

Applying Technology to Learning for the JLPT N2 Exam to Improve Listening Skills for Japanese Major Students

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Abstract--- The article examines and evaluates the potential of applying technology in learning and preparation for the Japanese N2 Certificate of Japan. With the wave of investments by Japanese companies in the Vietnamese market, the demand for training for human resources who can speak Japanese is a hot topic in the Vietnamese market. However, mastering Japanese is not easy. After reaching the level suitable for working in a Japanese office, learners must pass the N2 or N1 level of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. Corresponds to around 500 grammar, 10,000 words, and several years of self-learning. Because of this, many Japanese language teaching programs use advanced technology to help learners accelerate their learning progress and time. The study uses two main methods, the first is quantitative search and qualitative analysis, and the last compares and contrasts using the numbers drawn from the research. With the obtained results, the article has found that the ability to use integrated technologies in language teaching has a certain attraction for learners and clearly shows the effectiveness in preparing for a listening test for a Japanese language certificate for learners.

Keywords--- Japanese Language Certificate, Vietnamese Market, Teaching Programs.

I. Introduction

In the early years of the XXI technology world, the Japanese government and companies had potential and development opportunities when investing in Vietnam, with projects covering almost 49/64 cities and provinces in Vietnam (Hao et al., 2022). Since then, it has been shown that the demand for human resources with knowledge of Japanese is extremely high. Japanese companies in particular are currently present in about 2000 companies in Vietnam, and most of them are located in Ho Chi Minh City. This is very profitable for students studying Japanese at universities in the city, but taking the Japanese language test is not easy. As the Japanese language test becomes more and more difficult, especially the listening test with different topics, many students cannot pass the test organization (Basri et al, 2020).

Listening skills often take a long time to acquire, and students often have to go through a variety of emotions, from boredom and disappointment to joy and pride, to teach listening skills. is one of the difficult tasks that a teacher has to face. Beymer (2022) suggests that students need to stay motivated to focus on the daily version, especially during long listening passages, and the content learned in the book is completely different, so it is difficult for students who have no real listening experience -life Japanese to keep learning Japanese most effectively. However, with the creation and development of technology and the Internet, more and more technologies are being used for language learning, making access easy and fast.

Nowadays, with the proliferation and proliferation of portable cell phones, the percentage of students using cell phones is also increasing day by day. Also, the developer communities that are beginning to create applications with many uniquely designed features have contributed a lot to the education industry, but here in particular to the language industry. Technology has made the difficult aspects of voice access easy with a phone in hand and an internet connection. As the world-famous app has shown, students using apps for language learning show a certain level of interest and spend a lot of time with them. language is high. Fernandez (2009) concludes that the use of applications in the language learning process has led to a phone-only language learning habit among students. This also confirms the role of technology application in learning a new language.

II. Literature Review

Listening is a language skill that can be developed through practice (Al-Jarf, 2022). These materials come in many different forms, mainly with teacher input, as well as peer input and interaction and as a source of information (recorded lectures, films, tutorials, etc). However, hearing Japanese is not easy for the following reasons. Japanese uses many copycat and onomatopoeic words called onomatopoe words. Japanese has fewer verbs and syllables than other languages and has used many words to expand the range of expressions. Second, Japan is a country with many dialects (Shibatani et al., 1990). Dialect is defined in such a way that in every place the place has a way of saying that describes a different thing or thing.

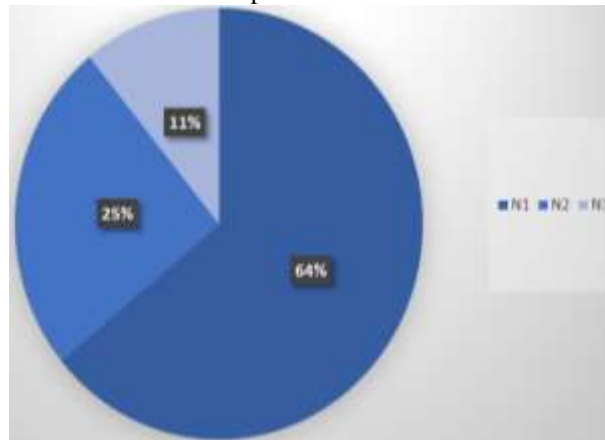
Since Japan is geographically divided by mountains and rivers, each place has developed its own language and culture (Imaizumi et al., 2022). Especially in Japan, there is another direction called Kansai ben, Kansai includes big cities like Kyoto, Osaka, and Nara. However, each of these regions has its peculiarities, which is why it is called Kyoto Ben, Osaka Ben, and Nara Ben (Long et al., 1999). In summary, it is extremely difficult to practice listening to Japanese with students who have never been to Japan or come into contact with Japanese people. However, with the rapid development of applications and websites, students' learning methods have been boosted, especially in subjects such as foreign languages. Pronunciation training software also comes into play when recording many languages with native speakers.

