

**A STUDY OF THE SPEECH ACT OF REFUSALS  
BY NATIVE SPEAKERS OF JAPANESE  
AND LEARNERS OF JAPANESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

by

MAYUMI NOGUCHI

B.A., Kansai University of Foreign Studies, 1993

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Language Education

Modern Languages Education

We accept this thesis as conforming  
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 1997

© Mayumi Noguchi, 1997

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, Canada

Date AUGUST 14, 1997

## ABSTRACT

As the role of pragmatic competence (the ability to use socially appropriate rules of speaking in a given context) within communicative competence has become a crucial issue in second language (L2) learning, interlanguage (IL) pragmatics, a subdiscipline of L2 research concerned with how non-native speakers comprehend and produce speech acts, and how they acquire L2 speech act knowledge, has been receiving increased attention in L2 research. However, most of the IL pragmatics studies thus far have been conducted in ESL settings, and relatively few have been done in Japanese as a second language (JSL) settings.

In order to communicate effectively and appropriately with the Japanese, JSL learners need to have knowledge of the social rules of speaking that include understanding different degrees of politeness with regards to the situation and the interlocutor, and the Japanese communicative style including such concepts as dependency, empathy, reserve, and in-/out-group relationships and distinctions.

In the present study, the speech act of refusals to interlocutors of three different status (higher, equal, and lower) by native speakers of Japanese (NSJ) and JSL learners were compared and analyzed. The purpose of this study was to examine whether pragmatic transfer occurred in the JSL interlanguage, and whether NSJ and JSL made sociopragmatically appropriate choices in politeness and linguistic forms according to social status variables.

Speech act data were collected by means of a 9-item discourse completion test (DCT), and the DCT data were analyzed in terms of the selection and order of semantic formulas (e.g., excuse, apology, offer of alternative, etc.), and communicative style (i.e., the use of the qualifier *chotto*, unfinished sentences, and honorifics). Qualitative data from retrospective interviews were used in order to investigate what made them say what they say: i.e., the transfer of English rules of speaking to Japanese, use of pragmatic knowledge about Japanese rules of speaking, and taking into account the status differences between themselves and their interlocutors.

Differences were found between NSJ and JSL in terms of the selection of semantic formulas considered appropriate. Such differences seemed not only attributed to the JSL's transfer of English

rules of speaking but also to other factors, such as teaching-induced errors (transfer of training), and stereotypes they have of Japanese rules of speaking. NSJ and JSL refusals also differed in their use of politeness strategies. NSJ made a distinction in their choice of linguistic forms according to the status of the interlocutors, but JSL's choice of linguistic forms was not made solely according to the status of the interlocutors.

The results suggest that the current instruction in the JSL classroom should be re-examined, and implications for teaching are suggested accordingly.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Acknowledgments	ix
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background and Problems	1
1.2 Research Questions	4
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE	5
2.1 Theories of Conversation and Politeness	5
2.1.1 Speech Act Theory	5
2.1.2 The Cooperative Principle	6
2.1.3 The Politeness Principle	8
2.1.4 The Politeness Theory	10
2.2 Linguistic Politeness and Communicative Style in Japanese	12
2.2.1 Linguistic Politeness in Japanese	12
(1) The Notion of Face and <i>Wakimae</i>	12
(2) The Concept of Politeness	14
(3) Honorifics	16
2.2.2 Japanese Communicative Style	18
(1) <i>Amae</i>	18
(2) <i>Omoiyari</i>	19
(3) <i>Enryo</i>	21
(4) <i>Uchi</i> and <i>Soto</i>	23
2.3 Interlanguage Pragmatics	24
2.3.1 Pragmatic Competence	24
2.3.2 Pragmatic Transfer	25
2.3.3 Pragmatic Failure	26
2.3.4 Research Methods	29
2.3.5 Studies of the Speech Act of Refusals	31
2.4 Summary	37

	v
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY	39
3.1 Research Site	39
3.2 Subjects	40
3.3 Instruments	42
3.3.1 Background Information Questionnaire	42
3.3.2 Discourse Completion Test (DCT)	42
3.3.3 Retrospective Interview	45
3.3.4 The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)	45
3.4 Procedures	46
3.4.1 NSJ Subjects	46
3.4.2 JSL Subjects	47
3.5 Data Analyses	48
3.5.1 Analysis of Semantic Formulas	49
3.5.2 Analysis of Retrospective Interviews	52
3.5.3 Analysis of Communicative Style	52
3.6 Summary	53
CHAPTER IV RESULTS	55
4.1 Background Information	55
4.1.1 Native Speakers of Japanese (NSJ)	55
4.1.2 Learners of Japanese as a Second Language (JSL)	56
4.2 The Order of Semantic Formulas	57
4.2.1 Requests	57
4.2.2 Invitations	61
4.2.3 Offers	66
4.3 The Use of Communicative Style	70
4.3.1 <i>Chotto</i>	70
4.3.2 Unfinished Sentences	71
4.3.3 Honorifics	71
4.4 Summary	72
CHAPTER V DISCUSSION	75
5.1 Transfer of English Rules of Speaking	75
5.1.1 The Number of Semantic Formulas	75
5.1.2 The Selection and Order of Semantic Formulas	76
5.2 The Use of Politeness Strategies	78
5.2.1 Indirectness and <i>Enryo</i>	78

5.2.2	Apology, Promise, and Alternative	85
5.3	Perception of Status Difference	87
5.3.1	Higher Status	87
5.3.2	Equal and Lower Status	88
5.4	The Use of Honorifics	91
5.5	Summary	95
CHAPTER VI	CONCLUSION	99
6.1	Research Questions and Implications for Teaching	99
6.2	Limitations of the Study	106
6.3	Suggestions for Further Research	108
6.4	Conclusion	108
REFERENCES		110
APPENDIX A	Background Information Questionnaire (NSJ)	116
APPENDIX B	Background Information Questionnaire (JSL)	117
APPENDIX C	Discourse Completion Test	120

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Rank Orders of Correlation Coefficients "Polite"/"Teineina" to Adjectives in Their Respective Languages	15
Table 2	Classification of Refusals	50
Table 3	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Professor's Request	58
Table 4	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Request	59
Table 5	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of <i>Koohai</i> 's Request	60
Table 6	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Professor's Invitation	62
Table 7	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Invitation	63
Table 8	JSL Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Invitation	64
Table 9	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of <i>Koohai</i> 's Invitation	65
Table 10	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Professor's Offer	66
Table 11	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Offer	68
Table 12	Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of <i>Koohai</i> 's Offer	69
Table 13	Frequency of <i>Chotto</i> Used by JSL and NSJ in Each Situation	70
Table 14	Frequency of Unfinished Sentences Used by JSL and NSJ in Each Situation	71
Table 15	Frequency of Honorifics Used by JSL and NSJ in Each Situation	72



**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1	Possible Strategies for Doing FTAs	11
----------	------------------------------------	----

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Stephen Carey, Dr. Patricia Duff, and Dr. Richard Berwick, for their valuable comments and suggestions. I am especially grateful to Dr. Duff, who unselfishly offered her time, wisdom, and support, and was always there especially when I needed her most.

I would also like to thank Mr. Bill McMichael of the UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Programme, and Dean Hajime Yamamoto, Dr. Hideaki Okawa, Professors Yoko Koyama and Chikako Shinagawa of the Kansai Gaidai Asian Studies Program for making it possible for me to conduct my research. I also thank all the participants in this study for their cooperation and time.

I also wish to thank Dr. Kathy Negrelli for spending hours discussing this work with me and editing these manuscripts. I would also like to thank Kimi Furuta for her assistance in coding the data.

Among the many friends who helped me along the way, I am especially thankful to Shino Takahashi, who spent many long nights encouraging and supporting me. I am in debt to Daisuke Sakai, my roommate, friend, and brother whose friendship, understanding, and encouragement helped me complete this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Junko and Taisuke Noguchi, and my late grandmother, Ai Ouchi. Without their love, constant support, and confidence in me, I could not have accomplished this task. I dedicate this thesis to them.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background and Problems

In recent years, the Japanese language teaching profession has become more aware of the significance of improving communicative competence of non-Japanese speakers learning Japanese as a second language (JSL) so that they may be able to communicate effectively and appropriately with native speakers of Japanese. Communicative competence includes both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge. Specifically, pragmatic competence, the ability to use socially appropriate rules of speaking in a given context, is considered an important component of communicative competence to be studied, with regard to appropriateness of what is said and how it is said (e.g., Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Thomas, 1983; Wolfson, 1989; among others).

As the role of pragmatic competence within communicative competence has become a crucial issue in second language learning, interlanguage (IL) pragmatics, a subdiscipline of second language research concerned with how non-native speakers comprehend and produce speech acts, and how they acquire L2 speech act knowledge (Kasper & Dahl, 1992, p. 1), has been receiving increased attention in second language research (Wolfson, 1989). A number of IL pragmatics research studies have been conducted on face-threatening acts (FTAs) (Brown & Levinson, 1978), such as requests, apologies, complaints, thanks, refusals, etc., and the findings from those studies suggest that L2 learners are faced with the great risk of offending interlocutors, or of miscommunication when performing FTAs. However, most of the studies thus far have been investigated in ESL settings, and observations are based on English alone (Wierzbicka, 1991). In addition, certain influential theories of speech acts and politeness, based largely on English, are seen to be ethnocentric, and oftentimes not applicable to the Japanese language (e.g., Ide, 1989; Matsumoto, 1988, 1989). Beebe et al. (1990) point out that refusals, like other speech acts, reflect fundamental cultural values, and thus, non-native speakers are likely to engage in pragmatic transfer (the use of L1 social rules of speaking in L2 contexts). It is plausible, then, that if such studies are done with English-speaking learners of

Japanese, pragmatic transfer will occur in their interlanguage as well. Despite its potentially significant contribution to JSL teaching and learning, however, IL pragmatics research in Japanese language and culture are scarce. Therefore, there appears to be a great need for investigation of IL pragmatics in JSL settings.

In order to communicate appropriately with the Japanese, JSL learners need to know not only grammar and vocabulary necessary to engage in interaction with native speakers of Japanese, but also "rules of speaking" (Wolfson, 1983), or appropriate speech behaviour of the Japanese. For instance, in Japan, it is crucial for a speaker to understand the social context, such as what kind of social relation s/he has with the interlocutors, the social status, the kind of situation or setting s/he is in, etc. (Matsumoto, 1988, 1989).

When communicating with speakers of a target language, a lack of pragmatic knowledge, as well as L2 knowledge in general, of that language and/or transfer of L1 rules of speaking to L2 interaction (pragmatic transfer) often cause miscommunication. Here is a simple example: One day when I was studying English at a university in America, one of my fellow classmates (an American) asked me if I wanted to go to a party that weekend. I did not want to go, and replied, "Well, I don't know, uhm..., I'll think about it" (*wakaranai kedo, uuun, kangaeteoku*). On the day of the party, this friend called me and said, "Hey, aren't you coming?" I was at a loss for words. When one says, "I will think about it" in Japanese (*kangaeteoku*) in this context or the like, almost all native speakers of Japanese would take it as an indirect way of saying "No." My American friend, however, apparently did not interpret my words as a refusal, although the utterance could have been interpreted either way (yes or no). This miscommunication resulted from my assumption that Americans would, as Japanese do, consider it a refusal. Obviously, there exist cross-cultural differences in the perception of politeness as well as the use of politeness strategies in performing FTAs.

Leech (1983) points out that "transfer of the norms of one community to another may well lead to 'pragmatic failure' and to the judgment that the speaker is in some way being impolite" (p. 281). A pragmatic failure can cause more serious misunderstanding than a grammatical error. For example, when a non-native speaker makes grammatical mistakes, native speakers would probably

assume that it is because s/he has not yet mastered the grammatical system of the target language. However, when one makes a pragmatic mistake resulting from some literal interpretation of her/his culturally-accepted speech act, it is possible for her/him to be misunderstood, and/or to be considered rude or blunt in the target culture. Consequently, it can be assumed that this kind of cross-cultural misunderstanding happens more to advanced-level JSL learners who have almost perfect mastery of the grammatical system of the Japanese language, and who have gained fluency to some extent, because native speakers of Japanese tend to take it for granted that those with high knowledge of linguistic rules also have knowledge of the social rules of appropriate usage as well.

The social rules of speaking that JSL learners need to learn include understanding different degrees of politeness with regards to the situation and the interlocutor, and the Japanese communicative style including such concepts as dependency, empathy, reserve, and in-/out-group relationships and distinctions. The appropriate use of linguistic devices and communicative strategies is attributed to such an understanding, and leads to successful cross-cultural communication.

This study will investigate how JSL learners, whose first language is English, make refusals to native Japanese speakers in different contexts, and compare them with the refusal speech acts made by native speakers of Japanese. The purpose of this study is to examine whether pragmatic transfer occurred in the JSL interlanguage, and whether NSJ and JSL made sociopragmatically appropriate choices in politeness and linguistic forms according to social status variables.

Refusals are a major cross-cultural "sticking point" for many nonnative speakers, and for that reason they are important for second language educators and others involved in cross-cultural communication. Furthermore, refusals are interesting from a sociolinguistic point of view. First, they are complex. In natural conversation they often involve a long negotiated sequence, and the risk of offending one's interlocutor is so much a part of the speech act that some degree of indirectness usually exists. Second, refusals are interesting in that their form and content vary according to the eliciting speech act (e.g., invitation, request, offer, or suggestion). They are also sensitive to other sociolinguistic variables, such as status of the interlocutor (Beebe et al., 1990, p. 56).

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The research questions examined in the present study are the following:

1. To what extent, with respect to the speech act of refusals, is there a tendency on the part of learners of Japanese as a second language (JSL) to transfer English rules of speaking to Japanese, as judged by their written production and their retrospective reports?
2. How do native speakers of Japanese (NSJ) and learners of JSL minimize the risk of offending interlocutors?
3. How does the social status difference of the interlocutors influence the choice of linguistic forms of NSJ and JSL learners?

The implementation of this study could serve to help JSL teachers to alleviate the problems caused by the inappropriate use of JSL learners' pragmatic knowledge, and realize what aspects of Japanese sociocultural rules should be taught in order for JSL learners to communicate effectively and appropriately with the Japanese without being misunderstood or considered blunt or impolite.

The present study is organized as follows: Chapter II presents a review of the literature related to the study; Chapter III describes the methodologies of data collection and data analyses; Chapter IV presents results of the study; Chapter V discusses the findings; and Chapter VI presents implications of the results for teaching, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter contains a review of the literature on theories related to speech acts and politeness, politeness and communicative style in Japanese, and interlanguage (IL) pragmatics. It begins with an overview of theories contributing to the studies of speech acts and politeness, followed by discussions of linguistic politeness and communicative style in Japanese. Parameters of IL pragmatics in the present study are presented in the third section, which also includes reviews of the major research methodologies used in studying speech acts, and findings and methodological problems in previous studies of speech act of refusals.

#### **2.1 Theories of Conversation and Politeness**

##### **2.1.1 Speech Act Theory**

According to Austin's (1962) speech act theory, the performance of a speech act involves the performing of three types of actions: a locutionary act (saying of something which is meaningful and can be understood); an illocutionary act (using a sentence to perform a language function); and a perlocutionary act (the consequential effects on the hearer that are produced by means of saying something). For example, the speaker might say "It's cold in here" (locution), meaning "I want the window shut" (illocution), and the perlocutionary effect might be that the hearer closes the window. The illocutionary act is the focus of Austin's interest, and today the term 'speech act' has come to refer exclusively to 'illocutionary act' (Levinson, 1983, p. 236).

