Teaching Burmese as a Foreign Language: A Case Study

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Abstract
The development of Myanmar as a country has led to an increased interest from foreign NGOs, businesses, labors and professionals alike. One significant barrier that has arisen is their ability to learn the Myanmar language. The Myanmar language is comprised of a speaking format and a writing format. The current study explored the writing ability of overseas Myanmar language learners (n=30) in a Myanmar university from various countries including Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and Thailand. 30 passages of written text were collected and typed in word document for archive. Textual analysis of the 30 essays revealed 23 types of grammatical mistakes, which were categorized into 3 main groups (1) syntax misuse, (2) word misplacement and (3) inappropriateness usage. The inappropriateness usage can be further classified into semantics inappropriateness and pragmatic inappropriateness. Take together, the mistakes highlight a potential learning need or development area, which may be emphasized at the beginning of the learning process. Teachers may benefit from having a greater awareness of the differences of the grammatical features between the learners' mother-tongue and the Myanmar language. Such awareness would ease the writing process and might diminish the written mistakes for learners in the future. The context of the writing should be discussed prior to the writing process and the cultural differences should be highlighted beforehand. Then, the appropriateness of word usage will be maintained.

Keywords: Burmese, Foreign Learners, Grammar, Word, Usage
**Introduction**

Nowadays, according to the development of Myanmar, there are many foreigners studying Burmese around the world. Therefore, there are various level Burmese classes appear in different countries. In a Myanmar university, foreign learners need to be taught proper grammar in learning Burmese 4 skills. The proper grammar is essential in all levels, basic level, intermediate level and advanced level. Foreign learners start learning Burmese language and grammar in basic level and they can use the learned grammar till advanced level. In intermediate level, learners' learning skills and proficient are well enough to manage daily activities, like journal writing, dairy, and so forth. Knowing the writing ability of the intermediate level foreign learners would help to improve the advanced level teaching pedagogy and readjust the basic level teaching contents.

**Statement of the Problem**

There are many types of Burmese classes in different settings. The levels can be divided into certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate. Alternatives are basic level, intermediate level and advanced level for vocational training. However, the classes around the world have their own curriculum and teaching materials. Because of the differences between different institutions in different regions, an understanding of the ultimate components in the curricula would be essential. To identify the crucial items in the curricula, understanding of the needs of the foreign learners in practice should be highlighted.

**Significance of the Study**

Significance of this study is providing an overview of the essential items when teaching Burmese as a foreign language. Indeed, the most essential item is grammar in learning four skills of Burmese. Once the grammar errors and the significant of barriers for the foreigners to learn Burmese are identified, the adjustment of the curricula will be more effective. And, I expect that a better or a tailor-made curriculum can be developed accordingly.

**Research Questions**

The research questions of this study are:
1) What are the common grammatical errors of Burmese as foreign language in the learning process?
2) Why foreigners have these errors?
3) What does we need to fill for these errors to be less and easier in teaching and learning Burmese?

**Literature Review**

There are many studies about learning foreign languages as second language.

Kenzie Shofner (2020) explored the differences between speaking format and writing format in learning Burmese are main barriers for foreign learners. Win Hein (2013) found that the pronunciation, spelling or Burmese sentence structures are difficulties from the learners' perspectives. May Nyane and Maryland (2015) indicated that the usage of Burmese is the biggest challenge for foreigners according to the learners' tasks.
According to Lan Luu (2019) had identified the grammatical mistakes found from foreigners in the grammatical learning process of Japanese language. Due to the Japanese grammar is similar to Burmese grammar, the grammatical learning would also become a potential challenge for the Burmese learners.

There are rare study exploring the intermediate level foreign learners' writing 'Burmese as a second language' ability. Such gap is identified. Thus, this study is mainly exploring the writings from foreigners in an intermediate class in a Myanmar tertiary education.

**Methodology**

When I found methodology to use in this study, I choose case study approach because it is suitable for collecting grammatical data from the writing of foreign learners in one specific level as a case. For this study, I located an intermediate level class of a foreign language institution in Myanmar. I choose intermediate level foreign learners because their Burmese 4 skills are not starters as basic level foreigners and their proficiency is not skillful as advanced level foreigners.

