

An Interlanguage Analysis of a Bilingual Child

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INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with the "interlanguage" system of a Japanese/English bilingual child at age 7 years, 1 month. The term interlanguage means a separate linguistic system that results from the learner's attempted production of the target language norm; in this case English. In other words, children learning a language are said to do so by "creative construction," a process whereby they gradually reconstruct rules for the speech they hear, guided by strategies that derive from certain innate mechanisms that cause them to formulate certain types of hypotheses about the language system being acquired, until the mismatch between what they are exposed to and what they produce is resolved. The construction of linguistic rules is said to be creative, because no speaker of the target language models the kind of sentences regularly produced by children who are still acquiring the language. The result of this "creative construction" process is a developing language often referred to as interlanguage. Corder (1971) used the term "idiosyncratic dialect" to connote the idea the learner's language is unique to a particular individual, that the rules of the learner's language are peculiar to the language of that individual alone.

Of what value is there in a careful examination of interlanguage? Essentially, researchers and teachers of second languages realize that the

mistakes and errors a person makes in this process of constructing a new system of language need to be analyzed carefully, for they possibly hold in them some of the keys to the understanding of the process of second language acquisition. As Corder (1967) notes: "A learner's errors... are significant in that they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in the discovery of language. By describing and classifying a learner's errors in linguistic terms, we build up a picture of the features of the language which are causing him learning problems." With these thoughts fresh in mind, let us have a look at some of our subject's interlanguage and discover what conclusions we can draw about (in this case) simultaneous language acquisition. First, a brief introduction.

The subject of this study was born Gene Clayton Reynolds, February 9, 1982, the first son of an American father and a Japanese mother in a small rural town in western Japan. It was the parents' wish to raise the child as a bilingual and, against most odds, succeeded far beyond their expectations. A unique aspects of the child's success is that the only "living" source of English is his father and that he has been outside Japan only once, a five week visit to southern California at age 6 ; 6, yet is able to communicate in English with remarkable fluency. He is virtually immersed in the Japanese language at home, at school, and in the community. For a more detailed description of how this bilingual ability was accomplished, see Reynolds (1988).

The interlanguage to be analyzed was tape recorded on March 26, 1989, when the subject was age 7 years, 1 month. The language is actually a series of five stories he told to me during the course of a day. As Gene has a keen interests in boats and ships, a visit to the Queen Mary was a must

during our trip to southern California. This interest in passenger liners has its beginnings in a book he read in kindergarten picturing the disastrous sinking of the HMS Titanic. The stark drama of that tragedy fired his imagination. When he saw a beautiful 1.5 meter, hand-crafted wood model on display inside the Queen — he *had* to have one. The problem was the \$5,000 dollar price tag that goes along with such a piece of art. When he realized that nobody he knew was going to buy it for him, he determinedly set out to save the money himself. Along with that decision came countless schemes to earn money. Thus, I suggested he write a book and try to sell it (of course I saw the value as a language learning activity). Thus, he dictated the following five stories to me while I wrote (most) of the words down on paper, being unaware he was being tape recorded for a thorough analyses at a later date.

The stories are generally transcribed verbatim and orthographically. Most of my redundant repetitions have been omitted and a phonetic analysis is beyond the scope of this study. All his speech has been transcribed verbatim. After each story is an error analysis; errors are underlined and the correct word (if applicable) is in brackets immediately following the error. Necessary words that he omitted are also enclosed in brackets.

QUEEN MARY'S WAR CARTOON

"First tell me the story, then I'll type it. Okay?"

[G-1A] "Okay."

"The first one's going to be about the Queen Mary?"

[G-2A] "Yeah."

"How do I write the title? You know, the name of it?"

[G-3A] “NAME ??? A.... a.... Queen.... Mary’s.... War Cartoon.”

(Writing, repeating after him) “Queen-Mary’s-War-Cartoon. Okay.”

[G-4A] “Ah.... this time was World War 2. The name Queen Mary the ship was going to World War 2. This ship was the third biggest ship (in the world). When the Queen Mary was going full speed. He was going. And, a, he hit a British cruiser and cut to two.”

“And-he-hit-a-British-cruiser-and-he.... and he, he what?”

[G-5A] “And. A. British cruiser was cut on two. And the Queen Mary’s a bow was only a little broken. And when the World War 2 was finished. He take the Queen Mary to dry dock. The people use to fix the ship. But.... he scrap it. And.... he made some strange ship name. And he made some strange ship with Queen Mary part. Name.... Name a.... Name.... ‘Geowa Geowa’! And got a, kinda *very very* small funnel. Ship was a same big as Queen Mary. But funnel. They have only one funnel. And that one, that funnel was only one meter long. I mean the funnel was.... 3 feet.”

“Only 3 feet high?”

[G-6A] “Yeah. And they have only one piece of big porthole. And. And they have only.... 2 meter long lifeboat. It’s big ship, but carrying only one passenger. And only one lifeboat. And they got only a.... And they got only a.... 8 centimeter life jacket. 8 centimeters is about how much? (I show him). *AND*. They got a.... no screw (propeller).”

“The lifeboat or ship? ”

[G-7A] “Ship. They move with very.... with only one centimeter long jet. Jet engine!

“Jet engine?”

[G-8A] “Yeah!”

... with-only-a-one-centimeter-long-jet-engine. Gee, what a ship. Okay. What's next? "

[G-9A] "And, a.... he can go less than one knot.... half of the one knot. Half of the one knot is how many? (I show him). When he launch the ship, 'Geowa Geowa' is being small and small. Only 10 meter. So that ship... when he touch a water.... is going to be small. They got only one table and one chair. That ship, when he finish making, it was nineteen... nineteen. It was nineteen. Nineteen.... eighty-nine."

"Nineteen-that's now, nineteen eighty-nine. Right. That's this year. Nineteen eighty-nine. Uh-huh. Great story."

[G-10A] (Laughing to himself): "Because only one people was making the ship! (He whispers) - finished."

"Finished? All right. The-End. Great story."

[G-11A] "Daddy. So can you read from beginning to end?"

ANALYSIS

[G-4A] "Ah... *this* [the] time was World War 2." This determiner "this" is incorrectly used for "the".

"*The name Queen Mary the ship* was going to World War 2." This sentence is grammatically correct yet cluttered with unnecessary words or unusual word order. "The name Queen Mary the ship" could have been reduced to "The Queen Mary was..." or the word order changed to "The ship named the Queen Mary..." However, his construction is not an error per se, but rather an example of "creative construction" with the linguistic rules available to him in English. Monolinguals make similar sentences in the learning process. He is conveying that there is a ship; that the ship has

a name ; and that the name is Queen Mary.

This ship was the third biggest ship [in the world]. This sentence is also grammatically correct, perhaps he takes “in the world” for granted.

“*He* [She/It] was going.” This is not so much a case of Gene not knowing that great ocean liners are referred to in the feminine gender as a complete lack of understanding English personal pronoun gender. At this stage of his English linguistic development, he refers to anyone or anything, including his mother, sister, grandmother, and female pet rabbit, as “he,” “his,” or “him”.

“And, a *he* [she/it] hit a British cruiser and cut [it] *to* [in] two.” The wrong preposition “to” was used and the direct object (it) of the second clause omitted.

G-5A “And. A. British cruiser was cut *on* [in] two.” Interestingly, he tries yet another preposition for the same phrase, incorrectly.

