The Intercultural Approach in Japanese Speaking Learning Activities

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Abstract. The aim of the study was to get deeply the implementation intercultural approach in Japanese speaking learning activities at senior high school. The research method is qualitative using direct observation. While the process of collecting data used documentation, video record, field note, the interview is appropriate with the research setting. The result of research found that Japanese speaking activities inside and outside the classroomhave some components, namely learning method implementation, the role of teacher and students, the role of native speaker teacher, and the material of learning. It has combined the linguistics aspect and culture to increase students' comprehension of Japanese language and culture.

Keywords: *Intercultural Approach, Japanese Speaking, Learning Activities*

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INTRODUCTION

The development of Japanese in Indonesia is quite rapid from year to year, this can be seen from a survey conducted every three years by The Japan Foundation. The latest data in 2015 showed that the number of Japanese language learners in Indonesia was 745,125 people, and was dominated by high school students(Foundation, 2015). In addition, it is the high interest to learn Japanese in the Indonesian youth environment, it also cannot be separated from the full support of the Japanese government through The Japan Foundation (JF), which provides various assistance to improve Japanese language education in Indonesia.

The result of observations in several schools Jakarta that held Japanese language subjects were found some problems, namely, the number of unequal between learners and instructors, for example, there were 11 classes with only 1 (one) teaching staff, teacher's Japanese language skills were still low, they have not passed the JLPT N3, and Japanese learners do not have the opportunity to speak Japanese both in and outside the school. Another problem shown that it was the lack of facilities and infrastructure such as language laboratories or supporting learning media, the methodology of Japanese teaching was still used conventional methods, and there is still a lack of information about Japanese social culture.

Language is part of the culture, and culture is part of the language. Both of them are closely twisted so that no one can separate them without losing their respective significance(Brown & Lee, 2015). Specifically, many people are interested to learn Japanese because it is driven by pleasure in Japanese cultures, such as J. Pop music, drama, animation and sports. In ASEAN, Indonesian learners who are interested in Japanese are ranked first. This makes a great opportunity for the world of Japanese language education in Indonesia.

As it is known that speaking skills are a skill to communicate ideas and thoughts verbally. To facilitate these skills, it needs to be supported by communicative abilities because it needs interaction among speakers (Saeed, Khaksari, Eng, & Ghani, 2016a). The forms of language that are very influential on Japanese speaking skills are speech, vocabulary, structure, and understanding of the cultural factors of the target language users.

Atamna(2008) concluded that language is part of culture, language embedded in the culture, language and culture cannot be separated from English teaching, or other foreign languages. In his study concluded that communication skills are obtained by learning cultural dialogue to support language learning. Comprehension of other cultures aspect is knowledge about related products, as well as the comparing skills with their own culture (Abou-Khalil et al., 2018). By placing ideas or products from two cultures side by side, students can see how each will look from another perspective and avoid misunderstandings.

Language and culture are dynamic knowledge, which contains all explicit knowledge, implicit knowledge, and unspoken knowledge. In foreign language education, the rules of grammar and vocabulary are explicit knowledge, which is transferred from the teacher to students in the classroom. However, language cannot be used in explicit contexts. Implementation of implicit knowledge is as the way of language is used, or its meaning implied by time, place, and situation is also

needed. In addition, it is very difficult to express cultural knowledge that is not spoken with language, such as assessing the value of native speakers, mindset, the pattern of action, etc., and it is to share the knowledge with students. This is the main difficulty in cultural education(X. Li & Umemoto, 2010).In Japanese, there are several cultures that need to be considered, namely: 1) words contain cultural meanings, 2) speeches are influenced by 3 cultural aspects (topics, codes, aspects and times), 3) non-verbal culture.

