



Exploring the Implementation Strategies of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in the Teaching Reform of Japanese as a Second Foreign Language Courses

Jia Luan

Department of Foreign Language, Qilu Normal University, Jinan, China
Email: luan.jia@163.com

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Abstract

Under the fundamental guidance of “fostering virtue through education” in higher education institutions, the teaching reform of Japanese as a second foreign language courses urgently requires the integration of curriculum ideology and politics to cultivate versatile talents with international perspectives and cultural confidence. This paper analyzes the current primary models and existing problems in the implementation of curriculum ideology and politics in second foreign language Japanese teaching, and proposes targeted implementation strategies: First, deeply excavate the ideological-political elements embedded in textbooks. Second, thoroughly explore cultural roots to guide students in dialectically analyzing Chinese and foreign cultures. Third, construct a closed-loop teaching model encompassing “pre-class guided learning, in-class discussion, and post-class reflection.” These strategies effectively address the problems of forced insertion and superficiality in the implementation of curriculum-based ideological-political education, truly achieving an effective integration of second foreign language Japanese teaching with ideological-political education.

Subject Areas

Education, Teaching Evaluation

Keywords

Japanese as a Second Foreign Language Courses, Curriculum Ideology and Politics, Teaching Reform, Implementation Strategies

1. The Necessity of Integrating Curriculum Ideology and Politics into the Teaching Reform of Japanese as a Second Foreign Language

As stipulated in the *Guidelines for the Construction of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in Higher Education Institutions*, the fundamental mission of higher education is to “foster virtue through education,” which has consequently redefined the talent cultivation objectives for foreign language majors [1]. Foreign language education is no longer confined to the transmission of linguistic skills; it now constitutes a critical component of national soft power development and the enhancement of international communication capabilities. Although Japanese as a second foreign language (JSFL) is allocated fewer class hours than English majors, its audience is broad, encompassing students from English and various other disciplines, thereby rendering it an integral part of the foreign language curriculum system in higher education.

The integration of curriculum ideology and politics into JSFL teaching reform is an inevitable response to the national strategy of building an all-staff, whole-process, and all-round education framework (the “Three-All Education” approach) [2]. This reform necessitates that JSFL courses transcend the narrow objectives of serving postgraduate entrance examinations and employment, pivoting instead toward cultivating versatile talents who possess an international perspective, a firm grasp of international norms, and the competency to engage in global affairs. Curriculum ideology and politics serve as the core driver of this paradigm shift. Only by embedding value orientation into knowledge instruction and skill development can we achieve the fundamental transition from “teaching Japanese” to “educating through Japanese,” thereby fulfilling the overarching mission of fostering virtue through education.

The unique nature of JSFL education renders it particularly sensitive with respect to historical perspective instruction. While China and Japan share a long history of cultural exchanges, historical issues and deep-seated cultural differences inevitably introduce pedagogical complexities. Most JSFL learners are beginners who, on the one hand, exhibit keen interest in Japanese culture, yet, on the other hand, lack a dialectical understanding of historical issues and underlying cultural divergences. In the absence of proper value guidance, JSFL teaching may inadvertently engender cultural blind worship or cognitive distortions [3]. Consequently, the reinforcement of ideological and political education—with particular emphasis on historical perspective instruction—is of pressing urgency in JSFL teaching reform.

Such reinforcement enables students to acquire an objective and dialectical view of Japanese culture while learning the language, to correctly comprehend historical issues, and to strengthen their national self-esteem and pride. This, in turn, requires teachers to incorporate historical perspective education objectively and dialectically into language instruction, fostering in students rational patriotism and a broad international vision. Ultimately, students should be empowered

to tell Chinese stories in Japanese, to navigate cross-cultural communication with composure, and to solidify their cultural confidence. Only through the substantive implementation of curriculum ideology and politics can JSFL teaching be aligned with the national initiative to construct a foreign discourse system, thereby cultivating high-caliber, versatile talents who are not only proficient in Japanese communication but also capable of safeguarding national interests and effectively narrating China's stories. This constitutes the baseline imperative for foreign language courses in fulfilling the fundamental task of "fostering virtue through education."

