An Error Analysis of the Speech of an Experienced Japanese Learner of English

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1. Introduction

There are a number of areas that second language acquisition (SLA) researchers in the world have been ardently investigating. In summation, Ellis (1994: 18) identifies four essential areas of SLA investigation: 1) characteristics of learner language, which involve errors, acquisition orders, variability, and pragmatic features; 2) learner-external factors, where social contexts are concerned; 3) learner-internal mechanisms, which deal with first language transfer, learning processes, communication strategies, and knowledge of linguistic universals; and 4) the language learner, where motivation and learner strategies are investigated.

Among these four areas of study, the description of the characteristics of learner language is considered the most essential. Without describing the learner language in detail, we cannot legitimately explain what occurs in the acquisition process. In other words, we cannot investigate how learner-internal/external factors affect the learner language until we have a good grasp of the general characteristics of learner language itself.

To further understand the nature of learner language, *error analysis* (EA) has widely been used among SLA researchers since it took over its predecessor, *contrastive analysis*, in the late 1960s. EA begins with the premise that errors can be attributed to a variety of factors, not solely to interference from the native language. By collecting a raw linguistic sample and analyzing the errors within it, researchers in the EA camp closely examine, and hopefully explain, the linguistic competence—however transitional it may be—of a second language learner.
It is quite natural for a second language learner to make errors when she puts the language to use. However, the way in which a second language researcher should interpret those errors can be a subject of argument. Corder (1974), for example, refers to the spontaneous speech of a second language learner as *idiosyncratic dialect*, which has its own grammar and is in no way *erroneous* in the usual sense. He argues:

I suggest it is misleading to refer to the idiosyncratic sentences of the second language learner as *deviant*. I also suggest that it is as undesirable to call them *erroneous* as it is to call the sentences of a child erroneous, because it implies a willful, or inadvertent breach of rules which, in some sense, ought to be known. (104)

Selinker (1974) joins Corder in advocating the existence of a separate linguistic system possessed by a second language learner, which he calls *interlanguage*. Interlanguage (IL) is a full-fledged language, which is not a subpart of the native language (NL) or the target language (TL) of a second language learner. Whereas researchers such as Burt and Kiparsky (1972) regard the deviations of a second language learner as *goofs* and suggest practical ways to correct them, the notion of deviation versus the norm is acknowledged here.

Whether it is deviant or self-contained, applying EA to IL will enable us to reveal some reality of the learner language. It is therefore of significance to try this EA approach with an English learner in order to investigate how she has internalized her learner language. To the best of my knowledge, EA research with a Japanese informant who has rich overseas experience has not yet been carried out. In this paper, I will utilize EA on the IL of an experienced adult English learner/speaker based on an interview, with hopes of revealing her linguistic competence, however partial it may be.

The aim of this research is to investigate how a Japanese learner of English has acquired different tense and aspect variations of English verbs by analyzing the errors in her speech. This is a pilot study of very limited data, which is obviously not intended to reveal the overall picture of how this particular learner (or Japanese learners of English in general) has internalized the rules of English verb usage.

Assuming a “hierarchy of errors,” Burt and Kiparsky (1974) suggest that there is a difference between *global* and *local* errors. They say:
Global mistakes are those that violate rules involving the overall structure of a sentence, the relations among constituent clauses, or, in a simple sentence, the relations among major constituents. Local mistakes cause trouble in a particular constituent, or in a clause of a complex sentence. (73)

They claim that global errors are more serious and rank higher in the error hierarchy than local ones, and they should be corrected prior to all others in language classrooms. Accordingly, errors in tense and aspect are regarded as local errors. They may be minor errors, for they may not cause grave breakdowns in communication. However, they are extremely common mistakes among second language learners of English and very much worth investigating since tense and aspect represent one of the most essential parts of English grammar.

