

Language, thoughts, and representations: anaphoric and logical functions of definiteness and indefiniteness in speaking

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Abstract: This research investigates that the functions of definiteness as identifiability and inclusiveness, of indefiniteness as quantifier are observed in speaking activities at the class of B1 level (CEFR) in the high school in Japan. Japanese do not have the distinction in the noun phrases themselves. The ultimate goal of this study is to examine the usages of definiteness and indefiniteness in speaking, on contexts in current reading articles. The research paper is focused on the correctness and errors of the usages.

Keywords: Identifiability, inclusiveness, quantifier, definiteness, indefiniteness, presupposition

1. Introduction

The high aspect of strong problem of the direct values between truth and false on judging what is correct in propositions is basically based on an argument of logics that are not unknown and unidentified to everyone who can try to understand situations and events. It comes down to the rapid interpretation and inferences; however, it might not be argued that their explanations go on experimental issues of memory that we may set out as all aspects in interpreting what is said. Sometimes, everyone would make more wrong terrible bad mistakes in right interpretations and operations. Then, why does that moment happen? It points out that our recognitions are not figured out to expressions. This paper soon weighs up the discussion, turning to integrated speaking activities like a collaboration of speaking and reading.

L2 speakers tend to divide the meanings of noun phrases into the distinctions in identifiability, inclusiveness, and quantifier. Especially, as an illuminating discussion, here it is noted that in indefiniteness, L2 speakers incline to grasp the meaning as an unit; then, they have errors in the usages according to the record. It also goes into the wrong recognition in the relations of single-plural, which might be under the metacognition in more details. Therefore, the findings from the analyses tell us the case that L2 speakers do not judge whether the noun phrase needs the determiner of identifiability, inclusive, or quantifier. It's the logical thoughts. Williamson (2005, p. 92) insists that "if she says 'I am a woman' while he says 'I am not a woman', it would not normally occur to us even for a moment to think of them as thereby disagreeing, although verbally his sentence is the negation of hers." As this comparatively simple field, we understand that her view was solely used as her position as our logical thinking. Pagin (2005, p. 305) gives us an observation.

(1) It rains. (Pagin, 2005, p. 305)

Then, we should judge that a speaker S knows it is raining, then S is a witness of fact if S does not lie. There might be an argument that S does not have an umbrella. It's another association. Mainly, noun phrases include their functions of identifiability as the sentences of (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6). They are relatively relied on representations we must look at (Saussure, 1972).

(2) a. Roland looks down a person likes SPA for just skin cares with podcasts.
b. Roland looks down the person like SPA for just skin cares with podcasts.
c. *Roland looks down person like SPA for just skin cares with podcasts.

(3) a. Alice often sinks in a wall towards jumping rabbits, sheep and horses.
b. Alice often sinks in a wall towards the jumping rabbits, the sheep and the horses.
c. *Alice often sinks in a wall towards jumping rabbit, sheep and horse.

(4) a. Russian people might criticize a yellow race couldn't read Karl Marx.
b. Russian people might criticize the yellow races couldn't read Karl Marx.

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- c. *Russian people might criticize yellow race couldn't read Karl Marx.
- (5) a. Remember a funeral grace pilot in an airplane would be crashed by the access of terrorists in Dubai.
b. Remember the funeral grace pilot in an airplane would be crashed by the access of terrorists in Dubai.
c. *Remember funeral grace pilot in an airplane would be crashed by the access of terrorists in Dubai.
- (6) a. Keith applied to a department of service industries of Carnegie Melon University.
b. Keith applied to the department of service industries of Carnegie Melon University.
c. Keith applied to department of service industries of Carnegie Melon University.

On the basis of recognitions we have in minds, the determiners are added completely. Then, a question might rise as another side. What is an acquisition of a second language? It is not difficult to acquire the functions; however, we often make wrong mistakes in recognitions and logics. If doing so, we must rethink the relevant consideration in language acquisitions and teaching methods as pedagogical issues. The paper suggests that teachers should give instructions of functions of L2 language in classes. It's because, in speaking, we have two sides to teach the way of speaking to students and to learn something through speaking in classes. Then, as the latter course, this research is based on an investigation of how L2 learners attempt to use the words they might have already acquired.

