Acquisition of Existence and Possession Structures in Japanese-Chinese Cross-Referentiality of Two-Way Learner Corpora: Beginner and Advanced Level-Wise Production…

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Acquisition of Existence and Possession Structures in Japanese-Chinese
Cross-Referentiality of Two-Way Learner Corpora
—Beginner and Advanced Level-Wise Production Trends and Analysis—

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Abstract

This study elucidates the dynamics of the acquisition of existential and possessive sentences in Japanese and Chinese among learners of differing proficiencies. It reveals advanced Japanese CFL learners' significant progress in employing the Chinese existential "*yǒu* Y" construction, contrasting with beginners' reliance on the elementary "X *yǒu* Y" construct. Furthermore, it identifies a prevalent error among Chinese JFL learners: the omission of the particle *ni*, attributing this to the syntactic influence of their L1. This investigation highlights the pivotal role of first language structures in second language acquisition, particularly the existential and possessive structures.

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on existential and possessive sentences in Japanese and Chinese, observing trends in the production of existential and possessive sentences by beginner and advanced learners of both languages. The aim of this study was to elucidate the factors that influence the difficulty of acquisition between Japanese and Chinese.

Japanese and Chinese both have verbs that code both existence and possession. The relationship between the prototypicality of the meanings of existence and possession and their forms in both languages can be summarized as shown in the following figure.

Figure 1

Forms and Semantics of Existence/Possession Structures in Japanese and Chinese

When examining the relationship between existence and possession in the use of *aru* and *iru* in Japanese, *aru* and *iru* are primarily considered verbs of existence (1a), within which there is a usage denoting possession (1b) (Nishiyama, 2021). Moreover, in Japanese, there exists a verb *motsu* dedicated solely to expressing possession (1c). In Chinese, the verb *yǒu*, which serves both existence and possession functions, is typically seen as denoting possession (2c), within which the denotation of existence is also recognized (Kimura, 2011; Ōnishi, 2011; Yuan, 2009). Additionally, there is a verb *zài*, which exclusively denotes existence (2a).

(1) a. Tsukue-no   ue-ni   hon-ga   ar-u.   (*aru* / existence)
      Desk-GEN   top-LOC   book-NOM   exist-NPST
      "There is a book on the desk."

    b. Kare-ni   ani-ga   i-ru.   (*iru* / possession)
      He-DAT   older borther-NOM   exist-NPST
      "He has an older brother."

    c. Kare-wa   koukyuusha-o   mot-tei-ru.   (*motsu* / possession)
      He-TOP   luxury car-ACC   have-PROG-NPST
      "He has a luxury car."

(2) a. Wǒ   zài   túshūguǎn.   (*zài* / existence)
      I-SUBJ   exist-V   library-OBJ
      "I am at the library."

    b. Zhuōzi-shang   yǒu   yì-běn   Hànyǔ cídiǎn.   (yǒu / existence)
      Table-on-LOC   exist-V   one-QUANT-CL   Chinese dictionary-OBJ
      "There is a Chinese dictionary on the table."

    c. Tā   yǒu   yì-běn   Hànyǔ cídiǎn.   (yǒu / possession)
      He-SUBJ   have-V   one-QUANT-CL   Chinese dictionary-OBJ

"He has one Chinese dictionary."

Both Japanese *iru*/*iru* and Chinese *yǒu* possess meanings of existence and possession, but with opposite semantic prototypicality. Traditionally, prototype theory posits that items with higher prototypicality are acquired more quickly and easily than those with lower prototypicality. Furthermore, it has been considered that concept formation primarily revolves around prototype-matching (Rosch, 1973, 1978). Furthermore, by examining learners' errors, this study aims to investigate the factors that contribute to difficulties in their acquisition. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions.

(3) a. Is it easier to acquire meanings and usages that are prototypical?
    b. The reasons behind the occurrence of these misuses.

Summarizing the prominent trends observed in the corpus data, we can state the following:

(4) a. In the Chinese Essays (Chinese JFL learners) data, there is a notable increase in existential expressions at advanced levels.
    b. In the Japanese Essays (Japanese CFL learners) data, there is a tendency for misuse that persists from beginner to advanced levels.

2. Literature Review

This section will review the existing literature relating to Japanese *aru*/*iru*, Chinese *yǒu* to clarify the distinction related to the functions of existence or possession in Japanese and Chinese.

2.1 Japanese *aru/iru*

In Japanese, the verb *aru/iru* is originally understood as a verb indicating existence, within which lies the usage for possession. However, there are views (Nishiyama, 2021, etc.) that recognize the possessive verb *aru/iru* as distinct from the existential verb and consider possessive sentences as transitive verb sentences. Additionally, in the acquisition of a first language by children, it is pointed out that the concept of existence is acquired first, followed by possessive sentences (Matsufuji, 2015).

Existential sentences are defined by both meaning and syntax (Nihongo Bunpō Gakkai, 2014). In terms of syntax, they are considered to follow the word order "Location-*ni* +

Subject-*ga* + *aru*/*iru*" (Kuno, 1973). Generally, the choice between *aru* and *iru* appears be influenced by the semantic property of animacy of the subject noun. Specifically, *iru* is chosen for subjects that are animate or capable of self-motion, while *aru* is selected for inanimate subjects or subjects not capable of self-motion (Nihongo Bunpō Gakkai, 2014).