2. Primary Approaches and Existing Problems in Implementing Curriculum Ideology and Politics in Second Foreign Language Japanese Teaching

According to the literature, the implementation of curriculum ideology and politics in second foreign language (JSFL) teaching has progressively transitioned from initial conceptual advocacy to substantive pedagogical practice, with the following typical models having emerged.

2.1. Classroom Infiltration Model

Under the premise of preserving the linguistic integrity of Japanese instruction, ideological and political elements are embedded into the teaching of vocabulary, grammar, and discourse through either implicit or explicit means. Vocabulary, as the foundational building block of language, offers a natural entry point. At the elementary stage of JSFL learning, teachers often integrate ideological-political content by exploring the cultural connotations, social significance, or mnemonic associations of words [4]. Given the substantial presence of Chinese-character words in Japanese, this feature not only constitutes a learning advantage for Chinese students but also serves as a strategic entry point for ideological-political integration. For instance, when teaching the word “風邪” (kaze, meaning cold), the instructor not only explains its meaning in modern Japanese but also traces its origin as a term in traditional Chinese medicine, thereby guiding students to recognize the historical ties between Chinese and Japanese cultures and to appreciate the far-reaching influence of China's fine traditional culture. In this way, cultural subject consciousness is subtly cultivated through vocabulary instruction. Similarly, when teaching the word “守る” (mamoru, meaning to protect or obey), the instructor may construct a contextually relevant sentence such as “We should protect nature (自然を守る),” thereby linking lexical acquisition with a sense of social responsibility and internalizing normative awareness through meaningful examples.

This model is currently the most widely adopted and pedagogically grounded approach in JSFL instruction. In actual classroom practice, the author has found that integrating ideological-political content into the teaching of Japanese language points often creates a logical disconnect between language instruction and

ideological-political education. For example, simply tacking on a contrived example sentence after vocabulary instruction—without any meaningful connection—strikes students as abrupt and may even generate resentment.

2.2. Cultural Comparison Model

Through systematic and in-depth comparisons between Chinese and Japanese cultures, this model aims to bolster students' cultural confidence while discouraging uncritical adulation or outright rejection of foreign cultures [5]. JSFL learners are predominantly English majors, typically possessing a solid foundation in English and a profound cultural grounding in their native heritage. This model draws on the methodology of comparative cultural studies to transcend mere linguistic skill training, guiding students toward a dialectical appreciation of both cultures through the identification and analysis of their similarities and divergences.

Many elements of Japanese culture originate from China but have undergone significant localization and transformation over time. By tracing these cultural lineages, students' sense of national cultural pride can be effectively reinforced. For instance, when textbooks address aspects of Japanese daily life and customs—such as the tea ceremony—teachers can instruct students to conduct comparative analyses between Japanese *sadō* and Chinese tea culture, tracing the latter's origins and examining how it evolved after being transmitted to Japan. While appreciating the refinement and aesthetic sensibility of Japanese craftsmanship, students should simultaneously recognize the inclusiveness, resilience, and vitality of Chinese culture in its capacity to absorb and integrate external influences.

In actual teaching practice, the author has observed that Japanese pop culture (anime, J-dramas, etc.) holds strong appeal for college students, leading some to develop a “Japanophile” complex. Conversely, other students, shaped by historical memory, exhibit resistant attitudes toward Japanese culture, which prevents rational academic discussion. Moreover, given their limited Japanese proficiency, these students often struggle to express their thoughts during in-depth cultural reflection and discussion, resulting in superficial exchanges or an outright switch to Chinese.

2.3. Online-Offline Integrated Model

JSFL courses typically offer only four class hours per week, a constraint compounded by heavy teaching content and large class sizes that afford students limited opportunities for active practice. In response, digital teaching platforms—such as Chaoxing Xuexitong, Rain Classroom, and MOOCs—have been employed to transcend the physical boundaries of the traditional classroom, extending ideological-political education from the “45-minute in-class session” to “pre-class preparation” and “post-class extension,” thereby creating an all-weather, multi-dimensional space for value cultivation.

In adopting the flipped classroom model, the author has observed that the lack of effective supervision and interactive mechanisms often leads students to merely

“log in and click through” the online sessions without any meaningful engagement. This pseudo-learning disrupts the integration of online and offline instruction, preventing online learning from achieving its intended outcomes and breaking the closed loop of classroom teaching. As a result, ideological-political education remains at the level of visual exposure, failing to reach students on a deeper level, let alone foster genuine value identification.

