VALIDATING THE SCORING INFERENCE OF THE JAPANESE OPI RATINGS: THE USE OF EXTENDED TURNS, CONNECTIVE EXPRESSIONS, AND DISCOURSE ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

Adopting Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity as a guiding framework, this study examined the scoring inference of the OPI ratings based on the level descriptions in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, with a focus on the "text type" criterion. The Guidelines state that Intermediate speakers typically produce "sentences" while Advanced speakers are capable of using "connected discourse of paragraph length" (ACTFL, 2012c, pp. 5–8). However, there is little empirical evidence to support such characterizations. In an attempt to fill this gap, this conversation analytic study investigated the appropriateness of the text type criterion by examining how Intermediate and Advanced candidates participated in turn-taking in the OPI and responded to the OPI's narration and description tasks, which were designed to elicit a "connected discourse of paragraph length." The focal data consisted of audio/video recordings of 15 face-to-face Japanese OPIs. From a larger pool of OPI data collected for program assessment research by the College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, three OPIs for each of the five (sub)levels ranging from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid were randomly selected and transcribed. The study found that while the candidates at higher proficiency levels tended to demonstrate superior ability to use connective expressions in their discourse, the level descriptions concerning the text type criterion did not necessarily match actual candidate performance, especially for the lower proficiency levels (Intermediate-Low/Mid). The problems seemed to reside in the Guidelines' failure to recognize the candidates' interactional competence to produce sequentially appropriate actions in an orderly manner, as well as

the use of units of analysis for writing (e.g., sentences, paragraphs) to describe oral proficiency. Further research is called for in order to collect more empirical evidence to inform future revisions of the Guidelines.

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LIST OF TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Transcription conventions (from ten Have, 2007)

[	point of overlap onset
]	point of overlap ending
=	no gap (latching)
(0.0)	elapsed time in silence by tenth of seconds
(.)	a brief pause
:	prolongation of the immediately prior sound
-	cut-off
.	falling intonation
,	continuing intonation
?	rising intonation
¿	slightly rising intonation
˚word˚	quieter sound
>word<	speeding up
.hhh	audible inbreath
hhh	audible outbreath
(word)	dubious hearings or speaker identifications
(( ))	transcriber's descriptions

Abbreviations used in gloss translations

CP	copula
FP	sentence final particle
LK	linking particle
N	nominalizer
NEG	negative morpheme
O	object marker
P	particle
PAST	past tense
Q	question marker
QT	quotation marker
S	subject marker
SF	sentence filler
TP	topic marker

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The continued prominence of the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (hereafter, the Guidelines) and the *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview* (OPI) is evidenced by their prevalent use in the field of foreign language teaching and assessment in the United States today. The Guidelines are widely used for curriculum development and classroom instruction in foreign language programs in universities and secondary schools, and the ACTFL OPI, in which a candidate's performance is rated according to the proficiency levels described in the Guidelines, is used for various assessment purposes in academic and professional contexts, including program admission, academic placement, exit requirements, program evaluation, hiring, promotion, and teacher certification (ACTFL, 2012a; Chambless, 2012; Houston, 2005; Kagan & Friedman, 2003; Kondo-Brown, 2012; Rifkin, 2003).[1] Because the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines have a great influence on how foreign languages are taught, learned, and evaluated, it is extremely important to ensure their validity.

The Guidelines were first developed as an adaptation of the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions for academic use (ACTFL, 2012c), and the two rating scales are still compatible (e.g., "Advanced" on the ACTFL rating scale

[1] According to ACTFL, the ACTFL OPI is currently conducted in 37 different languages (http://www.actfl.org/professional-development/certified-proficiency-testing-program/testing-proficiency).

corresponds to ILR Level 2; ACTFL, 2012b). The Guidelines have been revised several times since their first publication in 1986, and while the 2012 version of the Guidelines describes five major levels of speaking proficiency (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, Distinguished), the ACTFL OPI currently tests for the four major levels of Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior.[2] The first three levels (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced) are further divided into Low, Mid, and High sublevels (e.g., Intermediate-Low, Intermediate-Mid, Intermediate-High).

In the ACTFL OPI, the interviewer elicits a sample of speech through a series of questions and follow-up questions, which are adjusted to the candidate's proficiency level and targeted at a specific function designated at a specific level. While basic tasks (e.g., describe, narrate, support opinion) and broad context/content areas (e.g., daily life, transactional situations, topics of personal and public interest) are prescribed, specific questions are formulated by the interviewer during the interview, depending on the candidate's interests, experiences, and knowledge. The rating criteria of the ACTFL OPI are organized into four categories: global tasks and functions, context and content, accuracy, and text type (ACTFL, 2012a). The rating criterion of text type, which I will describe in more detail below, is the focus of interest for the present study.

The text-type criterion of the ACTFL OPI generally refers to the length of discourse that the speaker is capable of producing. According to ACTFL, the text types of the four major levels are as follows: "Individual words and phrases" (Novice), "Discrete

[2] The Distinguished level was not present in the 1999 version of the Guidelines; it is a new addition to the 2012 version and is not currently tested in the ACTFL OPI.

sentences" (Intermediate), "Paragraphs"[3] (Advanced), and "Extended discourse" (Superior) (ACTFL, 2012a, p. 6). The text type of the Advanced level (paragraphs) is also referred to as "connected discourse of paragraph length" in the Guidelines, and this is one of the most important criteria that divide Intermediate and Advanced speakers. According to the Guidelines, while Advanced-Low/Mid speakers are capable of producing connected discourse of paragraph length by linking sentences with connectors and internal organization, Intermediate-Low/Mid speakers typically respond with "short statements and discrete sentences" (Intermediate-Low) or "sentences and strings of sentences" (Intermediate-Mid) (ACTFL, 2012c, pp. 6–8). Intermediate-High speakers are expected to share some characteristics with Advanced speakers as they are capable of producing "connected discourse of paragraph length," but may not be able to sustain the performance at that level all the time.

However, it has to be noted that these level characterizations are not based on any theory or empirical research on spoken interaction (Bachman, 1988; Bachman & Savignon, 1986; Lantolf & Frawley, 1988; Raffaldini, 1988; Savignon, 1985), and the use of units of analysis for writing (e.g., sentences, paragraphs) to describe the levels of oral proficiency seems particularly problematic as it largely disregards the differences between spoken and written language (Brown & Yule, 1983a, 1983b). Barnwell (1993) criticizes the ACTFL OPI for this reason, explaining that "exhibition of what is called

[3] The ACTFL defines a paragraph as "a self-contained, cohesive unit of spoken or written discourse that generally consists of multiple sentences linked by internal organization and connectors" (http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org/glossary).

'paragraph length' discourse is required at Advanced level. Yet people do not speak in paragraphs" (p. 206). He further argues:

> The paragraph is a concept rooted in the world of written language, and the fact that it is cited in ACTFL materials is an artifact of the test format itself. Using the paragraph to epitomize a particular level of proficiency is a value judgment, one that springs from the academic preconceptions of those who do proficiency testing. (Barnwell, 1993, p. 206)

Overall, there is little empirical evidence to support or refute the text type criterion of the ACTFL OPI. In an attempt to fill this gap, the present study will investigate the appropriateness of this criterion by examining actual candidate performance in the OPI.

Although the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines have been widely used in the field of foreign language teaching and assessment, their lack of basis in theory and empirical research has been long noted as a critical weakness (Bachman, 1988; Bachman & Savignon, 1986; Fulcher, 1996; Kramsch, 1986; Lantolf & Frawley, 1988; Liskin-Gasparro, 2003; Raffaldini, 1988; Savignon, 1985; van Lier, 1989). For instance, Bachman (1988) maintains that ACTFL has not taken seriously "the test developer's responsibility for demonstrating the validity of the interpretations of the ratings and identifying the uses for which they are valid" (p. 159). In addition, Lantolf and Frawley (1988) observe that the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines have been increasingly used for curriculum design, teacher certification, and entrance and exit requirements for language programs, and consider such uses as premature and potentially harmful since their validity is not yet confirmed. Bachman and Savignon (1986) criticize the Guidelines for their "confounding of language ability and test method factors" (p. 385). The descriptions of language proficiency (traits) in the Guidelines are highly dependent on specific content

areas and contexts (testing methods), which makes it extremely difficult to interpret the ratings. Savignon (1985) claims that the ACTFL OPI overemphasizes grammar and accuracy, and Raffaldini (1988) argues that the ACTFL OPI stresses only one function, the exchange of information and opinions, and that "the range of discourse and sociocultural contexts that the OPI presents is extremely limited" (p. 202). These researchers have called for empirical research to evaluate the validity of the interpretations and uses of the OPI ratings. In response, quite a few studies have been conducted on the ACTFL OPI and non-ACTFL OPIs. I will review these studies in Section 1.2.

1.2 Previous validation studies on OPIs

1.2.1 Studies on the ACTFL OPI

Previous validation studies on the ACTFL OPI have mostly concerned two areas: rating criteria and interrater reliability. Issues relating to the rating criteria that have been investigated include communication strategies (Liskin-Gasparro, 1996a), narrative strategies (Liskin-Gasparro, 1996b), and cohesion and coherence strategies (Watanabe, 2003). Liskin-Gasparro (1996a) examined the use of communication strategies in the ACTFL OPI, focusing on the Guidelines' characterization of Advanced speakers as capable of using strategies such as circumlocution and of Intermediate-High speakers as likely to exhibit features of breakdown where such strategies could be employed.[4] In order to examine the appropriateness of this rating criterion, Liskin-Gasparro examined

[4] An older version of the Guidelines was used in Liskin-Gasparro's (1996a, 1996b) studies. The level descriptions of the Guidelines have since been revised.

the Spanish OPIs of 13 Advanced speakers and 17 Intermediate-High speakers. Contrary to the level descriptions in the Guidelines, she found that both groups of speakers used circumlocution at similar rates. However, Intermediate-High speakers were more likely to rely on first-language-based communication strategies (e.g., code-switching) while Advanced speakers tended to use second-language-based strategies. Since the level descriptions of the Guidelines included only circumlocution as an example of communication strategies, Liskin-Gasparro recommended that the Guidelines be revised to include more comprehensive descriptions of communication strategies in the level descriptions.

Another study by Liskin-Gasparro (1996b) investigated the use of narrative strategies in the narration task in the OPI. She examined two stories about the same event produced by the same learner of Spanish in two OPIs administered before and after a summer language program. The learner was rated as Intermediate-High in the first OPI and as Advanced[5] in the second OPI. Liskin-Gasparro found that the story produced in the second OPI was superior to the story in the first OPI as it was considerably longer and more coherent, and it included more details and a greater variety of evaluation devices. In the ACTFL OPI, the ability to narrate is one of the criteria for Advanced level proficiency, and her study provided insight into how this rating criterion was reflected in the actual ratings.

Watanabe (2003) investigated the text-type criterion in the ACTFL OPI in relation to cohesion and coherence strategies. As mentioned earlier, the Guidelines

[5] In the 1986 version of the Guidelines, the Advanced level was not divided into sublevels.

associate different text types with different proficiency levels. By examining 15 Japanese OPIs evaluated at proficiency levels ranging from Intermediate-High to Superior, Watanabe investigated the candidates' use of linguistic resources that contributed to the achievement of extended discourse. She found that the use of embedded predicates expanded as the proficiency level went up, as more proficient speakers incorporated more embedded clauses per response unit. As for nonembedded clauses, she observed that speakers at higher proficiency levels employed more post-predicate elements (e.g., connective particles, sentence-final particles) while speakers at lower proficiency levels tended to produce the bare form of predicates. Watanabe also emphasizes that the appropriate use of linguistic devices was essential in achieving a cohesive and coherent discourse in the OPI.

In addition, several studies have examined the interrater reliability of the ACTFL OPI (Dandonoli & Henning, 1990; Magnan, 1987; Surface & Dierdorff, 2003; Thompson, 1995). Magnan (1987) examined interrater reliability between a master tester and trainees in French OPIs and observed a high level of interrater reliability (Pearson's r = .94). Thompson (1995) inspected the ratings of 795 ACTFL OPIs in five European languages and found that the interrater reliability was significant in all languages (with Pearson's r ranging from .839 to .897). Surface and Dierdorff (2003) examined interrater reliability based on 5,881 OPIs in 19 languages conducted and rated by experienced ACTFL testers. A high level of overall interrater reliability was observed (Pearson's r = .978) although some differences were found among languages. Surface and Dierdorff also report that the interrater consistency was significant in all 19 languages: About 80.8% of ratings agreed

perfectly, 18.6% of ratings were one category apart (e.g., Advanced-Low vs. Advanced-Mid), and only 0.6% of ratings disagreed by more than one category (e.g., Advanced-Low vs. Advanced-High). They also noticed that when the raters disagreed, the second rater tended to give a lower rating than the interviewer/first rater. These studies seem to provide some evidence for the validity of the interpretations and uses of the ACTFL OPI ratings. However, the amount of evidence collected from empirical studies is still very small, and further research is required to evaluate the validity of the ACTFL OPI.

1.2.2 Studies on non-ACTFL OPIs

In the past two decades, a number of conversation/discourse analytic studies have been conducted on non-ACTFL OPIs. Many of these studies examined the interviewer–candidate interaction and interviewer behavior in various types of OPIs. In this subsection, I will review several of these studies that greatly inform the present study with their discussions of the interactional characteristics of the OPIs.[6]

First of all, some earlier studies examined the OPI as an instance of native–nonnative interaction, and noted that the interviewer and the candidate have an asymmetrical relationship and make different contributions to the interaction in the OPI (Young & Milanovic, 1992). Ross and Berwick (1992) characterize interviewers' language use as having two features: control exponents and accommodation exponents. That is, interviewers are inclined to control the interview and proceed according to the prescribed procedures while they also tend to adjust their language to make the

[6] The OPIs examined by these studies include the Cambridge English exams, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and other OPIs conducted within institutions. They had different testing procedures, and were conducted in various settings such as schools, workplaces, and testing offices.

communication with the candidates easier. Ross and Berwick observe that some candidates might have been treated to more accommodation than they deserved, which could decrease the validity of the OPI since over-accommodation weakens the power of probing.

More recently, several studies have compared the OPI and other kinds of interaction such as ordinary conversation, interviews, and second language (L2) classroom and university interactions. Johnson and Tyler (1998) and Johnson (2001) reveal striking differences between the OPI and ordinary conversation: While turn types, turn allocation, and topics are unpredictable in conversation, one type of adjacency pair, question and response, was predominant in the OPI, and it was almost always the case that the interviewer asked a question and the candidate provided a response. In addition, while the interviewer directly selected the candidate as a next speaker by posing a first pair part of an adjacency pair (e.g., a question), the candidate indirectly selected the interviewer as a next speaker by contributing the second pair part (e.g., a response). Furthermore, topics were typically introduced by the interviewer, but not by the candidate.

Egbert (1998) compared the organization of other-initiated repair in the OPI with learners of German and in ordinary conversation among native speakers of German. She found that while there were similarities in the use of other-initiated repair in the OPI and conversation, the learners in the OPI did not use open class repair initiators (e.g., *hm?* "huh?" *was?* "what?"), which was common in conversation. Instead, the learners used explicit requests for repetition to initiate repair on the entire prior turn (e.g., *Wiederholen Sie das bitte?* "Repeat that please?"), which did not occur in conversation. Egbert

explains that the learners were instructed to use these explicit request forms by the interviewer and their textbook prior to the OPI. Her study offers important pedagogical implications.

In a more recent study, Seedhouse (2013) compared the organization of turn-taking, sequences, topics, and repair in the IELTS Speaking Test and in L2 classrooms and university interactions. He observed that the highly standardized procedures of the IELTS Speaking Test deeply affected the interaction between the examiner and candidate. In this test, topics and questions were prescribed, and examiners were not allowed to alter the wording of questions. If the candidate did not understand a question, the examiner could repeat the question only once (without paraphrasing). Also, in some parts of the test, the interviewer was not allowed to ask follow-up questions on what the candidate said, and therefore the achievement of intersubjectivity was not required on the interviewer's part. Seedhouse maintains that this highly scripted question–answer sequence was effective in generating differential performances among the candidates, hence achieving the institutional goal of the test. On the other hand, the interactional restrictions of the test made the test interaction quite different from the interactions in L2 classrooms and at the university, where follow-up moves were more common and participants worked together to achieve intersubjectivity.

While these studies have highlighted the differences between OPIs and other kinds of interaction, several other studies have indicated that OPIs share some similarities with one type of institutional discourse: interviews. For instance, Johnson (2001) claims that the level-check and probing phases in the OPI resemble a very formal type of

interview, such as survey interviews. Moder and Halleck (1998) also report that both native and nonnative speakers of English interpreted the OPI in a general interview framework, and maintain that the OPI can be considered a legitimate representative of a speech event (interviews) in which nonnative speakers are likely to participate in real-world situations. However, there are fundamental differences between OPIs and interviews in general as well. According to Kasper (2006b), "Although all interviews share their defining speech exchange system, they display different interactional characteristics in other respects, which both reflect and construct their particular purpose" (p. 324). On the one hand, interviews in general are intended to obtain information from the interviewees, and linguistic forms and discourse features are just a vehicle for conveying topical content. On the other hand, OPIs are designed to collect ratable samples for the purpose of language assessment, and topical content is more or less a means to generate speech samples (Kasper, 2006b).

Kasper's (2006b, 2013; Kasper & Ross, 2007) studies highlight how the interactional characteristics of the OPI are connected to its institutional objective. Kasper and Ross (2007) examined how interviewers managed interactional troubles using multiple questions in different sequential environments in the OPI. They found that when the candidate did not hear or understand the interviewer's initial question (indicated by the candidate's other-initiation of repair, a gap of silence, or a problematic response), the interviewer produced a subsequent version of the question to pursue a relevant response from the candidate. Further, in sequential environments where intersubjectivity may be difficult to achieve (e.g., the interviewer's third position repair, topic shift, request for

extended actions), the interviewer often used multiple questions to increase the comprehensibility of the question (e.g., by introducing a new topic in the first question and narrowing down the referential focus in the second question). The authors maintain that these interactional practices of interviewers have strong connections to the institutional goal of the OPI. Since candidates' misunderstanding or mishearing of questions makes it difficult to generate relevant responses, interviewers must reduce such risks, and multiple questions are a useful interactional device for them to do so.

Kasper (2006b) further analyzed interviewers' use of multiple requests in the OPI in relation to politeness. She noticed that when interviewers produced multiple requests, they often removed politeness marking in the subsequent version of the request, and as such, multiple requests often showed a shift from a less direct and/or more mitigated version to a more direct and/or less mitigated version. Kasper maintains that "the request versions are associated with sequentially sensitive orientations to interactional priorities" (p. 345). That is, the interviewers prioritized the display of politeness and affiliation toward the candidates in the first request, and the transparency and intelligibility of the request in the second request, which built on the first one. In this way, the interviewers were able to manage two interactional demands, one to establish and maintain a favorable relationship with the candidates, and the other to increase the chance of generating relevant responses and hence meeting the objective of the OPI.

In a more recent study, Kasper (2013) examined candidates' task uptake and interviewers' use of third position repair (Schegloff, 1992). In the OPI, tasks are designed to elicit specific genres of discourse, linguistic features, and/or pragmatic functions. If the

candidate fails to understand the task in the way it was intended, his/her response is likely to be "off-task." Since such off-task performance does not allow inferences to be made about the candidate's proficiency level, it is crucial that the interviewer constantly monitor the candidate's responses to keep them on-task. Kasper found that when the interviewer considered the candidate's response as irrelevant to the task, he/she produced a third position repair to redirect the candidate toward the task. The interviewers tended to provide such interventions at early opportunities, but in some cases, the interventions appeared premature or overdue. The study also shows that, when the candidate did not produce the specific type of response the task was intended to generate, the interviewer rejected the responses as task-irrelevant, even when they would have been appropriate in real-world situations.

Similarly, Okada and Greer (2013) examined how interviewers managed interactional troubles in OPI role plays. They found that, in role plays, when the candidates did not respond to questions appropriately, or diverged from the scenario given in the task card, the interviewers attempted to keep the interaction on track by reformulating questions, providing sample answers, and/or indicating a trouble with a gap of silence. The authors maintain that the interviewers' repair practices in role plays had both similarities with, and differences from, repair practices in ordinary conversation, and that the interviewer's skillful use of those "natural" and "unnatural" repairs enabled the interviewers and candidates to achieve the goals of the role plays.

Lastly, previous studies have indicated that there are variations in interviewer behavior, and that interviewers' interactional styles could affect candidates' performance

in the OPI. Lazaraton (1996, 2002) reports frequent variability in interviewer behavior in the Cambridge English exams. Even when the wording and order of questions were prescribed, the examiners did not consistently use the questions, and they substantially modified their wording. Kondo-Brown (2004) found in her study on the Japanese OPI with children that when children failed to produce appropriate responses to initial prompts, interviewers inconsistently provided various types of support, which significantly affected resulting scores. Katona (1998) shows in her study on the English OPI with Hungarian candidates that familiarity between the interlocutors could influence the interviewer–candidate interaction in the OPI.

Some studies have reported actual cases in which the same candidate was rated differently when interviewed by different interviewers. Brown (2003) investigated two IELTS interviews in which the same candidate received different ratings. She noticed that the two interviewers used different elicitation techniques with the candidate. For instance, one of the interviewers typically asked closed questions first (e.g., yes/no questions) to establish a topic, and then elicited extended responses using open questions and explicit requests such as "tell me about…" With this interviewer, the candidate appeared more effective at communication and was rated higher. In contrast, the other interviewer exclusively used closed questions and did not employ open questions or explicit requests to elicit extended responses. In requesting elaboration, he would use repetitions and continuers, which were often misunderstood by the candidate as confirmation requests. With him, the candidate tended to provide minimal responses and did not elaborate, and as a result, she was rated lower. Brown's study indicates how interviewers' elicitation

techniques could influence candidates' performance. This problem may be especially salient when the interviewer and candidate have different cultural interaction practices. For example, it has been noted that in English OPIs, Japanese candidates tend not to elaborate and often misunderstand the cues interviewers provide in requesting elaboration (e.g., a partial repetition of the candidate's under-elaborated response) as mere confirmation requests (Kasper & Ross, 2003; Ross, 1998; Young & Halleck, 1998).

Ross (2007) also examined two English OPIs in which the same candidate was differently rated by two interviewers at different times, resulting in the candidate's "backsliding" to a lower rating. His study demonstrates how the candidate's differential establishment of footings in the interview, misalignments to the tone of the interviewer, and differential tendencies of the interviewers to accommodate the candidate (e.g., how they provided backchannels) influenced the interviewers' impressions of the candidate's proficiency level, which in turn influenced the interview trajectories and resulting ratings. However, Ross maintains that, in spite of interviewer variation, the reliability of the OPI is upheld by the second-rating system, as evidenced by the second ratings of the candidate in his study, which were consistent in both interviews.

In sum, previous studies indicate that there are variations in interviewer behavior, which could affect candidates' performance in the OPI. These findings highlight the importance of interviewer/rater training. Since OPIs are often used in high stakes assessments and could have a considerable impact on candidates' lives, it is very important to make certain that all candidates are treated equally and fairly.

1.3 Potential contributions of the present study

While previous studies on interviewer–candidate interaction and interviewer behavior in OPIs have greatly informed researchers, test administrators, interviewers/raters, and teachers about the interaction in the OPI, conversation/discourse analytic studies also contribute by investigating the relationship between candidates' performance in the OPI and the resulting ratings (Lazaraton, 2002; Lee, Park, & Sohn, 2011; Liskin-Gasparro, 1996a, 1996b; Ross & O'Connell, 2013; Tominaga, 2013; Watanabe, 2003). For instance, empirical evidence collected from such studies could be helpful in revising the rating criteria so that the criteria would better reflect actual candidate performance.

Following previous conversation/discourse analytic research on OPIs, the present study will potentially contribute to the literature in the following two ways. First, adopting Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity, this study will examine the scoring inference of the OPI ratings based on the Guidelines. As discussed earlier, one of the rating criteria of the ACTFL OPI is the text type criterion. It is expected that Intermediate speakers respond with "sentences" while Advanced speakers produce "connected discourse of paragraph length" (ACTFL, 2012c). However, there is little empirical evidence to support the assumption that this criterion is either reasonable or applied appropriately. In an attempt to fill this gap, the present study will investigate how a "connected discourse of paragraph length" is achieved in the OPI. Specifically, it will examine how candidates at different proficiency levels (ranging from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid) performed the two major tasks designed to elicit the "connected

discourse of paragraph length," which are the description and narration tasks, with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. The study will then assess whether the level descriptions in the Guidelines match the actual candidate performances.

Second, drawing on conversation analysis (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974), this study will present a detailed analysis of the interviewer–candidate interaction in the face-to-face Japanese OPI. The analysis will include many aspects of interactional organization, such as turn-taking, sequential structure, extended turns, topic management, embodied actions, and self-directed speech. It is hoped that findings from this study will enhance the understanding of the collaboratively constructed nature of the interaction in the OPI.

1.4 Organization of the study

In this chapter, I have discussed issues relating to the validity of the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines, and reviewed previous studies on ACTFL and non-ACTFL OPIs. I have also presented potential contributions of the present study.

Chapter 2 describes the methodology of the study. I will introduce Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity as a guiding framework. I will also present my analytical framework, conversation analysis. Furthermore, I will discuss the notion of interactional competence, turn-taking and extended turns, and connective expressions in spoken Japanese, all of which are highly relevant to the present study. I will also present my research questions and data collection methodology in this chapter.

Chapter 3 presents the basic sequence structure found in the present OPI data, and demonstrates how the candidates and the interviewer projected, understood, and negotiated the continuation and completion of the candidates' response turns. I will also discuss the turn-taking resources used in the present OPI data.

Chapters 4 and 5 are parallel chapters. Chapter 4 examines the candidates' performance on the description task, with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. For each level from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid, an excerpt that shows the candidate's response to the description task will be presented and analyzed. I will also compare the candidates' performance on the description task within and across levels.

Chapter 5 examines the candidates' performance on the narration task, again with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. I will present a detailed analysis of excerpts to illustrate how the candidates produced stories using connected discourse in the OPI. Again, I will also compare the candidates' performance within and across levels.

Chapter 6 summarizes the findings of the study and provides answers to the research questions. I will also discuss implications of the findings for the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines. Finally, the contributions and limitations of the present study, as well as recommendations for future studies, will be presented.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a brief description of the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines and summarized findings from relevant previous studies on OPIs. In this chapter, I will present the methodology of the present study. First, I will introduce Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity as a guiding framework. Second, I will discuss my analytical framework, conversation analysis (CA), and the notion of interactional competence. I will also talk about seminal CA studies on turn-taking and extended turns, which have direct relevance to this study. Third, I will briefly describe connective expressions in spoken Japanese. Finally, I will present my research questions and the data collection methodology of the study.

2.2 Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity

The *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* defines validity as "the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed uses of tests" (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999, p. 9). The present study follows the current practice of viewing validation as constructing a sound, coherent argument to support proposed interpretations and uses of test scores (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999; Bachman & Palmer, 2010; Chapelle, 2012; Chapelle, Enright, & Jamieson, 2008, 2010; Cronbach, 1988; Kane, 2006, 2012, 2013; Messick, 1988). In particular, I will adopt Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity as a guiding framework.

Kane's framework has informed recent validation studies in the field of L2 assessment. For instance, Chapelle, Enright, and Jamieson (2008) used Kane's approach to build a validity argument for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Roever (2011) also drew on Kane's framework to outline interpretive and validity arguments for the testing of L2 pragmatic competence, and Youn (2013) adopted Kane's approach to validate a task-based assessment of L2 pragmatics in interaction. According to Chapelle, Enright, and Jamieson (2010), the advantages of Kane's argument-based approach to validity, as compared to the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999), include the following: (a) It does not rely on a construct, which is helpful because "no agreement exists concerning a single best way to define constructs of language proficiency to serve as a defensible basis for score interpretation" (p. 4); (b) it provides clear guidance for outlining and organizing validation studies; (c) it helps to synthesize evidence gathered from different perspectives; and (d) it allows space for counterevidence.

Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity uses two kinds of arguments: an *interpretive argument* and a *validity argument*.[1] An interpretive argument outlines a chain of *inferences* that form a bridge from observed performance to conclusions and decisions made based on the test results. Each inference relies on certain *assumptions* that need to be evaluated. When assumptions underlying an inference are found to be reasonable and plausible, it provides backing for the inference. A validity argument represents an evaluation of the interpretive argument. In Chapelle, Enright, and

[1] The interpretive argument is called "interpretation/use argument" (IUA) by Kane (2013).

Jamieson's (2010) words, "a validity argument is an interpretative argument in which backing has been provided for the assumptions" (p. 5). As a series of analyses and empirical studies evaluate the inferences and assumptions identified in the interpretive argument, all relevant pieces of evidence will be put together to develop a validity argument. However, if evidence suggests that some inferences or assumptions in the argument are implausible, the interpretive argument needs to be modified or abandoned.

An interpretive argument, therefore, represents inferences and assumptions that lead from observed performance to conclusions and decisions made based on test results. In the first step in Kane's model, the *scoring inference* bridges observed performance and observed score. The general assumptions underlying this inference include "that the scoring criteria are reasonable and that they are applied appropriately" (Kane, 2006, p. 24), and backing for these assumptions usually involves expert judgment. The ACTFL claims that the ACTFL OPI assesses "language proficiency in terms of a speaker's ability to use the language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations" (ACTFL, 2012a, p. 4). The assumptions for this claim would include that: (1) the rating categories and criteria are appropriate for assessing what it claims to assess; that is, the ability to use the language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations; (2) candidate performance matches the level descriptions in the Guidelines; and (3) the raters are trained adequately so that they understand the rating criteria appropriately and are able to apply them consistently. Chapelle (2012) notes that Kane's model, which is not specifically designed for language testing, treats scoring rules as relatively uncontroversial, but that "in language tests, the development, implementation and justification of scoring rules are

both consequential for score meaning and controversial" (p. 23). She further emphasizes the importance of studying rating criteria:

> Human scoring intended to capture the effectiveness of communication requires judgments which result in scores that are affected by human interpretation of a scoring rubric (McNamara, 1996). Therefore, an important issue in language assessment is the study of the criteria that raters actually use when they score such responses (e.g. Cumming, Kantor, & Powers, 2002). (Chapelle, 2012, p. 23)

As discussed in Chapter 1, several studies have examined the rating criteria of the ACTFL OPI (e.g., Kagan & Friedman, 2003; Liskin-Gasparro, 1996a, 1996b; Watanabe, 2003) as well as interrater reliability (e.g., Surface & Dierdorff, 2003; Thompson, 1995). These studies have provided some evidence to support (or partially refute) the scoring inference and the associated assumptions of the ACTFL OPI ratings. However, only parts of the rating criteria have been examined, and further research is needed to evaluate the plausibility of the assumptions inherent in the scoring inference.

The second step in Kane's model involves the *generalization inference*, which leads from an observed score to a universe score. This inference relies on the assumptions "that the sample of observations is representative of the universe and that the sample is large enough to control sampling error" (Kane, 2006, p. 24). In the OPI, it is important that tasks/questions, elicitation techniques, and other testing procedures are clearly defined and appropriately applied in order to make generalization possible. As such, the assumptions inherent in this inference specific to the OPI would include: (1) the OPI sample is representative of the target task domains for making inferences about candidates' levels of oral proficiency; (2) the interviewers' performance is reasonably standardized so that the interviewer effect on candidate performance is minimized; and

(3) the tasks included in the OPI are sufficient and appropriate to obtain stable observations of candidate performance. There have been a number of studies on interviewer behavior and variations in non-ACTFL OPIs (e.g., Brown, 2003; Kasper, 2006b, 2013; Kasper & Ross, 2003, 2007; Katona, 1998; Kondo-Brown, 2004; Lazaraton, 2002; Okada & Greer, 2013; Ross, 2007; Ross & Berwick, 1992), but such studies are scarce on the ACTFL OPI. In addition, other facets such as tasks, time, and settings need to be examined in order to evaluate the generalizability of the ratings of the ACTFL OPI.

In the third step in Kane's model, the universe score is extended to the target score via the *extrapolation inference.* The assumptions inherent in this inference are "that the test tasks provide adequate measures of the competencies of interest […] and are not overly influenced by extraneous factors" (Kane, 2006, p. 24). Such assumptions need to be supported by empirical evidence examining "relationships between observed scores and other scores associated with the target domain (e.g., other measures drawn from the target domain)" (Kane, 2006, p. 35). As mentioned earlier, the ACTFL OPI is intended to assess "language proficiency in terms of a speaker's ability to use the language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations" (ACTFL, 2012a, p. 4). The assumptions underlying the extrapolation inference for the ACTFL OPI would include that: (1) performance observed in the OPI is related to how well the candidate is likely to use the language in real-life situations; and (2) performance observed in the OPI is related to other criteria of language proficiency (e.g., other proficiency tests, candidates' self-evaluation of their ability to use the language, actual class placement, instructors'

evaluations of learners' language proficiency). However, there is little evidence to support these assumptions; previous studies on non-ACTFL OPIs provide related but limited evidence. For example, Youn (2013) investigated the extrapolation inference of a task-based assessment of L2 pragmatics in interaction by examining relationships between examinees' scores on the target tasks and other types of speaking tasks. There has been much discussion on the appropriateness of the interviewer–candidate interaction for the evaluation of candidates' competencies to use the language in non-test situations (e.g., Johnson, 2001; Johnson & Tyler, 1998; Okada, 2010; Ross & O'Connell, 2013; Seedhouse, 2013). More empirical evidence is needed to determine whether or not, and to what extent, the candidate's performance in the ACTFL OPI is related to how well he/she is likely to use the language in real-life situations.

Finally, the *utilization inference*[2] bridges the target score to conclusions and decisions made based on the test results. The utilization inference is based on a number of assumptions such as that the test results are interpreted appropriately by the test takers, administrators, and teachers, and that claims and decisions made based on the test results are appropriate. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the ACTFL OPI has been widely used for foreign language assessment in various settings, and it is inevitable that it has substantial washback effects (Brown, 1999; Messick, 1996) on teaching and learning of foreign languages.[3] Therefore, inquiries about the consequences of the uses of the ACTFL OPI

[2] Kane (2006) calls this *decision inference* (or *implication inference*), but I have adopted the term *utilization inference* from Chapelle, Enright, and Jamieson (2008, 2010).

[3] For instance, the adoption of the ACTFL OPI as a measure of teacher candidates' L2 proficiency could have impacts on teacher education programs, which would seek ways to better prepare their candidates for the OPI (Sullivan, 2011).

ratings form an important part of the validation process. The assumptions for the utilization inference specific to the ACTFL OPI would include that (1) the intended interpretations and uses of the OPI ratings are clearly explained so that test takers, teachers, and administrators can make appropriate decisions based on the test results; and (2) the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines have positive washback effects on how foreign languages are taught, and the negative washback of the test is minimal. To my knowledge, there is no empirical study that has investigated these issues, and future research is certainly needed.[4]

The following table (Table 2.1) presents the chain of inferences that form the bridge from observed performance in the OPI to the interpretations and uses of the OPI ratings, the assumptions inherent in those inferences, and the previous studies that have investigated the related issues for both ACTFL and non-ACTFL OPIs.

[4] Kondo-Brown (2012) mentions that the high costs of taking an official ACTFL OPI test and participating in the OPI tester training/certification may reduce the practicality of the ACTFL OPI for many foreign language programs.

Table 2.1.

Inferences and Assumptions in the Interpretive Argument for the ACTFL OPI

Inference	General assumptions (adopted from Kane, 2006)	Assumptions specific to the ACTFL OPI	Empirical studies on OPIs (including ACTFL and non-ACTFL OPIs)
Utilization Inference	1. Test results are appropriately interpreted. 2. Claims and decisions made based on the test results are appropriate.	1. The intended interpretations and uses of the OPI ratings are clearly explained so that test takers, teachers, and administrators can make appropriate decisions based on the test results. 2. The ACTFL OPI and Guidelines have positive washback on how foreign languages are taught. The negative washback of the test is minimal.	
Extrapolation Inference	Observed performance is related to the competencies of interest.	1. Performance observed in the OPI is related to how well the candidate is likely to use the language in real-life situations. 2. Performance observed in the OPI is related to other criteria of language proficiency.	Comparisons between the test and target domains (e.g., Johnson, 2001; Johnson & Tyler, 1998; Seedhouse, 2013) Relationships between the test and other proficiency tests (e.g., Youn, 2013)
Generalization Inference	1. The speech sample is representative of the universe. 2. The speech sample is large enough to control sampling error.	1. The OPI sample is representative of the target task domains for making inferences about candidates' levels of oral proficiency. 2. The interviewers' performance is reasonably standardized so that the interviewer effect on candidate performance is minimized. 3. The tasks included in the OPI are sufficient and appropriate to obtain stable observations of candidate performance.	Interviewer behavior and variations (e.g., Brown, 2003; Kasper, 2006b, 2013; Kasper & Ross, 2003, 2007; Katona, 1998; Kondo-Brown, 2004; Lazaraton, 2002; Okada & Greer, 2013; Ross, 2007; Ross & Berwick 1992) FACETS analyses on examinees' abilities and task difficulty (e.g., Youn, 2013)
Scoring Inference	1. The rating criteria are reasonable. 2. The rating criteria are applied accurately and consistently.	1. The rating categories and criteria are appropriate for assessing oral proficiency. 2. Candidate performance matches the level descriptions in the Guidelines. 3. The raters are trained adequately so that they understand the rating criteria appropriately and are able to apply them consistently.	Rating criteria (e.g., Kagan & Friedman, 2003; Liskin-Gasparro, 1996a, 1996b; Watanabe, 2003; Youn, 2013) Interrater reliability (e.g., Magnan, 1987; Surface & Dierdorff, 2003; Thompson, 1995)

As Kane (2006) claims, "The main advantage of the argument-based approach to validation is the guidance it provides in allocating research efforts and in gauging progress in the validation effort" (p. 23). To my knowledge, no research concerning the validity of the interpretations and uses of the ACTFL OPI ratings has adopted Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity. I believe that Kane's framework will provide a practical framework to organize validation research, integrate evidence collected from different sources, and build a coherent validity argument for the ACTFL OPI. If any inferences or assumptions are found to be implausible during the validation process, then recommendations for the ACTFL OPI could be made. Kane's framework also helps small-scale studies, such as the present study, to find a place in, and make a meaningful contribution to, a broader body of validation research on the ACTFL OPI.

Adopting Kane's framework, therefore, the present study aims to evaluate the assumptions inherent in the scoring inference. Although my study does not examine all the inferences in the interpretive argument, it adopts this framework as a jumping-off point for validation studies for the ACTFL OPI. I will focus on the text type criterion of the ACTFL OPI and investigate whether this rating criterion is appropriate for assessing "language proficiency in terms of a speaker's ability to use the language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations" (ACTFL, 2012a, p. 4). As discussed in Chapter 1, the Guidelines state that Intermediate speakers' responses typically consist of unconnected "sentences" while Advanced speakers are capable of producing "connected discourse of paragraph length" by linking and combining sentences (ACTFL, 2012c, pp. 6–8). However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, the descriptors (e.g., "sentences," "paragraphs") are

rather problematic as they are units of analysis for writing, and there is little empirical research evaluating the appropriateness of this criterion. In an attempt to fill this gap, this study will examine candidates' performance in the OPI and evaluate whether or not, and to what extent, the level descriptions in the Guidelines concerning the "text types" are appropriate for assessing candidates' oral proficiency levels in the OPI.

2.3 Conversation analysis

2.3.1 CA for the analysis of the OPI interaction

Conversation analysis (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998; Liddicoat, 2011; Sidnell, 2010; ten Have, 2007) has become an established approach to research on L2 teaching and learning (e.g., Gardner & Wagner, 2004; Hall, Hellermann, & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; Hellermann, 2008; Kasper, 2006a, 2009; Koshik, 2002; Mori, 2002, 2004a, 2004b; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009; Nguyen & Kasper, 2009; Pallotti & Wagner, 2011; Seedhouse, 2004; Tateyama, 2012). As shown in Chapter 1, many studies have demonstrated the usefulness of CA for the analysis of the OPI interaction as well (e.g., Kasper, 2006b; Kasper & Ross, 2003, 2007; Lazaraton, 2002; Okada, 2010; Ross, 2007; Ross & Kasper, 2013; van Compernolle, 2011; Young & He, 1998). Emphasizing the strength of CA for validation studies of oral language tests, Lazaraton (2002) says:

> CA offers a systematic approach for analyzing spoken interaction from a qualitative perspective, allowing one to make observations about a stretch of talk while at the same time interacting with it. One of its unique strengths as an analytic tool is its ability to validate intuitions about data; in terms of oral test validation, the results that emerge from such analysis make sense not just to researchers who undertake them, but to the test stakeholders, including those who develop, administer, and validate the tests, as well as the teachers who prepare the students who take the tests. (Lazaraton, 2002, p. xi)

Following the previous conversation analytic research on the OPI interaction, the present study draws on CA as an analytical framework.

