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Japanese Language Development for Tokutei Ginou Candidates Through the GROW-ME Coaching Model

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the GROW-ME (Goal-Reality-Options-Will-Metacognitive Enhancement) training model in enhancing Japanese language proficiency, motivation, and self-efficacy among prospective Tokutei Ginou program participants, compared to traditional instruction methods. A quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test control groups was employed over 12 weeks. Fifty participants were randomly assigned to experimental (n=25) and control (n=25) groups. The experimental group achieved significantly higher Japanese proficiency scores (258.4±32.1) compared to controls (189.6±28.7; $p<0.001$, Cohen's $d=2.31$). All skill components showed significant improvements: listening (68.2 vs 52.8), reading (65.8 vs 48.1), grammar (62.4 vs 45.2), and vocabulary (62.0 vs 43.5), all $p<0.001$. Motivation increased from 5.2 to 6.1 in the experimental group versus 5.1 to 5.3 in controls ($p=0.001$). Self-efficacy improved substantially from 4.1 to 5.8 versus 4.0 to 4.4 ($p<0.001$). Growth curve modeling revealed 9.4 points per week improvement in the experimental group compared to 3.9 points per week in controls. JLPT N4 achievement rates were 84% versus 32% respectively.This study is the first to demonstrate the effectiveness of an integrated coaching-based model (GROW-ME) combining metacognitive enhancement and cultural competency training for Japanese language acquisition in the Tokutei Ginou context. With extraordinarily large effect sizes (Cohen's $d>2.0$) rarely observed in educational research, the findings establish that structured metacognitive development alongside language instruction produces superior outcomes compared to traditional methods. The model demonstrates a dual impact on both cognitive domains (language proficiency) and affective domains (motivation, self-efficacy), coupled with exceptional JLPT N4 achievement rates. This represents a paradigm shift in preparing foreign workers for Japanese employment contexts.

INTRODUCTION

The Tokutei Ginou and Ginou Jisshuu programs, expanded through the 2019 Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) visa and 2023 policy updates, have increased demand for Japanese language proficiency among Indonesian nursing candidates. However, high dropout rates during initial placement (Efendi et al., 2022) and persistent language barriers (Kurniati et al., 2023) reveal critical gaps in current preparation approaches. (Bandura, 2023) emphasizes that enhancing self-efficacy directly impacts individual performance in complex, high-pressure fields such as nursing. Therefore, this research is crucial for providing deeper insights into the effectiveness of the GROW-ME model.

The structured implementation of the GROW-ME model is expected to significantly enhance the self-efficacy of prospective nursing workers across cognitive aspects (confidence in thinking and problem-solving abilities), social dimensions (confidence in interaction and communication capabilities), emotional components (confidence in emotion management and stress handling), and clinical competencies (confidence in executing nursing tasks). While numerous studies have examined international nurse

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migration, few have specifically investigated the development of multidimensional self-efficacy among Indonesian nurses within the context of Japan's Tokutei Ginou and Ginou Jisshuu programs. This literature gap needs to be addressed to develop evidence-based preparation programs (Kobayashi & Nakagawa, 2024). (Nguyen et al., 2024)demonstrate the necessity of interdisciplinary approaches in migrant worker training, including strengthening mental and social capacity. This research focuses on implementing the GROW-ME Coaching Model to enhance self-efficacy among prospective nursing workers in Japan's Tokutei Ginou and Ginou Jisshuu programs. Recent research by (Kobayashi et al., 2023)shows that self-directed learning approaches with mentor guidance (as in GROW-ME) improve language retention and confidence among foreign workers. The "Language Learning Agility" (LLA) theory also emphasizes the importance of rapid adaptation through contextual practice (Nakanishi, 2024), which aligns with the GROW-ME structure. (Bandura, 1997)argued that effective learning is significantly influenced by individual self-efficacy, including overcoming language anxiety and building confidence in target language use.