For data collection, I collected 30 essays with the title of 'Introduction of a place', written by 30 foreign learners from 6 nations (Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and Thailand). 30 foreign learners included 4 Indians, 1 Australian, 5 Japanese, 1 Thai, 2 Koreans and 17 Chinese.

For data management, I numbered 30 foreign learners as learner 1, learner 2. Then, I managed the sentences of each essay according to correct and incorrect usages and sentence structures. I identified the incorrect sentences and highlighted the grammatical errors.

**Data Analysis**

First, I summarized the correct and incorrect sentences in number and percentage according to learners' serial numbers and nationalities (see Table 1). The 30 learners wrote 407 sentences. Correct sentences are 202 (49.63%) and incorrect sentences are 205 (50.36%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners' serial number</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>No. of Nationality</th>
<th>no. of Sentences (100%)</th>
<th>Correct (%)</th>
<th>Incorrect (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner 1</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3 (27.27%)</td>
<td>8 (72.72%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 2</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9 (60%)</td>
<td>6 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 3</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7 (38.88%)</td>
<td>11 (61.11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 4</td>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10 (58.82%)</td>
<td>7 (41.17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 5</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 (54.54%)</td>
<td>5 (45.45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 6</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10 (71.42%)</td>
<td>4 (28.57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 7</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2 (28.57%)</td>
<td>5 (71.42%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 8</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Incorrect</td>
<td>Correct (%)</td>
<td>Incorrect (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 9</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 10</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5 (33.33%)</td>
<td>10 (66.66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 11</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9 (60%)</td>
<td>6 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 12</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8 (66.66%)</td>
<td>4 (33.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 13</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1 (11.11%)</td>
<td>8 (88.88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 14</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3 (27.27%)</td>
<td>8 (72.72%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 15</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 16</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10 (62.5%)</td>
<td>6 (37.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 17</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6 (60%)</td>
<td>4 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 18</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 19</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7 (46.66%)</td>
<td>8 (53.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 20</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3 (23.07%)</td>
<td>10 (76.92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 21</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3 (23.07%)</td>
<td>10 (76.92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 22</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11 (73.33%)</td>
<td>4 (26.66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 23</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10 (76.92%)</td>
<td>3 (23.07%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 24</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12 (70.58%)</td>
<td>5 (29.41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 25</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8 (57.14%)</td>
<td>6 (42.85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 26</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 (54.54%)</td>
<td>5 (45.45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 27</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11 (73.33%)</td>
<td>4 (26.66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 28</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5 (33.33%)</td>
<td>10 (66.66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 29</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10 (62.5%)</td>
<td>6 (37.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner 30</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5 (29.41%)</td>
<td>12 (70.58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>407 (100%)</td>
<td>202 (49.63%)</td>
<td>205 (50.36%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Correct and Incorrect Sentences of Each learner
Correct and incorrect sentences according to nationality can be seen in Figure 1.

I analyzed the sentences into 4 parts as follows:
correct sentence = no mistake = ok
incorrect sentence = grammatical mistake = X
rearrangement of sentence order = need to change = Y
spelling error = green words

Figure 2 show that the percentages of these 4 parts.
There are 23 types of grammatical errors are identified. (see Figure 3).

1) Particle for intended place/person  
   (အပါဝင်မှုအတွက်)  
   (1X)

2) Particle for place  
   (အောင်မြင်သော)  
   (2X)

3) Usage of verb  
   (စားသောက်ခြင်း)  
   (3X)

4) Speaking and writing  
   (ဆိုရာ)  
   (4X)

5) Extra and need  
   (အသေးစိတ်)  
   (5X)

6) Particle for possession  
   (အပါဝင်)  
   (6X)

7) Adjective for indicating  
   (ထိန်းချုပ်ခြင်း)  
   (7X)

8) Particle for object  
   (အကြောင်း)  
   (8X)

9) Conjunction for one after one  
   (တစ်ပါတည်း)  
   (9X)

10) Conjunction for reason  
    (အမှန်)  
    (10X)

11) Levels of adjective/ adverb  
    (ထိန်းချုပ်)  
    (11X)

12) Particle for separating  
    (ဆိုးမြင်)  
    (12X)

13) Particle for changing to adjective  
    (ထိန်းချုပ်ခြင်း)  
    (13X)

14) Pronoun for indicating  
    (မှီးရး)  
    (14X)