Possessive sentences can have the same syntactic structure as existential sentences. Possession is also indicated in cases like *Kanojo ni wa ani ga iru* (*aru*) 'She has a brother' with kinship terms (Kageyama, 2004; Kishimoto, 2005, etc.). Additionally, sentences like *Kare ni wa sainou ga aru* 'He has talent', *Watashi wa netsu ga 37.5 do aru* 'I have a fever of 37.5 degrees', and *Kare wa shinchou ga 180 cm aru* 'He is 180 cm tall' are defined as possessive sentences in Japanese language teaching materials (Iori et al., 2000, etc.).

In essence, the structure "X-*ni*, Y-ga *aru*/*iru*" fundamentally signifies that when X represents a location, it forms an existence sentence, whereas when X denotes an possessor, it constitutes a possessive sentence.

2.2 Chinese *Yǒu*

This section begins by providing an overview of ontological research on the Chinese term *yǒu* to ascertain the basic semantics and syntactic structure of *yǒu*.

Initially, regarding the semantics of *yǒu*, Lü (1980) indicates that the character *yǒu* embodies three semantic types: possession, existence, and estimation. According to Yuan et al. (2009), possession and existence constitute the fundamental semantics of *yǒu*. Additionally, Yuan et al. (2009) notes that possession and existence can be interchangeable, such that the meaning "X has Y" is equivalent to "Y exists with X." Wang and Zhou (2012) argue that the most fundamental semantic functions of *yǒu* are to denote possession and existence. Through a diachronic analysis of the semantic evolution and application of *yǒu*, Wang and Zhou (2012) deduce that subsidiary meanings are derivatively expanded from the foundational semantics of possession and existence. Consolidating these perspectives, the essential semantic categories of *yǒu* can be classified into possession and existence. The following discussion is framed based on these semantic pillars.

Next, regarding the syntactic structure of *yǒu*, there are primarily two structures: "N1 + *yǒu* + N2" and "*yǒu* + N." Fan (1998) considers the most typical format of the *yǒu* sentence to be "N1 + *yǒu* + N2," which encompasses both affiliative and existential relationships. Lü (1980) notes that in the existential "*yǒu* + N" construction, the semantic essence of *yǒu* approximates the notions of 'some' or 'uncertain'. Chappell and Lü (2022) have succinctly summarized the existential and possessive constructions in Chinese from a typological perspective as follows:

(5) The Existential & Possessive Construction in Chinese

Existential	(Locative NP)	Verb[LOC]	[NPINDEF]s
Possessive	[NPPOSSESSOR]s	Verb[POSS]	NPPOSSESSED

(Chappell & Lü, 2022, pp. 10–11)

Building upon the aforementioned research, we can distill the fundamental sentence patterns of *yǒu* into two primary types: "X *yǒu* Y" and "*yǒu* Y." The semantics conveyed by these two structures are as follows: In the "X *yǒu* Y" construction, when X is a Locative NP, the verb *yǒu* and the entire structure express the meaning of existence, the NP following the verb *yǒu* being indefinite, as in (6a); when X is an animate noun expressing an possessor, *yǒu* and the entire structure express the meaning of possession, the NP following *yǒu* being definite, as in (6b).

(6) a. Zhuōzi-shang yǒu yì-běn Hànyǔ cídiǎn. (existence)

Table-on (Locative NP) yǒu (Verb[LOC]) a Chinese dictionary (NPINDEF)

"There is a Chinese dictionary on the table."

 b. Tā yǒu yì-běn Hànyǔ cídiǎn. (possession)

He (NPPOSSESSOR) yǒu (Verb[POSS]) one Chinese dictionary (NPPOSSESSED/DEF)

"He has one Chinese dictionary."

Regarding the "*yǒu* Y" structure, in line with the insights from Chappell and Lü (2022, pp. 10–11) as indicated in (5), when no NP appears before the verb, the structure tends to convey the meaning of existence. We believe that this rule also applies to the "*yǒu* Y" structure, meaning that this structure exclusively expresses the notion of existence. As shown in (7), when the possessor mentioned in (7a) is omitted, it results in the "*yǒu* Y" structure of (7b), which does not convey the possession meaning of (7a) but rather an existence meaning. Simultaneously, the NP following *yǒu* shifts from definite in (7a) to indefinite.

(7) a. Tā yǒu yì-běn Hànyǔ cídiǎn. (possession)

He (NPPOSSESSOR) *yǒu* (Verb[POSS]) one Chinese dictionary (NPPOSSESSED/DEF)

"He has one Chinese dictionary."

 b. Yǒu yì-běn Hànyǔ cídiǎn (zài zhuōzi-shang). (existence)

Yǒu (Verb[LOC]) a Chinese dictionary (NPINDEF)

"A Chinese dictionary (is on the desk)."

In short, the structures formed by the verb *yǒu* and the meanings they express are as follows:

(8) a. X *yǒu* Y

　　When X = Locative NP, then "X *yǒu* Y" = existence

　　When X = NPPOSSESSOR, then "X *yǒu* Y" = possession

　b. *yǒu* Y = existence

The primary focus of this study is to investigate learners' production of the existential and possessive meanings of *yǒu* as well as the output of these two syntactic structures.

3. Methods

This study extracts and analyzes data from the Japanese Chinese Two-Way Learners' Corpus, which comprises beginner and advanced-level Japanese Essays (Chinese L1) and Chinese Essays (Japanese L1). The details of the corpus data are as follows:

Table 1

Japanese Essays (Chinese L1)

Level	Beginners	Advanced
Learning Period	10–12	48–60
Number of Essays	59	12
Number of Authors	59	5
Word Count	21,773	9,774

Table 2

Chinese Essays (Japanese L1)

Level	Beginners	Advanced
Learning Period	10–12	48–60
Number of Essays	138	26
Number of Authors	138	11
Word Count	7,981	5,446

For Chinese JFL and Japanese CFL learners, beginner-level learners were categorized as learners with a study duration of 10–12 months. Conversely, advanced-level learners are defined as Japanese native speakers with 48–60 months of experience studying

Chinese who have attained HSK Level 6 proficiency, and Chinese L1 speakers who are learning Japanese with a study duration of 48–60 months, some of whom have achieved the Japanese Language Proficiency Test N1 level.

