



Reviewing Japanese writing education at universities in Indonesia, China, and South Korea

Via Luviana Dewanty¹, Juju Juangsih², Ghaida Farisya³

^{1,2} Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

³ Universitas Garut, Garut, Indonesia

luvianadewanty@upi.edu¹, jujujuangsih@upi.edu², ghaida@uniga.ac.id³

ABSTRACT

Mastery of Japanese writing (sakubun) is a crucial aspect of Japanese language learning at the university level. Diverse linguistic backgrounds, cultural contexts, and writing systems pose challenges for Japanese language learners, particularly in Asian countries such as Indonesia, China, and South Korea. This study aims to highlight the problems, differences in learning models, and the use of learning media in sakubun learning in these three countries. The research method used is a systematic literature review conducted by searching academic databases for the terms "sakubun", "university", and the names of the three countries: "Indonesia", "China", and "South Korea". The results show that the difficulties faced by Indonesian, Chinese, and South Korean students in learning sakubun stem from a lack of acquired language knowledge, grammar mastery, and vocabulary mastery. In Indonesia, Sakubun learning uses Padlet to assist students in learning Sakubun, as it offers various features that support writing activities. In sakubun learning in China, the creative response project learning model is used to monitor and evaluate students' writing, thereby maximizing their creativity. Meanwhile, in South Korea, sakubun learning uses the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model to develop students' creativity based on their individual preferences.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: 23 Feb 2026

Revised: 29 Jun 2026

Accepted: 13 Jul 2026

Publish online: 18 Aug 2026

Keywords:

Japanese writing education;
Sakubun; university level



Inovasi Kurikulum is a peer-reviewed
open-access journal.

ABSTRAK

Penguasaan penulisan bahasa Jepang (sakubun) merupakan aspek penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa Jepang di tingkat universitas. Keberagaman latar belakang linguistik, konteks budaya, dan sistem penulisan yang berbeda menjadi hambatan dan tantangan bagi para pembelajar bahasa Jepang, khususnya di negara-negara Asia seperti Indonesia, Cina, dan Korea Selatan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyoroti permasalahan, perbedaan model pembelajaran, serta penggunaan media pembelajaran dalam pembelajaran sakubun di tiga negara tersebut. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah systematic literature review dengan melakukan penelusuran pada database akademik yang memuat konteks "sakubun", "universitas", dan nama tiga negara, yaitu "Indonesia", "China", dan "Korea Selatan". Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesulitan yang dihadapi mahasiswa Indonesia, China, dan Korea Selatan dalam pembelajaran sakubun berasal dari kurangnya pengetahuan bahasa yang diperoleh, kurangnya penguasaan tata bahasa, serta kurangnya penguasaan kosakata. Pembelajaran sakubun di Indonesia menggunakan Padlet untuk membantu mahasiswa mempelajari Sakubun karena memiliki berbagai fitur yang mengakomodasi aktivitas menulis. Dalam pembelajaran sakubun di Cina, model pembelajaran proyek respons kreatif digunakan untuk memantau dan mengevaluasi tulisan mahasiswa agar mereka dapat memaksimalkan kreativitas. Sementara itu, pembelajaran sakubun di Korea Selatan menggunakan model Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek (PjBL) untuk mengembangkan kreativitas mahasiswa berdasarkan preferensi pribadi masing-masing.

Kata Kunci: pembelajaran menulis bahasa Jepang; sakubun; tingkatan universitas

How to cite (APA 7)

Dewanty, V. L., Juangsih, J., & Farisya, G. (2026). Reviewing Japanese writing education at universities in Indonesia, China, and South Korea. *Inovasi Kurikulum*, 23(3), 609-630.

Peer review

This article has been peer-reviewed through the journal's standard double-blind peer review, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.

Copyright



2026, Via Luviana Dewanty, Juju Juangsih, Ghaida Farisya. This an open-access is article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author, and source are credited. *Corresponding author: luvianadewanty@upi.edu

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the number of Japanese language learners worldwide has increased significantly. Currently, Japanese is spoken by approximately 130 million people in 18 regions, making it the ninth most widely spoken language in the world. A 2021 survey by The Japan Foundation to determine the current status of Japanese-language education worldwide found that Japanese-language learners are spread across 142 countries. This high number of institutions is due to strong learner interest in Japan, driven by its economic development, Japanese pop culture, and the Japanese language (Ciubăncan, 2025; Dewanty et al., 2025). In terms of the number of institutions, teachers, and students, East Asia has the largest population, followed by Southeast Asia. These two regions boast impressive numbers of Japanese language institutions, teachers, and learners. It is known that 63.6% of institutions, 77.0% of teachers, and 76.8% of students studying Japanese are located in East and Southeast Asia. Mastery of Japanese is a crucial requirement for the success of individuals, society, and the Indonesian nation in the current era of globalization. Mastery of Japanese can be achieved through various programs, including college or university teaching programs. The development of Japanese language education at the higher education level in East and Southeast Asian countries generally follows developments in technological, social, cultural, and economic aspects.

