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東洋大学長 殿  
To the President of Toyo University

ウクライナからの研究員 研究報告書  
Research Report by Researcher from Ukraine

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研究課題名 Research topic	Teaching methods for improving the communications skills of beginner Japanese learners
研究期間 Research period	2022年12月22日～2023年2月15日 From Y/M/D to Y/M/D
研究協力教員氏名（所属） Research partner (affiliation)	山口 しのぶ 教授（文学部学部長）
研究成果発表 （予定も含む） Publication/Presentation (including future ones)	Presentation 「ウクライナの文学～近代から現代まで～」for Toyo University students (the 20 <sup>th</sup> of January, 2023)
研究成果の概要 Summary of your research achievements	Gathered useful materials at the university library for future thesis about the teaching methods for improving the communications skills of beginner Japanese learners.  Gathered materials to create a workbook for beginner Japanese learners.

Talking about the development of speaking skills during teaching-learning process, it is necessary to consider a number of factors that influence this process. Oral production, the process of communication, number of interlocutors, an amount of information processed, time span, teacher, student, the conditions under which all these elements mutually interact are only a small part of what developing speaking skills makes.

According to the syllabus of studying Japanese language at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, the goals of lessons are focused on all the components of communicative competence and not restricted only to grammatical or linguistic competence.

In order to enhance the speaking competence of our students in the oral communication lessons, Japanese language learning strategies must be linked to meaningful communicative activities in the classroom. Therefore, language teaching activities in the classroom should aim at maximizing individual language use.

So, during the research period we compared structure of the materials of the most popular Japanese learning textbooks:

- *Genki* is a series that is praised by most elementary Japanese language students. The two volumes of these popular series balance its lessons on four different fields, which are reading, listening, writing and oral expression. Each lesson of the textbook features a “Culture Notes” section. This segment is designed to boost student’s knowledge of Japan through materials about Japanese society and everyday life. The workbook for *Genki I* contains grammar exercises, listening practices, and kanji drills. Moreover, there are questions sections that allow students to build their own answers with what they learned with the textbook. Practice dialogs and texts will help

to understand the meaning of vocabulary in common situations.

- *Marugoto* course centres on study of language features that support communication (Japanese characters, vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, etc.). At the Starter level, the most basic sentence structures are studied (sentences with nouns, sentences with adjectives, present and past forms of sentences with verbs, etc.). A big difference between *Marugoto* and a textbook with a structural syllabus is that the learning points, such as sentence patterns, were chosen based on language activities.
- *Minna no Nihongo Shokyu I and II* (which contained total of fifty lessons) is a complex of textbooks that focus on teaching real-life conversational skills in Japanese. Every unit has exercises that focus on different aspects of the language, such as vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. There's also audio recordings to practice listening and pronunciation. In addition to the main textbook are workbooks of grammar exercises, reading topics, listening tasks.

The way in which the grammar points (sentence patterns) are actually used are illustrated with example sentences and dialogues. Practice drills are provided to help learners develop their ability to use the grammar points, and illustrations are given whenever necessary to show the context. Learners are encouraged to make their own statements based on the sentence pattern drills, which are designed to develop conversational topics and strengthen conversational and reading comprehension skills.

Also, very useful are the listening comprehension parts of the exercises in the main textbook. In addition to the study of the pronunciation word by word while paying attention to accent and

intonation, learners can use the dialogues to accustom themselves to Japanese spoken at normal speed, as well as to develop their ability to understand the key points in the flow of a conversation and answer questions about it. Communication scenes are set out, and model dialogues and graded exercises are provided. By working through these exercises, which are designed to stimulate interest and increase learning motivation, learners ultimately become able to use the intended dialogues without relying on rote memorization.

So, the structure of the materials of Minna no Nihongo aim to help learners develop a comprehensive set of Japanese language skills in speaking/listening and reading/writing at the beginner level.

As regards speaking, providing students with as many opportunities to practice the language orally as possible is an essential aspect of teaching of this productive skill. We also think that it is important to avoid purely grammatical lessons and follow the principles that communicative language teaching offers, with the primary focus on activities that aim at a better communication of student's thoughts more clearly and fully.

Students should be encouraged to speak from the very beginning. It does not depend on how many words or grammar the learners know, but if they use it for practice.