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ABSTRACT

The use of connectives in 41 academic papers written for an English writing course by Japanese students ranging from university sophomores to graduate students was examined. Connectives were categorized as additive, adversative, causal, and temporal. Each connective type was subject to certain types of error. Additive connectives tended to be overused, possibly because of the influence of oral discourse. In contrast, adversative connectives were omitted; this may be explained by the Japanese students' lack of awareness that the adversative connection is usually marked and requires a connective. Causal connectives are the most difficult for Japanese writers of English. Due to first language transfer, causal connection may be left "bare," while connections that are unrelated to cause and effect may be marked with a causal connective. Results showed no conspicuous error in temporal connection. (JP)

The Use of Connectives in English Academic Papers Written by Japanese Students

Yasuko Kanno

1. Introduction

Writing English involves skills and rules different from those of speaking, and for this reason, it poses difficulties to most native speakers of English. For non-native speakers of English, however, the task is even more difficult, since they face two additional problems: first, most of them are far more limited in their vocabulary and ability to compose complex sentences than native speakers; second, as Dillon (1981) suggests, writing conventions are culture-bound and therefore non-native speakers must learn them, whereas native speakers can acquire at least some of them naturally through their long exposure to the language and the culture behind it. The first is usually manifested as solecism occurring within sentences, whereas the second tends to cause problems in creating cohesion[1] between sentences. Although, intuitively speaking, grammatical problems typify the non-native speaker's English, problems of non-grammatical nature might in fact prove themselves to be more persistent: while grammatical mistakes can be corrected by consulting dictionaries and grammar books, there is no set way of verifying whether one's writing is in accordance with English readers' expectations.

Among many devices that serve to maintain cohesion in the text is the "connective"—a word or phrase, such as however, in addition, and therefore, that "explicate[s] the conceptual relation between different propositions . . . occurring in separate sentences" (Dillon 1981, p.69).[2] Having instructed writing courses at a Japanese university for several years, Reid (1983) concludes that Japanese students are generally not aware of the function of connectives and he considers this to be a main reason for the incohesion often found in their compositions. This paper will aim to develop further Reid's observation by categorizing and stipulating connectives in Japanese students' writings. At a glance, errors in the use of connectives seem to occur sporadically, but closer scrutiny reveals that they are in fact systematic and it is possible to specify the context in which certain types of error occur.

2. Data

Data was taken from forty-one academic papers written over the past five years by thirty students, ranging from sophomore to graduate, in Keio University, Tokyo. All the papers— from five to fifteen pages in length were written for an English-writing course offered in the Department of English and American Literature. Twenty-nine of the forty-one papers are on literature; five on linguistics; and the remaining seven on other subjects, such as politics and sociology.

3. Types of connectives

Connectives are not limited to one particular syntactic category; any words or phrases, regardless of their syntactic categories, which "show a relationship in ideas between two [or more] statements without connecting them in any grammatical way" (Kane 1983, p. 773) may be considered as connectives.[3]

For the present investigation, all the connectives are counted.[4] Judgment on whether a connective is used correctly or not is based on the corrections made by the native English instructor who has been teaching the course for the past several years and is quite familiar with Japanese learners' English.

There are many possible ways of categorizing connectives, but linguists and rhetoricians generally agree upon the four major types: **additive**, **adversative**, **causal**, and **temporal** (Halliday and Hasan 1976). These four connections can be represented by the words and, but, so, and then, respectively. Subcategorizing these major categories is a more controversial matter; here sixteen subcategories are presented, combining Halliday and Hasan's categorization with that of Quirk et al. (1972) and Ball (1986). They will hereafter be referred to as "connective types". In Table 1, each connective type is explained and connectives which appeared in the sample are listed (the first numeral shows the number of occurrences of a connective and the numeral in parentheses show the number of the correct use):