“And the Queen Mary’s *a* bow was only a little broken.” The indefinite article “a” is incorrectly used before a plural noun. The indefinite article a/an really means “one”, so it can be used with only singular countable nouns, but not with plurals. Correct usage of English definite and indefinite articles is another aspect of Gene’s English interlanguage which is poorly developed at this point in time. There seems little evidence from the language in these stories and from our daily conversations that he controls the factors which govern the insertion of these articles. However, it is also a complex area for monolingual English learners and, as Fletcher (1988 ; 51) points out, probably not fully mastered until the early school years.

“And when *the* World War 2 was finished.” An unnecessary article.

“*He* [They] *take* [took] the Queen Mary *to* dry dock.” The third

person singular masculine pronoun "he" is used rather than the plural form "they" and the verb "take" in the present rather than past tense.

"*The* people *use* [used] to fix the ship. But... *he* [they] *scrap* [scraped] it. And... *he* [they] made some strange ship *name* [named]. And *he* [they] made some strange ship with Queen *Mary* [Mary's] *part* [parts]." I included these three sentences as they contain many of the same recurring errors: unnecessary articles, incorrect pronouns, wrong verb tenses. The possessive marker for "Queen Mary" oddly comes up missing for the one and only time but the noun "part" in the singular rather than the plural is another area of his interlanguage which is not well developed: the inflection to mark the plural number of nouns (generally formed by adding -s/-es to the singular). This may be do to an interlanguage interference (versus intralingual, within the target language itself, interference) from his native language. In Japanese, one and the same form of a noun may mean both the singular and the plural number of the noun. Nonetheless, it is a consistently recurring error in his speech.

"Name.... Name a.... Name.... 'Geowa Geowa'!" After three full hesitations, he comes up with a nonsense rhyme 'Geowa Geowa' for the ship's new name.

"And [it] [has] got a, kinda (kind of) very very small funnel." The subject of the sentence is missing (it) plus he should have used the past perfect tense (has got) with an auxiliary verb. Also, notice the common reduction "kinda" from "kind of". As "kinda" ends with the same vowel sound, the indefinite article "a" may be omitted before "very".

"[The] Ship was *a* [the] same *big* [size] as Queen Mary." This sentence is missing the definite article "The," using an indefinite article "a" instead of "the," and using the adjective "big" instead of the noun "size".

As Queen Mary has become so familiar to Gene, the definite article “the” may be dropped before her name and not be considered grammatically incorrect as he has done in this sentence. Also, using “big” in place of “size” is another consistently recurring error in Gene’s developmental speech diary. It may be attributed to interlingual interference from his L1. In Japanese grammar, adjectival stems can function as nouns when suffixed by *-sa*. For example, the Japanese adjective for big is “ookii”. “You have a big car” translates as; “Ookina (big) kuruma (car) arimasu (you have).” “My car is the same size” translates as; “boku no (my) kuruma (car) wa onaji (same) ookisa (big/size) desu (is).” Thus, the above illustrates the transformation of an adjective stem (*ookii*) to a common noun (*ookisa*) in Japanese grammar. This Japanese noun structure “big” is interfering with Gene’s English lexis.

“But [the] funnel. *They* [She/It] have only one funnel.” A missing article and incorrect pronoun. “He” has now become “They”. As the verb “have” agrees with its subject (the incorrect “They”) in person as Gene *spoke* it, I can not consider it an error in verb tense.

“And that one, that funnel was only one meter *long* [high/tall].” This is a good example of the role subjectivity can play in error analysis. In Gene’s mind, is he seeing the funnel laying on its side at a shipyard or already standing on the ship’s superstructure? In the first case, the funnel’s length would be measured, the latter it’s height. It’s impossible to say.

G-6A “And *they* [she/it] have only one *piece of* big big porthole.” He continues to use the incorrect pronoun “they” and an interesting usage of the partive-noun “piece”. As Gene’s knowledge of paratives in English is limited, he applies one of the few he knows to all cases. Just yesterday, at

age 7 years 6 months, as we drove into the parking lot of a 31 Flavors Ice Cream Shop he exclaimed: "See, it's not crowded, there's only one piece of people inside."

"And *they* [it] have only... [a] 2 meter long lifeboat. It's [a] big ship, but [it] [is] carrying only one passenger." More of the same errors; an incorrect pronoun and 2 omitted articles. Also, the subject-pronoun "it" and auxiliary verb "is", are missing from the second clause.

"And *they* [she/it] [have] got only a... 8 centimeter life jacket." This sentence has the same pronoun error plus a missing auxiliary verb "have". Note that "have" would agree in person to the incorrect spoken pronoun "they". "Has" would agree in person with "she" or "it".

"They [She/It] [have] got a... no screw." The pause in the middle of this sentence makes for a cautious analysis. At first glance it would seem as though Gene hasn't an understanding of the principle of negation or the primary auxiliary verb system to carry present and past tense markings. That is, he has yet to learn the rule that negative sentences contain the word "not" (or its contracted form "-nt"), which occurs after the first auxiliary, which he omitted (have). However, I know this not to be the case from our daily conversations. It appears to be two separate thoughts separated by a long, vocal (a....) pause, thus rendering the sentence awkward, but not necessarily (among native-speakers) unusual. Notice that he uses the lexical verb "got" rather than "have" as it is particularly frequent in colloquial English, which is mostly what he hears from me.

G-7A "[The] ship. *They* [She/It] move with [a] very... with only [a] one centimeter long jet. Jet engine!" Here are more familiar errors; 3 omitted articles and the personal pronoun in the wrong person and gender.

G-9A "And, a... *he* [she/it] can go less than one knot... Half of *the* one

knot. Half of *the* one knot is how *many* [much]?" Gene returns to using the singular masculine form of the subject pronoun, and unnecessarily uses two definite articles. He also uses the incorrect countable noun determiner "many".

"When *he* [They] *launch* [launched] the ship, 'Geow Geowa' is *being small and small* [getting smaller and smaller]." In this sentence he again has trouble with the correct person of the subject-pronoun and the verb in the first clause in the wrong tense. The second clause is difficult to analyze. In his speech diary, there are no notations that he has problems with comparative inflections such as "smaller", "bigger", "faster", etc. The choice of a verb that expresses a state of being in a clause immediately following an action verb (launch) is indeed perplexing and as of this writing tribute the construction to a mental lapse.

"Only 10 *meter* [meters]. So that ship... when *he* [she/it] *touch* [touches] *a* water.... is going to be small." In these sentences, the persistently non-existent plural inflection, the ubiquitous masculine gender pronoun, the verb not agreeing with its subject in person, and an unnecessary indefinite article, can be found.

"*They* [she/it] [have] got only one table and one chair. That ship, when *he* [they] finish making [it], it was nineteen...." Here are more of the well documented pronoun problems; switching back to the plural form with "they" and continuing with the singular form with "he". He also omits the direct object "it" of the verb "making".

G-10A "Because only one *people* [person] was making the ship!" The plural form is incorrectly use.

G-11A "Daddy. So can you read [it] from [the] beginning to [the] end?" The direct object for the verb "read" was omitted as are two definite

articles.

