

Japanese English: Pragmatic competence at the university level - some evidence from Discourse Completion Tasks and Naturally Occurring Data

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1.0 Introduction

According to Cohen (1996), “the first concern of SLA researchers has been to arrive at the set of realization patterns” which he called “speech act set”: Cohen (1996:385). Then, we need to define the preconditions and interactional goals of speech act, along with what he called “socio-cultural ability” which enables a speaker to achieve his intended perlocutionary effect. His socio-cultural ability includes a learner’s choice of a relevant expression relative to not only such situational factors as the status of the speaker and hearer, age, power relationships, but also such personal factors as familiarity, and psychological distance.

This report presents Speech Act studies we have carried out since 1999 up to this year. In 1999, we investigated what kinds of expressions are used as input to realize speech acts of thanking, apologizing, requesting, and offering in Japanese junior high school textbooks as well as in Japanese high school textbooks. This investigation was useful to determine their possible speech act sets which should be stored in their mind by the time they become university students.

In 2000, 378 university students took part in Discourse Completion Tasks which elicited thanking, apologizing, requesting, and offering, in order to see whether their lexical resources go beyond the input they had received in their junior high school and high school days. We also compared our data with the NS spoken data stored in London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English. We found out that their speech act sets among our university students were those frequently taught in their high school or junior high school textbooks.

Cohen also indicates that a learner’s selection of a situationally appropriate utterance depends on his/her developmental stage of Interlanguage Pragmatics. For this reason, we examined whether Japanese students are not proficient enough to select a relevant expression, depending on situational factors and personal factors mentioned above. In 2000, we analyzed e-mail exchanges between American and Japanese university students. We calculated mean sentence length and compared with the respective

scores among French, Dutch learners of English, American native speakers and British native speakers. We also checked overall vocabulary patterns and adjectives and intensifiers. The data showed that sentence length and vocabulary pattern are adequate, but the various use of intensifiers are extremely weak among Japanese participants. This suggests that Japanese students are poor at selecting a relevant lexical form or that they are not trained to be sensitive to the choice of words relative to socio-cultural factors.

So, in 2001, we investigated whether or not they are sensitive to socio-cultural factors, if we give them questionnaires about their native language. It proved to be so. This meant that Japanese are not intrinsically thick-faced towards socio-cultural factors; on the contrary, we are very sensitive. Then, the next thing we had to test was that Japanese learners of English use word such as 'please' for multiple purposes, i.e., emotionally loaded use. Our experiment confirmed our conjecture.

As a result, we provided some socio-cultural training using Internet synchronous chat and video-conferencing system. We gave them discourse situations orally and elicited various responses from Koreans, Filipinos and Japanese, so that the students can understand intercultural differences at least. The example is given by Eiichiro Tsutsui et al.: **CCDL activity files**. CCDL activity files include our analysis of chatting data, video-conferencing exchange videos and some examples of 'culture introduction CD-ROMs made by undergraduate students.

2.0 A Study of EFL Discourse using Corpora (6): Discourse Completion Tasks in relation to the analysis of Textbooks as a learner's input

The experiment reported in this section was carried out by Nakano, M. Miyasaka, N. Yamazaki, T. and Saito, T (1999).

2.1. Purpose

Our purpose is to analyze the discourse completion data with reference to four speech functions (thanking, apology, request, and offering) in order to find out the strategies or some fixed forms Japanese learners seem to prefer.

First, we compare Japanese learners' lexical resources with those obtained by the native speakers of English stored in London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English. This analysis is carried out by partly using the data in Aijmer (1996), which reports that native speakers of English have various utterance forms to achieve the speech functions mentioned above.

Secondly, we compare Japanese learners' lexical resources with those found in 12 English textbooks used in junior and senior high schools in Japan. Through this comparison,

we will observe similarity or difference of expressions used among discourse completion task (hereafter, DCT) data, junior high school textbooks and high school textbooks.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Subjects

The subjects for this study are 378 Japanese university students who attend four different universities. They are in the first year or the second year.

2.2.2 Material

The DCT consists of 62 questions. They are extracted from three randomly selected junior high school textbooks. We draw expressions of thanking, apologies, requests and offers by using *Concord* involved in *WordSmith Tools* (Ver.3.00), and then select discourses that are thought to be suited for DCT. In selecting the expressions, we checked whether the situation can elicit a greater number of utterances than in the textbooks. For example, in the first excerpt, we can fill in (5) such expressions as thanks, thank you, than you very much, thanks a lot, etc. Likewise, in Excerpt No. 2, the various expressions can be used for (6) and (7), depending on a learner's situational understanding and her/his intention of how much polite s/he wishes to be. For these reasons, although we used junior and high school textbooks for our DCT, this choice does not hinder to elicit a variety of expressions among our 378 participants.

Excerpt No. 1 On the Way Home

Mika: Do you play the guitar, too?

Ted: No, I don't. But I play the drums.

I have drums at home. Come over sometime.

Mika: Really? (5).

Excerpt No.2

Mrs. Baker: Mika, which do you prefer, juice or soda?

Mika: Juice, please.

Mrs. Baker: Here you are.

Mika: (6).

Mrs. Baker: You're welcome. This is for you, Ted.

Ted: (7).

Appendix 5 presents a partial list of 62 elicitation situations in relation to Social Distance, Power, Rights, and Obligation. This list can justify that textbook-based DCT can elicit more expressions than those in the textbooks: for the full list of 62 elicitations, see, Nakano, et. al (2000).

2.2.3 Procedure

The subjects are asked to fill out a short background questionnaire and then to answer DCT (see Appendix 4). All the answers are stored in a computer and are processed by *Concord of WordSmith Tools*. Each speech function is analyzed separately.

Our analysis is carried out based on thanking strategies, apologizing strategies and requestive strategies presented in Aijmer (1996). We will present those strategies in results and discussion section in detail.

2.3. Results and Discussion

2.3.1 Thanking

We pick up the answers that are appropriate to the context, and then classify them into eight categories according to Aijmer (1996:37). These categories appear in Appendix 1. Besides, the items which are not appropriate to the context are also considered afterward.

Table 1 Types of thanking strategies in DCT

Strategies	Raw	Percentage
A	5418	87.1
B	1	0.0
C	28	0.5
D	455	7.3
E	0	0.0
F	2	0.0
G	303	4.9
H	13	0.2
Total	6220	100

Table 1 shows that the frequency of each thanking strategy. This indicates that the thanking strategies used by Japanese learners of English are limited. They use strategy A for the most cases (87.1%), and sometimes use strategy D and G (7.3 % and 4.9% respectively).

We listed the distribution of the items belonging to strategy A in Table 2. This indicates that almost all gratitude expressions used by Japanese learners consist of ‘thank you,’ ‘thank you very much’ and ‘thanks’ (99.8% combined), while NS use various types of expressions.

Table 2 Relative frequency of (direct) apology expressions in theLLC and DCT

Realization		LLC	%	JPN	%
(A)THANK YOU	<i>thank you</i>	134	45.1	4605	85.0
	<i>thank you very much</i>	73	24.6	401	7.4
	<i>thank you very much indeed</i>	17	5.7	0	0.0
	<i>thank you so much</i>	2	0.7	10	0.2
Subtotal		226	76.1	5016	92.6
(B)THANKS	<i>thanks</i>	33	11.1	390	7.2
	<i>thanks very much</i>	28	9.4	1	0.0
	<i>thanks very much indeed</i>	5	1.7	0	0.0
	<i>thanks awfully</i>	2	0.7	0	0.0
	<i>thanks a lot</i>	2	0.7	11	0.2
	<i>many thanks</i>	1	0.3	0	0.0
Subtotal		71	23.9	402	7.4
Total		297	100.0	5418	100.0

Among the answers that are not appropriate to the context, there are three features. First, Japanese learners often use ‘you are welcome’ instead of ‘thank you.’ Secondly, Japanese learners tend to just respond to the offer (e.g. *Yes, OK* and *All right* etc.) instead of expressing gratitude. Thirdly, Japanese learners are likely to express how they feel to the act offered by someone in order to express gratitude (e.g. *I’m happy to hear that* and *I’m glad* etc.).

2.3.2 Apology

The selected answers that are appropriate to the situation are classified into thirteen categories according to Aijmer (1996:83). The types of apologizing strategies appear in Appendix 2.

Table 3 Types of apologizing strategies in DCT

Strategies	Raw	Percentage
A	0	0.0
B	0	0.0
C	0	0.0
D	681	42.9

E	862	54.2
F	0	0.0
G	7	0.4
H	0	0.0
I	1	0.1
J	39	2.5
K	0	0.0
L	0	0.0
M	0	0.0
Total	1589	100

Table 4 Relative frequencies of (direct) apology expressions in the LLC and DCT

Realization		LLC	%	JPN	%
(A) (I AM) (WE'RE) SORRY	<i>Sorry</i>	107	49.8	329	21.3
	<i>very sorry</i>			4	0.3
	<i>I'm sorry (I am sorry), we're sorry</i>	57	26.5	343	22.2
	<i>I'm terribly sorry</i>	4	1.9	1	0.1
	<i>I'm very sorry</i>	4	1.9	1	0.1
	<i>I'm awfully sorry</i>	1	0.5	0	0.0
	<i>I'm so sorry</i>	7	3.3	3	0.2
Subtotal		180	83.7	681	44.1
(B) (I BEG YOUR) PARDON	<i>I beg your pardon</i>	8	3.7	0	0.0
	<i>beg your pardon</i>	1	0.5	0	0.0
	<i>Pardon</i>	8	3.7	0	0.0
Subtotal		17	7.9	0	0.0
(C) EXCUSE (ME)	<i>excuse me</i>	10	4.7	862	55.9
Subtotal		10	4.7	862	55.9
(D) APOLOGIZE (APOLOGIES)	<i>I apologize</i>	2	0.9	0	0.0
	<i>I owe (you) an apology</i>	2	0.9	0	0.0
	<i>give one's apologies</i>	2	0.9	0	0.0
	<i>present one's apologies</i>	1	0.5	0	0.0

	<i>pass on one's apologies</i>	1	0.5	0	0.0
Subtotal		8	3.7	0	0.0
Total		215	100.0	1543	100.0

(our

data)

Table 3 shows the frequency of each apologizing strategy. It tells us that the percentage of occurrences is significantly higher in strategy D, expressing regret, and strategy E, demanding forgiveness (42.9% and 54.2% respectively). We could say that Japanese learners use quite limited variation of apologizing expressions. Table 3 clearly shows this tendency.

