

# 琉球大学学術リポジトリ

## 社会人入学者の英語機能語(grammatical morphemes)の習得について

メタデータ	言語: 出版者: 琉球大学法文学部 公開日: 2010-01-26 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: Onaha, Hiroko, 小那覇, ひろこ メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/15193">http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/15193</a>

## **Acquisition of English Grammatical Morphemes: A Case of a Local Employee on a U.S. Military Base in Okinawa, Japan\***

Hiroko Onaha

The motivation of learning English as a foreign language for Japanese college students may not be as strong as second language learning. According to Long (1983: 380), "... these questions (see Long 1983) will affect the lives of countless individuals, children and adults, for whom SL (Second Language) is the gateway to education and to economic and social survival." However, there are English learners whose motivation of learning or acquisition of English is as strong as second language learners. Among these motivated English learners are Japanese employees on U.S. bases all over Japan, especially in Okinawa. The English language in Okinawa used to be and in some cases still is: "the gateway to education and to economic and social survival" as well as individual promotion.

For the purpose of the present study local employees on U.S. military bases in Okinawa can be classified into the following three groups: (1) junior or senior high school graduates who acquired their English in an English language environment through exposure to American military personnel, (2) college or graduate school graduates who have received their degrees from American universities and acquired English during their stay in the U.S. through both formal instruction and exposure to the language environment, and (3) college graduates who learned their English through formal instruction and subsequently improved their language abilities through exposure to American military personnel.

This study proposes to examine interlanguage produced by the subject who can be classified into the first group, and who has been currently enrolled in the English Department of the Junior College of the University of the Ryukyus.

The purpose of the study is to describe the nature of the interlanguage through examination of the English grammatical morphology<sup>1</sup> produced by the subject (29-year-old male) who has been working for the officers' club on a U.S. military base for six years, and then to examine whether the formula applied to the study is the best measure of the interlanguage acquired through exposure to the target language environment. Based on the results of this study, future research will be proposed.

Data for the study consist of ten-minute-long audiotaped conversations between the subject and an American interviewer. The subject was asked to talk about his experiences in English language learning, his career at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, his daily routine starting from the time he got up the day of the interview and any special happenings. The subject spent most of the interview time discussing his career. The conversations were audiotaped one day in July 1991 at which time the subject was a first year student of the Junior College.

Data from the ten-minute-long conversations were transcribed, and analyses were made according to percentage of suppliance in obligatory context (SOC) in an empirical study by Pica (1983: 474). The formula for Supplied in Obligatory Contexts Analysis of Morpheme used in the study of Pica is:

$$\text{SOC} = \frac{\left( \begin{array}{c} n \text{ correct suppliance in} \\ \text{obligatory context } \times 2 \end{array} \right) - \left( \begin{array}{c} n \text{ misformations in} \\ \text{obligatory context } \times 1 \end{array} \right)}{\text{total obligatory contexts } \times 2}$$

To calculate the percentage of SOC, if a subject produces an utterance such as, "We have two local managers," the subject supplies the correct plural-s mor-

pheme (2 points), the subject supplies an incorrect morpheme such as, “We have a two local national *manager*” (1 point), or no morpheme is supplied such as, “We have two local *manager*” (0 point). The score of each context is added and then divided by the product of twice the total number of contexts requiring suppliance of the morpheme in the subject’s utterances.

### Results and Discussion

SOC percentages for the four morphemes (progressive-ing, plural-s, copula, and progressive auxiliary) of this study<sup>2</sup> are shown in Table 1. Morphemes are ordered according to Krashen’s “natural order” (1981, 1988).

Table. 1

Morpheme	SOC%
1. progressive-ing	100
2. plural-s	14
3. copula	64
4. progressive auxiliary	25

1. All of the data transcribed for progressive-ing are as follows:

(\* A word in ( ) is the correct morpheme in the context.)

H- 1- 2: ....so, because I *working* for the Kadena Air Base already six year.

H- 3- 8: Ah- *working* for the club as a operation manager.

H-11-38: Ah- I *working* for the, in a office.

H-14-49: I was *talking* to her the other day.

H-14-51: We *going* to the part of the north of the island.

H-14-53: Just we, you know, I *talking* to her.

H-15-61: ....and what *gonna* on today.

H-15-81: ....then I *talking* to my people.  
(talked)

H-16-94: ....*talking* to her.  
(talked)

H-16-95: What's *going* on?

The morpheme, progressive-ing, has shown the highest SOC percentage in the study of Pica (see Note 2), and Krashen's "natural order" (1977, 1988) also suggests progressive-ing is the first morpheme acquired by second language learners. It is the case for this study as well. The subject has scored perfect SOC on progressive-ing in the obligatory contexts; however, two progressive-ing morphemes (H-16-94, 95) are supplied in the nonobligatory contexts as well. The subject shows overuse of progressive-ing.

