Exploring Meta-Pragmatic Awareness
of Japanese Learners of English:

Focusing on Speech Act of Request
by Lower-Intermediate Proficiency College Students

Akutsu Yuka

Abstract

The present study explores meta-pragmatic awareness of Japanese learners of English with lower-intermediate proficiency. By asking them to make as many different kinds of requests sentences as possible for a situation that they need to borrow money from someone, and without any other situational restrictions, the subjects can fully utilize their pragmatic knowledge. We also asked the reasons for each choice to understand their meta-pragmatic knowledge.

The results show that the meta-pragmatic awareness of the subjects in making requests is generally very limited. Even without time limitation, they can produce only 4.16 variations in average, and their meta-pragmatic knowledge contains many misunderstandings. Also, the subjects do not realize their lack of knowledge and believe that English does not have many polite expressions. We need to offer more opportunities for them to raise their pragmatic awareness through organized and explicit instruction on the knowledge.

1. Introduction

As pragmatic competence is necessary for learners to participate successfully in a target language community, providing efficient and effective education on pragmatic skills at English courses is important. For effective and efficient teaching of the skills, acquiring data on the learners' pragmatic knowledge is indispensable.

The present study tries to grasp the learners' meta-pragmatic awareness in request strategies.

"Meta-pragmatic awareness" is defined as "knowledge of the social meaning of variable second language forms and awareness of the ways in which these forms mark different aspects of social contexts." (Kinginger and Farell, 2004). Although the number of studies on interlanguage pragmatics is increasing, few studies focused on learners' "meta-pragmatic knowledge" as a whole. Many of the past studies used DCTs, role plays, or questionnaires to get the data, and therefore the subjects are asked to tell or choose what they would say or think in each specific situation, not the reasons why the informants used the strategies or phrases. Some studies add retrospective reports to get more information about the reasons for the choice, but still, they ask only about the answers they already give and not about the ones they did not choose. Because the subjects usually make only one answer considering only the given situation, we cannot know if a subject believes other choices can be used in the very same situation, either. The whole usable knowledge within the subjects does not appear in the results. In other words, it is difficult to get hold of the extent and depth of subjects' pragmatic knowledge just with those methods.

By asking them to make as many different kinds of requests sentences as possible for a situation that they need to borrow money from someone, and without any other situational restrictions, we assumed that the subjects can fully use their pragmatic knowledge. Then we asked the reasons for each choice to understand their meta-pragmatic knowledge. In order to understand their awareness of pragmatic aspects in English, we also asked them to compare their own request strategies in English and Japanese, and to make comments on the differences and to analyze the reasons for them.

2. Background of the study

Among the studies on the production of speech acts by non-native speakers, request strategies have been attracted the most attention, both because the act is very important for communication and because the request strategies by NNSs are often different from the ones by NSs. Many researchers have studied request strategies by learners of English, and found several characteristics. One of them is that NNSs tend to choose more direct strategies than NSs do. House and Kasper (1987) investigated request realization strategies by 200 German and 200 Danish learners of English. The data were examined along three dimensions: directness level, internal modification, and external modification. They found that the learners used much more direct formulas, including mood directive (Do X), than native speakers of English did. On the other hand, NSs used the second most indirect form, *query preparatory* (Could you do X?), almost all the time (92%).

This tendency is found also in the studies focused on Japanese learners of English. Tanaka and

Kawade (1982) investigated perception of politeness by native speakers of English and advanced learners of English whose native tongue is Japanese. One of the findings was that learners tend to choose "less polite strategies in certain situations." In the study, they found that 14.2% of advanced learners selected rather direct expressions or least polite strategies such as "I want to borrow your car" or "Lend me your pen" when speaking to his/her father and his/her girl/boy friend. Few native speakers (5.2%) chose those strategies.

Other researchers also found similar problems; Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003) showed that the learners used too many "I want" and "I want you to" expressions in requesting. Nakano Miyasaka, and Yamazaki (2000) claimed that the subjects used too many "directive + please" phrases, and that it might have been influenced by the textbooks they had used.

As a whole, the past studies suggested that even advanced learners' strategies were different from those by NSs, and they could be considered inappropriate in some situations. As often pointed out, mistakes in pragmatic aspects are problematic because they are sometimes attributed to the speaker's personality, not to their language ability. Acquiring the skills is, therefore, very important for the English language learners to success in English language communities or to conduct businesses in English.