Table 4 tells us that Japanese learners seldom use intensifiers (e.g. *terribly*, *very*, *awfully* and *so*). It is possible that they recognized ‘I’m sorry’ as a chunk, and hesitate to put intensifiers between ‘am’ and ‘sorry’. There is room for further investigation.

When we look through the answers that are not appropriate to the situation, we can find the following two salient features.

1. It seems that two apologizing expressions, ‘I’m sorry’ and ‘excuse me’ are easy to be confused. We can find many learners who use the apologizing expression ‘I’m sorry’ even in the situation in which ‘excuse me’ seems to be proper (e.g. opening of conversation). The confusion might be caused by the negative transfer from Japanese. In Japanese, we use a phrase, *sumimasen*, for both the opening of conversation and apologizing. The learner, therefore, might use this expression in both cases.

In addition, when we consider the fact that few learners use ‘excuse me’ in the situation in which ‘I’m sorry’ seems appropriate, it is likely that the Japanese apologizing expression *sumimasen* closely links to the English expression, ‘I’m sorry’, for the Japanese learners.

2. Some learners suddenly explain their own things or situations (e.g. *I’m lost* in Q.28) without using any apologizing expression. This tendency was also found in the analysis of the occurrence of thanking (‘expressing their feelings’).

2.3.3 Requests

The answers appropriate to the context are classified into eighteen categories according to the criteria appearing in Aijmer (1996:132-133). These criteria are shown in [Appendix 3](#).

Table 5 Types of requestive strategies in the LLC and DCT

	LLC		JPN	
	RAW	Percentage	Raw	Percentage
A	132	29.3	340	35.7

B	9	2.0	2	0.2
C	37	8.2	309	32.4
D	80	17.7	2	0.2
E	5	1.1	90	9.4
F	17	3.8	1	0.1
G	3	0.7	1	0.1
H	9	2.0	0	0.0
I	18	4.0	0	0.0
J	6	1.3	0	0.0
K	80	17.7	208	21.8
L	12	2.7	0	0.0
M	15	3.3	0	0.0
N	5	1.1	0	0.0
O	5	1.1	0	0.0
P	14	3.1	0	0.0
Q	4	0.9	0	0.0
Total	451	100.0	953	100.0

(our data)

Table 5 lists the frequency of each requestive strategy used by native speakers and Japanese learners. As a whole, Japanese learners use the limited types of strategies (Strategy A, C, E and K , 99.4% combined).

Japanese learners seldom use strategy D, while native speakers use it frequently. This may be explained by considering Aijmer's (1996:141) subclassification of request markers. Request markers are classified into three types: assertive (e.g. *I want you to...*, *I want...* etc.), unmarked(e.g. *can you...*, *will you...* etc.) and tentative (e.g. *you haven't go...*, *is it possible for you to...* etc.). Japanese learners prefer unmarked ways of requesting, whereas native speakers seem to use assertive and unmarked types equally.

Among the answers that are not classified into eighteen categories, there is a remarkable feature. Japanese learners use the combination of imperatives and 'please' frequently. This can be attributable to L1 transfer. In Japanese, we can increase the degree of politeness by adding lexical devices such as *dohka...shite-kudasai* to imperatives. The Japanese word *dohka* can be interpreted as 'please.' Thus, Japanese learners tend to use the combination of imperatives and 'please' for requesting politely. This overuse of 'please' is investigated in Section 4.0 in this paper.

2.3.4 Offers

Criteria for classifying offering strategies are not found in Aijmer(1996). We will, then, pick up ten frequently used expressions in DCT, which are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Relative frequency of (direct) offering expressions in DCT

	Raw	Percentage
let's	474	45.9
Shall we	175	17.0
May I	160	15.5
Shall I	102	9.9
Can I	57	5.5
Would you like	30	2.9
Do you want	19	1.8
Imperative	7	0.7
How about	6	0.6
Do you want me to	2	0.2
Total	1032	100.0

We can find that the offering expression ‘let’s’ is used most frequently. This tendency can be a reflection of the fact that the DCT includes four questions in which ‘let’s’ is most appropriate. However, even after taking this into account, we can say that they tend to overuse the expression ‘let’s’ for the following two reasons. First, compared to other questions that require other offering expressions, the percentage of answering ‘let’s’ in the questions for which ‘let’s’ is obligatory is relatively higher (284 out of 378 respondents answer ‘let’s’ in Q.34). Secondly, learners use ‘let’s’ even for the test items with question marks.

2.4 Comparison of the DCT data with textbooks

2.4.1 Thanking

Table 7 shows the percentages of thanking strategies in the textbooks and DCT. According to Table 7, the percentage of using ‘thanks’ in DCT data is lower (7.4%) than that in the textbooks (24.1% in the junior high school textbooks and 31.4% in high school textbooks).

Table 7 Comparison of thanking strategies (%)

	HS textbooks	JHS textbooks	DCT
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THANKS	31.4	24.1	7.4
THANK YOU	68.6	76.0	92.6
TOTAL	100	100	100

2.4.2 Apology

Table 8 shows the percentages of apologizing strategies in the textbooks and DCT. Expression using the word ‘apologize’ is not found in all three data above. While textbooks include expressions with the word ‘pardon’, DCT data have no such expression. This means Japanese learners fail to acquire that expression.

Table 8 Comparison of apologizing strategies (%)

	JHS textbooks	HS textbooks	DCT
SORRY	59.7	44.7	44.1
PARDON	5.2	18.4	0
EXCUSE	35.1	36.8	55.9
APOLOGIZE	0	0	0
TOTAL	100	100	100

2.4.3 Request

Table 9 shows the percentages of requestibe strategies in the textbooks and DCT. The high frequency strategies used in DCT data are also found in textbooks. Apart from the strategies suggested by Aijmer(1996), the word ‘please’ are used frequently in DCT data. This can be the reflection of the expressions in textbooks.

Table 9 Comparison of requestive strategies (%)

	JHS textbooks	HS textbooks	DCT
A	14.1	14.8	23.5
B	0	0	0.1
C	13.5	13	21.4
D	0.5	0	0.1
E	5.9	3.7	6.2
F	8.6	0	0.1
G	0	0	0.1

H	0	3.7	0
K	0.5	16.7	14.4
please	56.8	48.1	34.1
Total	99.9	100	100

2.4.4 Offers

Tables 10, 11 and 12 show the offering expressions which are used frequently. We can find that the offering expression 'let's' is most frequently used in the textbooks as well as in DCT data. Besides, other commonly used expressions in DCT data are also found in the textbooks.

Table 10 High frequency order of offering expressions
(junior high school textbooks)

	Total	Percentage
let's	86	77.5
May I	8	7.2
Can I	4	3.6
Would you like	4	3.6
Shall I	3	2.7
What shall I	2	1.8
Do you want NP	3	2.7
You can V	1	0.9
Total	111	100

Table 11 High frequency order of offering expressions
(high school textbooks)

	Total	Percentage
let's	16	40.0
May I	8	20.0
Can I	3	7.5
Shall we	2	5.0
Do you need any help?	2	5.0
Would you like	3	7.5
Do you want me to V ?	1	2.5
Do you want to V ?	1	2.5

How can I help you?	1	2.5
Want a NP ?	1	2.5
What shall I do?	1	2.5
Won't you have one?	1	2.5
Total	40	100

Table 12 High frequency order of offering expressions
(DCT data)

	Total	Percentage
let's	474	45.9
Shall we	175	17.0
May I	160	15.5
Shall I	102	9.9
Can I	57	5.5
Would you like	30	2.9
Do you want	19	1.8
Imperative	7	0.7
How about	6	0.6
Do you want me to	2	0.2
Total	1032	100.0

2.5 Conclusion

Through this study, we can say that the Japanese learners use limited variation of thanking, apologizing, requestive and offering expressions - all four-speech functions focused on in this study. In fact, their expressions used are limited to those taught in the textbooks. This tendency may arise from an influence of the textbooks widely used in junior and senior high schools, supporting the importance of Input Hypothesis in EFL. Pedagogically, in teaching, teachers should promote the students' use of various expressions by giving them various situational interpretations to each situation and at the same time textbook-writers should further diversify the types of expressions used in the textbooks.

3.0 A Study of EFL Discourse Using Corpora (7): An Analysis of E-mail Discourse and Variation of Expressions

The experiment in this section was originally carried out by Nakano, M., Yamazaki, T.,

Miyasaka, N. and Saito, T, and the summary is presented here.

