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The Impact of Intercultural Japanese Language Teaching Based on Gen-AI and Multimedia on Intercultural Communication Adaptation, Learning Motivation (L2), and Japanese Language Proficiency

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of the integration of intercultural communication and Japanese culture in Japanese language learning based on Gen-AI and multimedia on Japanese language learning motivation (L2), intercultural communication skills, and Japanese language skills. The research method used in this study was a quasi-experiment involving 252 participants of prospective Indonesian migrant workers who were taking Japanese language courses. This study used several instruments in data collection, namely the L2 motivation scale, the intercultural competency scale, and the Japanese language test. Data analysis was carried out using one-way repeated measures ANOVA, mean, standard deviation, and EFA (exploratory factor analysis). The results showed that the Integration of intercultural communication and Japanese cultural knowledge in Japanese language teaching based on Gen-AI and multimedia was able to improve, intercultural communication adaptation, L2 motivation, and Japanese language proficiency of prospective Indonesian migrant workers. The increase in L2 learners' motivation is seen in the components of integrated motivation, external motivation, self-efficacy motivation, and motivation to learn a language for work. The increase in intercultural competence occurs in the components of intercultural situational self-efficacy, intercultural awareness, and intercultural knowledge interest. The increase in Japanese language proficiency is seen in several language features, including vocabulary mastery, sentence structure. Thus, the integration of intercultural communication in Japanese language teaching is not only able to improve Japanese language skills, but also able to improve learners' understanding of the target language culture and learning

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motivation (L2). This study implies that second language teaching must convey linguistic knowledge according to the context of the intercultural communication environment.

Keywords: intercultural communication; Japanese language and culture; L2 motivation; second language learning; second language education

1. Introduction

Along with the growing interest of Indonesian workers in Japan, this phenomenon has become a concern for practitioners to implement various Japanese language learning programs. In February 2025, the number of Indonesian workers in Japan reached 251,268 people, or an increase of 192 percent compared to 2020 (Baker, 2022; Sari et al., 2020). Japanese language and culture education is one of the main priority choices of several second language education institutions to facilitate prospective Indonesian workers who want to work in Japan to be able to communicate with native Japanese speakers effectively and appropriately (Aririguzoh, 2022; Dong et al., 2024).

Based on the needs of second language learners, various educational institutions offer various second language teaching methods that facilitate learners to be able to adapt to the culture, norms, and linguistic use of native second language speakers (D'Orazzi & Marangell, 2025; Dylman & Zakrisson, 2023). One of them is communicative language teaching which is able to facilitate students to achieve second language learning goals. Communicative teaching not only facilitates learners to master a second language but also to be able to communicate by paying attention to the culture of the language (Elias & Mansouri, 2023; Ismailov, 2021). Second language proficiency accompanied by the culture of its native speakers is the main goal of second language learning.

This aims for students not only to develop language skills but also to increase the sensitivity of the culture of native speakers so that learners are able to communicate with native speakers well. In addition, the context of needs in the world of work in native speaker countries requires intercultural communication competencies in Japanese language education (McLaren, 2023; Ward et al., 2024).

Along with the growth in the number of Indonesian migrant workers in several countries, such as Japan, job training institutions provide language education classes in the destination country. This is done to facilitate prospective workers to be able to work in the destination country. Currently, teaching a second language for work purposes, the goal is not only to facilitate learners to be proficient in the language, but also to equip prospective workers to be able to adapt to the work culture of native speakers (Delante, 2020; Maree et al., 2024).

Second language learning is currently experiencing very rapid development, one indicator of which is the use of various technologies in second language learning. This happens because of the need for second language learning so that students get direct experience of their involvement with aspects of the language and culture of native speakers that are mediated digitally (Hedman &

Magnusson, 2020; Hu, 2025). Several previous studies have raised the use of technology and cultural integration in second language learning. Previous studies have revealed that cultural integration in English learning can increase students' awareness and motivation to learn a second language with the results showing that the integration of native speaker culture teaching can be a trigger for students' motivation to learn the language (Sipe & Saludadez, 2021; Tatzali et al., 2025). In addition, other studies show that AR technology can facilitate second language learners to gain various cultural knowledge of native Korean speakers (Lenkaitis, 2020). In addition, short film technology-based cultural learning can improve language skills and understanding of English culture (Tarnopolsky et al., 2021).

From several studies it has been found that the use of technology can optimize cultural learning in second language learning. In addition, other studies investigate that intercultural communication in English language learning can attract students' interest in learning the language and can facilitate students to adapt to the culture of native English speakers (McLaren, 2023; Noroozi & Taheri, 2022). Other studies also investigate that the integration of intercultural communication in Korean language learning can improve Korean language skills specifically, especially those related to Korean culture (Hackett et al., 2023; Kerrigan et al., 2024). This study is different from previous studies, namely in that it explores the integration of intercultural communication and the use of Gen-AI technology (Chat-GPT) and multimedia (YouTube) in Japanese language learning.

