

Learning Japanese Language Based on 2013 Curriculum at Elementary Schools in Bali

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Abstract— This study aimed at describing the implementation of the 2013 curriculum in learning Japanese at elementary schools in Bali, considering that learning Japanese has not been taught only in high /vocational school level. The results of questionnaires and interviews revealed that only 20% of them have implemented the 2013 curriculum for Japanese language. The context of Japanese language learning at this level is the addition of character education and literacy. From the respondents (students), it was found that there was a tendency for students to like Japanese (67.4%), because they were interested in Hiragana and Katakana letters, besides of Japanese culture and food. On the contrary, respondents who were not interested stated the difficulty of memorizing Japanese letters as reasons for their dislike. This study also showed that the non-optimal implementation of the 2013 curriculum for Japanese was due to the absence of 2013 curriculum-based learning tools.

Keywords—*Japanese language; elementary school; 2013 curriculum; literation; character education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia-Japan's increasing economic cooperation (Economic Partnership Agreement / EPA) in 2008 increased the flow of investment and population mobility between the two countries [1]. This collaboration also increases the need for workers who master Japanese. The number of manpower's needs of being capable to use Japanese in Japan certainly increases the learners' interest to be able to master the Japanese Language well. In addition to the economic motivation, the interest of young people in Indonesia towards comics, anime, and J-POP is also the cause of the large number of Japanese language learners.

The number of Japanese language learners in Indonesia has reached the second rank in the world after China, which is 745,125 people. Japanese language learners in Indonesia are not only among teenagers but also among children. Of the total number of students in Indonesia, 6,504 students are elementary school students. A total of 4,707 people are students who take Japanese language learning as a curricular activity, while 1,797 people take Japanese language learning as an extra-curricular activity [16]. Although the overall number of Japanese language learners at the elementary school level is slightly

compared to the higher-level learners, the number shows that the Japanese Language in Indonesia is also in demanded by elementary school children. This should be a concern for related parties who conduct Japanese language education.

Based on a survey conducted by The Japan Foundation in 2015 [16], it was found that teaching materials used in Japanese language learning at the elementary level were designed by schools, ranging from the introduction of Hiragana, Katakana, and greetings. Since learning Japanese in Indonesia is still conducted in high school / vocational school level, learning Japanese language at the elementary level has not been taken for granted by related parties.

The absence of special attention to Japanese learning at the elementary level is certainly a problem because the characteristics of elementary school children are very different from high school learners. Young learners are certainly different from adult learners due to their differences in cognitive development. Children aged seven to eleven years old are still at the stage of concrete operations, while children aged eleven years to adulthood have entered the formal operation stage [14]. With these differences in cognitive development, Japanese learning that has been done in high school/vocational school cannot be applied in elementary school.

After conducting preliminary research related to Japanese language learning profiles in elementary school children in Bali [17], it can be described that almost all elementary schools, which became the research sites, still used the same learning strategies as learning in high school / vocational school. Japanese learning at the high school / vocational level currently used a more audio-lingual method which is characterized by the presence of mimicry and memorization. In the process of mimicry and memorization, the children were asked to say a vocabulary repeatedly [11]. For elementary school learners, this method can still be used. However, the problem arises whether or not the method causes elementary school students to lose enthusiasm and bored in learning since they have the characteristics of being bored easily. Whereas, based on several studies that have been conducted on learning English for young learners, it is known that variety of activities in class were

needed such as demonstrating or performing tasks and so on [4]. Therefore, further research is needed regarding Japanese language learning at the elementary level.

Learning system in Indonesia, including in elementary school, has been using the 2013 curriculum (K-2013), which emphasizes on the learning process rather than the learning outcome. There are three components covered in the standard of curriculum 2013 which is related to learning planning, and the implementation of learning that must involve the skills of the 21st century (reorganized in Permendikbud No. 22/2016 about Learning process standards for primary and secondary education) [10]. Based on the 2013 curriculum, learning process focuses on 21st century skills (in lesson plan) namely character education revitalization /PPK (religious, nationalist, independent, mutual cooperation and integrity), literacy, 4C (Communication, Collaboration, Critical thinking and Problem Solving, and Creativity and Innovation), as well as HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skill). Furthermore, the Appendix to the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 22/2016 regarding the Basic and Secondary Education Process Standards reveals that the learning principles used in the Revised K-2013 are learning changes from teacher centered to student centered, from the teacher as the only source of learning to be learning based on various learning resources, from a textual approach to the process of strengthening the use of scientific approaches, from content-based learning to competency-based learning, and from partial learning to integrated learning.

