Teaching Methods in Japan with Relation to English Syntax

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Abstract

This essay is about teaching and learning English syntax (word order) in Japan. My thesis is that there might be expected to be several difficulties in learning and teaching English syntax for Japanese people as they have very different syntax in Japanese. Regarding primary data for this thesis, a questionnaire in the research in Chapter 3 was answered by six English teachers; both private and public junior high school teachers in Japan. The questionnaire included questions about teaching methods and difficulties they considered their students to have. In Chapter 4, thirteen students in Japan were asked what they think about English syntax and its difficulties. The individuals who participated in the research were teaching and studying English at the time. The questionnaire was answered via e-mail. There were only five open questions; however, where the participants could write about their ideas and opinions as much as they liked. The results revealed that teaching basic English syntax was not difficult according to the teachers. The students seemed to understand the basics; however, they had difficulties in applying them in different situations. The problems students seemed to have were that they did not have enough time to practice a great deal of syntax in their daily lives and their lessons consisted mainly of translation and recitation of their English textbooks. Therefore, students needed more communication and oral practice in order to use English syntax more naturally.

Key words: syntax, teaching methods, learning difficulties, recitation, communication.

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INTRODUCTION

The reason for writing this essay is that I am interested in my first language, Japanese, and its influence on my second language, English. The general theories of second language acquisition (SLA) and English language education in Japan are going to be introduced.

Generally, from my eighteen-years of experience living and studying in Japan, many children there devote much time and effort in their studies in order to pass entrance examinations for high school and university. Students in Japan often start their English education from the first year of junior high school and learn it for at least six years. However, from my experience, many of them are unable to speak fluent English after this education. There are two main reasons beyond language differences for this phenomenon: historical and cultural aspects. The aspects of history and culture will be introduced in Chapter 1 in order to clarify why many Japanese people are less competent English speakers and still employ the traditional grammar-translation method for the majority of English teaching.

Word order is called "syntax" and the syntax of Japanese will be presented and compared with English in Chapter 2. Japanese language belongs to the Altaic language tree, which is a different language tree from of the Germanic family of languages, including English. The common property of Altaic languages such as Korean, Japanese, Turkish and many other Asian languages is that "they have vowel harmony, are agglutinative and have the SOV-form" (Vogler, 1998). Vowel harmony means that it does not allow all kinds of vowel combinations. In Japanese, there are no words with more than two vowels in a row. A consonant and a vowel are often used as a pair in a syllable, e.g. ka, ki, ku, ke, ko [ibid]. The languages are also agglutinative, which means word endings bend and conjugate e.g. aruk+u (an infinitive, walk) aruk+imasu (the present tense), aruk+imashita (the past tense) [ibid]. The most famous grammatical aspect of the languages is they have the SOV (Subject-Object-Verb) form, while English and many other European languages have the SVO- form. For example, *Watashi wa kouen made arukimasu* (I park to walk).

My thesis is founded on the expectation that there would be many difficulties in learning and teaching English syntax for Japanese people as they have very different syntax in Japanese. My aim is to propose better teaching strategies for learning and teaching syntax, and to clarify. Hence, I am going to clarify several main problem areas and demonstrate teaching strategies

in Japan. Chapters 3 and 4 describe and analyze my primarily qualitative research study. The research is divided into two chapters: teaching English syntax from the teachers' perspectives, and the learners' perspectives of studying English syntax and the difficulties demonstrated. The essay will conclude with an evaluation of the research and suggestions for improving teaching methods.

1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN JAPAN

1.1. General Theories of Second Language Acquisition

In general, there are three theories and three teaching methods in second language acquisition, which will be introduced as a background of the research in this chapter. The oldest theory, from the 1960s, is Behaviourism and it suggests repetition and memorization of vocabularies and grammar. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) proposes that, if an L1 (the first language) and L2 (the second language) are similar, it would be easier for learners to acquire their L2. If they are different, learners would have difficulties (Lightbown and Spada, 2005, p.34). The most commonly used method in Japan is the grammar-translation method, which involves many lists of vocabulary. The audio-lingual method is also used for the pronunciation and repetition of new words. Kawano (1999, p.23) states that "the audio-lingual method is effective in introducing new sentence patterns and it is also helpful so that students memorize many important sentences in English". These methods are more pattern-based and involve a considerable amount of practice.

There were reactions against these teaching methods in the 1970s. The innatist perspective emphasised learners' natural inborn grammar: so called Universal Grammar (UG) (Lightbown & Spada, 2005, p.15). In the innatist's theory, learners can use UG to acquire the complex English grammar by themselves (ibid, p.35). The cognitivist and interactionist perspective emphasizes that interaction with others is the most important element for language acquisition (ibid, p.19). Therefore, interactionism advocates a communication-based teaching method and this is commonly used nowadays in many countries in Europe and the U.S.A. This approach is more focused on learners' ability to use the target language and create communicative experiences in order to use the language in more natural communication with others (ibid, p.43). The lessons are more individually adjusted and the learner's errors are tolerated since errors are seen as an indication of the natural language acquisition process. (Yule, G. 2006, p.166).

1.2. The Historical Background of Japanese Education

Formal education in Japan began in the sixth century when Confucianism and Buddhism came to Japan (U.S. Library of Congress).When the samurai (warrior) era began, more discipline and hierarchy were established in their education. The education mainly involved reading old Chinese and Japanese literature, art and military strategies. Loyalty and respect for their chiefs and shogun (highness) were also very important parts of the education [ibid].

Japan stopped having any contact with other countries from 1639 to 1868, with the exception of Korea, China and Holland by Southern Japan [ibid]. English education was first introduced when Japan was forced to open their country to the world by the U.S.A. in 1854. An English boom spread in order to create contact with western culture and knowledge [ibid].

However, during the Pacific War, when Japan attacked Pear Harbor in 1941, "all the U.K. and American lectures in Japanese universities were dismissed. Teaching English was abolished and English was seen as a negative" (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006, n. p.) When Japan was defeated after World War II, the U.S.A. organized Japanese society. This occupation by the American military played "a major role in influencing people's interest in English education." [ibid]. This event created the second English boom, which was almost 70 years after the first one. In the following year, English lessons started again in junior high schools and became a component of the National Curriculum [ibid].

The U.S.A. also gave Japan an opportunity to develop its own economy. This led to so-called "'Economic Miracle' in which the Japanese economy grew rapidly from 1955 until the 1970s" [ibid]. Another English boom was triggered by the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, even though English education in schools was still examination-oriented. According to Imura (2003, p.284), "English education was seen as a preparation for examination". In 1979, TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), the U.S. business English Test was introduced. It was important to provide the means by which to compare the linguistic competence of Japanese students with students of other countries (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006).

In the 1990s, 'globalization', 'cultural difference' and 'international understanding' became official slogans for state-run English education and this led to the fourth English boom in Japan [ibid]. The communicative approach towards English language teaching became increasingly popular and teachers tried to develop their students' speaking ability for the first

time. A wide-ranging teacher-training programme for all junior and senior high school teachers in methodology and linguistic ability was introduced [ibid].