In Japanese language learning at the university level, there is a composition course called *sakubun*. Lectures in the *sakubun* course require not only writing skills but also mastery of vocabulary and grammar, as well as the ability to organize ideas (Indrowaty, 2021). Nakamura (2019), in a book titled “*All Color Manga Sakubun ga Jouzu ni Naru*” states that writing skills require special attention. Even after mastering speaking and listening skills, learners will experience difficulties with writing because, in Japanese, there are differences in expression between hanashikotoba (conversational language) and kakikotoba (written language) for many of the same words (Haq et al., 2023). In addition, difficulties such as finding ideas, choosing vocabulary, using sentence patterns, and arranging sentences into coherent writing are often experienced by learners. Japanese writing (*sakubun*) has levels corresponding to the Japanese proficiency taught at each level. Learning at each level can be implemented using different methods, approaches, and learning models, depending on students' proficiency in Japanese.

Research related to Japanese writing learning at universities includes research on the evaluation of *sakubun* learning (Leung et al., 2023; Park & Kwon, 2026; Philiyanti et al., 2025; Xu & Shen, 2025), the application of *sakubun* learning media and models (Aneros, 2020; Utari et al., 2024), as well as descriptions of situations and responses to *sakubun* learning (Dizon et al., 2022; Nurjaleka et al., 2025). Several of these studies were conducted in Asian countries, such as China, South Korea, and Indonesia, and only discussed *sakubun* learning at the university level in each country. There is still not much research that generally describes what *sakubun* learning is like at universities in these three countries. Therefore, this study aims to review Japanese writing (*sakubun*) learning at the university level, including the curricula, methods, and learning models used in Indonesia, China, and South Korea, which have the largest numbers of Japanese-language learners in Asia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Japanese in Higher Education

The objective of Japanese language learning in the higher education curriculum with a concentration in Japanese language education is to produce graduates who are highly competitive as Japanese language education experts and other professionals related to Japanese language skills, and to build, implement, and improve cooperation with institutions related to Japanese language and Japanese language education

at home and abroad on an ongoing basis (Firmansyah et al., 2018; Haristiani, & Aryadi, 2017). The formation of Japanese language courses is based on Japanese language skills, knowledge of Japanese linguistics, literature, and culture, as well as teacher professionalism. Courses are designed based on knowledge of Japanese linguistics, literature, and culture, including courses that enable students to speak Japanese receptively and productively in everyday/general, academic, and work contexts. Students are also expected to be able to analyze and apply theories, concepts, and approaches in learning Japanese, as well as produce innovative learning designs for learning Japanese. Finally, the courses presented are expected to encourage students to analyze and apply theories of the Japanese language, linguistics, culture, and literature in learning and teaching Japanese.

To achieve university targets, meet field needs, and meet stakeholder expectations regarding graduate competency, the Japanese language curriculum in higher education yields better outcomes in Japanese communication skills and knowledge. Japanese language courses focus on the four language skills: speaking, reading, listening, and writing. In addition to these four language skills, additional skills include kanji mastery and grammar. Japanese language skills courses are divided into three levels: *Shokyuu* (basic), *Chukyuu* (intermediate), and *Chujokyuu* (upper-intermediate) (Ge et al., 2022).

Japanese Writing (*Sakubun*)

Writing is a productive skill because it expresses ideas, thoughts, or feelings in written form. Writing is an important skill that foreign learners, including Japanese language learners, must master (Pandya & Saiyad, 2025). However, learning Japanese writing (*sakubun*) is considered difficult by most Japanese language learners. Limitations in expressing and developing ideas (Indrowaty, 2021), applying textbook sentence patterns, writing kanji, and using sentence patterns when conveying ideas or thoughts in written Japanese are the most difficult (Aneros, 2020). These difficulties are experienced by students studying basic *sakubun* due to a lack of understanding of the material, including sentence patterns and topic-specific writing tailored to the textbook's themes.

A study identified two factors that cause difficulties in writing *sakubun*: compositional and linguistic factors (Sari & Zalman, 2021). The compositional factor has four indicators: 1) Difficulty in creating an outline; 2) Difficulty in the writing process; 3) Difficulty in determining the type of composition; and 4) Difficulty in determining the flow of the composition. Meanwhile, the second factor is a linguistic factor in the form of 1) Difficulties related to letters; 2) Difficulties related to vocabulary; 3) Difficulties related to sentences; and 4) Difficulties in using language variety. To overcome these problems in learning to write Japanese, learning activities are needed to improve Japanese writing skills in terms of mastery of letters (hiragana, katakana, kanji), vocabulary variation, sentence patterns, relationships between sentences, and story coherence.

Japanese Writing (*Sakubun*) in Asian Countries

Asia, one of the largest continents in the world, comprises more than 40 countries. Countries in Asia have diverse physical, economic, political, and cultural characteristics. Despite this diversity, five languages are most often taught for "special purposes" due to political, economic, religious, and educational interests: English, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Arabic (Meyer & Ruppel, 2024). According to a survey conducted by The Japan Foundation (2018), the top three countries in Asia with the largest numbers of institutions offering Japanese-language learning are South Korea (2,998 institutions), Indonesia (2,879 institutions), and China (2,435 institutions).

