

Japanese Teacher's Perception of the Book Nihongo Dekiru

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30996/mezurashii.v6i1.11023>

ABSTRAK

Buku adalah salah satu faktor yang mendukung sebuah kesuksesan proses pembelajaran. Dengan buku, pembelajar dapat memahami materi yang dipelajari. Disisi lain, buku dapat memotivasi guru untuk meningkatkan kreativitas mereka dalam membuat materi pengajaran sehingga proses pembelajaran menjadi lebih bermakna. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi guru bahasa Jepang terhadap kelengkapan isi dan materi buku Nihongo Dekiru yang digunakan di SD Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Sidoarjo. Buku ini terdiri dari lima jenis tingkatan/level yang diintegrasikan dengan level sebelumnya. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah interview dan observasi. Hasil penelitian menemukan 1) buku Nihongo Dekiru tidak memiliki petunjuk isian buku dan penilaian di setiap levelnya, 2) buku Nihongo Dekiru tidak ada tujuan pembelajaran disetiap levelnya, 3) buku Nihongo Dekiru memiliki informasi pendukung, latihan, dan petunjuk isian buku.

Kata Kunci: Buku Bahasa Jepang, Nihongo Dekiru, Persepsi Guru.

ABSTRACT

Textbooks are one of the factors that support the success of a learning process. With textbooks, students can understand the material being studied. On the other hand, textbooks can motivate teachers to increase their creativity in making teaching materials, so that the learning process becomes more meaningful. This research aims to determine Japanese language teachers' perceptions of the completeness of the Nihongo Dekiru book material. The Nihongo Dekiru book is a Japanese language textbook used by Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School students. This book consists of five volumes which are integrated with the previous volumes. The method used is descriptive qualitative using interview and observation techniques. The results were 1) no book instructions and evaluations were found in each book volume, 2) there were almost no learning outcomes in each book volume, and 3) supporting information, exercises, and work instructions were found in each book (teacher interviews were included in the discussion).

Keywords: Japanese Student Book, Nihongo Dekiru, Teacher's Perception

Submitted:

9 Juni 2024

Accepted:

25 Juni 2024

Published:

28 Juni 2024



1. INTRODUCTION

One of the success factors in the class learning process is using textbooks. According to Canale, G. (2021), the full issue considers textbooks produced in different parts of the world, for different audiences (in terms of geographical location, age, and level of proficiency), for the teaching of several languages (Chinese, English, French, German, Spanish) with different statuses (first, second and foreign language education) Textbooks can help students understand the material being studied (Julianti, et al, 2019:22; Sofyan, et al, 2005:6). Nurhayati (2021:1) also added that textbooks could motivate teachers to be more creative in making teaching materials and motivate students in the learning process to make it more meaningful.

A few years ago, textbooks mostly were printed ones while textbooks can be found in digital ones. This phenomenon has been very common since the development of the internet at the beginning of the 21st century. E-books, e-libraries, and digital books are some examples of books or textbooks that can be read by people. However, printed books are still needed by many teachers and students.

There are several studies relating to the analysis of the content of Japanese language textbooks and their development, including Cicilia and Retnani (2020) regarding the analysis of the book Nihongo as a Japanese language textbook at SMAN 7 Surabaya; Juliantini, et al (2019) regarding the development of Japanese language textbooks in Japanese extracurricular activities at Mutiara Singaraja Elementary School; Purwantini, et al (2019) regarding the development of Japanese language textbooks for fifth grade students at Tunas Kasih Elementary School, Nusa Dua; Santiar (2019) regarding a model of theme-based intermediate level Japanese reading teaching materials with collaborative strategies; Haryanto (2018) regarding the analysis of the conformity of Japanese Middle-Low language textbooks with Japan Foundation standards; Asmaniah, et al (2017) regarding the development of a Japanese language textbook for class X nursing at Vidya Usadha Singaraja Health Vocational School; and Kanah (2014) regarding the need for developing Japanese language teaching materials in the D III Program at the Bali State Polytechnic.

2. METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative with a descriptive analysis approach. The instruments used were interviews and observations. The interview was given to the Japanese teacher who was using the Nihongo Dekiru. There were about ten questions delivered to the teacher related to the contents, the goal of learning, evaluation, and the book instructional guidance. The interview was conducted twice in October and November 2023. Each interview was taken 90 minutes. The second instrument was the observation of Nihongo Dekiru books (Books 1 & 2, 3, 4, and 5). The observation was done to check the cover, content, and material completeness.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Furthermore, the results of the overall content analysis of the Nihongo Dekiru book are as follows.

a. Physical Structure of the Nihongo Dekiru Book

The characteristics of a good book are that it is an interesting book, characterized by illustrations, colors that attract attention, and a clear font type and size. Apart from that, Arifin and Kusrianto (2009:93) and Basuki, et al (2015:7) also stated that a book has a physical structure consisting of the skin and contents of the book. The leather part is divided into the front cover (front cover), the back of the book, and the back cover (back cover). Furthermore, the contents of the book or parts of the book are divided into the front of the book (preliminaries), the text of the book, and the back of the book.

The Nihongo Dekiru book, which consists of five volumes, has different facial skin colors. Dark green for volumes 1-2, blue for volume 3, dark purple for volume 4, and red for volume 5. Meanwhile, the illustrations on all book covers are the same, namely three kokeshi dolls with the characters of 2 girls and 1 boy whose position is between the two girls. On the cover of this book, there is the title of the book written in hiragana letters and romaji letters as information at the bottom. Apart from that, there is also the book volume number, book author, publisher logo, publisher name, and a round sign that says Oki in katakana letters. Furthermore, on the back of the book, there is also a title written in Japanese letters only, the bookbinding, and a round symbol that says Oki in katakana letters. There is no writing or illustration on the back cover.



Figure 1 Nihongo Dekiru Book Front Cover

Then the contents of the book, starting from the front of the book (preliminaries), only consist of a foreword and table of contents. The page numbering in this section is written in Roman letters and consists of five pages. The second part is the text of the book, consisting of chapter titles, learning objectives, sub-chapters, and sub-sub-chapters. In this section, the page numbering uses numbers and there is a description of the book volume next to the page. Apart from that, almost at the beginning of every chapter, there is a picture illustration related to the title of the material. However, the illustration is not supported by colors that attract attention. Meanwhile, at the end of the chapter, there is a "vocabulary" which contains a collection of vocabulary that appears in the material. The font type used is MS Reference Sans Serif with size 14pt. This font has a youthful, universal, clean, modern, and objective character so that Muhammadiyah 3 Elementary School students can read the writing in the Nihongo Dekiru book.

The third part is the back of the book (preliminaries), which consists of a bibliography, appendices, glossary, index, and biography. In volumes 1-3 of the Nihongo Dekiru book there is a bibliography or reference list, but in volumes 4-5 these references are not found. Apart from that, appendices, glossaries, indexes, or author biographies are not found in every volume of Nihongo Dekiru's book.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that basically, the Nihongo Dekiru textbook has two main structures of a good book, namely the cover of the book and the contents of the book. The important elements of the front cover of the book that have been fulfilled are the book title, author's name, and publisher's name. However, several other important elements are not found on the back of the book and the back cover, such as the year of production, main title, name and description of the author, synopsis, name, and address of the publisher, ISBN, and for what level the book was written.

Table 1 Physical Structure of the Nihongo Dekiru Book Cover

Edition	Cover			Cover Page				Back Cover					
	Title	Author (s)	Publisher	Title	Author (s)	Publisher	Year	Title	Biography	Book Summary	Publisher Address	ISBN	Level
1	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The same is true for the contents of the book, several elements are missing (not fulfilled), such as the absence of a copyright page, a copyrighted work page, and a foreword page at the front of the book (preliminaries). Furthermore, in the main content of the book, the learning achievement element is only found in volume 1 of the book, while it is not found in volumes 2-5. Then, at the back of the book, almost all the elements that are not fulfilled, starting from the appendices, epilogue, glossary, index, and author's

biography are all not fulfilled. Bibliography elements are only found in volumes 1-3. For the other two volumes, no bibliography was found.

