

Confusion of Japanese Case Particles *ni* and *de* that Mark Place of Existence:
Comparison of the Cases of JSL and JFL Chinese Learners

Authors

Miho Okada, *Kyushu University*

Minoru Hayashida, *The University of Kitakyushu*

Yuka Iwata, *University of Guam*

Contact Info.

Miho Okada, okada050914@hi.enjoy.ne.jp

Minoru Hayashida, hayashida@kitakyu-u.ac.jp

Yuka Iwata, iwata.yuka@gmail.com

Biography

Miho Okada

Part time teacher. MA. She conducts research about an acquisition of Japanese particle at the Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies, Kyushu University.

Minoru Hayashida

Born in 1959 in Goto Islands, Japan, he received Ph.D. in Statistics from Kyushu University (1990). His interests include not only economics but linguistics and history.

Yuka Iwata

Associate Professor and Japanese Language Coordinator at the University of Guam

Abstract

Chinese JFL learners at the intermediate level often incorrectly apply the case particle *de* in situations requiring *ni*, which indicates place of existence in certain linguistic situations. Okada, Shimizu, and Li (2012) report that confusion of *de* of limited use with *ni* causes such errors.

The purpose of this study is to examine whether the above errors are also typical among Chinese JSL learners. The investigators administered multiple-choice Japanese Particle Test to intermediate-level JSL learners. The results of multiple regression analyses are consistent with the case of JFL learners. This leads to the conclusion that, regardless of learner's learning environments, incorrect application of *de* in sentences of existence by Chinese learners of L2 Japanese demonstrates a process of language acquisition by which they cannot distinguish *ni* indicating place of existence from *de* of limited use.

要旨

本研究は、JFL 環境の「中位レベル」の中国語を母語とする日本語学習者に見られた、ある条件の存在文における「に」と範囲限定の「で」との混同（岡田・志水・李 2012）が、JSL 環境の「中位レベル」の日本語学習者にも見られることを明らかにすることを目的とした。まず、JSL 環境の「中位レベル」の中国語を母語とする学習者を対象に格助詞選択テストを実施した。次に、格助詞選択テストの回答をデータとして重回帰分析をした結果、ある条件を伴う存在文における「で」の誤りは、JFL の誤りと同様に、動作場所の「で」ではなく範囲限定の「で」との混同によるものであることが分かった。学習環境の異なる中国語を母語とする日本語学習者に同一の結果が得られたことから、当該存在文に見られる「で」の誤用は、存在場所を表す「に」の習得の発達段階における、存在場所の「に」と範囲限定の「で」との区別がつかない段階を示すと思われる。

Confusion of Japanese Case Particles *ni* and *de* that Mark Place of Existence: Comparison of the Cases of JSL and JFL Chinese Learners

Introduction

Japanese L2 learners often confuse the case particle *ni* indicating place of existence with *de*. Learners at the novice level confuse *ni* indicating place of existence with *de* indicating place of motion. Errors in applying *de* incorrectly in situations requiring *ni* indicating place of existence are also observed among intermediate level learners; however, does the specific confusion of *de* indicating place of motion for *ni* indicating place of existence still remain even when learners have reached the intermediate level?

In L2 learning in general, there is a universal acquisition order that applies to all learners regardless of their first languages or learning environments (e.g., Baidi, 1999; Ellis 1985; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Shirahata, Wakabayashi & Muranoi, 2010; Towell & Hawkins, 1994). Acquisition order means the common process that learners of a given language experience when learning a certain grammatical feature of the language. Within the acquisition orders for Japanese case particles, there seem to be differences in the types of confusion that novice-level and intermediate-level learners face.

Okada and Hayashida (2007) and Okada, Shimizu, and Li (2012) report that intermediate-level learners incorrectly apply *de* in place of *ni* in the sentence of existence, a sentence that (1) contains one of the following entities--a quantifier, an interrogative, a locative noun or a collective noun, and (2) indicates existence of objects or people in two contrastive locations. However, it cannot be ignored that subject's various L1 backgrounds might have some influence on the result that Okada and Hayashida (2007) report. Similarly, Okada et al. (2012) investigate native speakers of Chinese living in China finding uncertainty regarding whether or to what degree the L1 backgrounds of the subjects affect results. Learning environment, a primary difference between JEF and JSL learners, is a crucial issue in L2 acquisition. As differences in learning environment may significantly influence the amount of input, it is not clear whether or not learning under JFL or JSL conditions affects the process of acquisition (Ellis, 1985).

Therefore, this study, focusing on L2 Chinese learners of Japanese at intermediate level studying in Japan, investigates whether errors in applying the case particle *de* in situations requiring *ni* indicating place of existence is influenced by confusion with *de* of limited use.