2. Methods

2.1 Participant

The informant of this study, Aki (pseudonym), is a young Japanese woman, age 27. She has had formal English education for a total of 10 years: 3 years in junior high school, 3 years in senior high school, 2 years in junior college and 2 years in a four-year college as an English major. She also learned conversational English through American missionaries intermittently between kindergarten and eighth grade. She was an exchange student in the U.S.A. for one year and, more recently, lived in Australia for one year as a Japanese teacher at an elementary school. She has developed her oral skills through everyday interactions with native speakers of English. She is currently an English instructor to children at a local language school.

She considers herself to be a woman of few words, though she is a very cheerful and fun person. She was ashamed of her English speaking skills and slightly reluctant to accept the interview. She read the interview question items in advance and finally accepted the interview by signing the consent form.

2.2 Procedure
Myself and the participant sat down in the living room of my private home with a portable cassette tape recorder (Sony TCM-36) placed on the table between us. We began with “small talk” in Japanese about her age, background, personality, job, and so on for 10 minutes as an icebreaker. Then I declared the start of the interview. I asked Aki to report on some of the events she experienced during her stay in Australia. The prepared question items, which were presented to Aki before she signed the consent form, are listed in Appendix 1, although these questions underwent slight changes in the actual interview. The details are recorded in the transcripts.

During the 20-minute interview, I asked Aki to share with me some photographs she took during her stay in Australia and tell me the story associated with each picture. (I had asked her in advance to bring pictures of memorable occasions.)

2.3 Data Analysis

The data collected on the audio tape was carefully transcribed. I adopted the two-column transcription system to separate statements from the interviewer and the interviewee into different columns with each line numbered. This made the subsequent computer-assisted text analysis easier. I removed all other parts but the informant's responses from the transcript, converted it into a text file, and then inputted it into WordLab, an English corpus analyzer software by Japan China Industrial Communications Co., Ltd., for a computer-assisted text analysis. The software was mainly used for measuring frequencies of verbs in the transcript. The verbs were also studied manually for their tense/aspect appropriateness in contexts.

3. Results and Discussion

Before embarking on EA, it is important to discuss the definition of the term “errors.” Richards (1974) acknowledges two different kinds of errors: performance errors and competence errors. Corder (1967) goes a step further to propose different terminologies for these two kinds of errors and stresses that we must make a clear distinction between mistakes and errors; the former refers to non-systematic performance errors of chance circumstances, whereas the latter can be defined as “the systematic errors of the learner from which we are able to reconstruct his knowledge of the language to date, i.e., his
"transitional competence" (25). Corder argues that EA should concentrate on dealing only with errors.

In the following discussion of Aki’s speech, the analysis focuses on competence errors. However, since this study is based on limited observable output, I must admit that it has been difficult to clearly determine which deviations are “mistakes” or “errors” in Corder’s terminology. It would require a much more extensive and longitudinal data analysis for a researcher to be able to precisely discern mistakes from errors.

3.1 General characteristics of Aki’s speech

In general, Aki’s speech was smooth and hardly stagnant. It proved her familiarity with conversational English. However, it was somewhat grating on my ears that she had a tendency to insert Japanese words such as *hai* for “yes,” *un* for self-affirming “yeah” or “right,” *chigau* for “no, no,” *chotto matte* for “just a moment,” and *nani* for “what should I say?” into the English context.

3.2 Expressions of past events

Aki’s task in this study was to explain a number of events that occurred in the past, where she was expected to use a number of past-tense verbs and perfectives. The error types of my particular interest in this investigation consist of four cases: 1) cases where past-tense verbs are substituted by present-tense verbs; 2) cases where be-verbs are inserted before the main verbs to signal the past, e.g., “I was watch(ed) TV yesterday”; 3) cases where sequence of tenses, or tense agreement, is violated; and lastly, 4) misuse or absence of perfectives. In addition to these four error types, cases where we would normally expect auxiliaries of past habits such as “would” or “used to” are also examined.

Numerical references in parentheses, such as (#25), in all subsequent discussions correspond to the numbers given to utterances in the transcript.