Like Austin's 'locution' and 'illocution', Searle (1975) makes a distinction between 'propositional content' and 'illocutionary force'. His theory of indirect speech acts explains that in an indirect speech act, the illocutionary force of the act is not derivable from the utterance, unlike a direct speech act in which there is a transparent relationship between form and function. For example, in a direct speech act a speaker may say, "Pass me the salt," which is an imperative form used to function as a request, and in an indirect speech act a speaker may say, "Can you reach the salt?" meaning it not only as a question but also as a request to pass the salt. According to Searle, in indirect speech acts,

the speaker communicates to the hearer more than s/he actually says by way of relying on speech act theory, certain general principles of cooperative conversation (cf., Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP); see below), and their mutually-shared factual background information, together with an ability on the part of the hearer to make inferences (pp. 60-61).

In order to perform a successful speech act, Searle distinguishes three types of conditions: preparatory condition (H[earer] is able to perform A[ct]), sincerity condition (S[peaker] wants H to do A), and essential condition (counts as an attempt by S to get H to do A). For example, the speech act of 'ordering' is successfully performed when both S and H recognize that S is in a position of authority over H (preparatory condition), that S wants the ordered act to be done (sincerity condition), and that S intends the utterance as an attempt to get H to do the act (essential condition) (Ellis, 1994, p. 160). If any one of these conditions is not met or is challenged by the hearer, the speech act may not be successfully performed. For this reason, this set of conditions specified by Searle are seen as of primary importance in a theory of speech acts.

### **2.1.2 The Cooperative Principle**

While Searle tried to systematize and formalize Austin's work, Grice, also following Austin, attempted to explain how a hearer gets from 'what is said' to 'what is meant' (Searle's 'propositional content' and 'illocutionary force') from the level of expressed meaning to the level of implied meaning (Grice, 1975). More often than not people manage to convey more than their words mean, or something different from the meanings of their words. These additional or different meanings are conveyed by means of 'implicature'. Grice identified two different kinds of implicature: conventional implicature and conversational implicature, both of which have in common the property that they convey an additional level of meaning, beyond the semantic meaning of the words uttered. The difference between them is that in the case of conventional implicature the same implicature is always conveyed, regardless of context. However, in the case of conversational implicature, what is implied varies according to the context. In order to explain the mechanisms by which people interpret conversational implicature, Grice proposed the Cooperative Principle (CP) and four Conversational Maxims, the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, which are presented below.



**The CP:** Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

**Quantity:** 1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).

Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

**Quality:** 1. Do not say what you believe to be false.

Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

**Relation:** Be relevant.

**Manner:** 1. Avoid obscurity of expression.

Avoid ambiguity.

Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

Be orderly. (Grice, 1975, pp. 45-46)

According to Grice, people communicate with each other on the assumption that they observe a certain set of rules, that is, they speak truthfully, relevantly, and clearly, while providing adequate amount of information. However, he was also aware that people often fail to observe the maxims in various ways in which the speaker may: 1) 'violate' a maxim and will be liable to mislead, 2) 'opt out' from the operation of the maxim by indicating that s/he is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires, 3) be faced by a 'clash' because s/he may be unable to fulfill one of the maxims without violating another, and 4) 'flout' a maxim by blatantly failing to fulfill it. As an example of flouting the first maxim of Quantity, Grice offers the following:

A is writing a testimonial about a pupil who is a candidate for a philosophy job, and his letter reads as follows: 'Dear Sir, Mr. X's command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours, etc.' (Gloss: A cannot be opting out, since if he wished to be uncooperative, why write at all? He cannot be unable, through ignorance, to say more, since the man is his pupil; moreover, he knows that more information than this is wanted. He must, therefore, be wishing to impart information that he is reluctant to write down. This

supposition is tenable only on the assumption that he thinks Mr. X is no good at philosophy.

This, then, is what he is implicating.) (p. 52)

When the speaker fails to observe a maxim at the level of what is said, the hearer nevertheless assumes that the speaker is operating according to the maxims, and thus, the hearer looks for a meaning at some other level, i.e., the level of implied meaning. In other words, when a maxim is flouted, a conversational implicature arises.

Matsumoto (1989, 1993) agrees that implicatures of the sort considered by Grice are certainly found in Japanese. However, she argues that Grice's theory is based solely on propositional content and is not sufficient to explain language- and culture-specific characteristics that describe the system of linguistic politeness. For example, expressions of politeness in Japanese, particularly honorifics, are not well accounted for in terms of the proposition conveyed, or in terms of the perspicuity of the utterance, which are the basic concepts relevant to the generation of conversational implicature. The Japanese language is very sensitive to the social context, especially one's position in relation to others, and thus, the speaker's attitude towards the referents, situation, and the interlocutors is necessarily lexically encoded in any type of utterance, and a specific form (e.g., honorifics) is expected by the participants to be appropriately chosen in the given situation. An unexpected choice of linguistic form will produce an interactional awkwardness and invoke inferences, which result from what Matsumoto terms "interactional implicatures" (1989, p. 210), which Grice's theory does not take into consideration. Matsumoto points out that no utterance in Japanese can be neutral with respect to the social context, and "the speaker cannot opt out of choosing some expression that conveys an acknowledgment of the social context" (1993, p. 57).

### **2.1.3 The Politeness Principle**

Leech (1983) considers politeness crucial in explaining "why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean" (p. 80). According to Leech, politeness can satisfactorily explain apparent exceptions to the CP, and introduces the Politeness Principle (PP) as a necessary complement, which "rescues" the CP. The PP is formulated as: Minimize (other things being equal)

the expression of impolite beliefs; Maximize (other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs (p. 81). Under the PP, the following maxims are proposed:

1. Tact Maxim: minimize cost to other, maximize benefit to other
2. Generosity Maxim: minimize benefit to self, maximize cost to self
3. Approbation Maxim: minimize dispraise of other, maximize praise of other
4. Modesty Maxim: minimize praise of self, maximize dispraise of self
5. Agreement Maxim: minimize disagreement between self and other, maximize agreement between self and other
6. Sympathy Maxim: minimize antipathy between self and other, maximize sympathy between self and other (p. 132)

Leech notes that trade-offs between the above maxims occur, just as do the Gricean maxims, and he calls those conflicts between different maxims "pragmatic paradoxes" (p. 110). Leech quotes from Miller (1967, p. 289-90) the following conversation between two Japanese women (of which only the English translation is presented here):

- A. My, what a splendid garden you have here --- the lawn is so nice and big, it's certainly wonderful, isn't it!
- B. Oh no, not at all, we don't take care of it at all any more, so it simply doesn't always look as nice as we would like it to.
- A. Oh no, I don't think so at all --- but since it's such a big garden, of course, it must be quite a tremendous task to take care of it all by yourself; but even so, you certainly do manage to make it look nice all the time: it certainly is nice and pretty any time one sees it.
- B. No, I'm afraid not, not at all.... (Leech, 1983, pp. 136-137)

Leech states that in Japan, the Modesty Maxim is more powerful than in English-speaking societies, "where it would be customarily more polite to accept a compliment 'graciously' (e.g., by thanking the speaker for it) rather than to go on denying it" (p. 137), and that "English speakers would be inclined

to find some compromise between violating the Modesty Maxim and violating the Agreement Maxim" (p. 137).

The PP and its maxims are, like other principles and maxims, not immune to criticisms. However, Leech's theory holds the view that speakers of different languages employ the same range of politeness maxims, but differ in the weights they assign and the consequent politeness strategies they choose. Thus, as Thomas (1995) points out, Leech's approach seems to help make specific cross-cultural comparisons and to explain cross-cultural differences in the perception of politeness and the use of politeness strategies.

#### **2.1.4 The Politeness Theory**

The most influential theory of politeness to date was put forward by Brown and Levinson in 1978. Based upon Grice's theory of conversation, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory attempts to provide an explanation for the divergence observed in conversational exchanges. They consider politeness to be one of the key motivations for deviation from Grice's maxims. Brown and Levinson state that their notion of 'face', which is a central concept to their theory, is derived from that of Goffman (1967), and assume that:

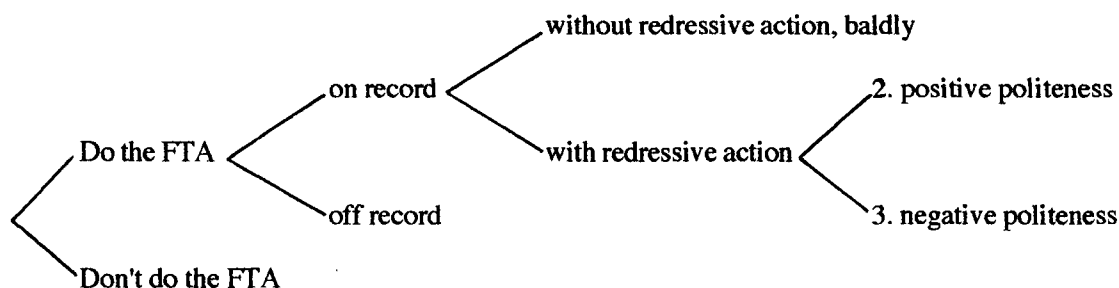
...all competent adult members of a society have (and know each other to have) 'face', the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself, consisting in two related aspects: (a) negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction - i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition [;] (b) positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. (Brown & Levinson, 1978, p. 66)

They further explain that negative face is "the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others," and that positive face is "the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others" (p. 67). They divide politeness strategies into 'negative politeness' and 'positive politeness' according to whether they are directed to the addressee's negative face wants or positive face wants. They assume not only that these operate universally in all languages and

cultures, but also that the need to defend one's positive face and to protect the other's negative face are important functions of politeness in all languages and cultures.

Brown and Levinson's theory defines politeness as redressive action (action that 'gives face' to the addressee) taken to counterbalance the disruptive effect of face-threatening acts (FTAs), such as requests, apologies, etc. They suggest that in order to calculate the weightiness of an FTA, one must assess the social distance (D) between speaker and addressee, the relative power (P) of addressee over speaker, and the absolute ranking (R) of impositions in the particular culture (1978, pp. 79-88). These combined factors determine the overall weightiness of the FTA, which in turn influences the strategy used. The following are the possible sets of strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978, p. 74):

Figure 1. Possible strategies for doing FTAs



According to Brown and Levinson, the speaker first decides whether to do the FTA or not. If the speaker decides that the degree of the FTA is too great, s/he may choose the strategy, 'Don't do the FTA', and say nothing. If the speaker decides to do it, there are four possibilities: three sets of on-record strategies and one set of off-record strategy. The speaker can do the FTA on-record baldly, without redressive action which is done by means of a direct speech act (e.g., 'Give me a match.'). or do the FTA using either positive politeness (e.g., 'Let me have your matches, love.') or negative politeness (e.g., 'Could you spare me a match?'). The speaker can go off-record by performing the FTA in such a way that it can be ignored by the addressee (e.g., 'I don't have a match.') (examples in parentheses taken from Ellis, 1994, p. 161).

Positive politeness is oriented toward the positive face of the hearer, and negative politeness is oriented toward the negative face of the hearer. Positive politeness includes such strategies as

using in-group identity markers, seeking agreement, indicating common ground, offering, promising, etc. Negative politeness strategies, on the other hand, include such as being conventionally indirect, hedging, minimizing the imposition, giving deference, apologizing, etc. As mentioned earlier, the overall weightiness of the FTA is calculated on the basis of the factors of power (P), social distance (D), and ranking (R) of imposition. For example, within Brown and Levinson's theory, when there is little power difference (low P differential) and minimal social distance (low D value) between the speaker and hearer, the speaker may use positive politeness, whereby the speaker tries to establish solidarity with the hearer by stressing commonness. On the other hand, when P is high and/or D is high, the speaker may employ negative politeness, which may be manifested in the use of such strategies as indirect speech acts, deference markers, minimizing imposition, etc. Brown and Levinson claim that their theory provides a framework for comparing cross-cultural differences in politeness, according to the weights assigned to the variables P, D, and R in individual societies. They assert that Japan, which has high D relations, is a negative-politeness culture in which symmetrical use of negative politeness and off-record strategies is expected. Conversely, as an opposite example, they take western USA as a low D and P society, where symmetrical use of bald on record and positive politeness is expected (1978, p. 256).

## **2.2 Linguistic Politeness and Communicative Style in Japanese**

### **2.2.1 Linguistic Politeness in Japanese**

#### **(1) The Notion of Face and *Wakimae***

Recent non-Western politeness research attempts to show the invalidity of Brown and Levinson's claims for the universality of face (Nwoye, 1992). Ide (1989), Matsumoto (1988), and Hill, Ide, Ikuta, Kawasaki and Ogino (1986) argue that negative politeness, addressing interactants' territorial concerns for autonomy and privacy (Brown & Levinson, 1978), derives directly from the high value placed on individualism in Western culture, and that it does not apply to Japanese culture. It is expected in Japanese society that one should understand where s/he stands in relation to other members of the group or society, and should acknowledge her/his dependence on the others. Nakane (1967, 1970) describes the Japanese social structure as a 'vertical society', in which the primary

relations are between persons who are related hierarchically (e.g., one senior to the other) in a certain social group. Nakane (1970), as an example of the group that plays a very important role in Japanese society, considers the *ie* or household/family as:

...a social group constructed on the basis of an established frame of residence and often of management organization. What is important here is that the human relationships within this household group are thought of as more important than all other human relationships.... (p. 5)

Given collectivism rather than individualism, the notion of negative face, which emphasizes the individuality of the interactants or the right not to be completely dominated by group or social values and to be free from the impositions of others, does not seem to account for politeness behavior in Japanese culture. However, Matsumoto suggests that more generally defined terms of the concept of face, a 'socially-given self-image', or "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (Brown & Levinson, 1978, p. 66) may be useful (Matsumoto, 1988, p. 408). In Japanese society, preservation of 'face' in this sense is closely related to "showing recognition of one's relative position in the communicative context and with the maintenance of the social ranking order," (p. 415) which will be discussed below with regard to the concept of *wakimae*.

Fundamental to politeness in Japanese is *wakimae*, or discernment (Hill et al., 1986; Ide, 1989; Ide et al., 1992). The discernment aspect of linguistic politeness is, Ide (1989) argues, neglected in Brown and Levinson's framework. Ide states that:

To behave according to *wakimae* is to show verbally and non-verbally one's sense of place or role in a given situation according to social conventions. In a stable society, an individual is expected to behave according to the status and the role of various levels ascribed to or acquired by that individual. To acknowledge the delicate status and/or the role differences of the speaker, the addressee and the referent in communication is essential to keep communication smooth and without friction. Thus, to observe *wakimae* by means of language use is an integral part of linguistic politeness. (1989, p. 230)

Whereas Brown and Levinson's theory is concerned with 'face wants', the discernment aspect of linguistic politeness is concerned with the wants of roles and settings: "the wants to acknowledge the ascribed positions or roles of the participants as well as to accommodate to the prescribed norms of the formality of particular settings" (Ide, 1989, p. 231). In the Japanese culture, where the individual is more concerned with conforming to norms of expected behavior (e.g., acknowledging the relative position of others, etc.) than with maximizing benefits to self, Brown and Levinson's concept of 'face' is not as important an issue in interpersonal relationships (Matsumoto, 1989).

Complementary to discernment is 'volition', "the aspect of politeness which allows the speaker a considerably more active choice, according to the speaker's intention, from a relatively wider range of possibilities" (Hill et al., 1986, p. 348). Both the discernment and volitional aspects aim at performing linguistic acts to achieve smooth communication. However, while the speaker's focus is placed on socially prescribed norms in the former, the focus is on his/her own intention in the latter (Ide, 1989). According to Hill et al., discernment is crucial in Japanese, and volition is the main factor determining the form of expressions in English.

