

The Usage of Popular Japanese Words

Surabaya Case Study

Masilva Raynox Mael
Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Surabaya, Indonesia
masilvamael@unesa.ac.id

Didik Nurhadi
Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Surabaya, Indonesia
didiknurhadi@unesa.ac.id

Retnani
Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Surabaya, Indonesia
retnani@unesa.ac.id

Hespi Septiana
Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Surabaya, Indonesia
hespiseptiana@unesa.ac.id

Abstract—Indonesians’ interest towards Japan has been increasing lately. Many have gone to Japan to travel and some even conduct a study there. Due to the increased interest of the Japanese language, there are many Indonesians that start learning the Japanese language. Because of that, the knowledge of the Japanese language is now known by many in Indonesia. The approach that is used in this research is a qualitative approach with qualitative descriptive analysis. The data is taken using the documentary technique. This study is the result of research that has been done in order to find out which Japanese words are popular and known by Indonesians, by taking data from people in Surabaya. The data was taken from a survey with 100 respondents with a varied background, job, age, and sex.

Keywords—*Japanese words; popular; Surabaya*

I. INTRODUCTION

Japan has become increasingly popular among Indonesians, which makes them go there to travel or conduct a study. Over the years, there is also a significant increase in people who learn Japanese. This might be caused by the amount of investing Japanese companies in Indonesia, easy access to *anime* and *manga*, and Japanese communities which have spread in many cities in Indonesia. This phenomenon causes many to know Japanese words, which they use in their everyday life, including people who live in Surabaya. According to Chaer [3], language attitude could depend on the language object, which gives a tendency to a person to act according to their preference.

People’s interest in Japan keeps increasing among children and even adults. Which creates an idea of Japan in society. Therefore, popular Japanese words among Indonesians are mapped, in order to enhance their knowledge about Japanese and help to make a reference book in basic Japanese which will be good for society.

Popular Japanese words were taken from a survey which was spread to people, in this case people in Surabaya, with a total of 100 respondents, varied from 16-6 years old, without differentiating their sex, job, or whether they have learned Japanese or not.

A. Language Development

Vocabulary development of a language always adheres to shifts, variation, and the language attitude that is used in an environment or in a specific community in social activities that constantly develop. According to Corder in Aslinda [1], language community is a group of people who understand each other when they communicate. It shows that language development is determined by themselves through their daily lives and also the reaction towards the agreement of the spoken words.

Because of this language development, it forces non-native speakers to know about the newest information about the language that they are currently studying in order to comprehend the meaning of a conversation, so they would be accepted in their environment or community

Because of this language development, language educators have to understand the newest vocabularies of the language that they are teaching in order to keep the balance in their society.

B. Japanese Word Types

Words of each language have several same types, for instance, they are divided into noun, verb, and adjective.

According to Isao [4], Japanese words types basically are divided into 6, which are:

1. Noun or *meishi* which is noun, which can function as a subject or an object in a meaningful sentence, for instance, *hon*, *kuruma*, *tsukue* and many more.

2. Verb or *doushi* which is word that can function as a predicate in a sentence, it could also stand by itself. For instance, *iku*, *kuru*, *taberu*, and many more.

3. Adjective or *keiyoushi* which is a word that has been changed and it could also stand alone. For instance, *yashashii*, *oishii*, *nigiyaka*, and many more.

4. Adverb or *fukushi*, which is an adverb

C. Survey

In this research, the survey will be done by using a questionnaire to find out which Japanese words that happen to cross people in Surabaya’s mind (which will represent Indonesia) when they hear the word “Japan,” where did they hear those words, and how deep is their understanding about those words.

II. METHODS

The approach that is used in this research is a qualitative approach with qualitative descriptive analysis. The data is taken using the documentary technique because according to Arikunto [2], the documentary method is a method to find the data about things or variables in the form of text, transcript, magazine, and etc.