In addition, this study not only investigates its impact on Japanese language skills, but also on the motivation to learn Japanese and the ability to adapt to native speaker cultural communication. In addition, this study also focuses on Japanese language learning specifically for prospective Indonesian migrant workers in Japan. Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine the effect of the integration of intercultural communication and Japanese culture in Gen-AI and multimedia-based Japanese language learning on Japanese language learning motivation (L2), intercultural communication skills, and Japanese language skills. Based on this explanation, the researcher formulated several problems, namely as follows.

- a) How does the integration of intercultural communication in Japanese language learning based on Gen-AI and multimedia impact L2 (Japanese) motivation?
- b) How does the integration of intercultural communication in Japanese language learning based on Gen-AI and multimedia impact intercultural communication competence?
- c) How does the integration of intercultural communication in Japanese language learning based on Gen-AI and multimedia impact Japanese language skills?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Intercultural communication competence in second language learning

Second language learners have complex demands, not only must they be proficient in language, but also must be able to adapt to the culture of the native speaker. Intercultural communication competence is one of the main competencies in second language learning (Dylman & Zakrisson, 2023; Sipe & Saludadez, 2021). This competence is very necessary for second language learners who will directly interact with native speakers for various purposes, such as study and work. Intercultural communication competence is the ability to use a second language (L2) to interact accompanied by an understanding of the culture of the native speaker, both when communicating and in other interactions (D'Orazzi & Marangell, 2025; Tsatzali et al., 2025).

This competence is also a sign that the learner is able to use effective linguistics and paralinguistics in communicating with native speakers. The success of using a second language in communication is marked by mutual understanding between two speakers with different cultural backgrounds. Cross-cultural experiential learning is learning that places learners in the native cultural environment of the speaker (Baker, 2022; Sari et al., 2020). This kind of learning environment facilitates students to increase their own intercultural awareness and the culture of the native speaker and to be able to appreciate cultural differences.

Intercultural communication competence has a role in second language education, namely facilitating students to be able to become speakers and intercultural mediators. Second language learners must have linguistic competence and intercultural competence. Linguistic competence is the ability to express thoughts verbally correctly and precisely, while intercultural communication competence is the ability of students to understand and accept individuals from other cultures (Piacentini et al., 2019; Pizziconi & Iwasaki, 2024). Several experts design an intercultural communication competence model including the constructions of awareness, attitude, behavior, character, skills, and knowledge that facilitate learners to understand native speakers with different cultural backgrounds. Some experts state that linguistic competence is one of the constructs of the intercultural communication model.

First and second language skills are very important components in developing intercultural communication competence (Cong-Lem, 2025; Lawless & Chen, 2020). Based on the need for cultural adaptation, a conceptual framework for cultural integration in second language teaching is carried out which encourages teachers to understand and apply the construct of intercultural competence. The scales that can be used in assessing intercultural communication competence include awareness, attitude, skills, and knowledge. Awareness is the ability of students to pay attention to and evaluate cultural differences. Attitude refers to the attitude of openness to appreciation of other cultures (Peng & Chen, 2023; Yu & Wright, 2024). The skill scale refers to the ability to interpret new knowledge about the culture of native speakers through their language. The knowledge

scale is the ability of students to understand the similarities and differences between cultures.

2.2 Issues in the integration of intercultural teaching in second language teaching

Second language or foreign language teaching is teaching that facilitates learners to improve their experience and intercultural competency. However, in its implementation, problems are often encountered due to various factors, including the lack of experience-based learning and target language communities, inappropriate pedagogical approaches, suboptimal materials, and suboptimal use of technology that can lead to suboptimal intercultural communication teaching (Knutzen et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025). As second language teaching develops, more and more teachers realize the importance of integrating cultural knowledge in the learning process, ineffective teaching methods, classes are still dominated by language learning, and cultural introduction activities are still minimal (Samorè, 2024; Wang et al., 2022).

Another problem found in the second language teaching component is that the target language speaker's cultural material in textbooks is still minimal and the absence of experiential learning reduces students' interest in learning a second language. This theory is in accordance with the findings of previous studies which found that teachers' understanding of cultural integration in the second language learning process greatly influences the content of their teaching (Delante, 2020; Rezai, 2023). Based on the results of observations in previous studies, it was found that the cultural content of native speakers is still not optimal in second language teaching, including the cultural norms of native speakers, the lack of understanding of native speaker characters and the absence of learning activities that encourage cross-cultural awareness of learners.

