

**FOSSILIZATION: A CHRONIC CONDITION
OR IS CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING THE
CURE?**

by

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ABSTRACT

It is probably true to say that most learners of a foreign or second language fail to achieve their aim of native-speaker-like proficiency due to an inability to permanently correct persistent errors. This condition has become known as fossilization. Research asserts that fossilization cannot be remedied. This dissertation contends, however, that perhaps fossilization can be remedied if a consciousness-raising approach is utilized. It first examines the origins of the concept of fossilization in interlanguage theory and looks at some contemporary views. It then summarizes the background of the group of Japanese adult learners who agreed to be the subjects of the study and establishes which fossilized element of their interlanguage should be the focus of the attempted de-fossilization. Consciousness-raising is then explained and a justification for its use in this study is given. The author also looks at the effects of instruction in SLA acquisition and at the type of grammar instruction that occurs in Japanese secondary schools. The intervention techniques are then described and reported on. It concludes by suggesting that perhaps consciousness-raising might work better with individual learners than with groups.

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CHAPTER 1: FOSSILIZATION AND INTERLANGUAGE

1.1 The origins of interlanguage theory

Any discussion of fossilization must begin with an outline of the concept of interlanguage. The term interlanguage came to prominence in 1972 in Selinker's paper of the same name. Stern (1983: 125) states that:

The concept of interlanguage was suggested by Selinker in order to draw attention to the possibility that the learner's language can be regarded as a distinct language variety or system with its own particular characteristics and rules.

Ellis (1985: 42-3) reviews the origins of interlanguage theory and notes that there are two distinct views of second language acquisition (SLA). One view is that put forward by mentalist, or psycholinguistic, theories of language acquisition which is that learners acquire a second language (L2) in much the same way as they acquire a first language (L1) because of an inbuilt faculty for language acquisition. The other view is based on behaviourist concepts of SLA where environmental factors and L1 interference shape acquisition.

The psycholinguistic view is in large part based on Chomsky's (1959) concept of Universal Grammar which asserts that people are born with 'innate linguistic principles which comprised the 'initial state' and which controlled the form which the sentences of any given language could take' (Ellis, 1985: 43). Chomsky's concept also included an *Acquisition Device* which would be put into operation by exposure to *primary linguistic data* (Chomsky, 1966). A contemporary of Chomsky's, Lenneberg (1967), writing about L1 acquisition, argued that children's brains were specially adapted to language acquisition and that this 'innate propensity was lost as maturation took place' (Ellis, 1985: 44).

1.2 Selinker's five processes

Both Chomsky and Lenneberg focused on L1 acquisition. It was Selinker's (1972) concept of interlanguage that led to the theory that learners acquire an L2 in a fixed order eventually leading to L2 proficiency or to a stage close to L2 proficiency.

In his 1972 paper Selinker chooses to disregard the small percentage of learners who achieve native-speaker competence as he assumes that because languages are constantly changing any learner who achieves L2 proficiency must have done so without being taught everything he or she has acquired. Instead he focuses on the 95% whom he sees as ideal second language learners and concludes that because the L2 utterances of the ideal learners differ from what native-speakers would say if they had tried to communicate the same meaning then:

‘One would be completely justified in hypothesizing, perhaps even compelled to hypothesize, the existence of a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a target language norm. This linguistic system we will call ‘interlanguage’.’ (Selinker, 1974: 35).

Selinker, writing in Richards (ed.) (1974: 35-41) suggests that there are five processes central to second language learning:

1. Language transfer.
2. Transfer of training.
3. Strategies of second language learning.
4. Strategies of second language communication.
5. Overgeneralization of TL (target language) linguistic material.

He contends (1974: 37) that ‘the most interesting phenomena in IL (interlanguage) performance are those items, rules and sub-systems which are fossilizable in terms of the five processes listed above’.

Selinker (1974: 37) hypothesizes that not only are the five processes central to second language learning but that each process creates fossilized items in learners' interlanguage. He also states that combinations of the five processes produce 'entirely fossilized IL competence'. He cites Coulter (1968) who presents examples of language transfer together with a strategy of communication which helps to convince learners that they know enough of the target language to be able to communicate effectively and they therefore stop learning. It could be said, perhaps, that the above is an example of an inherent weakness in the communicative approach with its emphasis on communication ahead of accuracy and where almost any output is encouraged and error-correction is kept to a minimum.

1.2.1 Language transfer

Appendix B to this paper is a list of errors uttered by a group of Japanese learners and it contains some examples of what Selinker refers to as *language transfer*, which is also referred to these days as *L1 interference*. Among Japanese learners *language transfer* often appears as the use of Japanese grammar patterns to form sentences in English. Some examples from Appendix B are:

Friday is no store.		
(Kinyoubi wa	mise ga	nai desu.)
Friday-topic	shop/store-object	is no.

Talking to friends and watching TV and ... listening to music.			
(Tomodachi ni	shabette	terebi o	mite
Friends- indirect object	talking to	TV-object	watching
ongaku o kite.)			
music-object	listening to.		

The first example was probably just laziness on the part of the learner who made no attempt to use an English grammar pattern in her utterance. The second example is a response to an enquiry regarding what the learner usually does on the weekend and the learner has confused the use of the Japanese *-te* form with the use of the morpheme *-ing*. The confusion arises because the *-te* form is used for both the Japanese equivalent of present progressive utterances and for describing habitual activities.

1.2.2 Transfer of training

Transfer of training, however, is quite different from *language transfer*. On the one hand the latter is the result of the influence of the learner's native language while on the other hand the former is the result of the influence of a third party, usually a text book in Selinker's opinion. He cites speakers of Serbo-Croat always using 'he' and never 'she' even when the distinction between the two is made in their own language and concludes that it is the consequence of drills always being presented with 'he' and never with 'she'. My own studies did not find any examples of fossilization due to *transfer of training*, although one possible example may be the excessive politeness of some L2 requests uttered by Japanese learners. For example, some students use the overly polite phrase 'May I have your name please?' in informal situations instead of the more appropriate 'What's your name?'. English textbooks in Japan which attempt to mirror the norms of Japanese usage, with its varying levels of politeness dependant upon the relative societal positions of the interlocutors, instead of applying the norms found in English-speaking countries could account for such inappropriate usage.

1.2.3 Strategies of learning and of communication

With regard to *strategies of second language learning and of communication*, Selinker (1974: 39) states that:

...little is known in psychology about what constitutes a strategy ...even less is known about strategies which learners of languages use in their attempt to master a TL and express meanings in it.

He also notes (1974: 39) that:

It has been pointed out that learner strategies are probably culture-bound to some extent.

Whilst his first remark above has been overtaken by time and subsequent studies into communicative and learning strategies his second remark may still be thought to be true. For example, Japanese learners tend not to ask their teachers direct questions when they do not understand and prefer to consult dictionaries or those sitting around them instead. This could be said to reflect a tendency toward reticence in Japanese society in general and the fear of making mistakes, which is said to be common in Japan.

1.2.4 Simplification

Selinker (1974: 40) refers to *simplification* as an example of a strategy of second language learning. However, the accuracy with which one may be able to classify certain examples of *simplification* as strategies of second language learning could be open to doubt. For example when a Japanese learner omits an article or utters what should be a plural as a singular is that *simplification* or is it *language transfer*? It could also be argued that it is a *strategy of communication*, as the learner may know that the utterance is incorrect but may also be aware that it will more than likely be understood by a native-speaker of English.

1.2.5 Overgeneralization

With regard to fossilization due to *overgeneralization* Selinker (1974: 38) gives examples such as the past-tense morpheme *-ed* being added to the main verb in a past-tense question, and of an Indian speaker who collocates 'drive' with 'bicycle'.

1.2.6 Backsliding

The phenomenon of *backsliding* is what convinced Selinker of the existence of both fossilization and interlanguage. *Backsliding* is where errors which had been thought to have been erased then re-appear, particularly when the speaker is ‘focused upon new and difficult intellectual subject matter or when he is in a state of anxiety or other excitement, and strangely enough, sometimes when he is in a state of extreme relaxation’ (Selinker, 1974: 36). Furthermore, Selinker claims that, backsliding is neither random nor towards the speaker’s native language but is toward an interlanguage norm.

1.3 Selinker’s definition of fossilization

Selinker (1974: 41-47) postulates that fossilized linguistic structures ‘even when seemingly eradicated, are still somehow present in the brain, stored by a fossilization mechanism (primarily through one of the five processes) in an IL’. However, he admits that it is often not possible to ‘unambiguously identify’ which of the five central processes the fossilized items may be attributable to. He goes on to hypothesize that a psychological structure, which he labels as an *interlingual unit*, is latent in the brain and is available to any learner whenever the learner wishes to produce the norm of any target language. This *interlingual unit* includes all three linguistic systems; native language, interlanguage, and target language; and, Selinker appears to be saying, is accessed when a learner attempts a target language norm. Again what Selinker appears to be saying is that if the attempt fails then the alternative language units contained in the interlingual unit become available to the learner, thereby creating an interlanguage. In his summary Selinker states that fossilization is a mechanism which also exists in the *interlingual unit* and that it will be present no matter how old or young the learner is nor how much instruction is given.

In Selinker's (1974: 49) opinion the latent psychological structure he writes of is 'different from and exists in addition to the latent language structure described by Lenneberg (1967, 374-379)'. According to Selinker his latent psychological structure:

- a) has no genetic time-table;
- b) has no direct counterpart to any grammatical concept;
- c) it may never be realized into a natural language; and
- d) it may overlap with other intellectual structures.

Possibly the most important difference between the two concepts is that regarding a genetic time-table. Lenneberg's view was that a child's brain has an innate propensity for language acquisition and that this propensity atrophies as time passes, however, as stated above in 1.1, Lenneberg was referring to L1 acquisition. According to Selinker's concept fossilization can take place at any stage of the learning process, even at a very early age.

In the notes to his paper (n.14) Selinker accepts that it is not only errors that may become fossilized but that 'correct things' can also become fossilized, especially if 'they are caused by processes other than language transfer'. Ellis (1985: 48) covers this point in a succinct definition of fossilization:

Fossilization occurs in most languages and cannot be remedied by further instruction. Fossilized structures can be realized as errors or as correct target language forms. If, when fossilization occurs, the learner has reached a stage of development in which feature X in his interlanguage has assumed the same form as in the target language, then fossilization of the correct form will occur. If, however, the learner has reached a stage in which feature Y still does not have the same form as the target language; the fossilization will manifest itself as an error.

Whilst Ellis' description of fossilized items is undoubtedly correct it is this paper's intention to examine and question his assertion that fossilization cannot be remedied.

1.4 Other views of fossilization

More recent commentaries on fossilization could perhaps be broadly grouped into two camps; the communicative or naturalistic camp on the one hand and the form or instruction-led camp on the other. Mitchell and Myles (1998: 13) label the two groups as *sociolinguistic* and *psycholinguistic* explanations of fossilization and this paper will use their categorizations. According to Mitchell and Myles the *psycholinguistic* explanation is that:

...the language-specific mechanisms available to the young child simply cease to work for older learners, at least partly, and no amount of study and effort can recreate them:

and the sociolinguistic explanation is that:

...older L2 learners do not have the social opportunities, or the motivation, to identify completely with the native speaker community, but may instead value their distinctive identity as learners or as foreigners.

1.4.1 Brown

One of the earliest proponents of the *sociolinguistic* explanation was Brown (1980) whose *optimal distance model* attempts to account for adults failing to master a second language in a second culture. Brown's model centres on *acculturation*, i.e. 'the process of becoming adapted to a new culture' (Brown, 1980: 129). It asserts that failure to master the L2 while living in a country where the L2 is the native language can be accounted for by the learner having 'learned to cope without sophisticated knowledge of the language' (Brown, 1994: 181). Brown goes on to say that:

... adults who achieve nonlinguistic means of coping in the foreign culture will pass through Stage 3 (of acculturation) and into stage 4 (adaptation /

assimilation) with an undue number of fossilized forms of language, never achieving mastery. (Brown, 1994: 180-1).

Brown's definition of fossilization differs from that of Selinker and Ellis as he sees it as a reversible condition. He uses the metaphor of "cryogenation"; the process of freezing matter at very low temperatures; to depict the reversibility of fossilization. His concept of how fossilization may be reversed centres around Vigil and Oller's (1976) 'account of fossilization as a factor of positive and negative affective and cognitive feedback' (Brown, 1994: 217). Brown's summation of Vigil and Oller's model is that fossilization may be overcome if the learner is given the necessary positive affective feedback, meant to encourage further attempts at communication, together with neutral or negative cognitive feedback which, Brown (1994: 218) states would:

...encourage learners to "try again", to restate, to reformulate or to draw a different hypothesis about a rule.

Brown also points out, however, that Vigil and Oller's model has been criticized for its reliance on extrinsic feedback and for not taking account of learners' internal factors.

My comment on this concept is that if fossilization could be overcome merely by saying to learners "That was very good but I'm not clear about ..." then fossilization would by now have ceased to be the main obstacle preventing progress to native-like proficiency that it is.

