



Analysis of Errors in Using Passive Sentences by Japanese Language Students at Universitas Harapan Medan

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received 12 October 2022 Revised 22 December 2022 Accepted 11 January 2023 Available online 07 June 2023</p> <p>ISSN: 2986-3848</p>	<p>This research analyzed the errors in the use of passive sentences among Japanese language students at Harapan Medan University. Using a descriptive analysis method on test data from students enrolled in the Japanese Language Program in the 2021 academic year, the study found that syntactic errors were the most common. These errors were caused by students' lack of understanding of passive sentence usage, including particles, verbs, and translation. Lapses in errors emerged as the dominant type, resulting from unintentional mistakes or lack of awareness by the speakers. They usually occur in writing due to physical fatigue or rushing during the test. Competence factors were the main cause of these errors, as students had not fully grasped the rules of passive sentence structure, particularly regarding using particles and determining subject and object. The influence of the native language also played a role in the errors, especially in translating passive sentences from Indonesian to Japanese. In conclusion, students face challenges in using passive sentences in Japanese, particularly in syntax and rule comprehension. Efforts are needed to improve their learning, deepen their understanding of passive sentence usage, and enhance their comprehension of sentence structure and its constituent elements.</p> <p>Keywords: Error analysis, Passive sentences, Japanese language</p>

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1. Introduction

Language serves as a means of communication in social interactions. In the era of globalization, there is a high demand for language proficiency, particularly in foreign languages. In Indonesia, there are various foreign language learning programs, including Japanese. Each language possesses its uniqueness and characteristics that differentiate it from others, such as Japanese. Regarding linguistics, Japanese exhibits distinctive features in its use of characters, vocabulary, and sentence patterns or structures.

According to Sutedi (2011, p. 41), the grammatical structure differences between Japanese and Indonesian pose challenges for Japanese language learners. Verbal sentences (transitive) in Japanese generally follow the SOP pattern (subject-object-predicate), while nominal phrases adhere to describing-described. This contrasts with Indonesian, which follows the SPO pattern (subject-predicate-object) with the described-describing (Gapur, 2017; Gapur & Mulyadi, 2018; Gapur & Pujiono, 2018; Pujiono et al., 2023).

It is crucial to comprehend these grammar patterns in Japanese to form correct sentences. This difference can be an obstacle for Japanese language learners as they need to adjust their thinking and understand the distinct structure. However, with awareness of these differences, learners can overcome these challenges through practice and in-depth understanding.

Understanding the differences in grammatical structure between Japanese and Indonesian is an important initial step in learning Japanese. With a good understanding, learners can master the unique sentence patterns in Japanese and develop their language proficiency more effectively.

In Japanese, there are various sentence forms, one of which is the passive sentence. According to Sutedi (2014:79), passive sentences in Japanese are called "*ukemi*" or "*judoubun*" (Astami, 2008; Hidayah, 2015; Noorsanti, 2017). Japanese passive sentences have their distinctiveness compared to other languages. For instance, they can be formed from transitive and intransitive verbs. In Indonesian, the formation of passive verbs involves adding the prefix "*di*" to the base form of the verb, sometimes accompanied by the particle "*oleh*." However, in Japanese, the formation of passive verbs starts with the V1 conjugation form. Then, the V1 conjugation form is suffixed with "*rareru*" for *ichidan* verbs and the verb "*kuru*", and "*reru*" for *godan* verbs and the verb "*suru*" (Iriantini & Setiawan, 2021; Rosliana, 2014).

Sutedi (2015, p. 79) states that, in terms of meaning, Japanese passive sentences are divided into two types: neutral passive (*chuuritsu ukemi*) and adversative passive (*meiwaku ukemi*). In terms of structure, Japanese passive sentences consist of direct passive (*chokusetsu ukemi*) and indirect passive (*kansetsu ukemi*). Direct passive sentences are formed from transitive sentences with animate objects or humans. Indirect passive sentences are formed from transitive sentences with inanimate objects (including body parts and belongings) or intransitive sentences.

Quoting Sutedi (2015), passive sentences in Japanese are considered problematic by Japanese language learners in Indonesia due to their differences from passive sentences in Indonesian. These differences are regarded as the uniqueness that characterizes passive sentences in Japanese. There are several aspects considered unique in Japanese passive sentences. Firstly, there is a distinction between direct passive (*chokusetsu ukemi*) and indirect passive (*kansetsu ukemi*) based on sentence construction. Secondly, there are differences in meaning between neutral passive (*chuuritsu no ukemi*) and adversative passive (*meiwaku no ukemi*). Thirdly, verbs used in the predicate of passive sentences can be transitive verbs (*tadoushi*), ditransitive verbs (*nijuu tadoushi*), or intransitive verbs (*jidoushi*). Fourthly, nominals used as the subject of passive sentences can come from direct objects, indirect objects, or even from outside the active sentence. Fifthly, inanimate nominals cannot be freely used as subjects in passive sentences but are subject to certain rules. Lastly, the use of passive sentences in Japanese is not as productive as in Indonesian, often leading to errors and overuse by Japanese language learners in Indonesia. The uniqueness of passive sentences in Japanese can cause problems, such as errors in vocabulary usage and sentence patterns, particularly due to the negative influence of the learners' native language. For example, "*この本は私に読まれている*" can be translated as "This book has been read by me". The error in this example arises from the influence of Indonesian, as seen in the Indonesian translation. The mistake lies in filling the subject in all three examples with inanimate nominals and using the first-person pronoun as the agent.