3.2.1 Present-tense verbs for past-tense verbs

In Aki’s speech, *WordLab* detected 40 appearances of verbs in past-tense forms, which accounts for 14.7% of all verb appearances (40 of 273 total verb appearances).
This figure was much lower than I expected, given that the task was mostly about reporting past events. It is suspected that there are many cases where Aki substituted past-tense verbs with present forms. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the denominator also included cases with root forms (e.g., “didn’t go”) and progressive forms (e.g., “was going”) as well as such expressions as “I think ...,” “I know ...,” and “I mean ....” Additionally, it was found that the software was not especially successful in precisely assigning parts of speech to words. Therefore, it is too hasty to conclude that Aki has not acquired English tenses.

There were 95 cases (verified by a manual search) where Aki used present-tense forms of verbs for expected past-tense forms. Of course, these include some ambiguous cases where she probably intended direct narratives and what is called “the historical present,” with which she might have consciously or unconsciously intended dramatic and vivid rhetorical effects. Nevertheless, it has become obvious that she has some trouble with using past-tense verbs properly, despite the extensive experience she has had with the English language. This does not mean, however, that her IL has a tense-lenient or tense-less verb system; she often corrected herself on verb tenses (#11, #36, #70, #88, #108, #166, #174). It is noteworthy that she was self-monitoring her speech and conscious of making mistakes, thus making corrections as soon as she noticed her mistakes. Therefore, not all, but in many cases she was aware that she was making mistakes, and in this respect, I classify these errors to be performance errors. She clearly knew the rules for past-tense verbs but could not apply them 100% of the time to her performance in the pressed interview situation.

3.2.2 Be-verb insertion before main verbs

One of the common errors among many elementary-level English learners, as well as some speakers of non-standard variations of English, is to insert the past-tense form of a be-verb before the main verb of a sentence to refer to past events, for example, “I was look(ed) at the sign.” I examined Aki’s speech for this construction but could not find a single instance of this error. This is not surprising, considering her long association with the English language. Her competence was revealed as obviously beyond the novice level.
3.2.3 Tense agreement violation

Violation of tense agreement is commonly found in Japanese learners of English. Some people argue that this is a result of language transfer, or language interference to be more precise. (The Japanese language does not have a tense agreement rule; the tense of a complex sentence is usually realized once by the main verb of the matrix sentence.) However, this view about language interference has been rejected in recent SLA research. Burt and Kiparsky (1972: 3), for example, are skeptical about such contrastive analysis and argue against it from their experience, “We stress that we do not mean [learning the student’s error regularities] in the sense of contrastive analysis with respect to syntax, for we have not found that the majority of syntactical goofs are due to the native language syntax of the learner.” Therefore, according to Burt and Kiparsky, we should consider the IL of a second language learner as an independent entity from her NL and treat it as such.

Burt and Kiparsky (1974: 73), also list the breach of “tense continuity across clauses” as a global error, as it affects the overall organization of a sentence and spoils comprehensibility more seriously than other local errors. I, however, must argue against the notion that violation of tense agreement outweighs other errors for comprehensibility. Aki made four errors in this category: 1) “I thought it is great opportunity” (#6); 2) “I thought this is what blue is” (#28); 3) “I thought that is because you don’t eat seaweed” (#74); and 4) “They learned how to use chopsticks and try to eat” (#90). Not one of the errors in these examples spoil the overall comprehensibility of the sentence to a great degree. Aki’s intention is clear and most English speakers would understand her meaning in these sentences. While this data is too limited to draw concrete conclusions, I suspect that in most cases, the tense agreement violation leads only to minor errors.