Heritage and Atkinson (1984) describe the goal of CA studies as "the description and explication of the competences that ordinary speakers use and rely on in participating in intelligible, socially organized interaction" (p. 1). CA has identified various aspects of interactional organizations that ordinary speakers orient to in the production and interpretation of utterances/actions in the interaction, such as adjacency pairs (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), turn-taking (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974), repair (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977), preference organization (Pomerantz, 1984), turn organization (Schegloff, 1996), and sequence organization (Schegloff, 2007). According to Heritage (1984b), there are three fundamental assumptions in CA. First, it is assumed that all aspects of social interaction are ordered and organized. As Heritage maintains, "Knowledge of these organizations is a major part of the competence which ordinary speakers bring to their communicative activities and, whether consciously or unconsciously, this knowledge influences their conduct and their interpretation of the conduct of others" (p. 241). Second, social actions in interaction are "doubly contextual." They are *context-shaped* because their meaning to the ongoing interaction is only understood by reference to the context, especially to the immediately preceding action. At the same time, social actions are *context-renewing* since each action creates a context for the next action. It also contributes to the maintenance or alteration of the broader context (e.g., activity). Finally, since all aspects of interaction are presumed to be organized, "no order of detail in interaction can be dismissed, *a priori*, as disorderly, accidental or

irrelevant" (p. 241). It is also important to note that the interactional order does not determine participants' actions. Participants are not "judgemental dopes" (Garfinkel, 1967) and have agency to choose their actions. As competent members of the society, participants orient to the knowledge of interactional order in participating in the interaction, and at the same time, they are accountable for the cooperative maintenance of interactional order and the achievement of intersubjectivity.

2.3.2 Interactional competence

I adopt the notion of interactional competence to analyze candidate performance in the OPI. Although the conceptualization of interactional competence has fundamental differences from the framework of communicative competence, it also owes much to previous analytical and empirical research on communicative competence (Hall & Pekarek Doehler, 2011).

First of all, the traditional models of language competence, such as Canale and Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence and Bachman's (1990) model of communicative language ability, treat competence as an underlying knowledge structure of individuals. This view of competence originates from Chomsky's (1965) linguistic theory, which equates competence with an individual's linguistic knowledge, detached from actual use (performance). Chomsky's conceptualization of competence was criticized by Hymes (1971, 1972, 1974) for privileging grammatical competence and neglecting sociolinguistic competence. Hymes maintained that children do not only acquire grammatical knowledge of a language, but also develop "a general theory of the speaking appropriate in their community" (Hymes, 1972, p. 279). Hymes's theory of

communicative competence was then incorporated into Canale and Swain's (1980) framework, and Canale (1983) includes grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competences as components of communicative competence.

Canale and Swain's (1980) conceptualization of communicative competence was then expanded in Bachman's (1990) model of communicative language ability, which includes: knowledge structures (knowledge of the world), language competence (knowledge of the language), strategic competence, psychophysiological mechanisms, and context of situation. In Bachman's model, language competence is further divided into organization competence (grammatical and textual competence) and pragmatic competence (illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence). Although this model has broadened the view of competence, it has preserved the competence/performance distinction: Competence is treated as an individual's underlying traits (e.g., knowledge, mental capacity) while performance is viewed as an indirect, imperfect realization of competence. In addition, in this model, context is treated in terms of the cognitive demands of the situation on the language user (McNamara, 2007).

However, McNamara (1997, 2000; McNamara & Roever, 2006) notes that such an individualistic view of competence cannot account for candidate performance in the OPI, which cannot exist independently of, and is largely influenced by, the interviewer's conduct. He argues that "we need to broaden our view of performance in second language performance assessment to permit a renewed focus on the social dimension of interaction" (McNamara, 1997, p. 459). As such, drawing on the CA notion of co-construction (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995), He and Young (1998) presented their framework of

interactional competence and argued that "abilities, actions, and activities do not belong to the individual but are *jointly* constructed by *all* participants" (p. 5).

The conversation analytic view of competence originates from ethnomethodology, a theoretical antecedent of CA. Garfinkel (1967), the founder of ethnomethodology, discusses ordinary people's competence to use commonsense knowledge and shared procedures in the production and interpretation of social actions in mundane social interactions. Garfinkel defines ethnomethodology as "the investigation of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organized artful practices of everyday life" (1967, p. 11). The notion of "indexical expressions" here does not only refer to deictic expressions, but is used to capture the indexical relationship between ordinary terms and their meanings. That is, terms do not have fixed meanings prior to the actual utterance, and the specific meaning (or the "sense") of an utterance is influenced by the context and can only be understood when analyzed against the context. Utterances are seen as "actions," and what an utterance accomplishes changes in every particular occurrence.

Since the meanings of terms are not pre-fixed, Garfinkel argues that the speaker and hearer cannot just rely on their shared linguistic knowledge to achieve mutual understandings. Instead, what the speaker and hearer rely on to communicate is the shared procedures of production and interpretation of social actions. The hearer interprets the speaker's utterance by invoking the commonsense knowledge that relates to the context. He/she may (unconsciously) ask "why that, in that way, right now?" (Heritage, 1984b, p. 151). The speaker also relies on the assumption that the hearer will perform

such interpretive work in order to understand his/her (the speaker's) utterance. In this interpretive process, what Garfinkel calls the "documentary method of interpretation" is involved:

> The method consists of treating an actual appearance as "the document of," as "pointing to," as "standing on behalf of" a presupposed underlying pattern. Not only is the underlying pattern derived from its individual documentary evidences, but the individual documentary evidences, in their turn, are interpreted on the basis of "what is known" about the underlying pattern. Each is used to elaborate the other. (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 78)

An elaborate discussion of interactional competence is also found in Mehan's (1979) ethnomethodological study on young students' participation in lessons. Mehan defines interactional competence as "effective participation or membership in the classroom," which includes "the requisites for communication with others, and the interpretation of language, behavior, rules, and other normative dimensions of classroom life" (p. 127). He maintains that previous studies that focused on the production of sentences and speech acts failed to attend to other abilities involved in the interaction. Instead of "competence for speaking," Mehan emphasizes "competence for interaction," which involves both interpretive and productive aspects. He also states that interactional competence is only available in the interaction and should not be confused with underlying traits.

Drawing on this perspective and current discussions of interactional competence (e.g., Hall & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; He & Young, 1998; Kasper, 2006a), the present study mainly considers interactional competence as the ability to effectively participate in an interaction by producing and understanding social actions in ways appropriate to the particular context. In this view, there is no distinction between competence and

performance, and interactional competence is locally co-constructed by all participants (and thus cannot be attributed to individuals) and varies with interlocutor and activity (He & Young, 1998). In producing and understanding actions, participants in the interaction draw on relevant resources and put them together in contextually appropriate ways. These resources, including linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge, cultural practices, and understandings of interactional organizations, are shared, partly created, maintained, and modified in the interaction. The interactional resources may be transportable from one interaction to another, depending on the interlocutor and the activity, and may be used in different arrangements in different contexts (He & Young, 1998). Therefore, while McNamara (2000) notes the challenge of "isolating the contribution of a single individual (the candidate) in a joint communicative activity" (p. 84), we can still assume that raters can make *inferences* about the candidate's individual competence (i.e., proficiency) based on the evidence found in the co-constructed performance in the OPI. Kasper and Ross (2013) also suggest that "the portability of resources between practices may enable valid inferences from test performance to performance in the target domain if comparative analysis of both practices identifies essential commonalities" (p. 14).

CA studies on L2 talk have documented various aspects of L2 speakers' interactional competence (e.g., Carroll, 2004; Hall, Hellermann, & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; Hauser, 2009; Hellermann, 2008; Ishida, 2006, 2009, 2011; Kim, 2009; Lee, 2006; Ohta, 2001; Young & Miller, 2004). Kasper (2006a) maintains that interactional competence serves as both *resource* and *object* in L2 learning. Since adult L2 learners are already interactionally competent in their first language, their fully developed

understanding of interactional organization helps them participate in L2 interaction. Also, Lee (2006) argues that students' current interactional competence ("communicative competence" in Lee's term) to participate in classroom activities serves as a resource for L2 teaching and learning. Similarly, in the OPI, while the candidates' interactional competence can be seen as the object of measurement, it also serves as a resource for the OPI interaction to take place. A candidate's ability to attend to the moment-by-moment development of the interaction, analyze the sequential environment, and produce an appropriate next action enables the interviewer and the candidate to jointly construct the activity of the OPI (Okada, 2010; van Compernolle, 2011).

2.3.3 Turn-taking and extended turns

As discussed earlier, one of the rating criteria for Advanced proficiency in the ACTFL OPI is the ability to produce "connected discourse of paragraph length" (ACTFL, 2012c). In order to produce such discourse, candidates must hold the floor to produce more than one utterance in a turn. Because it is relevant to this issue, I will review the CA literature on the organization of turn-taking and extended turns in this section.

In their seminal paper, Sacks et al. (1974) proposed that turns are constructed from *turn-constructional units* (TCUs), which include lexical items, phrases, clauses, and sentences. The completion point of a TCU constitutes a possible *transition-relevance place* (TRP), where speaker change may take place. Because the hearer can analyze the syntax of the turn-in-progress and locate the turn completion point, it is possible for him/her to launch a new turn at a TRP without (or with a minimum of) gaps or overlaps.

Previous studies have also found that even speakers with limited L2 proficiency orient to the minimization of gaps and overlaps and are capable of precise timing in their turn-taking (Carroll, 2004; Hauser, 2009).

In another influential study on turn-taking, Ford and Thompson (1996) found that turn completion is not only shaped by syntax but is also formed by pragmatics and intonation. They compared the three potential indicators of turn completion (i.e., syntax, intonation, pragmatics) and found that the points where all three completion types coincided, rather than the points where syntactic completion alone occurred, recurrently formed TRPs, or Complex Transition Relevance Places (CTRPs). They conclude that

> syntax in itself is not the strongest predictor of speaker change. Syntactic completion is, however, one of the features associated with, though not definitive of, CTRPs, since intonational and pragmatic completion points regularly fall at points of syntactic completion. (p. 156)

Ford and Thompson also examined deviant cases such as (a) where speaker change occurred at non-CTRPs and (b) where speaker change did not occur at CTRPs. In the cases where speaker change occurred at non-CTRPs (e.g., prior to a CTRP), it was found that the next-speakers were doing some interactional work (e.g., display of affiliation or disagreement) through the violation of turn-taking rules. In the cases where speaker change did not occur at CTRPs (e.g., the same speaker continued after a CTRP), the speakers often pursued the recipients' response by adding extensions to the prior turn and renewing and recreating the context for the next speakers' turn.

While the TCU constitutes a basic unit for turn-taking, turns that contain more than one TCU (extended turns) are possible. Schegloff (1982, 1996, 2007) discusses how such extended turns are methodically and interactionally achieved by participants in

conversation. He points out that the speaker often uses devices such as discourse markers, story prefaces, and preliminaries to preliminaries (e.g., "can I ask you a question?") in order to project the production of an extended turn. Also, at a possible TRP, the speaker may "rush through" the juncture and start a next TCU, thereby preventing the next speaker from starting a new turn. Schegloff emphasizes that extended turns are collaborative achievements by all participants, not just the speaker. For instance, the hearer can make contributions to the achievement of extended turns by providing continuers (e.g., "uh huh") and withholding from taking full turns, thus letting the speaker continue (Schegloff, 1982).

2.4 Connective expressions in spoken Japanese

In addition to projecting an extended turn, Advanced speakers in the ACTFL OPI are also expected to use connective expressions to produce a "connected discourse of paragraph length." In this section, I will briefly discuss connective expressions commonly used in spoken Japanese.

First of all, the te-form of predicate (or a gerund) is "the most common connective between successive clauses" in spoken Japanese (Clancy, 1982, p. 57). Since Japanese is a predicate-final language, the te-form of predicate that appears at the clause-final position grammatically combines the current clause and the next clause. The te-form of predicate can indicate various relationships between the clauses, such as (a) sequential actions or events, (b) two states of someone or something, (c) a cause and a consequence, (d) a means or manner of doing something, and (e) a contrast (Makino & Tsutsui, 1986).

The connectives (*setsuzokushi*) and connective particles (*setsuzoku-joshi*) are another set of connective expressions. They are conjunctions and used as cohesive devices (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). According to Mori (1999), connectives are "free forms" and appear at clause-initial positions, similar to discourse markers in English (Schiffrin, 1987). Watanabe (2003) notes that various connectives occurred in candidates' utterances in the Japanese OPI, including *demo* "but," *dakedo* "but," *desuga* "but," *shikashi* "but," *dakara* "so," *soshite* "and," *sorekara* "and then," *sorede* "and then," *de* "and then," and *ato(wa)* "and so." Among them, *de* "and then" was the most frequent, followed by *dakara* "so." In contrast, connective particles are "bound forms," attached to the predicate, which occur at clause-final positions (Mori, 1999). A clause marked by a connective particle often forms a subordinate clause, which *precedes* the main clause in the canonical order. However, in spoken discourse, the subordinate clause (marked by a connective particle) may *follow* the main clause, or may even occur without a main clause (Ford & Mori, 1994; Makino & Tsutsui, 1986; Mori, 1999; Watanabe, 2003). Examples of two-clause sentences in the canonical and reverse orders are presented below.

Canonical order

ame	ga	futteta	**kara**	ikanakatta.
rain	*S*	*was-falling*	***because***	*didn't-go*
subordinate clause				main clause

"I didn't go because it was raining."

Reverse order

ikanakatta	ame	ga	futteta	**kara.**
didn't-go	*rain*	*S*	*was-falling*	***because***

main clause subordinate clause

"I didn't go because it was raining."

Mori (1999) investigated how connectives and connective particles were used in agreement and disagreement in Japanese conversational interaction. She found that, in agreement, speakers often used the "agreement-plus-elaboration" format, and the elaboration was marked by causal connective expressions such as *datte* "because," *dakara* "therefore," and *kara* "because." The connectives *datte* and *dakara* were used in a stronger display of agreement: *datte* introduced justification for the opinion proffered by the previous speaker, and *dakara* prefaced an example to support the opinion. On the other hand, the connective particle *kara* was used in a weaker display of agreement, marking a repetition or a qualification of what was said in the previous turn. In disagreement, contrastive connective expressions were frequently used, but speakers usually did not directly assert disagreement. The connective *demo* "but" was used when the speaker introduced a different perspective or an exception to the opinion proffered by the previous speaker as a partial disagreement. On the other hand, the connective particle *kedo* "but/although" was used to "subordinate" the clause and mitigate the disagreement rather than signaling a contrast. In addition, the speakers used the causal connective expressions (e.g., *kara* "because," *datte* "because") to account for their disagreement or reluctance to fully agree with the previous speaker.

It has been noted that the contrastive connective particle *kedo* "but" is frequently used to mark background information and self-qualification segments in conversational interaction. In narratives, *kedo* is used to provide background information that helps the

hearer to understand the story (Nakayama & Ichihashi-Nakayama, 1997; Yoshimi, 2001). Also, when expressing an opinion, the speaker may use *kedo* to qualify his/her claim, voluntarily admitting a limitation or potential problem in his/her opinion (Geyer, 2007; Mori, 1999). Geyer (2007) examined self-qualification segments in the Japanese OPI and found that the use of *kedo* by the candidates was sometimes problematic. The candidates marked both self-qualification segments and main opinions with *kedo*, which made the main point of the argument unclear and vague.

In addition, the clause/sentence-final discourse marker *n desu* can be used as a cohesive device as it has "the cohesive power to relate a clause to other parts of a text" (Iwasaki, 1985, p. 134). As Yoshimi (2001) explains, *n desu* in narratives "provides the 'glue' that holds a story together and draws the listener into the story" (p. 230). In conversational Japanese, *n desu* is frequently followed by the connective particle *kedo* "but/although" or the sentence-final particles *yo* and/or *ne.* These forms have different functions: *n desu* ***kedo*** is often used to provide background information, *n desu* ***ne*** functions to elicit the recipient's attention, and *n desu* ***yo*** may be used to emphasize an important point (Narita, 2008; Yoshimi, 2001). In addition, Iwasaki (2009) found that *n desu* is often used when the speaker is expressing an opinion. In a study of interviews with native and nonnative speakers of Japanese, Iwasaki observed that native speakers frequently attached *n desu (yo) ne* or *n desu kedo* to *to omou* ("I think") to show their attitude toward a proposition while L2 speakers mostly produced the bare form *to omoimasu* ("I think that").

2.5 Research questions

The present study investigates the appropriateness of the text type rating criterion in the ACTFL OPI, thereby attempting to evaluate the scoring inference of the Japanese OPI ratings based on the level descriptions in the Guidelines. As discussed in Chapter 1, the text type criterion characterizes Intermediate speakers' discourse as "sentences," and Advanced speakers' discourse as "paragraphs" (ACTFL, 2012a). These level differences are illustrated in the following excerpts from the Guidelines (ACTFL, 2012c; presented with permission from ACTFL; see Appendix for full descriptions).

Intermediate-Low

Intermediate Low speakers express personal meaning by combining and recombining what they know and what they hear from their interlocutors into short statements and discrete sentences. Their responses are often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they search for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message.

Intermediate-Mid

Intermediate Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to produce responses typically consisting of sentences and strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves.

Intermediate-High

Intermediate High speakers can narrate and describe in all major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length, but not all the time. Typically, when Intermediate High speakers attempt to perform Advanced-level tasks, their speech exhibits one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to carry out fully the narration or description in the appropriate major time frame, an inability to maintain paragraph-length discourse, or a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary.

Advanced-Low

Advanced Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven.

Advanced-Mid

Advanced Mid speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future by providing a full account, with good control of aspect. Narration and description tend to be combined and interwoven to relate relevant and supporting facts in connected, paragraph-length discourse.

In sum, Advanced speakers are capable of producing "connected discourse of paragraph length" while Intermediate-Low/Mid speakers typically respond with "short statements and discrete sentences" (Intermediate-Low) and "sentences and strings of sentences" (Intermediate-Mid). The differences between "connected discourse of paragraph length" and "sentences" reside in whether or not the speaker links sentences with connectors and organizes discourse appropriately: ACTFL defines *discrete sentences* as "stand-alone sentences that lack further organization, such as into paragraphs"; *strings of sentences* as "a series of isolated or discrete sentences typically referring to a given topic but not grammatically or syntactically connected"; and *paragraph* as "a self-contained, cohesive unit of spoken or written discourse that generally consists of multiple sentences linked by internal organization and connectors" (http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012/glossary). Therefore, the present study will examine the use of connectors and discourse organization in the candidates' performance in the OPI. While "connectors" in a broad sense could include a variety of linking words and phrases, I will focus on the use

of the te-form of predicate, connective particles, connectives, and sequential adverbial phrases (e.g., *mazu* "first," *tsugi ni* "next," *saigo ni* "finally") as representative of connectors in spoken Japanese. The classifications of connectives and connective particles are based on *Daijisen* (Matsumura, 1995) and *A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar* (Makino & Tsutsui, 1986).

Although some studies of OPIs compare candidates' overall production of certain linguistic forms in the entire OPI to examine level differences (Lee, Park, & Sohn, 2011; Watanabe, 2003), the present study does not take such an approach. Because the types of questions/tasks used in OPIs vary depending on candidates' proficiency levels, I assume that the overall production of linguistic forms cannot be meaningfully compared across levels. Different types of questions/tasks would elicit different types of discourse (of varying length and complexity), and some linguistic forms may appear more frequently in some tasks than in others. For instance, Advanced-level candidates, but not Intermediate-level candidates, would receive Superior-level tasks (e.g., state and support opinion) in the probing phase of the OPI, which would require more elaborate discussions than the tasks for the lower levels. In order to make reasonable cross-level comparisons, the present study will focus on the description and narration tasks, the two major Advanced-level tasks designed to elicit "connected discourse of paragraph length" in the ACTFL OPI.

As mentioned earlier, this study problematizes the use of descriptors in the text-type criterion in the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines. I suggest that the use of terms that are primarily for written language (e.g., sentences, paragraphs) in the descriptions of oral

proficiency levels is rather confusing and misleading. For instance, the use of the term "paragraph" in the OPI rating criteria gives the impression that the candidates are expected to produce discourse that resembles a written text of paragraph length, which would be unnatural (if not impossible) if produced in spontaneous spoken interaction. Previous studies have documented a number of differences between spoken and written discourse. For instance, Brown and Yule (1983a, 1983b) mention differences in the density of information packing, syntactic complexity, vocabulary, functions (e.g., transitional, interactional), and the presence/absence of typical features of spoken language (e.g., fillers, incomplete utterances, pauses, repetitions). Conversation/discourse analytic studies have also demonstrated how spoken interaction is differently organized than written language, including in turn construction (Sacks et al., 1974); sequential organization of turns (e.g., adjacency pairs) (Schegloff, 2007; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973); the speaker's monitoring of the recipient's participation (Goodwin, 1980, 1984); the use of discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1987); and the importance of prosody (as well as gestures and physical context) in the accomplishment of coherence in spoken interaction (Gumperz, Kaltman, & O'Connor, 1984).

In order to investigate the appropriateness of the text type rating criterion in the ACTFL OPI and evaluate the scoring inference of the Japanese OPI ratings based on the level descriptions in the Guidelines, therefore, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do the candidates achieve extended turns (in collaboration with the interviewer) in the face-to-face Japanese OPI? What linguistic and nonlinguistic

resources are used to project and understand turn-continuation and turn-completion?

2. How do the candidates use connective expressions and discourse organization in their responses to the description and narration tasks, which are designed to elicit a "connected discourse of paragraph length"?
3. What differences are found in the use of connective expressions and discourse organization across the levels (ranging from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid)?
4. Do the level descriptions of text types in the Guidelines match the candidates' actual performance observed in the data? How adequate are the text type descriptors (e.g., sentences, paragraphs) for the assessment of oral proficiency? What implications do the findings have for the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines?

2.6 Data collection

2.6.1 Procedures and participants

The OPIs analyzed in the present study were conducted as part of a larger program assessment research project of the College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (http://www.lll.hawaii.edu/?page_id=1247). In this research program, undergraduate senior students majoring in modern foreign languages were invited, on a voluntary basis, to participate in the ACFTL OPI in the semester in which they were graduating. Between spring 2011 and spring 2013, a total of 57 students majoring in Japanese participated in an OPI. With the candidates' permission, these OPIs were audio and videorecorded.

These Japanese OPIs were conducted face-to-face by the author, an ACTFL-certified tester, in an office at the university campus, following the standard format of the ACTFL OPI.[5] Each OPI was initially rated by the interviewer. The audiorecordings of the OPIs were sent to Language Testing International (LTI), the testing agency of the ACTFL OPI, for official ratings and certification. Strictly speaking, the OPIs analyzed in this study are so-called "advisory ACTFL OPIs" rather than "official ACTFL OPIs" since they were conducted within an academic program. ACTFL only permits the official term "ACTFL OPI" to be used for interviews coordinated and conducted by LTI.

From the pool of 57 Japanese OPI recordings, 15 (three OPIs for each of the five levels from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid) were randomly selected and transcribed using CA transcription conventions. Each of these 15 OPIs lasted for 27 to 30 minutes. The 15 OPIs involved nine female and six male students. All were English-speaking senior students majoring in Japanese at the time of data collection. According to a survey conducted along with the OPI, the candidates' language backgrounds varied: About half of them had studied abroad in Japan (mostly for about one year), and several (mostly Advanced-level candidates) had parents who were native speakers of Japanese (see Table 2.2). All candidate names used in this study are pseudonyms.

[5] All of these Japanese OPIs were conducted by the author because she was the only ACTFL-certified tester on campus available for the research at the time of data collection. While it would have been ideal for validation research purposes to have several testers, it was not possible for this study. On the other hand, by having the same interviewer conduct all the OPIs, the interviewer effect may have been minimized in this study.

Table 2.2.
Background of the Candidates

OPI rating	Candidate	Duration of OPI	Study abroad	Heritage status
Intermediate-Low	Olivia	29:11	Yes (1 year)	No
	George	30:40	No	No
	Daniel	28:50	No	Yes (mother)
Intermediate-Mid	Alyssa	30:20	Yes (1 year)	No
	Emily	28:25	No	No
	Jacob	27:14	Yes (1 year)	No
Intermediate-High	Nicole	28:36	Yes (1 year)	No
	Brian	29:50	No	No
	Kyle	29:22	Yes (1.5 years)	No
Advanced-Low	Chris	28:50	Yes (1 year)	No
	Hanna	28:15	Yes (1 year)	No
	Tracy	27:55	No	Yes (mother, father)
Advanced-Mid	Mia	29:55	Yes (1 year)	Yes (mother, father)
	Lauren	29:29	No	Yes (mother)
	Sophie	30:00	No	Yes (father)

2.6.2 Instrument

The ACTFL OPI has a four-phase structure, which consists of warm up, level checks, probes, and wind down (ACTFL, 2012a). In the warm-up phase, the interviewer starts the interview with simple questions about the candidate's background (e.g., school, work, hobbies, hometown, etc.), trying to create a relaxing atmosphere and good rapport with the candidate. The information obtained in the warm-up phase is typically used by the interviewer in later phases as topics to elicit more elaborate talk. In the level-check phase, the interviewer attempts to identify the "floor" of the candidates' proficiency (the base level), and in the probing phase, he/she explores the "ceiling" (where linguistic breakdowns systematically occur). The level-check and probing phases are done in a spiral manner, going back and forth until the interviewer determines the candidate's proficiency level (ACTFL, 2012a). In the wind-down phase, the interviewer and the

candidate talk about familiar, easy topics (e.g., "what are you going to do after this interview?") so that they can finish the interview on a pleasant note.

As touched on in Chapter 1, in the ACTFL OPI, while the basic tasks (e.g., describe, narrate, support opinion) and context/content areas (e.g., daily life, transactional situations, topics of personal and public interest) are prescribed, specific questions are not predetermined. The interviewer often takes up topics from the candidate's talk in order to formulate questions appropriate for the candidate. The types of tasks/questions vary depending on the (perceived) proficiency level of the candidate. While a large part of the interview is conducted in a "question–answer" format, the OPI also includes a role play.

To determine ratings, each OPI is double-rated by the interviewer and a second rater. After conducting an OPI, the interviewer listens to the audiorecording of the OPI and assigns the first rating. A second rater (also a certified tester) also independently listens to the audiorecording of the OPI and provides a second rating. When the first and second ratings match, that will become the final rating. However, when the first and second ratings differ, a third rater will be asked to rate the OPI, and a final rating will be issued according to the raters' majority assessment. In general, testers (interviewers, raters) develop their understanding of the oral proficiency levels through tester training. For instance, in the initial workshop and the following certification process, the trainees extensively conduct and rate OPIs and receive feedback from the trainer regarding the quality of the OPIs they conducted and the accuracy of the ratings they produced.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the methodology of the present study. I have discussed Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity as a guiding framework, and conversation analysis as my analytical framework. I have also talked about the notions of interactional competence, turn-taking and extended turns, and connective expressions in spoken Japanese, all of which have strong relevance to the present study. In addition, I have presented my research questions and the data-collection methodology in this chapter.

In the next chapter, I will examine the sequential structure and turn-taking organizations in the OPI data that I collected. I will discuss how the interviewer and the candidate projected, understood, and negotiated turn-continuation and turn-completion, and what turn-taking resources were used in the OPI interactions.

CHAPTER 3

TURN-TAKING IN THE FACE-TO-FACE JAPANESE OPI

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the basic sequential structure and the turn-taking organizations found in the present face-to-face Japanese OPI data. Turn-taking is directly related to the achievement of "connected discourse of paragraph length" in the OPI because whether the candidate's current response turn will be a short utterance or a longer, "paragraph-length" discourse, which is essentially an extended turn consisting of multiple clauses/utterances, largely depends on how the candidate projects (and the interviewer understands) the continuation and completion of the turn-in-progress in the interaction. As shown below, the candidate and the interviewer negotiate turn-taking in the OPI as they display their interpretations of the other party's moves and align or disalign with each other on a turn-by-turn basis.

In what follows, I will first describe the basic sequence structure found in the present OPI data. I will then show how the interviewer and the candidate negotiated the continuation and completion of the candidate's response turns. Finally, I will discuss what turn-taking resources, including linguistic and nonlinguistic devices, were used by the candidate (and the interviewer) to project (and understand) the continuation and completion of turns in the OPI.

3.2 Basic sequence structure

In the present Japanese OPI data, the basic sequence structure consisted of the following four components:[1]

1	Interviewer:	question/request
2	Candidate:	response
3	Interviewer:	acknowledgement
4	Candidate:	minimal response[2]

This four-part structure was repeated once it was completed, as illustrated in the following excerpt taken from Mia's OPI. In this segment, the interviewer (IR) and Mia (M) are talking about Mia's previous part-time translation job.

Excerpt 3.1 Mia (Advanced-Mid): Translation

1. IR: hee:.
"Wow."

2. donna hon'yaku desu ka?
what-kind translation CP Q
"What kind of translation was it?"

1. Question

3. M: tashika, ano: .hh (.)
perhaps SF

4. aru kaisha no webbu saito o
certain company LK web site O

2. Response

5. eiyakusuru shigoto deshita.
translate-into-English job CP-PAST

"If I remember correctly, my job was to translate a company's website into English."

6. IR: aa soo desu [ka:. ((nodding))
oh so CP Q

3. Acknowledgement

[1] Other types of turns may appear at various sequential points. Also, this sequence structure does not necessarily apply to all parts of the OPI (e.g., role plays).

[2] Although the candidates frequently produced a minimal response to the interviewer's acknowledgement, it did not seem to be required. That is, even when the candidate did not produce any response to the acknowledgement, it went (hearably) unnoticed by the participants. The minimal response may be done nonverbally as well (e.g., a nod).

"Oh I see."

7. M: [hai. ((nodding)) — 4. Minimal response
yes
"Yeah."

8. IR: muzukashikatta desu ka? — 1. Question
difficult-PAST CP Q
"Was it difficult?"

9. M: muzukashikatta d(h)esu. ((nodding)) — 2. Response
difficult-PAST CP
"It was difficult."

10. IR: [aa soo desu ka:. ((nodding)) — 3. Acknowledgement
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

11. M: [((nodding)) — 4. Minimal response

12. IR: hee wakarimashita.
wow understood
"Wow. I understand."

13. .hh eeto jaa chotto iroiro
SF then little various

14. kikitai n desu ga:,
want-to-ask N CP but

"Well then, I want to ask you about many things, but"

15. M: [hai.
"Uh huh."

16. IR: [Mia san shumi wa arimasu ka¿ — 1. Question
Mia Ms. hobby TP have Q
"Mia, do you have any hobbies?"

In this segment, the interviewer initiates a question–answer sequence by asking a question (line 2). Mia provides an answer, the second pair-part of the adjacency pair (lines 3–5). Then, the interviewer acknowledges Mia's response (line 6), which Mia responds to with a nod and a recipient token (*hai* "yes/yeah," line 7). As this four-part sequence gets completed, the interviewer launches a new question, opening up another

question–answer sequence (line 8). Mia provides an answer (line 9), which is followed by the interviewer's acknowledgement (line 10) and Mia's minimal response of nodding (line 11). As this sequence gets completed, the interviewer initiates a topic change. She provides more acknowledgement tokens to wrap up the current topical talk (line 12),[3] and produces a question preface to indicate a topic change (lines 13–14). Finally, she asks a question on a new topic (line 16).

As shown in this segment, the interviewer typically produced one or more acknowledgement tokens (e.g., *aa soo desu ka* "Oh I see," *hee* "wow," *wakarimashita* "I understand") after the candidate's response turn. The acknowledgement turn in the OPI may be considered what Schegloff (2007) calls a *sequence-closing third*, which occurs after a first and second adjacency pair, and proposes to close the sequence. In the present data, the interviewer used *aa soo desu ka* "Oh I see/Is that so" most frequently, which often elicited the candidate's minimal response.[4] While the acknowledgement indicates

[3] Multiple acknowledgement tokens often appeared when the interviewer was wrapping up the current topical talk to move on to a next topic.

[4] OPI interviewers in different languages may use different types of sequence-closing thirds. For instance, in English OPIs, the interviewer may produce "okay" or "I see" to acknowledge the candidate's response, which does not seem to elicit a verbal response from the candidate regularly, as seen in the following excerpt (lines 1, 4) from Kasper, 2006b (p. 334).

```
1 I:  I see. That's a good idea too. (0.2) You live with
2     your parents. Is it a house or an apartment.
3 C:  House. Yeah, they live in house (.) a house.
4 I:  I see. Can you describe the house for me? Can you tell
5     me what it looks like?
6 C:  Uh (.) our house is normal Japanese house,
```

On the other hand, Kim and Suh (1998) report that, in the Korean OPI, the question–answer sequence is often followed by what they call a "confirmation sequence," which may share some similarities with the acknowledgement-minimal response sequence found in the present data.

receipt of information, it also displays the interviewer's interpretation that the candidate's response turn has been completed. Frequently, the candidate ratified such a displayed interpretation by producing a minimal response in the next sequential slot, aligning with the interviewer's move to close the sequence.

On the other hand, the interviewer's production of continuers (Schegloff, 1982) such as *hai* "uh huh" and *un* "uh huh" displayed her interpretation that the candidate's turn was still in progress. An example is presented in the excerpt below, which is taken from Mia's OPI (continued from the previous segment).

Excerpt 3.2 Mia (Advanced-Mid): Hobbies

16. IR: [Mia san shumi wa arimasu ka¿
Mia Ms. hobby TP have Q
"Mia, do you have any hobbies?"

17. M: shumi wa, (.) ima wa
hobby TP now TP
Mia's response turn begins.

18. tok(hh)uni arimasen ga:,
particularly have-NEG but
"I don't have any hobby in particular now, but"

19. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."
Continuer

20. M: .hh (.) shiite ie ba,
forcibly say if
"if I'm forced to say something,"

21. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."
Continuer

22. M: .hh (.) dokusho desu ka ne¿
reading CP Q FP
Mia's response turn ends.
"maybe it's reading."

23. IR: aa: dokusho desu ka?
oh reading CP Q
"Oh reading?"

24. M: hai.

"Yes."

25. IR: hee.
"Wow."

26. donna mono o yomu no ga suki desu ka?
what-kind thing O read N S like CP Q
"What kind of books do you like to read?"

In this segment, as Mia produces a multiclause utterance in her response turn (lines 17–18, 20, 22), the interviewer provides continuers (*hai* "uh huh") at the clause boundary positions in Mia's utterance (lines 19, 21). In the present data, the interviewer frequently produced continuers at clause/phrase boundaries in the candidate's response turns, displaying her understanding that the candidate's current turn would still continue. Such an understanding was then often confirmed by the candidate as he/she continued the turn in the next sequential slot. However, there were cases in which the interviewer's interpretation of the status of the candidate's turn was disconfirmed by the candidate, as shown in the next section.

3.3 Negotiation of the continuation and completion of turns

As in the case of ordinary conversation, in the present OPI interactions it was observed that turn-taking was collaboratively achieved and negotiated by the interviewer and the candidate. The interviewer's displayed understanding about the status of the candidate's turn was systematically ratified or denied by the candidate in the next sequential slot. The turn-taking system and the four-part sequence structure of the Japanese OPI seemed to allow some flexibility and interactional space for the candidates to negotiate with the interviewer on the continuation and completion of their turns.

3.3.1 Continuing the response turn after the interviewer's acknowledgement

As discussed earlier, the interviewer's production of an acknowledgement was a step toward closing the current question–answer sequence. However, instead of aligning with the interviewer by producing a minimal response, the candidate could use the next sequential slot to continue his/her turn, as illustrated in the following excerpt. In this segment, the interviewer and Alyssa (A) are talking about Alyssa's previous part-time job at a school nurse's office.

Excerpt 3.3 Alyssa (Intermediate-Mid): School nurse's office

1. IR: ano hokenshitsu ni wa takusan
   SF nurse's-office to TP many

2. (.) kodomo ga kuru n desu ka?
   child S come N CP Q

   "Do many children come to the nurse's office?"

3. A: iie. ((shakes her head))
   no
   "No."

4. (.)

5. IR: aa(hh) soo desu k(hh)a.
   oh so CP Q
   "Oh I see."

6. A: hotondo wa: (.) zenzen minakatt(hh)a.
   mostly TP not-at-all saw-NEG
   "Mostly I didn't see them at all."

7. IR: aa [soo:: ((nods))
   oh so
   "Oh I see."

8. A: [attenakatta. ((nods))
   was-meeting-NEG

"I wasn't meeting them."

9. IR: hee: soo desu [ka:.
wow so CP Q
"Wow. I see."

10. A: [((nods))

11. IR: hoka ni mo arubaitoshita koto
other P also worked-part-time N

12. arimasu ka?
have Q

"Have you had any other part-time jobs?"

In this segment, in response to the interviewer's question (lines 1–2), Alyssa produces a single word TCU (*iie.* "No.", line 3). After a micro gap of silence (line 4), the interviewer provides an acknowledgement (line 5), displaying her interpretation that Alyssa's response turn was over despite its briefness. At the same time, by producing laughter, the interviewer orients to Alyssa's under-elaborated response as a breach of the normative expectation that such a negative response to a positive polarity question should be more elaborate. In line 6, Alyssa also treats elaboration as relevant, and produces a sentential TCU. Then, in a partial overlap with the interviewer's second acknowledgement (line 7),[5] Alyssa self-repairs by replacing *minakatta* "did not see" with *attenakatta* "was not meeting" (line 8). In line 9, the interviewer produces acknowledgements once more, to which Alyssa responds by nodding (line 10). Subsequently, the interviewer launches a next question (lines 11–12). As shown in this segment, the candidate was able to continue

[5] Overlaps often occurred when the candidate continued his/her response turn beyond the interviewer's acknowledgement turn.

his/her response turn even after (or in a partial overlap with) the interviewer's acknowledgement turn. The structure of such a sequence might be outlined as follows:[6]

1	Interviewer:	question/request
2	Candidate:	response
3	Interviewer:	acknowledgement
4	Candidate:	continued response
5	Interviewer:	acknowledgement
6	Candidate:	minimal response

The next excerpt also shows how the candidate continued her turn after the interviewer produced an acknowledgement. In this segment, the interviewer is asking Lauren (L) about her visits to Japan.

Excerpt 3.4 Lauren (Advanced-Mid): Visits to Japan

1. IR: Lauren san nihon ni itta koto tte
Lauren Ms. Japan to went N QT

2. arimasu ka?
have Q

"Lauren, have you been to Japan?"

3. L: a hai arimasu.
oh yes have
"Oh yes I have."

4. ojiichan to obaachan ga nihon ni (.)
grandpa and grandma S Japan in

5. kurashiteru node,
is-living because

"Because my grandpa and grandma live in Japan,"

6. IR: aa soo desu [ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

7. L: [hai.

[6] The candidate's continued response (4) and the interviewer's acknowledgement (5) may be repeated multiple times.

"Yeah."

8. IR: hee.
"Wow."

9. L: ai ni, yoku ittemashita ne.
see P often was-going FP
"I used to go to see them often."

10. IR: aa soo desu ka.=
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

11. =[jaa tokidoki nihon ni itte=
then sometimes Japan to go-and
"Well then, you sometimes visited Japan, and"

12. L: [hai.
"Yeah."

Here, the interviewer treats the end of the subordinate clause in Lauren's response in line 5 (marked with the connective particle *node* "because") as a possible TRP and produces an acknowledgment (line 6). In a partial overlap, Lauren provides a minimal response (*hai* "yeah") and aligns with the interviewer in her move to close the sequence (line 7). While this could be the end of the current question–answer sequence, as the interviewer produces another acknowledgement token (line 8), Lauren utilizes the next sequential slot to produce the main clause (line 9) and completes the two-clause utterance (*ojiichan to obaachan ga nihon ni (.) kurashiteru node, ai ni, yoku ittemashita ne*. "Because my grandpa and grandma live in Japan, I used to go to see them often.", lines 4–5, 9), which is then responded to by the interviewer with another acknowledgement (line 10).

