



ANALYSIS OF THE YOUTUBE CHANNEL *LEARN JAPANESE WITH TANAKA SAN* FOR JAPANESE LANGUAGE LEARNING IN GRADE XI AT SMAN 62 JAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the suitability of the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* for Japanese language learning among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta, and to identify the channel's strengths and weaknesses based on student responses. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with purposive sampling, analyzing content suitability through a comparison matrix based on Arsyad's (2006) media criteria, and further examined using Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis and Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis. Response data were collected through a questionnaire completed by 60 eleventh-grade students and corroborated by a teacher interview for source triangulation. The findings show that the channel supports the achievement of learning objectives for the *hajimemashite* and *watashi no yume* themes, but insufficiently supports the *arigatou* theme, as its content remains focused on providing comprehensible input without facilitating students' independent oral production. Based on student responses, the channel was rated favorably across all measured aspects, including accessibility, usefulness, time efficiency, practicality, message clarity, and attractiveness, though it was consistently positioned as a supplementary medium rather than a substitute for teacher instruction.

Keywords: *youtube channel; learn japanese with tanaka san; instructional media; japanese language*

INTRODUCTION

Japanese is one of the foreign languages that has attracted considerable interest in Indonesia, driven both by the influence of popular culture and by academic needs (Ramadhan et al., 2025). The interest of younger generations in learning Japanese has evolved, they no longer merely seek to understand entertainment media, but also aim to pursue employment opportunities and further studies. This growing phenomenon aligns with technological developments that have transformed how people access learning resources, with information no longer confined to print media but increasingly available through various digital platforms. This shift necessitates the availability of learning media that are broader in scope, more interactive, and more varied to meet the needs of modern learners.

Despite this considerable interest, however, conditions in the field reveal various obstacles in the learning process. Based on a pre-research questionnaire administered to eleventh-grade students and the Japanese language teacher at SMAN 62 Jakarta, students were found to still face difficulties in reading texts, listening to conversations, memorizing vocabulary, and speaking in Japanese. Students reported that learning confined to textbooks

or the teacher's lecture method in class often felt monotonous, tedious, and even induced drowsiness due to abstract material that was difficult to visualize.

To address this lack of engagement, students require learning media that are more visual and practical. Based on the pre-research questionnaire, 97.6% of students gave a positive response, stating that YouTube videos are highly needed as a supplementary medium for Japanese language learning. The ideal characteristics of learning videos identified by students include clear text or subtitles (77.4%), engaging animation (56%), explanations delivered by native speakers (52.4%), and short video duration (33.3%). This need expressed by students was fully supported by the subject teacher, who affirmed that creative instructional video media are indeed needed to accommodate the limited class time available for learning.

One channel that can address the needs of beginner-level Japanese learners is the YouTube channel "Learn Japanese with Tanaka san." This channel has been active on YouTube since 2021, is managed by Tanaka, a native speaker born and raised in Japan, and had approximately 700,000 subscribers as of June 2026. Based on a review of general user comments, the channel's main strengths lie in the aesthetic quality of its visual animation and its presentation of speaking practice content. The researcher selected this channel as the research object because it has consistently uploaded educational content since 2021 and provides a range of Japanese language learning materials relevant for examination within the context of senior high school learning. Based on the researcher's search, no prior study has been found that specifically analyzes this channel as a medium for Japanese language learning at the senior high school level.

The YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* is expected to hold potential as a creative supplementary learning medium. However, no scientific and systematic study has yet analyzed this channel within the scope of formal schooling. Specifically, it remains unknown to what extent the content of this channel is suitable for Japanese language learning among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta, nor how students respond to this channel in their learning. This suitability analysis is based on the odd-semester Japanese language learning module for the eleventh grade/Phase F at SMAN 62 Jakarta, which encompasses learning objectives, topics, materials, and learning outcomes, and is examined using Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis and Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis as the theoretical foundation for assessing the suitability of language material presentation.

Based on the foregoing, the research problems addressed in this study are: (1) how suitable is the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* for Japanese language learning among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta, and (2) what are the strengths and weaknesses of this channel as a Japanese language learning medium based on the responses of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta. In line with these research problems, this study aims to describe the suitability of the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* for Japanese language learning among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta, and to determine the strengths and weaknesses of this channel as a Japanese language learning medium based on the responses of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta.



METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the suitability of the video content on the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* for eleventh-grade Japanese language learning, as well as students' responses toward the channel (Sugiyono, 2019). The research was conducted from March to June 2026 at SMAN 62 Jakarta. The data collected were qualitative, comprising descriptions of the content suitability found in the video material and descriptive results from the student response questionnaire. Primary data sources were obtained from the video content on the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san*, the results of the student response questionnaire, and an interview with the eleventh-grade Japanese language teacher. Secondary data consisted of the odd-semester eleventh-grade Japanese language learning module used at SMAN 62 Jakarta, which served as a comparative instrument.

The research population comprised all eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta in the 2025/2026 academic year enrolled in Japanese language learning, totaling 144 students. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling (Asrulla et al., 2023). The object sample consisted of videos on the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* selected based on their suitability with the odd-semester eleventh-grade/Phase F Japanese language learning module, grouped into three themes: *hajimemashite*, *arigatou*, and *watashi no yume*. The subject sample consisted of 60 students from classes XI A, XI B, and XI C who were present at the time of data collection, comprising 22 students from XI A, 12 students from XI B, and 26 students from XI C.

Data collection was carried out through three techniques: digital observation of the video content on the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san*, the administration of closed- and open-ended questionnaires to eleventh-grade students, and semi-structured interviews with the eleventh-grade Japanese language teacher as a source triangulation technique. The questionnaire consisted of 23 statement items using a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree), accompanied by open-ended reasons from respondents, while the interview guide consisted of 23 open-ended questions. Both instruments were developed based on a synthesis of three theoretical foundations: the instructional media selection criteria proposed by Arsyad (2006), covering the aspects of practicality, flexibility, and durability, the instructional video criteria proposed by Riyana in Oktaviani (2019), namely the aspect of message clarity, and the YouTube instructional video practicality criteria proposed by Yudela et al. (2020), covering the aspects of accessibility, time efficiency, usefulness, and attractiveness. Both instruments were validated through expert judgment and deemed suitable for use.

An additional instrument, a content-suitability analysis matrix, was developed based on the media-suitability-with-learning-objectives theory proposed by Arsyad (2006), complemented by analytical indicators for the fulfillment of the Phase F Japanese language learning outcome elements: listening (*kiku*), speaking (*hanasu*), reading (*yomu*), and writing (*kaku*). An element was considered fulfilled if the video contained material or activities corresponding to the indicator for that element. The data analysis technique referred to the Miles and Huberman model (in Sugiyono, 2019), comprising data reduction, data display in

the form of a comparison matrix table along with narrative descriptions and simple percentages, and conclusion drawing to address the suitability of the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* with the learning module and students' responses toward the channel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Suitability of YouTube Channel Content with the Learning Module

The suitability analysis was conducted on three themes in the odd semester eleventh grade Phase F Japanese language learning module at SMAN 62 Jakarta, namely *hajimemashite*, *arigatou*, and *watashi no yume*, referring to the media suitability with learning objectives criteria proposed by Arsyad (2006) as well as language acquisition theories, namely Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis and Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis.

Hajimemashite Theme. For the daily greetings topic, two relevant videos were identified. The video "*Konnichiwa vs Konnichiha - Which is the Correct Spelling and Why?*" fulfilled the listening (*kiku*) and reading (*yomu*) elements through a dialogue between the characters Tanaka-san and Croissant-san explaining the spelling rule of the hiragana 「は」 pronounced as *wa* in *konnichiwa* and *konbanwa*, providing comprehensible input as described by Krashen (1982). The video "*Every Morning Japanese Conversation Practice To Start The Day*" further fulfilled the speaking (*hanasu*) element, as it prompted students to answer everyday questions before displaying sample answers, reflecting Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis despite the one-directional nature of video-based interaction.

For the sentence patterns for introducing oneself and others, four relevant videos were found. "*A Guide to Self-Introduction in Japanese (+ Free PDF!)*" presented a five-sentence self-introduction structure accompanied by Japanese script and romaji, fulfilling the listening and reading elements. "*50 Must-Know Phrases to Ask Questions in Japanese*" presented question phrases with romaji and translation, likewise fulfilling listening and reading. "*Answer 50 Common Questions About Yourself in Japanese!*" gave students the opportunity to respond orally before the character Croissant demonstrated sample answers, fulfilling listening, reading, and speaking, and was further supported by a downloadable PDF transcript with furigana. "*Japanese Conversation Practice with Sushi*" combined a question stimulus, a response pause, and a sample dialogue, likewise fulfilling all three elements.

