

Research Paper

Contemporary problems arising from the similarity in content between Japanese language textbooks used in Japanese language sections at Chinese universities and high school *Kokugo* textbooks used in Japan

TANAKA, Yusuke*

Abstract

By drawing a comparison between textbooks, this paper analyzes the current situation of, and contemporary issues concerning the problem of “teaching Japanese language as kokugo”, which was widely discussed from the late 1970s into the 1980s with reference to the study of Japanese language in Chinese universities. The main conclusions of the paper are as follows: (1) Many of the authors and works included in Japanese language textbooks currently in use also appear in kokugo textbooks, which means that the problem that was pointed out in the 1980s still persists, and (2) The main cause of it is proved to be the fact that in the curriculum guidelines as well as among teachers, students, textbook authors and researchers, there exists a common view that the aim of textbooks is to learn and understand “the correct Japanese language / Japanese culture / soul of the Japanese people” and therefore it has been considered both appropriate and efficient to refer to kokugo textbooks when making Japanese language textbooks. Given the above, I point out that Japanese language education at Chinese universities is currently on a stage where, based on a thorough understanding of the close connections with kokugo education and also of the differences between the two, its purpose and the learning it will propose and develop in future should be reconsidered.

Keywords

Japanese language education at Chinese universities, Japanese language textbooks,
Kokugo textbooks, similarities in content, reading

* Waseda University Graduate School of Japanese Applied Linguistics.
Research Fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.
E-mail address: y.tanakaoffice@gmail.com