Table 1. Connective Types

1) **Additive**

- **Additive** connectives add the following sentence to the previous sentence(s).
  also 49 (41), and 41 (12), moreover 20 (19), furthermore 15 (12), another 13 (13), besides 9 (2), too 5 (4), in addition 5 (2), other 3 (2), again 2 (2), similarly 1 (1), aside from 1 (0)

- **Enumerative** connectives list elements of a catalog.[5]
  first (of all) 23 (18), second 11 (9), one 7 (7), (the) other 6 (5), next 6 (3), another 5 (5), third 4 (4), finally 3 (2), (the) last 3 (2), thirdly 2 (2), secondly 2 (2), at first 2 (2), firstly 1(1), on the other hand 1 (1), fourth 1(1), fifth 1(1), then 1 (1), since then 1 (1), lastly 1 (1)

- **Summative** connectives introduce a sentence which summarizes the previous sentence(s)
  in conclusion 5 (5), in summary 3 (2), in short 3 (2), to sum up 1 (1), in one word 1 (0), all things considered 1 (0), it is concluded 1 (0), in brief 1 (0), my conclusion 1 (0)

- **Appositive** connectives introduce a reformulative sentence of the previous sentence(s).
  that is 6 (1), this means 6 (2), in other words 2 (2), that is to say 2 (2), namely 1 (0), I mean 1 (0)

- **Examples** connectives introduce a sentence which is an example of the previous sentence(s).
  for example 29 (25), for instance 8 (8), especially 2 (1), in particular 1 (1)

- **Manner** connectives indicate that the previous sentence describes the manner in which the content of the following sentence is conducted.
  in this way 3 (3), like this 1 (0)

- **Transitive** connectives mark a change of subject.
  now 6 (2), by the way 3 (0), incidentally 1 (1)

- **Referential** connectives indicate that the following sentence focuses on a particular point.
  as for 13 (3), concerning 3 (1), as to 2 (0), from the point of view of 1 (0), in terms of 1 (0), speaking of 1 (0)

2) **Adversative**

- **Corroborative** connectives indicate the writer's conviction that the the content of the following sentence is true.
  of course 7 (5), in fact 4 (4), indeed 4 (1), naturally 3 (1), clearly 1 (1), surely 1 (1), in effect 1 (1), as a matter of fact 1 (1)

- **Concessive** connectives indicate that the following sentence is contrary to expectation.
  however 72 (61), but 51 (43), yet 6 (5), nevertheless 3

(2), in spite of 2 (2), after all 2 (1), at the same time 2 (1), in any case 1 (1), though 1 (1)

- o **Contrastive** connectives introduce a sentence which contrasts with the previous sentence.
  on the other hand 18 (14), some & other 2 (2), in comparison 1 (0), by contrast 1 (0)

- o **Corrective** connectives introduce a sentence which corrects the previous sentence(s)
  on the contrary 6 (0), rather 2 (1), instead 1 (1), otherwise 1 (1), far from that 1 (0), or 1 (0) to the contrary 1 (0)

3) **Causal**

- o **Causal/Consequential** connectives indicate that the sentences between them are cause and effect.
  therefore 41 (31), thus 24 (15), so 18 (8), that/this/it is because 9 (5), consequently 8 (8), as a result 6 (4), that/this is why 5 (3), for these reasons 2 (2), because of this 1 (1), for 1(1), the reason 1 (0), that is a reason why 1 (0), it was partly due to 1 (0)

- o **Inferential** connectives indicate that the following sentence can be inferred from the previous sentence(s).
  then 11 (7), so 4 (2)

4) **Temporal**

- o **Temporal** connectives indicate that the sentences between them are connected in time.
  then 16 (11), finally 6 (4), later 4 (4), this time 3 (3), next 3 (2), now 3 (1), at last 3 (1), first 2 (1), at that time 2 (1), at first 1 (1), until then 1 (1), in the end 1 (1), after that 1 (0), from then on 1(0), from now 1(0), before this 1 (0), since then 1 (0), in the age 1 (0), after 1 (0), until now 1 (0), at this time 1 (0)