Based on the result of observations through informal interviews and preliminary observations at State Senior High School 75, Jakarta is known that it has some uniqueness. The first, Speaking Japanese learning at State Senior High School 75 North Jakarta has an independent learning concept, it is not only to transfer of knowledge from teacher to student, but also the teacher relates the material with the theme of the real world situation and it encourages students to connect between the knowledge that they have and their application in their daily lives. The learning process takes place naturally through patterns of speaking activities in the form of project-based, presentations, question and answer, role play and others. Based on the result of interviews with Japanese language teachers, it is known that Japanese is a subject of local content, students need more challenging learning activities so that they can increase their motivation to like Japanese.

Secondly, students' speaking activities are carried out individually, in pairs (ペアー) and in groups (グループ/ guruupu). Third, the learning process is student-centred learning rather than teacher centred learning (TCL). Fourth, the result of observations found that the Japanese speaking ability of some students classified as fluent in communication. This can be seen from their communication with native speakers who are quite good. Since 2014 until now, State Senior High School 75 has received five native speaker teachers from Project Nihongo Partners of The Japan Foundation. Not all schools get privileges assisted by foreign speakers from The Japan Foundation. The Nihongo Partners program recipient schools are established with the agreement of The Japan Foundation (JF) and the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. Before it approved and determined, the school will go through a selection process first. Before the selection process, they will be applied to the application process from the school.

Fifth, the student achievements had the opportunity to go to Japan using students exchange program in the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Student and Youth (*Jenesys*) from the Japanese government. Then, 18 students are from State Senior High School 75 also had a 9-day study tour to Japan through the Japanese Ministry of Tourism program. Among all middle-level schools in Indonesia, there are only 2 selected schools have the right to represent Indonesia, one high school in Bali and State Senior High School 75 Jakarta. This activity is certainly very helpful for students to communicate with the real conditions of Japan. Tanaka in his research stated that abroad study activities can be one of the learning options outside the classroom that allows students to interact with the target language environment(Tanaka, 2007).The view for Japanese learners on the network of native speakers and interactions outside the classroom has an important role to play in supporting their abilities(Campbell, 2011;Shvidko, Evans, & Hartshorn, 2015)

Sixth, students are very interested in Japanese activities such as Japan Club, Kobayashi in their research explaining that language group can improve students' ability to communicate especially in speaking because students can help each other to improve their speaking skills through drama activities, debate, discussion or practice public speaking(Kobayashi, 2016) and in context concept(Taguchi, 2015).Although it is counted still new, Japan Club State Senior High School 75 Jakarta has made quite a proud achievement, such as ever winning the North Jakarta Level Japanese Calligraphy Contest (Shodo), Roleplay Competition champion in LabSchool, National University, and so on.

Based on the problem, this study will discuss more deeply the intercultural approach in Speaking Japanese learning activities at State Senior High School 75 North Jakarta. The objectives of this study are: 1) To get a complete description of learning activities with an intercultural approach carried out both inside and outside the classroom, 2) To examine in full, detailed and in-depth the learning methods of speaking Japanese with an intercultural approach; 2) Study in full, detailed and in-depth about the roles of teachers and students in learning activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Approah

The research method is a qualitative approach using ethnography method. A researcher who conducts qualitative research is usually oriented towards existing theories. In qualitative research, the theory is limited to the notion of a systematic statement relating to a set of prepositions derived from data and retested empirically. In this case, it is referred to as the paradigm term(Y. Li, 2014).Paradigms are interpreted as a collection of assumptions that are logically shared. Concepts or propositions are ways of thinking and ways of research. According to Bogdan dan Biklen, the characteristics of qualitative research include: 1) qualitative research is descriptive, it means that data is decomposed in the form of statements or images; 2) the researcher is a key instrument; 3) data analysis tends to be inductive, and 4) "meaning" is essential something for a qualitative approach(Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Data and Data Sources

In this study, data and sources of data are descriptive data which includes decomposed data in the form of interviews and documentation, from established informants namely Japanese teacher, native speaker teacher and students from State Senior High School 75 Jakarta during the learning process of speaking Japanese. These learning activities take in the classroom or outside the classroom. Li added that there are several methods in the introduction of Japanese culture teaching, namely: 1) Commenting, it means that the teacher does not only focus on textbooks but it is very instrumental in providing explanations about words is containing culture, 2) Comparing, it compares between mother tongue and Japanese which includes linguistic and cultural aspects, 3) Intuitivism, students play an active role in seeking information about Japanese society and culture through various sources, and 4) Case Study, it presented the Japanese atmosphere, for

example Roleplay (Y. Li, 2014).In addition, the research data is also in the form of supporting documents such as lesson plan, photos, videos, and student work.

