

Japanese English at the University Level: grammatical features seen in Spoken Learner Corpus

Michiko Nakano, Masanori Oya,
Kazuharu Owada, Norifumi Ueda
and Tae Yamazaki



A set of tags to characterize a spoken learner language

- In this presentation, we propose two types of tag set and preliminary analysis:
 - syntactic error tags and some characteristics of Japanese English
 - speech dysfluency tags some characteristics of Japanese English
- We will illustrate that these two types of errors interact each other in the process of speech production.



Two kinds of tag sets

- Eight categories of syntactic error tags
 - noun number, agreement, tense, aspect, lexical choice, omission, addition, word order, and unclear
- Four categories of dysfluency tags
 - cutoff, repeat, repair, and reformulation



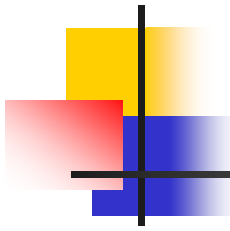
A part of the corpus used for frequency analysis

- Subjects: 30 adult EFL learners
- Oral interviews (15 mins.): warm-up, picture description, role play, story telling, and wind-down
- ACTFL 4-9 levels



Noun number

- $\langle +pl \rangle$ $\langle /+pl \rangle$
 - $a \langle +pl \rangle men \langle /+pl \rangle$ 25 cases
 - Lack of articles (a or the in E) in Japanese
- $\langle -pl \rangle$ $\langle /-pl \rangle$
 - $two \langle -pl \rangle hour \langle /-pl \rangle$ 132 cases
 - Lack of morphological indications (-s or -es in E) in Japanese



Subject-verb number-person agreement : problematic

- `<agr>` `</agr>` 93 cases
my sister `<agr>`go`</agr>` to
- Lack of subject-verb number/person agreement in Japanese
`<delart>`A`</delart>` university in Osaka.
she `<agr>`enjoy`</agr>` her life,



Tense errors: Past Tense is problematic for Japanese.

- <prs> </prs> 21 cases
- <pst> </pst> 150 cases (In Japanese the same morpheme –ta is used to mark past and perfective. So, Ls tend to use past erroneously to express his/her perfective notion.)
- <fut> </fut> 8 cases
- And my father and mother, <F>ah</F>, also <prs> **didn't** </prs> drink, <F> ah </F>, alcohol,
- and if I <prs>**could**</prs> go, I will go.



Aspect errors: No problem except for stative verbs

- <ing> </ing> 16 cases
- <perf> </perf> 6 cases
- <ing> I'm belonging </ing> to,
<F>urm</F>, Waseda University,
- And the lion in front of them
<repair>is</repair> <./> seems to be
<ing>smile</ing> to <repair>hi</repair>
them.



Lexical choice errors (15 types)

- 1 article errors: <eart> </eart> 71 cases
 - 2 possessive pronoun errors: <epos> </epos> 0 case
 - 3 demonstrative pronoun errors: <edem> </edem> 9 cases
 - 4 adverb errors: <ead> </ead> 8 cases
- Yes. Can be quick. <A> But not for you. <./> <eadv>Yes</eadv> Never mind.



Lexical choice errors (15 types)

- 5 conjunction errors: <econj></econj> 16 cases
- <A>What do you mean ‘maybe third year’?
Because I have many reports about Japanese literatures <econj> or </econj> some education classes, because I wanna be a teacher.
<A> How do you like living alone?
 Ah, <econj> but </econj> I, I lived alone <econj> until </econj> when I was a high school student.– some difficulty in interpreting his intended message.



Lexical choice errors (15 types)

- 6 adjective errors: <eadj> </eadj>

27 cases

<A>How much is your textbook?

This book is <eadj> high </eadj>.