History tells us that Japanese education has been strictly followed according to its many rules and disciplines. The Japanese population has consisted of a single ethnic group and the society is mono-cultural (Kawano 1999, p. 48). They have never been colonized or forced to speak any other languages than Japanese. As mentioned above, English culture came very late and language education only began until very recently in Japanese history. According to Kawano (1999, p.4), the Japanese have few opportunities to speak a foreign language as more than 99% of the population is ethnically Japanese. For this reason, it seems they are still not used to having conversations in a foreign language, even though the number of tourists is increasing in Japan.

The Ministry of Education in Japan does not seem to have changed the traditional education system and English curriculum a great deal (Kawagoe, 2012). Many Japanese children are often expected to study hard in order to obtain a good job. Studying is still mainly considered as a preparation for the entrance examination as Imura (2003, p.284) mentioned above. Hence, children do not see the language as a daily conversation method. Therefore, even though they have oral exercises during English lessons, this competence does not seem to be of any value as it is not a requirement of any entrance examination [ibid]. The texts they use are often very formal with old-fashioned vocabulary, which is seldom used in daily life nowadays (Ichimura, 2009). Hence, many students expect tourists to speak Japanese, as they do not want to take any risks by saying incorrect sentences.

I perceive that many Japanese teachers have been taught by this strict grammar-translation method according to the history above and, therefore, may not know how to teach differently. They do understand the meaning of English texts; however, they might not be able to use their oral skills fluently in conversations, according to Yuditt (2007). Hence, their pronunciation might not be seen as being very suitable for listening to as they tend to speak with a Japanese accent.

1.3. Japanese Culture and Education

Foreign and native teachers may be wise to consider not only these teaching methods but also the culture Japanese people have. My perception is that students who remain silent during English lessons might not be just afraid of correction or thinking it is pointless to speak in the classroom. They might be inhibited for another reason related to the culture of Japan. The Japanese live in what might be called a "collective" society, by which I mean everyone follows the same ideas and routines.

Generally speaking, Japanese people prefer to remain silent rather than express a different idea, according to Yuditt (2007). He explains that many Japanese people avoid behaving differently or individually. When they do not know or are not sure of a correct answer, they try not to answer the question at all (Kawano, 1999, p.8). This is an effect of Confucianism, which is an idea that making mistakes is painful, also is associated with their attitude, according to Damen (1987) in Kawano (1999, p.8). Therefore, open questions such as "What do you think?" or "Why do you think so?" are often very challenging for Japanese students to answer. Many students might look down and avoid having eye contact with their teacher in order not to be singled out (Yuditt, 2007). They may try to find some answers from their textbook. Even when the teacher convinces them that there are no wrong answers, the students often give only ambiguous answers. They often give more general answers instead of giving their own opinions [ibid]. English conversation is often held by native teachers and this kind of lesson can be problematic for students. Foreign teachers often assess them as lacking opinions and being poor English speakers [ibid].

There are some more examples of cultural differences and misunderstanding between Japanese and non-Japanese people. Hall (1987, p.124, cited in Kawano, 1997, p.16) states that Japanese people are liable to say, "It's a little bit difficult." meaning "I can't". He continues "Misunderstanding is likely to occur because generally English speaking people expect "but I'll try to do it." after "It's a little bit difficult." When the Japanese say yes, they may not mean yes. To the Japanese, "Yes" simply means "I hear you". He means that they never assume that they agree, especially in business discussions. They also do not assume that a smile means the Japanese are pleased or are agreeing with you, since they often smile or laugh when embarrassed [ibid].

Naturally, teachers are seldom questioned or criticised openly in their classrooms. What they teach is generally seen as very valuable and logical. By virtue of their higher authority, teachers can control everything during their lessons (Yuditt, 2007). Their students seldom ask any questions during lessons when they do not understand. This is likely to be because they are compelled to display their lack of knowledge, and that can make them feel embarrassed and ashamed; consequently, they are inclined to remain sitting passively and listening to their teacher's lecture (Yuditt, 2007). They seldom have any active discussion, only by being forced [ibid]. For this reason, students may not think that they have right to talk during lessons as much as their teacher. Kawano (1999, p.28) mentions "discussions and debates are probably one of the most difficult activities for Japanese students. In every day life, Japanese people seldom argue or discuss potentially controversial topics. Once an argument starts, it can be serious and emotional. Apart from English proficiency and the knowledge of cultural differences, students need to know the discussion and debate strategy".

Kawano (1999, pp. 30-31) states: "As most tests and examinations in Japan are right or wrong answer-oriented, learners feel unsatisfied or incomplete when they are not given correct answers after answering questions. Therefore, analyzing critically, talking about problems and stating their opinions in groups are unfamiliar to Japanese learner. The Japanese are also less flexible to unexpected incidents; consequently, they have difficulty taking different points of view."

Students' silence during a lesson can be interpreted as indifference and ignorance by foreign teachers, according to Yuditt (2007). He explains that the reason is not only the hierarchical distance between the teacher and the students, but also that asking is considered to be rude. In Japanese culture, listeners should understand and interpret what the speaker wants to say without imposing upon any trouble for the speaker [ibid]. Therefore, students can become irritated in English conversation lessons when their teacher does not understand them. They are not willing to give any clear opinions and it is very important for listeners to make their best guesses of speaker's meaning. Listeners should also interpret correctly what is the real purpose behind the speech. The interpretation is seen as consideration and respect for the speaker. Therefore, demand, inquiry, expectation, denial, insistence and critique are seen to be rude, while ambiguity and silence are not seen to be any barriers or disadvantages for Japanese people [ibid].

Kawano (1999, pp.3-4) explains "when Japanese speak with non-Japanese in English while using Japanese cultural yardsticks, they will encounter conflicts and misunderstandings. People should try to avoid carrying their own cultural norms when they talk with different cultural groups in order to achieve better communication." Yuditt (2007) emphasises that the communication with foreign students often irritates Japanese teachers as the students ask too many questions and they are too direct. He also states that the teacher may receive the impression that their attitudes are due to a lack of respect and consideration. He or she may interpret their attitudes as aggressive and greedy since they keep asking why and requiring more comprehensible explanations. So the teachers can be judged as intolerant and less patient [ibid].

Regarding culture, many western students learn "critical thinking" which does not exist in Japanese education. It seems to be taboo to use critical thinking as it is seen to be a barrier for the collective society when interpreting culture. Since the teacher sits on a higher level in the hierarchy in Japan, it can be perceived that it might be difficult to understand how their students think and why they do not understand. Kawano (1999, p.10) proposes that "the students probably are enthusiastic and eager to learn English; however, the fact that the teacher and her students belong to different cultures affects their teaching and learning negatively". Therefore, it seems to be safe to conclude that it can be best that the native and foreign teachers should keep in their minds about this type of culture and try to adjust their teaching methods to Japanese culture and society.

