some papers got good evaluation as they were well-organized or well-presented.

The further studies:

Some students come to Japan for their further study after graduated from the Junior College. The big problem as considered to their further studies is the season of university entrance and graduation. Female students without any duty of national service, can enter in April, July or September etc. of the following year after JC's graduation, depending on their universities. In the case of studying in Japan, it needs 5 years including a one-year Japanese Language course. In addition, if they receive the scholarship, they will come one year late and will graduate later than other Singaporean students who study at home or other countries. Their interaction with Japanese Language after their completion of the LEP is still also my interest.

In conclusion, an investigation on its benefit of this programme and on the interaction between the students and Japanese language can be done, as the students now have been studying at the university. However, the contents of Japanese Studies syllabus or its approach to syllabus needs to be reconsidered, since economics and social phenomenon have changed by the times, and this also changes viewpoints and evaluation of the people.

(Osaka University of Foreign Studies)