Table 2 Physical Structure of the Contents of the Nihongo Dekiru Book

Edition	Cover							Content						Back Cover					
	Front Page	Copyright	Title	Copyright Page	Preface	Overview	Table of Contents	Part	Chapter	Sub Chapter	Lesson Goals	Summary	Exercises	References	Appendices	epilog	glosarium	indexes	Biography
1	√	-	-	-	√	-	√	-	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-
2	√	-	-	-	√	-	√	-	√	√	-	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-
3	√	-	-	-	√	-	√	-	√	√	-	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-
4	√	-	-	-	√	-	√	-	√	√	-	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	√	-	-	-	√	-	√	-	√	√	-	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that the physical structure of the book Nihongo Dekiru does not fully meet the quality standards for the physical structure of a book. The standards that are met are only on the front cover because all the elements in that section are found in the Nihongo Dekiru book, while in other parts, several elements are still blank (not found), even all the elements on the back cover are not owned by this book. This refers to the theory of Prastowo (2009), Arifin, and Kusrianto (2009:102) regarding physical standards for textbooks.

b. Completeness of the Nihongo Dekiru Book Material

Six important components must be in a textbook, namely study instructions, competencies that must be achieved, supporting information, exercises, work instructions, and evaluation (Muttaqin, 2016). These six elements indicate whether a textbook is good or not. If one element is missing, then the completeness will be less and the book will be less effective to use.

Based on the observations that have been made, it is known that volume 1 of the Nihongo Dekiru book only has four elements, whereas, in the subsequent volumes, namely volumes 2, 3, 4, and 5, there are only three elements. The following are the results of this research findings.

Table 3 Material Completeness

Edition	Learning Direction	Lesson Goals	Supporting Information	Exercises	Exercises Direction	Evaluation
1	-	√	√	√	√	-
2	-	-	√	√	√	-
3	-	-	√	√	√	-
4	-	-	√	√	√	-
5	-	-	√	√	√	-
6	-	-	√	√	√	-

a) Study Guide

From the table above it is known that all volumes of the Nihongo Dekiru book do not have study guides. This is not by the criteria for an ideal textbook, because learning instructions are very necessary

for both teachers and students to use a textbook effectively. In this element, there is usually an explanation for the teacher regarding things he can do in conveying or teaching material to students. Likewise for students, with study instructions students can more easily understand the existing material, so they don't make mistakes when studying the material.

With no study guides in all volumes of Nihongo Dekiru, students often feel confused about the material being studied. This condition hurts the Japanese language learning process at Muhammadiyah 3 Wage High School. This is like what the Japanese language teacher at the school felt.

"Students often don't understand the commands in the training section. For example, practice pairing answers. What should we do with this, sensei? Even though it's simple, you have to draw a line to the correct answer. "But because there are no examples or simple instructions, such as 'Draw a line to the correct answer', students often just stare and don't do the exercises." (waw November 1, 2023)

Through these responses, it can be understood that Nihongo Dekiru's book is not by the theory of Muttaqin (2016) and Ur (in Syamsi, et al, 2013: 84) regarding textbook criteria. Both of them stated that textbooks are equipped with study instructions that are presented enough for the user to understand. So, it can be said that the book Nihongo Dekiru is less effective in the Japanese language learning process at SD Muhammadiyah 3 Wage.

b) Study Guide

The purpose of this section is to explain the competencies that students must achieve when studying the material, so that usually there are several competencies that students must master in each material or chapter presented. With Learning Outcomes, the objectives of the learning will appear clearer and more concrete.

Of the five volumes of the Nihongo Dekiru book, only the first volume has learning outcomes, while there are none in the other volumes. This is certainly very unfortunate because the Nihongo Dekiru book does not have clear measurements when the book is used. Not only that, teachers must create their learning outcomes by adjusting the curriculum used.

"There are no indicators of learning achievement (in this book). "So like it or not, we have to make our own by adapting the curriculum here (SD Muhammadiyah 3 Wage)." (waw November 1, 2023)