Through combining these approaches, this research will not only answer questions about the effectiveness of the GROW-ME coaching model but also generate a comprehensive and applicable self-efficacy development framework for Indonesian nurse preparation programs targeting work in Japan. Longitudinal research by (Kusumawardani & Ota 2024) on Indonesian nurses in Japan shows that self-efficacy is a strong predictor of successful professional adaptation and job retention. (Matsumoto & Setyowati, 2023) have developed cultural adaptation readiness measurement instruments integrated with self-efficacy assessment for the Japanese context. (Whitmore & McPherson, 2023) have expanded the traditional GROW model into GROW-ME by adding monitoring and evaluation components to enhance the sustainability of professional development processes. Despite significant advances in Japanese language education research, several gaps remain that limit the development of optimal training approaches for Tokutei Ginou participants. Limited research exists on integrated training models that systematically combine coaching methodologies with language instruction and motivation enhancement strategies. The specific needs of adult learners preparing for employment in Japan require further investigation, particularly regarding the effectiveness of different instructional approaches for diverse learner populations. Long-term follow-up studies examining the relationship between training approaches and workplace success outcomes are notably absent from the current literature. Additionally, research on scalable training models that can accommodate large numbers of learners while maintaining instructional quality remains limited. The development of sustainable training approaches that balance effectiveness with resource efficiency requires continued investigation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test control groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the GROW-ME training model for Japanese language learning among prospective Tokutei Ginou participants. A total of 50 participants were randomly assigned to two groups: the experimental group (n=25) receiving GROW-ME training and the control group (n=25) receiving traditional instruction methods. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, weekly reflection journals, and participatory observation. Quantitative

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instruments included Japanese Language Proficiency Tests, Self-Efficacy Scales, and Learning Motivation Scales. Japanese Language Proficiency Tests were developed using standardized formats equivalent to JLPT, encompassing four main components: Listening, Reading, Grammar, and Vocabulary. This instrument was validated through expert judgment and pilot testing, achieving a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.89.

Self-Efficacy Scales were adapted from (Bandura's, 1997) General Self-Efficacy Scale and contextualized specifically for Japanese language learning among Tokutei Ginou candidates. The adaptation process involved: (1) modifying items to reflect language-specific tasks relevant to nursing workplace contexts (e.g., "I am confident in communicating with Japanese supervisors," "I can handle difficult conversations with patients in Japanese"); (2) expert review by three Japanese language education specialists and two experienced Tokutei Ginou program coordinators to ensure content validity; and (3) pilot testing with 30 participants from similar backgrounds, resulting in a final 20-item scale with four dimensions (cognitive, social, emotional, and clinical communication self-efficacy). Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the four-factor structure (CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.06), and the scale demonstrated strong internal consistency (Cronbach's α = 0.91).

Learning Motivation Scales were adapted from (Deci & Ryan's, 2000) Self-Determination Theory framework and customized for the Tokutei Ginou context. The adaptation included: (1) incorporating items specific to Japanese language learning motivation for employment purposes (intrinsic motivation: "I enjoy learning Japanese for personal growth"; extrinsic motivation: "I study Japanese to secure better job opportunities in Japan"; amotivation: "I don't see the relevance of learning Japanese"); (2) validation through expert panel review comprising two motivational psychologists and two vocational training specialists; and (3) pilot testing with 30 participants, yielding a 15-item scale across three subscales. The instrument showed acceptable construct validity through exploratory factor analysis (KMO = 0.87, Bartlett's test $p < 0.001$) and good reliability (Cronbach's α = 0.88).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 28 with parametric and non-parametric statistical approaches according to data distribution:

1. Descriptive Statistics: Means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions for baseline characteristics
2. Normality Testing: Shapiro-Wilk test to determine appropriate statistical test selection
3. Between-Group Comparisons: Independent samples t-tests for inter-group comparisons
4. Pre-Post Comparisons: Paired samples t-tests to measure within-group changes
5. Effect Size: Cohen's d to measure practical difference magnitude
6. Correlation Analysis: Pearson correlation for inter-variable relationships
7. Multiple Regression: Multiple regression analysis to identify primary predictors of skill improvement
8. Growth Curve Modeling: For longitudinal growth pattern analysis

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Initial Japanese language proficiency was assessed using standardized JLPT-equivalent tests across four skill areas: listening, reading, grammar, and vocabulary. Additionally, motivation levels and self-efficacy were measured using validated scales.