This research observes that the language usages on definiteness and indefiniteness are based on the functions of identifiability, inclusiveness and quantifiers in interactions and that the correctness and error analyses show L1 influence in speaking and in reading contexts (Hawkins, 1978; Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005; Cook 2008). The fundamental topics of the subject cover how to learn and acquire L2 language in speaking.

The study of functions in language reveals that the actual utterances include a large amount of logical meanings semantically and pragmatically. Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005, p. 15) say that 'one way to find out how learners acquire a second language (L2) is to study how they use it in production.' In addition, Cook (2008) describes that L2 learners with L1 are completely imperfect in grammar and phonologies toward acquiring L2, on which they have two grammars. It means whether L2 speakers can recognize functions of the noun phrase in definiteness and indefiniteness in productions, or not.

On denoting, Griffiths & Cummins (2017, p. 7) indicate that 'if expressions did not have denotations, language would not be of much use.' The world we live in is constructed through the communication, based on references in the points that what we refer to and what we infer, which are visible or not. It means that language usages are supported on the views that we share the same dimension, based on the shared presupposition. If doing so, L2 learners can acquire the ability to infer the presupposition as linguistic logical systems in language usages. In addition, Jaszczolt (2005, p. 49) mentions that 'propositions, units of meaning, are built up through composing meaning out of elements which exhibit intentionality.' This is the philosophical question.

On definiteness, the meaning of articles as *the*, *a*, and *an* has been defined as an equal status (Lyons, 1999). Historically, the famous analyses have been based on the distinction in familiarity and identifiability, including shared knowledge; however, the function of anaphoric status as inclusiveness has been proposed. This research is relied on those previous analyses.

This paper is based on the theories of L2 acquisition and learning, with effective speaking activities. What is significant in language learning is still a new area because it needs to grow the abilities from the view of diversity. The necessary condition of reading is to catch right information rapidly (Nuttall, 1996). In listening, L2 listeners should learn the systems of phonemic structures (Cutler, 2015; Rost, 2016). In writing, L2 writers have the complexity in outputs to organize paragraphs (Byrnes & Manchón, 2014). Speaking has a feature of linear and interactive factors in relationships. This research is focused on the operation of speaking activities, which becomes a better evidence in real language usages to research functions.

The following sections contain the parts of this study. Section 2 deals with literature reviews that have slightly explained the functions of definiteness and indefiniteness, and the characteristic of speaking. Section 3 shows the methodology. Section 4 analyzes the data. Section 5 ends the paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Functions of Definiteness

Russell (1905) assumes that denoting has complexities in defining objects and needs propositions and knowledge to anaphoric referents. For example, it is indicated that there is a distinction in *a man*, *all men*, and *the present King of England*. It apparently has each proposition and presupposition; however, it is dependent on a hypothesis. In the proposition of (7), we need the truth value. He says, 'if this is true, I met some

definite man' (p. 481). Therefore, on assumption, he adds that 'there seems no reason to believe that we are ever acquainted with other people's minds, seeing that these are not directly perceived' (p. 480).

(7) I met a man. (Russell, 1905, p. 481)

Strawson (1971) also represents that identifying referents is to identify a knowledge under a presupposition, saying that 'everyone has knowledge of the existence of various particular things each of which he is able, in one sense or another, though not necessarily in every sense, to distinguish from all other things' (p. 87). It is the identifiability. Abbot (2010) indicates from Frege's explanation that the noun phrases with definite articles have the presupposition of existing in real worlds or as knowledge.

Hawkins (1978) indicates that the referential meaning to define something as a meaningful one is one of factors of definiteness. In the sentence of (8), the function of definiteness is the identifiability and inclusiveness. In the sentence of (9), the usage of definiteness should be presupposed as knowledge of shared information, *the professor*. In sentence of (10), the article, *the*, seems to have a function of anaphoric reference. The functions are related with the familiarity of referents (Chesterman, 1999; Lyons, 1999). Lyons (1999) explains that the noun phrase with definiteness is easy to be reserved if the referent is visual, as the sentence of (11).