The data is retrieved from a survey that was given to 100 respondents. The survey is as follows:

Name	: _____ (Optional)
Job	: _____
Sex	: _____
Age	: _____
Questions	:
Write three Japanese words that you know and you have used in a conversation	
1.	_____
	I know this word from...
	a. Friends b. School/Office c. Film/TV Shows
	d. Others _____
2.	_____
	I know this word from...
	a. Friends b. School/Office c. Film/TV Shows
	d. Others _____
3.	_____
	I know this word from...
	a. Friends b. School/Office c. Film/TV Shows
	d. Others _____
4.	What are the functions of those words?
	1. (first word) _____
	2. (second word) _____
	3. (third word) _____
	You can write you don’t know if you don’t know

Fig. 1. Popular Japanese words survey sheet

Every respondent was asked to write three Japanese words that they know. After the data was collected, the data is to be analyzed.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Popular Japanese Words among People in Surabaya

Based on the survey taken from 100 respondents about three Japanese words that they know, the most popular Japanese words are as following:

TABLE I. MOST KNOWN JAPANESE WORDS, THE FIRST RANK OF THE SURVEY

No.	Japanese Words
1.	Arigatou (25 people)
2.	Konnichiwa (11 people)
3.	Watashi (wa) (10 people)
4.	Ohayou (7 people)
5.	Genki (4 people)

In table 1, the word *arigatou* is the most known word among the respondents, in the total of 25 people. The second most known word is *konnichiwa*, known by 11 people. The third is *watashi*, known by 10 people, *ohayou* being the fourth with 7 people, and the word *genki* being the fifth with 4 people. Those are the most known words with the total of 57 respondents. While the rest 43 respondents wrote other Japanese words such as *sayonara*, *ganbatte*, *sumimasen*, and many others.

The second rank of the result of the survey is as follows:

TABLE II. MOST KNOWN JAPANESE WORDS, THE SECOND RANK OF THE SURVEY

No.	Japanese Words
1.	Arigatou (13 people)
2.	Ohayou (5 people)
3.	Oyasumi (5 people)
4.	Konnichiwa (4 people)
5.	Watashi (wa) (4 people) Mosh moshi

In table 2, the word *arigatou* is the most known word with the total of 13 people who claim to know that word. While the word *ohayou* and *oyasumi* are the second and the third most known words with the same total of respondents, which is 5 people. It is followed by the word *konnichiwa*, *watashi*, and *moshimoshi* and they are the fourth and the fifth known words with the same number of respondents, which is 4 people. The total of the second rank of the survey is 35 respondents who wrote those words, sorting them into that order. The rest of the respondents is 65 people, and they wrote Japanese words such as *sayonara*, *suki*, *kawaii*, and many others.

The result of the third rank of the survey is as follows:

TABLE III. MOST KNOWN JAPANESE WORDS, THE THIRD RANK OF THE SURVEY

No.	Japanese Words
1.	Arigatou (12 people)
2.	Ohayou (7 people)
3.	Watashi (wa) (5 people)
4.	Tomodachi (4 people)
5.	sayonara suki sensei (3 people) konbanwa

In table 3, the word *arigatou* is the most known word among respondents, with the total of 12 people who wrote that word. *Ohayou* is the second most known word with the total of respondents, followed by *watashi* as the third word with the total of 5 people, *tomodachi* being the fourth with the total of 4 people, and *sayonara*, *suki*, *sensei*, and *konbawa* being the fifth most known words with the total of 4 people. The number of respondents who wrote those words is 40 people, while the rest 58 respondents wrote Japanese words such as *ganbatte*, *sumimasen*, *moshi-moshi*, and many others. There are 2 respondents who did not write anything because of their lack of Japanese knowledge.