2. All of the data for plural-s are as follows: (\* The absence of plural-s is shown in ( ) )

H- 1- 2: ....so, because I working for the Kadena Air Base already six *year(s)*.

H- 4-16: ....so total one hundred eighty six *employee(s)* right now.

H- 7-28: We had two local national *manager(s)*.

H-10-34: Yes, I have a lot of *opportunities*.

H-15-66: We had many of the *equipment(s)* in the club.

H-15-78: I gotta too many, you know, *assignment(s)*.

H-16-93: ....then before six o'clock about ten *minute(s)*,

come over here.

The above data exclude utterances such as "I don't have special *program*," "I make *friend* or associate my, with my *employee*" and so forth<sup>3</sup>. It is because the plural morphemes in the preceding sentences might be construed as "generic" (see Quirk and others 1985), which do not function as plural concepts. Thus, it is not interpreted in this context as an obligatory context for plural-s. This study does not count plural nouns without any numerals or quantifiers as the plural-s morpheme.

The data show very low SOC percentage for the plural-s morpheme (14%). In the seven obligatory contexts, only one context (H-10-34) supplied a correct

plural-s. This scored 14%. The utterance, "Yes, I have a lot of *opportunities*" was repeated right after the interviewer's utterance, "So you have a lot of *opportunities* to speak English." It might have just been induced by the interviewer's speech or the subject might have taken the word, opportunities, as a single word without any idea of plurality. Thus, the subject may not have plural-s in his interlanguage grammar of English.

3. All of the data for copula are as follows:

H- 3- 9: I (am) in charge of bakery operation and the warehouse operation,  
some other operation....

H- 3-10: ....but ah- (am) not in charge of me.

H- 4-15: because I'm local national manager, too.

H- 6-26: Yes, that one *is*....

H-10-37: So this is reason why I *am* here.

H-15-60: What happen *was* yesterday.

The subject scored 64% of SOC for copula, which is the second highest SOC percentage among the four morphemes. What are the most salient features for acquirers in naturalistic settings? While available in the naturalistic input, it is reported (Pica 1988) that the easier to perceive may be the easier to acquire, and the more critical to message comprehension, the more salient to acquirers. All of these reasons make copula relatively easier to be acquired. Another possible explanation might be due to native language interference, which appears to be less disturbance for the subject unlike plural-s. The acquisition of plural-s seems to be more disturbing due to native language interference.

4. All of the data for progressive auxiliary are as follows:

H- 1- 2: ....so, because I (have been) working for the Kadena Air Base  
already six year.

H- 1- 3: Ah- (am) working for the club as a operation manager.

H-11-38: Ah- I (am) working for the, in a office.

H-14-49: I *was* talking to her the other day.

H-14-51: We (are) going to the part of the north of the island.

H-14-53: Just we, you know, I (was) talking to her.

H-15-61: ....and what('s) gonna on today....

H-16-95: What's going on?

The SOC percentage for progressive auxiliary (25%) shows very different results from that of either progressive-ing or copula. In other words, the result indicates that the progressive auxiliaries such as *is*, *are* and *was* have different functions from copula.

Only two obligatory contexts (out of eight obligatory contexts) have been supplied progressive auxiliary by the subject. It seems that the rule of progressive auxiliary and past tense were applied to the utterance, "I *was* talking to her the other day"; however, the utterance, "what's going on?" could be what Pica (p. 467) describes as "unanalyzed chunks, not subject to rule application." Despite the low score of SOC, the former utterance seems to show the existence of progressive auxiliary in the subject's interlanguage.

## Conclusions and Future Research

Overall acquisition in the study has shown relatively lower SOC percentages, which implies lower acquisition of the English grammatical morphology. Pica states (p. 467), "Acquirers in naturalistic settings, however, might use less grammatical morphology....". The interlanguage of this study is also characterized as acquisition of English in the naturalistic settings. Pica's study also supports that naturalistic subjects are likely to make more errors of the omission types than those of oversuppliance. Overwhelming omission types of errors were also found in the study excluding two cases of errors which are classified as overuse of grammatical morphemes in nonobligatory contexts.

In spite of the fact that the subject has acquired poor grammatical morphemes (except for progressive-ing), the subject carried on communicative conversations with the interviewer. The interlanguage consists of simple sentences,

using “so” and “then” repeatedly. There are no forms of relative pronouns, passive and participles (present or past). The subject created an obligatory context to use gerund, but used an incorrect form, “I wanna keep *continue* my job.” The direct speech was used seven times out of ninety five sentences, but no reported speech was used. Another important characteristic the subject made in his speech was the use of the phrases, “whatever I needed,” “whatever they got....” or “whatever so.....” When the subject could not find any explanation in English, he often used the phrase “you know” and then left the explanation up to the interviewer to think about.