## (2) The Concept of Politeness

Ide (1989) defines linguistic politeness as:

the language usage associated with smooth communication, realized 1) through the speaker's use of intentional strategies to allow his or her message to be received favorably by the addressee, and 2) through the speaker's choice of expressions to conform to the expected and/or prescribed norms of speech appropriate to the contextual situation in individual speech communities. (p. 225)

Ide makes a distinction between the terms 'polite' and 'politeness'. The term 'polite' is an adjective like 'deferential' and 'respectful'. According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, it has a positive meaning, such as: 'having or showing good manners, consideration for others, and/or correct social behavior'. 'Politeness', on the other hand, is a neutral term; just as 'height' does not refer to the state of being 'high', 'politeness' does not refer to the state of being 'polite' (Ide, 1989, p. 225). Linguistic politeness, as Ide suggests, is used in this paper as covering a continuum



stretching from polite to non-polite. In Japan among status equals, for example, people do not use honorifics to each other as they do to higher status interlocutors. However, it would not be accurate to say they are less polite to their status equals, because they may be appealing to different forms of politeness.

Ide, Hill, Carnes, Ogino, and Kawasaki (1992) have investigated how 'politeness' is conceptualized by Americans and Japanese. Their study was conducted by administering English and Japanese questionnaires to 219 American and 282 Japanese college students in order to compare the American English concept of 'polite' with the Japanese concept of the corresponding adjective, '*teineina*'. Table 1 below shows the English and Japanese terms ranked according to a politeness scale; the lines connect the corresponding English and Japanese terms.

Table 1. Rank orders of correlation coefficients "polite"/"*teineina*" to adjectives in their respective languages (Ide et al., 1992, p. 290)<sup>1</sup>

Americans	POLITE	Japanese	TEINEINA
respectful	0.9892	<i>keii no aru</i>	0.9697
considerate	0.9868	<i>kanji yoi</i>	0.9108
pleasant	0.9713	<i>tekisetsuna</i>	0.8544
friendly	0.9103	<i>omoiyari no aru</i>	0.7496
appropriate	0.8826	<i>kidoranai</i>	0.2816
casual	0.1204	=====	=====
=====	=====	<i>shitashigena</i>	-0.3213
conceited	-0.7995	<i>unuborete-iru</i>	-0.6848
offensive	-0.9189	<i>kanjoo o kizutsukeru</i>	-0.7078
rude	-0.9545	<i>bureina</i>	-0.7880

As can be seen from the table, the pair of respectful/*keii no aru* ranks first in degree of correlation with the key terms polite/*teineina*. To this extent, it can be interpreted that the American and Japanese concepts of politeness are similar. However, a large difference lies between the relation of 'polite' to 'friendly' and of their corresponding Japanese terms *teineina* and *shitashigena*. According to this

<sup>1</sup> Here, the Japanese adjectives in romanization are presented in the Hepburn system since most Japanese-English dictionaries use the Hepburn system. In Ide et al. (1992), *kanji*, *tekisetsuna*, *shitashigena*, and *kanjoo o kizutsukeru* were spelled: *kanzi*, *tekisetuna*, *sitasigena*, and *kanzyou wo kizutukeru*, respectively.

two-dimensional data, Americans seem to consider friendly to be plus-valued politeness, whereas Japanese seem to take being *shitashigena* as minus-valued politeness. This difference between American and Japanese concepts of politeness may help to explain some of the questions underlying linguistic politeness in IL pragmatics with respect to speech acts of English-speaking learners of Japanese.

Another important difference between the American and Japanese concepts is the disparity in both the second and third highly correlating terms, 'considerate' and 'pleasant' versus *kanji yoi* and *tekisetsuna*. 'Pleasant' and *kanji yoi* are corresponding terms, but 'considerate' and *tekisetsuna* are not. Ide et al. argue that *tekisetsuna* is used in Japanese to evaluate behavior according to *wakimae*, or discernment. In other words, whether one observes *wakimae* or not is evaluated in terms of *tekisetsuna*. On the other hand, 'considerate', which ranks second in degree of correlation with the key English term 'polite', is used to evaluate behavior which is "careful not to hurt the feelings of others or cause inconvenience to them" (New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus) , or "pays attention to the needs, wishes, or feelings of other people" (Cobuild English Dictionary), etc. Thus, considerate behavior depends upon one's volition rather than upon discernment. Therefore, Ide et al. conclude that *teineina* is oriented toward discernment, while 'polite' is oriented toward volition.

### (3) Honorifics

The Japanese honorific system (*keigo*) consists of *teineigo* (polite/formal forms; addressee honorifics), *sonkeigo* (exalting forms; referent honorifics), and *kenjoogo* (humble forms; humble honorifics). The plain forms of verbs and adjectives are used when the speaker does not have to acknowledge the interpersonal relationship with the interlocutor; i.e., when speaking to an equal/lower status interlocutor in an informal setting. The use of addressee honorifics indicates the speaker's acknowledgment of a relationship with the interlocutor and/or of the formality of the setting. For example, the *-masu* forms of verbs and noun/adjective-*desu* forms are used in speaking to a higher status person or a stranger, and/or in formal situations, and are thus called the formal forms. The super-polite addressee honorifics express a greater degree of deference and of formality of the setting.

Referent honorifics, or exalting forms, are used to show deference to a person in the subject position of a sentence/utterance. With humble honorifics, the person in the subject position shows a humble attitude, which results in exalting the person in a position other than the subject. The following are four different forms used to say "I/the professor (will) write this" in the order of: 1) plain form, 2) formal form (ADDressee HONOrific), 3) exalting form (REFerent HONOrific), and 4) humble form (HUMble HONOrific).

- (1) *Watashi-ga kore-o kaku*  
I - SUBJ this-ACC write  
I (will) write this.
- (2) *Watashi-ga kore-o kaki-masu*  
I - SUBJ this-ACC write-ADD.HONO.  
I (will) write this.
- (3) *Sensei-ga kore-o o-kaki-ni-naru. / o-kaki-ni-nari- masu*  
Prof.- SUBJ this-ACC write-REF.HONO. write-REF.HONO. ADD.HONO.  
The professor (will) write this.
- (4) *Watashi-ga kore-o o-kaki-suru. / o-kaki- shimasu*  
I - SUBJ this-ACC write-HUM.HONO. write-HUM.HONO. ADD.HONO.  
I (will) write this.

Sentence (1) is without honorifics, and thus indicates that the speaker is talking to someone equal or lower in status. Sentence in (2) encodes an acknowledgment of a relationship with the addressee and/or a formality of the setting, and thus could be used to a higher status person and/or in a formal setting (irrespective of a status difference). In the case of (3), the speaker accommodates to the social conventions and uses a referent honorific for the predicate which is appropriate for the subject's social standing; i.e., a professor. In (4), the speaker accommodates to the formal situation by using the morphologically encoded form of a humble honorific.

As mentioned earlier, there is no utterance in Japanese that can be neutral with respect to the social context. Even in a case of non-FTA utterance, such as the above, it requires the speaker to make a sociopragmatically and grammatically obligatory choice among linguistic forms in accordance with a person who is the addressee, the referent, or the speaker him/herself, and according to the formality of the setting (Matsumoto, 1987, 1989).

This section has attempted to show that the choice of formal linguistic forms is not a matter of individual choice in Japanese. The speaker behaves according to social conventions, one set of which Ide calls the social rules of politeness. Such rules of politeness for Japanese is, Ide states: be polite 1) to a person of a higher social position, 2) to a person with power, 3) to an older person, and 4) in a formal setting determined by the factors of participants, occasions, or topics (Ide, 1989, p. 230). According to Ide, honorifics are used so as to comply with these rules.

### 2.2.2 Japanese Communicative Style

Clancy (1986) states "communicative style is one aspect of 'communicative competence', relating, in particular, to the 'rules for use' that govern speakers' production and interpretation of language appropriately in context," and she defines communicative style as "the way language is used and understood in a particular culture, both reflects and reinforces fundamental cultural beliefs about the way people are and the nature of interpersonal communication" (p. 213). In the following, Japanese communicative style is reviewed in terms of the following key concepts: *amae*, *omoiyari*, *enryo*, and *uchi* and *soto*.

#### (1) *Amae*

According to Doi (1973, p. 28), *amae* is "a key concept for the understanding not only of the psychological makeup of the individual Japanese but of the structure of Japanese society as a whole." *Amae* is the noun form of the verb *amaeru*, in Doi's definition, "to depend and presume upon another's benevolence." The adjective form of *amaeru* is *amai*, or "sweet," both with reference to the taste and to human relations, and thus, "*amaeru* has a distinct feeling of sweetness and is generally used to describe a child's attitude or behavior toward his parents, particularly his mother" (1962, p. 132). Likewise, Barnlund (1974) refers to the term *amaeru* as "seeking a protective relationship" (p. 52). However, Doi asserts that an *amae* relationship can also exist between two adults: "if A is said to be *amai* to B, it means that he allows B to *amaeru*, i.e., to behave self-indulgently, presuming on some special relationship that exists between the two" (1973, p. 29). According to Doi, all interpersonal communications in Japanese society have the emotional undertone of *amae*, and what is most important for Japanese is to reassure themselves on every occasion of a mutuality based on

*amae*. Therefore, Japanese communicative style, with *amae* as its central concept, is indirect and intuitive, "with the speaker presuming upon the listener's willingness to cooperate, empathize, and intuit what he or she has in mind" (Clancy, 1986, p. 217).

## (2) *Omoiyari*

Lebra (1976) calls Japanese culture an "*omoiyari* culture" (p. 38), and *amae* (dependency) and *omoiyari* (empathy) stimulate and sustain each other, as a culture that commends empathy must tolerate or even promote dependency (p. 51). She defines *omoiyari* as:

the ability and willingness to feel what others are feeling, to vicariously experience the pleasure or pain that they are undergoing, and to help them satisfy their wishes. Kindness or benevolence becomes *omoiyari* only if it is derived from such sensitivity to the recipient's feelings. The ideal in *omoiyari* is for Ego to enter into Alter's *kokoro*, "heart," and to absorb all information about Alter's feelings without being told verbally. (p. 38)

As Azuma et al. (1980) have pointed out, verbal expression among the Japanese is "context dependent, indirect, rich in connotation and evasive in denotation" (cited in Clancy, 1986, p. 213). The basis of this style is, Clancy states, a set of cultural values that emphasize *omoiyari* over explicit verbal communication. Similarly, Doi (1974) points out that "Japanese hesitate or say something ambiguous when they fear what they have in mind might be disagreeable to others (that is, when they have to say 'no')" (p. 22). Barnlund (1974) continues in a similar vein, showing the findings from his study done on Japanese university students. The students were asked the question: What I am like in interpersonal relationships. Some of the comments that appeared most frequently were:

I try to behave according to my role and circumstance.

I try to be as polite as possible.

I try to pretend to be calm and cool even when I am not.

I rarely show my true self.

I don't say all of what I think.

I try to keep the conversation pleasant.

I use words that won't hurt anybody.

I never talk about inner feelings.

I try not to disagree. (p. 56)

In Japan, where interpersonal communication relies so heavily upon intuition and empathy, conformity to group norms is seen as an essential aspect of communicative style. The Japanese communicative style in this sense is manifested in several ways. One example is the speaker's use of the sentence final particle, *ne* ("isn't it?"), which makes the speech sound like that the speaker is asking for the hearer's agreement. Ellipsis is another example. In Japanese conversation the speaker often does not complete a sentence, but leaves it unfinished, and the hearer takes it over and completes what the speaker was intending to say. By leaving a sentence unfinished, the speaker can avoid expressing and/or imposing her/his will or opinion before knowing the hearer's response. Empathetic concern for maintaining consensus may somewhat overlap rule 2 of Lakoff's Rules of Politeness (1973), 'Give options', in that the speaker leaves up to the hearer the option of how to behave and/or what to think, thereby making one's statement, request, etc. less imposing on the hearer. In addition, pause fillers, such as *anoo* (well, uh), are used to show hesitation, difference, or politeness, and thus function to soften the statement in conversation (Koide, 1983; Mizutani & Mizutani, 1977). By using a pause filler, the speaker delays and softens the message to be delivered, and prepares the interlocutor psychologically for the ensuing utterance, which can be, just as the use of unfinished sentences, attributed to the speaker's consideration of the interlocutor. Similarly, the adverb, *chotto*, which literally means 'a little', is often used in requests, refusals or in assertions of negative evaluation in order to soften the impact of the utterance (Matsumoto, 1985). For example, the following show how *chotto* may be used in 1) a request and 2) a refusal:

1. *Mokuyōobi ni chotto tetsudatte morae masu ka.*

Can you chotto help me on Thursday?

The *chotto* here does not simply mean "Can you help me for a little while on Thursday?" in its literal sense. Rather, it expresses the speaker's apologetic feeling in making the request.

- 2a. *Sono hi wa chotto tsugoo ga warui n desu.*

That day is chotto inconvenient for me.

This *chotto* does not only modify the verbal *tsugoo ga warui n desu*, but it also expresses the speaker's hesitant and apologetic feeling for telling the requester that s/he cannot comply with the request. This can also be used in an unfinished sentence as in:

2b. *Sono hi wa chotto...*

That day is *chotto*...

This is an example of *chotto* that can function as a refusal by itself. Doubled with the use of an unfinished sentence, it makes the refusal more indirect and less harsh than saying everything explicitly.

These utterances can be used without *chotto*, but Kawasaki (1989) points out that the use of *chotto* plays a role in helping communication go smoothly, which is an integral part of linguistic politeness (which does not only refer to the use of honorifics). In Japanese interpersonal communication, *chotto*, unfinished sentences, and pause fillers are frequently used, in addition to other linguistic devices such as honorifics and plain forms, in order to keep communication smooth and/or to minimize the risk of offending the interlocutors, which in turn ensure that harmonious social relations between the speaker and the interlocutors are not endangered. The use of unfinished sentences, *chotto*, and pause fillers may also be related to the concept of *enryo*, which is discussed below.

### (3) *Enryo*

*Enryo* is often translated into English as 'reserve' or 'restraint', but Wierzbicka (1991) lists, in addition to the above two, a variety of other English glosses such as: constraint, diffidence, coyness, discretion, hesitation, reservation, deference, regard, ceremony, modesty, shyness, backwardness, etc. However, it seems difficult for non-Japanese to understand the concept of *enryo* because, as Wierzbicka claims, one "cannot rely on any global English equivalents, because there simply are none" (p. 346).

Doi (1973) has, like many other Japanese who visit America for the first time, experienced something that relates to the concepts of *amae* and *enryo* as follows:

Not long after my arrival in America I visited the house of someone...and...he asked me, "Are you hungry? We have some ice cream if you'd like it." As I remember, I was rather hungry, but finding myself asked point-blank if I was hungry by someone whom I was visiting for the first time, I could not bring myself to admit it, and ended by denying the suggestion. I probably cherished a mild hope that he would press me again; but my host, disappointingly, said "I see" with no further ado, leaving me regretting that I had not replied more honestly. (p. 11)

Doi's anecdote illustrates how a Japanese holds back (*enryo*) and at the same time presumes upon the other's willingness to empathize and intuit what he or she has in mind (*amae*). This holding back way of behavior is directly linked to the Japanese cultural constraint that prevents people from clearly expressing their preferences, even in response to direct questions. Mizutani and Mizutani (1987) explain how and why many Japanese refuse to directly state it when asked about their convenience, saying, "any time will do," "any time will be all right with me," etc., but "in actuality, one cannot always agree to what another person wishes, and one will then have to state one's own convenience anyway, but it is regarded as childish to immediately start stating one's own convenience when asked" (pp. 117-18).