3.3.2 Indicating turn-completion after the interviewer's continuer

Excerpts 3.3 and 3.4 show that the candidates were able to continue their response turns even after the interviewer produced an acknowledgement. Similarly, the candidates were able to discontinue their turns even after the interviewer provided a continuer and

indicated her expectation for them to continue their turns. In such cases, the candidates could employ the Japanese interactional practice called a "loop" sequence (Iwasaki, 1997). According to Iwasaki, a loop sequence is created when the current speaker responds to the hearer's recipient token with another recipient token. By creating a successive exchange of recipient tokens, the current speaker can suggest speaker change. An example of a loop sequence from the present OPI data is shown in the excerpt below, in which Jacob (J) is explaining how he feels about living with a roommate in a dorm.

Excerpt 3.5 Jacob (Intermediate-Mid): Living with a roommate

1. J: sukejuuru ga chotto chigaimashite:,
schedule S little different-and
"Our schedules are different, and"

2. IR: ee ee ee.
"Uh huh."

3. J: ano: (.) neru toki:, nemuru toki:,
SF sleep time sleep time

4. chotto chi- chigatte:,
little different-and

"we sleep at different times, and"

5. IR: un [un un.
"Uh huh."

6. J: [dakara, un sono seikatsu wa
therefore SF that life TP

7. chotto muzukashii [desu.
little difficult CP

"therefore, such a life is a little difficult."

8. IR: [fu::n.
"Oh."

9. (.)

10. J: demo, tomodachi ni naru- (.) koto mo
but friend P become N also

11. sonzai[shiamsu] kara.
exist because

"But it's also possible to become friends, so"

12. IR: [°n::n.°] ((nodding))

13. ee ee [ee. ((nodding))
"Uh huh."

14. J: [un. ((nods slightly))
"Yeah."

15. IR: aa soo desu ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

In this segment, a loop sequence appears in lines 13–14. Immediately preceding this sequence, Jacob added a clausal utterance to his ongoing extended turn, which is marked with the connective particle *kara* "because" (lines 10–11). While *kara* can syntactically project the production of a next (main) clause, it also can be used at utterance-final positions when the main clause is omitted (Makino & Tsutsui, 1986). In line 13, the interviewer provides continuers and displays her interpretation that Jacob's current turn will continue. However, in the next sequential slot, Jacob produces a recipient token (*un* "yeah") and passes the opportunity to continue his turn (line 14). As he creates a loop sequence by responding to the interviewer's recipient tokens (continuers) with another recipient token, the interviewer interprets it as a proposal for speaker change and takes a next turn to produce an acknowledgement (line 15).

Excerpt 3.5 shows that the candidates in the OPIs were able to discontinue their response turns by responding to the interviewer's continuer with a recipient token. Such sequences follow the structure outlined below:

1	Interviewer:	question/request
2	Candidate:	response
3	Interviewer:	continuer
4	Candidate:	recipient token
5	Interviewer:	acknowledgement
6	Candidate:	minimal response

Another instance of a loop sequence is presented in the following excerpt. In this segment, Sophie (S) is telling what university courses she is currently taking.

Excerpt 3.6 Sophie (Advanced-Mid): University courses

1. S: [de, .hh °eto: moo hitotsu arimashita kke.°
then SF more one had Q
"And then, did I have one more?"

2. (.) aa eeto:, eego no kurasu desu.=
oh SF English LK class CP
"Oh, it's an English class."

3. =ano:
SF
"uhm"

4. IR: hai hai. ((nods))
"Uh huh."

5. S: hai hai. ((nods))
"Yeah."

6. (.) ((IR is gazing toward S))

7. S: un un.
"Yeah."

8. IR: aa: soo desu [ka.= ((nods))
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

9. S: [°hai.°
"Yeah."

10. IR: =jaa kurasu kekkoo takusan atte,
then class quite many have-and

11. (.) [isogashii.
busy

"Well then, you have many classes and must be busy."

12. S: [n: n:

13. hai. maamaa. (.) soo desu ne.
yes so-so so CP FP
"Yeah, kind of. That's right."

In this segment, when Sophie completes her utterance in line 2, she rushes through a possible TRP and produces a hesitation marker (*ano:* "uhm," line 3), which projects more talk to come. In response, the interviewer provides continuers (line 4). However, Sophie responds to the interviewer's continuers with recipient tokens (line 5), creating a loop sequence. As the interviewer does not immediately react to this move by Sophie (line 6), Sophie produces another set of recipient tokens, reinforcing the context for speaker change (line 7). Subsequently, the interviewer takes a next turn and provides an acknowledgement (line 8).

These segments indicate that the candidates were not passively reacting to the interviewer's conduct, but were actively constructing the interaction with the interviewer. Even when the interviewer produced continuers, they were able to discontinue their turns by producing a recipient token and creating a loop sequence. These recipient tokens were also used to suggest speaker change in other sequential environments, as shown in the next section.

3.3.3 Indicating turn-completion in other sequential environments

In the present data, it was observed that the candidates could utilize recipient tokens in various sequential environments to indicate that their turns had been completed

and that the interviewer might take the next turn. For instance, in the following excerpt, the candidate produces a recipient token immediately following his own utterance as a turn-completion signal. In this segment, Daniel (D) is explaining what roller hockey is.

Excerpt 3.7 Daniel (Intermediate-Low): Roller hockey

1. D: a: (1.2) soshite:, ((both hands rest on the table))
   SF and

2. IR: hai.
   "Uh huh."

3. D: stick o, stick (.) de,
   stick O stick with
   ((makes a gesture of holding a stick))

4. IR: hai.
   "Uh huh."

5. (0.9)

6. D: gooru (.) ni, ((makes a square shape with fingers))
   goal to

7. IR: hai.
   "Uh huh."

8. D: a: (0.6) utte,
   SF hit-and
   ((makes a gesture of hitting a ball with a stick and another gesture of going forward))

   "And, you hit it with a stick towards the goal, and"

9. IR: un. ((nodding))
   "Uh huh."

10. D: utte, hai.
    hit-and yes
    ((makes a gesture of hitting a ball with a stick; then withdraws both hands and places them on his lap))
    "hit and, yeah."

11. (.)

12. IR: [hee: ((nodding slightly))
    "Wow."

13. D: [hai. (.) °hheh°
"Yeah."

14. IR: aa: soo desu ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

15. D: [hai.
"Yeah."

16. IR: [sore: o Daniel san wa, ano yoku,
that O Daniel Mr. TP SF often

17. yaru n desu ka?
play N CP Q

"Do you play it often, Daniel?"

In this segment, the end of Daniel's utterance in lines 1–8 is marked with the te-form of predicate and a continuing intonation (line 8). As these features project the continuation of his talk, the interviewer produces a continuer (line 9). However, instead of producing a next utterance, Daniel repeats the final part of his previous utterance (*utte* "hit"), and while withdrawing his hands, he produces a recipient token *hai* "yes/yeah" (line 10). After a micro gap of silence (line 11), the interviewer produces an acknowledgement token (line 12), treating Daniel's turn as completed. In an overlap, Daniel produces another recipient token (line 13), further indicating the completion of his turn.

Another environment where the candidate could use a recipient token to suggest speaker change was after a gap of silence. In Excerpt 3.8 below, as the interviewer does not immediately take a full turn after the candidate's utterance, there is a long gap of silence (line 5). Then the candidate produces a recipient token to suggest speaker change. In this segment, Alyssa (A) is retelling the story of Disney's animated movie *Tangled*. The final part of the sequence is presented here.

Excerpt 3.8 Alyssa (Intermediate-Mid): "Tangled"

1. A: warui: (.) mahootsukai (.) [wa, (1.3)
   bad witch TP

2. IR: [hai.
   "Uh huh."

3. A: e: kekkyoku, (0.6) shindeshimatt(h)a.
   SF finally died

   "The bad witch finally died."

4. IR: fuun. ((nodding slightly))
   "Oh."

5. (2.3) ((IR and Alyssa are gazing at each other))

6. A: hai. hhuh hhuh [hhuh
   "Yeah."

7. IR: [sore ga eega ((smiling))
   that S movie

8. [no hoo no,
   LK one LK

   "That's the movie's story"

9. A: [>suimasen.<
   "Sorry."

10. hai. eega.=
    yes movie

11. IR: =aa: [soo na n desu ka.
    oh so CP N CP Q
    "Oh I see."

12. A: [eega desu.
    movie CP

    "Yeah. That's the movie."

In this segment, in response to Alyssa's utterance in lines 1–3, the interviewer produces a short recipient token *fuun* "oh" (line 4) and does not take a full turn to provide an acknowledgement. During the following 2.3-second silence, Alyssa and the interviewer gaze at each other, and neither of them takes a next turn (line 5). Finally, Alyssa produces a recipient token *hai* "yeah" (line 6) and bursts into laughter, which shows her orientation toward the silence as problematic. At this point, the interviewer treats Alyssa's move as an invitation for speaker change and takes a next turn (lines 7–8).

In sum, in the present OPI data, the candidates used recipient tokens in various sequential environments to signal the completion of their turns, suggest speaker change, and pass the opportunity to continue their turns. On the other hand, the candidates could also produce some more substantial utterances to recomplete their turns when the interviewer did not recognize the initial turn-completion point, as shown in the following excerpt. In this segment, Tracy (T) is retelling the story of *Bloody Monday*, a Japanese drama series. The final part of the sequence is presented in Excerpt 3.9.

Excerpt 3.9 Tracy (Advanced-Low): "Bloody Monday"

1. T: ano, (.) saado ai to yuu (.) ano, ma nihon o
SF third I QT say SF well Japan LK
((brings left hand in front of her chest))

2. [mamoru? (.) hoo no? (.) [soshiki ga:,
protect side LK organization S
((both hands in front of her chest))

3. IR: [hai. [hai.
"Uh huh."

4. T: .h ano koo, tatakatte?
SF like-this fight-and

"The organization called 'Third-I,' which protects Japan, fights against them, and"

5. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

6. T: ano: ironna koo, (.) ano: .h (.)
SF various like-this SF

7. ano tometari, (.) shiyoo to suru,
SF stop-etc. try-to-do QT do

"tries to stop them,"

8. IR: hai [hai.
"Uh huh."

9. T: [sutoorii na n desu kedo,
story CP N CP but
((withdraws both hands as she completes the utterance))
"the story is like that, but"

10. IR: ee ee ee. ((nodding slightly))
"Uh huh."

11. (0.5) ((IR and Tracy gaze at each other. Tracy nods slightly.))

12. T: ee. (0.5) de, ma- (.) mada, saigo,
yes then yet end

13. owattenai n desu [ked(hh)o.
not-finished N CP but

"Yeah. And then, it's not yet finished, but"

14. IR: [aa:

15. [soo desu ka. hee.
so CP Q wow

"Oh I see. Wow."

16. T: [h(hh)ai.
"Yeah."

In this interaction, the interviewer does not treat the completion point of Tracy's utterance in line 9 as a *turn*-completion and produces continuers (line 10). During a brief gap of silence, Tracy and the interviewer gaze at each other, and neither of them takes a

next turn (line 11). Subsequently, Tracy produces a recipient token *ee* "yeah," indicating that her turn has been completed, and after a brief pause, she self-selects as the next speaker to recomplete her turn, stating that the drama series has not been concluded yet (lines 12–13). This additional utterance makes the interviewer recognize the turn-completion, and she takes the next turn to provide acknowledgement (lines 14–15).

This section showed how the candidates and the interviewer negotiated the continuation and completion of the candidates' response turns in the present OPI data. The interviewer constantly displayed her understanding of the status of the candidate's current turn (e.g., continuing or completed) by producing a continuer or acknowledgement, and such a displayed understanding of the interviewer was then systematically ratified or denied by the candidate in the next sequential slot. In these cases, the interviewer's production of an acknowledgement token did not shut down the sequence, but rather was a tentative proposal to close the sequence, with which the candidate might align or disalign. Furthermore, when the interviewer did not recognize the completion point of their turns, the candidates were able to use recipient tokens or some more substantial utterance to indicate the turn-completion and suggest speaker change.

3.4 Turn-taking resources in the face-to-face Japanese OPI

In this section, I will discuss what turn-taking resources were used by the candidates and the interviewer to project and understand turn-continuation and turn-completion in the present OPI data. Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) maintain that turns are constructed from turn-constructional units (TCUs), which include lexical items, phrases, clauses, and sentences. The completion point of each TCU may form a transition

relevance place (TRP), where speaker change may occur. Therefore, in order to produce multiple TCUs within a single turn, the speaker must signal that the current turn will continue beyond the completion point of the TCU-in-progress, so that the recipient can collaborate with the speaker by not launching a next turn at the possible TRP (Jefferson, 1978; Schegloff, 1982). In the present OPI data, grammar appeared to play a role in the projection and interpretation of turn-continuation/completion to some extent. The candidates frequently marked clauses in turn-*middle* positions with connective expressions (e.g., the te-form of predicate, connective particles), which syntactically project the production of a next clause (hence turn-continuation). Also, they generally employed nonconnective expressions (e.g., the final-form of predicate) in turn-*final* positions, completing the utterance syntactically.

However, as Ford and Thompson (1996) found, grammar alone does not determine where speaker change will occur. In my OPI data, although less frequently, connective expressions also occurred in turn-*final* positions, and nonconnective expressions did appear in turn-*middle* positions. This indicates that there were other turn-holding and turn-yielding devices used in the OPI interaction. A close examination of the data indicated that the candidates and the interviewer used a variety of turn-taking resources to project and understand turn-continuation and turn-completion, including (a) syntax and linguistic forms, (b) the semantic content of utterances and the organization of discourse; (c) audible features such as intonation, rushing-through, inhalation, and hesitation markers; and (d) other semiotic resources such as gaze direction, gestures, body movement, and facial expressions.

In the present OPI data, the candidates and the interviewer were generally successful in projecting and understanding turn-continuation and turn-completion. As shown in the previous section, even when there were misalignments (e.g., the interviewer's misinterpretation of the status of the candidate's turn), the interviewer and the candidate were able to work together and solve such problems quite effectively in subsequent sequential slots. However, there were some potentially more problematic cases, in which the misalignment was a little more intense or was taken as a sign of an interactional problem by the candidate. I will present two such cases below. In the first case, a misalignment between the interviewer and the candidate resulted in a conflict over the right to speak. In the second case, a gap of silence following the candidate's turn was oriented to by the candidate as a possible sign of the interviewer's nonunderstanding. While both cases present instances in which the interviewer misinterpreted the status of the candidate's current turn, the analysis of these cases shows how such misunderstandings occurred, which in turn illustrates what turn-taking resources were in play in these OPI interactions.

3.4.1 Case analysis: Kyle

The following excerpt is taken from Kyle's (K) OPI. In this segment, in response to the interviewer's request to describe his host family in Japan, Kyle is telling a personal narrative about his host father. Prior to the segment, Kyle said that the host father was a speaker of the Kansai dialect of Japanese, which he could not understand at all in the beginning. He gradually learned the dialect and finally became able to speak it, but he forgot it soon after returning to the United States (lines 1–14). In this interaction, as Kyle approaches a possible completion point of the story, the interviewer makes several moves

toward closing the sequence. However, as Kyle continues his turn beyond the completion point of the story, a bit of conflict over the right to speak emerges.

Excerpt 3.10 Kyle (Intermediate-High): Kansai dialect

1. K: e: hajimeni, ano: etto (.)
SF at-first SF SF

2. zenzen wakaranakatta n desu ga,
not-at-all understood-NEG N CP but

"At first, I didn't understand it at all, but"

3. IR: [ee ee ee.
"Uh huh."

4. K: [etto .hh a:: dandan wakaru-
SF SF gradually understand

5. (.) wakaru yoo ni natte,
understand like P become-and

"I gradually began to understand it, and"

6. IR: [un un.
"Uh huh."

7. K: [etto: a: .hh yatto: amerika ni kaeru:
SF SF finally America to return

8. a: mae ni, ano: etto hanaseru yoo ni
SF before P SF SF can-speak like P

9. natta n desu ga,
became N CP but

"I finally learned to speak it before coming back to the United States, but"

10. IR: aa so[o:.
oh so
"Oh I see."

11. K: [etto:
SF

12. IR: [ee.
"Uh huh."

13. K: [kansaiben w(hh)a:, etto
Kansai-dialect TP SF

14. sugu, wasurechaimashita kara,
soon forgot because

"because I soon forgot the Kansai dialect,"

15. IR: aa [soo desu k(hh)a.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

16. K: [eeto sore w(hh)a, hhuh
SF that TP

17. IR: hhuh hhuh hhuh

18. K: e:: sore ga, ano: mottain(hh)ai huh
SF that S SF waste
((hands on lap; gazing toward IR))

"it's a shame,"

19. IR aa so[o desu ne:. ((smiling, shifts gaze down))
oh so CP FP
"Oh that's right."

20. K: [da to omoimasu.
CP QT think
((gazing toward IR, sitting straight))
"I think."

21. IR: [maa, ((gazing downwards))
well
"Well,"

22. K: [sorede,
then
"And then,"

23. IR: [ee ee. ((turns gaze toward Kyle))
"Uh huh."

24. K: [etto: (.) a:: etto: ((shifts gaze down))
SF SF SF

25. hosuto famirii ga etto a: kodomo ga ((gazes at IR))
host family S SF SF child S

26. e: (.) futari imashita kara
SF two-people have-PAST because

"because the host family had two children,"

In this segment, indicating her interpretation that Kyle's story is approaching a possible completion point, the interviewer provides acknowledgement tokens (lines 10, 15). Yet Kyle holds the floor by continuing his turn in overlaps with the interviewer (lines 11, 16). In lines 16–20, with laughter, Kyle produces a negative assessment of the event he has described (*sore w(hh)a, hhuh e:: sore ga, ano: mottain(hh)ai huh da to omoimasu.* "I think it's a shame."), to which the interviewer responds with an agreement token (line 19). At this point, nothing seems to indicate that Kyle would continue his turn beyond the TRP. His utterance (lines 16–20) is grammatically completed, marked with a falling intonation, and hearable as a sequence-closing assessment following a narrative. In addition, Kyle is sitting up straight, gazing toward the interviewer, with his hands placed on his lap. All of these features could signal turn-completion rather than turn-continuation. In line 19, while producing an agreement token, the interviewer withdraws her gaze from Kyle, who is gazing at her. This displays a shift in the interviewer's role from a recipient to a speaker (Goodwin, 1980, 1984). Treating Kyle's turn as completed, the interviewer then launches a next turn (line 21), producing the discourse marker *maa* "well," possibly to preface a disagreement (Pomerantz, 1984).[7] However, in an overlap,

[7] According to Pomerantz (1984), when the second speaker disagrees with the first speaker's assessment, the second speaker tends to delay the disagreement by prefacing it with an agreement and/or turn-initial *uh* or *well.* In Excerpt 3.10, the interviewer first agrees with Kyle's assessment (line 19) and produces *maa* "well" (line 21), which

Kyle also produces a discourse marker, *sorede* "and then" (line 22), indicating that he has more to add. In response, the interviewer abandons her newly-initiated TCU and produces continuers to yield the floor (line 23). In lines 24–26, Kyle starts telling another mini story about his host family, further expanding his response turn. In this interaction, the misalignment between the interviewer and Kyle at the possible TRP resulted in a bit of conflict over the right to speak. Although the conflict was not a serious one, it was a little more intense than usual since after several moves to close the sequence (e.g., acknowledgement, agreement), the interviewer actually initiated a new TCU to take a next turn, and had to abandon it in order to let Kyle continue his turn.

3.4.2 Case analysis: Nicole

While it is important for the candidates to appropriately signal turn-continuation in order to achieve an extended turn in the OPI, they also need to properly project turn-completion points so that the interviewer will launch next turns at TRPs in a timely manner. As discussed earlier, if the interviewer does not recognize the completion point of the candidate's turn, the candidate may produce a recipient token or some more substantial utterance to recomplete the turn and recreate a context for speaker change. However, when the interviewer's next turn is delayed, the candidate may orient to it as a sign of other interactional problems, as illustrated in the following excerpt. In this segment, Nicole (N) is describing a food preparation process. The final part of the sequence is shown here (the full interaction is presented in Section 4.2.3).

Excerpt 3.11 Nicole (Intermediate-High): Tofu and okra dish

1. N: ano, (0.7) sore mo nanka (0.6) atatamete

---

suggests that she was possibly going to produce a disagreement (e.g., a positive assessment of Kyle's experience).

SF that also like warm-and
"warm that up too, and"

2. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

3. N: ano (.) sono onaji toofu ni
SF that same tofu P

4. ano kaketa onaji soosu o (.) o kakete,
SF added same sauce O O add-and

"add the same sauce that was added to the tofu, and"

5. IR: ee ee [ee.
"Uh huh."

6. N: [ano (0.5) issho ni taberu,
SF together P eat
"eat them together,"

7. soo yuu kanji.=
so say like
"it's kinda like that."

8. =nanka hi- (0.5) chawan ni, hhuh
like bowl in

9. hitotsu no chawan ni [sugu
one LK bowl in immediately
((makes a cup shape with her hands))

10. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

11. (0.4) ((Nicole withdraws her hands and places them on her lap))

12. N: ano hairimasu.
SF go-in
((brings her right hand in front of her chest))

"They go into one bowl together."

13. IR: aa:.
"Oh."
((IR nods. Nicole moves her right hand up and down, and then withdraws the hand.))

14. (0.6) ((Nicole turns her gaze upward))

15. N: ano tsuujitemasu ka¿ ((turns gaze back to IR))
SF be-understood Q
"Is this making sense?"

16. [(k- kono) chotto hheh
this little
"It's a little"

17. IR: [hai hai hai.
"Yes yes."

18. ja otoofu to okura (0.6) o ryooho[o (.) irete,
then tofu and okra O both put-and
"Well then, you put in both tofu and okra, and"

19. N: [un.
"Yes."

20. IR: soshite, oshooyu (.) mitaina soosu de,
and soy-sauce like sauce P
"then add a sauce similar to soy sauce"

21. N: un.
"Yes."

In this segment, as Nicole approaches a possible turn-completion point, she marks a clause, whose content is hearable as a final step in the food preparation process, with the final-form of predicate (line 6), and then produces a short wrap-up utterance (*soo yuu kanji.* "It's kinda like that," line 7). While this could be the end of the turn, Nicole rushes through the potential TRP to expand the turn with a bit of elaboration (lines 8–12). At this point, while the interviewer produces the discourse marker *aa:* "oh," she does not provide a full acknowledgement token (e.g., *aa soo desu ka*). After the following 0.6-second silence, Nicole self-selects as the next speaker and asks the interviewer if her explanation makes sense (line 15). This indicates that she is treating the absence of the interviewer's acknowledgement as a possible sign of nonunderstanding. In response, the interviewer claims that she has understood Nicole's explanation (line 17) and displays her

understanding by summarizing it in her own words (lines 17–20), which then gets confirmed by Nicole (lines 19, 21).

A close look at the interaction indicates that the status of Nicole's response turn around the TRP (lines 12–14) is somewhat ambiguous: Some features of Nicole's conduct signal possible turn-completion while others suggest possible turn-continuation. Her utterance in lines 8–12 is grammatically complete and marked with a falling intonation, which could potentially indicate turn-completion. In terms of discourse organization, she has rushed through a possible TRP (lines 7–8) to expand her turn, and at this point, it is not clear how far this expansion may go on. Her embodied actions rather seem to suggest turn-continuation, as she produces a hand gesture at the TRP (lines 12–13) and gazes upward during the gap of silence in the talk (line 14). These embodied actions can be seen as indicative of her continued speakership (Goodwin, 1980, 1984; Schegloff, 1984). In the present OPI data, the candidates frequently used hand gestures and shifted their gaze away from the interviewer during their turns, but often withdrew their hands and gazed at the interviewer at TRPs. The mixed features of Nicole's conduct seem to affect the interviewer's conduct. Without producing a full acknowledgement token, the interviewer waits to see if Nicole will continue her turn. However, Nicole orients to the lack of acknowledgement from the interviewer as a possible sign of nonunderstanding, rather than a misinterpretation of the status of her turn. While the interviewer claims and displays her understanding of Nicole's telling in response to Nicole's question, in the context of the OPI, Nicole's displayed uncertainty about her own speech could influence the interviewer's (and the second rater's) perception of her proficiency level, which could potentially affect the resulting rating negatively.

3.5 Summary

In this chapter, I described the basic sequence structure and turn-taking organizations observed in the present OPI data. I have discussed how the candidates and interviewer projected, understood, and negotiated turn-continuation and turn-completion in the OPI interactions. It was found that the interviewer's displayed understanding of the status of the candidate's turn was systematically confirmed or disconfirmed by the candidate in the next sequential slot. Even when the interviewer provided an acknowledgement and made a move toward closing the current sequence, the candidate could continue his/her turn by exploiting a next sequential slot (often in a partial overlap). In addition, when the interviewer did not recognize the completion point of the candidate's turn and produced a continuer, the candidate could respond with a recipient token to pass the opportunity to continue his/her turn, or produce some utterance to recreate a context for speaker change. The turn-taking resources used in the present OPI interactions included syntax and linguistic forms, discourse organization and the semantic content of utterances, audible features (e.g., intonation, rushing-through, inhalation, hesitation markers), and other semiotic resources (e.g., gaze movement, gestures, body positioning, facial expressions). The candidates and interviewer were generally effective in projecting and understanding turn-continuation/completion, and even when there were misalignments, they were able to solve the problems collaboratively by attending to each other's interactional moves and aligning and disaligning with each other on a moment-by-moment basis.

CHAPTER 4

THE DESCRIPTION TASK

4.1 Introduction

In the ACTFL OPI, the description task is one of the Advanced-level tasks designed to elicit a "connected discourse of paragraph length." The interviewer introduces the description task when he/she estimates that the candidate's proficiency level is at Intermediate or above in the interview. It is used for a level check with Advanced candidates, and for a probe with Intermediate candidates. In this task, the candidate is prompted to produce a detailed description of a target item, such as a thing, place, person, process, activity, and so forth. The specific topic of the task is determined during the interview depending on the candidate's interests, experiences, and knowledge.

In the present Japanese OPI data, the description of a process (e.g., a food preparation process) was most frequently used for this task. Since different types of description tasks can elicit different types of discourse (e.g., while a description of a process often consists of a series of steps, a description of a place could contain more assessments, and a description of a person may include narratives), I will focus on the description of a process in this chapter. I will examine the candidates' use of connective expressions and discourse organization, because these differentiate a "connected discourse of paragraph length" and "discrete sentences" according the ACTFL rating criteria. I will first present segments from the OPIs and discuss how the candidates produced a description of a process in response to the prompt. I will then compare the use

of connective expressions in the description task within and across the levels to look for individual differences and/or level differences.

4.2 Data analysis

In this section, I will present segments of the OPI interactions in which the candidates were asked to describe a food preparation process. All segments start with the interviewer's prompt, followed by the candidates' responses. For each of the five levels (Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid), I have chosen a segment that appeared to demonstrate a typical performance of that level in my data. Each segment is followed by an analysis of the segment, with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. Due to the limitation of space, not all embodied actions of the candidates and the interviewer are presented in the transcripts.

4.2.1 Olivia: Intermediate-Low

This segment is taken from Olivia's OPI (Intermediate-Low). Prior to this segment, the interviewer brought up the topic of cooking, one of Olivia's hobbies that she had mentioned earlier in the interview. Immediately preceding this interaction, Olivia (O) said that she usually bakes cakes using premade cake mixes. In lines 2–6, the interviewer requests Olivia to describe how to make some kind of food (such as cakes).

Excerpt 4.1 Olivia (Intermediate-Low): Making a cake

1. IR: hee.
   wow

2. ano: nan- (.) nanika desu ne
   SF *something CP FP*

3. watashi ni, tsukurikata o
   me *P* *how-to-make O*

4. oshiete kuremasen ka.

tell give-NEG Q

5. ma, ke- (.) keeki demo
well cake also

6. ii n desu kedo.
good N CP but

"I see. Would you please tell me how to make something? Well, you can tell me how to make a cake if you like."

7. (0.6)

8. O: tsukurikata? ((folding her arms, gazing at IR))
how-to-make
"How to make?"

9. IR: hai hai.
"Yes."

10. O: er::: (1.1) a okay. ((shifts her gaze upwards))
SF SF okay

11. ano:: soshite (.) hhuh (1.3) ((gazes down))
SF and

12. ano: ryoori o- (0.6) o katte:,
SF dish O O buy-and

"Oh, okay. And, buy a dish, and"

13. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

14. O: ano: (.) ie de: ano (0.9)
SF home at SF

15. a: (1.1) ryoori o
SF dish O

16. (4.2) tsu- (2.5)
((unfolds and folds her arms, knits her eyebrows))

17. tsukatte:¿=
use-and
((brings her left hand in front of her chest, palm up; softly shakes her head; gazes down))

"use the dish at home and"

18. =ts- a- tatoeba[::,
for-example
"for example"
((makes her hands into fists in front of her chest))

19. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

20. O: ano keeki no mikkusu,
SF cake LK mix

21. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

22. O: o (1.4) p(h)our shite:,
O pour do-and

"pour a cake mix, and"

23. a(hh)no, eggu: (.) toka:
SF egg etc.

24. [mizu:,
water

"egg[Eng] and water,"

25. IR: [e- (.) eggu tte nan desu ka?
egg QT what CP Q
"What's egg[Eng]?"

26. O: oh. tamago[:: toka,
oh egg etc.
"Oh, egg[Jpn] and"

27. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

28. O: ano abura: toka,
SF oil etc.
"oil and"

29. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

30. O: mi:zu::, (0.5) ano hoka no:,
water SF other LK

31. (0.6) a:no: zai-(.)ryoo ga atte:
SF ingredients S have-and

"water. There are other ingredients, and"

32. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

33. O: [ano (.) zenbu (0.6) ano booru ni
SF all SF bowl in

34. irete:,
put-and

"put everything in a bowl, and"

35. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

36. O: [ano mazete:,
SF mix-and
"mix it, and"

37. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

38. O: erm sono mikkusu (.)
SF that mix

39. keeki no mikkusu,
cake LK mix

40. ato wa, ano pa-(.)n, ((gazing slightly down))
after TP SF pan

41. tatoeba, kappu keeku¿ ((gazes at IR))
for-example cup cake

42. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

43. O: [kappu keeki no pan¿ (0.5) no irete,
cup cake LK pan LK put-and

"and then, put that mix, the cake mix, in pans, for example, cupcake pans, and"

44. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

45. O: o- (.) ove:n o, (.) setto,
oven O set

46. ta- (.) e: futsuu wa
SF usually TP

47. ni- (0.5) nijuu go ppun gurai?
twenty five minutes about

48. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

49. O: setto shite,
set do-and

"set the oven, usually for about 25 minutes, and"

50. IR: fuun.
"Oh."

51. O: ano: (0.6) pan ni irete:
SF pan in put-and
"put the pans in it, and"

52. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

53. (0.5)

54. O: mattete: (.)
be-waiting-and
"wait, and"

55. ato dekita.
after done
"and then, it's done."

((holds her hands out in front of her chest, palms up; gazes at IR))

56. IR: fuun.=
"Oh."

57. O: =un. (.) ek (.) kantan.
yes SF easy
"Yeah. It's easy."

58. min- (.) daredemo [dek(h)iru.
anyone can-do
"Anyone can do it."
((gazes at IR, withdraws her hands))

59. IR: [aa soo. hh
"Oh I see."

60. O: uh huh [huh

61. IR: [hhuh

62. [soo desu ka. hee:
so CP Q wow
"Oh I see. Wow."

63. O: [(xxx xxx) ((laughing; hands are on her lap))

64. IR: a: nanika sukina shurui no keeki
SF anything favorite type LK cake

65. toka aru n desu ka?
etc. have N CP Q

"What's your favorite type of cake?"

This segment starts with the interviewer's request to describe how to make some food, such as a cake (lines 2–6). Following a gap of silence (line 7), Olivia initiates repair (line 8) by repeating a key word in the interviewer's instruction (*tsukurikata* "how to make") with rising intonation, asking for confirmation of her understanding of the task (Kasper, 2013), to which the interviewer provides confirmation (line 9). After some hesitation and thinking, Olivia initiates her response turn, prefacing it with the English discourse marker *okay* (line 10). Then she describes the process of making a cake, presenting the steps of the process in a sequential order (lines 10–55). During Olivia's turn, the interviewer interrupts once to elicit a Japanese word equivalent to the English word Olivia used (*eggu tte nan desu ka* "What's egg?" line 25), which shows her

orientation toward the goal of the OPI as an assessment of proficiency in the target language. Olivia responds to this intervention with a change-of-state token "oh" (Heritage, 1984a) and self-corrects by replacing *eggu* (line 23) with *tamago* "egg" (line 26).

After describing a number of steps in a sequential order, Olivia produces a clause whose content is hearable as the end of the process (*dekita.* "It's done."). At the same time, she holds out her hands, palms up, as if to say "voila!" (line 55). The interviewer responds with a recipient token (*fuun.* "Oh.", line 56), to which Olivia also responds with a recipient token (*un.* "Yeah."), and then produces some sequence-closing assessments while withdrawing her hands (lines 57–58). As these features signal the completion of Olivia's turn, the interviewer provides acknowledgement tokens (lines 59, 62) and moves on to the next question (lines 64–65). Overall, the segment shows Olivia's interactional competence to produce a sequentially appropriate action in response to the interviewer's request, first checking her understanding of the task by initiating repair, and then producing an extended turn to describe the process in an orderly manner. She also appropriately responds to the interviewer's intervention, and signals turn-completion using a variety of linguistic and nonlinguistic resources.

One of the most notable features in Olivia's discourse in the segment above is that, while presenting the steps involved in the process of making a cake, she uses the te-form of predicate at the end of *all* clauses except the last one (e.g., *katte* "buy," line 12; *tsukatte* "use," line 17; *pour shite* "pour," line 22; *atte* "have," line 31; *irete* "put," lines 34, 43, 51; *mazete* "mix," line 36; *setto shite* "set," line 49; *mattete* "wait," line 54). The te-form of predicate grammatically connects the clauses, and integrates them into a

coherent sequence in conjunction with the semantic content of the clauses. It also contributes to holding the turn since it projects the production of a next clause. As such, the interviewer often responds to the clauses marked by the te-form of predicate with continuers (lines 13, 32, 35, 37, 44, 52). On the other hand, when Olivia approaches the turn-completion point, she employs the final-form of predicate (*dekita.* "It's done.", line 55; *kantan.* "It's easy.", line 57; *daredemo dekiru.* "Anyone can do it.", line 58).[1] As this predicate form syntactically completes the utterances and projects a possible TRP (along with other features of the utterances), the interviewer produces acknowledgement tokens in response (lines 59, 62). These instances demonstrate Olivia's ability to use the two predicate forms appropriately according to their discourse functions.

Olivia also employs a few connectives in the segment above. There are two instances of *ato (wa)* "and then" (lines 40, 55), which explicitly indicate the sequential relationships between the clauses. Olivia also employs *soshite* "and" in line 11, but this use of *soshite* appears somewhat problematic. It is placed at the beginning of her turn, following the English discourse marker *okay* (line 10), by which she claims her understanding of the prior turn (the interviewer's request) and her readiness to produce the next-position matter (Beach, 1993). Subsequently, she produces a hesitation marker and *soshite* (line 11), but there is no preceding utterance (at least within this turn) to which the *soshite*-marked utterance could be connected.

It is also interesting to see how Olivia utilizes the adverb *tatoeba* "for example" to initiate a clarification of her utterance. In lines 14–17, while describing a step (i.e., use

[1] These predicates are in the plain style. Olivia tended to mix the plain style and the *masu* style (addressee honorifics) in the OPI.

ryoori at home), Olivia shows much hesitation and uncertainty, as indicated by several long pauses, hesitation markers, cut-offs, slightly rising intonation, facial expression (knitting her eyebrows), and gesture (head shake). The utterance indeed appears problematic since the term *ryoori* "a dish/cuisine/cooking" generally refers to a prepared dish rather than ingredients, and it would be odd to use it for making a cake. Subsequently, Olivia rushes through a clause boundary and utters *tatoeba* "for example" to initiate a clarification (line 18). She then illustrates what she meant by the previous utterance (e.g., pour a cake mix; lines 20–22). A similar use of *tatoeba* is also observed in line 41, where she initiates a clarification on the English word she used (*pa-(.)n* "pan," line 40) and provides an example recognizable to the interviewer (*kappu keeki no pan* "cupcake pans").[2] These *tatoeba*-prefaced self-clarification attempts demonstrate Olivia's awareness of potential problems in her own utterances that may prevent the interviewer from understanding her, and her efforts to achieve a mutual understanding on the subject matter. Table 4.1 summarizes the sequential positions of the connectives and predicate forms used in Olivia's telling in this segment.

[2] Before producing *kappu keeki no pan* in line 43, Olivia checks the recognizability of the word *kappu keeki* by try-marking it in line 41.

Table 4.1.

Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Olivia's Telling

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
10–12	*soshite* "and"	step 1 (buy a dish)	te-form
14–17		step 2 (use the dish at home)	te-form
18–22		step 3/clarification of step 2 (pour a cake mix)	te-form
23–31		step 4 (there are eggs, oil, water, etc.)	te-form
25		IR intervention on "egg"	---
26		self-correction on "egg"	---
33–34		step 5 (put everything in a bowl)	te-form
36		step 6 (mix it)	te-form
38–43	*ato wa* "and then"	step 7 (put the cake mix in pans)	te-form
45–49		step 8 (set the oven for about 25 minutes)	te-form
51		step 9 (put the pans in it)	te-form
54		step 10 (wait)	te-form
55	*ato* "and then"	goal (it's done)	final-form
57		assessment (it's easy)	final-form
58		assessment (anyone can do it)	final-form

In summary, in her description of a cake-making process, Olivia organized her discourse by presenting the steps in a sequential manner and linking them with the te-form of predicate. At the potential turn-completion point, she used the final-form of predicate, and produced sequence-closing assessments (also marked by the final-form of predicate), which invited the interviewer's acknowledgement. While Olivia did not use any connective particles in this segment, she utilized a few connectives such as *ato (wa)* "and then" and *soshite* "and." While *ato (wa)* was appropriately used to indicate the sequential relationships between clauses, her turn-initial use of *soshite* appeared a little problematic. Overall, it seems fair to say that Olivia produced an (at least) minimally connected discourse for this description task. She produced a number of clauses, linked them using a limited variety of connective expressions, and organized the discourse in an appropriate manner. Her efforts to make her utterances comprehensible to the interviewer were also evident in her self-clarification attempts prefaced by *tatoeba* "for example."

However, her utterances still contained many hesitation markers, long pauses, cut-offs, sound stretching, and occasional code-switches to English, which possibly affected the resulting rating negatively.

4.2.2 Alyssa: Intermediate-Mid

The next segment is taken from Alyssa's OPI (Intermediate-Mid) and shows her performance on the description task. Prior to the segment, Alyssa (A) mentioned that she prepares dinner for her family a few times a week, and that she often cooks Japanese-style dishes such as chicken cutlets and curry. In lines 1–3, the interviewer requests Alyssa to describe how to prepare her favorite dish.

Excerpt 4.2 Alyssa (Intermediate-Mid): Cooking curry

1. IR: nanika ano: s- sukina ryoori no:
something SF favorite dish N

2. tsukurikata o hitotsu atashi ni
how-to-make O one me P

3. oshiete kuremasen ka¿
tell give-NEG Q

"Would you please tell me how to prepare your favorite dish?"

4. A: e:tto:, (.) karee wa doo desu ka¿
SF curry TP how CP Q
"How about curry?"

5. IR: a karee. ii desu yo.
oh curry good CP FP

6. oshi[ete kudasai. hai.
tell please yes

"Oh curry. That's good. Please tell me. Yeah."

7. A: [°karee°
"Curry"

8. ˚um˚ watashi hotondo: (.) ˚a etto˚ ninjin?
SF I mostly SF SF carrot

9. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

10. A: [o, (.) (˚xx˚) ichi senchi gurai?
O one centimeter about

11. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

12. A: ookiku, um (0.4) kitte,
big SF cut-and

"I mostly cut carrots big, about one centimeter, and"

13. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

14. A: sore o (f-) (.) nabe ni ire(.)te,
that O pot in put-and
"put that in a pot, and"

15. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

16. A: u:n (.) tsugi wa:: (0.4) jagaimo?
SF next TP potato

17. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

18. A: o, (1.0) (f-) koo ookiku (0.5) kitte,
O this big cut-and

"next, cut potatoes big like this, and"

19. sore [mo nabe ni ire- (0.5) [iremasu. .hh
that also pot in put
"put that in the pot also."

20. IR: [hai. (1.1) hai [hai.
"Uh huh."

21. (1.2) ((Alyssa is gazing upward))

22. A: hoka wa: ˚na- nani o ireru? (.) kana¿˚
other TP what O put FP

((gazes at IR))((turns gaze upward))

23. (.) °a! e:tto a sore wa ato° ((gazes down))
oh SF oh that TP later

"Other things are, what do I put? Oh! Oh that's later."