Review of Related Literature

Studies on the acquisition of case particles by L2 learners of Japanese include, for

example, Haseike (2004), Kubota (1994), Matsuda and Saito (1992), Okada and Hayashida (2007), Sakota (2001), and Yagi (1996). It has been reported that both novice- and intermediate-level learners often incorrectly apply *de* in situations requiring *ni* indicating place of existence (as illustrated in 1a below). Also, these errors emerge regardless of L1. For studies that investigate application of particles by Korean, English, Thai and Malay, Indonesian, and Tagalog speakers, please see Matsuda and Saito (1992), Kubota (1994), and Yagi (1996).

1a. *(*Shujin wa*) *ie de imashita*.

[(My husband) was at home.]

(Matsuda & Saito, 1992)

There are some strategies that intermediate-level learners employ when they are uncertain about using either *ni* or *de*. Sakota (2001) reports that Chinese and Korean learners apply the “locative noun (e.g., *naka* [inside]) + *ni*” strategy. According to Iwasaki (2001) and Masuda (2001), the same strategy is also used by university students in the U.S. whose L1 is English. On the other hand, Hasuike (2004) finds that learners apply *ni* with the verb “*iru/aru* [to exist]” and argues that this is true especially of native speakers of Chinese whose language does not share grammatical features equivalent to the case particles *ni* and *de*.

However, if learners apply *ni* by employing the above strategies, the following error should be avoided:

2a. **Daigaku no naka de tomodachi ga imasu*.

[I have friends in university.]

(Okada & Hayashida, 2007)

Okada and Hayashida (2007) contend that the error shown in 2a is typical for intermediate-level learners and attribute this error to confusion of the particle *ni* indicating place of existence with the *de* of limited use.

The present study attempts to prove that errors in applying *de* of the type demonstrated in 2a are caused by confusion of *ni* indicating place of existence with *de* of limited use regardless of the learner’s learning environment (China or Japan in this study). Then, it argues that making such errors is one step in the process of acquiring *ni* indicating place of existence. The following section reviews existing studies relevant to the current study.

Review of Studies Relevant to the Current Study

In example 2a, in spite of having a locative noun, *naka* [inside], in the sentence, the learner does not apply the “locative noun + *ni*” strategy. Nor is the particle *ni* used, even though 2a contains the verb *imasu* (derivation of *iru* [to exist]). Does this imply the learner’s total lack of understanding of the particle *de*? This must be false since other intermediate-

level Chinese learners can correctly apply *de* in writing. For example,

2b. *Aomori de okonawarete imasu.*

[(Something) is being undertaken in Aomori.]

Therefore, learners seem to understand to some degree that *de* is used to mark the place of motions and actions. According to Moriyama (2004), the particle *de* marks instruments, causes, locations, manners, limitations, time, and doers. Among the above usages, locative nouns can co-occur with *de* indicating locations and limitations: “Locative noun + *de*” expresses the place of motions or actions (e.g., *Shokudou de tabemasu.* [I eat at a cafeteria.]) and limited use (e.g., *Kankoku de yuumei na hito wa dare desu ka.* [Who is famous in Korea?]). If incorrect application of *de* for *ni* in a sentence of existence does not derive from confusion of *de* indicating place of motion, then another possible source of explanation lies in *de* of limited use.

Okada and Hayashida (2007) therefore hypothesize that learner’s confusion of *de* for *ni* derives from *de* of limited use as illustrated in 2a. To verify this hypothesis, they administer the Japanese Language Particle Test to 61 university students of various language backgrounds and find that test-takers apply *de* incorrectly under the following linguistic conditions:

(1) The sentence contains a quantifier (e.g., *Ryou ni san-nin imasu.* [There are three people in the dormitory.]), an interrogative (e.g., *Ryou ni nan-nin imasu ka.* [How many people are in the dormitory?]), a locative noun (e.g., *Ryou no naka ni dare mo imasen.* [No one is in the dormitory.]), or a collective noun (e.g., *Ryou ni amerika-jin ga imasu.* [There are Americans in the dormitory.])

(2) The sentence indicates existence of objects or people in two contrastive locations (e.g., *Ryou no mae ni Lee-san ga iru ga, shokudou no naka niwa dare mo inai.* [Mr. Lee is in front of the dormitory, but no one is in the cafeteria.]).

Hereafter, the particle *ni* defined in (1) is called numeral *ni* and in (2) contrastive *ni*.

Furthermore, the study finds that test-takers who make frequent errors are intermediate-level learners who have passed Level 3 but could not have reached Level 2 in the old version of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) due to scores insufficient by 20%. The study concludes that the error in 2a arises due to learners’ confusion of *ni* indicating place of existence with *de* of limited use.