According to Yuditt (2007), too much pressure can make the situation worse as the students are quite passive. The question here is how much both the teacher and the students can cooperate and understand their different cultures. The teacher who has Japanese culture as his or her background also seems to need more tolerance and acceptance of foreign students. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers in general need to be more open-minded and interested in learning from their students.

2. JAPANESE LANGUAGE: THE SYNTAX OF JAPANESE

2.1. Japanese Alphabet: Three Writing Systems

The key language differences between Japanese and English will be discussed in this chapter. Before talking about Japanese syntax, I would like to show the Japanese alphabets to demonstrate how they are different from English ones. Japanese has 46 basic syllables, which can be written in either of two scripts: hiragana or katakana.

Furthermore, the scripts use old Chinese characters which are called 漢字 (kanji) and they are combined with hiragana and katakana in writing.

Kanji - Chinese in origin

An example of a sentence is: 私はバナナを食べています。 (I am eating a banana.)

Katakana is mainly used for Western European words and hiragana for functional words, such as conjunctions and articles. Kanji is always used for lexical words such as nouns, verbs and

adjectives. There are no capital letters or spaces in Japanese, yet they still can read sentences easily thanks to the combination of these three scripts (Kamermans 2006, p.28). However, there are symbols for punctuation, such as full-stop (。), comma (、), single quotes 「and 」 double quotes 『and 』 and parentheses （ and ） [ibid]. It is only with hiragana or katakana that would be difficult to understand the meaning of a sentence as they can only (to a degree) accurately reflect the pronunciation [ibid], not kanji.

2.2 Sentence Structure

Language is a cultural phenomenon and its syntax shows how people think, according to Shioiri (1991, p.115). The similarities and differences between Japanese and English are demonstrated in this chapter.

The differences between Japanese and English syntaxes are:

Japanese syntax	English syntax
1) Subject may be omitted	1) Subject is never omitted
2) Objects and complements come before verbs	2) Verb comes after a subject. (Auxiliary verbs and adverbs can come between the subject and the verb)
3) Verbs come at the end	3) Objects and compliments come after a verb.
4) Bigger areas come first e.g. writing an address; begins with country, city, gate, person's name	4) Smaller areas come first. e.g. writing an address; begins with person's name, gate, city, country.

In English, "I ate the apple" has "I" as subject, then "eat" as a verb, and then "the apple" as an object. In Japanese, the sentence "私が林檎を食べた" has "私" (I) as a subject, 林檎 (apple) as an object and then 食べた (ate) as a verb.

If the sentences were divided into phrases, the phrases would look like this.

S (sentence), NP (Noun Phrase), Det (determiner such as articles and numbers), VP (Verb Phrase), N(Noun), V (Verb), Part (particles or called Topic marker)