Based on several problems from previous studies, the current study attempts to investigate second language teaching (Japanese) that is balanced in both linguistic and cultural aspects through an experiential learning framework assisted by various technologies. The next problem is that second language teaching that is integrated with culture is less competent teaching. There are still many teachers who have a paradigm that other people's cultures are not very important in language teaching, even though teaching the target culture is an important component of the language curriculum (Dewi & Arifuddin, 2021; Rickert, 2024). The causes of negative views of teachers include teachers focusing more on the practical aspects of language learning, such as vocabulary, grammar, and oral communication.

In addition, institutional demands provide time limits for raising cultural material in depth in teaching practices (Thomas & Waugh, 2020; Tran et al., 2020). The cause of the negative paradigm in teachers is that the majority of second language teachers do not have experience and training in teaching integration of cultural knowledge in language teaching practices and have not found an effective method in instilling character values, attitudes towards the culture of native speakers (R'boul, 2022; Samuelsson, 2021). Thus, the purpose of the current study is to address the cultural knowledge gap of Japanese language

learners by integrating cultural learning in the classroom. In addition, experiential learning is used to improve intercultural competence, Japanese learning motivation, and language proficiency. This study contributes to second language teaching practices so that second language learners are able to interact with native speakers effectively.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Participants

This study used a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest method to investigate the impact of integrating intercultural communication competence in Japanese language learning on intercultural awareness, L2 motivation, and Japanese language skills of prospective Indonesian migrant workers. The quasi-experimental method is used because full control over variables is difficult to achieve and data collection in research is carried out using various techniques that are adapted to the research objectives. This study involved 252 participants of prospective Indonesian migrant workers working in Japan. All participants were taking Japanese language teaching classes at a job training institution from several institutions. Participants were prepared to be able to communicate and adapt to the world of work in Japan. Participants were divided into two groups with the same number of 126 learners each, namely the experimental group and the control group.

The experimental group received an intervention of language teaching integrated with Japanese culture based on Gen-AI and multimedia, while the control group received an intervention that focused on teaching Japanese with conventional methods. All participants involved in this study used anonymous data that will only be used for research purposes. All participants filled out a consent form to participate in this study so that participants participated in this study voluntarily. This study has received permission from the Japanese language teaching institution for Indonesian immigrant workers and the Indonesian University of Education.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of research participants

	Experimental group	Control group
Gender		
Female	63 (50%)	63 (50%)
Male	63 (50%)	63 (50%)
After-school Japanese Language Training		
No	25 (38.6%)	21 (44.8%)
Yes	35 (65.4%)	28 (48.5%)
Overseas travel experience		
Never	110 (72.5%)	120 (92.5%)
1-3 times	14 (23.5%)	8 (18.10%)
4 or more times	2 (3.4%)	0 (0%)
Student exchange experience		
Never	123 (91.5%)	124 (91.8%)
1-3 times	4 (3.6%)	3 (4.5%)
4 or more times	1 (1.2%)	0 (0%)

Study abroad experience		
Never	124 (95.8%)	126 (100%)
Less than half a year	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Half to 1 year	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
More than 1 year	2 (3.5%)	0 (0%)
Experience interacting with foreign students or teachers		
No	115 (78.5%)	120 (82%)
Yes	11 (3.8%)	6 (4.6%)

3.2 Intervention

The duration of the intervention was carried out for one semester of language class or 6 months. Weekly meetings were held four times a week in both groups. In the pretest phase, students were asked to take a Japanese language skills test to assess their Japanese language proficiency, then students were also asked to fill out an assessment scale to assess their L2 motivation and intercultural competence in the pretest phase. Formative assessment was also conducted through a final oral presentation containing Japanese culture. Experiential learning was integrated in the experimental group by emphasizing Japanese language and culture experiences assisted by Gen-AI and multimedia. Gen-AI used as an intervention in this study is Chat-GPT. The multimedia used is YouTube. Both of these media are used to display various Japanese cultures needed in everyday life and culture in communication.

However, in the control group all materials were delivered with conventional teaching without the assistance of media and technology. All procedures and duration of intervention in the experimental and control groups were the same, except without the use of Gen-AI (Chat-GPT) and multimedia assistance. The researcher also designed each teaching topic filled with various language and cultural sub-competencies needed in the world of work in Japan.