1.4.2 Lightbown and Spada

Lightbown and Spada (1999) could also be placed in the sociolinguistic group. Their findings tend towards the communicative approach and away from the view that language is learned by the 'gradual accumulation' (Lightbown and Spada, 1999: 119) of items which is a view favoured by

some researchers in the psycholinguistic camp, most notably Skehan (1998).

Lightbown and Spada (1999) report concerns that the communicative approach lacks sufficient correction of errors and explicit instruction and will lead to early fossilization of errors. In response they cite three studies, one by Lightbown and her colleagues in Quebec, Canada (Lightbown 1983, 1987), one by Savignon (1972), and one by Montgomery and Eisenstein (1985). In the case of the Savignon and the Montgomery and Eisenstein studies, it was found that learners who were exposed to a communicative element in their otherwise grammar-based lessons made greater improvements than those who did not receive a communicative element in their lessons. In the Lightbown study, learners whose lessons comprised solely of practice drills were unable to maintain their mastery of a particular form after it was no longer being practiced in class (Lightbown and Spada, 1999: 120-1). Therefore, by implication, Lightbown and Spada appear to be supporting the view that a communicative approach might help prevent early fossilization errors.

1.4.3 Skehan

Skehan (1994) refers to Long (1983, 1988) to make a case for the effectiveness of instruction. He asserts that instruction exerts:

...an influence to combat unbalanced memory-driven development. Learners are not easily allowed, that is, to forget about structure, when their tendency might be concentrate on communication and meaning. In this way, instruction pre-emptively reduces the likelihood of inflexibility and fossilization in language development (Long, 1988).

In a chapter entitled 'Psycholinguistic processes' Skehan (1998) has more to say about fossilization. His view is related to the debate surrounding two psycholinguistic processes: rule-based systems and exemplar-based systems. In the case of the former it is assumed that what is learned, although derived from actual instances, consists of underlying rules which

have been induced from the stimulus material and then become the basis for generalization and transfer. With the latter, learning is interpreted as the accumulation of chunks or formulaic items. Rather than relying on analysis and rules, users of exemplar-based systems match current input with correct prior input. There is a similarity here with Sharwood-Smith's view of consciousness-raising where interaction between explicit and implicit knowledge leads to acquisition. According to Skehan, judgements of well-formedness and instances of L2 production are based on these accumulated chunks.

Skehan's interpretation of fossilization (1998: 61) is that it is an error produced by a rule-based system which becomes an exemplar, albeit one which can be supplanted later if the underlying rule-based system evolves sufficiently. Or, in other words, fossilization is a misinterpretation of a rule by a learner which has not subsequently been eradicated by the accumulation of well-formed formulaic items. Skehan goes on to say that:

...using exemplars based on previous rule generation or using formulaic language is extremely practical as an attention-saving device.

If using exemplars resulted in consciousness-raising then the accumulation of exemplars might drive a learner's interlanguage forward thereby achieving de-fossilization. Furthermore, the use of exemplars would complement a C-R approach as both approaches have an accumulative aspect with advances in L2 acquisition being the objective.

CHAPTER 2: AN ASSESSMENT OF A GROUP OF LEARNERS

2.1 Background of the Class

The class which will be the subject of this attempted de-fossilization takes place once a week in a factory in the early evening. It comprises of eight learners, split evenly between the sexes. There is an age span of about twenty years ranging from the mid-twenties to the mid-forties. With the exception of one recent addition to the class they all work together and know each other quite well.

Although I have been teaching this class only since April of this year they had been having lessons for about twelve months previously with a colleague. The lessons last for at least ninety minutes and are usually nearly two hours long. However, the students prefer that the lessons are not too intense with too much bookwork. They prefer to chat and to attempt only one or two exercises from the text.

In general I would categorize their proficiency levels as ranging from false beginner to low intermediate with an overall tendency toward low intermediate. One member of the class, Yukari, acts as leader perhaps because the others defer to her more assured conversational manner, but she defers to Koji whose grammar is more accurate than that of the other members of the group and whose vocabulary is more extensive. However, a recent addition to the class, Akemi, who joined after most of the data had been collected but prior to the intervention activities being carried out, is far more proficient than Yukari or Koji.

2.2 Learners' attitudes to and experiences of English

The learners were given a questionnaire (see Appendix A) which sought information relating to educational background, their attitude to English when they first started to learn it, their reasons for learning English,

problems they have encountered when using English in “real-life” situations, and on the learning strategies they employ.

The purpose in asking such questions was in part an attempt to confirm what was thought to be likely, that is that there would be a large degree of uniformity in their responses. If such uniformity were to be found then that might enable one to hypothesize that if their educational backgrounds, learning experiences and strategies are broadly similar then it may be likely that there would be a corresponding degree of similarity in relation to the fossilized elements of their interlanguage.

Three of the four female learners were educated up junior college level with one having attended a design college. Junior colleges are two-year colleges in Japan primarily for women. They are usually private institutions and are less prestigious than universities (Wadden, 1993). Two of the male learners attended university and the other two went to technical college. So although there are variations in their educational backgrounds it is broadly true to say that they are all relatively well educated. All but one of the learners first started learning English while at junior high school, which is entered at age twelve in Japan. Only one learner began learning English while at elementary school. Four of the learners stated that they did not enjoy English when they first started learning it. Their reasons are given below:

- *I hated the teacher.*
- *Because I didn't know the English at all. I felt that the English wasn't the language but the work (study).*
- *Because I had to study for examinations.*
- *Because in class grammar was most important. And teacher was my relative, so I must took high level point in tests.*

With the exception of the teacher being a relative, the reasons stated above are commonly given in Japan. In my experience many adult learners

say that the emphasis on reading and on understanding grammar discouraged them from taking an interest in learning English. In a national debate currently taking place in Japan it has been suggested that the teaching methods in Japanese schools may account for the poor record of Japanese students in international tests of English. From personal experience I know that many adult Japanese learners are somewhat resistant to grammar-based lessons as they remind them of their schooldays where the emphasis was on accumulating knowledge of English in order to pass tests and university entrance examinations. It could perhaps be said that the approach to teaching grammar in Japanese schools is similar to the Grammar Translation approach, which will be looked at in Chapter 3. Again from my own personal experience, I have found that if an aspect of grammar is presented to adult Japanese learners as such then they tend to become disinterested and even slightly hostile. This antipathy towards grammar instruction and learners' desire for what they see as 'conversation' lessons makes the teaching of grammar to adult learners in Japan a delicate task. The teacher needs to be careful that the learners do not perceive the lesson as being something they thought they had put behind them when they left school, but at the same time there needs to be some meaningful input if the learners are to advance the level of English they had attained by the time they graduated from high school. It was for this reason that C-R was chosen as the means of the attempted de-fossilization as such an approach is probably unlike the type of grammar instruction the learners' received in their schooldays.

For five of the eight learners their first English lessons with a native-speaker were their lessons at their place of work and only four of the learners have spoken English to native-speakers outside of their English lessons. This relative lack of contact with native-speakers may, according to Mitchell and Myles (1998: 13), be one reason why elements of the learners' interlanguage appear to be fossilized. That is that their lack of

contact means that they do not ‘identify completely with the native speaker community’ (ibid: 13) and that they are happy to be learners rather than proficient users of the language.

The four learners who have had contact with native-speakers outside of the classroom gave differing responses to the question which asked about difficulties the learners had encountered in communicating with native-speakers of English. One learner responded that native-speakers could not understand her because of her accent and another said that the person she spoke with talked too fast and that due to her lack of vocabulary she did not know what he was saying.

Most of the learners had more than one reason for learning English. The learners’ responses and the number of instances each response was provided are shown below:

- For travel (5 instances)
- For fun (5 instances)
- For business (4 instances)
- For intellectual exercise (3 instances)
- To be with friends (3 instances)
- To have contact with a non-Japanese person (3 instances)
- To understand English in films (2 instances)

However, the veracity of some of the above responses is perhaps open to question. For example, one of the learners who stated that one of his reasons for learning English was for travel does not yet possess a passport. Similarly, none of the group travels on business; not even in Japan let alone abroad. Of course those learners who gave travel and business as reasons would probably say that they are learning English in the hope of utilizing it abroad or on business at some point in the future. With regard to the question asking whether they think that their English has improved since they started attending the class, again the veracity of

their responses could be questioned. All seven of the original class members stated that they thought their English had improved. However, one learner, acting on behalf of the class following a post-lesson discussion among the learners, recently contacted me to say that they wanted a change in the lesson format because they felt that their English had not improved. As they have not been subjected to testing of any sort it is not possible to quantifiably state whether or not there has been any improvement. Of course it is hoped that the post-intervention assessment will show that they have improved their performance at least in regard to the targeted items.

The learners' responses to the question regarding "weak points" show three areas of concern to them: listening, pronunciation, and a lack of vocabulary. Listening and a lack of vocabulary were the main concerns accounting for four and five responses respectively, with pronunciation being mentioned only once.

The last two questions concerned learning strategies. In particular, how the learners' remember new items of vocabulary and what they do when they do not know how to say something. Some learners gave more than one response and the most common strategy for remembering new items of vocabulary was to write down the new words. Two of the learners said that they try to commit new items to memory but they did not say how they do it and one said that he tries to "extrapolate" by which I think he means that he makes educated guesses. Another learner responded by saying that his method of remembering new words was to 'image interesting episode for ones' which I understand as meaning that he tries to relate new words to interesting or memorable experiences he has had. One other learner said that she reads a lot in order to remember new words. As for what they do when they do not know how to say something the most common strategy was the use of body language or gestures.

Three learners said that they make use of items already known to them and two of them quite honestly said that they panic. Use of a dictionary and asking an able English speaker were mentioned only once each, the latter again reflecting the learners' lack of exposure to the English-speaking community.

2. 3 Data collection

The data collection involved three separate recordings of parts of the lessons. The errors found in those recordings can be seen in Appendix B. The first recording covers errors 1 to 24 in Appendix B, the second covers 25 to 36, and the third 37 to 53. Errors 1 to 13 relate to exercises in the textbook used by this class and numbers 14 to 24 are responses to inquiries from the teacher regarding the upcoming weekend; an attempt to encourage the learners to use the “going to” form. The errors numbered 25 to 36 again relate to referential questions asked by the teacher this time in an attempt to have the learners practice using the simple present tense to talk about habitual activities. From number 37 onwards the errors relate to actions in the past and they display the learners attempts to use the past simple and present perfect verb tenses. The error categories and their frequency of occurrence are shown in Appendix C. After an analysis of the errors in the recordings it was decided that the intervention activities would focus on errors in past tense verb usage. The reasons for that choice are explained in 2.3.3 below.

2.3.1 Error distribution

The distribution of errors among the learners in the recordings is shown in table 2.1 below. It can be seen that three of the eight learners are responsible for most of the errors. However, that should not be interpreted as meaning that their interlanguage contains a greater density of fossilized elements than that of the other learners. Nor should it be seen as an indicator of greater or lesser proficiency on the part of those three.

Table 2.1 Distribution of erroneous utterances

Learners	No. of erroneous utterances
Akihiro	3
Koji	12
Tokuyo	5
Yoshie	12
Yukari	21

While two of the three, Koji and Yukari, are perhaps the most able English users in the group the other one, Yoshie, is one of the least able. Therefore, perhaps the distribution of errors among this group of learners reflects garrulousness more so than proficiency as the three learners concerned are perhaps the most talkative in the class with the others being much less talkative in comparison.

The garrulousness of the three above-mentioned learners is indicated in table 2.2 below, which shows the number of errors per learner as a percentage of the words uttered in Appendix B.

Table 2.2: Errors as percentage of words uttered

Learners	Words uttered	No. of errors	Errors as a % of words uttered
Akihiro	11	5	45.45%
Koji	79	22	27.84%
Tokuyo	29	5	17.24%
Yoshie	75	22	28.00%
Yukari	111	39	35.13%

Whilst there is a clear relationship between a high number of errors and a high amount of words uttered, the figures do not relate to the learners' proficiency levels. For example, it is difficult to account for Yukari having an "error-ratio" of 35.13% whilst Yoshie's is 28% even though Yukari's spoken English is much easier to understand and consequently appears to have a lower density of errors. One possible reason is that the

more garrulous learners can be seen as ‘risk-takers’ and as a result are more likely to make errors. This is related to Ellis’ (1985) comments on communication strategies wherein he posits that achievement strategies or ‘risk-taking’ may aid the acquisition of lexis rather than grammar. That may account for Yoshie’s utterances being mostly nouns with almost no verbs. Of course, it is also to be expected that the greater the number of utterances, the greater the number of errors produced.

2.3.2 Classification of errors

The majority of errors can be put into two groups; errors relating to articles, prepositions and pronouns, and errors relating to verb usage, including auxiliary and modal verbs.

The articles, prepositions and pronouns group includes the omission of articles; overgeneralization of article use; incorrect choice of article; omission of the pronoun ‘it’; omission of prepositions; incorrect use of prepositions; and redundant prepositions. The verb usage group includes the omission of verbs; inappropriate verb tense; inappropriate choice of verb; inappropriate use of auxiliary verbs; and inappropriate use of modal verbs. The two groups account for 12 of the 27 categories listed in Appendix C, and for 59 of the 93 errors.