Within this framework, the composition task for the beginner level is designated as narrative writing, with topic options including "Introducing the Meaning of My Name," "My Hobbies," "My College Life," "A Day in My Life," "My Future Dreams," and "My Favorite Food." Learners can choose any of the topics provided for their writing assignments. At the advanced level, composition tasks expand to include both narrative and argumentative essays. For narrative writing, topics include "Introducing the Meaning of Your Name" and "My Travel/Study Abroad Experience." For argumentative writing, topics are set as "Whether Nuclear Power Generation Should Be Supported," "Whether Women Should Have Their Own Careers," and "Suppose You Found a Winning Lottery Ticket." The participants could select a topic from the given categories based on their composition. All the aforementioned writing tasks were designated as homework assignments, with the students allowed unrestricted access to dictionaries and other reference materials.

4. Results

This section presents the quantitative analysis comparing the numbers of instances produced by learners of Japanese *aru/iru* and Chinese *yǒu* denoting existence and possession. Comparisons of the findings regarding the quantities of these outputs are reported in Section 4.1. Section 4.2 then focuses on analyzing errors in learners' outputs.

4.1 The Production of Existence and Possession by Chinese JFL and Japanese CFL Learners

The proportions of *aru/iru* produced in the compositions of both beginner and advanced Japanese learners (L1) are summarized in Figures 2–3, while the proportions of *yǒu* production obtained from the compositions of both beginner and advanced Chinese learners (L1) are summarized in Figures 4–5.

Figure 2

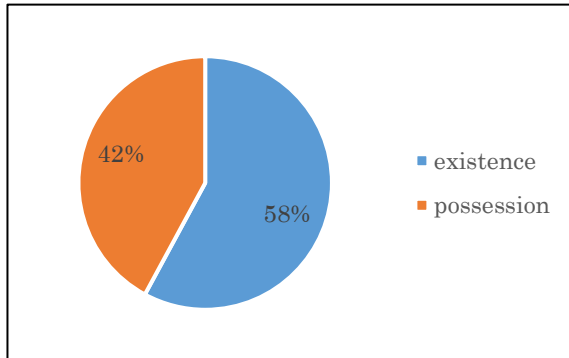Beginning Japanese Essays (Chinese L1)

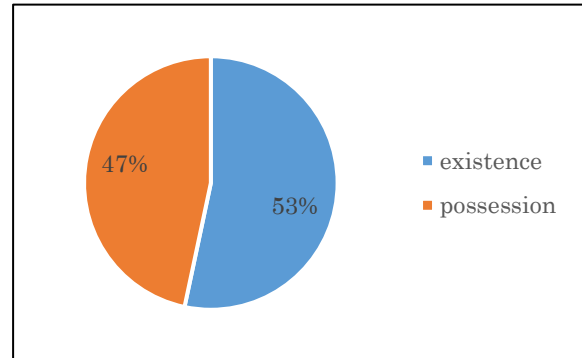
Figure 3

Advanced Japanese Essays (Chinese L1)

Figure 4
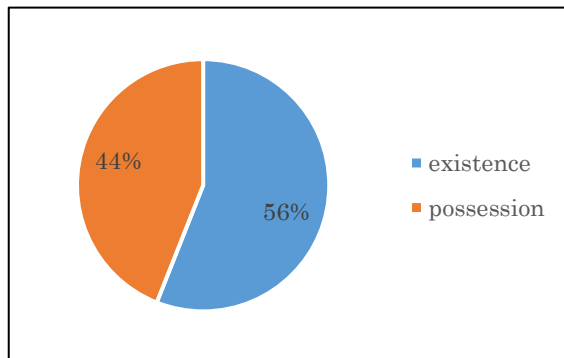
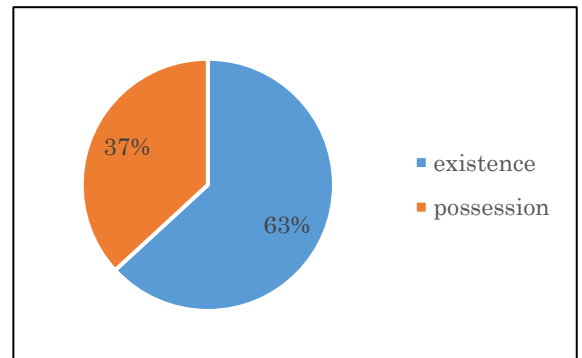Beginning Chinese Essays (Japanese L1)

Figure 5

Advanced Chinese Essays (Japanese L1)

Instances of *aru*/*iru* [existence/possession] produced by beginning and advanced Chinese JFL learners were extracted and compared using adjusted frequencies (per 10,000 words). The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Comparison of the Output of *Aru*/*Iru* [Existence/Possession] by Beginning/Advanced Chinese JFL Learners (Adjusted Frequency per 10,000 Words)

Corpora	*Aru*/*Iru* [Existence]	*Aru/Iru* [Possession]
Beginners	17.73	12.90
Advanced	24.09	19.90

The comparison in Table 3 shows no significant difference in the number of outputs of beginning and advanced Chinese JFL learners for the use of *aru*/*iru* [existence] (χ^2 test: $G^2 = 1.45$, $p = .229$). Similarly, there is no significant difference in the number of outputs of *aru*/*iru* [possession] between the two groups (χ^2 test: $G^2 = 2.24$, $p = .135$). In other words, the use of the existence and possession meanings of *aru/iru* did not significantly

differ between beginning and advanced Chinese JFL learners.