The above discourse strategies were seen in the interlanguage in this study, although these strategies were hardly recognized in the third year junior college student from the University of the Ryukyus<sup>4</sup>. Using the formula of SOC, discourse strategies or communicative constructions can not be analyzed. Therefore, research in which subjects are required to use communicative skills, should be designed. The following questions for future research should be asked in order to elicit communicative skills:

- (1) How did the subject learn English?
- (2) What kind of previous education did the subject receive?
- (3) What does the subject think his/her family (i.e. father, mother, brothers or sisters) is doing right now?
- (4) What did the subject do today from the time he/she got up in the morning?
- (5) What kind of duties does the subject do at work or in his/her career?
- (6) What kind of activities does the subject do during his/her weekends?
- (7) How does the subject persuade others?

All of the data should be evaluated according to the use of communicative skills (or constructions) and the trained interviewers’ evaluations as well as the SOC percentages. Scoring communicative skills should be focused especially on the data from (7). Further explanation of the project and procedures will be forthcoming.

## Notes

\* I would like to thank Professors Maria Latona and Katsunobu Sunagawa for reading and commenting on earlier versions of this paper. I remain responsible for all errors of fact and interpretation.

1. Grammatical morphemes used in the studies of Krashen (1977, 1988) and Pica (1983) are progressive-ing, plural-s, copula, progressive auxiliary, article, irregular past, regular past, third person singular and possessive. In this study only first four morphemes are used to examine the interlanguage of the subject due to the small amount of the data.

2. SOC percentages of Pica's study (1983: 479) are as follows: progressive-ing (94%), plural-s (74%), copula (92%), progressive auxiliary (76%), copula (92%), progressive auxiliary (76%), article (91%), past irregular (68%), past regular (58%), and third person singular (25%). These data are from naturalistic subjects who have not received any formal instruction for their acquisition of English.

3. All these excluded data are as follows:

H- 1- 1: I don't have special *program(s)*.

H- 1- 4: I make *friend(s)* or associate my, with my *employee(s)*.

H- 1- 6: ....then whatever I need information from, you know, my *friend(s)*.

H- 4-14: ....and then also I have to take care of Japanese *employee(s)*, too.

H- 5-23: ....then *adjustment(s)*....

H- 5-24: ....make *schedule(s)*....

H-15-72: ....then make *appointment(s)*.

H-15-85: ....then I get, I got in touch with local *company(ies)*.

4. SOC percentages of a student who was enrolled in the third year of the Junior College were also analyzed. These SOC percentages are as follows: progressive-ing (100%), plural-s (75%), copula (92%), and progressive auxiliary (100%).

## References

- Krashen, S. 1977. "The monitor model for adult second language performance ."  
*In View points on English as a Second Language* eds. M. Burt, H. Dulay, and  
M. Finocchiaro. New York: Regents.
- . 1988. *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. New  
York: Prentice Hall
- Long, M. H. 1983. "Does second language instruction make a difference? A re-  
view of research." *TESOL Quarterly* 17 (3): 359-382.
- Pica, T. 1984. "Adult acquisition of English as a second language under dif-  
ferent conditions." *Language Learning* 33 (4):465-497.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaun, S., Leech, G. and Svartvik, J. 1985. *A Comprehensive  
Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.

## —— 論文要旨 ——

# 社会人入学者の英語機能語 (grammatical morphemes)の習得について

小那覇 ひろこ

第2言語習得者の中間言語は習得あるいは学習した言語環境によって質的に異なるという研究報告が近年数多く発表されている。言語(英語)環境の違いは大きく2つに分けられている。第1のグループは、英語教育を受けずに英語が話されているコミュニティーで自然に英語(中間言語)を習得する場合で、第2のグループは、各機関での英語教育によって学習者が英語を学習・習得する場合である。

本稿では、琉球大学短大部英語学科に入学した社会人学生(米軍雇用員)の中間言語を被験者が1年次の時、テープ録音したものを文字化し、分析を試みた。米軍雇用者の英語習得は3つに分類される。(1)中・高校の教育歴で、英語習得は職場のアメリカ人との接触による場合、(2)大学か大学院教育をアメリカ合衆国で受けた場合、(3)日本の大学で英語教育を受け、職場でのアメリカ人との接触によって、さらに英語を習得した場合である。被験者の英語教育歴は中学校と高校に限られており、言語習得環境は、第1グループに属し、(1)の分類に入れられると思われる。

分析方法は、KrashenやPica等の研究で用いられたSOC(Supplied in Obligatory Contexts Analysis of Morpheme)の方法で、英語の機能語(English grammatical morpheme)の習得状況を調査することによって被験者の中間言語の特徴を明らかにするものである。分析の結果、SOCテストによる機能語の習得状況だけでは、第1グループに属する被験者の中間言語の特徴を明らかにすることはできないという結論に達した。被験者の中間言語には第2グループに属する短大英語学科3年次の学生の間言には見られない discourse strategy が頻繁に用いられていた。

本稿の結果は、被験者が3年次に達した段階で、同様な方法により再度テープ録音された中間言語と比較される予定である。