Examples of each of the error types together with comments regarding their classification are as follows:

a) Omission of articles;

‘I want to go to * Statue of Liberty.’

‘I went to * hair salon.’

The omission of articles is a common error among Japanese learners as there is no equivalent to articles in Japanese. Five of the seven article omissions were omissions of the definite article and the two examples

above show omissions relating both to a proper name and a common noun. It could, perhaps, be said that this type of error could also be classed as L1 transfer. However, it has not been classed as such here as it does not reflect a pattern or a rule in Japanese but merely the presence of a particular grammatical feature in English and its absence in Japanese.

b) Overgeneralization of article use;

‘It’s on the* Fourth Street.’

It may be surprising to some that there is only one instance of this type of error. Just as the omission of articles is prevalent in Japanese learners’ interlanguage, overgeneralization of articles is also a common error. The above example is typical as Japanese learners often use the definite article with place names; e.g. “I went to the Tokyo”.

c) Incorrect choice of article;

‘He’s going to a* restaurant.’

The above example is a learner’s response to a question contained in the textbook used by this class. As there was only one restaurant shown on the map in the book the correct response should have, of course, included the definite article. As with b) above, although this is a common error with Japanese learners it is surprising that there is only one instance here.

d) Omission of the pronoun ‘it’;

‘I saw * from airplane.’

All five errors of this type involve the omission of ‘it’ when it should be used to refer to an object or event that has already been mentioned and whose identity is known. Again, as stated above in a), there are perhaps grounds for classifying this error as L1 transfer and for the same reason as in a) it has not been classed as such. The grounds for possibly seeing this as L1 transfer are that in Japanese responses to enquiries often omit the object. For example the Japanese response to the Japanese equivalent

of “Is dinner ready?” would be “Hai, dekita” (Yes, ready), instead of “Yes, it is”.

e) Omission of prepositions;

‘It’s on the corner * Third Street and Grant Street.’

‘You can have a (view of Fukui City) * Mt. Asuwa.’

‘(It is) * Saturday and Sunday.’

As the above examples show, there can be several reasons for omitting prepositions. In the first example it may simply be due to forgetfulness as the learner remembered most of the prepositional phrase but omitted ‘of’. The second example may be seen as an example of an ‘avoidance strategy’ (Faerch and Kasper, 1983), as the learner omitted not only the preposition but also the preceding noun phrase perhaps because she felt that the complete sentence was too long and complicated and therefore beyond her ability. The third example may be seen as ‘backsliding’ (Selinker, 1972) as the learner may have felt under pressure due to the unusual condition of having her utterances recorded. It is not an error I would expect this particular learner to make under normal circumstances.

f) Incorrect use of prepositions;

‘Tamasama means ‘arigato’ by* Indonesia.’

There is only one error of this type, which may indicate that this group of learners chooses to omit difficult items rather than run the risk of uttering an incorrect item. Again, however, this error could be seen as ‘backsliding’ as the learner would normally say “in English” or “in Japanese”. It should be noted that it is the same learner as in the previous case where ‘backsliding’ was cited as a possible cause of the error.

g) Redundant prepositions;

‘I clean in* my house.’

‘I have never been to* abroad.’

Once again the above errors could be explained as being due to the influence of the L1 as the equivalent Japanese expression would contain the Japanese equivalent of a preposition.

h) Omission of verbs;

‘Saturday ... old book, old newspaper and ... in K-truck ... elementary school.’

‘My son ... attendance.’

‘Its name * Tamasama.’

The above examples represent the three types of verb omission found in the data. In the first example the learner utters a string of nouns but no verbs, which is typical of this particular learner’s utterances. The same learner is responsible for the second utterance where she has used a noun in place of a verb. The third example is from a different learner and is also typical of her, that is the omission of the copula ‘be’.

i) Inappropriate verb tense;

‘My friends come* to my house and drinking*.’

‘My cousin on the doll and play* Taiko.’

‘It was very difficult to watered* the plants.’

‘I have* a ... I * already got up.’

This category contains the largest number of errors; fourteen in total. The above examples reflect the fact that errors were made in the past, present and future usage of verbs. Given the learners’ apparent confusion with correct tense usage I can only surmise that that it may be due to a lack of meaningful instruction earlier in their English learning experience. The confusion over verb tense usage that is exemplified by the fact that the ‘inappropriate verb-tense’ category has the greatest number of errors, indicates that there is a need for instruction in this area and, as stated in 2.2 above, perhaps C-R could be an appropriate approach.

j) Inappropriate choice of verb;

‘You can have* skating in Shibamasa Skate Rink.’

‘I play* Internet.’

‘I wanted to be* someday’

‘Yesterday morning an earthquake caused*.’

The above examples reflect both the influence of the L1 and the general confusion with verb usage seen above. The utterance ‘I play Internet’ reflects the usage of the Japanese verb ‘asobu’, meaning ‘to play’. In Japanese it is used to express doing something for fun in instances where in English a verb with a more specific meaning would be used. For example the sentence “I went out with some friends” would be expressed as “Tomodachi ni asonda” (I played with friends) in Japanese. In the sentence ‘I wanted to be someday’ the learner appears to have confused the past participle of ‘go’ with the past participle of the copula ‘be’ and to have then erroneously uttered ‘be’ instead of ‘been’.

k) Inappropriate use of auxiliary verbs;

‘I sleep, ... I do ... does ... I read.’

Once again confusion over correct verb usage is apparent with the learner appearing to be under the impression that it is necessary to use the auxiliary verb ‘do’ in conjunction with the main verb when attempting to make a present tense statement about habitual actions.

l) Inappropriate use of modal verbs;

‘You must take a passport.’

There is only one error of this type and again it reflects L1 influence and confusion over correct verb usage. The L1 influence is apparent in the use of ‘take’ instead of ‘get’ and the confusion over correct verb usage can be seen in the fact that the learner selected ‘must’ instead of ‘should’.

Table 2.3 below summarizes the errors contained in the two groups and indicates their prevalence. The table highlights the fact that errors involving verb usage are noticeably more prevalent than those involving articles, prepositions and pronouns. Therefore, perhaps it would be worthwhile examining the verb usage errors in greater detail.

Table 2.3 Prevalence of errors in the two main groups

Error description	Number of errors	Percentage of total
Articles	9	9.89%
Prepositions	11	10.98%
Pronouns	4	4.39%
Omission of verbs	10	10.98%
Verb tense errors	13	14.28%
Inappropriate verb choice	5	5.49%
Auxiliary verbs	3	3.29%
Modal verbs	1	1.09%

2.3.3 Analysis of verb usage errors

The purpose of this analysis is to identify which of the learners' fossilized elements should be the focus of the attempted de-fossilization. Verb usage errors have already been identified as being more prevalent among this group of learners than other types of errors identified in the data. Now the objective is to further classify those errors into discrete elements and to then make a judgement as to which element would be the most suitable for an attempt at de-fossilization. The analysis can be seen in Appendix D.

The judgement will take into account not only the prevalence of the errors but also their distribution among the learners and the likelihood of the chosen means of intervention, C-R, having a positive effect. The analysis will focus on the two main groups of verb errors: "omission of verbs" and "inappropriate verb tense". The "inappropriate choice of verbs" group is not included as it is thought that inadequate lexical knowledge cannot be

considered as an example of fossilization. For an element of grammar to be thought of as fossilized it must firstly enter the learner's interlanguage continuum where it either progresses to native-like L2 proficiency or becomes fossilized. If a lexical item is unknown to the learner then it cannot be said to have entered the learner's interlanguage continuum. The groups relating to auxiliary and modal verbs have also not been included as they provided insufficient data.

As can be seen in tables 2.4 and 2.5 below, the two groups provided five separate descriptions of errors: omission of the copula 'be', omission of the present simple form, omission of the future form, inappropriate use of the past tense, and inappropriate use of the present tense.

Table 2.4 Summary of omission of verbs analysis

Description of errors	No. of errors per learner	Total no. of errors per learner
Omission of copula 'be'	Yukari 5	Yukari 6
	Koji 1	Koji 5
	Yoshie 1	Yoshie 5
Omission of present simple form of verb	Yoshie 3	
Omission of future form	Koji 2	
	Koji 2	
	Yoshie 1	
	Yukari 1	

Table 2.5 Summary of inappropriate verb tense errors.

Description of errors	No. of errors per learner	Total no. of errors per learner
Inappropriate use of past tense	Koji 3	Koji 5
	Akihiro 2	Akihiro 3
	Tokuyo 1	Yukari 3
	Yukari 1	Tokuyo 1
Inappropriate use of present tense	Koji 2	Yoshie 1
	Yukari 2	
	Akihiro 1	
	Yoshie 1	

The omission of the copula 'be' accounted for the largest number of errors in the "omission of verbs" group. However, five of the seven errors are attributable to one learner, Yukari. As it is hoped that the attempted defossilization will benefit the majority if not all of the learners perhaps it would be inappropriate to choose an element which appears to be a problem for only one of the learners. The omission of verbs in the present simple tense and the omission of future forms have an almost even prevalence with five and four errors respectively. Those errors are also distributed fairly evenly among the learners, except for Yukari not having any errors in the present simple category.

In the "appropriate verb tense" group the two categories have an almost equal prevalence with seven inappropriate uses of the past tense and six inappropriate uses of the present tense. The distribution among the learners is also fairly even. Therefore, the choice for the focus of the intervention activities is between present tense usage with 11 errors, past tense usage with 7 errors, and the use of future forms with 4 errors.

On the face of it, present tense usage should perhaps be the focus of attention. However, it should be remembered that five of the present tense errors are attributable to only one learner and it should also be noted that there are no omissions of verbs in utterances where the past tense is appropriate. This may indicate that the learners' awareness of past tense usage is greater than their awareness of present tense usage, which may be due to the regular discussion of recent activities at the start of each lesson. This possible greater awareness of the past tense may indicate that there is a greater likelihood of the learners' interlanguage being advanced in that area and, therefore, use of the past tense will be the focus of the intervention activities.

CHAPTER 3: DEFINITIONS OF CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING AND A JUSTIFICATION FOR ITS USE IN THIS STUDY

3.1 Consciousness-raising

As the title of this paper states, a grammatical consciousness-raising (C-R) approach was used in the attempted de-fossilization. Therefore, perhaps it is best to start this chapter by clarifying what C-R is. However, there appear to be varying and, to some extent, conflicting views as to what constitutes C-R and clarification of it is not a simple matter. Therefore, I shall begin by briefly summarizing the views of the principal researchers and shall then consider C-R in more detail.

The second section of this chapter will look at the learners' attitudes towards grammar instruction, and will consider whether their reactions to the grammar-translation approach they encountered in their schooldays account for their present attitudes towards grammar instruction. It will also hypothesize that perhaps a C-R approach may enable the learners to advance their interlanguage in relation to the grammatical feature targeted by the C-R tasks.

3.1.1 A summary of the principal views of C-R

Like so many other terms in language pedagogy, the term "grammar consciousness-raising is rather vague and is used with very different meanings". (Ellis, 1993: 3-11)

So what does the term mean to Ellis? He draws the distinction between the teaching of grammar through practice and the teaching of it through consciousness-raising. The former, according to Ellis, has as its objective the production of 'sentences exemplifying the grammatical feature that is the target of the activity' (1993: 3-11), whilst the latter:

... sees form-focused instruction as a means to the attainment of grammatical competence not as an attempt to instill it. Consciousness-raising aims to facilitate acquisition, not to bring it about directly. (Ellis, 1990: 15-16).

Ellis' view of C-R also allows for learners being presented with explicit grammar rules. Sharwood-Smith (1981: 159-68) however, takes the view that requiring learners to absorb, and be able to articulate, rules may hinder their understanding of the grammatical feature which is the focus of attention. Sharwood-Smith's view of C-R also involves what he terms as explicit and implicit knowledge, referred to above in 1.4.3, with the former being thought of as what has been taught and learnt and the latter thought of as intuitive. He maintains that it is the interaction between explicit and implicit knowledge that leads to acquisition.

Krashen (1982), who distinguishes between learning and acquisition, does not share this view. Indeed Krashen specifically denies any interface between learning and acquisition; i.e. what is consciously learned cannot be transformed into automatised acquired knowledge. Krashen's views are also at odds with another proponent of C-R, Rutherford (1987), whose version of C-R is neatly summarized by Yip (1994):

It focuses on aspects of grammar without necessarily using explicit rules or technical jargon. Instead of trying to impart rules and principles directly as in the traditional grammar lesson, it seeks to help learners discover for themselves by focusing on aspects of the target structures. On the other hand, it differs from pure communicative approaches by telling learners which structures are ungrammatical and providing the grammatical counterparts. (Yip, 1994: 124).

Another writer who warrants inclusion in a paper on C-R, even though what he writes about is a form of CALL which he has named 'data-driven learning' (DDL) is Johns (1991 a and b). A brief synopsis of DDL is that it is an approach which utilizes computer-generated concordances in an attempt to encourage learners to notice patterns in the data and to try to account for them. Johns likens DDL to a new style of C-R due to it:

... placing the learner's own discovery of grammar at the centre of language-learning, and by making it possible for that discovery to be based on evidence from authentic language use. (Johns, 1991a: 3).

