



## VIDEO-BASED SHADOWING IN A CLIL FRAMEWORK: ENHANCING JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND CULTURAL LITERACY

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**Abstract.** This study investigates Japanese language learners' perceptions of the shadowing technique using YouTube videos within a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) framework. The research aims to explore how video-based shadowing supports both linguistic proficiency and cross-cultural understanding. Shadowing, which involves imitating native speech in real-time, was applied using authentic Japanese videos containing culturally rich content. A mixed method was employed, involving intermediate to advanced learners from several Indonesian Universities. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and reflective journals after several shadowing sessions. The findings show that learners experienced improvements in listening comprehension, pronunciation, and vocabulary, while also gaining insights into Japanese cultural norms, speech styles, and non-verbal communication. These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating language and cultural content as promoted in the CLIL approach. Furthermore, findings show substantial gains in listening, pronunciation, and speaking fluency, supported by positive evaluations of YouTube as a valuable source of authentic audiovisual input that enhances vocabulary and cultural understanding. This study highlights the pedagogical potential of video-based shadowing, particularly in autonomous or resource-limited Japanese language learning contexts.

**Keywords:** Video-based shadowing, japanese language learning, CLIL, YouTube

### 1. Introduction

Pronunciation and listening comprehension are fundamental aspects of second language (L2) acquisition, contributing directly to learners' communicative competence and overall intelligibility [1], [2], [3], [4]. Learners who struggle with these skills may experience communication breakdowns, misunderstandings, and reduced willingness to communicate [5], [6], [7], [8]. Despite their importance, pronunciation and listening instruction are often underrepresented in language curricula due to difficulties in aligning them with communicative teaching approaches [9], [10].

Amid these challenges, the shadowing technique has emerged as a promising approach to developing learners' listening and pronunciation skills (Tamai in [4], [12], [13]). Originally designed for simultaneous interpreter training (Lambert in [4]), shadowing involves repeating speech almost simultaneously with auditory input, a process that activates attention in the



working memory and engages both listening and speaking channels (Baddeley, Tamai in [4]). This dual-task mechanism differentiates shadowing from traditional listen-and-repeat drills, fostering greater focus on phonological and prosodic features [13], [14].

A substantial body of research has demonstrated shadowing's effectiveness in enhancing listening comprehension [15], [16], pronunciation [17], speech reproduction [18], and learner motivation [19], [20], [21]. It has been widely implemented in East Asia [22], [23] and increasingly recognized in global L2 teaching contexts [24]. In Japan, where language education is often rooted in grammar-translation and memorization-oriented pedagogies, the mechanical characteristics of shadowing have made it particularly suitable [25]. Its popularity in Japanese EFL and JSL classrooms is supported by evidence showing that the technique encourages automatization of bottom-up processing through simultaneous listening and speaking [26], [27], [28], [29], [30].

However, the integration of shadowing into different L2 learning contexts remains challenging. Outside Japan, where communicative language teaching dominates, the repetitive and mechanical nature of shadowing may be perceived as incompatible with meaning-focused instruction and could even trigger learner anxiety or fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al, Markee in [31]; [32]). These cultural and pedagogical differences underscore the need for adaptive applications of shadowing that balance its mechanical rigor with communicative goals. When carefully implemented, such as through individualized or homework-based practice, shadowing can mitigate performance anxiety while reinforcing listening comprehension and pronunciation accuracy [31]. Overall, shadowing represents a unique pedagogical bridge between perception and production in L2 learning.

In recent years, digital platforms have transformed language education by providing learners with unprecedented access to diverse resources and learning experiences. Among these, YouTube has emerged as one of the most influential tools for language learners due to its accessibility, multimodality, and variety of authentic input. The platform offers a wide range of educational materials from structured instructional videos to natural conversational content that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, supporting self-directed and autonomous learning [33], [34], [35]. This flexibility enables learners to take ownership of their language development, particularly in contexts such as Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) learning, where consistent exposure to authentic spoken input is often limited outside the classroom.