3. Strategies for Implementing Curriculum Ideology and Politics in the Teaching Reform of the Second Foreign Language Japanese

In view of the issues identified in second foreign language Japanese teaching, and grounded in practical teaching experience, the author argues that curriculum-based ideological and political education can be more effectively carried out through the following measures.

3.1. Deeply Excavating Ideological and Political Elements to Achieve Organic Integration of Knowledge and Values

Teachers are expected to conduct an in-depth study of the textbook, optimize teaching content, and identify points of resonance between Japanese linguistic knowledge and China's core socialist values, traditional culture, and craftsmanship spirit. By pinpointing the convergence points between textbook content and ideological-political elements, they can facilitate an organic integration of the two. For instance, during the introductory stage of kana learning, tracing the origins of Japanese kana naturally leads to a discussion of the influence of Chinese character culture on Japan and East Asia as a whole, thereby reinforcing cultural confidence. When teaching the honorific system, the underlying “harmony” culture embedded in giving-and-receiving expressions can be compared with China's tradition as a nation of etiquette, revealing both similarities and distinctions. In essence, teachers need to evolve from being mere “language instructors” into “cultural interpreters.”

However, most JSFL teachers come from language and literature backgrounds and lack a comprehensive grasp of ideological and political theory, which hinders their ability to naturally extract ideological-political elements from linguistic content. To address this, teachers should actively enhance their knowledge of traditional Chinese culture, current political affairs, and core socialist values. During lesson preparation, they should first identify the linguistic points and then seek naturally compatible entry points for ideological-political integration, avoiding lengthy sermons in favor of succinct expression through a single sentence or a brief anecdote. Through etymological analysis and thoughtful example sentence design, grammatical contexts can be reconstructed so that value transmission is grounded in knowledge, achieving a subtle and imperceptible educational effect. For example, when teaching the desiderative pattern “たい (tai, meaning want to)”, the flexibility of example sentence construction can be leveraged to guide

students in forming sentences such as “What kind of person I want to become,” thereby linking personal career aspirations with national development needs. Moreover, the course objectives of JSFL should be revised to incorporate ideological-political educational goals alongside existing ones, embedding value education throughout the entire teaching process. Furthermore, each lesson should explicitly define specific ideological-political cultivation points, systematically integrating education on socialism with Chinese characteristics, the Chinese Dream, ideal and belief cultivation, and excellent traditional Chinese culture with the instructional content, thereby providing teachers with clear and actionable guidance.

3.2. Thoroughly Exploring Cultural Roots and Dialectically Analyzing Chinese and Foreign Cultures

Cultural comparison should be elevated to the level of value reflection. For instance, when comparing the concepts of “family” in China and Japan, one can analyze the Chinese tradition of “family-state homology” (家国同构) in conjunction with the evolution of the Japanese “家制度 (ie system)” [6]. Through such in-depth comparison, students can gain insight into cultural choices shaped by different social formations, thereby reinforcing their Chinese cultural stance while simultaneously cultivating an inclusive and mutually appreciative international outlook. In practice, “家族” (family) can serve as a productive entry point. In Japan, the family is understood not merely as a kinship unit but as a “management community,” which has engendered a pronounced “group belongingness”—the company is regarded as a surrogate family, and individuals may sacrifice personal family interests for the sake of the organization. In contrast, the Chinese concept of family is rooted in blood lineage and patriarchal kinship, with an emphasis on blood ties. More fundamentally, Chinese culture upholds the notion of “family-state homology”—the family as a microcosm of the state and the state as an extended family. This deep exploration enables students to grasp why Chinese people often say “without the state, there is no family” [6]. Ultimately, this guides students toward a steadfast embrace of “family-state sentiment” as a uniquely cohesive value orientation within Chinese culture.

