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Pronunciation

Errors Specific of Japanese Speakers of English

Bachelor's Diploma Thesis

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*I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently,
using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.*

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Author's signature

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Introduction

English has over the last centuries become very close to be the ultimate universal tool for intercultural communication. As such it is taught world-wide from a very young age. In many countries around the world English is used as *lingua franca* and in international communication the common language is almost always English even in situations where none of the participants is a native speaker of English (Cruttenden, 2014, p. 6). As such it is crucial for the participants to be able to understand each other and so listening comprehension and intelligible pronunciation are arguably the quintessential skills of intercultural communication. This thesis focuses on pronunciation as the key factor for communicating a message to its recipient.

As native speakers we can quite easily spot a foreigner, who has not mastered our native language. Many people can even guess, based on previous experience and other factors, what a foreigners native tongue is. Hence we could assume that every language has a certain set of markers specific of the given language – native speakers of English can distinguish for example a Spanish speaker from a German or a Japanese speaker. The aim of the thesis is to analyse speech samples of Japanese speakers at different proficiency levels and assess pronunciation habits and errors. In this thesis I will attempt to answer following questions: *Which pronunciation errors are typical of Japanese speakers? Which pronunciation errors are easily dropped over time and which errors are more difficult to eliminate? Can prevailing errors be considered a typical set of errors typical of Japanese language?*

The theoretical part of the thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter introduces the cultural context. Describes language education in Japan and briefly introduces the Japanese language. The following chapter deals with the role and importance of pronunciation. The most important chapter of the theoretical section is the third chapter, which pursues the comparison of phonetic systems of both languages – English and Japanese. The chapter will compare both segmental features, such as vowels, diphthongs and consonants, and will touch upon suprasegmental features. The chapter is concluded with a polemic about any presumed difficulties Japanese English speakers may encounter in reality.

The practical section will attempt to test the hypotheses presented in the theoretical section with help of two small test groups of Japanese English speakers. The research derives inspiration and methodology from Derwing and Murray's *"Second language accent and pronunciation teaching: A research-based approach"* (2005). The research participants were split into two small test groups of six students each based on the time they spent studying English. Every participant is asked to provide a recording of a short article, which is designed in order to be phonetically varied. Pronunciation errors and habits of both groups are to be assessed and provided with a commentary. General American accent (GA) will be used as a reference model for all recordings as GA is more common in Japan as well as in other East-Asian countries (Cruttenden, 2014, p. 87).

There is a number of reasons Japanese students were chosen for this study. Japanese is very different from any Indo-European language in all respects from lexis, syntactical structure, pronunciation and more, and as such I expect to come to

a find which could be potentially utilized by English teachers in Japan as well as Japanese students themselves as the demand for good English communication skills is on the rise in Japan more than ever before. The second reason is based on my personal observations - informal interviews with Japanese students and English teachers from Japan and other sources such as YouTube video logs (That Japanese Man Yuta). Many of such sources claim that pronunciation and other key communication skills are of secondary importance and the emphasis is on grammar and lexis. Therefore, a brief comparison of two groups of different proficiency levels could pave a way for a more complex research.

It is necessary to note that the data provided by this research is not sufficient to be considered a reliable representation of Japanese English speakers as the test groups are statistically too insignificant and the test subjects are not diversified for the research to be considered comprehensive. It is meant only as a template or a suggestion for a follow-up, more detailed research.

1 Cultural context

In order to consider learning English by the Japanese and trace its peculiarities it is firstly crucial to get a deeper understanding of the teaching context and its specific features. The descriptions, which emerge from a consideration of unique settings, influencing the context of language learning, and the impact they have on English of non-native speakers, are called sociolinguistic profiles. (Berns, 1990, p.49) According to this concept, certain predispositions arising for teaching English in foreign countries, where English is not the native language.

“For better context In 1951, when a peace treaty was concluded between Japan and the Allied Powers, Japan concluded another treaty with the United States related to the mutual cooperation and security between the two countries (Buruma, 2003; Wikipedia, 2004). Although in 1952 Japan was granted independence from the U.S., because of this treaty, the American military has had a presence in Japan for sixty years. This situation did, however, give Japan an opportunity to develop its own economy instead of being burdened by the expenses of protecting itself militarily in the region. This led to the so-called ‘Economic Miracle’ in which the Japanese economy grew rapidly from 1955 for almost twenty years until the 1970s.” (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006, 280) The era mentioned above was arguably the most important episode in the modern history of Japan. Not only did Japan arise from post-war poverty, but thanks to the influence of American troops and everything they brought with them from The United States Japan got culturally much closer to the western world.

To start with, the communication styles of Japanese and Westerners are completely different in general, which affects teaching approach significantly. (Abe, 2013, p.49) According to Abe (2013), while the mentality of the majority of Japanese students is more a group-oriented, English-speaking Western students are rather individually oriented in class (p. 52). Thus, individual responses or oral presentations, that are inevitable for English language practicing, can be quite stressful for language-learners. Therefore, teachers have adapted their ways of teaching to Japanese students and put more highlight on group work. It is specifically pointed out, that a flexible approach is needed in the classroom: 'learner-centered some of the time and teacher-centered at other times, depending on the type of activities employed' (Jenkins, 2009, p. 143).

Furthermore, English students that study English devote substantial amount of time to learning cultural aspects of the language, that is focusing on reading about cultures of the U.S.A. and the U.K. Notably, this cultural studying is frequently taught as an example of how students are supposed to behave and speak when they are communicating in English. Thus, having a significant gap between Western and Asian cultural values, the tremendous difference between ways of thinking, that are expected from students, leads to overall dissatisfaction about their language skills when they cannot comply with studied standards. (Tran, 2013; Tsui et al., 2017)

The dire need for a reformed system of education stimulated predominantly the attitude of teachers in classes. "From the beginning, students were encouraged to think outside of the traditional Japanese style of organization while writing. This style

is known as the *ki sho ten ketsu* style of writing, and has marked differences between writing in English and writing in Japanese.” (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006, 279)

Another unique feature of teaching English in Japanese environment is the general approach to English as the second language. As many as 68% in Japanese urban schools is taught with the inclusion of a native speaker in the educational process, like lessons conducted by those for whom English is the mother language, or simply webinars or workshops. (Ram Ashish, 2014) That is the result of three main postulates typical for teaching Japanese students:

1. English is the American language.
2. To speak English is to act like an American.
3. If teachers fail to raise students that would use American English patterns, the issue would be not in the goal model but rather in quality control. Consequently, quality control efforts should be increased, for example, by earlier introduction of English in the curriculum or else by involving native speakers more. (Honna, Takeshita, 2014, p.69)

In Japan English is studied as a tool of international communication, and thus students are expected to generate high level of language expertise, especially taking into account the fact, that on average Japanese students study English for at least 8 years. This is counterproductive to Japan’s English language teaching endeavor, which places more importance on using Japanese patterns in English, not American English. (Glenn, 2014, p.181) It comes as no surprise, that, being unable to deliver

American pronunciation and American English patterns in their speech, students develop a feeling of inferiority and avoid speaking.

1.2 The Japanese language

The main scope of the present thesis is English and its pronunciation. It is, however, important to explain some of the most elemental aspects of Japanese for proper understanding of the topic. This chapter will very briefly introduce the language.

It is quite predictable that both of these languages, as they come from a vastly different language family, will differ in many linguistic categories, which may then result in specific language errors typically present in learners of the English language who originate from Japan. Therefore, the focus of this section will lay on two important points. First, linguistic elements of the Japan language will be explained and showcased, and second, these elements will be compared to their counterparts in the English language – which shall plainly display differences in these two languages, aiding the scholars who intend to pursue this topic in greater depth.

Briefly, the first obvious difference, as mentioned above, is the fact that both of these languages belong in a different language family. English language comes from the Indo-European language family, whereas Japanese language sits firmly in the Japonic Language family. Japonic Language family is isolated, as opposed to the Indo-European Language family which envelops a vast number of languages – more than four hundred of them (ETHNOLOGUE), and therefore contains some language elements unique to itself.

Japonic Language family includes only the Japanese language and Ryukyuan languages. For the sake of completeness of this thesis, a piece of information will be

present about these as well, even though it will be presented only superficially, as the focus on this thesis lies on the Japanese language only. Ryukyuan languages are endangered as a consequence of the influence from the mainland Japan and the language shift as whole. In fact, the number of fluent speakers of these languages severely decreases every year, since Japanese language is both learnt in schools and used in official speech, while Ryukyuan languages are spoken mostly in the home of family only, as a sort of a “community language”. (ENDANGERED) This results from the fact that Ryukyuan languages have never been modernized, and neither standard language nor written varieties of such presently exist. All of it was preserved only via the oral tradition, and the lexicon have also never been updated to a level which could be applicable in the modern world. These languages are mostly treated as a dialect nowadays. (165 Heinrich, Ishihara)

One of the most striking aspects of the Japanese is the fact that three scripts are in use simultaneously. This differs from many other languages which use more than one script, for example, the Georgian language, in which two of three scripts used there are nowadays applied only by the church, and even though they are learnt in schools, it is only at a very basic level. (UNESCO)

In Japan though, proper understanding of every script is necessary in a daily life. These scripts are called Hiragana (ひらがな), Katakana (カタカナ) and Kanji (漢字). Rewriting of Japanese into Latin script is also noticeably present in the Japan, known as a rōmaji, however, the focus will be on the native scripts of the country. Nevertheless, since Japanese natives encounter the rōmaji daily, the learning

difficulties present when learning to write in the English language are minimal compared to the learning of spoken language. (ESL)

Both of these syllabaries can be used to transcribe Japanese words into written text, but each of them is used in a different way. While hiragana is used mainly for the particles, suffixes and also for the successful learning of how to actually write and understand Kanji, katakana is used for onomatopoeia, for rewriting foreign loan words into Japanese and also in the scientific field. (ESL) Basically, all scientific and more specialized terms like botanical names, technical or medical terms or business language is written in Katakana.