For the numbers topic, the video "*Numbers in Japanese - Listening Quiz!*" fulfilled the listening element through a native speaker listening quiz and the reading element through on-screen numeral vocabulary. For the *katakana* topic, three flashcard style videos, namely "*Katakana Flashcards for Beginner!*", "*Can You Read Country Names in 5 Seconds?*", and "*Cafe Menu Flashcards!*", consistently fulfilled the reading element through five-second reading challenges and the listening element through the presenter's pronunciation confirmation afterward.

Overall, four of the six topics in the *hajimemashite* theme had relevant videos, while the remaining two topics, namely introduction etiquette and customs in Japanese culture and the structure of Indonesian and Japanese names, had no equivalent. The available topics consistently fulfilled listening and reading, and some also facilitated speaking, but none provided activities specifically developing the writing (*kaku*) element. This theme was



therefore considered to support the learning objective of enabling students to understand spoken, written, and visual texts in simple Japanese.

Arigatou Theme. For the daily greeting expressions topic, the video "*How To Answer 'Ogenki Desuka?' (How Are You?) in Japanese*" presented several formal and casual response variations, fulfilling listening and reading and providing comprehensible input, but did not give students the opportunity to produce an oral response before the answer was shown, so the Interaction Hypothesis was not optimally facilitated. For the topic of politely asking permission and making requests, "*50 Japanese Classroom Phrases You Should Know!*" presented classroom expressions with audio and on-screen translations, again fulfilling listening and reading only. For the *hiragana* topic, three flashcard videos, namely "*House Vocabulary Flashcards!*", "*Vocabulary Flashcards (Things You See Outside!)*", and "*Hiragana Flashcards! Can You Read in 5 Seconds?*", fulfilled listening and reading but focused on vocabulary recognition rather than response practice.

Overall, only three of the six topics in the *arigatou* theme had relevant videos, while three other topics, namely basic classroom instructions, comparison of Japanese-Indonesian greeting culture, and multilingual greeting posters and cards, had no equivalent. Although the available videos provided comprehensible input, most presented material one directionally without question stimuli or conversation simulations giving students the chance to respond independently. This theme was therefore considered insufficient in supporting its learning objective of enabling students to respond to or answer questions in simple Japanese.

Watashi no Yume Theme. For the dates and months topic, "*Days and Months in Japanese - Listening Quiz!*" presented sample conversations, listening practice, and a review session, fulfilling listening and reading. "*Japanese Grammar Test! Can You Spot 5 Mistakes in Egg-san's Diary?*" additionally fulfilled the speaking element, as students identified a date-writing error in a diary entry and then practiced reading the corrected sentence aloud after the presenter, reflecting the Interaction Hypothesis.

For the topic of asking and answering about birthdays, "*Days and Months in Japanese - Listening Quiz!*" again fulfilled listening and reading through birthday related question and answer examples, while "*Answer 50 Common Questions About Yourself in Japanese! | Speaking Challenge*" fulfilled listening and speaking through a speaking challenge format supported by a *furigana* transcript. For the *arigatou* expression topic, "*How to Say Thank You in Japanese (Correctly!)*" explained variations of gratitude expressions according to politeness level, namely *arigatou*, *doumo*, *arigatou gozaimasu*, and *arigatou gozaimashita*, fulfilling listening and reading. "*5 Common Japanese Mistakes Beginners Make! Can You Spot Them All?*" presented a dialogue-based error-identification quiz involving the correct use of *arigatou gozaimashita*, reflecting the Interaction Hypothesis through the evaluative identification activity.

Overall, three of the seven topics in the *watashi no yume* theme had relevant videos, while four topics, namely vocabulary for professions and aspirations, sentence patterns about aspirations, birthday greetings, and the use of the particle "no," had no equivalent. The available videos consistently fulfilled listening and reading, and several also facilitated speaking through speaking challenges, read-aloud practice, and error identification activities.

This theme was therefore considered to support the learning objective of enabling students to compose simple Japanese conversational sentences.

Overall, the analysis results show that videos on the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* consistently and strongly facilitated the listening and reading elements through comprehensible input, but varied in facilitating the speaking element depending on the availability of interactive activities within each theme, while the writing element was generally not accommodated by the videos analyzed. These findings indicate that the channel is more appropriately positioned as a supplementary source of comprehensible input rather than a substitute for productive language activities that need to be facilitated by teachers in the classroom, in line with the media suitability with learning objectives criteria proposed by Arsyad (2006).