(8) Fred was discussing *an interesting book* in his class.

He is friendly with *the author*.

(Hawkins, 1978, p. 86)

(9) Well, what happened to *the professor*, then?

(Hawkins, 1978, p. 108)

(10) Fred bought me *a bucket*, but *the bucket* had a hole in.

Fred bought me *some buckets*, but *the buckets* had holes in. (Hawkins, 1978, p. 110)

(11) Just give *the shelfa* quick wipe, will you, before I put this vase on it. (Lyons, 1999, p. 3)

Gundel, Hedberg, & Zacharski (1993) note that the hierarchy of anaphoric references. The noun phrases with the definite article, *the*, are defined as uniquely identifiable objects and the noun phrases with the indefinite, *a oran*, are defined as type identifiable ones. They add that other anaphoric references, as *it*, *this*, *that*, have functions of focus, activation and familiarity. Ariel (1996) also clears the relation between the anaphoric the references and the accessibility, which is based on the memory of speakers and addressees. With antecedents, the distinction would be clarified more. On the antecedents, Cornish (1999, p. 44) indicates that 'the interpretation of the anaphor *it* is not *an apple*, since coreference, but rather *the apple which Joe ate the night before the time of utterance*.' It means that the interpretation happens in the speaker's mind. Moreover, it is relied on the context. That is, their analyses depend on the anaphoric usages on contexts.

(12) Joe ate *an apple* last night, but *it* was much too acid for his liking. (Cornish, 1999, p. 44)

Venhuizen et al. (2018) develop discourse structures with information structures and illustrate that opening the file in discourse, with presuppositions and anaphora, has the base of the given information, which refers to the accessibility to referents and the inference to what is said in discourse. That sense connects with the shared knowledge Hawkins says, and it is likely to limit the work to find the anaphoric antecedences in conversations. Levinson (2000, p. 5) points out the definition of presupposition that 'what the speaker is thinking the hearer will think that the speaker is thinking.' Sperber & Wilson (1995, p. 90) comment on the ability of inference that 'a speaker who intends an utterance to be interpreted in a particular way must also expect the hearer to be able to supply a context which allows that an interpretation to be recovered.'

Schiffrin (1994) observes that the identifiability continues in conversations. In the conversation of (13), the identifiability of *the top* has the antecedence; however, it has the topic continuity on this context (Givón, 1983). That is, in the discourse, the accessibility to the discourse referent is maintained and the file of discourse is open. If doing so, the conversation keeps a constant coherency on this context.

(13) Ivec: That's three- has three rooms on top of one another
Right?

Iver: hhhh You're right!

That's the sign of an old Philadelphia, somebody [who=

Ivee: [Yeh.
 Iver: =knows what one of [those are.
 Ivee: [I like- I was in one.
 Iver: You were?
 Ivee: Yeh.
 Iver: where?
 Ivee: A girlfriend of mine, downtown somewhere.
 She m-uh got married and she moved into one.
 One room here and then it's one room on the second floor and one room on
the top.
 Iver: Yeh, that's right.

(Schiffrin, 1994, p. 268)

2.2 The Functions of Quantifier

Noun phrases usually have the meaning of quantifier to count something, with determiners. Peter & Westerståhl (2006) clear the examples of determiners in Table 3. At this point of view, the definiteness and indefiniteness have a function in counting some. Levinson (2000, p. 92) also indicates that 'the semantic representation of *a* is simply the existential quantifier.' The argument does not have an agreement with the statement of Lyons (1999), on which the functions of definiteness and indefiniteness are equal.

Table 3: Determiners

Examples of determiners
some / a / all / every / no / several / most / neither / the / both / this / these / my / John's / many / few / enough / a few / a dozen / ten

Sudo (2016) explains the relation between *some* and *all* in questions. That is, he says that the scope is obviously limited or should be limited in the presupposition of the usages in interactions. This counting feature and the function of determiners are taken into account in the later analysis. We also investigate functions of single and plural in *a* and *the* in the following analyses.