Both Hiragana and Katakana are syllabaries, representing the syllables used in script. Katakana is used mainly as a means to rewrite loan words borrowed from the other languages, whereas Hiragana serves primarily for inflection. Through the medium of Hiragana, Kanji is learnt. Kanji originates from the adoption of Chinese logographic symbols, which were brought to Japan by a Buddhist monk. Kanji is basically used for the root words, and between 2000 and 3000 of the signs is used commonly in the daily life. (ESL)

2 Role of Pronunciation

This current Heisei Era (8.1. 1989 – 30.4. 2019) seems to have reached a new peak in English language education in Japan. English at schools, colleges, universities and the growing private language school market is enormously popular and appears to be responding to the practical needs of the business community. (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006, 278)

There are no doubts about the importance of English world-wide and is the most important medium through which majority of international communication is conveyed. Apart from conveying the intended message there are many other benefits to proper pronunciation. One of such benefits is social prestige, even though it is not the case everywhere. Tsutomu Akamatsu argues that in English, learning the standard pronunciation carries social value. However, this is the case in the United Kingdom only. In the United States, for example, anyone speaking RP English is considered to be on the same social level as a user of any other accent. This phenomenon could be explained by an ironic scarcity of users of RP in the UK which is around 3 to 4% of the total population.

Standard Japanese pronunciation, in comparison does not carry such prestigious status. The reason behind this could be, again, explained through scarcity. There are considerably more people who use Standard Japanese pronunciation and they can be found in all levels of society (Akamatsu, 1997, p.7)

As for learning pronunciation as a part of language acquisition there is a common consensus that, together with listening comprehension these two skills are quintessential for mastering a language.

3 English and Japanese Sound Systems Comparison

The third chapter of the thesis focuses on the nature of the sound system of English. At the same time it compares its features with the Japanese sound system and highlights the differences. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section describes the segmental features – vowels, consonants, and diphthongs are described in depth as they are a quintessential part of the research. The second section will discuss suprasegmental features.

3.1 Segmental features

The phonic elements like vowels, consonants and semivowels are (...) entities, which occur sequentially in connected speech and therefore may be identified through the analytical process of segmentation. (Akamatsu, 1997, p. 21-22) In other words, Akamatsu defines segmental features as basic building elements through which more complex structures can be built. This definition is being constantly questioned by academics for various reasons, but for the purposes of this thesis the definition is sufficient as the prime objective of the research itself is an analysis of segmental features in utterances of Japanese English learners. This chapter will describe fundamental differences between segmental features such as vowels, consonants and diphthongs of English and Japanese.

3.1.1 Vowels and Diphthongs

According to Cruttenden vowels are normally produced by “voiced egressive airstream, without any closure or narrowing such as would result in the noise component characteristic

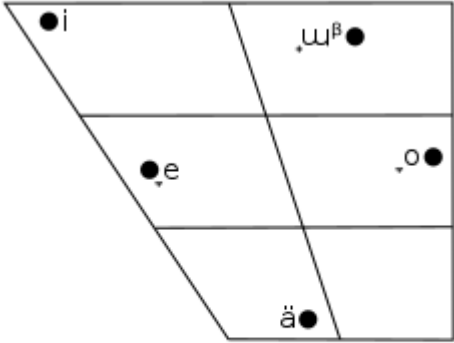
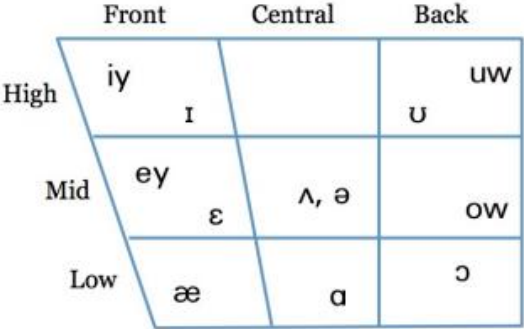
of many consonantal sounds; moreover, the escape of the air is characteristically accomplished in an unimpeded way over the middle line of tongue.” (Cruttenden, 2014, p. 34) The definition of vowels is ambiguous, as there are generally two ways to define them. This is the phonetical approach. The phonological approach is systematic and considers a vowel to be a phonic part of asyllable, which is in a centre, while consonants are on the edge of it (Cruttenden, 2014, p.27).

This section presents the Standard American vowels for reference and further elaborates on articulatory regions of the Japanese vowels. According to Celce-Murcia there are eleven vowels in SA English. Those form additional three diphthongs. The following table represents vowels marked with red dots; and diphthongs marked with green dots.

(Fig. 1 Vowels of American English; Yoshida, Marla. The Vowels of American English. - edited)

Vowels of American English			
Example	Symbols	Example	Symbols
beat	/iy/ /i:/ ●	boot	/uw/ /u:/ ●
bit	/ɪ/ /i/ ●	book	/ʊ/ /u/ ●
bait	/ey/ /eɪ/ ●	boat	/ow/ /ou/ ●
bet	/ɛ/ /e/ ●	bought	/ɔ/ /ɔ:/ ●
bat	/æ/ /æ/ ●	box	/ɑ/ /a/ ●
but	/ʌ/ /ə/ ●	by	/ay/ /ai/ /aɪ/ ●
sofa	/ə/ /ə/	cow	/aw/ /au/ /aʊ/ ●
her	/ə/ /ɜ/ /ər/ /ɜr/	boy	/oy/ /ɔy/ /ɔi/ /ɔɪ/ ●

(Fig. 2 Vowels of American English 2; Yoshida, Marla. The Vowels of American English)



The vowels of Standard Japanese on a vowel chart. Adapted from Okada (1999:117).

The diagrams above represent the Standard American (left) and Japanese (right) pronunciation charts.

Japanese, in comparison to Standard American, uses only five simple vowels. It is expected of the reader to be familiar with the English vowel articulatory regions. The following text will describe the Japanese simple vowels. The entirety of the following text on vowels is based on Tsutomu Akamatsu’s Japanese Phonetics (Akamatsu, 1997, p. 30-34).

/i/ close front

/e/ front mid

/a/ open

/o/ back mid

/u/ close back

/i/ - The Japanese /i/ is similar to French or Italian /i/. English native speakers may struggle with pronunciation. It should not be compared with English /ɪ/ as in /kɪt/, neither /i/ as in /hapi/ nor long /i:/ as in /i:t/.

“The jaw is only slightly open, with the lower jaw being raised. Front of the tongue is raised close to the hard palate.”

/u/ - The mouth is just as slightly open as when /i/ is articulated. The back of the tongue is raised fairly close to the soft palate. /u/ resembles shortened version of vowels in words such as /fu:d/ or /mu:d/.

/e/ - The mouth is a little open with a lowering of the jaw, which in turn allows the tongue to lower as well. It is unquestionably best to compare the Japanese /e/ with the English vowel as in /bed/.

/o/ - The mouth is a little open with a lowering of the jaw, which in turn allows the tongue to lower as well, but the back of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate. There is no resemblance of Japanese /o/ with any of the English phonemes. Unlike the English counterparts, Japanese /o/ is not rounded. Also, it is a monothong whose quality should be invariable throughout its articulation.

/a/ - The mouth is fairly open, as the jaw is reasonably lowered. The tongue is lowered and the highest point of the tongue is on the central part of the tongue. The lips are naturally held. In Received Pronunciation it is close to /mɑ:st/ with the vowel slightly closer to /ɑ/.

Akamatsu also notes that Japanese, unlike English, does not use schwa /ə/ and is seriously detrimental to verbal communication as Japanese speakers could only make a guess which one of the Japanese five vowels was meant.

3.1.2 Consonants

This section will describe the differences between consonants used occurring in Standard American English and Japanese. Only consonants which may be relevant for the purposes of the research will be described in depth.

As was discussed in the chapter on Japanese language Japanese is bound to be very different from English due to the nature of the script that is being used. Unlike in English, Japanese does not have any standalone consonants except but one exception - *h* [n].

English Consonants

Place of Articulation		Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Alveolar	Alveopalatal	Velar	Glottal
Manner of Articulation								
Stops	Voiceless	p			t		k	
	Voiced	b			d		g	
Fricatives	Voiceless		f	θ	s	ʃ		h
	Voiced		v	ð	z	ʒ		
Affricates	Voiceless					tʃ		
	Voiced					dʒ		
Nasals		m			n			
Retroflex Liquid					r			
Lateral Liquid					l			

(Tab. 1 Ohata, 2004, p. 29-41)

Place of Articulation		Bilabial	Alveolar	Alveopalatal	Velar	Glottal
Manner of Articulation						
Stops	Voiceless	p	t		k	
	Voiced	b	d		g	
Fricatives	Voiceless	Φ	s	ç		h
	Voiced		z			
Nasals		m	n			
Liquids (Approximants)			r			

(Tab. 2 Ohata, 2004, p. 29-41)

The following text shall focus on individual consonants deemed as potentially problematic either for English speakers attempting to speak Japanese, or vice versa. Chosen consonants are expected to appear in the chapter evaluating the research.

The following text on consonants articulation is based on Tsutomu Akamatsu's Japanese Phonetics (Akamatsu, 1997, p. 86-133) in its entirety.

/ŋ/ uvular nasal Voiced. The soft palate is in its lowered position and its end droops slightly forward. All the air coming up flows into the nasal cavity. The tongue is not held tight, but the back of the tongue is brought slightly upward and backward. As a result, a closure is formed between the hindmost part of the back of the tongue and uvula. A vast majority of foreign learners will not have learnt any consonant similar to / ŋ /. The closest consonant an English speaker can naturally produce is velar nasal / ŋ /.

