

# The Impact of Learning Community in Japanese Reading Learning Model through Contextual Approach

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## Abstract

This study aims to see the impact of learning community on Japanese reading learning model through contextual approach. The subjects of the study are emerging readers in the first semester class of Japanese language education department at Jakarta State University. As the result, it found that collaborative reading as one of learning community had helped students to overcome their excessive anxiety of identifying various Japanese letters, understanding the reading, and solving problems. It also helped them to increase their reading speed and reading comprehension ability.

**Keywords:** Japanese reading, Contextual approach, Learning community

## 1. Introduction

Reading in Japanese language is a language activity which has a high level of difficulties compared to speaking and listening. A student has difficulty in reading Japanese text, the factors as main causes are the various Japanese letters, different grammar with the Indonesian language grammar, and the usage of words that have various nuances of meaning.

The letters in Japanese consist of hiragana, katakana, and kanji. Each type of letters have their own roles and functions. Hiragana functions to write original words of Japanese language, Katakana functions to write the loan words or words from language outside Japanese, while Kanji itself is a letter originated from China that has a similar function with Hiragana.

For beginner students the first two types of letters must be mastered as a major condition in reading. This is certainly not an easy case, considering each type of letter consists of 46 basic letters, 25 additional letters, and 36 combined letters.

Facing these problems, of course, teachers need to work hard to create a learning environment that can help students to overcome them. Referring to the national standard of higher education in Indonesia it is necessary to develop a learning environment that has characteristics of interactive, holistic, integrative, scientific, contextual, thematic, effective, collaborative, and student-centered.

This study focuses on efforts to improve the literacy ability of Japanese language for beginner level of Japanese language students..

## 2. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Approach

### 2.1. Constructivism

The principle underlying the birth of a contextual approach is constructivism which belief that learning is a construction of knowledge that formed because of the reconstruction of new information by knowledge or experience that has been owned. The essential essence of this idea is that students must discover and transform information into their own. Because by this way the brain will find the meaning of a learning, and when a student realizes the meaningfulness of an information it is believed that the information will stay longer in the memory than forced memorize activity.

Also in this thinking base, how a student acquires knowledge is more important than how many knowledges he acquired. Therefore, in the foundation of constructivism, lecturers are more concerned with a student's learning strategy than what the competencies should be achieved.

### 2.2. Seven components on The Implementation of CTL

In the practice of learning in the classroom, there are seven main components that must apply on the contextual approach, namely:

#### a) Constructivism

As explained above, learning through a contextual approach provides students with free time to construct their own newly gathered information. Nurhadi (2002) said that the structure of knowledge developed in the human brain through two ways, namely assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation means that the structure of knowledge is built on the structure of existing knowledge. While accommodation means that existing knowledge structures are modified in such a way in the human brain to accommodate the entry of new knowledge.

#### b) Inquiry

As explained above that the essence of learning through a contextual approach is the discovery process by students in memorizing a number of information. At this stage a lecturer or teacher should be able to create activities that lead students to the process of discovery. Usually the activity begins with the process of observation, especially in the reading, process of observation can be done by observe the vocabulary, the pattern of new sentences, letters, etc.

#### c) Questioning

Questioning activity is the beginning of an invention. A teacher can ask students things to know their readiness in learning, to know the understanding, to generate student responses, and so on. This activity is not only done by lecturers to the students, but also can be done from students to lecturers, students to other students, and so on.

#### d) Learning Community

Contextual approaches are primarily concerned with the principle of interdependence among individuals. This approach is based on the philosophy that no one in the world lives apart from one another. Johnson (2014) says that without interdependence language will be stopped, along with other relationships we make in the brain. In its application in the classroom, lecturers are asked to create an environment requires cooperation among their students. Because by working together, the students will be helped in finding the problems, planning, and looking for solutions.

#### e) Modeling

The model in this term is a model that can be imitated by students as an early example. In reading activities, lecturers can give examples of how to search for keywords, how to pronounce a vocabulary, and so forth.

In practice in the classroom, lecturers are not the only models that students can imitate. Peers can be imitated as good models as well.

#### f) Reflection

Reflection by Nurhadi (2002) is a way of thinking about what was just learned or thinking back about what has been done. Reflection is a response to a activity or knowledge newly received.