2.3 Speaking

Many researchers have investigated the way of that language learners acquire language correctly and indicated that more communicative activities seemed to develop the language abilities (Long, 2015; Ellis et al., 2020). Surely communicative attitudes to speak English have been grown for a decade. However, according to Hughes (2013), in speaking, it is obvious that the feature of speaking is linear and to teach speaking is complicated in both sides of teaching of the way or attitudes of speaking as discourse markers, and teaching some on contexts through speaking. In speaking, it is meaningful to examine how the grammar is built, which is also observed in the field of discourse and conversational analyses. It does not mean the syntactic knowledge through grammar drills.

Furthermore, the collateral argument with it is that speaking is often assessed in a topic development as a coherency and relevancy; therefore, in speaking, what is conveyed as the topic of speakers should have an enormous impact on contexts for constructing conversations. Thus, this research is focused on the usage of noun phrases semantically although verbs include several meanings. The noun phrases have effective meanings semantically and functionally on contexts. The aim of this study is that the attitude in speaking is represented on contexts and the grammar in speaking is examined, which is focused on the definite articles and anaphoric references.

Gass & Selinker (2008) indicate that researches must be done how the second language should be learned and how the second language is not learned in language learning and teaching, although the capacity exists, which does not mean a considerable amount of knowledge on grammar, but there are constraints in learning and acquisition of languages on contexts of communication and language usages. It does not refer to the stage of focus on form of target language in learning (Doughy & Williams, 1998), but rather relates with the side that language learners have the cognitive awareness in production (Skehan, 1998). The cognitive recognition is important. This study is focused on the distribution of definiteness and definiteness and explores that the awareness of L2 speakers influences on language usages in speaking.

2.4 Research questions

This research answers these questions:

- a. Do L2 speakers have the functions of identifiability, inclusiveness and quantifier of definiteness and indefiniteness in speaking?
- b. Do L2 speakers use the functions of definiteness and indefiniteness correctly?

3. Research Method

3.1 Participants and Materials

A class of 19 students (4 boys, 15 girls) from the third grade in a public high school in Aichi in Japan participated in the study. The English proficiency level is nearly B1 (CEFR). They are good at English and the class has a special curriculum in English. Ordinarily they are learning English positively, to read simple English novels and take part in lessons of native English speakers.

3.2 Reading Articles and Questions for Speaking

For speaking, students are given news current reading articles, prepared through CNN, which has about 200 words. The teacher makes them to read the current articles, which takes 15 minute to complete it. Then the teacher gives a lecture on the topic through English, which takes 10 minutes. Moreover, the teacher asks questions on the reading articles. The students answer the questions and exchange their opinions toward the current articles with classmates. It almost takes 45 to 50 minutes to complete the speaking activity to read and speak. Table 1 and 2 show the detail of the title of current reading articles and questions for speaking activities.

Table 1: Speaking Activity 1

The article	Britain's young royals open up about mental health (190 words)
Question	What is a good thing for keeping mental health and mental wellbeing?

Table 2: Speaking Activity 2

The article	President Trump's first 100 days on the global stage (183 words)
Question	What will you do as the President during the first 100 days?

4. Analysis

4.1 Identifiability and Inclusiveness

In the speaking activity 1, the current reading article is on the wellbeing that family and friends should share their problems openly, in which the topic is on having a baby and death of family. In the utterance of (14), the student accesses the information, using the definite article, *the*. The noun phrases, *the problems* and *the problem*, are apparently identifiable and inclusiveness. Moreover, the inclusive function in *the problem*, has the scope of meaning on the context. On the speaking interaction of that context, the usages are permitted. The antecedents indicate other nouns in the reading articles. The identifiability is not ambiguous.

(14) Student 1:

I think sharing *the problems* with my friends, or family is good for mental health. We can be happy by talking with people, and if I share *the problem*.