METHODS

This research employed a systematic literature review (Carrera-Rivera et al., 2022) based on Google Scholar. The search used the keywords "sakubun," "university," and the names of three countries: "Indonesia," "China," and "South Korea." The search yielded 248 articles on *sakubun* learning in Indonesia, China, and South Korea. After searching for articles using related keywords, a screening process was conducted to identify research articles that met the criteria, specifically those discussing writing learning (*sakubun*) at universities and the use of learning models and media. Based on the screening results, 16 research articles met the criteria: 6 on *sakubun* learning in Indonesia, 6 on *sakubun* learning in China, and 4 on *sakubun* learning in Korea. The next step was to identify key information from each article, integrate it, and draw conclusions. The selected articles were presented in a table to facilitate the analysis process. The table contains columns detailing the conditions of *sakubun* learning, the obstacles/challenges faced in *sakubun* learning, the learning model implemented, and the learning media used in each research article. Finally, the table's contents are presented narratively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The articles that were searched using the keywords "sakubun", "Japanese writing", "Japanese writing classroom", and "university" were screened, and 16 articles were obtained, with details of 6 articles about *sakubun* learning in Indonesia, 6 articles about *sakubun* learning in China, and 4 articles about *sakubun* learning in Korea. To identify important information from each article, namely the condition of *sakubun* learning, obstacles/challenges faced in *sakubun* learning, the learning model applied, and the learning media used, a table was created as shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Article Identification Results

No.	Article	Sakubun Learning Conditions	Sakubun Learning Model	Sakubun Learning Media
Sakubun Learning in Indonesia				
1	Rasiban, L. M., Dahidi, A., & Widiarti, S. (2018). Peer feedback untuk mengembangkan kegiatan menulis bahasa Jepang di kelas menulis bahasa Jepang (<i>sakubun</i>). <i>Journal of Japanese Language Education and Linguistics</i> , 2(2), 294-314.	Students experience difficulty developing story ideas into cohesive writing. Internal factors such as lack of vocabulary mastery and complex sentence structure are the main obstacles.	Using peer feedback in collaborative learning models.	Specific physical/digital worksheets: Worksheets (for writing), Review Sheets (for assessing peer work), and Kakinaoshi Sheets (for rewriting revised work).
2	Aneros, N. (2020, December). Japanese Learners' Perception of using Padlet in Japanese composition (<i>Sakubun</i>) skills. In <i>4th International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2020)</i>	Writing is considered difficult because students do not understand sentence patterns, the use of particles, or how to write kanji, and have difficulty developing ideas based on textbook themes.	Student-centered model utilizing information technology to increase learning effectiveness and interest.	Padlet, a web-based virtual wall application that allows students to paste writing, photos, and documents. Apart from that, a WhatsApp Group is used for discussions and to share material, and PowerPoint is used to present it.
3	Amalia, A., & Novitasari, R. (2020). The effectiveness project work teaching techniques of <i>sakubun</i> teaching	The teaching and learning process often feels monotonous and boring for students.	Using a thematic method with project-based learning techniques (Project Work).	The media used are written reports (bouquets) for the <i>sakubun</i> assessment and

No.	Article	Sakubun Learning Conditions	Sakubun Learning Model	Sakubun Learning Media
	collaboration with kaiwa. <i>Widai Japanese Journal</i> , 1(1), 42-53.			presentations for the kaiwa assessment.
4	Indrowaty, S. A. (2021). The Implementation of project-team based learning method on Sakubun online learning. <i>Educatio: Journal of Education</i> , 6(2), 191-202.	Difficulties with grammar and the use of the three Japanese alphabets (hiragana, katakana, and kanji).	Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model.	Various online platforms such as Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Classroom, and WhatsApp.
5	Utari, R., Sukmara, R., & Septiany, N. (2024). Implementation of project-based learning in improving the creativity of writing Japanese essays in the sakubun course. <i>Kiryoku</i> , 8(1), 139-146.	<i>Writer's block due to limited ideas and vocabulary.</i>	Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Model	Yasashi Nihongo textbook as a topic reference.
6	Philiyanti, F., Rismorlita, C. E., Noverisa, E. J., Hamdi, M. A., Adnyani, K. E. K., & Nujaleka, L. (2025). Evaluasi pembelajaran keterampilan menulis bahasa Jepang (sakubun). <i>International Conference on Innovation, Reflection, and Creativity in Arts, Literature, and Language Education</i> , 1(1), 289-296.	Lack of lecturer monitoring and the emergence of students using ChatGPT.	Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Case-Based Learning (CBL), Collaborative Learning, and Participative Learning models.	Traditional media such as written drafts, assessment rubrics, and textbooks.
Sakubun Learning in China				
1	Zhang, L., & Hide-Hiko, K. I. T. A. (2017). A collaborative learning method of learning from errors in Japanese writing. <i>International Conference on Computers in Education</i> , 1(1), 1-4.	Students tend to repeat the same mistakes in writing <i>sakubun</i> .	Collaborative learning in small groups (3 people).	Four-panel comics (from Aesop's Fables), error analysis cards, and an electronic error database using the Moodle system.
2	Huang, W. (2019). Strategies for improving the Japanese writing ability of Chinese students. <i>Language Teacher</i> , 43(1), 30-32.	Inadequate vocabulary, writing barriers, and negative transfer of the mother tongue.	Extensive reading and essay memorization models.	Textbooks and visual stimuli.
3	Zhao, D., & Yin, G. (2022). Retracted: teaching method of Japanese professional writing course based on big data fusion. <i>Security and Communication Networks</i> , 2022(1), 1-13.	Context-based teaching theory has not yet developed rapidly.	Contextualized teaching supported by big data fusion.	Computer systems for data processing (distributed or centralized models).
4	Xu, T., & Shen, D. (2025). A study on improving Japanese writing skills by constructing Japanese syntactic analysis and generation technology using computational methods	Difficulty managing ideas, language form, and text structure simultaneously.	An intelligent syntactic analysis approach based on SVM (Support Vector Machine)	Integration of AI models for language generation and computational algorithms for automatic text correction and improvement.