In addition to the culture needed by prospective Indonesian migrant workers in the world of work in Japan, culture as a provision for adapting to everyday life was also provided, including an understanding of the character of Japanese people so that they are able to understand Japanese culture and character contained in the concepts of seiri, seiton, seiketsu, seiso, and shitsuke Japanese culture. Some materials related to work culture include discipline, hard work, politeness, and respect for time. In addition, materials related to food, customs, religion, habits, and other cultures needed in everyday life in Japan were also introduced. Information about the participants involved in this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 2 Cultural topic materials in Japanese language learning

Culture theme
1. Introduction—introduction to the theme and objectives of the Japanese language course
2. Japanese Food
3. Matsuri: Japanese Festivals
4. Sadou: Tea Ceremony
5. Kimono: Traditional Japanese Clothing
6. Tako: Japanese Kites
7. Origami: The Art of Paper Folding
8. Hanami: Flower Viewing
9. Hanabi: Fireworks
10. Oral presentation of one of the Japanese cultures (key vocabulary)
11. Communication simulation based on specific situations and contexts in Japan (group summative assessment)

In each language and culture learning topic, students are given Japanese language and culture materials using various multimodal, starting from the use of Gen-AI and multimedia. This culture-based language learning is carried out in an integrated manner, for example, the character and culture when asking a Japanese person is displayed through multimedia displays. In addition, the character and work culture of the Japanese, such as discipline, hard work, never giving up, valuing time depicted in the concepts of seiri, seiton, seiketsu, seiso, and shitsuke are displayed through various media such as Gen-AI, multimedia, YouTube, short films, and virtual posters. This briefing is carried out to enrich students' knowledge before the intercultural communication simulation is carried out.

Along with this briefing, students are encouraged to use key vocabulary and sentences related to the Japanese culture they are studying. In the first five meetings, students receive material interspersed with simulation practices, while meetings six to the end of the learning process are carried out through guided instructions assisted by Gen-AI and multimedia to encourage students to fully participate actively in various forms of learning activities, such as mini presentations, simulations of various work situations, and exploring various Japanese cultural heritages. In this intervention session, students get the opportunity to practice all Japanese language skills, from listening, speaking, and writing in order to improve language proficiency and intercultural communication competence through various learning process activities.

Table 3. Motivation factors for learning Japanese (L2) for prospective Indonesian migrant workers

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
18. I took a Japanese course because I wanted to be fluent in Japanese	.821			
20. I took a Japanese course so I could communicate with Japanese people	.931			
21. I took a Japanese course to help me when I work in Japan	.916			
22. I took a Japanese course because I wanted to get to know Japanese people	.906			
23. I took a Japanese course because I wanted to know more about Japanese culture	.720			
24. I took a Japanese course because I might continue my studies in Japan	.798			
01. I took a Japanese course to get a good status		.805		
09. I took a Japanese course because I felt interested		.745		
10. I am confident in taking a Japanese course		.858		
11. I enjoy the process of learning Japanese		.924		
12. Learning Japanese makes me feel like I will succeed at work		.756		
02. I took a Japanese course to pass the exam to work in Japan			.752	
05. I took a Japanese course to get into a good job			.747	
06. I took a Japanese course because I don't want to be left behind by my friends			.783	
07. I took a Japanese course to fulfill my parents' demands			.884	
17. I took a Japanese course to improve my competitiveness			.645	
03. I took a Japanese course to help me better understand Japanese media (e.g., novels, movies, comic books, games) online, etc.)				.834
04. I took a Japanese course to make it easier to navigate the internet (e.g., browse websites, play video games, etc.)				.912
Total explained variance: Cronbach's alpha:	70.10%;			.935

3.3 Research instruments

This study used four instruments in its data collection, namely the L2 motivation assessment scale, the intercultural competency assessment scale, the Japanese language test, and the Japanese language class evaluation survey. The reliability and validity tests of the research instruments were conducted empirically on 140 Japanese language learners using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) for

psychometric properties on learners' L2 motivation and attitudes towards Japanese culture. The L2 motivation assessment scale of prospective Indonesian migrant workers was created using 24 items through the adaptation of the student motivation inventory from Wu (2012). The intercultural competency assessment scale used the assessment scale from Peng et al. (2009) which was modified according to the needs of prospective Indonesian migrant workers.

Moreover, EFA analysis was conducted to investigate the reliability and validity of the scales. Based on the results of the analysis, the assessment scales used in the study all met the research criteria. The L2 motivation scale includes four aspects, namely integrated motivation, self-efficacy, external motivation, and Japanese language learning for work with a coefficient showing a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.916 with a total variance of 67.09%. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

Furthermore, the intercultural competency scale contains three aspects, namely intercultural self-efficacy (the ability to adapt to the native speaker's communication culture), intercultural awareness (awareness construct), and intercultural knowledge interest (attitude and knowledge construct). This Japanese intercultural competency scale shows a Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of 0.930 with a total variance of 64.49% which is presented in Table 4. From the results of the analysis, the level of reliability and internal consistency shows a value that meets the research criteria, so it can be used in the current study.

