

Japanese for Heritage Language Speakers Higher Education Program

Background Information

Institution: California State University, Long Beach

College: College of Liberal Arts

Department: Department of Asian and Asian American Studies

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Type of institution: four year university

Languages/dialects taught: Japanese

Courses: JAPN 385

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: This course is designed to assist learners of Japanese as a heritage language to further develop their language skills and socio-cultural knowledge. The course intends to strengthen the students' oral language at a formal level, and to develop literacy skills by utilizing the Japanese language in the community through community service learning.

Students who have successfully completed this course should be able to demonstrate:

- an improvement in their oral and written Japanese language skills at a formal level
- their understanding of the Japanese American community and the concept of community service
- skill to continue their study independently after they complete formal instruction

Type of program: This program is heritage track within a foreign language program. The instruction is individualized, taking varied language proficiency into consideration. Students can repeat the course for up to six units.

Program origin: The Japanese program at CSULB was granted a Japan Foundation grant to hire a tenure track faculty member to develop new courses that included a course for Japanese heritage learners.

Faculty's and administration's expectations for the program: Faculty expect to accommodate the needs of the heritage language learners who have a wide range of language proficiency and to teach different levels of linguistic formality in the oral and written modes, communication and reading strategies, and everyday language use.

Students

Total student enrollment: 12-15

Age of students: 18-26

How the program identifies heritage speakers:

- placement test
- oral interview

How the program determines the language background and language proficiency of students: When students receive a high score on the placement test, an individual oral interview is conducted.

Percentage of students who complete the program: 90%

Percentage of students who continue to study the heritage language after completing the program: After the heritage course, most students enroll in fourth year content courses taught in Japanese.

Possible reasons for student withdrawal: Some students need to take other courses to fulfill their degree requirements and are unable to fit additional Japanese classes into their schedules.

Faculty

Number of faculty in the program: 5

Languages in which faculty members are proficient: Japanese and English

Proficiency level: All faculty members are native speakers of Japanese. All were educated in Japan and the U.S.

Credentials: MA and Ph.D. in Education and Linguistics

Professional development opportunities for faculty members: Faculty members attend international, national, and regional conferences.

Professional development opportunities faculty members need: Faculty members would like to attend conferences that focus on heritage language acquisition, teaching, and learning.

Instruction

Total contact hours per week: 2.5 hours

Times per week: 2

Language skills

Heritage language skills:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Language Learning Strategies

Levels of language proficiency reached by the end of the program: Because language proficiency varies at the start of the course and the instruction is individualized, language proficiency at the end of the program varies by student.

Culture

Aspects of culture taught:

- Customs
- Traditions/Beliefs
- Social and cultural norms
- Cultural appropriateness

Kind of student identity fostered by program: The program fosters a bicultural identity.

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program:

- Whole class activities
- Individualized instruction
- Online reading activities
- Community service learning

Materials

Materials used for instruction:

- Internet sources
 - newspaper articles
 - essays
 - lecture notes from Japanese universities

Technology used for instruction:

- Computers/Internet

Assessment

Assessments used to evaluate students' progress:

- Weekly quizzes
- Chapter tests
- Final exams
- Student self-assessment
- Performance-based tasks
- ACTFL OPI
- Portfolio

Articulation

Connections: Japanese, and Japanese-American Community, Japanese universities for education abroad program

Opportunities for using the heritage language and developing cultural knowledge outside the program:

- Students use Japanese at service learning sites in the community.
 - Japanese radio stations
 - Non-profit Japanese organizations
 - Japanese heritage schools

How the program promotes involvement with the local heritage community:

Students engage in a community service learning activity as a course requirement.

What the program has in place

Types of financial support the program receives: Institutional support

Desired assistance or collaboration for program from other entities:

Financial support to develop additional courses

System for graduating students and granting credit: Students earn letter grade that count towards their overall grade point average.

Faculty research on heritage language issues: The faculty has presented papers on Japanese heritage learners at national conferences, and has published journal articles and book chapters.

Douglas, M.O. (In press). A profile of Japanese heritage learners, individualized curriculum and its effectiveness. In D. M. Brinton & O. Kagan (Eds.), *Heritage Language Acquisition: A New Field Emerging*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Douglas, M.O. (2006). Pedagogical theories and approaches to teach young learners of Japanese as a heritage language. *Heritage Language Journal*, University of California, Los Angeles, Vol. 3, pp. 60-80.

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Douglas, M.O., Kataoka, H., Kishimoto, T. (2003). A study of language background of students at Japanese language schools and Japanese supplementary schools: A Survey Report. *Review of International Education*. Tokyo: Tokyo Gakugei University.

Kataoka, H. C., Koshiyama, Y. & Shibata, S. (2005). Amerika ni okeru hoshuukoo no jidoo, seito no nihongoryoku oyobi eigoryoku no shuutoku jyookyoo (Japanese and English language Ability of Students at Supplementary Japanese Schools in the U.S.), in *Kokusai Kyooiku Hyooron (Review of International Education)*, No. 2, Tokyo: Gakugei University, Tokyo.

Kataoka, H. C., & Douglas, M. (2004). Proceedings of the National Network Conference for Saturday Japanese Schools in the U.S. (Zenbei Nihongo Gakkoo Nettowaaku Kaigi).

Kataoka, H. C. (2004) Study of Language Environment of the Children at Japanese Heritage Language Schools and Hoshuu-koo" (Keishooogo-koo to Nihongo Hoshuukoo ni okeru Gakiushuusha no Gengo Haikei Choosa), in *Kokusai Kyooiku Hyooron (Review of International Education)*, No. 1, Tokyo: Gakugei University, Tokyo.

Kataoka, H.C. (2002). *2002-nen Asahi Gakuen Orenji-koo Jidoo-seito no Gengo Kankyoo Choosa Kekka Hookoku-sho" (2002 Report of the Students' Language Background Survey Research at Asahi Gakuen, Orange School)*, a paper submitted to the Asahi Gakuen Board of Directors and disseminated among administrators and parents of students at Asahi Gakuen Orange School.

Special challenges

Challenges the program has experienced: At least 10 students must be enrolled in the course, if not, it is cancelled. Due to this policy, it is not possible to guarantee that the course will be offered regularly.

Insights: Community service learning and self-reflection really helps students establish concrete learning objectives.