Japanese

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                    S                    In Japanese, VP always comes at the end and no Det
                   /|\
                  / | \
              NP   NP   VP               is used. Part. are used instead after N. In English NP comes
             /\    /\    |
            /  \  /  \   |
           N  Part N  Part V             at the end of a sentence. Det always comes before N.
           私   が  林檎  を  食べた
```
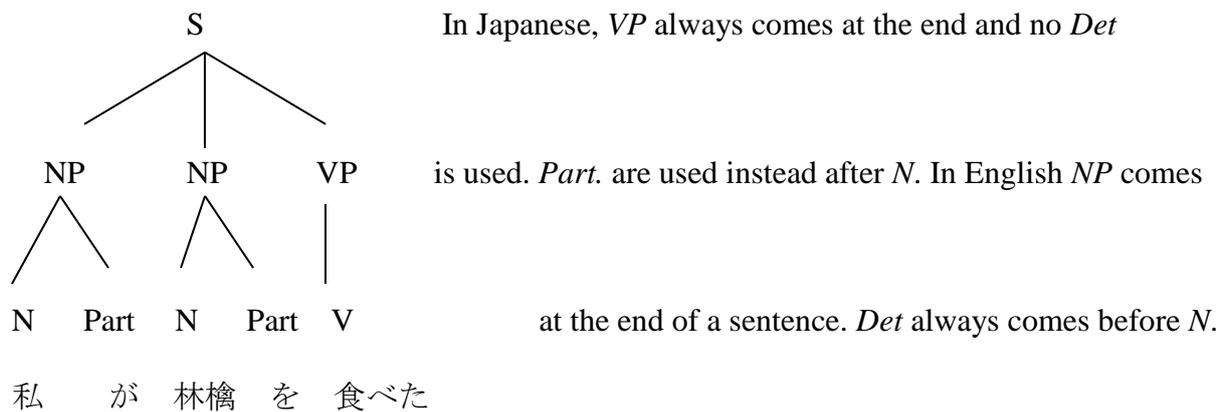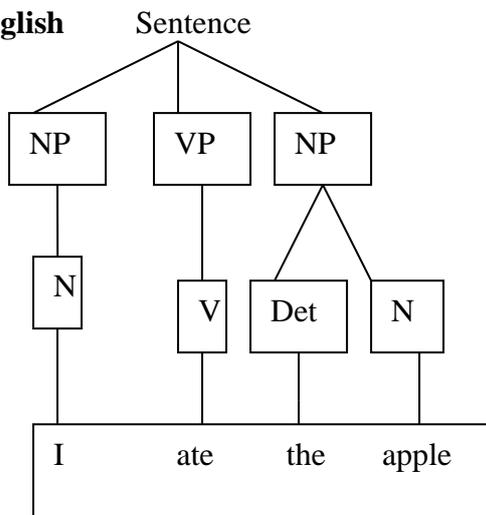
English   Sentence

2.2.1. Word Modifiers

In Japanese, modifying phrases come after a noun that will be modified, while in English, modifying phrases come before a noun (Narise, 2012). For instance, in Japanese, the predicate is placed at the end of a sentence and a postposition comes after a noun e.g. 机の上に, while in English articles and adjectives come before a noun, e.g. *beautiful flower*. The infinitive and

relative clause are also used for modification such as *something to eat.* In Japanese 何か食べ
る物, *thing* 物 comes after the verb 食べる [ibid].

2.2.2. SVO and SOV forms

English SVO-form is difficult to define as the subject tends to be the entity who "does" or
"experiences" the verb. The object is usually the entity that has the verb action "done" to it.
For instance in this sentence below (Japanese professor (n.d.)):

Bill	threw	me	The ball	from the other side of the field.
Subject	Verb	Indirect Object	Direct Object	Prepositional phrases
		<----------------"Object"-------------->		

While a Japanese sentence looks as follows [ibid]: The teacher passed the students their
grades.

先生は	授業の後で	生徒に	成績を	出した。
The teacher	after class	the students	their grades	passed out.
Subject	A prepositional phrase <-------------------"Object"-------------------->			Verb

2.2.3. Topic Markers

In English, for example, the sentence "John gave Mary the book," is clear that John is the
subject because his name comes before the verb (Allen, 2000). "Mary gave John the book"
clearly has Mary as the subject. "John gave the book Mary," makes us pause mentally as the
word order tells us that John is giving Mary a book. It is clear that *John* is the giver and the
object is *the book* and readers can assume either a missing preposition, *to* Mary, or rearrange
the syntax *John gave Mary the book.* "Since English does not have any kind of marker for

the subject of a sentence, people must indicate what noun is the subject by where it is in the sentence" [ibid].

In Japanese, word order is very flexible due to the topic marker. Every noun is marked with a particle that indicates its grammatical role and parts of speech are explicitly tagged using particles such as は(marking topic), が (marking verb subject), か (marking something as question),を (marking direct verb object) and a wide variety of other "particles" according to Kamermans (2006, p.47). Here are some examples:

- ・ は, ha marks a sentence topic. Subject and verb object marker
- ・ が, ga marks the verb subject (for passive verbs) or actor (for active verbs).
- ・ を, wo marks the verb direct object.
- ・ に, ni marks the verb's indirect object, and marks the destination of a targeted verb action [ibid].

Therefore, in the following example:

こどもが	テレビを	みている。
Kodomo ga	terebi wo	miteiru.
Child SUB	TV OBJ	be watching.

OSV- form instead of SOV-form becomes possible without any problems thanks to the topic markers [ibid].

テレビを	こどもが	みている。
Terebi wo	kodomo ga	miteiru.
TV OBJ	Child SUB	be watching.

Sentences can have wildly different meanings depending on which particles are used. For instance, in the following sentence:

昨日は犬が私の晩ご飯を食べました。

Yesterday (topic marker) a dog (subject marker) I (genitive marker), dinner (direct object) ate. (Kamermans, 2006, p.47)

This sentence reads, "Yesterday, a dog ate my dinner" in normal English. Now, if some particles would be replaced in the sentence so that it instead reads the following:

昨日は犬を私が晩ご飯に食べました。

Yesterday (topic marker) a dog (direct object) I (subject) dinner (indirect

object) ate, then this sentence now suddenly reads "Yesterday, it was I who ate the dog for dinner" [ibid]. Hence, the sentences have completely different meanings depending on which particles are used.

Japanese simply does not use personal pronouns unless it is necessary. People are expected to understand who said what, especially in simple conversations: "Omissions all over the place due to the context" (Kamermans, 2006, p. 57). When a person asks questions, the other person should know the answer. This stems from Japanese culture, as mentioned in Chapter 1. In Japanese, the topic marker は is used for something new, when a particular subject is asked.

However, the sentence: 誰は来ましたか (who, 誰 and as verb "came in", 来る) "Who is that person?" to whoever just came in, does not make any sense [ibid]. Everything that is marked as は can technically be dropped and should still make sense as a sentence. Therefore, another subject topic marker が should be used instead here, i.e. 誰が来ましたか [ibid].

2.2.4. Clause Order

Japanese may be flexible about word order, but there is one hard-and-fast rule about clause order, which is restrictive. In Japanese, the main (independent) clause must come last, whereas in English, the clause order for emphasis is varied, and it is free to tag extra clauses and phrases onto the end of our sentences in order to add more information during mid-

sentence (Allen, 2000). "These constructions are less possible in Japanese. For instance, "I like her because she is tall" has a different flavor than the sentence, "Because she is tall, I like her." The first is centered on the fact that you like her, and her height just gives extra information or explanation; however, the second sentence is strongly conditional" [ibid].

2.2.5. Plurals and Counters

In Japanese language, there are no articles (the, a, an) or noun plurals, except for a handful of classes of nouns. Personal pronouns are avoided whenever possible and, once a topic is known to all the interlocutors, ～達 (tachi) is used (Kamermans, 2006, p.42).
 This is the common group-suffix for turning personal pronouns into personal group pronouns. "However, note the following suffix: ～等(ra) suffix is an older group suffix and can be used to alter 彼等 (彼女達), which means them (either a group or men or women)" [ibid].

Counters are used when counting different objects in Japanese. For instance, "there is not just one but there are different ways to count from one to ten, and which one to be used depends on what is counted, e.g. *mai* for flat things and *hon* for oblong things" (Kamermans, 2006, p.49).

2.2.6. Tense

There is no explicit future tense or perfect tense for verbs in Japanese. The present tense is used for future as well as habitual action (Abe, 2012). However, there are formal and informal present and past tenses. The informal present tense is the same as the dictionary form. The ~ *masu* form is used in formal situations. In Japanese, the past tense is used for all actions, which completed in the past [ibid]. Therefore, Japanese people have difficulty with using the English present perfect, e.g. have done. There are formal *~mashita* and informal *~ta* which also exist in the past tense. There is also present progressive *–te imasu*, which corresponds to the –ing form in English [ibid].

The research study in the next chapter was performed in order to see how these differences between the languages affect learning difficulties for Japanese students.

3. TEACHING ENGLISH SYNTAX IN JAPAN

3.1. Method

The aim of this research is to investigate how English teachers in Japan teach English syntax in their lessons. Qualitative primary data was obtained from six teachers; two of them (coded Teacher A and B) worked at a private evening school and four of them (coded Teacher C to F) at a public junior high school. Their students were fifteen years old. An e-questionnaire (Appendix A) consisted of five questions and sent to them by e-mail. They were asked what kind of teaching methods and strategies they used in teaching English in order to facilitate their students' learning of English syntax. They were also asked how they tested their students' understanding and the main difficulties their students experienced in English syntax by explaining why they thought their students had these difficulties. All the teachers received the questionnaire both in English and Japanese. They were also informed that their answers would not be used or published with another purpose more than in this study. This ethical information and secrecy had been written clearly in Appendix C in Japanese and all of the teachers read and answered the questionnaire in Japanese. Their answers were translated and summarized by me in the following results. Five teachers explained their ideas very clearly with many details, which helped a great deal of my interpretation. The evaluation of the research will be presented in chapter 5.

3.2. Results

Referring Appendix A, "How do you teach the differences between Japanese and English syntax?"

The private teacher, Teacher A explained: "I usually emphasize the basic syntax in English in my teaching, e.g. a verb comes after a subject. It is also important that the subject is not allowed to be omitted in English". Teacher B wrote that he usually teaches the SVO-form properly and that English verbs have small nuance differences depending on how they are used, while Japanese verbs have only broad meaning. Regarding exercises with translation, he explains that a Japanese sentence becomes more natural when they translate from the end of an English sentence after its subject. When it is a text, it is better to understand the meaning of clauses and the content of the text rather than translate every single word.