III. The Status of Students Learning the Japanese Language

Although Japan has gone through the economic development process like in the early 20th century, Japan is still one of the countries with a special economy in the world. Especially the city of Tokyo, which represents cultural diversity and cultural prosperity over hundreds of years. According to number from the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, every year there are amounts of tourists visiting Vietnam, along with the wave of Japanese FDI into Vietnam being extremely large (Nguyen, 2022). Therefore, the labor market is increasingly expanding and requires a large number of Vietnamese people to understand the working culture and the increasing Japanese language. Japan is facing an aging population, so investing in countries with young workers like Vietnam will benefit both Japan and Vietnam. Because it will be an opportunity for Vietnamese workers to have the opportunity to interact with advanced machinery imported from Vietnam.

Second, investors will adopt personnel with high professional and Japanese ability to hand over jobs and promote jobs in Vietnam (Nguyen et al, 2013). Therefore, the personnel who are not only good at Japanese but also have high expertise in business will be able to go further in their careers and be able to work directly with Japanese investors. This is also the reason that Japanese is taught in parallel in many university programs in Vietnam. At the same time, in order for students to understand Japanese working culture, universities regularly organize cultural exchanges with large organizations such as Japan Foundation. This study helps students understand the basic culture of the serious Japanese way of working. Almost businesses also need to find personnel with certificates like N1 accounting for 61% and 25%.

Especially with the explosion of technology, technology companies tend to recruit engineers who understand Japanese to become technology bridge engineers between Vietnam and Japan. Which companies focus on personnel who understand Japanese culture and can listen to Japanese well.



Level of Japanese Language Proficiency Test required by Japanese Companies

IV. Methodology

First with a qualitative approach, in-depth information on teaching methods in Japanese. Especially, the main question "How to improve Japanese listening ability with technology applications" was conducted through interviews between lecturers at the Japanese Language Center and the University in Ho Chi Minh City. Ho Chi Minh City. Second, the quantitative method is used through questionnaires with the amount of information collected from 80 students of Japanese language departments in Ho Chi Minh City. With 40 students majoring in Japanese at FPT University in Ho Chi Minh City, there are 20 students at Ho Chi Minh Foreign Trade School, and finally, 20 students are studying at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities. Next, the above data is analyzed and cleaned to give visual results to show the application and utility level of applications on phones and laptops for listening comprehension of Japanese in Japanese. Student.

V. The Content in the Listening Section of JLPT

No	Level of the listening test	Level each level of target
1	N1	Dialogues are mostly used in formal texts, rarely in spoken language.
2	N2	Dialogues often appear in life conversations to a considerable extent. Grammar often used in formal writing.
3	N3	The dialogues are at medium difficulty. Vocabulary and grammar are often used in daily life
4	N4	The dialogues are pretty easy. Ask the listener to understand vocabulary and simple grammar.
5	N5	The dialogues focus on reading numbers, counting, and pronouns in conversations

Based on JLPT data we can see that at level N2, conversations tend to be more difficult than at the other three levels. However, it is still not as difficult as N1 for the following reasons. At the N2 level, grammar and sesame words are still used in everyday conversations. However, to the N1 level, vocabulary, as well as grammar, often do not appear in everyday life. Because of the reason that it is rarely used, companies in Vietnam often hire employees at the N2 level, which is enough.

Level	Kanji	Vocabulary	Time of learning/ hours
N5	~100	~800	~150
N4	~300	~1,500	~300
N3	~650	~3,750	~450
N2	~1000	~6000	~600
N1	~2000	~10,000	~900

To estimates from JEES (Japan Educational Exchanges and Services), to reach an advanced level in Japanese, the time it takes students to strive is over 600 hours of study. At level N2, the vocabulary has begun to increase twice as much as N3 (intermediate level). However, the difficulty of Japanese lies in Kanji, many students consider Kanji as one of the major obstacles to learning Japanese. Kanji, also known as Chinese characters, are Japanese characters derived from Chinese. Japan began to borrow features of the Chinese kanji system from the fourth century AD. Then, in the 10th century, the Japanese created the katana with stiff strokes, which was adapted from the kanji and hiragana characters. Next, in the early 19th century, receiving the process of exchange with the West, the Japanese modified the previous kanji to become easier to read.

