The way I learnt Japanese

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I am thrilled to go through a new thing and learning a language is also one of them. I had learnt Japanese since I was high school student once a week by tutoring at home. Taking JLPT(stands for Japanese Language Proficiency Test) level 2 was my minimum aim for a certain reason at that time from beginner’s level. Today, I want to share my experience of the way I had learnt Japanese not only describing myself studying at the first time briefly but also considering my teacher’s teaching way that she chooses was effective or ineffective mainly.

In the beginning of learning Japanese, I had not any idea of it, even how to write or how to pronunciate katakana and hiragana which were two different ways of representing letters Japanese use. So what I did myself before I take the tutoring was memorizing those alphabets. While I memorize these alphabets, I used to use verbal-linguistic and intrapersonal way as write down all the alphabets on a paper speaking out these each sound at the same time. Even though it was really awkward and not familiar with me when I try this method at the first time, however, those alphabets and sounds become to match each other gradually on my mind as time goes by. In case that some alphabets look similar each other such as katakana ‘ツ(tu)’ and ‘ソ(so)’, I tried to draw these hiragana images ‘つ(tu)’ and ‘そ(so)’ which look similar to their katakana images on my mind to connect each other. After memorizing all Japanese alphabets and knowing some basic conversation such as ‘hi’, or ‘thank you’ in Japanese, I met my tutor and begin with my learning session with her.

My tutor’s teaching method was the middle stage of traditional teaching style and modern teaching style like an involver. Some researchers and people might insist that involver style teaching techniques is kind of not that effective way to let students remember well while they are studying. However, I think that her teaching method was quite effective way for me that time at least to a person who had never learnt any basic concept of Japanese such as from phonological matters like me.

I was a literally high beginner level student as described on our text book that I am only able to read and write simple phrases and basic sentences with some difficulties after studying myself to memorize the alphabets. So what she asked me of preparing for her class was a note book and a conversations-words-based text book when we met in the first class orientation. From that time, she runs her class as explains me the meaning of each words and sentences, let me speak out and do shadowing after her modeling by using the mix of grammar translation and audio-lingual methods. Also I had to do note-taking what I learn the day and try to memorize myself until next class. When the next class comes, I have to take quick quiz what she provided me not only verbally but also on paper. After three or four months later, I become to free to read and write without hesitancy compare to when I get in trouble before. I am sure that if she does not control and kind of strict way, I would not strengthen the basic knowledge of Japanese.

After I become to be familiar with some patterns of sentences and express what I want to say slowly with frequent repetitions, I start to study for JLPT level 2 in earnest with my tutor. She gave me two main books, one for more than two-hundreds different grammar patterns book and the other for more or less two-thousands different words including idioms. In this time, she provides me the method that not only she used to use since I had learnt the basics with her but also she teaches me in a new way with many examples that she went through in real situations to let me understand well and keep in my mind. In addition, I also highlighted some key expressions or the things I cannot memorize well by using visual intelligence effect.

Thanks to this certain kind of progress and my tutor’s teaching way, I could take the certificate at once and became a intermediate level student. Perhaps, if I do not have a solid aim to get the certificate then this kind of traditional teaching method would not effective way in terms of considering to find inner motivation or interests from myself. However, even though it sometimes offers stressful environments such as taking quiz every class, limited time but must-take-the object situation, I highly agree that her teaching method was effective and essential.