15) Mathematical adjective for amount and number  
    (အမှန်)  
    (15X)

16) Conjunction for opposition  
    (ချိုးချိုး)  
    (16X)

17) Particle for argument  
    (အယ်ဒေါ)  
    (17X)

18) Particle for subject  
    (ဂျော်ကြီး)  
    (18X)

19) Particle for variety  
    (လူများ)  
    (19X)

20) Particle for supporting noun  
    (အသိပြု)  
    (20X)

21) Conjunction for combining  
    (စားသောက်ခြင်း)  
    (21X)
As shown in Table 2, we can see the total of sentences and percentages of each nationality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>4 Indians</th>
<th>17 Chinese</th>
<th>5 Japanese</th>
<th>1 Thai</th>
<th>2 Koreans</th>
<th>1 Australian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ok</td>
<td>24 (5.89%)</td>
<td>121 (29.72%)</td>
<td>31 (7.61%)</td>
<td>10 (2.45%)</td>
<td>13 (3.19%)</td>
<td>3 (0.73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1X</td>
<td>2 (0.49%)</td>
<td>2 (0.49%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2X</td>
<td>3 (0.73%)</td>
<td>8 (1.96%)</td>
<td>2 (0.49%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3X</td>
<td>2 (0.49%)</td>
<td>8 (1.96%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4X</td>
<td>15 (3.68%)</td>
<td>16 (3.93%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (0.49%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5X</td>
<td>10 (2.45%)</td>
<td>38 (9.33%)</td>
<td>7 (1.71%)</td>
<td>4 (0.98%)</td>
<td>5 (1.22%)</td>
<td>2 (0.49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(1.71%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8X</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(1.71%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9X</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(0.73%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(0.73%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0.49%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0.49%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(0.98%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17X</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18X</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(1.47%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(0.73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0.49%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.24%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0.49%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(0.73%)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>(2.70%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0.49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green words</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(1.22%)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>(13.26%)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>(5.40%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: 23 Types of grammatical errors according to nationality

**Findings**

The 23 types of grammatical errors are classified into 3 categories.

1) Syntax Misused
2) Word Misplacement
3) Usage Inappropriateness
1) Syntax Misused

"Syntax misused" is the usage of grammatical words are misplaced, misused or missed. Among the incorrect sentences, foreign learners usually mixed up with some grammatical words in speaking format of Burmese. It could be due to the differences between speaking format and writing format.

a) Particle for subject (ကတ#$%ဝiဘတ)

In Burmese grammar, Particles for subject (ကတ#$%ဝiဘတ) are "သည-၊ က".

Example a (Learner 16)

ဗိုလ်ချင်းများတွင် Okinawa သည် သည် အချင်းထွက်သည်

In this example, learner 16 misplaced န and ပ. Because they are similar in some speaking usages in Burmese. န is grammatical word for subject and ပ is for places. Okinawa is the subject. သည် is the place. Therefore, the correct sentence should be:ဗိုလ်ချင်းများတွင် သည် ပ အချင်းထွက်သည်.

b) Particle for Object (ကၽင-ဝiဘတ)

In Burmese grammar, Particle for object (ကၽင-ဝiဘတ) is "က".

Example b (Learner 20)

ခရိုင်သည်-လူ၊ Cang Shan သည်-လူ၊ သည်-လူ သည်-လူ က စိုက်ပျိုးသည်

Learner 20 misused န and က. န is Particle for using as by car = က in English. She mixed up the usage of န and the object particle usage က. It is because of verb စိုက်ပျိုးသည်. In Burmese, we use like this က သည်-လူ and သည်-လူ. In this sentence, ကသည်-လူ is the object. It is not the used transport. Therefore, the correct sentence should be:ခရိုင်သည်-လူ၊ Cang Shan သည်-လူ၊ သည်-လူ က စိုက်ပျိုးသည်

c) Particle for Intending Place/Person (၀င်မဆိုဝiဘတ)

In Burmese grammar, Particle for intended place/person (၀င်မဆိုဝiဘတ) is "က သည်-လူ (speaking form-က)".

