

Task-based language teaching approach in the teaching of Thai language speaking skills to Japanese students =

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Deskripsi Lengkap: <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20497212&lokasi=lokal>

Abstrak

This paper is a teaching note on the case of teaching Thai language speaking skills to Japanese students using task-based language teaching approach. Subjects included 17 second year Japanese students in the "Communication in Daily Life" course, a full academic year course. The course met 90 minutes once a week for 15 weeks per semester. The course objectives were for the students to be able to ask and answer questions in daily life situations; to be able to communicate with native speakers on various topics; and both communicative situations and complicated grammatical structure are emphasized. In task-based language learning, the primary focus of classroom activities was the task, and language was used as a tool to complete the meaningful tasks through authentic communication. Task-based language teaching provided opportunities for students to share ideas on an individual, pair and group basis. Each task was organized in 3 steps which proposed by Willis (1996) : pre-task, during task and post task. In the last week of semester 1, the students were asked to complete a questionnaire on students' self-assessment. The students reported the effectiveness of learning vocabulary from the tasks. In the students' view, authentic task materials such as pictures and VDO provided by the teacher in pre-task were very useful for them in the stage of planning the tasks. However, the students also reported difficulties in speaking fluently because of their inadequate vocabulary. Results from the students' self assessment indicated their satisfaction with the teaching approach employed in this course. It has been widely concluded that Japanese students tend to be shy and have nothing to say in class because of the fear of making mistakes. However, Japanese students in this class can communicate effectively in public with no fear and shyness. There were many reasons for the success of task-based learning approach in promoting speaking skills among Japanese students. Real world topics, authentic materials, classroom atmosphere and good relationship among the students play important role in the improvement of students speaking ability.