On the other hand, in the utterance of (15), the student catches the meaning, *problems*. Semantically, it explores the scope of general meanings of the noun. That is, the meaning may include other problems that mean school problems, learning problems, and sleeping problems, which are not on that reading context. The usage of indefiniteness is not identifiable. On the view of quantifier, the students do not have other options as *all*, *some*, and *no*, in order to use the plural noun phrase, *problems*. Although the concept may be a little abstract, the research observes that the students have the ability to divide noun phrases into definite and indefinite meanings. Logically, the utterances of (14) and (15) have different presupposition on those contexts. The definition of *the problems* and *the problem* presuppose that there are problems to have a child, cure stresses and share worries with friends and family according to the reading articles. Here the presupposition is given to all of the students. Therefore, they are naturally identifiable. On the other hand, in general, *problems* include several meanings semantically, which also means to have a headache and call at night.

(15) Student 2:

I agree with Lady Gaga's idea. People who are weak or unhealthy mentally tend to try to solve *problems* by themselves, then it makes them unhealthy. So they should open their mind to others.

In the speaking activity 2, in the utterance of (16), the student refers to the Trump's plan of tax at the term, with the definite article, *the*, which is identifiable. Contrary to that, in the utterance of (17), the student suddenly gives the opinion; therefore, it does not need the definite article in *educational plans* that Trump does not take according to the current reading article of CNN. In the utterance of (18), the student uses the definite article in the function of inclusiveness to the antecedent in the same sentence although the noun phrase, *child*, has an error in indefiniteness, *a*.

(16) Student 3:

I will decrease *consumption tax* during *the first 100 days*.

(17) Student 4:

I'll take *educational plans*. Because I want many children to study more.

(18) Student 5:

I will reduce child on *the waiting list* for daycare.

4.2 Errors

Japanese have no distinctions in definiteness; therefore, the L2 speakers tend to omit the forms and functions in L2 productions and L2 performances as speaking and writing. Usually the noun phrases in Japanese presuppose the counting as quantifier. In addition, the noun phrases are steered into the ellipsis syntactically. Here, the error analysis is the stage of L1 influence on that sense.

In the speaking activity 1, in the utterance of (19), the student does not add the definiteness or indefiniteness to the noun phrase, *favorite activity*, as *a favorite activity*, *favorite activities* or *the favorite activity*. Apparently, it should be displaced into the plural nouns as *activities*. In the utterance of (20), the student does not use the article, *a*, as *a good thing*. Here, the meanings of the noun phrases are defined as concepts in the speaking. Therefore, it is likely to say that the students grasp the meaning as the unit. Or it is likely to say that the noun phrases do not have functions on those contexts.

(19) Student 6:

To do favorite things. For example, in my case, I like go shopping with my mother, so by doing that, stress will decrease. So I think doing *favorite activity* is good.

(20) Student 7:

I think that doing anything is *good thing* for keeping mental health. I absorbed in anything so I can feel change.

Similarly, in the speaking activity 2, in the sentence of (21), the student does not change the noun into plurals as *policies* and *immigrants*; however, they are antecedents of *them*. Contrary to (21), in the sentence of (22), the usage as unit, *poverty*, is correct. These ideas to the question in the speaking activity 2 were quickly extracted.

(21) Student 8:

I arrange *policy* about *immigrant*. America is suffering from *them*.

(22) Student 9:

I will improve *poverty*.

4.3 Investigation of the Research Questions

The qualitative study was designed to research the usages of definiteness and indefiniteness in speaking. On the basis of the analysis, the research questions are investigated. The first question that L2 speakers have the functions of identifiability, inclusiveness and quantifier of definiteness and indefiniteness in speaking. The usages in the functions of identifiability, inclusiveness and quantifier are observed on contexts; therefore, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is accepted. In addition, the second question is that L2 speakers use the functions of definiteness and indefiniteness correctly. In fact, the students tend to miss the usages in functions of the counting and unit as concepts of nouns. Therefore, the second question is rejected. Apparently, the reason is based on L1 influences in L2 acquisition.