Example c (Learner 1)

သည်-လူ သည်-လူ သည်-လူ သည်-လူ သည်-လူ သည်-လူ

Learner 1 misused န and က. န is speaking word of Particle for subject. က is speaking word of Particle for intending place/person. သည်-လူ is the place. It is not the subject.
Therefore, the correct sentence should be ပို့စားသော ငှက် အကြီးမားသည့် အက္ကရာဖုံးကို အရှေ့ပေါ်ဖို့ ကြည့်စီးပါမည်။

**d) Particle for Place (နိုင်ငံတော်)**

In Burmese grammar, Particles for place (နိုင်ငံတော်) are "နိုင်ငံတော် ဗိုလ်ချာ သို့မဟုတ် ကြည့်စီးပါမည်".

**Example d (Learner 4)**

သို့မဟုတ် ပို့စားသော ကြည့်စီးပါမည်

Learner 4 misused နိုင်ငံတော် and ကြည့်စီးပါမည်. ကြည့်စီးပါမည် is the place. It is not the object. Therefore, the correct sentence should be ပို့စားသော ကြည့်စီးပါမည်

For the above examples, the foreign learners misplaced, misused and missed some of the grammatical words for subject, object, places and so forth. The other potential reason for these mistakes would be the variations between Burmese and their own mother-tongue language.

**2) Word Misplacement**

The second category is word misplacement. Word misplacement is the placement of the words are misplaced or missing. It would be due to their misunderstanding or lack of knowledge about buffer language, their mother-tongue language and Burmese.

**a) Levels of Adjective/Adverb (ဒုတ်ကြီး/ဆောင်ကြီး)**

In Burmese grammar, levels of adjective/adverb (ဒုတ်ကြီး/ဆောင်ကြီး) are such as "ဒုတ်ကြီး/ဆောင်ကြီး ပို့စားသော ကြည့်စီးပါမည်".

It looks like comparative and superlative in English such as "good place, better place, best place".

**Example a (Learner 18)**

စိုးရိမ်သော ပို့စားသော ကြည့်စီးပါမည်

Learner 18 misplaced the words, စိုးရိမ်သော ပို့စားသော and ကြည့်စီးပါမည်. စိုးရိမ်သော is a noun. ကြည့်စီးပါမည် is the highest level of adjective. In Burmese syntax, level of adjective is in front of noun. Therefore, the correct sentence should be ကြည့်စီးပါမည် စိုးရိမ်သော ပို့စားသော

I found that the misplacing of levels of adjective/adverb and noun/verb in the above incorrect sentences. Because of these examples, the intermediate foreign learners are mixed up with the placement of words in Burmese sentences.
b) Mathematical Adjective for Amount and Number

In Burmese grammar, Mathematical adjective for amount and number are such as "ကျန်စာရင်းကို". Because noun is always in front of the number or the amount in Burmese sentence structure. It is different from other foreign language sentence structure, especially in English (for example- some students).

Example b (Learner 19)

အနက်စာရင်းကို ကျန်စာရင်းကို ပါစေတာ

Learner 19 misplaced the words, ကျန်စာရင်းကို and ပါစေတာ. ကျန်စာရင်းကို is the mathematical adjective for amount. ပါစေတာ is noun. Therefore, the correct sentence should be အနက်စာရင်းကို ပါစေတာ ကျန်စာရင်းကို ပါစေတာပါစေတာပါစေတာ

c) Particle for Supporting Noun

In Burmese grammar, Particles for supporting noun are such as "ကျွန်တော် (ဗ-for speaking form) ဖြင့်". They mean that "only" in English. Normally, they are behind noun in Burmese sentence but in English, only one (တစ်ခါကြည့်ခြင်း). Sometimes they are behind the Particle or other which is connected with noun, not behind the noun, for example, (ဒီ မှာ့ကြည့်ခြင်းမှာ သို့= This is only for Mya Mya.)

Example c (Learner 16)

နောက်ဆိုင်ရာ: Okinawa ကျွန်တော် ဖြင့် ကျွန်တော်ကို ပါစေတာပါစေတာပါစေတာ

Learner 16 misplaced the word, ဖြင့်, behind ကျွန်တော်. Normally, it is correct. But ကျွန်တော် is not noun. It is place because of ဖြင့်. Therefore, the correct sentence should be နောက်ဆိုင်ရာ: Okinawa ကျွန်တော် ဖြင့် ကျွန်တော်ကို ပါစေတာပါစေတာပါစေတာ

In the above examples, I found that there are many foreign students made these kinds of mistakes because of studying Burmese from the translation of their mother-tongue language.

