Error Analysis of *Sokuon* and *Choon* Used by Japanese Learners

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Abstract—**The research aimed to describe the errors and factors affecting errors made by learners in writing *hiragana* letters involving the elements of the word *sokuon* and *choon*. It also described the way to resolve errors made by the teacher and learners. This study was qualitative descriptive research, which was conducted in SMAN Rengat involving 20 Japanese language students of grade ten. The collected data were in the form of tests on *choon* and *sokuon* and interviews. It was ten questions for each session. The interview aimed to support errors and mistakes. The results show that the highest error in *sokuon* part was about 80% which was divided into 60% of errors and 20% of mistakes. The highest error in *choon* part was 75% which consisted of 55% of errors and 20% of mistakes. The lowest number of errors was 5% in *choon* and 35% in *sokuon*. The errors occurred because of students' lack of knowledge about *choon* and *sokuon*. The mistakes were more caused learner by less focus when students answered the questions provided. Besides, it was discovered that learners forget about the vocabulary in questions. To fix the errors, the students were helped by the teachers who gave more exercises of hiragana letters and became more creative in the learning process by using relevant media and various sources. Also, learners could do more exercise in reading and writing of hiragana letters, especially *choon* and *sokuon* in order to minimize the errors.**

Keywords: error, **choon***, mistakes,* **sokuon**

I. INTRODUCTION

Errors are generally found in the way of writing and reading Japanese characters. Errors are often encountered when learners are asked to read いって「*itte*」 but they read いつて「*itsute*」 for *sokuon* sounds and written いて, small" *tsu* "letters should be read as double consonants, but they read and write" *tsu* "letters that stand alone. While for the sound of *choon,* they are more likely to mention the letter written in front of the letter. For example, the word おはよう「*ohayoo*」 is read 「*ohayo-u*」 and written おはよ「*ohayo*. Previous research on error analysis has focused more on student errors because of a lack of knowledge about Japanese (Kamal, Firmansyah, & Setiana, 2017). However, there are also pronunciation mistakes that are also influenced by the mother tongue, such as long

vowel sounds which are difficult to recognize (Motohashi, 2012). Also, Maeda (2011) reveals errors that occur to students affected by teaching from the teacher. Therefore, this study discusses the *sokuon* and *choon* writing errors which are influenced by students and teachers. The error occurred in students of SMAN 1 Rengat.

A. Error Analysis

Tarigan (2011) argues that two terms in language errors, namely mistakes and errors. Errors can be caused by competency factors, meaning that the learner does not understand the linguistic system of the target language it uses. Error correction can be helped by the teacher, for example through remedial, writing or reading practice, communication practice, and so on. Mistakes will decrease if the level of understanding increases. Errors are generally caused by performance factors which are limitations in remembering something or forgetfulness that causes errors in pronouncing language sounds, words, word order, word pressure or sentences and so on.

There are two main factors as the causes of language errors, namely inter-language errors and intra language errors. According to Sakoda (2011), inter-language errors include language transfer (gengo ten i), Overgeneralization (Kajoo ippanka), Transfer of training (kunren-jo no Ten i), Learning strategies (Gakushuu sutorateji), Communication strategies (Komyunikeeshon) Sutorateji). Richard (as cited in Tarigan, 2011; Roidah, 2016) make categorizes intruder as an errors into overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concept of hypothesized

B. Choon and Sokuon

In addition, *choon* is expressed by adding **aiueo** vowel to the previous letter in hiragana and katakana, as adding sound that is released continuously without changing the shape of the mouth and not cut (Yasushi, Kazuo, & Osamu, 1990). *Choon* sound is counted as one *mora* (Kang, 2006; Takamizawa, 2006). Sutedi (2014) states that there are long vocal sounds (reaching two *mora*) and short ones, both have a function as a differentiator of the meaning of the word spoken. Vocal sounds occur because of the flow of air coming out of the lungs continues to vibrate the vocal cords. The vocal sound is determined by five things, namely the level of the tongue, the position of the tongue is the position of the tongue on the front or back, whether or not the shape of the lips, whether or not

related to the nasal cavity, vibrating vocal cords (Kamishim, as cited in Sutedi, 2014)

Dahidi and Sudjianto (2018) argue the double consonant in Japanese is known as *Sokuon* or often called *tsumaruon* which is a closed sound or a blocked sound. *Sokuon* is clearly visible when written in Latin letters. *Sokuon* does not contain vowels and cannot be syllable, and only contains consonants. *Sokuon* can be syllable if it has been joined by other existing syllables. *Sokuon* formed a mora, for example, よっか *Yokka*—two syllables three *mora*, びっくり *bikkuri*—three syllables four *mora*.