Willis and Willis (1996) also focus on a data-driven approach and in their definition of C-R they cite three of Ellis' (1993) characteristics of consciousness-raising:

- The 'attempt to *isolate* a specific linguistic feature'.
- The provision of '*data* which illustrate the targeted feature'.
- The requirement that learners 'utilize *intellectual effort*' to understand the targeted feature.

3.1.2 C-R in more detail

Firstly, although some may think this too obvious to require stating, C-R is an inductive method. Brown (1994) defines inductive reasoning as storing 'a number of specific instances' and inducing 'a general law or conclusion' (1994: 92). Brown's definition could just easily serve as a definition of C-R. Rutherford (1987) refers to "instruments" and "modes of operation" which can be seen as Brown's "specific instances". He also notes that 'C-R activity ... asks that the learner not only "notice" but also perform an operation of some kind' (Rutherford, 1987: 152-3). From that he asserts that C-R is task-oriented and that the learner is actively involved in solving problems. In other words it is an inductive method.

A further feature, which possibly typifies C-R, is its rejection of the PPP approach in favour of a discovery-oriented approach. Ellis (1993) quite strongly rejects PPP and suggests that through what he views as C-R learners can 'understand a particular grammar feature, how it works, what it consists of, and so on, but not [be] require[d]...to actually produce sentences manifesting that particular structure' (1993: 5-6). One way of achieving this, Ellis suggests, is through what he terms as a "focused communication activity" where the teacher's role is to 'request clarification' each time a learner makes an error in the grammatical structure which is the focus of the lesson. However, to this author and others (Hopkins and Nettle, 1994) this seems less like a communication activity and more like excessive error-correction which can only serve to

hinder communication. However, it could also be said that as Ellis' form of error correction involves the learner trying to identify the errors in his/her own production it therefore contains elements of C-R and is distinct from traditional explicit error correction. Rutherford (1987) makes the point that both product and process oriented activities are necessary to aid L2 acquisition and that favouring one at the expense of the other does not benefit learners. Such a viewpoint would seem to support the validity of Ellis' "focused communication activities" and their insistence upon accurate production.

Ellis also refers to another type of classroom activity, one he labels a "grammar consciousness-raising activity" (1993: 10-11). He defines such activities as ones which encourage learners to discover facts about a grammar-point for themselves. In fact he goes so far as to say that such activities 'help learners to construct their own explicit grammar' (1993: 10). As an example of such an activity he suggests asking learners to sort a list of sentences into two groups and then have them explain how the two groups differ. This appears to be rather like Johns' DDL approach but without the computer-generated-material. A further example of Ellis' is asking learners to use an explanatory diagram, provided by the teacher, to decide whether the given sentences are grammatical or ungrammatical. This latter approach would appear not to be dissimilar to a PPP approach where learners are first presented with a rule pertaining to the grammar point which is the focus of the lesson. That would, of course, be at odds with Ellis' view (1990) that PPP does not achieve what it sets out to achieve.

One discrepancy between Ellis' "focused communication activities" and his "grammar consciousness-raising activities" is that whilst the latter are typical of other C-R activities, such as Johns' DDL, by virtue of their being learner-centred, the former do appear to be somewhat teacher-led.

Ellis makes the point that in some activities the teacher, to some extent, misleads the learners into believing that they are carrying out a communicative activity when they are really involved in a grammar activity which, with some learners, if it were presented to them as such might be met with a negative response. The “clarification” or error-correction involved in such activities also indicates that the activities are being controlled and led by the teacher and not by the learners, which would be contrary to contemporary views of C-R. Rutherford (1987) in his view of C-R methodology states that:

...teacher-directed learning is of course incompatible with the whole concept of the learning and teaching of second-language grammar that we have been developing throughout these chapters. (1987: 154).

Rutherford’s principal view of the objectives of a grammar-centred approach is that it teaches learners how to learn rather than teaching grammatical concepts in and of themselves. It is a means to an end and not an end in itself. To illustrate this Rutherford divides views of grammar-centred approaches into two groups, which he labels as “mechanic” and “organic” the former being the more traditional approach and the latter being Rutherford’s own view (Rutherford, 1987: 154).

One area where Rutherford (1986) and Ellis (1990) coincide is the time taken for C-R grammar instruction to have effect. Rutherford (1986: 153-5) makes the point that C-R instruction is individual-focused and not group-focused and that, in his view of C-R, grammar should not be taught in a “lockstep” pattern and that learners should be allowed to learn at their own pace. Ellis (1990) talks about the limited immediate effect of instruction and says that while there is only limited empirical evidence in support of instruction having a delayed effect, ‘there is a strong logical argument to support the delayed effect position’ (1990: 169). He suggests that ‘instruction in some way primes the learner so that acquisition becomes *easier* when she is finally ready to assimilate the new material’

(1990: 169). Ellis goes on to speculate that ‘formal instruction raises the learner’s consciousness about the existence of linguistic features which she would otherwise ignore’ and that although the existence of the linguistic feature may not be processed straightaway it will be acquired ‘when the prerequisite processing operations ... have been developed’ (Ellis, 1990: 169). Ellis sees this as declarative knowledge serving as a platform for the acquisition of procedural knowledge.

Ellis also refers to studies carried out by Zobl (1985) which, according to Ellis, show that a consequence of instruction aimed at targeted linguistic features can be the acquisition of other linguistic features which are not targeted. He asserts that it is possible that instruction ‘can have a considerable effect on the acquisition of declarative knowledge’ and concludes that instruction should focus on targeted linguistic features. He substantiates his conclusion by referring to studies on the effects of instruction:

This conclusion is partly compatible with the results obtained by Schumann (1978) and Kadia (1988), which showed that instruction did have an immediate effect on monitored language use, but none on spontaneous use. However, Schumann’s and Kadia’s learners failed to show any improvement in spontaneous language use later as well. It may be that these learners needed more time for the benefits of instruction to show or it is possible that certain social and psychological conditions have to be met for instruction to have the delayed effect that is being proposed. (1990: 170)

He goes on to state that if declarative knowledge is the objective of the instruction and if the activities involved are directed at consciousness-raising then that supports an approach which utilizes C-R instead of a more conventional drill-based approach.

In the light of Ellis’ and Rutherford’s remarks regarding the time taken for the effects of instruction to become apparent, it is possible that some of the learners in the group under study may show immediate benefits from the intervention activities while some others may not show any

improvement within the time allowed for the study, but might do so at some point in the future.

Another area where all of the principal researchers on C-R appear to agree is that learner production and articulation of rules is not a necessary element. However, there does not appear to be such general agreement concerning learners being provided with rules in order to carry out C-R activities; Ellis' "explanatory diagrams", for example. Furthermore, in some instances learners may already have knowledge of a rule therefore the objective of the C-R activity in such cases would be to verify whether their understanding of the rule is accurate, or indeed to test the validity of the rule itself.

3.2 The Grammar-Translation Method and a justification for the utilization of C-R

As stated in 3.1 above, this section will look at the Grammar-Translation Method, which the learners were exposed to in their schooldays, and will consider its effects and the possibility that a C-R approach may result in de-fossilization.

In the Grammar-Translation Method a detailed analysis of the grammar rules of the language under study is conducted and that knowledge is then applied to translating sentences and texts into and out of that language (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). The main focus of the Grammar-Translation Method was, and indeed still is, reading and writing in order to be able to read the literature of the language in question. There is little or no speaking or listening in the target language. Lessons are organized around grammar-points and each grammar-point is explained and is illustrated by sample sentences.

Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979: 3) offer a succinct list of the characteristics of the grammar-Translation Method:

- 1.Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little or no active use of the target language.
- 2.Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
- 3.Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of the grammar are given.
- 4.Grammar provides the rules for putting words together and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection.
- 5.Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early.
- 6.Little attention is paid to the contents of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
- 7.Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.
- 8.Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.

Whilst the above does not always relate exactly to the way in which English is taught in Japanese secondary schools, there are enough similarities to be able to posit that the Grammar-Translation Method is used extensively in Japan. Perhaps the principal points of similarity are numbers 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8, with particular emphasis on the first point.

As stated earlier in this paper, Japanese schools focus on students accumulating sufficient knowledge to enable them to pass tests which are themselves a form of training for the university entrance examinations taken by high school students. Whilst that approach is undergoing change, for the adult learners that are the subjects of the attempted de-fossilization, the description of the Grammar-Translation Method probably sounds very much like the English lessons they experienced in their schooldays. Their dislike of English in their schooldays, as highlighted by their remarks quoted in Chapter 2, is reflected in the poor performance of Japanese students in the English portion of the university entrance exams. Mulvey (1999), writing about Japanese university exams notes that ‘although students generally answered grammar questions correctly, questions focusing on listening and reading comprehension

skills were either answered incorrectly or were skipped entirely' (Mulvey, 1999: 127). With regard to translation activities in Japanese classrooms Mulvey cites Jannuzi (1994) who, after four years of teaching in Japanese high schools, noted:

[T]ranslation was almost always from English into Japanese. If students did undertake translation, it was limited to the translation of sentences disconnected from longer discourse in order to practice grammar points. Students did not translate authentic texts (1994: 122).

From the above it can be gleaned that the Grammar-Translation Method is not ineffective in terms of giving learners ample knowledge of grammar. However, when one considers the learners' comments in Chapter 2 and the failure of the students taking the university entrance exams to adequately use listening and reading skills, one could be forgiven for thinking that the consequence of the approach to grammar instruction in Japanese schools is a subsequent lack of interest in English as a language. Perhaps learners come to see English merely as a means to an end: the passing of tests and exams. It should be borne in mind of course that only two of the eight learners in the group attended university. Therefore, perhaps the grammar expertise of the other six is not on a par with the "would-be" university students referred to by Mulvey above. Undoubtedly, they have been taught the structures which appear to be fossilized in their interlanguage, but perhaps their dislike of grammar teaching in school has resulted in a type of avoidance strategy wherein they are resistant to grammar instruction and, unconsciously perhaps, choose to focus on what they see as non-grammatical aspects of English. It may be noteworthy that in response to the question asking what they thought their main "weak points" were none of the learners cited a lack of grammatical understanding or awareness. Instead they stated that listening, pronunciation and a lack of vocabulary were their main areas of concern. That may be indicative of an attitude wherein they do not have any desire to improve their grammatical awareness. One might go as far as to say

that their uninspiring experience of grammar instruction has resulted in them unconsciously or not, stunting the growth of their grammatical awareness within their interlanguage.

Of course the above is hypothesis and it may be that their grammatical awareness is fossilized for reasons other than their dislike of the type of grammar lessons they had at school. However, although grammar-translation does contain an element of C-R (Willis and Willis, 1996: 63) it is, to a large extent, the antithesis of C-R as Rutherford (1987: 154-5) exemplifies in his 'idealized sketch' of a 'mechanic' and an 'organic' view of a grammar-centred pedagogy, referred to above in 3.1.2.

Furthermore, as C-R does not require the presentation and explanation of rules, it may be that such an approach could result in some benefit to learners who are resistant to traditional approaches.

Although rules are not presented it is expected that the learners will recognize that the lesson in which the intervention takes place is focusing on an aspect of grammar, and for that reason it is hypothesized that there may be some resistance from the learners towards the idea of taking part in a grammar lesson. However, as the learners' co-operation has been sought and given it is also expected that any resistance will be suppressed and that they will approach the intervention activities positively.

CHAPTER 4: A REPORT ON THE INTERVENTION TASKS AND AN ASSESSMENT OF THEIR EFFECTS

4.1 A description of the tasks

The intervention tasks were conducted in two lessons three weeks apart with two other lessons in between. There were two tasks in each lesson: one spoken and one written. In one of the intervening lessons there was a discussion of the errors found in the spoken task conducted in the first intervention lesson. The tasks therefore comprise a “before and after” assessment of the learners.

In each lesson the learners were first asked to tell a short story. In the first lesson the subject of the stories was a trip or holiday experience and in the second lesson the learners talked about what they had done in the recent summer holiday. Transcripts of both can be seen in Appendices E and F. This chapter will contain an assessment of the learners’ past tense verb-usage errors found in both of the spoken tasks.

The purpose of the spoken activities was twofold. Firstly, the objective was to ‘sensitize learners to form while avoiding explicit focus’ (Skehan, 1998: 65), and secondly, to act as part of the assessment meant to establish whether there had been any positive change in the learners’ interlanguage. The sensitizing of learners to form is related to ‘noticing’ (Schmidt, 1990) wherein, ‘other things being equal, the more frequent a form, the more likely it is to be noticed and then become integrated in the interlanguage system’ (Skehan, 1998: 48). This group’s regular chat about recent activities at the beginning of most lessons in effect prepared the ground for this slightly more formalized attempt at ‘noticing’.

