

Kanji Learning Strategies of Malaysian Students in a Preparatory Course for Japanese Universities : How the Use of Strategies Change Over Time and How It Varies Between High and Low Achievers

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This study investigates use of kanji learning strategies of students from non-kanji background. Questionnaires on kanji learning strategies were administered twice (after 4 months and 1 year following entry to the course) to 100 Malaysian students in a preparatory course for Japanese universities. This study aims to analyze how the use of kanji learning strategies change as students' learning period of kanji extends, and to determine the characteristics of strategies used by students achieving high scores in an exam.

Statistical analyses of questionnaire responses reveal that 1) as students' learning period extends, the use of strategies for organizing kanji increase and this tendency appears stronger among those who achieved high scores in the exam, 2) while the use of 'repeated writing' strategy decreases, the use of other strategies for memorizing and compromising increase, 3) a 'using kanji as often as one can' strategy is used frequently and continuously by students who achieved high scores. The results also suggest a possibility that the knowledge for organizing kanji introduced in the tutorials has an influence upon students' choice of kanji learning strategies.

'Watch! Teaching Japanese Videos' Project

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This paper reports on the 'Watch! Teaching Japanese Videos' project which utilized Internet video distribution services and SNS. Using the mottoes 'You can acquire several teaching tips by simply watching the videos' and 'You can easily implement the ideas by simply watching the videos', 97 videos targeted at JFL teachers in Thai secondary schools were circulated through the Internet from May 2014 to February 2015. The videos offer a broad range of topics and include classroom activities for the JFL textbooks most commonly used in Thai secondary schools as well as classroom control and team teaching ideas. In this paper, we describe the project aims and development process; thereafter, based on the results of a user questionnaire, we outline the problems identified by the project evaluation and discuss the future prospects.

A Teachers Training Course Enhancing 21st Century Skills through Learners' Experience: What Thai Secondary Teachers Discovered and Learned

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Acquiring 21st Century Skills should be encouraged in Thai secondary schools. It is needed in the global society. However, most teachers still doubt whether it is really necessary to bring in these skills and how to adopt them in Japanese language lessons, even though they have recognized their necessity. To address this, the Ministry of Thai Education and the Japan Foundation, Bangkok held a teacher camp focused on project-based learning activities. At the camp, the teachers experienced various activities from the perspective of learners. After that, by reflecting on what they had learned, they considered the necessity of 21st Century Skills and how to apply the skills in their Japanese language lessons. According to questionnaires, reports and interviews, the teachers-participants recognized the importance of 21st Century Skills and teacher's role, and began to think that they should have students develop these skills in their lessons.

Development of Japanese-Language Textbooks for Elementary and Secondary School in Mongolia : An Approach to Proficiency-Oriented Language Learning and Autonomy Support

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About 70% of Japanese-language learners in Mongolia are students in elementary and secondary schools. No standardized syllabus or teaching materials currently exist for these schools. Mongolia Japanese-Language Teachers Association organized a project to develop Japanese-language textbooks for elementary and secondary schools. The association created a textbook series called "Nihongo Dekirumon", to accompany Mongolia Japanese-language education standard. The standard has two principles; 1) to foster foreign language proficiency needed to express ideas freely in the society to achieve mutual understandings, 2) to foster the abilities to self-learning. The textbook series, therefore, has two features to account for proficiency and support learners' autonomy. Discussions with teachers who used the trial edition of these textbooks led to improvement of the books, and the students who used the books perceived the improvement of their speaking abilities. However, we found that most teachers have traditional teaching beliefs that "writing is learning", which hinders their adoption of the new standards. The change of textbooks is not designed to change their ways of teaching, which is our next issue to solve.

Japanese Language Advocacy in Tasmania – A Trial Program: Nihongo Roadshow

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Since its early years, The Japan Foundation, Sydney (JFSYD)'s Japanese Language Department has focussed on providing Professional Development opportunities (PDs) for teachers of Japanese, and Learner Events to encourage and inspire learners of Japanese. However, following the inaugural National Symposium on Japanese Language Education (NSJLE) in 2012, JFSYD came to recognise that advocacy for Japanese language education is also important. In response to this, JFSYD trialled a project titled 'Nihongo Roadshow', which integrated existing programs (such as the aforementioned PDs and Learner Events) with a stress on, and from a perspective of, advocacy. This article reports on the Roadshow, considering the effectiveness of the project based on feedback from teacher-participants, and discussing implications and challenges that became apparent through organising and running the event.