

Abstract

The purposes of this study are to study “comprehension of authentic documents” of elementary Japanese learners focusing on 12th grade students attending public schools in and around Bangkok and to investigate the students’ attitude towards using Japanese authentic documents in the classroom.

The instruments used in this study are the achievement test of “comprehension of authentic documents” and the questionnaire. The answers from 298 students of 10 public schools are collected and analyzed. Statistically, the result shows that the highest point is 34.34 or 85.84 percent, the lowest score marks at 19.40 or 48.49 percent and the average score of the achievement test is 26.29 or 65.7 percent. The data also shows that the schools that use authentic documents in the classroom tend to get higher scores than the schools that do not.

According to the students, the difficulties of the achievement test are Kanji (Chinese characters), grammar, Katakana words (loanwords) and cultural issues. This implies that the limited knowledge of Japanese and lack of cultural background of the learned language are the main problems. However, the result from the questionnaires, more than 95 percent of students state that they have positive attitude towards this kind of test and want to learn and get more information using Japanese authentic documents.