*Enryo*, thus, may be considered opposite to such words as aggressiveness and frankness. Lebra (1976) defines it as social self-restraint, and she explains the term as follows:

*Enryo* refers to the restraint Ego imposes upon himself in interaction with Alter when he is offered help, a treat, a gift, and the like. The same term describes both polite hesitation to accept a desired offer and polite refusal of an undesired offer. Thus, Alter does not always know how to take Ego's expression of *enryo*. Since *enryo* refers to polite hesitation in most instances, Alter is generally supposed to keep insisting that his offer be accepted. (p. 125)

Lebra also states that *enryo* is "a product of empathetic considerations for Alter's convenience and comfort" (1976, p. 252). The use of unfinished sentences which was discussed earlier under *omoiyari*, thus, also overlaps with *enryo*. Using an unfinished sentence when refusing a request may be considered as indicating hesitation in completing the utterance. In other words, using an



unfinished sentence like "*yooji ga arimasu node...*" ("I have things to do, so...") instead of its complete form "*yooji ga arimasu node dekimasen*" ("I have things to do, so I can't.") as a response to a request, an invitation, etc. may be attributed to the speaker's *enryo*, or "a desire not to hurt, offend, inconvenience, or embarrass anybody" (Wierzbicka, 1991, p. 350), and thus an attempt to qualify the presumed rudeness of refusing the request or invitation.

#### (4) *Uchi* and *Soto*

The presence or absence of *enryo* is used by the Japanese as a gauge in distinguishing between the types of human relationship that are referred to as *uchi* and *soto*. Lebra (1976) explains the concept of *uchi* and *soto* as follows:

The Japanese distinguish one situation from another according to the dichotomy of *uchi* and *soto*. *Uchi* means "in, inside, internal, private," whereas *soto* means its opposite, "out, outside, external, public." The Japanese are known to differentiate their behavior by whether the situation is defined as *uchi* or *soto*....it is essential in determining the way Japanese interact. Where the demarcation line is drawn varies widely: it may be inside vs. outside an individual person, a family, a group of playmates, a school, a company, a village, or a nation. It is suggestive that the term *uchi* is used colloquially to refer to one's house, family or family member, and the shop or company where one works. The essential point, however, is that the *uchi-soto* distinction is drawn not by social structure but by constantly varying situations. (p. 112)

The concept of in-group and out-group (inside and outside, as Lebra defines) is closely related to the concept of discernment. In Japan the politeness used in in-group and out-group is very different; in-group communication requires the minimum of honorifics and is informal, whereas out-group communication requires various degrees of honorifics and is more formal. Thus, one must select an appropriate linguistic form and/or appropriate behavior according to his/her and the interlocutor's group membership. In other words, to speak with the proper choice of linguistic forms and expressions is to demonstrate that the speaker knows her/his expected place in terms of group

membership. With regard to Brown and Levinson's framework, one may use positive politeness strategies to in-group members, and negative politeness strategies to out-group members.

### **2.3 Interlanguage Pragmatics**

Interlanguage (IL) studies during the 1970s were concerned with learners' phonological, morphological, and syntactic knowledge, i.e., their linguistic competence. Since Hymes's (1971) notion of communicative competence was introduced to second language learning and teaching, the scope of interlanguage research has been extended to include learners' pragmatic knowledge; the area of studies which has come to be referred to as IL pragmatics. Since the early 1980s, the ways L2 learners select and realize speech acts have been increasingly investigated. IL pragmatics research, and more specifically, the study of speech acts in interlanguage, have been conducted to examine whether non-native speakers differ from native speakers in the range and contextual distribution of strategies and linguistic forms used to convey illocutionary meaning and politeness (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Kasper, 1992).

#### **2.3.1 Pragmatic Competence**

The knowledge required to perform speech acts consists of part of communicative competence. Communicative competence includes knowledge the speaker has of what constitutes appropriate as well as correct language behavior and also of what constitutes effective language behavior in relation to particular communicative goals (Ellis, 1994, p. 13). Hymes (1971) points out that there is a lot more to linguistic activity than the production of grammatical sentences, and he provides a definition of the concept of communicative competence as follows:

A normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as *appropriate*. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner.... This competence, moreover, is integral with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and uses.  
(1971, pp. 277-278)

Thus, communicative competence includes both linguistic and pragmatic competence. Linguistic competence describes a speaker's knowledge of the underlying systems of intonation, phonology,

morphology, and syntax (Thomas, 1983) which are required to construct grammatical sentences in a language. Pragmatic competence, however, is defined not with reference to the sentence, but to "the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts" (Koike, 1989, p. 179). Becoming an effective speaker of a second language not only involves learning vocabulary in addition to rules of pronunciation and grammar of the target language, but it must also include the ability to use these linguistic resources in ways that are socially and culturally appropriate among speakers of the target language. As Canale and Swain (1980) assert, knowledge of what a native speaker of the target language is likely to say in a given context is a crucial component of L2 learners' competence to understand second language communication and to express themselves in a native-like way (p. 16). If, in cross-cultural communication, an L2 learner applies the wrong set of pragmatic rules, there is high probability that communication breakdown will occur between the L2 learner and a speaker of the target language. In interlanguage (IL) pragmatics, a subdiscipline of second language research, there is a virtually uncontested assumption that L2 learners' comprehension and production of linguistic action is considerably influenced by their L1 pragmatic knowledge (Kasper, 1992). According to Wolfson, the use of rules of speaking, or norms of interaction, from the learner's L1 speech community when interacting with members of the target community is known as sociolinguistic or pragmatic transfer (1989, p. 141). She uses the terms 'rules of speaking' and 'sociolinguistic rules', and 'pragmatic' and 'sociolinguistic' interchangeably.

### **2.3.2 Pragmatic Transfer**

Beebe argues that language transfer is not only a psychological process but "often a sociolinguistic process, frequently of cultural identity assertion" (Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990, p. 55). Beebe et al. (pp.55-56) have classified sociolinguistic transfer into the following three types:

- (1) Transfer of a native language sociolinguistic variable rule
- (2) Transfer of native, discourse-level, sociocultural competence

- (3) Socially motivated transfer where the transferred pattern may not be sociolinguistic in itself, but is transferred in order to fulfill a social psychological function

Pragmatic transfer is viewed primarily as the second of these three types of sociolinguistic transfer. That is, as "transfer of L1 sociocultural communicative competence in performing L2 speech acts or any other aspects of L2 conversation, where the speaker is trying to achieve a particular function of language" (p. 56).

In her study of speech acts of complements and responses, Wolfson (1989) found that L2 learners transfer their own native sociolinguistic rules inappropriately in interactions with English speakers, especially when they have had little or no instruction in sociolinguistic behavior in the target language. When such transfer occurs, it is labeled as negative transfer. It is perceived as negative transfer when L1-based pragmatic knowledge is projected onto L2 contexts and differs from the pragmatic perceptions and behaviors of the target community (Beebe et al, 1990; Kasper, 1992; Odlin, 1989).

On the contrary, positive transfer is the facilitating influence of similarities between the L1 and L2 (Odlin, 1989). Thus, positive transfer from the learner's native language can be very helpful, especially when the differences between her/his native and target languages are relatively few. Cases of positive transfer presented by Kasper (1992) are those of speech act requests: formal equivalents of 'can you' (from Danish, German, Japanese, Chinese, Hebrew to English; from Danish to German; from English to Hebrew); 'why not' and 'do you mind' questions from English to Hebrew (Blum-Kulka, 1982); and past tense modal forms from Danish and German to English (House & Kasper, 1987; Faerch & Kasper, 1989). These studies have shown that more often positive transfer leads to successful communicative outcomes, while negative transfer causes pragmatic failure which leads to cross-cultural communication breakdown.

### **2.3.3 Pragmatic Failure**

Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic failure as "the inability to understand 'what is meant by what is said'" (p. 91). She has made a distinction between the two areas of pragmatic failure: 'pragmalinguistic failure', and 'sociopragmatic failure'. She argues that pragmalinguistic failure is

basically a linguistic problem, caused by differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force, but sociopragmatic failure stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior (p. 98). Kasper suggests that transfer of politeness assignment as well as illocutionary force be included in pragmalinguistic transfer (1992).

Pragmalinguistic failure may arise from two identifiable sources: 'pragmalinguistic transfer' and 'teaching-induced errors'. Thomas defines pragmalinguistic transfer as:

The inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies from one language to another, or the transferring from the mother tongue to the target language of utterances which are semantically/syntactically equivalent, but which, because of different 'interpretive bias', tend to convey a different pragmatic force in the target language. (p. 101)

Coulmas (1981) in his analysis of thanks and apologies, noted that the Japanese often use expressions of apology in situations where Westerners cannot perceive any object of regret. For example, upon receiving a gift, the Japanese often say *sumimasen*, which is translated into English as "I'm sorry," where Westerners would say "thank you." The Japanese concept of gifts and favors, Coulmas explains, focuses on the trouble they have caused the giver rather than the aspects which are pleasing to the recipient. Pragmalinguistic failure occurs, for example, when the Japanese transfer this concept into their English and say "I'm sorry" instead of "thank you."

According to Thomas, pragmalinguistic failure can also be caused by what Kasper terms "teaching-induced errors" (p. 101). For instance, inappropriate use of modals in teaching materials, lack of marking for modality, complete sentence responses and inappropriate propositional explicitness in classroom discourse may all cause pragmalinguistic failure (p. 102). Similarly, this type of pragmatic failure can be attributed to what Beebe and Takahashi call "stereotype-induced error" (1989, p. 214). According to the stereotype that many Japanese and American have of Japanese, their speech should be "very polite, hesitant, and indirect, even in English" (p. 206), but many Japanese ESL learners reported that they were taught by their Japanese teachers of English to "be direct when using English" (p. 215). As a result, their responses sounded "harsher and more direct" (p. 207) than American responses.

According to Thomas (1983), pragmalinguistic failure is fairly easy to overcome since it is simply a question of highly-conventionalized usage which can be taught quite straightforwardly as a part of grammar. Sociopragmatic failure, on the other hand, can be much more difficult to deal with than pragmalinguistic failure since it involves the L2 learner's underlying cultural beliefs as much as her/his knowledge of the target language. This is so, Thomas (p. 104) asserts, because sociopragmatic decisions are 'social' before they are linguistic, and while L2 learners are rather amenable to corrections which they regard as linguistic, they are justifiably sensitive about having their social judgment called into question. This is plausible since deeply held cultural values are not easily given up.

Sociopragmatic failure can result from misinterpretations which reflect cross-culturally different assessments of social power or social distance relationships, rights and obligations, and degree of imposition (Kasper, 1992; Thomas, 1983). In a study of pragmatic transfer of ESL refusals which focused on Japanese learners of English compared with native speakers of English and Japanese, Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) found sociopragmatic transfer in which Japanese ESL learners transferred into English a sensitivity to interlocutor status that exists in Japanese. For example, whereas American native speakers' decisive distinction of refusal strategies was between status-equal and status-unequal relationships (irrespective of direction --- either high to low or low to high), Japanese ESL learners' selection of refusal strategies depended on whether the refuser's status was higher or lower than the interlocutor's. In Beebe et al.'s (1990) study, there was some evidence that Japanese ESL learners transferred their sociopragmatic knowledge; namely, that Japanese society is hierarchical and one is expected to speak in accordance with the relationship (high-low, low-high, or equal) between the interlocutor and her/himself.

Hudson, Detmer, and Brown (1992) and Kasper (1992) suggest that there is no absolute distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic transfer because sociopragmatic concerns are realized pragmalinguistically. For example, decisions about how much politeness to employ in the performance of an FTA are based on an assessment of relevant contextual factors, and are thus

sociopragmatic, while decisions about which politeness strategy to use and the language-specific means for its implementation are pragmalinguistic.

### **2.3.4 Research Methods**

The major data collection approaches employed in IL pragmatics are: 1) a discourse completion task/test (DCT), 2) a role play, and 3) an observation of naturally-occurring speech. Of the three, DCT has been most extensively used in IL pragmatics studies. The format was first developed by Levenston and Blum (1978) to study lexical simplification, and later adapted by Blum-Kulka (1982) to investigate speech act realization. DCT is a written questionnaire consisting of brief situational descriptions, followed by a short dialogue with an empty slot for the speech act under investigation. Subjects are asked to fill in the slot by writing down a response which they think fits the given context. This approach has been used in the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984), the largest speech act research project to date, and also used by a number of other researchers (e.g., Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Beebe et al., 1990, etc.). The advantages of this data collection method are that one can collect a large amount of data in a relatively short period of time, and that all subjects are asked to respond in identical situations (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989). It is also claimed that DCT gives subjects time to plan their responses, and reduces the anxiety of face-to-face encounters (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986). Beebe and Cummings have concluded, in addition to the aforementioned advantages, that DCT is a highly effective means of: providing information about the kinds of semantic formulas and strategies that learners use to realize different speech acts; studying the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response; gaining insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance; and ascertaining the canonical shape of refusals, apologies, etc., in the minds of the speakers of that language (Beebe & Cummings, 1985, cited in Kasper & Dahl, 1991). However, DCT has disadvantages as well. Beebe and Takahashi (1989) point out that DCT allows subjects to edit their answers, elicits less complex responses than would occur in natural speech, and that DCT does not adequately show the depth of

emotion, or tone of negotiation involved in conversational exchanges. Robinson (1992) also points out that a written instrument may cause writing fatigue.

Like DCT, role plays provide the subjects with a description of a context calling for the performance of a particular speech act. In role plays, however, the subjects are asked to respond orally. The role plays may be performed through interacting with puppets (e.g., Walters, 1980; Andersen, 1989), with other subjects (e.g., Kasper, 1981) or with the researcher. This data collection technique has the advantage of allowing examination of speech act behavior in its full discourse context, including impromptu planning decisions contingent upon interlocutor input (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Therefore, data elicited in role plays may be closer to naturally occurring speech. The advantage of this approach over data collection of natural speech is that role plays are replicable and as with DCT, they also allow for the comparative study of non-native speaker and L1 and L2 native speaker controls (Kasper & Dahl, 1991).

According to Wolfson (1981, 1983, 1989), the use of naturally-occurring speech as a basis for studying speech acts is the best way to study speech acts. However, there are also problems with this approach. It is difficult to assemble a sufficient corpus of particular speech act data to make generalizations because the speech act being studied may not often appear naturally. Beebe and Takahashi (1989) claim that natural data they collected are biased toward conversational exchanges that the researcher finds especially typical, especially atypical, or especially non-native sounding, and that the data gave them many examples that are not at all comparable in terms of speakers, hearers, and social situations. Yet another disadvantage of this approach (which also applies to role plays) is that they need transcribing. In natural data, when they are not audio taped, word-for-word transcriptions have to be made concurrently or as soon after the interactions as possible. Word-for-word recall, however, cannot be absolutely accurate unless the core speech act is very short, and it is not possible to make a complete transcription of long negotiated sequences (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989). When they are recorded, it is extremely time-consuming to transcribe audio taped conversations. In addition, coding the data collected through these methods is more difficult than coding data from more tightly controlled tasks, such as DCT, since "illocutionary force and the



precise function of conversational markers often cannot be unambiguously determined, facts making interrater reliability harder to achieve" (Kasper & Dahl, 1991, p. 20).

The advantages and disadvantages of the above approaches suggest that a combination of techniques may reduce overall data limitations and improve the quality of data. Kasper and Dahl (1991), reviewing different approaches in data collection used in interlanguage pragmatic studies, claim that one method can be employed to collect the primary source of data, while using data collected by another method as the subsidiary data to help in the interpretation of the primary data.

Robinson (1992) notes that some researchers in second language research are increasingly confident that verbal report procedures are a useful means of accessing learners' mental activities associated with language behavior (p. 39). The results of her study, which used DCT and verbal reports, demonstrated that the introspective data provided insight into learners' reasoning behind their DCT responses which was not accessible through an analysis of DCT responses alone.