SUMMARY OF ERRORS

Wrong Pronoun	17	Omitted verb	1
Wrong Article	1	Omitted Pronoun	5
Wrong Verb Tense	4	Omitted Article	7
Wrong Expression	1	Omitted Plural Marker	2
Wrong Determiner	2	Omitted Auxiliary Verb	4
Wrong Word Order	1	Omitted Comparative Marker	1
Wrong Preposition	1	L1 Interference	1
Wrong Verb Choice	1	Plural for Singular	1
Wrong Verb Person	1	Incomplete Sentence	1
Unnecessary Article	6		

SUMMARY OF GRAMMAR

<i>nouns</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>adverbs</i>	<i>adjectives</i>
two (2)	is (3)	how	big (2)
bow	hit	much	full
end	cut (2)	okay	same
jet (2)	got (5)	only (11)	small (2)
name	was (8)	very (2)	third
time	read	yeah (3)	little
part	take	about	biggest
feet	made (2)	less than	strange
knot	have (3)		British
ship (11)	going (2)	<i>pronouns</i>	finished
speed	scrap	I	
meter (3)	being	he	<i>articles</i>
screw	touch	it	a (2)
water	can go	one (10)	the (12)
table	launch	two	
chair	making (2)	ten	<i>determiners</i>
people	finished	you	this (2)
funnel (5)	carrying	eight	that (4)
broken	going to	three	some (2)
engine	move with		
cruiser (2)	use to fix	<i>prepositions</i>	<i>conjunctions</i>
dry dock	is going to be	to	so (2)
lifeboat		from	and (13)
porthole		with	but (3)
passenger			when (5)
beginning			because
centimeter			
Queen Mary			
jet engine			
war cartoon			
World War 2			
life jacket			
nineteen eighty-nine			

THE NIMITZ TIME SLIP

“All right. What’s the title of the next story?”

[G-1B] “Nimitz Time Slip.”

“All right. Let’s do it.”

[G-2B] “Once upon a time there was the biggest biggest navy named Nimitz. And when he was learning.... for doing a war, the Nimitz made time slip. But the.... and a.... and the time slip is name black hole. And the black hole’s shape was Donald Duck. You know that day.... a some kind of dinosaur day?”

“Yeah.”

[G-3B] “And Nimitz came to dinosaur day. Once upon a time, the Nimitz launched a Tom Cat (U. S. Navy jet fighter aircraft). The Tom Cat want to look at the Pearl Harbor. But there was only ten dinosaur looking the Tom Cat. And the Tom Cat tell the captain to okay to attack dinosaur. The captain said okay. Tom Cat only one machine gun killed the all of those dinosaur. And a.... And a.... Nimitz was going near to the dinosaur but a dinosaur was swimming and he came up to flight deck but the Tom Cat was launching and, but the Tom Cat was going down. The Tom Cat was going down he hit the dinosaur but the dinosaur fall down water and drown. And the blood came out, but the world be whole blood.”

“What kind of blood? Old blood?”

[G-4B] “A, a, the *whole* earth is all blood.”

“Oh, the whole earth turned to blood. Okay, and?”

[G-5B] “And, a, black hole came out again. Black hole shape was a.... was a.... like a Arizona (U. S. S. Arizona, sunk at Pearl Harbor, now a monument). Next time when he came to future. That day was a (unintel-

ligible) explode and this was new earth. New earth.”

(Writing, repeating after him) “That-day-the.... what happened? That day, what?”

[G-6B] “That day when he came time slip. One, one, one earth explode and he came to another, very new earth. There’s only one earth so.... So a, everybody was a, everybody saw the Nimitz and a.... ‘Oh my goodness. It’s so big.’ And the Nimitz was trying to go back to Pearl Harbor. But the Pearl Harbor was scraped, that was airport. And the black hole came out again. They was shape like, a.... train. A, not a train. Not a train. A.... Pearl Harbor. So when he came back to the world and when he finish time slip, the Nimitz was already on the time slip. No. And the Nimitz was already on the Pearl Harbor. Finished (writing)?”

“Yeah. Is that the end?”

[G-7B] “Yeah.”

“The-End. That’s a good story.”

[G-8B] “Then Daddy, read to me.”

ANALYSIS

G-2B “Once upon a time there was the biggest biggest navy [ship] named Nimitz.” In this sentence he omits the proper subject (ship) of the verb “named,” however, it isn’t entirely clear whether this is an error or lapse. As in the previous story, Nimitz has become so familiar to Gene that the definite article “the” may be omitted.

“And when *he* [she/it] was learning.... for doing a war, the Nimitz made [a] time slip.” He improperly uses the third person singular mascu-

line nominative pronoun “he” instead of “she” or the neuter “it” and omits an indefinite article “a”. Technically, the verbs in this sentence “learning”, “doing”, and “made” could be called errors, but they are so similar in meaning to what’s correct that I am going to let them stand. Most likely, ten different people would have ten different constructions for expressing the above thought. Mine would be, “And when it was participating in the war games, the Nimitz experienced a time-slip.” A “time-slip” is a correctly quoted phenomenon from one of his favorite movies, “The Final Countdown.”

“But the... and a... and the time slip *is name* [name is] [was named] black hole.” This could either be an error of word order with a missing possessive inflection (the time slip’s name is) or an error in verb tense (the time slip was named).

“And the black hole’s shape was [like] Donald Duck.” He has omitted the adjective “like” which is necessary to tell us that the black hole is the same as Donald Duck in many ways, in this case its shape.

“[Do] You know that day... a some kind of dinosaur day?” This sentence illustrates what was once one of the most serious flaws in Gene’s English interlanguage system; the function of the auxiliary verb “do”, in this case in interrogative sentences that don’t open with “WH- questions”. Although in our daily conversations he has begun to use “do” correctly in more and more instances, he occasionally slips back to the type of pattern shown here. Also, instead of introducing such a difficult concept as “pre-historic times” for “dinosaur day” which might have slowed down his train-of-thought, I merely replied casually, “Yeah”, to the question.

G-3B “The Tom Cat *want* [wanted] to look at *the* Pearl Harbor.” This sentence has the verb “want” in the present rather than past tense and

an unnecessary definite article in front of a proper noun, i. e., Pearl Harbor.

“But there was only ten *dinosaur* [dinosaurs] looking [at] the Tom Cat.” This sentence is missing the plural marker for “dinosaur” and the preposition “at” which must be used with something seen as a point in space.

“And the Tom Cat *tell* [asked] the captain *to* [if] [it] [is] okay to attack [the] *dinosaur* [dinosaurs]. This sentence contains another example of interlingual interference from Gene’s L1 by his use of the verb “tell” instead of “ask”. He consistently makes this error as the Japanese verb “kiku” can mean either “hear”, “listen”, or “ask”, depending on the context in which it’s used. The incorrectly used “tell” is also in the wrong tense. The second and third clauses of the same sentence are somewhat of a grammatical mess. Essentially, he is unaware of how to form an “if” construction with the second clause and omits the verb “is”, the subject-pronoun “it”, uses an unnecessary preposition “to”, and omits both the definite article “the” and the plural marker for dinosaur.

“[The] Tom Cat [with] only one machine gun killed *the* all of those *dinosaur* [dinosaurs].” This sentence is missing a definite article “the”, the preposition “with” which conveys possession, the plural inflection with “dinosaur”, and an unnecessary article “the”.

“Nimitz was going near to the *dinosaur* [dinosaurs] but a dinosaur was swimming and he came up to [the] flight deck but the Tom Cat was launching and, but the Tom Cat was going down.” This sentence has the usual definite article and plural inflection omissions. The use of the verb “launching” is so near to the correct meaning of what he wants to say that I can’t label it an error.