Lexical choice errors (15 types)

- 7 verb errors: `<everb>` `</everb>` 4 cases
I always `<everb>` maintenanced `</everb>` the computer.
- 8 prepositional errors: 86 cases
`<eprep>` `</eprep>`: lack of prepositions in Japanese
I went to the movie theatre `<eprep>` from `</eprep>` the afternoon.– NL transfer



Lexical choice errors (15 types)

- 9 morphological errors: 36 cases
<emorph> </emorph>
- 10 interjection errors: 1 case
<einter> </einter>
- 11 pronoun errors: 1 case
<epron> </epron>
- 12 modal auxiliary errors: 1 case
<emda> </emda>



Lexical choice errors (15 types)

- 13 indefinite pronoun errors: 1 case
<eindpro> </eindpro>
- 14 noun errors: 1 case
<enoun> </enoun>
- 15 lexical choice errors: 136 cases
<elex> </elex>



An example of Lexical choice error

- choose <eart> the </eart> tie <F> mm
</F> and <./> so the <F> mm, mm </F>
the <F> mm </F> <elex> **buyer** </elex>
<F> mm </F> recommended <F> mm
</F> <repeat> one </repeat>, one tie
<F> mm </F> the tie <F> mm </F>
<cut> li </cut> <pst> looks </pst>nice. –
shop assistant?



(redundant) 15 Addition errors

- 1 redundant articles: 34 cases

<redart> </redart>

Will you have **a** lunch? Will you have **the** dinner?—lack of plural vs singular distinction in Japanese

- 2 redundant prepositions: 33 cases

<redprep> </redprep>

I live **in** alone. – ‘live in’ is remembered as a chunk or does not know ‘alone’ is adverb.

Additive errors

| Error Type | tag | <i>f</i> | Preposition addition errors | <i>f</i> |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| addition | <redart></redart> | 34 | to | 14 |
| | <redconj></redconj> | 1 | in | 10 |
| | <redinter></redinter> | 0 | for | 3 |
| | <redprep></redprep> | 33 | at | 3 |
| | <redpron></redpron> | 0 | from | 2 |
| | <redadv></redadv> | 2 | with | 1 |
| | <redadj></redadj> | 3 | | 33 |
| | <redpos></redpos> | 1 | | |
| | <redsub></redsub> | 0 | | |
| | <redobj></redobj> | 2 | | |
| | <redverb></redverb> | 0 | | |
| | <redcop></redcop> | 9 | | |
| | <redmda></redmda> | 3 | | |
| | <redapos></redapos> | 0 | | |
| | <rednoun></rednoun> | 0 | | |
| | | | 88 | |

Omission errors

Table 4. Preposition omission errors

| Error Type | tag | <i>f</i> | Preposition omission errors | <i>f</i> |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| omission | <delart></delart> | 265 | | |
| | <delconj></delconj> | 3 | TO | 36 |
| | <delinter></delinter> | 1 | IN | 13 |
| | <delprep></delprep> | 83 | AT | 11 |
| | <delpron></delpron> | 6 | OF | 8 |
| | <deladv></deladv> | 4 | ON | 5 |
| | <deladj></deladj> | 5 | WITH | 3 |
| | <delpos></delpos> | 5 | FROM | 2 |
| | <delsub></delsub> | 2 | BY | 1 |
| | <delobj></delobj> | 47 | ABOUT | 1 |
| | <delverb></delverb> | 12 | OUT OF | 1 |
| | <delcop></delcop> | 22 | DURING | 1 |
| | <delmda></delmda> | 3 | FOR | 1 |
| | <delapos></delapos> | 2 | | 83 |



