

Japanese Studies at the University of Ljubljana

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Background

Our department was founded in 1995/96 and from then on consists of two independent study courses, Japanese Studies and Chinese Studies. In the recent years, African Studies has been formed, presently as some methodology classes. Before the foundation of the department, Slovene specialists in the field of Japanese and Chinese studies had their activities in the Slovene Oriental Society, organizing some language courses, conferences, etc. Now those activities are taken over by the department.

Staff members

Dr. Andrej BEKEŠ	full professor
Dr. Akiko NAKAJIMA	assistant professor
Dr. Chikako SHIGEMORI BU AR	assistant professor
Kristina HMELJAK SANGAWA, MA	assistant
Nagisa MORITOKI, MA	assistant
Yufuko TSUNEKI, MA	lecturer
Michiru MOGI, MA	lecturer
Hyeon Sook RYU, MA	assistant

Number of students as of October 2004

Japanese Studies

1 st year	75
2 nd year	21~
3 rd year	28
4 th year	17
5 th year (writing diploma thesis)	54
total	195

Evening language courses

beginners	20
intermediate	10
total	30

Curriculum (no. of hours/week: 1 hour = 45 minutes)

1 st year:	Modern Japanese I (lecture 2, exercise 5, language lab 1) Japanese Writing System (2) History of East Asia I (2)
2 nd year:	Modern Japanese II (lecture 2, exercise 6) Introduction to Japanese Grammar I (2) Methodology I (2) History of East Asia II (2)
3 rd year:	Modern Japanese III (lecture 2, exercise 2) Introduction to Japanese Literature (2) Introduction to Translation Techniques I (2) Text Processing in Japanese (2) Introduction to Classical Japanese (2) Chinese Philosophy (2) + one optional course (2)
4 th year:	Introduction to Translation Techniques II (2) History of East Asian Philosophy (2) History of East Asian Culture (2) Methodology II (2) + two optional courses (2 × 2)

Compulsory for graduation: Diploma thesis (2)**Optional courses:**

Classical Japanese (2)
 Classical Chinese “Kanbun” (2)
 Introduction to Japanese Calligraphy (2)
 Introduction to Islamic Culture (2)
 Special Issues in Japanese History (2)
 Special Issues in Japanese Society (2)
 Special Issues in Japanese Grammar (2)
 Writing Techniques (2)
 Korean Language I (4)
 Korean Language II (2)
 Teaching Japanese (2)

Double-major system

Japanese Studies is a double-major course. Students must choose another major and study both majors at the university. Therefore, the average number of hours for a student attending classes per week amounts to around 30, which is quite a burden. The combinations of two major subjects are various. There are a few students each year studying both Japanese and Chinese in our department, others decide for History, Geography, Philosophy, Sociology, Linguistics, Anthropology, Art History, Musicology and so on, or another language and literature major, such as German Language and Literature, French Language and Literature, Spanish Language and Literature, English Language and Literature, etc.

Guest professors

Since most of our staff members are language-oriented, lectures on other subjects (literature, philosophy, religion, sociology, history, etc.) are mostly given by guest professors from Japan. The guest professors usually stay in Ljubljana for a month or so and have lectures in intensive blocks (6 to 8 hours per week). Students' knowledge of the Japanese language after the 2nd and / or 3rd year is expected to be good enough to attend these lectures given in the Japanese language.

Teachers' training

Twice every year, in March and July, two-week Japanese language courses for would-be-teachers are organized. The student teachers from undergraduate and graduate level come from Tsukuba University and Japan Women's University with which we have exchange agreements. Some of the classes consist of the students in the department, others are of learners invited from other departments and outside the university.

Study in Japan

The ideal time for our students to go to Japan is in the 4th year of their study. Unfortunately, there are only a few scholarships available, and the priority for these scholarships is given to the best students. Other students go to Japan partly or fully on their own expenses.

Exchange programmes with Japanese universities

Currently we have exchange agreements with Tsukuba University and Gunma University. A similar agreement will be signed with Japan Women's University this year. With these universities, we have the following arrangements:

- as mentioned under 7. (Teachers' training) above, we accept student teachers to experience Japanese language teaching;
- one to two students from Gunma University come to our university as exchange students every year;
- our students go to Tsukuba or Gunma for a year as one-year exchange students;
- their professors come to our department as guest professors.

It has also become a tradition to exchange students with Tohoku Fukushi University on short-term basis, about one month. Their students come to Ljubljana every November for a month, our students go to their university in November / December for a month. Students experience special lectures and language classes organized by the hosting university during their stay.

Diploma presentation

The diploma theses for Japanese Studies are of various topics, depending on students' majors and interests. They may be written as one common thesis for both majors, or two theses separately for each major. The diploma thesis is written in Slovene with a short summary in Japanese. Each student must present his / her thesis orally in Japanese as a part of the final diploma examination.

After graduation

It must be mentioned that there are not enough job opportunities for our students after graduation. Possible employments are in the Foreign Ministry, travel agencies, cultural institutions, schools, and trade companies. Another job possibility is in the field of translation and interpretation. Some of our former students are presently in Japan for further study at the postgraduate level.

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