Another example of a previous error in the use of passive sentences in the research conducted by Ernawati (2011:13) is as follows:

- (1) おととい、先生は山田さんをほめられた。
Ototoi, sensei wa Yamada-san wo homerareta.
Two days ago, Yamada was praised by the teacher.
- (2) 私のケーキは妹に食べられました。
Watashi no keeki wa imouto ni taberare mashita.
My cake was eaten by my sister.

The mistake in example (1) lies in the inverted subject and agent roles. The particle used for the agent should be "*ni*." The correct sentence should be "*Ototoi, Yamada-san ni sensei wa homerareta,*" which means "Two days ago, the teacher praised Yamada." The mistake in example (2) is in the sentence structure, which does not conform to the formation of passive sentences in Japanese. The correct sentence should be "*Watashi no keeki wa imouto ni taberare mashita,*" which means "My cake was eaten by my sister."

These errors commonly occur due to the influence of the native language (Indonesian). Further in-depth research is needed to have a more detailed understanding of the errors in using passive sentences. Therefore, the researcher proposes a research title: "Analysis of Errors in Using Passive Sentences (*Ukemibun*) among Japanese Language Students at Harapan Medan University." Students enrolled in 2021 are chosen as the research subjects since they studied passive sentences in the even semester (January-June) of 2023.

Through this research, it is expected to gain a better understanding of the errors in using passive sentences in Japanese by students and to help improve their proficiency in using passive sentences correctly.

2. Methods

This study is descriptive research with qualitative data analysis. According to Sutedi (2011), descriptive research aims to describe a state or phenomenon as it is. This descriptive research is conducted to depict and describe a current phenomenon using scientific procedures to address actual problems (Sugiyono, 2016). On the other hand, qualitative data analysis refers to data that shows the quality or characteristics of something, such as its condition, process, events, or occurrences, expressed in statements or words. Qualitative data analysis is carried out to understand the error results of students through explanations in words. The data for this study involves the analysis of passive sentence errors using Japanese language essays written by Japanese Language Program students from Harapan Medan University, who enrolled in 2021, with 10 participants. The students were instructed to translate a text containing passive sentences from Indonesian to Japanese.

The data collection techniques are as follows. First, the students were given instructions once to translate the text, specifically focusing on using passive sentences. Second, after completing the worksheets, they were collected. Third, once the data were collected, the instruments were examined based on the researched indicators, and scores were given to evaluate the completed essays.

Next, the data were analyzed using the following steps. First, the data were classified according to the types, forms, and causes of errors. Second, the data were analyzed using formulas to calculate the percentage of errors. Third, after obtaining the error percentage of the respondents, the results were discussed descriptively. Fourth, the findings were summarized.

4. Results and Discussion

Based on the analysis of error results on the use of passive sentences by Japanese Language Program students who enrolled in 2021 at Universitas Harapan Medan, the data were analyzed in terms of error forms, which are morphology and syntax; error types, which are lapses and mistakes; and the causes of errors, which are mother tongue interference, performance factors, competence factors, and generalization factors.

4.1. Error Forms

There are various error forms in the research conducted on students who enrolled in 2021 regarding using passive sentences. The error forms identified in this research are morphology and syntax. The table below presents the number of errors found in the students' sentence pattern test.

Table 1. Error Forms in the Use of Passive Sentences

Error Form	Number of Errors	Percentage
Morphology	36	45%
Syntax	44	55%
Total Errors	80	100%

Based on Table 1, two error forms can be identified, namely morphology errors and syntax errors. There were 44 morphology errors, accounting for 55% of the total errors. Additionally, there were 36 syntax errors, comprising 45% of the total errors. This study's total number of errors reached 80, which accounts for 100% of all errors.

From this information, it can be concluded that morphology errors are the most common error, contributing to 55% of the total errors. On the other hand, syntax errors account for 45% of the total errors. This analysis provides a clearer understanding of the distribution and forms of errors found in this research.

4.2. Types of student errors

The types of errors examined in this study are lapses and mistakes. The following table presents the number and percentage of errors found in the students' essays.

Table 2. Types of Student Errors

Errors Types	Number of Errors	Percentage
Lapses	64	80%
Mistake	16	20%
Total Errors	80	100%

From Table 2, it can be observed that there are two types of errors in this study: "lapses" and "mistakes." The number of errors categorized as "lapses" is 16, accounting for 20% of the total errors. On the other hand, the number of errors classified as "mistake" is 64, constituting 80% of the total errors. This study's overall number of errors is 80, encompassing 100% of the total errors.