The public school teacher, Teacher C, usually let his students translate both from Japanese sentences into English and from Japanese into English as much as possible. Regarding English syntax, Teacher D wrote: "I usually make my own exercises with new vocabulary and explain what my English sentences mean in Japanese. I usually compare English syntax with Japanese syntax. In English, there are no particles such as はwa, がga, もmo, therefore, English *I* means 私は in Japanese and there is no word meaning only 私. Another example is the English word *visit*. It will be the particle をwo and the verb訪れる in Japanese translation. There are also many words and synonyms for *see* in English, while we use the same word every time. I think people speak more exactly and directly in English. I try to teach the cultural differences and the history of the language in my teaching." Regarding reading comprehension, Teacher E usually divides a text into small parts for translation and teaches the differences between English and Japanese syntax. Teacher F also teaches the differences between English and Japanese syntax. Subject-verb and object or complements come at last. However, his students sometimes need to repeat and recite some sentences in a textbook in order to learn the patterns. Regarding English composition, he wrote: "The students tend to write an English sentence with Japanese syntax. They have not acquired the form patterns properly and they need a considerable amount of practice."

"What teaching methods do teachers in your school use now when teaching English syntax?"

According to Teacher A, it is important to teach the basics and let her students practice with many exercises. She usually lets them learn vocabulary by themselves, which she is not sure is good or bad. Teacher B thinks the teaching methods should be central to every teacher's technique. He wrote: "The curriculum has the regulation when and what grammar and vocabulary should be taught. I think every teacher goes to seminars and studies by his- or

herself in order to improve his or her teaching skills. I have also studied and learned the teaching methods by myself and I am progressing all the time."

Teacher C usually lets his students practice in pairs with translating Japanese into English, reading and writing. The teachers at the public school said: "we have a curriculum that requires education with small group-work. Pair-work is one of the small group activities and therefore, we make our students work in pairs as much as possible. We think it is more effective than individual work as the students teach each other and learn to work cooperatively." The basics of English syntax are usually introduced by the teachers and the students do their exercises in pairs after the lecture. Teacher F usually lets his students memorize the basic sentences and texts in a textbook. He said: "I think translation from Japanese into English is important. It is also important that they read and listen to texts; however, the students cannot do it well by themselves at home. I try to make them read and listen in pairs during my lessons". Teacher D said: "Reading and writing abilities are most important things in Japanese education. The students should write correct spelling and grammatical sentences. They may learn how to solve questions and can understand the structure of English syntax. However, they are often unable to apply what they have learned in another situation." There seem to be still many pattern-based learning even in listening and speaking in his lessons, therefore, it may be difficult for his students to acquire the ability of making sentences by themselves.

The effectiveness of the teaching methods in English syntax.

Teacher A thinks it is good for her students to know and acquire the basics and practice many exercises. But they do not seem to know how to use them in a real life. Teacher B said: "What I have learned in my school is the base of my English syntax skill. I learned after what was available for me when I was a student and now I can speak fluent English without having studied or lived abroad. Especially, the English study at my university was very useful."

Teacher D said." I do not think Japanese education is effective for acquiring English syntax, as English is used only for solving problems in exercises. Many students have learned English phrases as chunks and they often seem to use the chunks whether they sound good or not. I think they need practice making their own sentences instead". Teacher E thought his students

in his school always practice speaking English in pairs and groups and he believes this communication method is effective for their learning. Teacher F agreed that English listening and conversation lessons are useful when traveling abroad. However, as long as the students stay in Japan, they have to think about their important entrance examination. He explained: "Many tests and entrance examinations in Japan contain mostly writing and grammar questions and no oral question. Therefore, conversation lessons are not important for them currently. I think it is important to enable my students to have high self-confidence by getting high scores in English examinations at first." He does not think English is difficult; however, many students often give up easily as they think it is too difficult. He wants to support the students who have difficulties in writing and grammar that are very important for their future.

"How do you test your students' understanding of English syntax?

Teacher A usually checks their understanding by how much they can use what they have learned in their exercises. Teacher B wrote: "I usually test my students' English skills by letting them read basic sentences in their textbook, write a text by an instruction and compose their own texts without any help. Mainly, I test their understanding by writing tests and conversation during my lessons. Regarding reading comprehension, I usually test if my students can explain grammar and syntax well and comprehensibly. I do not make any formal tests since I think that syntax is complementary knowledge for understanding of a text and it is the basic communication methods; such as reading, writing, listening and speaking."

The teachers at the junior high school agreed that their students usually read and write a lot and they believed that the students have more or less acquired the basic syntax. The students usually take two examinations in a semester and smaller tests after summer and winter vacations in order to check their understanding of English syntax. They also have small daily tests for continuous study. Teacher D wrote: "It is very important that the students learn new words and grammar every day rather than all the words before an examination. As I have the third-class students, it is also very important that all my students should pass the entrance examination of their high schools. These students have many writing exercises and tests except a speaking test." Teacher F explained that there are some students who are very good at English and others who are not. The difference between them is how much they study English at home. Some of them can only use English sentences from their textbook and therefore, they cannot get higher scores in the national or entrance examination. They do not

seem to have not understood or acquired English syntax properly as they only memorize fragments in their textbook.

"What do you perceive to be the main difficulties your students experience in English syntax? Please explain why you think they have these difficulties."

Teacher A explained that it was due to their lack of practice in listening and making themselves understood. She did not mention how she could improve her teaching. Teacher B wrote: "The most difficult thing with English syntax is the different order of verbs. Since verbs have different places in a sentence in English, my students need to change their thinking order. The three points below are the reasons. Since they do not have much meta-linguistic knowledge (knowledge of how a language works), they cannot make their own texts, even though they know the basic grammar and syntax.

1. They have much less time to listen to natural English in e.g. TV and films in Japan.
2. They have very few opportunities to practice their English in a natural way without being afraid of making errors".

The teachers at the junior high school agreed that many students often try to translate Japanese into English directly and use a sentence as a chunk. Teacher D explained: "The students need to change Japanese sentences to more easily expressing ones when translating into English. They also need to keep in their minds that subject cannot be omitted in English" Teacher E illustrated: "The different word order between English and Japanese is difficult for my students to work with. Articles, plurals and third person –s are also difficult for them as these things are missing in Japanese language." Teacher C said: "Japanese and English have different characters; syntax is important in English, while vocabulary is more important in Japanese. As people who have English as their first language have a different culture and Japanese people may not understand the cultural background why English syntax is used in a different way". Teacher F contended: "Repetition is important for language acquisition. Exercises at school are not enough and they need to practice more at home. Many students may understand the basic sentences and grammar; however, they cannot apply it to their own or other sentences." In a school, they seem to learn only the basics; however, they cannot learn English syntax as a whole. He continued that English in junior high school has only a few things to do with syntax and therefore, the students need to do many exercises and

repetition as a summary of their textbook. They really need to practice until they acquire the patterns.

4. LEARNING ENGLISH SYNTAX IN JAPAN.