3.1 Purpose

Our purpose of this study is to inquire into features of English written by Japanese learners. As we indicated in the introduction, it is important to see the relationship between a learner's choice of situated utterance and his/her stage of Interlanguage development. We analyze written discourse data collected via e-mail exchanges between Japanese and American university students in the following three points of view:

- 1) We compute sentence length. The mean number of words per sentences is compared with the respective mean scores among French, Dutch learners of English as well as British native speakers and American native speakers, which are found in Meunier (1998). Wonkey Lee (2003) points out that the main measure to estimate a learner's fluency is the total number of words uttered. In this sense, the sentence length is an appropriate method to measure a learner's level of proficiency.
- 2) We list overall vocabulary patterns and high frequency verbs, and compare them with those among native speakers and western European learners of English. This analysis is based on Ringbom (1998).
- 3) We list all the occurrences of the combination of adjectives and intensifiers, and compare them with those among native speakers and German learners of English (cf. Lorenz, 1998).

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Subjects

The data were collected from Japanese university students. All the subjects were in their third year and majoring in English Language and literature, School of Education, Waseda University.

3.2.2 Procedures

The written discourse data were collected via e-mail exchanges between Japanese and American university students. They exchanged what they thought of an essay entitled "cross-cultural communication," which they read beforehand individually. The exchanges, which consist of 106,987 words, were processed by using *WordLists* and *Concord* involved in *WordSmith* tools.

3.3 Results and Discussions

3.3.1 The comparison of mean sentence length between NS and NNS

Table 13 shows the mean sentence length (MSL) of the corpora collected by American and British native speakers, and French and Dutch EFL learners.

Table 13 Sentence length analysis

	MSL (words/sentence)
E2F1 intermediate	17.25
E2F1 advanced	19.08
E2D1 advanced	17.59
E1 American	18.26
E1 British	22.36
Japanese	15.08 (Our data)

Abbreviations:

E2F1 intermediate: first year university students, EFL learners, L1 French.

E2F1 advanced: third and fourth year university students, EFL learners, L1 French.

E2D1 advanced: third and fourth year university students, EFL learners, L1 Dutch.

E1 American: university students, L1 American English.

E1 British: university students, L1 British English.

Japanese: university students, EFL learners, L1 Japanese.

The mean sentence length (MSL) of Japanese learners of English is the shortest among five kinds of subjects. When we regard MSL as indicating the level of English proficiency, the Japanese learners of English are the lowest of all. However, American university students yield MSL of 18.26 while British university students yield that of 22.36. Thus, MSL can vary, depending on NS's writing culture; Americans prefer to use Simple English, conveying the message in a compact way. This tendency has been observed by historical survey of Presidential speeches and the current president tend to use the briefest MSL: see Morita (2002). Waseda students' MSL is close to that of French intermediate students and that of Dutch advanced students. The average Toieic score in 2002 is 579: see Nakano(2003). When university students at several universities took the same grammar test, Waseda students belonged to the top level: Nakano(2003). For these reasons, we might be able to regard Waseda students as belonging to the Intermediate level on average.

3.3.2 The comparison of vocabulary frequencies between NS and NNS

We compare the e-mail discourse data with 7 western European learner corpora

from International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) database and the LOCNESS native speaker (British and American) corpus of argumentative essays. The results concerning to ICLE and LOCNESS corpora are quoted from Ringbom (1998).

Table 14 The 100 most frequent words out of total vocabulary (%)

	NS	FRE	SPA	FIN	FINSW	SWE	DUTCH	GERM	JPN
1 (the)	6.6	5.9	6.1	5.6	5.2	5.0	6.1	5.1	3.8
1 ~ 10	25.6	25.7	26.3	25.1	24.9	24.8	24.9	23.8	25.3
1 ~ 30	37.2	39.2	39.7	37.9	38.9	38.2	37.6	36.8	39.8
1 ~ 50	42.8	46.2	46.7	44.6	46.0	44.9	44.4	43.6	47.2
1 ~ 70	46.8	52.4	51.7	49.4	50.8	49.6	48.6	48.3	52.2
1 ~ 100	51.3	57.3	56.2	54.2	56.0	54.6	53.0	52.9	57.5

(Our data)

For Japanese, the most frequently used word is *I* (5.3%) instead of *the* (3.8%).

Table 14 shows the percentage of the most frequent words of the total vocabulary used in the corpora. As Ringbom (1998:42) indicates, in all corpora, the ten most frequent words account for about a quarter of the total vocabulary of a text, and the top 100 words account for about a half of the total vocabulary. The main difference between NS and NNS is that NNS overuse the words in the frequency bands from 30 to 100.

Ringbom (1998:42-43) assumes that there are more occurrences of function words in the top 100 frequent word list in all NNS corpora than in NS corpora. This tendency is also found in Japanese learners' corpora: see Appendix 1, in Nakano, M., etc. (2000).

Table 15 Occurrences of the most frequent verbs per 10,000 words (lemmas)

Word	NS	FRE	SPA	FIN	FINSW	SWE	DUTCH	GERM	JPN
<i>be</i>	467	484	506	533	537	460	503	489	472
<i>have</i>	110	133	153	163	158	159	145	133	126
<i>do</i>	50	55	75	76	85	72	72	84	59
<i>can</i>	55	65	72	78	81	53	68	64	49
Total	682	737	806	850	861	744	788	770	706

(Our data)

Table 15 shows the occurrences of the most frequent verbs per 10,000 words. It lists the lemmatized forms. These high-frequency function words seem to be overused by all NNS. The rate of overuse by Japanese learners is relatively low compared to

phrase

(Our data)

Abbreviations:

obj.: a direct object

PP/ adj.: a past participle or adjective

adv.(phrasal): an adverb forming a phrasal verb

inf.: an infinitive

adv.: an adverb

prep. phrase: a prepositional phrase

We added the categories of 5 and 6 to those of 1 through 4 appearing in Ringbom (1998).

3.3.3 The comparison of adjective intensification strategies between NS and NNS

We focus on peculiarities in NS and NNS intensification of adjectives. In addition to the e-mail discourse written by Japanese learners of English, we refer to the corpora of British native speakers and German learners of English containing argumentative essays. All the figures about the corpora of British and German appear in Lorenz (1998).

At first we consider how often each adjective is intensified. Table 19 lists what kinds of adjectives are most frequently intensified by NNS and NS. Japanese learners of English emphasize ‘important,’ ‘interesting,’ ‘difficult’ and ‘hard’ in this order of frequency. German learners emphasize ‘important,’ ‘good,’ ‘different,’ ‘interested’ and ‘interesting.’ This may be interpreted as revealing stereo-typical cultural differences between Japan and Germany. ‘Hard-working serious Japanese’ emphasize the importance, difficulties and hardness. Japanese tend to make compliments toward the addressee and hence use an adjective ‘interesting’ more emphatically; e.g. ‘That’s very interesting.’ On the other hand, European people are more individualistic and tend to say how the addresser sees a given event subjectively. This may be the reason why European NNS emphasize ‘important,’ ‘different,’ ‘difficult’ and ‘interested.’

Table 19 Percentage of intensified adjectives

	NNS (German)	NS(British)	JPN
important	62.6(1)	29.1(1)	64.2(1)
good	35.8(2)	25.5(2)	9.9(9)
different	32.9(3)	13.2(4)	11.7(7)
difficult	26.0(6)	9.8(7)	39.2(3)

hard	17.9(7)	8.0(9)	29.5(4)
high	15.8(8)	11.7(5)	2.4(10)
bad	14.3(10)	8.4(8)	10.2(8)
interested	32.4(4)	-	18.3(6)
interesting	31.0(5)	-	47.4(2)
easy	15.3(9)	-	23.1(5)
successful	-	14.2(3)	0.0
aware	-	10.9(6)	0.0
ambiguous	-	7.6(10)	0.0

(Our data)

In Table 19, the figures in brackets indicate the ranks of high frequency in each subject group.

Then, we classify the adverbial intensifiers use by the Japanese learners according to the criteria of Quirk et al. (1985). The classification is shown in Table 20. Further information about the classification is cited below. It is useful to distinguish two subsets of intensifiers:

- (I) AMPLIFIERS { Maximizes (eg: *completely*)
- { Boosters (eg: *very much*)
- (II) DOWNTONERS { Approximators (eg: *almost*)
- { Compromisers (eg: *more or less*)
- { Diminishers (eg: *partly*)
- { Minimizers (eg: *hardly*)

Amplifiers scale upwards from an assumed norm: downtoners have a lowering effect, usually scaling downwards from an assumed norm....The subtypes provide nothing more than a rough guide to semantic distinctions, because (i) the varying effects of intensifiers represent a semantic gradient, which is obscured by a clear-cut division into classes; (ii) some intensifiers are sometimes used for different effects; and (iii) speakers vary in their use of intensifiers.

Intensification is realized for the most part by adverbs, but occasionally also by noun phrases and prepositional phrases.

Amplifiers scale upwards. They are divided into (a) MAXIMIZERS, which can denote the upper extreme of the scale, and (b) BOOSTERS, which denote a high degree, a high point on the scale....

Downtoners have a generally lowering effect on the force of the verb or predication and many of them apply a scale to gradable verbs. They can be divided into four groups:

(a) APPROXIMATORS serve to express an approximation to the force of the verb,

- while indicating that the verb concerned expresses more than is relevant.
- (b) COMPROMISERS have only a slight lowering effect and tend, as with (a), to call in question the appropriateness of the verb concerned.
 - (c) DIMINISHERS scale downwards and roughly mean ‘to a small extent’.
 - (d) MINIMIZERS are negative maximizers, ‘(not) to any extent’.