The written activities involved inserting omitted past tense verb forms into a text. The handouts given to the learners to enable them to undertake

the written tasks can be seen in Appendices I and J. For each task the learners were given two handouts. One contained a story set in the past with most of the past tense verbs omitted and the other contained a list of the omitted verbs and a numbered grid wherein the learners had to write the appropriate verb. The grid was numbered in relation to the numbered spaces in the story. The written task in the first of the two intervention lessons was taken from a teaching manual, 'Grammar Games and Activities for Teachers' (Watcyn-Jones, 1995), and the second one was drawn up by the teacher.

Such a task meets Rutherford's criteria that in C-R tasks learners not only 'notice' a particular grammatical phenomenon but that they also 'perform an operation of some kind' (Rutherford, 1987: 154-5). Rutherford states that 'it is C-R activity that is task-oriented, where the learner is actively engaged in solving problems' (1987: 153). The task also meets many of the attributes of Rutherford's (1987: 154-5) views of a 'grammar-centred pedagogical programme', referred to above in 3.1.2. The points of concurrence between Rutherford's list and the content of the tasks are:

- *Teach learning as against teach grammar.*

The learners had to make judgements about the appropriateness of each verb choice and it is hoped that this 'intellectual effort' (Ellis, 1993) may have some longer-term benefit in relation to the learners making appropriate lexical choices.

- *Interpretation by learners and teacher as against transmission by teacher.*

Although the teacher's interpretation was limited to pre-teaching the meanings of some of the items in the list that the learners made their choices from, the learners themselves had to interpret those

meanings in the context of the story. In addition there was no transmission of grammatical rules or patterns by the teacher.

- *Understanding as against memory.*

Whilst the learners made use of their memories in making their lexical choices they were not required to commit correct forms to memory and produce them upon request.

- *Operational experience as against rule articulation.*

Prior to the task no grammatical rules were presented and the learners had to navigate their way through the task to the best of their ability, thereby gaining ‘operational experience’.

- *Slowing down as against speeding up.*

The learners were given as much as they were comfortable with for the completion of the task during lesson time. In addition there was sufficient time for reflection after completion of the task.

In conclusion I think that in view of the above points of concurrence with Rutherford’s model, it would be reasonable to view the written task as an example of a C-R task.

4.2 A report on the intervention lessons

At the beginning of the lesson the learners were advised that they were going to be asked to attempt two tasks related to this dissertation. The reason for telling them that the tasks were related to the dissertation was in order to gain their co-operation for doing tasks that the teacher suspected they might be resistant to doing otherwise. Their possible resistance would probably be due to nervousness and embarrassment about a public performance which was being recorded, and to a dislike of tasks that involve reading and writing but not speaking. As stated elsewhere in

this paper, their usual lesson format involves some casual conversation and one or two exercises from the elementary level text that they use. The fact that they were unused to an activity where noticing and intellectual effort are called for was one reason for choosing a C-R approach. The logic being that if the usual conversation and text-led lessons were not driving their interlanguage forward then perhaps a different approach might have a positive effect.

After all the learners had told their stories the written task was explained and the handouts were distributed. It was not explicitly stated that the missing words were mostly past tense forms of verbs although it was made clear that the story took place a few years ago. The learners were then guided through the list of omitted words and any words they appeared to not know were explained. The learners then began reading the story and after a few minutes it became apparent that they were having some difficulty with it. They were advised that when they came to a gap in the story they should scan through the list and insert a word that they think is the right one. The teacher tried to reassure them that it was not a test and that they should not be too concerned if they make an incorrect choice. After about a further twenty minutes it became apparent that while some of the learners were nearly halfway through the activity others had written only a few verbs in the spaces. They had already gone past the time when they usually stopped for a break and they were clearly uncomfortable with the task. Therefore, after a further five minutes the teacher told them to stop and asked if they would complete it in their own time before the next lesson.

During the break the teacher attempted to ascertain why they had found it so difficult. One of the less-able learners, Akihiro, said that he did not understand most of the omitted words, despite the vocabulary having been pre-taught. The teacher went through the list again and it became apparent

that there were only three words that Akihiro and the others had not encountered previously. The three were 'misread', 'reached' meaning 'arrived', and 'persuade'. The more able learners were unable to explain why they had found it so difficult and some of them seemed quite embarrassed by their inability to complete the task. In retrospect it is likely that the flow of the story, with the two main characters criss-crossing Europe, possibly confused the learners, which probably indicates that they are reading at word and sentence level rather than at paragraph or text level.

Five learners were present at the second intervention lesson, including four who had been present at the first lesson. The same format was followed as in the first lesson. Although there was still some reluctance towards a public performance there seemed to be less nervousness this time which may have been due to the learners knowing what to expect. Their reluctance could possibly be explained by their belief that they had not done very much of interest during the summer holiday. One noticeable difference between the spoken tasks in the two lessons is that in the second lesson the learners' stories were much shorter and the learners interjected when another learner was taking her or his turn. In the first lesson they remained silent when it was not their turn. Similarly with the written task, the learners seemed to be more relaxed and to make better progress with the task in the lesson time. As in the first lesson, the vocabulary was pre-taught with most of the learners knowing most of the words already. Also as with the first lesson however, it soon became evident that the learners were not finding the task easy. Again after approximately thirty minutes none of the learners were close to completing the task and break time was coming up. So once again they were allowed to complete the task in their own time before the next lesson. During the break the learners confirmed that they were finding

this task easier than the first one because the story itself was easier to understand.

4.3 An outline of the intervention task data analysis

Out of a total of eight learners in the group four were present at both of the intervention lessons and therefore the analysis of the spoken tasks will focus on those four, namely Akihiro, Koji, Yoshie and Yukari. In addition, one learner, Akemi, completed both of the written tasks. She began the first task in the lesson but completed it, and the second task, in her own time. Therefore, the analysis of the written tasks will look at the work of five learners.

The spoken tasks will be looked at first. The analysis consisted of isolating the learners' past tense verb-usage errors, indicating the probable intended meaning, and categorizing the errors. In addition a percentage score was given reflecting the number of errors in relation to the number of words uttered. Japanese words, non-lexical items such as 'er' and 'ah', and repetitions were not included in the word count. 'Repetitions' perhaps needs to be clarified. Repeating for emphasis, for example 'yes, yes, yes' and 'murder, murder', was included but straightforward repeating such as 'I forget ... I forget', and repeating the teacher's utterances were not included.

4.3.1 An analysis of the learners' performance in the spoken tasks

Categorizations of the learners' errors in both of the spoken tasks can be seen in Appendices G and H. The frequency of the errors is summarized in tables 4.1 and 4.2 below.

The most obvious feature of the results of the spoken tasks is the marked improvement in Akihiro's performance. However, the figures in relation

to Akihiro are somewhat misleading. His improved performance in the second task is more than likely to be due to the fact that in that task he needed to make use of the past simple tense only whilst the first task required both the past simple and the past perfect. To the best of my knowledge, he has not yet encountered the past perfect tense in his English learning experience, as his performance in the first spoken task indicates.

Table 4.1 A summary of the frequency of errors in the first spoken task.

Learners	No. of errors	Word count	Errors as a % of word count
Akihiro	10	92	10.86%
Koji	2	130	1.53%
Yoshie	4	36	11.11%
Yukari	3	94	3.19%

Table 4.2 A summary of the frequency of errors in the second spoken task

Learners	No. of errors	Word count	Errors as a % of word count
Akihiro	3	103	2.91%
Koji	2	93	2.15%
Yoshie	9	80	11.25%
Yukari	4	131	3.05%

The other learners show little or no improvement. In each case the error frequency varied by less than 1%: a negligible change. In the case of Yukari the fact that her error frequency improved by only 0.14% is a little

surprising, as her performance in the second task was not entirely spontaneous. Prior to the lesson she was observed rehearsing what she intended to say but her rehearsal seems not to have had any positive effect.

However, the principal role of the spoken tasks was, as stated in 4.1 above, to sensitize learners to form. Therefore it is hoped that the noticing entailed in the story telling may have a positive effect on the learners' performance in the written tasks.

4.3.2 An analysis of the learners' performance in the written tasks

Both of the written tasks contained almost the same number of omitted items, 28 in the first task and 27 in the second. Table 4.3 below shows the learners' performance in both tasks.

The results of the written tasks were not what had been anticipated. An across the board improvement had been hoped for and an improved performance by the more-able learners had been expected. However, neither of those possible outcomes resulted. Two of the three more-able learners, Akemi and Yukari, showed decreases in their level of performance with the third, Koji, showing only a marginal improvement. However, Akihiro and Yoshie either improved or remained constant.

Table 4.3 A summary of the learners' performance in the written tasks

Learners	Score in 1 st task	Score in 2 nd task	% variation
Akemi	20 (71.42%)	14 (51.85%)	-19.57%
Akihiro	7 (25.00%)	7 (25.92%)	+0.92%
Koji	18 (64.28%)	19 (70.37%)	+6.09%
Yoshie	2 (7.14%)	4 (14.81%)	+7.67%
Yukari	7 (25.00%)	5 (18.51%)	-6.49%

It is difficult to account for Akemi and Yoshie's performance except to note that they were both late in submitting the second task to the teacher. A subsequent conversation with Yukari revealed that at the time that the others had submitted their completed tasks she had yet to add to the attempt she had made in the lesson a week earlier. Therefore, she then made a hurried attempt at completing the task and submitted it without checking it over as she had done with the first task. It is possible to suppose, therefore that if she had been more careful in her approach to the second task then perhaps her performance might have improved. Although it was not possible to have a similar conversation with Akemi, in view of the fact that like Yukari she submitted the task by fax after the other learners had submitted their tasks in person, it is reasonable to assume that she too had completed the task in a similar manner and that if she had also paid more attention to it then the results may have been significantly better. Yukari was asked if she would like to attempt the task again but she declined. It is also worth noting that in the subsequent conversation Yukari stated that she thought the second task was a little easier but that she did not think she had done better than in the first task. It must also be stated that the fact that all of the learners completed the task outside of the lesson time does leave open the possibility of the learners making use of grammar books or dictionaries at home and thereby compromising the results. In the case of the two low-level learners, Akihiro and Yoshie, it is thought that they did not make use of grammar aids for if they had then their results should have been better than they were. As for Akemi and Yukari, their belated submission of the second task and Yukari's admission that she had not given it as much attention as the first one, may indicate that they did use a grammar book or a dictionary for the first task but not for the second. In Koji's case there is no evidence either way to indicate whether he used any grammar aids or not. If it is the case that grammar aids were used by some of the learners, and it must be stressed that it is not known if any of them did, then the results could not be relied

on. In particular, the validity of Akemi and Yukari's results from the first test may be open to question.

In view of the unexpected results it is difficult to draw conclusions other than to say that possibly the type of task this group was asked to attempt was not suited to everyone in the group. The learners' own learning preferences and their perception of their own abilities may have had a part to play in the final results. Akemi and Yukari both combine gregarious personalities with a reasonable standard of English and in lessons they are confident enough, both in themselves and in their English ability, to prefer to talk rather than attempt any writing or listening exercises. Koji, on the other hand, whilst having about the same level of spoken proficiency as Akemi and Yukari, and probably a better grasp of grammar than Yukari, is perhaps not so gregarious and may, therefore, have been more comfortable with an exercise where he was not required to speak. Although his spoken English is of a reasonable standard he tends to be a little uncomfortable being the focus of attention, as indicated by his reluctance to speak in the second spoken task. Yoshie, however, whilst being as gregarious as Akemi and Yoshie, clearly has a low level of proficiency and speaking coherently in English is difficult, if not impossible, for her. Therefore, she too may have welcomed the opportunity to practice English in a written task rather than endure the difficulties entailed in speaking. Similarly with Akihiro who, whilst having a slightly better proficiency level than Yoshie, i.e. he does make an attempt to use verbs, nonetheless is a low-level learner who finds it difficult to communicate in spoken English.

The unexpected results of the written tasks could be seen as echoing Rutherford's (1987) view of C-R referred to in 3.1.2 above, that it is individual-focused. Whilst Rutherford's meaning is that grammar should not be taught in a "lockstep" pattern, perhaps there may also be a case for

stating that, if at all possible, C-R tasks should be designed to meet the needs and preferences of individual learners.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

The principal hypothesis of this paper, as stated in 1.3 above, is that the assertion that fossilization cannot be remedied may not be correct. Related to that is the hypothesis, stated in 3.1 above, that a C-R approach may enable some learners to advance their interlanguage in relation to the aspect of grammar targeted by the C-R task. In addition to the hypotheses concerning fossilization and C-R there was a further hypothesis put forward in the final paragraph of 3.2 above, that the learners might exhibit some resistance to the idea of doing a grammar task, even though it was not presented as such a task.

The last of the above hypotheses will be looked at first. To begin with it must be said that of the learners who were asked to attempt the written tasks only one failed to do either of them, that being Yoshihire. As he attends very infrequently and as his English ability is very limited, his failure to complete either of the tasks should not, perhaps, be viewed as resistance but could be seen as the learner feeling that the task had nothing to do with him. It is also almost certainly true that he felt, probably rightly, that the task was far too difficult for him. Of the other learners in the group, one attended only the second intervention lesson and another did not attend either lesson, as he was busy with work. The learner who attended only the second lesson did, nonetheless, complete the task. The other five learners all completed both of the tasks therefore, it is fair to say that any resistance that there may have been did not extend to the learners' choosing not to do the tasks. Indeed, all of the five learners completed both of the tasks in their own time.