4.1. Method

The research was conducted with thirteen students in Japan. The students were fifteen years old (coded Student A-O) and had the four teachers from the public junior high school from Chapter 3. The e-questionnaire (Appendix B) was used to investigate how they learned English syntax in Japan and what difficulties they encountered. They were also asked the reasons why they thought the syntax was difficult and how they made themselves understood. They were asked for their opinions about Japanese education and advice for better teaching methods that Japanese teachers could use. All the students received the questionnaire both in English and Japanese. They were also informed that their answers would not be used or published with another purpose more than in this study. This ethical information and secrecy had been written clearly in Appendix D in Japanese. All of the students read and answered the questionnaire in Japanese. Their answers were translated and summarized by me in the following results. Nine students answered the question completely. Two of them wrote detailed answers while the rest of them wrote brief answers. The evaluation of the research will be presented in chapter 5.

4.2. Results

Referring Appendix B, "What aspects of English syntax do you find difficult to understand?"

Student A wrote: "It is difficult to change the infinitive to the past tense and progressive form. Third person –s and the past tense are also difficult for me as the form and syntax are different

from Japanese." Student B said that verbs do not change depending on subject in Japanese and this different syntax makes translation difficult. Four students were confused that nouns could be pre-modified and post-modified in English. Tense is also difficult as it has different forms; the present, past and future tense. Especially, present perfect is difficult as five students do not know precisely how to use and translate it into Japanese. Prepositions are very difficult as they have different uses and meanings in different sentences. Student C wrote that it is difficult that one single word has many different meanings in English. Student D said: "I do not know where I should place be-verbs; am, is and are in a sentence." Student E explained that she cannot apply the basics that she has learnt and does not know the order of which word should come first. Student F thought that English syntax itself is not difficult; however, translation from English into Japanese can be difficult as Japanese has so many different expressions of politeness. Nine students agreed that English syntax is difficult for them to understand, as it is very different from Japanese one. Student G said:" In Japanese, people understand me even when I say incorrect sentences. However, they do not in English. There are too many grammar rules in English".

"Regarding Question 1 above, why do you think you find these difficult?"

Four students expressed a belief that the reason is that it is very difficult to understand and remember all the rules of word order in English. They also said that English syntax is confusing and easily mixed-up the rules, since it is different from Japanese. Student G wrote: "I know that I have to translate an English sentence from the end of a sentence; however, I am not used to doing it and always try to translate from the beginning of the sentence." Student E thought English syntax was both different and similar to some parts of Japanese. He continued that translation of present perfect was also difficult as there were no proper and suitable Japanese words for this. Therefore, if they do not know the meaning of words and syntax, it will be very difficult to understand a sentence. Student F did not know what prepositions to use, or where to use them.

"Please comment on the methods used to teach you English syntax at your present school or academy. How effective do you think they are?"

Ten students could not answer this question. Student A said:" What we learn at our school are basic and most necessary things in English. I think English lessons are great as we learn so

many things and we practice the expressions. However, the pronunciation is very different from natives". Student F said: "It depends on how well teacher can explain. Otherwise, school lessons do not help me so much. My private lessons can help me much better as they are individual lessons." Student G did not know how he could use English syntax in his daily life. He required more concrete examples.

 "What advice would you give as to how teachers in Japan could teach English syntax better?"

Student B said:" I think English tests at a junior high school are too easy. Studying only grammar, vocabulary, accent, reading and listening are boring. I want to have speaking tests with my native teacher. I will be motivated and can practice my speaking. I believe I will be able to have more reflexive speaking skills". Student E thought that he should have studied English at a younger age, e.g. before teenage in order to acquire the English syntax. He also needed more practical and concrete examples in order to know how to use English syntax. Student F wrote: "It is good to know the differences between English and Japanese syntax as it is important when translating English sentences." Student H and C thought they should have had English conversation lessons before learning grammar. They believed that their teachers made English very difficult and boring for their students with all the grammar rules and difficult terms. Student K believed that she could learn English by conversation. She wanted to go abroad and gain more practice for using natural English.

The last question invited any further comments or suggestions regarding the teaching of English syntax to Japanese students. Six students thought there were too many English writing exercises in their school. They needed and wanted to have more English conversation lessons. They understood that they needed oral training in order to speak fluent English and they liked lessons with a native teacher. Student E explained:" I think we need to learn how to pronounce English words. There are many students who understand the meaning of words but cannot pronounce correctly. I do not think we have to memorize words in order to pronounce correctly". Student H wrote: "We should not be afraid of speaking natural English or be ashamed of doing it. I think English with a Japanese accent is not so useful in abroad." Student F wrote that it is important to begin English with conversation and have positive image and impression of English. As Japanese students learn the grammar first, many of them think it is difficult and cannot enjoy studying English.

5. EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS

The research study reveals that the students often have difficulties with English syntax and grammar such as tense, articles, third person-s and prepositions that are missing and different from their first language, Japanese. Many of them demonstrated that English syntax was both difficult and boring. Although the students have many lectures, exercises and tests of English syntax during and after lessons, they still have many problems such as translation and application of the basics, according to the teachers and the students in the research. Translation into Japanese can be difficult before they have acquired the technique of how to think and what to look for in an English sentence. It can also be problematic when there is no suitable Japanese word for the specific translation, according to Student E. the other students did not mention about this.

The results of this research can be interpreted as indicating that teaching methods appear to be different between private and public junior high schools. At the private school, the teachers seem to be able to decide freely how to teach as they, and their students, wish. Teacher B mentioned that she had studied and learned her teaching methods by herself. She was also apparently able to adjust her lessons according to her students and their needs. Conversely, at the public junior high school, there were more strict rules that the teachers had to follow and goals they had to achieve. It was only the public school teachers who use much of the communicative approaches and the entrance examination. However, this point cannot be generalized, since another private school could have been more disciplined, and imposed more stress on its students, than a public school. There are many different kinds and levels of private schools and some of them only have conversation lessons.

Generally speaking, many private schools tend to assist the education of public schools and can support them in solving their students' difficulties, according to my experiences. The results of the research could have been different if a greater number of teachers from different

private schools had participated. Despite the disadvantage of having a small and narrow sample group, the teachers from both schools expressed similar opinions about what their students need, i.e. practice in English syntax with variable exercises in order to apply the basic rules. Hence, it seems to be safe to conclude, in this case, that many Japanese students seem to have difficulties in constructing their own grammatically accurate sentences and texts due to their lack of experience and practice.

There is an example that shows: How the teachers at the private school and the junior high school have different perspectives of the difficulties their students have: This is that the teachers at the junior high school agree that their students usually read and write a great deal. They believed that the students had, more or less, acquired basic syntax, while Teachers A and B did not say much about this. Instead, they described how their students did not have many opportunities and time for practice. This can be interpreted that the teachers at the private school and the junior high school were making different judgments of their students and had different expectations of their students' achievements. This might be due to the students having been taught with different teaching methods: the grammar-translation method and the communication method, as mentioned in Chapter 3.

