

A Practical Approach to Speaking Japanese
Through Inquiry and Presentation

*"Studying Japanese Through Interviews:
A Practical Approach"*

*"Studying Japanese Through Questionnairing:
A Practical Approach"*

Abstract

We have been studying methods for the better teaching of spoken Japanese by the understanding of the problems involved with the teaching of conversational Japanese and reflection on these points. Here we would like to introduce *"Studying Japanese Through Interviews:A Practical Approach"* and *"Studying Japanese Through Questionnairing: A Practical Approach"*. This report is a summary of the methods used in the books, which aims to give students the ability to speak and teach natural conversation through speaking experiences about more advanced intellectual subjects, which are close to real communication in Japanese. The former textbook is designed for primary and intermediate students and the latter is for intermediate and advanced students.

The objectives of these books are as follows :

The main aim is to enable the students to make a presentation about a certain subject in Japanese in their class, but through the process, they are trained in the four skills of reading, speaking,

listening, and writing. To that point, this method includes total learning activities : Students must read books to gain knowledge or points on various subjects before preparing interviews or questionnaires. They speak about and discuss how to work with the subject or to allocate the work within their groups, or how to consolidate and analyze their respective data. They pick up listening experience during the process of data gathering or through listening to other people's opinions or statements inside and outside the classroom. Also, they gain writing experience when getting ready for interviews, when making questionnaires, while arranging the data, during making of notes for the presentations, or when writing reports. Through these activities, Japanese language skills are raised. We also intend to deepen the mutual understanding of the people and the different cultures through contact with many people, the collection of information and exchanging of opinions.

These textbooks are designed for foreign students who are studying in universities or graduate schools, or who are preparing for enrollment in universities or colleges, but also could be used by students in general who learn Japanese in ordinary Japanese language schools.

The contents and characteristics of the books are as follows :

Each step of the activities has a prescribed

form and the necessary materials for them, such as questionnaires, are prepared. In addition, various topics are presented in order to motivate students to work on a series of activities with interest. Working on the activities which are prescribed in a certain pattern several times will allow students to learn basic intellectual procedures. As for teachers, the various topics will be useful as teaching materials.

The topics and the structure of the lessons, learning activities, and teaching plans were shown specifically in the report.

These textbooks have not been evaluated objectively yet, but the putting together of a diverse range of materials saves time and labor with respect to preparation for lessons, so it gives teachers time to create more effective lessons or to pay more attention to the other things for class.

Because contemporary topics are chosen and they arouse students' interest, students will be able to choose some topics within a wide range. It is likely that this could stimulate their curiosities.

Also, they seem to progress class activities easier because activities are constructed in a specific pattern.