

CODE MIXING AS A STRATEGY FOR MASTERING VOCABULARY FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS OF THE JAPANESE STUDY PROGRAM IN MEDAN

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ABSTRACT

Conservatively, code mixing is viewed as a form of deviation from good language, as mixing the mother tongue with other languages when communicating is viewed as undermining the mother tongue's authenticity. On the other hand, this linguistic phenomenon can serve as a strategy for mastering vocabulary when learning a foreign language. This paper examines the use of code-mixing forms by junior university students learning Japanese. This paper employs a qualitative research approach and a descriptive method. The data consist of sentences with code-mixed forms derived from the speeches of first-year Japanese language students at Universitas Harapan Medan in the conversation class (*kaiwa*) and the result sheet of the evaluation of vocabulary mastery. According to the results of this study, the lecturer uses nominal, adjective, and verbal sentence code mixing when communicating with students in the classroom. Using these code-mixing forms demonstrates the effect of enhancing students' Japanese vocabulary comprehension. In conclusion, code-mixing can be used as one of the instructional strategies for teaching Japanese to elementary school students.

Keywords: code-mixing, vocabulary mastery, Japanese

INTRODUCTION

Japanese is studied formally in Indonesian educational institutions at the secondary school level and possibly even at the university level (Savitri, Cahyono, & Efrizal, 2022, p. 51). There are currently departments/majors of Japanese literature or Japanese language in universities in Indonesia's major cities, including Universitas Sumatera Utara and Universitas Harapan Medan in Medan, which has Japanese Language Departments/majors.

According to observations made by researchers while teaching in the Japanese language departments at Universitas Sumatera Utara and Universitas Harapan Medan, not all students who enroll in the Japanese Language Department have previously studied the language. Some reasons why students choose to major in Japanese are subjective, such as their preference for popular cultures, such as anime and manga. However, some try to enroll in Japanese majors without any interest in Japan or its language (Kobari, 2014, p. 126), for instance, as a fallback option if they fail their first choice on the university entrance exam.

Facing the reality of the condition of Japanese language students, lecturers are confronted with a situation in which students are still unfamiliar with foreign Japanese vocabulary. This has far-reaching effects on vocabulary mastery, as it makes it difficult for students to remember new vocabulary that will be used later in the learning process, especially in conversation courses (*kaiwa*), where vocabulary mastery is essential for creating natural conversation.

If a situation exists in which the vocabulary is used in everyday communication, vocabulary mastery can be attained without difficulty. In this regard, it is necessary to foster

an environment that encourages language contact between Indonesia and Japan, including the use of code-mixing.

Code mixing is the use of language units from one language to another in order to expand language style or variety, such as the use of words, clauses, greeting idioms, and so on (Gapur, Pujiono, & Taulia, 2018, p. 32). Code-mixing is a speech event in which clauses and phrases consist of hybrid clauses and hybrid phrases and no longer support their individual functions. It has been determined from these two terms that code-mixing is the phenomenon of mixing language elements into other languages during speech events (Chaer & Agustina, 2004). Code-mixing forms can be separated into five categories. (1) Insertion of tangible word elements, (2) insertion of tangible phrase elements, (3) insertion of tangible clauses, (4) insertion of repetitive word elements, and (5) insertion of tangible or idiomatic word elements. Code-mixing can also be divided into two categories: (1) inner code-mixing, which is derived from the original language and all of its variants, and (2) outer code-mixing, which is derived from a foreign language (Barus, Pujiono, & Fibriasari, 2019).

Code mixing is a disorder of language that frequently occurs in society (Pujiono, 2017, p. 89). In this paper, however, code mixing is utilized to facilitate student vocabulary mastery by inserting codes in the form of vocabulary and clauses in Indonesian-language classroom communication between lecturers and students.

This creates habituation and mastery in listening to and understanding Japanese vocabulary and clauses for students learning Japanese for the first time, thereby accelerating vocabulary mastery and enhancing students' Japanese proficiency.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative methodology based on observational learning process assessment data. As supporting data, a pre-test and post-test were also administered to demonstrate the efficacy of the in-class translation of the Japanese code into Indonesian.

During the six-day preparatory week (*juunishuukan/準備週間*) provided by the Universitas Sumatera Utara Japanese language Department for students to provide orientation and instruction in kana (hiragana and katakana), observations and evaluations were conducted on seven new students with a very limited background in Japanese.