- o **Local** connectives indicate that the sentences between them are connected in place.
  here 19 (13), in this case 2 (2), from here on 1 (1), on this point 1 (1), up to this point 1 (1)

4. Use and misuse of connectives: categories

Using connectives correctly consists of two stages. First, the writer must correctly identify the connection between

sentences. Second, he/she must choose a connective which appropriately describes the connection; for instance, a concessive connection must be indicated by a concessive connective, not by an additive one. Using these conditions as criteria, the use and misuse of connectives in the sample can be classified into the following six types:

Table 2.

- **Appropriate use of connectives** (hereafter abbreviated as **AC**).
  1) The casting of the two narrators as 'normal people' is partly to keep the story close to earth, to make it realistic. They <u>also</u> serve to comment on the inadequacy of the common sense of 'normal people'.[6]

- **Misleading connectives (MC)**: the connection represented by the connective does not correspond to the connection which holds between sentences. This happens when the writer fails to identify the type of connection or to link the sentences as he/she intended.
  2) "Le cabinet de toilette" in the first half of this story is used as a prop to express Marguerite's duality. <u>And</u> [But], in the second half, "le cabinet de toilette" is no longer described.
  3) To insert a recollection in a story can confuse the juvenile reader. <u>That is why</u> Pearce tries to revolt against time using Mrs. Bartholomew's memories.

- **Wrong choice of connectives (WC)**: the connective correctly describes the connection between sentences; however, it sound clumsy and should be replaced with another connective of the same connective type.
  4) At the age of 51, past her best, Clarissa is faced with a sense of "vanity", "weariness", and a "fear" of death; nevertheless, she feels curiously attracted to death, her refuge from this tiresome world. <u>In one word</u> [in short], Mrs. Dalloway [Clarissa] is a symbol of the human conflict between life and death.

- **Redundant connectives (RC)**: the connection between sentences is so obvious that it does not require any connective.
  5) During Ellen's sickness, the boy and his sister spent some months in the house of their maternal aunt. <u>Furthermore</u>, when Aubrey went to a grammar school, his grandfather paid the fee again.

- **Deficiency of connectives (DC)**: the place where a connective is required is left blank.
  6) Although this novel contains the motif of Opheiia, those of Elaine and the lady of Shalott are also involved as

images of a woman related to water and death. [However,] the Ophelia motif is central while those of Elaine and the lady of Shalott are not.

- **Miscellaneous (M)**: connectives that do not fall into any of the types above, especially those which are difficult to evaluate because the previous or the following sentence does not make sense.

5. Analysis

First of all, it becomes clear that certain types of errors can be associated with each of the four major categories (Table 3.); in other words, different types of connection pose different kinds of problems for the writer. We can illustrate this point by citing examples from the largest subcategory within each major category: additive, concessive, causal/consequential, and temporal.

Additive connectives are marked for RC and WC errors; this implies that they tend to be overused. In particular, the excessive use of and is conspicuous: out of twenty-nine R errors, twenty-two involve and:

7) Similarly, while Anne is teaching, at Avonlea, she goes on a picnic with her friends. There, she enjoys the beauty of the woods and feels refreshed. And, even after her marriage, Anne returns to her hometown sometimes.

8) The parlour, as mentioned above, is arranged for Linton by Heathcliff when Linton is looked after by him. And the first significance of this event is the physical separation of the parlour from "the house". . . Heathcliff, who dislikes his own son, "could not do at all with his sitting in the same room with him many minutes together". And from Zillah's further reports, we learn how Heathcliff uses this room as a prison . . .

In conversation, and often appears at the beginning of a sentence, linking it to the previous sentence. Ball (1986) notes that and is the most frequently used word in English, with the exception of the. The overuse of this word in writing may be due to influence of colloquialism.

Another example of the influence of colloquial expressions is the connective besides; out of nine instances found in the sample six are WC errors.