3.2.4 Perfectives

During the interview, I purposefully asked Aki questions about events in the past that associate with the notions of experience, completion, continuation, and the distant past, in order to induce her to use perfectives. In the transcript, I found only four cases of perfective use by Aki.
In the first case (#8), Aki seems to be a little too self-conscious in answering, “I had taught Japanese...” to my question, “What did you do in Australia?” She could have answered in a simpler way: “I taught Japanese.” In the second case (#24), her confusion with perfectives is plainly demonstrated: “I already, I, ah? I have been, ahh, I have already been America for, one year? so it’s not first time to go abroad.” She must have meant to say, “It was not the first time I went abroad because I had already been to America for about a year.” Obviously, Aki was struggling to figure out how she should mix simple past tense and perfect aspect into a single sentence. This example demonstrates Aki’s standing in her linguistic developmental path. The third case was when I induced her to report a null experience: “I had never fail to do that thing” (#62). Here, again, Aki seems to be self-conscious. In the final case, Aki is unsuccessful in using the perfective: “So, … research, ahh, the money gonna used, for research why the phenomenon has happen or something” (#120).

In addition to those listed above, I made several attempts to elicit perfective constructions from Aki with questions such as “Have you been corresponding with each other since you left Australia?” (#183). Other attempts included #33, #73, #77, #191, #195, #205, and #209. However, these efforts failed to trigger perfectives from Aki. I suspect that she was not very comfortable in using perfectives. Or more precisely stated, her IL seems to have not yet developed up to the level that allows natural use of perfective constructions.

3.2.5 Expressions of past habits or iterative aspect

Although expressions of past habits and the iterative aspect do not specifically involve the tenses of English verbs, there are some special locutions in English which are used for past habits, namely, the iterative aspect, such as “would” and “used to.” In the interview, I attempted to urge Aki to report particular past habits, for example, “How did you spend your most ordinary day?” (#35) (see also #57 and #71). I also tried to induce her to compare two situations, past and present, and refer to the past situation with “used to” by questions such as: “Have you noticed any change in yourself... before and after you stayed in Australia?” (#73) (see also #33, #77, and #79). However, my attempts failed flat, and Aki never responded with these constructions. This can be interpreted in three possible ways. First, Aki has not yet internalized these constructions.
Second, my triggers were not designed well enough to elicit these expressions from her. Third, is the case of avoidance, which is a communication strategy used by second language learners such that they “avoid” unfamiliar expressions or difficult constructions, and paraphrase with more familiar expressions to them. However, in the post-interview chat, Aki confessed that using “would” or “used to” never occurred to her during the interview. This fact eliminates the avoidance interpretation, leaving one or both of the first two interpretations as explanations for Aki’s lack of the iterative aspect. I suspect the first interpretation might have been the case, that Aki’s IL was premature for these constructions.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I briefly reviewed the relationship between learner language and the errors involved. I then attempted to perform an error analysis of the speech ability of an experienced Japanese learner of English, focusing on expressions of past events. Using error analysis, we expect to learn truths about the interlanguage of a language learner. There may be a variety of factors affecting the IL, but it has been shown that interference from the learner’s native language is considered to exhibit only a minor effect in modern applied linguistics theories.

The informant of this study, Aki, appeared to be a fluent speaker of English, though her English usage in regard to reporting past events was found to have some room for improvement. She did not have the elementary-level problem of inserting a be-verb before the main verb of a sentence to indicate pastness, yet she used quite a number of present-tense verbs in reporting past events. She could also improve on her tense agreement across clauses, but this should not be considered to be so crucial a problem as some linguists anticipate, nor a grave interference from her native language Japanese. Her unstable usage of perfect and iterative aspects indicates that she is still in the developmental stage of internalizing English aspect. If she becomes familiar with these aspects, her level of communicative competence will advance.

Although this case study was conducted with a limited scope on limited data, the tense-related errors found in the analysis seem typical and common among learners of English. In other words, the error patterns found above with Aki can be generalized to
many advanced English learners. I am convinced that this study has successfully revealed part of the reality about learner language, and that what was found here will serve as useful data for future SLA studies and for the improvement of English language pedagogy from the perspective of tense acquisition.

References


Appendix 1: Intended Interview Questions

1. What was the reason you decided to go to Australia?
2. How did your family react to your decision?
3. What was your first impression of Australia? What did you think of Australia the first time you arrived there?
4. Did your impression of the country change over time?
5. Describe your typical day in Australia. How did you spend your most ordinary day?
6. I know there are a lot of crimes in Australia, would you tell me some of the things you never failed to do everyday for your personal security?