“The Tom Cat as going down [when] *he* [it] hit the dinosaur but the dinosaur *fall* [fell] down [in/to] [the] water and *drown* [drowned].” This

sentence is missing the conjunction “when”, uses a masculine “he” rather than the neuter “it” pronoun, has two verbs in the wrong tense, and a preposition “in/to” and a definite article “the” missing.

“And *the* blood came out, *but* [and] the world *be whole blood* [turned to blood].” This sentence has an unnecessary article “the”, and a wrong choice for a conjunction. He uses “but”, which implies “in spite of this”, rather than “and”, which shows a connection or addition of words of the same type or sentences of the same importance. Although “the world be whole blood” is a non-native’s choice of words, it is a good approximation of meaning nonetheless.

G-5B “[The] Black *Hole* [Hole’s] shape was a... was a... like *a* [the] Arizona.” This sentence has a missing definite article “the”, a missing possessive case marker, and the wrong choice of articles with “a” for “the”.

“[The] Next time when *he* [it] came to [the] future.” This sentence has two missing definite articles and the subject pronoun in the wrong gender.

“That day was a (unintelligible) *explode* [exploded/explosion] and *this* [there] was [a] new earth.” Due to the unintelligible word, whether “explode” should be in the past tense as a verb or used as a noun (explosion), can not be determined. It is also difficult to read his mind to ascertain whether he uses “this” correctly as a determiner or incorrectly as an adverb (there). The indefinite article “a” is also missing.

G-6B “That day when he *came* [became] [a] time slip.” It is difficult to determine in his 7 year old mind whether or not he has personified “time slip” with the personal pronoun “he”. If so, the only errors would be the wrong verb choice by one syllable (became) and the missing indefinite article. However, if he was thinking “That day when the time slip came”,

it would essentially be a problem of word order, an unnecessary pronoun (he), and an omitted article (the).

“One, one, one earth *explode* [exploded] and *he* [it] *came* [became] *to* another, very new earth.” This sentence has the verb in the wrong tense, the pronoun-subject in the wrong gender, an incorrect verb choice, and an unnecessary preposition “to”.

“So a, everybody was a, everybody saw the Nimitz and a.... [said] ‘Oh my goodness. It’s so big.’” This sentence is grammatically correct (if somewhat hesitant) except for the missing verb “said” in the final clause.

“But *the* Pearl Harbor *was* [had been] scraped, *that* [it] was [now] [an] airport.” Most importantly, the past perfect tense should have been used to show that an action was completed (Pearl Harbor being scraped) before another action (becoming an airport) in past time. There is also an unnecessary definite article “the”, a missing indefinite article “an”, and a demonstrative “that” used in place of a pronoun “it”. The adverb “now” is also needed to give a “time referent” to the statement.

“*They* [it] was *shape* [shaped] like, a.... train” has Gene missing again with the correct subject-pronoun “it” and the adjective “shaped” missing the final phoneme.

“So when *he* [it] came back to the world and when *he* [it] *finish* [finished] [the] time slip, the Nimitz was already on the time slip.” Again, he has the pronouns in the wrong gender, the verb in the present rather than past tense, plus a missing definite article. As “one the time slip” isn’t what he meant to say I’ll avoid discussing the preposition “on” until the following sentence.

“And the Nimitz was already *on* [in/at] *the* Pearl Harbor” has an incorrect preposition “on” and an unnecessary definite article “the”.

“Then Daddy, read [it] to me.” The final sentence is missing the direct object “it” of the verb “read”.

SUMMARY OF ERRORS

Wrong Verb	3	Omitted Verb	2
Wrong Pronoun	7	Omitted Noun	1
Wrong Article	2	Omitted Adverb	1
Wrong Verb Tense	7	Omitted Pronoun	2
Wrong Conjunction	1	Omitted Phoneme	1
Unnecessary Article	5	Omitted Article	12
Unnecessary Preposition	2	Omitted Adjective	1
Unnecessary Demonstrative	1	Omitted Preposition	3
Word Order	1	Omitted Conjunction	2
L1 Interference	1	Omitted Plural Marker	4
		Omitted Auxiliary Verb	2
		Omitted Possessive Marker	1

SUMMARY OF GRAMMAR

<i>nouns</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>adverbs</i>	<i>adjectives</i>
day (4)	be	so	new (3)
navy	is (2)	no	big
kind	was (6)	okay	next
time	hit	near	whole (2)
shape	saw	only	biggest
water	made	not	finished
blood	know	yeah	
world	tell	then	<i>pronouns</i>
earth	came	there (3)	my
train	doing	again (2)	it
Daddy	going	already	me
Nimitz (9)	drown	Once upon a	one (3)
future	shape	time.	ten
Tom Cat	killed		you
captain (2)	finish	<i>conjunctions</i>	this
Arizona	name (d)	so (2)	another
airport	came to (3)	and (17)	everybody
dinosaur (8)	explode	but (7)	
goodness	scraped	when (5)	<i>prepositions</i>
time slip (5)	learning		to
Black Hole (5)	launched	<i>articles</i>	of (2)
Donald Duck	came out (3)	the (25)	at
machine gun	to attack	a (3)	like (2)
flight deck	launching		back
Pearl Harbor	fall down		
	came up to		<i>predeterminers</i>
<i>determiners</i>	going down (2)		all
that (3)	looking (at)		
those	came back to		
	want(s) to look at		
	trying to go back to		

TITANIC'S BULKHEAD IS BROKEN, BUT THE WATERTIGHT DOOR ISN'T

"Okay Gene. This is the last story for today so lets get started."

[G-1C] "Okay. Yeah. I'm going to think of the next story. Next story is about a.... I am going.... I was.... About a airplane.... Jumbo jet."

"What's the title of the story?"

[G-2C] "It's the.... Ummmmmmmm.... Ahhhhhh.... Jumbo jet.... Ahhhhhhh.... *OKAY!* A real drama about the Titanic! The Titanic Bulkhead Breaking But The Watertight (unintelligible)."

"What's the title again? "

[G-3C] "Titanic's Bulkhead Break, Broken, But The Watertight Door Is Still Not Broken."

"Okay, let's do it."

[G-4C] "Once upon a time, the Titanic hut [sic] the iceberg."

(Writing, repeating after him) "Once-upon-a time-the-Titanic-What?"

[G-5C] "Hut [sic] the iceberg."

"Pardon?"

[G-6C] "Hut the iceberg."

"Hit the iceberg?"

[G-7C] "Yeah."

"Hit-the-iceberg. Okay."

[G-8C] "The cut was three hundred feet long. When the water be flooded, the bulkhead break. But the watertight door gotta break together. But not broken. Rope was still hanging the watertight door. Water was going so fast so the.... How you say with English when the

watertight door... when the water go 'pa-gyeah', when it goes like that (wildly gesturing with his arms)."

"The water was going aaaaa.... The door was...."

[G-9C] "Going like this (gesturing)."

"Fluttering."

[G-10C] "Fluttering around."

"The-water-was-going-so-fast-that-the-watertight-door-was-fluttering. All right."

[G-11C] "Fluttering around."

"Fluttering-around. All right."

[G-12C] "At the engine room was so hot, when the one people were drowning on the water at the engine room.... I forgot how you say with English that watertight door go like this (gesturing)."

"Fluttering? "

[G-13C] "The watertight door was fluttering so he makes a lots a air. So that guy was being cool. But the wind was so strong so the man hit the watertight door, turn the watertight door, and the man went all the way back and he came out from the screw. But that man broke all the watertight door. So the ship sank at one second. (A short pause), All finished."