Definition of intensifiers (Quirk et al. 1985, 589-597)

Table 20 The types of intensifiers

Amplifiers	Maximizers	eg. <i>absolutely, altogether, completely, quite, totally</i> etc.
	Boosters	eg. <i>badly, bitterly, enormously, far, greatly, very much</i> etc.
Downtoners	Approximators	eg. <i>almost, nearly, virtually</i> etc.
	Compromisers	eg. <i>kind of, sort of, rather, enough, sufficiently</i> etc.
	Diminishers	eg. <i>mildly, partially, partly, somewhat, in part</i> etc.
	Minimizers	eg. <i>barely, hardly, little, scarcely, in the least</i> etc.

Tables 21 and 22 list what kinds of adverbial intensifiers are used by British native speakers, German and Japanese learners of English. Table 9 shows that German learners use more intensifiers than British do. However, our data are contrary to those of German learners. Table 10 indicates that Japanese learners use much less intensifiers than British do. Especially, downtoners are seldom used by Japanese learners. Besides, the variation of intensifiers is also limited. This is suggested by Table 11. For downtoners, only ‘Diminishers’ are included in our data.

Table 21 Scalar category counts (NNS and NS)

Scalar category	GermanESL	British	²	NNS overuse (%)
X	163.1	126.7	4.7	28.7
B	858.6	580.2	53.7	48.0
amplifiers	1021.7	706.9	57.1	44.5
A	35.5	29.4	0.6	20.8
C	157.7	116.3	6.3	35.6
D	25.6	15.6	2.4	64.1
N	98.4	81.1	1.7	21.3
downtoners	317.2	242.5	10.0	30.8

all	1338.9	949.3	66	41
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Table 22 Scalar category counts (Japanese learners and NS)

Scalar category	JPN (SF)	NS(SF)	²	JPN overuse (%)
X	25.2	126.7	0.0	-80.1
B	191.6	580.2	0.0	-67.0
amplifiers	216.8	706.9	0.0	-69.3
A	0.0	29.4	-	-100.0
C	0.0	116.3	-	-100.0
D	8.4	15.6	0.0	-46.1
N	0.0	81.1	-	-100.0
downtoners	8.4	242.5	0.0	-96.5
all	225.3	949.3	0.0	-76.3

In Tables 9 and 10, SF stands for 'rounded standardized form,' which means the value arithmetically normalized per 100,000 words.

The number of adjective intensifiers does not necessarily indicate the degree of English proficiency. However, Japanese learners need to expand their vocabulary of adjective intensification: see Table 23.

Table 23 Variation of intensifiers

	impo- rtant	good	different	interest- ed	interest- ing	difficult	hard	high	easy	bad	ambigu- ous	Total
X:most	15			1								16
X:quite			2	1		1		1	3			8
X:totally			1									1
X:comple- tely			1	1								2
B:very	31	17	6	10	32	27	30	1	4	4	1	163

B:very much				1								1
B:more	3				4	2						9
B:so	2	10	1	1	1	7	4	3	2	1		32
D:less	1											1
D:a little			2				2					4
D:little bit			1									1
D:a little bit						2						2
D:a bit						1						1
Total	52	27	14	15	37	40	36	5	9	5	1	241

3.4 Conclusion

These results lead to the conclusion that:

- 1) In terms of MSL, Waseda students can be regarded as belonging to the intermediate.
- 2) Japanese learners of English (at Waseda) tend to overuse high-frequency main verbs. A pedagogical treatment to increase their variety of verb uses is required.
- 3) They have limited strategies of adjective intensification. It is necessary to introduce various kinds of intensifiers to the learners.

4.0 Cross-Cultural comparisons of situation assessments and DCT:

An Investigation of Requests Made by Japanese Learners of English

This research was jointly done originally by Tae Yamazaki and later modified by Michiko Nakano

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to inquire into 104 Japanese EFL learners' requestive strategies in relation to information of situation where a request is made. The research in this study consists of the two kinds of data set: the data obtained through Situation Assessment Questionnaire and the data of Discourse Completion Test. The results are examined from the following three

points of view: 1) the relationship of the subjects' awareness of situation and the frequency of *please*, 2) characteristics of the subjects' strategies in English with reference to *please*, and 3) characteristics of the subjects' strategies in Japanese. It is revealed that the Japanese EFL learners have a certain sensitivity to situational information, such as social status of interlocutors, familiarity of interlocutors, and so on, and at the same time, they can reflect such information on their actual expressions in Japanese. Nonetheless, they cannot use requestive strategies relevant to situation in English. Therefore, it is essential to raise learners' consciousness of the relationship between English request expressions and situational information.

Over the past few decades a considerable number of studies have been made on speech acts performed by non-native speakers of English. They direct their attention to communicative competence rather than grammatical competence (Olshtain and Cohen 1983; Cohen, Olshtain, and Rosenstein 1986; Olshtain and Cohen 1990; Suh 1999). Non-native speakers, as can be seen in the following quotation: "may fail to communicate effectively in a given situation even though their command of grammar and vocabulary is fine." (Cohen, Olshtain, and Rosenstein, 1986:51) This argument is based on the fact that speech act is realized by not only linguistic knowledge but also discourse situation. This is what Yule (1996) comments on the matter as follows:

As a technical term, **face** means the public self-image of a person. It refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize. **Politeness**, in an interaction, can then be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person's face. In this sense, politeness can be accomplished in situations of social distance or closeness. (The two words were bold-faced in the original text.)

Yule (1996:60)

What is apparent in this extract is that we are sensitive to the degree of politeness each occasion of utterance imposes on us, and for this reason, our awareness of social factors is essential in our daily interaction. Yule goes on to say:

Within their everyday social interactions, people generally behave as if their expectations concerning their public self-image, or their **face wants**, will be respected. If a speaker says something that represents a threat to another individual's expectations regarding self-image, it is described as a **face threatening act**.

Yule (1996:61)

Brown and Levinson (1987) present a formula in order to calculate the seriousness of an face threatening act (FTA) as follows:

$$W_x = D(S, H) + P(H, S) + R_x$$

W_x : the numerical value that measures the weightiness of the FTax

$D(S, H)$: the value that measures the social distance between S and H

$P(H, S)$: a measure of the power that H has over S

R_x : a value that measures the degree to which the FTax is rated an imposition in that culture

Brown and Levinson(1987:76)

Note: S stands for speaker, H stands for hearer

Requests are face threatening acts (Brown and Levinson 1987; Suh 1999), since a speaker is imposing his will on the hearer; thus the choice of requestive strategies depends on the three factors: the social distance between a speaker and a hearer, the power that a hearer has over a speaker, and culture.

The purpose of this study is to examine the requestive strategies in both Japanese (L1) and English (FL), chosen by Japanese learners of English. It is found in Nakano, Miyasaka, and Yamazaki (2000) that the Japanese learners had limited variation of requestive expressions. They used only five strategies in the discourse completion test (hereafter DCT), i.e. *can you...*, *will you...*, *I want...*, *may I...*, and imperative + *please*. Among them, they were likely to use imperatives + *please* excessively. In addition, the subjects paid little attention to the degree of politeness in their English DCT. We will inquire into the factors causing the Japanese learners' biased use of requestive strategies by examining the results of the Situation Assessment Questionnaire and DCT data.

The analysis of the present study was carried out by partly using the data in Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989), which was conducted as a part of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP). Both the Situation Assessment Questionnaire and the DCT of the present study were also made on the basis of CCSARP.

4.3 Research Questions

We present the following three research questions:

- 1) Is the Japanese learners' awareness of situational information reflected in their choice of *please*?
- 2) What kinds of requestive strategies do the Japanese learners use in the English DCT?
- 3) What kinds of requestive strategies do the Japanese learners use in the Japanese DCT?

We will also compare our results with those of CCSARP.

As mentioned above, the Japanese EFL learners tend to use the strategy, imperative + *please* when they make requests. Besides, Nakano, Miyasaka, and Yamazaki (2000) reveals that the strategy emerges extremely often in the EFL textbooks. Considering these findings,

we suppose that the Japanese learners may choose exclusively the strategy including *please* so as to show politeness, which is one of the major factors in making expressions appropriate to each situation, in their requestive expressions. If so, it seems reasonable to assume that the frequency of the use of *please* may be regarded as an indicator of a degree of politeness that the Japanese learners intend to express; moreover, it may be treated as an indicator of a degree of the learners' awareness of situational information. The analyses concerning the research questions 1 and 2 are on the basis of these assumptions.

4.4 Subjects

The subjects were one hundred and four Japanese learners of English as a foreign language. They had experience of learning English for more than five years in classroom settings in Japan. For the research question 2, four subjects were omitted randomly so that we could compare our data to the data among the British native speakers, German NSs, German learners of English, Hebrews, French Canadians, Australians and Argentinean Spanish Ss given by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989).

4.5 Procedure

4.5.1 Data Collection

Two kinds of data sets were collected. One was collected by using the Situation Assessment Questionnaire and the other by the DCT.

In the Situation Assessment Questionnaire, the subjects were given eight situations, which appear in the next subsection, and asked to assess on the six situational features below:

- 1) the role relationships between the two participants (Dominance)
- 2) the role relationships between the two participants (Familiarity)
- 3) the right of the requester to make the request (Right)
- 4) the degree of obligation placed on the requestee to comply with the request (Obligation)
- 5) the likelihood that the request would, in fact, be complied with (Compliance)
- 6) the degree of difficulty involved in making the request (Difficulty)

The subjects weighed each situation on the three-point-scale basis: 1 (low) 2 (neutral) 3 (high).