7. Have you noticed any change in yourself, your personality, your views of life, beliefs, dietary preferences, hobbies, etc. before and after your stay in Australia?

8. Please show me some pictures of Australia and tell me stories about them.

9. Please tell me about the person whom you consider as your best friend in Australia?

10. Have you been corresponding with each other since you left Australia?

Appendix 2: The Transcript

**Transcript of the interview with Aki**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewer</th>
<th>Aki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK, Aki, thank you for sharing your precious time with me, for this short interview. In this interview I’d like to ask you about your life in Australia. I know you’ve been to Australia and had a wonderful time there. First of all, let me ask you, “What was the reason why you decided to go to Australia?”</td>
<td>Mmmmm .. I .. thought it is great opportunity to work at public school in Australia. There is many people works there, uh, I mean, many Japanese works in Australia, mmmm, but, I think, working at public school is great, opportunities, ahh, yes, hh hh ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mmmmm .. What, what, what did you do in Australia?</td>
<td>Ahh .. I had taught Japanese .. at primary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mmm. mmm. Were you invited by Australian government?</td>
<td>Yes, yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yes, you were! Great. Ok. How did your family react to your decision?

Ahh ... My mother .. said to me ... ah, my mother ... un, my mother said to, me, “Why don’t you try this program?” and I applied. So mother .. agreed, my decision, and the other fami, I mean, father, and my brothers also, I think, I thoght I, un, they’re happy about my decision.

Oh, they were happy.

I think so. Ha ha ha ... un.

So it was your mother who first found this job?

Mmmmm. Yes.

Yes.

Un.

Ah, huh. What did your brother say?

Ahhh. It’s great ... to go abroad when we are young. I mean, un, yeah.

I see.

Yeah, yeah. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ...

What did your, what did your father say?

Ahhhhh, I already .. had bee, I, ah?, I have been, ahh, I have already been America for, one year?, so it’s not first time to go abroad. So, mmm, my father didn’t say, anything.

Ah... He, he..he must have encouraged you to go to Australia. Ok. Then, when you went down to Australia, what was your first impression of Australia? What did you think of Australia the first time you arrived there?

Mmmmm ...... ahh .... mmm .. when I arrived at airport, I didn’t feel, that I was in the other country, just feel like, .. mmm, the not, maybe, Nagano or, the other, city in Japan.

Umm hmm.

Un. Yes. Yes. And also, a first impression, of Australia is, ... very ... I, mmm, ah, it is wonderful, blue sky. I thought, ah, blue is,
Ah, this is what blue is.

29  Umm hmm.


31  Blue sky.

32  Ahh, blue sky. Yes.

33  Yes. All right. Very impressive. All right. So, uhhhhh, had your impression of the country, uhhhhhh ... changed over time? You said, Australia looked much familiar to you, but uhhhhhh, but did it change, or had it change over time?

34  Mmmmm. I said, that, mmmm, I didn’t feel like I was in the other country, but, when I, lived, and, so much different from Japan, un, because there’s, uhhh, it’s, mmmmm, great, mmm, g—Australia has a great natures, and, there’s a beautiful countyside. So, ... when I first impression is not feel like in, ... the other country, but it is really different from Japan.

35  I see. Thank you. Could you describe your typical day in Australia? How did you spend your most ordinary day?

36  Mmmm. So, I, teach, Japanese at primary school so I go to school, .. I went to school on Monday to Friday, and ... eight-thirty to three o’clock about, and I have one or two .. lessons, I had one or two lessons, a day, and, the other time I visited, the class, and maybe they are stud— they were studying math or they’re studying science. So, sometime I can teach, math, like a, three times two equals six or something. I can teach children like...

37  Oh, you taught math, to children.


39  And?

40  And (prepare) for the, lesson.

41  What’s that?

42  Umm prepare for the lesson, and visit, .. the other classes and, did, my lesson.

43  Uh, huh. Did you take trains, or
take buses to school?

Ahhhh ... That's depends on the host family. Mmmm, if I, ahh, when I lived near the school I walked, to school or sometime, rode a bike, but, un, the other family, tooks me to school by car.