"Is that the end?"

[G-14C] (giggling), "Yeah."

ANALYSIS

G-1C "... About *a* [an] airplane.... Jumbo Jet." Gene has yet to learn the rule that a noun which begins with a vowel sound takes "an" as an

indefinite article.

G-2C "The *Titanic* [Titanic's] Bulkhead Breaking But The Watertight (unintelligible)." He has omitted the possessive marker for "Titanic." Interestingly, he uses the correct inflection in his next utterance (G-3C).

G-3C "Titanic's Bulkhead Break, [is] Broken, But The Watertight Door Is Still Not Broken." He has omitted the verb in the first clause of the sentence.

G-4C "Once upon a time, the Titanic hut (sic) *the* [an] iceberg." G-5C & G-6C "Hut (sic) *the* [an] iceberg." Same problem as G-1C.

G-8C "When the *water* [ship] *be* [was] flooded, the bulkhead *break* [broke]." Although it is easy to understand what he is imagining, technically, "water" can not be flooded. Water is the agent which usually causes flooding. Also, the auxiliary verb "be" is in the wrong person and tense and the verb in the second clause is in the present rather than the past tense.

"But the watertight door [has] gotta (got to) break [with] [it] together." In this sentence he must use the present perfect tense (formed by prefixing "have/has" to the past participle "got") to show that the action indicated (the watertight door breaking) began in the past and extends to the present or bears on the present. He has also omitted the preposition "with" and neuter pronoun "it." Notice the reduction "gotta" for "got to" commonly used in casual speech.

"But [it] [is] not broken." Both the subject-pronoun "it" and the verb "is" have been omitted.

"[A] Rope was still hanging [from] the watertight door." The indefinite article "a" is missing as well as the preposition "from" to show the starting point in position of the rope.

"... How [do] you say with English when the watertight door...." Same

problem discussed in story G-2B, i. e., has not yet learned to form interrogative sentences that don't open with *WH*- question as the subject with the auxiliary verb "do."

G-12C "At the engine room [it] was so hot, when *the one people* [person] were drowning *on* [in] the water at the engine room...." He has omitted the subject-pronoun "it", inserted an unnecessary article "the", uses the plural rather than the singular form "people", and an incorrect preposition "on."

G-13C "The watertight door was fluttering so *he* [it] makes *a* lots a air." He uses a masculine pronoun "he" rather than a neuter "it" and an unnecessary article "a." Strictly speaking, he should say "lots of air." However, as I usually use the reduced form "lotsa" for "lots of", he is merely repeating correctly what hears.

"So that guy was being [kept] cool." He's using "being" as a main verb. In this sentence, it must be used as an auxiliary verb to help another verb (keep) express a state of being or condition.

"But the wind was so strong so the man hit the watertight door, *turn* [turned] the watertight door, and the man went all the way [to] [the] back and he came out from the screw." In this long sentence he has "turn" in the wrong tense and omits the preposition "to" to indicate "direction towards" and the definite article "the" necessary for clarity.

"But the man broke all the watertight *door* [doors]." As so often previously, he omits the plural inflection.

"So the ship sank *at* [in] one second." A wrong preposition choice.

SUMMARY OF ERRORS

Wrong Noun	1	Omitted Verb	3
Wrong Pronoun	1	Omitted Pronoun	3
Wrong Article	4	Omitted Article	2
Wrong Preposition	2	Omitted Preposition	3
Wrong Verb Tense	3	Omitted Auxiliary Verb	2
Wrong Verb Person	1	Omitted Plural Marker	1
Plural for Singular	1	Omitted Possessive Marker	1
Unnecessary Article	3		

SUMMARY OF GRAMMAR

<i>nouns</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>adverbs</i>	<i>adjectives</i>
cut	is	so	hot
air	go	not (2)	next (2)
guy	hit (4)	how	real
man (3)	was (3)	okay (2)	strong
door (9)	say (2)	yeah (3)	finished
feet	goes	fast	watertight (11)
rope	turn	cool	three hundred
lots	went	around (2)	
wind	sand	together	<i>pronouns</i>
ship	break	Once upon a	I (2)
story (2)	going	time.	it (2)
drama	makes		he (2)
water (3)	being	<i>conjunctions</i>	one (2)
screw	broke	so (3)	you (2)
people	broken (2)	but (6)	that
second	forgot (2)	and (3)	this
Titanic (4)	flooded	when (3)	
iceberg	hanging		<i>prepositions</i>
English	drowning	<i>articles</i>	like (3)
bulkhead	fluttering	a	about (2)
jumbo jet	got to break	the (25)	
engine room	came out from		<i>determiner</i>
	going to think of		that (3)

THE MAD, MAD EARTH

“So, what’s the name of your story, kid?”

[G-1D] “MAD MAD EARTH!”

(Writing, repeating after him) “Mad-mad-earth. Um-huh. All right, let’s do it”

[G-2D] “Long a.... Once upon a time. This was, this was nineteen.... nineteen.... nineteen.... nineteen eighty-nine. Whole world people so mad at everybody was jumping around and a earth looks like it’s going to be broken.”

“Okay. (Writing, repeatng after him) Every-body-”

[G-3D] “In the whole world.”

“Everybody-in-the-whole-world-”

[G-4D] “Was fighting and jumping.”

“Was-fighting-”

[G-5D] “And jumping.”

“And-jumping-”

[G-6D] “Around.”

“Around-.”

[G-7D] “There was, and the earth cracked. And the left side earth and the right side earth was panicking. There, so there was panicking too many so the earth came (unintelligible).”

“Earth came?”

[G-8D] (Using his hands) “Stick like that.”

“So-many-people-were-panicking-that-the-earth-came-together-again. Um-huh.”

[G-9D] “And then, ah.... What stuff? From the earth.... How do you

say 'hibi' with English?"

"Crack?"

[G-10D] "But earth they a crack a little. So the magma was leaking. The leak was getting much more much more lot. So, the earth went up and up like a Space Shuttle. Because some kinda like this. This is earth, magma's leak is gonna (gesturing with his hands) earth is going up like a Space Shuttle."

"Oh, I see. So, the-leaking-magma-pushed-the-earth-up-and-up-into-the-universe. Uh-huh."

[G-11D] "And, magma was gone when he fall down is the supernova. And the red giant (a type of star) said 'Wow!' and fall down supernova and stick together and (unintelligible). Like that. And there is a some kinda tiny round stuff like.... Spin around and, explode!"

"Red ant? What fell to the earth?"

[G-12D] "Some. The red giant."

"Oh oh. The-red-"

[G-13D] "Giant said 'Wow!' "

"So the red giant fell into the supernova...."

[G-14D] "Yeah. Because the red giant looked a 'Wow!' " and (unintelligible) stick together and he went go like that, then you know, what was that stuff spin around?"

"Sunspot?"

[G-15D] "And, a, he make sunspot.... and spin around and (he makes exploding noises) supernova and red giant is gone."

"Okay. Anyway, A red giant saw the magma and fell down to it."

[G-16D] "No. No no no. Red giant saw the earth went inside to the supernova."

“Uh-huh. So the red giant-saw-this-and-fell-into the magma?”

[G-17D] “No. Red giant saw, saw, that earth went inside to the supernova.”

“Okay. So-a-red-giant-saw-the-earth-going-into-the-supernova-and-he-said-‘Wow!’-and-fell-down-to-the-supernova.”

