Utilization of Information Media to Improve Japanese Listening skills

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Abstrak

Menyimak merupakan keterampilan berbahasa berbentuk reseptif. Dilatarbelakangi oleh peningkatan jumlah, serta besarnya minat mahasiswa untuk mengikuti program Internship ke Jepang, dilakukan upaya mempercepat peningkatan kemampuan berbahasa Jepang mahasiswa melalui pemanfaatan media informasi dalam pembelajaran menyimak melalui penugasan mandiri. Media Informasi bersumber dari Youtube pada NHK News Web (News Web Easy) yang dipilih secara random dan disesuaikan dengan kemampuan mahasiswa Tingkat satu. Metode yang digunakan deskriptif kualitatif. Berfokus pada deskripsi pelaksanaan pemberian tugas mandiri dalam pembelajaran menyimak mampu meningkatkan pengetahuan kosa kata (kata benda), pengetahuan dan pemahaman tata bahasa, pemahaman isi dari tema yang diberikan, serta respon mahasiswa dalam pembelajaran tersebut. Hasil pengerjaan tugas melalui LMS dengan langkah pengerjaan yang telah disepakati membawa hasil yang positif pada peningkatan pemerolehan kosa kata, pemahaman tata bahasa serta pemahaman isi. Dari delapan tema penugasan mandiri tersebut diketahui bahwa naik turunnya kemampuan pemerolehan kosakata (kata benda) antara tugas 1-8, berdasarkan respon mahasiswa bergantung pada kesulitan tema, serta sering tidaknya kosa kata tersebut pernah digunakan dalam kelas. Sedangkan pemahaman tata Bahasa berhubungan dengan pemahaman isi dari materi yang disimak. Perubahan kata kerja seperti bentuk ~mashita, ~dekimasu, ~shite imasu telah dipelajari, kesulitannya pada pengetahuan kata kerja yang belum dipelajari. Namun secara keseluruhan informasi penting yang terdapat dalam materi dapat disampaikan dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: *Menyimak, informasi, bahasa Jepang*

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Abstract

This study is motivated by the increasing number of students, as well as the great interest of students to participate in the Internship program in Japan. Efforts are made to accelerate the improvement of first year students in Japanese language skills in knowledge of vocabulary, knowledge of grammar, as well as understanding information obtained through the use of information media in listening learning given through independent assignments. By worksheets linked to the LMS, students are free to open and work on it until the specified time. The information media were sourced from news with themes that are randomly selected. The method used is qualitative descriptive, focusing on the description of how the implementation of independent assignments in listening learning is able to increase knowledge of vocabulary (nouns), knowledge and understanding of grammar, understanding the content of the theme given, as well as student responses in the learning. The research results show that the rise and fall of vocabulary acquisition ability (nouns) between tasks 1 until 8, based on student responses, depends on the range of difficulty of the theme being listened to, and whether or not the vocabulary has been used in the classroom. Verb changes such as the forms ~mashita, ~dekimasu, ~shite imasu have been studied. We found that the difficulty is in the knowledge of verbs that have not been learned, although the important information contained in the material mostly can be well conveyed.

Keywords: verb knowledge, vocabulary improvement

1. Introduction

The increase in the number of new students for the class of 2023, along with the rising interest of students in participating in a one-year internship program in Japan, necessitates the acceleration of Japanese language proficiency for first-year students in the Japanese Language Education Program (2023). To achieve this, various learning innovations are being implemented, including the selection of learning strategies, classroom teaching methods, the use of media, and learning resources, as well as other efforts to enhance students' Japanese language skills.

To expedite the improvement of Japanese language proficiency, first-year students in the Japanese Language Education Program have been provided with Japanese language knowledge equivalent to JLPT Level 4 during the first and second semesters. Consequently, as a continuation of efforts to enhance Japanese language skills, learning materials from YouTube are being utilized in listening comprehension exercises. These materials consist of news information from NHK Japan, with themes tailored to the proficiency level of first-year students.

Short news clips, not exceeding four minutes in duration, are selected and used as learning materials for students to practice listening both in class and as independent assignments outside the classroom. This learning activity is expected to accelerate the improvement of first-year students' listening skills (class of 2023) in terms of vocabulary acquisition, grammar knowledge and understanding, as well as the enhancement of information obtained. Additionally, it is hoped that this will broaden students' horizons and increase their knowledge about Japanese culture, mindset, and social conditions.