4.4 Discussion

This research to analyze the functions in speaking was carried on the previous sections. L2 speakers use the definiteness and indefiniteness in the functions of identification, accessibility, and quantifier on reading contexts or their own speaking contexts. At the same time, errors happen, especially in identification or quantifier, which is also on single-plural. The finding of this study supports to the view that definiteness and indefiniteness have the functions in interactions and on contexts. These results may seem to support the idea of interlanguage. Selinker (1972, p. 212) defines that ‘the crucial assumption we are making here is that those adults who succeed in learning a second language so that they achieve native-speaker competence has somehow reactivated the latent language structure.’ Apparently, some of the students fail to acquire the definiteness and indefiniteness correctly. Moreover, on bilingualism Green (2000) signifies that in outputs, there are L1 input and L2 input in words. It is supposed that the errors this study researched show these processes to acquire L2 in language learning.

The functions of identifiability and inclusiveness suggest that speakers have the cognitive ability to retrieve the memories and define them as old information on given contexts. If the identifiability is one of the functions of definiteness, the usages of definiteness need contexts, as reading articles or shared settings, on the case that the definiteness may not have the antecedent. Moreover, when the inclusiveness is used as a function of definiteness, the interpretation should be appropriate semantically and pragmatically. Finally, if the counting function is weak for Japanese, and if it is strong in English, the language learning takes in the instruction for acquiring the meaning of counting, like *many*, *all*, *every*, *some*, and *a few* of quantifiers.

Nation (2001) and Kreidler (2014) mention language learners have the receptive and productive words. In reality, the receptive words are able to be understood in reading and listening, and the productive words are able to be used appropriately in speaking and writing. In language learning, we have a tendency to focus on the receptive words and how much we memorize them. This research indicated that definiteness and indefiniteness have meanings as functions; therefore, they should be taught in speaking for advancing productive words.

The purpose of the present study was to research the functions of definiteness and indefiniteness in speaking activities. From the functional views in language, the ability to identify some means the inference structure on logical propositions. It may tell us the power of words semantically. In addition, it has an aspect of skills in interactions, to maintain and explore the topics with the noun phrases. The findings of this research on errors also reveal too strong L1 influences in L2 acquisition. On pedagogical points, the study on how these errors are corrected on teaching contexts should be done.

5. Implications

5.1 Implications

Teaching speaking is to teach what to say and how to say. This study proposes two views. Teachers should portion their instructions into the ways and attitudes of speaking, and contents with contexts in reading, which is also defined as discussion. First, the textbook Pelteret (2012) has written, shows the functions of speaking itself, which is limited in interruptions and clarification. The expressions have sentences, as *actually*, *can I just say*, and *no, what I mean is*, for keeping the interactions well in conversations. For example, if the students understand the meaning of *the problems*, in the utterance (7), they might say, *sorry, you were saying the problems*, using the function of interruptions in speaking, for maintaining the interactions. Next, Lyster (2018) gives an insight on content-based instructions. Having the functions on contexts, the language should be learned in those real contexts. Teachers should acquire the ability to do aural feedbacks to students in classes.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

The present study has limitations of amounts on data. More enormous amounts of data should reveal the functions of definiteness, indefiniteness and anaphoric references. This research has some aspects on functions on learning in speaking. The sides have further possibilities to be investigated. Especially, on definiteness and indefiniteness, quantifiers and existential meanings are included at the same time. That is, it means that speakers recognize the existence and quantity toward referents, where there are complicated implications. When the anaphoric meanings are appropriately acquired, the language learners may succeed in language learning.

5.3 Conclusions

In this paper, definiteness and indefiniteness have been investigated and the language usages in speaking have been analyzed on the side of the functions of language. In conversations, it is necessary to infer what speakers refer to and what hearers interpret. Interestingly, the language includes such a function. Just

memorizing difficult vocabularies is not language learning, but acquiring language functions is significant in productions. Identifying and counting referents rapidly in interactions also are important.

This study was an attempt to explore the implementation of integrated speaking activities in reading contexts. In teaching a second language, teachers should think how to teach speaking properly, then contexts should be obviously considered. In addition, it apparently reveals L1 influences in L2 learning. The issue of that is still remained. However, the challenge to go through it should be continued in classes.

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