[G-18D] “And stick together. And he stick together. And they make some sunspot. And, start, spinning around. And those two explode. And there is a new star.”

“And-they-exploded-and-made-a-new-star.”

[G-19D] “Finished.”

“That’s the end? All right, The-End.”

[G-20] “Now next is ‘Rabbit Olympic.’”

“Okay. One more story and we can print and sell.”

ANALYSIS

G-2D “[The] whole world people [were] so mad at everybody was jumping around and *a* [the] earth looks like it’s going to be broken.” Grammatically and semantically, this is very complex sentence. First of all, the meaning of “whole world people” is clear enough and perhaps cognitively appropriate for a 7-year-old child. “The people of the world,” “mankind,” “the human race,” etc. are complex concepts. Other than the missing definite article “the,” do I count this an error? Again, the issue of subjectivity arises. Also, he seems to be using the word “everybody” as both the direct object of the omitted verb “were” in the first clause and as the subject of the verb “was jumping” in clause number two. Of course, it has to be one or the other, but in his thought process they seemed to have

merged (sensibly) together, making for a difficult "error" classification. Otherwise, an indefinite article "a" instead of the definite "the" is the only other error.

G-7D "And the *left side earth* and the *right side earth was* [were] panicking." As with the previous example, it is clear to understand what he is saying. Again, the grammar for what he is saying is somewhat complex. With the addition of the preposition "of" to express "part in relation to a whole" and the definite article "the" for clarity, he could have said "And the left side of the earth and the right side of the earth." Or he could have used the construction, "the Earth's left side and the Earth's right side," using earth as a proper rather than a common noun, thus the capital "E". Other than the problem with syntax, the only other error is the verb "was" in the wrong person.

"There, so there was panicking too *many* [much] so the earth came (unintelligible)." Actually, the sentence should read "There, so there was too much panicking so the earth came (unintelligible)." He is using "too many" as an adverb which can not be done. Also, there is a problem with word order as the adverb "too much" must precede the word it is modifying, "panicking" in this sentence.

G-10D "But [the] earth *they* [it] *crack* [cracked] a little." Here are more familiar errors: a missing definite article "the," the pronoun in the plural rather than singular number, and the verb in the present instead of the past tense.

"The leak was getting much more much more *lot*." This sentence poses problems for analyzation as it isn't clear whether he's trying to form a comparative or whether he's trying to emphasize a great quantity of magma by using all the adjectives he knows that expresses such.

G-11D “And, [when] [the] magma was gone *when he* [it] *fall* [fell] down, [and] *is* [became] *the* [a] supernova.” First of all, the conjunction “when” is in the wrong position to express “at the time which.” There is also the usual assortment of missing or incorrect articles, verb tense and pronoun problems. In addition, the conjunction “and” has been omitted (necessary to show connection of words of the same importance) and incorrectly uses a verb of being (*is*) rather than of action (becoming).

“And the red giant said ‘Wow!’ and *fall* [fell] down [to] [the] supernova and *stick* [stuck] together and (unintelligible).” In this sentence, Gene continues to use the present rather than the past verb tense and omits the preposition “to” (which indicates direction towards) and the definite article “the.”

G-14D “Because the red giant *looked* [saw] a ‘Wow!’ and (unintelligible) *stick* [stuck] together and *he* [it] went *go* like that, then you know, what was that stuff [that] *spin* [spins] around?” The first error in this sentence is common for any learner of English; the proper uses of look (at), watch, and see. Generally, “look (at)” suggest concentration, intention: if we look, we are paying attention or trying to see what is there. “Watch” is like “look (at)”, but suggests that something is happening or going to happen. We watch things that change, move, or develop. “See” is used when we just want to say that visual impressions come to our eyes. Seeing is not always deliberate - it may be accidental; you can see things without thinking about them, and even without realizing that you are seeing them. He has “stick” in the wrong tense and continues to use the masculine gender pronoun “he.” In his excitement he uses both the past and present tense of the verb “go” together and omits the conjunction “that” which acts as the subject of a defining relative clause. Also, the verb “spin” is in the first

rather than the third person form.

G-15D "And, a *he* [it] *make* [made] [a] sunspot.... and *spin* [spins] around and (he makes exploding noises) supernova and red giant *is* [are] gone." Again, there are the same pattern of errors: the wrong pronoun gender, wrong verb tense, a missing indefinite article, the verb "spin" in the wrong person, and the verb "be" in the third person singular present tense (is) rather than the second person singular present tense (are).

G-16D "No. No no no. Red giant saw the earth *went* [go] inside to the supernova." In this sentence there is another problem with verb tense and an unnecessary preposition "to." The identical errors are made in the following sentence G-17D.

G-18D "And [they] *stick* [stuck] together. And *he* [they] *stick* [stuck] together. And they *make* [made] *some* [a] sunspot." This sentence has a interesting progression of pronouns. In the first sentence "they" is omitted entirely, in the second sentence he includes a pronoun (he) but in the singular, and in the third sentence gets it right. He continues to use *all* the verbs in the present tense which makes me wonder if, in his mind, he has shifted his time reference completely from the past to the present. He makes an odd choice to use "some" rather than an indefinite article "a." It is unclear whether "some" is used as a determiner to mean "certain but not all" or as a pronoun to mean "a little, few, or certain or small amount".

SUMMARY OF ERRORS

Wrong Verb	2	Omitted Verb	1
Wrong Adverb	1	Omitted Pronoun	1
Wrong Pronoun	5	Omitted Article	7
Wrong Article	2	Omitted Conjunction	2
Wrong Verb Tense	10	Omitted Preposition	3
Wrong Verb Person	4	Word Order	1
Unnecessary Verb	1	Unnecessary Adjective	1
Unnecessary Preposition	1		

SUMMARY OF GRAMMAR

<i>nouns</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>adverbs</i>	<i>adjectives</i>
two	is (5)	so	mad
side (2)	was (5)	no (2)	new
leak (2)	say	too	left
kind (2)	saw (2)	how	ride
star	came	more	tiny
1989	gone (2)	much	whole (2)
earth (11)	said (2)	yeah	finished
world (2)	spin (2)	next	
stuff (3)	know	there (3)	<i>pronouns</i>
magma (3)	went (2)	little	it
round	make	inside (2)	you
start	stick (5)	around (11)	that (3)
people	crack	together (3)	what (2)
sunspot (2)	looked	Once upon a	this (2)
English	jumping	time.	everybody
supernova (5)	cracked		
red giant (6)	leaking	<i>prepositions</i>	<i>conjunctions</i>
space shuttle (2)	getting	of	so (3)
	went up	at	and (19)
<i>determiners</i>	explode (2)	in	but
some (3)	going up	with	now
that	spinning	down	when
those	panicking	like (5)	then
	fall down	from	because (2)
<i>interjunctions</i>	looks like		
wow!	going (to)		
	going to be broken		

RABBIT'S SILLY, SILLY OLYMPICS

"Okay, one more story and we can print and sell. All right, what's the name of this story?"

[G-1E] "Rabbit's Silly, Silly Olympic."

"Rabbit's silly, silly Olympic. (Writing, repeating his words), Rabbit's-Silly-Silly-Olympic. All right, what's this story about?"

[G-2E] "My rabbit. My.... I have a rabbit.

(Writing, repeating), "I-have-a-rabbit. Um-huh."

[G-3E] "And my rabbit can run so fast and he jumps so crazy he's (unintelligible) he's trying to get a leaf he jump and get it but he missed."

