

# The Application of Japanese Animations in College Japanese Teaching

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**Abstract.** As is known, characters, vocabulary, listening comprehension, reading comprehension and grammar are generally involved in Japanese learning. After making an analysis of the Japanese proficiency test results, Japanese scholars find out the score of listening comprehension is much lower than the scores of other sections. It has been a sore point for students to improve the ability of listening and speaking, therefore, it is a very challenging project to improve students' listening and speaking ability of Japanese through the course of College Japanese by taking Japanese animation as the vehicle.

## 1. Introduction

Japanese animation, as a vehicle of language, covers various kinds of information including language, culture and society, etc. of Japan. Unquestionably, it will be conducive to arousing students' learning interest with the aid of intriguing plots and exquisite scene. However, Japanese animations were often applied in the elective courses with relatively few credit hours, and the teaching effect is far from satisfactory. If the Japanese animations are applied in the course of College Japanese as part of learning materials, the integration of Japanese learning and animation will not only improve the current situation- dreary and tedious teaching materials of College Japanese course, but also integrate watching videos, listening and speaking, and create comfortable atmosphere by making good use of multimedia classrooms for learners to improve their learning efficiency. Meanwhile, it also provides a more effective teaching approach for Japanese teachers.

## 2. Feasibility of Applying Japanese Animations in College Japanese Teaching

### 2.1. Arousing Students' Learning Interest

Japanese animations adopted in College Japanese teaching will help students focus their attention, give full play to their visual and listening sense and convert the pure language input into straightforward language immersion. People share many mutual feelings, such as family affections, friendship and love. Though people from different countries speak different languages, they can still share the same feelings. Japanese animations will help students learn the essence of Japanese through depiction of events and description of persons. Interest is regarded as the best teacher. Once the learning interest is created, students will have great passion for Japanese learning and will then pursue their study positively.

### 2.2. Authentic Language Environment

What Japanese learners lack is authentic language environment. Japanese animations will compensate the shortcomings of some Japanese teaching materials and resources with vivid and various content; genuine and popular language from real life will present the background and context of Japanese in an authentic and three-dimensional way. Language learning will be not as much a subconscious process of adapting as a process of active learning. Japanese animations will not only correspond with features of language learning, and but also provide prerequisite for

language learning. Students will give full play to their senses and their brains will respond comprehensively to the message of language. Students will imitate the most standard and genuine spoken Japanese and pronunciation, or even facial expressions of Japanese while watching the animations. Moreover, students will make progress in their listening comprehension day by day and improve their Japanese proficiency.

### **2.3. Appreciating Japanese Cultures**

Japanese animations will directly reflect the urban features, family life, festivals, architecture and corporation culture, etc of Japan. It is crucial to prepare cultural introduction in Japanese learning. Generally, what the teachers do in cultural introduction is considered dull. The students still fail to understand foreign cultures even with the aid of some pictures. Students will appreciate everyday life of Japanese from different social structures in an easier and closer way by watching Japanese animations. Students will subconsciously understand the cultural knowledge that the teachers try to expound painstakingly and that puzzle students greatly while watching Japanese animations. Furthermore, students will enhance appreciation of cross-cultural communication in the real language environment.

### **2.4. Increasing Students' Autonomous Learning**

Japanese animation will not only assist in arousing students' curiosity, but also increase students' autonomous learning. Teachers design and organize teaching effectively and guide the students to carry out autonomous learning, such as recommending animations, giving assignments and supervising learning efficiency effectively. Students' interests will be extended to effective learning. It will be helpful for teachers to teach according to students' own ability and provide suitable learning method and time for each student.

## **3. Precautions for Selecting Japanese Animations**

### **3.1. Taking the Content of Japanese Animations into Consideration**

Since there are various Japanese animations with good or poor quality, the teachers should first try to select the genres of Japanese animations and pick out animations of good quality. The topic selected should be in line with the students' learning situation, which will make them share the same feeling and arouse their interest and curiosity. Moreover, the teachers should select the topics which are close to everyday life with clear pronunciation and appropriate speed which can meet the students' proficiency, and equipped with both Chinese and Japanese captions as well. Finally, although some of the animations selected are educational, they will not be regarded as good works when the students lose interest. Therefore, the topics which are both educational and entertaining will be selected so as to arouse students' interest.

### **3.2. Taking Students' Proficiency into Consideration**

Teachers should know students' proficiency of Japanese and select appropriate materials. Students of different grades have different proficiency and even students from different classes of the same grade still differ in proficiency. Only by selecting appropriate animations, can the students improve their learning efficiency. On the one hand, if the animations selected are beyond the students' proficiency, the students fail to understand the content, only stare at the screen, and they may lose interest within short period of time, thus fail to meet the learning objective. On the other hand, if the animations selected are too simple for students, the students can merely consolidate the learned knowledge and it is very difficult for them to improve their proficiency.