A dialectical perspective of “harmony in diversity” should be cultivated, guiding students to apply materialist dialectics in recognizing both the strengths of Japanese culture and the roots of its social problems. The purpose of comparison is not to judge which culture is superior, but to understand differences and thereby gain a clearer appreciation of the unique value of Chinese culture. For instance, when addressing the topic of “職人” (shokunin, craftsman) frequently found in Japanese textbooks—such as Japanese chefs or traditional artisans—the following approach can be taken: show documentary clips of Japanese craftsmen dedicating their entire lives to a single craft, and guide students to identify their strengths—focus, rigor, perfectionism, and dedication—as a “craftsmanship spirit” worthy of emulation. Building on this, contrast it with China’s “great country craftsmen” to

help students recognize that China's craftsmanship spirit not only pursues technical excellence but also emphasizes "innovation" and "commitment to the nation and family." The final conclusion is that Japanese culture embodies "craftsmanship form," while Chinese culture embodies "craftsmanship soul." Rather than blindly admiring Japan's conservatism, we should "innovate" while "upholding fundamental principles."

3.3. Implementing a Closed-Loop Teaching Model of "Pre-Class Guided Learning + In-Class Discussion + Post-Class Reflection"

To address the disconnection between online and offline instruction, a closed-loop teaching model comprising "pre-class guided learning, in-class discussion, and post-class reflection" should be implemented [7]. Prior to class, based on the thematic units of the offline textbook (e.g., "food," "transportation"), 3- to 5-minute bilingual (Chinese-Japanese) short videos should be produced or curated and released on the online platform in advance. Given the limited Japanese proficiency of JSFL students, all online videos and reading materials should be equipped with bilingual subtitles or parallel Chinese-Japanese texts, with key vocabulary annotated with Japanese pronunciation, ensuring that ideological-political content simultaneously serves as language learning material. Guided learning tasks should be assigned, requiring students to vote or post brief opinions on the online platform after viewing. During class, online data should be directly leveraged to initiate instruction. Capitalizing on the face-to-face advantages of the offline classroom, instructors can comment on typical viewpoints and data from online discussions, engaging students in collaborative exploration of the cultural psychology and social values underlying the phenomena under study. Concurrently, grammar points relevant to the textbook content should be introduced, with example sentence practice conducted around ideological-political themes. After class, open-ended assignments should be given, requiring students to synthesize online-acquired knowledge with offline classroom reflections to produce original work. Students upload their work to the online platform, where, after all have viewed them, they engage in liking and peer evaluation. Through this interactive process, students resonate with their peers' achievements, fostering a positive public opinion environment and enhancing collective honor and cultural confidence. Platform backend data should be utilized to monitor students' engagement levels rather than mere viewing duration; special attention should be paid to the quality of discussion forum contributions and the number of likes received. If cognitive misunderstandings on certain topics are identified, targeted supplementary corrections should be incorporated into the next round of pre-class resource delivery, thereby forming a continuous cycle of teaching improvement. Through the organic integration of these three steps, curriculum ideology and politics cease to be rigid indoctrination and instead become a multi-dimensional educational process permeating the entire "preview-study-review" cycle.

4. Conclusions

The integration of curriculum ideology and politics into the teaching reform of Japanese as a second foreign language (JSFL) is fundamentally aimed at achieving the organic unification of value shaping, knowledge transmission, and skill development. To this end, teachers are expected to fully leverage the educational potential of the course, thoroughly excavate ideological and political elements, and foster a seamless integration of knowledge, instruction, and value orientation.

When engaging in cultural comparisons, it is crucial to maintain a dialectical perspective rooted in the principle of “harmony in diversity,” to avoid oversimplification, and to encourage rational and critical reflection. Through in-depth comparative analysis, students are able to understand the cultural choices arising from different social structures, thereby reinforcing their Chinese cultural identity while simultaneously cultivating an inclusive and mutually enriching global perspective.

Moreover, the adoption of a closed-loop teaching framework—comprising “pre-class guided learning, in-class discussion, and post-class reflection”—facilitates the effective convergence of online and offline instructional modes. This systematic and holistic approach effectively resolves the issues of forced integration and superficial treatment commonly encountered in the implementation of curriculum ideology and politics, ultimately ensuring that JSFL teaching and ideological-political education move forward in synergy toward shared educational objectives.

This systematic approach effectively overcomes the problems of forced integration and superficiality in curriculum-based ideological-political education, achieving a genuine integration of second foreign language Japanese teaching and ideological-political education.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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