Mmmm, oh, you changed your host family, several times?

Un, yes, three times.

Three times!

Un.

Ahh, huh, ahh, huh. I see. Ok. And uhh,, What time did you go to sleep, usually?

What time did I, go to bed?

Yes.,

Go to sleep. Go to bed.

Ahhhh! It wasn't very, uhh, early. Ummm, maybe, before twelve?

Un.

Umm humm. Ok. Thank you. I know there are a lot of crimes in Australia, but would you tell me some of the things you never failed to do everyday, for your personal security?

Ahhhh, .. I, know there are lots of crime im Australia, but, where, umm, where I live is very safe countryside, so, ... I didn't, ... ummm, I, ... I don't get this meaning sorry. So, that means, ... you I never?

You never failed to lock the doors or you ...

Ahhh, and, ahh, and, the the thief came in or ...

Umm humm.

Umm humm. I had never fail to do that thing.

Umm humm. You mean locking the door?

Yes always. Un. Ah! Lo- Ah, yes, uhh, yes, locking the door. And if I have a money, lots of money, I, put the purse .. in a, safe-ty place. For example, I don't know, not in a bag, bag. Un, in a ... un. Ahh ... ah, and I, try to not, bring, backpack? Bring, how to say, ...po, like porch.
Ah, pouch.  

Pouch, yes.

A waist pouch.  

Waist pouch.

Oh, you always bring?  

Ummmm, like, when I go to, big city. I live in countryside, and I don't do that, I didn't do. But, when I, traveled, big city like Sydney or ... un ....

You would always carry, one of those waist po, pouches.  

Un.

I see. That's a good idea. OK. Have you noticed any change in you -- your personality, or your view of life, beliefs, dietary preferences, hobbies, and so on, before and after you stayed in Australia?

Hmmmmm, mmmmm, ... when I, said, to student we all, we, ... all Japanese eat seaweed, and they said, “Oh, yuck!” or something, but, I thought, that is, because, you, don't eat seaweed. That’s why, they, said like this, but, ... ummm ... I thought so. But, .. I .. uhhh, no, on weekend, I, stay the lakes near my host family’s house, so I always, swim in a lake, and, jump in, or some, make, ummm, always, and, swim in a lake, so, they is a seaweed. That's a very, ... ummmmm, ... how’d say, .. slime? Like, nani, like, ... I know, what, they said, “Yuck!” I feel like, I know, “Ahhh, that’s why they said so.” Un. Ahhh, is that not, good ans- ? ahhh, nandarou, no, un ...

That's OK.  

OK? So. Yeah, ... Before angry, after (OK).

So, you, you don't, you haven't noticed any change inside yourself?  

Ahh, inside. Uhhhh ....

Like you change your personality, or, your view of the world, has changed, or something like that.

Ahh, Ok. Tho ... Austra-, Australian, are very easy go, easy going. So, I'm always, ... I'm always, .. try to do, .. what nan ... mmm ...
nanda...what, ahhhhh...I'm very, careless, doing something quickly or doing, very, uhh, and I did lots of mistakes, but they are very, easy-going and take a, time, and, mmm, ... enjoy the time? I don't know, they may, times goes slowly, so, I'm gonna try to relax, don't rushed? Un. Un. Yes.

That's what you learned in Australia.

That's good, that's good. Ok. Could you show me some pictures of Australia, and tell me stories about them? Did you bring some pictures with you?

Yes, yes.

Ok.

Ummmm, this is I, was teaching ...

This is you?

Un. And I was teaching, that's grade, three students. And it says, that, "Watashi-wa, ..... desu." Like, name, I'm Catherine is. Ah, ur? "Watashi-wa Catherine desu." or something. Un. And they practicing, they were practicing the name. And also I taught, like colors, or numbers, mmm, some writings, ... hiragana. And also, I, ... we cooked okonomiyaki, in a cooking lesson.

I see.