24. hheh hheh suimasen. ((gazes toward IR))
sorry
"I'm sorry."

25. IR: [ie ie ie. ((laughing))
"No no no."

26. A: [huhhu hhuh

27. etto, sore wa (1.1) n: chuubi? (.) kurai?
SF that TP SF medium-heat about

28. IR: hai hai.=
"Uh huh."

29. A: =de yaite,
P fry-and

"fry that over about medium heat, and"

30. shio (0.8) to:: koshoo,
salt and pepper

31. IR: hai.=
"Uh huh."

32. A: =o irete,
O put-and

"add salt and pepper, and"

33. sore mazattara,
that mixed-when
"after that's mixed,"

34. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

35. A: n: (0.8) sono ato wa, (1.0) tamanegi?
SF that after TP onion

36. IR: hai [hai.

"Uh huh."

37. A: [o (0.7) un (1.2) e¿ (0.6)
O SF eh

38. °usuku janakute,°
thinly CP-NEG-and

39. e¿ (0.7) futoi? hheh hoo ni?
eh thickly way P

40. IR: a hai.=
oh yes
"Oh, uh huh."

41. A: =kitte,
cut-and

"after that, cut an onion, not thin but thick, and"

42. (0.8) nabe ni ire(.)te,
pot in put-and
"put it in a pot, and"

43. A: um moo ikkai mazete mazete,
SF more one-time mix-and mix-and
"mix it once more, and"

44. IR: hai hai.=
"Uh huh."

45. A: =de, (2.1) ato moo sukoshi dake,
then after more little only

46. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

47. A: yaite, (0.5)
fry-and

"then, fry it just a bit more, and"

48. chikin toka:,
chicken etc.

49. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

50. A: um (.) e shabushabu:, shabu: (.) biifu?

SF SF shabushabu shabu beef

51. IR: hai hai. fuun.
"Uh huh. Oh."

52. A: irete,
put-and

"add chicken or shabushabu beef, and"

53. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

54. A: sore (0.5) de, (0.7) omizu: (.)
that then water

55. u:n san koppu gurai? [(0.7) irete,
SF three cup about put-and

"then, put in about three cups of water, and"

56. IR: [((nodding))

57. hai.
"Uh huh."

58. (0.9)

59. A: n (hai) (2.2) n: hai. hheh irete,
SF yes SF yes put-and
"yeah, put it in, and"

60. .hhh de: sono ato wa, karee no ruu¿
then that after TP curry LK roux

61. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

62. A: o (.) irete,
O put-and

"then, after that, put in curry roux, and"

63. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

64. A: (y-) a- e- yowabi (.) [ni (0.8) shite=
low-heat P do-and
"turn the heat low, and"

65. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

66. A: =irete mazete,
put-and mix-and
"put it in and mix it, and"

67. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

68. (0.5)

69. A: dekima-(.)agari.
done
"it's ready."
((rests hands on table; gazes at IR))

70. IR: aa soo desu [ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

71. A: [hehh hheh

72. IR: nanpun gurai niru n desu ka?
how-many-minutes about boil N CP Q
"How many minutes do you boil it?"

In this interaction, since the interviewer's request (lines 1–3) does not specify the target item for the task, Alyssa proffers a possible target (curry) in a question format (line 4), which gets accepted by the interviewer (lines 5–6). As mutual understanding on what the task is about is achieved, Alyssa initiates her response turn in line 8. Similar to Olivia in her discourse in Excerpt 4.1, Alyssa presents a number of steps involved in the process of cooking curry in a sequential fashion (lines 8–69). It is notable that Alyssa frequently try-marks (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979) newly-introduced items (e.g., ingredients, manners of preparation) with a rising intonation (e.g., lines 8, 10, 16, 27, 35, 39, 50, 55, 60) and elicits the interviewer's verbal or nonverbal response (e.g., *hai hai* "uh huh"). This allows Alyssa to ensure the recognizability of the words/phrases before moving on to a next part.

At the turn-completion point, Alyssa produces an utterance that is hearable as the end of the process in a falling intonation (*dekima-(.)agari*. "It's ready.", line 69).[3] The interviewer then produces an acknowledgement (line 70) and asks a follow-up question (line 72). Overall, the excerpt shows Alyssa's interactional competence to produce a sequentially appropriate turn in the interaction, by attending to the particular way in which the interviewer's request was formulated, producing a projected action (description of a food preparation process) in an extended turn, and working together with the interviewer to achieve intersubjectivity.

In this segment, Alyssa also produces self-directed speech, which is distinguished from the main discourse by linguistic and nonlinguistic features such as style shift, reduced volume of voice, and gazing away. For instance, in line 19, Alyssa temporarily ceases her telling by completing an utterance with the final-form of predicate in the *masu* style (addressee honorifics; *iremasu* "put"). Yet the following in-breath (line 19) and her upward gaze during the subsequent silence (line 21) indicate her continued speakership. Then Alyssa turns her gaze to the interviewer and utters the phrase *hoka wa:* "other things are," but soon withdraws her gaze and produces the rest of the utterance in a reduced volume of voice, employing the plain style and the sentence-final particle *kana*, which are appropriate for a self-addressed question (°*na- nani o ireru? (.) kana¿*° "What do I put?" line 22). As these features enable the interviewer to see that Alyssa is doing "thinking," she does not respond to the question or make any intervention. After producing more self-directed speech in a similar manner (°*a! e:tto a sore wa ato*° "Oh!

[3] The cut-off and a brief pause in the utterance suggest that Alyssa was originally producing the verb *dekimasu* "to be done/finished" but changed it into the nominalized form *dekiagari* "completion/ready." The copula is omitted in this utterance.

Oh that's later," line 23), Alyssa orients to this prolonged "thinking" as problematic and turns her gaze back to the interviewer to produce an apology (*suimasen* "I'm sorry," line 24) with apologetic laughter. The interviewer responds with minimization (*ie ie ie* "No no no") and reciprocates the laughter to align with Alyssa (line 25). Then, Alyssa resumes her telling (line 27). These instances demonstrate Alyssa's ability to use self-directed speech in the target language and maintain the turn while doing "thinking" in the interaction.

Similar to Olivia in her telling presented in Excerpt 4.1, Alyssa predominately uses the te-form of predicate to combine clauses as she presents the steps of the process in a sequential order (e.g., *kitte* "cut," lines 12, 18, 41; *irete* "put in," lines 14, 32, 42, 52, 55, 59, 62, 66; *yaite* "fry," lines 29, 47; *mazete* "mix," lines 43, 66; *yowabi ni shite* "turn the heat low," line 64). Together with the semantic content of the clauses, the te-form of predicate integrates the clauses as a coherent sequence of steps. In addition, Alyssa once employs the connective particle *tara* "if/when/after" (*sore mazat**tara*** "after that is mixed," line 33), which indicates the temporal/conditional relationship between clauses more explicitly than the te-form of predicate. Since these clause-final connective expressions syntactically project the production of a next clause and signal turn-continuation (in conjunction with the semantic and prosodic features of the utterances), the interviewer frequently responds to them with continuers (e.g., lines 13, 15, 20, 34, 44, 53, 57, 63, 67).

In this segment, Alyssa also utilizes several clause-initial connective expressions that express sequential relationships between clauses, such as the connective *de* "and then" (lines 45, 54, 60) and sequential adverbial phrases *tsugi wa* "next" (line 16) and *sono ato*

wa "after that" (lines 35, 60). While *de* is used to indicate general sequential transitions in her discourse, *tsugi wa* "next" and *sono ato wa* "after that" are used to preface newly introduced ingredients (which are also try-marked). For instance, after describing the preparation steps for carrots (lines 8–14), Alyssa utters *tsugi wa::* "next" and introduces a new ingredient, potatoes, in a try-marked intonation (line 16). Then she describes a few preparation steps for potatoes. Similarly, she utters *sono ato wa* "after that" before mentioning onions (line 35) and the curry roux (line 60) for the first time in her discourse. Table 4.2 summarizes the sequential positions of the connectives, sequential adverbial phrases, connective particles, predicate forms, and sentence-final particles used in Alyssa's telling in this segment.

Table 4.2.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Alyssa's Telling

Lines	**Clause-initial**	**Content**	**Clause-final**
8–12		step 1 (cut carrots big)	te-form
14		step 2 (put that in the pot)	te-form
16–18	*tsugi wa* "next"	step 3 (cut potatoes big)	te-form
19		step 4 (put that in the pot)	final-form
22		self-directed speech	final-form + FP *kana*
23		self-directed speech	copula omitted
24		apology	final-form
25		IR mitigation	---
27–29		step 5 (fry it over medium heat)	te-form
30–32		step 6 (add salt and pepper)	te-form
33		step 7 (after that is mixed)	*tara* "if/when/after"
35–41	*sono ato wa* "after that"	step 8 (cut onions thick)	te-form
42		step 9 (put that in the pot)	te-form
43		step 10 (mix it again)	te-form
45–47	*de* "and then"	step 11 (fry it a bit more)	te-form
48–52		step 12 (add chicken or beef)	te-form
54–59	*de* "and then"	step 13 (add water)	te-form
60–62	*de* "and then," *sono ato wa* "after that"	step 14 (add curry roux)	te-form
64		step 15 (lower the heat)	te-form
66		step 16 (add and mix)	te-form
69		goal (it's done)	copula omitted

In sum, in the above segment, Alyssa produced a description of a process, using an extended turn, presenting the steps in a sequential manner, and linking the clauses with a fair variety of connective expressions. The clauses in her telling were mostly combined by the te-form of predicate, but she also employed the connective particle *tara* "if/when/after," which explicitly indicates the temporal/conditional relationship between clauses. The segment also demonstrated Alyssa's ability to appropriately use different predicate forms (the te-form vs. the final-form, the *masu* style vs. the plain style) according to their discourse functions. She also employed several clause-initial connective expressions, such as *de* "then," *tsugi wa* "next," and *sono ato wa* "after that," to indicate sequential transitions and to organize the discourse thematically. Overall, it seems reasonable to say that Alyssa produced a (at least) moderately connected discourse for the description task. On the other hand, her utterances contained frequent filled and unfilled pauses, and her repeated use of try-marked intonation, which helped her to ensure the comprehensibility of her utterances, seemed to make her uncertainty about the words/phrases more evident. These features might have affected the resulting rating negatively.

4.2.3 Nicole: Intermediate-High

The following segment presents Nicole's (Intermediate-High) performance on the description task. Prior to the segment, Nicole (N) has mentioned that she lives in an apartment-style dorm with a kitchen, and that she usually prepares simple meals for herself, such as salads, omelets, and pasta. In lines 1–3, the interviewer requests Nicole to describe how to prepare some simple dish.

Excerpt 4.3 Nicole (Intermediate-High): Making a tofu dish

1. IR: jaa nanika: ano: (.) nandemo ii n desu kedo,
then something SF anything good N CP but

2. atashi ni (.) kantanna ryoori no tsukurikata o
me P simple dish LK how-to-cook O

3. hitotsu oshiete [kuremasen ka?
one tell give-NEG Q

"Well then, would you please tell me how to prepare some simple dish? Any dish is fine."

4. N: [hai.
"Yes."

5. (1.7) ((Nicole is looking away))

6. N: °nani ga ii n daroo°
what S good N CP
"What would be good?"

7. ano: (0.6) jaa (1.1) nanka,
SF then like

8. jibun de, nanka katteni jib- (.) ((gazing toward IR))
self P like freely

9. ano (.) tsukutta mono na n desu kedo,
SF made thing CP N CP but

10. [sono reshipi wa
that recipe TP

"Well then, this recipe is something I made up on my own, but"

11. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

12. N: ano demo (0.5)
SF but
"But"
((puts her hands on the table and leans forward slightly))

13. °nan daro°
what CP

"What is it?"

14. .hhh ano, sono toofu?
SF that tofu
"the tofu?"
((makes a square shape with her hands))

15. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

16. N: o, nanka i- (.) ichi mai tte yuu no?
O like one slice QT say FP
"Do you say 'one slice'?"

17. [a ichi mai (.) to yuu- (.) yuu n desu ka?
oh one slice QT say say N CP Q
"Oh do you say 'one slice'?"

18. IR [((nodding))

19. N: sono [ichi mai toofu o kitte:,
that one slice tofu O cut-and
"Cut one slice of tofu, and"

20. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

21. hai hai.
"Uh huh."

22. N: ano (.) furaipan ni, ano (.) ano atatamete:,
SF frying-pan in SF SF warm-and
"warm it up in a frying pan, and"

23. sono soosu¿
that sauce
"the sauce,"

24. nanka shooyu: ni nitemasu ga
like soy-sauce P resemble but

25. chotto chigau n desu kedo,
little differ N CP but

"It's similar to soy sauce, but it's a little different, but"

26. IR: ee [ee.
"Uh huh."

27. N: [ano, (1.0) kakete:,
SF add-and
"add it, and"

28. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

29. N: [(um) (.) moo ikkai atatamete,
SF more once warm
"warm it up one more time, and"

30. IR: [ee ee.
"Uh huh."

31. N: [ano, (0.7) sore (.) o:, hhuh (1.2)
SF that O

32. °are?° (.) gohan toka, (.) ni nosete,
SF cooked-rice etc. P put-on-and

"Put that over cooked rice, and"

33. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

34. N: ano (1.1) sonomama de taberu.=
SF as-it-is P eat
"eat it just like that."
((withdraws both hands and puts them on her lap))

35. =ato, ((brings her hands in front of her chest))
after
"And then,"

36. IR: ha[i.
"Uh huh."

37. N: [ano hhuh okura?
SF okra
"okra?"

38. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

39. N: [okura? (.) mo ano (0.6)
okra also SF
"also okra?"

40. °are nan da kke?° ((looking away))
that what CP FP

41. hheh (0.5) komakaku? komakaku ja nakute (0.7)
finely finely CP not-and

42. slice n(h)an te yuu no?
slice what QT say FP

"What is that? Finely? Not finely. How do I say 'slice[Eng]'?"

43. slice shite:, ((gazes toward IR))
slice do-and
"Slice[Eng] okra also, and"

44. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

45. N: ano, (0.7) sore mo nanka (0.6) atatamete
SF that also like warm-and
"warm that up too, and"

46. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

47. N: ano (.) sono onaji toofu ni
SF that same tofu P

48. ano kaketa onaji soosu o (.) o kakete,
SF added same sauce O O add-and

"add the same sauce that was added to the tofu, and"

49. IR: ee ee [ee.
"Uh huh."

50. N: [ano (0.5) issho ni taberu,
SF together P eat
"eat them together,"

51. soo yuu kanji.=
so say like
"it's kinda like that."

52. =nanka hi- (0.5) chawan ni, hhuh
like bowl in

53. hitotsu no chawan ni [sugu

one LK bowl in immediately

54. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

55. (0.4) ((Nicole withdraws her hands and places them on her lap))

56. N: ano hairimasu.
SF go-in
((brings her right hand in front of her chest))

"They go into one bowl together."

57. IR: aa:.
"Oh."
((IR nods. Nicole moves her right hand up and down, and then withdraws the hand.))

58. (0.6) ((Nicole turns her gaze upward))

59. N: ano tsuujitemasu ka¿ ((turns gaze back to IR))
SF be-understood Q
"Is this making sense?"

60. [(k- kono) chotto hheh
this little
"It's a little"

61. IR: [hai hai hai.
"Yes yes."

62. ja otoofu to okura (0.6) o ryooho[o (.) irete,
then tofu and okra O both put
"Well then, you put in both tofu and okra, and"

63. N: [un.
"Yes."

64. IR: soshite, oshooyu (.) mitaina soosu de,
and soy-sauce like sauce P
"then add a sauce similar to soy sauce"

65. N: un.
"Yes."

66. IR: hee::.
"Wow."

67. ano: slice tte sakki iimashita kedo,
SF slice QT earlier said but

68. [slice tte nan desu ka?
slice QT what CP Q

"You said 'slice[Eng]' earlier, but what is that?"

This segment begins with the interviewer's request (lines 1–3), which does not specify the target item for the task. After accepting the task (line 4), Nicole engages in a bit of thinking (lines 5–6), and proffers a target item (a recipe of her own creation) by providing a piece of background information about the item (lines 7–10). Then Nicole describes the steps of the food preparation process by presenting the steps in a sequential order. Her description of the process consists of two series of steps, one for preparing tofu (lines 12–34) and another for preparing okra (lines 35–50). Each series of steps gets completed with a similar utterance that is marked with the final-form of predicate and hearable as the end of the process (e.g., *sonomama de taberu.* "Eat it just like that.", line 34; *issho ni taberu* "Eat them together.", line 50). While at the end of the first series Nicole rushes through the potential TRP and continues her turn (line 34), at the end of the second series she adds a wrap-up utterance (*soo yuu kanji.* "It's kinda like that," line 51), which further signals turn-completion. However, she again rushes through the potential TRP and provides a bit of elaboration (lines 52–56). As discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4), the mixed signals of turn-continuation and turn-completion here seem to prevent the interviewer from providing a full acknowledgement token (lines 57–58). Nicole orients to the silence as a possible sign of nonunderstanding, and asks if the interviewer understands her telling (lines 59). In response, the interviewer claims and displays her understanding (lines 61–64), which gets confirmed by Nicole (lines 63, 65). As Nicole's

interactional move also indicates the completion of her telling, the interviewer goes on to produce a short acknowledgement token (*hee::* "Wow," line 66) and moves on to a next matter. The interviewer attempts to elicit a Japanese word equivalent to the English word Nicole used (*slice*, lines 67–68), which shows her orientation to the current activity as an assessment of proficiency in the target language.

Similar to Alyssa in the discourse shown in Excerpt 4.2, Nicole also produces self-directed speech to do "thinking" in this segment. These utterances are delivered in the plain style and marked as self-addressed questions by either the conjecture form of the copula *daro(o)* (e.g., °*nani ga ii n daroo*° "What would be good?" line 6; °*nan daro*° "What is it?" line 13) or by the sentence-final particles *kke* and *no* (°*are nan da kke?*° "What is that?" line 40; *slice n(h)an te yuu no?* "How do I say 'slice'?" line 42). Her self-directed speech is also often accompanied by nonlinguistic features such as a reduced volume of voice and gazing away. In addition, in the segment above, Nicole once requests assistance from the interviewer regarding a Japanese expression. She first formulates a question in the plain style (*ichi mai tte yuu no?* "Do you say 'one slice'?" line 16) but soon self-corrects it by changing the predicate form into the *masu* style (*ichi mai (.) to yuu- (.) yuu n desu ka?* "Do you say 'one slice'?" line 17), treating the *masu* style as more appropriate to address the interviewer in this interaction. These instances also indicate Nicole's ability to appropriately use the different forms of predicates and sentence-final particles according to their discourse functions.

Similar to Olivia and Alyssa in Excerpts 4.1 and 4.2, Nicole also predominantly uses the te-form of predicate to combine clauses while presenting the steps of a process

(*kitte* "cut," line 19; *atatamete* "warm up," lines 22, 29, 45; *kakete* "add," lines 27, 48; *nosete* "put," line 32; *slice shite* "slice," line 43). She also employs the connective particles *kedo* "but/although" (lines 9, 25) and *ga* "but" (line 24) in her discourse. While both *kedo* and *ga* are contrastive markers, Nicole uses *kedo* (in the discourse marker *n desu kedo*) to mark background information (Yoshimi, 2001), and *ga* to indicate a contrast between clauses. For instance, when Nicole provides a piece of background information about her recipe as a preface to the description of the food preparation process, she marks her utterance with *n desu kedo* (*nanka, jibun de, nanka katteni jib- (.) ano (.) tsukutta mono na* ***n desu kedo***, *sono reshipi wa* "This recipe is something I made up on my own, **but**," lines 7–10). Also, when she introduces a sauce in her telling (line 23), she provides some supplementary information about the sauce in a subsequent utterance, which is also marked by *n desu kedo* (*nanka shooyu: ni nitemasu ga chotto chigau* ***n desu kedo*** "it's similar to soy sauce, but it's a little different, **but**," lines 24–25). In this two-clause utterance, the connective particle *ga* is also used to show a contrast between the clauses. As the use of the te-form of predicate and the connective particles projects turn-continuation at clause-boundary positions (in conjunction with the semantic and prosodic features of the utterances), the interviewer frequently responds to the clauses marked by them with continuers (lines 11, 21, 26, 28, 30, 33, 44, 46, 49).

Furthermore, Nicole utilizes several connectives (*jaa* "well then," *demo* "but," *ato* "and then") to indicate transitions in her discourse in the above segment. *Jaa* "well then" (line 7) appears at the beginning of her turn (after a bit of thinking and hesitation), linking what went before (the interviewer's request) and what is coming next (her response).

Demo “but” (line 12) is employed to mark a transition from a preface (background information about the recipe) to the main body of discourse (the description of the food preparation process) and indicates that she is getting to the main subject. *Ato* “and then” (line 35) is used between the two series of steps in order to maintain her response turn by indicating that she has more to add after completing the first series of steps. These uses of discourse markers allow the interviewer to see how Nicole’s telling is developing. Table 4.3 summarizes the sequential positions of the connectives, connective particles, predicated forms, and sentence-final particles used in Nicole’s telling in Excerpt 4.3.

Table 4.3.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Nicole’s Telling

Lines	**Clause-initial**	**Content**	**Clause-final**
6		self-directed speech	conjecture-form
7–10	*jaa* “well then”	preface/background information	*kedo* “but”
12	*demo* “but”	---	---
13		self-directed speech	conjecture-form
14		ingredient 1 (tofu)	---
16		question	final-form + FP *no*
17		repair on the question	final-form + FP *ka*
19		step 1 (cut tofu)	te-form
22		step 2 (warm it up in a frying pan)	te-form
23		ingredient 2 (the sauce)	---
24		supplementary information	*ga* “but”
25		supplementary information	*kedo* “but”
27		step 3 (add it)	te-form
29		step 4 (warm it up again)	te-form
31–32		step 5 (put it over cooked rice)	te-form
34		goal (eat it just like that)	final-form
35–39	*ato* “and then”	ingredient 3 (okra)	---
40		self-directed speech	final-form + FP *kke*
41–42		self-directed speech	final-form + FP *no*
43		step 6 (slice it)	te-form
45		step 7 (warm it up also)	te-form
47–48		step 8 (add the same sauce)	te-form
50		goal (eat them together)	final-form
51		wrap-up (it’s kinda like that)	copula omitted
52–56		elaboration (they go into one bowl)	final-form

Overall, this segment shows Nicole's quite competent participation in the interaction. She produced a sequentially appropriate action in an extended turn and organized the discourse in an orderly manner, by first providing a preface (background information) and then describing the food preparation process in two series of steps. Although she (and the interviewer) exhibited a bit of a problem in projecting (and understanding) the turn-completion point, Nicole's orientation to the silence as a possible sign of trouble occasioned her question about the comprehensibility of her telling, which elicited the interviewer's claim and display of her understanding. This allowed them to establish intersubjectivity and proceed with the interaction. The segment demonstrated that Nicole appropriately used various discourse markers (e.g., predicate forms, sentence-final particles, connectives, connective particles) to manage her response turn, which included a preface, the main body of discourse, self-directed speech, and a question to the interviewer. As other candidates did, Nicole most frequently used the te-form of predicate to combine clauses and present the steps as a coherent sequence. She also used the discourse marker *n desu kedo* to provide background/supplementary information on the subject matter, and the contrastive marker *ga* to indicate a contrast between clauses. In addition, she effectively used several connectives (*jaa* "well then," *demo* "but," *ato* "and then") to mark various transition points in her discourse. In sum, Nicole's response turn presented a well-connected discourse, containing a number of clauses linked by a fair variety of connective expressions and organized in an appropriate manner. However, there were potential weak points in her discourse, such as the difficulty she exhibited in finding the right Japanese words, and her displayed uncertainty about the

comprehensibility of her own telling, which might have influenced the raters' perceptions about her proficiency level.

4.2.4 Chris: Advanced-Low

The next segment is taken from Chris's OPI (Advanced-Low) and shows his performance on the description task. Prior to this segment, Chris (C) mentioned that he likes cooking simple food such as fried rice and crepes. In lines 1–2, the interviewer requests Chris to describe how to make crepes, which, however, turns out to be unsuccessful in eliciting a description of a process. Subsequently, the interviewer reformulates the request (lines 5–6).

Excerpt 4.4 Chris (Advanced-Low): Making crepes

1. IR: ano: (.) kureepu no tsukurikata o
   SF crepe LK how-to-make O

2. chotto oshiete kuremasen ka?
   little tell give-NEG Q

   "Would you please tell me how to make crepes?"

((Transcript of the following 22 seconds omitted, in which Chris explains how making crepes is similar to and different from making pancakes.))

3. IR: aa: soo desu ka. .h
   oh so CP Q
   "Oh I see."

4. C: [hai.
   "Yeah."

5. IR: [nanka sono tsukurikata o,
   like that how-to-make O

6. saisho kara chotto oshiete kuremasen ka?
   beginning from little tell give-NEG Q

   "Would you please tell me how to make it from the beginning?"

7. C: hhh hai. (0.5) ano: (0.7) maa mazu,
yes SF well first
"Yes. Well first,"

8. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

9. C: ano tamago: (1.0)
SF egg
"eggs,"

10. ma sukini shite mo ii kedo,
well like do also good but
"well you can do as you like, but"

11. IR: hai.=
"Uh huh."

12. C: =ano: jibun wa, tamago yonko de,
SF self TP egg four CP-and
"I use four eggs, and"

13. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

14. C: ano: gyuunyuu (0.5) ichi koppu¿
SF milk one cup
"one cup of milk,"

15. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

16. C: ano: meetoru- (.) metorikku no.
SF meter metric LK
"in metric."

17. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

18. C: [(xx) yoku wakarimasen kedo. .h
well know-NEG but
"I don't know well, but"

19. ano ichi koppu, (0.5) de, (1.1) ((gazing down))
SF one cup then
"one cup, and then,"

20. °ato wa nan deshita kke° (0.7) ((gazing upward))

after TP what CP-PAST FP
"what else was it?"

21. sukoshi dake satoo¿ ((returns gaze to IR))
little just sugar
"just a little sugar,"

22. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh"

23. C: de, shio.
then salt
"and then salt."

24. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

25. (0.4)

26. C: wa issho ni mazete,
TP together P mix-and
"Mix them together, and"

27. IR: hai.=
"Uh huh."

28. C: =ano komugiko wa sukoshizutsu,
SF flour TP little-by-little

29. IR: °fuu:n.°
"Oh."

30. C: furui ni kakete mikkusu suru.
sifter P put-and mix do

"put the flour through a sifter little by little to mix it."

31. IR: °fu[un.°
"Oh."

32. C: [shite, sorekara: .hh ano:
do-and after-that SF

33. (0.6) tashikani (.) juppun gurai o (.)
certainly 10-minutes about O

34. sukoshi (.) ude o ir(hh)et(hh)e:,
little arm O put-and

35. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

36. C: [sono mikkusu shita ato de, .hh
that mix do after P

"and then, after using your arm to mix it for about 10 minutes,"

37. ano: furaipan o, sono kicchin:: no (0.5)
SF frying-pan O that kitchen LK

38. maa denshirenji toka ano, (.)
well microwave etc. SF

39. a, denshirenji ja nakute, sono gasurenji?
oh microwave CP not-and that gas-stove

40. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

41. C: no ue ni, kakete,
LK above P put-and

"put the frying pan on a microwave in the kitchen, oh I mean a gas stove, not a microwave, and"

42. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

43. C: ano: (2.1) maa oriibu oiru?
SF well olive oil
"well, olive oil?"

44. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

45. (0.6)

46. C: mo suko- (.) moo sukosh- (.) er monosugoku
also more little SF very

47. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

48. C: sukoshi dake?
little just

"just a very little?"

49. IR: sukoshi dake. hai hai.
little just yes yes
"Just a little. Uh huh."

50. C: sukoshi dake tsukatte, (.)
little just use-and
"use it just a little, and"

51. ano: (0.5) maa (0.5) futsuu te yuu ka,
SF well normal QT say or

52. (2.2) hanbun gurai no,
half about LK

53. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

54. C: atsusa¿
heat

55. IR: hai ha[i.
"Uh huh."

56. C: [ni setto shitara,
P set do-when

"after you set it to a normal, I mean, a half heat,"

57. (0.5) ano: (0.6) maa
SF well

58. sono (.) sakki ni tsukutta bataa o
that earlier P made batter O

59. (0.9) ue ni, hh hhuh hhuh hhuh
above P

60. sono furaipan ni irete,
that frying-pan in put-and

"put the batter you made earlier in the frying pan, and"

61. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

62. C: ano: sorekara sugu yakimasu. ((gazes at IR))

SF after-that soon cook
"after that, cook it immediately."

63. IR: aa: °soo desu ka.° [°hai.°
oh so CP Q yes
"Oh I see. Uh huh."
((Chris shifts his gaze slightly downward, maintaining a forward-leaning posture with his mouth slightly opened.))

64. C: [de, ano:: maa
then SF well

65. (.) dekiagaru no: (.) wa:kari kata wa (.)
be-done LK know way TP

66. ka[ntan desu kedo, .hh
easy CP but

"And then, well it's easy to tell when it's done, but"

67. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

68. C: sono: (0.8) kureepu wa,
that crepe TP

69. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

70. C: futsuuni toomei de wa nai n desu kedo,
normally transparent CP TP NEG N CP but

"a crepe is normally not transparent, but"

71. IR: [ee ee.
"Uh huh."

72. C: [sono (0.5) mada yaitenai mama?
that yet cooked-NEG as

73. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

74. C: ma toomei ja nai n desu kedo,
well transparent CP not N CP but

"it's not transparent when it's not cooked yet, but"

75. (.) moshi: dekiagattara, toomei de,
if done-when transparent CP-and

76. ano: chiisana (.) chairo sen ga
SF small brown line S

77. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

78. C: [(hai)ttekimasu.
come-in

"when it's done, it's transparent and gets small brown lines."

79. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

80. C: sore: dattara:, [ano: (0.9)
that CP-when SF
"When it's like that,"

81. IR: [°fu:n.°
"Oh."

82. C: ma (.) ((flipping gesture; Chris turns his hand over))
well

83. ura ni furippu shite,
underside P flip do-and

"well, flip[Eng] it to the other side, and"

84. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

85. C: [ano:
SF

86. IR: [furippu tte nan desu ka¿
flip QT what CP Q
"What's flip[Eng]?"

87. C: ahhuh hhuh hh a:no:, (.) ((gazes upward))
SF

88. °nan: (xx) desu ka.°
what CP Q
"What is it?"

89. °nan te yuu n da kke¿°
what Q say N CP FP
"How do I say?"

90. (1.2)

91. C: toriaezu, furikaesu? ((gazes at IR))
for-now swing-and-turn-over
"For now, 'swing and turn over'?"

92. (.)

93. IR: h(hh)ai hai.
"Uh huh."

94. C: h(hhh)ai. hhuh hhuh hhuh
"Yeah."

95. f(hh)urikaeshite,=
swing-and-turn-over-and
"Swing and turn it over, and"

96. =°nanka [okashii desu ne.°
something funny CP FP
"that sounds funny, doesn't it?"

97. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

98. C: .hh furikaeshite, sorekara,
swing-and-turn-over-and after-that
"Swing and turn it over, and after that,"

99. sono (0.6) ura mo soo yuu fuu ni nattara,
that back also so say way P become-when
"when the underside also becomes like that,"

100. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

101. C: [dekiagari desu.
done CP
"it's done."

102. IR: aa: soo desu ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

103. C: hai.=
"Yeah."

104. IR: =donna mono to issho ni
what-kind thing with together P

105. taberu n desu ka¿
eat N CP Q

"With what do you eat it?"

In this interaction, the interviewer's initial request to describe how to make crepes (lines 1–2) does not elicit the target discourse (a description of a process) from Chris, as he explains how making crepes is similar to and different from making pancakes in his response turn. After acknowledging his response and closing down the sequence (line 3), the interviewer employs a third position repair, orienting to his response as a misunderstanding of the request (Kasper, 2006b). She reformulates the second version of the request by adding the phrase *saisho kara* "from the beginning" to the original version, thereby indicating more explicitly that she is looking for a description of a process (lines 5–6). Subsequently, Chris accepts the task, and after a bit of hesitation, he starts describing the crepe-making process (line 7). He first lists the ingredients (lines 9–23) and then presents a number of steps in a sequential fashion (lines 26–62). In line 62, he produces an utterance that is hearable as the end of the process and marked with the final-form of predicate and a falling intonation (*sorekara sugu yakimasu.* "After that, cook it immediately"). The interviewer interprets this as a turn-completion point and produces an acknowledgement token (line 63). However, during the acknowledgement turn, Chris maintains a forward-leaning posture, withdraws his gaze from the interviewer, and keeps his mouth slightly open. The interviewer concurrently orients to these embodied features

as indicative of Chris's intention to continue his turn, and gradually reduces the volume of her voice, and eventually produces a recipient token to yield the floor (line 63). In an overlap, Chris launches a new TCU and continues his turn (line 64).

In his continued turn, Chris produces a preface by introducing a new subtopic, how to tell when crepes are done (*dekiagaru no: (.) wa:kari kata wa kantan desu kedo,* "it's easy to tell when it's done, but," lines 65–66) and provides a contrastive description of uncooked and cooked crepes for background understanding (lines 68–78). As this is achieved, using the information as a basis, Chris describes the rest of the steps (lines 80–101). The interviewer once interrupts Chris to elicit a Japanese word equivalent to the English word he used (*furippu tte nan desu ka¿* "What's 'flip'?" line 86). In response, he produces laughter, engages in a bit of thinking, and comes up with a made-up word[4] as a temporary solution (*toriaezu, furikaesu?* "For now, 'swing and turn over'?" line 91). After a micro gap of silence, the interviewer accepts it but produces laughter (line 93). Chris reciprocates the laughter (line 94), employs the word in his discourse (line 95), but soon produces an assessment, which is marked with the sentence-final particle *ne*, as a side comment in a reduced volume of voice, orienting to the word as problematic (°*nanka okashii desu ne*° "that sounds funny, doesn't it?" line 96). In line 101, Chris completes his telling with an utterance that is marked with the final-form of predicate and a falling intonation, and is hearable as the end of the process (*dekiagari desu.* "It's done," line 101). In response, the interviewer produces an acknowledgement (line 102) and asks a next question, continuing on the topic (lines 104–105). During his turn, Chris also uses self-directed speech to do "thinking." The instances of self-directed speech are

[4] More target-like words would be *uragaesu* "turn over" or *hikkurikaesu* "flip over."

characterized by a reduced volume of voice, gazing away, and a question format with the sentence-final particle *kke* or *ka* (°*ato wan an deshita* ***kke***° "what else was it?" line 20; °*nan: (xx) desu* ***ka***° "What is it?" line 88; °*nan te yuu n da* ***kke¿***° "How do I say?" line 89). Unlike Alyssa and Nicole, Chris employs both the plain style and the *masu* style in self-directed speech.

In this segment, similar to other candidates in the present data, Chris most frequently uses the te-form of predicate to connect clauses while presenting the steps of the process as a sequence (e.g., *mazete* "mix," line 26; *kakete* "put," lines 30, 41; *shite* "do," line 32; *irete* "put," lines 34, 60; *tsukatte* "use," line 50; *furippu shite* "flip," line 83; *furikaeshite* "swing and turn over," lines 95, 98). Even when he employs the final-form of predicate (*suru* "do," line 30) in the middle of the description, he self-corrects by replacing it with the te-form of predicate (*shite* "do," line 32), which shows that he is treating the te-form as more appropriate than the final-form in this environment. He also employs several connective particles, such as *kedo* "but/although" (lines 10, 18, 66, 70, 74), *ta ato de* "after" (line 36), and *tara* "if/when/after" (lines 56, 75, 80, 99). Both *ta ato de* "after" and *tara* "if/when/after" are used to explicitly indicate the sequential order and/or timing of the steps (e.g., *mikkusu shi**ta ato de*** "**after** mixing it," line 36; *hanbun gurai no, atsusa¿ ni setto shi**tara*** "**after** you set it to a half heat," line 56). The contrastive marker *kedo* "but/although" is employed to present non-main information, such as parenthetic comments, a preface, and the background information against which the main information is contrasted. For instance, when listing the ingredients, Chris produces *kedo*-marked parenthetic comments to qualify his preceding or following

statements (*ma sukini shite mo ii* ***kedo*** *ano: jibun wa, tamago yonko de* "Well you can do as you like, **but** I use four eggs," lines 10–12; *gyuunyuu (0.5) ichi koppu¿ ano: meetoru-(.) metorikku no. (xx) yoku wakarimasen* ***kedo.*** "One cup of milk, in metric, I don't know well, **but**," lines 14–18).

In addition, Chris utilizes several clause-initial connective expressions including the connectives *de* "and then" and *sorekara* "after that" and the sequential adverbial phrase *mazu* "first." *Mazu* "first" is used to give a clear beginning to his telling (line 7). The transition marker *de* "and then" is employed to signal that he has more to add, such as adding more items to the list of ingredients (lines 19, 23), and indicating that he has more to say after the interviewer's acknowledgement (line 64). In addition, *sorekara* "after that" is used to signal discourse continuation while emphasizing the sequential relationships between clauses (lines 32, 62, 98). Table 4.4 shows the sequential positions of the connectives, sequential adverbial phrases, connective particles, predicate forms, and sentence-final particles used in Chris's telling in the above segment.

Table 4.4.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Chris's Telling

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
7–9	*mazu* "first"	ingredient 1 (eggs)	---
10		parenthetic comment	*kedo* "but"
12		elaboration on ingredient 1	te-form
14		ingredient 2 (milk)	---
16		elaboration on ingredient 2	---
18		parenthetic comment	*kedo* "but"
19		restatement of ingredient 2	---
19	*de* "and then"	---	---
20		self-directed speech	final-form + FP *kke*
21		ingredient 3 (sugar)	---
23	*de* "and then"	ingredient 4 (salt)	---
26		step 1 (mix them together)	te-form
28–32		step 2 (sift the flour to mix it)	final-form → te-form
32–36	*sorekara* "after that"	step 3 (use your arm to mix it)	*ta ato de* "after"
37–41		step 4 (put a frying pan on the stove)	te-form
43–50		step 5 (use a little olive oil)	te-form
51–56		step 6 (after you set it to a half heat)	*tara* "if/when/after"
57–60		step 7 (put the batter in the pan)	te-form
62	*sorekara* "after that"	step 8 (cook it immediately)	final-form
63		IR acknowledgement	---
64–66	*de* "and then"	preface	*kedo* "but"
68-70		description of uncooked crepes	*kedo* "but"
72–74		restatement of description of uncooked crepes	*kedo* "but"
75		condition (when it's done)	*tara* "if/when/after"
75		description of cooked crepes (it's transparent)	te-form
76–78		description of cooked crepes (it gets small brown lines)	final-form
80		step 9 (when it's like that)	*tara* "if/when/after"
82–83		step 10 (flip it to the other side)	te-form
86		IR intervention on "flip"	---
88		self-directed speech	final-form + FP *ka*
89		self-directed speech	final-form + FP *kke*
91		self-correction on "flip"	---
93		IR acceptance	---
94		minimum response	---
95		restatement of step 10	te-form
96		assessment/side comment	final-form + FP *ne*
98		restatement of step 10	te-form
98–99	*sorekara* "after that"	step 11 (when the underside becomes like that)	*tara* "if/when/after"
101		goal (it's done)	final-form

In summary, the segment in Excerpt 4.4 highlights Chris's ability to manage his discourse using a variety of linguistic and nonlinguistic resources. While his response to the interviewer's initial request was treated as task-irrelevant by the interviewer, when a more explicit instruction was provided, he understood the task in the way it was intended and produced the target discourse (a description of a process) in an extended turn. He organized his discourse by first listing the ingredients and then describing the steps in a sequential order. He also provided a piece of information for background understanding (a contrastive description of uncooked and cooked crepes), which served as a basis for describing the subsequent steps. In addition to the main body of discourse, his turn also included parenthetical comments, self-directed speech, a preface, and an assessment as a side comment. Chris managed such a complex discourse by employing various discourse markers (e.g., connectives, connective particles, predicate forms, sentence-final particles). Similar to other candidates, he most frequently used the te-form of predicate to present the steps as a coherent sequence. In addition, he employed many other connective expressions, including the connective particles *tara* "when/if/after," *ta ato de* "after," and *kedo* "but/although"; the connectives *de* "and then" and *sorekara* "after that"; and the sequential adverbial phrase *mazu* "first." Many of these expressions were used to show sequential relationships between steps. His speech was quite smooth, and although he used a few English words in his turn, which could have been considered problematic by raters (e.g., *furippu* "flip"), it did not seem to affect the resulting rating much (as he received a rating of Advanced-Low).