Table 4 Contents of intercultural competency factors for prospective workers

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
12. I am confident when communicating with Japanese people	.741		
14. I am able to overcome negative feelings in different cross-cultural situations	.876		
15. I can develop my own way of learning Japanese language and culture	.883		
17. I can interact with people from different cultures without anxiety	.836		
19. I am aware that cultural background can affect communication with others	.684		
20. I am aware that responses from people from different cultures reflect their cultural value systems	.723		
08. I want to learn the differences between my language and culture and those of Japanese people		.683	
10. I will adjust my attitude and behavior when communicating with someone from a different cultural background		.956	
11. I can interact appropriately with Japanese people		.834	
16. I prepare myself well before interacting with Japanese people		.756	
18. I do not consider behavior to be a representation of the local culture		.786	
01. I like to learn about various Japanese cultures			.740

02. I like to interact with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds	.668
03. I like collecting objects from other cultures	.760
04. I like to learn the history of other countries	.931
05. I like watching shows or programs that introduce the culture or traditions of other countries	.978
Total variance explained: 66.50%; Cronbach's alpha:	.946

Quantitative analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS statistical application. Data analysis was conducted using one-way repeated measures ANOVA. In addition, calculations were also carried out on the mean, standard deviation, and EFA to investigate statistical differences in the pretest and posttest phases. One-way repeated measures ANOVA was also conducted to compare the effectiveness of Japanese language teaching integrated with culture and not integrated based on Gen-AI and multimedia.

Furthermore, an evaluation questionnaire was also designed to assess student and teacher satisfaction after taking a Japanese language teaching class based on Gen-AI and multimedia integrated with Japanese culture. This questionnaire assesses student perceptions consisting of 11 student perception items and 10 teacher perception items presented in tables 5 and 6. The measurement uses a 5-point Likert scale and is analyzed from the results of the average score obtained. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. All responses were coded using S1 (learners), T1 (teachers) to maintain research ethics.

Table 5. Learner satisfaction survey in the experimental group

Item questions	5	4	3	2	1
01. The course content is even from easy to difficult					
02. The teacher's instructions are easy to understand in all materials					
03. The teacher uses various methods to help students understand the materials					
04. I really like the culture-based Japanese language materials					
05. After studying this culture-based Japanese language material, I learned more about Japanese culture					
06. I learned more about the culture of communicating in Japan					
07. I realized how important the culture of communicating with Japanese people is					
08. I became more motivated to learn Japanese after getting the Japanese culture material					
09. I am no longer afraid to learn Japanese					
10. I became more confident in communicating with Japanese people					
11. I want to take this culture-based Japanese language course in the future					
Strongly agree (5); Agree (4); OK (3); Disagree (2); Strongly disagree (1)					

3.4 Data analysis

Data collection was carried out on both groups using a self-assessment scale for L2 motivation and intercultural competency. For Japanese language proficiency, a Japanese language test was conducted on both groups. Data collection used quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain comprehensive data on the impact of the integration of Gen-AI-based intercultural communication and multimedia on the three competencies, namely the development of intercultural communication competency, L2 motivation, and Japanese language proficiency.

4. Result

4.1 Motivation of L2 (Japanese) of prospective Indonesian migrant workers

Based on the results of the ANOVA test, a significant difference was found between the experimental and control groups. The results of the analysis of L2 motivation of Japanese language learners are presented in tables 6 and 7. From the results of the analysis, it was found that the average score of overall L2 motivation of learners in the experimental group showed an increase from 3.57 to 5.28, while in the control group showed a decrease from 3.65 in the pretest to 3.52 in the posttest after a period of 8 weeks. In the aspect of integrated motivation, the average score of students in the experimental group showed an increase from 3.52 to 4.46, while in the control group showed a decrease from 3.82 to 3.78.

Furthermore, in the aspect of self-efficacy in learning Japanese, students in the experimental group showed an increase in self-efficacy from 3.34 to 3.93, while self-efficacy in the control group showed a decrease from 3.56 to 3.48. The external motivation aspect in the experimental group showed an increase from 3.31 to 4.18, while the external motivation of the control group showed a slight decrease from 3.52 to 3.46. Finally, the aspect of learning Japanese for work needs in the experimental group showed an increase from 3.82 to 4.17, while in the control group it showed a significant increase from 3.89 to 3.97.

Based on the data analysis, overall Japanese language learning integrated with intercultural communication and cultural knowledge is able to increase learner motivation in L2 more significantly compared to Japanese language learning that focuses on the Japanese language aspect alone. The results of the L2 motivation analysis (Japanese) of the experimental group are presented in Table 7, while the results of the L2 motivation analysis (Japanese) of the control group are presented in Table 8.