No.	Article	Sakubun Learning Conditions	Sakubun Learning Model	Sakubun Learning Media
	and artificial intelligence models. <i>International Journal for Housing Science & Its Applications</i> , 46(3), 741-752.		and NN-LSVM models.	
5	Yan, P. (2025). Research on the integration and training of metacognitive strategies in Japanese writing teaching materials. <i>Journal of Modern Educational Theory and Practice</i> , 2(8), 1-13.	There are shortcomings in the integration of metacognitive strategies, and the presentation of knowledge remains static.	Integration of metacognitive strategies includes planning, monitoring, and evaluating.	Teaching materials include strategy prompt boxes, mind maps, audience analysis frameworks, writing portfolios, and reflective journals.
6	Zhai, T. (2026). Research on the intelligent transformation path of Japanese writing teaching from the perspective of human-machine collaboration. <i>Open Journal of Social Sciences</i> , 14(5), 311-327.	High level of student writing anxiety.	Human-machine collaboration model with the principle of "AI as technical support and teachers as humanistic leaders".	Large language models (LLM) such as Kimi, Doubao (basic grammar), and DeepSeek (academic writing), as well as LMS platforms.

Sakubun Learning in South Korea

1	Son, M. (2018). A study on Japanese writing course with schema and storytelling - focused on comparison with writing lesson using elementary writing textbook. <i>The Japanese Language and Literature Society of Korea</i> , 79(1), 105-124.	Difficulty creatively describing situations or using natural Japanese expressions like native speakers.	Schematic and storytelling models.	Visual media in the form of four-frame cartoons and a textbook titled "Japanese Writing Technique."
2	Nishioka, H. (2020). Learning to write Japanese using a SNS designed to develop writing proficiency: affordances and constraints. <i>Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching</i> , 17(2), 405-420.	Lack of basic communication skills through clear written structure.	Social Media Integration (SNSLL-Lang-8) model.	The Lang-8 platform (a social networking service for language learning), a class blog for sharing work, and a commercial Japanese composition textbook.
3	Park, J. (2025). Challenges in writing tasks for Korean learners of Japanese - a qualitative analysis using reflection sheets completed after handwritten composition assignments. <i>The Japanese Language and Literature Society of Korea</i> , 86(1), 43-64.	Cognitive and psychological barriers such as time pressure and anxiety.	Textbook-based and handwriting models.	Reflection sheets, dictionaries, and translation tools.
4	Park, H., & Kwon, H. (2026). Enhancing learning beyond correction: AI-assisted Japanese business writing and sociocultural awareness in online higher education. <i>Education Sciences</i> , 16(2), 1-23.	Weak understanding of cultural context and use of respectful language (keigo).	Hybrid feedback model.	ChatGPT (Custom GPT) called "Japanese Business Writing Tutor", video tutoriChatGPT (Custom GPT) called "Japanese Business Writing Tutor", video tutorials, and a learning management system (LMS).

Source: Research 2026

The Condition of *Sakubun* Learning in Indonesia, China, and South Korea

Sakubun learning in Indonesia faces a main obstacle: difficulty in developing written content (Rasiban, 2018; Aneros, 2020; Utari et al., 2024). Even though students had been given a theme and stimulated to practice sentence patterns that would appear in the essay/writing by adding an essay/thinking framework, the content of the students' writing/composition still could not be developed (Aneros, 2020; Rasiban, 2018). This is caused by the difficulty of generating and developing ideas (Indrowaty, 2021; Philiyanti et al., 2025).

Unlike Indonesian learners, Chinese learners face challenges due to inadequate vocabulary, which hinders their sentence and paragraph writing skills (Huang, 2019; Yan, 2025). In addition to vocabulary issues, the process of understanding Japanese culture also impacts their *sakubun* skills (Huang, 2019). These issues lead to anxiety in the *sakubun* writing process (Zhai, 2026), such as fear of making writing mistakes and unwillingness to remember or double-check incorrect sentence patterns (Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017). As a result, learners often repeat mistakes in the *sakubun* writing process (Huang, 2019; Yan, 2025; Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017).

