

Effectiveness Of Introduction Of Indology Course In Japanese Department

Supriya Pathal

supriya.phatak@yahoo.com

Faculty, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune

Abstract:

Being students of Japanese language students study cultural and historical aspects of Japan at all 3 BA (undergraduate) levels. Similarly, MA Program is dedicated towards learning more about Japan and Japanese language in detail with inclusions of subjects namely, linguistics for 4 semesters, and history of Japan. Besides having deep knowledge about Japan it is a necessity to have in depth knowledge about own country and its heritage. Being Indians, students are also expected to have knowledge about Indian culture, history, literature and philosophy i.e. Indology. Here in this paper we will study how introduction of Indology subject has helped students of Japanese language department in their career.

Being students of Japanese language students study cultural and historical aspects of Japan at all 3 BA (undergraduate) levels. Similarly, MA Program is dedicated towards learning more about Japan and Japanese language in detail with inclusions of subjects namely, linguistics for 4 semesters, and history of Japan for 1 semester, Japanese literature for 1 semester and cultural trends or Japanese society for 1 semester. Students also learn teaching methodology for 2 semesters whereas interpretation for 1 semester during 2 year MA program. These courses are based on practical knowledge which helps students to use their knowledge in different fields where Japanese language is essential.

This course offers a comprehensive knowledge about Japan and Japanese language in all and therefore students more than 60% of students who are selected for MEXT scholarships from all over India are from TMV. Employment rate of students from Japanese language department is more than 90 %.

Besides having deep knowledge about Japan it is a necessity to have in depth knowledge about own country and its heritage. Being Indians, students are also expected to have knowledge about Indian culture, history, literature and philosophy i.e. Indology. "Indology is a study of Indian history, literature, philosophy and culture."

Similarly, the knowledge of Indology is a requirement of professions related to Japanese language as Japan and India has strong ties in past which connected two countries very closely. According to records in Nihon Shoki, Buddhism was accepted by Emperor Kinmei in the year 552CE.

The Buddhism was introduced to Japan by Paekche or Baekche King Song Myong in 552 with the gift of bronze statue of Gautam Buddha.

Later in 736, Bodhisena, a Buddhist monk from Chennai, Tamilnadu of India came to Japan via China in search of Bodhisattva Manjushree who was believed to have taken incarnation in mountains of Japan with the name Gyoki. Bodhisena was the first Indian Monk to visit Japan. Similarly, he was believed to have brought true teachings of Gautam Buddha as he was also considered to be incarnation of disciples of Gautam Buddha and both of them had promised each other in earlier birth to meet again in next birth. Before Bodhisena came to Japan, teachings of Buddhism were based on teachings from monks in China and Korea.

Bodhisena lived all his life in Japan. He and his disciple Bidatsu taught Sanskrit and philosophy of Buddhism. Similarly, they taught some Indian dance forms which were adopted in Japanese dance forms and are still practiced. Not only that, a Japanese noble named Kibi no Makibi who travelled with Bodhisena from China and even in Japan was very impressed by Buddhist philosophy and Sanskrit language.

Kibi no Makibi takes the credit of introducing Katakana script in Japanese language. Letters in this script are inspired or based on Sanskrit script. This script was introduced to write Siddham script and Sanskrit sutras.

Similarly, many Hindu gods such as Ganapati, Laxmi, Kubera



With local names are worshiped in Japan along with Buddhism and Shintoism. Even some of ritual dances like Bugaku in Shinto shrines are based on dances introduced and taught by Bodhisena and his disciple Buttetsu.

Hence Japan and government has special love for India. For the special love and respect towards lord Buddha Japanese government funded a road from Patna to Gaya.

Similarly, they donated 300 Crores to Ajanta Ellora caves or even other popular pilgrim place where Buddhist heritage site are located.

While visiting religious places the tourists also visit Indian popular sites which come under world heritage. Since India has ancient civilization it is really very difficult to know about each and every place. However, it is important to have a basic knowledge of such popular places in India.

Japan is one of the most important tourist generating markets for India from East Asia and it contributed 2.24% to the total FTAs in India during 2018, and occupied twelfth position. The arrivals from Japan grew from 29,032 in 1981 to 2,36,236 in 2018 at a CAGR of 11.7%.

During the year 2018, 99.1% of tourists from Japan visited India by air, 0.6% by land and 0.3% by sea routes. As far as port of disembarkation is concerned, 57.8% disembarked at Delhi airport. Of the total Japanese nationals who arrived in India, majority of 73.2% were male and 26.8% were female. The dominant age group of Japanese tourists was 45-54 years contributing about 26.3% of tourist arrivals followed by the age group 35-44 years (23.8%) and 25-34 years (17.9%). The maximum number of tourists arrived in the quarter Jan-Mar (27.7%) followed by October-December (27.4%). Out of the total arrivals from Japan, 61.3% were for the purpose of Business and Professional followed by Leisure Holiday and Recreation (34.9%) and Indian Diaspora (2.8%).

The knowledge of Indology is not limited to only tourism but it is important even when one does a job in company or even in Japan. A students must be able to answer queries of Japanese people related to Indian history, culture etc.

Effectiveness Of Introduction Of Indology Course In Japanese Department

The above statistics show need for Indology subject to be introduced at under graduate level and master's level as an industrial need. This course was introduced in the year 2015 at undergraduate level and again in the year 2019 at MA level.

Following topics were covered in the course were:

Indian history

Time line

History of architecture and art

World heritage sites

Sources to understand Indian history

Local city heritage

Murti abhyas

All such subjects proved to be very beneficial to the students who studied Indology as a subject along with Japanese language.

Following are the testimonies of students who are in the field of teaching and interpretation.

MA 1:

“I studied Indology for one semester of MA. This is how it has helped me:

1. The history I had studied in school was mainly from when the Mughals entered India. Study of Indology helped me in my informal conversations with the Japanese people as I was more aware of my rich cultural heritage. I think this helps in generating more interest about Indian culture among Japanese people.

2. As a part of my work, I frequently visit heritage sites such as Ajanta and Ellora with Japanese people. Though expert guides explain us the monuments there, I can handle queries that arise later in a better way. I can also give some background to the Japanese people before visiting such places.

3. I work on some cultural projects with Japan and knowledge of Indology helps me understand and explore things in a better way. Also, study of Indology might open the avenue of expert tour and cultural guides to students.”

MA2:

“1. We get information about the rich heritage of our country.

2. Before somebody tells us about our country's history, heritage better we learn it from authentic sources like TMV.

3. This will help the student to explain it to the Japanese visitors about our ancient heritage”

This course introduced at MA program has enabled students to know more about Indian history and heritage in detail. It enabled them in their professions.

Following were the outcomes course:

1. They could explain properly about heritage sites to Japanese visitors in detailed manner as compared to previous tours.
2. Similarly they are able to explain properly if a Japanese person cross-checks information given by local guide.
3. It saved time of interpreting local guide's explanation in to Japanese and vice a versa.
4. They could move at their own pace.
5. Teachers could compare and explain eras parallel to Japanese Eras while teaching history or cultural aspects.
6. Also while teaching Japanese syllables they could explain that Katakana, Hiragana scripts were developed by Buddhist monk/s.
7. Since the interpreter has detailed knowledge about the Indian heritage they get referred by Japanese people which helps student get more work.

References

1. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Hinduism_in_Japan.
2. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/202004/India%20Tourism%20Statistics%202019.pdf>
. <https://www.lexico.com/definition/indology>. (n.d.).
3. Williams, M. (n.d.). Buddhist Monk Bodhisena in Japan. *History of Relations of Asian Countries* , 4.