/ɾ/ alveolar tap Voiced. The rims of both sides the tongue are raised as to touch the teeth-ridge. The front teeth-ridge is left free from contact with the tongue, however, in the first instance. The tip of the tongue is quickly raised, poised at a short distance behind the teeth ridge, then is made to shoot downward and forward to tap the teeth-ridge once. The contact between the two articular should be momentary and light. The alveolar tap occurs in English rather often as it is employed while t-flapping – words such as butter.

/ç/ alveopalatal fricative Voiceless. The blade of the tongue is raised toward the hinder part of the teeth-ridge and the front of the tongue toward the hard palate to form a narrow channel which is relatively broad sideways but relatively short in front-back direction. The tip of the tongue is kept low behind the lower front teeth. Compared to English /ʃ/ the pitch is higher and the consonant sounds "lighter". Lips are always relaxed, or in neutral position unlike in English, where the speaker may tend to protrude lips forward.

/ɸ/ bilabial fricative The air flows into the oral cavity and advances until it reaches the lips, which are approximated (i.e. brought near each other) without, however, pressing them together to create a bilabial closure. It is essential that both lips are involved in articulation. English speakers tend to articulate /f/ instead of /ɸ/.

3.2 Suprasegmental features

Akamatsu's definition of segmental features also elaborates on suprasegmentals as overlying features of connected segments of speech (Akamatsu, 1997, 22). In other words, suprasegmental features are larger constructs composed of multiple segmented elements and their function cannot be observed on an individual segment. It is generally easier to focus on one problem at a time. The same applies for pronunciation. English is a very challenging language to master in this regard. As Murcia states in English spoken discourse words are not produced in isolated fashion but rather have a tendency to "run together". This phenomenon is generally referred to as connected speech (Murcia, 2016, p. 163). Japanese and English are both very different languages in many respects.

Both languages use stress in utterances to highlight certain parts of the speech, but the use of stress is very different. Cruttenden distinguishes two varieties of how languages manifest word and sentence accent. English is a stress accented language, whilst Japanese pitch accented language (Cruttenden, 2014, p. 282-288).

Intonation can very dramatically change the entire meaning of an entire utterance. Cruttenden characterises intonation as a fundamental frequency which is perceived by listeners as pitch (Cruttenden, 2014, p. 277). He also argues, that language learner ought not to make conscious attempts to use native speaker's pattern with exception of word stresses.

3.3 Presumed problems

This chapter follows the sound systems comparisons and discusses sounds, which may prove difficult to pronounce and use in an active conversation for a Japanese English learner. The following table shows sounds shared by the two languages.

Vowel	English	Japanese	Consonant	English	Japanese
i	√	√	B	√	√
i:	√	√	P	√	√
u	√	√	M	√	√
u:	√	√	W	√	√
e	√	√	V	√	
ɔ:	√		F	√	
ɒ	√		Ð	√	
ɜ:	√		θ	√	
ʌ	√		D	√	√
æ	√		T	√	√
ə	√		Z	√	√
a:	√	√	S	√	√
a		√	N	√	√
o		√	L	√	
o:		√	ʒ	√	
e:		√	ʃ	√	√
			dʒ	√	√
			tʃ	√	√
			R	√	√
			J	√	√
			G	√	√
			K	√	√
			ŋ	√	
			H	√	√

(Tab. 3 Sound Comparison; Bada, 2001, p. 4)

The table shows that even though a number of phonemes overlap, there is a significant amount of differences between the two languages. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that sounds, which do not have any similar counterpart in the other language, will pose a challenge for the language learners. This chapter shall discuss how could be missing phonetic elements interpreted in English by a Japanese English learner.

The first column of the table compares vowel presence. It is apparent that English has considerably more vowel allophones than Japanese and as such Japanese speakers may tend to use a phoneme, which is closes to the Japanese version. Vowels, in terms of articulatory regions, are not too different and so they may not impede intelligibility. The vowels, however, may function as insertion vowels. Japanese language consonants are in most of the cases paired with a vowel. This phenomenon is quite likely to transgress into the recordings in words with clustered consonants together. For example pumpkin.

However, consonants are much more varied and may result in utterances which are unintelligible. Well known problematic examples are lateral and rhotic liquid consonants. Since Japanese has only a single liquid the alveolar flap /r/ is expected to be used as a substitute for both lateral and rhotic liquid consonants.

Another case of generally very problematic consonants are dental fricatives /ð/ and /θ/. Neither of them has a similar phoneme in Japanese and the articulatory regions are uncommon for Japanese. The inexperience speaker may use alternative places of articulation, which are closest to dental fricatives – presumably alveolar fricatives /s/ and /z/. Consonants /ç/ and /ʃ/ and their means of articulation are very close no one another. They sound very similar and may be easily overlooked. English /f/ may be pronounced as a bilabial fricative /ϕ /, again, due to the proximity of articulatory regions.

Japanese consonants generally form pairs with vowels. The only exception to the rule is *h* [ŋ] – uvular nasal, which is different from the English alveolar nasal /n/. This consonant is typically in final position and may be used by a Japanese speaker in English as well.

This list of potential mistakes is by no mean exhaustive, because ultimately it depends on the speakers. The above mentioned mistakes are expected to be fairly commonly found in the recordings analysed in the research section of the present thesis.

4 Research

The third section of the thesis will elaborate on the findings of the author of the thesis. First, it introduces research methods used. The main body of this section is devoted to analysis of gathered speech samples and the last part concludes the findings.

“Data collection should be rigorous and neutral rather than selective and biased. For example, classroom observations of particular error patterns, accompanied by analysts’ commentaries on learner output, are valid ways of documenting aspects of pronunciation ...” (Derwing, Tracey M., and Murray J. Munro, 2005, p. 381). The research section of this thesis was inspired by suggestions mentioned by Derwing and Murray. Pronunciation of hiragana is written in square brackets using Hepburn’s transcription.

4.1 Research Goals

The goal of this research is to answer the following questions:

- 1) Which pronunciation errors are typical of Japanese speakers?
- 2) Which pronunciation errors are easily dropped over time and which errors are more difficult to eliminate?
- 3) Can prevailing errors be considered a typical set of errors typical of Japanese language?

The objective is it reveals features which distinguish two different groups of English speakers and explain those features by tying them back to speakers’ mother tongue.

4.2 Research Methods

The participants of the research are 12 young Japanese students split into two test groups. The first test group consists of 6 high school students 14 to 15 years old with 3 to 4 years of studying English. They were picked at random from classes at Zushi Kaisei Senior High School. All of them had participated in a school trip to Australia with little to none any other experience from abroad. None of the participants is taking any extracurricular English classes. The second group of students consist of university students 18 to 23 years old with 5 to 10 years of studying English. The group 2 participants were chosen based on their previous experience with staying abroad for a long period of time where they were forced to communicate in English in a multinational environment. All of the participants are taking, or did take English classes at their respective universities. No students of English major participated in the research. Both groups were selected so that each student of the respective group have had as equal opportunities to develop their language skills as possible in terms of opportunities to communicate with native speakers, education and their surroundings.

The participants were asked to speak freely for a short period of time in order to record their unguided speech, but were excluded from the research due to nervousness of majority Group 1 participants, who were unable to provide any measurable data. Then both groups were to provide a recording of a short text (Joke, YouTube), which was modified in order to include every basic phoneme found in English (App. 1). Also, the text was chosen to be a humorous story in order to keep the readers interested and focused. This data collection method is based on Jacquelyn Schachter recommendation as observing only errors that occur in natural productions conceal underlying processes because of learner avoidance strategies. (Schachter, 1974, p.205 - 214) Each student was instructed to read the text twice

– the first reading was read silently and served only as a tool to get the student familiar with the text.

Before the recording session every student was thoroughly informed both in English and Japanese about the purpose of the recording and the goal of the research. Each participant signed a consent form and was reassured of anonymity as the only personal data gathered concerned participant’s age, gender, and years of exposure to the English language and, for university students, major.

The recordings are to be phonetically transcribed and any errors in pronunciation will be highlighted in red colour. The primary targets are segmental features, consonants and vowels in particular. Supra-segmental features are of secondary importance as the text was not designed to observe such features in a satisfactory extent. English proficiency level of the Group 1 participants is not high enough to allow such analysis. Supra-segmental are going to be briefly commented upon, but will not be reflected in the transcriptions. The final count of phonemes which are typical of Japanese language present in the recording from both groups will be compared. Each group’s results will be commented upon and then a conclusion is drawn.

Tab. 4 Table of participants – Group 1

Group 1	1	2	3	4	5	6
Age	15	15	15	15	15	14
Years of Exposure	4	3	4	4	4	3
Gender	M	M	M	M	M	M
Major	HS	HS	HS	HS	HS	HS

Tab. 5 Table of participants – Group 2

Group 2	7	8	9	10	11	12
Age	21	21	20	23	18	18
Years of Exposure	10	11	5	8	7	7
Gender	F	F	M	M	M	M
Major	Design	Art	Architecture	Finance	Czech	Czech

4.3 Recordings Analyses

The text for the recording was chosen for a number of reasons. The most important aspect is phonetic diversity. The text contains advanced vocabulary and is generally challenging for not-so-advanced speakers, thus frequent mispronunciation, especially in Group 1 recordings, is to be expected. The reference phonetic transcription in Standard American accent is presented first. Standard American accent was chosen as it is the more common accent taught in Japanese school, as discussed in theoretical part, and majority of the interviewed students adhere to it. RP English pronunciation is marked as incorrect. The recordings themselves are provided on the attached CD in mp3 format. The text modified for the research follows together with an IPA transcription:

A zany blonde and a redhead have a ranch. They have just lost their very old bull. The women need to buy another, but only have five hundred dollars in paper notes. The redhead tells the blonde-haired girl, "Tomorrow early in the morning I will go to

the city market nearby and see if I can find one for under that amount. If I can, I will send you a telegram with instructions." She walks out of the door, goes to the market and finds one for four hundred ninety-nine dollars. Having only one dollar left, she goes to the telegraph office house and with fear finds out that it usually costs one dollar per damned word. 'Oh, shoot!' she is stumped on how to tell the blonde to join her and bring the father's truck and trailer. She puts on her thinking hat and, finally, she proposes the European telegraph operator Lisa Edwards to send the word "comfortable." Skeptical, the operator asks, "How will she know to come with the trailer from just that word?" The redhead replies, "She's a blonde so she reads slowly: 'Come for ta bull.'" Then, she quickly exits.