In the same way, the output of *yǒu* was compared between beginning and advanced learners of Chinese, and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Comparison of the Output of *Yǒu* [Existence/Possession] by Beginning/Advanced Japanese CFL Learners (Adjusted Frequency per 5,000 Words)

Corpora	*Yǒu* [Existence]	*Yǒu* [Possession]
Beginners	18.17	14.41
Advanced	33.05	19.28

Table 4 shows a comparison of the output (per 5,000 words) of *yǒu* [existence] and *yǒu* [possession] between beginning and advanced Japanese CFL learners. Comparison shows a noticeable difference in the output of *yǒu* [existence] between beginning and advanced learners, with advanced learners producing significantly more *yǒu* [existence] than beginners (χ^2 test: $G^2 = 5.82$, $p = .016$). However, no significant difference was found in the output of *yǒu* [possession] between beginners and advanced learners (χ^2 test: $G^2 = 0.93$, $p = .336$).

Based on the observations of the output of *aru*/*iru* [existence/possession] by Chinese JFL learners and *yǒu* [existence/possession] by Japanese CFL learners, the following conclusions can be drawn:

(9) The output of *aru*/*iru* [existence/possession] by Chinese JFL learners:
  a. Comparison of the output quantities of *aru*/*iru* [existence] and *aru*/*iru* [possession] show that for both beginning and advanced learners, the output is consistently higher for [existence] than for [possession].
  b. Comparing the output between beginning and advanced learners, there is no significant difference in quantity for either *aru*/*iru* [existence] or *aru*/*iru* [possession].

(10) The output of *yǒu* [existence/possession] by Japanese CFL learners:
  a. Comparison of the output quantities of *yǒu* [existence] and *yǒu* [possession] indicates that for both beginning and advanced learners, the output is consistently higher for [existence] than for [possession].
  b. Comparing the output between beginners and advanced learners, there is no significant difference in quantity for the use of *yǒu* [possession]; however, for the

use of *yǒu* [existence], advanced learners show a clear increasing trend.

4.2 The Misuse of Existence and Possession by Chinese JFL and Japanese CFL Learners

In Section 4.1, we conduct a quantitative analysis of learners' outputs. In the following section, we examine the errors in the learners' outputs.

With regard to the criteria for error identification, usages that do not conform to grammatical norms and instances in which avoidance leads to unnatural expressions are classified as errors. These assessments were manually conducted by the two authors of this study. Specifically, the assessment of errors in the Japanese compositions was carried out by a native Japanese speaker, whereas the evaluation of errors in the Chinese compositions was undertaken by a native Chinese speaker. Both individuals were engaged in foreign language teaching at the university level. Following their respective assessments, a cross-examination process was implemented, whereby each author reviewed the other's judgments to ensure a double-check procedure.

Initially we focused on the errors related to the use of *aru*/*iru* [existence/possession] by Chinese JFL learners, as depicted in Table 5. The table illustrates both the frequency of these errors and their proportions of the total output. It is observed that the number of errors made in the usage of *aru*/*iru* [existence/possession] by Chinese JFL learners is relatively low, regardless of whether the learner is at the beginner or advanced level. Notably, at an advanced level, there was a slight reduction in the frequency of errors, although they did persist.

Table 5

Proportions of Misuse by Beginning and Advanced Japanese CFL Learners

Japanese CFL Learners	*Aru*/*Iru* [Existence]	*Aru*/*Iru* [Possession]
Beginners	27.27% (6/22)	37.50% (6/16)
Advanced	17.39% (8/46)	13.64% (6/44)

As indicated in Table 5, the frequency of misuse decreases progressively from the beginner to advanced stages. However, even at the advanced level, there is still misuse of both the existence and possession usages of *aru/iru*.

Table 6

Types of Misuse by Beginning and Advanced Japanese CFL Learners

Japanese CFL Learners	*Aru/Iru*	Types of Misuse and Numbers of Instances		
		Case Particles	Predicate	Others
Beginners	[existence]	2 (2)	2 (2)	2 (2)
	[possession]	3 (3)	2 (2)	1 (1)
Advanced	[existence]	6 (4)	1 (1)	1 (1)
	[possession]	4 (3)	2 (1)	0 (0)

The numbers represent tokens, while the numbers with ( ) indicate types.

Table 6 classifies each error into one of the following categories: Case Particles, Predicates, and Others. Examples of misuse of Case Particles are presented in (11) and of Predicates in (12), while Others encompasses types of errors besides these categories.

(11) Nihon-wa   totemo   kirei-desu.
     Japan-TOP   very   beautiful-NPST-polite
     Machi-wa   (revise: φ→ni)   gomi-ga   arima-sen.   (SU_JP_012)
     Town-TOP (revise: φ→LOC)   litter-NOM   exist-NEG-polite
     "Japan is very beautiful. There is no litter in the streets."

(12) Konanryouri-wa   chotto   karai-de,
     Hunan cuisine-TOP   a little   spicy-CONJ
     Shokuyoku-ga   (revise: arima-su→dema-su).   (SU_JP_022)
     Appetite-NOM   (revise: exist-NPST→appear-NPST)
     "Hunan cuisine is a bit spicy, and it stimulates the appetite."