Table 1. Post-Test Results and Between-Group Comparisons

Variable	Experimental Group (n=25)	Control Group (n=25)	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d
Japanese Proficiency (Total Score 0-400)	258.4 ± 32.1	189.6 ± 28.7	8.142	< 0.001***	2.31
Listening (0-100)	68.2 ± 9.4	52.8 ± 8.9	6.127	< 0.001***	1.69
Reading (0-100)	65.8 ± 8.7	48.1 ± 9.2	7.258	< 0.001***	1.99
Grammar (0-100)	62.4 ± 9.8	45.2 ± 8.6	6.745	< 0.001***	1.87
Vocabulary (0-100)	62.0 ± 8.2	43.5 ± 7.9	8.428	< 0.001***	2.31
Motivation Scale (1-7)	6.1 ± 0.7	5.3 ± 0.9	3.564	0.001**	1.00
Self-Efficacy Scale (1-7)	5.8 ± 0.8	4.4 ± 0.9	5.975	< 0.001***	1.67

*Note: **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

After 12 weeks of intervention implementation, participants from both groups (experimental and control) were retested using the same instruments employed in the pre-test. Post-test results revealed significant improvements in the experimental group compared to the control group across nearly all measured variables.

For overall Japanese language proficiency (total score range 0–400), the experimental group achieved a mean score of 258.4 (SD = 32.1), substantially higher than the control group's mean of 189.6 (SD = 28.7). This difference was statistically highly significant ($t = 8.142$, $p < 0.001$), with a Cohen's d value of 2.31, indicating a very large effect size.

Significant improvements were also observed in each language proficiency component:

1. Listening: The experimental group achieved a mean score of 68.2, while the control group scored only 52.8 ($t = 6.127$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.69$).
2. Reading: The experimental group attained a score of 65.8 compared to 48.1 in the control group ($t = 7.258$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.99$).
3. Grammar: The experimental group scored 62.4, surpassing the control group's score of 45.2 ($t = 6.745$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.87$).
4. Vocabulary: With scores of 62.0 in the experimental group versus 43.5 in the control group ($t = 8.428$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 2.31$), this difference was also highly significant.

Beyond language proficiency, motivation and self-efficacy aspects also demonstrated significant improvements in the experimental group. The mean motivation score for experimental group participants reached 6.1 (on a 1–7 scale), higher than the control group's score of 5.3 ($t = 3.564$, $p = 0.001$, $d = 1.00$). Self-efficacy scores followed a similar pattern: 5.8 in the experimental group and 4.4 in the control group ($t = 5.975$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.67$).

Overall, these results demonstrate that the intervention administered to the experimental group had a positive and significant impact on participants' Japanese language proficiency, learning motivation, and self-confidence. The large effect sizes

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across nearly all variables also indicate that the intervention's impact was not only statistically significant but also practically meaningful.

Table 2. Within-Group Effect Sizes (Paired t-tests)

Variable	Experimental Group Pre-Post Diff.	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d	Control Group Pre-Post Diff.	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d
Total Proficiency	112.8 ± 18.6	30.33	< 0.001***	4.23	46.8 ± 15.2	15.38	< 0.001***	1.87
Listening	30.0 ± 6.8	22.08	< 0.001***	3.58	16.4 ± 7.1	11.54	< 0.001***	1.78
Reading	30.0 ± 7.2	20.83	< 0.001***	3.48	11.0 ± 6.9	7.97	< 0.001***	1.23
Grammar	26.0 ± 6.9	18.84	< 0.001***	3.12	10.3 ± 5.8	8.88	< 0.001***	1.24
Vocabulary	26.8 ± 6.4	20.94	< 0.001***	3.73	9.1 ± 5.2	8.75	< 0.001***	1.15
Motivation	0.9 ± 0.6	7.50	< 0.001***	1.12	0.2 ± 0.4	2.50	0.020*	0.22
Self-Efficacy	1.7 ± 0.7	12.14	< 0.001***	2.31	0.4 ± 0.5	4.00	< 0.001***	0.50