Meanwhile, the biggest obstacle South Korean students face in writing Japanese is their lack of understanding of Japanese grammar (Park & Kwon, 2026; Son, 2018). While students' strong vocabulary memorization facilitates fluency in writing, it still hinders them when writing that requires grammatical understanding (Park & Kwon, 2026). This still causes them to have difficulty describing situations or even writing explanations in Japanese (Son, 2018).

***Sakubun* Learning Model in Indonesia, China, and South Korea**

***Sakubun* Learning Model in Indonesia**

In Indonesia, basic Japanese writing can be taught using a project-based model or approach. Appropriate teaching strategies, models, and techniques significantly impact language learning, particularly writing. PjBL (Project-Based Learning) can be used in *sakubun* learning in Indonesia to improve students' Japanese essay-writing skills and make it easier for them to express ideas and develop them into good essays. Project-based learning is a teaching model that guides students through systematic, standardized work procedures to create or complete projects using real-world processes (Utari et al., 2024). If a situation is created that forces students to produce work without feeling forced, namely by providing project-based learning, students can develop their ideas and writing (Rasiban et al., 2018; Utari et al., 2024).

Research provides an update on the *sakubun* and *kaiwa* learning patterns to improve learning effectiveness and students' writing and speaking skills (Amalia & Novitasari, 2020). This project-based model is considered fun, livens up the class, engages passive students, and allows them to explore their writing and speaking skills. To improve critical thinking and creativity, project-based learning is a suitable model. This project-based learning model is suitable for productive language learning because it produces essays that can stimulate students' writing skills (Adinegoro et al., 2022; Utari et al., 2024). The project-based learning model can help improve students' abilities, especially by developing their ideas into Japanese essays. In other words, essay planning can be done well if we use this model.

***Sakubun* Learning Model in China**

Based on the difficulties and obstacles faced by *sakubun* learners, the *sakubun* learning model in China has evolved from a traditional approach to a more collaborative, cognitive-based model integrated with AI technology (Huang, 2019; Xu & Shen, 2025; Yan, 2025; Zhai, 2026; Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017; Zhao & Yin, 2022). Historically, Japanese language education in China has relied heavily on traditional teacher-centered methods (Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017). However, the obstacles and barriers faced by learners have

led to the development of the traditional method into a Collaborative Learning Model, which involves group discussions and independent reflection to recognize their own and others' error patterns in writing *sakubun*, thereby preventing repeated errors in the future (Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017). The Collaborative Learning model then evolved into a metacognitive strategy model that emphasizes self-regulation, involving planning, monitoring, and evaluating cognitive processes during writing (Yan, 2025). Through a process-based approach, *sakubun* learning emphasizes the stages of drafting, logical revision, and in-depth reflection after writing (Yan, 2025).

Along with technological advancements, *sakubun* learning in China has also incorporated digital technology into its teaching. These include the Human-Machine Collaboration (Generative AI) learning model and the Contextualized Teaching Model with big data fusion integration (Zhai, 2026; Zhao & Yin, 2022). The Human-Machine Collaboration (Generative AI) model uses AI as technical support for real-time grammar correction, sentence-structure optimization, and initial *sakubun* assessment (Zhai, 2026). However, classroom instructors still play a significant role in higher-level assessments, such as interpreting sentence patterns, explaining Japanese cultural connotations, and providing emotional support for students. Meanwhile, the Contextualized Teaching model with big data fusion integration uses big data fusion to help students transition from textbook knowledge to real-world communication situations (Zhao & Yin, 2022). The context is close to everyday life, based on the topic of the learning unit, to strengthen understanding of vocabulary and sentence patterns before starting to write (Zhao & Yin, 2022).

Sakubun Learning Model in South Korea

The *sakubun* learning model in Korea shares similarities with China, ranging from the conventional textbook-based approach (Park, 2025), the Schema and Storytelling Model (Son, 2018), to the use of modern technologies such as social media (Nishioka, 2020) and artificial intelligence (AI) (Park, 2026). The textbook-based and handwriting model is implemented by asking students to write *sakubun* manually (by hand). They are then asked to complete a reflection sheet to identify any difficulties they encounter (Park, 2025). Still related to the conventional model, the Schema and Storytelling model is used to improve creativity and the ability to use Japanese sentence patterns and expressions beyond rigid or formal Japanese grammatical structures (Son, 2018). This model is effective in stimulating the use of a more varied vocabulary, including onomatopoeia and casual everyday words rarely found in textbooks.