### **2.3.5 Studies of the Speech Act of Refusals**

Robinson asserts that refusals in American English are an important target for interlanguage research for such reasons as: their formulaic structure often makes them difficult for non-native speakers to negotiate; they require an ability to manipulate indirect utterances; and they vary under the influence of social, cultural, and other variables (1992, p. 40). She also argues that in the target culture many non-native speakers have difficulty interpreting ambiguous refusals and producing refusals appropriate to situations where they are required (p. 40). Other speech acts, especially requests, have received considerable attention in IL pragmatics research, and as a response to requests, refusals have been treated indirectly. However, the number of studies focused on refusals without an intermediate focus on requests to date is small.

One of the few research studies on pragmatic transfer concerning speech act of refusals is that of Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), which focused on Japanese learners of English compared with native speakers of English and Japanese. Similarity in responses to native Japanese and dissimilarity to native English was seen to be evidence of transfer. In their study, it was reported that pragmatic transfer was evident in the order, frequency, and intrinsic content (or tone) of semantic

formulas used in the Japanese ESL learners' refusals. In one situation, for example, where a cleaning woman breaks a vase and the head of the household (i.e., respondent) refuses to accept her offer of payment, all respondents began by letting the cleaning woman off the hook, saying "That's okay," "Never mind," etc., but Japanese ESL learners resembled Japanese native speakers in adding two additional semantic formulas: 1) a statement of philosophy which resembled proverbs (e.g., "Things break anyway," "This kind of thing happens," "To err is human," etc.), and 2) a suggested future alternative (e.g., "Be careful from now on"). Native English speakers, on the other hand, simply let the cleaning woman off the hook, saying, "Don't worry," with a reinforcer such as "I know it was an accident," etc. without any further elaboration.

Beebe et al. claimed that Japanese tended to apologize more than Americans. In a situation where an employee (i.e., subject) had to refuse the boss's request, 95% of the JJ (Japanese speaking Japanese) responses contained an apology, and 85% of the JE (Japanese ESL subjects) responses contained "I'm sorry," but only 40% of Americans did. Therefore, they concluded that evidence of pragmatic transfer was found in the frequency of occurrence of 'apology' formula, among several other semantic formulas, in ESL responses as well.

According to Beebe et al, however, pragmatic transfer was most evident in content of semantic formulas. They assert that Japanese excuses in general are less specific than American excuses, and it appeared to transfer to the English of Japanese speakers. For instance, in a situation where a company president (i.e., the subject) refuses a salesman's invitation, one JE subject responded, "I have to go to Europe soon." When refusing a boss's invitation, one JE said, "My children have many problems," and another said, "I have a previous engagement." JJ responses, along the line of "I have something to take care of at home," were similar to those of JE's, and thus, the study claims that the tendency to leave the excuse vague in JE seemed to reflect transfer of a Japanese sociocultural norm.

Ikoma and Shimura (1992) replicated the ESL study done by Beebe et al. and conducted their research in a JSL setting. In their study, similarity to native speakers of English and dissimilarity to native speakers of Japanese was seen to be evidence of transfer. Unlike Beebe et al's findings, they

found no evidence of pragmatic transfer in the order of semantic formulas. However, they presented evidence that pragmatic transfer from English influences the Japanese of Americans in the frequency and the content of the semantic formulas. For example, in terms of the frequency of semantic formulas used to make their refusals, AEs (Americans speaking English) and AJs (Americans speaking Japanese) used more direct formulas such as "I can't" and "No" than did JJs (Japanese speaking Japanese) in refusals to requests, invitations, and suggestions. JJs often used unfinished sentences, such as "*Nichiyooobi wa chotto... (dekimasen)*" (lit. "Sunday is sort of... (no good)" or "(I can't) on Sunday"), and avoided saying "I can't" or "No" directly. According to Ikoma and Shimura, the AJ's tendency of not using unfinished sentences probably made them use more direct refusals. In addition, AJs were not as sensitive to interlocutor status as were Japanese native speakers.

Evidence of pragmatic transfer in terms of the content of semantic formulas was found in a situation where the subjects refuse a friend's offer of another piece of cake. Most of the Japanese native speakers said "*onaka ga ippai*" (lit. "My stomach is full") but many of AJs said "*kekkaa desu*" (i.e., a polite way of saying "No, thank you"). Ikoma and Shimura argue that it is highly possible that the offerer will consider it a rather blunt refusal upon hearing just "*kekkaa desu*". Moreover, the Japanese do not usually say "*kekkaa desu*" to a friend (equal status); a fact that makes this refusal even more inappropriate.

Beebe et al. (and Ikoma and Shimura who replicated their study) used a Discourse Completion Test (DCT), which consisted of twelve situations, whereby each situation contained a blank in which only a refusal would fit. The situations that Beebe et al. adopted in the DCT in their study involve: refusing a worker's request for a raise, refusing a boss' invitation to his house for a party, refusing a student's suggestion to give students more practice in conversation than on grammar, etc. When asked to fill out a questionnaire like this DCT, a respondent will be forced to pretend to be someone other than her/himself; in the situations of the above examples, for instance, the respondent is required to answer as if s/he were an owner of a bookstore, a company executive, or a university teacher. In order to obtain valid and reliable data, it may be important for variables

likely to be caused by the uniqueness of situations like the above to be controlled more thoroughly. Otherwise, the use of the DCT may fail to collect near-authentic data, which would be very important in this kind of study. In addition, the number of DCT items should be held to a minimum in order to subdue subject fatigue and thus prevent incomplete responses (Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Robinson, 1991).

Robinson (1991) conducted a study of refusals, combining three data collection methodologies: DCT, concurrent verbal reports from a think aloud session, and retrospective interviews. Her study attempted to examine the process by which pragmatic competence is acquired, with the primary purpose of evaluating verbal reports as a means of investigating interlanguage pragmatics knowledge. Her subjects were twelve Japanese graduate and undergraduate students (six intermediate and six advanced ESL students). In this study, variables which the given DCT situations might cause were more controlled than those of the study done by Beebe et al., since the situations Robinson used in her DCT were based on authentic refusal instances told to her by native and non-native English-speaking university students. Also, assumed interlocutor relationships were consistent throughout the test; subjects were asked to refuse requests and invitations made by American female classmates. That is, all the refusal speech acts in this test were produced within conversations between a student (i.e., respondent) and her American classmate. Thus, it could be said that the refusal statements made by the respondents in this DCT were more realistic because the respondents could retain their identities as students and did not need to act like someone else. The number of DCT items was six, half the number used in Beebe et al.'s study, in order to limit writing fatigue.

Robinson reported that the subjects had difficulties with verbalization procedures, such as the difficulty of simultaneous reporting and the inability to recall thoughts from the concurrent session. The subjects in both groups (intermediate and advanced) had these problems, but for intermediate subjects, the problem was exacerbated by the need to translate their thoughts into English before thinking aloud, which in turn made their verbal reports incomplete. Nevertheless, her study demonstrated that the use of retrospective interviews helped to clarify data from the concurrent

sessions, and the DCT data also helped to clarify the introspective data. For instance, one of the subjects said that she is "no good at saying no" in her concurrent report and explained it in the retrospective report, which would also help clarify her DCT data. The following is the retrospective report given by the subject:

...because I haven't never - I I haven't - learned saying no...anytime yes yes yes - oh this is our - custom - Japanese custom - uh - um - any time uh - um - my family taught me - uh smile and - modest - and uh is - the attitude is to be - not - not say - no - is very uh - good part - to - uh for - women - Japanese women - sometimes and...and we can keep our - our harmony - with - uh many people - if I say no if I - didn't say no - if any time yes - but - actually - inside - um - I'm so confused because I want to say no - but I'm so shy and hesitate to say no - because I'm not - accustomed to saying just saying no. (pp. 56-57)

Robinson points out that the social acceptability of a linguistic behavior in the learners' native culture may influence the pragmatic competence with which they carry out the same action in a target context. This example above illustrates the subject's sociopragmatic transfer of one aspect of Japanese society in which harmony is respected and saying 'no' is repelled. In other words, since any overt conflict between interlocutors could imperil the harmony of an interaction if expressed directly, the Japanese tend to rely upon various indirect strategies for saying 'no', and the most extreme of which is simply saying 'yes' (cf., Ueda, 1974). Westerners may regard such behavior as irresponsible or dishonest, but it may be attributed to the Japanese ideal of concern for others that makes it so difficult for them to risk offending or hurting the feelings of the interlocutor by directly saying 'no' (Clancy, 1986). From the above retrospective report, it is evident that the subject wanted to say 'no' but her sociopragmatic knowledge learned in Japanese culture made it difficult for her to make a refusal and, also made her 'so confused'.

Robinson's study did not investigate how non-native speakers produce speech acts in situations where they interact with interlocutors of different status. This pragmatic competence in producing socially appropriate speech acts in accordance with interlocutor status is one of the most important components to be investigated in IL pragmatics studies in JSL/JSL settings. This is so, as

discussed above, because in Japanese it is crucial for a speaker to perceive the social context, such as the kind of situation or setting s/he is in, what kind of social relation s/he has with the interlocutors, the social status, the position in the conversation, etc., and to show recognition of that social context. Learners of Japanese must therefore have a certain amount of knowledge about Japanese social norms and culture values if they are to communicate appropriately in a given context. A lack of such pragmatic knowledge may result in insult to the interlocutor and/or embarrassment to the speaker her/himself, which in turn causes misunderstandings and subsequent communication breakdown in interactions with the Japanese.

To conclude this part of the section, studies of 'refusals' in Japanese, the following is cited from Doi (1974), who claims that the Japanese people's tendency to avoid saying "no" has been deeply ingrained from centuries ago. He tells the story behind one of the poems from *Manyoshu*, the oldest anthology of Japanese poems composed in the 8th century:

A beautiful girl...Unai-otome...was wooed by two boys who fought fiercely over her. She apparently could not let her mind be known as to whom she loved and therefore lamenting over the fact that as a humble maid she had caused two boys to fight, she killed herself. Hearing about the death of the girl one of the two boys at once killed himself and the other left behind was much grieved that the one who followed her to death might have beaten him. He couldn't bear this "defeat" however, so he killed himself soon after. The village was deeply moved by the death of three young people and built monumental mounds for each, with the one for the girl in the middle. Several years passed. A tree planted in front of the girl's mound stretched its branches towards one of the other two mounds. Then as the tree stretched its branches, the villagers said: "Now we know for sure which of the two the girl loved." (pp. 22-23)

Doi notes that there is no condemnation of suicide, nor of the girl's apparent indecisiveness in this story, but that the villagers appreciate her tenderheartedness with which she could not bear to see the two boys fighting over her. Doi says, "This is Japanese. I have often thought that nowhere in the whole world literature is found such a moving story" (p. 23).

## 2.4 Summary

Speech act theory was introduced by Austin (1962) and developed by Searle (1969, 1975) and Grice (1975). Where Searle proposed the theory of indirect speech acts and set out a series of conditions for speech acts, Grice put forward the Cooperative Principle (CP) and four Maxims in attempt to explain the process of performing speech acts and of generating conversational implicature.

Grice's theory of conversation was followed by Leech (1983), who introduced the Politeness Principle (PP), which he claimed to 'rescue' the CP by explaining why speakers do not always observe Grice's maxims. Brown and Levinson (1978) considered politeness to be the major motive for deviation from Grice's maxims, and put forward the most influential politeness theory. Central to their theory was the concept of 'face', and they proposed the sets of strategies for performing face-threatening acts (FTAs).

While the theories discussed in the first section have contributed immensely to the studies of speech acts and politeness, it has also been argued that they are not sufficient to account for the Japanese linguistic politeness (Hill et al., 1986; Ide, 1989; Matsumoto, 1987, 1989). In the Japanese culture, where the individual is more concerned with conforming to norms of expected behavior than with maximizing benefits to self, 'face' is better defined as a 'socially-given self-image' and the concept of 'negative face' is not as important as Brown and Levinson claim. Fundamental to linguistic politeness in Japanese is *wakimae*, or discernment, and complementary to the discernment aspect is the volitional aspect of linguistic politeness. Ide et al.'s (1992) study speculates that the Japanese concept of politeness is oriented toward discernment, while that of Americans is oriented toward volition. As such, in Japanese the choice of formal linguistic forms (e.g., honorifics) is not a matter of individual choice, but the speaker makes an obligatory choice according to the social context. In the final part of the second section, the way in which the language is used and understood in the Japanese culture is discussed in terms of the concepts of: *amae* (dependency), *omoiyari* (empathy), *enryo* (restraint), and *uchi* and *soto* (in-group and out-group). The use of unfinished sentences, pause fillers, and the adverb *chotto* as a qualifier or impact softener of a refusal are briefly reviewed.

Interlanguage (IL) pragmatics is the branch of second language research which studies how non-native speakers carry out linguistic action in a target language by using their pragmatic competence. Pragmatic transfer occurs when L2 learners use their L1 rules of pragmatic competence in performing L2 speech acts. While positive transfer is the facilitating factor of successful L2 performance, negative transfer causes pragmalinguistic and/or sociopragmatic failure. The two identifiable sources of pragmalinguistic failure are 'teaching-induced errors' and 'pragmalinguistic transfer'. Sociopragmatic failure may result from an L2 learner's failure in assessing social power or social distance relationships, rights and obligations, and degree of imposition. However, the distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failures is not as clear-cut, because sociopragmatic concerns are realized pragmalinguistically (Hudson, Detmer & Brown, 1992; Kasper, 1992). The major data collection techniques employed in IL pragmatics are: DCT, role play, and observation of natural speech. Each technique has its advantages and disadvantages, and it is suggested that a combination of different techniques may be used in order to reduce overall data limitations and to improve the quality of data. The final section concludes with a review of previous studies of speech act of refusals, which are scarce compared to other speech acts such as requests and apologies. In each of the three studies presented, findings and methodological problems are reviewed.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents descriptions of the research site, subjects, instruments, procedures for data collection, and analyses of data. The research questions to be examined in this study are the following:

1. To what extent, with respect to the speech act of refusals, is there a tendency on the part of learners of Japanese as a second language (JSL) to transfer English rules of speaking to Japanese, as judged by their written production and their retrospective reports?
2. How do native speakers of Japanese (NSJ) and learners of JSL minimize the risk of offending interlocutors?
3. How does the social status difference of the interlocutors influence the choice of linguistic forms of NSJ and JSL learners?

#### **3.1 Research Site**

The present research was conducted on two sites: 1) UBC-Ritsumeikan House located on the University of British Columbia (UBC) campus; and 2) Center for International Education at Kansai Gaidai in Osaka, Japan. UBC-Ritsumeikan House is the main facility of the UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program. The purpose of this program is to provide students from Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Japan, with an integrated language and content program conducted in English. The duration of the program is eight months, and approximately 100 Japanese participants reside in the UBC-Ritsumeikan House together with about 100 UBC students. Most of the courses they take are conducted in this facility.

Kansai Gaidai is a private, nonprofit institution composed of Kansai Gaidai University, Kansai Gaidai College, the Graduate School, Kansai Gaidai Hawaii College, and the Asian Studies Program. The University, Junior College, and Graduate School currently enroll over 11,300 students. The Asian Studies Program annually enrolls over 350 students from some 140 institutions, mainly in the United States. Since its inception in 1972, the program has enrolled in excess of 3,000

students from the United States, Canada, Australia, and Southeast Asia, as well as several European countries. The program offers Japanese language courses (elementary to advanced level Speaking and Reading & Writing) as well as lecture courses in the humanities, the social sciences, and business. The purpose of the program is to provide its participants with an ideal opportunity to study and obtain a practical knowledge of the culture and language of Japan. The program is designed as a one-year study abroad experience, and student housing is arranged either in the homestay program (in which over 70% of the Asian Studies students participate) or in the Japanese-style dormitory on campus.