4.2.5 Mia: Advanced-Mid

The next segment shows Mia's (Advanced-Mid) performance on the description task. Prior to this segment, Mia (M) mentioned several dishes she makes at home, including stir-fried vegetables, hamburger steaks, meat-and-potato stews, and grilled fish. In lines 1–3, the interviewer requests Mia to describe how to cook a meat-and-potato stew (*nikujaga*).

Excerpt 4.5 Mia (Advanced-Mid): Cooking hamburger steaks

1. IR: jaa ano chotto wata- (.) ano: watashi ni nikujaga
   then SF little SF me P meat-potato

2. no tsukurikata o oshiete kuremase[n ka?
   LK how-to-cook O tell give-NEG Q

   "Well then would you please tell me how to cook a meat and potato stew?"

3. M: [nikujaga
   meat-potato

4. no tsukurikata [d(hh)esu ka. ((laughing))
   LK how-to-cook CP Q

   "How to cook a meat and potato stew?"

5. IR: [hhuh hhuh

6. nanka wakaru no [de ii desu yo.=
   something know LK CP good CP FP
   "You can tell me something you know."

7. M: [a

8. IR: =[nanika tokuina ryoori.
   something good-at dish
   "Any specialty dish?"

9. M: [a:a
   "Oh"

10. hanbaagu de [ii deshoo ka¿ ((laughing))
    hamburger P good CP Q

"Would hamburger steaks be okay?"

11. IR: [hanbaagu, hai hai.
hamburger yes yes
"Hamburger steaks, yes yes."

12. M: hanbaagu wa tashika
hamburger TP probably
"Hamburger steaks are, if I remember correctly,"

13. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

14. (.)

15. M: hikiniku: (0.5)
ground-meat
"ground meat,"

16. a mazu tamanegi o mijingiri ni shite
oh first onion O mince P do-and
"Oh, first, mince an onion, and"
((Mia brings both hands in front of her chest))

17. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

18. M: sore o: furai- (.) ano: (.)
that O fry SF
"fry that-"

19. a! mijingiri ni shite sono aida-
oh mince P do-and that while
"Oh, mince it, and in the meanwhile-"

20. mijingiri ni- (.) ni shita ato,
mince P P did after
"after you mince it,"

21. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

22. M: panko o gyuunyuu ni hi- (.)
breadcrumbs O milk P

23. hitashite oku n desu yo.
soak do-in-advance N CP FP
((makes a cup shape with her hands, then places hands on the table))

"soak breadcrumbs in milk in advance."

24. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

25. M: de, sono (.) sono mijingiri ni
then that that mince P

26. shita tamanegi o,
did onions O

27. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

28. M: [furaipan (.) de itamete,
fry-pan P fry-and

"And then, fry the onion you minced in a frying pan, and"

29. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

30. M: .hh de:, tashika, (0.5)
then probably
"then, if I remember correctly,"

31. ano: (0.6) kyarameru iro ni natte kara
SF caramel color P become after
"after it becomes caramel color,"

32. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

33. M: ano: (1.2) ano: °e° chotto samas- (.)
SF SF SF little cool-down

34. samashi-sete oku n desu yo.
cool-down do-in-advance N CP FP
((moves her hands to the left))

"cool it down a bit."

35. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

36. M: de, (.) hikiniku o, °hi-°
then ground-meat O

"And then, ground meat-"

37. de, kondo wa booru ni hikiniku to,
then this-time TP bowl in ground-meat and

38. sono hitashite oita panko,
that soak did-in-advance breadcrumbs

"And then, next, put the ground meat and the breadcrumbs you soaked in a bowl,"

39. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

40. M: ato: tamago,
after egg
"and then, egg,"

41. IR: hai.=
"Uh huh."

42. M: =tamago, (.) ikko.
egg one
"one egg."

43. (1.3) ((IR nods. Mia briefly turns her head to the side.))

44. M: de shio koshoo de- (.) de aji o tsukete
then salt pepper P P taste O add-and
"And then season it with salt and pepper, and"

45. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

46. M: [ajitsuke-(.)shite (.) kara=
add-taste after
"after seasoning it,"

47. =sono itameta tamanegi o irete,
that fried onions O add-and
"add the onion you fried, and"

48. IR: hai.=
"Uh huh."

49. M: =konete,
knead-and
"knead it, and"

50. yoku .hhh ano nebari ga deru made konete,
well SF stickiness S appear until knead-and
"knead well until it becomes sticky, and"

51. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

52. (1.0)

53. M: de: sokkara, (.) .hh °tashika°
then after-that probably
"then, after that, if I remember correctly,"

54. kobanjoo ni hhehhe
oval-shape P
"into oval shapes,"

55. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

56. M: ano, aa sono hikiniku o- (.)
SF oh that ground-meat O

57. aa hi- (.) sono mazeta hikiniku o,
oh that mixed ground-meat O

58. te ni totte
hand in take-and

59. kobanjoo ni shite, ((laughing))
oval-shape P do-and

"take the ground meat, the ground meat you mixed, in your hand, and form it into oval shapes, and"

60. IR: hai hai. ((laughing))
"Uh huh."

61. M: hhuh .hhh de kuuk(hh)i o: totte:, ((laughing))
then air O take-and
"then remove the air, and"

62. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

63. (1.2)

64. M: de, (2.1) ano: furaipan de (.) yaku to yuu.

then SF fry-pan P fry QT say
"then, fry it in a frying pan, it's like that."
((puts hands in lap))

65. IR: aa: soo desu [ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

66. M: [hai.
"Yes."

67. IR: [kekkoo jaa honkakutekini:,
quite then authentically
"Well then that's quite authentic"

68. M: [hhuh hhuh

69. kekkoo hai. ((laughing))
quite yes
"Yes, quite."

70. [saikin tsukutta no[de oboetemasu. ((laughing))
recently made because remember
"I remember because I made it recently."

71. IR: [tsukuru n- [aa:
make N oh

72. aa: soo desu ka. hee:. ii desu ne.
oh so CP Q wow good CP FP
"Oh I see. Wow. That's good."

73. oryoori wa suki desu ka?
cooking TP like CP Q
"Do you like cooking?"

In this segment, the interviewer's request to describe how to cook *nikujaga*, a meat and potato stew, (lines 1–2) is followed by Mia's other-initiation of repair (lines 3–4). Since other-initiation of repair after the first pair part (e.g., request) delays the production of the second pair part, it could project a dispreferred response (e.g., a rejection) (Schegloff, 2007). In particular, the laughter accompanying Mia's repair initiation suggests a potential interactional problem. The interviewer orients to this

interactional move by Mia, aligns by reciprocating the laughter (line 5), and adjusts her request so as to make it more likely that Mia will accept it (line 6). As the interviewer lets Mia choose the target item, Mia proffers a possible target (hamburger steaks, line 10), which gets accepted by the interviewer (line 11). Subsequently, Mia initiates her response turn by topicalizing the target, and describes the cooking process by presenting the steps in a sequential manner (lines 12–64). Mia's telling gets completed in line 64 with an utterance that is hearable as the end of the process (*de, (2.1) ano: furaipan de (.) yaku to yuu.* "And then, fry it in a frying pan, it's like that"), which is marked by a wrap-up expression (*to yuu*, in rough translation "it's like") and a falling intonation. Mia also withdraws her hands to place them on her lap. Interpreting these features as indicative of turn-completion, the interviewer provides an acknowledgement (line 65), which is followed by Mia's minimal response in a partial overlap. Then the interviewer produces a compliment on Mia's cooking (lines 67, 71), to which Mia responds by first agreeing (line 69) and then shifting the focus of the compliment away to avoid self-praise (Pomerantz, 1978) (line 70). The interviewer produces more acknowledgement and assessment (line 72) to wrap up the sequence, and asks a next question, continuing the topic of cooking (line 73).

Similar to other candidates, Mia most frequently employs the te-form of predicate to combine clauses while presenting the steps as a sequence in this segment (*mijingiri ni shite* "mince," lines 16, 19; *itamete* "fry," line 28; *tsukete* "add," line 44; *irete* "add," line 47; *konete* "knead," lines 49, 50; *totte* "take," lines 58, 61; *kobanjoo ni shite* "form oval shapes," line 59). She also utilizes connective particles *ta ato* "after" (line 20) and *te kara*

"after" (lines 31, 46) to explicitly express the order and/or timing of the steps (e.g., *mijingiri ni- (.) ni shi**ta ato*** "**after** you mince it," line 20; *kyarameru iro ni nat**te kara*** "**after** it becomes caramel color," line 31). Another clause-final cohesive device Mia employs in her telling is the sentence-final discourse marker *n desu yo* (lines 23, 34). In its two occurrences, *n desu yo* follows the auxiliary *te oku* "do something in advance," which indicates that the current step is a preparation for a later step (*panko o gyuunyuu ni hi- (.) hitashi**te oku n desu yo***. "Soak breadcrumbs in milk in advance.", lines 22–23; *chotto samas- (.) samashi-se**te oku n desu yo***. "Cool it down a bit.", lines 33–34). As *n desu yo* grammatically completes the current sentential TCU, it creates a temporary break in the discourse while making the utterance salient as an important point. Since these clause-final expressions (the te-form of predicate, connective particles *ta ato* and *te kara*, and the discourse marker *n desu yo*) project turn-continuation (in conjunction with the semantic and prosodic features of the utterances), the interviewer typically responds to them with continuers (lines 17, 21, 24, 29, 32, 35, 45, 48, 51, 60, 62).

In addition, Mia employs a variety of clause-initial connective expressions in this segment. She frequently utilizes the transition marker *de* "and then" (lines 25, 30, 36, 37, 44, 53, 61, 64). In particular, she often prefaces a next step with *de* "and then" when the immediately preceding step was marked by either the te-form of predicate or the discourse marker *n desu yo*, both of which do not overtly express the sequential relationship between clauses (lines 25, 30, 36, 53, 61, 64). On the other hand, she describes a next step without prefacing it with *de* when the immediately preceding step was marked with a clause-final sequential marker such as *ta ato* "after" or *te kara* "after"

(lines 22, 33, 47). As such, most of the steps described in her telling are linked to each other with some sequential marker (either at the end of the preceding clause or at the beginning of the next clause). Mia also employs other connectives such as *ato* "and then" and *sokkara* (a variation of *sorekara*) "after that" and sequential adverbial phrases such as *mazu* "first" and *kondo wa* "next." *Masu* "first" (line 16) appears near the beginning of Mia's response turn as she starts over her telling after abandoning an initial TCU for self-repair (line 15). *Ato* "and then" (line 40) is employed to add more items to the list of ingredients (line 40). *Kondo wa* "next" and *sokkara* "after that" are used in combination with *de* "and then" to further emphasize transitions in the sequence (lines 37, 53). Table 4.5 presents the sequential positions of the connectives, sequential adverbial phrases, connective particles, predicate forms, and sentence-final particles used in Mia's telling in the segment in Excerpt 4.5.

Table 4.5.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Mia's Telling

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
12		topicalization of the process	---
15		abandoned TCU[a]	---
16	*mazu* "first"	step 1 (mince an onion)	te-form
18		abandoned TCU	---
19		abandoned TCU	te-form
20		restatement of step 1	*ta ato* "after"
22–23		step 2 (soak breadcrumbs in milk)	final-form + FP *yo*
25–28	*de* "and then"	step 3 (fry the onion you minced)	te-form
30–31	*de* "and then"	step 4 (after it becomes caramel color)	*te kara* "after"
33–34		step 5 (cool it down)	final-form + FP *yo*
36	*de* "and then"	abandoned TCU	---
37–42	*de* "and then," *kondo wa* "next"	step 6 (in a bowl, ground meat and the breadcrumbs you soaked)	---
40–42	*ato* "and then"	additional ingredient (one egg)	---
44	*de* "and then"	step 7 (season it with salt and pepper)	te-form
46		restatement of step 7	*te kara* "after"
47		step 8 (add the onion you fried)	te-form
49		step 9 (knead it)	te-form
50		elaboration on step 9 (knead it until it becomes sticky)	te-form
53	*de* "and then," *sokkara* "after that"	---	---
54		abandoned TCU	---
56		abandoned TCU	---
57–58		step 10 (take the ground meat you mixed in your hands)	te-form
59		step 11 (make oval shapes)	te-form
61	*de* "and then"	step 12 (remove the air)	te-form
64	*de* "and then"	step 13 (fry it in a frying pan)	final-form + *to yuu* "it's like"

[a] Several times during her telling, Mia abandoned TCUs to produce self-repairs.

In sum, the segment in Excerpt 4.5 illustrates Mia's ability to produce a coherent discourse using a variety of linguistic and nonlinguistic resources. Her other-initiation of repair on the interviewer's request was interpreted by the interviewer as a possible sign of an upcoming dispreferred response, which led to their negotiation on the target item for the task. After both parties agreed on what the task was about, Mia produced the requested action (a description of a food preparation process) in an orderly manner, by

using an extended turn, presenting a number of steps in a sequential fashion, and linking them by a range of connective expressions. Similar to other candidates in the present data, she employed the te-form of predicate most frequently, but also used other clause-final cohesive devices such as *ta ato* "after," *te kara* "after," and *n desu yo*. In addition, she frequently utilized clause-initial connective expressions, such as *de* "and then," *ato* "and then," *sokkara* "after that," *mazu* "first," and *kondo wa* "next" to signal sequential transitions in her discourse.

What is particularly evident in this segment is Mia's careful crafting of the description and the attention she paid to details. While fluent in speaking Japanese, Mia abandoned a number of TCUs she had initiated (e.g., lines 15, 18, 19, 36, 54, 56) and produced self-repairs in order to adjust the order and/or timing of the steps and give a more precise description of the process. For instance, after saying *mijingiri ni shite* ***sono aida***- "mince it, and **in the meanwhile**-" (line 19), she self-corrected by uttering *mijingiri ni- (.) ni shi**ta ato*** "**after** mincing it" (line 20), thereby altering the temporal relationship between the current and next steps. In addition, she did not only link adjacent steps by clause-final and clause-initial connective expressions, but also indicated the relationships between nonadjacent steps using linguistic resources such as relative clauses (e.g., lines 25–26, 38, 47) and the auxiliary *te oku* "do something in advance" (lines 23, 34). The use of a relative clause often connected the current step with a step mentioned earlier (e.g., *sono mijingiri ni shita tamanegi o furaipan de itamete* "fry the onion you minced in a frying pan," lines 25–28). The use of the auxiliary *te oku* linked the current step to a future step to be mentioned later on (e.g., *panko o gyuunyuu ni hi- (.) hitashi**te oku** n desu*

yo “soak breadcrumbs in milk **in advance**,” lines 22–23). In addition, Mia provided more details for some steps when she deemed it appropriate. For example, in describing how to shape hamburger patties, Mia gave a quite detailed explanation (e.g., *te ni totte* “take it in your hand,” line 58; *kobanjoo ni shite* “make oval shapes,” line 59; *kuuk(hh)i o: totte:* “remove the air,” line 61). It was evident that such a careful, detailed description of the cooking process was supported by Mia’s linguistic repertoire: the linguistic resources she was able to draw on to construct her discourse. These features of Mia’s discourse might have led to the interviewer’s compliment about Mia’s cooking upon the completion of her telling.

4.3 Comparisons within and across the levels

In Section 4.2, I closely analyzed how the candidates responded to the interviewer’s request to describe a food preparation process in the OPI interaction with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. In this section, I will compare the candidates’ use of connective expressions in the description task within and across the proficiency levels. The tables in this section present the clause-initial and clause-final expressions (e.g., connectives, sequential adverbial phrases, connective particles, predicate forms, sentence-final particles) used by the candidates in the description task. Since not all candidates received the task of describing a process, the tables include other types of description tasks as well (e.g., description of a place, person, rules, etc.).[5] In order to make the comparisons easier, tokens of clause-initial and clause-final expressions in clarification sequences regarding the interviewer’s request (or

[5] When a candidate did not receive the task of describing a process, and when he/she received more than one description task, I chose the one that appeared to best demonstrate his/her ability to produce a connected discourse.

sequences in which the candidate and the interviewer negotiated the target item for the task) and the candidates' talk produced in response to the interviewer's follow-up questions are excluded from the numbers given in the tables.

The **Intermediate-Low** candidates in the present data tended to rely on a small variety of linguistic resources to connect their utterances. Table 4.6 shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Intermediate-Low candidates in the description task. (The number in the parentheses after each linguistic item indicates the number of tokens.)

Table 4.6.
Intermediate-Low Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Description Task

Candidate	**Description task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Olivia	how to make a cake	*soshite* "and" (1) *ato (wa)* "and then" (2)	te-form (10) final-form (3)
George	hometown	*soshite* "and" (1) *demo* "but" (1)	final-form (4)
Daniel	how to get to school by bus from home	*soshite* "and" (2)	te-form (4) final-form (3)

Among the three Intermediate-Low candidates in my data, Olivia and Daniel received the task of describing a process (i.e., how to make a cake, how to get to school by bus from home), while George was asked to describe his hometown. As for clause-final connective expressions, Olivia and Daniel utilized the te-form of predicate to grammatically connect clauses and present the steps described in the clauses as a sequence. On the other hand, George did not use the te-form of predicate to connect clauses in his task, and completed each single-clause utterance with the final-form of predicate. None of them employed connective particles in their respective tasks. As for clause-initial connective expressions, while Olivia's turn-initial use of *soshite* "and" was

a bit problematic (see Section 4.2.1), Daniel and George appropriately utilized *soshite* to add more information in their tellings. Olivia also used *ato (wa)* "and then" to express temporal transitions between steps, and George employed *demo* "but" to signal a change in subtopic and describe his hometown from a different perspective. In sum, all of the Intermediate-Low candidates in the present data produced several clauses/utterances in the description task, and linked the clauses/utterances using a small variety of connective expressions.

The **Intermediate-Mid** candidates in the present data predominantly used the te-form of predicate to connect clauses, but also employed other clause-final expressions, including the connective particles and sentence-final particles. The extent to which they used the clause-initial connective expressions varied among the candidates. Table 4.7 shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Intermediate-Mid candidates in the description task.

Table 4.7.
Intermediate-Mid Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Description Task

Candidate	**Description task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Alyssa	how to cook curry	*de* "and then" (3) *sono ato wa* "after that" (2) *tsugi wa* "next" (1)	te-form (16) final-form (2) final-form + FP *kana* (1) *tara* "if/when/after" (1)
Emily	how library assistants return books to shelves	*sorede* "and then" (2) *soshite* "and" (1)	te-form (6) final-form (1) final-form + FP *ka* (1) *ga* "but" (1)
Jacob	how to prepare ravioli	n/a	te-form (2) final-form (2) final-form + FP *kana* (1) *kedo* "but/although" (1)

All of the three Intermediate-Mid candidates received the task of describing a process (e.g., how to prepare a dish; how library assistants return books to shelves). They mainly used the te-form of predicate to combine clauses and present the steps as a sequence. Each of them employed one connective particle in the task: Alyssa used *tara* "if/when/after" to express the temporal/conditional relationship between steps; Emily utilized *ga* "but" (discourse marker *n desu ga*) to mark the background information against which the main information was contrasted; and Jacob employed *kedo* "but/although" at an utterance-final position to mitigate a sequence-closing assessment on the subject matter. They each also used a sentence-final particle (e.g., *kana, ka*) to produce a self-addressed question (Alyssa), to ask a question of the interviewer (Emily), or to produce a turn-initial assessment of the task (Jacob). Regarding the clause-initial connective expressions, while Emily and Alyssa used a few connectives and/or sequential adverbial phrases to signal transitions in their discourse (e.g., *de/sorede* "and then," *soshite* "and," *sono ato wa* "after that," *tsugi wa* "next"), Jacob, whose telling was rather short, did not employ any clause-initial connective expressions in his task. In sum, while some individual differences were observed in their use of clause-initial expressions, the Intermediate-Mid candidates employed a little more variety of clause-final expressions than the Intermediate-Low candidates.

The **Intermediate-High** candidates in the present data employed a greater variety of clause-final and clause-initial expressions to link clauses/utterances and manage their discourses than the Intermediate-Low/Mid candidates. Table 4.8 shows the clause-initial

and clause-final expressions used by the Intermediate-High candidates in the description task.

Table 4.8.
Intermediate-High Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Description Task

Candidate	**Description task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Nicole	how to prepare a tofu dish	*jaa* "well then" (1) *demo* "but" (1) *ato* "and then" (1)	te-form (8) final-form (3) final-form + FP *no* (2) final-form + FP *kke* (1) final-form + FP *ka* (1) conjecture-form *daro(o)* (2) *kedo* "but/although"(2) *ga* "but" (1)
Brian	how to cook mapo tofu	*de* "and then" (6) *sokkara* "after that" (3) *saisho* "first" (1) *soshitara* "and then" (1) *soshite* "and" (1)	te-form (11) final-form (1) final-form + FP *ne* (1) final-form + FP *yo ne* (1) final-form + *mitaina* "it's like" (1) conjecture-form *daro* (1) *ga* "but" (2) *ta ato ni* "after" (2) *te kara* "after" (1)
Kyle	host family	*sorede* "and then" (2) *hajime ni* "first" (1)	te-form (5) final-form (3) *kara* "because" (6) *ga* "but" (2) *tara* "if/when/after" (1) *mae ni* "before"(1)

Among the three Intermediate-High candidates, Nicole and Brian received the task of describing a food preparation process while Kyle was asked to describe his host family in Japan. Nicole and Brian frequently employed the te-form of predicate to connect clauses and present them as a coherent sequence, and they each utilized several clause-initial expressions to signal transition points in their discourse (e.g., *jaa* "well then," *demo* "but," *de* "and then," *sokkara* "after that"). They also used the discourse marker *n desu kedo/ga* "but" to present non-main information such as a preface,

parenthetical comment, and supplementary information, and employed the sentence-final particles (e.g., *ne, yo ne, no, kke, ka*) and predicate forms (e.g., the conjecture form *daro(o)*) to produce self-directed speech, to ask a question of the interviewer, and/or to respond to the interviewer's intervention. Brian also used connective particles (*ta ato ni* "after," *te kara* "after") to explicitly indicate sequential relationships between clauses. Kyle's description of his host family consisted of a series of short narratives. He also utilized various clause-final connective expressions (the te-form of predicate, *kara* "because," *n desu ga* "but," *tara* "if/when/after," *mae ni* "before") as well as a few clause-initial expressions (*sorede* "and then," *hajime ni* "first"). Overall, the Intermediate-High candidates demonstrated their ability to use a variety of linguistic resources to connect clauses/utterances and manage their discourse in the description task.

The **Advanced-Low** candidates in the present data also utilized various connective expressions although there were individual differences in the extent to which they used clause-initial expressions. Table 4.9 shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Advanced-Low candidates in the description task.

Table 4.9.
Advanced-Low Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Description Task

Candidate	Description task	Clause-initial	Clause-final
Chris	how to make crepes	*de* "and then" (3) *sorekara* "after that" (3) *mazu* "first" (1)	te-form (10) final-form (3) final-form + FP *kke* (2) final-form + FP *ne* (1) final-form + FP *ka* (1) *kedo* "but/although" (5) *tara* "if/when/after" (4) *ta ato de* "after" (1)
Hanna	how to cook toppoki	*de* "and then" (3) *ato wa* "and then" (2) *jaa* "well then" (1)	te-form (11) final-form (4) final-form + FP *ka ne* (1) final-form + FP *kke* (1) *kedo* "but/although"(1) *ba* "if" (1)
Tracy	bus route from home to school	n/a	te-form (3) final-form (1) *tara* "if/when/after" (1) *node* "because" (1) *nagara* "while" (1)

Among the three Advanced-Low candidates, Chris and Hanna were requested to describe a food preparation process while Tracy was asked to explain the bus route from home to school. All of them most frequently used the te-form of predicate to connect clauses. Chris and Hanna also employed *kedo* (*n desu kedo*) "but/although" to mark non-main information (e.g., a preface, parenthetical comments, background information) and utilized sentence-final particles (e.g., *kke, ka ne*) to produce self-addressed questions. They also used a few other connective particles (e.g., *tara* "if/when/after, *ta ato de* "after," *ba* "if") and connectives (e.g., *de* "and then," *sorekara* "after that," *ato wa* "and then") to show sequential relationships between clauses. Tracy's description of the bus route was shorter than Chris's and Hanna's descriptions of a food preparation process, and while

she produced several connective particles, she did not use any connectives in her telling on this task.

Finally, the **Advanced-Mid** candidates in the present data also employed a good variety of connective expressions while there were individual differences in the extent to which they used connectives. Table 4.10 presents the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Advanced-Mid candidates in the description task.

Table 4.10.
Advanced-Mid Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Description Task

Candidate	**Description task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Mia	how to cook hamburger steaks	*de* "and then" (8) *mazu* "first" (1) *kondo wa* "next" (1) *ato* "and then" (1) *sokkara* "after that" (1)	te-form (10) final-form + FP *yo* (2) final-form + *to yuu* "it's like" (1) *te kara* "after" (2) *ta ato* "after" (1)
Lauren	how to cook a rice omelet	*saisho wa* "first" (1)	te-form (12) final-form (1) final-form + FP *kamo* (1) final-form + *mitaina* "it's like" (1) conjecture-form *daro* (1) *tara* "if/when/after" (2) *node* "because" (1) *kedo* "but/although"(1) *te kara* "after" (1)
Sophie	how to cook a gratin	*sono ato ni* "after that" (2) *hajime ni* "first" (1) *de* "and then" (1)	te-form (14) final-form (1) *node* "because" (2) *ta ato ni* "after" (1)

All of the three Advanced-Mid candidates received the task of describing a food preparation process. Similar to the candidates at other proficiency levels, they frequently utilized the te-form of predicate to combine clauses and present steps in a sequence. They also employed connective particles to explicitly indicate the order and/or timing of the steps (e.g., *ta ato (ni)* "after," *te kara* "after," *tara* "if/when/after"). Lauren and Sophie

also used *node* "because" to present a reason, and Lauren utilized *n desu kedo* "but/although" to provide background information and the conjecture-form *daro* to produce self-directed speech. In addition, all of the Advanced-Mid candidates produced a sequential adverbial phrase that served to give a clear opening in their discourse (*mazu* "first," *saisho wa* "first," *hajime ni* "first"). Mia and Sophie, but not Lauren, also employed other connectives and sequential adverbial phrases (e.g., *de* "then," *kondo wa* "next," *sono ato ni* "after that") to signal sequential transitions.

Overall, both similarities and differences were observed across the proficiency levels in the use of clause-initial connective expressions in the description task (see Table 4.11). The majority of the candidates in the present data received the task of describing a process, and many of them employed connectives and adverbial phrases to indicate sequential transitions in their discourse (e.g., *de/sorede* "and then," *ato (wa)* "and then," *soshitara* "and then," *sorekara/sokkara* "after that," *sono ato wa/ni* "after that," *saisho (wa)* "first," *mazu* "first," *hajime ni* "first," *tsugi wa* "next," and *kondo wa* "next"). The connective most frequently employed by the candidates at all levels except Intermediate-Low was *de/sorede* "and then," while the Intermediate-Low candidates seemed to favor *soshite* "and." It should be noted that there was much individual difference in the extent to which the candidates used these expressions: Some candidates used them extensively while others used them seldom or not at all, which did not seem to be necessarily related to their proficiency levels.

Table 4.11.
Clause-initial Connective Expressions Used in the Description Task

level	candidate	*soshite* "and"	*de/sorede* "and then"	other sequential markers[a]	other[b]
Intermediate-Low	Olivia	1		2	
	George	1			1
	Daniel	2			
Intermediate-Mid	Alyssa		3	3	
	Emily	1	2		
	Jacob				
Intermediate-High	Nicole			1	2
	Brian	1	6	5	
	Kyle		2	1	
Advanced-Low	Chris		3	4	
	Hanna		3	2	1
	Tracy				
Advanced-Mid	Mia		8	4	
	Lauren			1	
	Sophie		1	3	

[a] This included *ato (wa)* "and then," *soshitara* "and then," *sorekara/sokkara* "after that," *sono ato wa/ni* "after that," *saisho (wa)* "first," *mazu* "first," and *hajime ni* "first," *tsugi wa* "next," and *kondo wa* "next."
[b] This included *demo* "but" and *jaa* "well then."

Some similarities and differences were also found in the use of clause-final connective expressions in the description task across the proficiency levels (see Table 4.12). The clause-final connective expression that most frequently appeared in the description task was the te-form of predicate. The connective particles that explicitly express the temporal relationships between clauses (e.g., *tara* "if/when/after," *te kara* "after," *ta ato (ni/de)* "after") were also used by many of the candidates who received the task of describing a process, especially at the higher proficiency levels. In addition, about half of the candidates employed the contrastive marker *kedo/ga* (or *n desu kedo/ga*) "but" to express a contrast and/or to present non-main information (e.g., a preface, parenthetical comments, background information). It appears that the frequency and variety of the

connective particles used in the description task increased as the proficiency level went up between Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-High. While the Intermediate-Low candidates did not produce any connective particles in the description task, the Intermediate-Mid candidates employed one, and the Intermediate-High and Advanced-Low/Mid candidates employed connective particles with a greater frequency and variety.

Table 4.12.
Clause-final Expressions Used in the Description Task

level	candidate	final-form (+ final particle[a])	te-form	*kedo/ga* "but"	*tara* "if/when/ after"	*te kara/ta ato (ni/de)* "after"	other[b]
Intermediate-Low	Olivia	3	10				
	George	4					
	Daniel	3	4				
Intermediate-Mid	Alyssa	3	16		1		
	Emily	2	6	1			
	Jacob	3	2	1			
Intermediate-High	Nicole	7	8	3			2
	Brian	4	11	2		3	1
	Kyle	3	5	2	1		7
Advanced-Low	Chris	7	10	5	4	1	
	Hanna	6	11	1			1
	Tracy	1	3		1		2
Advanced-Mid	Mia	3	10			3	
	Lauren	3	12	1	2	1	2
	Sophie	1	14			1	2

[a] This included the sentence-final particles (e.g., *ne, yo, kke, ka*) and some other utterance-final expressions such as *mitaina* "it's like" and *to yuu* "it's like."
[b] This included *kara/node* "because," *ba* "if," *mae ni* "before," *nagara* "while," and the conjecture-form of predicate.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, I examined the candidates' performance on the description task, with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. A detailed analysis of the interactions indicated that the candidates at all levels between Intermediate-Low and Advanced-Mid demonstrated their interactional competence to produce a sequentially appropriate action in an orderly manner. The task was introduced

by the interviewer's request, which was often followed by some interactional work by the candidate and the interviewer to achieve a mutual understanding on what the task was about. When this was achieved, the candidates produced the requested action (e.g., description) in an extended turn. When completing their turns, they often produced an utterance that was hearable as the end of the process (e.g., *dekiagari* "It's done/ready"), marked with a falling intonation and the final-form of predicate and/or a wrap-up phrase (e.g., *to yuu* "it's like," *mitaina* "it's like"). These turn-final utterances were frequently accompanied by embodied features that also projected turn-completion (e.g., withdrawing hands, gazing at the interviewer).

My analysis in this chapter focused on the task of describing a food preparation process, and found that the candidates at all levels in the present data organized their discourse in a similar manner, presenting a number of steps involved in the process in a sequential fashion. They most frequently combined clauses with the te-form of predicate, which integrated the steps described in the clauses as a coherent sequence. A comparison of the use of connective expressions across the proficiency levels indicated that while the candidates at the lowest proficiency level in the present data (Intermediate-Low) utilized a quite limited variety of connective expressions (e.g., the te-form of predicate, *soshite* "and") to link clauses/utterances, the candidates at higher proficiency levels used a greater variety of connective expressions. Using these resources, they indicated transition points in their discourse, explicitly showed the timing and/or order of the steps, and distinguished non-main information (e.g., prefaces, parenthetical comments, background information) from the main body of discourse. In the present data, it appeared that the

variety of linguistic resources the candidates used in the description task increased between Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-High, where the candidates increasingly employed various types of discourse markers (e.g., connectives, connective particles, sentence-final particles, predicate forms/styles) to manage their discourse.

In sum, in the description task in the present data, the candidates at all levels between Intermediate-Low and Advanced-Mid were able to achieve extended turns in collaboration with the interviewer and organize their discourse in an appropriate manner. They also constantly attended to interactional needs and co-constructed intersubjectivity with the interviewer. On the other hand, the extent to which they were able to draw on various linguistic resources to construct and manage their discourse seemed to vary across the proficiency levels. In the next chapter, I will examine the candidates' performance on the narration task, another Advanced-level task designed to elicit a "connected discourse of paragraph length" in the ACTFL OPI.

CHAPTER 5

THE NARRATION TASK

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine the candidates' performance on the narration task in the present Japanese OPI data. Along with the description task, the narration task is one of the major Advanced-level tasks in the ACTFL OPI, and the interviewer introduces it when he/she estimates the candidate's proficiency level at Intermediate or higher during the interview. In the Japanese OPI, the target story for the narration task can be a personal narrative or a retelling of a novel, movie, or other such text (Makino et al., 2001). The target story is different in each OPI as it is determined based on the candidate's knowledge, experiences, and interests.

In the following sections, I will mainly discuss the candidates' performance on the retelling of a novel, movie, or other text, since this was the type of narration task most frequently used in the present data. Again, my analysis focuses on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization, which differentiate a "connected discourse of paragraph length" and "discrete sentences" according to the ACTFL rating criteria. I will first present segments of the OPI interactions and discuss how the candidates produced stories in response to the interviewer's prompts. I will then compare the use of connective expressions in the narration task within and across the proficiency levels in order to look for level differences and/or individual differences in the present data.

5.2 Data analysis

In this section, I will present the segments of the OPI interaction that show candidate performance on the narration task. For each level (from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid), I have chosen a segment that appeared to best represent the performance at that level in the present data. Following each segment, I will present an analysis of the interaction, with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. Again, due to the limitation of space, not all embodied features are described in the transcripts.

5.2.1 George: Intermediate-Low

Although my analysis in this chapter will focus on the retelling of a novel, movie, or other text, I will present both the retelling of a novel and a personal narrative from George's OPI (Intermediate-Low) in this subsection. George happened to produce these two types of stories in his OPI, and his stories illustrate possible differences in the difficulty of these two narration tasks.

The first segment shows George's retelling of a short story. Prior to the segment, George (G) mentioned that he had read *Chinmoku* "The Silence," a short story by Murakami Haruki, in his Japanese literature class. In lines 1–4, the interviewer requests him to retell the story.

Excerpt 5.1.1 George (Intermediate-Low): "The Silence"

1. IR: jaa sono sutoor(hh)ii o, ((George is gazing at IR))
   then that story O

2. chotto oshiete kuremasen ka¿
   little tell give-NEG Q

   "Well then, would you please tell me that story?"

3. (0.5)
((George shifts his gaze slightly upward; his mouth is slightly open in a smile))

4. IR: wakaru toko dake de ii node.
know part only P good because
"Just the part you know?"
((George gazes toward IR))

5. G: ano: (1.7) e: (1.8) sutoorii wa, etto
SF SF story TP SF
"The story is,"
((George leans forward slightly, and then leans back and gazes upward))

6. (3.3) e: (1.2) neru- a: (2.4) neruta, no, ano:
SF SF Neruta LK SF
((straightens up)) ((gazes down))
"Neruta's"

7. (3.1) a:: hheh (1.7) hheh (.) hhuh: a:: (1.2)
SF SF
((puts his right hand on his chin))

8. IR: °a hai hai.° ((nods slightly))
"Uh huh."

9. (1.3)

10. G: b(hhh)o- hheh bokushing(hh)u hheh hheh
boxing
"Boxing"

11. IR: bokushingu no hanashi.
boxing LK story
"A story about boxing"

12. G: hai. ((nods))
"Yes."

13. IR: hai hai. ((nods slightly))
"Uh huh."

14. G: ano: (1.7) neruta no, ano: (0.5) ano
SF Neruta LK SF SF
((puts his right hand on the table))

15. hoka no hito, etto (.) e (0.6) aoki san¿

other LK person SF SF Aoki Mr./Ms.

16. IR: hai [hai.

"Uh huh."

17. G: [to ano (0.8) wa, ano (.) bokushingu
and SF TP SF boxing

18. suru koto (.) ano (0.6) a: shiteimasu.
do thing SF SF be-doing
((gazing slightly downward))

"Neruta and the other person, Mr. Aoki, are doing boxing."

19. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

20. G: [soshite, ano (0.7) a: (1.3)
and SF SF

21. a: ne- (.) neruta wa ano: (1.1)
SF Neruta TP SF

22. i- (.) itsumo ano: (.) a: ayamashi? (.)
always SF SF jealous
((gazes at IR))

23. a (0.5) jealous, (.) a:
SF jealous SF

"And Neruta is always jealous[Jpn]?...jealous[Eng]"[1]

24. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

25. (0.9)

26. G: kono hito no: ano: (1.5) e:: (1.9)
this person LK SF SF

27. e: (1.2) seikaku: toka:
SF personality etc.

28. IR: hai [hai.

[1] George utters *ayamashi* in line 22, which was probably meant to be *urayamashii* "be jealous."

"Uh huh."

29. G: [ano: (1.1) e: (1.5) dekiru koto, ano
SF SF can-do thing SF

"this person's personality and ability"

30. (0.5) sonna kanj(hh)i
that like
"it's kinda like that."

31. IR: fuun aa [soo desu ka:.
oh oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

32. G: [hai.
"Yes."

33. IR: aa: soo desu ka.=
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

34. =omoshiroi desu ka? sutoorii wa.
interesting CP Q story TP
"Is that story interesting?"

In this segment, the interviewer's request to describe the story of "The Silence" (lines 1–3), is followed by a brief gap of silence. Orienting to this delay of response as a sign of interactional trouble, the interviewer modifies the request by making it potentially easier for George to respond (*wakaru toko dake de ii node* "just the part you remember?" line 4). After some hesitation, George initiates his story retelling by topicalizing the story (*sutoorii wa* "the story is," line 5), and produces a fragmented utterance that contains what appears to be the name of the character (*neruta*, line 6). George exhibits much difficulty in formulating the utterance, evidenced by a number of long pauses and the use of hesitation markers (lines 5–7). His laughter (line 7) also indexes interactional trouble. However, his intention and effort to continue his turn is evident in his use of hesitation markers and a "thinking" gesture (e.g., putting his hand on his chin). In line 8, the

interviewer provides continuers, encouraging him to continue. In line 10, George utters *bokushing(hh)u* "boxing" while bursting into laughter. The interviewer responds by displaying her understanding (*bokushingu no hanashi* "a story about boxing," line 11), which gets confirmed by George (line 12). In line 13, the interviewer produces another set of continuers, creating a "loop" sequence (an exchange of recipient tokens) and suggesting George continue his retelling of the story.

Subsequently, George produces a sentential utterance (lines 14–18), marking it with the final-form of predicate (*shiteimasu* "are doing," line 18) and grammatically completing the utterance. Then, in an overlap with the interviewer's continuers, George produces the connective *soshite* "and" to signal the continuation of his story, and delivers a next utterance (lines 20–29). In this utterance, George try-marks a (non-target-like) Japanese word *ayamashi* to check its recognizability, but as the interviewer does not show any sign of recognition, he produces the English equivalent word, *jealous.* This indicates that he is aware of a potential problem in his utterance, and that he makes an effort to achieve intersubjectivity with the interviewer by using available resources in a context-sensitive manner (first try-marking the Japanese word, and then code-switching to English). After completing the utterance in line 29, George somewhat suddenly concludes his storytelling by producing a wrap-up utterance *sonna kanj(hh)i* "it's kinda like that" (line 30). In response, the interviewer provides acknowledgements (lines 31, 33) and asks a next question to elicit an assessment of the story (line 34). Table 5.1.1 shows the sequential positions of the connective and predicate form used in George's retelling in the above segment.

Table 5.1.1.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in George's Retelling

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
4–10		fragmented utterances (the story is… Neruta's… boxing)	---
14–18		story clause 1 (Neruta and Aoki are doing boxing)	final-form
20–29	*soshite* "and"	story clause 2 (Neruta is always jealous… this person's personality and ability)	---
30		wrap-up (It's kinda like that)	---

By looking at this segment, one might consider that George is not quite able to tell a story in Japanese yet. George displayed great difficulty in formulating utterances in his story retelling: His utterances were filled with lengthy pauses and hesitation markers, and were often fragmented and difficult to understand. In terms of narrative structure (Labov, 1972), the story only contained orientation (e.g., the introduction of characters and setting) as George did not describe what actually happened in the story. However, it should be noted that, despite the difficulty he exhibited, George still organized his retelling in a logical manner, by first introducing the characters (lines 14–18) and then describing their problematic relationship (lines 20–29), which could have developed into a complication in the story. In addition, his retelling had a clear opening (the topicalization of the story, *sutoorii wa* "the story is") and closing (the wrap-up utterance, *sonna kanj(hh)i* "it's kinda like that"), and his utterances were linked by the use of the connective *soshite* "and" (line 20). These features show his ability to organize his discourse and connect utterances with linguistic resources.