#### g) Authentic Assessment

By authentic assessment lecturers expect to get a picture of the actual student learning progress. The characteristics of authentic assessment lies on the assessment itself. In the authentic assessment, the assessed object is student's performance rather than its ability to remember facts. Assessment should be done continuously during and after the learning process.

Things that can be used for authenticity assessment are projects and the report, quizzes, essays, presentations, journals, written test results, and papers.

### 2.3. Collaborative Reading in Learning Community

Moreillon (2007) states that collaboration emphasized in how two or more people solve problems, not what they solved. In collaborative learning each individual has their own expertise. This difference is then that will fill the weakness each other.

This study focuses on the beginning level reader (emerging readers). The toughest task of a emerging readers is to work on decoding and developing their independent reading abilities. Therefore through the collaborative reading the students will be given the opportunity to be model and correct their mistakes to recognize the letters, how to read, even to the process of understanding the text.

The importance of learning community in learning through contextual approach actually has an important role in independent-study. It is necessary to distinguish between independent-study and self-study. To be independent in a learning community a student is required to be able to ask questions, think critically and creatively, and be able to work together.

Collaborative reading as one of the strategies in a learning community gives every student the opportunity to share knowledge and experience during the reading process. The students share their knowledge in order to find the connection between themselves and the text, the text with the text, the text with the real life.

### 3. Ability to Read Literally

Nurhadi (2005) states that the skills required for a reader to have literal skills are as follows:

- a. The skill of word recognizing.
- b. The skill of sentence recognizing.
- c. The skill of paragraph recognizing.
- d. The skill of detail element recognizing.
- e. The skill of comparison element recognizing.
- f. The skill of sequenced element recognizing.
- g. The skill of recognizing the element of the causation (cause and effect).
- h. Skills to answer the question of who, who, when, where.

- i. Skills to restate the element of comparison
  - j. Skills to restate the sequence.
  - k. Skills to restate the causation element (cause and effect element).
- This eleven skills then will become the focus of reading learning in this study.

#### 4. Research Method

Method used in this research is experimental method with research design are group pre-test and group post-test.

##### 4.1. Population and Research Sample

Population of research is student of Japanese language education department at Jakarta State University in academic year 2016/2017. While the sample is a first-semester student majoring in Japanese language education consist of 28 students.

##### 4.2. Research Instrument

To see the effectiveness of learning community element in Japanese reading learning through contextual approach, this research used reading speed test and reading ability test as the instrument.

##### 4.3. Data analysis techniques

###### 4.3.1. Speed reading test

Student reading speed (Rs) is calculated by the formula:

$$Rs = \frac{N(\text{NumberofWords})}{T(\text{TheTimeTakeninMinutes})} \quad (1)$$

###### 4.3.2. Test reading ability

To calculate The Effectiveness of Treatment (t) of reading ability test result, using formula:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2d}{N(N-1)}}} \quad (2)$$

With description:

Md : mean of deviation between post test and pre test

xd : deviation difference with deviation mean

N : number of subject

#### 5. Result

The tests conducted before and after students experienced the learning of Japanese reading within the learning community. This study aims to see the difference between them and calculate it into the formula to see whether this method is significantly effective or not, especially for the emerging readers.

The result of reading speed test of research samples are belows.

Table 1. The Difference of Reading Speed Before and After Collaborative Reading

Samples	Pre-test	Post-test
1	9.574468085	15.06276151
2	4.649160568	19.42446043
3	7.01754386	17.6182708
4	17.17011129	17.06161137
5	25.35211268	33.96226415
6	20.6500956	45.56962025
7	26.08695652	44.26229508
8	32.82674772	47.36842105
9	19.38958707	24.60136674
10	32.04747774	24.71395881
11	14.75409836	52.42718447
12	14.67391304	20.41587902
13	11.85510428	45.37815126
14	16.61538462	16.48854962
15	14.83516484	16.7962675
16	14.34262948	12.93413174
17	17.30769231	8.23798627
18	8.017817372	14.30463576
19	5.89198036	13.17073171
20	25.17482517	43.72469636
21	31.30434783	41.6988417
22	15.2758133	9.738503156
23	32.72727273	25.89928058
24	35.88039867	17.64705882
25	16.48854962	76.05633803
26	16.7962675	31.39534884
27	23.73626374	46.95652174
28	24.65753425	34.06940063
Average	19.11068995	29.17801919