ə 'zeɪni blɑ:nd ənd ə 'red ,hed hæv ə ræntʃ. ðeɪ hæv dʒæst lɒst ðeə 'veri ɔʊld bʊl. ðə 'wɪmən nɪd tə baɪ ə 'nʌðər, bət 'oʊnli hæv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'dɑ:ləz ɪn 'peɪpə-
nɒʊts. ðə 'red ,hed telz ðə blɑ:nd-hɛrd gɜ:l, "tə 'mɑ:rou 'ɜ:li ɪn ðə 'mɑ:rnɪŋ aɪ wɪl
gou tə ðə 'sɪt.i 'mɑ:rkət 'nɪr baɪ ən si ɪf aɪ kæn faɪnd wʌn fə 'lʌndə ðæt
ə 'maʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl send ju ə 'telə ,græm wɪð ɪn 'strʌkfənz." ʃi wɑ:ks aʊt
əv ðə dɔ:r, gouz tə ðə 'mɑ:rkɪt ən faɪndz wʌn fə fɔ:r 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnti-naɪn
'dɑ:ləz. 'hævnɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'dɑ:lər left, ʃi gouz tə ðə 'telə ,græf 'ɑ:fɪs haʊs ən
wɪð fɪr faɪndz aʊt ðæt ɪt 'ju:zʊəli kɑ:sts wʌn 'dɑ:lə pə dæmd wɜ:d. ɔʊ, ʃu:t!' ʃi
əz stʌmpt ən haʊ tə tel ðə blɑ:nd tə dʒɔɪn hɛ ən brɪŋ ðə 'fɑ:ðəz trʌk ən 'treɪlə.
ʃi pʊts ən hɛ 'θɪŋkɪŋ hæt ænd, 'faɪnəli, ʃi prə 'pouzɪz ðə 'jʊrə 'piən 'telə ,græf
'apərəɪtə lɪsə ɛdwədz tə send ðə wɜ:d "kʌmfə-təbəl." skeptɪkəl, ði apərəɪtə-
æskz, "haʊ wɪl ʃi nɒʊ tə kʌm wɪð ðə 'treɪlə frəm dʒæst ðæt wɜ:d?" ðə 'red ,hed
rɪ 'plaɪz, "ʃɪz ə blɑ:nd soʊ ʃi rɪdz 'sləʊli: kʌm fə tə bʊl." ðen, ʃi 'kwɪkli 'egzɪts.

Following the reference transcription there are transcriptions of the twelve recordings. Each recording is commented upon and mispronounced phenomena are explained. It is important to note that, as mentioned in theoretical part – consonants, /r/ sound is in Japanese often flapped.

4.3.1 Group 1

Participants in this group are high school students after approximately 3 years of studying English. It is reasonable to expect frequent mispronunciations and frequent use of prosthetic phonemes and avoidance strategies. Students are expected to struggle with words containing multiple clustered consonants such as *damned*, or *sceptical*.

Recording 1

ə 'dʒʌni blɒndɛ ɛndɔ a 'rɪd, hɛd hæv ə ræntʃ. ðeɪ hæv dʒæst lɒst dɛə 'vɛrɪ old bʊl. dɛə 'wɪmən
 nid tʃw baɪ ə 'nʌðə, bʌt 'oʊnri hʌv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'da:rəz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. dʒə 'rɛd, hɛd
 tɛldz ðə brɑ:ndɛ-hɛəd gɜ:l, " tə'mɔ:roʊ 'ɜli ɪn ðə 'mɔ:_nɪŋk aɪ wɪr goʊ tʃə dʒə 'ʃɪ:ci
 'mɑ:rkət 'jɪr baɪ ən ʃɪ ɪf aɪ kən faɪnd wʌn fə 'ʌdə ðæt ə'maʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl
 sendʒ jʊ ə 'tɛrɛ,grʌmʊ wɪz ɪn'strʌkʃənz." ʃɪ wɑ:ks aʊt əv dɛ dɔ:r, goʊdz tɛ dɛ 'mɑ:_kɪt
 ənd faɪnts wʌn fə fɔ:r 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnɪ-naɪn 'da:rəz. 'hævɪŋg 'oʊnli vʌn 'da:rər left, xɪ
 goʊts tʃw dʒə 'tɛrə,græf 'ɔ:fɪs haʊs ɛndɔ wɪdʒw fɪr faɪndz aʊt dʒæt ɪt 'juʒli kɑ:sts wʌn
 'da:rə pɛə dʌmʌndɔ wɛ:d. oʊ, ʃut! ʃɪ əz w stʌmpt ʌn haʊ tɛr dʒə brɒndɛ tʃw dʒɔɪn hɛ
 ənd brɪŋg dɛ 'fɑr, dɑ:z trʌk ɛndɔ 'treɪlə. ʃɪ pʊts ʌn hɛ 'ɛɪ_kɪŋk _æt ændʊ, 'faɪnəli, ʃɪ
 prə'pɔʊʃtɪt dɪ ,jʊrə'piʌn 'tɛrə,grʌm 'ɔpə,reitə 'lɪsə 'ɛdwədz tɛ send dɛ wɜ:d
 "'kʌmfəʃəbəl." 'skɛpʊtɪkʌl, dɪ 'apə,reitʌ ʌks, "haʊ wɪr ɛɪ nɔ tʃw kʌm wɪdʒw dɛ 'treɪlə
 frəm dʒæst dæt wɜ:d?" dɛ 'rɪd, hɛd rɪpʊ'reɪdz, "ɛɪz ə brɑ:ndɛ so: ɛɪ rɪdz 'slɔʊli : kʌm fɔ tɛ
 bəl." ðɛn, ɛɪ 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪsts.

Voiced alveolar affricate /dz/ used at times instead of /z/ and /s/ consonants, and voiced dental fricative /ð/. Voiceless alveolar affricate /ts/ used commonly together with close back unrounded vowel /ʊ/ as a prosthetic sound representing っ [tsu] frequently replacing consonant /t/. Inclination to use voiced palatal nasal consonants /ɲ/ over voiced alveolar stop /n/. Close back rounded vowels frequently complement words which end with a consonant. Uvular nasal consonant /ŋ/ appears scarcely in final positions of words ending with /n/. The student struggled with the use of connected speech.

Recording 2

ə 'dzʌŋi brɒnd and 'red, hɛd hʌv ə ræntʃ. ðeɪ hæv dʒæst lɒst dɛr 'veri old bɔɪ. də 'ʊmən ɲɪd tə baɪ ə 'nʌzʌ, bʌt 'oʊnri hʌv^w faɪv^w 'hʌndrəd 'dɑ:rəz ɪn 'peɪpɑ: noʊts. dzə 'red, hɛd tɛlzə _ brɔ:d-hɛəd gʌrɪ, " tə 'mɔ:roʊ 'ɑ:ri ɪn ðə 'mɔ:_nɪŋ aɪ wɪr goʊz tə də 'sɪ.ti 'mɑ:rkət 'ɲɪr baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kæn faɪnd wʌn fɔ: 'ʌndə ðæt ə 'mɑʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl sɛnd jʊ ə 'tɛrɛ, grʌmʊ wɪz ɪn 'strʌkʃənz." ʃɪ wɑ:ks aʊt əv zə dɔ:r, goʊz tə zə 'mɑ:kɪt ən faɪndz wʌn fɔ fɔ:r 'hʌndrəds 'naɪnti-naɪn 'dɑ:rəz. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'dɑ:rər lɛft, ʃɪ goʊs tə də 'tɛrə, græf 'ɔ: fis haʊs ənd wɪzʊ fɪɑ: faɪndz aʊt dæt ɪt 'ju:zʊəli kɑ:sts wʌn 'dɑ:rə pɛə dʌm^w wɑ:dɔ. ɔʊ, ʃɔt! ' ʃɪ əz stʌmpwɒdʌ ən haʊ tə tɛr də brɒnd tə dʒɔɪn hə ənd brɪŋ zʌ 'fɑ: dɑ:z trʌk ɛndɔ 'treɪlɑ:. ʃɪ pʊts ən hə 'sɪŋkɪŋk hæʔ ən, 'faɪnəri, ʃɪ prə'pəʊs dɪ ,jʊrə'piən 'tɛrə, grʌf 'ɔpə, reɪtə 'lɪsə 'ɛdwə-dz tə sɛnd də wɜ:d "'kʌmfəʔəbəl." 'skɛptɪkəl, dɪ 'əpə, reɪtə ʌskz, " haʊ wɪl ʃɪ noʊ tə kʌm wɪdzʊ də 'treɪlə frəm dʒæst dæt wɜ:d?" də 'red, hɛd rɪp 'reɪz, "ʃɪzə ə brɔ:d so: ʃɪ rɪdz 'sləʊ _ : kʌm fɔ tə bəl." ðɛn, ʃɪ 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪts.