In practice, lecturers have consciously used code mixing in the classroom. The code mixing employed involves vocabulary and clauses that are not included in the learning module. Because pure students only hear the vocabulary in class during the learning process, it is essential that the mastery of student vocabulary and clauses be evident. As shown in the table below, the amount of vocabulary that is emphasized in the context of code-mixing in communication consists of 10 words and 10 clauses.

Table 1. Words and clauses used as a form of code-mixing in Indonesian in class

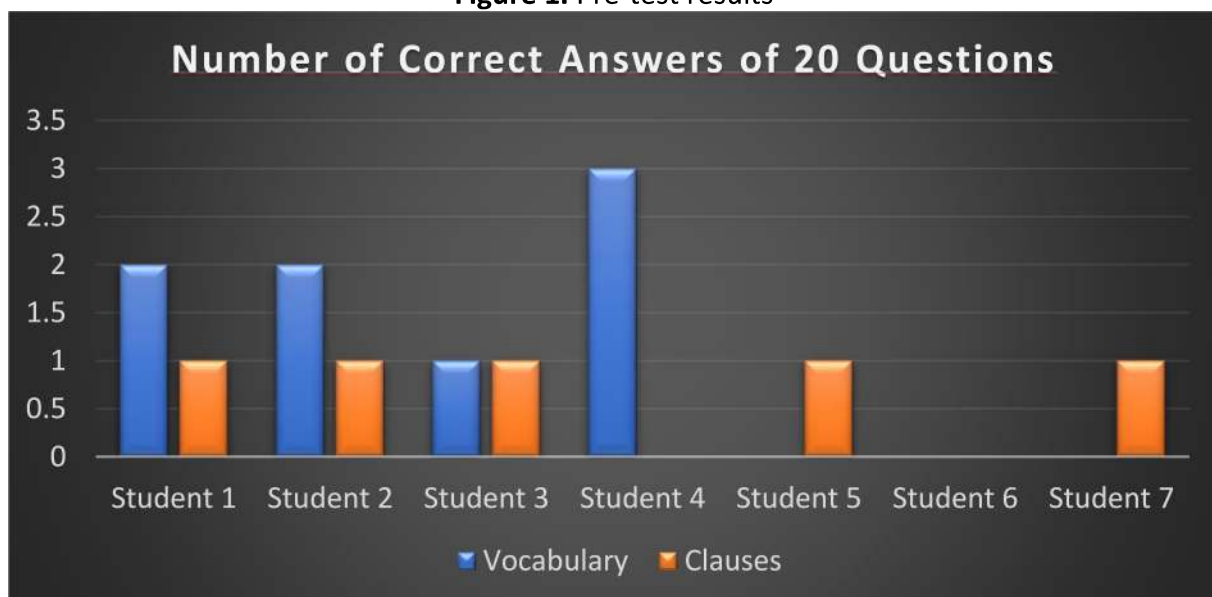
No	Kata	Kalimat
1	携帯電話	携帯をいじる
2	眼鏡	時間が終わります
3	時間	眼鏡をかける

4	好き	(物) が好きですか
5	いきます	どこへ行っていましたか。
6	きます	Aさんはきますか/きませんね
7	笑います	なぜ笑っていますか
8	うまい	(食べ物) がうまいですね。
9	すごい	Aさんはすごいですね
10	静か	静かにしてください

RESULTS

Students were asked to write down the meanings of these 10 vocabulary words and 10 clauses as pre- and post-test questions. Students scored no more than three correct responses for each word and clause on the pre-test, as indicated by the results. This indicates that students' vocabulary knowledge, as measured by the pre-test, is extremely limited. The figure below illustrates the particulars.

Figure 1. Pre-test results



Based on the results of the pre-test depicted in Figure 1, the vocabulary and clauses are used in classroom communication through code-mixing. The lecturer does not explicitly explain the meaning of each word and clause but rather emphasizes the context and purpose of the vocabulary and clauses in question.

In the course of the meeting, each vocabulary word and clause is repeated once or twice. With a clear speech context, students can comprehend and anticipate the meaning of the lecturer's vocabulary and clauses.

The following are examples of forms used in class.