Collecting Data

The data collection techniques in this study consisted of participant observation, interviews and documentation studies.

Data Analysis

In accordance with the research methods and procedures chosen, data analysis was carried out directly with the researchers. More clearly Emzir(2012) says that in qualitative research, data analysis tends to (1) consist of text analysis (2) involves the development of description and themes, and (3) contains a statement of the meaning of broader findings. The data analysis procedure of this study uses the Spradley data analysis model, namely: 1) domain analysis 2) taxonomic analysis 3) component analysis and 4) theme analysis (Marta & Rafli, 2016)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Learning activities Using an Intercultural Approach Inside and Outside the Classroom

After analyzing the domain worksheets, taxonomic analysis, and complementary analysis, the results of learning activities using an intercultural approach can be seen inside and outside the class in picture 1 below:
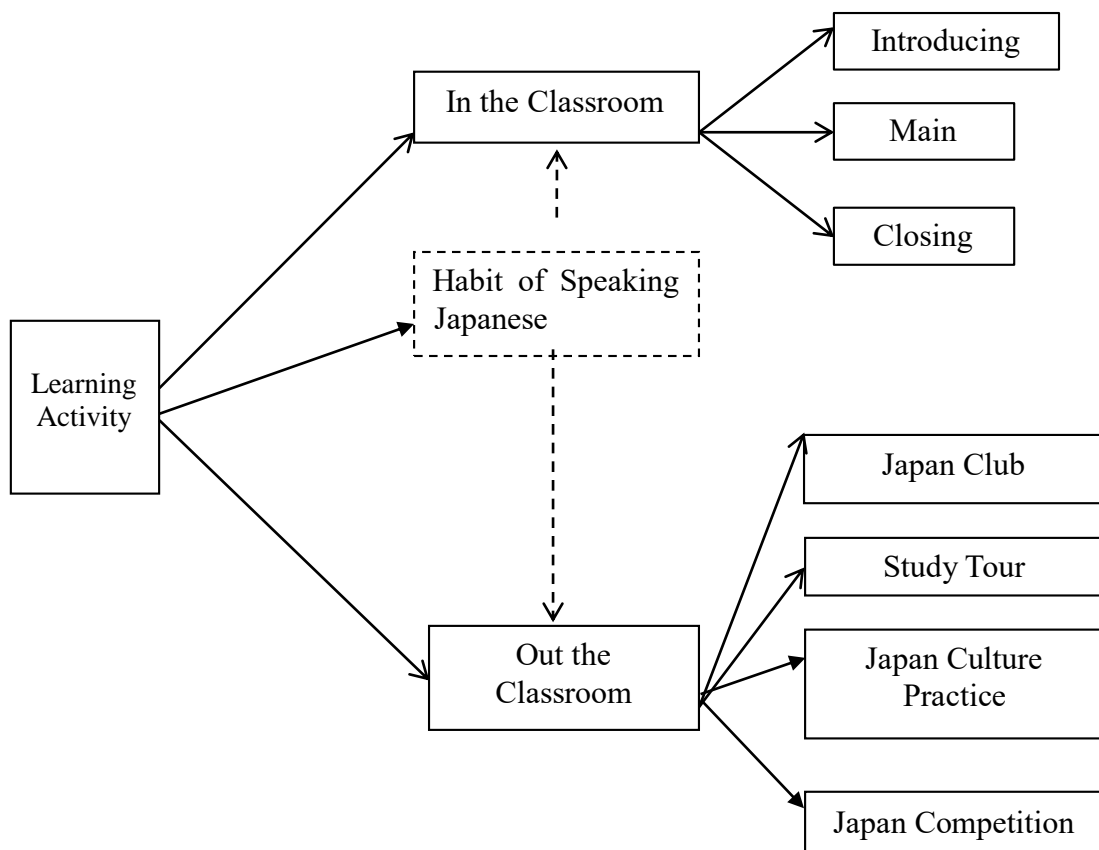
Picture 1. *Learning Activities*