Despite the lack of experience there is an assimilation of /d/ and /j/ in the recording. The student uses predominantly the close back unrounded vowels /ʊ/ to complement words ending with a consonant. In one instance the student used bilabial fricative /ɸ/ instead of /f/ consonant as a prosthetic phoneme for Japanese ふ [fu].

Recording 3

ə 'dʒʌni brɒnd ɛnd ə 'rɛd, hɛd hæv ə ræntʃ. ðeɪ hæv dʒæst lɒst dɛə 'vɛrɪ old baɪ. də 'wɒmən
nɪd tə baɪ ə 'nʌdʒə, bʌt 'oʊnri hʌv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'dɔːrəz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. də 'rɛd, hɛd
tɛldz də brɒnd-hɛrd gɜːl, "tə 'mɔːrɒs 'ɜːri ɪn ðə 'mɔː_nɪŋk aɪ wɪl goʊ tə də 'sɪ.ti 'mɑːrkət
'jɪr 'baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kən faɪnd wʌn fɔː 'ʌndə də ə 'mɑːsnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl sɛnd jʊ ə
'tɛrɛ, grʌm wɪz ɪn 'strʌkfənz." ʃɪ wɑːks aʊt əv də dɔːr, goʊ_ tʊ də 'mɑːrkɪt ənd faɪnd_
wʌn fɔː fɔːr 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnti-naɪn 'dɑːrəz. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'dɑːrər rɛft, sɪ goʊs tʊ də
'tɛrə, græf 'ɔː.fɪs haʊs ənd wɪz fɪr faɪndz aʊt dæt ɪt 'juːʒəri kɑːsts _ʌn 'dɑːrə pɛə dʌmɪd
wɜːd. oʊ, ʃuːt! ʃɪ əz stʌmpɪt ən haʊs tə tɛr də brɒnd tə dʒɔɪn hɛ ənd brɪŋg də 'fɑːr, dɑːz trʌk
ɛnd 'treɪrə. sɪ pʊts ən hɛ 'θɪŋkɪŋ hæʔ ənd, 'faɪnəri, ʃɪ prə'pəʊs? dɛə ,jʊrə'piən
'tɛrə, græf 'ɔːpə, rɛɪtə 'lɪsɪ 'ɛdwədz tə sɛnd də wɜːd "kʌmfə'təbəl." 'skɛptɪkʌr, də
'əpə, rɛɪtʌ ʌskz, "haʊ wɪr ʃɪ nɔ t kʌm wɪdz də 'treɪlə frəm dʒæst dæt wɜːd?" də 'rɛd, hɛd
rɪpʊ'reɪdz, "ʃɪz ə brɑːndɛ soː sɪ rɪdz 'sɪrɔːri : kʌm fɔ tə bəl." ðɛn, sɪ 'kwɪkli 'ɛkzɪst.

Prosthetic sounds such as /φ/, /dz/ and /ts/ were frequently used as well as flapped liquid consonants. Liquid consonants /l/ are pronounced as a flapped liquid /r/ more frequently than /r/.

Recording 4

ə 'zʌni blɑːnd ʌnd ə 'rɛd, hɛd hæv ə ræntʃ. dʒeɪ hæv dʒæst lɒst dɛə 'vɛrɪ old baɪ. də 'wɪmən
nɪd tə baɪ ə 'nʌdɑː, bʌt 'oʊnri hʌv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'dɑːrəz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. də 'rɛd, hɛd
tɛlz ðə blɑːnd-hɛəd gɜːl, "tə 'mɔːrɒs 'ɜːli ɪn ðə 'mɔː_nɪŋk aɪ wɪr goʊ tə də 'sɪ.ti 'mɑːrkət
'nɪr 'baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kən faɪnd wʌn fə 'ʌndɑː dæt ə 'mɑːsnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl sɛnd jʊ ə
'tɛrɛ, grʌm wɪz ɪn 'strʌkfənz." ʃɪ wɑːks aʊt əv də dɔːr, goʊdz tə də 'mɑːkɪt ən faɪnds wʌn
fɔ fɔː 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnti-naɪn 'dɑːrəz. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'dɑːrər lɛft, ʃɪ goʊs tə də
'tɛrə, græf 'ɔː.fɪs haʊs ən wɪz fɪr faɪndz aʊt dæt ɪt 'juːʒuəli kɑːsts wʌn 'dɑːrə pʰɑː dɛmənd

wɛ:d. oʊ, ʃu:t!' ʃi əz stʌmpt ən haʊ tə tɛl ðə blɑ:nd tə dʒɔɪn hɪz ən brɪŋ də 'fɑ:da:z trʌk
 ənd 'treɪlɑ:. ʃi pʊts ən hə 'sɪŋkɪŋ hæʔ ænd, 'faɪnəli, ʃi prə'pəʊz dʌt 'dʒərə'piən
 'tɛrə,grɑf 'ɔpə,reitə 'lɪsə 'ɛdwɜ:ɔd tə send də wɜ:d "'kʌmfəʔtəbəl." 'skeptɪkəl, dʌ
 'apə,reitə ʌskz, "haʊ wɪl ʃi nɔʊ tə kʌm wɪz deə 'treɪrɑ: frəm dʒəst dət wɜ:d?" də 'rɛd, hɛd
 rɪp'eɪrɪz, "ʃɪz ə blɑ:nd so: ʃi rɪdɪz 'sləʊli : kʌm fɔ tə bəl." ðɛn, ʃi 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪts.

Apparent attempts to use RP English. Limited use of prosthetic phonemes compared to other students from Group 1.

Recording 5

ə 'zʌni blɑnd ən ə 'rɛd, hɛd hʌv ə ræntʃ. ðeɪ hʌv dʒəst lɔst dɛr 'vɛrɪ ɔld bɔɪ. də 'wʊmən nɪd
 tə baɪ ə 'nʌðər, bʌt 'oʊnli hʌv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'da:ləz ɪn 'peɪpə nɔʊts. ðə 'rɛd, hɛd tɛlz də
 blɑ:nd-hɛrd gɜ:ɜl, "tə 'mɔ:roʊs ' :zɪrɪ ɪn ðə 'mɔ: _ ʃɪŋ aɪ wɪ go_ tə də 'sɪʃ.ɪ mɑ:rkət 'ʃɪr' baɪ
 ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kæn faɪnd wʌn fɔ: 'ɛndə-ðət ə 'mɑʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl send jʊ ə 'tɛrɛ,grɑm wɪð
 ɪn'strʌkʃənz." ʃi wɑ:kz aʊt əv də dɔ:r, goʊz tə də 'mɑ: _ kɪt ənd faɪnts wʌn fɔ: fɔ: 'hʌndrəd
 'naɪntɪ-naɪn 'da:ləz. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'da:rər lɛft, ʃi goʊz tə ðə 'tɛrə,græf 'ɔ:fɪs haʊs
 ənd wɪð fɪr faɪndz aʊt ðət ɪt 'dʒʊəri kɑ:sts wʌn 'da:lə pə dʌmænd wɛd. oʊ, ʃu:t!' ʃi əz
 stʌmpt ɒn haʊ tʊ tɛl ðə blɑ:nd tə dʒɔɪn hə ən brɪŋ də 'fɑ:ðəz trʌk ən 'treɪlɑ:. ʃi pʊts ən hə
 'θɪŋkɪŋ hæʔ ænd, 'faɪnəli, ʃi prə'pəʊzɪz ðə 'dʒərə'piən 'tɛrə,grɑf 'apə,reitə
 'lɪsə'ɛdwɜ:ɔdz tə send də wɜ:d "'kʌmfəʔtəbəl." 'skeptɪkəl, dɪ 'apə,reitə ʌskz, "haʊ wɪl ʃi
 nɔʊ tʊ kʌm wɪð ðə 'treɪlɜ frəm dʒəst dət wɜ:d?" də 'rɛd, hɛd rɪp'raɪz, "ʃɪz ə blɑ:nd so: ʃi
 rɪdɪz 'sləʊli : kʌm fɔ tə bəl." ðɛn, ʃi 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪts.

Both voiced and unvoiced dental fricatives were used mostly correctly considering the student's group's English proficiency and experience. Usage of prosthetic phonemes limited to /n/ and /ŋ/ only. The recording is highly segmented features of connected speech are

difficult to observe. Linking occurs only scarcely and only between two words i.e. /baɪ əˈnʌðər/

Recording 6

əˈdʒʌni blɑːnd ən əˈred, hɛd hʌv əˈræntʃ. ðeɪ hʌv dʒəst lɒst dɛrˈveri ɔːld bɔɪ. dəˈwʊmən
nɪd tə baɪ əˈnʌðər, bətˈoʊnli həv faɪvˈhʌndrədˈdɑːləz ɪnˈpeɪpəˌnoʊts. ðəˈred, hɛd tɛlz
ðə blɑːnd-hɛrd gɜːl, "təˈmɔːrɒsˈzi ɪn ðəˈmɔːrɪŋ aɪ wɪ goʊ tə dəˈsɪtʃiˌmɑːrkətˈnɪrˈbaɪ
ən ɛɪ ɪf aɪ kən faɪnd wʌn fəˈlndəˌdət əˈmæʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl send jʊ əˈteləˌgræm
wɪð ɪnˈstrʌkʃənz." ʃi wɑːks aʊt əv dəˈdɔːr, goʊz tə dəˈmɑːrkɪt ən faɪndz wʌn fəˈfɔːr
ˈhʌndrədˈnaɪntiˌnaɪnˈdɑːləz. ˈhævɪŋˈoʊnli wʌnˈdɑːləɪ lɛft, ʃi goʊz tə ðəˈteləˌgræf
ˈɑːfɪs haʊs ənd wɪð fɪr faɪndz aʊt ðət ɪtˈjuːʒuəli kɑːsts wʌnˈdɑːləˌpʰɑːr dʌmənɪd wɛd. ɔː,
ʃuːt! ʃi əz stʌmpt ən haʊ tə tɛl ðə blɑːnd tə dʒɔɪn hə ən brɪŋ dəˈfɑːðəz trʌk ənˈtreɪlə. ʃi
pʊts ən həˈθɪŋkɪŋ hæɪt ænd, ˈfaɪnəli, ɛɪ prəˈpɒzɪz ðəˌjʊrəˈpiənˈteləˌgræfˈapəˌreɪtəˌ
ˈlɪsəˈedwɛdz tə send dəˈwɛːd "ˈkʌmfəˌtəbəl." ˈskeptɪkəl, dɪˈapəˌreɪtɪr æskz, "haʊ wɪl sɪ
nɒs tə kʌm wɪð ðəˈtreɪlə frəm dʒəst dət wɛːd?" dəˈred, hɛd rɪˈplaɪz, "ʃɪz ə blɑːnd soː ʃi
rɪdzˈsləʊliː kʌm fɔː tə bəl." ðen, ʃiˈkwɪkliˈegzɪts.