9) First, calligraphy is a very simple cultural pursuit compared with others in Japan. . . . you can start to write if you have a brush, an inkstone, India ink and a sheet of

paper. Besides it [Furthermore], you have to obey only a few rules when starting to learn.

If RC and WC errors of additive connectives are mainly caused by the influence of colloquialism, they may not be peculiar to Japanese learners of English; they may be also prevalent in the writing of native speakers of English.

On the other hand, concessive connectives are noted for their DC errors. (6) is one example, and the following is another:

10) In the above work, there is an assumption that time has only a single flow. In C. S. Lewis's Narnian books, [however,] there are two flows of time: one is of the real world and the other is of Narnia.

Dillon (1981) suggests that, between the additive and the concessive connections, the former is unmarked and the latter marked; when there is no connective, the reader tends to take the next sentence additively, and thus, when it is in fact connected concessively to the first sentence, concessive connective is generally required. Many Japanese students may not be aware of this convention; consequently, concessive connectives tend to be omitted.

Causal connectives play a very important role in academic papers, which are by nature intended to prove or claim something. Nevertheless, these connectives are the most difficult for Japanese writers of English; they use them when they are not required and omit them when they are necessary.

One possible explanation of the excessive use of causal connectives (RC and MC errors in Table 2) is the transfer from Japanese. Petersen (1988) notes that in academic papers written in Japanese, the causal connective shitagatte is the most frequently used connective, saying that he has never seen a Japanese academic paper without shitaggate in it.

This strong liking for the connective shitaggate is probably due to the pattern of argument in Japanese. There are two ways of developing one's argument: one is to introduce the main point first and support it with examples or evidence; the other is to leave the generalization until the very end and start off with examples or evidence (Itasaka 1973). In English writing, both types are used, with possible preference for the first, while in Japanese writing, one generally chooses the second type. That is probably why the connective shitaggate is quite frequently used in Japanese academic papers; it serves to indicate the main point as well as the causal connection between sentences.

In writing English, Japanese students do not change their way of argument; they tend to leave the most important point until the very end:

11) Kappa consists mainly of the narrative of a Japanese man who falls into Kappaland, and stays there before returning to this world to become a patient in a mental home. It is commonly accepted that this story is a satire which bears a similarity to Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels (1726) and Samuel Butler's Erewhon (1879). Therefore (RC) various European aspects in Kappa have been pointed out.

In (11), the generalization is introduced after examples such as Gulliver's Travels and Erewhon are cited. If the last sentence was inserted before the sentence starting "It is commonly accepted", there would be no need to use therefore.

It is also common to repeat the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph, introducing it with a causal connective:

12) A poet symbolizes reality by his language.

13) Therefore, a poet symbolizes the nature in the sense of reality by his language as art.

The last sentence of a paragraph (13) is the repetition of the first sentence (12). Of course, this is a common technique used in English rhetoric: when a paragraph becomes substantially long, the repetition of the topic sentence at the end helps the reader grasp the main point of the paragraph. The point is, however, many Japanese conclude a paragraph by generalization whether or not it is already introduced at the beginning of the paragraph or no matter how short the paragraph may be.

Another possible explanation of MC errors is that the Japanese have a tendency to simply "throw in" facts which they perceive to have logical connections without explicitly verbalizing the connection; they expect readers to look for it for themselves. In writing English, however, it is the writer's responsibility to guide the reader along the course of the argument; when using a causal connective, the writer must demonstrate the logical connection explicitly:

14) Pearce does not speak much about herself; for instance, when a publishing company, Fukuinkan Shoten, asked her for an interview, she replied that the best way to know her is to read her stories. That is why the flow of time is emphasized in her books.

What the writer intends to say is that "Pearce considers the influence of time to be enormous and believes that it is capable of changing everything". When the first sentence in (14) is replaced with this sentence, cohesion is created and the use of that is why is justified.