"Okay now, I have a rabbit and.... Once again, what did you say?"

[G-4E] "My rabbit it's *very* fast."

(Writing, repeating), "My-rabbit-is-very-fast."

[G-5E] "He want to get a leaf."

"She? You mean Jenny?"

[G-6E] "Yeah. A.... some kind. You know that.... trees. You know some kind a.... tree, like this (draws a picture). But it's.... lots of.... like this so a rabbit can jump and eat it."

"Yeah?"

[G-7E] "That's what we have there (looks towards the backyard)."

"Yeah. So it's a bush. It's a small tree, a bush. So, my rabbit is very fast, okay. (Writing), I-have-a-rabbit. My-rabbit-is-very-fast."

[G-8E] "I have a bush-tree."

"Okay. I-have-a-bush-in-the-back-yard."

[G-9E] "And those rabbit jump very high and try to get that bush leave, but he can't."

“The...”

[G-10E] “But he’s jumping *really* high.”

“The-rabbit-is-jumping-really-high-to-eat-the-bush-leaves-but-she-can’t-reach-them. Um-huh.”

[G-11E] “My rabbit is white and black.... a black and white.”

“My-”

[G-12E] “Black and white, okay?”

“-rabbit-is-black-and-white. Um-huh.”

[G-13E] “Once upon a time a, Daddy, this is not a real part, okay?”

“Do you want me to write this or not?”

[G-14E] “I want to, Daddy, this is not a real part see...”

“Anything you want to write...”

[G-15E] “This is not a real part, okay?”

“All right.”

[G-16E] “Rabbit’s is going to lose some Olympic. And he is going to jump on the pool. But water is out there (stops talking and begins using his hands to simulate a rabbit hitting the bottom of a swimming pool and splattering).”

“This is a crazy story. So, once-upon-a-time-the-rabbit-”

[G-17E] “Next is going to the Olympic.”

“-was-going-to-enter-the-Olympic-Games”.

[G-18E] “And he’s going to jump on the pool.”

“And-”

[G-19E] “He’s going to jump to the pool and...” (gesturing with his hands and vocalizing a rabbit hitting the bottom of an empty swimming pool).

“She-was-going-to-jump-to-the-pool. Uh-huh.”

[G-20E] (A long pause-7 seconds) "But.... he's nothing scary but walking around and... you know that stuff you... jumping and (gesturing with his hands something diving and hitting the water)... that stuff."

"Oh! It's a diving board. Uh-huh."

[G-21E] "And a rabbit came very front of the diving board but its not afraid of it and doing his nose like (begins to imitate a rabbit sniffing with it's nose)."

"Okay, wait a minute. The-rabbit-went-to-the-end-of-the-diving-board."

[G-22E] "He not afraid of and a water not inside..."

"Okay, wait a minute. And-she-wasn't-afraid. Um-huh."

[G-23E] "Water was not inside here. He was, he's ready to put it a water."

"There-was-no-water-inside-the-pool."

[G-24E] "It was just ready for getting a water inside."

"They-were-just-getting-ready-to-put-water-inside."

[G-25E] "And.... the rabbit jump like this (gesturing with his hands something jumping up and down.)"

"On a diving board?"

[G-26E] "Yeah! Like this (gesturing with his hands). I want to.... I wonder how you....? This is silly one. The rabbit (gesturing with his hands saying 'dong-dong-dong')."

"And-the-rabbit-jumped-up-and-down-on-the-diving-board. Um-huh, jumping up and down on the diving board."

[G-27E] "Yeah, like this (gesturing with his hands and saying loudly, 'dong-dong-dong')."

"Uh-huh."

[G-28E] “But rabbit is not inside yet, (unintelligible) is ready.”

“But-there-was-no-water-inside-the-pool.”

[G-29E] “But he went down to the pool.”

“And jumped into the pool?”

[G-30E] “Yeah.”

“But-she-jumped-into-the-pool-anyway.”

[G-31E] “But he not hurt at all he’s (imitating a rabbit breathing rapidly and saying in a high pitched voice ‘water! water!’).”

“Okay. But-she-wasn’t-hurt-at all. She-just-wagged-her-tongue-and-said-water! -water!”

[G-32E] “And this is finish, but.... but, and, but, and the water’s inside so he go (imitating a ‘licking’ action)... and they gets a pillow and a (unintelligible).”

“But-then-the-water-came-into-the-pool. The-rabbit-licked-the-water-and-she-rested-on-a-pillow.”

[G-32E] “And everybody was laughing.”

“And-everybody-was-laughing-at-her.”

[G-33E] “So he jumped and go (imitating splashing with his hands and voice) to whole people.”

“So-she-splashed-water-on-all-the-people.”

[G-34E] “And the rabbit.... and the Olympics finished.... he went to the.... place where he get some medal.”

“Okay. And-then-the-Olympics-were-finished-and-she-went-to-where-they-were-giving-the medals.”

[G-35E] “But the rabbit’s medal was gold.”

“And-the-rabbit’s-medal-was-”

[G-36E] “The first one. First one is gold, right?”

"Yeah, right."

[G-37E] "So it's gold, right?"

"Yeah. ~~And-the-rabbit's-medal-was-the-gold-one.~~"

[G-38E] "When the rabbit.... so the, everybody went to where to fix those.... rabbit cut."

As I don't understand, I ask, "Once more."

[G-39E] "So.... so.... the... every, whole people went to the.... where. Whole people went for.... whole people went to kind a place for a.... you know place for fixing people when he got blood out?"

"Like a hospital?"

[G-40E] "Yeah. He went to Olympic hospital because a rabbit did..."
(gesturing scratching and saying 'shaw! -shaw!').

"Oh, scratched them?"

[G-41E] "Yeah."

"The rabbit scratched all the people? Why?"

[G-42E] "Because everybody was laughing."

"Oh. ~~Because-all-of-the-people-laughed-at-the-rabbit-she-scratched-them-in-the-face.~~"

[G-43E] "So everybody went to the Olympic hospital."

"~~And-so-they-all-had-to-go-to-the-Olympic-hospital.~~"

[G-44E] "How's that one?"

"Yeah, that's pretty good."

[G-45E] "Can you read from beginning?"

"Okay. (Addressing his younger sister who just entered the room),
"Hi Aiko. What's our plan for today?"

[A-1E] "Ummmmm.... ice cream shop.... Mister Donuts!"

ANALYSIS

G-3E “And my rabbit can run so fast and *he* [she] jumps so crazy *he’s* (unintelligible) *he’s* trying to get a leaf [and] *he jump* [jumps] *and* [to] get it but *he* missed.” As explained in G-3A, Gene does not have an understanding of English pronoun gender. He always refers to anything feminine as his, him, he, or it - including his pet female rabbit, who is the protagonist of this story. As he makes this pronoun error consistently throughout this story, I will put the correct form in brackets just once and subsequently only underline the incorrect pronoun forms. Other errors include the verb “jump” in the wrong person and the conjunction “and” rather than the preposition “to.”

G-5E “*He* want [wants] to get a leaf.” The verb is in the first rather than the third person.

G-9E “And *those* [that] rabbit *jump* [jumps] very high and *try* [tries] to get that bush *leave* [leaf], but *he* can’t.” Again, he has two verbs in the wrong person and the demonstrative pronoun “those” in the plural rather than the singular form. He also uses the plural form of “leaf” but without the final morpheme.