The next segment, taken from the same OPI, presents George's production of a personal narrative. Prior to this segment, George said that he had traveled to Japan to visit friends a few years ago. In lines 1–3, the interviewer requests him to talk more about his

trip. The topical talk continues and eventually leads to George's initiation of a personal narrative about his experience in *onsen*, Japanese-style hot springs baths.

Excerpt 5.1.2 George (Intermediate-Low): Hot springs baths

1. IR: jaa chotto sono toki no, nihon no ryokoo
then little that time LK Japan LK travel

2. ni tsuite chotto moo chotto kuwashiku
P about little more little in-detail

3. oshiete kuremasen ka¿
tell give-NEG Q

"Well then, would you please tell me about your trip to Japan in more detail?

((Transcript of the following 60 seconds omitted, in which George describes his trip to Japan. He says that his friends lived in the Kansai region of Japan at that time, and that he and his friends visited several cities in the region such as Kobe, Kyoto, and Osaka. He also mentions that he and his friends went to Fukui on a road trip and stayed in a *ryokan*, a Japanese-style hotel.))

4. IR: dooshite, fukui made, itta n desu ka?
why Fukui to went N CP Q
"Why did you go to Fukui?"

5. G: ano: (.) tomodachi wa: ano: (.) ((hands on the table))
SF friend TP SF

6. watashi o ano: (1.3) a: (0.8) ((snaps fingers))
me O SF SF

7. ryokan no koto o oshie(.)ta(katta)
ryokan LK thing O wanted-to-teach

"My friends wanted to show me a *ryokan*."

8. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

9. G: a: (1.5) a:
SF SF

10. IR: jaa fukui ni ii ryokan ga atta n desu ka?
then Fukui in good hotel S had N CP Q
"Well then, was there a good *ryokan* in Fukui?"

11. G: fukui wa: (.) inaka desu kedo, ano: ((leans back))
Fukui TP rural CP but SF

12. ryokan wa (0.6) yokattadesu.
ryokan TP was-good

"Fukui is rural, but the *ryokan* was good."

13. IR: aa: soo [desu ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

14. G: [ano:
SF

15. IR: ee ee
"Uh huh."

16. (0.8)

17. G: etto: (.) sore wa: (.) onsen no:
SF that TP hot-spring LK
((puts his left hand on the table))

18. (.) a: (0.5) (ha-) (.) haji- (.) a (.)
SF SF

19. (e?) (.) hajime- (.) e? hajimeta koto?
SF SF started thing

"That was my first time in an *onsen*."[2]

20. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

21. (0.7)

22. IR: [a:
"Oh"

23. G: [ano:
SF

24. IR: ee ee.
"Uh huh."

[2] George utters *hajimeta koto* "what I began" in line 19, which was probably meant to be *hajimete* "the first time."

25. (0.9)

26. G: soshite, ano: (1.7) e: i- (1.3) a: (0.8)
and SF SF SF
((puts both hands on the table))

27. °what is it° (.) i- (.) ippaku: e: (1.3)
one-night SF

"And, what is it? One night"

28. °I can't° hheh ((shakes his head slightly))

29. IR: hai hai. ip[paku?
yes yes one-night
"Uh huh. One night?"

30. G: [a:
SF

31. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

32. G: ano: (0.7) e (0.5) hajime no: yoru wa,
SF SF first LK night TP
((withdraws both hands at once, and then puts his left hand on the table))

33. ano: (1.1) etto: (0.8) a: (3.3) ano:
SF SF SF SF

34. (0.9) oto- (.) otoko no tomodachi to:
male LK friend with

35. IR: hai [hai
"Uh huh."

36. G: [etto: (0.5) on- (.) e: onsen ni:
SF SF onsen in

37. ano: (.) hairimashita.
SF entered

"On the first night, I went to the *onsen* with my male friend."

38. IR: [ee ee.
"Uh huh."

39. G: [ano: (.) demo: e: (.) tsugi no: (1.1)
SF but SF next LK
((puts both hands on the table))

40. tsugi no: ano: ichi wa,
next LK SF one TP

41. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

42. G: etto: (0.6) a: watashi wa: hayaku:
SF SF I TP early

43. (.) okita. ((raises his right hand, palm up))
woke-up

"But next day, I woke up early."[3]

44. a- ano: soshite
SF and

45. IR: ee ee.
"Uh huh."

46. G: etto: (1.2) a: on- (.) onsen- (.) e¿
SF SF onsen SF

47. (.) onsen ni hairu toki, [ano: (0.7)
onsen in enter time SF

48. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

49. G: ano: (1.1) e (.) a: (.) minna: ano:
SF SF SF everyone SF

50. (.) nanimo: (.) inakatta.
nothing there-was-NEG
((puts his right hand on the table))

"And when I went into the *onsen*, there was nobody."

51. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

[3] George utters *tsugi no ichi* in line 40, which was probably meant to be *tsugi no hi* "next day."

52. G: etto (0.7) soshite ano: (0.9) e
SF and SF SF

53. modoru toki, [ano (1.0) e: (1.3)
return time SF SF
((both hands on the table))

54. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

55. G: °how do I say like° changing room?

56. IR: hai hai. [(xx)
"Uh huh."

57. G: [ni iku to:
to go when

"And on my return, when I went to, how do I say, the changing room[Eng]?"

58. IR: [ee.
"Uh huh."

59. G: [ano: (0.9) josei no tomodachi ga ita.
SF female LK friend S there-was
"my female friend was there."

60. IR: aa soo! hhuh
oh so
"Oh I see."

61. G: ano: [(.) t(hh)omodachi kara ano: (.)
SF friend from SF
"According to my friend,"

62. IR: [hhuh hhuh hhuh hhuh

63. G: chott(hh)o,
little

64. IR ee.
"Uh huh."

65. G: ano: (.) otoko no: (.) e?
SF male LK SF

66. otoko no onsen to onna no onsen ga,
male LK onsen and female LK onsen S

67. IR: a [hai.
"Uh huh."

68. G: [ano: chotto (1.0) switch(hh)¿
SF little switch
((crosses his hands a few times))
"they had switched[Eng] the male and female *onsen.*"

69. IR: aa! soo.
oh so
"Oh I see."

70. G: un. wakarimasendeshit(hh)a.=
yes understood-NEG
"Yeah. I didn't know."
((puts both hands on the table))

71. =hheh hheh hheh hheh

72. IR: aa s(hh)oo d(hh)esu ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

73. G: omoshirokattadesu.=
interesting-PAST
"It was funny."

74. =[hheh hheh hheh hheh hheh hheh hheh
((withdraws both hands and puts them on lap))

75. IR: [hhuh hhuh hhuh hhuh

76. aa demo daremo inakute,
oh but nobody there-was-NEG-and

77. yokattadesu ne:.
good-PAST FP

"Oh but it was good that nobody was there."

78. G: h(hh)ai. hheh hheh hheh
"Yeah."

79. IR: aa hhuh s(hh)oo desu ka:.
oh so CP Q

80. hhuh hhuh .hheh omoshiroi,
interesting

81. [omoshiroi [keiken deshita ne:.
interesting experience CP-PAST FP

"Oh I see. That was an interesting experience, wasn't it?"

82. G: [.hh [hai.
"Yeah."

In this segment, in response to the interviewer's request (lines 1–3), George provides some details about his trip to Japan. His response is elaborate but not quite presented as one story. In lines 4–12, the interviewer asks a few follow-up questions, and George responds with sentential utterances. In line 13, the interviewer produces an acknowledgement to close the current question–answer sequence. It is at this point that George self-selects as a next speaker by producing the hesitation marker *ano:* "um" to initiate storytelling (line 14). The interviewer yields the floor by providing continuers (line 15). As he introduces a story, George first locates the relevance of the story to the current topical talk (Jefferson, 1978). He anaphorically refers to his stay at the *ryokan* in Fukui, the topic of the talk-so-far, as *sore* "that," and states that that was his first time in an *onsen* (lines 17–19). By doing so, he effectively brings in the main topic of his story, *onsen*, while identifying how it is related to the topic of the ongoing talk. Here, his story is not directly elicited by the interviewer's request, but is initiated in a spontaneous manner, similar to stories told in ordinary conversation (Jefferson, 1978; Liddicoat, 2011).

As George goes on to provide a bit of background to his story (lines 26–27), he observably struggles to find the right Japanese expressions. He code-switches to English to produce self-directed speech (°what is it°, line 27) and claims his inability (°I can't°, line 28). Yet the interviewer supports his telling by displaying her hearing and

understanding (line 29), and George launches the story proper by describing the events in a chronological order. As he does so, he explicitly indicates the time of the events using adverbial phrases (e.g., *hajime no: yoru wa* "on the first night," line 32; *tsugi no: ano: ichi wa,* "next day," line 40) and relative clauses with the dependent noun *toki* "at the time when" (Makino & Tsutsui, 1986) (e.g., *onsen ni hairu toki* "when I went into the *onsen*," line 47; *modoru toki* "when I returned"). At the climax of his story, he states that when he returned to the changing room, he found his female friend there (lines 52–59). Then he explains why this happened, stating that the male and female *onsen* baths were switched (lines 61–68),[4] and that he did not know about it (line 70). As he has difficulty finding the right Japanese words, he at times code-switches to English and uses a try-marked intonation to check the recognizability and acceptability of the English words (°*how do I say like*° *changing room?*, line 55; *switch(hh)¿*, line 68). The interviewer responds with continuers (line 56) or an acknowledgement (line 69), letting the problems go. George concludes his story with a sequence-closing assessment (*omoshirokattadesu* "It was funny," line 73), and in response, the interviewer expresses her stance toward the story (lines 75–77). The reciprocated laughter (lines 60–63, 70–75, 78–80) and reciprocated assessments (*omoshiroi, omoshiroi keiken deshita ne:*. "That was an interesting experience, wasn't it?" lines 80–81) also indicate that George successfully engaged the interviewer in his storytelling and got the gist of the story across.

[4] It is not uncommon that *onsen* baths (and their associated changing rooms) alternate daily between male and female. In line 61, George utters *t(hh)omodachi kara* "from my friend," which indicates that he is quoting his friend, but the quoting particle and verb are not produced in his utterance.

In George's storytelling above, most of his utterances consist of relatively short sentences. He typically completes clauses with the bare final-form of predicate marked with a falling intonation (e.g., *hairimashita* "went in," line 37; *okita* "woke up," line 43; *inakatta* "there was not," line 50; *ita* "there was," line 59; *wakarimasendeshit(hh)a* "I didn't know," line 70; *omoshirokattadesu* "it was funny," line 73),[5] and does not employ the te-form of predicate or connective particles to combine clauses (except in line 57, where he employs the connective particle *to* "when/if"). This seems to influence how the interviewer responds to his utterances. Since George does not project turn-continuation in terms of grammar or intonation, the interviewer needs to rely on other indicators of turn-continuation/completion such as the semantic content of the utterances. Then, when George's story is building toward the climax, the interviewer keeps producing continuers around the utterance boundaries (lines 38, 45, 51). However, once the story reaches the climax (line 59), the interviewer starts producing acknowledgements at the utterance boundaries (lines 60, 69, 72). It seems that, after the climax, the semantic content of the utterances no longer clearly projects turn-continuation (since the story could finish anytime soon), which appeared to make it difficult for the interviewer to predict the exact completion point of George's turn based on the semantic content.

While George rarely uses the clause-final connective expressions (the te-form of predicate, connective particles) to combine clauses in his storytelling, his utterances are often linked to each other by the use of connectives (*soshite* "and," *demo* "but"). These connectives are used as discourse markers to indicate the continuation of the story (*soshite* in lines 44, 52) or a contrastive transition between the events (line 39). In

[5] George mixes the *masu* style and the plain style in his storytelling.

addition, George once employs the connective particle *to* "when/if" when describing the climax of the story (*changing room? ni iku* ***to:*** *ano: (0.9) josei no tomodachi ga ita.* "**When** I went to the changing room, my female friend was there," lines 55–59). According to Makino and Tsutsui (1986), the conjunction *to* "marks a condition that brings about an uncontrollable event or state" (p. 480). George's use of *to* effectively expresses the unexpectedness of the event. The interviewer's exclamatory response with laughter (*aa soo! hhuh* "Oh I see," line 60) also shows that George successfully communicated the surprise and funniness of this event. Table 5.1.2 shows the sequential positions of connectives, connective particle, and predicate forms used in George's narrative in this segment.

Table 5.1.2.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in George's Narrative

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
17–19		preface (that was my first time in an *onsen*)	---
23–28	*soshite* "and"	background/fragmented utterance (one night)	---
32–37		story clause 1 (in the first night, I went to the *onsen* with my male friend)	final-form
39–43	*demo* "but"	story clause 2 (next day, I woke up early)	final-form
44–50	*soshite* "and"	story clause 3 (when I went into the *onsen*, there was nobody)	final-form
52–57	*soshite* "and"	story clause 4 (when I went back to the changing room)	*to* "when"
59		story clause 5 (my female friend was there)	final-form
61–68		story clause 6 (they had switched the male and female *onsen*)	---
70		story clause 7 (I did not know)	final-form
73		assessment (it was funny)	final-form

In summary, in the segment in Excerpt 5.1.2, George produced a personal narrative, initiating it at a sequentially appropriate moment in the interaction. He organized his discourse by first locating the relevance of the story to the ongoing topical talk, and then describing the events in a chronological order in an extended turn. He also

linked utterances using a few connective expressions (*to* "when/if," *soshite* "and," *demo* "but"). His narrative demonstrated his fully developed competence to tell a story in an orderly manner in the interaction, although the linguistic resources he was able to draw on were quite limited. His utterances contained many pauses, hesitation markers, self-corrections, grammatically incomplete utterances, non-target-like word choices, and occasional code-switches to English. When he exhibited difficulty in finding the right Japanese word or in formulating utterances, the interviewer was generally supportive of his storytelling, allowing him to use English words and letting the lexical problem go.[6] Such behavior of the interviewer might be considered as more conversation-like than test-like, and may have favorable and unfavorable consequences for the OPI interaction as a test. At any rate, it certainly influenced how George told the story.

The two stories George produced in these two segments (the retelling of a short story and the personal narrative) both showed his competence to produce sequentially relevant actions in the interaction (i.e., story retelling as a second pair part of an adjacency pair; a spontaneously initiated narrative relating to the ongoing topical talk). In both cases, George presented the story clauses in a logical order and made appropriate openings and closings. However, his personal narrative was told much better and more fully than his retelling of a short story. The retelling task seemed to overwhelm George, preventing him from fully demonstrating his storytelling abilities. This suggests that interviewers and raters need to be aware of the varying linguistic and cognitive demands that the two types of narration tasks may pose for the candidates. The above segments

[6] In the ACTFL OPI, the interviewer is generally encouraged to act monolingual. For instance, in the case of the candidate's code-switching, the interviewer may ask for equivalent words in the target language.

also showed two different ways in which stories were produced in the OPI interaction: a direct elicitation by the interviewer's request, and a spontaneous initiation by the candidate. It may be the case that personal narratives are difficult to directly elicit with a request since the interviewer would not know on what topics the candidate might have tellable stories. Because stories are commonly initiated by the speaker (rather than elicited by the recipient) in ordinary conversation (Jefferson, 1978; Liddicoat, 2011), George's personal narrative could be considered a good indicator of his storytelling competence in conversation. His production of a narrative suggests that stories may be produced in a spontaneous manner in the OPI when the talk expands on a topic familiar to the candidate. Such an indirect way of eliciting stories may be worth further consideration as an interviewer technique that might enable the OPI to more effectively assess a candidate's storytelling skills in real-life situations.

5.2.2 Emily: Intermediate-Mid

The next segment is taken from Emily's (Intermediate-Mid) OPI and presents her performance on the narration task. She retells the story of *Natsume Yuujinchoo* "Natsume's Book of Friends," a Japanese anime series based on a manga by Midorikawa Yuki. Prior to this segment, the interviewer brought up the topic of amine, one of Emily's hobbies mentioned earlier in the interview. In response to the interviewer's prompt, Emily (E) said that she recently had watched this anime. After a few exchanges about the anime (lines 1–5), the interviewer requests Emily to retell the story (lines 6–7).

Excerpt 5.2 Emily (Intermediate-Mid): "Natsume's Book of Friends"

1. IR: hee: omoshirokattadesu ka?
   wow was-interesting Q
   "Wow. Was it interesting?"

2. E: hai. ((both hands resting on lap))
"Yes."

3. IR: nihon no (.) anime (.) de[su ka?
Japan LK animation CP Q
"Is it a Japanese anime?"

4. E: [hai.
"Yes."

5. IR: aa soo desu ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

6. chotto sutoorii ga donna sutoorii
little story S what-kind story

7. datta ka, chotto oshiete kuremasen ka.
CP-PAST Q little tell give-NEG Q

"Would you please tell me what kind of story it was?"

8. E: etto: (0.7) natsume wa: ano:
SF Natsume TP SF

9. (2.5) yookai (0.5) ga mieru
spirits O can-see

10. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

11. E: ano shoonen de,
SF boy CP-and
((places her left hand on the table))

"Natsume is a boy who can see spirits, and"

12. ano (.) ju- (.) juugosai, gurai¿ (.) no
SF fifteen about LK

13. shoonen de,
boy CP-and

"he is a boy about 15 years old, and"

14. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

15. E: etto (1.9) ano (0.9) henni (0.7) mieru kara
SF SF strangely see because
"because he looks strange"

16. ano (1.4) n:: (1.6) natsume no (.) ano (.)
SF SF Natsume LK SF

17. oya ga (.) inai to omoimasu¿
parents S have-NEG QT think
((withdraws her left hand and places it on her lap))

"I think Natsume doesn't have parents."

18. IR: hai.=
"Uh huh."

19. E: =etto (2.1) shin:seki: (0.7)
SF relative

20. iroirona shinseki ga, (.) ano:
various relative S SF

21. natsume o sewashita n desu ga,
Natsume O took-care N CP but

"Many of his relatives took care of him, but"

22. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

23. E: etto (2.2) ˚eh:˚ ano yookai wa (.)
SF SF SF spirits TP

24. hito: toshite miru n (.) desu kara (0.9)
human as see N CP because

"because he sees spirits as human,"

25. ano (2.5) sono shinseki ga, (.)
SF that relative S

26. natsume o (.) ano sewa o shitakunai
Natsume O SF care O want-to-do-NEG

27. IR: ˚fu::n.˚ ((nodding))
"Oh."

28. E: desu. ((gazes downward))
CP

"the relatives don't want to take care of Natsume."

29. ano ((a cough)) demo (.) yatto ano (2.2)
SF but finally SF

30. sewa o shitai (.) ano: shinseki ga
care O want-to-do SF relative S

31. (0.5) ano (.) atte,
SF have-and

"But finally, there are relatives who want to take care of him, and"

32. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

33. E: etto (1.2) n: inaka no dokoka de hheh
SF SF countryside LK somewhere at
"somewhere in the countryside"

34. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

35. E: ano (0.5) s: sorede (.) ano: (3.2)
SF then SF

36. ano (.) natsume no obaasan ga,
SF Natsume LK grandmother S

37. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

38. E: ano (0.8) yuujinchoo to yuu mo- (.) ano
SF book-of-friends QT say SF

39. hon o (1.2) ano (.) natsume o (.) agete,
book O SF Natsume O give-and

"And then, his grandmother gives Natsume a book called the Book of Friends, and"

40. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

41. E: etto (1.4) yuujinchoo w(hh)a (.)
SF book-of-friends TP
((puts her left hand on the table))

42. to wa (.) ano (1.7) obaasan ga, ano,
QT TP SF grandmother S SF

43. taoshita (0.7) yookai no namae ga atte,
defeated spirit LK name S have-and

"in the Book of Friends, there are the names of the spirits the grandmother defeated, and"

44. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

45. E: etto, natsume wa yasashii ko (.) na node
SF Natsume TP kind child CP because
"because Natsume is a kind person,"

46. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

47. E: sono: namae o (.) kaeshitai n desu.
that name O want-to-return N CP
"he wants to return the names."

48. (0.5) ((IR and Emily gaze at each other.))

49. E: etto (.) sorede, anime wa, (1.4) etto:
SF then anime TP SF

50. (1.4) namae o (.) kaeshita, kaesu, ano (1.5)
name O returned return SF

51. to yuu h(hh)anashi desu.
QT say story CP

"And then, the anime is a story about him returning the names."

52. IR: namae o kaesu tte yuu to.
name O return QT say when
"What do you mean by 'return the names'?"

53. E: hai. ano (1.1) namae ga: (.) areba,
yes SF name S have-if
"Yes. If you have the names,"
((withdraws her left hand and places it on her lap))

54. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

55. E: [ano (.) sono yookai no chikara ga (.)
SF that spirit LK power S

56. [arimasu.
have

"you have the power of the spirits."

57. IR: [˚fu:n.˚
"Oh."

58. (1.2)

59. E: ano (1.4) meeree(.)shitara, (0.7) ano:
SF order-when SF
"When you give them orders,"

60. (1.7) shitaga: (.) shitaga- shitagae- (0.9)

obey obey obey

61. ((coughs))

62. suimasen.
"Sorry."

63. IR: ie ie.
"No no."

64. (1.2)

65. E: ano: shitagawa(.)nakerebanaranai desu.
SF must-obey CP
"they must obey."

66. IR: aa: soo desu ka. hee:.
oh so CP Q wow
"Oh I see. Wow."

67. jaa obaasan ga sono: (.) namae o
then grandmother S that name O

68. totteshimatta, tte yuu koto desu ka?
took QT say think CP Q

"Well then, did the grandmother take their names away?"

69. E: hai.
"Yes."

70. IR: aa: soo desu ka. wakarimashita:.
oh so CP Q understood
"Oh I see. I understand."

71. .hh eeto: soo desu ne:, soredewa etto
SF so CP FP then SF

72. mata chotto hanashi ga kawatteshimaimasu ga
again little talk S change but

"Let's see. Well then, I must change the topic but"

In this segment, in response to the interviewer's request (lines 6–7), Emily starts retelling the story in line 8. After a bit of hesitation, she first introduces the main character (lines 8–11, 12–13), and then presents a number of story events in a chronological order, while referring to background information and reasons as appropriate. The interviewer quite regularly provides continuers around clausal boundaries in Emily's storytelling (e.g., lines 14, 18, 22, 27, 32, 40, 44, 46). In lines 49–51, Emily wraps up the story with an utterance hearable as a completion point of her turn, marked with the final-form of predicate and a falling intonation. However, instead of providing an acknowledgement, the interviewer initiates repair on Emily's utterance, locating the trouble source in the previous turn (*namae o kaesu tte yuu to.* "What do you mean by 'return the names'?" line 52). Her trouble in understanding the phrase *namae o kaesu* "return the names" was possibly indicated earlier in line 48, where she did not respond to Emily's utterance that contained the first appearance of the same phrase (line 47). In response to the interviewer's repair initiation, Emily provides more explanation regarding the trouble source (lines 53–65), which gets responded to by the interviewer's acknowledgement (line 66). Then, the interviewer displays her interpretation concerning the trouble source and asks for confirmation (lines 67–68). Upon Emily's confirmation (line 69), the interviewer produces more acknowledgement tokens to close the sequence (line 70) and initiates a topic change (lines 71–72). This illustrates how the interviewer and the candidate worked together to achieve a mutual understanding on the subject matter.

In this storytelling, Emily tends to produce relatively long, multiclause utterances by grammatically connecting clauses with the te-form of predicate and connective particles. First, the te-form of predicate is used to present the states and events that construct the main line of the story. For instance, the first two clauses in her retelling that describe the main character are marked with the te-form of predicate (the copula *de*, lines 11, 13). Also, several story events are connected with the te-form of predicate as successive occurrences (e.g., *atte* "have," lines 31, 43; *agete* "give," line 39). Second, Emily employs connective particles to provide information subordinate to the main discourse. For example, the causal markers *kara* "because" (line 24) and *node* "because" (line 45) are used to present reasons for the main events, and the contrastive marker *ga* (the discourse marker *n desu ga*) "but" (line 21) is used to provide the background information against which a main event is contrasted. Using these clause-final connective expressions, Emily groups clauses together as chunks of related events. The end of each chunk is then marked with the final-form of predicate, which also marks the main line of the story (e.g., lines 28, 47, 51). Furthermore, Emily utilizes a few connectives as discourse markers to indicate transition points in her discourse. For instance, *demo* "but" shows a contrastive transition between events (line 35), and *sorede* "and then" presents a sequential transition between events (line 35) and a shift in the discourse from the main body of storytelling to a wrap-up utterance (line 49).

Although many of these connective expressions are appropriately used in Emily's discourse, at times there seems to be a bit of a problem in the backgrounding and foregrounding of information in her story retelling. For instance, after presenting the

main character's attribute as a reason (i.e., because he looks strange) for an upcoming event in line 15, Emily abandons this TCU to provide more background information (i.e., he does not have parents; his relatives took care of him) which is necessary for the recipient to understand the upcoming event (i.e., the relatives do not want to take care of him). In lines 16–17, she utters, *natsume no (.) ano (.) oya ga (.) inai to omoimasu¿* "I think Natsume doesn't have parents." Although this is a piece of background information to be fitted into the discourse, it is presented more like a stand-alone utterance. It is linguistically unconnected to other clauses, and somewhat foregrounded by the use of the final-form of predicate, which usually serves to present the main line of the story. If a connective particle (such as *kara* "because") were employed to mark this clause (e.g., *natume wa oya ga inai kara* "because Natsume doesn't have parents"), the information would have been adequately subordinated in the discourse, and the clause would have been appropriately connected to the next clause as a reason and result. Table 5.2 shows the sequential positions of connectives, connective particles, and predicate forms used in Emily's retelling in the above segment.

Table 5.2.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Emily's Retelling

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
8–11		story clause 1 (Natsume is a boy who can see spirits)	te-form
12–13		story clause 2 (he is about 15 years old)	te-form
15		story clause 3 (because he looks strange)	*kara* "because"
16–17		story clause 4 (I think Natsume doesn't have parents)	final-form
19–21		story clause 5 (many of his relatives took care of him)	*ga* "but"
23–24		story clause 6 (because he sees spirits as human)	*kara* "because"
25–28		story clause 7 (the relatives don't want to take care of him)	final-form
29–31	*demo* "but"	story clause 8 (finally, there are relatives who want to take care of him)	te-form
33		elaboration (somewhere in the countryside)	---
35–39	*sorede* "then"	story clause 9 (his grandmother gives him a book called the Book of Friends)	te-form
41–43		story clause 10 (the book contains the names of the spirits she defeated)	te-form
45		story clause 11 (because Natsume is a kind person)	*node* "because"
47		story clause 12 (he wants to return the names)	final-form
49	*sorede* "then"	wrap-up (the anime is a story about him returning the names)	final-form

In sum, in the segment in Excerpt 5.2, Emily produced a sequentially relevant action (a story retelling) in an extended turn in response to the interviewer's request, presenting a number of events in a chronological order and supplying relevant background information and reasons as appropriate. She tended to deliver multiclause utterances in her storytelling by linking clauses with the te-form of predicate, *kara/node* "because," and *ga* "but." The clauses were moderately grouped together as chunks of related events, as she marked the end of each chunk with the final-form of predicate. She also utilized connectives (*demo* "but," *sorede* "and then") to indicate transition points in her storytelling. Still, it appeared that the main line of the story and the subordinate

information were not always well differentiated in her retelling. However, more important problems in relation to the OPI rating may reside in the difficulty she exhibited in formulating utterances, as her utterances contained frequent long pauses, hesitation markers, self-corrections, and grammatical and lexical errors. In addition, it appeared that her initial storytelling failed to provide some information necessary for the recipient to understand the story, as indicated by the interviewer's repair initiation and the subsequent work they engaged in to achieve a mutual understanding.

5.2.3 Brian: Intermediate-High

The next segment is taken from Brian's OPI (Intermediate-High). In this segment, Brian is narrating the story of *Bad Couple*, a Korean movie directed by Sin Geun-ho. Prior to this segment, Brian (B) mentioned that he often watched Korean movies. The interviewer then asked if he had recently seen any interesting Korean movies, and he answered that he had watched a romantic comedy called *Bad Couple*. In lines 3–4, the interviewer requests Brian to retell the story of the movie.

Excerpt 5.3 Brian (Intermediate-High): "Bad Couple"

1. IR: aa soo desu [ka.
   oh so CP Q
   "Oh I see."

2. B: [hai.
   "Yes."

3. IR: chotto sutoorii oshiete kuremasen ka¿
   little story tell give-NEG Q
   "Would you please tell me the story?"

4. B: e:tto ee: muzukashii desu ne. ((hands on lap))
   SF SF difficult CP FP
   "It's difficult, isn't it?"

5. IR: hai.

"Uh huh."

6. B: kankokugo- (.) kankoku no:,
Korean-language Korean LK
"A Korean,"

7. IR: ee.
"Uh huh."

8. B: omawarisa- (.) omawarisa:n?
policeman policeman
"policeman,"

9. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

10. (1.2)

11. B: ga, (1.1) ((turns his head to the side))
S
"was,"

12. ee:: (1.3) nan te yuu no,
SF what QT say F
"How do I say?"
((knits his eyebrows; gazing away))

13. tax (0.5) evasion. (0.7) e:: (2.1) ((gazing away))
tax evasion SF
"tax evasion[Eng]."

14. e: nihongo de (.) nan te ((gazes at IR))
SF Japanese-lang in what QT

15. yuu no ka wakannai n desu kedo:,
say N Q know-NEG N CP but

"I don't know how to say it in Japanese, but"

16. IR: ee ee.
"Uh huh."

17. B: tax evasion o shita (.) nde:,
tax evasion O did because
"Because he committed tax evasion[Eng],"

18. IR: ee.
"Uh huh."

19. (1.2)

20. B: tax collectors ga (1.2) mukae ni (1.3)
tax collectors S come-to-meet P
((brings his right hand in front of himself))

21. kane o toru,
money O take

"tax collectors[Eng] come to take his money,"

22. IR: hai.=
"Uh huh."

23. B: =mitaina (0.6) hanashi desu ne.
like story CP FP
"the story is like that."
((puts his right hand on the table))

24. IR: hai ha[i.
"Uh huh."

25. B: [de, (.) demo
then but

26. omawarisan ga (1.1) itsumo nigedashite:,
policeman S always run-away-and

"but the policeman always runs away, and"

27. IR: ee.
"Uh huh."

28. (0.7)

29. B: soo yuu (0.5) nanka ren'ai ga,
that say like love S

30. (.) umareta, mitaina.
was-born like
((brings both hands in front of his chest; palms up))

"a love was born, it's like that."

31. tax collector to (.) omawarisan (.) no.
tax collector and policeman LK
((brings his hands together in front of his chest))

"Between the tax collector[Eng] and the policeman"

32. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

33. B: datte itsumo surechigatte:,
because always pass-each-other-and
"Because they always pass each other, and"

34. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

35. B: demo, soo yuu sai ni itsumo kenkashite:,
but that say occasion P always quarrel-and
"But, on those occasions, they always quarrel, and"

36. de,
then

37. IR: ee.
"Uh huh."

38. B: sarani, (0.4) koi ni ochiru,
further love in fall

"Then, they fall in love deeper"

39. IR: fuu:n.
"Oh."

40. B: mitaina hanashi- (.) hanashi (.)
like story story

41. [desu ne.
CP FP

"the story is like that."

42. IR: [ee ee ee ee.
"Uh huh."

43. B: demo saigo ni, yatto,
but last P finally

44. IR: un.
"Uh huh."

45. (1.8)

46. B: kokuhakushite,

confess-and

"But in the end, they finally confess their love, and"

47. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

48. (1.1)

49. B: de, kekkonshite,
then get-married-and
"then, they get married, and"

50. IR: ee.
"Uh huh."

51. B: demo mada (1.1) shakkin wa harattenai nde,
but still debt TP pay-NEG because
"But because he hasn't paid his debt yet,"

52. IR: ee ee ee ee.
"Uh huh."

53. B: soo yuu, (.) mada tsuzuiteru, mitaina,
that say still continue like
((withdraws both hands and places them on his lap))
"it still continued,"

54. IR: fuu:n.
"Oh."

55. B: owarikata shita n desu ne.
way-of-*ending did N CP FP*
"the way it ended was like that."

56. IR: aa soo desu [ka:.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

57. B: [˚hai.˚
"Yeah."

58. IR: maa kekkoo kankoku wa o- (.)
well quite Korea TP

59. ano: (.) dorama tte yuu ka
SF drama QT say Q

60. omoshiroi romantikku komedii no

interesting romantic comedy LK

61. B: hai.
"Uh huh."

62. IR: ano iroiro arimasu yo ne:.
SF various have FP FP

"In Korea, they have lots of interesting dramas, I mean, romantic comedies, right?"

63. B: hai.
"Yeah."

In this segment, in response to the interviewer's request (line 3), Brian first produces an assessment of the task, marking the utterance with the final-form of predicate in the *masu* style, followed by the sentence-final particle *ne* (*muzukashii desu ne* "It's difficult, isn't it?" line 4). The interviewer responds with a continuer, awaiting his story retelling (line 5). Brian starts narrating the story by first introducing the main character (lines 6–8), and observably encounters a lexical problem while describing the main character's circumstances. After a bit of thinking, he produces self-directed speech (*nan te yuu no, tax evasion* "How do I say? Tax evasion," lines 11–13), which is marked by style shift (the plain style, with the sentence-final particle *no*) and his gazing away. He then turns his gaze to the interviewer and produces a parenthetical comment, stating that he does not know how to say "tax evasion" in Japanese (lines 14–15). As the interviewer responds with continuers (line 16), he resumes his storytelling using the English expression in his utterance (line 17). He describes a series of events in a chronological order and supplies reasons for the events as appropriate. The interviewer quite consistently provides continuers near clausal boundaries in Brian's storytelling (e.g., 16, 18, 22, 24, 27, 32, 34, 37, 39, 42, 47, 50, 52, 53). Brian completes his storytelling with an

utterance that semantically, grammatically, and prosodically projects a turn-completion point (*soo yuu (.) mada tsuzuiteru, mitaina, owarikata shita n desu ne.* "it still continued, the way it ended was like that," lines 53–55), to which the interviewer responds with an acknowledgement (line 56). The interviewer then produces an assessment about Korean romantic comedies in general (lines 58–62), to which Brian agrees (line 63).

Similar to Emily, in her story retelling discussed in Section 5.2.2, Brian combines clauses using the te-form of predicate, the causal connective particle *nde* (a variation of *node*) "because," and the contrastive connective particle *kedo* "but/although" in his story. The te-form of predicate connects events as sequential occurrences and presents the main line of the story (*nigedashite* "run away," line 26; *surechigatte* "pass each other," line 33; *kenkashite* "quarrel," line 35; *kokuhakushite* "confess," line 46; *kekkonshite* "get married," line 49). The causal marker *nde* is used to present a reason for an upcoming event (lines 17, 51), and the contrastive marker *kedo* "but/although" (the discourse marker *n desu kedo*) is employed to mark the parenthetical comment he produced regarding the lexical problem (*nihongo de (.) nan te yuu no ka wakannai* ***n desu kedo****:*, "I don't know how to say that in Japanese, **but**," lines 14–15). Similar to Emily, Brian also groups clauses together as chunks of related events, and the end of each chunk is marked by the quoting expression *mitaina* "like," which turns the preceding set of clauses into embedded clauses (lines 23, 30, 40, 53).[7] In some instances, *mitaina* occurs with a head noun and the predicate of the matrix clause (e.g., *mitaina hanashi desu ne* "The story is like…," lines 23; 40–41, 53–55) while in other instances, it is used without a head noun, in a way

[7] Due to the difference in word order between Japanese and English, the English translation in the excerpt does not show the clauses preceding *mataina* as embedded clauses.

similar to final particles (line 30). Using these expressions, Brian tentatively wraps up his telling before moving on to a next point. Brian also often marks the completion points of his utterances with the sentence-final particle *ne* (e.g., lines 4, 23, 41, 55). The use of *ne* makes his storytelling interactive rather than monological, as it serves to show his cooperative stance toward the interlocutor and facilitate the achievement of a mutual understanding (Cook, 1990, 1992; Morita, 2005).

Brian also quite frequently employs connectives as discourse markers to preface his utterances/clauses in this segment. He employs the connective *de* "and then" to show sequential transitions (lines 25, 36, 49), *demo* "but" to indicate contrastive transitions (*demo* "but," lines 25, 35, 43, 51), and *datte* "because" to signal that what follows is an elaboration of the previous point (line 33). He also utilizes the adverbial sequential phrase *saigo ni* "in the end" as he approaches the completion point of his story (line 43). Table 5.3 presents the sequential positions of the connectives, sequential adverbial phrase, connective particles, sentence-final particles, and predicate forms used in Brian's retelling in this segment.

Table 5.3.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Brian's Retelling

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
4		assessment of the task (it's difficult)	final-form + FP *ne*
6–17		story clause 1 (a Korean policeman committed tax evasion)	*nde* "because"
12		self-directed speech (how do I say)	final-form + FP *no*
13		self-directed speech (tax evasion)	---
14–15		parenthetical comment (I don't know how to say that in Japanese)	*kedo* "but"
20–23		story clause 2 (tax collectors come to take his money)	*mitaina hanashi desu ne* "the story is like…"
25–26	*de* "then," *demo* "but	story clause 3 (the policeman always runs away)	te-form
29–30		story clause 4 (a love was born)	*mitaina* "it's like…"
31		elaboration (between the tax collector and the policeman)	---
33	*datte* "because"	story clause 5 (because they always pass each other)	te-form
35	*demo* "but"	story clause 6 (they always fight)	te-form
36–41	*de* "then"	story clause 7 (they fall in love deeper)	*mitaina hanashi desu ne* "the story is like…"
43–46	*demo* "but," *saigo ni* "in the end"	story clause 8 (they finally confess their love)	te-form
49	*de* "then"	story clause 9 (they get married)	te-form
51	*demo* "but"	story clause 10 (because he hasn't paid his debt yet)	*nde* "because"
53–55		story clause 11/wrap-up (it still continues, it ended like this)	*mitaina owarikata shita n desu ne* "the way it ended was like…"

Overall, in the segment in Excerpt 5.3, Brian narrated a story in an organized manner in response to the interviewer's request. As did other candidates in the present data, he used an extended turn to describe a number of story events in a chronological order and linked the clauses/utterances by various connective expressions. He employed the te-form of predicate to link the events that formed the main storyline, *n desu kedo* "but/although" to present a parenthetical comment, and *nde* "because" to provide a reason for main events. He also utilized several connectives (*de* "and then," *demo* "but," *datte* "because") and a sequential adverbial phrase (*saigo ni* "in the end") to signal how

the story was developing. Brian tended to combine clauses to group them together as chunks of related events. The ends of those chunks of clauses were marked by *mitaina* "like" (and the matrix clause), which served to temporarily wrap up his storytelling. The segment demonstrated his ability to produce a coherent storytelling and manage his discourse by using a variety of connective expressions, along with other discourse markers (e.g., predicate forms/styles, sentence-final particles). Unlike George's retelling of a short story, which only presented the orientation section, or Emily's retelling of an anime series, which required more interactional work for the interviewer and Emily to achieve a mutual understanding about the story after the turn-completion point, Brian's retelling of a movie presented the story as a whole, and was told well enough for the interviewer to claim an understanding of it. Yet his story was somewhat like a skeletal plot summary, lacking details about the characters, actions, and scenes. Brian exhibited lexical problems at times and drew on English words (i.e., *tax evasion*, line 17; *tax collector(s)*, lines 20, 31), which could have been considered signs of linguistic breakdown by the OPI raters.

5.2.4 Hanna: Advanced-Low

The next segment shows Hanna's (Advanced-Low) performance on the narration task. In this segment, Hanna (H) retells the story of *Akai Ito* "The Red String," a novel written by the Japanese author Mei. Prior to the segment, the interviewer brought up the topic of reading, one of Hanna's hobbies that she had mentioned earlier in the interview. Hanna had said that she likes to read both novels and manga. In lines 2–9, the interviewer requests Hanna to retell a story from either a novel or manga.