Since causal connectives mainly used to emphasize the main points, the causal connection marginal to the central argument

often does not receive a connective (DC errors in Table 3):

15) After his brother's trading company went bankrupt, Irving, being the youngest and owing much to his brother, went into business to help. [Thus] forced to face the world of business, the vulgar and annoying realities of life threatened to invade his own imagination.

Irving's facing the world of business obviously results from his going into business, calling for a causal connective. However, this part of the text is not the main point of the paragraph, and it may be for this reason that the connective is omitted.

Temporal connectives do not show any definite pattern in their behavior: there is no noticeable error except for the the slight overuse of then, which can probably be explained by, again, the influence of colloquialism;

16) Soon after this, in the United States a magazine was published with the title Fantasy and Science Fiction (1930-). This gave yet a new meaning to the word. Fantasy was a name given to a set of works. It was a definition born in the twentieth century.
Then at the beginning of this century, research on books for children became popular.

Then often appears in conversation, indicating succession in time. It is probably this influence that Japanese students are apt to use this connective excessively.

A closer look at each subcategory throws light on other points, some of which will be mentioned here.

The WC errors in enumerative connection suggest that the students found it difficult to list items of a catalog clearly. They are often not certain of the number of the items they are listing:

17) In the seventh drawing for the poem, "The Cave of Spleen", more foetuses appear: at the bottom left of the drawing, two foetuses can be found. The left one is a pregnant male. . . .The next one [The other] is on the thigh of one of the "living Teapots". And the last [A third] and hidden foetus is at the centre of the drawing close by a turbaned man with sunken cheeks.

The writer first indicates that there are two items to be listed, but in fact includes three. This kind of confusion of the number of elements to be listed is very common.

In two out of the three PMC errors in the summative category (Table 3), summative connectives were used where appositive connectives are appropriate:

18) Julia's pursuit of Proteus provides a model for Helena in The Midsummer Night's Dream and for Portia and Nerissa in The Merchant of Venice. After Julia, women took a leading roles in Shakespeare's plays, especially in his comedies. In summary [In other words], the heroines of Shakespeare's late comedies were developed from Julia.

The writer presumably intended the third sentence as a summary of both the first and the second sentence, but in fact, it is only a reformulation of the second and thus should be introduced by an appositive connective.

Out of the six RC errors in appositive connection, four are instances of that is:

19) This poor dog [Fanny] is nearly hanged by Heathcliff when Isabella runs away from Thrushcross Grange, and Catherine is struck down by her fatal illness. The hanging and the collapse of Thrushcross Grange occur at the same time. That is, Fanny symbolizes the tragedy of Thrushcross Grange.

Transitional connectives tend to be used excessively, as can be seen from the number of RC errors in Table 3. They appear typically at the beginning of a new paragraph:

20) By the way, Sōseki was influenced by Millais's "Ophelia", but why did Millais paint Ophelia's death?

Transition can be signaled by changing paragraphs, and thus any further signal is normally unnecessary. Japanese students may not be fully aware of the function of the paragraph, and this may explain the redundant use of transitional connectives. Also, the students may transfer transitional devices normally limited to oral discourse: a change of subject in speech generally requires a transitional connective.

Referential connectives come in very "handy" for Japanese learners of English, whose mother tongue is a topic-comment language; again, this is an example of the first language transfer:

21) Boston was born in Lancashire, Southport. Her family was rigidly puritanical, so she was taught that art, drama and dancing were wicked. When she was eleven, her family moved into the country for her mother's health. This is the period from which the children's adventures in the Green Knowe series are taken. As for education, she and her sister were sent to school in the south, to correct their accents.

The writer first indicates the topic of the sentence, and then, supplies new information.

A very conspicuous error in corrective connection is the connective on the contrary being used instead of a contrastive connective; out of six instances of this expression, none is used correctly, and five are treated as a contrastive connective.