3) Usage Inappropriateness

The third category is usage inappropriateness. This category can be further divided into two categories. Usage inappropriateness is using incorrect usage in sentence. It is classified into two parts.

a) Semantic Inappropriateness
b) Pragmatic Inappropriateness
Semantic Inappropriateness

Semantic inappropriateness is using incorrect usage in sentence that makes the meaning of sentence, incorrect or mislead. It is because of the different usages between Burmese and other languages.

i) Usage of Verb (ဗိုလ်ချင်းအသိ)

In Burmese grammar, usage of verb is such as 

There are 3 kinds of verb, (1) verb for continuous (example- စသည-တယ-), (2) verb for possession/location (example- မမသည-။ မမယ-ပါး), and (3) verb for being (example- မမသည-။ မမယ-ပါး). There is another kind of verb usage in Burmese is totally different from English or other foreign language. For example, ဖင- and ပင- in the sentences "ဖင-တယ-" and "ပင-တယ-". In English, "He opens the doors." and "Ko Ko saw the open doors." are the same using "open". It is different in Burmese. It depends on the noun that do other and the noun that be done by other. In the first sentence, the verb "" is for the noun "" who do "open". In the second sentence, the verb "" is for the noun "" that is done or opened by other.

Example i (Learner 8)

Learner 8 use incorrect usage ဖင- instead of ပင-.

Learner 8 use incorrect usage ဖင- instead of ပင-. ဖင- is for the noun that is done by other. ပင- is for the noun do other. In this sentence, ပင- is the noun that do other. Therefore, the correct sentence should be ပင-တယ-။

ii) Particle for Verb of Time (ကလ/ပကြည့်)

In Burmese grammar, Particle for verb of time is tense of sentence. There are 3 tenses of sentence, (1) Present tense (example- ဒန်-ကန်-တယ-။), (2) Past tense (example- မန်-ကန်-တယ-။), and (3) Future tense (example- မန်-ကန်-မယ-။). Present tense usage and past tense usage are only different in time usage, other are same. Future tense usage is "မယ-ဒီဇိုင်း".

Example ii (Learner 22)

Learner 22 use incorrect usage တယ- instead of မယ-.

This sentence shows the future tense that is coming nearly. Therefore, the correct sentence should be မယ-။
iii) Extra and Need (အပေါ်အလို)

Extra and need is more extra usage and need usage than normal usage should be or must be in the sentence of Burmese.

Example iii (Learner 24)

ကျောင်းတိုက်ဆိုင်ရာသော သို့မဟုတ်

Learner 24 wrote the sentence with the extra usage "ကျောင်းတိုက်". "ကျောင်းတိုက်" is the subject, not object. And then, "ကျောင်းတိုက်" is Particle for object. Therefore, the correct sentence should be ကျောင်းတိုက်ရှိုင်းချင်သော သို့မဟုတ်

For the above examples, the semantic inappropriateness of foreign learners can make the meanings of sentences incorrect or mislead. These mistakes showed that learners forget to care about the characteristics of Burmese sentence structures. The mother-tongue language of the learners would affect the learning of Burmese. This fact would be quite common in all kinds of language learning process.

b) Pragmatic Inappropriateness

In usage inappropriateness, pragmatic inappropriateness is using incorrect usage in sentence or syntax that cannot make the meaning of the context clearly. This kind of incorrect usage cannot make the meaning of sentence incorrect. But it might lead to incorrect sentence structure or usage.

i) Noun-changing from Verb (အခြွင်မှား)

In Burmese grammar, verb changes into Noun when some words are adding in front of or behind that verb. (example- အောက် + စော = အောက်စော + စော = အောက်စော). We called that kind of noun as "noun-changing from verb".

