

Indonesian Student Perceptions of Learning Kanji

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Abstract. This study aims to describe the perception of learning Kanji in the Moji Goi course. This study uses a descriptive evaluative method with an online survey approach via Google Forms. Respondents in this study were 54 grade 1 students of the Japanese Language Department at the Indonesian Computer University for the 2022/2023 Academic Year. The results showed that students stated that learning kanji is important, more than students stated that the addition of learning media with e-learning with structured material was the right learning method. The problems that occur when learning kanji are that it is difficult to memorize kanji because it has many meanings, it is difficult to write kanji because there are many streaks, and boredom arises because the learning process is monotonous. The solution to this problem is to improve the ability of lecturers to carry out Kanji learning using a variety of teaching methods. Use of the e-learning method with structured material by lecturers is considered to be the right solution because learning materials can be accessed anywhere. In addition, lecturers always motivate students to be enthusiastic about attending lectures. For students' Japanese language skills to continue to improve, it is necessary to motivate students and the ability of lecturers to carry out quality Kanji learning using various teaching techniques.

1. Introduction

Setiana and Arianingsih stated that in learning Japanese there are several learning difficulties, one of which is in learning Kanji letters. Kanji letters are one aspect that is difficult for students who study Japanese, especially for students who do not have a Kanji cultural background. Even students with Kanji backgrounds sometimes find it difficult to deal with Japanese Kanji [1]. Furthermore, Renariah revealed that it has been widely acknowledged by Japanese language learners and not a few feel that kanji is a difficult field to learn in Japanese, especially for Japanese language learners who do not have "kanji culture", in Japanese it is called hikanjiken, this is caused by several factors such as quite a large number of kanji that must be memorized, ways to read kanji that vary in number, hitsujun (how to write it) should be considered correct,

and knowledge of kanji includes bushu (part of kanji which determines the meaning) as well as rikusho [2]. Setiana explained that the success of learning Japanese includes aspects of hard skills and soft skills. One of them is the ability to communicate well in Japanese, both orally and in writing [3]. Basic Level Learning kanji in Japanese is included in Kiso Moji Goi courses.

The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) is one of the most widely followed Japanese language competency measurement tools for Japanese language learners and is recognized throughout the world. JLPT consists of five levels, from level N1 (highest) to level N5 (lowest). To enter the world of work which demands mastery of Japanese language technical skills, a person is required to have at least a JLPT N3 certificate [4]. Therefore, educational institutions that organize Japanese language programs at the tertiary level use JLPT N3 as a standard for qualifying graduates' competencies [5]. So that lecturers can find the right strategy for organizing Japanese language learning activities and improving the quality of graduates. As time goes by, technology in the world of education has experienced various developments, where everything has used technology to facilitate all work, including in the world of education, as now more and more vocational high schools are being built, it is proof that educational technology in Indonesia is increasingly advanced. In times like today we often encounter the use of technology in the implementation of learning carried out by an educator to teach or students or students to learn [6].

Shinozaki examined the use of e-learning for advanced grammar learning in Japanese language classes for foreign students at Beppu University [7]. The results of this study were more than 70% of respondents stated that they were helped in mastering grammar through e-learning based on the Moodle application and the test results showed an increase of 63.4%. What needs to be anticipated from this research is to think that the material content refers to the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) so that the learning outcomes are international standards for Japanese language learning [8].

However, This study described the perceptions of students in learning Kanji. This research was conducted on grade 1 students in the Japanese literature study program, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Komputer Indonesia academic year 2022/2023. This research used an evaluative descriptive research method by conducting an online survey through Google forms was used to answer these problems. The results of the research have provided useful information for Kiso Moji Goi lecturers to improve the quality of online Kaiwa learning.

2. Method

The method used is Evaluative descriptive. Respondents in this study were 54 students of the 1st grade of the Japanese Department Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Komputer Indonesia Academic Year 2022/2023. Data collection was carried out on January 30 – February 9, 2023, by distributing online questionnaires via Google form to find out perceptions about learning kanji and the problems faced by students. In addition, interviews were also conducted with lecturers of the Kiso Moji Goi course to find out how the lecturers' efforts were to overcome problems in learning kanji.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of a questionnaire, it is known that the Students' perceptions about the importance of learning kanji are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The implementation of kanji learning

Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	0
Do not Agree	3.6
Agree	38.2
Strongly Agree	58.2

From table 1 it can be illustrated that 0% of students strongly disagree, 3.6% disagree, 38.2% agree, and 58.2% strongly agree about the importance of learning kanji. This is because kanji is one of the ingredients in JLPT. If someone has passed the JLPT N3, it is considered that they have mastered basic Japanese well and can use it to communicate in everyday life but are still limited to certain situations. This is in line with research findings from Daha and Destiyani which state that Kanji is an important aspect of learning Japanese, especially in learning Dokkai. In Dokkai texts, there are many vocabularies written in kanji [9]. Furthermore, student responses regarding the effectiveness of kanji learning, it is presented in Table II below:

Table II. The effectiveness of kanji learning

Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	19.8
Do not Agree	17.3
Agree	38.4
Strongly Agree	24.5

Based on table II, it can be seen that 19.8% of students strongly disagree, 17.3% disagree, 38.4% agree, and 24.5% strongly agree about the effectiveness of learning kanji with the E-learning method. It can be assumed that more than half of the respondents stated that learning kanji could help their Japanese language skills, especially in reading. This means that even though learning kanji is done individually, the material provided is not much different from the material studied in lectures. This is in line with Dabbagh and Rithland's opinion which states that the application of e-learning by the "structure" will provide "increased learning outcomes" [10].

Furthermore, based on an open questionnaire it is known that the problems that occur when learning kanji are: 1. It is difficult to memorize kanji because it has many meanings, 2. It is difficult to write kanji because there are many streaks, 3. Difficulties communicating directly with lecturers and colleagues, 4. Difficulty concentrating during the kanji learning process, 5. Difficulty in doing coursework, 6. Boredom arises due to the monotonous learning process. Looking at the research findings, it can be assumed that the biggest problems students face in learning kanji are external factors. This is following the opinion of Saragih, et al who stated that the problems faced by students related to online learning are the facilities and

infrastructure owned, the ability of lecturers, and the learning process which includes the suitability of time and lecture material [11]. Based on the results of the interviews, to overcome these problems, the efforts made by Lecturer Kiso Moji Goi are motivating students to remain enthusiastic about attending lectures, making variations of kanji learning techniques, such as implementing a culture of writing kanji with a brush or called Shodou, providing the material that can be accessed at any time and anywhere, read extensively, and store kanji learning materials in the learning management system provided by the university so students can review material that has been discussed anytime and anywhere. Rose and Harbon once stated that 5 students lacked emotional control, managed commitments, and felt bored when they studied kanji. [12]. Therefore, an independent learning method is needed by creating or developing special learning sites for kanji and games that can increase motivation to learn kanji, Aryadi and Haristiani [13].

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study it can be concluded that in learning kanji at the basic level, there are many difficulties for students in learning Japanese, especially in the field of kanji. Therefore it is very important to add several new learning methods so that learning is not easily boring and can access the material anytime and anywhere. Motivating the ability of students and lecturers to carry out quality kanji learning using various teaching techniques is very necessary. The suggestion from this study is that the use of e-learning learning methods is considered the right way to learn Japanese, especially in the field of kanji. Using structured material from the lecturer will help Japanese language learners. Then by using the e-learning method students can easily access the material anywhere and anytime.

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