However, it is not easy to improve the skills of talking appropriately depending on the situation. According to the previous studies, learners' language ability in pragmatic aspects does not necessarily improve as other aspects such as grammar, listening, or reading skills improve. Olshtain & Blum-Kulka (1985) pointed out that pragmatic competence sometimes lags behind grammatical competence. Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford (1991), among others, have shown that grammatical ability or general language proficiency scaled by standardized tests, such as TOEFL, does not necessarily guarantee the person's pragmatic ability. Although some other studies have claimed that the competence does improve as the learner's overall proficiency improves (Koike, 1996), these research suggest that pragmatic competence should be scaled separately, and taught independently.

Integrating pragmatic aspects in English education curriculum at college level will be very important, as well as effective, considering the demand by the global world and learners' English levels; most of the learners have enough basic grammar skills to manipulate polite expressions.

However, there are not so many studies focusing on pragmatics skills of EFL college students with intermediate proficiency. Most of the studies are about advanced learners or the learners who are in second language learning situations such as studying abroad, not college students who are still in the lower intermediate level, or in other words, average college students in Japan.

3. Method

The subjects are college sophomores majoring economics. Although we administered the experiment to 60 students, some have been excluded from the results; the six people who did not answer some of the questions at all, the five people who scored more than 650 and four people who scored less than 350 in TOEIC test and therefore cannot be considered "low-intermediate" proficiency. The subjects are asked to read the written questions and then answer them orally, recording the answers using a software on computers. In this way, we hoped to get more answers than writing them down since the subjects can response as they think, and writing does not slow them down. However, because they need to talk about their own answers later, we asked the subjects to write down the recorded answers before moving on to the next section.

The questions were written in Japanese but can be translated as follows:

(1) You are at the college campus and suddenly you realize that you need to borrow some money from someone. What would you say in English?

First, please read the following two conditions carefully.

<Condition 1> The person you are asking to borrow money can be anyone. For example, he/she may be your best friend, a friend or an acquaintance from a class, a senior or a junior from your seminar, the professor in charge of your seminar, etc.

<Condition 2> The amount and the reason(s) for the request can be anything. For example, it can be ¥300 for lunch, ¥3,000 for a textbook, or ¥20,000 for the cost of "seminar gassyuku" or "camp."

Now, please record your answers about the following questions.

①Imagine the situations and then record what you would say in English in each situation.

②After recording what you would say, please add the following information to describe the situation: to whom you are asking, how much you are borrowing, and why you are borrowing. This part can be Japanese.

(2) Why did you use the expression in each situation? Please tell me what knowledge or rules you used when answering the question #1. If you used different expressions in different situation, why did you change the expression? If you used the same expression, why did you choose to use the same one? Please make sure to include all the expressions and situations. This part can be Japanese.

(3) Please listen to the recording of your answers for the question #1. What would you say in Japanese in the same situations? This part can be Japanese.

(4) Why did you use the expression in each situation? Please tell me what knowledge or rules you used when answering the question #1. If you used different expressions in different situation, why did you change the expression? If you used the same expression, why did you choose to use the same one? Please make sure to include all the expressions and situations. This part can be Japanese.

(5) Please compare the answers you made both in English and in Japanese. Do you think the ways to make requests differ in Japanese and in English? What do you think are the differences? This part can be Japanese.

Question 1 is to investigate the extent of the subjects' knowledge about expressions to use when making requests in English. In Question 2, we asked them to give the reasons for their choices, and what they think the differences in each expression, that is, their meta-pragmatic knowledge. In Question 3 and 4, the subjects are to make requests in Japanese and explain the reasons for their choices. Then in Question 5, they are asked to compare the differences in their answers and make comments. By comparing their own answers, the subjects seem to realize the characteristics of their responses better. We hoped to understand what the subjects think of their own knowledge and skills of making requests in English.

4. Data and Analysis

First, all the sentences of request were transcribed and then categorized according to the linguistic forms into a scale described below, and the number of the sentences in each category (strategy) and subcategory (linguistic form: variation) were counted. The scale used in this study was adapted from CCSARP, a study by Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper. (1989b), and adjusted as described later in this section. The original scale was made based on degrees of requestive transparency. They identified the request sentences with grammatical indicators signaling the illocutionary force. They categorized request strategies into three types, 'direct strategies', 'conventionally indirect strategies', and 'hints' according to the strategies' illocutionary transparencies. 'Direct strategies' are most transparent or 'direct', and *mood derivables* (Do X), *performatives* (I ask you to do X), *hedged performatives* (I would like to ask you to do X), *obligation statements* (you will have to do X), and *want statements* (I want X) are included in this order of directness as its subcategories. The strategies in the next level of directness are called 'conventionally indirect strategies', and they derive their illocutionary transparency form the semantic content or conventional usage. The strategies in this category include *suggestory* (how about -?), *stating preparatory* (I'll have⋯), and *query preparatory* (could you -?). Most indirect

level of strategies are 'hints', and the requestive force comes from its context. 'Hints' are divided into two types; *strong hints* and *mild hints.*