The research questions focus on how the listening comprehension skills of the class of 2023 students are enhanced through the utilization of information sourced from YouTube (NHK news) in terms of vocabulary acquisition, Japanese grammar knowledge, and understanding of the content of the news or discourse presented orally. The second focus is on the students' responses to the use of information media in Japanese listening

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comprehension learning, which is provided as independent assignments linked to the LMS for the Chokai course.

The listening activities involve a series of stages. According to Iskandarwassid (2009), the stages of listening activities are divided into three types: psychological activities, concentration activities, and high intellectual activities. Psychological activities involve hearing and recalling. Concentration activities start with paying attention, forming imagery, searching past memories for ideas, comparing, testing cues, and re-encoding. The process of obtaining meaning, internalizing it while listening, interpreting what is heard, and mentally mimicking it falls under high intellectual activities. These three types of activities are interconnected and experienced by every language learner.

According to Kemp (Hamid, 2015:4), the model of listening activities is divided into four parts: 1) Identification: Learners perceive sounds and phrases by identifying these elements directly and holistically concerning their meaning; 2) Identification and selection without retention: Learners listen for enjoyment and understanding, summarizing sequences without being required to demonstrate comprehension through active language use; 3) Identification and directed selection with short/limited retention: Learners are given some indicators in advance about what they will hear or listen to; they demonstrate their understanding directly in various active ways; 4) Identification and selection with long-term retention.

Research by Santiar, which observed the listening learning process using authentic materials, found that learners engage in selective, intensive, and responsive listening activities as when using non-authentic materials, as well as extensive and autonomous listening activities. Santiar's research shares similarities in the use of teaching materials sourced from YouTube but differs in the learning activities' instructions or steps for listening comprehension. In Santiar's research, the activities were conducted in groups of 3-4 students, whereas, in this study, students complete tasks independently. Additionally, the instructor uploads audio-visual recordings along with Japanese audio texts before the class day, allowing learners to identify difficult vocabulary in advance as a pre-reading activity to get an overview of the theme and discussion. In this study, although there are Japanese texts in the NHK link, it has been agreed that the tasks will be completed without looking at the Japanese texts, so vocabulary acquisition, grammar understanding, and comprehension are purely based on the students' listening activities, which can be repeated multiple times. Another difference lies in the final learning activity. In Santiar's research, learners were asked to prepare a list of difficult vocabulary and key points heard through audio-visual recordings and texts, then answer questions related to the audio-visual content to confirm reading comprehension. In this study, learners repeatedly listen to the news, identify vocabulary, write down the grammar used, and record key information. Confirmation of understanding and task difficulties is done at a different time. Referring to Rost's types of listening activities (in Lea Santiar, 2017), independent listening using YouTube sources, such as short news clips under four minutes from NHK, falls into selective, intensive, and autonomous listening activities.

2. Methods

The research method outlines the researcher's design for solving the research problem, including the steps taken, the time of implementation, the source of data, the form of data, how data is obtained, and the processing of data to produce statements or conclusions about the formulated research problem. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. In qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument (Sugiyono, 2014). Data collection techniques are conducted through triangulation (combination). The data sources are students of the 2023 cohort (B) of the Japanese Language Education Program. The data for the first

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research problem consist of the number of vocabulary (meishi) acquired, the understanding of grammar in the material, and the important information that can be extracted from independent listening. The data for the second research problem include the results of students' responses to the independent assignments, utilizing NHK news sources taken from YouTube.

Data collection techniques are methods or efforts used to obtain data (Sugiyono, 2011:193). The data collection technique in this research involves assigning independent tasks to students through links in the LMS, with flexible completion times but an overall deadline (documentation). Additionally, interviews and questionnaires are conducted to gather responses from the students. The data analysis stage uses Miles and Huberman's theory, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The vocabulary (meishi) acquisition data by students are categorized, tabulated to determine the percentage of each meishi vocabulary acquired from the listening results, and then averaged per class. The acquisition and understanding of grammar are also analysed based on the grammatical forms understood by the students, including any grammar that has not been previously studied if applicable. The understanding of the content of the news will also be presented in tables.

3. Results

The steps for completing the independent assignments given to the first-year students of the 2023 cohort are as follows: without looking at the Japanese text, students listen to or watch the news with unlimited repetition to find vocabulary in the form of nouns (meishi), write them down on a worksheet, note verb changes and the grammatical forms used, and then write the key information in Indonesian based on their understanding. Confirmation of the accuracy of their understanding and any difficulties in completing the assignments is conducted at a different time.