Meanwhile, for technology-based learning models, the Social Media Integration (SNSLL - Lang-8) model utilizes the Social Networking Service for Language Learning platform to connect learners directly with native speakers (Nishioka, 2020). Through this model, students' *sakubun* essays are uploaded to the Lang-8 platform, where students receive line-by-line corrections from native Japanese speakers. This model has been shown to increase student motivation through interaction with a real audience outside the classroom and to provide access to more natural Japanese expressions (Nishioka, 2020). Similar to China, South Korea also uses artificial intelligence (AI) in one of its *sakubun* learning models. Teachers design custom chatbots (Custom GPTs) that function as writing tutors and help students check vocabulary usage, sentence patterns, and expressions (Park, 2026). However, teachers still conduct in-depth checks to avoid errors that AI cannot detect in detail.

Sakubun Learning Media in Indonesia, China, and South Korea

Sakubun Learning Media in Indonesia

Learning Japanese writing (*sakubun*) at the elementary level in Indonesia can use digital, internet-based media such as Padlet to increase students' interest in basic Japanese writing classes. Padlet can help students learn basic Japanese writing by offering a range of features that support writing activities. Several

studies have shown that learning through the internet can simplify the learning process (Fitriana & Susanti, 2025) and shift it from teacher-centered to student-centered (Aneros, 2020). Padlet offers several features to assist learners and teachers throughout the learning process. Students can write on the feature wall and upload photos, images, audio, video, documents, copy links, and more. Padlet can even function as a place to collect assignments (Masykuri & Alekseevna, 2024). By integrating Padlet into learning, students engage collaboratively. This is demonstrated by student activity in adding posts containing links, videos, images, files, and more (Rofiah et al., 2023). Research has shown that using Padlet makes the learning process much more effective and engaging (Aneros, 2020). Padlet is accessible to all students in the course, and they use it to express their thoughts or to post content related to basic Japanese writing materials.

Sakubun Learning Media in China

The learning media used in Japanese writing lessons in China have evolved from traditional media to cutting-edge technology-based ones. In elementary *sakubun* learning, teachers still rely heavily on traditional media such as textbooks and *sakubun* models and templates as structural frameworks for students (Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017). Visual media, such as pictures in books or *sakubun* frameworks, are used to stimulate creativity while reducing students' cognitive burden in generating *sakubun* story ideas (Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017).

Technological advancements have led to the use of technology-based media in *sakubun* learning in China. These include using platforms like Moodle to build electronic error databases from students' error analysis card data, which can be reviewed and studied collaboratively to identify students' error patterns (Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017). Furthermore, Learning Management Systems (LMSs) like Chaoxing are used to automatically record students' learning progress, revision frequency, and writing duration (Zhai, 2026). Following the current trend of AI, the integration of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) such as Kimi, Doubao, and DeepSeek is also being used for real-time grammar correction (Zhai, 2026). This technology is supported by intelligent analysis models like SVM and NN-LSVM for advanced syntactic analysis, as well as big data fusion systems that create a more realistic, context-based learning environment (Xu & Shen, 2025).

Sakubun Learning Media in South Korea

Japanese writing learning media in South Korea range from conventional to digital technology-based. Textbooks, handwriting (Park, 2025), and visual media, such as images (Son, 2018), remain fundamental media essential for strengthening cognitive processing and supporting students' basic writing skills. The use of traditional media, such as reflection sheets, can help students identify their specific difficulties with vocabulary, kanji, and sentence patterns (Park, 2025). Visual media in the form of four-frame cartoons are used to stimulate students' imaginations through storytelling activities, allowing them to use more varied and natural expressions than simply following the rigid sentence patterns in textbooks (Son, 2018).

Digital-based learning media used in *sakubun* learning in South Korea include Social Networking Service for Language Learning (SNSLL) platforms such as Lang-8. Lang-8 is utilized to provide an authentic writing experience by connecting learners directly with native Japanese speakers for line-by-line feedback and correction (Nishioka, 2020). In addition to the use of social networking services, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) has given rise to learning media in the form of ChatGPT and custom chatbots designed by instructors that function as writing tutors that provide instant feedback, grammar correction, and sociocultural guidance in formal communication contexts (Park, 2026).

Discussion

Challenges and obstacles in learning *sakubun* at the university level in Indonesia, China, and South Korea exhibit distinct yet interrelated characteristics. The analysis shows that although these three countries have the largest populations of Japanese-language learners in Asia, students in each country face unique obstacles. In Indonesia, the main obstacle is the difficulty in developing ideas into structured writing, which causes students to experience writer's block due to limited vocabulary and complex Japanese sentence structures (Rasiban et al., 2018; Utari et al., 2024). In contrast, students in China struggle more with inadequate vocabulary, negative influences from their mother tongue (negative transfer), and high levels of writing anxiety, which often lead them to repeat the same mistakes in writing *sakubun* (Huang, 2019; Zhai, 2026). Meanwhile, in South Korea, although students have relatively strong vocabulary memorization skills, the obstacles they face include a lack of in-depth understanding of grammar and difficulty using natural Japanese expressions and respectful language (keigo) appropriate to the sociocultural context (Park & Kwon, 2026; Son, 2018). In general, all learners in these three countries face the same challenge: distinguishing between spoken language (*hanashikotoba*) and written language (*kakikotoba*), which often use different expressions for the same meaning.