There are several competencies at the basic education level according to the Indonesian government rules [9], which are expected to be achieved by students at the elementary level as shown in Table I.

TABLE I. BASIC EDUCATION COMPETENCIES

Core competencies	Description
Spiritual attitude	1. Receiving, practicing and respecting the teachings of the religion they hold
Social attitude	2. Showing behaviors of being: (a) Honest; b) discipline, c) polite, and) confident, e) caring, and (f) responsible for interacting with family, friends, teachers, neighbors, and the country.
Knowledge	3. Understanding factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge at a basic level by observing, asking, and trying based on curiosity about himself, God's creatures and their activities, and objects found in homes, schools, and playgrounds.
Skill	4. Demonstrating thinking and acting skills: creative, productive, critical, independent, collaborative and communicative. In clear, systematic, logical, and critical language, in aesthetic works, in movements that reflect healthy children, and actions that reflect the child's behavior according to the stage of its development.

In the learning process, teachers must be able to actively guide their students to obtain a particular concept and apply it. To be able to integrate 21st-century skills in achieving these competencies, a learning tool is needed. Learning tools are very necessary for the learning process because it can help teachers in the learning process. The 2013 curriculum mentions several learning tools, including syllabus, lesson plans, worksheets,

assessment instruments, textbooks, portfolio bundles as evaluation material, learning media, and so on. Teaching material that is included in the learning tools is very important in the process of language learning both for teachers and learners so that learning is more successful [12]. To be able to consider that learning has implemented the revised curriculum, the overall learning tools should guide learners to master the skills targeted in the revised curriculum 2013 itself.

How to integrate these skills in Japanese language learning especially at elementary level is certainly a challenge for teachers. The implementation of the 2013 curriculum in learning at all levels also influences the implementation of Japanese language learning in elementary schools. However, it does not receive the attention of the stakeholders. Therefore, it is necessary to explore how the 2013 curriculum is planned and implemented in learning Japanese in elementary school. This study later becomes the basis for the improvement of Japanese language learning in elementary school.

II. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR CHILDREN

Foreign language learning for children received more attention from researchers, especially considering the age of the children because their development impacts on their cognitive development. According to Jean Piaget in reference [14] about the development of cognition, there are four stages of development including Sensorimotor Stage (At birth to 2 years); Preoperative Stage (2-7 years); Concrete Operation Stage (7-11 years); and Formal Operation Stage (11 years to adulthood). According to reference [14], in the Concrete Operations Phase (7-11 years), children can develop their memory and cognitive abilities (including meta-cognition / ability to think about their own thoughts and learn how to learn) rapidly. Although such stages are raised, it cannot be said that children's development will be the same/appropriate as these stages because the ability and speed of the developing children are influenced by the way they accomplish things and their experiences [14].

The development of cognition also affects children's language acquisition. Several studies have shown that children who start learning a foreign language at the age of 6 years will be able to master the foreign language in a native approach to phonology [4]. On the other hand, other research shows that older learners are faster at learning grammatical and lexical components [4]. This shows how age affects children's language acquisition, which then becomes a consideration for teachers in the process of learning foreign languages.

Related to learning for children, reference [2] states that viewed from the perspective of learners (children), that a foreign language training/learning is said to be good if (1) material provided is useful for children, (2) development of language in individual learning is continuous and is carried out throughout the year, (3) there is a contribution of each material to the process of language acquisition individually, and (4) quality learning for children individually is adjusted with each individual strengths and weaknesses.

III. METHOD

This research was a descriptive qualitative study to describe the existing problems [13]. The results of the questionnaire and interview were analyzed qualitatively, and then presented descriptively. Reference [3] states that the description is used to help readers know what is happening in the environment under observation, such as how participants' views are related to what events or activities in learning. In the data analysis, several steps of analysis proposed following [8] including data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. In the initial stage, the selection, transformation of the data and strengthening of the data were carried out. And then, the data were arranged so that it was easy to make a conclusion. In the final stage, conclusions were made and verified. The whole steps were the part of the data analysis that cannot be separated in order to obtain the right conclusion.