A growing body of research has emphasized YouTube's pedagogical potential for developing language skills through exposure to real-world communication and interactive content. Watkins and Wilkins [36] demonstrated that YouTube videos provide rich, contextually embedded input that fosters learners' ability to comprehend and produce spoken language. For Japanese language learners, this authentic exposure to natural speech patterns, including intonation, rhythm, and cultural expressions, offers valuable opportunities to internalize the nuances of spoken communication. Moreover, the combination of auditory and visual modalities allows learners to observe non-verbal elements of interaction, such as gestures and facial expressions, which are essential in mastering communicative competence in Japanese.

Within this context, the integration of shadowing into the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) framework presents an innovative pedagogical direction. CLIL emphasizes learning content through a foreign language, thereby fostering linguistic proficiency and intercultural awareness simultaneously. In Japanese language education, CLIL can be realized through culturally embedded materials such as authentic videos, that allow learners to engage with both linguistic and cultural dimensions of communication [37]. This dual focus aligns well with shadowing, which enhances phonological control while exposing learners to contextualized cultural expressions.



In addition to serving as a source of authentic input, YouTube also facilitates active engagement and communication. Its interactive features, such as comment sections, enable learners to exchange ideas, practice writing, and reflect on linguistic forms in meaningful contexts [37], [38]. Such participatory functions can complement speaking practice by reinforcing learners' understanding of language use in socially and culturally appropriate ways. In the Japanese learning context, where politeness levels, turn-taking, and pragmatic cues are vital, these interactions can deepen learners' awareness of communicative norms.

Furthermore, empirical findings suggest that using YouTube as a language learning medium contributes significantly to improving speaking proficiency. Students exposed to video-based materials show measurable progress in vocabulary acquisition, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and the ability to generate ideas related to the content of the videos. These improvements indicate that video-based learning through YouTube not only enhances linguistic performance but also promotes contextualized thinking and cultural understanding—both of which are central to effective spoken communication in Japanese.

In light of the issues and the previous studies reviewed above, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does video-based shadowing practice improve Japanese learners' speech perception?
2. What are positive and negative aspects of shadowing perceived by the participants?

## **2. Methods**

This study employed a mixed method approach, which was considered appropriate because the primary aim was to capture learners' experiences and perceptions rather than to test a specific hypothesis. By using this approach, the research was able to generate rich, detailed descriptions of how learners engaged with video-based shadowing within a CLIL framework.

The participants were intermediate Japanese language learners drawn from several institutions in Indonesia. This group was selected because they already possessed sufficient linguistic knowledge to benefit from shadowing practice, while also being at a stage where the development of fluency and cultural literacy is particularly critical.

To collect data, multiple instruments were employed. Questionnaires were used to gather general information about learners' experiences and attitudes containing 5 questions in each category: (1) perception of improvement in listening and speaking [39]; (2) attitude towards shadowing performance (Pf) and satisfaction (St), while open-ended questions and interviews allowed for deeper exploration of positive and negative aspect, individual perspectives, challenges, and perceived benefits. These methods were complemented by reflective journals in the broader study, but the focus here is primarily on learners' self-reported accounts.

As for the materials, learners engaged with culturally rich Japanese YouTube videos from Speak Japanese Naturally Channel. These videos were selected because they not only provided authentic spoken language but also embedded cultural content. Such materials created opportunities for learners to practice listening and shadowing while simultaneously gaining exposure to Japanese cultural practices, communicative styles, and real-life contexts.

## **3. Results And Discussion**

### **1. Video-based Shadowing Practice Steps**

To maximize the effectiveness of the shadowing practice, respondents in this study followed a series of procedures adapted from the shadowing training steps proposed by Shiki et al. [40]. The process consisted of the following stages:

1. Respondents selected one of ten videos from the Speak Japanese Naturally YouTube channel, each presenting a different topic prepared for this research. Participants were

- encouraged to choose a theme of personal interest to maintain engagement and reduce cognitive burden during practice.
2. Respondents who selected the same video theme were grouped together to facilitate shared understanding of the video content and to allow for peer feedback on their shadowing performance.
  3. In the first session, respondents performed shadowing (1<sup>st</sup> attempt) using the chosen video without prior knowledge of its content or meaning, allowing them to focus solely on listening and speech reproduction.
  4. After the initial practice, respondents were given time to comprehend the video's linguistic and cultural content. This stage was intended to deepen their understanding of both meaning and contextual aspects embedded in the material.
  5. Once the content had been understood, respondents conducted a second attempt of shadowing, integrating their newly gained comprehension into the practice.
  6. Following the second attempt of shadowing practice, participants engaged in content-based reflection and comprehension checks to evaluate their understanding of the selected video.
  7. The procedure concluded with a third attempt and final round of shadowing, designed to observe changes and progress from the earlier sessions. The shadowing phase ended with a feedback discussion focusing on respondents' performance and learning outcomes.