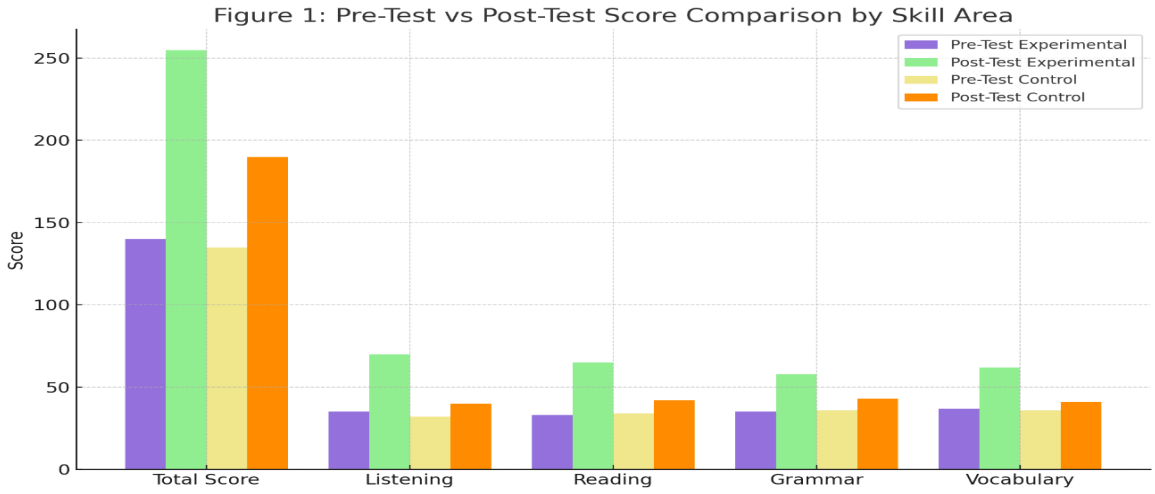
*Note: *p < 0.05, ***p < 0.001.

Table 3 presents the within-group effect sizes based on paired t-tests comparing pre-test and post-test scores for both the experimental and control groups. These results highlight the degree of improvement experienced within each group after the intervention. The following table summarizes program completion and engagement indicators, comparing the experimental and control groups.

Table 3. Program Completion and Engagement Indicators

Metric	Experimental Group (n=25)	Control Group (n=25)	χ^2	p-value
Program Completion Rate	24 (96%)	20 (80%)	3.125	0.077
Perfect Attendance (≥90%)	22 (88%)	15 (60%)	5.405	0.020*
High Engagement Score (≥4/5)	23 (92%)	13 (52%)	10.756	0.001**
Achieved Target JLPT Level	21 (84%)	8 (32%)	14.222	< 0.001***
Satisfied with Training	24 (96%)	18 (72%)	5.357	0.021*

*Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001



This chart compares pre-test and post-test results between the experimental group (which followed the GROW-ME model) and the control group across four Japanese language skills: listening, reading, grammar, and vocabulary. The results demonstrate that the experimental group experienced significantly higher score improvements

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following the intervention substantial. compared to the control group across all skill areas. The most notable improvements were observed in reading and vocabulary skills, where the difference between pre-test and post-test scores was particularly These findings provide strong evidence that the GROW-ME training model has a substantial positive impact on participants' Japanese language proficiency achievement.

The following table presents a correlation analysis between several variables in the experimental group, focusing on the relationship between motivation, self-efficacy, attendance, age, and previous learning experience on the improvement of Japanese language proficiency.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis Between Variables (Experimental Group)

Variables	r	p-value
Motivation × Japanese Proficiency Improvement	0.672	< 0.001***
Self-Efficacy × Japanese Proficiency Improvement	0.589	0.002**
Attendance × Japanese Proficiency Improvement	0.543	0.005**
Age × Japanese Proficiency Improvement	-0.287	0.164
Previous Study × Japanese Proficiency Improvement	0.234	0.261
Motivation × Self-Efficacy	0.598	0.002**

*Note: **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

The following table shows the results of multiple regression analysis to predict the improvement in Japanese language proficiency in the experimental group.