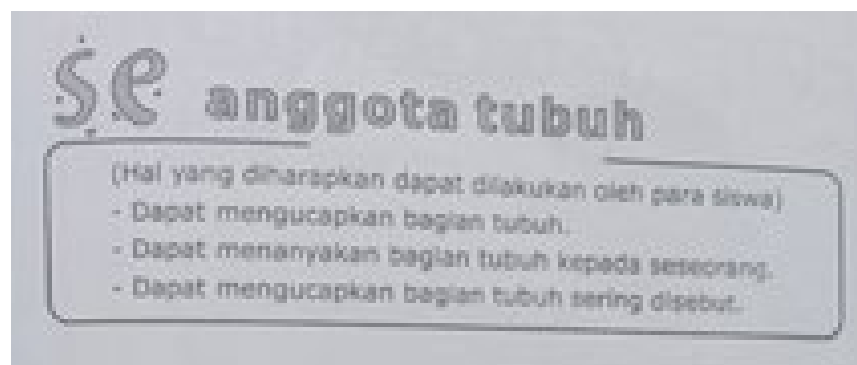


Figure 2 Learning Achievements

Based on the explanation above, it is known that the book Nihongo Dekiru cannot be considered for use in learning. Several considerations in having a textbook presented by Prastowo (2013: 175), one of which is that the book should have references to basic competencies or main material that students must master, and this is not found in the Nihongo Dekiru book volumes 2-5.

c) Supporting Information

Muttaqin (2016) also stated that even though it is only additional, the supporting information elements in the book can make it easier for students to master the knowledge they will acquire. The purpose of this supporting information is to increase students' abilities and become more comprehensive. One form of supporting information is illustration. Usually, illustrations are used to clarify the message or information to be conveyed so that it can make it easier for students to remember broad concepts or ideas in a limited space (Arifin, 2009:70).

At the beginning of each material title, the author of the book Nihongo Dekiru provides an image illustration related to the material title. The aim is so that book users (students and teachers) understand the material being studied. These illustrations or pictures are one form of supporting information contained in the contents of the book Nihongo Dekiru.

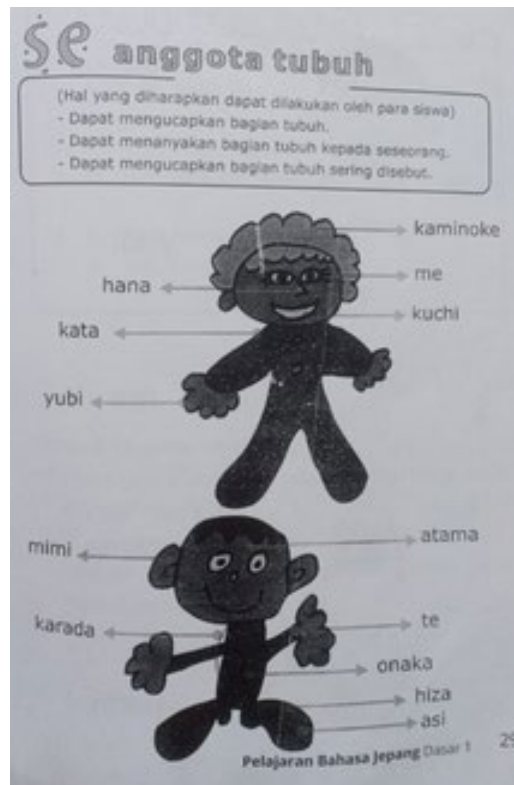


Figure 3 Supporting Information for Body Parts Chapter

In the image above, illustrations of human body parts are shown in less clear images and less attractive colors. The illustration depicts all parts of the body with descriptions in Japanese. Vague illustrations, such as the example of material from the Parts of the Body chapter above, often make teachers creative by making additional teaching materials independently, such as writing song lyrics while acting them out.

“Usually to memorize vocabulary, I make up song lyrics. So, children can quickly memorize vocabulary and end up enjoying Japanese.” (waw November 1, 2023)

Supporting clearer information is only available in a few titles, especially those related to position material (ko-so-a). In this chapter, the explanation of this material is explained with a clearer explanation, as follows.