Below are the results of vocabulary acquisition from the eight assignment themes presented in the table:

Tema 1: キャベツが高かい　野菜の値段んが上がっている (5 月 23 日 11 時 55 分)

Durasi : 1:52

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)
1	農林水産省	8	25%
2	店	23	72%
3	値段	30	94%
4	人参	20	63%
5	以上	20	63%
6	野菜	32	100%
7	理由	25	78%
8	原因	12	38%
9	説明	30	94%
10	季節	21	66%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class			**69%**

Tema 2: 竜巻や突風・雷のときに気きをつけること

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Durasi : 3:47

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)
1	竜巻	5	16%
2	突風	25	78%
3	雷	32	100%
4	季節	20	63%
5	関係	20	63%
6	所	32	100%
7	空気	23	72%
8	雲	32	100%
9	積乱雲	10	31%
10	音	21	66%
11	窓	32	100%
12	場合	32	100%
13	建物	32	100%
14	電化製品	3	9%
15	電柱	4	13%
16	地面	7	22%
17	情報	10	31%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class			**63%**

Tema 3: 地震で被害を受けた「白米の千枚田」で田植たうえ
Durasi : 1:48

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)
1	階段	25	78%
2	団体	20	63%
3	農家	10	31%
4	白米	5	16%
5	田植	8	25%
6	地震	30	94%
7	被害	20	63%
8	戻	15	47%
9	高校生	32	100%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class			**57%**

Tema 4: 神戸市の六甲山　羊の赤ちゃんたちが生まれた（3月18日11時55分）
Durasi : 1:25

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)

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1	羊	32	100%
2	季節	30	94%
3	最初	32	100%
4	牧場	15	47%
5	元気	32	100%
6	予定	32	100%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class			**90%**

Tema 5 : 沖縄県の横断歩道　事故をなくすために色いろを塗ぬる (4 月 22 日 11 時 55 分)

Durasi : 1:50

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)
1	横断歩道	4	13%
2	道路	8	25%
3	場所	32	100%
4	隣	13	41%
5	小学校	32	100%
6	信号	21	66%
7	交差点	15	47%
8	事故	20	63%
9	警察	30	94%
10	校長	25	78%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class			**63%**

Tema 6 : ペットと一緒に避難　何に気をつけるか勉強する会かい (5 月 29 日 16 時 25 分)

Durasi: 1:45

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)
1	季節	32	100%
2	台風	32	100%
3	公園	32	100%
4	避難	25	78%
5	場所	32	100%
6	専門家	23	72%
7	生活	28	88%

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8	用意	30	94%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class		91%	

Tema 7 : 化粧の力」で避難している人を元気にしたい（5 月 15 日 12 時 00 分）

Durasi : 1:47

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)
1	避難所	4	13%
2	年寄	17	53%
3	化粧	20	63%
4	化粧品	25	78%
5	会社	32	100%
6	元気	32	100%
7	顔	32	100%
8	唾液	18	56%
9	健康	30	94%
10	筋肉	5	16%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class			**67%**

Tema 8: 富山県高岡市でお祭り　（5 月 20 日 16 時 00 分）
Durasi : 1:39

NO	Vocabulary	Vocabulary Processing Number	Vocabulary Processing Number (%)
1	飾	6	19%
2	道路	25	78%
3	場所	32	100%
4	祭	32	100%
5	声	32	100%
6	地震	32	100%
7	元気	32	100%
Average vocabulary acquisition in class			**85%**

The result of acquiring grammatical forms that are understood by student in carrying out listening task independently are presented in the table below.

Acquisition of understanding of grammar in the news (followed by a change in verb)	
No	Task 1

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1	–ていました。―より。―から。―ように。―と思います。調べたり、値段が高くなったり。–ですが。―ついて。
	Task 2
2	–て...ください。―できると。―なります。―できます。―すぐに。―なって。―たり...たりする。―たほうがいい。―ている。―ないで。―...より...です。―ため に。
	Task 3
3	–ができます。―ています。―くなっています。―ならんで。―できたら。―なおした。 ―などは。―のように。―のこっています。―ました
	Task 4
4	–...たり...たりしています。―ています。―てから。―よると。―てほしいです。―しています。―と思って...もらいたいです。
	Task 5
5	–なっています。―ありませんです。―ように。―ために。―しています。―してから。 ―なるので。―たら。
	Task 6
6	–ている。―と思います。―ように。―くなります。―がありました。―ために。―するとき。―ています。―ので。―など。
	Task 7
7	–がありました。―になります。―ていました。―ので。―くなって。―なる。―くなります。
	Task 8
8	–と思います。―ています。―ことができます。―のように。―なくしました。―ため。

Student understanding of the content or important information from the news in assignments 1 to 8 is shown in the table below.

