

# Japanese language plays an important role in the development of Cambodia

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After World War II, despite the fact that Japan, which is a defeated country, did not have anything left, the Japanese people became worker bees and after a while, it became a developed nation like it is today. Japan produces a variety of high-quality goods which have been marketed in countries around the world. Japanese culture is expanding all over the world. Japanese language has also been studied and used in many countries in the world. In Cambodia, Japanese is a popular language, and Japanese learners are increasing year by year. Japanese language plays an important role in the strengthening of Cambodian and Japanese relations, increasing the job opportunities for Cambodian students in Japanese companies, and increasing the opportunities to study abroad in Japan.

From the strengthening Cambodian and Japanese relations point of view, Cambodia and Japan first established diplomatic relations in 1953. After that, the Japanese government has been providing various assistance for Cambodian development. For example, the Japanese government established a program, called Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) into Cambodia. In Cambodia, the JOCV members first entered in 1966. Unfortunately, this

program was disbanded in Cambodia in 1970 due to political tensions. They re-started in 1992 (JICA, 20006). When the JOCV opened a Japanese course at the Institute of Foreign Language at Royal University of Phnom Penh, as a result, many Cambodian students have been able to study Japanese since then. Through JOCV, the number of students interested in Japanese has increased, and the activities on the strengthening of Cambodian and Japanese relations are also increasing year by year. Currently, Japanese language schools are increasing nationwide, and Japanese language learners are also increasing. Take, by way of example, Japanese and Business Training Center (JBTC) of Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia. JBTC was founded by Dr. Sar Sochea in 2015. Currently, 250 students are studying Japanese at JBTC. In addition to providing Japanese lectures to students, JBTC plays a role of introducing Japanese culture, customs, and strengthening relations between the two countries, Cambodia and Japan as well. JBTC has good relations with a lot of universities in Japan. We frequently conduct events related to exchange with students from various universities of Japan, and JBTC frequently conducts events on cultural exchanges between Cambodia and Japan as well.

The above has resulted in job opportunities for Cambodian students in Japanese companies. Since 2012, many Japanese companies have made

remarkable progress in Cambodia. According to the annual report of JETRO, 2016, there are 250 Japanese companies registered in the Ministry of Commerce

in 2015. Not only in the industry sector, but also in service industry sector such as restaurants, tourist companies, banks, Japanese companies are increasing as well. The increase of Japanese companies gives Cambodian students a lot of work opportunities, especially, for students who have abilities in Japanese language will get more opportunities from those companies with priority. In other words, as Japanese companies increase, the demand for human resources who can speak Japanese also will increase because most Japanese companies need Japanese speaking staff rather than English speaking staff.

There are increasing opportunities to study abroad in Japan as the Japanese government provides a lot of scholarships for Cambodian students every year. These scholarships are of many types as provided by the Japanese government. In order to receive a

In conclusion, through the Japanese study programs, Cambodian students have strengthened bilateral relations between Cambodia and Japan, and the relations between the two countries will be further deepened from now on. Cambodian students who have ability in Japanese language will have increased possibilities to receive good jobs from Japanese companies. In addition, Cambodian students

scholarship, various conditions are required such as Japanese language ability or English language ability. In the case of scholarships, the Ministry of Education Department of Japan requires English or Japanese ability. The competition is intense and it is hard to get a scholarship for students who speak English while students who speak the Japanese language have less competition. Besides government-sponsored study abroad, the private expense study abroad is also increasing. As an example, among 250 students who are studying Japanese at JBTC, there are 50 students (20%) have already decided to study in Japan. Currently, they are studying Japanese at JBTC to prepare their ability before their departures to Japan because they have to take all subjects of their study in Japanese language.

have opportunities to get scholarship of Ministry of Education Department of Japan or have opportunities to study abroad in Japan at private expense, and can acquire various knowledge in Japan. Through these three points, it can be said that Japanese language plays an important role in Cambodian economic development.