However, there was a reluctance to do the type of task in question. Even the more-able learners complained that the tasks, especially the first task,

were difficult. Indeed, they probably were more difficult than the usual tasks that their textbook requires of them. For the less-able learners in the group, i.e. Akihiro and Yoshie, the tasks were probably beyond their ability to complete them comfortably. However, for the more-able learners, i.e. Akemi, Koji and Yukari, the written tasks should have been well within their capabilities and it was surprising that they were unable to complete them in class time. Of course, it is not possible to empirically confirm what is going on in learners' minds, as some of the possibly less than truthful responses to the questionnaire indicate. However one reason for the more-able learners' failure to complete the tasks in the lesson may be connected to the tendency toward group activity in Japan. The more able learners may have complained about the difficulty of the tasks in order to help the less-able learners save face. The thinking may have been that if they completed the tasks in the lesson then the less-able learners would have appeared conspicuous by virtue of their inability to even come close to finishing the tasks. This is of course conjecture and opinion but it may account for the attitudes of the more-able learners towards the tasks in the lesson.

The above, however, does not account for the attitudes of Akemi and Yukari who not only failed to complete the tasks in the lesson but also did not complete them in time for the next lesson and in fact had to be cajoled into submitting the completed tasks. As stated in 4.3.2 above, their preference is for spoken activities and their apparent indifference towards the tasks probably reflects that preference. The roots of that preference may lie in their more gregarious personalities or they may be the result of a negative attitude towards grammar instruction brought about by a dislike of the grammar instruction they received in school. Either way, as stated in 2.2 above, it is true to say that the teaching of grammar to adults in Japan is a delicate task whereby one runs the risk of alienating some learners at the expense of aiding the interlanguage growth of others.

With regard to the hypothesis that C-R might enable some learners to advance their interlanguage growth in targeted areas, it is appropriate to compare the effects of the spoken and the written tasks. In the case of the spoken tasks, with the exception of Akihiro there was little or no improvement in the learners' performance on the second task as compared with the first. Akihiro's performance has been accounted for already and cannot be seen as a consequence of the first task. However, the written tasks do show improvements in performance for those learners who completed the tasks promptly. This may be accounted for by Ellis' (1990) views referred to in 3.1.2 above, i.e. that if declarative knowledge is the objective of the instruction and if the activities involved are directed at consciousness-raising then that lends support to a C-R approach as opposed to a more conventional drill-based approach. The written tasks did not require production of the targeted form but instead required only a declarative knowledge of past tense forms and their usage, whereas the spoken tasks by their nature required production. The resultant outcome whereby some improvement can be seen following the written task but not the spoken task may well support Ellis' (1990) support for C-R as an approach. It bears out the findings of earlier research which showed instruction having an immediate effect on monitored language use, i.e. the written tasks, but none on spontaneous use, i.e. the spoken tasks. Consequently it could be argued that C-R tasks do enable learners to advance their interlanguage in targeted areas and, again as stated in 3.1.2 above, the raising to consciousness of a linguistic feature at a declarative level serves as a platform for the acquisition of procedural knowledge.

As for the main hypothesis that it may be possible for fossilization to be remedied, it has to be admitted that the results of the tasks are inconclusive on this point. Not only are the results inconclusive but as stated in 4.3.2 above, the possibility that some of the learners may have used grammar books or dictionaries to assist them in the completion of the

tasks raises doubts about the validity of the results. The unexpected, and possibly invalid, results may indicate that successful attempts at de-fossilization are difficult to achieve with groups of learners. One of the reasons may be that the differing levels of ability among learners may result in a particular activity being successful with some learners but not with others. There is also the question of motivation. Some learners may be keen to improve their second language ability but others may be content with the level they have attained, as it may be sufficiently proficient to enable them to communicate successfully but imperfectly with native speakers of the L2. Perhaps Akemi and Yukari could be included among the latter as their lack of attention toward the second task may be indicative of the strategies of communication referred to in 1.2 and of the sociolinguistic view of fossilization referred to in 1.4 above.

It is possible that a different type of C-R task may have produced more desirable results. However, as C-R tasks in general involve reading and writing but little or no speaking, it is debatable whether this particular group of learners would have reacted any more positively or have produced stronger results if the tasks had been different. It is certainly true, however, that in order to avoid doubts over the validity of the results, tasks should be completed in the lesson time. Whilst allowing learners to complete tasks in their own time certainly alleviates most of any pressure that they might be feeling, and provides plenty of time for reflection by the learners, it does compromise the results. Upon reflection, in this particular case having the learners do the spoken and the written tasks in separate lessons would probably have enabled the learners to complete the written tasks in the lesson time.

As stated in 4.3.2 above, it may be true that C-R tasks could be more effective on individuals rather than with groups. The aforementioned factors of differing levels of ability and motivation, together with other

difficulties such as satisfying the group's communicative needs whilst at the same time attempting to bring about changes in their interlanguage, and having adequate levels of attendance at lessons, make attempting de-fossilization at a class-level highly problematic. However, it may be possible to have greater success with a single, sufficiently motivated learner who is open to different approaches and who does not see the lesson just as an opportunity to interact with a native speaker. Which brings us back to the beginning and Selinker's focus on *ideal* second language learners. Perhaps there are no such people as *ideal learners* and perhaps, therefore, achieving de-fossilization is as impossible as finding perfection in people.

**APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE USED TO OBTAIN BACKGROUND
INFORMATION ON THE LEARNERS**

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Age (Please circle the appropriate age group)

20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59

2. Sex

Male Female

3. Education (You may check more than one school)

High School

Vocational School

Junior College

University

Graduate School

4. When did you start learning English?

At elementary school

At junior high school

At high school

At junior college

At university

5. Did you enjoy learning English when you started to learn it?

Yes No

6. If you did not enjoy it can you say why not?

7. When did you first have lessons with a native-speaking teacher?

Elementary School

Junior High School

High School

Vocational School

Junior College

University

Company

8. Have you ever spoken English to a non-Japanese outside of English classes?

Yes No

9. If you answered 'yes' to question 8 can you say what problems you have had in communicating with non-Japanese people?

10. What are your reasons for learning English? (You may check more than one reason.)

For travel

For business

For fun

For intellectual exercise

To be with friends

To have contact with a non-Japanese person

Other (please specify)

11. Do you think that your English has improved since you started coming to this class?

Yes No

12. Can you say what your main English weak points are?

13. How do you remember new words?

14. What do you do when you don't know how to say something?

APPENDIX B: LIST OF LEARNERS' ERRORS

(Key: T = teacher, A to F = learners)

1. B: He's going to a restaurant. (*'going to' omitted*)
2. D: Is there Newman's department store? (*Should be 'Is it near...'*)
3. T: Where is the Post Office?
B: It's on the Fourth Street.
4. T: Where's the drugstore?
D: It's ... on the corner ... Third Street. It's on the corner Third Street and Grant Street.
5. T: You don't remember whether you went to the Empire State Building or not?
F: Yes.
6. T: Were you in Times Square for the New Year countdown?
F: No, it was very crowded.
7. T: So what did you do in New York on New Year's Eve?
F: I went to a museum.
8. T: On New Year's Eve? At midnight?
F: New Year's Eve at midnight I watched a fire ... fire ...
T: Firework display.
9. T: Koji, where would you want to go in New York City?
B: I want to go to Statue of Liberty.
10. T: Did you go there? The Statue of Liberty?
F: I saw from airplane. Just airplane.
11. T: Where can you listen to music outdoors, Yoshie?
E: You can listen to Bryant Park.
12. T: Where can you have a view of Fukui City?
E: You can have a Mt. Asuwa.
13. T: Where can you go skating in Fukui?
D: You can have skating in Shibamasa Skate Rink.

14. T: What are you going to do this weekend?
A: I studied ...I studied.
15. T: What are you studying?
A: I study ...Labour Union.
16. T: What is Yukari going to do this weekend?
F: This weekend is Mikuni Festival.
17. F: Saturday and Sunday.
18. F: Friday is no store.
19. F: My friends come to my house and drinking.
20. F: We gonna go to Mikuni Temple.
21. T: On what day do the big dolls get carried around?
B: My cousin on the doll and play Taiko.
22. T: So how about you Yoshie? What are you going to do?
E: Saturday ...old book, old newspaper and (Japanese utterance) ...in
K-truck (Japanese English for a small van), elementary school ...
23. T: Where will you take them?
E: (school name) School.
24. T: Why?
E: My son ... attendance.
T: Attends. He attends that school.
25. T: Yoshie, do you watch much television on the weekend?
E: No, not much.
T: About how much time do you spend watching TV?
E: I watch ... er, ...watching (Japanese utterance) about 30 minutes.
26. T: Koji, do you watch much TV?
B: Yes, on Saturday about 4 hours. On Sunday 6 or 7 hours.
27. T: What do you go shopping for?
B: I go to clothes shop.
28. T: Yoshie, what do you do on the weekend?
E: I sleep, ... I do ... does ... I read.

29. T: No, what do you do usually. You don't need to say do or did.
E: I clean in my house or
30. E: food shopping or
31. E: I play with my childrens ...
32. E: Internet (Japanese utterance) I play internet.
33. E: Maurice send ... er, ... e-mail and write to Maurice, e-mail 2 hours.
34. F: Talking to friends and watching TV and ... listening music.
35. A: I didn't play the computer.
36. B: I didn't play the computer either.
37. T: Yukari, what did you do on the weekend.
F: I went to hair salon.
38. D: It was very difficult to watered the plants.
39. F: I went to office.
40. F: its name Tamasama.
41. F: Tamasama means 'arigato' by Indonesia.
42. T: So it's an Indonesian restaurant?
F: No, restaurant.
43. F: I haven't ever er, ... I haven't never, er ...
T: I have never.
44. F: I have never been to go to Asia.
45. B: I have never been to abroad.
46. F: Do you have a passport?
B: No.
F: You must take a passport. (*'You should get a passport'*)
47. T: Have you been there?
B: I wanted to be someday.
48. F: Hong Kong's people can speak English?
49. B: Yesterday morning an earthquake caused.
50. T: Did it wake you up or were you already awake?
B: I went out of my house.

51. T: Really? So you were already awake or did you get out of bed and run out of the house?

B: I have a ... I ... already got up.

52. D: What did you think when happened the earthquake?

53. T: What did you do? (when the earthquake happened)

F: I ate breakfast. (the intended meaning was 'I was eating breakfast?').

**APPENDIX C: ERROR CATEGORIES AND FREQUENCY OF
OCCURRENCE**

1. Omission of articles. (1, 9, 10, 16, 18, 23, 37, 39, 42)
2. Incorrect use of articles. (3)
3. Incorrect word order. (16, 18, 26, 33, 48, 49, 52)
4. Omission of the subject. (2, 10, 17, 33, 34, 42)
5. Omission of prepositions. (2, 4, 12, 17, 18, 19, 27, 33)
6. Incorrect use of prepositions. (29, 41, 45)
7. Inappropriate response. (5, 7, 9, 33, 50, 53)
8. Use of a 'non-word'. (6)
9. Lexical item not known by learner. (8)
10. Incorrect use of adverbs. (10)
11. Omission of verb-phrases. (11, 12, 22, 24, 27, 30)
12. Incorrect use of verb-forms. (14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 25, 27, 34, 35, 36, 38, 47)
13. Incorrect choice of verb. (32, 46, 47, 49)
14. Incorrect use of auxiliary verbs. (13, 28, 43, 47, 51)
15. Incorrect use of modal verbs. (46)
16. Omission of the copula 'be'. (17, 20, 21, 39, 41, 42)
17. Inappropriate use of the copula 'be'. (47)
18. Incorrect use of plural / singular items. (18, 31)
19. Telegraphic speech. (15, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24)
20. Incorrect use of negative forms. (18, 42, 43)

APPENDIX D: ANALYSIS OF VERB USAGE ERRORS

In the following list of utterances the numbers follow the same numbering as used in Appendix B. The name of the learner responsible for each utterance is given at the end of the utterance. In the “omission of verbs” group all of the omitted items are shown in italics in the body of each utterance. In the “inappropriate verb tense” group the appropriate utterance is given in italics after the learners’ utterances.

Omission of verbs

1. He’s going to *go to* a restaurant. (Koji)

Omission of present simple verb form of ‘go’. (N.B. The statement was in response to a question in which ‘go’ was the main verb therefore its omission in the reply is considered to be an error.)

17. *It is on* Saturday and Sunday. (Yukari)

Omission of the third person singular form of the present simple of the copula ‘be’. (N.B. The statement was not in response to a question and therefore it should have contained the three omitted items.)

19. My friends *are going to* come to my house and drinking. (Yukari)

Omission of the plural form of the present simple of the copula ‘be’ and of ‘going to’.

20. We *are gonna* go to Mikuni Temple. (Yukari)

Omission of the plural form of the present simple of the copula ‘be’.