Student Responses toward the YouTube Channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san*

The questionnaire was distributed to 60 eleventh grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta, with 73.3% of respondents having never accessed the channel and 26.7% having previously accessed it. A total of 58.3% of respondents selected a duration of one to five minutes as the ideal duration for a Japanese language learning video, consistent with Brame's (2016) view that effective learning videos should be relatively short, as shorter durations help maintain students' attention and engagement.

Regarding accessibility, 53.3% of students strongly agreed and 43.3% agreed that the channel was easy to access using their own devices, reasoning that YouTube is a widely known application accessible anytime through various devices and that the channel is easily found via the search feature. Only 3.3% disagreed, citing device limitations. This finding was corroborated by the teacher interview, which noted that the channel is practical as a supporting medium since it can be recommended to students prior to classroom instruction, and that YouTube's pause and rewind features help students revisit parts they have not yet understood, although unstable internet connections and advertisements on the free version remain potential obstacles.

Regarding usefulness, 68.3% of students agreed and 30% strongly agreed that the material presented was useful, citing new vocabulary, conversational practice, and easily accessible supplementary information, while 1.7% disagreed due to difficulty understanding the material. Regarding the videos' potential to improve Japanese proficiency, 66.7% agreed and 28.3% strongly agreed, citing simple delivery, interactive animated visuals, and pronunciation practice sessions, while 5% disagreed, feeling the teaching method did not suit their learning style. Regarding recommending the channel as a learning medium, 80% agreed and 18.3% strongly agreed, citing practical delivery, clear articulation, and appealing visuals, while 1.7% disagreed, finding the videos unappealing. The teacher interview confirmed the channel's usefulness as a reference but emphasized that material still needs to be filtered according to students' varying vocabulary levels and character reading ability.

Regarding time efficiency, 68.3% of students agreed and 18.3% strongly agreed that video duration was efficient enough to maintain focus, while 13.3% disagreed, with some considering certain videos too long and others too short. The teacher suggested an ideal duration of three to five minutes for senior high school students, noting that basic material such as vocabulary introduction, conversation practice, and brief explanations can still be delivered effectively within that range, though guidance remains necessary to prevent



students from skipping parts. Regarding material being delivered concisely and directly, 78.3% agreed and 20% strongly agreed, with the teacher citing the clock time material as an example of practical, concise delivery followed by practice. These findings align with the theory of effective learning duration proposed by Slameto (2010), Cornish and Duketee (2009), Cirillo (2018), and Brame (2016), which holds that concise and structured delivery helps students make optimal use of limited attention capacity.

Regarding practicality, flexibility, and durability, 66.7% of students agreed and 23.3% strongly agreed that their devices and data quotas were adequate, citing compatible devices, home and school Wi-Fi access, and the channel's short video durations that conserve data, while 6.7% disagreed and 3.3% strongly disagreed, citing limited data or unstable signal. Regarding flexibility to watch anytime and anywhere, 70% agreed and 25% strongly agreed, while 5% disagreed, considering other platforms more flexible. Regarding portability, 70% agreed and 23.3% strongly agreed, citing accessibility via portable devices without needing textbooks, while 6.7% disagreed, noting they do not always study while traveling. Regarding YouTube's pause and repeat features, 66.7% agreed and 28.3% strongly agreed, citing their usefulness for pacing, note taking, and reviewing complex script details. Regarding buffering disruptions, 63.3% disagreed and 13.3% strongly disagreed with experiencing them, attributing this to adequate data and stable Wi-Fi, while 20% agreed and 3.3% strongly agreed they experienced buffering due to unstable signal or limited data. Regarding advertisement disruptions, 43.3% disagreed and 11.7% strongly disagreed, noting ads rarely appeared or only appeared briefly at the start, while 38.3% agreed and 6.7% strongly agreed that mid-video ads disrupted their focus, attributed to not having YouTube Premium. The teacher interview confirmed that access via YouTube links is relatively practical for sharing pre-class material, though Wi-Fi issues at school and ad interruptions remain concerns.

