

Spice of Life - Language Teaching in Japan

Saturday 2 March 2024 15:50 (30 minutes)

In the realm of language teaching, there's a complex task at hand: guiding individuals through the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a specific language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Japan, renowned for its rich culture and technological advancements, offers a unique linguistic landscape, especially for third-country nationals living there (Kubota, 2020).

Living in Japan means navigating multiple languages in various contexts. Students study in Japanese at school, converse in their native tongue at home, and often use English or other languages in social or professional settings (Brown & Ogawa, 2017). While this diversity adds depth to Japan's cultural tapestry, it also poses challenges for language learning (Dörnyei, 2005). However, these challenges also present opportunities for personal growth and cultural enrichment as learners adapt to different communication styles (Gardner, 2014).

Through exploring the experiences of language learners in Japan, focusing on their successes, struggles, and strategies for language acquisition, this research project aims to illuminate the complexities of language learning in a multicultural setting (Yashima, 2010). By celebrating the richness of linguistic diversity and encouraging learners to embrace the variety of languages around them, this project aims to inspire a deeper appreciation for different cultures and communication styles (Canagarajah, 2013). In my talk, I want to share how this affects individuals who are termed as third-country nationals in their linguistic accomplishments and also how they can contribute to the fabric of Japanese society by adding diversity. I will also explore the language goals of Japan-based learners, and we can compare their journeys.

Bio: Samia Haseeb Khan was raised in Oman and India. She has been based in Kansai for over 14 years now and has been teaching learners of various ages and levels. Recently, she has been working on translation projects along with personal research. She is a part-time student at Shinshu University working on her research in Cancer therapeutics.

Presenter: KHAN, Samia Haseeb (Shinshu University)