However, is it plausible to say that intermediate-level learners confuse *ni* indicating place of existence exclusively with *de* of limited use, not with *de* indicating place of motion instead? If so, is it possible to determine that there is an acquisition order by which learners

normally first confuse *ni* indicating place of existence with *de* indicating place of motion followed by confusion with *de* of limited use? If this is the sequence of acquisition, such confusion should be common to all learners regardless of their learning environments which should be testable by examining learners who share the same L1 but learn L2 in either a JFL or a JSL environment. To answer these questions, Okada et al. (2012) administered the Japanese Particle Test (see Appendix) to 179 Japanese language students learning in a JFL environment at a university located in Dalian city in China in 2011.

Table 1 summarizes correct answer rates for the following particles: simple existence *ni*, motion *de*, contrastive *ni*, limited use *de*, and numeral *ni*. There are three items of simple existence *ni* (*ni* indicating place of existence in a simple sentence), three items of motion *de* (*de* indicating place of motions and actions), seven items of contrastive *ni* (*ni* in two sentences of existence that contain objects or people in two contrastive locations followed by the verb *iru/aru* [to exist]), seven items of limited use *de*, and eight items of numeral *ni* (*ni* in a simple sentence of existence that contains a quantifier, a locative noun, an interrogative or a collective noun followed by the verb *iru/aru* [to exist]). Additionally, 14 distracter items are included in the test. Participants receive one point for each correct answer, and the highest obtainable score is 42.

[Insert Table 1 Here]

Table 2 shows the mean and the standard deviation of the correct answer rates of the same particle usage provided by the intermediate-level subjects.

[Insert Table 2 Here]

Two subsequent multiple regression analyses predict error rates in selecting *de* for *ni* indicating place of existence (an application that involves the numeral sense and the contrastive sense) by using correct answer rates in applications of *de* indicating place of motion and in application of *de* of limited use. The results indicate positive and reliable associations between particular correct and incorrect applications of *de*. As Table 3 indicates, participants who apply *de* of limited use correctly also more frequently apply *de* incorrectly in place of the numeral *ni* and in place of the contrastive *ni*. In contrast, correct uses of *de* indicating place of motion do not correlate with errors involving substitution of *de* for the numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni*. Thus, participants' errors in applying *de* appear to be systematic and specific, rather than general.

[Insert Table 3 Here]

What do these results of the regression analyses suggest? The researchers attempted to use the same test conducted in Table 3, to examine whether novice-level learners confuse *ni*

indicating place of existence with *de* indicating place of motion regardless of their first language. Unfortunately, no novice-level learners of Japanese were included in the study from the university located in Dalian city. Therefore, the researchers used the samples collected from novice-level learners at universities located in Colorado and Guam to conduct the regression analyses. Table 4 summarizes correct answer rates, and Table 5 presents results of the regression analyses.

[Insert Table 4 Here]

[Insert Table 5 Here]

Compared to the results summarized in Table 3, the results shown in Table 5 appear to be quite opposite. That is, the coefficient of *de* indicating place of motion is positively correlated, whereas no correlation is present for *de* of limited use. Contrasting the results summarized in Tables 3 and 5 confirms that if learners confuse *ni* with *de* indicating place of motion, the coefficient of *de* indicating place of motion appears to be positively correlated¹. Furthermore, if they do not confuse *ni* with *de* of limited use, no correlation is found in the coefficient of *de* of limited use.

This finding strongly supports the argument that JFL Chinese learners at the intermediate level incorrectly apply *de* in place of the numeral *ni* and/or the contrastive *ni* because of confusion with *de* of limited use rather than with *de* indicating place of motion.

Purpose of This Study

Both locative particles *ni* and *de* share similar functions (Yagi, 1996). Therefore, from a psycholinguistic perspective, Japanese L2 learners apply locative particles *ni*, *de*, and *o* incorrectly due to insufficient semantic and pragmatic understanding of those particles (Moriyama, 2002). The order by which learners acquire locative particles *ni*, *de*, and *o* is still unknown. One of the purposes of research in Second Language Acquisition is to establish theories that explain why and how learners can acquire L2 through certain phases of learning based on research evidence that investigates the process of acquisition (Shirohata, Wakabayashi, & Muranoi, 2011). This study presents evidence contributing to acquisition theory concerning how learners acquire the case particles *ni* that express place of existence.

If frequent errors by intermediate-level learners in applying *de* in place of the numeral *ni* or the contrastive *ni* in the sentence of existence are attributed to confusion with

¹ It may sound strange to see a plus (+) sign in the coefficient since a plus sign implies that participants applying *de* indicating place of motion correctly also more frequently apply *de* incorrectly in place of *ni* in a simple sentence of existence. The researchers found that this is changeable to learners in the process of acquisition; however, we propose to discuss the details of this finding in another paper.

de of limited use (rather than *de* indicating place of motion), and moreover, if the errors and degree of confusion are persistent among learners regardless of their learning environment, whether L1 or L2 is spoken, this may demonstrate an aspect of the acquisition process that is in common to all learners.