Table 2. examples of the form of code mixing implemented in the class

Vocab	Clauses
<p>"Iya, kemarin sensei makan di Mentai yang baru buka itu, kayanya lebih umai dari yang ditempat lama."</p> <p>"Yeah, yesterday I (sensei) ate at the newly opened Mentai, it seems much tastier(umai) than the old one."</p>	<p>"Kalau kalian makanan Jepang suki desu ka? Suka?"</p> <p>"Do you like Japanese food? Suki desu ka?"</p>
<p>"Itu keitai denwa siapa di atas meja?"</p> <p>"Whose cellphone (keitai denwa) is on the table?"</p>	<p>"Eh.. Si A ini dari tadi keitai o ijiru aja ya.. Jd maknya ga paham"</p> <p>"Eh.. A has just been playing on his cellphone (keitai o ijiru), huh.. So that's why he doesn't understand."</p>
<p>"Iya bener.. Kalau itu sensei suki."</p> <p>"That's right.. If that's what I suki."</p>	<p>"heh yang diujung shizukani shite kudasai, tolong lah suaranya"</p> <p>"Hey, sitting in the corner, please keep your voice quiet (shizukani shite kudasai)"</p>
<p>"Oh ya hari ini jikan nya dari jam berapa sampai jam berapa?"</p> <p>"Oh yes, today is the time (jikan); from what time to what time?"</p>	<p>"A-san, tadi doko e itte imashitaka? Dari mana?"</p> <p>"A-san, Where did you go? (doko e itte imashitaka?)"</p>
<p>"Sugoi kamu ya sudah bisa menulis katakana."</p> <p>"You're great (sugoi); you can already write katakana."</p>	<p>"Si A ini, naze waratte imasu ka? Kenapa ketawa-ketawa aja? Ada yang lucu?"</p> <p>"Hey, A, Why are you laughing? (naze waratte imasu ka?) There is something funny?"</p>

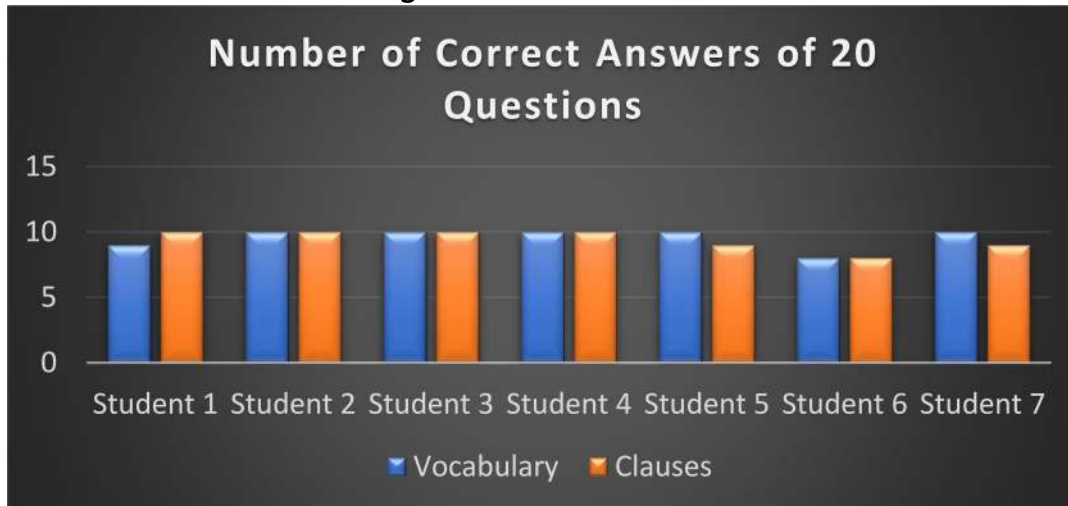
In certain instances, the lecturer employs a form of code mixing followed by the repetition of the same words in Indonesian or gestures to ensure that students comprehend the meaning and intent.

During the meetings on the fifth and sixth day, some students even used the same code-mixing in classroom activities. For example,

"Sensei **jikan** nya udah habis. **Owarimasu**"
Sensei's time is up. Class is over.

A post-test with the same problem material as the pre-test was administered on the sixth day. The following is the result:

Figure 2. Post-test results



Compared to the pre-test results, the results in Figure 2 show a significant increase. This increase indicates that students answer correctly an average of more than eight questions on words and clauses that are questions in Indonesian.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that at the introductory level, the practice of code-mixing in the classroom can improve students' vocabulary mastery. Code mixing can be used to accelerate the acquisition of Japanese vocabulary and clauses by students who have never studied Japanese before. The lecturer must also be able to adjust the use of code-mixing, such as in the movements, expressions, and situations used in class, to ensure that students grasp the correct meaning of each clause and vocabulary word.

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