

“Japanese Studies in Taiwan with global prospects.”

The lecturer of this week is the Dean of College of Foreign Languages and Literature Shing-Ching Shyu. The topic of lecture is “Japanese Studies in Taiwan with global prospects.” The content of lecture can be divided into eight parts.

I. Current situation and Task

- (1) Importance of Japanese Studies in Taiwan
- (2) The necessity of Japan experts
- (3) Japanese Studies in Taiwan with global prospects

II. Suggestion and Conception for international Japanese Studies in Taiwan.

III. New perspective for Japanese Studies: What is the characteristics of Japanese Studies in Taiwan?

IV. Question the Tasks of modern East Asia

- (1) Serve the functions of “collective knowledge base”
- (2) For East Asia, what is modern?

V. How should we think of East Asian Community

VI. East Asia from the perspective of history of thought

VII. The development and various aspects of the studies on colonial Taiwan

- (1) The Wave of “Objectification” in colonial education system
- (2) The complicated relations between colonial governance and language culture: Studies on translator and translation
- (3) Japan element in law of Taiwan
- (4) Representation of “Taiwan Incident (1874)”: The formation of Taiwan image in Meiji Japan era

VIII. Intellectual exchanges in “Japan and Taiwan Asia Future Forum”

In the section of “Current situation and Task,” Dean Shing-Ching Shyu mentions that even without official foreign relations between Taiwan and Japan since 1972, both sides maintain close economic, cultural, and education ties. An evidence is that universities in Taiwan has promoted Japanese language education since 1960s. Around 40 universities established Department of Japanese language and literature or Department of Applied Japanese and 13 universities established Center for Japanese studies. However, in spite of the vigorous development of Japanese language education, the current development was not satisfactory from the aspects of “cultivating Japan experts.” In light of this, what direction should Center for Japanese studies in universities head from now on? What can scholars on Japanese studies in

Taiwan contribute to the society through their research? These tasks left unsolved.

Thus, from the perspective of Japanese studies, it is important to understand the current tasks of Japanese studies in Taiwan correctly and recognize the problems needed to be solve. Then in order to intensify the understanding of embedded parts of Japanese culture and its nation and state, we need to intensify Japanese studies in every discipline. In regards to this, we should not be restricted within separate and individual study but we should unite and integrate effectively distinguished research results and talents aggregated in Taiwan. In addition, under the cooperation among industrial, official, and academia, we should set up clear goal and educate outstanding young scholars of the next generation related to Japanese studies. Through these research and education activities, both Taiwan and Japan are able to intensify mutual understanding in boarder and deeper fields and advance more close cooperation. This is the direction that we should pursue as researchers and educators and it is urgent to work on it.

Dean Shing-Ching Shyu also emphasizes the importance of Japanese studies in Taiwan and the necessity of Japan experts and look forward to cooperate with other researchers in East Asian area. Through cooperation between Taiwanese Japan experts and other researchers in East Asian area, we are able to find our shortcoming and discover our strengths. Through these efforts, we hope to represent Taiwan's characteristics and create a special position in Japanese studies in the world including Japan.

In conclusion, Dean Shing-Ching Shyu hopes to unite and integrate research institutes involving in Japanese studies in Taiwan and establishes "United Association of Japanese Studies in Taiwan." Through institutional cooperation among industrial, official, and academia in both Taiwan and Japan, the goals are not only to unite horizontally researchers and research center in Taiwan but also to cooperate with "East Asian Consortium of Japanese Studies." Through mutual cooperation, we expect to establish an education system for next generation scholars for Japanese studies and to realize multiple development of Japanese studies internationally. With these experience and achievement, we expect in establish a "National Center for Japanese Studies," affiliated with Taiwanese government, in near future.

Dean Shing-Ching Shyu not only explains the importance of Japan-related studies in Taiwan, but also points out the problems faced Japanese language education in Taiwan. There are many "Japan-hater" and "Japanophile" in Taiwan. Most of the former belong to Mainlander group in Taiwan. Many of them were told since childhood with the thought that Japan is enemy. Thus, even elementary students who have never gone to Japan said that the countries that I hate most is Japan. Most of the later are those young people who access to Japanese subculture and were influenced

by those subculture. Some in these group consider everything in Japan is good and have the tendency of Japanolatry. However, whether Japanophile or Japanolatry is not a good phenomenon. For us whom specialize in Japanese language research and education, our goal is to train Japan experts. Japan experts should not simply speak fluent Japanese and have some basic knowledge of Japan, but also should comprehend the embedded part of Japanese culture and have intensive understanding of Japanese nation and countries. For training Japan experts of next generation, we need to unite and integrate effectively distinguished research results and intensify Japanese studies in various discipline. Japanese language, literature, and culture is central basis for training Japan experts and it is absolutely necessary. Except these, other fields like politics, economics, and law and macro and micro conception of history are equally important and should not be ignored. Studies in discipline of humanities and social science should not develop separated without dialogue. Dialogues between humanities and social science can create newer perspectives and are beneficial for studies in both discipline.

Responding to the need of diversified job market, many universities and education institutes with Japanese languages departments design courses like “Business Japanese,” “Industrial Japanese,” “Travel Japanese,” “Legal Japanese,” “Medical and Nursing Japanese.” These courses enable Japanese language learners to increase their ability to respond to the need of diversified job market. We are pleased to see this changes. Only changes can spark new ideas and cross different disciplines and create new perspectives. These changes responding to the need of diversified job market create an excellent timing for integrating Japan-related studies in various disciplines. Japanese studies should not simply respond the need of job market, but also promote interactions with Asian countries and the world. To connecting to the world, the first step is connecting to Asia, especially East Asia where Taiwan and Japan located.