

# **A comparison of Japanese compound verb usage by native speakers and learners using composition corpus**

CHEN Xi

*Key words:* compound verb, composition database, learners corpus, Second Language Acquisition

This paper reports on a quantitative analysis of the compound verbs used in a Japanese second language (JSL) learners' written language corpus and compares it with the use in a comparable corpus of native speakers' writing. The compound verbs were compared on four points: frequency count, second-positioned verbs, first-positioned verbs, and learner level. Moreover, this paper compared the result with the research results on spoken language corpus.

The major findings are as follows:

1. JSL learners' general usage of compound verbs was more limited than the Japanese native speakers, not only in terms of number but also in variety. In particular, learners are often unable to properly use compound verbs which express respect such as '*sashi-ageru*'.
2. There were similarities in the use of the secondly-positioned verbs. JSL learners used almost the same secondly-positioned verbs as Japanese native speakers often used. On the other hand, JSL learners are often unable to properly use intransitive and transitive second-positioned verbs of compounds such as "*hajimaru*" and "*hajimeru*".
3. JSL learners used almost the same first-positioned verbs as Japanese native speakers often used.
4. There was no significant difference in the frequency of use depending on learner's level and learners' native language.

(Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University)