Next is the result of the three tables from the first rank to the third rank combined, the result is as follows:

TABLE IV. MOST KNOWN JAPANESE WORDS

No.	Japanese Words	Explanation
1.	Arigatou (50 times)	The number of respondents who wrote 5 words on the left is 77 out of 100 respondents.
2.	Watashi (19 times)	
3.	Ohayou (19 times)	
4.	Konnichiwa (15 times)	
5.	Sayonara (9 times)	

In table 4, the word *arigatou* is the most known Japanese word, ranking that word into the first place, that word is written 50 times. *Watashi* and *ohayou* are the second and the third most known words, the words are both written 19 times. Followed by the word *konnichiwa* making it the fourth most used word as it is written 15 times. *Sayonara* is the last one, the fifth most known Japanese word as it is written 9 times. The amount of time those words are written is 112 times by 77 respondents, the other 23 did not write any of those 5 words. Therefore, it can be concluded that from 77 respondents, average respondents wrote one word 1,45 times from those 5 most known words. This means there are several respondents from those 77 who wrote two words that are included in the 5 most known words. Then, from 100 respondents, the total of the Japanese words that were written by the respondents from the first to the third rank is 106 words.

B. Discussion

According to the result of the survey in table, 1, 2, and 3 about the most popular Japanese words among the society, especially around Surabaya, there are several things that can

be discussed. The result shows that the word *arigatou* is the most popular among society. It is proven that it dominates all three tables in all ranks with the total of 50 people who wrote that word, which means 50% of respondents know that word. They know that word mostly from film/TVshows (*anime*, drama, and etc), friends, and some know from books.

Then the word *watashi* is the second word that people know, even though it never gets the second rank in the tables, but the word *watashi* is always there in every rank with the total of 19 people. Which means almost 20% of respondents know that word. They know this word from film/TV shows (*anime*, drama, and etc), friends, office, and the Internet.

Just like the word *watashi*, the word *ohayou* gets the third place in term of being the most known Japanese words right under the word *arigatou*, it gets the second rank twice, with the total of 19 people. This means almost 20% of respondents know this word. The amount of time *ohayou* is found in the survey is the same amount as *watashi*. Most respondents know the word *ohayou* from film/TV shows, school/office, and friends.

According to the survey, it can be seen that almost every word or approximately 90% of the popular Japanese words is the ones that function as *aisatsu* or greetings, such as *arigatou*, *ohayou*, and *konnichiwa*. The reason behind this is because those words are very familiar, easily used, and always being spoken without having to construct a complete sentence or a long dialogue during a conversation with a Japanese. These greetings are easy because they are free from grammatical rules of a language, which makes it easier to remember for people. Greetings are also familiar because they are often used to start and end a conversation according to the context and the situation of the conversation. By using greetings, it could make people who are involved in a conversation feel closer.

Another thing from the survey that should be taken into account is the absent of Japanese verb in the result of the survey. This might be caused by the difficulty of creating a grammatically correct sentence. Verb can't stand alone, therefore in order to use one, one should construct a complete sentence in a conversation. Making it harder to remember a verb compared to remembering greetings as they often could stand by themselves and they are easily used.

Even though almost every respondent could write Japanese words, but there were also some respondents who misunderstood the meaning of some words and who don't understand the function of some words. Therefore, socialization needs to be done more in order to teach people Japanese to make them understand and practice Japanese words correctly.

IV. CONCLUSION

According to the result and discussion of this research, there are several things that can be concluded. First, even though Indonesians are interested in Japanese-related things, their knowledge of the Japanese language still needs to be taken care of, because their knowledge of Japanese is rather limited and still mostly just revolves around the function of a particular word. Second, there are many people who could

write Japanese, but there are also many people who could not and don't understand the function of that word. Last, for Japanese language educators, their task is to help in developing and socializing the Japanese language, so people would be more intrigued in Japanese and improve their quality in learning Japanese.

REFERENCES

- [1] Aslinda. *Pengantar Sociolinguistik*. Bandung: Refika Aditama. 2007.
- [2] Arikunto, Suharsimi. *Prosedur Penelitian cetakan ke 10*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta. 1997.
- [3] Chaer, Abdul. *Sociolinguistik, Perkenalan Awal (edisi revisi)*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta. 2004.
- [4] Isao, Iori. *Atarashii Nihongo Gaku Nyuumon*. Tokyo: 3A Network. 2001.