### **3.3. Taking Time Limits and Speed of the Animations into Consideration**

If the animations last long, it will bore the students and lead to casual atmosphere. On the contrary, it is very challenging to fulfill the expected learning effect by applying animations which are too short. The teachers should make good preparations and teaching design before class. While preparing the lesson, the teachers should work out some questions in accordance with the plots of

the animation, pin out and generalize the frequently occurred words, and put down the practical Japanese conversation. The plot-related questions, frequently occurred words and expressions and practical conversation should be printed out on a piece of paper and distributed to students so that the students will have a specific purpose while watching the animations and the interest to the plots will be extended to the language itself.

Before watching the animation, students are required to learn the plots of the animation in advance. While watching, the teacher should pause and give a detailed explanation when students come across the frequently occurred words. The practical dialogues should be replayed so that the students can imitate the actors' pronunciation. The teachers should also explain some culture and customs in the Japanese animations.

### **3.4. Taking Students' Learning Effect into Consideration**

Although the application of Japanese animations will motivate students' initiative and independence, it will also increase students' inertia. Some students will only pay attention to the plots, other students will only focus on the intriguing plots and ignore the uninteresting plots. Thus they may neglect the purpose of watching animations, just like putting the cart before the horse. Therefore, the teachers should monitor the learning effect at any time while watching the animation.

## **4. Teaching Model of Applying Japanese Animations in College Japanese Teaching**

The teachers should modify the former teaching model when applying Japanese animations in College Japanese. After selecting the animations, the teaching content should be sectioned according to the scenes or conversations so as to carry out relative practice of listening and speaking.

### **4.1. Filling in the Blanks with Greeting Words**

The students are required to fill in the blanks with greetings such as gratitude and request, etc. after listening to the dialogues. The students will learn the greeting expressions and ways of greetings through watching the animations directly so as to put them in use flexibly.

### **4.2. Rectifying the Underlined Captions**

The teacher provides the selected captions to the students, with the wrong words marked underlined. The students then rectify the underlined words while listening to the materials in order to practice their selective dictation skill.

### **4.3. Completing Some Captions**

The teacher replaces several captions of the selected scenario with brackets. The students are requested to complete the scenario after listening to the clips. In this part, the students should grasp the cataphoric reference and anaphoric reference, and grammatical forms such as negation, past tense or ellipsis, etc. Thereby, the students will improve their listening, speaking and writing skill.

### **4.4. Answering the Questions**

The teacher will raise questions after watching the animations and the students will answer them directly in Japanese. The students should have a good understanding of the whole animation to find out the correct answers to the questions. Furthermore, the students will answer with correct pronunciation and flexible sentences to cultivate their comprehensive ability of listening and speaking.

By adopting the above-mentioned models, the teacher will create excitements and liven up the atmosphere of the class. The students will then participate in class with great enthusiasm and greatly improve their learning interest and efficiency.

## **5. Assessment of Application of Japanese Animations in College Japanese Teaching**

The assessment method should be modified accordingly after applying Japanese animations into College Japanese. In order to improve the model of “The final examination paper determines all”, four types of scores involving written exam, listening exam, text reading, conversation in groups will be accumulated as the total result of the final examination.

### **5.1. Written Exam**

The written exam aims to evaluate whether the students have grasped the vocabulary and grammar occurred in the College Japanese Course.

### **5.2. Listening Exam**

Besides multiple choices like questions in JLPT, the students are also asked to make a summary of the animations in written form in order to evaluate the students’ ability to trace the information and comprehension of the received information.

### **5.3. Text Reading**

The students will first draw their reading material randomly from several copies prepared by the teacher. After three minutes’ practice, the students are asked to read it out loudly within limited time period so as to evaluate students’ vocabulary, pronunciation and intonation.

### **5.4. Conversation in Groups**

The students will be provided with the content of the conversation in advance and make preparation in groups and then present their performance on the stage. The students will make good preparation actively before examination so that the assessment in this way is considered not only as examination, but also as a performance by the students tested and appreciation for other students.

By this assessment, the results of examination will not only objectively reflect whether the students have mastered what they have learned, but also inspire students’ imagination and creativity, thus reflect students’ learning effects in a more objective way.

## **6. Conclusion**

In summary, the teaching effects of applying Japanese animations and movies in College Japanese are as follows: arouse the students’ interest, draw the students’ attention, have a better understanding of communication by providing visual intelligence, provide flexible language by real practical clips and enhance understanding of foreign culture by presenting social reality, etc.

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