To be able to pronounce the sound of double consonants, it needs the help of one kana letter, namely "*tsu*", a small size, the size is written about a quarter of the normal kana The small "*tsu*" only helps to conclude the four consonants that follow the next kana sound, p, s, k, and t. Example: *Kippu* きっぷ, *Zasshi* ざっし, *Sekken* せっけん, *Suwatte* すわって. *Sokuon* is commonly used in the middle of a word, but there is also a *sokuon* that is used at the end of a word such as あっ. The use of *sokuon* does not function to show double consonants, it only signifies expressions or sentences that express a feeling, expression, or emotion (Dahidi & Sudjianto, 2018)

Japanese phonetics has five types of sound inhibition, namely / p /, / t /, / k /, / s /, / ʃ / contained in one word that is counted as one *mora*. For example: *happa* (leaf), *hatta* (traffic jam), *hakka* (ignition), *hassa* (departure), *hacchi* (arrival), *isshoni* (together) (Vance, 1987; Sutedi, 2014).

II. METHOD

This research was descriptive qualitative research, which described the data obtained from the research sample (Sutedi, 2018). Qualitative research has two objectives, namely to describe and uncover (to describe and explore), and describe and explain (to describe and explain) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001 in Sukmadinata, 2016).

There is no significant difference in error between *choon* and *sokuon* errors. The sample in this study was Japanese language learners in SMAN 1 Rengat, as many as 20 people who studied grade 10. This study had 10 questions. In addition to conducting tests, this research also supports interviews to support the hypotheses of the research conducted.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analisis whit Man-Whitney can be seen from the Table I, II, and III:

TABLE I. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
Value					
Choon	40	45.75	18.382	20	90
Sakuon	40	1.50	506	1	2

TABLE II. RANKS

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Value			
Choon	20	22.48	449.50
Sakuon	20	18.53	370.50
Total	40		

TABLE III. TEST STATISTICS

	Value
Mann-Whitney U	160. 500
Wilcoxon W	370. 500
Z	-1.085
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.278
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.289

a. Grouping Variable: *choon sokuon*

b. Not corrected for ties.

From the above output, it is known that the mean rank in the *choon* is 22.48 and the mean rank in *sokuon* is 18.53. Asymp. Sig value was 0.278. Because the value 0.278 is > 0.05, then in accordance with the basis of decision making in the Mann Whitney Test, it means that the initial hypothesis that many errors were found in the *choon* and *sokuon* were accepted. Acceptance of the initial hypothesis implies that there is no significant difference between the errors of *choon* and *sokuon* that occur in students of SMAN 1 Rengat.

More errors are found than mistakes in how to read and write vocabulary that contains elements of *choon* and *sokuon*. The details are as follows in Table IV:

TABLE IV. *CHOON* AND *SOKUON* ANALYSIS

No.	Sound		Percentage		Frequency& percentage of error		Frequency & percentage of mistake	
	Choon	*Sokuon*	*Choon*	*Sokuon*	*Choon*	*Sokuon*	*Choon*	*Sokuon*
1	O（さようなら）	K（かっこいい）	12 60%	14 70%	8 40%	8 40%	4 20%	6 30%
2	E（せんせい）	P（じゅうじじゅっぷん）	1 5%	9 45%	-	5 25%	1 5%	4 20%

3	I（いいえ、ちがいます）	T（かぶっています）	12 60%	16 80%	12 60%	12 60%	-	4 20%
4	E（おねえさん）	K（みっか）	15 75%	14 70%	11 55%	14 70%	4 20%	-
5	A（おかあさん）	P（きっぷ）	9 45%	11 55%	-	7 35%	9 45%	4 20%
6	A（おばあさん）	TS（よっつ）	11 55%	15 75%	8 40%	15 75%	3 15%	-
7	U（ゆうめい）	S（きっさてん）	9 45%	7 35%	9 45%	-	-	7 35%
8	I（ちいさい）	Sh（いっしょに）	14 70%	6 30%	8 40%	4 20%	6 30%	2 10%
9	U（せんぷうき）	S（いっさい）	6 30%	10 50%	3 15%	6 30%	3 15%	4 20%
10	O（りょうり）	T（いってください）	12 60%	14 70%	12 60%	9 45%	-	5 25%

Based on Table IV, the highest error rate is found in the third part of the *Sokuon* problem by 80%. The second highest is seen in the sixth question with a percentage of 75%. The lowest percentage of errors can be seen in the eighth question of 30%. Overall the most error rate is found in words or sentences that contain the word *sokuon*. Most errors are found in the error category error. This happens because the learner does not know the meaning of the word being asked and does not know the true rules of the Japanese language. So it is also found the category of overgeneralization and false concept hypothesis.

There is also an influence found in the learner's mother tongue, the Malay language. For example in the word that can not be observed in the sentence "will not do the task" which means that the person (implied subject) does not want to do the task assigned to him. But the pronunciation of the word can not be separated into two words/not//right/. This is said by the learner when reading the word みっか the mention should be /mikka/, but the learner mentions the word みっか to be two syllables that have pauses between one and the other so that the mention is heard */mik//ka.* In Malay, double consonants like this are often found but are pronounced the same as those written. So that these words are different words, whereas in Japanese, double consonants are pronounced in one word that cannot be separated from one another. If the word is separated, it will have a different meaning from the real meaning.