The recorded reading was highly segmented, but very carefully executed with very few mispronounced phonemes. Supra-segmental features are unobservable.

As expected, most of the transcriptions have numerous mispronunciations marked in red. Supra-segmental features will be discussed first. As for stress, both word and sentence stresses were misplaced. Word stresses did not pose that big of a problem, compared to sentence stresses, as majority of word stresses are on the first syllable. Sentence stresses were more problematic as the recordings were very often highly segmented and it would

suggest that the students did not perceive the text as a whole rather than as a queue of words. This might have been caused by the difficulty level of the text as it was high above their language capabilities. Upon being asked after the recording session one of the participants was able to tell what the text was about. Thus, stress in general could not be effectively observed. Liaison, intrusive consonants, assimilation, juncture and other features of connected speech were rarely observable. Each instance was given a short notice below the respective transcription. Evaluation of elision is precarious as omitted phonemes could have been omitted because the reader was unsure about words' pronunciation.

The most difficult segments of the text seem to be attempts to pronounce phonemes absent in Japanese. Among the most numerous mispronunciations belong dental fricatives /ð/ and /θ/. Those were pronounced as either /s/ or /z/ as alveolar fricatives, unlike dental fricatives, are very common in Japanese. Voiceless post-alveolar fricatives /ʃ/ were fairly commonly mispronounced as Japanese utilizes alveolar-palatal fricative instead and the articulatory regions are very close to one another. The most problematic consonants were lateral liquid /l/ and rhotic /ɹ/. Japanese uses voiced alveolar flap /r/ instead and the error count suggests it is very difficult to distinguish between them. Particularly challenging seemed to be words containing multiple alveolar flaps such as *dollar*, or *slowly*. The last consonant specific of Japanese language and which affected the reader's recordings is uvular nasal /ŋ/. This consonant, as discussed in the chapter about Japanese consonants, is the only standalone consonant used in Japanese and appears predominantly at the end of utterances. That is the case for Group 1 participants as well, who used /ŋ/ in final positions of English words which should end with /n/.

As described in the language system before, Japanese consonants are, except for one, paired with a vowel. The recordings show how this system transgressed into English. Words ending with consonants were accompanied by a vowel. Words with consonant

clusters often contained vowel insertion i.e. /stʌmpʊdʊ/. In majority of cases the inserted vowel was uncounded back vowel /ʊ/, but other vowels appeared in pairs with final consonants i.g. /brɒndɛ/ and /dʌmʌndɔ/.

Devoicing and weak forms have proven to be difficult as well as there were many errors in word endings of words with /s/ and /z/ in final positions.

4.3.2 Group 2

Group 2 participants are more experienced than Group 1 and are less homogenous in terms of age, experience with the language and proficiency. Whilst the Group 1 participants were struggling with text comprehension it is more reasonable to expect of the Group 2 participants to fully understand the text and spot the punchline. The author expects the supra-segmental features to be easier to observe and the overall fluency and intelligibility to be better. The usage of prothetic sounds is expected to be less frequent except for alveolar-palatal fricative replacing rhotic and lateral liquid consonants.

Recording 7

ə 'dʒʌni blɒnd ənd ə 'rɛd , hɛd hɛz ə rænts. ðeɪ hæv dʒɛst lɒst dɛr 'vɛri ɒld bɔɪ. də 'wɒmən
nɪd tə baɪ ə 'nʌðə, bʌʔ 'oʊnri hʌv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'dɑ:lɛz ɪn 'peɪpə- noʊt_. ðə 'rɛd , hɛd tɛlz
ðə brɒnd- hɛrd gɑ:l, " tə 'mɔ:roʊ 'ɑ:lɪ ɪn ðə 'mɔ:_nɪŋk aɪ wɪl goʊ tə ðə 'sɪ. ʃɪ 'mɑ:rkət
'nɪr' baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kæn faɪnd wʌn fɔ 'ʌndə dæt ə' mæʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl sɛndʒʊə
'tɛrɛ , grʌm wɪz ɪn 'strʌkʃəns." ʃɪ wɑ:ks aʊt əv də dɔ:ə, goʊz tə ðə 'mɑ:_kɪt ən faɪnd_ wʌn
fɔ: fɔ 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnti-naɪn 'dɑ:lə-s. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'dɑ:rə_ rɛft, ʃɪ goʊz tə də

'tɛrə,grʌm 'ɔ:fɪs haʊs ənd wɪz fɪr faɪnd_ aʊt dæt ɪt 'ju:ʒuəli kɑ:sts wʌn 'dɑ:lə pə dʌmɪd wəd. oʊ, fɪt!' fɪ əz stʌmpt ɒn haʊ tə tɛl də blɒnd tə dʒɔɪn hɪ:ʒ ən brɪŋ də 'fɑ:ðəz trʌk ɒnd 'treɪlə. fɪ pʊts ɒn _ θɪŋkɪŋ hæʔ ænd, 'faɪnəri, fɪ prə'pəʊst _ ,jʊrə'piən 'tɛrə,grʌm 'ɔpə,reitə 'lɪsə 'ɛdwɑ:d tə sɛnd də wə:d "'kʌmfə-təbəl." 'skɛptɪkəl, də'apə,reitə æsk_, "haʊ wɪl fɪ noʊ tə kʌm wɪs də 'treɪlə frəm dʒəst dæt wə:d?" də 'rɛd,hɛd rɪp'raɪs, "fɪz ə blɒnd so: fɪ rɪd 'srɔʊri : kʌm fɔ tə bəl." ðɛn, fɪ 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪts.

At times schwa pronunciation tends to be too open resembling open to open-mid back vowels. T-flapping not used at all instances. Assimilation /d/ and /j/ present. The reader pronounced the consonant clusters properly, but mistook the word "damned" for "damn it". Voiced dental fricative replaced by /d/ consonant. The influence of RP English apparent. Linking was used, although at all times. Sentence stresses were observable. The reader distinguishes between direct speech and the narrator.

Recording 8

ʌ 'dʒʌni brɒndɛ ɛnd ə 'rɛd,hɛd həv ʌ ræntʃ. deɪ hʌv dʒʌst lɒst dɛə 'veri ɒld bʊl. də 'wʊmən nɪd tə baɪ ə'nʌðə, bʌt 'oʊnli hʌv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'dɑ:rəz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. də 'rɛd,hɛd tɛlz də brɑ:ndə-hɛəd gɔrɪ, "tə'mɔ:roʊ 'zɛli ɪn ðə 'mɔ:nɪŋk aɪ wɪl goʊ tə də'sɪ.ci 'mɑ:rkət 'jɪr'baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kæn faɪnd wʌn fɔ: 'ʌndə dæt ə'mɔʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl sɛnd jʊ ə 'tɛrə,grʌm wɪz ɪn'strʌkfənz." fɪ wɑ:ks aʊt əv də dɔ:r, goʊz tə də 'mɑ:rkɪt ənd faɪnds wʌn fɔ fɔ:_ 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnti-naɪn 'dɑ:rəz. 'hʌvɪŋg 'oʊnli wʌn 'dɑ:rər lɛft, fɪ goʊz tə də 'tɛrə,græf 'ɔ:fɪs haʊs ɛnd wɪz fɪr faɪndz aʊt dæt ɪt 'ju:ʒuəli kɑ:sts wʌn 'dɑ:rə pɔ:ə dʌmnd wɛ:d. oʊ, fɪt!' fɪ əz stʌmpt ɒn haʊ tə tɛl də blɒnd tə dʒɔɪn hɛ ənd brɪŋg də 'fɑ:dɪ:z trʌnk ɛnd 'treɪrə. fɪ pʊts ɒn hɛ 'θɪŋkɪŋ hæʔ ænd, 'faɪnəli, fɪ prə'pəʊzɪz də ,jʊrə'piən 'tɛrə,græf 'ɔpə,reitə 'lɪsə 'ɛdwɔ:dz tə sɛnd də wə:d "'kʌmfə-təbəl." 'skɛptɪkəl, də

'apə, reɪtə ʌskz, "həʊ wɪl ʃi noʊ tə klʌm wɪz də 'treɪrə frəm dʒəst dæt wɜ:d?" də 'rɛd, hɛə rɪp'raɪz, "ʃɪz ə brʌnd so: ʃi rɪdz 'srɔ:ri : klʌm fə tə bəl." ðɛn, ʃi 'kwɪkri 'ɛgzɪts.