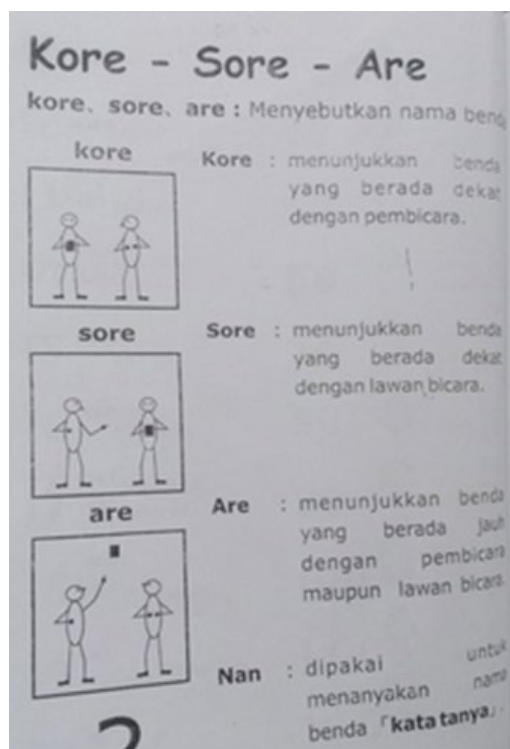


Figure 4 Supporting Information for the Kore-Sore-Are Chapter

From the results of observations that have been made, almost every material title has supporting information, but this information is incomplete, so it does not help students in learning the material being taught. To help students understand the material being taught, the teacher makes additional improvisations by creating song lyrics that contain Japanese vocabulary. Apart from that, to support learning, the illustrations are less interesting because the illustrations in this book do not have characters that are attached and easy for children to remember. Apart from the characters being always different in each title, the colors used in the supporting information are also less varied. This does not follow the theory which states that the criteria for a good textbook provide students with interest and motivation to learn (Arifin (2009); Prastowo (2013); Greene & Petty (in Supriyadi, 2018: 52).

d) Exercise

Several types of exercises appear in the Nihongo Dekiru book volumes 1-5, including drawing lines, filling in vocabulary, writing letters, making sentences, and conversation exercises. This training section can be found after the supporting information section has been presented, in other words, it is on the next page after the supporting information has been discussed. However, there are several titles where the training section appears at the beginning, such as in the material titles yasai (vegetables) and youbi (day). As explained above, because there is minimal explanation regarding what tasks students must carry out regarding the exercise (no instructions), it makes it difficult for students to command the

tasks given. At times like this, teachers always explain to students the tasks that must be done, so that it can reduce the efficiency of learning time in class.

Apart from that, there are also conversation exercises in most of the material titles. Based on the interviews conducted, this conversation exercise could not be applied because it used roleplay which was deemed not suitable for elementary school students.

"The conversation part, role play is never done, because it is difficult for elementary school students. The important thing is that they can enjoy learning Japanese, that's already good. If they are happy at least they can mention the vocabulary. So, we always skip the roleplay part."
(waw November 1, 2023)

From the explanation of the Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School teacher, it can be seen that the book Nihongo Dekiru has fulfilled one of the elements in the completeness of the textbook, namely the presence of exercises. Even though conversation practice cannot be applied because it is a role play, this book has provided one of the important components that must be in a textbook, namely the practice component. With practice, students' abilities can be honed and the material can be mastered thoroughly.

e) *Work Instructions*

As explained above, there are very few work instructions in the Nihongo Dekiru book, especially in volume 1 which is intended for beginner students, as follows.

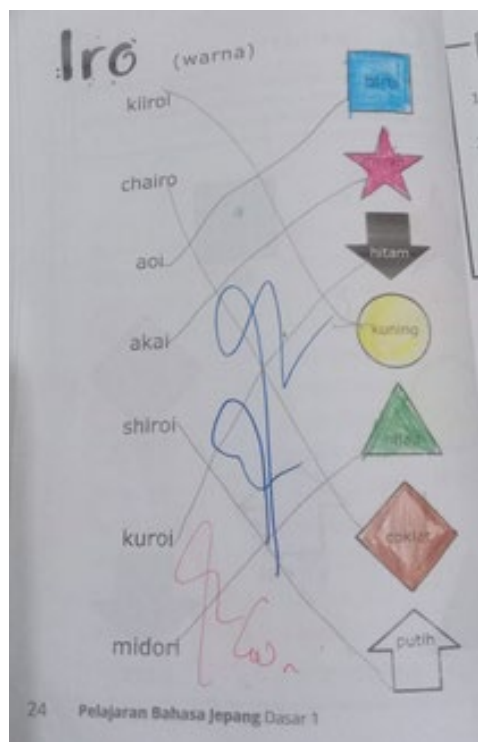


Figure 5 Line Drawing Practice

From the image above, it can be seen that there is no explanation for the tasks that must be done. However, from the results of the students' work, it appears that students are required to draw lines to the flat shape variants with the correct meaning. Apart from that, students are also assigned to color the shapes according to the words written in them.