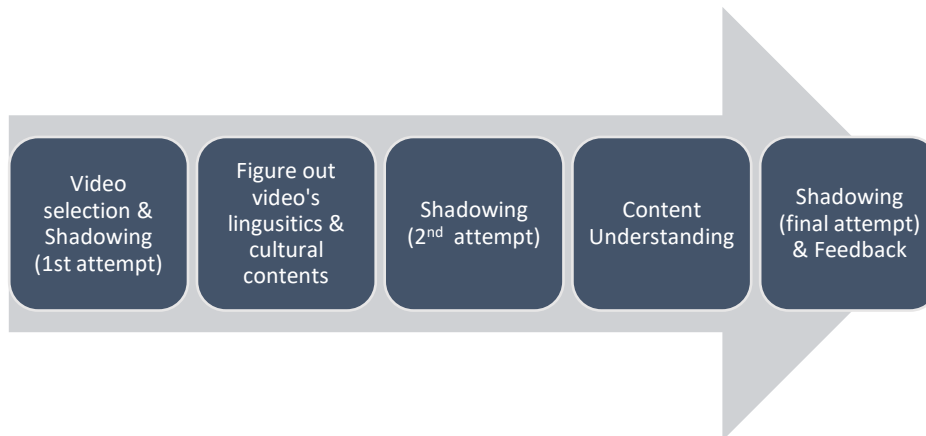


Figure 1. Video-based Shadowing Practice Steps

## 2. Participants' responses for questionnaire items

Table 1. Listening competence

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean (SD)
1	Video-based shadowing is effective in improving listening skills.	44 (77.1%)	7 (12.2%)	5 (8.7%)	1 (1.7%)	4.69 (1.091)
2	Listening skills improve if video-based shadowing improves.	42 (73.6%)	12 (21.0%)	3 (5.2%)	0 (0%)	4.72 (0.914)
3	Listening skills improve the	43 (75.4%)	10 (17.5%)	3 (5.2%)	1 (1.7%)	4.72 (1.031)



	more practice video-based shadowing.					
4	Became better at listening after practicing video- based shadowing.	49 (85.9%)	5 (8.7%)	3 (5.2%)	0 (0%)	4.94 (0.860)
5	Don't think video-based shadowing is good for listening skills.	0 (0%)	1 (1.7%)	12 (21.0%)	44 (77.16%)	4.78 (1.098)

Table 1 summarizes the frequency and percentage of responses for the listening competence questionnaire items of the survey. The responses, 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Disagree', and 'Strongly Disagree', are put together for the simple organization of the table; however, the actual scores of 5 scales were used, and negatively phrased items used reversed scores in order to align the positive consistency for statistical analyses. The results indicate that students overwhelmingly perceived video-based shadowing as highly effective for enhancing their listening comprehension in Japanese. Across all positively worded items (Items 1–4), more than 73% of respondents selected agree or strongly agree, with mean scores ranging from 4.69 to 4.94. Item 4, in particular, shows the strongest endorsement ( $M = 4.94$ ), suggesting that most students felt noticeable improvement in their listening ability after engaging in video-based shadowing. These consistently high ratings demonstrate a strong belief among learners that the technique promotes listening development, especially when practiced regularly.

The negatively phrased statement (Item 5) further reinforces this conclusion. A large majority (77.16%) strongly disagreed with the notion that video-based shadowing is ineffective, yielding a high mean score (4.78) that reflects strong rejection of this pessimistic view. Taken together, the pattern of responses shows both high confidence in the pedagogical value of video-based shadowing and low levels of skepticism among learners. These findings suggest that students not only recognize the benefits of shadowing but also attribute improvements in their listening skills directly to repeated exposure to authentic audiovisual input.