For data collection, two techniques were used, a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire was used to determine the implementation of the 2013 curriculum in Japanese language learning in elementary school. In addition, the questionnaire was also used to find out the learning tools that were owned by respondents and to find out whether the learning devices had supported the implementation of the revised 2013 curriculum. There were two types of questions in this questionnaire, namely closed-ended questions and open-ended questions. Questionnaires were given on May 2019 to eleven Japanese elementary school teachers from ten schools in the area around Denpasar, Tabanan, and Singaraja. Those teachers have experienced in teaching Japanese language learning from 2 to 17 years. In addition to the questionnaire, interview techniques were also conducted to 43 elementary school students who had studied Japanese from different grade levels about their responses in learning the Japanese language. The structured interview conducted to dig up information on children in a short time. The results of the questionnaire and interview were then presented descriptively.

IV. RESULT

A. Questionnaire results

Based on the results of the questionnaire, it revealed that in Bali, ten private elementary schools provided Japanese language learning. Of the ten schools, eight schools provided Japanese language as additional subjects (local content), one school provided Japanese as the extracurricular subjects, and one school provided Japanese as both additional subjects (local content) and extracurricular subjects. Japanese language learning was given at different levels. Four schools gave Japanese language from first to sixth grades, two schools gave from second to sixth grade, one school from third to sixth grade, two schools from fourth to sixth grade, and one school gave the Japanese language from fourth to fifth grades as seen in Table II.

TABLE II. CLASS WITH JAPANESE LESSONS

Grades	Number of schools
1 to 6	4
2 to 6	2
3 to 6	1
4 to 6	2
4 and 5	1

Those ten elementary schools provided Japanese language lessons to provide foreign language skills other than English, so they were better compared to other schools. This will certainly be a selling value for the school. In terms of the implementation of the 2013 curriculum, only seven schools implemented the 2013 curriculum. Of the seven schools, only two schools gave Japanese language lesson by only inserting character education and literacy in their lesson plan. It means that other important things based on 21st learning in the revised 2013 curriculum, like students' critical thinking, has not yet been implemented [17]. And the last, the other five schools did not provide Japanese language lesson because there were no Japanese language handbooks/textbooks that based on 2013 curriculum for elementary school.

As shown in Table II, it can be seen that the respondents who already had a syllabus were two people (27%). Respondents who already had lesson plan, worksheet, and assessment instruments were 4 people (36%) each. Meanwhile, the respondents who already had textbooks were 6 people (55%). Not all of the learning tools were in accordance with the revised K-2013 curriculum. Two schools only included PKK and literacy in the RPP, but the other learning tools were not in accordance with the revised 2013 curriculum, while 82% of respondents already had learning media as can be seen in Table III.

TABLE III. AVAILABILITY OF LEARNING TOOLS

Lerning tools	Respondents who already have
Syllabus	3 respondents (27%)
RPP	4 respondents (36%)
LKS	4 respondents (36%)
Assessment instruments	4 respondents (36%)
Teaching material books	6 respondents (55%)
Learning Media (example: based on ICT, cards, etc.)	9 respondents (82%)

B. Interview result

Based on the results of the interview with 43 students from 10 elementary schools, there were several things related to their perception of Japanese language learning. Twenty-nine students said that they liked learning Japanese because of the fun learning and there were even teachers who rewarded their students in the form of gifts. One student stated not so special, ten students expressed they are not very fond of learning the Japanese language, and three students strongly said that they did not like the Japanese language that can be seen in Figure 1.