The purpose of the present study, then, is to examine whether JFL learners' confusion of *de* of limited use for *ni* indicating place of existence, found in Okada et al. (2012), is also present in JSL learners, and therefore is independent of learning environment, as elements of acquisition order are presumed to be.

The Present Study

To compare with JFL learners, the Japanese Particle Test (See appendix), the same test used by Okada et al. (2012), is adopted by this study. It has 42 multiple-choice questions in the sentences containing target particles and distracters. Participants are asked to select and circle the most appropriate particle for each sentence from four options (*ni*, *de*, *o*, or *kara*). They have already learned and become familiar with the words appearing in the test. Test subjects consist of 80 learners of Japanese studying in a Japanese university located in Fukuoka prefecture (60 freshmen, 18 sophomore, 1 junior, and 1 senior) in July 2011. Subjects' levels of Japanese proficiency range from N3 to N1 on the JLPT. Test completion takes about 10 minutes. The order of the question items in the test shown in the Appendix does not correspond to the order on the actual test.

Results and Discussion

The results are as follows.

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics categorized by particle usage.

[Insert Table 6 Here]

Among 80 participants, 37 participants who had scored between 26 and 37 and who had not passed N1 level on the JLPT are classified as intermediate-level learners.

Table 7 summarizes the descriptive statistics provided by these intermediate-level learners. The 29.6% gap between motion *de* and limited use *de* could imply that acquisition of motion *de* has taken precedence over limited use *de*, the same trend demonstrated by intermediate-level JFL learners.

[Insert Table 7 Here]

Table 8 summarizes results of multiple regression analyses.

[Insert Table 8 Here]

As Table 8 indicates, results on both multiple regression analyses are similar. First, correct uses of *de* indicating place of motion do not correlate with errors of substituting *de* for

the numeral *ni* or for contrastive *ni*. That is, participants' application of *de* indicating place of motion correctly does not affect their incorrect application of *de* in place of both the numeral *ni* and contrastive *ni*. This suggests that *de* indicating place of motion is not the source of confusion when incorrectly applying *de* in place of the numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni*.

As for correct application of *de* of limited use, it correlates positively with incorrect application of *de* in place of numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni*, which indicates participants more often applying *de* of limited use correctly also more frequently apply *de* incorrectly in place of the numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni*. If acquisition of *de* of limited use is not related to that of numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni*, their correlations with correct use of *de* of limited use are expected to be insignificant. If there is relationship, the coefficient becomes negatively correlated, and participants should more often correctly apply *de* of limited use and less often apply *de* incorrectly in place of the numeral *ni* and contrastive *ni*. However, the coefficient of the correct answer rate of *de* of limited use is positively correlated with incorrect application of numeral *ni* and contrastive *ni* in this study. This unexpected yet strange phenomenon is consistent with the case of JFL learners shown in Table 3 and the case of novice learners in Table 5. In fact, this is evidence to support the hypothesis that incorrect use of *de* in place of the numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni* derives from confusion with *de* of limited use.

Below, we summarize and compare the results obtained from JFL and JSL learners. The result of Table 3 indicates that it is *de* of limited use, not *de* indicating place of motion, that causes JFL learners to apply *de* incorrectly in place of the numeral *ni* and contrastive *ni*. This also suggests that learners becoming more proficient in applying *de* of limited use are also more likely to apply *de* incorrectly to substitute for numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni*.

As for JSL learners shown in Table 8, the results are mostly similar to those of the JFL case summarized in Table 3. JSL participants applying *de* incorrectly also demonstrate errors in applying *de* in place of the numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni* due to confusion of *de* of limited use.

Overall, the results of this study examining JSL learners are similar to those of JFL learners investigated by Okada et al. (2012). Both studies find that it is *de* of limited use that causes errors in applying *de* in place of the numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni*. Thus, it can be concluded that confusion of *de* of limited use with numeral *ni* or contrastive *ni* appearing in the sentence of existence is a step in the process that learners at the intermediate level follow in acquiring the particle *ni* that marks existence.

Conclusion

In this study, multiple-choice tests are administered to JSL learners of Chinese at the

intermediate level to examine the acquisition process for the case particle *ni* indicating place of existence. The results reveal that JSL participants apply *de* of limited use incorrectly in place of *ni* indicating place of existence, an application that involves the numeral sense and the contrastive sense, due to confusion. This finding is consistent with the case of Chinese speakers in JFL learning environments. Therefore, it is clear that in the process of acquiring *ni* to mark place of existence, intermediate-level learners of Japanese, regardless of learning environments, are likely to first experience confusion with *de* indicating place of motion, and that this is likely to be followed by confusion with *de* of limited use.