Table 2. The Difference of Reading Ability Between Before and After Collaborative Reading

Samples	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain (d)
1	68	82	14
2	65	87	22
3	63	66	3
4	81	89	8
5	82	87	5
6	69	77	8
7	80	87	7
8	70	70	0
9	66	72	6
10	79	78	-1
11	71	78	7
12	71	80	9
13	80	85	5
14	73	79	6
15	74	65	-9
16	76	89	13
17	69	78	9
18	80	71	-9
19	84	86	2
20	75	78	3
21	64	70	6
22	39	45	6
23	80	76	-4
24	48	60	12
25	68	64	-4
26	66	64	-2
27	77	70	-7
28	57	62	5
$\Sigma$	1975	2095	120
Average	70.535714	74.821429	

The result is calculated by the statistic formula and it is known that the value of  $t = 3.200149$ . After converted to ttable then the result of reading ability after exercise in learning community showed significant result with  $t > \text{tabel}$ , that is  $3.2 > 2.76$ .

## 6. Discussion

From the results of data calculations in the field is known there is a significant increase both in terms of reading speed and reading comprehension in the beginner reader after learning in groups as shown below.

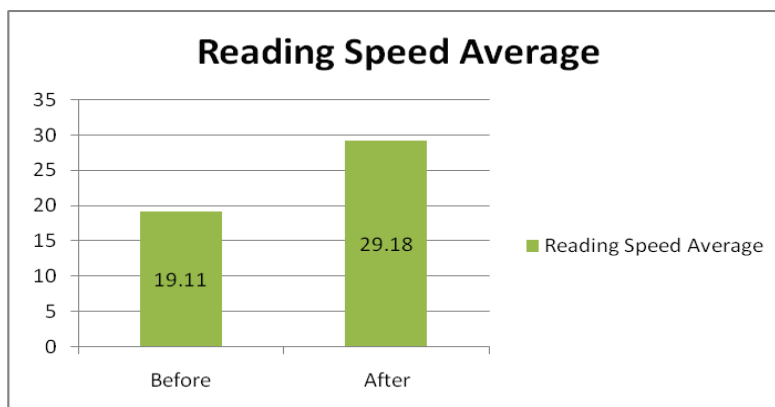


Figure 1. The Increment of Reading Speed Average (Number of Words/Minutes)

As seen above there is an increase in reading speed of approximately ten words per minute to students after reading in the learning community.

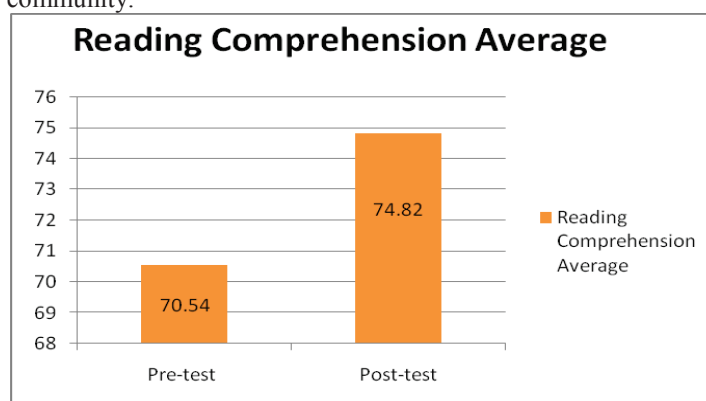


Figure 2. The Increment fo Reading Comprehension Average

Based on field observations and interviews with several students, it is found that learning in group as we called learning community also activated the other CTL components. Other CTL components that appear during group study are modeling and reflection.

In practice each student is given the opportunity to read in turn, at this time the student becomes a model for other students. This precious opportunity indirectly raises students' confidence. In addition the students can reflect on the new knowledge they gathered through group discussion during problem solving.

Since the selected group is a heterogeneous group then every student independently seeks to think critically and creatively in putting forward their idea.

## 7. Conclusion

Through learning in groups, students, especially emerging readers will be helped to overcome excessive anxiety due to the inability to recognize the letters such as Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji. Collaborative reading with colleagues helps him/her to be more confident and critical of reading. The role of teachers in this learning is as a facilitator, motivator as well as a model in learning. Similarly, the role of peers is as a model and a collaborator.

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