Based on this information, it can be concluded that most errors fall under the "mistake" category, constituting 80% of the total errors. Meanwhile, errors categorized as "lapses" contribute to 20% of the total errors. This analysis provides a clearer understanding of this study's distribution and types of errors.

4.3. Causes of Errors

The causes of errors examined in this study are interference from the mother tongue, performance-related factors, competency-related factors, and generalization factors. The following table presents the number and percentage of errors attributed to each cause in the students' translations.

Table 3. Causes of errors

Causes	Number of Errors	Percentage
Interference from Mother	12	15%
Performance Factors	6	7.5%
Competency-related Factors	45	56.25%
Generalization Factors	17	21.25%

Table 3 shows four factors contributing to errors: interference from the mother tongue, performance-related factors, competency-related factors, and generalization factors. The table also presents the number and percentage of errors associated with each factor. Based on the analysis, competency-related factors are the primary cause of errors, accounting for 56.25%. Generalization factors also significantly contribute with a percentage of errors amounting to 21.25%. Interference from the mother tongue and performance-related factors contribute 15% and 7.5% of the total errors, respectively. Therefore, this analysis provides a clearer understanding of the errors commonly made by students in using passive sentences in the Japanese language.

5. Discussion

In this section, three aspects of the results of the data description of the Analysis of Error in the Use of Passive Sentences by Japanese Language Students at Harapan Medan University were outlined as follows. Firstly, the study focused on identifying errors in the morphological and syntactic use of passive sentences in the 2021 entrance exam for the Japanese Language Program at Harapan Medan University. The research findings revealed that syntactic errors were the most frequent type of error, accounting for 44 errors or 55% of the total. According to Sutedi (2015, p. 64), syntactic errors pertain to the study of sentence structure and its constituent elements. This indicates that students' lack of understanding regarding the overall usage, such as the use of particles, verbs, and translation, often leads to syntactic errors in the use of passive sentences. Previous related studies conducted by Novikasari (2016) and Hidayah (2015) reached similar conclusions that errors in using passive sentences in Japanese are influenced by interference from the mother tongue, especially during translation exercises.

Secondly, the types of errors identified in the use of passive sentences in the 2021 entrance exam for the Japanese Language Program at Harapan Medan University were lapses and mistakes. The research findings revealed that the highest occurrence was in the lapses category, amounting to 64 errors or 80% of the total. As Corder (in Putri & Sari, 2020) explains, lapses refer to surface-level deviations caused by momentary shifts in the speaker's attention. These errors occur unintentionally and without the speaker's awareness. Lapses in using passive sentences can happen due to physical fatigue or rushing during the exam, leading to slip-ups in writing. Previous studies did not specifically discuss the types of errors in using passive sentences, so there is no direct comparison to the findings of this study.

Lastly, several factors were identified as contributors to errors in using passive sentences, including interference from the mother tongue, performance-related factors, competency-related factors, and generalization factors. Based on the data description, the highest number of errors was attributed to competency-related factors, totaling 45 errors or 56.25% of the total. Competency-related factors refer to language-related mistakes resulting from a lack of understanding or knowledge of language rules. Many errors occur because students do not fully grasp the rules for constructing passive sentences in Japanese, which can be considered relatively difficult. Difficulties involve using particles, determining the subject as the agent, and

the object as the recipient of the action. Moreover, errors can also be influenced by interference from the mother tongue when translating from Indonesian to Japanese.

In previous relevant studies conducted by Novikasari and Hidayah, it was concluded that the mother tongue influences errors in using passive sentences in Japanese. These errors occurred predominantly in translation exercises and indicated that students are influenced by their mother tongue, causing confusion in understanding the sentences.

Overall, the findings indicate that errors in the use of passive sentences by Japanese language students at Harapan Medan University can be attributed to syntactic errors, mainly lapses in performance, and competency-related factors influenced by the features of the Japanese language itself and interference from the students' mother tongue.

6. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted on the Analysis of Errors in Using Passive Sentences among Japanese Language Students at Universitas Harapan Medan, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the most prevalent type of error observed is syntactic errors, encompassing the structure of sentences and their constituents. These errors stem from the students' inadequate understanding of passive sentences in Japanese, including the appropriate use of particles, verbs, and translation.

Secondly, the dominant type of error encountered is lapses, occurring due to inadvertent mistakes or lack of awareness on the part of the speakers. These errors frequently manifest in written form and can be attributed to physical fatigue or time constraints during examinations.

Thirdly, the primary cause of these errors lies in the students' competency, wherein a deficiency in comprehension or knowledge of language rules is evident. The student's grasp of the rules governing the formation of passive sentences in Japanese, particularly regarding particle usage and subject-object determination, remains limited.

Moreover, the influence of the student's native language also contributes to the occurrence of errors, particularly in translating passive sentences from Indonesian to Japanese. The impact of the native language tends to perplex students and results in errors in sentence comprehension.

The research findings indicate that students encounter challenges in effectively utilizing passive sentences in Japanese, particularly in syntax and rule comprehension. It is crucial to provide the students with improved and more comprehensive instruction on using passive sentences while enhancing their understanding of sentence structure and its constituent elements.

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