The point or Outline in the news	
No	Task 1
1	The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries has investigated and found that the prices of cabbage, tomatoes, carrots, and several other vegetables are rising in the market.
2	The prices of vegetables in Japan are higher than usual due to the heavy rainfall last month.
3	The high price of cabbage has led to an increase in the prices of other vegetables as well. The Minister of Agriculture explained that this is because the continuous rain last

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	month resulted in a smaller harvest of vegetables.
4	The increase in vegetable prices is due to the excessive rainfall. As a result, many stores in Tokyo are experiencing higher vegetable prices.
5	The rise in vegetable prices is due to the heavy rain.
6	農水省が日本の野菜店を調査したところ、ホウレンソウ、ニンジン、キュウリなど一部の野菜が高騰していることがわかった。これは梅雨からだった。その結果、一部の買い物客は値上げにショックを受けた。
7	The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries investigated vegetable prices sold in stores from May 13-15. There was an increase in the prices of cabbage, carrots, lettuce, cucumbers, and tomatoes. The reason for the price increase is due to the reduced availability of vegetables in stores because of factors such as heavy rain last month. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries stated that starting in mid-June, cabbage grown in cooler areas will be available in stores, and the prices will decrease.
8	In May, from the 13th to the 15th, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries conducted a survey of vegetable prices sold in the market. Several vegetables were found to be expensive, including cabbage, carrots, lettuce, cucumbers, and tomatoes. This occurred because the heavy rainfall delayed the harvest and availability of vegetables in the market. People have remarked that cabbage tastes good in spring, but due to its high price, they cannot afford to buy it. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries announced that starting from mid-June, cabbage grown in cooler areas will be displayed in stores, and the prices will go down.
9	The Japanese Ministry of Agriculture inspected markets in Suginami (Tokyo, Japan) due to the surge in vegetable prices. Vegetables that experienced price increases include cabbage, carrots, and cucumbers. This happened because of continuous rain in the area. As a result, sellers are experiencing losses as many customers are reluctant to buy vegetables due to the sharp rise in market prices.
No	Task 2
1	Explanation of What to Do During Storms and Lightning:
2	If you are outside, immediately seek shelter in a building or car. If you are inside a building, keep a distance from windows and take cover.
3	Information on Signs of Typhoons and How to Stay Safe:
4	This section contains information about major storms, including typhoons and loud thunder. The storm can be so strong that it damages windows and enters buildings. It is advised to stay away from trees within a 4-meter radius or underneath them, as they can be struck by lightning.
5	Methods to Avoid Natural Disasters Like Typhoons and Lightning: During a typhoon, take shelter inside a concrete building or a car. Stay away from