And they, learned how to use chopsticks, and try to eat ...

What were they eating?

Mmm, okonomiyaki.

Ahhh, okonomiyaki. Ah, huh.

What grade students are they?

That is, mmm, grade one? Grade one.

Grade one.

Un.

Umm, hmm. How many students were in one class?

Ahhhhhh, about, mmmmmm, less than twenty, students.

Less than twenty.

Maybe, un, eighteen or nineteen or, un.

Hmmm. Did you enjoy teaching?

Yes, I did. Hmm.
Hmmmmm. Hmm. What what exciting part of teaching Japanese to children?

Ahhhh ..... You mean, the cooking or? No? Mmmmm...

Well, you, you enjoyed cooking?

Yes, yes, cooking. Ha ha ha. And they also enjoyed, I think.

Ahh, huh. Ok. Cooking was nice.

And, like something make, Japan has lots of events, like, mmm, hinamatsuri or tanabata, or and, make something. Made, un, so, me, we made lots of things, like, for example, wear the kimono, no, yukata, or, un, and, ahh, raijotaisou, we did raijotaisou, mmm, they, love it, love it. Un.

Was this class required, or, or optional?

Ah, required.

Required. Ok. And, did they seem to enjoy learning Japanese?

Un. I think so.

Hm hmm. That’s good.

Actually, not ju- ah Japanese and Japanese culture, or, un, un...

So they were interested in learning Japanese culture.

Yes, yes, like, un.

Ah, huh. OK, Thank you. And, could you tell me, your story about these pictures?

Ok. Mmmm, these are, mmm, raise the money, uhh, fund-raise.

Money, money ...

Uh, fund-raise day. And this is, mmm, red day. This is, everybody wear something red, and this is, raise the money for, people who, no, I’m not sure but, there’s a phenomenon, of the, some, uhh, children die suddenly, but the- I, they don’t know why. So, research, ahh, the money gonna used, for research why the phenomenon has happen or something. So, un, that’s a, anyway, that’s a fundation day. Un, ah, un? rai, un, fund-raise.
day. *Un*, yes. So, like, *un, akai hane no, bokin,* or ...

121 Ahh, in Japan.
122 And what did you call this day? *Un.*
123 Side, red?
124 Hmmm. Do—does the color red have any meaning?
125 Hmmmmm, I'm not sure. I don't know. I don't know.
126 You don't know.
127 Hmm. So, this day was very impressive to you.
128 Un. And everybody, wear, ...
129 So what were they doing?
130 Hmm, hhm. They're assembling in the, in the yard.
131 Ah, this is assemble, ah, *chiga-*; no, just, mmm, uhh, assemble.
132 And, uh, are they dancing or ..?
133 They're showing their clothes off?
134 Yes.
135 But they don—, they were not doing anything, any activities or any ...
136 Ahhh, mmm, just, how they look. They can see, enjoys,
137 Ha ha ha.
138 They won?
139 Uh, *un,* yes.
140 But they don—, they were not doing anything, any activities or any ...
141 Ahhh, no, but there is a, who gonna be a, most red person or, *nan,* say, *un,* so ...
142 Ha ha ha.
143 Maybe, she gonna be a first prize, because all red, I think she's gonna be win, and she did, ah, she won.
144 She won?
145 Uh.
146 Ah, because he was all in red.
Un, all in red. And he is the principal.

Prize also. Un, un.

This is pajama day.

Un. They all wear the pajama. This, is, this money for, people who doesn’t, who don’t have house? hou, houses, and, hou-, no, homeless, ah, home, un. And but, we can, un, we have a house, and we can wear the pajama and go to bed and that’s a very, good things.

Un, fund—raising, yes, for, people, ah, poor people? poor people.

Un.

Ah, they bring money ((corney?))

Ah! And also, yes!, yes! There’s a, maybe, box? And they put money in and walking around.

Yes, dona– ah, yes, un, yes un.

