The Use of Firaa in “Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture” Textbooks for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) Levels

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ABSTRACT
Filler, also known as Firaa in Japanese, is a discourse marker which frequently used by Japanese people in daily communication. However, Japanese learners are less likely to employ this discourse marker. This study aims to identify the types of Firaa and their functions in the textbook “Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture” for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels. The data observed were collected from 217 audio of chokai (listening) and videos of kaiwa (conversation) as supplements in the Marugoto for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels textbooks. The type of Firaa and their functions were then categorized using Yamane’s (2002) theory, and a total of 271 Firaa appear in conversations has been collected. The findings of this study showed that only six types of vowel sound Firaa type from the eight types of Yamane’s theory, namely the ‘Eeto’ Firaa type, the ‘Ko-So-A’ Firaa type, the ‘Hai’ Firaa type, the ‘N’ Firaa type, the ‘Maa’ Firaa type, and the ‘Sa’ type were found and introduced in the Marugoto textbooks at the beginner and elementary levels (A1 & A2). Moreover, it is found that the Firaa introduced to Japanese learners were based on their level of proficiency, so as the level increases, the Firaa types introduced in the textbooks also increase. Further, in the beginner level (A1), we found 74 times Firaa and five Firaa types, while at the elementary level (A2), the Firaa are used in much higher frequency. Hence, we can conclude that Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels has its’ own the criteria as textbooks which use communicative approach by introducing Firaa as one of the Japanese characteristic discourse markers from the beginner level.

KEY WORDS
Communicative approach; Discourse marker; Japanese filler; Marugoto Textbooks.

INTRODUCTION
Sending messages from the sender to the recipient is a communication activity involving two or more persons. This communication process is sometimes disrupted, resulting in silence or a delay in speaking. In this case, the process of delay or silence is a pause or information barrier. If during the process of composing sentences in Japanese, there are obstacles, then Firaa usually appears in the form of words such as anoo, Eeto, and others (Yamane, 2002). According to Schiffrin (1987), Firaa is a discourse marker that plays an
essential role in spoken language. *Fira* is derived from an English word, filler or filled, which means ‘pause.’

According to Fujita (2001), *Fira* is a form of discourse marker representing the speaker’s attempt to establish an interpersonal relationship with the interlocutor. In conclusion, discourse markers in Japanese are used as cataphoric markers or anaphoric markers to help the speaker focus on certain utterances that may be important to the interlocutor.

*Fira* and *aizuchi* are two characteristics of Japanese culture, specifically spoken discourse, in which they are frequently used to improve communication fluency. *Fira* is a signal marker used by the speaker in a conversation, while *aizuchi* is used by the listener. Yamada stated that the speaker pronounces *Fira* such as *de* ‘で (−)’, *sonoo* ‘そんの (−)’, and *anoo* ‘あの (−)’, when the speaker cannot find the right word. *Fira* is also used as a signal to the interlocutor so that the interlocutor can predict what the speaker will say according to the context of the conversation (Watanabe, 2005; Watanabe, Hirose, Den, & Minematsu, 2005). It can be concluded that *Fira* has a vital role in Japanese, especially in spoken discourse.

Linguists such as Daikuhara were involved in some of the *Fira* studies. Daikuhara (2010) suggests that his research indicates that *Fira* contributes to Japanese spoken grammar. As a result, *Fira* should be introduced in Japanese language courses. Kim (2007) analyzed Japanese fillers as well. Let us look up words like *anoo* “Ano” or *eeto* “Eh” in a dictionary. We will find the term *kuuhaku-hojougo 供求補充語* with the explanation that the word is used to avoid silence in a conversation. Therefore, *Fira* has an important communicative function, which Japanese people use to maintain harmony in communication in addition to its primary function as a filler for pauses or silences.

According to Kim (2007), the key to harmonious Japanese cultural values dominates the Japanese lifestyle. It is based on the principle of not getting into trouble with other people, a traditional Japanese behavior pattern. As a result, instead of making the conversation clear or accurate, Japanese people tend to say it in a hazy and indirect manner (avoiding the clarity of verbal intervention).