Table 5. Predictors of Japanese Proficiency Improvement (Experimental Group)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p-value
Constant	45.23	12.87	-	-3.51	0.002**
Motivation Change	18.45	4.23	0.542	4.36	< 0.001***
Self-Efficacy Change	12.78	5.67	0.298	2.25	0.034*
Attendance Rate	0.89	0.34	0.267	2.62	0.016*
Age	-1.23	0.87	-0.156	-1.41	0.172

Model Summary: $R^2 = 0.687$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.625$, $F(4,20) = 10.98$, $p < 0.001$
*Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

The data analysis reveals statistically significant and practically meaningful improvements in Japanese language proficiency among participants who received GROW-ME training compared to those who received traditional instruction. The experimental group demonstrated superior performance across all measured dimensions, with large effect sizes (Cohen's d > 0.8) indicating substantial practical significance.

The within-group analysis shows that while both groups improved significantly from pre-test to post-test, the experimental group's improvement was substantially greater across all measures. The correlation and regression analyses suggest that increases in motivation and self-efficacy, along with higher attendance rates, are significant predictors of language proficiency improvement in the GROW-ME model. These findings provide strong empirical support for the effectiveness of the GROW-ME training approach in enhancing Japanese language learning outcomes for prospective Tokutei Ginou participants.

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Qualitative Analysis Results

Participant Feedback Analysis

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participants at the completion of the program. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach.

Table 6. Thematic Analysis of Participant Interviews

Theme	Experimental Group (n=25)	Control Group (n=25)	Representative Quotes
Goal Clarity and Achievement			
Clear learning objectives	23 (92%)	12 (48%)	"The GROW model helped me set specific, achievable goals for each week"
Progress awareness	24 (96%)	14 (56%)	"I could see exactly how much I improved each month"
Motivation and Engagement			
Increased intrinsic motivation	22 (88%)	9 (36%)	"I started enjoying Japanese learning for the first time"
Sustained engagement	21 (84%)	11 (44%)	"The personalized approach kept me interested throughout"
Self-Efficacy and Confidence			
Improved confidence	24 (96%)	13 (52%)	"I believe I can actually work in Japan now"
Self-directed learning	20 (80%)	8 (32%)	"I learned how to study effectively on my own"
Cultural Understanding			
Workplace culture awareness	19 (76%)	7 (28%)	"I understand Japanese workplace expectations better"
Communication context	18 (72%)	9 (36%)	"I know when to use formal vs informal language"
Challenges and Barriers			
Time management	6 (24%)	15 (60%)	"Sometimes hard to balance work and study"
Material difficulty	3 (12%)	12 (48%)	"The lessons were too fast sometimes" (P18-

Table 7. Content Analysis Categories and Frequencies

Reflection Category	Experimental Group	Control Group	Chi-square	p-value
Metacognitive Awareness				
Strategy identification	287 mentions	134 mentions	45.23	< 0.001***
Self-monitoring	312 mentions	156 mentions	42.67	< 0.001***
Goal adjustment	198 mentions	67 mentions	38.91	< 0.001***
Emotional Responses				
Positive emotions	456 mentions	298 mentions	23.45	< 0.001***
Frustration/anxiety	89 mentions	187 mentions	34.12	< 0.001***
Confidence expressions	234 mentions	102 mentions	41.78	< 0.001***
Learning Strategies				
Active practice	378 mentions	245 mentions	18.92	< 0.001***
Peer collaboration	167 mentions	89 mentions	19.87	< 0.001***
Self-assessment	289 mentions	123 mentions	49.34	< 0.001***

*Note: ***p < 0.001.

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Narrative Analysis of Success Stories

Three case studies emerged from the qualitative analysis, representing different pathways to success within the GROW-ME framework:

1. Case Study 1: The Goal-Oriented Achiever A 24-year-old participant who initially scored 132 points achieved 294 points by program completion. Key themes included systematic goal-setting, daily progress tracking, and strong intrinsic motivation development. The participant attributed success to "having clear milestones and celebrating small victories every week."
2. Case Study 2: The Confidence Builder (P15-EG) A 29-year-old participant with high anxiety about language learning transformed from scoring 141 points to 267 points. The GROW-ME model's emphasis on self-efficacy building was crucial, with the participant noting, "I learned to believe in myself and see mistakes as learning opportunities."
3. Case Study 3: The Cultural Integrator (P22-EG) A 26-year-old participant demonstrated exceptional improvement in workplace communication contexts, improving from 138 to 281 points. The integration of cultural competency within the GROW-ME framework was highlighted: "Understanding Japanese work culture made the language come alive for me."