This study focused on L2 Japanese learners of Chinese language background; however, it has been reported that different language groups may demonstrate the acquisition process differently (Shirahata, Wakabayashi & Muranoi, 2010). In this regard similarities and differences in the process of acquiring case particles should be further investigated in learners of various language backgrounds.

References

- Akikawa, T. (2010). *Bunkei no tame no SPSS nyuumon* [Introduction to SPSS for social sciences]. Nagano: Pureadesu Publishing.
- Baidi, S. M. (1999). *The acquisition of second language syntax*. London: Arnold.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hasuike, I. (2004). Basho o shimesu kakujyoshi “ni” no kajyou shiyou ni kansuru ichibousatsu--Chuukyuu reberu no chuugokugo bogo-washa no jyoshi sentaku sutategii bunseki [A study of overuse of locative particle “ni”: Analysis of particle selection strategy of Chinese learners of Japanese at intermediate level]. *Nihongo Kyouiku*, 7, 52-61.
- Iwasaki, N. (2001). Eigo bogo washa wa “de” to “ni” o donoyouni toraete irunoka: Intabyuu chousa kara miete kitakoto [How native speakers of English perceive “de” and “ni”: Results from interviews]. *2001-nendo Nihongo Kyouiku-gakkai Shunki-taikai Yokoushuu*, 61-66.
- Kubota, Y. (1994). Dainigengo to shite no nihongo no danzokuteki shuutoku kenkyuu--kakujyoshi “o” “ni” “de” “e” no shuutoku ni tsuite [Study of acquisition of L2 Japanese--process of acquiring case particles, “o” “ni” “de,” and “e”]. *Nihongo Kyouiku*, 82, 72-85.
- Masuda, K. (2001). Dainigengo to shiteni nihongo gakushuu-sha no basho-kaku ni kansuru sutategii shiyou no henka [Change in strategy in using locative particles by L2 Japanese learners]. *2001-nendo Nihongo Kyouiku-gakkai Shunki-taikai Yokoushuu*, 55-60.
- Matsuda, Y. & Saito, S. (1992). Dainigengo to shiteni nihongo gakushuu-sha ni kansuru jyuudanteki jirei kenkyuu [A longitudinal case study of learning Japanese as a second language.] *Sekai no Nihongo Kyouiku*, 2, 129-156.
- Moriyama, A. (2002). Nihongo no kaku jyoshi shuutoku wa donoyouni nasareru ka--kankokugo bogowasha ni taisuru jikkenteki kenkyuu [Experimental research on how Japanese case particles are acquired by native Korean speakers of Japanese learners]. *Higashi Ajia Nihongo Kyouiku Shinpo Ronbunshuu*, 38-52.
- Moriyama, A. (2004). Kakujyoshi “de” no houshajyou kategorii kouzou to shuutoku tono kankei. [Relationship between radial category structure and acquisition of case particle ‘de’]. *Nihon Ninchi-gengo-gakkai Ronbunshuu*, 4, 66-75.
- Okada, M & Hayashida, M. (2007). Nihongo gakushuu-sha ni yoru kakujyoshi no kondou--Sonzai basho no “ni” hani-gentei no “de” [L2 Japanese learner’s confusion of case particles--place of existence “ni” and limited use of “de”]. *Nihongo Kyouiku Ronshuu*, 23, 3-15.
- Okada, M., Shimizu, T., & Li, S. (2012). Sonzai basho ni tsuku ni-kaku no shuutoku--JFL kankyou ni okeru chuugokugo o bokokugo to suru nihongo gakushuu-sha no baai

- [Acquisition of case particle “ni” that indicate place of existence: A case of JFL Chinese learners of Japanese]. *Higashi Ajia Nihongo Nihonbunka Kenkyuu*, 14, 32-47.
- Sakota, K. (2001). Gakushuu-sha no goyou o umidasu gengoshori no sutorategii (1) Basho o arawasu “ni” to “de” no baai [Learner’s strategy in application of language use (1) The case of locative particles “ni” and “de”]. *Hiroshima Daigaku Kyouiku-gakubu Nihongo Kyouiku-kouza Kiyuu*, 11, 17-22.
- Sakota, K. (2002). *Nihongo kyouiku ni ikasu dainigengo shuutoku kenkyuu* [Study on Japanese L2 acquisition]. Tokyo: Aruku.
- Scarcella, R. C. & Oxford, R. L. (1992). *The tapestry of language learning: The individual in the communicative classroom*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Shirahata, T., Wakabayashi, S., and Muranoi, H. (2010). *Shousetsu dainigengo shuutoku kenkyuu riron kara kenkyuu-hou made* [From theory to research methods in L2 language acquisition in depth]. Tokyo: Kenkyuu-sha.
- Towell, R., & Hawkins, R. (1994) *Approaches to second language acquisition*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Yagi, K. (1996). Shokyyuu gakushuu-sha no sakubun ni mirareru nihongo no jyoshi no seiyuu jyunjyo--Jyoshi betsu, jyoshi no kinou betsu, kinou gruupu betsu ni [Acquisition order of Japanese particles observed from essays written by beginner-level learners based on types of particles, their functions, and their functional categories]. *Sekai no Nihongo Kyouiku*, 6, 65-81.