Following the same approach, we investigated the frequency and proportion of errors in the use of *yǒu* [existence/possession] among Japanese CFL learners, with results presented in Table 7. The situation for Japanese CFL learners mirrors that of the previously discussed Chinese JFL learners in that the number of errors produced is relatively low. Moreover, errors were exclusively found in the [existence] usage of *yǒu*, with no errors observed in its [possession] usage.

Table 7

Proportions of Misuse by Beginning and Advanced Japanese CFL Learners

Chinese JFL Learners	*Yǒu* [Existence]	*Yǒu* [Possession]
Beginners	6.89% (2/29)	0% (0/23)
Advanced	2.78% (1/36)	0% (0/44)

Regarding the types of errors induced by Japanese CFL learners, the two instances of *yǒu* [existence] errors produced by beginners and the one instance of *yǒu* [existence] error produced by advanced learners were all due to the erroneous avoidance of *yǒu*. Given the small number of instances, these errors do not have statistical significance; therefore, they are not discussed further in this study. Instead, we list these three instances of error for illustrative purposes.

(13) Avoidance of using *yǒu* [existence] by beginners.

    a. Wǒ   xǐhuān   sān-ge   cài.   (TY_CH_0213)

       I-SUBJ   like-V   three-QUANT-CL dish-OBJ

       "I like three dishes."

       Revise:

       Wǒ   xǐhuān-de   cài   <u>yǒu</u>   sān-ge.

       I-SUBJ   like-ATTR   dish-SUBJ   exist-V   three-QUANT-CL

       "The dishes that I like are three."

    b. Wǒ jiā   shū   tài   duō-le.   (TY_CH_0231)

       My home-ATTR   book-SUBJ   too   much-MOD

       "There are too many books in my home."

       Revise :

       Wǒ jiā   <u>yǒu</u>   hěn   duō   shū.

       My home-LOC   exist-V   very   much-QUANT   book-OBJ

       "There are too many books in my home."

(14) Avoidance of using *yǒu* [existence] by advanced learners.

       Wǒmen   jiāoliú-de   Zhōngguó rén-zhong,

       We-SUBJ   communicate-ATTR   Chinese-among-LOC,

       yí-wèi   shūshu   duì-wǒmen   tèbié   rèqíng. (TUFS_CH_091)

       one-QUANT-CL uncle-SUBJ   to-PREP-we-OBL especially enthusiastic.

       Revise :

       Wǒmen   jiāoliú-de   Zhōngguó rén-zhong,

We-SUBJ   communicate-ATTR   Chinese-among-LOC,

<u>yǒu</u>   yí-wèi   shūshu   duì-wǒmen   tèbié   rèqíng.

exist-V   one-QUANT-CL uncle-SUBJ   to-PREP-we-OBL especially enthusiastic.

"Among the Chinese people we communicate with, there is one uncle who is especially enthusiastic towards us."

Section 4.2 presents our investigation of learners' misuse of language. The significant findings are summarized as follows.

(15) Misuse of *aru/iru* [existence/possession] by Chinese JFL learners:
   a. The frequency of misuse is low for both beginning and advanced learners.
   b. Particle marker misuse is more frequent at the advanced level than at the beginner level.

(16) Misuse of *yǒu* [existence/possession] by Japanese CFL learners:
   a. The frequency of misuse is low for both beginning and advanced learners.
   b. All instances of misuse were related to the existence usage, specifically involving avoidance of using *yǒu*. However, due to the small sample size, these instances are not statistically significant.

5. Discussion

This paper primarily focuses on the variations in production by level; hence, in this section, we discuss the differences observed between beginning and advanced learners, as identified in Section 4, while tendencies common to both levels will not be explored further in this paper. The issues discussed in this section pertain to the following two points:

(17) Why is there an increase in particle errors at the advanced level for Chinese JFL learners?
(18) For Japanese CFL leaners, why does the usage of *yǒu* [existence] increase at the advanced level?

5.1 The Acquisiton of *Aru/Iru* by Chinese JFL Learners

As summarized in Table 11, based on the discussion in Section 4.2, the following represent the errors of Japanese learners (Chinese L1) at both the beginner and advanced levels.

Figure 6

Numbers of Errors in Beginning and Advanced Japanese Essays (Chinese L1)
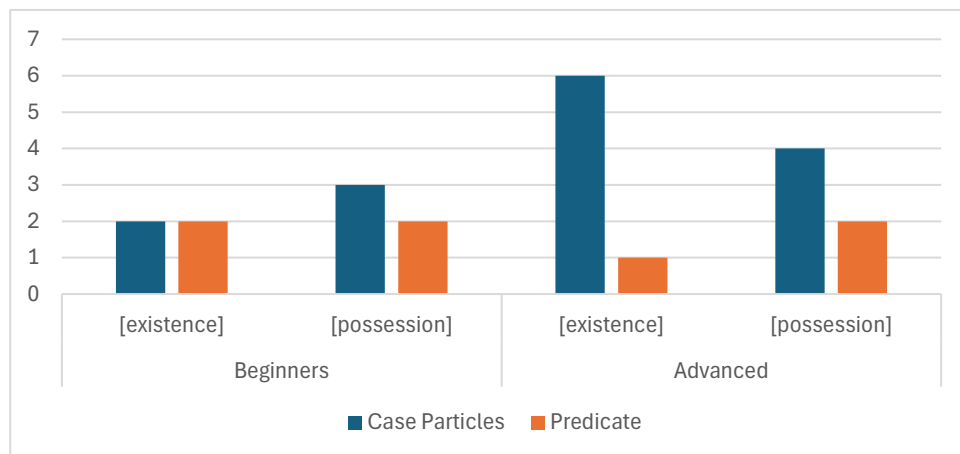
From Figure 6, it is evident that even among advanced learners, the misuse of Existence, Possession, and Case Particles does not decrease. Therefore, an attempt is made to clarify the factors causing errors in Case Particles by contrasting them with their corresponding forms in Chinese. The following are examples of errors written by advanced learners:

(19) Minna   chigau   tokoro-kara   kita-node,
    Everone   different place-OBL   come-because
    seikatsu shūkan (revise: φ→-ni) -wa   chigai-ga   ar-u.   (chsj002_L3)
    life style habit (revise:φ→-DAT)-TOP difference-NOM exist-NPST
    "Since everyone comes from different places, there are differences in lifestyle habits."