Park (2019) conducted another study comparing the *Fira* function of Japanese and Korean people. Park claims the two languages have similar functions, but Japanese people use them more daily than Koreans in intercultural situations. Meanwhile, Lukamto (2012) describes that discourse signs such as *anoo, kono, sono, eeto, nanka, and maa* are essential for smooth communication, and that discourse signs need to be actively taught to Japanese language learners (Higgins & Ikeda, 2021). However, after examining the actual conditions of how *Anoo, Kono, Sono, Eeto, Nanka,* and *Maa* are contained in Japanese textbooks, it turns out their use in textbooks is insufficient. According to Ohta, Kitaoka, and Nakagawa (2014), pauses between sentences filled with filled pauses (*Fira*) can improve user understanding and increase the naturalness of the spoken dialogue system.

According to Nakajima (2009), *Fira* has three functions based on location: the first is at the beginning of a speech, the middle position, and the end position of speech, all of which have different functions. The highest usage rate of the 1680 *Fira* found in natural discourse recordings was 32.7 percent for KOSO-A *Fira*, followed by vowel sounds at 18.3 percent and Nanka filler *Fira*’s at 7.1 percent. Nakajima collects data from native Japanese speakers in the form of natural conversations.

Januarika (2018) conducted another study on the use of *Fira* by non-native speakers. The use of *Fira* by foreign Japanese speakers does not vary as much as it does by native speakers, according to Januarika’s research. Another research by *Fira* related to Japanese language learners was conducted by Nagai (2017). The conclusion is that Japanese learners from Korea and China often use some *Fira* unfairly compared to native Japanese speakers, so it is necessary to teach the use of natural *Fira*.

However, the studies on Japanese *Fira* used by Japanese language learners are still insufficient. In the fourth semester of the Japanese Language Education study program at the state university in Semarang, we conducted a preliminary study on the students. The result is that students admitted they did not understand the different types of *Fira* and how they were used in conversation. As for the lack of understanding and use by learners like them, they are only used to using *Fira*, *anou*, and *eeto*. The lack of understanding of Japanese language learners for this type and function of *Fira* is a research gap that researchers want to see from the point of view of whether the textbooks that students have used are
sufficient to illustrate that filler has been introduced or not. Daikuhara (2010) observes *Fira* concerning learning Japanese in Japanese language textbooks. Daikuhara data were drawn from sixteen Japanese textbooks and references ranging from elementary to advanced. It can be concluded that these references still lack an introduction to Japanese fillers.

Therefore, we try to analyze textbooks that use a different approach published by the Japan Foundation in 2013. Marugoto’s textbooks have been used by Japanese Language Education Study Program in a state university in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia since 2018. These textbooks focus on communication skills where the filler is found in live conversations. This study aims to identify the different types and functions of the Japanese language *Fira* in Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbooks for Beginner Level (A1) and Elementary Level 1 and 2 (A2). The listening method with an advanced note-taking technique was used in this research to collect data. The researchers then used data analysis techniques, such as reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions, as described by Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono (2013). In addition, the following are steps in this research’s data analysis: a) Listening to the conversational dialogue in choukai audio and kaiwa video are complementary materials for learning the Marugoto Japanese Language and Culture textbook for Beginner Level (A1) and Elementary Level (A2); b) Recording the appearance of *Fira* contained in the conversational dialogues in choukai audio and kaiwa video, which are complementary materials for learning the Marugoto Japanese Language and Culture textbook for Beginner Level (A1) and Elementary Level (A2); c) Classify data and analyze it based on the types of *Fira* according to Yamane’s theory (2002); and d) Summarize the findings of the data analysis and make suggestions.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Fira** Types in Marugoto Textbooks

Based on the results of data analysis, 271 *Fira* appear in 217 conversations in the video and audio of the Marugoto Japanese Language and Culture textbook. Yamane’s *Fira* theory is used to investigate the classification of *Fira* types in Nagai (2017). Table 1 shows the data on research findings of the different types of *Fira*.