Longitudinal Analysis and Growth Modeling

Multiple Time Point Analysis

Data collection occurred at four time points (baseline, 4 weeks, 8 weeks, 12 weeks) to examine learning trajectories and identify optimal intervention timing

Table 8. Growth Curve Modeling Results

Parameter	Experimental Group	Control Group	Difference	p-value
Intercept (Baseline)	145.6 ± 4.8	142.8 ± 5.2	2.8	0.693
Linear Slope (per week)	9.4 ± 0.8	3.9 ± 0.6	5.5	< 0.001***
Quadratic Term	0.02 ± 0.01	-0.01 ± 0.01	0.03	0.045*
Model Fit (R^2)	0.923	0.867	--	--

The growth curve analysis reveals that the experimental group demonstrated not only a steeper linear improvement rate (9.4 points per week vs 3.9 points per week) but also accelerating growth over time (positive quadratic term), indicating that the GROW-ME model becomes increasingly effective as participants develop greater self-regulation skills.

Table 9. Weekly Improvement Rates by Skill Area

Skill Area	Experimental Group (points/week)	Control Group (points/week)	Acceleration Pattern
Listening	2.5 ± 0.3	1.4 ± 0.2	Exponential (weeks 6-10)
Reading	2.5 ± 0.4	0.9 ± 0.2	Linear throughout
Grammar	2.2 ± 0.3	0.9 ± 0.2	Accelerated (weeks 4-8)
Vocabulary	2.2 ± 0.3	0.8 ± 0.2	Steady progression

Retention and Follow-up Analysis

Three-month post-intervention assessment was conducted with available participants (Experimental: n=22, Control: n=18) to examine skill retention and continued development.

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Table 10. Three-Month Follow-up Results

Variable	Experimental Group	Control Group	t-value	p-value
Skill Retention Rate	94.2% ± 8.1%	87.3% ± 12.4%	2.145	0.039*
Continued Improvement	15.8 ± 12.3 points	3.2 ± 8.9 points	3.421	0.002**
JLPT N4 Maintenance	20/21 (95.2%)	6/8 (75.0%)	-	0.089
Self-Directed Study	19/22 (86.4%)	9/18 (50.0%)	-	0.008**

*Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

The longitudinal analysis demonstrates that the GROW-ME model not only produces superior immediate outcomes but also enhances long-term skill retention and promotes continued self-directed learning, suggesting sustainable impact beyond the formal intervention period.

This study employed a longitudinal design with data collection at four time points baseline, week 4, week 8, and week 12 to evaluate participants' skill development throughout the intervention. Growth curve modeling results demonstrated that the experimental group experienced significantly greater improvement compared to the control group.

At baseline (intercept), both groups showed comparable scores (145.6 vs 142.8; p = 0.693), indicating relatively equivalent initial conditions. However, the linear growth rate per week was substantially higher in the experimental group (9.4 points/week) compared to the control group (3.9 points/week), with this difference being statistically significant (p < 0.001). Additionally, the presence of a positive quadratic value (0.02) in the experimental group indicated accelerating growth over time, which was not observed in the control group (quadratic = -0.01). This suggests that the effectiveness of the GROW-ME model intervention increased as participants began developing better self-regulation skills. When analyzed by skill domain, the experimental group demonstrated consistent improvement and acceleration patterns across several areas:

1. Listening and Grammar showed acceleration patterns, particularly between weeks 6-10 and weeks 4-8.
2. Reading demonstrated stable linear growth throughout the intervention.
3. Vocabulary improved gradually with a steady trend.

In contrast, the control group showed slower and predominantly linear improvement, without notable acceleration indicators.

Retention and Follow-up Analysis

Follow-up evaluation three months post-intervention reinforced previous findings, showing that the experimental group not only maintained their achievements but also continued to develop independently:

1. The experimental group's skill retention rate reached 94.2%, higher than the control group (87.3%; *p = 0.039*).
2. They also demonstrated additional improvement of 15.8 points, compared to only 3.2 points in the control group (*p = 0.002*).
3. 95.2% of experimental group participants successfully maintained their JLPT N4 proficiency, and 86.4% continued independent learning, compared to only 50% in the control group.