The development of learning models, from traditional approaches to more innovative, student-centered ones, is a key strategy to overcome these obstacles. In Indonesia, the use of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model has proven effective in enhancing creativity and helping students shift from passive to active learning by producing tangible products, such as Japanese compositions (*sakubun*) (Indrowaty, 2021; Utari et al., 2024). In China, learning models have evolved toward collaborative models and the use of metacognitive strategies that encourage students to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own thinking processes and to learn from the patterns in their peers' mistakes (Yan, 2025; Zhang & Hide-Hiko, 2017). Meanwhile, South Korea implements the Schema and Storytelling model to stimulate students' imaginations, enabling them to use more varied and natural vocabulary, such as onomatopoeia, which is rarely found in standard textbooks (Son, 2018). In addition, South Korea integrates social media platforms such as Lang-8 to connect learners directly with native speakers, providing more authentic feedback and increasing motivation through interactions outside the classroom (Nishioka, 2020).

The integration of digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI) is driving the development of technology-based learning media on the *sakubun* learning platform in Indonesia, China, and South Korea. The use of platforms such as Padlet in Indonesia enables the creation of interactive virtual collaboration spaces for students to upload their writing or essays (Aneros, 2020). In China, technological advancements are evident in the use of learning management systems (LMS) and big data analytics to automatically detect errors (Zhao & Yin, 2022), as well as in the use of generative AI models such as Kimi and DeepSeek for real-time grammar correction (Zhai, 2026). South Korea also demonstrates similar innovation with the development of a custom chatbot (Custom GPT) that functions as a personal writing tutor (Park & Kwon, 2026). However, while AI technology facilitates technical corrections, this research confirms that the instructor's role remains irreplaceable, particularly in providing emotional support, interpreting complex cultural connotations, and providing high-level assessments that require empathy and human understanding (Park & Kwon, 2026).

CONCLUSION

Based on a literature review of articles on Japanese writing (*sakubun*) in Indonesia, China, and South Korea, students in all three countries face similar obstacles in learning *sakubun*. Obstacles such as limited vocabulary, poor grammar, and a lack of language knowledge require different focuses and coping strategies in each country. Indonesian students tend to struggle with developing story ideas and experiencing writer's block, which can be addressed by implementing PjBL models and using interactive

media such as Padlet to create a more collaborative and student-centered learning environment. In China, challenges such as writing anxiety and repetition of errors are addressed by shifting from traditional methods to collaborative models and metacognitive strategies, and by integrating cutting-edge technologies such as generative AI and big data analytics for real-time error correction. Meanwhile, learners in South Korea who struggle with natural expression and understanding of sociocultural contexts (such as keigo) use Schema and Storytelling models and social media platforms (SNS) to obtain direct feedback from native speakers. Overall, *sakubun* learning in Indonesia, China, and South Korea has shifted toward the use of digital technology and AI to enhance creativity and learning effectiveness. However, the role of teachers remains crucial and irreplaceable in providing emotional support, interpreting complex cultural nuances, and conducting high-level assessments.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

The study was funded by The Faculty of Language and Literature Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.

REFERENCES

- Adinegoro, B., Nasution, Y. A., & Basri, M. S. (2022). Pengaruh project-based learning terhadap kemampuan sakubun mahasiswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Jepang Undiksha*, 8(2), 112-121.
- Amalia, A., & Novitasari, R. (2020). The effectiveness project work teaching techniques of sakubun teaching collaboration with kaiwa. *WIDAI Japanese Journal*, 1(1), 42-53.
- Aneros, N. (2020). Japanese learners' perception of using padlet in japanese composition (*Sakubun*) skills. *4th International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education ICOLLITE 2020*, 499-505.
- Carrera-Rivera, A., Ochoa, W., Larrinaga, F., & Lasa, G. (2022). How-to conduct a systematic literature review: a quick guide for computer science research. *MethodsX*, 9, 1-12.
- Ciubăncan, M. (2025). Determinants of motivation in learning japanese as a foreign language: a Romanian case study. *Dialogos*, 26(42), 63-74.
- Dewanty, V. L., Farisya, G., & Kusri, D. (2025). Japanese pop culture for language learning: a quantitative study on motivation and japanese language skills among japanese language students in Indonesia. *Kiryoku*, 9(1), 238-250.
- Dizon, G., Tang, D., & Yamamoto, Y. (2022). A case study of using Alexa for out-of-class, self-directed Japanese language learning. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, 3, 1-8.
- Firmansyah, D. B., & Rahmawati, R. S. (2018). Penggunaan media ajar berbasis multimedia dalam pembelajaran kanji. *Japanedu: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran Bahasa Jepang*, 3(1), 1-10.
- Fitriana, R., & Susanti, H. (2025). Efektivitas pemakaian padlet sebagai media kolaboratif dalam peer response pada pembelajaran Sakubun 1. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Linguistik dan Sastra*, 75-82.
- Ge, S., Hai Leng, C., & Baharudin, S. M. (2022). The effect of multimedia and temporal contiguity principles on students' attitude and retention in learning Japanese language. *International Journal of Chinese Education*, 11(2), 1-13.
- Haq, M., Zalman, H., Suci, P., & Arni, R. (2023). Penerapan PJBL dalam pengajaran sakubun untuk pemelajar tingkat menengah. *Omiyage: Jurnal Bahasa dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Jepang*, 6(2), 403-415.
- Haristiani, N., & Aryadi, S. (2017). Development of android application in enhancing learning in Japanese kanji. *Pertanika Journal of Science and Technology*, 25, 157-164.