The reader was aware of the consonant clusters, but overpronounced. Back open-mid vowel /ʌ/ frequently replaces schwa. Liquid consonants are often flapped; however /l/ consonant is replaced more frequently than the rhotic liquid. Voiceless postalveolar fricative pronounced properly. Both voiced and unvoiced dental fricatives replaced /d/ consonants. Apparent attempts to employ RP pronunciation at times. Linking was limited, speech was segmented.

Recording 9

ə 'ze_ni brʌnd ənd ə 'rɛd, hɛd hæv ə ræntɪf. ðeɪ hæv dʒəst lɒst ðɛr 'veri oʊld bʊl. ðə 'wɒmlən nɪd tə baɪ ə'nʌd_, bət 'oʊnli hʌv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'da: rɛz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. ðə 'rɛd, hɛd tɛlz də brʌnd-hɛəd gɜ:l, "tə'mɔ:roʊ 'ɜ:li ɪn ðə 'mɔ:_nɪŋ aɪ wɪl goʊ tə də'sɪtt.i 'mɑ:_kət 'nɪə'baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kən faɪnd wʌn fɔ:ʊ 'ʌnʌd dæt ə'maʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl sɛnd jʊ ə 'tɛrə, græm wɪs ɪn 'strʊkɛʃnz." ʃi wɑ:ks aʊt əv ðə dɔ:r, goʊs tə də 'mɑ:rktɪt ən faɪndz wʌn fɔ: fɔ:_ 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnti-naɪn 'da:rɛz. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnri wʌn 'da:rə lɛft, sɪ goʊs tə də 'tɛrə, græf 'ɑ:fɪs haʊs ən vɪs fɪr faɪnd_ aʊt dæt ɪts 'ju:ʒəri ka:sts wʌn 'da:rə p:ɜ demɑnd wɜ:d. oʊ, ʃut!' ʃi əz stʌmpt ən həʊ tə tɛl də brʌnd tə dʒɔɪn hɜ: ən brɪŋ də 'fəðəs trʊk ən 'treɪrə. ʃi pʊts ən hə 'θɪŋkɪŋ hæt ænd, 'faɪnəli, ʃi prə'pəʊzɪz ðə ,jʊrə'piən 'tɛrə, græf 'ɑ:pə, reɪtə 'lɪsə 'ɛdwə-dz tə sɛnd də wɜ:d "'kɒmfə-təbəl." 'skɛptɪkər, dɪ 'apə, reɪtr æskz, "həʊ wɪl ʃi noʊ tʊ klʌm wɪð də 'treɪrə frəm dʒəst dæt wɜ:d?" də 'rɛd, hɛd rɪ'praɪz, "ʃɪz ə brʌnd soʊ ʃi rɛdz 'srɔ:ri: klʌm fə tə bəl." dɛn, ʃi 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪts

Voiced dental fricatives frequently replaced by /d/ consonants. No complementary vowels in final positions of words ending with consonants. /r/ and /l/ liquids often pronounced as

flapped. Rhoticity omitted at times probably in attempts to use RP. Voiceless postalveolar fricative pronunciation is mostly correct. Linking is present, but the utterance is still largely segmented. Sentence stresses indicate the reader understands the text as direct speech is marked with higher pitch.

Recording 10

ə 'ze_ni bla:nd ənd ə 'rɛd ,hɛd hæv ə ræntʃ. zɛɪ hæv dʒəst lɒst ðə 'vɛrɪ oʊld bʊl. zə 'wɒmlən
nid tə baɪ ə 'nʌdə_, bət 'oʊnli hæv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'da:ləz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. ðə 'rɛd ,hɛd tɛlz
ðə bla:nd-hɛəd g:ɜl, " tə'mɔ:roʊ ' :ɜli ɪn ðə 'mɔ:_nɪŋ aɪ wɪl goʊ tə ðə'sɪtt.i 'mɑ:_kət
'nɪr'baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kæn faɪnd wʌn fɔ: 'lʌndr dət ə'maʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl sɛnd jʊ ə
'tɛlə ,græm wɪð ɪn'strʌkʃənz." ʃɪ wɑ:ks aʊt əv ðə dɔ:r, goʊz tə ðə 'mɑ:rkɪt ən faɪndz wʌn
fɔ: fɔ:_ 'hʌndrəd 'naɪntɪ-naɪn 'da:ləz. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'da:lə lɛft, ɛɪ goʊz tə ðə
'tɛlə ,græf 'ɑ:fɪs haʊs ən wɪð fɪʌ faɪndz aʊ_ zət ɪt 'ju:ʒuəli kɑ:sts wʌn 'da:lə pə- dɑ:mɛnd
wɜ:d. oʊ, ʃu:t!' ʃɪ əz stʌmpt ən haʊ tə tɛl ðə bla:nd tə dʒɔɪn hæ ən brɪŋ ðə 'fa:ðə_ trʌk ən
'treɪlə. ʃɪ pʊts ən hɜ: 'θɪŋkɪŋ hæ t ænd, 'faɪnəli, ʃɪ prə'pəʊsɪz ðə ,jʊrə'piən 'tɛrə ,græf
'ɑ:pə ,reɪtə 'lɪsə 'ɛdwə-dz tə sɛnd ðə wɜ:d "'kʌmfə-təbəl." 'skɛptɪkəl, ðɪ 'ɑpə ,reɪtr æskz,
"haʊ wɪl ʃɪ noʊ tə kʌm wɪz ðə 'treɪlə frəm dʒəst ðət wɜ:d?" ðə 'rɛd ,hɛd rɪ'plaɪz, "ɛɪ ə
bla:nd soʊ ɛɪ rɪdz 'sləʊli: kʌm fə- tə bʊl." dzɛn, ʃɪ 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪts.

The reader uses linking well, is confident and sentence and word stresses are present. Frequent liquid problems, but otherwise there are very few other prosthetic sounds used. Alveo palatal fricatives especially in combinations with /i/. Problems with clustered consonants – damned. Accent is inconsistent.

Recording 11

ə 'zeɪni blɑ:nd ənd ə 'red ,hed həv ə ræntʃ. ðeɪ həv dʒəst lɒst ðeɪ 'veri oʊld bʊl. ðə 'wɪmən
nɪd tə baɪ ə 'nɒðə, bət 'oʊnli həv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'da:ləz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. ðə 'red ,hed telz
ðə blɑnd-herd gɜ:l, " tə'mɔrɔs ə-li ɪn ðə 'mɔrniŋ aɪ wɪl goʊ tə ðə'sɪt.i mɑrkət nɪrbaɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ
kən faɪnd wʌn fə 'lʌndə ðæt ə'maʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl send jʊ ə 'telə ,græm wɪð
ɪn'strʌkʃənz." ʃɪ wɑ:ks aʊt əv ðə dɔ:r, goʊz tə ðə 'mɑ:rkɪt ən faɪndz wʌn fə fɔ:r 'hʌndrəd
'naɪnti-naɪn 'da:ləz. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'da:lər left, ʃɪ goʊz tə ðə 'telə ,græf 'ɑ:fɪs haʊs
ən wɪð fɪr faɪndz aʊt ðæt ɪt 'ju:ʒuəli kɒʊsts wʌn 'da:lə pə dæmɪd wɜ:d. oʊ, ʃut! ʃɪ əz
stʌmpt ən haʊ tə tel ðə blɑ:nd tə dʒɔɪn hæ ən brɪŋ ðə 'fɑðəz trʌk ən t'reɪlə. ʃɪ pʊts ən hæ
'θɪŋkɪŋ hæ tænd, 'faɪnəli, ʃɪ prə'pəʊzɪz ðə ,jʊrə'piən 'telə ,græf 'ɑpə'reɪtə lɪsə ɛdwədz
tə send ðə wɜ:d "kʌmfə'təbəl." skeptɪkəl, ði ɑpə'reɪtə æskz, "haʊ wɪl ʃɪ noʊ tə kʌm wɪð ðə
't'reɪlə frəm dʒəst ðæt wɜ:d?" ðə 'red ,hed rɪ'plaɪz, "ʃɪz ə blɑ:nd soʊ ʃɪ rɪdz 'sləʊli: kʌm fə
tə bʊl." ðen, ʃɪ 'kwɪkli 'egzɪsts.

Uses linking as a natural part of speech even though the speech is slightly segmented at times; the author is of that opinion it is due to the small print. T-flapping is present. No problems with consonant clusters. Sentence stresses are well observable. Word stresses are used properly.