Appendix

Questions in the Japanese Particle Test (Please note that the order of questions was randomly assigned.)

1. simple existence *ni*

Three items examine correct use of *ni* in a simple sentence of existence.

1-1. 食堂 (に、で、を、から) 彼がいます。

Shokudou (ni, de, o, kara) kare ga imasu. [He is at the cafeteria.]

1-2. 中国 (に、で、を、から) おばさんがいません。

Chuugoku (ni, de, o, kara) obasan ga imasen. [My aunt is not in China.]

1-3. 東京 (に、で、を、から) 大きな病院があります。

Toukyou (ni, de, o, kara) ookina byouin ga arimasu. [In Tokyo, there are big hospitals.]

2. motion *de*

Three items examine correct use of *de* indicating place of motions and actions.

2-1. 食堂 (に、で、を、から) ご飯を食べます。

Shokudou (ni, de, o, kara) gohan o tabemasu. [(I) eat at the cafeteria.]

2-2. 食堂 (に、で、を、から) ご飯を食べています。

Shokudou (ni, de, o, kara) gohan o tabete imasu. [(I) am eating at the cafeteria.]

2-3. リーさんはいつも寮 (に、で、を、から) ご飯を食べています。

Lee-san wa itsumo ryou (ni, de, o, kara) gohan o tabete imasu. [Mr. Lee always eats at the dormitory.]

3. limited use *de*

Seven items examine correct use of *de* of limited use.

3-1. 韓国 (に、で、を、から) 有名な人は誰ですか。

Kankoku (ni, de, o, kara) yuumei na hito wa dare desu ka. [Who is famous in Korea?]

3-2. 中国 (に、で、を、から) 有名なところはどこですか。

Chuugoku (ni, de, o, kara) yuumei na tokoro wa doko desu ka. [What place is famous in China?]

3-3. 大学の中 (に、で、を、から) だれが一番テニスが上手ですか。

Daigaku no naka (ni, de, o, kara) dare ga ichiban tennisu ga jyouzu desu ka. [Who is the best tennis player at a university?]

3-4. 東京 (に、で、を、から) どこが一番好きですか。

Toukyou (ni, de, o, kara) doko ga ichiban suki desu ka. [Where in Tokyo do you like the best?]

3-5. この店の中のもの (に、で、を、から) 何がほしいですか。²

Kono mise no naka no mono (ni, de, o, kara) nani ga hoshii desu ka. [Which item in this store do you want?]

3-6. 大学の留学生の中 (に、で、を、から) リーさんが一番背が高いです。

Daigaku no ryuugakusei no naka (ni, de, o, kara) Lee-san ga ichiban se ga takai desu. [Mr. Lee is the tallest among foreign students in this university.]

3-7. 日本の食べ物の中 (に、で、を、から) おいしいのはラーメンです。

Nihon no tabemono no naka (ni, de, o, kara) oishii no wa raamen desu. [Among Japanese foods, ramen noodle is delicious.]

4. contrastive *ni*

Seven items examine correct use of *ni* followed by “*iru/aru* + contrastive location.”

4-1. 寮の中（に、で、を、から）みんないますが、リーさんは寮の外（に、で、を、から）います。

Ryou no naka (ni, de, o, kara) minna imasu ga Lee-san wa ryou no soto (ni, de, o, kara) imasu. [Everyone is in the dormitory but Mr. Lee is outside the dormitory.]

4-2. 父は韓国（に、で、を、から）いますが、母と兄は日本（に、で、を、から）います。

Chichi wa kankoku (ni, de, o, kara) imasu ga, haha to ani wa nihon (ni, de, o, kara) imasu. [My father is in Korea, but my mother and older brother are in Japan.]

4-3. 日本（に、で、を、から）ボーリング場がたくさんあります。中国（に、で、を、から）ボーリング場はあまりありません。

Nihon (ni, de, o, kara) booringu-jyou ga takusan arimasu. Chuugoku (ni, de, o, kara) booringu-jyou wa amari arimasen. [There are many bowling alleys in Japan. There are none in China.]