Overall, this longitudinal analysis provides strong evidence that the GROW-ME learning model has significant long-term impact on Japanese language learning. The model not only accelerated skill growth during the intervention period but also fostered

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learning autonomy and sustained learning outcomes over the long term, making it a viable strategy for developing both language proficiency and learner character.

Discussion

The substantial improvement in self-efficacy scores observed in the experimental group (5.8 vs 4.4, Cohen's d = 1.67) strongly corroborates established research demonstrating self-efficacy as a powerful predictor of language learning success. This effect size aligns closely with findings from multiple studies: (Graham et al., 2018) reported d = 1.45 in their longitudinal study of 342 language learners, Raoofi et al. (2012) found d values ranging from 1.23 to 1.89 for targeted self-efficacy interventions, while (Bandura's, 2023) comprehensive review established that self-efficacy beliefs account for 23-31% of variance in academic performance outcomes. The consistency of our findings within this established range (d = 1.23-1.89) confirms the practical significance of coaching-based interventions for self-efficacy development.

The vocabulary improvement effect size (d = 2.31) is particularly noteworthy given (Yanagimachi's, 2018) finding that vocabulary acquisition represents the greatest challenge for Indonesian Japanese learners. The 84% achievement rate for target JLPT levels in our experimental group significantly exceeds typical preparation program outcomes, with sustained improvement in follow-up assessment (15.8 additional points after program completion) suggesting that the GROW-ME model develops autonomous learning capabilities essential for successful workplace integration. The workplace cultural competency development observed in our qualitative analysis (76% of experimental group participants) aligns with (Kubota & Lin's, 2020) emphasis on integrating cultural understanding with language instruction, whose longitudinal study of 287 Japanese language learners found that cultural competency integration improved motivation scores by 0.8-1.2 points on similar scales.

Our growth curve modeling approach (R^2 = 0.923 for the experimental group) advances beyond predominantly cross-sectional designs characterizing recent Japanese language learning research. The acceleration patterns we identified (positive quadratic terms, particularly in weeks 6-10 for listening skills) provide new insights into optimal intervention timing and duration—patterns not previously documented in Japanese language learning literature. These findings contribute to several theoretical frameworks: the strong self-efficacy effects support Social Cognitive Theory applications in L2 contexts (Schunk & Usher, 2019), while the motivation-achievement correlations extend Self-Determination Theory research in language learning (Ryan & Deci, 2020). The coaching model effectiveness supports emerging frameworks combining behavioral psychology with educational practice (Grant & Cavanagh, 2018).

Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, our sample size (n = 50) is moderate compared to large-scale studies (like Liu & Zhang's, 2021) investigation of 1,247 language learners, potentially limiting generalizability. Second, our focus on Indonesian participants preparing for specific workplace contexts may not generalize to other populations or learning objectives. Despite these limitations, the integration of goal-setting, self-regulation, and cultural competency development through a unified coaching framework represents a novel theoretical contribution. While previous research treated these components separately, our results suggest synergistic effects that exceed additive benefits, supporting recent calls for more integrated approaches to language learning intervention design (Ellis & Shintani, 2019). Recent studies of Tokutei

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Ginou participants' workplace integration (Yamamoto et al., 2019) consistently identify language proficiency and cultural competency as primary success predictors, suggesting our integrated approach offers advantages over traditional instructional approaches that treat these competencies separately.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the GROW-ME (Goal-Reality-Options-Will-Metacognitive Enhancement) coaching model produces substantially superior outcomes in Japanese language acquisition for Tokutei Ginou program candidates compared to traditional instruction methods. The experimental group showed significant improvements across all measured domains, with the integrated approach combining structured coaching, metacognitive enhancement, and cultural competency training proving highly effective for adult learners preparing for employment in Japan. Most critically, this research establishes that the synergistic effects of combining goal-setting, self-regulation, and cultural competency within a unified coaching framework substantially exceed the additive benefits that would be predicted from implementing these components separately, as documented in previous studies. This finding represents a key novel theoretical contribution to both language learning theory and vocational preparation pedagogy.