- Huang, W. (2019). Strategies for improving the Japanese writing ability of Chinese students. *Language Teacher*, 43(1), 30-32.
- Indrowaty, S. A. (2021). The Implementation of project-team based learning method on *Sakubun* online learning. *Educatio: Journal of Education*, 6(2), 191-202.
- Leung, T. N., Hui, Y. M., Luk, C. K., Chiu, D. K., & Ho, K. K. (2023). Evaluating Facebook as aids for learning Japanese: learners' perspectives. *Library Hi Tech*, 41(5), 1456-1475.
- Masykuri, E. S., & Alekseevna, E. K. (2024). Non-english speakers' perspectives on the utilization of Padlet. *TLEMC (Teaching and Learning English in Multicultural Contexts)*, 8(2), 117-126.
- Meyer, R., & Ruppel, A. (2024). Teaching the languages of Asia. An Introduction. *Cahiers du Centre de Linguistique et des Sciences du Langage*, 68, 7-15.
- Nishioka, H. (2020). Learning to write Japanese using a SNS designed to develop writing proficiency: affordances and constraints. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 17(2), 405-420.
- Nurjaleka, L., Supriatnaningsih, R., Rosliyah, Y., Afifah, M., & Yuniawan, T. (2025). Developing sociolinguistic awareness through Japanese virtual linguistic landscapes in *Sakubun* classroom. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 22(2), 610-629.
- Pandya, I., & Saiyad, A. (2025). From struggle to mastery: writing as a transformative skill in second language learning. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 67(2), 32-37.
- Park, H., & Kwon, H. (2026). Enhancing learning beyond correction: AI-assisted Japanese business writing and sociocultural awareness in online higher education. *Education Sciences*, 16(2), 1-23.
- Park, J. (2025). Challenges in writing tasks for Korean learners of Japanese - a qualitative analysis using reflection sheets completed after handwritten composition assignments. *The Japanese Language and Literature Society of Korea*, 86(1), 43-64.
- Philiyanti, F., Rismorlita, C. E., Noverisa, E. J., Hamdi, M. A., Adnyani, K. E. K., & Nujaleka, L. (2025). Evaluasi pembelajaran keterampilan menulis bahasa Jepang (*sakubun*). *International Conference on Innovation, Reflection, and Creativity in Arts, Literature, and Language Education*, 1(1), 289-296.
- Rasiban, L. M., Dahidi, A., & Widiyanti, S. (2018). Peer feedback untuk mengembangkan kegiatan menulis bahasa Jepang di kelas menulis bahasa Jepang (*sakubun*). *Journal of Japanese Language Education and Linguistics*, 2(2), 294-314.
- Rofiah, N. L., Mohd, Y., & Waluyo, B. (2023). The efficacy of integrating Padlet-mediated feedback into writing lessons: A case of low-proficiency students. *The JALT Call Journal*, 19(3), 317-343.
- Sari, I. P., & Zalman, H. (2021). Faktor Kesulitan menulis *sakubun* mahasiswa program studi pendidikan bahasa Jepang Universitas Negeri Padang. *Omiyage: Jurnal Bahasa dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Jepang*, 4(1), 15-23.
- Son, M. (2018). A study on Japanese writing course with schema and storytelling - focused on comparison with writing lesson using elementary writing textbook. *The Japanese Language and Literature Society of Korea*, 79(1), 105-124.
- Utari, R., Sukmara, R., & Septiany, N. (2024). Implementation of project-based learning in improving the creativity of writing Japanese essays in the *sakubun* course. *Kiryoku*, 8(1), 139-146.
- Xu, T., & Shen, D. (2025). A study on improving Japanese writing skills by constructing Japanese syntactic analysis and generation technology using computational methods and artificial intelligence models. *International Journal for Housing Science & Its Applications*, 46(3), 741-752.
- Yan, P. (2025). Research on the integration and training of metacognitive strategies in Japanese writing teaching materials. *Journal of Modern Educational Theory and Practice*, 2(8), 1-13.
- Zhai, T. (2026). Research on the intelligent transformation path of Japanese writing teaching from the perspective of human-machine collaboration. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(5), 311-327.
- Zhang, L., & Hide-Hiko, K. I. T. A. (2017). A collaborative learning method of learning from errors in Japanese writing. *International Conference on Computers in Education*, 1(1), 1-4.
- Zhao, D., & Yin, G. (2022). Retracted: teaching method of Japanese professional writing course based on big data fusion. *Security and Communication Networks*, 2022(1), 1-13.