| Fira type | Variance of Fira | Video | Marugoto | Marugoto | Marugoto | Total | Frequency (%) |
|-----------|-----------------|-------|----------|----------|----------|-------|---------------|
| **Vowel** |                 |       |          |          |          |       |               |
| a          | 7                | 2     | 4        | 3        | 15       | 5,5   |
| e          | 0                | 1     | 0        | 0        | 1        | 0,4   |
| i           | 1                | 0     | 0        | 0        | 1        | 0,4   |
| u          | 1                | 5     | 2        | 5        | 13       | 4,7   |
| **Subtotal** |               |       |          |          |          | 4     |               |
| **Ete**     |                 |       |          |          |          |       |               |
| エー       | 2                | 7     | 7        | 4        | 20       | 7,3   |
| **Subtotal** |               |       |          |          |          | 3     |               |
| **Ko-So-A** |                |       |          |          |          |       |               |
| ソーデスホ | 3                | 12    | 14       | 9        | 38       | 14    |
| **Subtotal** |               |       |          |          |          | 12    |               |
| **Noo**     |                 |       |          |          |          |       |               |
| アーノ | 9                | 34    | 26       | 35       | 104      | 38,3  |
| **Subtotal** |               |       |          |          |          | 12    |               |
| **Total**   |                 |       |          |          |          | 25    |               |

As presented in Table 1, the number of *Fira* that appear in the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbooks for Beginner Level (A1) was only 74, with variations in the types of *Fira*, namely Vowel Sound, *Ete*, *Ko-So-A*, *Noo*, and *Saa*. Meanwhile, in the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture Elementary Level (A2) textbooks, the...
number of Firaa that appeared was 81 times (Marugoto Japanese Language and Culture Basic 1), and 91 times (Marugoto Japanese Language and Culture Basic 2).

In addition, five different Firaa types were discovered in the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture for Beginner Level (A1) textbooks, namely Eeto, Ko-So-A, N, and Saa vocal sounds. Meanwhile, Firaa Hai and Maa are two types of Firaa found in the basic level Japanese language and culture Marugoto textbook (A2) but not previously introduced in the beginner level Japanese language and culture Marugoto textbook (A1). The types of Firaa in the beginner-level Japanese language and culture Marugoto textbook (A1) and the Elementary level in Marugoto Language and Culture textbook (A2) are divided into the following classifications based on the findings in Table 1.

**Vowel sound type (Boon-gata)**

We found the examples of sentences using Firaa boon-gata as follows.

(1) K01: あ、金曜日、生花コンテストがありますよ。  
*A: kinyōbi, seika kontesuto ga arimasu yo.*  
Ah, Friday, there's a flower arrangement contest.

K02: ああ、いいですね。先生はみに行きますか。  
*Aa, iide una, sensei wa min ni ikimasu ka.*  
Oh that's good. Will you come to see it?

K01: はい、いつも行きます。今年も多分行きます。  
*Hai, itsumo ikimasu. kotoji mo tabun mi ni ikimasu.*  
Yes, always come. This year too may come to see it.  
(Marugoto plus A1, can do 31, 0050-00:22)

(2) K01: いらっしゃいませ。  
*Irasshaimase.*  
Welcome

K02: あっ、すみません。ハンバーガー1つとコーヒー2つください。  
*Ah, sumimasesu. hanbāgā hitotsu to kōhi futatsu kudasait.*  
Mmm, excuse me. I ordered 1 hamburger and 2 coffee.  
(Marugoto A1 Katsudou, Lesson 6, Audio 084, 00:01-00:12)

From the examples of conversations (1) and (2) above, it can be seen that the variations in the type of Firaa used are the short vowel form ‘a’ あ and the long vowel form such as ‘ee’ ええと. According to the dictionary, the form of Firaa is ‘a’ あ what is in the example conversation (1) has the meaning of a form of surprise expression when you find something. Next is the form of ‘ee’ ええと; if you look at its meaning in the example conversation (2), it expresses affirmation or agreement.

We find a lot of data about this boon-gata type of Firaa or vowel sound at the beginning of the speech, though examples also appear in the middle.

**Eeto type (Eeto gata)**

We found that examples of Eeto-gata variations differ from the variations found at the start of the speech and in the middle of the speech. Here is an example of the Eeto-gata form in the middle of a speech.

(3) K01: すみません、たいしかんに行きたいんですか。  
*Sumimasesu, tai shikan ni ikitaindesu ka.*  
Excuse me, I want to go to the embassy.

K02: たいしかんですか？えーと。  
*Tai shikan desu ka? eetto.*  
Embassy huh? Hmmm, from here, the big white building can be seen right.

K01: 自分で大きいもの。いい。  
*Shirokute hito tatte mo, hai.*  
Big white building. Yes.