Learning activity in Japanese speaking class show in the three activities, namely introducing, main or core activity, and closing activity. In introducing activity are done in various ways that are interactive, inspiring, fun, challenging, motivating so that all talents, interests, physical and psychological development of students are channelled well. While the technique for implementing Japanese speaking's core activity can be with a variety of methods that have been prepared by the teacher adapted to the material to be studied including the 5M process (observing, asking, exploring, associating, communicating). At SMAN 75 the meeting is usually opened with greetings (aisatsu) then the introduction of the material begins with the introduction of new vocabulary and pronunciation. The use of integrated listening or reading and listening material as input for the learning process is done in various ways. There are many forms of reading, namely reading in the form of IT, reading in the form of discourse, or reading picture situations. In this input section, the teacher compares the conditions of pictures/photos/ videos in Indonesia and Japan (between cultures) first as an opening. For pictures of conditions in Japan explained by native speaker teachers in Japanese, and the class teacher translates them. The part of reading is also like observing, analyzing. One example of the input is as an introduction to the material. For example, there is a situation of an image, then read and observed. When associated with the material, students are asked to observe, analyze, which will later be concluded. In this section native speaker teachers who teach using Japanese. Here you can see the interaction and communication between teachers and students. The use of a picture or video media is in line with the results of Neff & Rucynski (2013) research that through such video or picture/photo material FL students can better understand cultural nuances that may not be directly seen in their daily lives or learned foreign languages.

The use of Japanese culture is not only done by Japanese teachers in the classroom but also it is used in the interacting process outside the classroom so that the language environment becomes maximum. The process of speaking activity in Japanese subject in the class show in the ways of learning activity. Intercultural in Japanese learning in language in line with Li that during the Japanese learning process, we not only have to look at language learning, but pay attention to the differences between mother tongue and Japanese culture, and then recognize and learn these differences so that they can grow integrated strong, who knows about Japan's condition. Foreign students can learn Japanese and do business successfully in that language, they not only have language skills but also have cultural knowledge and sensitivity(Kumayama, 2010). Because Japanese culture and mother tongue are very different. It is an absolute necessity to study language in a cultural context(Bayramova, 2016;Krasniqi, 2019;ELMES, 2013). Then it proceeds using drill can be in the form of question and answer or group discussion. After students begin to understand the assignment is a project, then the results are presented in Japanese in front of the class. Due to a large number of students and the small amount of time in class, it is usually continued at the next meeting. After all group or student appears, then the teacher and students reflect the learning process in the closing activities by identifying positive values obtained from the material that has been studied.

While learning activity is done outside the classroom through Japan Club which are greatly assisted by the teachers. Japan Club members are students who are interested in Japanese. Students' reason is interested in Japanese and joins the Japan Club are; the first, they like anime, the second, they want to go to Japan, the third, they like Japanese fashion, and the fourth, they love Japanese. Japan Club routine activities can improve Japanese language skills, including watching Japanese films, remembering Japanese songs, getting acquainted and chatting with Japanese friends.

Use of Japanese both in and outside the class are free to communicate with anyone. The teacher usually makes a habit in using the Japanese language in the school. The students used greeting (*aisatsu*) or asking for news (*o genkidesuka*) in Japanese every time when they meet the teacher and native speaker. In March 2017, several Japanese language club members at State Senior High School 75 took a study tour in Japan with Ms Marta. It can be as media for students in order that the students can feel directly using and remembering Japanese, talking with Japanese people, who certainly improve their ability to speak Japanese and Japanese Culture Practices (*Nihon Bunka Taiken)* such as cooking Japanese food, writing calligraphy (*shodo*), making bento etc. This activity is usually carried out outside the classroom.