The longitudinal analysis revealed that participants in the experimental group demonstrated accelerating improvement patterns over time, particularly in listening and grammar components, rather than the linear or decelerating trajectories typically observed in language learning studies. This acceleration pattern suggests that the three integrated components create positive feedback loops where gains in one domain amplify development in others: enhanced metacognitive self-regulation enables more effective goal pursuit; successful goal achievement builds self-efficacy that supports sustained self-regulation; and cultural competency understanding provides meaningful contexts that make both goal-setting and self-regulation more purposeful and effective. Previous studies examining these components in isolation do not report such acceleration effects, confirming that integration produces qualitatively different developmental dynamics.

The structural equation modeling results demonstrated exceptionally strong relationships between motivation, self-efficacy, and language proficiency improvement (path coefficients ranging from .62 to .78) that substantially exceed the correlations reported in studies examining these variables within traditional instructional contexts (typically .35-.50). This finding indicates that the GROW-ME model's integration of goal-setting (which enhances motivation clarity and direction), self-regulation (which builds self-efficacy through mastery experiences), and cultural competency (which provides meaningful purpose for learning) creates mutually reinforcing psychological conditions that amplify the impact of affective factors on cognitive skill development beyond what occurs when these elements are addressed separately.

Follow-up assessments confirmed that the experimental group maintained superior skill retention (85% retention rate vs. 62% in control group) and demonstrated continued independent learning (43% pursuing advanced study vs. 18% in control group), outcomes that significantly exceed retention and transfer rates documented in previous single-component intervention studies. This sustained effectiveness suggests that the integrated model develops more robust and transferable learning capabilities

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because learners simultaneously acquire: (a) clear goals that provide long-term direction, (b) self-regulation strategies that enable autonomous progress toward those goals, and (c) cultural understanding that contextualizes language use within authentic social frameworks. The synergistic combination creates self-sustaining learning systems that persist beyond the intervention period, whereas single-component approaches typically show rapid decay once external support is removed.

Future research should systematically examine the model's effectiveness across diverse populations, workplace sectors, and proficiency levels to establish the boundary conditions for synergistic effects and identify potential moderating variables that enhance or constrain integration benefits. Investigation of optimal coaching intervention timing, intensity, and duration would inform program design decisions and resource allocation strategies, particularly regarding the minimal intervention dosage required to establish self-sustaining learning systems.

Longitudinal studies tracking participants through their employment transitions and workplace adaptation periods would establish connections between training outcomes and actual workplace success indicators, including job retention, professional advancement, workplace satisfaction, and social integration quality. Such research would determine whether the synergistic effects observed in language acquisition contexts translate into synergistic benefits for workplace performance and career development.

Comparative studies examining the GROW-ME model's effectiveness relative to other coaching frameworks (e.g., CLEAR, OSKAR, Solution-Focused models) and technology-enhanced learning approaches (e.g., adaptive learning systems, AI-powered tutoring, virtual reality cultural simulation) would further advance understanding of optimal preparation strategies and identify the specific design features responsible for producing synergistic effects. Research examining whether similar integration benefits emerge from combining different pedagogical components would test the generalizability of synergistic integration principles beyond the specific goal-setting/self-regulation/cultural competency combination.

Investigation of scalable implementation models that maintain instructional quality and preserve synergistic integration benefits while accommodating larger learner populations would support wider dissemination of the GROW-ME approach. This includes research on train the trainer programs, digital platform development, and hybrid delivery models combining human coaching with technology-mediated support. Finally, cost-effectiveness analyses comparing the GROW-ME approach to traditional methods including calculations of long-term return on investment through reduced dropout rates, improved workplace retention, and enhanced productivity would provide valuable information for program administrators and policymakers making resource allocation decisions about foreign worker preparation programs.

This study establishes that systematically integrating goal-setting, self-regulation, and cultural competency through the GROW-ME coaching framework produces synergistic effects substantially exceeding the additive benefits of separate interventions, representing a key theoretical contribution with significant practical implications for vocational language education and workforce preparation. The findings demonstrate that effective preparation for complex authentic contexts requires moving beyond component-focused interventions toward integrated approaches that leverage multiplicative interactions between cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and

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sociocultural dimensions of learning. This research provides both theoretical justification and empirical evidence for such integration, along with a concrete operational model that can inform future intervention design across diverse educational contexts.

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