### **3.2. Subjects**

This study was conducted with two groups of university students: native speakers of Japanese (NSJ) and learners of Japanese as a second language (JSL) whose first language was English. The NSJ group consisted of 18 (9 females and 9 males) UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program participants. The researcher obtained permission from the director of UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program to recruit subjects from among the 1994-1995 participants. The researcher then contacted two instructors in the Program, explained details of the study, and directly asked for volunteer subjects in the classes. The criteria for the selection of NSJ subjects were that they had received most of their education in Japan and had not stayed in other countries for more than one year. The researcher originally intended to recruit 20 subjects. Twenty-five students volunteered to participate in the study, but 7 of them could not actually partake in the study due to unforeseen circumstances. The average age of the 18 subjects who participated in the study was 20.3 years.

The JSL group consisted of 10 North Americans (3 females and 7 males), enrolled in intermediate to advanced level Japanese courses at Kansai Gaidai. The researcher first intended to solicit JSL subjects among students who were enrolled in intermediate to advanced level Japanese courses at the University of British Columbia. Since the majority of the UBC students enrolled in Japanese courses were of Asian descendant, it was not easy to find the subjects whose own first language, as well as their parents' first language, was English. Although 10 such students

volunteered to participate in the study, the researcher had to go back to Japan unexpectedly for an ineluctable, personal reason when the data were scheduled to be collected. Upon the researcher's return to UBC, the academic year was over and the prospective subjects had left their dormitories. Therefore, Kansai Gaidai was included as a supplementary research site. The researcher obtained permission from the dean of the Center for International Education at Kansai Gaidai to recruit volunteer subjects from among the participants in the 1994-1995 Asian Studies Program. The researcher then went to three intermediate and advanced level Japanese courses, explained details about the study, and solicited volunteer subjects in the classes. In addition, the Japanese instructors of the three courses helped the researcher select the subjects by recommending the students whom they considered suitable for the present study. The criteria for the selection of JSL subjects were that they had received most of their education in North America, and that their level of Japanese proficiency corresponded to level II of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) developed by the Association of International Education and the Japan Foundation. (Most of the subjects' JLPT scores were unknown until the administration of the JLPT by the researcher as a part of the present study, and thus the initial selection of JSL subjects was reliant upon the instructors' recommendations.) Thirteen students volunteered and/or agreed to participate in the study, but three of them could not actually partake in the study because they were busy. Originally, the researcher intended to recruit 20 subjects (or at least 18 to meet the number of NSJ subjects) for this group. However, since the end of academic year was drawing near and most of the Asian Studies Program participants were busy preparing to return home, it was difficult to secure this number. The average age of the 10 subjects who participated in the study was 21.4 years.

The selection of subjects in each group was controlled as much as possible. For the NSJ subjects, the controlled variables were: 1) the amount of exposure to English, 2) the length of stay in Canada (6 months), 3) status (university student), 4) cultural background (both parents were native speakers of Japanese), and 5) age (19-22). For the JSL subjects, the following variables were controlled: 1) the level of Japanese proficiency (level II), 2) length of stay in Japan (8 months), 3)

status (university student), 4) cultural background (both parents were native speakers of English), and 5) age (20-23).

### **3.3 Instruments**

There were three instruments utilized in this study: a background information questionnaire, a Discourse Completion Test (DCT), and a retrospective interview conducted immediately after the DCT. In addition, the Japanese Language Proficiency Test was administered to JSL subjects for the purpose of assessing their general proficiency levels.

#### **3.3.1 Background Information Questionnaire**

For NSJ subjects, a background information questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding their age, educational background, work experience in Japan, experience of living in foreign countries, and the amount of exposure to English and Japanese after coming to Canada, etc. (see Appendix A). For JSL subjects, the background information questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding their age, educational background, the length and purpose of studying Japanese, the length and purpose of other language(s) studied as a foreign/second language, self-evaluated proficiency level in Japanese, experience of living in Japan, type of accommodation (homestay or university dormitory) and the amount of exposure to Japanese after coming to Japan, etc. (see Appendix B). The background information questionnaire was written in Japanese for NSJ, and in English for JSL subjects respectively. The information obtained from the background questionnaire was used to probe factors that might affect their DCT responses.

#### **3.3.2 Discourse Completion Test (DCT)**

In the present study, the instrument used to collect the primary data was a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). Beyond the practical methodological advantages, elicited data has theoretical advantages as well. Hill et al. (1986) points out that "the virtue of authenticity in naturally occurring speech must be weighed against its reflection of speakers' sociolinguistic adaptations to very specific situations" (p. 353). DCT gives subjects time to plan their responses, and reduces the anxiety of face-to-face encounters which are not really possible in spontaneous face-to-face encounters. However, this study intended to obtain from subjects their best possible responses or the responses

that they considered were most appropriate in given situations in order to study the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response. According to Hill et al. (1986), using written elicitation techniques makes it possible to obtain more stereotypical responses; that is, "the prototype of the variants occurring in the individual's actual speech" (p. 353). Hudson (1980) points out that while actual speech samples are more likely to include atypical items, prototype theory can account for "how people categorize the social factors to which they relate language" (p. 80), which is precisely the aspect of speech behavior to be examined in the present study.

The DCT used in this study consisted of nine situations (see Appendix C). Following Beebe et al. (1990) (and Ikoma and Shimura (1992) who replicated Beebe et al.'s study), the researcher originally intended to give twelve DCT situations instead of nine. Like the Beebe et al. study, the twelve DCT situations were categorized into four stimulus types: three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions, and one of each group required a refusal to a higher status person, one to a lower status person, and one to a status equal. As discussed earlier in section 2.3.5, the DCT situations used in the Beebe et al. study seemed problematic in that the subjects were required to answer as if they were an owner of a bookstore, a company executive, etc. Thus, the situations used in the present study were different from those of Beebe et al.'s study. All the DCT situations were made so as to make certain that the subjects could retain their identities as students and were not required to pretend to be someone other than themselves. In this study, the DCT situations, except for suggestions, were adapted from authentic refusal instances told to the researcher by native Japanese-speaking undergraduate and graduate students. Those native Japanese-speaking students asserted that a situation in which one makes a suggestion to someone of higher status does not usually occur (one of them said that it was 'unthinkable') in Japanese. They also stated that they do not usually make such a suggestion to their friends (equal-status) as the one that was used in Beebe et al.'s study (i.e., a friend suggests her/his friend a new diet). Therefore, the situations for suggestions included in the original DCT in the present study were not authentic as were the nine other situations.

In order to examine the appropriateness of the DCT, a pilot study was conducted on three native Japanese speakers (UBC graduate students) and three JSL students (two UBC graduate students and one undergraduate student). One of the pilot study participants claimed that after making nine refusals consecutively, he became a little tired. Other participants expressed no fatigue caused by the DCT, but one of them appeared to be tired after completing the twelve DCT items. Thus, in order to limit subject fatigue and to avoid incomplete responses, it was decided to reduce the number of DCT situations. The situation that was omitted was 'suggestions' for the reasons discussed above. Aside from the authenticity of the suggestion situations and the length of DCT, there were no other apparent problems; all participants agreed that they had more or less encountered similar situations to the ones specified in the DCT in real life. The nine-item DCT specified the following contexts:

#### Requests

- 1) Your seminar professor asks you to help him clip some newspaper articles. (Situation 1)
- 2) Your friend wants to borrow your lecture notes. (Situation 6)
- 3) Your *koohai* (junior, underclassman) wants to borrow your textbook. (Situation 4)

#### Invitations

- 4) Your seminar professor invites you over for dinner. (Situation 3)
- 5) Your friend invites you to go to a movie with her/him (same sex as the respondent). (Situation 5)
- 6) A younger club member invites you to go to a soccer game with a group of club members. (Situation 2)

#### Offers

- 7) Your seminar professor offers you a ride to the airport. (Situation 7)
- 8) Your friend offers you another piece of cake. (Situation 9)
- 9) A younger club member offers to take over the cleaning of the club office. (Situation 8)

In all situations, subjects were placed in the role of a student making a refusal. They were required to write what they would say in conversation to refuse these requests, invitations, and offers made by

the three different status persons (professor, *koohai* (junior), and friend). Printed instructions were given on the first page of the DCT. In order to avoid leading subjects, and to elicit their independent thoughts, the DCT situations only gave the details necessary to describe the situations clearly. The situations were described in uncomplicated English and interlocutors' (professor, *koohai*, and friend) utterances were written in Japanese for both groups. In order to help in the interpretation of the primary data collected by means of DCT, retrospective interviews were used to collect the subsidiary data.

### **3.3.3 Retrospective Interview**

Retrospective interviews, which were recorded and later transcribed by the researcher, immediately followed the DCT. The purpose of the interviews was to identify the subjects' intentions, cognitions, planning, and evaluations (Ericsson & Simon, 1984; Robinson, 1992). Following Robinson (1992), questions which explored intentions included: What did you intend to say? Why did you say that? Cognition questions included: What did you notice about the situation? What were you paying attention to at that moment? What were you thinking when you said that? Questions about planning included: What did you plan to say? What did you plan to say first, second, etc.? Questions which probed evaluations asked: What were your alternatives? What else could you have said? In addition to these questions, the following were explored for the JSL subjects: what it was that they knew about Japanese rules of speaking; how they acquired this knowledge (knowledge sources); and what made them say what they had said. These questions about pragmatic knowledge were intended to help identify factors that might cause pragmatic failure, as well as to help interpret the data obtained from the DCT.

### **3.3.4 The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)**

In order to assess JSL subjects' Japanese proficiency levels, the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), developed by Association of International Education, Japan and the Japan Foundation, was administered. The JLPT has been administered in 31 countries and regions, 67 cities in the past 11 years and approximately 98,000 people have taken this test to this date (Association of International Education, Japan and The Japan Foundation, 1995). There are four

levels in the JLPT. Level I is the most advanced level and requires acquisition of very advanced grammar, *kanji* or Chinese characters (approximately 2,000), and about 10,000 vocabulary items, which is necessary for studying at the university level in Japan (equivalent to completion of 900 hours of study of Japanese). Level II requires an advanced level of grammar, about 1,000 *kanji*, and 6,000 vocabulary items, which is needed for daily conversation, reading and writing (completion of the intermediate level or 600 hours of study). Level III is equivalent to completion of the beginning level, and Level IV is equivalent to completion of the first half of the beginning level.

In this study, since data were to be collected from intermediate to advanced level learners, the Level II test was administered. Procedure was followed as stated in the 1994 Japanese Language Proficiency Test kit created and edited by the Association of International Education, Japan and The Japan Foundation. The test consists of three sections, and the total time allotted for it is 145 minutes: 35 minutes for the writing and vocabulary section; 40 minutes for the listening section; and 70 minutes for the reading and grammar section.

### **3.4 Procedures**

#### **3.4.1 NSJ Subjects**

First, in order to recruit NSJ subjects, the researcher, with the permission of the director and instructors, asked for volunteer subjects in classes in the UBC-Ritsumeikan Program. The researcher provided all the students in the classes with a letter of invitation to participate in the study, in which the purpose of the study, the total amount of time required of a subject, all procedures to be carried out in which the subjects would be involved, etc. were described, and to which a consent form was attached. In addition to the letter, the researcher also provided a verbal explanation of what the study involved. Students who were interested in the study filled out the consent form and returned it to the researcher in the classroom on the day when recruitment was made. Soon after, the researcher contacted each of the subjects by telephone, and set a mutually convenient time for the DCT. Since all the subjects preferred to fill out the DCT and partake in the interview session in their own room, the researcher visited each subject in each of their rooms in the UBC-Ritsumeikan House or in a dormitory (two of the subjects were living in a university dormitory).



Each of the NSJ subjects took about 5 minutes to fill out the background information questionnaire before starting the DCT. Written instructions were attached to the DCT. In addition, to ensure that the subject clearly understood the procedure, the researcher gave a verbal explanation as well, and asked if the subject had any questions regarding the DCT. Since it was crucial that each subject responded as they would in actual conversation, the researcher asked her/him to read out each response after writing it down in order to make sure that what s/he wrote was what s/he would most likely say in actual conversation. After these points were made clear, the subject started working on the DCT and the researcher stayed unobtrusively in the room. The time required of the subjects to complete the DCT was 20 to 40 minutes; the subjects were allowed to work at their own pace. Immediately after the subjects completed the DCT, the researcher interviewed them for 25 to 70 minutes regarding their responses to the DCT, looking at the completed DCT to activate processing traces in short-term memory, and to remind the subjects of their thoughts. All of the interviews were audio taped and later transcribed by the researcher.

### **3.4.2. JSL Subjects**

First, in order to recruit JSL subjects, the researcher asked for volunteer subjects in classes in the Asian Studies Program at Kansai Gaidai University with the permission of the dean of the program and the instructors. A letter of invitation to participate in the study was distributed to all the students, and those who were willing to participate in the study returned the consent form to the researcher. Since most of the subjects were participants of the homestay program and it was difficult to visit each subject at their home, the research procedures were administered in a classroom located in the Center for International Education at Kansai Gaidai. Prior to the DCT followed by the retrospective interview, JSL subjects were required to take the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) for 140 minutes. (Each section of the JLPT was scored by the researcher as soon as the subject finished it.) Taking into account that the total time required of a subject to complete the tasks involved in this study was fairly long (approximately 200 minutes), the researcher was hesitant to administer all the research procedures at once. Since, however, all the subjects preferred to complete

all the tasks in one session, it was agreed that the subjects take a break in between the JLPT and the DCT for as long as they needed. There was no break in between the DCT and the interview.

The background information questionnaire was given to the subjects prior to the day on which the JLPT, the DCT and the retrospective interview were administered so that they could fill it out whenever they had time. In addition to the same instructions given to the NSJ subjects, the JSL subjects were instructed not to worry about grammar (or handwriting), since that was not the focus of the present study. The subjects were allowed to work at their own pace, and it took them 25 to 40 minutes to complete the DCT. The interview session immediately following the DCT lasted between 30 to 60 minutes. The JSL subjects were instructed to answer in either Japanese or English, depending upon their preference. All of the interviews were audio taped and later transcribed by the researcher.

Retrospective interviews for both groups were recorded on a Panasonic RQ-L400 mini cassette recorder using a Sony ECM-ZF80 condenser microphone.

### **3.5 Data Analyses**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how JSL learners make refusals to native Japanese speakers in different contexts, and to compare them with the refusal speech acts made by native speakers of Japanese. This study will examine the JSL learners' knowledge and use of appropriateness ("sociolinguistic rules" or "rules of speaking" in Wolfson's (1983) terms), both in English and in Japanese. The data were analyzed to see whether pragmatic transfer occurred in the JSL interlanguage, and whether NSJ and JSL made sociopragmatically appropriate choices in politeness and linguistic forms according to social status variables. NSJ data was used primarily as norms (i.e., Japanese rules of speaking). Descriptive statistics were used on DCT data, but primarily the results of this study were presented qualitatively due to the small sample size and the descriptive nature of the study. Data obtained through retrospective interviews was used to examine the subjects' pragmatic knowledge, such as what they knew about Japanese rules of speaking, and what made them say what they said. Subsequently, retrospective data, as well as data obtained from background questionnaires, helped in interpretation of DCT data. The DCT data were analyzed in terms of the

order of semantic formulas selected and communicative style. Where the data were comparable, the results of this study were compared with previous studies of Beebe et al. (1990) and Ikoma and Shimura (1992).

### **3.5.1 Analysis of Semantic Formulas**

In analyzing the data elicited from the DCT, Beebe et al.'s coding scheme was adapted in the present study. Beebe et al. (1990) developed a 'Classification of Refusals' in a cross-cultural project on native and nonnative English refusals. However, since the present study was conducted in JSL and not in ESL settings, the modification was deemed necessary. Yokoyama (1993) modified Beebe et al.'s classification and used it in her study on foreigner talk, analyzing Japanese refusals made by Japanese to Japanese and to Americans (the respondents were all native speakers of Japanese). Table 2 shows a complete list of the classification of refusal responses, which was modified by the researcher based on Beebe et al.'s classification and its modification by Yokoyama, used in this study.