Table 6. Results of the L2 motivation assessment analysis (Japanese) of the experimental group

Aspect	Pre-test M (SD)	Post-test M (SD)
Integrated motivation	3.52 (.35)	4.46 (.26)
Self-efficacy toward Japanese	3.34 (.26)	3.93 (.34)
External motivation	3.31 (.42)	4.18 (.38)
Learning Japanese for work	3.82 (.27)	4.17 (.23)
Overall motivation means	3.57 (.28)	5.28 (.35)

Table 7. Results of the analysis of the L2 (Japanese) motivation assessment of the control group

Aspect	Pre-test M (SD)	Post-test M (SD)
Integrated motivation	3.82 (.56)	3.78 (.52)
Self-efficacy toward Japanese	3.56 (.43)	3.48 (.58)
External motivation	3.52 (.34)	3.46 (.37)
Learning Japanese for work	3.89 (.50)	3.97 (.47)
Overall motivation means	3.65 (.37)	3.52 (.44)

4.2 Intercultural competence of prospective Indonesian migrant workers

The development of intercultural communication competence is presented in tables 8 and 9. Based on the results of the analysis, the intercultural competence in the experimental group showed an increase in the posttest from an average of 3.52 to 4.26, while in the control group it showed a slight increase from 3.40 to 3.43. The self-efficacy aspect in intercultural situations in the experimental group showed a significant increase from 3.37 to 3.94, while in the control group it showed an increase, but not too significant from 3.36 to 3.38. Furthermore, the intercultural awareness aspect of the experimental group showed a significant increase from 3.60 to 4.32, while in the control group self-efficacy in intercultural situations showed a decrease from 3.59 to 3.54. The interest aspect in intercultural knowledge in the experimental group showed a significant increase from 3.47 to 4.15, while in the control group it increased insignificantly from 3.27 to 3.31. Thus, overall, language teaching integrated with Gen-AI and multimedia-based culture is able to significantly improve students' intercultural competency.

Table 8. Results of the experimental group's intercultural competency assessment

Aspect	Pre-test M (SD)	Post-test M (SD)
Self-efficacy in intercultural situations	3.37 (.46)	3.94 (.38)
Demonstrating intercultural awareness	3.60 (.54)	4.32 (.42)
Interest in intercultural knowledge	3.47 (.59)	4.15 (.30)
Overall intercultural competence means	3.52 (.33)	4.26 (.45)

Table 9. Results of the intercultural competency assessment of the control group

Aspect	Pre-test M (SD)	Post-test M (SD)
Self-efficacy in intercultural situations	3.36 (.56)	3.38 (.37)
Demonstrating intercultural awareness	3.59 (.48)	3.54 (.67)
Interest in intercultural knowledge	3.27 (.55)	3.31 (.50)
Overall intercultural competence means	3.40 (.54)	3.43 (.33)

4.3 Japanese language proficiency of prospective Indonesian migrant workers

Based on the analysis results in Table 10, Japanese language proficiency in culture-based language classes shows a more significant increase than language classes that are not integrated with cultural knowledge. The language proficiency of the experimental group in the pretest phase was 124.21, while the control group showed a value of 123.18. Furthermore, in the posttest phase the experimental group showed a significant increase with a score of 146.78, while the control group showed a slight increase with a score of 126.87. Based on the results of this analysis, Japanese language learning that is integrated with Japanese culture is more effective in increasing Japanese language proficiency than language classes that only focus on Japanese.

Table 10. Japanese language proficiency level of prospective Indonesian migrant workers

Pretest		Posttest	
M	SD	M	SD
<i>Experiment group</i>			
124.21	7.35	146.78	12.24
<i>Control group</i>			
123.18	11.24	126.87	13.45

Perception of prospective Indonesian migrant workers towards the implementation of the intervention to obtain comprehensive data and understanding, triangulation was conducted in this study. Quantitative and qualitative data from two posttest questionnaires were used to obtain learner response data from the results of the Japanese language teaching intervention integrated with Japanese culture based on Gen-AI and multimedia.

Table 11. Survey of learner responses to the experimental group intervention

Questions	M	SD
01. The course content is even from easy to difficult	3.6	0.8
02. The teacher's instructions are easy to understand in all materials	3.9	0.7
03. The teacher uses various methods to help students understand the materials	3.9	0.7
04. I really like the culture-based Japanese language materials	3.8	0.7
05. After studying this culture-based Japanese language material, I learned more about Japanese culture	3.8	0.7
06. I learned more about the culture of communicating in Japan	5.0	0.9
07. I realized how important the culture of communicating with Japanese people is	5.0	0.8
08. I became more motivated to learn Japanese after getting the Japanese culture material	3.9	0.7
09. I am no longer afraid to learn Japanese	3.9	0.8
10. I became more confident in communicating with Japanese people	4.0	0.8
11. I want to take this culture-based Japanese language course in the future	3.9	0.9

Based on the results of quantitative analysis in table 11, the average score of all items is close to 5, especially in question items 6 and 7 which indicate the suitability between Japanese language learning experience, knowledge

development and intercultural competency. Furthermore, items 1,4,5 show values 3,6 and 3,8 which indicate the suitability of the language content from the teacher with the perceived ability. Qualitative data analysis from item 12 shows that 80% responded that the intervention provided was able to increase awareness of intercultural competence and facilitate students to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the differences between their own culture and the culture of native Japanese speakers. Here are some examples of student responses from interviews regarding the intervention provided:

"I like it when the teacher introduces several cultures in Japan through multimedia technology and asks us to think about whether there are cultures that are similar to those cultures. We can think openly and analyze the differences in these cultures. In addition, we can also practice listening and speaking about these cultures."

