

## Linguistics E: Day 2

### Prescriptive grammar and Descriptive grammar

#### 1 Research project/Conference preparation

- Q.1 Find one study theme on language and plan to present it as a poster in the final round. Discuss your research question with your partner. Think and discuss how you will get the data.
- Q.2 Briefly explain your specialty and exchange ideas with your neighbors about the significance of your research topic. Also, describe the relationship between your research topic and language.

#### 2 Prescriptive and Descriptive grammar

- Q.3 What are the prescriptive and descriptive grammars?
- Q.4 Which grammar is generally taught at school, prescriptive grammar or descriptive grammar?
- Q.5 Discuss the rules for using similar words, such as the and a/an and the differences between the facts and the rules. For example, in English
1. The mountain is covered with/by snow.
  2. The butter is made from/of/with milk.
- In Japanese
1. Eiga wo miru [no/koto] ga suki da.  
(I like watching movies)
  2. Neko ga naku [no/koto] ga kikoeta.  
(I heard a cat meow)
  3. Furansugo o masutaa suru [no/koto] wa muzukashii.  
(French is difficult to master).
  4. Sumisu san ga amerika ni kaetta [no/koto] o shitteimasuka.  
(Do you know that Mr. Smith has returned to America?)
- Then, when should we use “no” and “koto”?
- Q.6 Even though we can use the language normally, we wonder if we cannot answer when asked how to use it. There are words that we cannot explain how to use even though we use them correctly, why?

#### 3 The principle of least effort

- Q.7 What are the relative lengths of words that are closely related to daily life in various languages? Also, discuss whether words used in a special context are longer or shorter in length.
- Q.8 In conversation, are there any differences in the length of sentences and the number of utterances when the topic is clear or unclear?
- Q.9 Discuss why language use is regarded as the law of least effort.
- Q.10 What determines language complexity?

Q.11 Among natural languages, is there a distinction between high-level languages and low-level languages?

Q.12 Honorific Japanese is not just the function of respecting somebody. Discuss what features it has.

Q.13 Chinese does not have inflection. Japanese does not have gender. Are they true?

## 4 Mathematical aspect: Length of Sentence

Q.14 Discuss how you can measure sentence length.

Q.15 Discuss how to check if there is a difference in the length of the sentence between the two texts.

Q.16 Plot the frequency of the length data on a graph to see what characteristics it has.

Q.17 Discuss how the graph changes once the length is converted to logarithm.

Q.18 Why is it logarithmically converted? What is the distribution type before and after logarithmic transformation?

Q.19 Discuss what the sentence length distribution is.

Q.20 Discuss the difference in sentence length between the two texts.

Q.21 How can you determine if two distribution types are the same or different?