

## Abstract

“Problematic Japanese expressions for Thai students” is aimed to study and identify potential problem areas in greeting verbal expressions performed by Thai students by approaching through behavioral linguistic patterns. The study is focused on 4 items namely 1) persuading 2) complimenting 3) leaving-returning home and office and 4) leave-taking.

The data are gathered by means of observations and interviewing 3 groups of informants ( ten people for each group) which are Thai students ( one group for Japanese- majoring and the other for non Japanese -studying ) and the native Japanese. The situations are given in order to observe interaction from each group.

The findings are as follow:

Persuading. The native group varied persuading speech in polite forms or honorific forms according to participants, by considering collectivism (in-group) social role and status (superior) including inter-relationship (closeness and distance). On the other hand, Thai students (non Japanese-studying) used mostly similar forms when persuading and add only the final endings “krab / kha” in case of showing respect. Most Thai students did not use honorific forms as much as the native group did.

Complimenting. Complimenting on person’s ability or intelligence are made by both The native group and the Thai student groups. Most believed that compliments show courtesy and help smooth social interaction. Also self-compliments are not usually made by both the native group and the Thai group ; however, for family members the Thai students offer compliments to other people. This practice may not very usual in Japanese culture. In responding to compliments, the native group accepted a compliment to a younger participant and deny to a superior one. Where as no particular rule found among the Thai student groups.

Leaving- returning home and office. The native group used formulaic speech (both initial part and a reply) when greeting. Which particular form of speech to choose depends on the situation and participants. The method and these forms are not found in Thai language. The Thai students might use non- verbal such as silences and “Wai” (paying homage). No formulaic responding found as well among the Thai student groups.

Leave-taking. The native Japanese use formulaic speech when parting, as well as the greeting expressions using in the previous item. Though Thai students (Japanese –majoring) have learned how to greet at the beginning class, they are not accustomed to addressing in the real situations.

The Thai students (Japanese- majoring) have problems in *not-to- use* and *mis-use* Japanese greeting expressions in the given situations , due to the lack of understandings socio-cultural factors in communication.

To learn how to use Japanese greeting expressions effectively and appropriately , Thai students need to realize the significance of Japanese communicative style and socio-cultural knowledge concerning collectivism social superior and inter-relationship. Furthermore, the problems can be overcome with frequent practice both in classrooms and real situations.