Turning to the DCT data, the subjects were given eight situations, which aimed to elicit request expressions. Then the subjects were asked to provide their responses in English. A week later, they were asked to respond in Japanese. Blum-Kulka et al. suggested the following situations as DCTs. Out of the fifteen situations, we only use 7 ticked items, since the remaining items relate to Apology situations.

- ✓ S1: A student asks her roommate to clean up the kitchen the latter had left in a mess the night before.
S2: A university professor promised to return the student’s term paper that day but did not finish reading it.
- ✓ S3: A young woman wants to get rid of a man pestering her on the street.
S4: A student asks another student to lend her some lecture notes.
- ✓ S5: A student asks another student to lend her some lecture notes.
S6: A staff manager has kept a student waiting for half an hour for a job interview because he was called away to an unexpected meeting.
- ✓ S7: A student asks people living on the same street for a ride home.
S8: The waiter in an expensive restaurant brings fried chicken instead of boeuf a la maison to a surprised customer.
- ✓ S9: An applicant calls for information on a job advertised in a paper.
S10: A notoriously unpunctual student is late again for a meeting with a friend with whom she is working on a paper.
- ✓ S11: A policeman asks a driver to move her car.
S12: A driver in the parking lot backs into someone else’s car.
- ✓ S13: A student asks a teacher for an extension on a seminar paper.
S14: The speaker offended a fellow worker during a discussion at work. After the meeting the fellow worker comments on the incident.
- ✓ S15: A high school teacher/ a college professor asks a student to give his lecture week earlier than scheduled.

Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper: 1989(14-15).

Each situation above varied in its situational information, i.e. the situations assumed different social distance and social power of interlocutors. (Table24)

Table 24: Situational Variation

<u>Situations</u>	<u>Social Distance</u>	<u>Social Power</u>
S1 Kitchen		$x = y$
S3 Street	+	$x = y$
S5 Notes		$x = y$
S7 Ride	+	$x < y$
S9 Information	+	$x < y$

S11 Policeman	+	$x > y$
S13 Extension		$x < y$
S15 Lecturer		$x > y$

Blum-Kulka, House, Kasper: (1989:15).

4.5.2 Nine Strategies suggested by Blum-Kulka et al.

Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) suggested the following 9 strategies on the scale of indirectness.

- 1 . mood derivable: utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force ('Leave me alone'; 'Clean up that mess').
2. performatives: utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named ('I am asking you to clean up the mess').
3. hedged performatives: utterances in which the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions ('I would like to ask you to give your presentation a week earlier than scheduled').
4. obligation statements: utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act ('You'll have to move that car').
- 5 . want statements: utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act ('I really wish you'd stop bothering me').
6. suggestory formulae: utterances which contain a suggestion to do x ('HOW about cleaning up?').
- 7 . query preparatory: utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions (e.g., ability, willingness) as conventionalized in any specific language ('Could you clear up the kitchen, please?'; 'Would you mind moving your car?').
- 8 . strong hints: utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act (' You have left the kitchen in a right mess').
9. mild hints: utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context (' I am a nun' in response to a persistent hassler).

Blum-Kulka, House, Kasper: (1989:18).

Strategies 1-5 are regarded as “Direct”, “Speaker-oriented” and “Impositives”, Strategies 6-7 are “Conventionalized Indirect”, “Hearer-oriented” and “Query Preparatory”, Strategies 8-9

are “Nonconventionalized Indirect”, “Mutually-oriented” and “Hints”, according to Blum-Kulka, House, Kasper.

House (1989:102-105) focused on the following three strategies:

- 1) Imperatives (‘direct’) (e.g., *Leave me alone; Clean up this room*)
- 2) Query Preparatory (‘conventionalized indirect’): utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions as conventionalized in any specific language (e.g., *Could you clean up the room?*)
- 3) Hints (‘nonconventionalized indirect’) (e.g., *You have left the kitchen in a right mess.*)

DCT data in Japanese can be classified based on the theory Koizumi (1990) and Ide (1982) advanced. They classify four requestive strategies below in terms of syntactic features. It should be noted that Imperatives are direct, speaker-oriented and impositive, since the speaker is imposing her will on the hearer. We should also note that Interrogatives are conventionalized indirect, hearer-oriented and query preparatory. Negative Interrogatives can be included in query preparatory.

- 1) Imperatives (e.g., *Souji site yo. [Clean up the room.] 掃除しろ、掃除しなさい、掃除してください。*)
- 2) Interrogatives (e.g., *Souji site kuremasuka.[Will you clean up the room?])掃除してくれますか？掃除して下さいますか？*
- 3) Negative Interrogatives (e.g., *Souji site kuremasenka. [Won't you clean up the room?]) 掃除して下さいませんか？*
- 4) Hints (e.g., *Kono heya kitanai yo. [This room is messy.] そろそろ掃除しようか。ほこりがあるね。*)

4.6 Results and Discussion

Table 25 shows the results of the Situation Assessment Questionnaire. Judging from the average values on the five-point scales, the Japanese learners distinguished each situation in terms of factorss such as dominance, familiarity, right, obligation, compliance, and difficulty. Accordingly, the Japanese learners were aware of the differences of the situational information.

Table 25 The average values in Situation Assessment Questionnaire by German, Hewbrew, Argentinian Spanish speakers and the Japanese EFL learners

Situation	1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15
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Social Parameters									
Dominance	(G)	2.25	2.45	1.80	1.52	1.21	2.75	1.20	1.92
	(H)	1.92		1.80	1.63		2.72		2.25
	(AS)	1.91		1.86	1.60		2.50		2.04
	(J)	1.17	2.07	1.23	2.58	2.72	2.8	2.91	2.77
Familiarity	(G)	2.23	1.18	2.00	1.65	1.25	1.27	1.53	1.77
	(H)	2.23		2.02	1.47		1.11		1.85
	(AS)	2.76		2.38	1.50		1.26		2.09
	(J)	2.61	1.00	2.90	2.29	1.04	1.03	1.94	1.81
Right	(G)	2.88	2.51	2.63	2.15	2.55	2.97	2.13	2.07
	(H)	2.97		2.90	2.72		3.00		2.27
	(AS)	2.95		2.95	2.61		3.00		2.45
	(J)	2.68	2.78	2.17	1.28	2.74	2.90	1.41	1.93
Obligation	(G)	2.22	1.57	1.77	1.70	1.68	3.00	1.675	1.67
	(H)	2.87		1.87	1.75		3.00		1.55
	(AS)	2.86		1.62	1.43		3.00		1.90
	(J)	2.78	2.61	1.87	1.43	2.78	2.93	1.41	2.01
Compliance	(G)	2.23	1.73	2.53	2.52	1.85	2.80	2.05	1.92
	(H)	2.62		2.60	2.82		2.97		2.25
	(AS)	2.41		2.81	2.40		2.96		2.04
	(J)	2.45	1.49	2.67	2.09	2.78	2.86	1.32	2.29
Difficulty	(G)	1.50	2.1	1.35	1.9	2.20	1.00	2.35	1.60
	(H)	1.57		1.50	1.67		1.13		1.85
	(AS)	1.50		1.14	2.20		1.10		1.90
	(J)	1.65	2.49	1.57	2.45	1.59	1.28	2.72	1.97

G=German NSs; H=Hebrew; AS=Argentinean Spanish; J= Japanese EFL learners
German data from House (1989:106), and Hebrew, and Argentinian Spanish data from
Blum-Kulka and House (1986:141)

The participants rated each factor in the three-point scale: 1 low, 2 neutral and 3, high.

Situation 1 involves two roommates. For Japanese, roommates are friends, although one of them made a mess of the room; so, Japanese rated dominance low (1.17). However, in the case of Germans, one of the roommates is regarded as more dominant (2.25), since he or she is entitled to claim the clean room. It seems that in German society, roommates are not either friends or equals or that even if they are friends, their relationship changes, depending on the situation. Hebrews and Spanish are just between Japanese and Germans (1.92 and 1.91). According to Bulm-Kulka and House (1986:143), the request to clean the kitchen is perceived by Israelis and Argentinians as more obligating and as having a higher chance for compliance than by the Germans. The Germans also perceive the requester as being in a more powerful position than do the other two groups.

Situation 3 involves strangers in the street and the young woman wished to get rid of the man who is pestering on her. German rated 2.45 and Japanese rated 2.07. Although the difference is small, it seems that the girl is more entitled to be dominant from a German point of view.

Situation 5 : A student asks another student to lend her some lecture notes. In the case of the

request for notes, four nationalities did not show so much difference in dominance factor, although a kind of friends you can ask for the lecture notes is regarded by Japanese as most intimate and equal. Israelis and Argentinians assess the requester's right as greater than the Germans and Japanese, and for the Argentinians there is also a high degree of likelihood for compliance. But the Israelis and Japanese perceive this as a more difficult request to make than either the Germans or the Argentinians.

Situation 7: A student asks people living on the same street for a ride home. In the request for a ride, the level of imposition, reflected by estimates for degree of difficulty, is rated highest by the Japanese, although they regard the student and the neighbor as intimate (the familiarity score being the highest). The Japanese are peculiar in that the requestee is in a dominant position and that the requester has the lowest right to ask, in spite of the fact that the student and the neighbor are perceived as intimate. Japanese and the Argentinians differ from the other two cultural groups in their lower estimates for the hearer's obligation to comply. 14 The right to ask and chances for compliance are estimated the highest by the Israelis.