Because listening skill is a skills that will be developed after learners have a large vocabulary (Milton et al., 2013). Especially in Japanese, with the target vocabulary of N1, and N2, the equivalent vocabulary required will be 6000 words to 10,000 words. However, these 10,000 words are assembled from separate Kanji words and create new meanings. This means that students who master kanji will have a certain vocabulary foundation. Ultimately it will also motivate students to have better listening skills.

VI. Results and Discussions

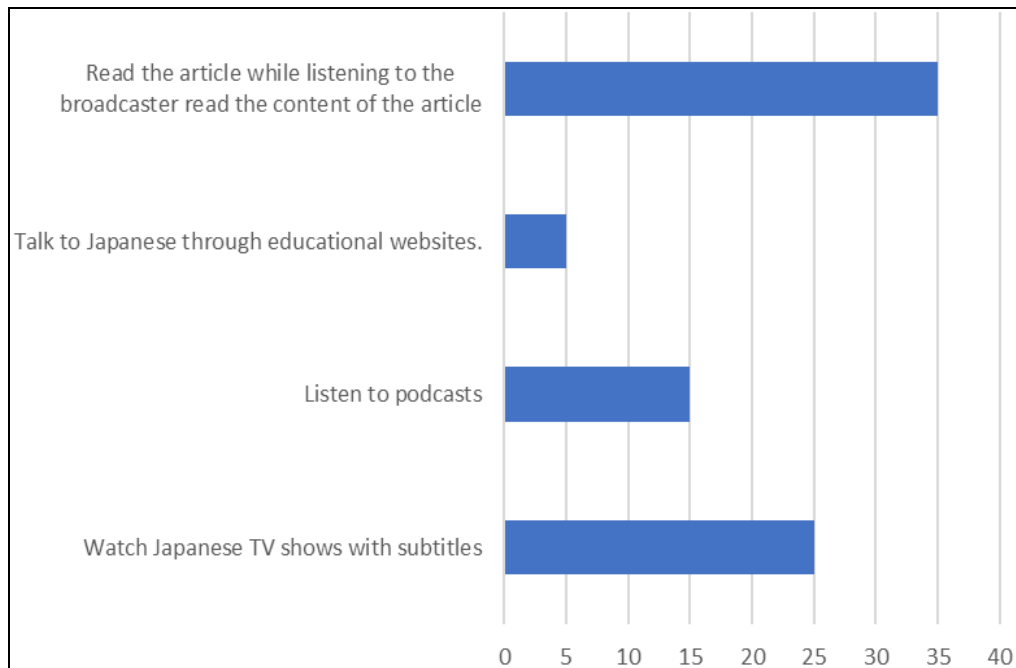


Figure 1: Most Common Listening Learning Strategies through Technology

Currently, there are many great websites and apps to help Japanese learners access new information (Saga, 2008). Especially with the Mazzi website, which is both a popular dictionary lookup site and a learning support website with many unique features. The site is famous for its function of reading newspapers and listening to the news, where the news is divided into different levels. This helps Japanese learners to access Japanese more conveniently. A count of nearly 35 agrees with the way of learning to listen mentioned above. This also shows that the development of websites also improves the quality of learners' Japanese language learning. Next is the method of learning to listen through programs broadcast on television. Nearly 25 of the students have chosen this method they pursue. In 1991, Paivio stated that subtitles help create an auditory-visual connection, with the most positive influence being on language learners. Moreover, watching the subtitles while watching the program helps the process of vocabulary awareness and attention be enhanced. A positive attitude towards subtitles also affects the ability to acquire knowledge between learners and program content (van der Linden et al., 2012).

One of the emerging technology mediums used in education in the last few years is Podcasting. Podcasts have been researched and developed to bring many solutions for language learning (Fernandez & Sallan, 2009). And many researchers have acknowledged its potential and documented a lot of evidence that podcasts help develop language skills, which are the listening and speaking skills of learners. Podcasting is one of the public power, an emerging technology that has been used in education for many years. Language learning has been recognized as one of the areas that are about to receive help from the rapid growth of podcasting (Rosell et al., 2007).