(20) "Làng zì"   (revise: φ→ni)-wa   aruku   toiu imi-ga   ar-i…
                                              (chs026_L2)
    "Làng character" (revise: φ→DAT)-TOP walk   called meaning-NOM exist-NPST
    "The character for 'Làng' contains the meaning of walking…"

(21) Chūgoku-no shoin   bunka-ga   yutaka-de,
    China-GEN   academy   culture-NOM rich-CONJ
    Kodai-no   shoin   (revise: φ→-ni)-mo   iroiro ar-imas-u. (chs030_L3)
    Ancient-GEN academy (revise: φ→-DAT)-EMPH various exist-polite-NPST
    "Chinese academy culture is rich, and there are various ancient academies as well."

When these examples are translated into Chinese, they are in sequence as follows.

(22) Shēnghuó xíguàn   <u>yǒusuǒ</u>   bùtóng.
    Life style habit-SUBJ exist-V   differ-OBJ
    "Lifestyles have differences."

(23) Làng zì   <u>hányǒu</u> xíngzǒu-de   yìyì…
    Làng character-SUBJ exist-V   walk-V-ATTR   meaning
     "The character for 'Làng' contains the meaning of walking…

(24) (Zhōngguó)   <u>yǒu</u>   gèzhǒng gèyàng-de gǔdài shūyuàn.
    (China-SUBJ)   exist-V various-ATTR   ancient academy
    "(In China) there are various kinds of ancient academies."

Thus, when translated into Chinese, sentences that encounter issues with the omission of the *ni* case all correspond to the syntactic structure "X *yǒu* Y." In the case of the Chinese "X *yǒu* Y" construction, "X," whether a location or an animate noun phrase, does not require a special grammatical form and remains unmarked. However, in Japanese, a marked form with the particle *ni* is necessary. Additionally, it is conceivable that there is a lack of knowledge regarding the *ni* particle itself in the Japanese language. This difference might be contributing to the omission of *ni* in second language acquisition. As a result, it is observed that the misuse of *ni* persists to the advanced level from the beginner level. Naturally, as one progresses to a more advanced level, one's acquisition of language skills advances, leading to the production of more complex sentences and increased output. This can result in an increase in the frequency of errors.

However, as illustrated in the following example, there are instances where the corresponding Chinese expression is "X *yǒu* Y" (X has Y), yet the particle *ni* is correctly produced.

(25) a. Ryō-no   ichiban-oku-<u>ni</u>-wa
       Domitory-GEN   most-inner part-LOC-TOP
       beranda-ga   a-tte,   semai-kedo…   (chsj004_L3)
       balcony -NOM   exist-CONJ   narrow-CONJ
    b. Sùshè   zuì lǐmiàn   yǒu   yí-ge   yángtái,
       Dormitory-SUBJ   most-inner-LOC exist-V one-QUANT-CL balcony-OBJ,

suīrán   hěn   zhǎi,   dànshì...

although   very   narrow,   but...

"At the far end of the dormitory, there is a balcony. It's small, but..."

(26) a. Kodai-no   shi-ya   bun-no   naka-<u>ni</u>,

Ancisent times-GEN   poem-CONJ text-GEN   in-LOC

Imi-ga   ii,   kanji ga   ii,

meaning-NOM   good   Chinese characters-NOM good   (chsj002_L2)

Bun-ga   takusan   aru-kara

Text-NOM   many   exist-CONJ

   b. Gǔdài-de   shīwén-zhong   yǒu   hěnduō

Ancient-ATTR   literature in-LOC   exist-V   many

yìyì   shēnyuǎn,   gǎnjué   yōuměi-de   jùzi.

profound meaning,   feeling   beautiful-ATTR   sentence

"Ancient poems and texts contain many sentences with profound meanings and

beautiful feelings."

The analysis of the data suggests that the correct use of the particle *ni* may be attributed to the noun phrases that appear in it being more perceptibly spatial. In other words, in the sentences where *ni* is correctly inserted, noun phrases with a strong spatial recognition, such as "*Ryō no ichiban oku*" 'the far end of the dormitory' or "*Kodai no shi ya bun no naka*" 'ancient poems and texts', are present. These phrases are more readily interpreted as locations, which could explain the accurate usage of *ni*.

5.2 The Acquisition of *Yǒu* by Japanese CFL Learners

   In the following discussion, we will discuss the phenomenon of increased usage of *yǒu* [existence] by Japanese CFL advanced learners compared to beginners. Initially, in Section 2.2, we classified and summarized the structure and meaning of *yǒu* as follows:

(27) a. X *yǒu* Y

      When X = Locative NP, then "X *yǒu* Y" = existence

      When X = NPPOSSESSOR, then "X *yǒu* Y" = possession

   b. *Yǒu* Y = existence

Reiterating (5)

   Here, the structure "X *yǒu* Y" is considered a typical structure expressing

96

[existence/possession], while the omission of "X" in "*yǒu* Y," which focuses on the existence of an indefinite NP, can be regarded as an atypical structure for expressing [existence]. Consequently, we hypothesize that the reason Japanese CFL advanced learners produce more [existence] than beginners is due to their increased use of the atypical "*yǒu* Y" structure. To this end, we investigated the output of both the "X *yǒu* Y" structure and the "*yǒu* Y" structure, with the following results.