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	windows. During lightning, keep a distance of at least 4 meters from trees, as taking cover under them is very dangerous.
6	竜巻から逃げる方法 第一に、建物や車に乗り込む。第二に、木のテーブルなど、頑丈な土台の後ろや下に避難する。第三に、雷雨の中、木の下に避難するのは避ける。第五に、建物から離れて屋外にいる場合は、木から少なくとも４メートル離れること。
7	Tornadoes, typhoons, and thunderstorms occur due to cumulonimbus clouds. To avoid tornadoes and typhoons, enter or stay inside a building or a car, then hide under a wooden table and avoid windows or fragile objects. To avoid thunderstorms, stay at least 4 meters away from trees because lightning can strike them.
8	Tornadoes, gusts of wind, and thunderstorms can occur in various places and seasons. 1. Cumulonimbus Clouds When cumulonimbus clouds approach, the sky suddenly darkens, thunder is heard, and a cold wind blows. Sometimes, small pieces of ice fall. If you see cumulonimbus clouds, immediately seek a safe place. 2. Tornadoes If you are outside during a tornado or gust of wind, immediately enter a sturdy concrete building or car. If you are in a high-rise building, go to a room with windows. Glass and other objects might fly around, so it is safer to enter a room and hide under a table. 3. Lightning Strikes If you are inside a building, keep at least 1 meter away from walls and electrical appliances. When lightning strikes a building, a strong electric current can flow through the walls and appliances. Information about tornadoes, gusts of wind, and lightning can be found on TV and the Internet.
9	Safety guidelines for emergency situations like seeing cumulonimbus clouds (storm clouds), experiencing an earthquake or an air raid, and hearing sounds indicating danger. They explain the steps to take to protect yourself, such as finding a safe shelter, staying away from windows, and following information from television or the Internet.
10	This news text provides safety guidelines for facing severe weather marked by cumulonimbus clouds, tornadoes, strong winds, and lightning. When you see cumulonimbus clouds, you should immediately seek a safe place. If a tornado occurs, take shelter inside a sturdy building or car and stay away from windows. When lightning strikes, enter a building or car and stay away from walls and electrical appliances.
No	Task 3
1	How to Prevent Landslides by Using Terracing
2	Rice paddies on hillside slopes are formed into steps or terraces to prevent landslides during an earthquake.

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3	Preventing landslides caused by earthquakes using terracing.
4	The Senmaida Protection Association is repairing damaged rice paddies. Rice planting began on the 11th in the prepared fields. The number of elderly people in the Senmaida area is increasing, and the number of farmers is decreasing.
5	"Shirame no Senmaida" in Wajima City, Ishikawa Prefecture, is a small rice paddy that lines up like steps near the sea. When the Noto Peninsula earthquake occurred, about 80% of the 1,000 rice paddies were destroyed. The Senmaida protection organization is repairing the damaged rice paddies. On the 11th, rice planting began in the repaired paddies. Volunteers such as high school students will also be involved in the rice planting.
6	The Noto Peninsula earthquake has damaged the community's farmland in Wajima City, Ishikawa Prefecture. As a result, the local community is coming together to revive the area by planting rice paddies. This effort is hoped to help earthquake victims recover from their trauma.
7	Planting rice in Shiroyone Senmaida, which was damaged by the earthquake. Shiroyone Senmaida in Ishikawa Wajima City is a small rice paddy lined up like steps near the sea. The Noto earthquake caused landslides, and about 80% of the 1,000 rice paddies were destroyed. The organization protecting Senmaida is repairing the damaged rice paddies. On the 11th, rice planting began in the repaired paddies. In the Senmaida rice paddy area, there are more and more elderly people, and fewer and fewer farmers. Volunteers, such as high school students, also plan to help with the rice planting.
8	About 80% of the 1,000 rice paddies were damaged by the earthquake. A group of people is working to repair the paddies and start planting white rice.
No	Task 4
1	In the mountainous area of Kobe, there is a sheep named Aka-chan. Before sleeping with her mother, she drinks milk first. Everyone wishes for her to grow up and have healthy offspring.
2	The lambing season at Rokkosan Farm, Kobe. This year, the first baby was born on February 8th. A total of 12 lambs have been born, and the farm hopes they all grow up healthy.
3	A higher number of sheep births.
4	Rokkosan Farm in Kobe City raises about 160 sheep. Now is the lambing season. On February 8th this year, the first lamb, Yokana-chan, was born. They all sleep with their mothers and drink milk together.
5	Birth of lambs.
6	At Rokkosan Farm in Kobe City, there are about 160 sheep. It is now the lambing season, and around 10 lambs have been born.

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"Innovation and Strategies for Advancing Japanese Language Studies"

No	Task 5
1	There are green and white lines at crosswalks with traffic lights. Their function is to reduce the risk of accidents. First-grade elementary school students usually walk across these lines when vehicles stop.
2	The zebra cross has been changed to green and white, and blue and white, to minimize accidents.
3	In Okinawa Prefecture, zebra crossings are painted to avoid accidents between pedestrians and vehicles.
4	Pedestrian crossings in Okinawa Prefecture are painted with colors to reduce the risk of accidents.
5	Coloring zebra crossings on some roads in Okinawa to avoid the high number of accidents.
6	Zebra crossings in Okinawa are painted so drivers can see them more clearly, especially in front of schools. This is intended to reduce the number of accidents.
7	Zebra crossings in Okinawa are painted to prevent accidents.
8	Zebra crossings in Japan are painted so drivers can see them clearly, with colors like white, green, and blue. Elementary school students think vehicles will stop at the zebra crossing.
9	Painting zebra crossings to reduce accident rates.
10	In Okinawa Prefecture, many crosswalks are painted with colors to avoid traffic accidents. For example, there are blue crosswalks in front of elementary schools in Urasoe City and green crosswalks at intersections in Naha City without traffic lights. Last year, 30% of pedestrian accidents in Okinawa occurred at crosswalks. Therefore, crosswalks are being repainted with colors to improve safety and driver awareness.

