

Re: Does anybody else think that learning to write kanji is over-prioritized in language classes outside of Japan?

Re: Does anybody else think that learning to write kanji is over-prioritized in language classes outside of Japan?

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang.japan/2008-04/msg00027.html>

- *From:* "moon.neko" <moon.neko@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 1 Apr 2008 16:16:59 -0700 (PDT)
-

Some Japanese people (like Kenzaburo Oe) have really (and I mean _really_) bad handwriting, so don't worry about it.

I'm so glad you've mentioned that, if anyone ever makes fun of my handwriting in Japan I'm going to pull that fact out and astound them

^_^

You have to be realistic. In my limited experience, I can only think of a couple of languages that might actually be a taller mountain to climb than Japanese for native anglophones, and those languages are pretty rare. (The Inuit languages definitely look more difficult.)

I know Japanese is supposed to be a really hard language to learn, but I've always been really impressed with the logic of the grammar and relative lack of exceptions to rules, etc. In contrast, French grammar and pronunciation seems really hard. Also, I did try learning Mandarin Chinese on and off for the last few years, and even though I managed to get to understand quite a bit, my pronunciation was so shocking that Mandarin speakers pretty much just laughed so I've pretty much given up. I'm also engaged to a Cantonese speaker and haven't even tried learning Cantonese yet, I'm just too scared @_@

I suppose the kanji would be considered the hardest part of Japanese, but it's quite easy to get to a communicative level of proficiency and even kanji aren't THAT hard, so I do always wonder why Japanese gets a reputation of being difficult. (Which is great though, it makes me look smart to my peers! muahaha)

Don't get me wrong, though. Nobody in their right mind would claim that maintaining mastery of written kanji is useful, because it isn't.

Re: Does anybody else think that learning to write kanji is over-prioritized in language classes outside of Ja

Re: Does anybody else think that learning to write kanji is over-prioritized in language classes outside of Japan?

Nobody writes them these days. Writing the kanji is the best way to learn them. Once you've learned them, you forget them without constant practice.

See, I suppose that's what I primarily object to in Japanese classroom method. When one's taking an advanced Japanese course, you're expected to be able to handwrite a very high number of kanji off the top of your head. I've been thinking of doing my post-grad in Japanese when I get back, but I just know meeting the writing requirement for the language classes is going to involve another month straight of writing kanji again and again so that I can memorize them for the course and then quite possibly forget them again (I suppose I could keep them up with a few hours a week practice, but I'm not sure I see the point).

Well, I've actually started studying for the kanken (I posted about this before), so I'm working my way back, but the only time I write any kanji these days is in shopping lists for my wife, so the gap has grown from when I was learning the kanji. I could write all of them then, but now, it's pretty iffy. And in fact our trip to Japan this year has been moved back, so I'm not going to be able to take the kanken, and my enthusiasm in practicing has waned a bit.

Good luck!

.

Re: Does anybody else think that learning to write kanji is over-prioritized in language classes outside of Japan?