Situation 9: An applicant calls for information on a job advertised in a paper. The Japanese and the Germans are different in Dominance, obligation, compliance and difficulty scores. For the Japanese, the job information supplier is in the dominant position and she or he should be more obliged to supply the information and she or he is expected to do so, which is not difficult to do so from the Japanese point of view. On the other hand, the job applicant and the information supplier are judged to be equal in status. Although the former is judged to have the right to ask for the information, he or she has low obligation to do so and therefore, compliance is estimated rather low and the former finds it difficult for his request to be accomplished.

Situation 11: A policeman asks a driver to move her car. There are no significant differences in estimates on any of the parameters. The policeman's role seems to be universally stable.

Situation 13: A student asks a teacher for an extension on a seminar paper. The Japanese find the teacher more dominant in position than the Germans but they find the teacher more familiar to the student than the Germans. This suggests the following interpretation; if the teacher is in a dominant position and the student dares to ask for the extension of the paper, the relationship between them must be intimate. For the Japanese, the student does not have the right to ask such a thing, but the Germans regards the student to claim his right. The Japanese as well as the Germans know that the teacher should not be obliged to extend the submission of the paper. The Germans find the request to be more likely to be accepted by the teacher than the Japanese do, although the two nationalities find the request equally difficult.

Situation 15: A high school teacher or a college professor asks a student to give his lecture

week earlier than scheduled. In the lecturer's request, there are significant differences on all parameters: Argentinians grant the speaker the highest level of right and the Japanese give the hearer the highest level of obligation to comply with the request among the four cultural groups, as well as the highest degree of dominance. The lecture's familiarity with the student is also estimated significantly higher in Argentina than in the other three countries. On the other hand, the Israelis and the Japanese differ from the other groups in their high estimates for chances of compliance.

Next, following House's method of analysis in her German study, we administered Pearson Correlation Tests for the situation factor scores in Table 25 and the frequency of occurrences of *please*(see Fig.1), and then obtained Table26. According to Fig. 1, in the case of the German Native Speakers as well as German learners of English, they tend to use *bitte/please* in Situations 1 and 11, followed by Situation 5; moreover, the NS patterns are all linearly reflected in their use of *Please* in English. In their case, when the hearer is highly obliged to comply the request and he or she feels low degree of difficulty in performing the request, he or she is more likely to say *bitte* or *please*.

Table 26 Correlations of the values of situation assessment and the frequency of *bitte/please* by German NSs and Japanese EFL learners

	Dominance	Familiarity	Right	Obligation	Compliance	Difficulty
German	0.71	0.32	0.76	0.91	0.72	-0.77
Japanese	-0.48ns	0.98**	-0.55ns	-0.37ns	0.05ns	-0.14ns

*p<.05 **p<.01

German data from House (1989:106).

Table 26 reveals that the Japanese EFL learners indicates a very weak relationship between the situational factors and their use of *please*. In other words, it is more likely that the Japanese learners' awareness of situational information is not reflected in their use of *please*. This suggests that *please* is merely a marker of politeness, just to hide some embarrassment of imposing the requester's will on the addressee.

Figure 1 demonstrates the frequency of occurrences of *please* for the four groups: 100 British native speakers, 100 German learners of English, 100 German native speakers and 100 Japanese EFL learners. The Japanese learners overused *please* in the most situations (Situations 1, 5, 7, 9, 13 and 15). We can here again see that the Japanese learners' awareness of situational information is not reflected in their use of *please*. This suggests that *please* is merely a marker of politeness, just to hide some embarrassment of imposing the requester's will on the addressee, as we have suggested above.

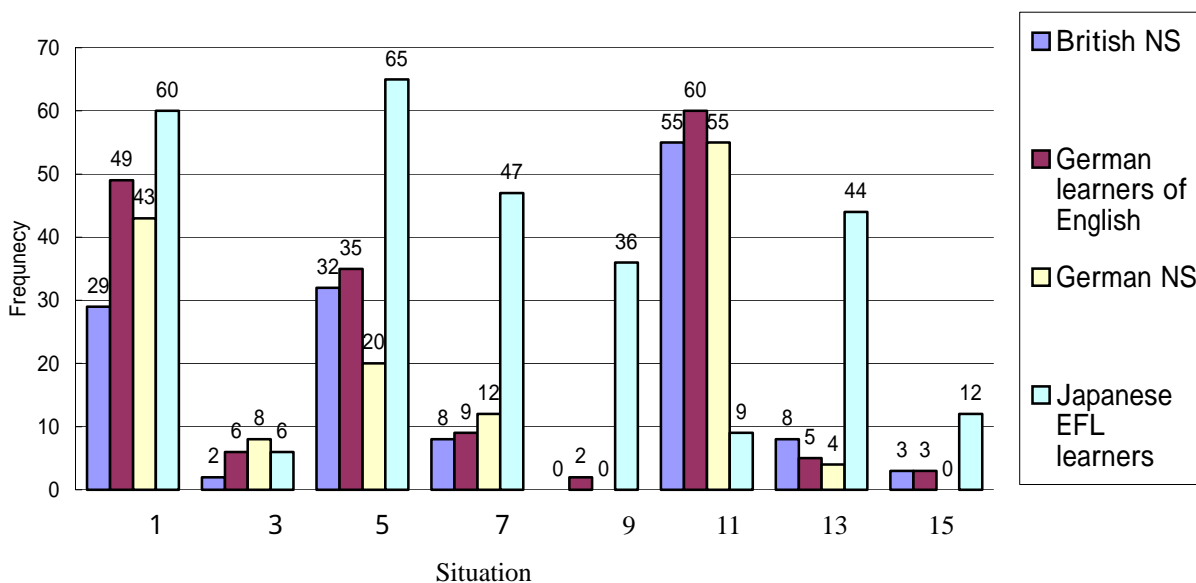


Figure 1 Frequency of occurrences of *please*

Apart from Japanese EFL learners' data, the other data from House (1989:100).

Table 27 shows the frequencies of each requestive strategy as well as the percentages of co-occurrences of each strategy and *please*. "I" stands for the use of imperatives, "Q" for query preparatory, and "H" for hints.

First, the Japanese learners overused imperatives in almost all the situations (Situations 1, 5, 7, 9, 13 and 15) in comparison with the British native speakers.

Secondly, the percentages of imperative + *please* strategy were extremely high in the situations 1, 5, 7, 9, 13 and 15 in the Japanese learners' data.

Thirdly, the Japanese learners overused query-preparatory + *please* strategy in the situations 5 and 7. According to Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989), the effect of the addition of *please* to the query-preparatory strategy is -polite, +direct in more face-threatening situations. The Japanese learners should have learned that *please* is not always a politeness marker.

Table27 Frequencies of requests and the percentages of *please*

Situation		1 (Kitchen)			3 (Street)			5(Notes)			7 (Ride)		
Request strategy		I	Q	H	I	Q	H	I	Q	H	I	Q	H
L	Request Distr.	9	53	5	32	4	4		88			80	4
	Please Distr.	100%	75%		12%	50%	50%		39%			11%	
G	Request Distr.	21	71	3	35	1	1		99	1		93	2
	Please Distr.	52%	45%		20%	100%	100%		20%			12%	

E	Request Distr.	9	76	2	46	8	8	1	99			85	6
	Please Distr.	33%	34%			25%	25%		32%			9%	
J	Request Distr.	71	7	9	61	0	16	61	31	1	42	26	1
	Please Distr.	80%	14%		10%			98%	10%		95%	8%	

Situation		9 (job)			11(policeman)			13(paper)			15(lecturer)		
Request strategy		I	Q	H	I	Q	H	I	Q	H	I	Q	H
L	Request Distr.		26	40	27	46	4	1	48	45		69	
	Please Distr.		7%		85%	80%		100%	8%			4%	
G	Request Distr.		20	75	61	27	6		50	48	2	81	3
	Please Distr.				70%	44%			8%				
E	Request Distr.		17	51	4	90	1		56	32		92	5
	Please Distr.				50%	58%			14%			3%	
J	Request Distr.	33	11	1	64	2	16	33	12	5	8	7	7
	Please Distr.	91%	18%		14%			97%	17%		75%		

L=German learners of English; G=German NSs; E=British NSs; J= Japanese EFL learners

Request Strategy types ‘I’= Imperative (‘Direct’); ‘Q’=Query-preparatory(‘Conventionalized indirect’); ‘H’=Hints (‘nonconventionalized indirect’)

Apart from Japanese EFL learners’ data, the other data from House (1989:103)

Table 28 indicates the frequency distribution of the four requestive strategies in Japanese. The Japanese learners used various strategies in their DCT data in Japanese. The learners chose negative interrogative form most frequently in the situations 5, 7 and 13, which were more face-threatening than the others: see Table 25. According to Koizumi (1990), this strategy is preferred in making polite requests. Thus, the learners could pay attention to the situational information in their native language, and marked politeness in their expressions successfully.

Table28 Frequency distribution of the four requestive strategies in Japanese

Situation	1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15	
Strategy									Total
Imperative	45	40	32	18	11	55	17	5	223
Interrogative	5	0	43	26	17	2	11	34	138
Negative Interrogative	17	2	24	49	21	2	58	15	188

Hint	13	52	1	1	7	43	3	1	121
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As we mentioned in 4.5.2, apart from Hints, Koizumi’s classification is based on the syntactic realizations, while Blum-kulka’s classification is based on either the discourse orientation such as hearer-oriented, speaker-oriented, inclusive or impersonal (Blum-Kulka (1989:59)) or on the scale of directness – indirectness, ranging from Direct, Conventional Indirect to Non-conventional Indirect (Blum-Kulka (1989:47)). As we pointed out above, House (1989:102-103) related direct/indirect scale to syntactic realization patterns: Imperatives(direct), Query Preparatory (conventionalized indirect) and Hints (non-conventionalized indirect). We can suggest the following relationships:

Imperatives (direct) speaker-oriented and impositives

Interrogatives and Negative Interrogatives Query Preparatory, hearer-oriented, conventionalized indirect

If the speaker uses *Let us* or *Shall we*, emphasizing the use of inclusive *we*, then the utterance is inclusive: e.g., it’s time that we cleaned the room.