Example i (Learner 23)

ကျောင်းတိုက်ဆိုင်ရာသော သို့မဟုတ်: အခြွင်မှားပြောပြချင်သော

Learner 23 use incorrect usage အခြွင်မှားပြောပြချင်သော instead of အခြွင်မှားပြောပြချင်သော: ပြောပြချင်သော. This sentence is explanation of the meaning of "အခြွင်မှားပြောပြချင်သော". In Burmese, explanation ends with "ပြောပြချင်သော". Therefore, the correct sentence should be ကျောင်းတိုက်ဆိုင်ရာသော သို့မဟုတ်: အခြွင်မှားပြောပြချင်သော: ပြောပြချင်သော

ii) Pronoun for Indicating (အပေါ်အလို)

In Burmese grammar, pronouns for indicating are "အပေါ် အလို" (in speaking "သင် အပေါ် အလို". They are used instead of noun.
Example ii (Learner 7)

Learner 7 uses incorrect usage အေ for the place. အေ is for the thing. ဗီ is for the thing. Therefore, the correct sentence should be အေ ကတည်းကြားဖြင့် အဖစ်ပေါ်တယ်။

iii) Adjective for Indicating (အခြေခံသောအကြံပြး)

In Burmese grammar, adjectives for indicating are "ဗစ်ဗထုံး" (in speaking "ဗထုံး") and "ဗစ်ဗထုံး ဗထုံး". They are behind noun.

Example iii (Learner 11)

Nanjing လမ်းဖောက် ဟိုလုပ်ကြည့်ပါသည်။ ကျွန်တော်တို့ကို မဟုတ်သည်။ Waitan သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်။

Learner 11 uses incorrect usage ဟိုလုပ်ကြည့် instead of ကျွန်တော်တို့ကို မဟုတ်သည်။ ဟိုလုပ်ကြည့် is for the things we do not know definitely. (for example- ဗစ်ဗထုံး ဗထုံး = Do you know that road?). ကျွန်တော်တို့ မဟုတ်သည်။ is for the things we know definitely. (for example- ဗစ်ဗထုံး ဗထုံး ဗထုံး ဗထုံး = Do you Pye Road? That road is long.) In English, they are the same. Therefore, the correct sentence should be Nanjing လမ်းဖောက် ဟိုလုပ်ကြည့်ပါသည်။ ကျွန်တော်တို့ကို မဟုတ်သည်။ ဗစ်ဗထုံး ဗထုံး ပေါ်လာသည်။ Waitan သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်။

iv) Particle for Possession (သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်)

In Burmese grammar, Particle for possession is "ဗစ်ဗထုံး" (in speaking "ဗထုံး"). They are behind noun.

Example iv (Learner 2)

Learner 2 uses incorrect usage ဗထုံး instead of ဗစ်ဗထုံး. ဗစ်ဗထုံး is for subject and ဗထုံး is for possession. Therefore, the correct sentence should be သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်။ ဗထုံး ပေါ်လာသည်။ ဗစ်ဗထုံး သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်။

v) Particle for Separating (သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်)

In Burmese grammar, Particle for separating is "ဗစ်ဗထုံး ဗထုံး" (in speaking "ဗထုံး ဗထုံး"). They are behind noun.

Example v (Learner 2)

ဗစ်ဗထုံး ဗထုံး သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်။ ဗထုံး ပေါ်လာသည်။ ဗစ်ဗထုံး သို့စွာနိုင်ပါသည်။
Learner 2 use incorrect usage မြဲ instead of ထဲက. မြဲ is Particle for place and ထဲက is Particle for separating. Therefore, the correct sentence should be ချင်မချင်ကို ထဲကို တွေ့ရင် မှန်ကန်သော အချက်ဖြစ်စေ မောင်းရင် မောင်းဆိုပါစေ।

But it cannot make the meaning of sentence incorrect largely. We can understand the meaning of sentence clearly even with this kind of incorrect usage. It is only grammatically mistake.

vi) Classifiers (ဗိုင်းစီမံအမျိုးမျိုး)

In Burmese grammar, particle for variety is "အက် အရှည်း ကြိုး...". This kind of usage is depending on the kinds of things. (for example- အက်ဆက်ကျော်)

Example vi (Learner 14)

ဒေါ်သည်နေသာ ကြကကြောင်း တွေ့ လျှပ်စစ်ကြောင်း: ဗိုင်းစီမံအမျိုးမျိုး

Learner 14 use incorrect usage ကြိုး instead of ဆက်. ကြိုး is general classifier. ဆက် is the generation of kings. When foreigners are not sure, they use it. For the natives, it is an incorrect usage. Therefore, the correct sentence should be ဒေါ်သည်နေသာ ကြကကြောင်း တွေ့ ဆက်တလိုက်: ဗိုင်းစီမံအမျိုးမျိုး