Table 2

Classification of Refusals (Adapted from Beebe et al., 1990, and Yokoyama, 1993, modified by the researcher)

Classification	Category	Example
Direct	A. Performative	<i>Okotowarishimasu.</i> (I refuse.)
	B. Nonperformative statement	1. <i>Iya.</i> (No.) <i>Iie</i> (No.)
	1. No.	2. <i>Kekko desu.</i> (No, thank you.)
	2. No, thank you. [Offer]	3. <i>Ikanai.</i> (I won't go.) <i>Ikenai.</i> (I can't go.) <i>Dekimasen.</i> (I can't.)
Indirect	3. Negative willingness/ability	
	A. Statement of regret	<i>Zannen desu ga</i> (I'm sorry but...)
	B. Apology	<i>Sumimasen.</i> (I'm sorry.)
	C. Wish	<i>Otesudai dekitara ii n desu ga</i> (I wish I could help you but...)
	D. Excuse	<i>Isogashii n desu.</i> (I'm busy.)
	E. Statement of alternative	<i>X ni kiite mitara.</i> (Why don't you ask X?)
	F. Set condition for future or past acceptance	<i>Moo sukoshi mae ni itte moraetara, nantoka natta n desu kedo.</i> (If you had asked me earlier, I would have ...)
	G. Promise of future acceptance	<i>Mata kondo</i> (Next time.)
	H. Request for future invitation	<i>Mata kondo sasotte.</i> (Invite me again.)
	I. Lack of enthusiasm	<i>Kyoomi nai.</i> (I'm not interested.)
	J. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor	1. <i>Mushi ga yosugiru zo.</i> (You are taking a lot for granted.)
	1. Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion); insult/attack	2. <i>Katta hoo ga ii yo.</i> (You should buy it.) <i>X-san, chanto nooto totte ta yo.</i> (X was taking good notes, you know)
	2. Give advice/tip, lecture, etc.	3. <i>Ki ni shinai de.</i> (Don't worry about it.)
	3. Reassure the offerer	
	K. Avoidance	1. <i>Baito ga aru node... (dekimasen).</i> (I have to work so... (I can't).)
	1. Avoid making the direct (non)performative statement	2. <i>Ikura kureru.</i> (How much will you pay me?)
	2. Joke	

Table 2 (Continued)

Adjuncts to Refusals	A. Gratitude/appreciation	<i>Arigatoo gozaimasu.</i> (Thank you very much.)
	B. Compliment	<i>Oishikatta.</i> (It was delicious.)
	C. Repetition of part of request, etc.	<i>Mokuyooobi desu ka.</i> (Thursday?)
	D. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement	<i>Ii desu ne.</i> (That sounds good.)
	E. <i>Enryo</i> (Restraint) [Offer]	<i>Otesuu kaketaku arimasen.</i> (I don't want to trouble you.) <i>Oisogashii deshoo.</i> (You must be busy.)
	F. Pause fillers	<i>anoo, uuun,</i> etc. (well, uhm, etc.)

The refusals were analyzed as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas. Semantic formula is defined by Fraser (1981) as "a word, phrase or sentence which meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy" (cited in Olshtain & Cohen, 1983, p. 20). For example, if a subject refused a professor's request, saying "I'm sorry, but I have something to do on that day. If you couldn't find anybody to help you, please let me know again," it was coded as consisting of three semantic formulas: [apology][excuse][offer of alternative]. There were preliminary remarks that could not by themselves function as refusals. For example, the expression of positive feeling (e.g., "I'd love to...") without giving excuse (e.g., "but I have to work that day") would sound like an acceptance. Those formulas were termed "adjuncts" by Beebe et al (1990). In order to assess the reliability of the coding in the present study, inter-rater agreement was assessed (97.7%).<sup>2</sup>

After categorizing the DCT responses according to the above classification, the order of semantic formulas used in each refusal was coded. Thus, in the above example, the order was coded as: [apology] first, [excuse] second, and [offer of alternative] third. These patterns were analyzed to see what constituted NSJ and JSL refusals in given contexts. The findings from the DCT data were compared with the findings of Ikoma and Shimura's (1992) study which dealt with pragmatic transfer

<sup>2</sup> The DCT data for NSJ and JFL groups were coded by the researcher and another native speaker of Japanese independently. Each refusal coded by the researcher was compared to the coding done by the native speaker. All the coded data were used in assessing the inter-rater agreement.

in the speech act of refusing in the Japanese of native speakers of English. The findings were also compared with the findings from the Beebe et al. (1990) study, particularly in terms of rules of speaking in English. Beebe et al.'s study dealt with pragmatic transfer in the speech act of Japanese learners of American English and not the Japanese of English-speaking JSL learners. However, their findings manifested, as well as Japanese ESL learners' pragmatic transfer, the speech behavior of American native speakers of English, which would be useful and interesting if compared with the findings from the present study.<sup>3</sup>

### 3.5.2 Analysis of Retrospective Interviews

In addition to help in interpretation of the DCT data, the data from retrospective interviews were analyzed in terms of JSL's pragmatic knowledge about Japanese rules of speaking and perception of the status difference of the interlocutors. A high level of acquisition in terms of pragmatic knowledge might lead to effective and appropriate speech act productions. Social status variables also play a very important role in Japanese communication. In the present study, there were three status variables which might affect the subjects' speech acts of refusal: higher, equal, and lower to the subjects. The retrospective data were analyzed qualitatively.

### 3.5.3 Analysis of Communicative Style

In the present study, knowledge of Japanese communicative style was viewed essential in understanding the purpose of politeness, or "one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider others' feelings, establish levels of mutual comfort, and promote rapport" (Hill et al., 1986, p. 349). The DCT data were analyzed in terms of communicative style which included: 1) the qualifier, *chotto*, 2) unfinished sentences, and 3) honorifics.

*Chotto*, which basically means 'a little', is often used in order to soften the impact of the refusal. Similarly, an unfinished sentence like *yooji ga arimasu node...* ("I have things to do, so...") instead of its finished form *yooji ga arimasu node dekimasen* ("I have things to do, so I can't do it")

---

<sup>3</sup> The DCT situations used in Beebe et al.'s and Ikoma and Shimura's studies were not exactly the same as those used in the present study. Thus, a comparison was made only where the situation was the same or similar. (Beebe et al.'s study involved 20 subjects in each of native speakers of Japanese (JJs), Japanese non-native speakers of English (JEs), and native speakers of English (AEs). Ikoma and Shimura's study involved 10 subjects in each of JJs, AEs, and American non-native speakers of Japanese (AJs).

is considered as indicating indirectness by hesitation in completing the utterance and, thus, as an attempt to mitigate the presumed rudeness of a refusal. The analysis of honorifics was done to see whether the subjects made a sociopragmatically appropriate choice among linguistic forms in accordance with the interlocutor status. For example, it is appropriate to use honorifics in utterances to a higher status person, namely, the professor in this study. To a status equal (friend) or to a lower status person (*koohai*), on the other hand, the use of honorifics is inappropriate; with those interlocutors, plain forms should be used. The wrong choice of linguistic forms, i.e., using plain forms to the professor and/or using honorifics to the friend/*koohai*, may imply insult or sarcasm, and thus offend the interlocutor. The frequency of the uses of *chotto*, unfinished sentences, and honorifics was calculated for each group.

### 3.6 Summary

This study involved two subject groups: 18 NSJ, who were the UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program participants; and 10 JSL, who were enrolled in the Asian Studies Program at Kansai Gaidai. Speech act data were collected by means of a 9-item DCT and analyzed to see whether pragmatic transfer occurred in the JSL interlanguage, and whether NSJ and JSL made sociopragmatically appropriate choices in politeness and linguistic forms according to social status variables. The DCT data were analyzed in terms of the selection and order of semantic formulas, and communicative style. In addition to help in interpreting the DCT data, retrospective interviews were analyzed in terms of pragmatic knowledge and perceptions of status difference of the interlocutors.

The lists of classification of refusals developed by Beebe et al. (1990) and that modified by Yokoyama (1993) were adapted and again modified by the researcher, and DCT data were analyzed as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas. The data were examined in the order in which the subjects said the various semantic formulas that made up their refusals. Pragmatic transfer occurrence (or lack of) in JSL interlanguage was examined by referring to retrospective data, as well as comparing this study's finding data with findings of previous studies.

The refusals were also analyzed in terms of communicative style which included: 1) the qualifier *chotto*, 2) unfinished sentences, and 3) honorifics.

The next chapter will discuss the findings from the present study.



## CHAPTER IV

## RESULTS

This chapter begins with a description of background information on the subjects who participated in the present study, followed by the results of DCT data. The DCT data were analyzed as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas. Inter-rater reliability for coding of JSL and NSJ data was established at 97.7% (see footnote 2). First, the characteristic ordering of semantic formulas selected in each refusal for JSL and NSJ groups is presented. The findings presented are qualitative assessments rather than computer calculations of the characteristic ordering of semantic formulas. Typical responses of JSL and NSJ in each situation are presented in this section as well. Where honorifics are used, they are bold-faced. In the following section, the frequencies of the qualifier *chotto*, unfinished sentences, and honorifics used by JSL and NSJ subjects are presented.

**4.1. Background Information**

The following is background information obtained from the pre-test questionnaire.

**4.1.1 Native Speakers of Japanese (NSJ)**

All of the NSJ subjects were undergraduate students from Ritsumeikan University, participating in the UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange Program. Seventeen subjects were sophomores, and one was a junior. Their majors were: English Literature (5), Sociology (4), Law (3), Economics (2), International Relations (2), Engineering (1), and Political Science (1). There were nine females, with a mean age of 20.1 years, and nine males, with a mean age of 20.6 years. The overall mean age was 20.3 years. All but one of them had work experience in Japan in such areas as waiting on tables and sales, both of which required the use of honorifics.

This group was homogeneous in that all the subjects were born in Japan, had received education in Japanese and had used Japanese as the primary language in their daily lives. Most of the subjects had no long-term experience residing overseas. One subject had lived in the U.S.A. from the ages of two to six years (with his family), and another had studied at a high school in America for eleven months. Five subjects had stayed in English-speaking countries (i.e., the U.S.A., Australia,

Canada, and England) for three to eight weeks for homestay or travel. NSJ subjects had been in Canada for six months before the present study took place. While in Canada, all but one of the subjects spent most of her/his time with Japanese friends with whom they always spoke Japanese. The mean length of hours being exposed to English per day was four hours (i.e., mostly in the classrooms only).

What the NSJ subjects considered difficult when speaking English were: expressing themselves effectively, pronunciation, tense, and grammar. In speaking Japanese, the appropriate use of honorifics to interlocutors in higher status was considered difficult by almost all the subjects. They also reported that they usually tried to avoid hurting others' feelings (regardless of the interlocutor status).

#### **4.1.2 Learners of Japanese as a Second Language (JSL)**

The JSL group consisted of one Canadian and nine Americans, who were participating in the Asian Studies Program at Kansai Gaidai University. There were two sophomores, five juniors, and three seniors. Their majors were: Japanese (4), Economics (2), Computing Science (1), Linguistics (1), Economics/Political Science (1), and International Business/Japanese (1). There were three females, with a mean age of 20.7 years, and seven males, with a mean age of 21.7 years. The mean age of all the JSL subjects was 21.4 years.

This group was also homogeneous in that all the subjects were born in North America, had received education in English, and had used English as the primary language in their daily lives. Most of the subjects had no long-term experience residing overseas prior to their studies at Kansai Gaidai. Two subjects had spent one academic year in Japan as high school exchange students. All of the JSL subjects had spent eight months in Japan before they participated in the present study. Six subjects were living with Japanese families, and four subjects were living in the Japanese-style dormitory on campus together with both Japanese students, as well as other international students. All of the subjects passed the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) Level II.

The mean length of their Japanese study was 3.6 years. All of the subjects had a chance to use Japanese outside the classroom everyday (e.g., interacting with Japanese friends and/or host

families, doing homework, etc.). The majority of the subjects did not usually read Japanese newspapers, magazines, comic books or novels, but all watched Japanese TV shows or videos almost everyday.

What they considered difficult in learning Japanese included: *kanji*, or Chinese characters (logographic symbols used in the Japanese language), absence of cognates, expressing themselves effectively, using different levels of speech (e.g., honorifics, humble, etc.), and people not willing to correct speaking mistakes.

## **4.2 The Order of Semantic Formulas**

The DCT data were analyzed as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas. The results of the typical order of semantic formulas of refusals are presented in the following order of stimulus types: 1) requests, 2) invitations, and 3) offers.

### **4.2.1 Requests**

Refusals to requests were elicited by the following contexts:

- 1) Your seminar professor asks you to help him clip some newspaper articles. (DCT #1)
- 2) Your *koohai* (junior, underclassman) is going to take the same course you took before and wants to borrow your textbook. (DCT #4)
- 3) Your friend who often sleeps in and misses class wants to borrow your lecture notes. (DCT #6)

The typical order of semantic formulas used in refusals of requests is presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6 in the order of the requester's status: 1) higher (professor); 2) equal (friend); and 3) lower (*koohai*).

Table 3

Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Professor's Request (DCT #1)

Requester status	Group	Order			
		1	2	3	4
Higher	JSL	(Pause filler)	Apology	Excuse	Can't
	NSJ	Pause filler	Apology	Excuse	Apology

( ) = Optional.

In a request situation where the professor asked the subject to help him clip newspaper articles, an apology and excuse were commonly presented by both JSL and NSJ groups, and their appearances in order were the same (i.e., an apology was followed by an excuse). However, these common semantic formulas for both groups, [Apology] [Excuse], were followed by the explicit statement of "I can't" in 6 out of 10 JSL responses (60%), whereas these formulas were followed by another apology in 12 out of 18 NSJ responses (67%). While 15 out of 18 NSJ subjects (83%) used pause fillers, only 4 out of 10 JSL (40%) did. The following are JSL's and NSJ's typical responses. (Bold-faced portions indicate honorifics.)

[JSL 5] Sumimasen ga, mokuyoobi wa jikan ga arimasen node, chotto muri nan desu.  
 [Apology] [Excuse] [Can't]

"I'm sorry but I don't have time on Thursday so I can't."

[NSJ 1] A, anoo, sumimasen ga, sono toki, chotto yooji ga atte.... Doomo sumimasen.  
 [Pause filler] [Apology] [Excuse] [Apology]

"Well, I'm sorry but I have something to do so.... I'm really sorry."

Table 4

Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Request (DCT #6)

Requester status	Group	Order		
		1	2	3
Equal	JSL	Excuse	Apology	---
		Excuse	(Criticism)	---
	NSJ	Criticism	Excuse	Alternative/Advice

( ) = Optional.

When refusing a request made by a friend who often sleeps in and misses the class that the friend and the subject take together, to lend her/him lecture notes, NSJ subjects started with a criticism of the request/requester, then made an excuse and offered an alternative and/or advice. On the other hand, JSL refusals began with an excuse, followed by an apology (50%). In 4 out of 10 JSL refusals (40%), the excuse was followed by criticism. Only 3 out of 10 JSL subjects (30%) offered alternative/advice.

Out of 18 NSJ refusals, 12 (67%) contained criticism of the request/requester, and the rest of NSJ refusals (6/18; 33%) only consisted of excuse and alternative. However, when asked in retrospective interviews whether there were any alternative responses, 4 of the 6 NSJ subjects made comments that would fall into the category of criticism, which would make the frequency of NSJ responses containing criticism 89% (16/18) in total. In contrast, 6 out of 10 JSL refusals (60%) did not contain criticism, and when asked about their alternative responses, none said that they would criticize this friend. Another notable difference was that 5 out of 10 JSL subjects (50%) expressed apology, whereas none of NSJ subjects did. The following are two examples of JSL and NSJ responses respectively.