## Learning Method of Speaking Japanese Through Intercultural Approach

The learning methods used to vary and are student-centred. For example, group learning, initially a group consisting of several students present in front of other groups. Then it replaced with a presentation before the group itself. Therefore, good teamwork is expected to emerge. Whereas to fulfil the competency of speaking, the example of the most frequently used method is drilling, then students try to practice it. Osamu explained that drill exercises would be very good if it assisted by learning media such as images, goods or original objects or imitation model objects. And also, the purpose or target of learning will be achieved well if the *Mim-mem* method is used before or after the practice of vocabulary or sentence(Osamu, 2000)

In addition, the *kaiwa* method (direct conversation) or role-play dialogue used the actual setting of conditions. The teacher sets the theme according to the learning material, then she/he makes the situation appropriate to the theme, the flow of the conversation, making role play, students practice in pairs or groups, finally, students present it in front of the class. For example, the theme of a restaurant, a conversation between guests and waiter in a restaurant, before students appear to complete their appearance by bringing food, trays, aprons and other equipment from home. Thus, the atmosphere of the restaurant is made like being in a real restaurant.

For cultural material, students usually practice Japanese culture directly, such as cooking Japanese food, writing calligraphy, making bento, etc. This activity is usually carried out outside the classroom. New innovations method combines the linguistic and cultural approach in accordance with Abdyhalykova (2016) as evidenced by his research that information and computer technology can improve efficiency and create conditions for independent learning. Innovative methods are an integral part of the modernization of the entire system. According to him

traditional research is only directed at the transfer and maintenance of knowledge, skills and abilities, and does not show adequate performance. Modern language education is intended for the formation of multicultural identity, self-analysis skills and systematization of new knowledge. For this purpose, a competency and cultural approach are used. Teachers must familiarize themselves with the most progressive approach, then combine it and use it in work. This is the innovation process.

From the description above, after analyzing the domain worksheets, taxonomic analysis, and compound analysis, the results of the implementation learning method of Japanese speaking using an intercultural approach in Figure 2 below:
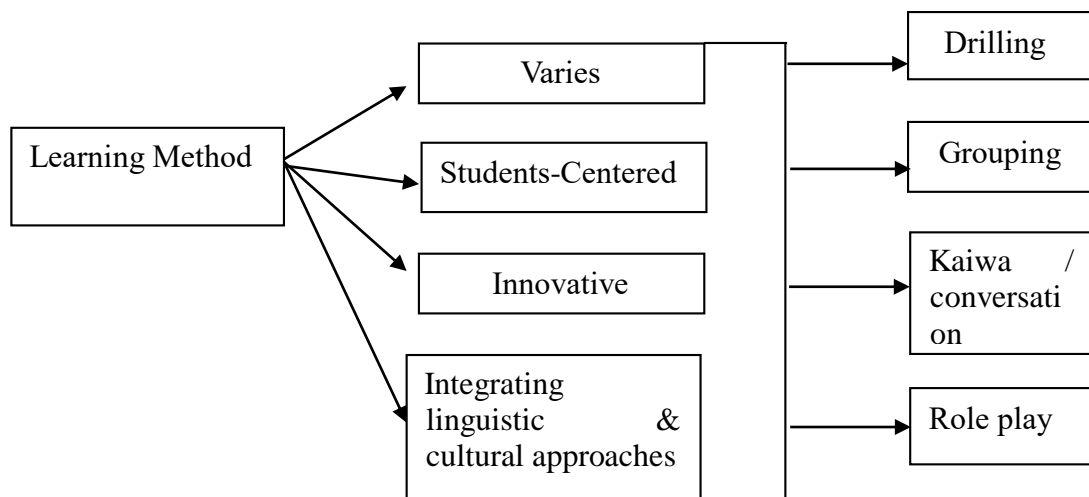
Picture 2. *Learning Method*