In the second volume, work instructions are also not found, but there is an example answer to an assignment. This can replace the role of work instructions for students. Work instructions in the example form are as follows.

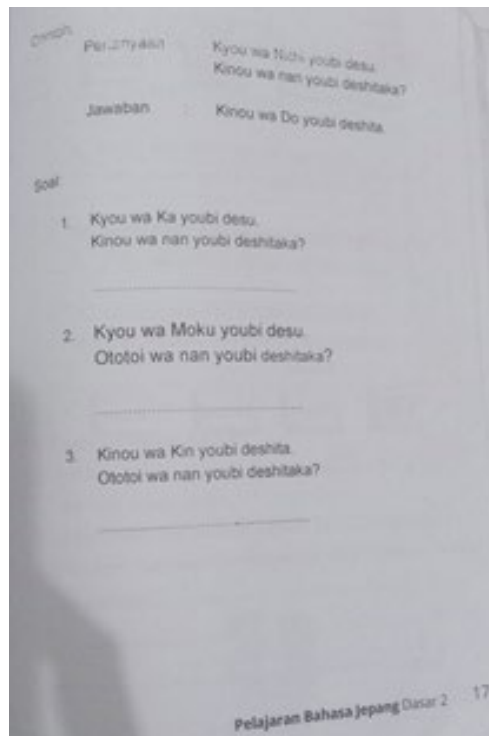


Figure 6 Answering Questions

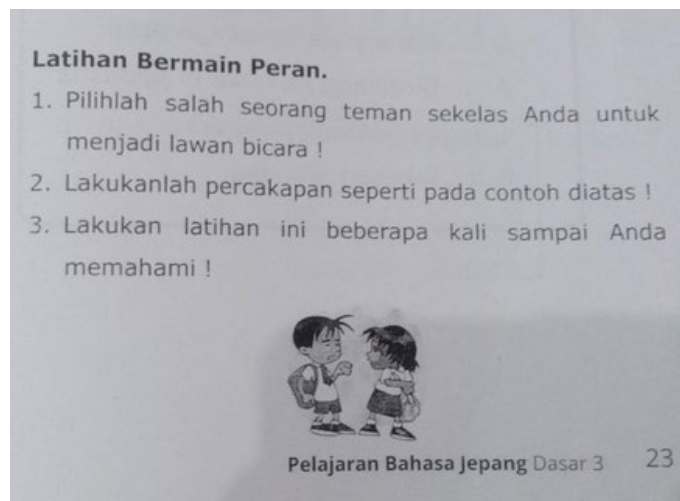


Figure 7 Conversation Practice Work Instructions

Based on the discussion above, it is known that the book Nihongo Dekiru volumes 2-5 fulfills the criteria for work instructions components. The instructions used are in the form of examples, short commands, and procedural methods for carrying out conversation activities in the form of roleplay.

f) Evaluation

Nihongo Dekiru volumes 1-5 have no evaluation. Muttaqin (2016) states that this component must be in textbooks because it is an important component of the assessment process. In the evaluation component, there are several questions addressed to students to measure how far the students have mastered the competencies. Through this, it will be known how effectively the teaching materials are used in learning, especially in achieving competencies that must be achieved by students after learning is finished.

With no evaluation in the Nihongo Dekiru book, it is difficult to know what the target or objective of this book was. However, what the Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School teacher did was make his evaluation by looking at basic competencies that were adapted to the curriculum used at the school.

c. Reading and Readability Aspects in the book Nihongo Dekiru

When preparing a book, several quality standards must be considered. One of the standards that must be maintained and paid attention to is the language and readability aspects. This aspect includes (1) good and correct use of Indonesian, (2) use of language that can increase students' reasoning power and creativity, (3) use of sentence structures that are appropriate to students' level of language mastery and students' level of development, (4) use of paragraphs, and (5) material and illustrations (Syamsi, 2013:84).

Based on the analysis that has been carried out, it is known that the book Nihongo Dekiru uses good and correct Indonesian. This book also uses Japanese with romaji letters. As is known, Japanese has four types of letters, namely hiragana, katakana, kanji, and romaji. Hiragana letters are a simplified form of kanji and are used to write native Japanese vocabulary; while katakana is used to write loan words from foreign languages; Kanji is a symbol that has meaning in each letter; and romaji is a form of the alphabet (Kamal, 2017:57; Lensun, 2016:107).