The students at the junior high school seemed to prefer pair-work exercises and conversation lessons. None of them made any negative comments about the communication method and their conversation lessons. Many of them seemed to have had problems with pronunciation since there was a lack of oral communication lessons. This interpretation comes from the students' demand of practical and natural English and the fact that the entrance examination does not require any oral skills, as mentioned in Chapter 1. Student H implied that English with a Japanese accent is not very useful. The other students did not say anything about this.

However, the junior high school teachers are pressured to make all their students pass the entrance examination. For this reason, it seems to be difficult to have conversation lessons, or pair and group work, all of the time. The dilemma is that the third year students often need more individually adjusted study for their different entrance examinations from my experience. As the entrance examination does not consist of oral comprehension, oral skills are often less prioritized in the last year of the junior high school, as previously mentioned in Chapters 1 and 3. Instead of a conversation lesson, vocabulary and grammar exercises are regarded as being more effective and important for the students before the entrance

examination as Teacher F explained in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 reports how Teacher F expressed a view that it is important to teach the basics and let his students repeat after him. He also thinks they should memorize and recite almost everything in their textbook in his lessons, which I interpret comes from the theory of behaviorism.

The research reveals that this pattern-based teaching can make students unable to use English words and phrases outside their textbooks as Teacher F mentioned in Chapter 3. Teachers D and F are convinced that their students only use phrases as chunks. Despite the students having learned a lot of vocabulary, they cannot develop their grammatical skills. Therefore, the results suggest it should be beneficial for the Ministry of Education in Japan to change the entrance examination, the traditional education system and English curriculum, to more orally based and conversational English.

I believe that the students may also need to discuss their learning needs and develop critical thinking approaches. For instance, the majority of the students could not evaluate their teachers. This could be due to them being unable to judge their teachers and school through critical thinking as they seldom question the teaching methods their teachers use. They might not have any experiences by which they can compare the teaching they have received and so they may have found the question posed to them was too difficult.

6. CONCLUSION

The thesis for this essay was founded on the expectation that there would be many difficulties in learning and teaching English syntax for Japanese people as they have very different syntax in Japanese. My motivation was to propose better teaching strategies for syntax learning and teaching.

I have introduced and discussed Japanese history, culture and the key differences between Japanese and English syntax in this essay. Thereafter, I investigated the main problems in syntax, including grammar of Japanese students and demonstrated the teaching strategies and methods that their teachers use in Japan. The research reveals that the students' difficulties are often caused by the different syntax and grammar that English has, which agrees with my thesis. The behavioristic, grammar-translation teaching methods might be the reason that the students think English syntax is difficult and boring. Due to the isolated translation exercises, they often have problems in applying their English knowledge in different situations in their daily lives. The Japanese history and culture also influences their difficulties as they prefer listening to foreigners passively to speaking actively. They are also afraid of making errors and dare not express their opinions openly. The traditional education system discourages them from discussing and debating during their lessons. Despite many lectures, exercises and tests of English syntax, many of the students still do not seem to have acquired a technique for translation. It can also be problematic when lacking suitable Japanese words for translation.

The research also reveals that the private and public schools seem to have different teaching methods. At the public junior high school, the teachers made much of communicative approaches and there are stricter rules that the teachers have to follow and goals they have to achieve. The teachers at the private school and the junior high school have different judgments of the difficulties that their students have, according to the last question in Chapter 3.

The students at the junior high school seem to prefer pair-work exercises and conversation lessons. However, due to the entrance examination, it seems to be difficult for them to have conversation lessons and pair and group work all the time. They often seem to need more individually adjusted study for their different entrance examinations. As the entrance examination does not consist of oral comprehension, oral skills are often less prioritized; instead, vocabulary and grammar exercises are regarded as being more effective and important. Therefore, the audio-lingual and grammar-translation methods are still commonly used in Japan.

My research reveals that this pattern-based teaching may make students unable to use English words and phrases outside their textbooks. Despite the students having learnt a lot of vocabulary, they cannot develop their grammatical skills as they use phrases as chunks. Therefore, my results suggest it should be beneficial for the Ministry of Education in Japan to change the entrance examination, the traditional education system and English curriculum to more oral based and practical English.

The outcome of my research turned out better than I had expected as many of the teachers and students were helpful and openly discussed their ideas and thoughts in the questionnaires. I could generally understand and appreciate their perceptions and opinions without any difficulties, even though I was unable to interview any of them directly. In this way, I believe the research has functioned well without interviews. There are several limitations that I could not receive proper replies quickly when I needed more explanations, details and concrete examples of their opinions. As I could not visit their school and see how they work or study, many of the answers have often been interpreted from my perspectives and experiences in Japan. Although some of the teachers answered my questions well several times via e-mail, it was not always easy to receive any further answers from the students. Otherwise, I hope I have produced a general view of the English education in Japan. I also hope that the description of the facts and backgrounds of the culture, history and differences between Japanese and English syntax could provide better understanding of the challenges of teaching and learning English in Japan.

If I were to conduct a further research study of this nature in the future, I would include in my sample group Japanese students who were studying English in Sweden temporarily. I would

compare what they think about Swedish education and let them compare it with Japanese education. I believe interviews, which are similar to the questionnaires in this research, can possibly provide more concrete and accurate answers and better explanations of their opinions and thoughts that I needed. It can provide more exact data and the results may be more varied. There are several limitations that very few Japanese students who study in my city and it would require more time and financial commitment if I were to travel to larger cities to conduct interviews.

As the students in my research identified, they need more oral practice in English with excessive emphasis being placed on their grammatical and syntactic accuracy. This research reveals that many of the students often dare not use or improvise their English in different situations, since they seem to be afraid of making errors due to their culture and their English skills are not adequate. Hence, they may be lacking in self-confidence in using English. It would certainly be worth considering the students' suggestion of beginning their English education with enjoyable oral communication and more practical exercises in order to enable them to use English in real interaction. I believe that the pleasure of speaking English should be an essential and important part of the language learning. When they enjoy communicating in English, they are likely to be motivated and, when they are so motivated, they are willing to learn more. As Teacher B explained in the fourth question in Chapter 3, "syntax is complementary knowledge for understanding of a text". I believe that, when English becomes a part of their lives, the knowledge of syntax will follow naturally as a basic communication method.