Table 2. Speaking competence

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean (SD)
6	Video-based shadowing is effective in improving pronunciation.	44 (77.1%)	10 (17.5%)	3 (5.2%)	0 (0%)	4.75 (0.874)
7	Speaking skills will improve if video- based shadowing improves.	45 (78.9%)	1 (1.7%)	7 (12.2%)	4 (7.0%)	4.74 (0.922)
8	Speaking skills improve the more practice video-based shadowing.	46 (80.7%)	6 (10.5%)	3 (5.2%)	2 (3.5%)	4.69 (1.064)



9	Pronunciation became better after video-based shadowing.	37 (64.9%)	12 (21.0%)	6 (10.5%)	2 (3.5%)	4.31 (1.091)
10	Don't think video-based shadowing is good for speaking skills.	4 (7.0%)	3 (5.2%)	4 (7.0%)	40 (50.8%)	4.64 (1.355)

Table 2 summarizes the frequency and percentage of responses for the speaking competence questionnaire items of the survey. The data show strong learner agreement that video-based shadowing is effective for improving pronunciation and speaking skills. Items 6–8 received high levels of endorsement, with 77–81% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that shadowing enhances pronunciation (Item 6) and contributes to overall speaking development (Items 7 and 8). The mean scores for these items, ranging from 4.69 to 4.75, indicate consistently positive perceptions of shadowing as a technique that supports oral production through repeated and guided practice with authentic audiovisual input.

Although Item 9 shows slightly lower agreement ( $M = 4.31$ ), a clear majority (64.9%) reported perceivable improvement in their pronunciation after participating in video-based shadowing activities. This suggests that while students generally acknowledge its benefits, perceived gains in pronunciation may vary depending on individual learning experiences or the degree of practice. The negatively worded Item 10 further reinforces the overall positive trend, as more than half of the respondents (50.8%) strongly disagreed that video-based shadowing is ineffective for speaking skills, resulting in a relatively high mean score (4.64). Taken together, these findings suggest that students perceive video-based shadowing not only as a valuable tool for developing listening skills but also as a meaningful strategy for enhancing pronunciation accuracy and improving speaking proficiency.

Table 3. Shadowing practice

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean (SD)
11	Become better at shadowing week after week	42 (73.6%)	9 (15.7%)	5 (8.7%)	1 (1.7%)	4.61 (1.076)
12	It is important to practice video-based shadowing at a faster speed	34 (59.6%)	17 (29.8%)	4 (7.0)	2 (3.5%)	4.25 (1.105)
13	Not necessary to practice at a speed faster than I can.	6 (10.5%)	7 (12.2%)	11 (19.2%)	33 (57.8%)	3.92 (1.339)
14	Can become better at video-based shadowing if practice more.	50 (87.7%)	6 (10.5%)	1 (1.7%)	0 (0%)	4.14 (0.798)
15	Feedback is very useful to find mistakes.	26 (74.3%)	9 (25.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.06 (0.765)



Table 3 summarizes the frequency and percentage of responses for the shadowing practice questionnaire items of the survey. The results suggest that students perceived consistent progress in their shadowing ability over time. A large majority (73.6%) agreed that they improved week by week in shadowing (Item 11), as reflected in a high mean score of 4.61. Learners also recognized the importance of practicing at faster speeds (Item 12), with nearly 60% agreeing and an overall mean of 4.25, indicating that many students view speed training as a meaningful component of shadowing. Conversely, the negatively phrased Item 13 received substantial disagreement (57.8%), suggesting that most learners believe that practicing at slightly challenging speeds is beneficial, even if it exceeds their current comfort level.

Furthermore, students expressed strong confidence that increased practice directly contributes to improved shadowing performance. This is evident in Item 14, where 87.7% agreed or strongly agreed that additional practice leads to better outcomes, yielding a mean score of 4.14. The importance of feedback also emerged clearly from the responses. All students agreed that feedback helps identify errors (Item 15), with a mean of 4.06, underscoring the role of corrective input in helping learners refine their shadowing skills. Overall, the findings highlight that students view shadowing as a skill that develops progressively through repeated practice, increased processing speed, and continuous feedback.