Several changes were made to the CCSARP scale so that it fits better to this study. First, the original scale divided the strategies into three, direct strategies, conventionally indirect strategies, and hints, but hints were omitted in the scale here because there were no hint strategies found in this experiment. Also, performatives and hedged performatives were omitted from the chart for the same reason. Second, one or more sub-subcategories, or 'variations', were added to each category (strategy) to show distribution of the linguistic forms used, as shown in the chart 1. A total of 16 sub-categories (linguistic forms: variations) were added. Some of the different linguistic forms in different directness levels were categorized as one to comply with Blum-Kulka's scale of strategies; imperative and you must, should and had better, how about, let's, what about, and shall we, could you and would you, can I and could I. The higher a strategy or a linguistic form is in the chart, the more transparent the force, and therefore, more direct.

Also, we added the numbers and the proportions of the strategies appeared in Oral Communication I textbooks to the chart to see if there is any connection between the subjects' tendencies and the contents of the textbooks. Oral Communication I is a course taught in high schools in Japan and it is the only course specifically designed to foster the learners' speaking skills. The numbers and the portions were brought from the authors study published in 2006.

(1) The total numbers and the proportion

Chart 1 shows the total numbers and the proportion of the expressions in each category, and the used expressions and the numbers categorized into the scale. As a whole, the number of expressions and the variation produced by the subjects were both few. The total number of expressions appeared in the experiment was only 187 for 45 subjects, and the average number of variations per subject was 4.16. Five subjects listed 6 variations, but most listed only 3 to 4. As this experiment was not a role play, there was no time limitation to answer. Although there are some studies pointing out that the lower level learners cannot answer appropriately in the role play situation because of the time limitation (e.g. Sasaki 1998), it is not the case here. Apparently, the subjects do not have enough knowledge to produce different kinds of request expressions even with time to think.

As to the variation, direct strategies were used often as expected. "Imperative + please" was used most, by 44 people. That is, all the subjects but one used the expression. This result corresponds with the claim by Nakano, Miyasaka, and Yamazaki (2000) that the learners use too many "directive + please" phrases. Nakano et al. suggested that it may be influenced by the

textbooks the subjects used, as the textbooks used so many of them. One of the possible reasons why the expression is used most here seems that adding "please" is very simple and easy, and also easily transferred from "kudasai" in Japanese. As described in later section for the reasons of their choices, many students believed that just adding please can make the sentence polite enough, and that may come from the transfer.

"Can you", which is one of the conventionally indirect expressions, was used the second most; 33 people out of 45 subjects (73%) included the expression. "Could you" / "Would you", and then "Will you" and "May I" followed. Query preparatory expressions altogether consists 67 % of all the answers. This seems to agree with the results from the previous study by the author (2006) which was mentioned above. In the study, the second most used expression for request was query preparatory, "would you" or "could you", the same as the result of this study. The subjects are exposed to the expressions very often during their formal English education at high school, and obviously are familiar with them.

In spite of the amount in query preparatory in total, no one used "Do you mind" expression. This again seems to go with the results from the study in 2006 by the author, where only 16 sentences with the expression were found in 17 textbooks. In my experience as an instructor, many of the students, however, seem to "understand" the meaning of the expression probably because they usually need to learn it for college entrance examination. We have to conclude that the expression is not in their active knowledge for production, though.

No one used suggestory or stating preparatory expressions. Although suggestory such as "why don't you" or "how about" may not be so suitable for some situations, "I'd appreciate" in stating preparatory expression would be a good option. This may have something to do with the lack of the expression in the high school textbooks as we can see from the results of the 2006 study again.