The Role of Teacher and Student in Learning Activity

The teacher is as a facilitator and motivator in designing strategies and learning environments by providing various learning experiences in the learning process of Japanese speaking, for example, students practice the speaking. The teacher speaks using Japanese at Japan Club. The teacher gives an explanation as usual with a different method from other teachers, namely learning languages as well as culture. In the classroom, the teacher uses a lot of Indonesian because not all students generally understand Japanese. Whereas, the presence of native speaker teachers is very helpful in the learning process inside and outside the classroom. The main role of native speaker teachers is to carry out the activities of introducing Japanese language and culture inside and outside the classroom as conversation partners and assistance in teaching and learning activities for Japanese teachers and students. Native speaker teachers contribute to creating positive attitudes of students, which are considered to produce better achievement in language learning(Adara, 2019;Getie, 2020).

The role of students in Japanese speaking learning is very important in achieving learning success. Students pay close attention to every material explained by the teacher, then try as much as possible to be active to practice the Japanese speaking ability. The native speaker teacher can help the student to talk anything,

ask anything about Japan. If there is the Japanese language that forgets, they mix with English. Saeed suggest that student interaction plays an important role in class because students can improve their speaking skills in a classroom setting, the best way to produce language effectively is to encourage students to participate in verbal interactions in the classroom(Saeed, Khaksari, Eng, & Ghani, 2016)

If a quiz or test is taking place, students work honestly. As for activities outside the classroom such as when students join the program to Japan, they also dare to practice Japanese with anyone, especially during school visits, they get to know each other, interact and communicate. Until now, they still communicate with each other via e-mail, line or Facebook. Thus, it is useful to practice Japanese language skills, also can know the current conditions about Japan. Every time there is an art performance or the language anniversary, Japan Club members always displays role play. For cultural activities, students also actively participate, such as in Japanese calligraphy activities, making Japanese sushi dishes, okonomiyaki and others, learning to make bento. From this activity can add to the vocabulary of the new Japanese vocabulary in addition to those obtained in the material in the class.

From the description above, after carrying out the analysis on the domain worksheet, taxonomic analysis, and compound analysis, we can find out the results of the teacher and student role in the learning activities in the following figure 3:
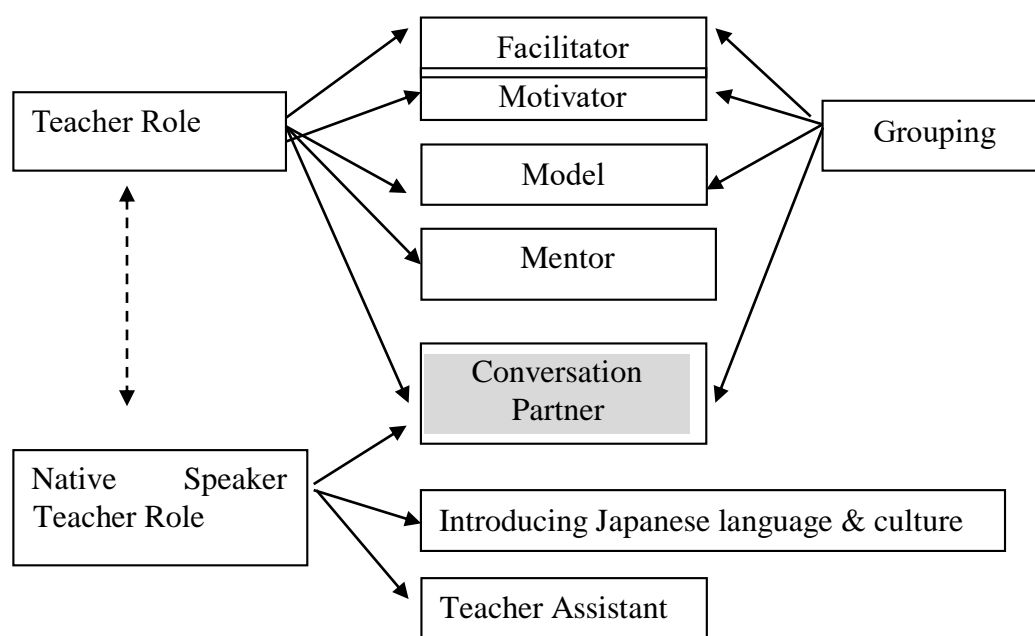
Picture 3. Teacher and Student Role