First, the results for the output of both structures by the beginners are listed Table 8. In the production of *yǒu* [existence], the majority were typical "X *yǒu* Y" structures (25 of 29 samples, 86.21%), while the "*yǒu* Y" structure was used less frequently (4 of 29 samples, 13.79%). Additionally, there was no incorrect use of the "*yǒu* Y" structure to express the meaning of possession.

Table 8

Yǒu Structures Produced by Beginning Japanese CFL Learners

|	X *Yǒu* Y	*Yǒu* Y	Total
Yǒu [existence]	25(86.21%)	4(13.79%)	29(100.00%)
Yǒu [possession]	23(100.00%)	0	23(100.00%)
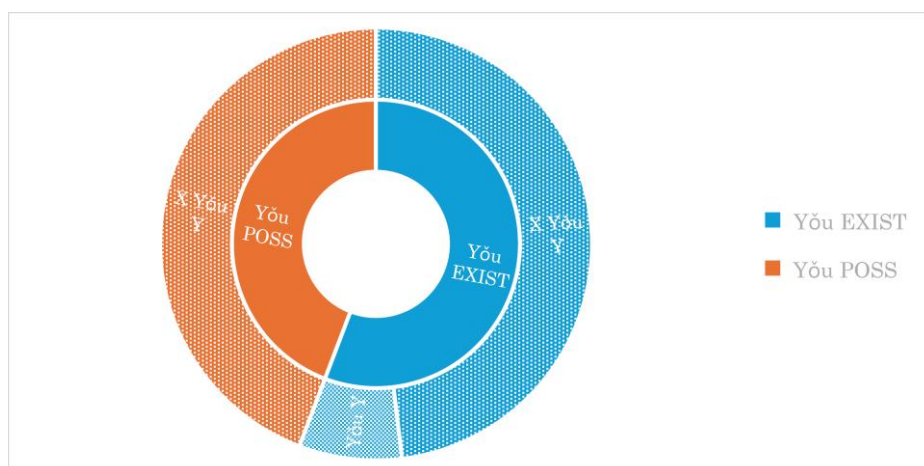
Advanced learners' outputs for both structures are presented in Table 9. Similar to beginners, advanced learners also refrained from erroneously using the "*yǒu* Y" structure to signify possession. However, a notable difference from beginners is observed in the output for *yǒu* [existence], wherein the typical "X *yǒu* Y" structure (17 of 36 samples, 47.22%) and the atypical "*yǒu* Y" structure (19 of 36 samples, 52.78%) are almost equally prevalent, with the latter even slightly outnumbering the former.

Table 9

Yǒu Structures Produced by Advanced Japanese CFL Learners

	X *Yǒu* Y	*Yǒu* Y	Total
Yǒu [existence]	17(47.22%)	19(52.78%)	36(100.00%)
Yǒu [possession]	21(100.00%)	0	21(100.00%)
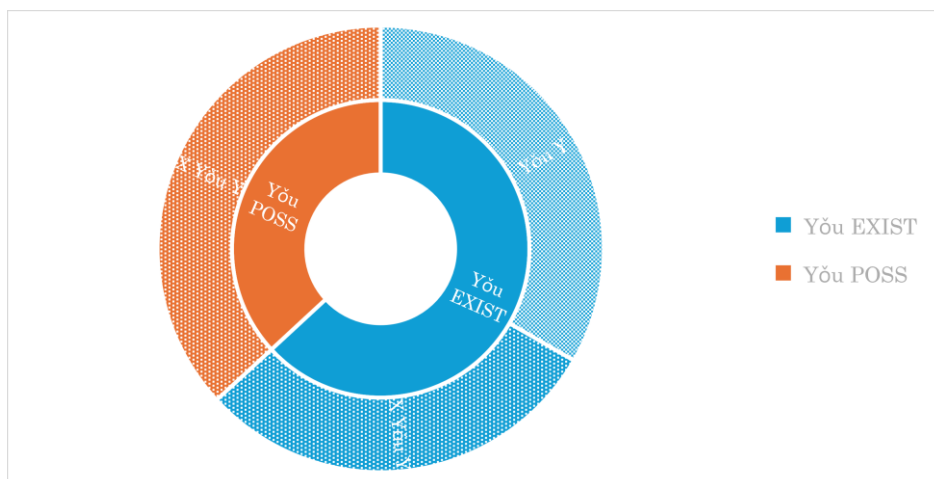
Through this investigation, we discern that advanced learners produce more instances of atypical "*yǒu* Y" structures than do beginners, corroborating our hypothesis that advanced learners, as observed in Section 4.1, exhibit a higher frequency of generating instances of *yǒu* [existence], attributable to their increased usage of atypical "*yǒu* Y" structures for expressing the concept of existence. In essence, relative to beginners, advanced learners demonstrate a more proficient command of the atypical "*yǒu* Y" structure.

Another contributing factor is the advanced learners' proficiency in expressing the existence of indefinite NPs. According to Lü (1980, p. 631), in the absence of a locative word preceding *yǒu* to denote existence, the meaning of *yǒu* closely approximates 'some' or 'uncertain', as illustrated in (28a) where "*yǒu rén*" means "someone', and in (28b) where "*yǒu yìtiān*" means 'one day'. Thus, it can be inferred that within the "Yǒu Y" structure used to express existence, "Y" represents an indefinite NP.