The last method that students mentioned in improving their listening ability are through websites that bridge with native speakers. Currently, there are many websites with interactive forms between users and native teachers. However, the tuition fee for an hour is usually around 20 USD, which is quite high for students to learn. It is also for that reason that the number of births who choose this method is quite small. There is also a search engine that allows us to characterize our perfect language partner. Users will choose the language they speak, the language they are learning, skill level, country, town, form of exchange, age, gender, and name (Figure 1).

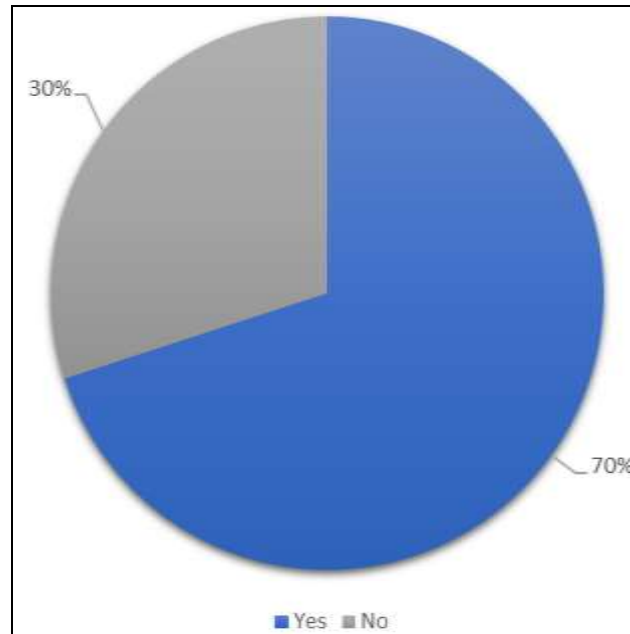


Figure 2: Technology Plays an Important Role in Helping with Listening Learning

This shows us that technology is a very useful and useful tool in education. The role of teachers and students is especially for language learners. Technology can help us find more ideas online. Not only that, but technology also allows us to express our opinions and contribute through educational platforms. Technology can help language learners improve their speaking skills and make our lives more successful and meaningful. However, the freedom to use technology to learn has certain limitations. In some cases, it is suggested that language learning should occur in real-life, person-to-person environments. Technology abuse is a bad thing for students who don't have a real awareness of listening. Many studies have shown that hearing and speaking problems improve when learners are in a balanced environment (Figure 2).

VII. Recommendations

There are many good methods that many candidates around the world have applied in studying for the exam to gain a prestigious certificate in the Japanese language. However, the article will provide some ideas to help students improve their listening skills.

First, it is to determine the goals for each individual and the profession that we want to work towards (Shalley et al., 1991). Because Japanese is a useful tool in the job application process, it is still important to have the basic knowledge that we want people to know. This will promote motivation for students to have more will to learn. Many researchers have shown that motivation has a huge impact on how we learn languages (Dörnyei, 1994). Because achieving a physical goal keeps the body excited and eager to win.

Second, a good Japanese background is required for everyone. Like building a house, we need a good foundation to build a solid house. As the data analyzed by the article, the time to reach the advanced level in Japanese is not short. That's why Japanese learners focus on their goals and always review old knowledge.

The third is the curriculum that students use. The first book that is recommended to use is 耳から覚える N1. This book series is very effective for new vocabulary or new grammar, we can review it all day by listening to it again and again on the way to work or while standing on the train. In addition, to practice listening and practicing, many students encouraged the use of 耳から覚える聴解トレーニング N1 book by listening to and imitating Japanese voices. After having acquired the background in the two books above. Many teachers and students with N1 certification believe that two books, ドリル&ドリル日本語能力試験 N1 文字語彙 and ドリル&ドリル日本語能力試験 N1 聴解読解, give students many advantages when taking the real exam (夏俊 et al., 2020).

Fourth is the application of technologies used by Japanese learners around the world. Many websites are reliable and offer a large amount of functionality to help learners practice better. For example, Mazzi, NHK World, Akira Education, Marugoto Plus...

In the conclusion, the study proposes that the use of technology will help partly in the development of listening skills in students. However, being in an environment where listening skills can be developed naturally would be ideal.

VIII. Conclusions

The result of the use of technology in Japanese language learning is a step forward in today's world. And also contributing to the bottom of the student's status made the additional test more computational. We will have to admit that technologies will go further in the future and learning a language will be easier than ever.

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