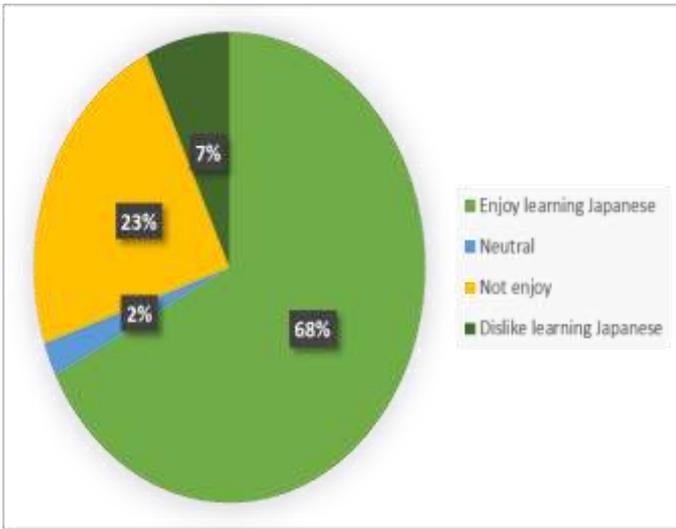


Figure 1. Students State of Enjoying Japanese

Students who disliked Japanese explained that they had difficulties in memorizing Hiragana Katakana materials and letters, and they sometimes did not understand the meaning. On the other hand, students who liked the Japanese language said they like learning Japanese because they thought Hiragana and Katakana letters were unique. Another reason was that they loved to know about Japanese culture especially Ojigi, and Japanese food because they had tasted the food.

In the learning process, their teachers used two languages (Bahasa Indonesia and Japanese) but for students, they preferred to use Bahasa Indonesia, because they can understand better when learning in Bahasa Indonesia.

V. DISCUSSION

The revised 2013 curriculum is a refinement of the 2013 curriculum which has been implemented in a limited manner in several Indonesian schools since 2013. The revised 2013 curriculum has qualification criteria for graduates' abilities that include attitudes, knowledge, and skills which are referred to as graduate competency standards. Overall, graduates' competencies are abilities that must be possessed by students when they complete primary and secondary school education. Based on Permendikbud no. 20 2016, attitudes competencies include spiritual and social attitudes. Knowledge competence includes understanding factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge at the basic level, as well as skills competence that is showing thinking and acting skills: creative, productive, critical, independent, collaborative and communicative.

To be able to achieve the graduate competency standard, learning is focused on 21st-century skills (contained in the lesson plan), namely the character education revitalization, Literacy, 4C, and HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skill). Character education revitalization / PPK (religious, nationalist, independent, mutual cooperation and integrity), is carried out

by developing and implementing character education activities that have been embraced so far. School literacy is carried out in an effort to improve students' ability to access, understand, and use a source of knowledge in various forms of print, digital, and so on. 4C (Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Problem Solving, and Creativity and Innovation) are learning skills (soft skills) that must be formed early so that students have abilities that can be used in international competition. HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) is the ability to think critically, logically, reflectively, metacognitively, and creatively which is a higher-order thinking ability. Through learning that includes 21st-century skills as above, students are expected to be able to form critical thinking skills in exploring knowledge based on information they can find from various sources. Through strengthening these skills, the strong character of students will also be enhanced.

With such graduate competence, readiness is needed from all parties related to children's education, both from the school, teachers, and parents. As expressed by [17] that the success of the 2013 curriculum implementation is strongly influenced by the role of the school, in addition to the continuous teacher professional development and professional learning community. The participation of parents in their children's education also influences. The school determines the most whether a curriculum can be used properly or not in the school environment.

Lack of attention from stakeholders towards learning Japanese in elementary school bring an impact on the implementation of the 2013 revised curriculum in learning Japanese. It also caused differences in the introduction of Japanese in each school. The difference in the introduction of Japanese as a subject (supplementary or extracurricular) was very dependent on the school's own policy. But it should also be noted about the readiness of students to learn Japanese language. Reference [4] states that several studies showed that children who start learning a foreign language at the age of six will be able to master the foreign language approaching native in phonology. However, other research shows that older learners are faster at learning grammatical and lexical components because of their higher levels of cognitive maturity and analytical skills. This certainly need further study in terms of learning Japanese as a foreign language for Indonesian children.

Related to the implementation of the 2013 revised curriculum in schools, based on research results it is known that there were private elementary schools in Bali that had not implemented the curriculum. If schools do not implemented the curriculum, how can teachers implement the 2013 curriculum in learning? Although Japanese learning in schools was based on school policy, it should follow the applicable curriculum. However, there are still schools that have not implemented the revised K-2013 curriculum. This is certainly a big question that needs to be explored. Is it because of the unpreparedness of the school or is there something else? This also impacts on the implementation of the revised K-2013 curriculum on Japanese language learning.