21. My cousin *will be* on the doll and *will* play the taiko.

Omission of the copula ‘be’ in conjunction with the modal ‘will’.

22. Saturday *I am going to put* old book(s), old newspaper(s) and ... in k-truck *and take them to an elementary school.* (Yoshie)

Omission of the first person singular of the present simple of the copula 'be' and the omission of 'going to' and of two present simple verb forms.

24. My son (*attends*) attendance *that school.* (Yoshie)

Use of a noun instead of the third person singular form of the present simple form of 'attend'.

26. Yes. On Saturday(s) I watch *about four hours.* (Koji)

Omission of the present simple form of 'watch'.

40. Its name is Tamasama. (Yukari)

Omission of the present simple form of the copula 'be'.

42. No it's not a restaurant.

Omission of the present simple form of the copula 'be'.

Inappropriate verb tense

14. I studied ... I studied. *I am going to study.* (Akihiro)

Use of the past simple form of 'going to' plus present simple form.

15. I study labour union. *I am studying labour unions.* (Akihiro)

Use of the present simple instead of the present continuous.

19. My friends come to my house and drinking. *My friends are going to come to my house for a drink.* (Yukari)

Use of the present continuous instead of a prepositional phrase.

21. My cousin on the doll and play the taiko. *My cousin will be on the doll and will play the taiko.* (Koji)

Use of the present simple instead of the future ‘will’.

25. I watch ... er, ... watching about thirty minutes. *I spend about thirty Minutes.* (Yoshie)

Use of present continuous form instead of the present simple.

27. I go to clothes shop. *I go shopping for clothes.* (Koji)

Use of ‘go’ plus a preposition instead of ‘go’ plus a gerund.

34. Talking to friends and watching TV and ... listening to music. *I talk to friends, watch TV and listen to music.* (Yukari)

Use of the present continuous form instead of the present simple.

35. I didn’t play the computer. *I don’t use a computer.* (Akihiro)

Use of the past simple instead of the present simple.

36. I didn’t play the computer either. *I don’t use a computer either.*
(Koji)

Use of the past simple instead of the present simple.

38. It was very difficult to watered the plants. *It was very difficult to water the plants.* (Tokuyo)

Inappropriate use of –ed morpheme with the main verb in a sentence formed with the past simple of the copula ‘be’.

47. I wanted to be someday. *I want to go someday.* (Koji)

Use of the past simple instead of the past perfect.

51. I have a ... I ... already got up. *I had already got up.* (Koji)

Use of the past simple instead of the past perfect.

53. I ate breakfast. I was eating breakfast. (Yukari)

Use of the past simple instead of the past continuous.

APPENDIX E: FIRST SPOKEN TASK DISCOURSES

Yukari's story

Yukari: I went to Rome in 1997. First I went to went to with my mother but she couldn't to go. Then I was alone. When I got to, to in Roma ... B Class hotel. Next day I went to Trebi, Trebi ...

Teacher: Oh. Trevi. The Trevi Fountain.

Yukari: Then I ... throw, er, throw. So, I hope my love someone, somebody (laughter). Then I went to colosseum.

Teacher: What did you think?

Yukari: I was surprised because too big and rocks all and (Japanese utterances) and then ...

Teacher: Did you go to the Vatican?

Yukari: Vatican, yeah.

Teacher: What did you think of that?

Yukari: So wonderful. I want to go there again, someday.

Teacher: Yeah, me too.

Yukari: One week ago I was back. (Japanese utterance meaning "That's wrong").

Teacher: Oh. You came back.

Yukari: I came back ...

Teacher: ... after a week.

Yukari: After a week.

Teacher: OK. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Akemi: (Japanese utterances to Yukari regarding what she had said, in Japanese, about the colosseum.) There was a mother.

Teacher: Oh, yeah. Your mother.

Yukari: No, no. Murder, murder.

Teacher: Murder! Sorry, I thought you said mother.

Yukari: In the colosseum.

Teacher: What? When you were there?

Yukari: When you were ...?

Teacher: Did it happen when you were in the colosseum?

Yukari: (Laughter) No. (Japanese utterance for “a long, long time ago”).

Teacher: Oh you mean about two thousand years ago people were killed in the colosseum. Many people were killed there.

Akemi's story

Akemi: Well I'll tell you, ... er, ... a story that happened so many years ago. It's about more than five years ago. It was a package tour but just ... er, ... there was , er, ... two days trip to Torquay so, er, ... and the second or third morning we had to get the train in the morning so we went to the station by ... tube, and my friend and I we had a ticket for the train the travel agency gave us the ticket. So we went to the station but ...er, ... when we saw the ticket, the train er, the station was er, ... it said different station. We went to the Paddington Station but but the train start, the train leave from another station maybe Waterloo or somewhere so we realised that the station was different so ... er, but we did not have much time. That train was almost coming so we were very panicked and we have to go there very quickly, so we had to ..er, ... train now coming ... subway again ... when we went got to go to the station but the train was already gone. So we were not sure the ticket if you can use the ticket and I asked the person at the station and he, he yes so wait for the next train and finally we get the train. But, and ... er, ... in the guidebook the train, the travel agency, said Torquay is a very resort place.

Teacher: Yes, that's right.

Akemi: So and er, ...it's so far away and it took about ... I'm not sure, three or four hours.

Teacher: Yeah, probably.

Akemi: It's so long time. Finally we got there but it was so quiet. We were very shocked!

Teacher: What time of year was it?

Akemi: Er, ... in September.

Teacher: Ah. End of the season.

Akemi: So I was really a little disappointed. There was no sophisticated shops and almost no people. Finally we got there but it was not so charming place for us!

Teacher: You should have gone to Brighton!

Yoshie's story

Yoshie: Honeymoon?

Teacher: Yes.

Yoshie: Honeymoon to ... I went to Guam.

Teacher: Uh huh.

Yoshie: One week. In the sea ... (Japanese utterances including the Japanese word for a sea cucumber).

Teacher: Sea cucumber.

Yoshie: Japanese sea cucumber are little. Guam is big. I didn't know ... sea ... I ... thought these er, ... rock ... stones (Consultation in Japanese with other learners).

Teacher: You stood on a sea cucumber?

Yoshie: (More consultation in Japanese with other learners).

Teacher: Oh! Squishy! It felt squishy.

Yoshie: (Japanese utterances) All ... wah! Wah! (Demonstrates her reaction to standing barefoot on a squishy sea cucumber.)

Teacher: They don't sting, do they?

Akemi&

Yukari: No, no.

Yoshie: Guam is cucumber not, not eat.

Teacher: You can't eat them.

Akihiro's story

Akihiro: I went to ... when I went to Canada ... (long pause) ... I stayed
in (Japanese utterance) hotel. The hotel ... I forgot the name.

Teacher: It doesn't matter.

Akihiro: I check in ... when I check in ... I show ... I show credit card
...er, ... (Japanese utterances).

Teacher: Gave it back to you.

Akihiro: Gave back the card. But ... I forget ... next morning I forget
gave back the card. I forget, I forget take the card, er, er, ...
take the card er, ...

Teacher: Yeah, I understand.

Akihiro: I ... said hotelman, hotelwoman gave the card ... I said ... gave
the card ...

Teacher: Yes.

Akihiro: Gave back the card ... but she said I gave your card ...
(consultation with fellow learner in Japanese).

Teacher: *Kanojo wa mo kaeta desu ne.* So she said I already gave it back
to you.

Akihiro: She already gave back your card, ... your card, she said.

Teacher: Aha.

Akihiro: But I forgot gave back.

Teacher: I see.

Akihiro: Gave back, gave back your card.

Teacher: So how did it finish? What happened?

Akihiro: I find the ... I find my wallet in the room. It find ... in the wallet.

Koji's story

Koji: Short story. Five years ago I went Hokkaido. I went to hopu? Scopu?

Teacher: Eh?

(Other learners try to help Koji find the right word)

Teacher: What is it? Can you describe it?

Koji: H-O-P-E.

Teacher: Hope. But you said you went to hope. Is hope a place?

Koji: A place?

Teacher: Ah.

Akihiro: Cope.

Koji: Cope.

Akemi: Speru wa? (how do you spell it?)

Akihiro: C-A-P-E.

Teacher: Cape. Cape.

Koji: Cape.

Teacher: Peninsula.

Koji: I went to cape ... I went a few cape, ... capes. And er, I carried two bag ... er, ... I was very tired ... er, ... when I ... (long pause) ... When I went to Otaru City in, by, the train I lost my wallet. Er, ... next day I noticed it.

Teacher: Oh really.

Koji: Er, ... lucky I had another wallet in the bag. My lost my wallet, my lost wallet, it has student ID, apartment key, in it. I came, I,

I came back to my apartment later ... a week ... after a week er,
... my wallet was sended to my university. Because student ...

Teacher: ID.

Akemi: ID card.

Koji: Er, ...

Teacher: Because your student ID card was in your wallet.

Koji: Yes.

Teacher: Good, good.

Koji: Mada, mada. (Not yet.)

Teacher: I thought this was a short story, but go on! (Lots of laughter).

Koji: Maybe, maybe, maybe a woman sent it, sent it.

Teacher: Why do you say it was a woman?

Koji: My next seat was a woman sit next sit my ...

Teacher: I see.

Koji: (Consultation in Japanese).

Teacher: Envelope.

Koji: There wasn't a name on the envelope. In fact, there was a nasty
picture in my wallet. So she didn't write her name.

Teacher: OK! What kind of nasty picture?

Koji: Top secret!

APPENDIX F: SECOND SPOKEN TASK DISCOURSE

Teacher: Akihiro, how was your holiday?

Akihiro: I, ... I took part in three races in Suzuka circuit.

Teacher: That's an F1 circuit, isn't it?

Akihiro: In Suzuka, Suzuka City.

Teacher: Yes, er, Suzuka circuit is an F1 circuit, isn't it?

Akihiro: Yes, yes. F1 circuit.

Teacher: Were you driving a car or riding your bicycle?

Akihiro: I, I, ... I, I ... cycling.

Teacher: Cycling! OK. I see.

Akihiro: Score is ... my result is my best.

Teacher: Ah, I see. It was a personal best.

Akihiro: Personal best?

Teacher: Yeah, personal best.

(Other learners confirm the meaning in Japanese.)

Teacher: So that was in Suzuka in Mie.

Akihiro: Yes, yes.

Teacher: So what else did you do down there? Anything? Did you do any sightseeing in Mie?

(Other learners confirm the meaning of the question in Japanese.)

Akihiro: No. Suzuka circuit only. I, I ... went to Suzuka circuit only.

Teacher: Yes, yes. So how about the rest of the holiday? Did you do anything else during O-bon?

Akihiro: I went to Biwako ... Biwako, Biwako.

Teacher: Lake Biwa.

Akihiro: Lake Biwako, Lake Biwako.

Teacher: Lake Biwa.

Akihiro: Lake Biwa.

Teacher: 'Ko' means lake. What did you do there?

Akihiro: Erm, ... I ... cycled?

Teacher: Yeah, cycled.

Akihiro: I cycled around Lake Biwa. One day. For one day.

Teacher: Did your family go with you?

Akihiro: No, er, ... I went to, er, with my friends. Three friends.

Teacher: Ah, I see. So it took one day to go around Lake Biwa, eh? What time did you start and finish?

Akihiro: We started at 6:20 and er, we finished at five ... about at 5 p.m. We cycled 150 kilometres.

Teacher: I suppose you drove home.

Akihiro: Drove?

Teacher: Er, ... how did you go to Lake Biwa? Did you drive there?

Akihiro: Ah! Yes, yes, yes.

Teacher: So what do you do with your bike when you drive?

Akihiro: What do you ...?

Teacher: Where do you put your bike when you drive?

(Other learners explain the meaning in Japanese.)

Akihiro: Erm, ... my bicycle in the car?

Yukari: In the car?

Akihiro: In the car. My friends bicycle is on the roof.

Teacher: Great! Thank you!

Koji, how about your ...

Koji: I'm sorry.

Teacher: How was your holiday? What did you do?

Koji: (A very long pause.)

Teacher: How long was your holiday? When did it start?

Koji: It starts, started August, er, ... 13th ...

Teacher: Yeah? Until when? The 20th?

Koji: I had been at home almost every day.

Teacher: So you stayed home every day. What did you do at home?

Koji: I cleaned my room.

Teacher: Every day?

(Laughter.)

Koji: And watched videos. Sometime I drove ... go to Kaga City or Fukui City.

Yukari: What kind of videos did you watch?

Koji: I watched soccer videos. Two years ago ... 1998 France World Cup.

Teacher: Which games?

Koji: Er, ... highlight ... I ... I ... I had video cassette tapes that I did, er, hadn't watched yet.

Teacher: Video tapes of the World Cup.

Koji: Yes.

Teacher: So, did you watch all of those during the holiday?

Koji: No, no, no ... two, two, two cassettes.

Teacher: Did you rent any videos?

Koji: No, no, no. My ... I'll ... take a rest in September.

Teacher: Take a rest? Take a holiday? Take a vacation?

Koji: Take a holiday. Take a vacation.

Teacher: What are you going to do in September?