Table 4. Satisfaction

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean (SD)
16	Shadowing practice is a valuable learning experience.	43 (75.4%)	10 (17.5%)	4 (7.0%)	0 (0%)	4.81 (1.009)
17	Shadowing practice did not assist learning in Japanese.	2 (3.5%)	3 (5.2%)	8 (14.0%)	44 (77.1%)	4.75 (1.156)
18	Shadowing practice using video enhancing cultural experience.	44 (77.1%)	9 (15.7%)	2 (3.5%)	2 (3.5%)	4.72 (1.085)
19	Recommend shadowing practice to friends.	29 (50.8%)	15 (26.3%)	6 (10.5%)	7 (12.2%)	3.67 (1.242)
20	Don't think shadowing improves conversation skills.	2 (3.5%)	8 (14.0%)	9 (15.7%)	38 (66.6%)	4.29 (1.274)

Table 4 summarizes the frequency and percentage of responses for the satisfaction questionnaire items of the survey. The data indicate that students held highly positive perceptions of video-based shadowing as a meaningful and beneficial learning activity. A strong majority (75.4%) agreed that shadowing practice was a valuable learning experience (Item 16), reflected in a high mean score of 4.81. This positive view is reinforced by the responses to Item 17, where 77.1% of students strongly disagreed that shadowing did not assist their Japanese learning, yielding a mean of 4.75. These results collectively suggest that learners



clearly recognized the pedagogical value of shadowing in supporting their language development.

Students also perceived cultural benefits from video-based shadowing, with 77.1% agreeing that it enhanced their cultural experience (Item 18). While the overall sentiment was favorable, willingness to recommend shadowing to peers (Item 19) showed slightly more variation, with 50.8% agreeing and a mean score of 3.67, suggesting that some learners may view the technique as beneficial but challenging. Finally, the negatively phrased Item 20 shows that most students (66.6%) strongly disagreed with the idea that shadowing does not improve conversation skills, resulting in a mean of 4.29. This further supports the conclusion that students perceive shadowing as contributing not only to listening and pronunciation but also to broader communicative abilities.

### 3.3. Participants' responses for open ended questions

Table 5. Open ended questions responses (Positive aspect of video-based shadowing)

No	Positive Aspects	Total Responses
1	Improve speaking	17
2	Improve listening	15
3	Improve pronunciation	12
4	Native-like speech	10
5	Improve vocabulary	9
6	Japanese norm & communication styles	9
7	Improve cultural literacy	6

Table 5 summarizes the responses for the open ended questions of the survey. The qualitative responses highlight several positive aspects of video-based shadowing as perceived by the students. The most frequently mentioned benefit was improvement in speaking ability, reported by 17 respondents. This suggests that learners perceive shadowing as a practical approach for improving oral fluency and overall speaking proficiency. Listening improvement was the second most cited advantage (15 responses), reinforcing earlier quantitative findings that shadowing helps learners process spoken Japanese more effectively. Pronunciation enhancement (12 responses) and the ability to approximate native-like speech (10 responses) were also frequently noted, suggesting that repeated exposure to authentic input supports more accurate and natural phonological production.

In addition to linguistic gains, students identified broader benefits from their learning. Nine respondents mentioned vocabulary development, indicating that shadowing helps learners notice and internalize new lexical items within meaningful contexts. Another nine responses highlighted improved understanding of Japanese communication norms and interactional styles, demonstrating that shadowing may also facilitate pragmatic awareness. Finally, six respondents noted an increase in cultural literacy, indicating that engaging with authentic video materials supports learners' understanding of sociocultural aspects embedded in real-life language use. Overall, these findings suggest that students perceive video-based shadowing as a multidimensional learning tool that enhances linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural competence.

Table 6. Open ended questions responses (Negative aspect of video-based shadowing)

No	Positive Aspects	Total Responses
1	Speed too fast	18
2	Frustrated/stressed	10
3	Difficult to understand	9
4	Time consuming	3



The responses shown in Table 6 reveal several challenges students encountered during video-based shadowing practice. The most frequently reported difficulty was the fast speed of the input, mentioned by 18 respondents. This suggests that learners often struggled to keep pace with native-level speech, which may have increased the cognitive load during practice. Feelings of frustration or stress were the second most common issue (10 responses), indicating that the demanding nature of shadowing can affect learners' emotional comfort, particularly when they perceive the task as overwhelming.