Recording 12

ə 'zeɪni blɑ:nd ənd ə 'red ,hed həv ə rɒntʃ. ðeɪ həv dʒəst lɒst ðeɪ 'veri oʊld bʊl. ðə 'wɪmən
nɪd tə baɪ ə 'nɒðə, bət 'oʊnli həv faɪv 'hʌndrəd 'da:ləz ɪn 'peɪpə noʊts. ðə 'red ,hed telz
ðə blɑ:nd-herd gɒl, " tə'mɔ:rɔs ɛ:'li ɪn ðə 'mɔ:niŋ aɪ wɪl goʊ tə ðə'sɪt.i 'mɑ:rkət
'nɪr'baɪ ən sɪ ɪf aɪ kən faɪnd wʌn fɔr 'lʌndə ðæt ə'maʊnt. ɪf aɪ kæn, aɪ wɪl send jʊ ə
'tɛrə ,græm wɪs ɪn'strʌkʃənz." ʃɪ wɑ:ks aʊt əf ðə dɔ:r, goʊz tə ðə 'mɑ:ki t ən faɪndz wʌn

fɒ: fɒ: 'hʌndrəd 'naɪnti-naɪn 'da:lə-z. 'hævɪŋ 'oʊnli wʌn 'da:lər lɛft, ʃi goʊs tə ðə 'tɛlə ,græf 'ɑ:fɪs haʊs ən wɪs fɪr faɪndz aʊt ðæt ɪt 'ju:ʒuəli kɑ:sts wʌn 'da:lə pə dʒʌmɑ:d wɜ:d. oʊ, ʃu:t!' ʃi əz sʌmpt ən haʊ tə tɛl ðə blɑ:nd tə dʒɔɪn hæ ən brɪŋ dæt 'fɑ:ðəz trʌk ən 'treɪlə. ʃi pʊts ən hæ 'θɪŋkɪŋ hæʔ ænd, 'faɪnəli, ʃi prə'pəʊzɪz ðə ,jʊrə'piən 'tɛlə ,græf 'ɑpə'reɪtə lɪsə ɛdwədz tə sɛnd ðə wɜ:d "kʌmfə'təbəl." skɛpt_kəl, ði 'ɑpə ,reɪtə æksks, "haʊ wɪl ʃi noʊs tə kʌm wɪs də 'treɪlə frəm dʒəst ðæt wɜ:d?" ðə 'rɛd ,hɛd rɪ'praɪz, " ɛɪz ə brɑ:nd sɔʊ ʃi rɪdz 'sləʊli: kʌm fə tə bʊl." dɛn, ʃi 'kwɪkli 'ɛgzɪts.

Linking is used throughout the text, but some passages are still segmented. Some inaccuracies may be caused by a minor speech impediment. Clustered consonants seemed to be problematic. Voiceless alveo palatal fricatives are used instead of voiceless postalveolar fricatives at times. T flapping is absent.

Compared to Group 1 participants the supra-segmental features in recording of the group 2 were easier to observe. The participants focused on proper placement of both word and sentence stresses. Smaller proportion of the text was segmented compared to the Group 1. The word linking seemed to be hindered in sections with vocabulary difficult or unknown to the reader. The participants seemed to understand the text and text difficulty matched their level of proficiency. Liaison, intrusive consonants, assimilation, juncture and other elements of connected speech were more frequently observable.

Neither of the speakers adhered to Received Pronunciation, nor Standard American even though SA is the standard pronunciation taught in Japan and the speakers attained a level of proficiency high enough. The author is of the opinion that the readers from Group 2 might have been influenced by the interviewer's accents as he consciously attempts to adhere to RP.

The number of pronunciation errors has dropped significantly. Majority of prosthetic sounds use is severely reduced. Alveolar-palatal fricative use instead of lateral /l/ and rhotic /ɹ/ liquid consonants is still very common, but the count of mistakes is almost halved. Dental fricatives mispronunciation seemed to dwindle in use as well, but remained the dominant. The pronunciation errors of voiceless post-alveolar fricatives /ʃ/ was, except for two instances, nearly eliminated. The least common mistake, which can be tied back to Japanese phonetics, is the use of uvular nasal consonant /ŋ/ in final positions replacing the English alveolar nasal /n/. This type of error was not very common with the Group 1 recordings and it does not occur in the recordings of Group 2 at all.

Words containing clustered consonants remained problematic. I.e. the word *damned* was pronounced correctly only once. Arguably the most important improvement concerns the use of vowels in final positions to compliment consonants. Such errors were eliminated completely, as well as the use of typically Japanese close back unrounded vowel /ɯ/. Schwa is still commonly replaced by /ʌ/, which seems to be more natural for the Japanese speakers, although, as mentioned in the chapter about presumed difficulties, the speakers were expected to use /ɑ/ instead.

4.3.5 Statistics of Error

Tab. 6 Statistics of Error

	Group 1	Group 2
/dz/	25	3
/ts/	10	1
/ɯ/	29	0
/r/	149	86
/ŋ/	8	0

4.5 Results of the Research

The research revealed that mistakes, which were committed by the research participants, can be traced back to their native language. Most of the committed mistakes were caused by the absence of respective phonemes in Japanese language and thus the speaker is forced to improvise. The mistakes, which were the most frequented, were commented upon in the conclusion of each group. As expected, there is a declining trend in error frequency in all instances. Some mistakes were eradicated completely, but there is a need for more detailed, larger scale research for more accurate results.

4.6 Limitations of the Study

This chapter will analyse faults of the study which have risen during the primary sources acquisition, creative process and concluding the results. The chapter discusses possible solutions should this thesis serve as a template for any follow-up research on this, or similar topic.

- Complexity of the Text

A large portion of the Group 1 participants admitted the text was way beyond their language capabilities and ignorance of proper pronunciation and respectively even lack of knowledge and experience to make an educated guess in regard to pronunciation of an unknown word. A simpler, perhaps even shorter, text, which could be well understood, would arguably change the outcome of the study.

- Number of Participants

The number of participants was too small for a reliable conclusion to be made. Such a small number of participants is not representative of the general population.

- Diversity of participants

The participants from Group 1 were too homogenous as they represented only a portion of two classes from a single school. The results of the study would benefit from a more varied test group representing a number of schools of different specialisations and backgrounds - both private and state schools and schools from rural areas for instance.

- More attention to primary sources

The text, which each of the participants was given to read out loud did not take into consideration suprasegmental features of the language. It is important to note, that the target test group has to be capable of providing any relevant information. In other words, the text needs to be understood and not alien to the participants.

- No consideration for students using Received Pronunciation.

Many of the mistakes may have originated from attempts to use different accent than what is being generally taught in schools in Japan. This ambiguity of outcomes forced the researcher to consider and evaluate only pronunciation errors which with certainty originate from the speaker's mother tongue – Japanese and many errors were left to speculations only.

Conclusion

The present thesis is concerned with pronunciation errors typical of Japanese English speakers. The purpose of the thesis was to distinguish which of the errors are difficult to eliminate over time. The thesis has also explained how said errors came to existence.

The first chapter of the thesis introduces the cultural and linguistic background of the topic. As the world is becoming ever more interconnected the need for a universal communication tool has become more indispensable than ever before. The first segment of the chapter discussed the peculiarities of language education in Japan. As the high demand for English-speaking workforce and aspiration for perfection forced the Japanese schools to focus heavily on English education it created unwanted by-products in form of low self esteem of the students, which has become counterproductive to the endeavour. The second part of the first chapter briefly described Japanese language from multiple angles – the origins of the language as well as the writing system and historical context.

The second chapter described the role of standard pronunciation in terms of social positions and prestige. It distinguished the two different points of view on Standard pronunciation – both from the perspective of the Japanese and two major English speaking countries – The United Kingdom and The United States.

The third chapter describes the differences between the sound systems of the two languages relevant to the aim of the research. The segmental features are discussed first – the differences between Standard American and Japanese vowels, diphthongs and consonants. The second part discusses suprasegmental features in short. The segment

following suprasegmental features makes an educated guess which mispronunciation may occur in the recordings based on the previous descriptions of both systems.

The core and the practical aspect of the present thesis are discussed in the Research section. The section informs about the inspiration behind the research, introduces the research methods and presents the research question, which are to be answered by said research.

The students were instructed to provide a recording of a short text. The text is a modified joke. The text was supposed to entertain the reader and stimulate attention during the recording. Before the recording session each of the participants was informed about the extent of the research, reassured of their anonymity and given instruction both in English and Japanese. The subsequent recordings were then phonetically transcribed using the standard IPA and any pronunciation deviations were marked in red. Each recording was commented upon as well as each of the groups. Both groups were expected commit pronunciation errors, which were discussed in the theoretical part. The predicted errors eventually did occur. The mentioned mistakes were discussed in the commentaries. Some of the significant errors were statistically evaluated and the outcome shown in a table.

Considering all of the above, the research answered the research questions in a satisfactory manner. The hypotheses laid out in the theoretical part were confirmed. However, the author is aware of a number of shortcomings of this research. Those are articulated in the final part of the research section. The most crucial shortcomings are the following: the number of participants in both groups was insufficient and thus the research was statistically unreliable in comparison to the total number of the Japanese English speakers; the participants of the first group considered the text to be too difficult, which may have influenced the results of the study.

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Summary in English

The present thesis deals with the pronunciation of English of Japanese native speakers. It is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the context of Japanese language and Japanese language education. The second section discusses the role of pronunciation in communication; predominantly the social status it holds. The third section compares two different sound systems – that of English and Japanese. It focuses on phenomena concerning the scope of the present thesis – Segmental features such as vowels and consonants and briefly comments on suprasegmental features. The last section is devoted to the actual research. Two groups of participants were to read a short text. The recordings of the said text were then phonetically transcribed and the mistakes the participants committed were tied back to their native language – Japanese. The data gathered concluded which errors are typical of Japanese students and which of said errors are difficult to eliminate.

Summary in Czech

Tato práce se zabývá výslovností angličtiny Japonských rodilých mluvčích. Práce je rozdělena do čtyř částí. První část popisuje kontext Japonského jazyka a jazykového vzdělávání v Japonsku. Druhá část jakou roli hraje pečlivá výslovnost v komunikaci, především pak jaký sociální status propůjčuje jejímu uživateli. Třetí část se zaměřuje na porovnání dvou fonetických systémů – jak Angličtiny, tak Japonštiny. Zaměřuje se na jevy vztahující se k rozsahu této práce – segmentové prvky, jako jsou samohlásky a souhlásky, a stručně shrnuje i nadsegmentální rysy. Poslední část je věnována samotnému výzkumu. Dvě skupiny účastníků dostaly za úkol přečíst krátký text. Záznamy textu byly poté přepsány fonetickým přepisem a chyby byly vysvětleny na základě poznatků o japonštině získaných v třetí části bakalářské práce. Získané údaje dospěly k závěru, které chyby jsou typické pro japonské studenty a které z těchto chyb se obtížně eliminují.