"I can learn Japanese from vocabulary and phrases that are newly learned from several Japanese cultures. The teacher gives us new knowledge about the use of words and phrases that can be used to express thoughts related to Japanese culture."

In addition, in the presentation phase, learners have the opportunity to collaborate with their peers to present Japanese culture. From this opportunity, students gain meaningful experiences that they have not had before:

"In the previous session, I did not have much opportunity to speak Japanese, but in the presentation project of various Japanese cultures, I had the opportunity to speak and explain Japanese culture in detail."

"Through various Japanese language and culture learning activities, I was not only able to practice my Japanese language skills, but also able to increase my knowledge of Japanese culture, as a provision for learners to adapt to Japanese life."

"Intercultural competence helps me adjust to Japanese communication culture. In addition, learners are also given provisions to adapt to everyday life in Japan through various cultural knowledge of Japanese society."

From several responses, it can be concluded that learners who receive Japanese language teaching interventions that are integrated with Japanese culture are not only able to improve their Japanese language proficiency, but also able to improve their intercultural competence. This is important so that prospective Indonesian migrant workers are able to adapt to the world of work in Japan.

5. Discussion

The results of the study on the aspect of motivation to learn Japanese or L2 motivation showed a more significant pattern of motivational changes in the experimental group learners than in the control group. From the results of the study, cultural integration in foreign language learning is not only able to increase learners' motivation in learning Japanese, but also able to increase knowledge of the community environment in Japan. This increase occurs because of the experiential cultural component with the help of Gen-AI technology and multimedia. Students not only gain linguistic knowledge

(vocabulary, grammar, and syntax) needed in the world of work but also gain language skills that are integrated with communication culture and cultural knowledge that support daily life in Japan through various simulation activities.

Increases also occurred in the four components of motivation, integrated motivation, external motivation, self-efficacy motivation, and motivation to learn a language for work. This finding is in line with previous findings showing that learners' English skills increase after receiving culture-based teaching materials (NLi, 2025; Tarnopolsky et al., 2021). This is reinforced by the theory of second language learning, namely contextual linguistic knowledge, such as cross-cultural interaction, concrete materials, and cultural knowledge can improve learners' second language skills (Elias & Mansouri, 2023; Huang & Byram, 2024). Communication placed in a real context makes learners feel the meaning of how Japanese works, so that the motivation to learn Japanese increases because these prospective Indonesian migrant workers want to know more about exploring the target language in various intercultural communication contexts (Noroozi & Taheri, 2022; Saito & Turner, 2024).

The next finding is that the integration of cultural knowledge in Japanese language learning can effectively increase the intercultural knowledge of prospective Indonesian migrant workers. The increase in intercultural communication competence in the experimental group occurred in all its components, namely self-efficacy in intercultural situations, intercultural awareness, and interest in intercultural knowledge. The increase in all components in the experimental group was higher than in the control group which increased slightly in the component of self-efficacy in intercultural situations. However, the other two components, intercultural awareness and interest in intercultural knowledge, decreased in the control group.

This happened because students in the control group only received Japanese language course interventions that focused on linguistic knowledge, so that the aspect of intercultural knowledge was not touched at all so that all components of intercultural communication competence did not experience a significant increase. This finding is in accordance with previous research which found that language teaching materials that are simulated according to the cultural context of communication accompanied by simulations of real activities contribute more significantly to learners' language skills according to their needs (Maree et al., 2024; Nakamura, 2024).

This finding is also reinforced by another study that found that Korean language learning integrated with knowledge of Korean character and culture can improve vocabulary knowledge about Korean culture and be able to use it in real communication (Hiratsuka, 2023; Saito & Turner, 2025). This is reinforced by the theory that linguistic knowledge delivered in accordance with the context of the intercultural communication environment and cross-cultural interaction can improve intercultural communication skills (Aririguzoh, 2022; Hackett et al., 2023).

This Gen-AI and multimedia-assisted culture-based language teaching facilitates students to understand cultural differences between their own culture and the target language culture that previously had limited experience. The next finding in this study is that the cross-cultural knowledge obtained is increasingly rich from the results of the intervention design. From the results of the questionnaire, students responded that the integration of the target language culture into second language teaching was able to overcome the challenges that had been encountered so far, which were still difficult to obtain actual and contextual target language culture materials.