22) Dimmesdale had kept her sin hidden. Hester, on the contrary [on the other hand], could not hide her sin since she had been forced to stand on a scaffold and to wear the scarlet letter, which was the symbol of committing adultery, all her life.

On the contrary indicates that the statement of the previous sentence is false. Most Japanese students, however, never use the connective in this sense; they assume that it is as multipurpose as on the other hand, the reason for which I do not know.

6. Conclusion

Each connective type is thus subject to certain kinds of error. Additive connectives tend to be overused possibly because of the influence of oral discourse. In contrast, adversative connectives tend to be omitted; this may be explained by the Japanese students' lack of awareness that the the adversative connection is usually marked and requires a connective. Causal connectives are the most difficult for Japanese writers of English: typical cases of causal connection may be left "bare", while connections totally unrelated to cause and effect may be marked with a causal connective. This can be attributed to the first language transfer. On the other hand, there is no conspicuous error in temporal connection.

Out of many possible directions in which research on the use of connectives can be pursued, two show particular promise. The first would be an attempt to determine which errors are peculiar to the Japanese and which are also found in native speakers' writing. The second would be an analysis of the uses of conjunctions, such as and, but, because, and although, and a comparison with the uses of connectives. Connectives and conjunctions both serve to link propositions; the only difference between them is that connectives operate between sentences whereas conjunctions operate within sentences. Thus, it is expected that the same pattern of errors would be observed in the use of conjunctions. In these ways it will be possible to clarify difficulties Japanese writers might face when projecting their thought on their writing.

Table 3 The Use of Connectives

Connection	AC	MC	WC	RC	DC	M
Additive	111	9	12	29	8	1
Enumerative	27	3	7	2	1	0
Summative	10	3	4	0	0	0
Appositive	7	1	1	6	0	3
Example	35	3	1	1	5	0
Manner	3	0	0	1	0	0
Transitional	3	1	1	4	1	1
Referential	4	1	5	11	0	0
Additive (Total)	**200**	**21**	**31**	**54**	**15**	**5**
Corroborative	15	1	0	2	5	4
Concessive	117	8	7	2	17	6
Contrastive	16	2	2	1	3	1
Corrective	3	8	1	1	0	0
Adversative (Total)	**151**	**19**	**10**	**6**	**25**	**11**
Causal/Consequential	78	19	4	8	12	9
Inferential	9	1	0	5	1	0
Causal (Total)	**87**	**20**	**4**	**13**	**13**	**9**
Temporal	29	4	6	6	1	1
Local	18	1	1	3	0	1
Temporal (Total)	**47**	**5**	**7**	**9**	**1**	**2**

Notes

[1] Cohesion is defined by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as "relation of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text."

[2] Different names are used by different linguists and rhetoricians: "conjunctions" (Halliday and Hasan 1976), "proleptic words" (Hirsch 1977), and "link words" (Ball 1986). Each has a slightly different definition, but what is common to all of them is that they serve to link parts of the text and help the reader to keep track of the writer's argument. Here, the term "connectives", first introduced by van Dijk (1977), will be used, since it reflects the device's function most explicitly.

[3] A connective can appear not only at the beginning of a sentence but also in the middle, after the subject, and at the end.

[4] Strings of words before and after a semicolon and a colon are counted as two sentences rather than two clauses in a sentence. As far as the use of connectives are concerned, they are more similar to sentences than clauses: several connectives can link strings of words which appear before and after a semicolon or a colon, but not two clauses within a sentence.

[5] Here, each connective is listed separately, but in the text, normally a few connectives are used together to indicate a catalog, such as "first, second, third" and "first of all, next, last". A sequence of connectives, such as those above, is counted as one in Table 3. Similarly, temporal a set of connectives indicating succession in time is counted as one.

[6] All the examples were taken from the papers written by the students. Grammatical mistakes and unusual expressions have been corrected to draw the reader's attention only to the problem of the connective in question. The connective used by the student is underlined; the correction is in square brackets.

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