Distribution of error types

Total Number of errors: 1511

Noun Number 157: 10%

Agreement 93: 6%

Tense 179: 12%

Aspect 22: 1%

Lexical Choice 398: 26%

articles 71 and prepositions 86

Addition 88: 6%

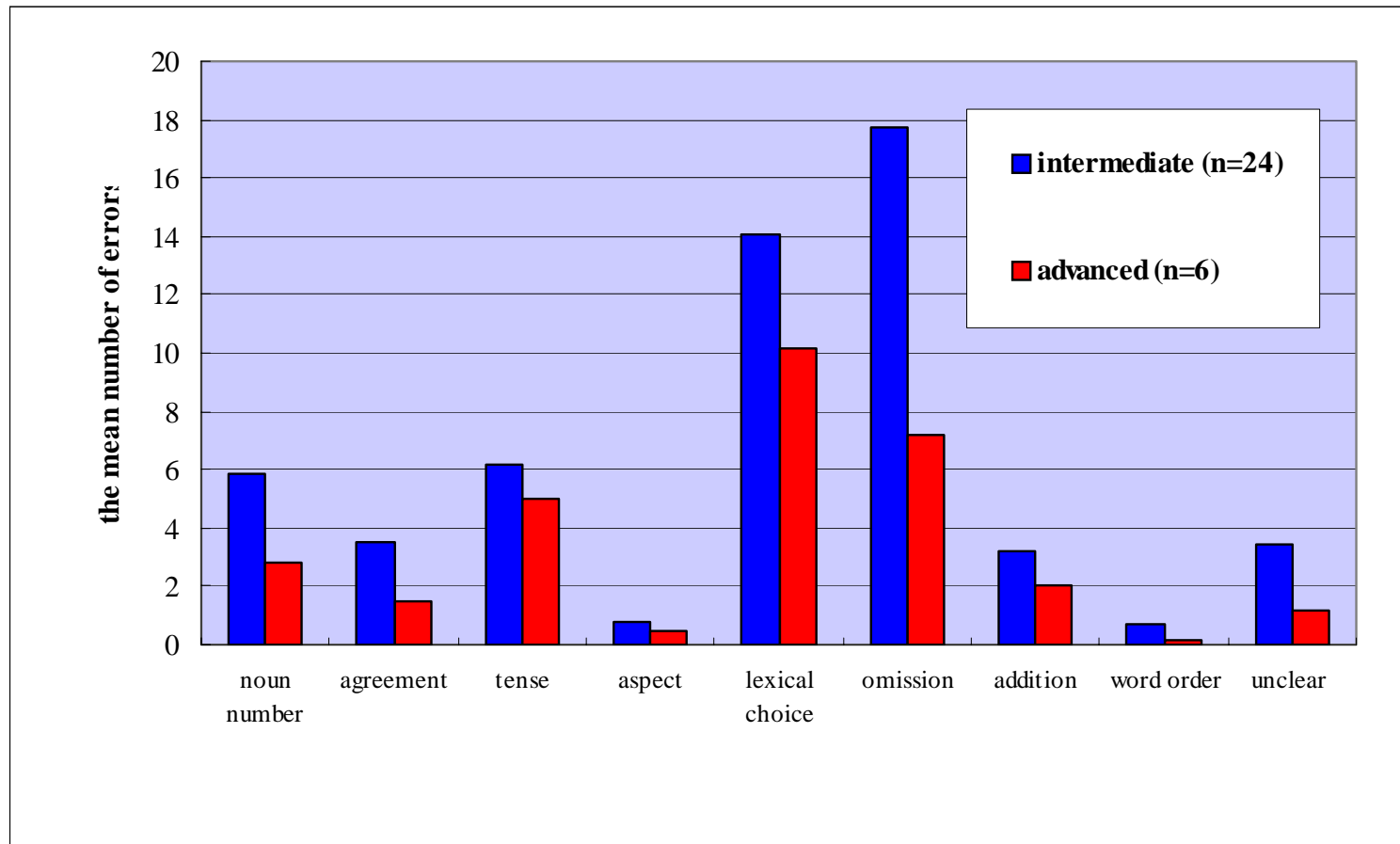
Articles 34 and Prepositions 33

Omission 466: 32%

Articles 264, Prepositions 83, object deletion 47,
copula deletion 22 and verb deletion 12

Word Order 19: 1% Unclear 89: 6%

Proficiency and Errors





Relationship between Syntactic Features Lacking in NL and Errors

Syntactic Features lacking in NL appear to be main sources of learner errors. NL linguistic competence is persistent, even when we are learning English.

We have a tendency to automatically produce chunks which we learned, due to input frequency.

Do we have syntactic creativity? Yes, in the sense of generating a novel string of words

Do we have lexical borrowing? Yes, sushi, sashimi, Tonkatsu, Soba, Udon, tempura, sukiyaki, Shinto, Cup Noodle, Karaoke, mikan, geisha, kamikaze, samurai, etc.

What about terms in Politics and Economics?



Interlanguage or EIL

- Many opinions are posted in our BBS about this debate, particularly among participants in the expanding circle.
- This depends on how each of us looks at the speed of spread in English: the number of speaking population and the opportunities to use English internationally.



EIL or Interlanguage

- We have seen in our OIC and cyber meetings that there are more common norm-developing features (i.e., errors in terms of NS Standard.) Once we in the expanding circle start to use English as in the outer circle, rich common features will be retained in our spoken English.



EIL

- According to Modiano, users of EIL represent some portion of native speakers, ESL and EFL speakers whose English is highly comprehensible, intelligible and interpretable (three criteria) in the international context of use. But some users of English including NS, ESL and EFL speakers should not be regarded as EIL speakers, when their English does not satisfy the three criteria.