Wow! That’s funny. Ok. All right. Thank you very much for your pictures. Then, could you tell me about one person whom you consider as your best friend in Australia?
| 174 | Mmmm, ... when I have, ah, when I want to talk, I always talk, my, host mother, mmm, but maybe, ahhhh, as your best friend, that is maybe, Yuri, ah!, ha ha ha, ah, my friend, ah, mmm, hang on, (chotto matte), mmm, there is one more, there was one more Japanese teacher, in Bairnsdale, and I could meet her once in a week, and talk a lot. |
| 175 | Hmm hmm. So, so you think she was your best friend. |
| 176 | Yes. |
| 177 | And ah, what did you typically do with her? |
| 178 | Ahhh, just make, Japanese food, and eat it. Or just talked, un, we talked a lot, un. |
| 179 | About Japan? |
| 180 | Mmmmm. Un. |
| 181 | About everything? |
| 182 | About everything. |
| 183 | Ok. All right. Have you been corresponding with each other since you left Australia? |
| 184 | Mmmm, I, I, ahhhh, but I should more, but I, send just Christmas card once in a year. |
| 185 | Is she still in Australia? |
| 186 | Ah, ahhhh! I see. No. Ah, that means ... |
| 187 | Your friend. |
| 188 | Friend, ah, best friend? |
| 189 | Yes. |
| 190 | Ah, yes, yes, yes. She’s in, Japan. |
| 191 | In Japan. Have you been talking on the phone or ...? |
| 192 | Oh, emailing. |
| 193 | Un. Ah, talking, talking on the phone, email. |
| 194 | Un. |
| 195 | Have you met her in Japan? |
| 197 | In Japan. Where does she live? |
| 198 | Osaka. |
| 199 | So did you visit Osaka? |
| 200 | Mmmm, we met in Kyoto. |
| 201 | Hmmmm. I see, I see. Did you, did you, go sight−seeing in Kyoto? |
Ahh, un, yes, un, yes, un, un, hai, yes. Arashiyama? Arashiyama. Arashiyama in Kyoto.

All right. But you haven’t been, ahh, contacting with each other so often? Mmmmm, we do.

As, as much as you, you wish? Ahhh, ah, yes, yes, un, un, ah, un, un, hai, yes.

How often have you been, contacting with each other? Ahhhhh, in Engli– email?

Well, either by email or phone call or letter writing. Mmmmm, ohhhhhhh, ..... mmm once in a month?

Once a month. Un.

I see. Ok. Is she doing fine? Yes.

Ok. Thank you very much. Well, thank you Aki. That’s all for this interview. I do appreciate your cooperation. Thank you and have a good day! Thank you.
要旨
英語学習経験豊富な日本人の発話に基くエラー分析
原島 秀人

第二言語習得に関する研究対象として Ellis (1994) は学習者言語、学習者に影響する外的要因、学習者の持つ習得メカニズム、学習者心理、の四つの分野が在るとしている。中でも学習者言語 (learner language) または中間言語 (interlanguage) の研究、即ち学習者が第二言語を習得する過程で実際に使用する個人的言語の実態を明らかにする研究は、全ての第二言語習得研究の基となる基礎データを提供するものとして重要である。

本研究は学習経験豊富な日本人英語学習者に英語のインタビューを試み、その録音内容を正確に書き起こしたデータを基に、そこに現れた中間言語の中から特に動詞の時制誤用に注目し、エラー分析を行った上で当該学習者の第二言語習得における発達段階を診断した事例研究である。

分析の結果、被験者の中間言語において以下の点が明らかになった。

1. 過去事象表現において一般動詞の前に過去形 be 動詞を指し挿む初歩的なエラー段階は脱している。
2. 現在形動詞の過去表現への誤用が頻繁に見られる。
3. 時制の不一致、不安定な完了相が散見する。
4. 反復相については未定着であり、未だに発達段階である。

このようなエラーパターンは日本人熟練英語学習者を大方特徴付けるパターンであろうと予測されたが、今回の研究でそれが実証された。この分析結果は第二言語習得研究と日本の英語時制教育を考える上で重要な資料となるであろう。