4-4. 食堂の前（に、で、を、から）はリーさんがいます。食堂の中（に、で、を、から）は誰もいません。

Shokudou no mae (ni, de, o, kara) wa Lee-san ga imasu. Shokudou no naka (ni, de, o, kara) wa dare mo imasen. [Mr. Lee is in front of the cafeteria. No one is in the cafeteria.]

4-5. 家の中（に、で、を、から）ネコはいません。あそこ（に、で、を、から）います。

Ie no naka (ni, de, o, kara) neko wa imasen. Asoko (ni, de, o, kara) imasu. [There is no cat in the house. It is over there.]

4-6. 家（に、で、を、から）お金がありません。銀行（に、で、を、から）お金があります。

Ie (ni, de, o, kara) okane ga arimasen. Ginkou (ni, de, o, kara) okane ga arimasu. [(I) have no money in the house. (I) have money in the bank.]

4-7. 教室（に、で、を、から）テレビがありませんが、あそこ（に、で、を、から）あります。

Kyoushitsu (ni, de, o, kara) terebi ga arimasen ga asoko (ni, de, o, kara) arimasu. [There is no TV in the classroom, but there is one over.]

5. numeral *ni*

Seven items examine correct use of *ni* followed by “*iru/aru* + a quantifier (an interrogative, a locative noun, or a collective noun).”

5-1. この家（に、で、を、から）入口が三つありますか。

Kono ie (ni, de, o, kara) iriguchi ga mittsu arimasu ka. [Are there three entrances in this house?]

5-2. きのう、カラオケパーティーがありました。私もその中（に、で、を、から）いました。

Kinou, karaoke paatii ga arimashita. Watashi mo sono naka (ni, de, o, kara) imashita. [There was a karaoke party yesterday. I was one of the people there.]

5-3. 大きな病院は東京（に、で、を、から）いくつありますか。

Ookina byouin wa Toukyou (ni, de, o, kara) ikutsu arimasu ka. [How many big hospitals are in Tokyo?]

5-4. 寮（に、で、を、から）アメリカの人がいますか。

Ryou (ni, de, o, kara) amerika no hito ga imasu ka. [Are there any Americans in the dormitory?]

5-5. 銀行（に、で、を、から）お金が100万円あります。

Ginkou (ni, de, o, kara) okane ga hyaku-man en arimasu. [(I) have 1,000,000 yen in the bank.]

5-6. 寮 (に、で、を、から) 5人メキシコの人があります。

Ryou (ni, de, o, kara) go-nin mekishiko no hito ga imasu. [There are five Mexicans in the dormitory.]

5-7. 留学生は大連外国語大学 (に、で、を、から) 何人いますか。

Ryuugakusei wa Dalian-gaikokugo-daigaku (ni, de, o, kara) nan-nin imasu ka. [How many foreign students are in Dalian Foreign Language University?]

5-8. いろいろな料理がありました。その中 (に、で、を、から) 中国料理もありました。

Iroiro na ryouri ga arimashita. Sono naka (ni, de, o, kara) chuugoku-ryouri mo arimashita. [There were various cuisines. Chinese food was one of them.]

6. Distracters, particle *o*

6-1. 京都のホテル (に、で、を、から) 予約します。

Kyouto no hoteru (ni, de, o, kara) yoyaku shimasu. [(I) will make a reservation in a hotel in Kyoto.]

6-2. 来年、家 (に、で、を、から) 建てます。

Rainen, ie (ni, de, o, kara) tatemasu. [(I) will build a house next year.]

6-3. 電車 (に、で、を、から) 降りてから、歩いて行きました。

Densha (ni, de, o, kara) orite kara aruite ikimashita. [After getting off the train, (I) walked.]

6-4. 帰るとき、公園 (に、で、を、から) 通りました。

Kaeru toki kouen (ni, de, o, kara) tourimashita. [When (I was) going home, (I) passed the park.]

6-5. 小さな橋 (に、で、を、から) 渡りました。

Chiisana hashi (ni, de, o, kara) watarimashita. [I crossed a small bridge.]

6-6. 私は大きな家 (に、で、を、から) 買いたいです。

Watashi wa ookina ie (ni, de, o, kara) kaitai desu. [I want to buy a big house.]

6-7. 飛行機が空 (に、で、を、から) 飛んでいます。

Hikouki ga sora (ni, de, o, kara) tonede imasu. [The airplane is flying in the sky.]

7. Distracters, particle *kara*

7-1. 大学 (に、で、を、から) 図書館まで自転車でいきます。

Daigaku (ni, de, o, kara) toshokan made jitensha de ikimasu. [(I) go to university library by bicycle.]

7-2. きのう、大学 (に、で、を、から) 電話がありました。

Kinou daigaku (ni, de, o, kara) denwa ga arimashita. [(I) received a phone call from university yesterday.]