(Marugoto Elementary 1 A2 katsudou, Lesson 6, Audio 057, 00:01-0:20)

The Eeto-gata variation is found in the middle of the speech, as shown in the example of conversation (3) above. Regarding the Eeto gata writing style, we distinguish between the ‘Eeto’ and ‘Eeto’ forms. ‘Eeto’ is a word or phrase that comes to mind as you consider the next word or thing to say. It became “Hmm” in the translation we discovered in Marugoto’s textbook. This type of Firaa usually appears at the start of a speech, but it can also appear in the middle, as shown in the conversation example (3).

**Ko-So-A type (Ko-so-a gata)**

The Ko-So-A gata is the most common type of Firaa found in Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbooks, accounting for 53.1 percent of all Firaa found in both beginner (A1) and
elementary (A2) levels. The most varied forms of the Ko-So-A gata are ‘soudesune’, ‘anoo’, and ‘anoo’. The following is an example of its use in conversation.

(4) K01: あのう、ここからどうやって行きますか。
  Anoo, koko kara dō yatte kimasuka.
  Hmm, how do I get from here to the airport?
K02: ここは電車がいいですよ。便利です。
  Koko wa densha ga iide yoo. benidesu.
  From here it is better to take the train. Because it’s more convenient.
K01: じゃあ、電車で行きます。どうも
  Jaa, densha de kimasu. dōmo arigatō.
  Then I’ll go by train. Thank you.
(Marugoto A1 Rikai, Lesson 13, Audio 217, 00:01:00:21)

(5) K01: キムさんは、どんなエコ活動を
  Kimu-san wa, donna ekō katsudō o shiteimasu ka.
  Mr. Kim, what kind of eco-friendly activities are you doing?
K02: エコですか？そうです、わたしは
  Eko desu ka? Sō desu, watashi wa
  environmentally friendly, right? Well, I try not to throw oil out of the kitchen while cooking.
(Marugoto Elementary 2 A2 Katsudou, Lesson 15, Audio 157, 00:01:00:15)

The forms of Ko-So-A gata found in the Marugoto Japanese Language, and Culture textbook are examples of conversation (4) and conversation (5). When the type of Fira ‘Anoo’, a word used when calling someone, is translated into English, many of the equivalents are “excuse me/sorry/hmm,” as shown in the example conversation (4). According to the data in Table 1, the Fira ‘Anoo’ type has the highest frequency of occurrence compared to the other types, at 38.3 percent.

In the example conversation (5), the type of Fira ‘Soudesune’ denotes the speaker’s approval or affirmation of the other party. This Fira also used when someone thinking and doubting something.

### Hai type (Hai gata)

This type of Hai gata is also found in the conversational data. Here is an example of its use.

(6) K01: おー。
  Oo.
K02: はい、私はどうしようか。
  Hai, watashi wa dō shōyō ka.
  Yes. I don’t know what to do.
K01: ジャズが好きです。
  Jyazu ga suki desu.
  I like Jazz.
K02: そうですか。
  Sou desu ka.
  Oh, I see.
(Marugoto Plus A1, Can do 28, 00:05:00:23)

The ‘hai’ fira that appears in conversation (6) does not appear as a form of aizuchi but rather as a Fira that is used to attract the interlocutor’s attention. ‘Hai’ type of Fira can be paired with ‘yes’ in English in the Marugoto Japanese Language and Culture textbooks for beginners (A1) and elementary (A2). This type of Fira ‘hai’ does not appear in the middle or at the end of a speech; instead, it predominately appears at the start of a speech, as in the example of conversation (6).

### Maa type (Maa Gata)

This type of Fira Maa-gata or type of Maa is the type of Fira with the fewest occurrences among others, only 0.4 percent. The following is an example of the occurrence of the Fira Maa type in the conversational data (7).

(7) K01: かわいいセーターですね。
  Kawaii seeta desu ne.
  Wow! What a cute sweater huh.
K02: あっ、ありがとうございます。
  Arigatou gozaimasu.
  Ah, thank you.
(Marugoto Elementary 1 A2 Katsudou, Lesson 17, Audio 170, 00:01:00:03)
The Firaa 'Maa’ utterance is a speech used when someone is impressed by something, such as a conversation example (7). Both beginner level (A1) and elementary level (A2) of the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbook are combined into English to form ‘Wow.’ This type of Firaa Maa-gata only appears at the beginning of the speech and not in the middle nor at the end of speech.

**N type (N gata)**

This type of Firaa N-gata appears more than the type of Firaa Boon-gata, which is as much as 13 percent. The following is an example of using N-gata in conversation (8).