Regarding message clarity, 61.7% of students agreed and 16.7% strongly agreed that the presenter delivered material clearly, citing clear articulation and gentle intonation, while 21.7% disagreed, with some finding the pace too fast and others too slow and unenergetic. Regarding the ease of understanding the Japanese used, 73.3% agreed and 18.3% strongly agreed, citing simple vocabulary suited to beginners, while 8.3% disagreed, citing difficult vocabulary. Regarding completeness of material presentation, 73.3% agreed and 18.3% strongly agreed, while 8.3% disagreed, feeling some videos remained too general. Regarding freedom from confusion or misinterpretation, 66.7% agreed and 10% strongly agreed, citing concise, direct delivery supported by detailed visualization, while 21.7% disagreed and 1.7% strongly disagreed, citing limited Japanese proficiency and overly fast delivery. Regarding whether the videos could be used without teacher guidance, only 48.3% agreed and 6.7% strongly agreed, while 40% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed, indicating that teacher assistance remains necessary. The teacher explained that the presenter, as a native speaker, provides authentic pronunciation examples, but that the channel remains more appropriate as a supporting medium than a replacement for the teacher, consistent with Holec's concept of learner autonomy as cited in Yulina (2025), which holds that autonomous learning still requires the teacher's role as facilitator. Regarding visualization and explanations aiding memory retention, 76.7% agreed and 16.7% strongly agreed, citing the unique and appealing

animated characters that benefit visual learners, while 6.7% disagreed, feeling the material did not fully stick in memory. The teacher corroborated this, noting that large, colorful, animated visuals suit current students' visual learning tendencies, consistent with Tsuji's (2007) view that audio-visual media help material become more memorable.

Regarding attractiveness, 66.7% of students agreed and 20% strongly agreed that the supporting text was appealing, citing clear and communicative captions helpful for beginners, while 13.3% disagreed, citing monotonous captions and occasional YouTube auto translation errors. Regarding visual appeal, 65% agreed and 26.7% strongly agreed, citing the unique and charming animation style, while 6.7% disagreed and 1.7% strongly disagreed, feeling the visuals were too childish and graphically unclear for senior high school students. Regarding the presenter's animated character delivery style, 73.3% agreed and 20% strongly agreed, citing easier comprehension and a relaxed, interactive atmosphere, while 3.3% disagreed and 3.3% strongly disagreed, finding it dull. Regarding the appeal of the presenter's explanations, 73.3% agreed and 18.3% strongly agreed, citing clear articulation and pleasant intonation, while 8.3% disagreed, finding the delivery insufficiently energetic. Regarding interest in revisiting the channel, 68.3% agreed and 16.7% strongly agreed, citing educational, appealing, and self-accessible content, while 13.3% disagreed and 1.7% strongly disagreed, citing mismatched learning styles and low interest in Japanese. These findings are consistent with Yudela et al. (2020) regarding the appeal of YouTube learning videos, as well as the views of Tsuji (2007) and Syafei (2025) regarding the advantages of audio-visual media in enhancing students' focus and retention.

Overall, student responses across all measured aspects tended to be positive, with a dominant proportion of agree and strongly agree responses for each statement item. The channel's main strengths lie in its accessibility, efficient video duration, practicality of cross-device use, clarity of pronunciation by the native speaker, and the appeal of its visuals and animated characters. The weaknesses identified mainly relate to limitations in data quota and internet signal, potential advertisement disruptions, visual impressions considered less suitable for senior high school students, and the need for teacher guidance to deepen students' understanding.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* has varying degrees of suitability for Japanese language learning among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta. For the *hajimemashite* theme, 4 of 6 learning topics had relevant videos that consistently fulfilled the listening and reading elements, with some also fulfilling the speaking element, thereby supporting the learning objectives of this theme. For the *arigatou* theme, although 3 of 6 learning topics had relevant videos, this channel insufficiently supported the learning objectives, as the available videos only presented examples and explanations without providing stimuli for students to practice responding directly. For the *watashi no yume* theme, 3 of 7 learning topics had relevant videos that supported the learning objectives by providing vocabulary and relevant conversational practice. These findings indicate that the channel's suitability with learning objectives does not always correspond to the number of topics



covered, but is instead determined by the extent to which the videos facilitate the achievement of the intended competencies.

Based on the responses of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta, the channel possesses a number of strengths, namely accessibility, the usefulness of its material, time efficiency, visual attractiveness, message clarity, and the practicality and flexibility of the medium. On the other hand, several weaknesses were also identified, namely video-loading disruptions (buffering) due to limited signal or internet data, advertisement interruptions during videos, and a relatively lower level of agreement regarding the ability to learn independently without teacher guidance. Accordingly, the YouTube channel *Learn Japanese with Tanaka san* is sufficiently suitable and was positively received by students for use as a supplementary medium in Japanese language learning for eleventh-grade students at SMAN 62 Jakarta, rather than as a substitute for the teacher's role, particularly for themes requiring response practice or direct speaking interaction.

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