Excerpt 5.4 Hanna (Advanced-Low): "The Red String"

1. IR: [soo desu ka. .h
so CP Q

2. jaa ano: nandemo ii node,
then SF anything good because

3. atashi ni, hitotsu, su[toorii o
me P one story

4. H: [hhuh

5. sut(hh)oorii.
story
"Story"

6. IR: hanashite kuremasen ka?
tell give-NEG Q

"I see. Well then, would you please tell me one of those stories?"

7. H: [hai.
"Yes."

8. IR: [ma- (.) manga demo shoosetsu demo
manga or novel or

9. ii desu kedo.
good CP but

"It can be either a novel or manga."

10. H: hai ano suki:
yes SF favorite
"Yes, my favorite,"

11. °aa doo shiyoo kana° ((looks up; hand on her chin))
oh how do FP
"Oh which story should I tell?"

12. h[huh hhuh hhuh

13. IR: [hhuh hhuh .hhuh

14. H: suki:na shoosetsu- ((turns gaze toward IR))
favorite novel
"My favorite novel-"

15. ano akai ito?
SF red string

16. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

17. H: [te yuu, shoosetsu ga atte,
QT say novel S have-and

"There is a novel called 'The Red String,' and"

18. a[no, doramaka mo,
SF dramatization also

19. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

20. H: eigaka mo,
cinematization also

21. IR: [hee:.
"Wow."

22. H: [ano natteimasu: kedo,
SF have-become but

"It has been made into a drama and a movie, but"

23. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

24. H: ano sono: (0.5) shoosetsu ni wa (.)
SF that novel P TP

25. ano (.) tabun kookoo ninensee no
SF perhaps high-school second-year LK

26. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

27. H: otoko to (.) ano (.) onna ga atte,
man and SF woman S have-and

"In this novel, there are a man and a woman who are probably high school juniors, and"

28. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

29. (.)

30. H: °de etto ((tilts her head; looks downward))
then SF

31. doo yatte s(hh)etsumeisureba ii n desu ka°
how do explain-if good N CP Q

"Then, how should I explain this?"

32. (e)to: ano (.) ma akai ito tte yuu (.)
SF SF well red string QT say
((looks up toward IR))

33. nanka densetsu wa, shirimasu ka¿ ((gazing at IR))
like legend TP know Q

"Do you know the legend called the 'red string'?"

34. IR: a hai.
"Oh yes."

35. H: nanka, (.) f- (.) ano min- (.)
like SF

36. ma, minna j(hh)a nak(hh)ute,
well everyone CP NEG-and

37. ma futari wa (.) ano, unmei: de,
well two-people TP SF fate P

38. IR: hai [hai.
"Uh huh."

39. H: [akai ito de musu:ba-(.)bareteimasu
red string P be-bound
((touches her little finger))

40. IR: hai hai.=
"Uh huh."

41. H: =tte yuu (.) ma hanashi ga atte,
QT say well story S have-and

"In the story, everyone, well it's not everyone, but these two, are bound by fate, by a red string, and"

42. IR: ee ee.

"Uh huh."

43. H: de sono futari no tanjoobi ga
then that two-people LK birthday S

44. issho de, ano
same CP-and SF

"then the two have the same birthday, and"

45. IR: °fuun.°=
"Oh."

46. H: =nigatsu no (.) nijuu ku nichi.
February LK twenty nine day
"The 29th of February."

47. IR: [hai hai.
"Uh huh."

48. H: [(xx) kekkoo mezurashiina tanjoobi
quite rare birthday

49. na n (.) desu kedo,
CP N CP but

"It's quite a rare birthday, but"

50. IR: [ee ee.
"Uh huh."

51. H: [maa sono futari wa
well that two-people TP

52. onaji tanjoobi de,
same birthday CP-and

"the two have the same birthday, and"

53. onaji gakkoo kayottete,
same school be-going-and
"they are going to the same school, and"

54. IR: ee ee.
"Uh huh."

55. (0.6)

56. H: de ano (.) nanka, wakai toki ni,

then SF like young time P

57. ikkai atta koto ga
once met N S

58. IR: °fuun.°
"Oh."

59. H: aru.
have

60. IR: hai hai.
"Uh huh."

61. H: atta rashii.
had seem

"Then, it seems that they met once when they were young."

62. (0.5)

63. H: de, maa nannen, ato,
then well how-many-years after

64. onaji kookoo, de,
same high-school P

65. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

66. H: [mata, deatte,
again meet-and

"And then, after some years, they met again at the same high school, and"

67. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

68. H: nakayokushite:,
become-friends-and
"they became friends, and"

69. IR: °un un.°
"Uh huh."

70. H: de nanka kekkyoku, suki ni natte:,

then like finally like P become-and
"then, after all, they fell in love, and"

71. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

72. H: suki ni natta n desu kedo
like P became N CP but
"although they fell in love,"

73. ir(hh)onna mondai ga (.) nanka jookyoo,
various problems S like circumstance

74. IR: ee ee [ee.
"Uh huh."

75. H: [ano, mawari ni,
SF around P

76. mo- mondai ga atte,
problems S have-and

"they were surrounded by many problems, and"

77. IR: ee ee.
"Uh huh."

78. (0.6)

79. H: nanka ish- (.) kekkyoku isshoni
like finally together

80. narenakatta n: desu.
could-become-NEG N CP

"they were not able to be together in the end."

81. IR: a hai.
"Oh, uh huh."

82. H: chotto kanashii:: hhuh hhuh
little sad
"It's a little sad."

83. IR: aa soo desu [ka. jaa
oh so CP Q then
"Oh I see."

84. H: [soo desu.

so CP
"Yes."

85. IR: happii endo ja nakute.
happy end CP NEG-and
"Well then, it's not a happy ending."

86. H: soo (de)su. [(anmari-)
so CP not-very
"That's right."

87. IR: [mondai tte yuu to
problem QT say QT

88. donna koto ga atta n desu ka?
what-kind thing S had N CP Q

"You said they had problems. What problems did they have?"

In this segment, as the interviewer requests Hanna to retell a story (lines 2–6) and clarifies by stating that it can be either a novel or manga (lines 8–9), Hanna accepts the task (lines 7, 10) and initiates a TCU (*ano suki:* "um my favorite," line 10). She soon abandons the TCU to do a bit of "thinking," deciding which story to tell. She produces self-directed speech (°*aa doo shiyoo kana*° "Oh which story should I tell?" line 11), which is marked by reduced volume of voice, style shift (the predicate in the plain style and the sentence-final particle *kana*), and "thinking" gestures (e.g., looking up, putting her hand on her chin). After the reciprocated laughter (lines 12–13), Hanna introduces a novel by first referring to it as her favorite novel (line 14), and then providing its title with a try-marked intonation (lines 15–17), which solicits the interviewer's response (line 16). Then Hanna supplies some relevant background information about the novel to preface her story retelling (lines 18–22).

In line 24, Hanna topicalizes the novel (*sono: (0.5) shoosetsu ni wa* "in that novel") to initiate the story proper. In lines 24–61, she describes the main characters and their background (e.g., they are bound by the red string of fate;[8] they share the same birthday; they go to the same school; they met once when they were young). When she refers to the notion of *akai ito* "the red string," which is also the theme of the novel, she (observably) wonders how she should explain it, producing a self-addressed question (°*de etto doo yatte s(hh)etsumeisureba ii n desu ka*° "And then, how should I explain this?" lines 30–31). Then she asks the interviewer whether she knows the legend of the red string (lines 32–33), and as the interviewer responds in the affirmative (line 34), she goes on to tell how the legend is related to the story (lines 35–39). While this utterance first appears as a stand-alone sentence, marked by the final-form of predicate (*ma futari wa (.) ano, unmei: de, akai ito de musu:ba-(.)bareteimasu* "these two are bound by fate, by a red string," lines 37–39), she integrates it into the ongoing discourse as an embedded clause by producing a quoting expression and the matrix clause marked by the te-form of predicate (*tte yuu (.) ma hanashi ga atte* "there is a story that…," line 41).

In lines 63–80, Hanna briefly describes the complication and ending of the story, depicting several events in a chronological order (e.g., the main characters met again in high school, became friends, and fell in love, but had problems and could not be together). She concludes the story with a sequence-closing assessment (line 82), presenting her emotional reaction to the story as a reader. In response, the interviewer provides an acknowledgement and displays her understanding of the story (lines 83–85), which gets

[8] The red string of fate is a Japanese legend (originally from China) that a man and woman who are destined to meet and marry are bound by an invisible red string.

confirmed by Hanna (line 86). Subsequently, the interviewer asks a follow-up question (lines 87–88) regarding a point that Hanna did not explain much in her storytelling (i.e., the main characters' problems that caused their separation).

In her retelling, like other candidates in the present data, Hanna combines clauses using the clause-final connective expressions and produces lengthy utterances. However, the variety of connective expressions she uses in this segment is quite small. She consistently employs the te-form of predicate to present the states and events that form the main line of the story (e.g., *atte* "have," lines 27, 41, 76; the copula *de*, lines 44, 52; *kayottete* "be going," line 53; *deatte* "meet," line 66; *nakayokushite* "become friends," line 68; *natte* "become," line 70). She also utilizes the connective particle *kedo* "but/although" to supply the information subordinate to (or outside of) the main discourse. For instance, the preface to the storytelling, in which Hanna provides background information about the novel, is marked by *kedo* (*ano, doramaka mo, eigaka mo, ano natteimasu:* ***kedo*** "It has been made into a drama and a movie, **but**," lines 18–22). Also, when Hanna makes an assessment as a narrator about the main characters' background (i.e., they share the same birthday on February 29), she marks the assessment with *n desu kedo* (*kekkoo mezurashiina tanjoobi na* ***n desu kedo*** "It's quite a rare birthday, **but**," lines 48–49). Another instance of *kedo* appears in line 72, where Hanna partially repeats her previous utterance (*suki ni natte:* "they fell in love, and," line 70) and marks it with *n desu kedo* (*suki ni natta* ***n desu kedo*** "**Although** they fell in love") to present the event again as the background against which the next event is contrasted. In addition, Hanna employs the connective *de* "and then" (lines 30, 43, 56, 63, 70) to indicate sequential

transitions in her story. Similar to Emily and Brian, Hanna groups clauses together as chunks of information and marks the end of the chunks with the final-form of predicate (lines 61, 80). Throughout her turn, the interviewer quite consistently produces continuers at clausal (and some phrasal) boundaries (e.g., lines 28, 40, 42, 45, 50, 54, 60, 67, 69, 71, 77, 81). Table 5.4 presents the sequential positions of the connectives, connective particle, sentence-final particles, and predicate forms used in Hanna's retelling in this segment.

Table 5.4.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Hanna's Retelling

Lines	Clause-initial	Content	Clause-final
10		abandoned TCU	---
11		self-directed speech (what should I do?)	volitional-form + FP *kana*
14		abandoned TCU	---
15–17		preface (there is a novel called "The Red String")	te-form
18–22		preface (it has been made into a drama and a movie)	*kedo* "but"
24–27		story clause 1 (there are a man and woman who are high school juniors)	te-form
30–31	*de* "then"	self-directed speech (how can I explain it?)	final-form + FP *ka*
32–33		question to IR (do you know the legend called the red string?)	final-form + FP *ka*
35–41		story clause 2 (in the story, these two are bound by fate, by a red string)	te-form
43–44	*de* "then"	story clause 3 (the two have the same birthday)	te-form
46		elaboration on story clause 3 (the 29th of February)	---
48–49		comment (it's a rare birthday)	*kedo* "but"
51–52		restatement of story clause 3 (the two have the same birthday)	te-form
53		story clause 4 (they go to the same school)	te-form
56–61	*de* "then"	story clause 5 (they met once when they were young)	final-form
63–66	*de* "then"	story clause 6 (they met again at the same high school after many years)	te-form
68		story clause 7 (they became friends)	te-form
70	*de* "then"	story clause 8 (they fell in love)	te-form
72		restatement of story clause 8 (they fell in love)	*kedo* "but"
73–76		story clause 9 (there were surrounded by many problems)	te-form
79–80		story clause 10 (they were not able to be together)	final-form
82		assessment (it's a little sad)	final-form

In sum, in this segment, Hanna narrated a story in response to the interviewer's request (which did not determine the target story) in an appropriate manner, first introducing the novel and providing background information about the novel, and then

describing the main characters and their background and presenting the events in a chronological order. She tended to produce lengthy utterances by grammatically combining multiple clauses, although the variety of connective expressions she used was not extensive. She employed the te-form of predicate to present the events and states that formed the main line of the story; *kedo* "but" to mark a preface, a comment as a narrator, and the background against which an upcoming event was contrasted; and *de* "and then" to signal sequential transitions in her storytelling. It appeared that the use of these connective expressions, along with other discourse markers such as predicate forms and sentence-final particles, helped her to organize and manage the discourse. The Advanced-Low rating of Hanna's OPI indicates that the raters considered her performance as meeting the rating criterion of "connected discourse of paragraph length." Overall, Hanna's utterances were fairly smooth and contained fewer pauses and lexical problems than the Intermediate candidates' discourse. Yet her descriptions of the events were rather brief and lacked details and elaboration, which resulted in the interviewer's follow-up question, upon the completion of Hanna's turn, regarding a point that had not been explained fully in her storytelling.

5.2.5 Lauren: Advanced-Mid

The following segment is taken from Lauren's OPI (Advanced-Mid). Prior to the segment, the interviewer returned to the topic of reading, one of Lauren's hobbies. In response to the interviewer's prompts, Lauren (L) mentioned that she had recently reread *The Awakening*, a novel by Kelley Armstrong. In lines 3–4, the interviewer requests Lauren to retell the story of the novel.

Excerpt 5.5 Lauren (Advanced-Mid): "The Awakening"

1. IR: aa: soo desu ka.
oh so CP Q

2. so[re wa fantajii na n desu yo ne¿
that TP fantasy CP N CP FP FP

"Oh I see. That's a fantasy novel, right?"

3. L: [hai.
"Yes."

4. hai.
"Yes."

5. IR: chotto sono sutoorii o oshiete kuremasen ka¿
a-little that story O tell give-NEG Q
"Would you please tell me the story?"

6. L: etto desu ne, (0.4) etto: (0.6)
SF CP FP SF
((brings her hands in front of her chest))

7. shujinkoo wa, [onnanoko de,
main-character TP girl CP-and

"Let's see. The main character is a girl, and"

8. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

9. L: chloa (.) chloe¿ (.) chloe (.) tte
Chloa Chloe Chloe QT

10. yuu ko na n desu kedo ((puts her hands on her lap))
say girl CP N CP but

"she is a girl called Chloe, but"

11. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

12. L: sono ko ga, (.) futsuu:,
that girl S ordinary

13. kekkoo futsuu no ko de:,
quite ordinary LK girl CP-and

"she is quite an ordinary girl, and"

14. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

15. L: gakkoo ni iru tochuu ni,
school in be middle P
((brings her hands in front of her chest))
"while in school,"

16. (0.7) h- (.) sugoi nagai aida (.)
very long while

17. obake o mita koto nai n desu kedo,
ghost O saw N NEG N CP but

"she hasn't seen any ghosts for a very long time, but"

18. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

19. L: kyuuni oikakerarete:,
suddenly be-chased-and
"she suddenly gets chased, and"

20. panikku: shookoogun o okoshite,
panic syndrome O have-and
"she gets a panic syndrome, and"

21. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

22. L: sore o riyuu de, hoomu ni
that O reason P home in

23. irerarechau n desu ne?
be-put N CP FP

"for that reason, she gets put into a home"

24. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

25. L: ie kara hanasarete.
house from be-separated-and
"separated from her home."

26. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

27. L: sorede: soko de, (0.4)
then there P

28. ironna hito to deatte,
various person with meet-and

"And then, she meets a variety of people there, and"

29. sono (.) ko tachi mo,
that children also

30. ironna chikara o motteite,
various power O have-and

"these kids also have various abilities, and"

31. IR: fuu:n.
"Oh."

32. L: simon to yuu otokonoko wa, (.)
Simon QT say boy TP

33. mono o ugokasetari:,
thing O can-move-etc.

"a boy called Simon can move things, and"

34. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

35. (.)

36. L: etto: (0.4) derek tte yuu otokonoko wa:,
SF Derek QT say boy TP
"a boy called Derek is,"

37. (0.7) were- (.) werewolf tte ((gazes down))
werewolf QT

38. °nihongo de nan deshoo°
Japanese P what CP

"What is werewolf[Eng] in Japanese?"

39. (0.5)

40. L: ookamiotoko, ((gazes toward IR))
werewolf

41. IR: hai [hai.
"Uh huh."

42. L: [mitaina, (.) hito dattari:,
like person CP-etc.

"He is like a werewolf, and"

43. maa soo yuu hito ga, (.) guuzen
well so say person S by-chance

44. atsumatteru tte yuu settingu
gather QT say setting

45. na n desu kedo
CP N CP but

"the setting is that these people are gathered there by chance, but"

46. jissai wa,
actual TP

47. IR: hai.
"Uh huh."

48. L: soko de: etto (.) ji- (.)
there P SF

49. soo yuu ko tachi ni
so say children P

50. jikken o shiteru tte yuu,
experiment O be-doing QT say

51. IR: fuu:n.
"Oh."

52. L: node,
because

"because they are actually doing experiments on these kids,"

53. soko kara- (.) soko made kizuku (0.5)
there from there until realize

54. etto no ga hotondo de,

SF N S almost CP-and

"it is mostly about them realizing it, and"

55. IR: [hai.
"Uh huh."

56. L: [saigo no hoo ni, nigeteru no ga (.)
end LK toward P be-running-away N S

57. IR: fuu[:n.
"Oh."

58. L: [tokoro de, etto daiichiwa wa
point P SF first-book TP

59. owarimasu ne. ((places her hands on her lap))
end FP

"toward the end, they run away, that's the end of the first book."

60. IR: aa: so[o desu ka.
oh so CP Q
"Oh I see."

61. L: [hai.
"Yes."

62. IR: de, mada tsuzuite iku (wake) [desu ne¿
then still continue go N CP FP
"And then, it still continues, doesn't it?"

63. L: [hai.
"Yes."

64. IR: aa soo desu ka. (.) ano, nanka
oh so CP Q SF like

65. saikin hayatteta banpaiya no eiga
recently was-popular vampire LK movie

66. ga arimashita yo [ne¿
S had FP FP

"Oh I see. There was a popular vampire movie recently, right?"

67. L: [a, hai.

"Oh yes."

68. IR: are to chotto nita kanji desu ka?
that with little similar feeling CP Q
"Is it a little similar to that one?"

In this interaction, after a few exchanges about the novel *The Awakening*, the interviewer requests Lauren to retell the story (line 5). After a bit of hesitation (line 6), Lauren begins her storytelling in line 7. She describes the main character (Chloe, lines 7–13), the setting (in school, line 15), and the main character's background (she has not seen any ghosts for a long time, lines 16–17), and a series of events (she gets chased by a ghost, gets a panic syndrome, and gets put into a home, lines 19–25). Then she depicts the subsequent events (she meets other children at the home who also have supernatural powers, lines 27–30), describes more characters (Simon and Derek, lines 32–42), and presents the main complication (although it appeared that they were gathered by chance, they were actually experimental subjects, lines 43–52) and the resolution (they run away from the home, lines 53–59). As she describes one of the characters, she (observably) encounters a lexical problem, and produces self-directed speech (*were- (.) werewolf tte °nihongo de nan deshoo*° "What's werewolf in Japanese?" lines 37–38), which is marked by the conjecture form of predicate, gazing away, and reduced volume of voice. After a brief gap of silence, Lauren successfully produces the right Japanese word (*ookamiotoko* "werewolf," line 40) and continues her storytelling. The interviewer regularly provides continuers near clausal boundaries in Lauren's storytelling (lines 11, 14, 18, 21, 24, 26, 31, 34, 47, 51, 55). Lauren ends her storytelling with an utterance that is hearable as a completion point of the story, marked by a falling intonation, the final-form of predicate, and the sentence-final particle *ne* (*saigo no hoo ni, nigeteru no ga (.)*

tokoro de, etto daiichiwa wa owarimasu ne "toward the end, they run away, that's the end of the first book," lines 56–59). In response, the interviewer provides an acknowledgement (line 60) and displays her understanding of the story to ask for confirmation (lines 62).

In this segment, Lauren also combines clauses using clause-final connective expressions and produces lengthy utterances. Similar to Emily, Brian, and Hanna, Lauren employs the te-form of predicate to present the states and events that form the main line of the story (the copula *de,* lines 7, 13, 54; *oikakerarete* "be chased," line 19; *okoshite* "have," line 20; *hanasarete* "be separated," line 25; *deatte* "meet," line 28; *motteite,* "have," line 30). Also like the other candidates, she uses the connective particle *kedo* (*n desu kedo*) "but/although" (lines 10, 17, 45) to present information subordinate to the main discourse, such as supplementary information added to a previous utterance (*shujinkoo wa, onnanoko de, chloa (.) chloe¿ (.) chloe (.) tte yuu ko na* ***n desu kedo*** "The main character is a girl, and she is a girl called Chloe, **but**," lines 7–10), and background information against which an upcoming main event is contrasted (e.g., *sugoi nagai aida (.) obake o mita koto nai* ***n desu kedo****, kyuuni oikakerarete:* "She hasn't seen any ghosts for a very long time, **but** she suddenly gets chased," lines 16–19). She also utilizes the causal marker *node* "because" (line 52) to present a reason for the characters' next action, and the exemplifying marker *tari* "such as" (lines 33, 42) to describe some characters as examples of the people who appear in the story. In addition, Lauren employs the sentence-final discourse marker *n desu ne* (*sore o riyuu de, hoomu ni irerarechau* ***n desu ne****?* "For that reason, she gets put into a home," lines 22–23), which serves to create a

break in the discourse and draw the recipient's attention to an important point (Yoshimi, 2001). While she does not use connectives very frequently, Lauren does employ *sorede* "and then" to signal a sequential transition point (line 27) and the sequential adverbial phrase *saigo no hoo ni* "toward the end" to indicate that the story is ending soon (line 56). Table 5.5 shows the sequential positions of connective, sequential adverbial phrase, connective particles, sentence-final particles, and predicate forms used in Lauren's story retelling in this segment.

Table 5.5.
Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions Used in Lauren's Retelling

Lines	**Clause-initial**	**Content**	**Clause-final**
6–7		story clause 1 (the main character is a girl)	te-form
9–10		story clause 2 (she is called Chloe)	*kedo* "but/although"
12–13		story clause 3 (she is an ordinary girl)	te-form
16–17		story clause 4 (she hasn't seen any ghosts for a long time)	*kedo* "but/although"
15, 19		story clause 5 (she is suddenly chased while in school)	te-form
20		story clause 6 (she gets a panic syndrome)	te-form
22–23		story clause 7 (because of that, she gets put into a home)	final-form + FP *ne*
25		elaboration (separated from home)	te-form
27–28	*sorede* "then"	story clause 8 (she meets a variety of people there)	te-form
29–30		story clause 9 (they also have various abilities)	te-form
32–33		story clause 10 (a boy called Simon can move things)	*tari* "such as"
37–38		self-directed speech (what is werewolf in Japanese?)	conjecture-form
36, 40–42		story clause 11 (a boy called Derek is like a werewolf)	*tari* "such as"
43–45		story clause 12 (the setting is that these people are there by chance)	*kedo* "but/although"
46–52		story clause 13 (they are doing experiments on them)	*node* "because"
53–54		story clause 14 (it is mostly about them realizing it)	te-form
56–59	*saigo no hoo ni* "toward the end"	story clause 15/wrap-up (they run away, that's the end of the first book)	final-form + FP *ne*

In summary, in this segment, Lauren retold the novel in an orderly manner, using an extended turn. Similar to other candidates, Lauren presented events and states in a chronological order and provided relevant background information and reasons as appropriate. She linked clauses using a variety of connective expressions: She employed the te-form of predicate to present the events and states that formed the main line of the story; *kedo* "but/although" to provide additional information and the background against which a main event took place; *node* "because" to present a reason for the characters' next action; *tari* "such as" to elaborate with examples; and the sentence-final discourse marker *n desu ne* to create a break in her discourse and draw the recipient's attention to an important point. She also utilized the connective *sorede* "and then" to show a sequential transition, and the sequential adverbial phrase *saigo no hoo ni* "toward the end" to signal that the story was coming to an end soon. In addition to these connective expressions, Lauren used other linguistic resources to align herself with the main character's perspective, including the passive voice (e.g., *oikakerarete* "be chased," line 19; *irerarechau* "be put," line 23; *hanasarete* "be separated," line 25) and the negative affect marker *chau* (*irerarechau* "be put," line 23), which also seemed to enhance the coherence of the story. Her storytelling was quite smooth (although there were still some filled and unfilled pauses and self-corrections). Even when she had a lexical problem, she was quick to solve the problem and continued her storytelling. These features are likely to have contributed to her rating of Advanced-Mid.

5.3 Comparisons within and across the levels

In Section 5.2, I examined how the candidates produced storytelling in the present OPI data, with a focus on their use of connective expressions and discourse organization. In this section, I will compare the use of connective expressions in the narration task within and across the proficiency levels. The tables in this section indicate the clause-initial and clause-final expressions (e.g., connectives, sequential adverbial phrases, connective particles, sentence-final particles, predicate forms) employed by the candidates in the narration task. When a candidate received more than one narration task, I chose the one that appeared to best demonstrate the candidate's ability to produce a connected discourse. In order to make comparisons easy, tokens that occurred in clarification sequences regarding the interviewer's request (and sequences in which the candidate and the interviewer decided on the target story for the task) and in candidate's talk produced in response to the interviewer's follow-up questions/interventions after the completion point of the candidate's turn are excluded from the numbers displayed in the tables.

The **Intermediate-Low** candidates in the present data tended to connect their utterances/clauses with a small variety of connective expressions. Table 5.6 shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Intermediate-Low candidates in the narration task. (The numbers in the parentheses after linguistic items indicate the number of tokens.)

Table 5.6.
Intermediate-Low Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Narration Task

Candidate	Narration task	Clause-initial	Clause-final
Olivia	personal narrative	*soshite* "and" (9) *demo* "but" (1) *ato wa* "and then" (1)	te-form (9) final-form (8)
George	personal narrative	*soshite* "and" (3) *demo* "but" (1)	final-form (6) *to* "when/if" (1)
Daniel	retelling of a short story	*soshite* "and" (4)	final-form (5) te-form (3) *kedo* "but/although" (1)

As for the clause-initial connective expressions, all of the three Intermediate-Low candidates employed *soshite* "and" quite frequently. Although *soshite* generally occurred between story clauses to link them, Olivia also produced it at the turn-initial position, which appeared to be a bit problematic (A similar problem was found in her performance on the description task; see Section 4.2.1). George and Olivia also used *demo* "but" to show a contrast between clauses, and Olivia utilized *ato wa* "and then" to indicate a sequential transition in her discourse. As for the clause-final connective expressions, Olivia and Daniel combined a few clauses using the te-form of predicate, while George did not employ the te-form of predicate at all in the narration task (he seldom used the te-form of predicate throughout the interview). Instead, he tended to rely on the final-form of predicate. At this proficiency level, the use of connective particles was not very frequent. George once employed *to* "when" to link an action and an unexpected event, and Daniel once utilized *kedo* "but/although" to indicate a contrast between clauses in his sequence-closing assessment. Overall, the Intermediate-Low candidates in the present data were able to produce a number of clauses in their storytelling, present the events and actions in a logical order, and link them using a limited variety of connective expressions.

It should also be noted that when the Intermediate-Low candidates were asked to retell a story from a movie, novel, or other text, their utterances were often fragmented and/or almost unintelligible, while when they talked about their own experiences, their utterances were quite comprehensible despite frequent speech perturbations (e.g., long pauses, hesitation markers, self-corrections, occasional code-switching to English).

The **Intermediate-Mid** candidates in the present data used connective expressions to varying degrees in their storytelling. Table 5.7 shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Intermediate-Mid candidates in the narration task.

Table 5.7.
Intermediate-Mid Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Narration Task

Candidate	**Narration task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Alyssa	retelling of a movie	*de* "and then" (3) *demo* "but" (1)	final-form (8) te-form (4) *tara* "if/when/after" (3) *kedo* "but/although" (2)
Emily	retelling of an anime series	*sorede* "and then" (2) *demo* "but" (1)	te-form (5) final-form (4) *kara* "because" (2) *node* "because" (1) *ga* "but" (1)
Jacob	retelling of a movie	n/a	final-form (4) *kedo* "but/although" (1)

While Alyssa and Emily produced a number of clauses when retelling a story, Jacob's storytelling was quite short, consisting of several short utterances marked by the final-form of predicate. He once used the connective particle *kedo* "but/although" to self-correct by negating the previous word and contrasting it with the forthcoming word. In his storytelling, he mainly described the main character and then concluded his turn, without explaining what happened in the story. On the other hand, Alyssa and Emily produced a fair amount of clauses to describe story events in a chronological order, and

linked them using several connective expressions. They employed the te-form and the final-form of predicate to present the events and states that formed the main line of the story, and the connective particle *kedo/ga* "but" to indicate a contrast between clauses. Alyssa also employed *tara* "if/when/after" to present the conditional/temporal relationships between events, and Emily utilized *kara* "because" and *node* "because" to provide reasons for the characters' actions. In addition, both Alyssa and Emily used the sequential transition marker *de/sorede* "and then" and the contrastive marker *demo* "but" to show transition points in their storytelling. Although the Intermediate-Mid candidates organized their discourse in an orderly manner, and their utterances were mostly comprehensible, their storytelling was often treated as unsatisfactory by the interviewer. Upon completion of their turns, the interviewer delayed her acknowledgement, and either initiated repair on the candidate's turn (Emily), asked what happened next in the story (Jacob), or waited to see if the candidate would continue her turn (Alyssa; see Section 3.3.3). Such responses of the interviewer seemed to point to possible problems in their storytelling, such as insufficient explanation and/or a sudden jump in the storyline.

The **Intermediate-High** candidates in the present data employed a wider variety of connective expressions to narrate stories than the Intermediate-Low/Mid candidates did. Table 5.8 shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Intermediate-High candidates in the narration task.

Table 5.8.
Intermediate-High Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Narration Task

Candidate	**Narration task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Nicole	retelling of a novel	*demo* "but" (2)	te-form (11) final-form (7) final-form + FP *no* (12) final-form + FP *yo ne* (2) final-form + FP *ne* (1) final-form + FP *ka* (1) final-form + FP *kke* (1) *kedo* "but/although" (4) *ga* "but" (1) *kara* "because" (2) *tara* "if/when/after" (1) *to* "when/if" (1)
Brian	retelling of a movie	*demo* "but" (4) *de* "and then" (3) *datte* "because" (1) *saigo ni* "in the end" (1)	te-form (5) final-form + FP *ne* (4) final-form + FP *no* (1) final-form + *mitaina* "it's like" (1) *nde* "because" (2) *kedo* "but/although" (1)
Kyle	retelling of a folktale	*sorede* "and then" (2) *de* "and then" (1) *demo* "but" (1) *soredewa* "if so/then" (1) *hajime ni* "first" (1)	te-form (20) final-form (3) final-form + FP *kana* *ga* "but" (1) *kara* "because" (4) *node* "because" (1) *te mo* "even if/although" (1) *nara* "if" (1) *ba* "if" (1)

While the Intermediate-High candidates tended to use a variety of clause-final expressions (e.g., connective particles, sentence-final particles) in the narration task, individual differences were found in the frequency and variety of the clause-initial connective expressions they employed. While Brian and Kyle quite frequently utilized connectives (e.g., *de/sorede* "and then," *demo* "but," *datte* "because," *soredewa* "if so/then") and sequential adverbial phrases (*saigo ni* "in the end," *hajime ni* "first") to indicate how their stories were unfolding, Nicole only used *demo* "but" twice as a sequential transition marker (rather than a contrast marker) in her storytelling. All of

these candidates employed the te-form of predicate to present the events and states that constituted the storyline, *kedo/ga* "but" to mark information subordinate to, or outside of, the main storyline (e.g., prefaces, background information, parenthetical comments), and *kara/node/nde* to provide reasons for story events. Nicole and Kyle also employed some other connective particles (e.g., *tara* "if/when/after," *to* "when/if," *nara* "if," *ba* "if," *te mo* "even if") to show conditional, temporal, or contrastive relationships between clauses. The Intermediate-High candidates tended to combine several clauses using these clause-final connective expressions, and to produce the final-form of predicate only at certain transition points,[9] creating chunks of clauses in their discourse. Unlike the Intermediate-Mid candidates' retellings, the Intermediate-High candidates' story retellings appeared to be done well enough so that, in each case, the interviewer provided an acknowledgement without delay upon completion of the turn and claimed an understanding of the story (although she asked follow-up questions in some cases). On the other hand, the Intermediate-High candidates still exhibited some problems such as frequent lexical searches, the use of English words (which was treated as problematic by the interviewer or the candidate him/herself), and the extensive use of hesitation markers.

The **Advanced-Low** candidates in the present data tended to employ a smaller variety of connective expressions than the Intermediate-High candidates, although they all demonstrated their abilities to retell a story using a connected discourse. Table 5.9

[9] They also marked self-directed speech with the final-form of predicate, but those utterances were clearly distinguished from the main line of the story by the use of sentence-final particles (e.g., *no*, *kke*, *kana*), style shift, reduced volume of voice, and/or embodied features. In particular, Nicole frequently produced self-directed speech (e.g., *nan te yuu no* "What is it?") in her storytelling, which resulted in her large number of tokens of the final-form of predicate followed by the sentence-final particles.

shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Advanced-Low candidates in the narration task.

Table 5.9.
Advanced-Low Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Narration Task

Candidate	**Narration task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Chris	retelling of a manga series	*nanoni* "and yet" (1)	te-form (5) final-form (1) final-form + FP *ne* (1) *kara* "because" (3) *kedo* "but/although" (1)
Hanna	retelling of a novel	*de* "and then" (5)	te-form (10) final-form (3) final-form + FP *ka* (2) volitional-form + FP *kana* (1) *kedo* "but/although" (3)
Tracy	retelling of a drama series	*de* "and then" (2) *sorede* "and then" (1)	te-form (4) final-form (1) *kedo* "but/although" (3)

Among the three Advanced-Low candidates, Hanna and Tracy employed the connective *de/sorede* "and then" several times to indicate sequential transition points in their stories while Chris utilized the connective *nanoni* "and yet" once to indicate a contrast between episodes. Again, all of these candidates used the te-form of predicate to present the events and states that represented the main storyline, and the connective particle *kedo* "but" to mark the information subordinate to, or outside of, the main discourse (e.g., prefaces, a narrator's comment). Tracy also employed *kedo* at utterance-final positions (in a similar fashion as sentence-final particles) to make her utterances less assertive (Mori, 1999), and Chris utilized *kara* "because" to provide a reason for an event. The Advanced-Low candidates were also skillful in grouping clauses together, and produced the final-form of predicate only at major transition points. Overall, the Advanced-Low candidates adequately connected clauses/utterances and did not exhibit

any major linguistic breakdowns, although their descriptions of story events and states were often quite brief and lacked details and elaboration. This seems to suggest that the smoothness of speech and the absence of observable lexical problems were important to achieve an Advanced-level rating while the use of a large variety of connective expressions or detailed explanation of the story were not necessary requirements for the Advanced-Low rating.

The **Advanced-Mid** candidates in the present data utilized a good variety of connective expressions to narrate a story. Table 5.10 shows the clause-initial and clause-final expressions used by the Advanced-Mid candidates in the narration task.

Table 5.10.
Advanced-Mid Candidates' Use of Clause-initial and Clause-final Expressions in the Narration Task

Candidate	**Narration task**	**Clause-initial**	**Clause-final**
Mia	retelling of a novel	*de* "and then" (8)	te-form (8) final-form (1) final-form + FP *yo* (3) final-form + FP *kana* (1) final-form + FP *kke* (1) *ga* "but" (3) *node* "because" (1) *te kara* "after" (1) *ba* "if" (1)
Lauren	retelling of a novel	*sorede* "and then" (1) *saigo no hoo ni* "toward the end" (1)	te-form (8) final-form + FP *ne* (2) conjecture-form *deshoo* (1) *kedo* "but/although" (3) *node* "because" (1) *tari* "such as" (2)
Sophie	retelling of a novel	*de* "and then" (3) *mazu* "first" (1) *saishuuteki ni* "at last" (1)	te-form (15) final-form (1) *node* "because" (2) *tara* "if/when/after" (1) *tari* "such as" (1)

All of the three Advanced-Mid candidates used the connective *de/sorede* "and then" to indicate sequential transition points in their storytelling. While Mia very

frequently utilized *de* to move from one episode to another, Lauren and Sophie employed *de/sorede* only at major transition points, which resulted in differences in their numbers of tokens. In addition, Lauren and Sophie used the sequential adverbial phrases (*mazu* "first," *saishuuteki ni* "at last," *saigo no hoo ni* "toward the end") to explicitly indicate the beginning and/or the ending of their stories. Similar to the candidates at other levels, they employed the te-form of predicate to present the events and states that formed the main storyline, and the causal connective particle *node* "because" to provide reasons for story events. Sophie also utilized *node* to mark a preface to her story, in a similar fashion as final particles. Lauren and Mia utilized the contrastive connective particle *kedo/ga* "but/although" to present subordinate information (prefaces, supplementary information, background against which a main event was contrasted), and Lauren and Sophie used the exemplifying connective particle *tari* "such as" to indicate that the state/event described in the clause was an example of many. Mia and Sophie also employed temporal/conditional markers such as *tara* "if/when/after," *te kara* "after" and *ba* "if." While Mia and Lauren utilized the sentence-final discourse marker *n desu yo/ne* to create a break in their discourse and draw the recipient's attention to an important point, Sophie marked all of the clausal boundaries with some sort of clause-final connective expressions (most frequently the te-form of predicate), which made her storytelling (grammatically speaking) one very long sentence, somewhat monotonous and less interactive. Overall, none of the Advanced-Mid candidates exhibited any major linguistic breakdowns in the narration task, and in their retellings, the story events and states were

organized in a chronological manner, and the clauses/utterances were well connected to each other via the use of a good variety of connective expressions.

Overall, some similarities and differences were found in the use of clause-initial connective expressions across the proficiency levels in the narration task (see Table 5.11). As in the case of the description task, the connective most frequently utilized by the candidates at the levels between Intermediate-Mid and Advanced-Mid was the sequential transition marker *de/sorede* "and then," whereas the Intermediate-Low candidates favored the additive *soshite* "and." Another level difference was observed in the use of the contrast marker *demo* "but." In the present data, the majority of the Intermediate candidates employed *demo* "but" while none of the Advanced candidates produced *demo* in the narration task (they favored the connective particles *kedo/ga* "but").[10] There were also individual differences in the use of clause-initial connective expressions in terms of frequency and variety.

[10] Geyer (2007) also reports that Novice and Intermediate speakers more frequently produced *demo* while Advanced and Superior speakers more often utilized *kedo/ga* in the Japanese OPI.

Table 5.11.
Clause-initial Connective Expressions Used in the Narration Task

level	candidate	*soshite* "and"	*de/sorede* "then"	*demo* "but"	other[a]
Intermediate-Low	Olivia	9		1	1
	George	3		1	
	Daniel	4			
Intermediate-Mid	Alyssa		3	1	
	Emily		2	1	
	Jacob				
Intermediate-High	Nicole			2	
	Brian		3	4	2
	Kyle		3	1	2
Advanced-Low	Chris				1
	Hanna		5		
	Tracy		3		
Advanced-Mid	Mia		8		
	Lauren		1		1
	Sophie		3		2

[a] This included *ato wa* "and then," *soredewa* "if so/then," *datte* "because," *nanoni* "and yet," *hajime ni* "first," *mazu* "first," *saigo ni* "in the end," *saigo no hoo ni* "toward the end," and *saishuuteki ni* "at last."

Certain similarities and differences were also found in the use of clause-final connective expressions across the proficiency levels in the narration task (see Table 5.12). The te-form of predicate was commonly used by the candidates at all levels to grammatically combine clauses and present the events and states that constituted the main line of the story. Only a few candidates at the Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid levels (George, Jacob) did not employ the te-form of predicate and mostly relied on the final-form of predicate in the narration task. While the majority of the candidates employed the contrastive marker *kedo/ga* "but" in the narration task, there seemed to be some level differences in how *kedo/ga* was used. The candidates at the Intermediate-Low/Mid levels mainly used *kedo/ga* to indicate a contrast between clauses, but the candidates at the Intermediate-High level and higher also utilized *kedo/ga* to mark

subordinate information and distinguish it from the main discourse (when there was no contrastive relationship between clauses). About half of the candidates also employed the causal marker *kara/node/nde* "because" to present reasons for the actions/events described in a main clause, presenting information that was not a focus of the story itself but was important for the recipient to understand the story (Schiffrin, 1987). As in the case of the description task, the frequency and variety of connective particles used in the narration task appeared to increase as the proficiency level went up between Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-High (although the Advanced-Low candidates did not use a large variety of connective particles). In general, the candidates at the Intermediate-High level and higher were more efficient in discourse segmentation (grouping clauses into chunks) and the backgrounding/foregrounding of information than the Intermediate-Low/Mid candidates.