If the speaker uses impersonal pronouns such as *one* or the utterance is stated in general terms, then the utterance is impersonal; e.g., one needs to clean the room once in a while, it is our school policy to clean the room once a day, etc.

	AE	French	Hebrew	AS	Japanese	JLE
Direct	9.8%	24%	33.4%	39.6%	33.3%	71%
C. Indirect	82.4%	68.9%	58.6%	58.4%	48.7%	18.3%
N. Indirect	7.8%	7.1%	8.0%	2.0%	33.3%	10.7%
Speaker-oriented	33.4%	19%	13.7%	0.9%	33.3%	71%
Hearer-orientated	61.3%	69.6%	54.3%	97.4%	48.7%	18.3%
Inclusive	2.3%	6.2%	1.3%	1.7%	15.0%	6.9%
Impersonal	2.9%	5.3%	30.3%	0%	3.1%	3.8%

AE: Austrarilan English; **AS:** Argentinian Spanish ; **JLE:** Japanese Learners of English

In the five native speakers’ group, conversationally indirect forms which are basically hearer-oriented are used most often, while Japanese learners of English tend to use the direct and speaker-oriented expressions most often. This can be interpreted as Interlanguage phenomenon whose directness is softened by the overuse of politeness marker, *please*. Most striking thing is that Argentinians hardly use the speaker-oriented expressions, although they use

39.6% of Direct expressions. This suggests that in Spanish Imperatives is not regarded as speaker-oriented. We need to investigate this possibility in future. One specific characteristic for the Japanese NS groups is that they use Non-conventionalized indirect expressions or Hints more often than the other four native groups, supporting that in Japanese we prefer to use vague hints in requesting events. The fact that Japanese learners use inclusive expressions most frequently of all may be related to their native speech habits. Another feature in the present data is that the Israelis use impersonal expressions most frequently. 'It's a very good idea or a good principle to keep the room clean' is one of the impersonal examples. This impersonal expression has a psychological distancing effect; rather than requesting directly, one is appealed from the point of view of principles. This sort of interpretation seems to accord with one of the Hebrew traditions.

4.7 Conclusion

This study has attempted to observe the Japanese EFL learners' requestive strategies in relation to information of situation where a request is made.

With regard to the research question 1, the results indicate that the Japanese EFL learners' awareness of situational information is not closely related to their frequency of the use of *please*. On the ground that the examination of the Situation Assessment Questionnaire demonstrates that the learners are sensitive to the difference of situations, it may safely be assumed that they fail not to recognize the difference of each situation but to express the difference they find in English.

Turning to a consideration of research question 2, the following results are obtained: the frequency of *please* is extremely high, the overuse of imperative + *please* in six out of eight situations, and the use of conventionalized indirect question + *please* in inappropriate situations. From this viewpoint one may say that the Japanese learners are affected by not the situational information but the formal feature such as imperative + *please*, which is common in their textbooks, when they respond in English.

With regard to the research question 3, the Japanese learners' awareness of the situational information is embodied in their responses in their L1, Japanese. Such a fact serves as evidence that the Japanese learners take situational information into consideration, and then they verbalize their intention of distinguishing situations whenever they can.

It follows from what has been said that it is necessary to introduce the Japanese learners to various requestive strategies, and to raise their consciousness of situational information at the same time. Miyasaka and Yamazaki (2000:382) demonstrates that the formal instruction in classroom settings fairly succeed in enriching the Japanese EFL learners' choice of thanking and apology strategies, and in making them pay

attention to discourse situations. Thus, it may be worthwhile giving students a similar instruction on requestive expressions as well.

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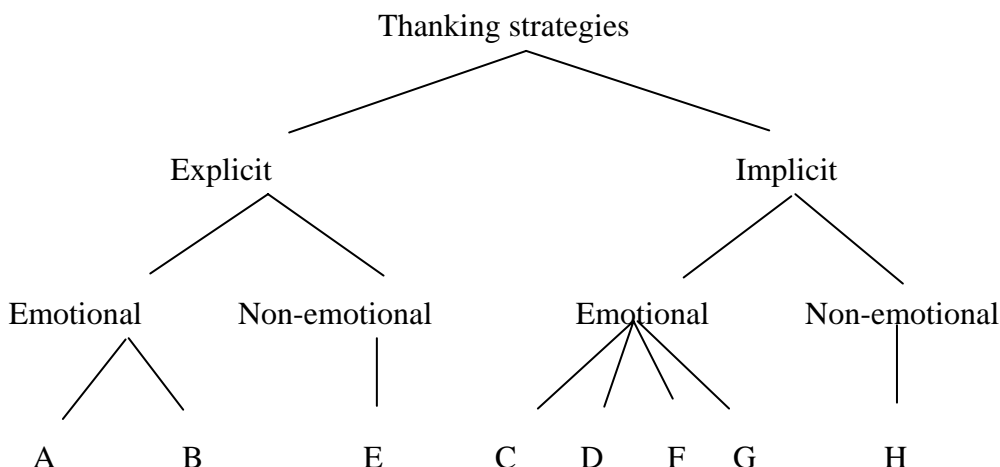
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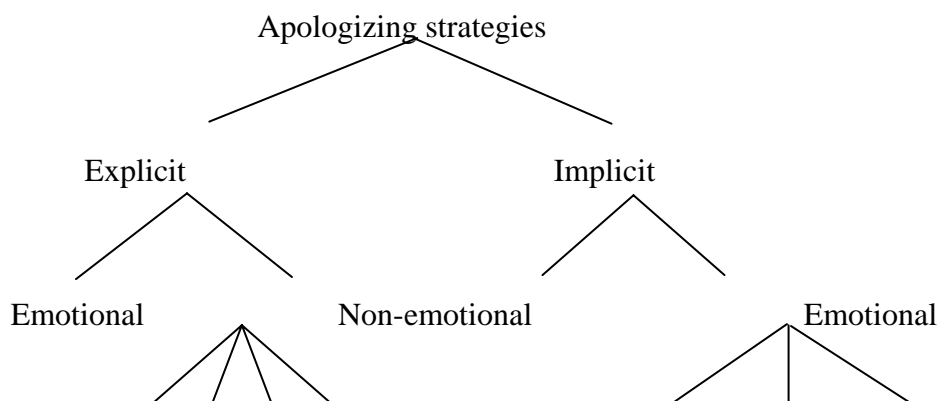
Appendix 1 Strategies of thanking



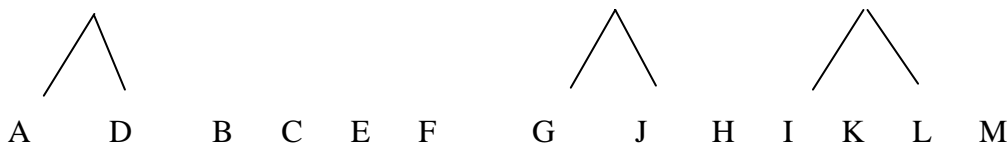
Code to strategies:

(A) thanking somebody explicitly	e.g. <i>thank you, thanks</i>
(B) expressing gratitude	e.g. <i>I am grateful</i>
(C) expressing appreciation of the addressee	e.g. <i>that's kind of you, it's nice (of you)</i>
(D) expressing appreciation of the act	e.g. <i>that's lovely, it's appreciated</i>
(E) acknowledging a debt of gratitude	e.g. <i>I owe a debt of gratitude to...</i>
(F) stressing one's gratitude	e.g. <i>I must thank you</i>
(G) expressing emotion	e.g. <i>oh (thank you)</i>
(H) commenting on one's own role by suppressing one's own importance (self-denigration)	e.g. <i>I am an ingrate, I'm so careless</i>

Appendix 2 Strategies of apologies



Non-emotional



Code to strategies:

(A) explicitly apologizing	e.g. <i>I apologize (for)</i>
(B) offering (giving, presenting) one's apologies	e.g. <i>I present my apologies</i>
(C) acknowledging a debt of apology	e.g. <i>I owe you an apology</i>
(D) expressing regret	e.g. <i>I'm sorry, I'm afraid</i>
(E) demanding forgiveness	e.g. <i>pardon me, excuse me</i>
(F) explicitly requesting the hearer's forgiveness	e.g. <i>I beg your pardon</i>
(G) giving an explanation of account	e.g. <i>(I'm sorry) it's so unusual</i>
(H) self-denigration or self-reproach	e.g. <i>how stupid of me, how awful, I ought to know this</i>
(I) minimizing responsibility	e.g. <i>I didn't mean to ..., I thought this was ..., I was thinking it was...</i>
(J) expressing emotion	e.g. <i>oh (I'm so sorry)</i>
(K) acknowledging responsibility for the offending act	e.g. <i>that was my fault (Fraser 1981: 263)</i>
(L) promising forbearance from a similar offending act	e.g. <i>I promise you that that will never happen again (Fraser 1981: 263)</i>
(M) offering redress	e.g. <i>please let me pay for the damage I've done (Fraser 1981: 263)</i>