This course design is able to create an experiential learning environment that encourages the development of learners' reflective awareness of cultural elements through simulations assisted by Gen-AI technology and multimedia. This is in accordance with the theory of second language learning which states that second language learning will be more optimal if learners are faced with the use of language that is appropriate to the situation and context of language use (M. Li, 2025; Qin, 2024).

In addition, this culture-based Japanese language teaching intervention design is able to develop learners' interest in knowing more about the culture of everyday life in Japan. The research findings show that students in the experimental group who interact actively in making comparisons or contrasts between Japanese culture and Indonesian culture in oral and written communicative tasks are able to improve intercultural communication more significantly. They understand culture and character better when communicating with Japanese people compared to learners in the control group. This finding is in accordance with the theory of second language learning which states that the culture and character of a second language will be more trained if used in a real context, not only in the aspect of teaching material, but must be practiced in real situations and contexts (Liu, 2023; Nigar & Kostogriz, 2024).

Furthermore, the design of cultural integration interventions in Japanese language teaching has been proven to be able to improve the Japanese language proficiency of prospective Indonesian migrant workers. The increase in Japanese language proficiency in the experimental group was more significant than the control group. This finding indicates that the content of intercultural communication in Japanese language learning is able to facilitate learners to acquire better Japanese language communication skills (Hiratsuka, 2023; Maree et al., 2024). This increase in Japanese language proficiency can be seen from several language features, including vocabulary mastery, sentence structure, and mastery of several language expressions that are appropriate to the situation and context of Japanese language communication culture.

In addition, instructors at job training institutions have different backgrounds and some are native Japanese speakers, thus helping students to continue to actively participate in various communicative learning process activities, especially for learners who are still low in ability so that they are more prepared both emotionally and linguistically in various simulation activities. These

findings are in line with previous studies that have shown that collaborative and sociocultural pedagogy has proven effective in improving Taiwanese and English language proficiency (Cruz Arcila et al., 2022; Sipe & Saludadez, 2021).

These findings are also supported by second language theory which emphasizes that second language acquisition is most effective when there is collaboration in the learning process and actual communication context, so that learners receive experiential culture-based learning (Dylman & Zakrisson, 2023; Tatzali et al., 2025). Researchers have now developed instructional designs that optimize the use of linguistic knowledge in vocabulary, grammar, and syntax in real-world contexts. This type of interaction can produce meaningful input and responses that can improve learners' target language skills.

6. Conclusion

The integration of intercultural communication and Japanese cultural knowledge in Japanese language teaching based on Gen-AI and multimedia can improve the L2 motivation, intercultural competence, and Japanese language proficiency of prospective Indonesian migrant workers. The increase in learners' L2 motivation is seen in the components of integrated motivation, external motivation, self-efficacy motivation, and motivation to learn a language for work. The increase in intercultural competence occurs in the components of intercultural situational self-efficacy, intercultural awareness, and intercultural knowledge interest. The increase in Japanese language proficiency is seen in several language features, including vocabulary mastery, sentence structure, and mastery of several language expressions that are appropriate to the situation and context of Japanese language communication culture.

Thus, the integration of intercultural communication in Japanese language teaching is not only able to improve Japanese language skills, but also able to improve learners' understanding of the target language culture, so that they can adapt to the cultural environment of native speakers. The increase in L2 motivation, intercultural competence, and Japanese language proficiency occurs because language learning activities that encourage the use of Japanese according to actual situations and contexts are assisted by Gen-AI technology and multimedia, so that learners receive experiential cultural teaching. This experiential learning is able to improve Japanese language skills according to real needs. The findings of this study contribute to the theory of second language learning which states that second language learning will be more optimal if accompanied by learning the target language culture. Learning the target language culture will help learners adjust when communicating with native speakers.

7. Implication and Recommendation

This study implies that second language teaching must convey linguistic knowledge according to the context of the intercultural communication environment and cross-cultural interaction in order to be effective in improving target language skills and intercultural communication. In addition, second language acquisition is most effective if there is collaboration in the learning

process and the actual communication context. This study has several limitations, including, culture-based Japanese language teaching only focuses on prospective Indonesian migrant workers in one job training institution, intervention activities have not involved native speaker learners, the experiential culture-based learning environment is only assisted by the use of Gen-AI technology and multimedia as well as simulation activities, and the intervention period is still quite short.

Based on these limitations, the researcher recommends several suggestions for further studies, including that this cultural integration model in second language teaching needs to be tested at the secondary school level and other foreign language learning, it is necessary to involve native speaker learners of the target language, learners must be faced with an actual learning environment, and a longer intervention period is needed for more optimal results. In addition, the researcher also recommends that cultural integration in language teaching needs to be included in the curriculum and textbooks for second language teaching.

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