There were schools that have implemented the K-2013 revised curriculum but Japanese learning had not been taught because of the lack of learning resources that referred to the revised K-2013 curriculum. The lack of learning resources was greatly influenced by the lack of attention from the related parties towards learning Japanese in elementary school. The learning tools used by respondents were also not fully in accordance with the revised 2013 curriculum, and the lesson plan in the two schools was limited to including KDP and literacy. 82% of respondents already had learning media, but how to use these media to help to learn in class needs further study by conducting direct observations in class. The absence of appropriate learning tools shows the implementation of the 2013 revised curriculum is not good.

The lack of implementation of the K-2013 revised curriculum in all levels of education certainly does affect the success of the educational process to be achieved by the government. This needs to get more attention considering the introduction of Japanese into the advantages of these schools in attracting prospective students.

Children in Indonesia, especially in Bali, have an interest in the Japanese language and culture. Interest in Japanese is mostly due to unique Japanese culture, both traditional culture, and pop-culture. As expressed by learners that they liked Japanese language lessons because of the unique Hiragana and Katakana letters, Japanese culture especially Ojigi, and Japanese special food because they had already tasted the food. Therefore, it is important to provide experiences for elementary-level learners to interact with Japanese culture. Interaction with culture is one step away from learning that only focuses on the Japanese language itself thereby increasing variation in learning activities. The addition of varied learning activities is good for foreign language learning activities for young learners [4].

But there are things that need to be reconsidered related to the introduction of Hiragana and Katakana letters because there were learners who think the letters are interesting things that cause them to like Japanese, but on the other hand, there are learners who declare the letters difficult which causes them to dislike Japanese. In Japan itself, students who learn Japanese from the beginning/zero experience difficulties (struggle) in learning Hiragana and Katakana letters effectively [5] so that a special method is needed in the introduction of these letters. When students stated it was difficult for learning material, it certainly affected anxiety in learning Japanese. As what is mentioned by reference [6], 'foreign language anxiety is a distinct set of beliefs, perceptions, and feelings in response to foreign language learning in the classroom'. Foreign language anxiety will also affect multiple Intelligences, learner attitudes, and perceive competence in young learners [6]. Based on these opinions, questions will arise about the importance of recognizing Hiragana and Katakana letters for learners at the elementary school level.

VI. CONCLUSION

Japanese language learning in elementary schools in Bali is still limited to private elementary schools. This became a marketing strategy undertaken by the school as an outspoken

when compared to other schools. By providing Japanese language lessons, the students have advantages in terms of foreign language skills. Japanese language learning at elementary school in Bali is not only as extracurricular but also as an additional subject (local content). In other words, the Japanese becomes the first choice of foreign language in addition to English. There were even four schools giving Japanese from first grade. Giving Japanese language lessons at the elementary school level and even from first grade certainly requires careful preparation, especially references that can be used as a guide in the implementation of learning.

There were ten private elementary schools in Bali that provide Japanese language learning. Only seven of those schools implemented the 2013 curriculum. Of the seven schools, only two schools implemented the 2013 curriculum in Japanese language learning. The implementation of curriculum 2013 revision as a basis for learning was strongly influenced by school policy and the availability of learning tools based on curriculum 2013. The lack of lesson plan, learning material, media, and sources which were based on 2013 curriculum strongly affects teachers in the implementation of Japanese language learning. Although two schools already used the 2013 curriculum in Japanese language learning, they only inserted character education and literacy in their lesson plan. The 21st-century skills demanded in the 2013 revision curriculum had not been implemented in Japanese language learning. The teachers explained the material without guiding students to be able to discover their concepts with their critical thinking.

Apart from the implementation of 21st-century skills, the learning process will provide an experience for students and certainly influence their perception of Japanese language learning. There was a tendency for students to love Japanese (67.4%) because they were interested in Japanese culture, food, as well as Hiragana and Katakana letters. Besides, they loved to learn Japanese because of the fun teaching-learning process and the gifts given by the teachers as a reward. On the other hand, uninterested respondents expressed the difficulty of memorizing Hiragana and Katakana as the reasons why they did not like Japanese language learning.

The implementation of the revised K-2013 curriculum is not optimal; of course, it requires reflection on the learning process. A study is needed to produce learning tools based on the revised 2013 curriculum. This is to facilitate the formation of Japanese language learning at the elementary level which is well ordered in terms of material. As it is known that learning Japanese at the elementary level, especially in Bali is still based on school policy, which causes learning materials in each class differ from one school to another.

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