This learner used it because it is general usage. Natives can understand this kind of incorrect usage. This would be quite complicated for foreign learners.

vii) Particle for Changing to Adjective (သင်္ကေတအပါအဝင်အသုံး)

In Burmese grammar, particle for changing to adjective is "သင်္ကေတ သင်္ကေတ သင်္ကေတ" (in speaking "သင်္ကေတ သင်္ကေတ/သင်္ကေတ/လက်") When verb combines with this particle, it changes to adjective. (example- လက်+သင်္ကေတ = လက်သင်္ကေတ) It is in front of noun.

Example vii (Learner 22)

ဒေါ်သည်နေသာ အချက်ဖြစ်သော လက်သင်္ကေတ တွေ့ရင် မြင်စေစေ

Learner 22 use verb "လက်" in front of noun "သင်္ကေတ". This verb needs to change to adjective by adding "သင်္ကေတ". Therefore, the correct sentence should be ဒေါ်သည်နေသာ အချက်ဖြစ်သော လက်သင်္ကေတ တွေ့ရင် မြင်စေစေ

viii) Particle for Argument (အပြောင်းအနောက်)

In Burmese grammar, particle for argument is "အပြောင်း အပြောင်း အပြောင်း" (in speaking, အပြောင်း အပြောင်း အပြောင်း). Burmese sentence with negative usage is such as အပြောင်း, အပြောင်း, အပြောင်း, အပြောင်း.
Example viii (Learner 10)

The Learner 10 uses the verb "မပါ". This usage is for self. This sentence is for giving advice to other. Therefore, the correct sentence should be ကိုးကျယ်သည် အားလုံးကို တစ်ခါပြီးလျင် သင်နိုင်ပါတယ်.

ix) Conjunction for One after Another (တစ်စောင်ခံနယ်နိုင်သည်)

In Burmese grammar, conjunction for one after another is "နောက်တစ်ခုနှင့် နောက်တစ်ခု" (in speaking, "နိုင်") . This usage is used for verb. If we use for noun or other, we need to add "ဖစ်" in front of it.

Example ix (Learner 27)

The Learner 27 wrote one after another, အားလုံးကို နောက်တစ်ခုပါ။ and နောက်တစ်ခုပါ။ by connecting with incorrect conjunction "နောက်တစ်ခု". အားလုံးကို is not verb. Therefore, we need to add "ဖစ်" in front of "နောက်တစ်ခု". The correct sentence should be စည်လောသာ အားလုံးကို: အားလုံးကို ဖစ်နောက်တစ်ခုပါ။

x) Conjunction for Combination (စည်ချော်နောက်တစ်ခု)

In Burmese grammar, conjunction for combination is "စည်နောက်တစ်ခု" . This usage is used for combination 2 nouns or 2 verbs or 2 sentences. (example - ညီညီအင်္ဂါကြိုးလောသာ: အတိုးအတိုး စည်နောက်တစ်ခု -for 2 nouns, ညီညီအင်္ဂါကြိုးလောသာ: စည်နောက်တစ်ခု -for 2 verbs or 2 sentences)

Example x (Learner 26)

The Learner 26 uses incorrect conjunction "ဝါဝါ" for combining 2 sentences instead of နောက်တစ်ခု. Therefore, the correct sentence should be စည်လောသာ: ဖစ်နောက်တစ်ခုပါ။

xi) Conjunction for Opposition (ဝါဝါ)

In Burmese grammar, conjunction for opposition is "ဝါဝါ" (in speaking, "ဝါဝါ") . This usage is used for opposition 2 sentences in different meanings. They are different in 1 sentence or 2 sentences. (example - ဝါဝါ ကြိုးလောသာ: စည်နောက်တစ်ခု ဝါဝါ -1 sentence, ဝါဝါ ကြိုးလောသာ: စည်နောက်တစ်ခု ဝါဝါ -2 sentences)
Example xi (Learner 18)

Learner 26 use incorrect conjunction "င်တာ" for combining 2 sentences instead of "ထည့်". Therefore, the correct sentence should be "င်တာလား".

xii) Conjunction for Reason (အရမ်း)