Another characteristic is that some subjects used "want" statements. They used both "I want to borrow" and "I'd like you to lend", which are rather demanding and could be even rude in some cases. A study by Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003) reported that even advanced level learners used "I want you to" expressions in requesting, too. As NSs do not usually use this expression unless the request is a kind of command from a senior to a junior, this tendency is problematic. One possible explanation for this error is transfer from Japanese expression, "-shite-itadakitai-no-desuga," a polite way of asking a favor. "Itadakkitai" can be mistranslated as "want you to" although the actual politeness levels are totally different. As described below, however, the subjects seem to understand the problem to some extent, and they all answered that they would use the expression only to close friends with a small favor only.

Chart 1: Linguistic forms for the request used in the expressions

	strategy	linguistic form (variation)	# used	% to total #	answers by the learners	# used in OC1 textbooks
direct	mood derivables	Imperative / you must	4	2.1	give me 2 lend me 2	541 (40.8%)
		imperative + please	44	23.5	please lend 44	101 (7.6%)
		imperative + will you?	0	0.0		1(0.1%)
	Obligation statements	should /had better	0	0.0		19(1.4%)
	want statements	want /need /I'd like	6	3.2	I want to borrow 4 I'd like to borrow 2	55(4.2%)
		I'd like you to	8	4.3	I want you to lend 7 I would like you 1	9(0.7%)
conventionally indirect	suggestory	Why don't you	0	0.0		46(3.5%)
		How about /Let's / What about /Shall we?	0	0.0		123(9.3%)
	stating prepara-tory	I'll have	0	0.0		16(1.2%)
		I'd appreciate	0	0.0		6(0.5%)
	query preparatory	Will you?	19	10.1	will you lend 19	43(3.2%)
		Can you?	33	17.6	can you lend 32 can you lend , please 1	72(5.4%)
		May I?	17	9.1	may I borrow 17	57(4.3%)
		Could you? / Would You?	39	20.9	could 21 would 18	172 (13.0%)
		Can I? / Could I?	17	9.1	can I borrow15 could I 2	48(3.6%)
		Do you mind?	0	0.0		16(1.2%)

⑵ Reasons for using the forms

　　Chart 2 shows the reasons for the choices, that is the subjects' meta-pragmatic knowledge. Although I specifically asked to explain the differences between all the variations, some of the examinees answered about only a part of the expressions they used.　Some explained the reason, saying that they don't know the exact difference between the expressions.　Sometimes, they

explained the reason for the choice as "nantonaku", which means "no specific reason, but it sounds sort of right." Those answers were omitted from the chart. As a whole, we can see from the chart that in most cases, they do not know many rules about how, when and why they use the expressions. However, as they can answer "I am not sure" when they think they don't know the reason, I believe they have some confidence when they do tell the reasons.

While a few of the students understand the politeness levels of each expression and the differences between the expressions, the data show that most of them had rather confused understanding of them. As we can see from the chart, there are many misunderstandings, and some of them could lead to pragmatic failures. For instance, five answered that "imperatives + please" is "polite," and four say it should be used to "seniors." Two believed "will you?" is "polite," and five believed that it should be used to "seniors." Other misunderstandings include the followings: "imperative + please" should be used in urgent situations only (three subjects), "would you" is polite enough to ask a big favor (nine subjects), and "could you" is very polite and can be used for "a big favor" (four subjects). One student answered, "Could you is one of the politest ways to ask a favor." As I mentioned earlier, most of the students have learned politer expressions like "I was wondering if" or adding "please" after query preparatory expressions. However, no one used "I was wondering if," and only one student added "please" after "can you" question. We can see that as a whole, their meta-pragmatic knowledge is very limited, and even though they have been exposed to and somewhat learned about polite expressions, they have not acquired the skills or knowledge to produce them.

(3) The differences in request expressions between Japanese and English

Finally, we asked the subjects what they think are the differences between request expressions in English and those in Japanese as shown in Chart 3. We asked the question to know more about the subjects' understanding on request variations and the difference in request making.

We categorized the answers according to the topics the subjects mentioned. 68 comments which meant that "Japanese has more variations," "more indirect" or "more polite" were made. There were only three comments that meant "English has more variations, indirect, or polite." Four answered there is no difference between the request strategies in the two languages. Far more people believe that Japanese language system itself is politer than that of English.