In the book Nihongo Dekiru Volume 1 the material is presented in full romaji form so that it is easier for students to read the material being studied. However, the writing of romaji is not followed by consistency in writing words that have long readings (choo-on). Sometimes vocabulary appears that should be long, but is not written long, such as the word 'chocho' which is written short in the book volume 1 page 53. Apart from that, there is also vocabulary that uses various forms to pronounce long sounds such as the vocabulary 'tougarashi' (volume 1 page 41), 'ko-hi-' (volume 1 page 47) 'zŌ (volume 1 page

53), and 'zoo' (volume 1 page 58). These three vocabularies both have a long sound that appears when the vowel o is mentioned, but they are written in different ways. Different writing can cause students to be confused and make it difficult for students to memorize the vocabulary they are studying.

From this explanation, it can be seen that the use of the target language does not pay enough attention to this aspect because it does not meet the quality standards for writing long, steady sounds. According to Renariah (2006:2), the commonly used long sound writing still uses the letter o, such as おとうさん otousan is pronounced [otoosan], and writing in romaji still uses the letter, so the correct one is otoosan. Apart from that, the long and short sounds of a word in Japanese can influence the meaning of a word, so vocabulary that should be read long should also be written long.

Furthermore, in terms of language structures that are appropriate to the level of language mastery of students and the level of development of students, there is vocabulary that is not suitable for elementary school children, such as 'Choose one of your friends to be the person you are talking to!'. For elementary school children, the use of the word you sounds lighter than the word you because the word you is more common for elementary school children.

Volume 5 of the Nihongo Dekiru book is presented using full Japanese letters. Even though in this case only hiragana and katakana letters are used, it seems that this cannot be applied to Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School students. This is as stated by the school teacher.

“Grade 6 students use volume 5 books and they are all hiragana katakana. Many have difficulty because most of them forget the letters they learned at the previous level. So I usually rewrite it in romaji letters on the blackboard.” (waw November 1, 2023)

From the teacher's explanation at Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School, it can be seen that the use of Japanese with the format for writing Japanese letters as a whole is not suitable for elementary school students, especially Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School students.

Based on the results of observations and interviews, it is known that Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School students use the Nihongo Dekiru book for Japanese language learning material starting from grade 3 to grade 6. This book has 5 volumes, namely volumes 1-2 for grade 3, volume 3 for grade 4, volume 4 for class 5, volume 5 for class 6, and is a mandatory lesson for Muhammadiyah 3 Wage Elementary School students.

Based on the results of interviews conducted on November 1 2023 with Japanese language teachers at SD Muhammadiyah 3 Wage, it was explained that initially the Nihongo Dekiru textbook was obtained from the author's partner publisher directly. However, after several years, the author of the book no longer printed it and handed it over to the school to reproduce it by copying the book. Therefore, the Nihongo Dekiru book currently circulating and used by students is a copy with a modified book cover.

4. CONCLUSION

In terms of physical structure, the book Nihongo Dekiru does not fully meet the book standard criteria because several parts are not found in the book. The truly empty part is in the structure of the book's skin, namely the back cover and the contents of the book's spine. On the back cover, there is no information on the book title, author's biodata, publisher's address, ISBN, and book level. Then on the spine of the book, there was no bibliography (volumes 3-5), epilogue, glossary, book index, and author biography. Second, judging from the completeness of the material, the Nihongo Dekiru book does not yet have clear study instructions and evaluation at the end of each chapter. Apart from that, the completeness of the learning outcomes that each student must achieve is not found evenly in each chapter title. This learning achievement is only found in volumes 1 and 2 of the Nihongo Dekiru book. Third, judging from linguistic and readability aspects, the vocabulary in the book is not written consistently according to general Japanese language rules. In addition, several uses of language are not suitable for elementary school age.

Based on the conclusions above, the suggestions made by the researcher are first, students should use quality books and other additional references that can support the process of learning Japanese at the elementary school level. Second, teachers should have good-quality books, which can then be recommended to students to use as learning references. This is to avoid mistakes and misunderstandings in the delivery of the material being taught. Third, authors should revise textbooks both in terms of book cover and book content, especially concerning study instructions and basic competencies that must be achieved by students in each material presented.

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