In Burmese grammar, conjunction for reason is "င်တာ" (in speaking, "င်တာလား"). It depends on that they are after noun or verb. (example- "အမြဲတွင် င်တာလား" -after noun, "အမြဲတွင် င်တာလား" -after verb)

Example xii (Learner 5)

Learner 26 use incorrect conjunction "င်တာ" for reason instead of "လား". Therefore, the correct sentence should be "င်တာလား".

xiii) Speaking and Writing (အစားနှင့်)

In Burmese grammar, the differences between speaking usage and writing usage are commonly known by the foreigners, though it is not easy to use for them. However, the incorrect usages might not twist the meaning of the sentence. It is quite complicated for foreign learners.

Example xiii (Learner 30)

Learner 30 use writing usage "င်တာလား", "မျိုး" and "လား" instead of speaking usage "င်တာလား", "မျိုး" and "လား". Therefore, the correct sentence should be "င်တာလား".

From the above examples, the learners could be due to the lack of exposure to the local culture or lack of chance to use in real practice. The intermediate level students always have a myth in mind, longer sentence is better. Somehow which is true in Burmese writing. However, because the skill level is only intermediate, the sentence structure would not be smooth in some usage. Another problem is the using of grammatical words to indicate the places or subjects.

Discussion

According to the findings, there are some grammatical items for foreign learners in learning Burmese. The grammatical problems are particles, conjunction, and sentence structures or
syntax. To resolve the problem of found grammatical errors, the readjustment of the basic level curriculum is an alternative. This curriculum must be structured by concluding general grammar items and exercises that are useful in real life.

Another item is "Bilingual mutual understanding". According to the examples in this study, the mother-tongue language of the foreign learners might affect their learning. The differences between Burmese and foreigners' mother-tongue language can mess up in daily usages. The main problem of this fact is thinking from the translation of mother-tongue language before writing or speaking Burmese. This problem is common if the sentence structures of mother-tongue language and Burmese are similar. If not, both teachers and students, all, must be careful in teaching and learning.

Another factor is the strength of the writing competence. It means that the more practice in learning Burmese four skills, the more careful in writing skill. Because practicing for writing skill is the easiest way to remember important basic usage for other skills. So, various practice with different contexts seems importance to eliminate the errors in usage.

Implications

There are two awareness that we should pay attention to. They are:

1) Pre-stage awareness and
2) Tailor-made awareness (learner-centered).

1) Pre-Stage Awareness

For pre-stage awareness, first, the curriculum should provide the grammatical differences since basic level. Because many curricula are prepared for four skills without grammar. Even concluding with grammar, only giving basic usages such as noun, pronoun, verb, subject, object, and the sentence structure such as subject + verb. Other usages and structures are being proficiency by practicing four skills in real life.

Second, not only foreign learners but also native teachers should be careful that learning and teaching must be based on the differences between speaking and writing in Burmese since basic level. If they do not care about these variations, they cannot reach for better teaching and learning in Burmese.

Final, learning language is not one-man band. For this fact, learners must go to public and practice in real life. Because practice in real situation is crucial.

2) Tailor-Made Awareness

For tailor-made awareness, teachers should identify the strengths and weaknesses of the learners beforehand. Teachers can prepare for students by students' proficiency level and nationalities. A good preparing is pre-testing students' needs on first lecture day.

Then, different exercises should be given according to individual needs. This approach can use during teaching period or one semester. After teaching first week or some weeks, teachers can know about the needs of each student in the class. Giving different exercises as the need of each student is really helpful for learners.
And then, the exposure of the usage in daily activities should be emphasized. Because teaching and learning language is not for one person. It is for communication. If teachers want students to be proficiency in language, they should add daily usages in lessons, give activities or projects connecting with daily life and listen to and explain students' questions out of the class.

**Conclusion**

This is a case study about 30 foreign learners learning Burmese as a foreign language in the intermediate level. Based on their writing, there are 23 grammatical errors are being identified. They are further classified as (1) Syntax misused; (2) Word misplacement; and (3) Usage inappropriateness. To improve the intermediate level of Burmese learning for the foreigners, the pre-stage awareness of the grammatical teaching content in the basic level is crucial. The tailor made of the explanation of the grammatical usage to different mother-tongue learners might ease the grammatical misunderstanding in Burmese throughout the learning process.

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