The theme analysis is done to find out holistically the cultural setting being studied, looking for relationships between domains and overall relationships, which are expressed in themes that are in accordance with the focus and purpose of the research. Previously, the teacher chose the learning method that would be used based on the students' needs. While the activities in the class include the beginning, core and closing activities. In summary, it can be concluded in a schematic theme or pattern diagram of the following cultural setting.
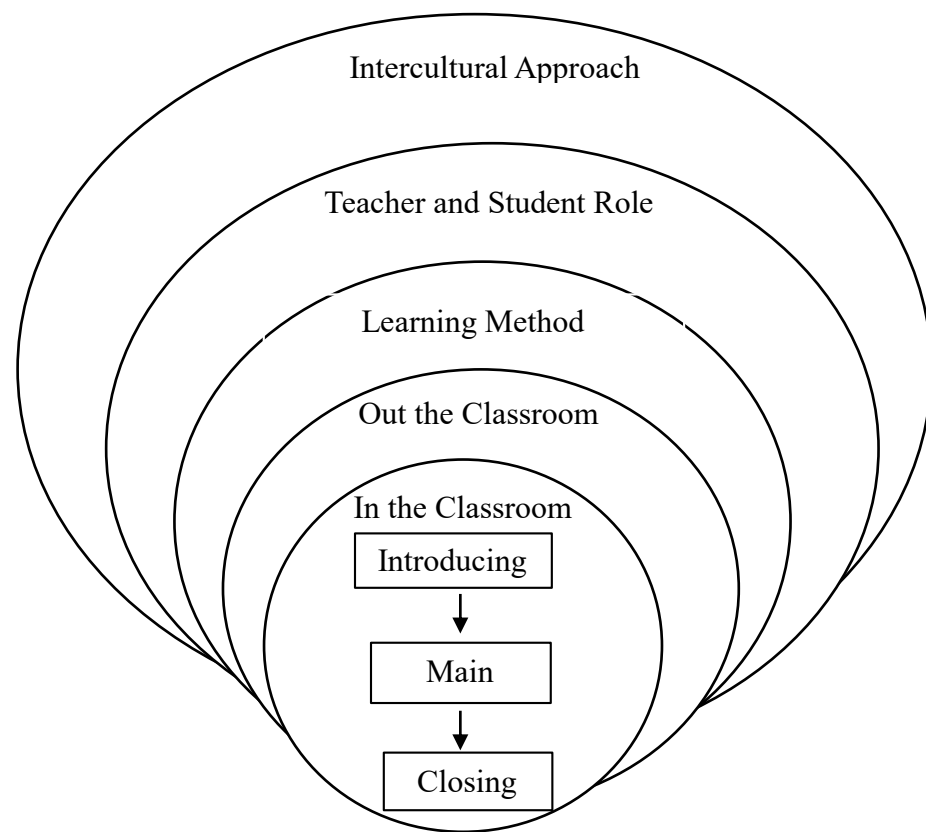
Picture 4. Inter-culture Theme / Pattern in Japanese speaking learning at Senior High School 75 Jakarta

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings presented, there are several components discussed in the research findings. Components consist of learning activities with an intercultural approach carried out both inside and outside the classroom, speaking Japanese learning method with an intercultural approach, the role of teachers and students in learning activities. Teachers, native speakers and students are important elements in developing speaking learning activities through an intercultural approach. Unlike the previous research, this paper found that learning activities, the role of teachers, native speakers, and students are as conversation partners synergized to create environment learning by using Japanese speaking starting from small things inside and outside the classroom. Many things still need to be discussed further. Language teachers also need to think of an intercultural approach in other language skills learning such as reading and writing. What if it applied in intermediate and advanced language learners, to what extent the combination of language and culture aspect is taught.

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