Nine respondents reported difficulty in understanding the content, highlighting comprehension barriers that may arise when learners are exposed to rapid and authentic spoken Japanese. A smaller number of students (3 responses) noted that shadowing was time-consuming, suggesting that the technique requires sustained effort and regular practice, which may be challenging for learners with limited study time. Overall, these challenges reflect the intensity of video-based shadowing and underscore the importance of scaffolding, gradual speed adjustment, and supportive feedback to help learners overcome initial difficulties.

### 3.4. Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce the relevance of video-based shadowing within the broader framework of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). As noted by Pires et al. [40] and Brevik and Moe [41], CLIL emphasizes the integration of language learning with meaningful content engagement, enabling learners to process language in authentic, context-rich situations. The students' positive perceptions toward shadowing—such as improved listening, pronunciation, speaking fluency, and cultural understanding—reflect how this method supports simultaneous development of linguistic competence and content comprehension. By shadowing native speakers in various communicative situations, learners engage with real-life discourse, thereby experiencing the type of meaningful learning central to CLIL principles.

Furthermore, the use of video materials in shadowing aligns with previous findings that highlight the pedagogical value of authentic audiovisual input. Studies by Tahmina [42] and Oktapiani [43] emphasize that video-based shadowing exposes learners to natural speech patterns, intonation, and pragmatic cues, which are difficult to replicate through traditional textbook-based instruction. The findings also demonstrate that students perceive YouTube as a highly effective supplementary resource for enhancing their Japanese language proficiency, particularly in listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and cultural and pragmatic understanding. The strong agreement on these aspects suggests that exposure to authentic audiovisual input plays a central role in supporting language learning. These results align with previous studies in English as a foreign language contexts, where learners who regularly engaged with YouTube content showed improvement in listening comprehension [44], [45]. Similarly, the findings are consistent with Kabooaha and Elyas [46] and Hia [47], who reported that YouTube effectively enhances learners' vocabulary development by stimulating curiosity and enabling spontaneous acquisition through repeated exposure. This exposure is particularly beneficial for developing native-like fluency and cultural awareness, as also demonstrated by the qualitative responses in this study.

The relevance of video-based shadowing becomes even more pronounced in contexts where access to native speakers or immersive environments is limited. As highlighted by Navarette [48], Sari and Margana [49], such techniques support autonomous learning and provide an alternative pathway for learners in remote or resource-constrained settings to engage with authentic language use. The students' reported improvements, despite challenges such as fast speech or comprehension strain, suggest that video-based shadowing can serve as a flexible and scalable strategy for enhancing language proficiency beyond the physical classroom. Together,



these insights highlight the pedagogical potential of shadowing as a CLIL-compatible, accessible, and culturally enriching approach to learning Japanese.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that video-based shadowing is a highly effective technique for enhancing Japanese learners' speech perception, particularly in listening comprehension, pronunciation accuracy, and overall speaking fluency. The strong learner endorsement across the survey items, supported by qualitative responses, confirms that repeated engagement with authentic audiovisual input enables learners to process natural speech more efficiently while internalizing prosodic, phonological, and pragmatic features of real-life communication. These findings are further reinforced by students' perceptions of YouTube as a practical supplementary resource, especially for improving listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and cultural understanding.

At the same time, the study highlights both positive and negative learner perceptions that carry important pedagogical implications. Learners valued the linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural benefits of video-based shadowing, noting improvements in vocabulary, communication norms, and cultural literacy. However, they also reported challenges, including a fast speech tempo, difficulty with comprehension, emotional strain, and the time-consuming nature of the activity. These drawbacks suggest that effective implementation requires scaffolding, including adjustable playback speed, guided practice, and timely feedback. Given its capacity to provide rich input comparable to immersive environments, video-based shadowing, mainly when supported by platforms like YouTube, holds significant promise for autonomous, remote, and resource-limited learning settings. Overall, the study underscores the value of integrating authentic audiovisual media into Japanese language education as a meaningful, accessible, and learner-centered approach to developing speech perception and broader communicative competence.

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