Many made comments about the number of variations and directness levels. 18 subjects (40%) answered that "Japanese has more variations" and another three said "Japanese has "polite" expressions which can be used for anyone (but English does not)." Four believed that in Japanese, politeness expressions can be combined but not so in English. This seems to explain a reason why

Chart 2. Reasons for the choice: meta-pragmatic knowledge

	strategy	linguistic form (variation)	#, expressions	situation, reasons, rules
direct	mood derivables	Imperative / you must	<total 4> give me 2, lend me 2	urgent situation 3
		imperative + please	<total 44> please lend 44	x polite 5, urgent situation 3, small favor 2, to close friends 26, to juniors 2 x to seniors 4
	want statements	want /need /I'd like	<total 6> I want to borrow 6	to close friends 5
		I'd like you to	<total 8> I want you to lend 7 I would like you 1	<I want you to > x to close friends 5, a little demanding 1
conventionally indirect	query preparatory	Will you?	<total 19> will you lend 19	to close friends 8, x to seniors 5, x to acquaintances2, x polite 2, a little polite 3, not too polite 2
		Can you?	<total 33> can you lend 32 can you lend me please 1	to close friends 20, to juniors 3 to acquaintances 2 x polite 3
		May I?	<total 17> may I borrow 17	to seniors 8, to close friends 2, polite 3, a little polite, 2, modest 2 x not polite1
		Could you? / Would You?	<total 39> could 21 would 18	<Could you> polite 16, to seniors 9, big favor 4 <Would you> seniors 10, to acquaintances 4, polite 3, polite and big favor 9
		Can I? / Could I?	<total 17> can I borrow 15 could I 2	<can I> to close friends 10, to seniors 4, <could I > a little polite 3

x: not correct or different from NS standards

most of them did not add "please" in query preparatory variations. They simply think it is not right to use more than one politeness markers in a sentence. Regarding the directness level, six answered "English is more direct than Japanese", another five said "Japanese has more roundabout way of expressing politeness," and yet another four said "Japanese is more ambiguous." They believe that in English, request strategies can be more direct, and the language does not have many variations.

They seem to think that the difference in the amount in their own answers in English came from the difference of the language systems between English and Japanese, rather than their lack of knowledge. This stereotyping can be very dangerous because not only they may be perceived as rude persons but it may be an obstacle to acquire more meta-pragmatic knowledge.

Chart 3. The differences in request expressions between Japanese and English

Japanese is more indirect and polite	number of variations	Japanese has more variations	18
		Japanese has a "polite" expressions which can be used for anyone (but English doesn't)	3
		English has less polite expressions	3
	directness	English is more direct than Japanese	6
		Japanese has more roundabout way of expressing politeness	5
		Japanese is more ambiguous	4
	How to express politeness	Japanese is more polite	11
		Japanese has introductory remarks (but English doesn't)	7
		In Japanese, polite expressions can be added or combined (but not in English)	4
		Japanese has more fixed ways of expressing requests	1
		Japanese is more complex and English is simpler	1
	How to use each expression	In Japanese, each expression is used according to the interlocutor, but not in English	2
		In English, there is more difference between seniors and juniors	2
English is more indirect and polite	directness	Japanese is more direct and easy to understand	1
	How to express politeness	English has more fixed ways of expressing requests	1
	How to use each expression	In English, each expression is used according to the interlocutor(but not in Japanese)	1
Other	No difference	There is no difference between English and Japanese	4
	Structure of politeness	In Japanese, politeness is expressed at the end of the sentence, and in English at the beginning of the sentence.	1
		In English, request is made in the first part of the conversation	1

4. Limitations of the study

As the subjects could answer very freely, the length and the details of the answers varied much. The situations given by the subjects varied, too, and that made it difficult to compare the questions among the subjects. Also, the gravity of request differed too greatly, both within each subject and among subjects, and we could not find any significant pattern in this study. Although these varieties were expected, it would be better if we could control them better in the next study.

Another point to mention is that the subjects answered only the request sentences, not other strategies such as hints and explanations for the coming requests. Since those strategies are very natural and also frequently used in Japanese, and therefore, Japanese speakers of English sometimes use too many hints (Takahashi, 1996), the format of the study should be changed to cover these strategies.

5. Conclusion

The results show that the meta-pragmatic awareness of the subjects in making requests is generally very limited. Even without time limitation, they cannot produce many variations, and their knowledge about the differences and how and when to use them is not often accurate. Obviously, they do not have enough knowledge even though they have had some exposure to the information through formal English education.

There are some interesting results from this study. First, although some of the past studies pointed out that the lower proficiency learners can produce appropriate request sentences if they have enough time, the subjects in this study had trouble producing them. Through the comments on the reasons and the differences about the expressions, we can see that they simply lack the necessary knowledge to produce accurate requests.