Koji: Maybe I will go ... mmm Tokyo, Akihabara and so on.

Teacher: Akihabara? To buy a computer?

Koji: No, no, no that's the end.

Teacher: Oh, right. OK. Thank you.

So, Yoshie. How was your holiday?

Yoshie: (Along pause)

Teacher: Did you go anywhere?

Yoshie: (Japanese utterances) 15.

Yukari: 15th.

Teacher: On the 15th.

Yoshie: On the 15th I ... I went to, I went to Shibamasa ... on my, with my family. (Japanese utterances.)

Teacher: In the morning.

Yoshie: In the morning, in the morning my (Japanese utterance) my
... morning (Japanese utterances)

Teacher: What did you do in the morning?

Yoshie: On Shibamasa ...

Teacher: You went to Shibamasa in the morning.

Yoshie: Shibamasa in morning (Japanese utterances) ... go-kart (Japanese
utterances) play, play go-kart.

Teacher: No, you ride a go-kart.

Yoshie: Go-kart, jagi-kart ...

Teacher: What?

Yoshie: Jagi-kart?

Teacher: What's a jagi-kart? Is it like a go-kart?

Yoshie: Go-kart is ... two.

Teacher: Two types of go-kart.

Yoshie: Two types of go-kart. Jagi-kart only driving (Japanese
utterances).

Koji: One person.

(Long pause followed by a brief discussion in Japanese among
the learners.)

Yoshie: Go-kart is ... (Japanese utterances)

Koji: Go-kart is two-seated.

Teacher: A two-seater go-kart? Really?

Yoshie: Jet coaster ... (Japanese utterances) ... jet coaster.

Teacher: Ride, again. You ride on a jet coaster. You can say you went on
a jet coaster. You go on it. You go on a ride. So you should say
'I went on the jet coaster'.

Yoshie: I went jet coaster.

Teacher: Went on the jet coaster.

Yoshie: Went on jet coaster ... on baiking ...? (Japanese utterances)

Teacher: The jet coaster and the Viking boat.

Yoshie: Viking boat.

Teacher: Yeah.

Yoshie: (A long pause) It's very, very (Japanese utterance)

Teacher: It made you feel sick.

Yoshie: It made you feel sick. Afternoon is ... swimming, swimming pool
(Japanese utterance) ... Caribbean Beach.

Teacher: What did you do there? Try to remember to use some verbs.

Don't just say the names of things but say what you did.

(Discussion in Japanese with Yukari.)

Yoshie: Play, played pool.

Teacher: Yes, you played in the pool.

Yoshie: Swim (Japanese utterance) in Caribbean Beach, name is
Caribbean Beach.

Teacher: Yeah, OK. So, yes, you played in the Caribbean Beach pool.

Yoshie: (Long pause)

Teacher: Say it in Japanese.

Yoshie: All, all over ... beach, beach in all the people.

Teacher: Yes, go on. Don't stop.

Yoshie: Slide, slider, slide.

Teacher: Slide. Water slide.

Yoshie: Water slider.

Teacher: Not slider. Water slide.

Yoshie: Water slide ... is all, all people.

Teacher: Crowded. The water slide was very crowded. It was very busy.
There were many people using the water slide.

Yoshie: Yes.

Teacher: Did you use it? Did you go on the water slide?

Yoshie: No, I didn't. My children is ...

Teacher: Did.

Yoshie: Did.

Teacher: How long did they have to wait?

Yoshie: Twenty, twenty minutes ... (Japanese utterances). My son...

Teacher: They waited ...

Yoshie: They waited ...

Teacher: ... for twenty minutes.

Yoshie: ... for waited twenty minutes.

Teacher: That's not too long. That's not too bad. I thought it might be longer. Thank you, Yoshie and *dozo* Yukari. Tell us about your holiday.

Yukari: My holiday was always the same. Sorry. My friend came to back to Fukui from Tokyo so we went to (indecipherable).

Teacher: Where?

Yukari: My friend's restaurant, (indecipherable) my friend's bar, for a drink. Hmm, ... so, ... I want to talk about Mikuni fireworks display. I want to wear yukata but I had no, I had no, ...I didn't have time so I couldn't wear yukata. Then ... we bought, bought some alcohol and some snacks then we got on the beach.
(Japanese utterances.)

Teacher: We went on the beach would be better.

Yukari: Went on the beach. And then ... the fireworks was very beautiful but it was cloudy and windless so we couldn't fireworks, the fireworks very well but I didn't mind because I was drunk!
(Laughter.) And I had a great time.

Teacher: Good, good.

Yukari: My best friend became a mother. She born, she make ...

Teacher: Ah, yes. This always causes confusion. She gave birth, or it's more usual to say she had.

Yukari: She had a baby.

Teacher: Well, yes! I'm glad it was a baby! Was it a boy or a girl?

Yukari: A boy.

Teacher: She had a boy.

Yukari: She had a boy. So tonight I went to ... oh, ... I'm going to go to

she home and ... look the baby.

Teacher: Oh. To see the baby.

Yukari: To see the baby. Thank you.

APPENDIX G: CATEGORIZATION OF THE LEARNERS' ERRORS
IN THE FIRST SPOKEN TASK

Akihiro

Error: The hotel ... I forgot the name of the hotel.

Intention: I forget the name of the hotel.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: I check in ... when I check.

Intention: When I checked in.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: I show ... I show credit card.

Intention: I showed my credit card.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: But ... I forget ... next morning I forget.

Intention: But the next morning I forgot.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: ... gave back the card.

Intention: ... she had given the card back to me.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: I forget, I forget.

Intention: I forgot.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: ... take the card.

Intention: I had taken the card.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: But I forgot gave back.
Intention: But I had forgotten that she had given it back to me.
Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense (x2)

Error: I find the ... I find the wallet.
Intention: I found the wallet.
Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Koji

Error: ... it has student ID.
Intention: ... it had student ID in it.
Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: My wallet was sended.
Intention: My wallet was sent.
Categorization: Overgeneralization of regular verb past tense formation.

Yoshie

Error: One week
Intention: I was there for one week.
Categorization: Omission of verb phrase.

Error: In the sea ...
Intention: There were lots of sea cucumbers in the sea.
Categorization: Omission of verb phrase.

Error: I thought these er, ... rock ...
Intention: I thought they were rocks.
Categorization: Omission of verb phrase.

Error: All ... wah! Wah!

Intention: I said wah! Wah!

Categorization: Omission of verb phrase.

Yukari

Error: First I went to went to with my mother but she couldn't to go.

Intention: At first I was going to go with my mother but then she couldn't go.

Categorization: Inappropriate choice of verb.

Error: Then I throw ...

Intention: Then I threw ...

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: One week ago I was back.

Intention: After a week I came home.

Categorization: Inappropriate choice of verb.

APPENDIX H: CATEGORIZATION OF THE LEARNERS' ERRORS
IN THE SECOND SPOKEN TASK

Akihiro

Error: I, I ... I, I cycling.

Intention: I was cycling.

Categorization: Omission of verb phrase.

Error: Score is ... my result is my best.

Intention: It was my best ever result.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: My friend's bicycle is on the roof.

Intention: My friend's bicycle was on the roof.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Koji

Error: I had been at home almost every day.

Intention: I was home almost every day.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: I save money.

Intention: I am saving money.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Yoshie

Error: In the morning, in the morning ... my, my ... morning

Intention: Unknown

Categorization: Omission of verb phrase.

Error: Shibamasa in morning, go-kart ... play, play go-kart.

Intention: In the morning I drove a go-kart at Shibamasa.

Categorization: Inappropriate choice of verb.

Error: Afternoon is swimming, swimming pool ... Caribbean Beach.

Intention: In the afternoon I went swimming at Caribbean Beach.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense and inappropriate choice of verb.

Error: Swim ... in Caribbean Beach, name is Caribbean Beach.

Intention: I went swimming at Caribbean Beach.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: All, all over ... beach, beach in all the people.

Intention: There were people all over the beach.

Categorization: Omission of verb phrase.

Error: Water slide ... is all people.

Intention: The water slide was very crowded.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: My children is.

Intention: My children did.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Yukari

Error: I want to wear yukata.

Intention: I wanted to wear a yukata.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: ... the fireworks was very beautiful.

Intention: ... the fireworks were very beautiful.

Categorization: Inappropriate verb tense.

Error: ... so we couldn't fireworks, the fireworks very well.

Intention: ... so we couldn't see the fireworks very well.

Categorization: Omission of verb.

Error: She born, she make a boy.

Intention: She had a boy.

Categorization: Inappropriate choice of verb.

APPENDIX I: FIRST WRITTEN TASK

THE LONGEST DAY

This story happened a few years ago when British people could go on a day trip to France without a passport. It is about a Mr. and Mrs. Elham who went on a day trip to Boulogne.

When they (1) their shopping, the couple (2) for a stroll to see the sights of the town. Unfortunately, they didn't (3) much French and couldn't really (4) the street signs, so they (5) completely lost. The French people they (6) were very kind and eventually they (7) a lift to the railway station.

As the last ferry (8), the Elhams (9) to go to Paris and (10) their way back to Dover from there. Unfortunately, they (11) the wrong train and (12) themselves the next morning – in Luxembourg! The local police (13) the confused passengers on a train for Paris and they (14) most of the way – all too soundly in fact, for they (15) their connection and (16) in Basel in Switzerland!.

The obliging Swiss police (17) the couple directions back to Boulogne but somehow they (18) their way again and ended up (19) over sixty kilometers to Vesoul in central France. A long-distance lorry driver gave the confused couple a lift to Paris, but when they (20) the Gare du Nord, their troubles were not over.

‘We (21) the signs,’ Mrs. Elham (22), ‘and took the train to Bonn in Germany.’ From Germany the Elhams (23) quickly back to France. At the border, a sympathetic gendarme decided to (24) they got to Boulogne safely, so he (25) them all the way there.

As they didn't have passports, it took twenty-four hours to (26) the customs that their unlikely tale (27) possibly be true. But at last they were allowed on a ferry and soon the familiar white cliffs of Dover (28) the Elhams back to England.

Complete the story

These are the missing verbs from the story.

became	gave	make	reached
caught	got	make sure	set out
could	had finished	met	slept
decided	had left	misread	understand
drove	hitchhiking	missed	welcomed
explained	know	persuade	were sent
found	lost	put	woke up

Gaps:

1	11	21
2	12	22
3	13	23
4	14	24
5	15	25
6	16	26
7	17	27
8	18	28
9	19	
10	20	

APPENDIX J: SECOND WRITTEN TASK

NIGHTMARE HOLIDAY

Eighteen years ago, when I was looking through a holiday brochure, I (1) a holiday in Sri Lanka on offer at three weeks for the price of two. I soon (2) that I (3) to go on the holiday and after a couple of weeks I (4) my girlfriend, Mandy, to go with me.

We (5) to go to London by bus and when we (6) at the bus station Mandy (7) the bus while I went to put our suitcases into the luggage compartment. However, a porter told me that I didn't have to do it and that he would load the suitcases. I said OK and (8) Mandy on the bus.

We had to change buses at Birmingham, which is about 200 kilometers from London. We got off the bus and went to the rear where the luggage was being (9). We couldn't see our suitcases so we (10). Eventually all of the luggage (11) unloaded but our bags weren't there! Mandy (12) to cry and after I had (13) at the porter I (14) towards the manager's office to find out what had (15) and what they were going to do.

The manager (16) the Liverpool bus station and (17) that our bags were still there. The porter hadn't put them on the bus! The manager suggested that we get on the next bus to London and that he would make sure that our bags were sent to us. Mandy then began crying even harder and said that she wasn't going to go to Sri Lanka without any clothes! The bus to London then (18) without us and the next bus would arrive in London too late for us to catch the plane.

Mandy then began to get hysterical. I (19) to know what the manager was going to do to help us and one of his colleagues actually (20) flying us to Heathrow by helicopter. Eventually the manager said he would drive us to the airport in his car: a 3500cc V8 Rover, a very fast car. He also (21) British Airways and (22) for one of their staff to meet us at the airport entrance and to take us directly to the plane. He (23) very fast. Mandy cried all the way to the airport. In fact, she cried all the way to Sri Lanka!

After three days in Sri Lanka our bags still hadn't arrived so I (24) and was told that the bags were at the Customs Office, but when we went there the office was (25). We went again the next day but our bags weren't there. Eventually, the travel company's representative (26) us that our bags were at the Customs Office in Colombo port and not at the airport! After a week of wearing borrowed clothes we finally had our own clothes to wear and Mandy (27) crying.

Complete the story

These are the verbs missing from the story.

Arranged	Decided	Persuaded
Arrived	Demanded	Planned
Began	Drove	Shouted
Boarded	Had been	Stopped
Charged off	Had happened	Suggested
Checked	Informed	Telephoned
Closed	Joined	Unloaded
Confirmed	Left	Waited
Contacted	Noticed	Wanted

Gaps:

1.	10.	19.
2.	11.	20.
3.	12.	21.
4.	13.	22.
5.	14.	23.
6.	15.	24.
7.	16.	25.
8.	17.	26.
9.	18.	27.

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