(28) a. <u>Yǒu   rén</u>   zhè-me   shuō-guo.
     Exist-V   someone   this way   say-PERF
     "Someone has said so."

   b. <u>Yǒu   yìtiān</u> tā   lái-de   tè bié   zǎo.
     Exist-V one day   he   come-ATTR especially   early
     "One day he arrived exceptionally early."

Additionally, Dong (2014) noted that in Modern Chinese, NPs following *yǒu* generally require a "Numeral + Classifier" with an indefinite referential function. The numeral *yī* 'one' may be omitted, but the classifier cannot; thus, NPs seldom appear in bare form after *yǒu*. Furthermore, Zhang et al. (2023) conducted a comparative study of the acquisition of the indefinite "Yī + Classifier + NP" structure by native Japanese and English speakers learning Chinese. They found that Japanese speakers tend to omit the "(Yī) + Classifier" before the NP, erroneously using bare nouns to express indefiniteness. Compared to native English speakers, native Japanese speakers learning Chinese have a weaker grasp of the "(Yī) + Classifier + NP" structure for expressing indefiniteness.

Through this investigative study, it is observed that compared to beginners, advanced learners are capable of employing the "*yǒu* Y" structure to express indefiniteness more frequently. This phenomenon reflects advanced Japanese CFL learners' potential mastery of Chinese indefinite expressions as their proficiency levels increase. As demonstrated in (29), all instances showcase advanced JFL learners correctly using the "*yǒu* Y" structure to denote indefiniteness. Nonetheless, there are instances where advanced Japanese CFL learners omitted the *yǒu* in "*yǒu* Y" while expressing indefiniteness (as in (30)), corroborating the observations of Zhang et al. (2023). However, such errors were minimal, with only one instance occurring (detailed in Section 4.2), leading us to consider the mastery of expressing the existence of indefinite NPs as a contributing factor to the advanced JFL learners' increased use of the "*yǒu* Y" structure.

(29) a. Èr bǎi shí wàn   bìng bú shì   shǎo-de   qián,
      2.1 million-SUBJ   not be-V   small-ATTR   money
      kěshì   wǒ   jué de   bù   jiāo gěi   Wú xiānsheng
      but   I-SUBJ   think-V   not   give to   Mr.Wu
      <u>yǒu</u>   liǎng-ge   hěn   dà-de   fēngxiǎn.   (TUFS_CH_012)
      exist-V   two-QUANT-CL   very   big-ATTR   risk
      "2.1 million is not a small amount of money, but I feel there are two significant risks in not paying Mr. Wu."
    b. Yīnwèi   <u>yǒu</u>-ge-rén   bù   xǐhuān   shòusī,
      Because   someone-SUBJ not   like-V   sushi-OBJ,
      wǒ   jiù   zhǔnbèi   Zhōngguó diǎnxīn hé   sānmíngzhì.   (TUFS_CH_005)
      I   so   prepare   Chinese dim sum and   sandwich
      "Because someone does not like sushi, I prepared Chinese dim sum and

sandwiches."

(30) Wǒmen   jiāoliú-de   Zhōngguó rén-zhong,

We-SUBJ   communicate-ATTR   Chinese-among-LOC,

yí-wèi   shūshu   duì-wǒmen   tèbié   rèqíng. (TUFS_CH_091)

one-QUANT-CL uncle-SUBJ   to-PREP-we-OBL especially enthusiastic.

Revise :

Wǒmen   jiāoliú-de   Zhōngguó rén-zhong,

We-SUBJ   communicate-ATTR   Chinese-among-LOC,

<u>yǒu</u>   yí-wèi   shūshu   duì-wǒmen   tèbié   rèqíng.

exist-V   one-QUANT-CL uncle-SUBJ   to-PREP-we-OBL especially enthusiastic.

"Among the Chinese people we communicate with, there is one uncle who is especially enthusiastic towards us."

Reiterating (14)

In summary, the reasons behind the advanced Japanese CFL learners' increased production of *yǒu* [existence] compared to beginners can be summarized as follows:

(31) a. Advanced Japanese CFL learners employed a higher number of atypical "*yǒu* Y" structures to express existence.

    b. The mastery of expressing the existence of indefinite NPs significantly influences the advanced Japanese CFL learners' propensity to utilize more "*yǒu* Y" structures.

6. Conclusion

This study elucidated the tendencies in production and misuse among beginning and advanced learners in a Japanese-Chinese two-way learner corpus. The results are as follows.

The study first showed that, based upon the scrutiny of Chinese compositions authored by advanced and primary learners (Japanese L1), there is a discernible advancement in the acquisition of *yǒu* [existence] at a more advanced stage. This progression is not solely quantified by the frequency of occurrences within the corpus, but also by learners' proficiency in assimilating a diverse range of structures in existential sentences. We further found that beginners predominantly grasped only the archetypal "X *yǒu* Y" construction, but advanced learners produce more atypical "*you* Y" structures than do beginners, which may be due to advanced learners having mastered the expression of

existential sentences with indefinite NPs.

In Japanese composition, a notable misuse is the omission of the particle *ni*. These sentences all correspond to the Chinese sentence structure "X *yǒu* Y." The reason why Japanse CFL learners tend to omit the particle *ni* in Japanese, which indicates in the Chinese "X *yǒu* Y" construction, is that "X" does not require a special grammatical form. However, in Japanese, a marked form with *ni* is necessary.

Although the differences between beginning and advanced learners have been elucidated, aspects such as the process and order of acquisition have not been explored. Additionally, in terms of the influence of the mother tongue, it is necessary to collect data from native speakers of linguistically and typologically distinct languages in future studies.

Acknowledgement

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