

## On-site Education of Practical Languages for Area Studies

### Report in 2008

—Thai, Thammasat University, Thailand, Term (5 Dec. 2008 – 21 Mar. 2009)—

Year of Enrollment: 2008

Graduate School of Asian and African Areas Studies

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#### Theme of the Study

The use of lacquerware of *Melanhorre usitata* is found in Thailand and Burma. People use sap of *Melanhorre usitata* for lacquering wood, bamboo and metals from old times in this area. There are many similarities between Thai lacquerware and Japanese lacquerware, however, Thai lacquerware have the specific characteristics. For example Thai lacquer is applied on the composition of bamboo and horse hair. Decoration of Thai lacquerware is described by the artisan with a stylus. My research is to reveal of connections between characteristics of Thai lacquerware and traditional use of local resources in this area.



*Melanhorre usitata*

#### Features of the Language

Thai language is an official language of Thailand and written by original Thai characters. Thai language is isolating language. Pronunciation of Thai language differentiates 5 tones of voice and aspirated or not.

#### Contents of the Course

I and Ms. Fumi Saji were taught by professors of Thai language department of Thammasat University four-day a week, three-hour a day. Professors used an original textbook for teaching us. The text book consists of lessons of everyday conversations and writing Thai. It took about 2 months to finish this textbook. After we had finished the textbook, professors taught us each subjects. So I and Ms Saji could study Thai lacquerware and floating market respectively.

Also we could take part in tours of students of Thammasat University to see the sights in Thailand. At the same time, fortunately professors guided us to a lacquerware factory and a floating market.



Study tour of Thai language department

## **Overall Impression of the course**

In the class, 6 professors taught us Thai language. So I understood Thai language have variations of writing and pronunciation. The class was very funny because professors are humorous.

Professors taught us warmly, cared about our life in Thailand tenderly.

Belief of Buddhism is expressed directly by Thai people in daily life. In a market I had often seen that children donate their change naturally after shopping. Thai people nearby didn't notice this behavior.

## **Self-assessment of the extent of achievement**

In this program, though the course and everyday life, I learned how to speak everyday conversations from native Thai people. I could learn to read elementarily for looking up a word in the Thai dictionary and reading a simple sentence by myself. Also I could visit lacquerware factories and could watch the traditional work of Thai lacquering.

However at the moment, I still cannot read a sentence of Thai language quickly. So I think it is necessary for me to review lessons of Thammasat in Japan. And I had better go to Thailand again as soon as possible.



Professors of Thai language department, Ms. Saji and myself