Second, many subjects seem to believe that the misinformation to be correct. Some of the subjects said that they "learned" the misinformation at high schools, and at least they believe they did. The problem is that they do not have enough chances to correct their misunderstandings: they do not use English in their daily lives and in addition, the teachers may not correct their mistakes in pragmatic aspects often.

Considering the fact that most of them did rather well in the preliminary university entrance examinations administered by the government, and their TOEIC scores are not so bad for college students, I feel that college English curriculum should do something about the situation. We need

to offer more information on pragmatic knowledge explicitly in English classes. Even though they do know about some expressions of requesting, they cannot produce them at all, or in appropriate ways. We should offer classes for them to organize the pieces of their knowledge so that they can actually utilize them. Organized and explicit instruction focusing pragmatic aspects will be indispensable in order to realize the goal.

(Associate Professor, The Faculty of Economics, Takasaki City University of Economics)

References

Akutsu, Y. (2006). Request Strategies in "Oral Communication A" Textbooks. *The Economic Journal of Takasaki City University of Economics,* 48, 135-149.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., Hartford, B.S. (1991). Saying "no" in English: Native and nonnative rejections. In L.F. Bouton & Y. Kachru (E s.), Pragmatics and language learning, monograph series vol. 2 (pp.41-57). Urbana-Champaign, IL: Division of English as International Language, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Bardoi-Harlig, K., Hartford, B., Mahan-Taylor, R., Morgan, M., and Reynolds, D. (1991). Developing pragmatics awareness: Closing the conversation. *ELT Journal,* 45, 4-15.

Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (eds). (1989b). Investigating cross-cultural *Cross-cultural Pragmatics: Requests an* pragmatics: An introductory overview. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House and G. Kasper (eds). *d Apologies* (pp.1-34). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Bouton, L. (1996). Pragmatics and language learning. In L. Bouton (Ed.), *Pragmatics ns language learning,* monograph series vol. 7 (pp.1-20). Urbana-Champaign: Division of English as an International Language, University of Urbana-Champaign.

House, J. & Kasper, G. (1987). Interlanguage pragmatics: Requesting in a foreign language. In W. Loerscher, & R. Scheulze (eds.), *Perspectives on language in performance* (pp. 1250-1288). Tubingen: Narr.

House, J. & Kasper, G. (1987). Interlanguage pragmatics: Requesting in a foreign language. In W. Loerscher & R. Scheulze (eds.), *Perspectives on language in performance* (pp. 1250-1288). Tubingen: Narr.

Kasper, G. (1992). Pragmatic transfer. *Second Language Research,* 8, 203-231.

Kinginger, C, and Farrell, K. (2004) Assessing Development of Meta-Pragmatic Awareness in Study Abroad. *Frontiers,* Volume X, Fall.

Kobayashi, H., & Rinnert, C. (2003). Coping with high imposition requests: High vx. low proficiency EFL students in Japan. In A. Martinez Flor, E.Uso Juan & A. Fernandez Guerra (Eds.), *Pragmatic competence and foreign language teaching* (pp. 161-184). Castello de la Plana, Spain: Servei de publications, Unicersitat Jaume I.

Koike, D. (1996). Transfer of Pragmatic competence and suggestions in Spanish foreign language learning. In S. M. Gass and J. Neu (Eds.). *Speech acts across cultures* (pp.257-281). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Maeshiba, N., Yoshinaga, N. Kasper, G., & Ross, S. (1996). Transfer and proficiency in interlanguage apologizing. In S. M. Gass & J. Neu (Eds). *Speech act across cultures* (pp21-44). New York: Morton de Gruyter.

Nakano, M., Miyasaka, N., & Yamazaki, T. (2000). A study of EFL discourse using corpora.: An analysis of discourse completion tasks. *Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics,* 4 (2), 273-297.

Olshtain, E. and Blum-Kulka, S. (1985). Degree of approximation: Nonnative reactions to native speech act behavior. In S. Gass and L/ Salinker (Eds.), *Language Transfer in language learning* (pp. 303-325). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Sasaki, M. (1998). Investigating EFL students' production of speech acts: A comparison of production questionnaires and role plays. *Journal of Pragmatics,* 30 (4), 457-484.

Takahashi, S. (1996). Pragmatic transferability. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 18 (2), 189-223.

Tanaka, S., & Kawade, S. (1982). Politeness strategies and second language acquisition. *Studies in second*

language acquisition, 5, 18-33.

Verschueren, J. (2000). Notes on the role of metapragmatic awareness in language use. *Pragmatics,* 10, 439-456.