The highest *choon* error rate is found in the fourth question in the question section. Next to the ninth question with the percentage of 75% and 70%, respectively. Learners cannot distinguish between the writing of a *choon* sound and the non-*choon*. Meanwhile there are also learners who cannot distinguish the form of writing between the letters ね/ne/ and the letters ぬ/nu/. This is categorized due to lack of ability to remember learner's hiragana letters. Lack of ability to remember learners is caused by lack of time to practice writing and reading hiragana at home. The lowest percentage of *choon* errors is found in the second question, which is 5%. Mistakes that occur are mistakes that are mistakes, because learners doubt between the two words presented in the question.

In general, errors that occur in this study are errors due to the inability of learners to remember hiragana letters, also influenced by the learning process factors, there are materials that have been taught and some have not yet reduced the ability to understand questions by learners. Mistakes found are a factor of wrong performance in the learner, because they are influenced when answering questions the learner already feels tired (Kamal, Firmansyah, & Setiana, 2017).

(Kamal, Firmansyah, & Setiana 2017) said to reduce and prevent errors in writing *hiragana* requires the help of a teacher in this case the Japanese language teacher in the school. The way that the teacher can take through repeated exercises so that learners better understand the concepts and rules of writing *hiragana* letters, then actively explain about the rules in writing *hiragana* letters not only a few meetings in the classroom. According to Nurhadi (1995) there are several things that affect the learning outcomes of second languages, namely the classroom environment, the environment outside the classroom, the first language used by students. The classroom environment is a language learning environment that is intentionally created formally, namely language teaching led by a teacher or language tutor. Class environment is a form of language environment that is intentionally created with special characteristics. Usually teaching is emphasized on the mastery of grammar rules with the assumption that knowledge is the basis of one's language skills.

The opinion above is also supported by research Maeda (2011) reveals errors that occur in students affected by the teaching of the teacher. Pronouns obtained by students are influenced by the pronunciation of teachers at school, the pronunciation of teachers differs from native speakers. The teacher does not pay attention to the pronunciation of the native speaker, the teacher needs to improve his professionalism. Even inferior pronunciation is never a mistake. It is a student who has mastered pronunciation by self-study or other methods has mastered good English.

Teachers can provide time outside the existing learning times to teach phonetics in Japanese for example when extracurricular. In the learning process, teachers can use more interactive media so that learners are motivated to learn Japanese. The teacher makes relevant modules on how to read and write *hiragana* letters that can be used when teaching as teaching material. In addition, students can also take preventive measures so that these mistakes are not repeated by diligently asking the teacher or classmates if there is something that is not

understood from writing *hiragana* letters. Learners can also use school facilities to find out more about hiragana letters on the internet or other media.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that errors categorized as errors in reading and writing *hiragana* are caused by false concepts hypothesized or errors in understanding concepts, overgeneralization or excessive leveling and ignorance of rule restriction or student ignorance of the rules that apply in hiragana writing.

False concept hypothesized is an error happened due caused by the learner's ignorance of the *choon* and *sokuon* writing principle, in general, the learner does not know how to read and write *hiragana* letters in Japanese. Overgeneralization is a mistake made by learners as a leveling of *hiragana* letters. Learners are not able to distinguish the writing *hiragana* letters which are almost the same shape. Ignorance of rule restriction is an error that occurs due to the learner's ignorance of the rules that apply in writing *hiragana*, especially writing *choon and sokuon*. The rules contained in reading and writing *choon and sokuon* are applied by learners like the rules in their native language, namely Malay. In short, Malay is applied as a *choon and sokuon* rule.

This error can be corrected with the help of the teacher in this case, the Japanese language teacher in the school. Teachers can reproduce the practice of writing and reading *hiragana* letters especially those contained in the words *choon* and *sokuon*, using interactive media in the teaching and learning process and making modules that emphasize phonetics in Japanese. In this case, the creativity of the teacher is required both to improve the quality of the learning process or increase the ability of learners to master Japanese.

Learners can spend more time practicing reading and writing in hiragana letters especially those related to *choon* and *sokuon*. Students should more actively ask their instructors or friends and look for various sources about Japanese, especially hiragana letters related to *choon* and *sokuon*. This can reduce errors in reading and writing in general hiragana *choon* and *sokuon* in particular.

Implications for further research on the *choon* and *sokuon* can be carried out in a number of different schools to see aspects of the ability of learners and the teaching and learning process by teachers who are also different. So they can find out more mistakes in terms of learners and instructors. The test used should use chokai. Listen to the learner a few conversations in Japanese, then learners write the discourse that is heard on the answer sheet. After that, the students are asked to read the answers they have written. Research like this can measure four language skills simultaneously.

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