Table 5.12.
Clause-final Expressions Used in the Narration Task

level	candidate	final-form (+ final particle[a])	te-form	*kedo/ga* "but"	*kara/node /nde* "because"	*tara* "if/when/ after"	other[b]
Intermediate-Low	Olivia	8	9				
	George	6					1
	Daniel	5	3	1			
Intermediate-Mid	Alyssa	8	4	2		3	
	Emily	4	5	1	3		
	Jacob	4		1			
Intermediate-High	Nicole	24	11	5	2	1	1
	Brian	6	5	1	2		
	Kyle	4	20	1	5		3
Advanced-Low	Chris	2	5	1	3		
	Hanna	5	10	3			1
	Tracy	1	4	3			
Advanced-Mid	Mia	6	8	3	1		2
	Lauren	2	8	3	1		3
	Sophie	1	15		2	1	1

[a] This included sentence-final particles (e.g., *ne, yo, no, kke, kana, ka*) and the utterance-final expression *mitaina* "it's like."
[b] This included *to* "when/if," *nara* "if," *ba* "if," *temo* "even if/although," *te kara* "after," *tari* "such as," the conjecture-form of predicate, and the volitional-form of predicate followed by the sentence-final particle *kana.*

5.4 Summary

In this chapter, I examined the candidates' performance on the narration task, with a focus on their use of connective expressions and discourse organization. In the present data, the narration task of retelling the story of a movie, novel, or other text was more frequently used than personal narratives. The interviewer often recycled the topic of movies, novels, and so forth from the candidates' earlier talk in the interview to introduce the narration task. It was observed that the candidates at all levels (Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid) were able to produce a sequentially appropriate action (a story retelling) using an extended turn. While the stories produced for the narration task were usually directly elicited by the interviewer's request, George's personal narrative showed that

stories may be initiated by the candidates in the OPI as the candidate and the interviewer engage in topical talk. On the narration task in the present data, the candidates often started their turns by producing a preface, topicalizing the story, and/or introducing the main character, and then presented story events and states in a canonical fashion (e.g., a chronological order). Then they completed their turns with an utterance whose content was hearable as the end of their storytelling, such as a sequence-closing assessment or a wrap-up utterance, often marked by the final-form of predicate and a falling intonation.

As in the case of the description task, the candidates most frequently utilized the te-form of predicate to combine clauses in the narration task. As the te-form of predicate grammatically connects clauses without subordination, it was routinely used to present the states and events that comprised the main line of the story. Many of the candidates also employed the causal and contrastive connective particles to provide background information and reasons, and indicated transition points in their discourse using the connectives and sequential adverbial phases. Again, the linguistic resources the candidates were able to draw on seemed to increase between Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-High. As a group, the Intermediate-High candidates produced the largest variety of connective expressions in the narration task in the present data. It was also observed that when asked to retell a story, the Intermediate-Low candidates' storytelling became fragmented and almost unintelligible (although their utterances in personal narratives were quite comprehensible). The Intermediate-Mid candidates were better able to retell a story, but their stories were treated as unsatisfactory by the interviewer due to insufficient explanation and/or a sudden jump in the storyline. These features also seem

to indicate level differences, since the candidates at the Intermediate-High level and higher did not show such problems.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This study has examined candidate performance in the face-to-face Japanese OPI in order to investigate the adequacy of the text type criterion of the ACTFL OPI and the level descriptions in the Guidelines. I have mainly focused on how the candidates produced, maintained, and completed extended turns, in collaboration with the interviewer, in response to the tasks designed to elicit a "connected discourse of paragraph length" (e.g., description, narration) in the OPI. Chapter 1 introduced issues related to the validity of the proposed interpretations and uses of the ACTFL OPI ratings, and discussed previous studies on ACTFL and non-ACTFL OPIs. Chapter 2 presented the methodology of the study, including conversation analysis and Kane's (2006) argument-based approach. Chapter 3 examined the basic sequence structure in the present OPI data and discussed how the candidates and the interviewer projected, understood, and negotiated turn-continuation and turn-completion in the OPI interaction. Chapters 4 and 5 investigated the candidates' performance on the description and narration tasks with a focus on discourse organization and the use of connective expressions.

In this chapter, I will answer the research questions by summarizing the findings of the present study, and by discussing the implications for the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines. I will then present the contributions and limitations of the study and recommendations for future studies.

6.2 Answering the research questions

6.2.1 Turn-taking in the face-to-face Japanese OPI

RQ 1: How do the candidates achieve extended turns (in collaboration with the interviewer) in the face-to-face Japanese OPI? What linguistic and nonlinguistic resources are used to project and understand turn-continuation and turn-completion?

In Chapter 3, I described the basic sequence structure and turn-taking organizations in the present Japanese OPI data. The four-part sequence structure of the current OPI included the following components: (1) interviewer question/request, (2) candidate response, (3) interviewer acknowledgement, and (4) candidate minimal response. I considered the interviewer's acknowledgement turn as a sequence-closing third (Schegloff, 2007), which displayed her understanding that the candidate's turn was completed. On the other hand, the interviewer produced continuers to show her interpretation that the candidate's turn was still in progress. Such a displayed analysis of the status of the candidates' turn was systematically confirmed or disconfirmed by the candidate in the next sequential slot. For instance, the candidate aligned with the interviewer's interactional move to close the sequence by responding to the acknowledgement with a minimal response and ratifying the interviewer's understanding that his/her turn was completed. Alternatively, the candidate could continue his/her turn by exploiting the sequential slot immediately following the acknowledgement turn, thereby refuting the interviewer's interpretation. The interviewer's analysis that the candidate's turn was still in progress was also confirmed when the candidate actually continued his/her turn. Yet the candidate could also discontinue the turn by responding to the interviewer's continuer with a recipient token and suggesting speaker change.

It was observed that the candidates and the interviewer drew on a variety of linguistic and nonlinguistic resources to signal and understand turn-continuation and turn-completion in the present face-to-face OPI data. These turn-taking resources included: (a) syntax and linguistic forms; (b) the semantic content of utterances and the organization of discourse; (c) audible features such as intonation, rushing-through, inhalation, and hesitation markers; and (d) other semiotic resources such as gaze direction, gestures, body movement, and facial expressions. Syntax and linguistic forms seemed to play a part in the projection and interpretation of turn-continuation/completion to some extent. Most candidates recurrently marked clauses at turn-*middle* positions with the clause-final connective expressions (e.g., the te-form of predicate, connective particles), which grammatically projected the production of a next clause and thus turn-continuation. They also frequently employed nonconnective expressions (e.g., the final-form of predicate) at turn-*final* positions to syntactically complete their utterances. However, the candidates sometimes used connective expressions at turn-*final* positions, and nonconnective expressions at turn-*middle* positions, which indicates that syntax alone did not determine whether or not speaker change would occur at a particular point of the interaction.

Frequently, the candidates signaled the continuation of their turns using multiple resources, such as connective expressions, the semantic content of the utterance, discourse organization (e.g., story events building toward a climax, steps moving toward a goal), continuing intonation, "rushing though" at clausal boundaries, the production of hesitation markers, and embodied actions (e.g., gazing away to do "thinking" and/or the continued use of hand gestures). On the other hand, they often indicated turn-completion

by an utterance that was hearable as a turn-completion point due to its semantic content and discourse organization (e.g., a wrapping-up utterance, a sequence-closing assessment). These turn-final utterances were often marked by the final-form of predicate (which might be followed by a sentence-final particle or a short wrap-up phrase), a falling intonation, and embodied features that also suggested turn-completion (e.g., withdrawing hands and placing them on the lap, gazing at the interviewer to show readiness to hear a next question).

In general, the candidates and the interviewer were quite effective in projecting and interpreting turn-continuation and turn-completion in the present OPI interactions. When there were misalignments, they worked together to solve such problems in subsequent sequential slots. However, when the misalignment was not resolved quickly or effectively, it could develop into a bit of an interactional problem, such as a conflict over the right to speak, or a gap of silence that was oriented to by the candidate as a possible sign of the interviewer's nonunderstanding of her previous turn.

6.2.2 Overall use of connective expressions and discourse organization

RQ2: How do the candidates use connective expressions and discourse organization in their responses to the description and narration tasks, which are designed to elicit a "connected discourse of paragraph length"?

In Chapters 4 and 5, I examined the candidates' performance on the description and narration tasks, with a focus on the use of connective expressions and discourse organization. It was observed that the candidates at all levels in the present data (from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid) were able to produce sequentially appropriate actions in an orderly manner using extended turns, and that there were many similarities

in the ways in which they organized their discourse and connected clauses/utterances. My analysis focused on the task of describing a food preparation process in Chapter 4, and the task of retelling a story in Chapter 5. It was found that the candidates organized their discourse in similar manners on the same tasks. For instance, to describe a food preparation process, they presented a number of steps in a sequential order. To narrate a story, they first introduced the main characters and then described story events in a chronological fashion, while providing background and reasons as appropriate. It was also not uncommon for the candidates to provide prefaces before they began their tellings. At the turn-completion point, they produced utterances whose contents were hearable as the end of the telling, which was often followed by a sequence-closing assessment or a wrap-up phrase.

The clause-final connective expression most frequently used by the candidates on both tasks was the te-form of predicate. Since it is a coordinating conjunction and grammatically connects clauses without subordination, it was routinely used to present and maintain the main line of the discourse, integrating different steps/events into a coherent sequence. The connective particles *kedo* "although/but" and *ga* "but" (often as the discourse marker *n desu kedo/ga*) were also employed by many candidates to mark non-main information (e.g., a preface, background information, parenthetical comments) and distinguish it from the main discourse. The clause-initial connective expression most often used by many of the candidates on both tasks was the sequential transition marker *de/sorede* "and then," which was used to show transition points between steps/events as well as to indicate the continuation of the telling. For the task of describing a process, the

candidates often employed connective expressions suitable to indicate the timing and/or order of the steps, including connectives (*ato wa* "and then," *sorekara* "after that"), sequential adverbial phrases (*mazu* "first," *tsugi ni* "next"), and connective particles (*tara* "if/when/after," *te kara* "after," *ta ato ni* "after"). On the narration task, the candidates often utilized contrastive and causal markers, such as the connective *demo* "but," the connective particles *kedo* "although/but," *ga* "but," *kara* "because," and *node* "because." These expressions were used to express a contrast between events or provide background information and reasons for the events, which seemed to help construct comprehensible storytelling.

6.2.3 Level differences in the use of connective expressions

RQ3: What differences are found in the use of connective expressions and discourse organization across the levels (ranging from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid)?

While many similarities were observed across the proficiency levels in the present data in terms of the candidates' tendencies to link clauses/utterances using connective expressions and to employ logical and/or canonical patterns for overall discourse organization on both the description and narration tasks, some level differences were observed in the range of connective expressions they used to construct their discourse. The comparisons across the levels showed that the candidates at the lowest proficiency level in the present data (Intermediate-Low) utilized a limited variety of connective expressions while the candidates at higher proficiency levels tended to employ a good variety of connective expressions. In particular, the variety and frequency of connective particles appeared to increase between Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-High, where the candidates' overall ability to employ a range of linguistic resources as discourse

markers seemed to increase. As their use of connective particles expanded, the candidates were able to express a broader range of relationships between clauses (e.g., contrastive, causal, temporal, conditional). Since most connective particles are subordinate conjunctions, this development also facilitated the backgrounding and foregrounding of the information in the discourse.

In addition to the increased use of connective particles, level differences were found in the different expressions favored by the candidates at different proficiency levels. For instance, the Intermediate-Low candidates favored the connective *soshite* "and" in both description and narration tasks, and did not use *de/sorede* "and then," which was frequently employed by the candidates at higher proficiency levels. Also, in the narration task, while the Intermediate candidates employed both the connective *demo* "but" and the connective particles *kedo/ga* "but," the Advanced candidates appeared to favor the connective particles *kedo/ga* "but." In addition, the functions of *kedo/ga* appeared to expand as the candidates' proficiency levels went up. While the Intermediate-Low/Mid candidates exclusively employed it to show a contrast between clauses, the candidates at the Intermediate-High level and higher also utilized it to mark subordinate information when there was no contrastive relationship between clauses (e.g., prefaces, parenthetical comments). Furthermore, in the narration task, the Intermediate-Low/Mid candidates tended to produce the final-form of predicate at turn-middle, nonboundary positions while the candidates at higher levels more consistently employed the clause-final connective expressions to create chunks of related clauses and tended to utilize the final-form of predicate only at the ends of the chunks. As such, the candidates at the higher

proficiency levels (e.g., Intermediate-High, Advanced-Low/Mid) were more efficient in discourse segmentation than the Intermediate-Low/Mid candidates.

6.2.4 Implications for the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines

RQ4: Do the level descriptions of text types in the Guidelines match the candidates' actual performance observed in the data? How adequate are the text type descriptors (e.g., sentences, paragraphs) for the assessment of oral proficiency? What implications do the findings have for the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines?

Drawing on Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity, the present study aimed at evaluating the scoring inference of the Japanese OPI ratings based on the level descriptions in the Guidelines, focusing on the text type criterion for the Intermediate and Advanced levels (i.e., "discrete sentences," "connected discourse of paragraph length"). It examined whether or not, and to what extent, the candidates' actual performance in the OPI matched the rating criteria and the related parts of the level descriptions in the Guidelines.

On the one hand, the findings of the present study provide a piece of evidence to support the overall adequacy of the assignment of proficiency levels and the effectiveness of the description and narration tasks in generating differential performance from the candidates between the Intermediate-Low and Advanced-Mid levels. In the current Japanese OPI data, the candidates at higher proficiency levels (Intermediate-High, Advanced-Low, Advanced-Mid) generally demonstrated superior ability to use connective expressions and manage their discourse in the description and narration tasks, whereas the candidates at lower proficiency levels tended to rely on a limited variety of connective expressions (Intermediate-Low) or were not yet very effective in discourse segmentation and foregrounding/backgrounding of information (Intermediate-Mid).

These findings appear to be consistent with the findings from previous studies that have observed increased use and control of a broader range of expressions by the candidates at higher proficiency levels in OPIs (Lazaraton, 2002; Lee, Park, & Sohn, 2011; Watanabe, 2003).

On the other hand, the findings of this study indicate that the level descriptions concerning the text type criterion of the OPI do not necessarily match the candidates' actual performance in the present data. My analysis suggests that there is a possibility that the text type criterion does not accurately characterize candidates' speaking ability, and if so, the assumption in scoring inference that the rating criteria are reasonable would be (at least partially) refuted, which would in turn bring into question the overall validity of the ratings. As suggested earlier, the problem seems to stem from the point that (as indicated by many researchers) the level descriptions in the Guidelines are not based on any adequate theory or empirical research on L2 talk and development. In particular, the use of the units of analysis for writing (e.g., sentences, paragraphs) to describe the levels of oral proficiency seems problematic. It was evident that what the candidates in the present data produced for the narration and description tasks did not resemble written sentences or paragraphs. Rather, the candidates consistently used linguistic and nonlinguistic resources to maintain the floor, monitored and elicited the interviewer's reactions to the current TCUs, and adjusted their utterances on a moment-by-moment basis to achieve intersubjectivity in the interaction. The sentence/paragraph distinction in the OPI rating criteria does not seem to adequately capture what L2 speakers are capable of doing in interaction.

With regard to the present OPI data, the problem appears to be particularly acute for the level descriptions of Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid speakers. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Guidelines (ACTFL, 2012c) characterize Intermediate-Low speakers' responses as "short statements and discrete sentences" (p. 8) and Intermediate-Mid speakers' responses as "sentences and strings of sentences" (p. 7). Again, according to ACTFL, discrete sentences refer to "stand-alone sentences that lack further organization, such as into paragraphs," and strings of sentences refer to "a series of isolated or discrete sentences typically referring to a given topic but not grammatically or syntactically connected." In contrast, speakers at higher proficiency levels are capable of producing a "paragraph," which is "a self-contained, cohesive unit of spoken or written discourse that generally consists of multiple sentences linked by internal organization and connectors" (http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012/glossary). What is claimed here is that the Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid candidates are basically incapable of producing a coherent and cohesive response that consists of multiple clauses/sentences linked by internal organization and connective expressions.

However, this was not what I found in the candidates' performance in the present data. In Chapters 4 and 5, I showed that all of the candidates in my data, whose ratings ranged from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid, produced multiple clauses/sentences in response to the description and narration tasks, organized their discourse in a logical manner, and tended to link clauses/sentences using connective expressions (although the variety and frequency of connective expressions varied among the candidates). This

seemed to indicate that all candidates in the present data produced what the Guidelines call a "connected discourse of paragraph length," including the Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid candidates, who were supposedly incapable of doing so, according to the Guidelines. What was different across the proficiency levels, then, was the degree to which the candidates were able to draw on linguistic resources and use their functions in the discourse. Yet the use of a large variety of connective expressions did not seem to be a requirement for an Advanced rating; rather, a consistent, adequate, and sufficient use of (even a small range of) connective expressions seemed important. In addition, lexical knowledge, fluency and smoothness of speech, and the overall comprehensibility of the telling appeared to have a good deal of weight in the rating. Utterances containing many hesitation markers, long pauses, self-corrections, lexical searches, grammatical and lexical errors, and English words were likely to affect the resulting ratings negatively.

The problem concerning the level descriptions of Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid speakers seems to reside in the Guidelines' failure to adequately recognize the lower-proficiency-level candidates' interactional competence to produce sequentially appropriate actions in an orderly manner (including extended turns), in addition to the inadequate descriptors (sentence, paragraph) used in the text type criterion of the OPI. As competent speakers of their first languages, adult L2 speakers have a good understanding of interactional organization, which they may use as a resource when they participate in an L2 interaction (Kasper, 2006a), often regardless of their current L2 proficiency level.

As shown in Chapters 4 and 5, the Intermediate-Low candidates demonstrated their competent participation in the interaction, and produced extended turns in response to the interviewer's requests that projected the production of such a discourse as an appropriate next action (description, narration) while constantly working with the interviewer to achieve intersubjectivity. For instance, in response to the interviewer's request to describe a food preparation process, Olivia first initiated repair on the request to get her understanding of the task confirmed, and then described a cake-making process by presenting a number of steps in a sequential order and linking them with a few connective expressions (e.g., the te-form of predicate, *ato (wa)* "and then"). Around the turn-completion point, she produced an utterance hearable as the end of the process (*dekita* "It's done") followed by sequence-closing assessments, and she marked them with the final-form of predicate and falling intonation, which invited the interviewer's acknowledgement. Olivia's efforts to achieve a mutual understanding on the subject matter were also visible in her self-clarification attempts prefaced by *tatoeba* "for instance." George's two instances of storytelling (the retelling of a short story and a personal narrative) also demonstrated his competence to produce sequentially relevant actions in extended turns. While he had much difficulty in formulating utterances in the retelling task, he still managed to make a clear opening and closing in his discourse, organized the telling in a logical manner, and linked utterances with *soshite* "and." In his personal narrative, he more fully demonstrated his storytelling ability, describing a number of events in a chronological order, indicating the time of the events, and linking utterances using a few connective expressions (e.g., *soshite* "and," *demo* "but," *to*

"when/if"). He initiated the story in a spontaneous manner at a sequentially appropriate moment in the interaction, and successfully engaged the interviewer in his storytelling, which was evidenced in the reciprocated laughter and reciprocated assessments around the completion point of his turn.

The Intermediate-Mid candidates also demonstrated their competent participation in the interaction, with an increased ability to use linguistic resources in their discourse. Similar to Olivia's description of a cake-making process, Alyssa's description of a cooking process was produced in an extended turn in which clauses were combined mostly with the te-form of predicate, but Alyssa also employed the connective particle *tara* "if/when/after." She also indicated sequential transitions using several clause-initial connective expressions (e.g., *de* "and then," *sono ato wa* "after that," *tsugi wa* "next") and produced self-directed speech in Japanese to do "thinking," appropriately using style-shift. Her frequent try-marked intonation on newly introduced items showed her efforts to ensure the recognizability of the words/phrases before moving on to a next part of the telling. Emily also produced her retelling of an anime series in an extended turn in response to the interviewer's request. She presented a number of story events in a chronological order and provided relevant background information and reasons for the events/actions to facilitate the interviewer's understanding of the story. She employed several connective expressions to link clauses/utterances (e.g., *kara/node* "because," *ga* "but," *sorede* "and then," *demo* "but") and grouped clauses together as chunks of related events (although her discourse segmentation and backgrounding/foregrounding of information was not yet always effective). While her storytelling seemed to fail to

provide some information necessary for the interviewer to understand the story, Emily's appropriate responses to the interviewer's repair initiations helped them achieve a mutual understanding on the subject matter.

What is evident, then, in these interactions is the candidates' competence to produce sequentially appropriate actions (whether a sentential TCU or an extended turn), and their orientation to the interactional organization and the achievement of intersubjectivity, which go beyond the mere production of "sentences" and "paragraphs." Yet the Guidelines state that the Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid candidates typically respond in discrete sentences or strings of sentences, which does not seem to accurately describe what these candidates did in the present OPI data. The findings from the present study indicate the importance of having an adequate theory of spoken interaction and empirical evidence. I recommend that future research should further investigate this issue. If findings are consistent, then recommendations for the revision of the Guidelines should be made, so that the rating scale of the ACTFL OPI would better reflect actual candidate performance. My findings suggest that while some parts of the level descriptions in the Guidelines adequately describe candidate performance, the parts concerning the text type criterion may require modification in order to accurately represent actual candidate performance. For example, it seems fair to say that "[Intermediate-Low speakers'] responses are often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they search for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message" (ACTFL, 2012c, p. 8), but their discourse cannot truly be characterized as "short statements and discrete sentences" (ACTFL, 2012c, p. 8). I also

recommend that the Guidelines should use more appropriate descriptors to represent spoken discourse, such as *utterances* and *short/long (or extended) turns*. Table 6.1 presents my proposed draft revisions to the text type criterion in the Guidelines based on the present findings. These are a work in progress, intended to serve as a basis of comparison with findings from future studies.

Table 6.1.
Proposed Draft Revisions to the Guidelines Based on the Present Findings

level	**Intermediate-Low**	**Intermediate-Mid**	**Intermediate-High**	**Advanced-Low Advanced-Mid**
current descriptions	short statements and discrete sentences	sentences and strings of sentences	connected discourse of paragraph length (but not all the time)	connected discourse of paragraph length
proposed draft revisions	able to use extended turns to produce sequentially appropriate actions, organize the discourse in a logical manner, and employ a limited range of connective expressions and other discourse markers	able to use extended turns to produce sequentially appropriate actions, organize the discourse in a logical manner, and employ a fair, but not extensive, range of connective expressions and other discourse markers	able to use extended turns to produce sequentially appropriate actions, organize the discourse in a logical manner, and employ a good range of connective expressions and other discourse markers	able to use extended turns to produce sequentially appropriate actions, organize the discourse in a logical manner, and employ a good range of connective expressions and other discourse markers consistently and efficiently
	generally not yet able to use linguistic forms to chunk information or distinguish the main and subordinate information	shows some evidence of using linguistic forms to chunk information and/or distinguish the main and subordinate information, but not always effectively	generally effective in using linguistic forms to chunk information and distinguish the main and subordinate information, but may show slight problems at times	generally effective in using linguistic forms to chunk information and distinguish the main and subordinate information

As discussed earlier, the ACTFL OPI and Guidelines are highly influential in the field of foreign language teaching and assessment. It is very important that they describe the proficiency levels accurately and clearly so that test takers, teachers, administrators, employers, and policy makers can appropriately interpret the OPI ratings and use them to make sound decisions. For instance, the ACTFL OPI certificates that the candidates are awarded and may use when applying for jobs or academic programs include the level descriptions from the Guidelines. If the Guidelines do not adequately describe what the candidate can do with the target language, this could lead to unfair judgments of the candidate's speaking proficiency. In addition, since the Guidelines are widely used for curriculum design and materials development in foreign language programs in universities and secondary schools, if the Guidelines incorrectly characterize the proficiency levels, this could have an unwarranted or even damaging influence on foreign language teaching and assessment. For example, teachers of beginning-level language courses may decide to focus on practicing sentence-level constructions in classroom activities and not to introduce activities that require the production of extended turns (e.g., storytelling) because the Guidelines emphasize "sentences" as characteristic of Intermediate speakers' talk. In any event, it is very important that the Guidelines accurately describe the proficiency levels with consideration of L2 speakers' interactional competence, so that the test results are appropriately interpreted and used, and that the Guidelines and OPI have positive influences on foreign language teaching and assessment.

6.3 Contributions of the present study

The present study attempted to make contributions in the following ways. First, the study was a first attempt to adopt Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity to investigate the validity of the interpretations and uses of the ACTFL OPI ratings. Drawing on Kane's framework as a guide, the study evaluated the scoring inference of the ACTFL OPI, focusing on the text type criterion for the Intermediate and Advanced levels. I examined how the candidates, whose proficiency levels ranged from Intermediate-Low to Advanced-Mid, responded to the two major Advanced-level tasks (description, narration), and investigated to what extent the level descriptions in the Guidelines matched with the candidates' actual performance in the present OPI data. While the findings of the study seemed to support the overall adequacy of the assignment of proficiency levels and the effectiveness of the two tasks in generating differential performances from the candidates, they indicated that the level descriptions concerning the text type criterion did not match the candidates' actual performance in my data. The findings suggested that the problems in the level descriptions stem from the Guidelines not being based on adequate theory and empirical evidence on spoken interaction, that they use the units of analysis for writing (e.g., sentences, paragraphs) to describe oral proficiency levels, and that they do not adequately recognize lower-proficiency-level candidates' competence to produce sequentially appropriate actions in an orderly manner in an interaction, including their ability to organize extended turns. I recommended that future research should investigate these issues, and if the findings are consistent, then the rating criteria of the ACTFL OPI and the level descriptions in the Guidelines should be

revised to better reflect actual candidate performance. It is hoped that the findings of the present study contribute to the efforts to validate the proposed interpretations and uses of the ACTFL OPI ratings.

Second, the present study attempted to make an addition to the growing body of literature on the interviewer–candidate interaction in OPIs. I identified the basic sequential structure and turn-taking organizations in the present face-to-face Japanese OPI data, and described how the candidates and the interviewer projected, understood, and negotiated the continuation and completion of the candidates' response turns. The study also documented how the OPI interaction proceeded on a moment-by-moment basis. Since specific topics and questions are not prescribed for the interviews, the interviewer had to create questions on the spot and frequently recycled topics from the candidate's previous talk to formulate tasks. The interviewer's requests were often followed by some interactional work by the candidate and the interviewer to achieve a mutual understanding on what the task was about. In some cases, the interviewer's request did not specify the target item for the task, which invited the candidate to proffer a possible target. During the candidate's extended turn, the interviewer quite consistently provided continuers and refrained from taking a full turn, thereby contributing to the achievement of the candidate's extended turn. Yet the interviewer sometimes intervened in order to ask for Japanese equivalents when the candidates used English words in their telling, showing her orientation to the OPI as an assessment of proficiency in the target language. After the candidates' tellings were completed, the interviewer and the candidates also often engaged in some interactional work to achieve a mutual

understanding on the subject matter. In addition to producing acknowledgement tokens, the interviewer often displayed her understanding of the candidates' just-completed telling, produced an assessment, and/or asked follow-up questions to solicit more information. The interaction found in the present OPI data was quite different from the interaction in the IST described by Seedhouse (2013), where the questions and topics were prescribed, the ways in which the candidate could initiate repair on the interviewer's questions were restricted, and the interviewer was not allowed to produce follow-up questions on what the candidate said. Compared to the highly scripted testing interaction in Seedhouse's data, where the opportunities for the interviewer and candidate to achieve subjectivity seemed quite limited, the interaction in the present OPI was more flexible, allowing the interviewer and the candidate to work together to achieve mutual understanding.

6.4 Limitations of the present study

There are many limitations to the present study. Due to the small number of participants, the relatively homogeneous backgrounds of the candidates, and the specific testing setting and target language, the findings of the present study are not directly applicable to other populations of candidates, testers, settings, and languages. In particular, the study involved only one interviewer, which prevented it from examining potential interviewer variations. Furthermore, the official ACTFL OPI is commonly conducted over the phone, where the lack of certain semiotic resources in the interaction (e.g., gesture, gaze, artifacts) could influence how the participants interact with each other. In addition, the OPIs examined in this study were conducted by an "in-house"

tester within an institution, which might have had some impact on the interviewer–candidate interactions, although the candidates took the OPIs for language proficiency certification and the testing context was a genuine one. For instance, while most of the candidates met the interviewer for the first time when they took the OPI, it was likely that the candidates and interviewer shared some knowledge about the university and its surroundings (e.g., campus life, courses, place names), which might have helped them construct mutual understandings on certain subject matters. Such knowledge is not likely to be shared between an interviewer and a candidate in a phone OPI, who are located in different places. Furthermore, there seems to be an increased use of the computer-based ACTFL OPI for assessment, which would offer a radically different testing context from an OPI conducted by a human interviewer.

6.5 Concluding remarks and recommendations for future studies

The present study examined how the candidates produced extended turns in the face-to-face Japanese OPI, and examined to what extent the level descriptions in the Guidelines concerning the text type criterion matched actual candidate performance in the data. It is hoped that the findings from this study enhance knowledge of the OPI interaction, especially in relation to candidate performance on the OPI. I recommend that future studies should further investigate the issues discussed in this study to collect empirical evidence to inform future revisions of the Guidelines. I also suggest that such future studies adopt CA for the analysis of the OPI interaction, as it enables researchers to identify the interactional competence of the participants as well as the dynamics of the interaction. I further recommend Kane's (2006) argument-based approach to validity for

validation studies on the ACTFL OPI, as it could provide a practical framework to organize validation research and integrate evidence collected from different sources. Future studies should also examine OPIs in different languages and different testing contexts, including computer-based OPIs. And in addition to the text type criterion, the other rating criteria of the ACTFL OPI such as global tasks and functions, context and content, and accuracy should be examined in future empirical studies. Furthermore, the chain of inferences beyond the scoring inference in the interpretive argument, including the generalization inference (i.e., the generalizability/reliability of the ratings), the extrapolation inference (i.e., the extent to which a candidate's performance in the OPI is related to how well he/she is likely to use the language in real-life situations), and the utilization inference (i.e., the impact of the use of the test results), needs to be examined so that a sound validity argument can be constructed for the proposed interpretations and uses of the ACTFL OPI ratings.

APPENDIX

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Speaking (ACTFL, 2012c; presented with permission from ACTFL)

PREFACE

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012—Speaking describe five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels.

The Guidelines describe the tasks that speakers can handle at each level, as well as the content, context, accuracy, and discourse types associated with tasks at each level. They also present the limits that speakers encounter when attempting to function at the next higher major level.

These Guidelines can be used to evaluate speech that is either Interpersonal (interactive, two-way communication) or Presentational (one-way, non-interactive).

The written descriptions of speaking proficiency are accompanied online by speech samples illustrating the features of each major level.

DISTINGUISHED

Speakers at the Distinguished level are able to use language skillfully, and with accuracy, efficiency, and effectiveness. They are educated and articulate users of the language. They can reflect on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts in a culturally appropriate manner. Distinguished-level speakers can use persuasive and hypothetical discourse for representational purposes, allowing them to advocate a point of view that is not necessarily their own. They can tailor language to a variety of audiences by adapting their speech and register in ways that are culturally authentic.

Speakers at the Distinguished level produce highly sophisticated and tightly organized extended discourse. At the same time, they can speak succinctly, often using cultural and historical references to allow them to say less and mean more. At this level, oral discourse typically resembles written discourse.

A non-native accent, a lack of a native-like economy of expression, a limited control of deeply embedded cultural references, and/or an occasional isolated language error may still be present at this level.

SUPERIOR

Speakers at the Superior level are able to communicate with accuracy and fluency in order to participate fully and effectively in conversations on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings from both concrete and abstract perspectives. They discuss their interests and special fields of competence, explain complex matters in detail, and provide lengthy and coherent narrations, all with ease, fluency, and accuracy. They present their opinions on a number of issues of interest to them, such as social and political issues, and provide structured arguments to support these opinions. They are able to construct and develop hypotheses to explore alternative possibilities.

When appropriate, these speakers use extended discourse without unnaturally lengthy hesitation to make their point, even when engaged in abstract elaborations. Such discourse, while coherent, may still be influenced by language patterns other than those of the target language. Superior-level speakers employ a variety of interactive and discourse strategies, such as turn-taking and separating main ideas from supporting information through the use of syntactic, lexical, and phonetic devices.

Speakers at the Superior level demonstrate no pattern of error in the use of basic structures, although they may make sporadic errors, particularly in low-frequency structures and in complex high-frequency structures. Such errors, if they do occur, do not distract the native interlocutor or interfere with communication.

ADVANCED

Speakers at the Advanced level engage in conversation in a clearly participatory manner in order to communicate information on autobiographical topics, as well as topics of community, national, or international interest. The topics are handled concretely by means of narration and description in the major time frames of past, present, and future. These speakers can also deal with a social situation with an unexpected complication. The language of Advanced-level speakers is abundant, the oral paragraph being the measure of Advanced-level length and discourse. Advanced-level speakers have sufficient control of basic structures and generic vocabulary to be understood by native speakers of the language, including those unaccustomed to non-native speech.

Advanced High

Speakers at the Advanced High sublevel perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence, and competence. They are consistently able to explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. In addition, Advanced High speakers

handle the tasks pertaining to the Superior level but cannot sustain performance at that level across a variety of topics. They may provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise, but in general, they are more comfortable discussing a variety of topics concretely.

Advanced High speakers may demonstrate a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms or for limitations in vocabulary by the confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration. They use precise vocabulary and intonation to express meaning and often show great fluency and ease of speech. However, when called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language will at times break down or prove inadequate, or they may avoid the task altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypothesis.

Advanced Mid

Speakers at the Advanced Mid sublevel are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks. They participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as topics relating to events of current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance.

Advanced Mid speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future by providing a full account, with good control of aspect. Narration and description tend to be combined and interwoven to relate relevant and supporting facts in connected, paragraph-length discourse.

Advanced Mid speakers can handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar. Communicative strategies such as circumlocution or rephrasing are often employed for this purpose. The speech of Advanced Mid speakers performing Advanced-level tasks is marked by substantial flow. Their vocabulary is fairly extensive although primarily generic in nature, except in the case of a particular area of specialization or interest. Their discourse may still reflect the oral paragraph structure of their own language rather than that of the target language.

Advanced Mid speakers contribute to conversations on a variety of familiar topics, dealt with concretely, with much accuracy, clarity and precision, and they convey their

intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. They are readily understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the quality and/or quantity of their speech will generally decline.

Advanced Low

Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest.

Advanced Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven. They can handle appropriately the essential linguistic challenges presented by a complication or an unexpected turn of events.

Responses produced by Advanced Low speakers are typically not longer than a single paragraph. The speaker's dominant language may be evident in the use of false cognates, literal translations, or the oral paragraph structure of that language. At times their discourse may be minimal for the level, marked by an irregular flow, and containing noticeable self-correction. More generally, the performance of Advanced Low speakers tends to be uneven.

Advanced Low speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings), but the overall performance of the Advanced-level tasks is sustained, albeit minimally. The vocabulary of Advanced Low speakers often lacks specificity. Nevertheless, Advanced Low speakers are able to use communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution.

Advanced Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. Their speech can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may require some repetition or restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly.

INTERMEDIATE

Speakers at the Intermediate level are distinguished primarily by their ability to create with the language when talking about familiar topics related to their daily life. They are able to recombine learned material in order to express personal meaning. Intermediate-level speakers can ask simple questions and can handle a straightforward survival situation. They produce sentence-level language, ranging from discrete sentences to strings of sentences, typically in present time. Intermediate-level speakers are understood by interlocutors who are accustomed to dealing with non-native learners of the language.

Intermediate High

Intermediate High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. They are able to handle successfully uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to their work, school, recreation, particular interests, and areas of competence.

Intermediate High speakers can handle a substantial number of tasks associated with the Advanced level, but they are unable to sustain performance of all of these tasks all of the time. Intermediate High speakers can narrate and describe in all major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length, but not all the time. Typically, when Intermediate High speakers attempt to perform Advanced-level tasks, their speech exhibits one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to carry out fully the narration or description in the appropriate major time frame, an inability to maintain paragraph-length discourse, or a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary.

Intermediate High speakers can generally be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although interference from another language may be evident (e.g., use of code-switching, false cognates, literal translations), and a pattern of gaps in communication may occur.

Intermediate Mid

Speakers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture. These include personal information related to self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such as food, shopping, travel, and lodging.

Intermediate Mid speakers tend to function reactively, for example, by responding to direct questions or requests for information. However, they are capable of asking a variety of questions when necessary to obtain simple information to satisfy basic needs,

such as directions, prices, and services. When called on to perform functions or handle topics at the Advanced level, they provide some information but have difficulty linking ideas, manipulating time and aspect, and using communicative strategies, such as circumlocution.

Intermediate Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to produce responses typically consisting of sentences and strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. In spite of the limitations in their vocabulary and/or pronunciation and/or grammar and/or syntax, Intermediate Mid speakers are generally understood by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

Overall, Intermediate Mid speakers are at ease when performing Intermediate-level tasks and do so with significant quantity and quality of Intermediate-level language.

Intermediate Low

Speakers at the Intermediate Low sublevel are able to handle successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to some of the concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for survival in the target-language culture. These topics relate to basic personal information; for example, self and family, some daily activities and personal preferences, and some immediate needs, such as ordering food and making simple purchases. At the Intermediate Low sublevel, speakers are primarily reactive and struggle to answer direct questions or requests for information. They are also able to ask a few appropriate questions. Intermediate Low speakers manage to sustain the functions of the Intermediate level, although just barely.

Intermediate Low speakers express personal meaning by combining and recombining what they know and what they hear from their interlocutors into short statements and discrete sentences. Their responses are often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they search for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message. Their speech is characterized by frequent pauses, ineffective reformulations and self-corrections. Their pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax are strongly influenced by their first language. In spite of frequent misunderstandings that may require repetition or rephrasing, Intermediate Low speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors, particularly by those accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

NOVICE

Novice-level speakers can communicate short messages on highly predictable, everyday topics that affect them directly. They do so primarily through the use of isolated words and phrases that have been encountered, memorized, and recalled. Novice-level speakers may be difficult to understand even by the most sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to non-native speech.

Novice High

Speakers at the Novice High sublevel are able to handle a variety of tasks pertaining to the Intermediate level, but are unable to sustain performance at that level. They are able to manage successfully a number of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to a few of the predict able topics necessary for survival in the target language culture, such as basic personal information, basic objects, and a limited number of activities, preferences, and immediate needs. Novice High speakers respond to simple, direct questions or requests for information. They are also able to ask a few formulaic questions.

Novice High speakers are able to express personal meaning by relying heavily on learned phrases or recombinations of these and what they hear from their interlocutor. Their language consists primarily of short and sometimes incomplete sentences in the present, and may be hesitant or inaccurate. On the other hand, since their language often consists of expansions of learned material and stock phrases, they may sometimes sound surprisingly fluent and accurate. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax may be strongly influenced by the first language. Frequent misunderstandings may arise but, with repetition or rephrasing, Novice High speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors used to non-natives. When called on to handle a variety of topics and perform functions pertaining to the Intermediate level, a Novice High speaker can sometimes respond in intelligible sentences, but will not be able to sustain sentence-level discourse.

Novice Mid

Speakers at the Novice Mid sublevel communicate minimally by using a number of isolated words and memorized phrases limited by the particular context in which the language has been learned. When responding to direct questions, they may say only two or three words at a time or give an occasional stock answer. They pause frequently as they search for simple vocabulary or attempt to recycle their own and their interlocutor's words. Novice Mid speakers may be understood with difficulty even by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to handle topics and perform functions associated with the Intermediate level, they frequently resort to repetition, words from their native language, or silence.

Novice Low

Speakers at the Novice Low sublevel have no real functional ability and, because of their pronunciation, may be unintelligible. Given adequate time and familiar cues, they may be able to exchange greetings, give their identity, and name a number of familiar objects from their immediate environment. They are unable to perform functions or handle topics pertaining to the Intermediate level, and cannot therefore participate in a true conversational exchange.

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