No	Task 6
1	Around 30 people attended a pet training and learning session in Tokyo. There was a small area in the middle that could fit pets. There was a place for poop along with the provided sand. This learning session is expected to have a positive impact on both pets and their owners.
2	Learning to take care of and train pets
3	A meeting to learn what to pay attention to when evacuating with pets. In a park in Tachikawa City, Tokyo, a meeting was held to learn what to pay attention to when evacuating with pets. When evacuating, place the pet in a small box called a "case." There was also an introduction to things that need to be prepared for your pet. Things like ice packs to keep them cool, toys that are always used, and a toilet seat. Pets also need shoes to avoid injuries from broken glass.

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4	In Tachikawa, Tokyo, an event is being held on how to evacuate with pets. About 30 people gathered there with their pets.
5	ペットを避難所に連れて行く場合の準備
No	Task 7
1	Victims of natural disasters use the power of makeup to beautify themselves
2	After the earthquake, a group was held to teach the elderly at the Hinanjo refugee camp how to apply makeup. The cosmetic company Kaishaga has opened an animal shelter in Hinanjo, Kanazawa City, Ishikawa Prefecture. They want to energize the minds and bodies of the refugees through makeup.
3	Makeup at the shelter
4	Explains about after the earthquake, a cosmetic company held a meeting to teach how to use cosmetics, aiming to heal mentally
5	One beauty company helped earthquake victims at one of the shelters by providing makeup skills. Initially, this company taught "face massage" to the refugees to help them better enjoy food, and then taught about makeup.
No	Task 8
1	There is a celebration called Fushikihikiyama that is held every January every year for the past 200 years. Usually, people chant "Iyaasa" eight times. It must be done with a cheerful and happy feeling.
2	The festival is held to restore the city of earthquake victims.
3	In the Fushiki district of Takaoka City, Toyama Prefecture, the "Fushiki Hikiyama Festival" has been held for about 200 years. Beautifully decorated floats parade around the city. This year, due to road damage and other areas affected by the Noto Peninsula earthquake in January, the number of float rotation spots was reduced compared to previous years. People are happy and enjoy this festival.
4	In the Fushiki district of Takaoka City, Toyama Prefecture, the "Fushiki Hikiyama" festival has been held for about 200 years. This festival features beautiful floats parading through the city. This year, due to the Noto Peninsula earthquake in January that damaged roads and other areas, the movement area of the floats was reduced. At the festival on the 18th, participants wore happi and chanted "Iyasaa, Iyasaa" while pulling an 8-ton float accompanied by flute music. Visitors felt happy and said that the festival helped them forget the hardships caused by the earthquake. The Chairman of the Fushiki Hikiyama Committee said he was happy to see the residents enjoying the festival and hoped it could uplift the spirits of the city again.
5	Explaining about a festival that crosses the earthquake-affected areas, aiming to help the victims forget the incident.

PROCEEDING
The 6th International Conference on Japanese Studies, Language, and Education
"Innovation and Strategies for Advancing Japanese Language Studies"

4. Discussion

Based on the results of LMS activities by students in listening to news from NHK News Web Easy, from topic one to topic eight, it can be observed that the acquisition of vocabulary, particularly nouns, varied between tasks one to eight. In the first task, with the news theme [キャベツが高かい 野菜の値段が上がっている] 10 vocabulary words were acquired with different acquisition percentages for each word. The vocabulary word [農林水産省] had the lowest acquisition rate, likely due to it being a specific governmental term related to agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, which is rarely mentioned or known in learning contexts. Additionally, the grammar patterns understood by students, having been previously studied, included [—ていました, —より, —から, —ように, —と思います, 調べたり, 値段が高くなったり, —ですが, —ついて]. No difficulties were found in the use of verbs. The students' comprehension of the news content in theme 1 was also good, as evidenced by their ability to convey the main message in writing, namely the skyrocketing price of cabbage due to heavy rainfall. They also articulated cause and effect or the reasons for the rise in vegetable prices, especially cabbage.