G-16E “[The] *Rabbit’s* [rabbit] is going to lose some Olympic [events?].” The definite article is missing as well as a noun at the end of the sentence for the adjective “Olympic” to qualify.

“And *he* is going to jump *on* [in] the pool.” An incorrect preposition. He makes the identical error in sentence G-18E.

But [the] water is out [of] there. “Of” must follow “out” in this sentence to express an outward movement and “water” needs a definite article. Strictly speaking, a neuter personal pronoun “it” should be used

rather than an adverb "there".

G-20E "But.... *he's nothing scary* [not scared] but walking around and.... you know that *stuff* [thing]...." Gene consistently uses the adjective scary as a verb, e. g., "Mommy's not scary of thunder." However, with his choice of "nothing" I wonder if he wasn't thinking something like "But.... there was nothing scary." It's impossible to say. Also, he consistently uses the noun to indicate things in a mass (stuff) rather than the noun which indicates an object that need not or cannot be named (thing).

G-21E "And *a* [the] rabbit came [to] [the] front of the diving board but its not afraid of it and doing *his* nose like..." The same pattern of errors: wrong or omitted articles, the omitted preposition "to" which indicates "as far as" and, of course, pronoun gender.

G-22E "*He* [is] not afraid of [it] and *a* water [is] not inside..." In this sentence, both clauses are missing their verbs, the first clause is missing a direct object for the verb, and an indefinite article is incorrectly used before a mass noun.

G-23E "Water was not inside *here* [there]. *He* was, *he's* [getting] ready to put *it* [in] *a* water." He uses the adverb "here" which indicate at, to, or in *this* place rather than "there" to indicate at, to, or in *that* place. The auxiliary verb "get" is missing, he uses a pronoun "it" rather than the preposition for the second half of the phrasal verb "put in," uses an unnecessary indefinite article, and misses with the wrong adverb "here." He makes the identical article error in sentence G-24E.

G-25E "And.... the rabbit *jump* [jumps] like this..." Same problem with the correct person of the verb.

G-26E "This is [a] silly one." An omitted article.

G-28E "But [the] rabbit is not inside yet, (unintelligible) is ready."

An omitted article.

G-31E “But *he* [is] not hurt at all *he’s*....” Verb is omitted.

G-32E “And this is *finish* [the end], but... but, and, but, and the water’s inside so *he go* [goes] (imitating a ‘licking’ action)... and they *gets* [get] a pillow and a (unintelligible).” Instead of “The End” is uses a reasonably approximate “finish” and has two of the four verbs in the wrong person.

G-33E “So *he* jumped and *go* [went] (imitating splashing with his hands and voice) to *whole* [all] [the]people.” The second verb of the sentence is in the wrong tense, makes a reasonable choice with the adjective “whole” rather than the correct predeterminer “all,” and omits the definite article “the.”

G-34E “And the rabbit.... and the Olympic finished.... *he* went to the.... place where *he get* [gets] some medal.” Other than the persistent problem with pronoun gender, only one verb in the wrong person.

G-39E “So.... so.... the... every, *whole* [all] [the] people went to the.... where. Whole [all] [the] people went for.... *whole* [all] [the] people went to kind a place for a.... you know place for fixing people when *he* [they] got *blood out* [cut].” After using “everybody” correctly in G-38E, he returns to using the incorrect “whole people” discussed in G-33E, uses a singular rather than the plural pronoun “they,” and uses a little “creative construction” to describe “cut.”

G-40E “Yeah. *He* [they] went to [the] Olympic hospital because [the] rabbit did (gesturing scratching and saying ‘shaw! -shaw!’).” As in G-39E, he continues to use the singular rather than-plural personal pronoun “they”, and omits two definite articles.

G-45E “Can you read [it] from [the] beginning?” The direct object of the

verb "read" is missing and a definite article is omitted.

SUMMARY OF ERRORS

Wrong Noun	1	Omitted Noun	1
Wrong Adverb	1	Omitted Verb	3
Wrong Article	1	Omitted Pronoun	2
Wrong Pronoun	20	Omitted Article	9
Wrong Verb Form	2	Omitted Conjunction	1
Wrong Expression	7	Omitted Preposition	2
Wrong Verb Tense	1	Omitted Plural Marker	1
Wrong Verb Person	8	Omitted Auxiliary Verb	1
Unnecessary Article	3	Unnecessary Conjunction	1
Plural for Singular	1	Unnecessary Plural Marker	1

SUMMARY OF GRAMMAR

<i>nouns</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>adverbs</i>	<i>adjectives</i>
one (3)	is (17)	so (2)	fast (2)
cut	go (2)	not (9)	real (2)
leaf (2)	get	how (2)	crazy
kind (2)	eat	yet	black (3)
tree	was (3)	very (2)	white (3)
lots	get (2)	yeah (6)	ready (3)
part (3)	got	okay (3)	silly
pool (3)	have	here	whole (4)
nose	know (3)	just	first (2)
gold (3)	have (2)	fast	afraid (2)
kind	went	high (2)	finish
trees	hurt	right (2)	Olympic
daddy (2)	read	where	
stuff (2)	jumps	really	<i>pronouns</i>
front	doing	around	I (5)
water (5)	scare	inside (5)	it (6)
place (3)	woncer	at all	we
medal (2)	jumped	Once upon a	my (4)
blood	to fix	time.	one
rabbit (15)	fixing		you (7)
pillow	missed	<i>prepositions</i>	they
people (5)	jumping (2)	of (4)	what
Olympic (2)	want to (2)	to	that (5)
hospital	walking	for (3)	this (9)
beginning	getting	out	those
bush-tree	can run	like (6)	there
diving board	went to (6)	down	nothing
	can jump	from	everybody
	going to		
<i>conjunctions</i>	came (to)	<i>determiners</i>	<i>articles</i>
so (6)	to put (in)	that	a (7)
and (27)	want to get	some (4)	the (11)
but (10)	trying to get (2)		
when	going to lose		
where (2)	going to jump (3)		
because			

CONCLUSION

I've attempted to describe and analyze one child's inter-language system. However, some of the serious methodological problems should be kept in mind. First of all, I was limited, for the most part, to observed speech. In addition, it is known that the speech of adults does not reflect their knowledge of the language perfectly. There are mistakes, slips of the tongue, memory lapses, and the like. Presumably similar processes occur in children's speech also. Young children have a very restricted short-term memory capacity, which in turn probably constrains sentence production. "Unimportant" words - auxiliaries, prepositions, conjunctions, and so on - may simply be left out, though the child may be aware of their presence in adult speech and may understand some aspects of their meaning. More than simple memory span for distinct items is relevant here; often a child will expand a complete sentence of an adult into a longer but simpler one. There is a complex interaction between memory and linguistic structure. Because of this possibility, it is difficult to decide whether an observed difference between a child's speech and adult language is owing to different linguistic systems or to the child's difficulty in fully using his knowledge of the adult language.

Another problem area is that the major source of data is the child's own productions, we often do not know what a word or grammatical construction means to the child when he uses it. That words mean different things to children from what they mean to adults is not surprising to anyone who has had much conversation with a young child.

A related problem concerns the meaning the child assigns to someone else's use of a word or construction, that is, his comprehension. There is

a very general belief that children comprehend more than they can produce at any point in development. If the child's knowledge of the language extends beyond the forms he actually produces, we should include this knowledge in our description of his language. Unfortunately, there were many instances where I was unable to do this in my analysis. Nonetheless, the corpus presented may be used by teachers, linguists, educators, and parents for their own research objectives.

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