Regarding my thesis, it can be concluded that there seem to be many difficulties in learning and teaching English syntax for the Japanese, since Japanese language has a different syntax. The education system and the cultural differences also contribute reasons for these difficulties. In order to overcome their difficulties, communication based teaching methods are recommended in this research. It would be beneficial if the teachers tolerate the students' errors and provide a suitable environment for conversation. In this way, the students might be able to influence their lessons and enjoy studying English. As Teacher B explained in Chapter 3, syntax should be taught and used as a communication tool and not as an isolated practice.

When a teacher shows his or her interest in the students and allocates time for conversation, it will be an individually adjusted lesson. He or she also needs to create a comfortable

environment for oral practice. I believe the degree of tolerance a teacher has for his or her students' errors can be a key to success.

My findings can be used in future when teaching students from Japan and Asia. It can be beneficial to know their difficulties and what they need to practice more beforehand. It is also important to have some knowledge of their culture in order to make English lessons comfortable and enjoyable for them. My topic could be beneficial in the study and research of language acquisition for Asian people and those who have an Altaic language as their first language. This study may provide insight for didactic studies when devising more effective teaching strategies.

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8. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Altaic languages: family of languages consisting of three branches: Turkic, Mongolian and Manchu-Tungus that show similarities in vocabulary, morphological and syntactic structure, and certain phonological features and which, on the basis of systematic sound correspondences, are generally considered to be genetically related.

Agglutinative language: a language in which words are made up of a linear sequence of distinct morphemes and each component of meaning is represented by its own morpheme.

Audio-lingual method: a style of teaching used in teaching foreign languages. It is based on behaviorist theory, which professes that certain traits of living things, and in this case humans, could be trained through a system of reinforcement and correct use of a trait would receive positive feedback while incorrect use of that trait would receive negative feedback.

Behaviorism: a philosophy of psychology based on the proposition that all things that organisms do: including acting, thinking, and feeling—can and should be regarded as behaviors, and that psychological disorders are best treated by altering behavior patterns or modifying the environment. The behaviorist school of thought maintains that behaviors as such can be described scientifically without recourse either to internal physiological events or to hypothetical constructs such as the mind. Behaviorism comprises the position that all theories should have observational correlates but that there are no philosophical differences between publicly observable processes (such as actions) and privately observable processes.

Chunk: a fragment of information which is used in many multimedia formats, such as DVD.

Collective society (Collectivism): Any of several types of social organization that ascribe central importance to the groups to which individuals belong (e.g., state, nation or ethnic group). It may be contrasted with individualism.

Confucianism is a Chinese ethical and philosophical system developed from the teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius ("Master Kong", 551–478 BC). Confucianism originated as an "ethical-sociopolitical teaching" and developed metaphysical and cosmological elements in the Han Dynasty. Following the abandonment of Legalism in China after the Qin Dynasty, Confucianism became the official state ideology of China, until it was replaced by the "Three Principles of the People" ideology with the establishment of the Republic of China, and then Maoist Communism after the ROC was replaced by the People's Republic of China in Mainland China.

Conjugation: the creation of derived forms of a verb from its principal parts by inflection. Conjugation may be affected by person, number, gender, tense, aspect, mood, voice, or other grammatical categories.

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis: The expectation that learners will have less difficulty acquiring target language patterns that are similar to those of the first language than those that are different.

Critical thinking: the process of thinking that questions assumptions. It is a way of deciding whether a claim is true or false. Critical thinking is an important component of most professions in many countries. It is a part of the education process and is increasingly significant as students progress through university to graduate education, although there is debate among educators about its precise meaning and scope.

Grammar translation method: a foreign language teaching method derived from the classical method of teaching Greek and Latin. The method requires students to translate whole texts word-for-word and memorize numerous grammatical rules and exceptions as well as enormous vocabulary lists. The goal of this method is to be able to read and translate literary masterpieces and classics

Interactionism: a theoretical perspective that derives social processes from human interaction. It is the study of how individuals act within society.

Modifier: A word, phrase, or clause that functions as an adjective or adverb to limit or qualify the meaning of another word or word group. Modifiers that appear before the head are called *pre-modifiers*. Modifiers that appear after the head are called *post-modifiers*.

Postposition: The placing of a word or suffixed element after the word to which it is grammatically related.

Second-language acquisition (SLA): the process by which people learn a second language in addition to their native language(s).

Syntax: the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages.

Tense is a grammatical category that locates a situation in time, to indicate when the situation takes place. The tenses are past, present, and future.

Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) measures the ability of non-native English-speaking examinees to use English in everyday workplace activities.

Topic marker: a grammatical particle found in the Japanese, Korean, and, to a limited extent, Classic Chinese languages used to mark the topic of a sentence. This often overlaps with the subject of the sentence, causing confusion with learners, as most other languages lack it. However, it differs from a subject in that it puts more emphasis on the item and can be used with words as well.

Universal grammar: a theory in linguistics that suggests that there are properties that all possible natural human languages have. Usually credited to Noam Chomsky, the theory suggests that some rules of grammar are hard-wired into the brain, and manifest themselves without being taught.

9. APPENDICES

A. Questionnaire for teachers

The aim of the questionnaire is to examine how you teach English syntax (word order) in Japan. I would like to ask you what kind of strategies you use for your English teaching in order to facilitate your students' learning in English grammar, especially syntax. I am going to ask you five questions. This is qualitative primary data and you are welcome to write your opinions and experiences as much as you like. I am interested in all the information and views you have to offer.

1. How do you teach the differences between Japanese and English syntax?

2. What teaching methods do teachers in your school use nowadays when teaching English syntax?

3. Please comment upon the effectiveness of these methods according to your own perceptions.

4. How do you test your students' understanding of English syntax?

5. What do you perceive to be the main difficulties your students experience in English syntax? Please explain why you think they have these difficulties.

B. Questionnaire for learners

The aim of this questionnaire is to examine how you learn English syntax (word order, SVO form) in Japan. I would like to ask you what difficulties you encounter with English syntax and how you made yourself understood. I am also interested in your opinions about Japanese education. How do you like the teaching methods that Japanese teachers use? I am going to ask you five questions. You are welcome to write your opinions and experiences as much as you like. I am interested in all the information and views you have to offer.

1. What aspects of English syntax do you find difficult to understand?

2. Regarding Question 1 above, why do you think you find these difficult?

3. Please comment on the methods used to teach you English syntax at your present school or academy. How effective do you think they are?

4. What advice would you give as to how teachers in Japan could teach English syntax better?

5. Do you have any further comments or suggestions regarding the teaching

   of English syntax to Japanese students?

C. Questionnaire for teachers in Japanese

英語教育に関するアンケート

このアンケートの趣旨は日本の皆さんがどのように英語構文（シンタックス、Ｓ
ＶＯ型）を学校で教えられているかという事です。日本の教育方針、教授法、英
語構文の難点等をお聞かせ下さい。質問は５つですが、ご意見やご経験をお好き
なだけお書き下さい。皆さんの意見は研究の参考にのみ使用し、口外される事は
ありません。

1. どのように英語と日本語の構文の違いを教えられていらっしゃいますか？

2. 日本のあなたの学校ではどのような教育方針を持ち、どのような教授法で英語

構文を教えていらっしゃいますか？

3. 日本の、そしてあなたの学校の教育方針についてどう思われますか？英語構

   文の学習に効果的ですか？

4. あなたの生徒の英語構文の理解度をどのように確認していますか？

5. あなたの生徒にとって英語構文の難点とは何でしょうか？なぜこれらが難し

   いのだと思われますか

   他にご意見がございましたら、お書き下さい。

D. Questionnaire for learners in Japanese

英語教育に関するアンケート

このアンケートの趣旨は日本の皆さんがどのように英語構文（シンタックス、Ｓ
ＶＯ型）を勉強されているかという事です。英語構文の難点、勉強の仕方、日本
の教育へのご意見などをお聞かせ下さい。質問は５つですが、ご意見やご経験を
お好きなだけお書き下さい。皆さんの意見は研究の参考にのみ使用し、口外され
る事はありません。

1.　英語構文の難しい点は何でしょうか？

2.　質問１．の回答でなぜそう思われますか？

3. 学校で習う英語構文の授業はどう思いますか？ あなたの学習に役立っていますか？

4.　どのようにしたらもっと効果的に英語構文を教えられるでしょうか？日本語
の文法とも比較して、良いアドバイスはありますか？

5. 日本の学校で教える英語構文について他にご意見がありますか？

ご協力ありがとうございます。