**Example (8)**

K01: あのう、ちょっといいですか。

K02: ええっと。

K01: もうちょっと説明してくださいませんか。

K02: この言葉の使い方がよくわかりません。

K01: わかりました。

K02: 私もよくわかりません。

K01: わかりました。

K02: さあ、ルパさん何がいいですか。

K01: うーん、ルパさん何がいいですか。

**Saa type (Saa gata)**

The last type of form is Firaa Saa-gata. This type of Firaa occurred much more than Maa-gata Firaa which is 0.7%. Below is an example of Saa-gata Firaa in conversation (9).

**Example (9)**

K01: きま、ルパさん何がいいですか。

Saa: うーん。

K01: ええと。

Saa: ええと。

K02: ええと。

**Functional Analysis on The Types of Firaa**

Table 2 summarizes the research findings on the functions of Firaa types. In Januariaka (2018), Yamane’s theory is used to analyze the classification of functions of Firaa types. According to Yamane (2002) and Xinyan (2015) in Januariaka (2018), the functions of Firaa including 1) Discourse adjustment function, which is divided into four variations: (FG1) Starting a topic or speech; (FG2) Defend the right to speak; (FG3) Time generator; and (FG4) Change of speaker. 2) The interlocutor’s adjustment function is divided into three variations: (FG3) refining, (FG6) doubts, and (FG7) common understanding.
The Use of Firaa in “Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture” Textbooks for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) Levels

Table 2: Types of Firaa and the Functions of Types of Firaa in Marugoto Beginner Level (A1) and Elementary Level (A2).

| Firaa Type | Firaa' Variation | Firaa's type function | Total |
|------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| vocal      | ｧ  | FG 1 5 FG 2 0 FG 3 0 FG 4 0 FG 5 0 FG 6 0 FG 7 1 | 15   |
|            | ｧー | FG 1 0 FG 2 0 FG 3 2 FG 4 0 FG 5 0 FG 6 0 FG 7 5 | 5    |
|            | ｴ   | FG 1 0 FG 2 0 FG 3 0 FG 4 0 FG 5 0 FG 6 0 FG 7 1 | 1    |
|            | ｴー | FG 1 4 FG 2 3 FG 3 0 FG 4 4 FG 5 1 FG 6 13 FG 7 13 | 13   |
| Koso-A     | ｿ¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬¬&#xa;Function to begin a topic or speech (FG 1) and a function to express doubt (FG6).

Moreover, the types of Firaa and their functions that most often appear in the Marugoto: Beginner Level (A1) and Elementary Level (A2) textbooks are the Koso-A type, especially the ‘ano’ Firaa, which carries the function of starting a topic or speech (FG1), used as many as 55 times (20.3 percent) occurrences and the type of ‘Eeto’ carrying the time generating function (FG3) was used 42 times (15.5 percent).

**CONCLUSION**

The benefits of communication skills-oriented textbooks such as the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture are that the types of Firaa and the functions of the types of Firaa were sufficiently varied to be introduced from the beginning, namely at the Beginner Level (A1) and Elementary Level (A2). The sound of Firaa types, the other types of Firaa such as ‘Eeto’ type, ‘Koso-A’ type, ‘hai’ type, ‘ni’ type, ‘maa’ type, and ‘saa’ types are all included in the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbook for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels.

The functions of the types of Firaa in the Marugoto Japanese Language and Culture textbook for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels include 1) to start topics and speeches, 2) to defend the right to speak, 3) function as time generator, 4) to refine, and 5) to show hesitation (Yamane, 2002; Momose, 2022). There is no Firaa with a speaker switching function in the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbooks for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels. This is because the Firaa with this function is usually found at the end of the sentence (Nakajima, 2009), while of all the Firaa introduced in the Marugoto: Japanese Language, and Culture textbook for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels, there is no Firaa that is located at the end of the sentence was introduced.

The level of Japanese language education has an impact on the Firaa presented to Japanese language learners. This is demonstrated by differences in the number and variety of Firaa types found in the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbooks for Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels. As can be seen from the results and analysis in this study, the Marugoto: Japanese Language and Culture textbooks for
Beginner (A1) and Elementary (A2) levels have included *Fira* in the teaching materials. As a result, additional research is required to determine whether the communicative approach used in this reference book represents one of the communicative textbooks.

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