Appendix 3 Categories of Requests and Offers

A	ABILITY	Asking about the hearer's ability to do something (e.g.) <i>can you...</i>
B	CONSULTATION	Asking about the possibility of the desired act happening (e.g.) <i>is it possible..., you haven't got..., would you mind..., have you...</i>
C	WILLINGNESS	Asking whether the hearer is willing to do something or has any objection to doing something

		(e.g.) <i>will you..., would you (like)...</i>
D	WANT	Expressing a wish that the agent should do something (e.g.) <i>I would like you to</i>
E	NEED	Expressing a need or desire for (non-verbal) goods (e.g.) <i>I want..., I need...</i>
F	OBLIGATION	Stating that the hearer is under the obligation to do the desired action (e.g.) <i>you must..., you have to...</i>
G	APPROPRIACY	Stating that it is appropriate that the hearer performs the desired action (e.g.) <i>you should...</i>
H	WH-QUESTION	Asking an idiomatic wh-question (e.g.) <i>what about..., why not..., how about..., why don't you...</i>
I	HYPOTHESIS	Referring to a hypothetical action (e.g.) <i>if you would..., perhaps you would...</i>
J	APPRECIATION	Expressing that one would appreciate, be pleased, feel gratitude if a hypothetical desired action were realized (e.g.) <i>I would be grateful if you would..., I would be glad if...</i>
K	PERMISSION QUESTION	Asking for permission to do something (e.g.) <i>may I..., let me...</i>
L	POSSIBILITY	Asserting that it is possible for the hearer to do something (e.g.) <i>you may..., you can...</i>
M	PREFERENCE	Referring to the speaker's opinion that something is preferable (e.g.) <i>you had better ..., the best thing to do ...</i>
N	PERFORMATIV E	Referring explicitly to the act of requesting (e.g.) <i>I was going to suggest ...</i>
O	STATE	Referring to a state of the world which needs to be changed (e.g.) <i>There are (some scented rushes)</i>
P	NAMING	Naming the object requested (e.g.) <i>(the next slide) please</i>
Q	EXISTENCE	Checking the availability of the desired object, etc (e.g.) <i>is (Mrs Davy) there</i>
R		Other (e.g.) giving a justification for a request

Appendix 4 DCT

Some examples of DCT (all the 61 items are listed in Nakano et.al. (2000).

【文章を読んで空欄を埋めて下さい】注：空欄の大きさと語数は関係がありません。

In the classroom

Mika: Here you are, Ted.

Ted: What's this?

Mika: It's your school badge.

Ted: Oh, (4).

On the Way Home

Mika: Do you play the guitar, too?

Ted: No, I don't. But I play the drums.

I have drums at home. Come over sometime.

Mika: Really? (5).

Mrs. Baker: Mika, which do you prefer, juice or soda?

Mika: Juice, please.

Mrs. Baker: Here you are.

Mika: (6).

Mrs. Baker: You're welcome. This is for you, Ted.

Ted: (7).

Jiro: Hi, everyone. (9) I'm late.

Mika: Oh, that's all right, Jiro.

“One evening, the Saitos invite Ms. Wilson to dinner.”

Ms. Wilson: You're a good cook, Mika. It's delicious.

Mika: (12).

Judy: Did you make this tempura, too?

Mika: No, I didn't. Dad made it.

Judy: You cook very well, too, Mr. Saito.

Mr. Saito: (13).

“One Sunday afternoon, Mika knocks on Judy’s door.”

Mika: (15) come in?

Judy: Sure, Mika.

Mika: Are you busy?

Judy: No, I was just reading a letter from my mother.

Mika: Any news?

Judy: Yes, my sister had a baby boy.

Mika: Oh, congratulations! I’ll send a card to her.

Judy: Oh, (16), Mika. I have to send one, too.

< 観光中に... >

Mika: (21) take a picture.

Ted: OK.

< Mika が学園祭に Ms. Smith たちを招待して... >

Mika: Welcome to our school. It’s very nice to see you again.

Ms. Smith: Nice to see you again, too. (22) for inviting us.

Mika: Jiro, Toshio, and Keiko are going to show you around.

Ms. Smith: (23).

< ファーストフード店で品物を渡しながら... >

店員: Here you are. That’s six hundred and forty yen, please. (26).

< A Phone Call >

Brian’s mother: Hello.

Koji: This is Koji. (31) speak to Brian, please?

Mother: (32), but he’s out right now. (33) take a message?

Brian: I’m home.

Mother: Oh, here he is now. Brian, Koji is on the phone!

Brian: Hi, Koji.

Koji: Hi, Brian. Listen. I got two tickets for the concert tomorrow.
Can you come?

Brian: I’m free tomorrow. Sure.

Koji: Great! (34) go together.

(35) meet at my house at five.

Brian: Fine.

Koji: Good. See you then.

Brian: O. K. Goodbye.

<At the Store>

A: May I help you?

B: No, (36). I'm just looking.

Koji: Make yourself at home.

Beth: This is a beautiful home. How long have you lived here?

Koji: We've lived here since I was seven. (40) a piece of cake?

Beth: Yes, (41).

< 駅で駅員さんに... >

(42). I don't know how to buy a ticket. (43) help me?

< パーティーに友達を誘う >

Sue: Say, I'm having a pajama party at my house this Friday.

(44) come?

Pat: Sure.

【次の質問に英語で答えてください。】

Koji: Is that a ship?

Girl: Well, it's a spaceship.

Girl: 中に入りたいたいとき、何と言いますか。(47)

Girl: もう一度催促したいとき、何と言いますか。(48)

手紙をもらって返事を書くとき

Dear Koji,

ここに何と書きますか。(49) It arrived there days ago. I enjoyed it very much...

Nancy: What do you want with it? A cup of tea or a glass of water?

Koji: Tea, please. 次に何と言いますか。(50)

Koji: その後、何を言いますか。(51)

Mother: The TV's too loud. Turn it down a little. TURN DOWN THE TV, RIKIMARU !

Rikimaru: Mom! 力丸は何と言ったと思いますか。(52) I can't hear the TV.

Dick: When are you leaving for England, Emi?

Emi: The day after tomorrow.

Dick: Well, have a nice vacation, and Dick はこの後、何と言ったと思いますか。(53)

Emi: I will. Will you write back?

Dick: Sure. It's a promise.

Mary: I'm going to make a special card just for Koji.

Mary: ここで、Mary は Emi に何と言ったと思いますか。(54)

Emi: Sure. What shall I do ?

Mary: Well, let's see... I have several ideas, but maybe this is the best. Will you cut this red paper into a heart ? The heart is the most important part of all. Then cut a moon and stars out of this yellow paper. I'll draw a picture of a boy and a girl.

The stationmaster sounded worried. When Kiki got to the station, the stationmaster said, "Some famous musicians just arrived. They're going to give a concert in the park. But we forgot to take their instruments off the train! Their concert begins at three o'clock this afternoon!

ここで、駅長はキキに何と言ったと思いますか。(58) Can you catch up with the train and bring their instruments back?

"I'm not sure. But 君がキキなら、何と続けますか。(59)" answered Kiki.

Becky: What a strange garden! No trees, no grass! But it looks cool.

Koji: Shh! Don't talk so loud.

Becky: ベッキーは何と言ったと思いますか。(60)

Koji: The rocks in the garden stand for islands.

Emi: The white sand is the sea. Don't you see the waves in the sea.

Becky: Wow! Wonderful!

Becky: ベッキーは何と言ったと思いますか。(61)

- Teacher: After you speech, someone may say something that hurts you. Just smile and say, "Thank you for your advice."
- Student: When I finished, they all rose and gave me a big hand.
- Teacher: Good! I'm glad that your speech went well. Now, aren't you looking forward to your next chance to speak?
- Student: Well...anyway, ここで何と言ったと思いますか。(62)

Appendix 5 Speech functions and target answers

Item No.	Speech function	target answers
1	apology hi	excuseme
2	thanking apology	thank you
3	thanking	thank you
4	thanking	thank you
5	thanking	thank you very much
6	thanking	thank you
7	thanking	thanks
8	thanking	thanks
9	apology	sorry
10	apology	excuse me
11	thanking	oh, good !
12	thanking	thanks
13	thanking	thank you
14	refusal	no, thanks
15	request	may I
16	thanking	that's sweet of you
17	request	can you
18	thanking	thanks
19	thanking	thanks
20	request offer	shall we
21	request offer	let's
22	thanking	thank you very much
23	thanking	thank you
24	apology	pardon
25	thanking	thank you
26	thanking	thank you

27	thanking		thank you
28	apology		excuse me
29	request		would you
30	thanking		thank you
31	request		may I
32	apology		sorry
33	offer		can I
34	request	offer	let's
35	request	offer	let's
36	thanking		thanks
37	offer		shall I
38	thanking		thank you very much
39	thanking		thanks
40	offer		would you like
41	thanking		thank you
42	apology		excuse me
43	request		could you
44	offer		why don't you
45	thanking		thank you
46	thanking		thank you
47	request		let's go
48	request		let's get into the spaceship
49	thanking		thank you for your letter
50	thanking		thank you
51			this is good
52	request		your voice is too loud !
53	greeting		write to me sometime
54	offer		will you help me, Emi ?
55	request		can't you go faster ?
56	refusal		no, I...
57	refusal	apology	I can't stand this bad smell
58	request		please, please help us
59	offer		I'll do my best
60	apology		oh, I'm sorry.!
61	apology		...sorry
62	thanking	request	thank you for your advice

|