7-3. 家 (に、で、を、から) 大学まで歩いて10分かかります。

Ie (ni, de, o, kara) daigaku made aruite 10-pun kakarimasu. [From home to college takes 10 minutes on foot.]

7-4. どろぼうが家の2階 (に、で、を、から) 入りました。

Dorobou ga ie no ni-kai (ni, de, o, kara) hairimashita. [The burglar entered from the second floor of the house.]

7-5. 勉強しているとき、窓 (に、で、を、から) 飛行機が見えました。

Benkyou shiteiru toki, mado (ni, de, o, kara) hikouki ga miemashita. [When (I was) studying, (I) saw the airplane through the window.]

7-6. ベッド (に、で、を、から) 落ちたので、体が痛いです。

Beddo (ni, de, o, kara) ochita node, karada ga itai desu. [Because I fell from the bed, my body hurts.]

7-7. 去年、福岡（に、で、を、から）東京へ行きました。

Kyonen, Fukuoka (ni, de, o, kara) Toukyou e ikimashita. [(I) went to Tokyo from Fukuoka last year.]

Table 1

Rates of Correct Answer (JFL Learners, n=179)

Particle Usage	Correct Answer (%)	
	Mean	Standard deviation
Simple existence <i>ni</i>	68.5	31.9
Motion <i>de</i>	89.5	21.5
Contrastive <i>ni</i>	61.6	31.7
Limited use <i>de</i>	79.6	22.6
Numeral <i>ni</i>	61.0	25.0

Table 2

Rates of Correct Answer (JFL Learners, Intermediate Level, n=104)

Particle Usage	Correct Answer (%)	
	Mean	Standard deviation
Simple existence <i>ni</i>	72.4	0.306
Motion <i>de</i>	91.0	0.214
Contrastive <i>ni</i>	64.9	0.249
Limited use <i>de</i>	80.2	0.218
Numeral <i>ni</i>	62.5	0.193

Table 3

Summary of Regression Analyses, JFL (n=104)

Incorrect application of <i>de</i> in place of the numeral <i>ni</i>				Incorrect application of <i>de</i> in place of the contrastive <i>ni</i>			
	Explanatory Variables	β	p		Explanatory Variables	β	p
$R_2=.193$	Motion <i>de</i>	-0.04	0.657	$R_2=.097$	Motion <i>de</i>	-0.024	0.798
	Limited use <i>de</i>	0.435	0.000**		Limited use <i>de</i>	0.308	0.002**
			** $p<.01$.				** $p<.01$.

Table 4

Rates of Correct Answer (Novice-Level Learners, n=51)

Particle Usage	Correct Answer (%)	
	Mean	Standard deviation
Simple existence <i>ni</i>	50.6	0.144
Motion <i>de</i>	49.6	0.318
Contrastive <i>ni</i>	28.8	0.234
Limited use <i>de</i>	51.2	0.262
Numeral <i>ni</i>	46.8	0.253

Table 5

Summary of Regression Analyses, Novice-Level Learners, (n=51)
 Incorrect application of *de* in place of *ni* in a simple sentence of existence

	<u>Explanatory Variables</u>	β	p
$R_2=.175$	Motion <i>de</i>	0.391	0.011*
	Limited use <i>de</i>	0.053	0.721

* $p<.05$.

Table 6

Correct Answer Rates (JSL Learners, n=80)

<u>Particle Usage</u>	<u>Correct Answer (%)</u>	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard deviation</u>
Simple existence <i>ni</i>	69.5	0.348
Motion <i>de</i>	89.1	0.196
Contrastive <i>ni</i>	58.3	0.326
Limited use <i>de</i>	69.4	0.233
Numeral <i>ni</i>	62.1	0.279

Table 7

Correct Answer Rates (JSL Intermediate-level Learners, n=37)

<u>Particle Usage</u>	<u>Correct Answer (%)</u>	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard deviation</u>
Simple existence <i>ni</i>	84.6	0.230
Motion <i>de</i>	96.4	0.104
Contrastive <i>ni</i>	74.6	0.213
Limited use <i>de</i>	66.8	0.220
Numeral <i>ni</i>	71.9	0.194

Table 8

Summary of Regression Analyses, JSL Learners (n=37)

<u>Incorrect application of <i>de</i> in place of the numeral <i>ni</i></u>				<u>Incorrect application of <i>de</i> in place of the contrastive <i>ni</i></u>			
	<u>Explanatory Variables</u>	β	p		<u>Explanatory Variables</u>	β	p
$R_2=.120$	Motion <i>de</i>	0.045	0.781	$R_2=.234$	Motion <i>de</i>	-0.035	0.816
	Limited use <i>de</i>	0.345	0.039*		Limited use <i>de</i>	0.482	0.003**

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$.