In the second theme [竜巻や突風・雷のときに気をつけること], students had difficulty with vocabulary such as 竜巻, 電化製品, 電柱, and 地面, as these words were new or previously unused. The sentence patterns used were [—て...ください, —できると, —なります, —できます, —すぐに, —なって, —たり...たりする, —たほうがいい, —ている, —ないで, —...より...です, —ために]. However, unfamiliar vocabulary and meanings hindered their understanding of the news content, even though some managed to convey it well and completely. According to the students, the second theme of the assignment, though challenging, motivated them to listen repeatedly due to the valuable information provided about precautions during tornadoes, strong winds, and lightning, which is useful knowledge when in Japan.

In the third theme [地震で被害を受けた「白米の千枚田」で田植], students also faced difficulties with the vocabulary used, such as 農家 (farmer), 白米 (white rice), and 田植 (rice planting), which sounded new to them. Additionally, understanding sentence patterns was challenging due to many unknown verbs, resulting in limited information conveyed. However, some students were able to write back the information they understood well. For the third theme, students found the topic less interesting and somewhat boring.

In the fourth theme [神戸市の六甲山 羊の赤ちゃんたちが生まれた], the vocabulary acquisition rate was nearly 100%, indicating that students were already familiar with the words. The only difficult word was ぼくじょう , but overall, both grammar and news content were well understood.

In the fifth theme [沖縄県の横断歩道 事故をなくすために色を塗る], few students knew the words 横断歩道 and 道路, with only 4 and 8 students respectively. The average vocabulary acquisition rate for the class was 63%. According to the students, this news was challenging, especially with many new and unfamiliar words, leading to limited and incomplete information being conveyed.

In the sixth theme [ペットと一緒に避難 何に気をつけるか勉強する会], students did not face difficulties, as indicated by the table. They also understood verbs, sentence patterns, and news content well. Students found this theme easy and comprehensible with just one listening.

In the seventh task with the theme [化粧の力」で避難している人を元気にしたい], students also struggled with vocabulary, despite having learned the verbs and sentence

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"Innovation and Strategies for Advancing Japanese Language Studies"

patterns. Therefore, their understanding of the information was limited. On average, students had to repeat the listening four times to grasp the content.

In the final task with the theme [富山県高岡市でお祭り], the average vocabulary acquisition rate for the class was 85%. Students found the vocabulary familiar from their Japanese language studies, making it easy to understand the news content.

Student responses from questionnaires and interviews related to independent assignments in Japanese listening courses were positive. Although they had to repeatedly listen to the news to capture noun and verb vocabulary with their various forms and the information or content of the news, the provision of tasks through LMS, which could be opened and completed anytime with agreed-upon procedures, made it easier for students to manage their time. However, it was challenging to monitor whether the tasks were done independently or copied from friends.

The difficulties faced by students regarding unknown noun and verb vocabulary motivated them to learn and find out their meanings. Using their previously studied grammar knowledge, they attempted to construct the meaning of sentences bit by bit. Although the information obtained was minimal, it was generally well understood. This aligns with Iskandarwasid's theory, which states that high psychological activity, concentration, and intellectual activity are interconnected. High concentration is required to identify new vocabulary. With the support of grammar forms previously studied and a broad vocabulary, it becomes easier to interpret meanings.

5. Conclusion

Assigning independent listening tasks based on NHK News Web Easy videos from YouTube not only trains students' Japanese listening skills but also serves as a method for expanding their Japanese noun vocabulary, even for first-year students. Listening to short news clips is also beneficial for reinforcing the understanding of verb usage and its various forms that have been studied, as the spoken information provides direct examples of Japanese sentence patterns. Additionally, listening to news information can enhance knowledge about culture, societal habits, natural conditions, ways of thinking, work ethics, and other useful information for students preparing for internships in Japan.

The students' responses were also positive. They felt that they acquired many new vocabulary words from listening to the assigned news, despite the difficulty and the need for repetition. Similarly, they did not face difficulties in understanding verb forms and changes. However, many of the verbs used were not yet studied, affecting their comprehension of the news content.

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The 6ᵗʰ International Conference on Japanese Studies, Language, and Education
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