[JSL 4] Boku wa nooto o kaite inai yo.      Gomen nasai.  
           [Excuse]                                      [Apology]

"I didn't take notes. I'm sorry."

- [JSL 2] Sonna ni taishita koto ja nakatta yo. Chanto okite kureba wakaru deshoo.  
[Excuse] [Criticism]

"(Yesterday's lecture) was not so important. You would have known it if you had gotten up."

- [NSJ 4] Anonee, nankai kariteru to omotteru no. Sore ni watashi no nooto kitanai kara kitto  
[Criticism] [Excuse]

yomenai to omou yo. Hoka no hito ni tanonda hoo ga iinjanai kana.  
[Alternative]

"Hey, how many times do you think you've borrowed [my notes]? Besides, they (my notes) are so sloppy, I don't think you'll be able to read them. I think you should ask someone else."

- [NSJ 11] Mata ka yo. Ima choodo matometeru kara hoka no hito ni kiite mite kureru. Kedo omae  
[Criticism] [Excuse] [Alternative] [Advice]

jugyoo deta hoo ga iiyo. Tan-i otosu zo.

"Again? I'm summarizing [the notes] just now so can you ask someone else? But you should come to class. [Or] you'll fail."

Table 5

Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of *Koohai*'s Request (DCT #4)

Requester		Order		
status	Group	1	2	3
Lower	JSL	(Pause filler)	Excuse	Apology
	NSJ	Apology	Excuse	Alternative/Advice

( ) = Optional.

Similar to the situation in which a request was made by a professor, in a request situation where a *koohai* (junior) asked the subject to lend her/him the textbook, excuses and apologies were commonly presented by both NSJ and JSL groups: In NSJ data, an apology was followed by an excuse, while in JSL data an excuse preceded an apology. However, some of NSJ subjects presented an apology after an excuse as well, and thus it may not be a significant difference if the order of excuse and apology were reversed. A more important difference between the two groups may be that whereas NSJ subjects offered an alternative or advice, just as they did to an equal-status interlocutor, JSL subjects suggested no alternative nor advice, but some of them (4/10; 40%) used a pause filler, just as they did to a higher-status interlocutor. For example, JSL's typical response was:

[JSL 3] Anoo, moo chotto are o benkyoo shi yoo to omotte ita node, chotto ano hon o motte  
 [Pause filler] [Excuse]  
okitai. Gomen nasai.  
 [Apology]

"Well, I was thinking about studying that more, so I want to keep that book. I'm sorry."

NSJ's typical response, on the other hand, was:

[NSJ 4] Gomen. Sono kyookasho wa moo sude ni hoka no ko ni agechatta n yan kaa.  
 [Apology] [Excuse]  
Watashi no tomodachi mo sore totteta shi, sono ko ni kiite ageru yo.  
 [Alternative]

"Sorry. I've already given that textbook to someone else. Since my friend also took it (the class), I'll ask her for you."

#### 4.2.2 Invitations

The following are the contexts in which refusals to invitations were elicited:

- 1) Your seminar professor invites you, along with other students who are in the seminar, over to his house for dinner. (DCT #3)
- 2) A younger club member invites you to go to a soccer game with a group of the club members. (DCT #2)





"Is that so? Then, I'm grateful that you invited me, but I've got a previous engagement, I'm sorry."

[NSJ 5] Aa, ikitai n desu kedo sono hi wa chotto arubaito ga aru kara.... Suimasen.  
 [Pause filler] [Positive feeling] [Excuse] [Apology]

"Oh, I would love to go, but I have a part-time job on that day so.... I'm sorry."

Table 7

Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Invitation (DCT #5)

Inviter status	Group	Order		
		1	2	3
Equal	NSJ	Apology	Excuse	Won't
		Excuse	Won't	Apology

In the situation where a friend invited the subject to go to a movie, the characteristic order of semantic formulas used in NSJ refusals was either [Apology] [Excuse] [Won't] or [Excuse] [Won't] [Apology]. However, there was nothing typical about JSL refusals, except that all of them contained an excuse. Whereas 72% of NSJ subjects (13/18) either started or ended their refusals with apology, only 30% of JSL responses contained apology. While 61% of NSJ subjects (11/18) explicitly stated their negative willingness, saying *yametoku* ("I won't go"), only 30% of JSL subjects did. Each JSL subject ordered semantic formulas differently as presented in Table 8, and therefore it was impossible to characterize the ordering of semantic formulas used by JSL subjects in this situation.

Table 8

JSL Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Invitation (DCT #5)

JSL Subject Number	Order		
	1	2	3
1	Apology	Excuse	Won't
2	Excuse	Apology	---
3	Positive feeling	Excuse	---
4	Negative feeling	Excuse	---
5	Gratitude	Excuse	Won't
6	Gratitude	Excuse	---
7	Excuse	Won't	---
8	Apology	Excuse	Promise of future acceptance
9	Excuse	---	---
10	Excuse	Promise of future acceptance	---

## Summary:

[Excuse]	100% (10/10)	Put first by 4 JSLs and second by 6 JSLs
[Apology]	30% (3/10)	Put first by 2 JSLs and second by 1 JSL
[Won't]	30% (3/10)	Put after excuse by all 3 JSLs
[Gratitude]	20% (2/10)	Put first by both JSLs
[Promise]	20% (2/10)	Put after excuse by both JSLs
[Positive feeling]	10% (1/10)	Put first before excuse
[Negative feeling]	10% (1/10)	Put first before excuse



### 4.2.3 Offers

The subjects made refusals to offers in the following situations:

- 1) Your seminar professor offers you a ride to the airport. (DCT #7)
- 2) Your friend offers you another piece of cake which does not taste very good. (DCT #9)
- 3) A younger club member offers to take over the cleaning of the club office. (DCT #8)

Table 10

Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Professor's Offer (DCT #7)

Offerer status	Group	Order				
		1	2	3	4	5
Higher	JSL	Gratitude	( <i>Enryo</i> )	Excuse	---	---
	NSJ	Pause filler	Gratitude	<i>Enryo</i>	Excuse	---
		Pause filler	<i>Enryo</i>	"No, thank you"	Excuse	Gratitude

( ) = Optional.

In the situation where the professor offered to give the subject a ride to the airport, some of the JSL and all but one of NSJ subjects expressed *enryo*. It was expected that the demonstration of *enryo* would be inevitable in this situation where the eliciting speech act was an offer, and the offer was made by the professor, i.e., superior to the subjects.

Many JSL subjects began by thanking the professor, and then gave an excuse explaining why it was not necessary (e.g., "Thank you but my friend is taking me"). Some of JSL subjects (4/10) expressed *enryo*. There were two sets of semantic formulas in NSJ refusals: one was with the explicit statement of "No, thank you" (50%), and the other without it. (22% of NSJ refusals (4/18) contained both formulas.)

[JSL 1] Arigatoo gozaimasu.      Demo michi ga konde itara komaru shi, yappari densha ni notte  
           [Gratitude]                      [Excuse]  
           itta hoo ga ii to omoi masu.

"Thank you very much. But I would be troubled if the street was congested, so I think I should take the train."

[JSL 1] Sugoku shinsetsu da to omou no **desu** ga, moshi watashi ga nosete morau to mendoo  
[Gratitude] [Enryo]

kusai to omou n **desu**. Desukara, chigau hoo hoo ni suru to omoi **masu**.  
[Excuse]

"I think it's very kind of you, but it would be a trouble for you if you gave me a ride. So I'll figure out some other means."

[NSJ 10] A, arigatoo gozaimasu. Demo go-meiwaku **deshoo** shi, moo eapooto  
[Pause filler] [Gratitude] [Enryo] [Excuse]

basu no chiketto totte aru node, sore de iki **masu**.

"Oh, thank you very much. But it would be a trouble for you, and since I have already bought a ticket for the airport bus, I will take that."

[NSJ 4] Aa, demo go-meiwaku ni naru **deshoo** kara **kekkoo desu**.  
[Pause filler] [Enryo] ["No, thank you"]

Sonna ni isoide nai **desu** kara basu ni demo notte iki **masu**. Go-kooi kansha  
[Excuse] [Gratitude]

**shimasu**.

"Oh, but it would be a trouble for you, so no, thank you. I'm not in such a hurry so I will go by bus or something. I appreciate your kindness."

Table 11

Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of Friend's Offer (DCT #9)

Offerer status	Group	Order			
		1	2	3	4
Equal	JSL	"No, thank you" [( <i>moo</i> ) <i>kekko</i> <i>desu</i> ]	Excuse	(Compliment)	---
	NSJ	"No more" [ <i>moo ii</i> ]	Excuse	Gratitude	(Compliment)
		Excuse	"No more"	Gratitude	(Compliment)

( ) = Optional.

In refusals of the friend's offer of another piece of less-than-delicious cake, JSL subjects generally omitted an expression of gratitude, while most NSJ subjects put it into third position after either the [Excuse] [No more] or [No more] [Excuse] formulas. Whereas 83% of NSJ subjects (15/18) expressed gratitude, keeping it in third position, only 3 out of 10 JSL subjects (30%) did so, in various orders (10% each in first, second, and third position).

[JSL 6] Kekkoo desu.      Juubun itadaite onaka ippai.

["No, thank you"]      [Excuse]

"No, thank you. I've had enough and I'm full."

[JSL 6] Moo kekko desu.      Moo tabe mashita.      Oishikatta.

["No, thank you"]      [Excuse]      [Compliment]

"No, thank you. I already ate. It was delicious."

[NSJ 18] Onaka ippai yashi,      moo ii wa.      Arigatoo.

[Excuse]      ["no more"]      [Gratitude]

"I'm full so I want no more. Thank you."

[NSJ 14] Moo ii ya.      Moo onaka ippai yashi,      arigatoo.      Oishikatta yo.  
 ["No more"]    [Excuse]                              [Gratitude]    [Compliment]

"I want no more. I'm already full, thank you. It was delicious."

Table 12

Typical Order of Semantic Formulas in Refusal of *Koohai*'s Offer (DCT #8)

Offerer status	Group	Order			
		1	2	3	4
Lower	JSL	"That's OK" [ <i>ii (yo) / daijoobu</i> ]	Explanation	---	---
	NSJ	"That's OK"	"That's OK"	Explanation	(Reassurance)

In this situation, the subject refused a *koohai*'s offer to clean the club office for her/him. JSL and NSJ refusals in this situation were similar in their order of semantic formulas, but there was one area in which JSL and NSJ responses differed. Both groups tended to begin refusals to the *koohai*'s offer saying *ii yo* (and its variant: *ii*, *iitte*, *ii wa*, and *eette*; "that's OK") or *daijoobu* ("that's all right"), but NSJ subjects tended to repeat it right after the first *iiyo* or *daijoobu*, as the following data show:

[JSL 10] Daijoobu yo.      Jibun de dekiru.  
 ["That's OK"]    [Explanation]

"That's all right. I can do it by myself."

[NSJ 12] ii yo,      ii yo.      Moo chotto de owari ya kara, jibun de yaru wa.  
 ["That's OK"]    ["That's OK"]    [Explanation]

"That's OK, that's OK. It's almost done so I'll do it by myself."

[NSJ 10] ii yo,      ii yo.      Betsu ni boku ga yaroo to omotte yatteru dake ya kara.  
 ["That's OK"]    ["That's OK"]    [Explanation]

Ki ni sen de ii de.

[Reassurance]

"That's OK, that's OK. I'm only doing it because I want to do it. Don't worry about it."

### 4.3 The Use of Communicative Style

In the previous section, some of the actual DCT responses made by JSL and NSJ subjects in each situation were presented. Honorifics and formal forms were bold-faced. In this section, frequency count of JSL's and NSJ's uses of the qualifier *chotto*, unfinished sentences, and honorifics in each situation is presented.

#### 4.3.1 *Chotto*

JSL subjects showed a high level of acquisition in terms of the use of the qualifier *chotto* in their refusals. They put *chotto* before the statement of "I can't" or embedded it in their excuses, as did NSJ subjects. They used this qualifier as often as, and sometimes more often than, NSJ subjects did. Kawasaki (1989) claims that *chotto* is one of the fixed formulas which plays an important role as a lubricant in interpersonal relationships and in communication. JSL subjects seemed to have employed *chotto* successfully, in a native-like manner, and no apparent problem was found with the use of *chotto*.

Table 13

#### Frequency of *Chotto* Used by JSL and NSJ in Each Situation

(JSL: N=10; NSJ: N=18)

	Refusing Higher-Status		Refusing Equal-Status		Refusing Lower-Status	
	JSL	NSJ	JSL	NSJ	JSL	NSJ
Request	80% (8)	61% (11)	0% (0)	0% (0)	30% (3)	0% (0)
Invitation	20% (2)	61% (11)	30% (3)	22% (4)	10% (1)	17% (3)
Offer	10% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	6% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Note. The number in ( ) is the number of subjects who used *chotto*.



### 4.3.2 Unfinished Sentences

The overall data showed that more subjects used unfinished sentences when the interlocutor was higher in status. There was a tendency in both groups not to use unfinished sentences as frequently when the eliciting speech act was an offer. The range of difference in the frequency of unfinished sentences used when the eliciting speech act from the higher-status interlocutor was a request and when it was an invitation (i.e., more than twice as many subjects used unfinished sentences in the latter situation) was more evident in the JSL data. Such difference was not seen in NSJ data. There may have been an influence on JSL subjects' refusals of the professor's invitation because the prompt also included an unfinished sentence.

Table 14

#### Frequency of Unfinished Sentences Used by JSL and NSJ in Each Situation

(JSL: N=10; NSJ: N=18)

	Refusing Higher-Status		Refusing Equal-Status		Refusing Lower-Status	
	JSL	NSJ	JSL	NSJ	JSL	NSJ
Request	30% (3)	72% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	20% (2)	0% (0)
Invitation	70% (7)	67% (12)	0% (0)	6% (1)	10% (1)	6% (1)
Offer	10% (1)	28% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Note. The number in ( ) is the number of subjects who used unfinished sentences.

### 4.3.3 Honorifics

JSL subjects demonstrated a high level of acquisition in terms of their use of honorifics to the higher-status interlocutor. However, some JSL subjects used honorifics to equal- and lower-status interlocutors, while none of NSJ subjects did. Table 15 shows the frequency of honorifics used by JSL and NSJ groups in each situation.

Table 15

Frequency of Honorifics Used by JSL and NSJ in Each Situation

(JSL: N=10; NSJ: N=18)

	Refusing Higher-Status		Refusing Equal-Status		Refusing Lower-Status	
	JSL	NSJ	JSL	NSJ	JSL	NSJ
Request	100% (10)	100% (18)	10% (1)	0% (0)	30% (3)	0% (0)
Invitation	100% (10)	100% (18)	20% (2)	0% (0)	20% (2)	0% (0)
Offer	100% (10)	100% (18)	60% (6)	0% (0)	10% (1)	0% (0)

Note. The number in ( ) is the number of subjects who used honorifics.

**4.4 Summary**

First, the characteristic ordering of semantic formulas selected in each situation for JSL and NSJ groups were presented. There was no situation in which JSL's characteristic selection/ordering of semantic formulas was exactly the same as that of NSJ's. With the exception of DCT #3 (higher-status interlocutor's invitation), the number of JSL's semantic formulas was one or two fewer than that of NSJ's. The results are summarized below.

**(1) Requests**Higher-status

- JSL refusals contained the explicit statement of "I can't," but NSJ refusals did not.
- NSJ subjects expressed apology twice.

Equal-status

- Some JSL refusals contained apology, but NSJ refusals did not.
- Whereas most of NSJ refusals contained criticism, the majority of JSL refusals did not.
- JSL subjects did not offer alternatives as frequently as did NSJ subjects.

Lower-status

- NSJ refusals contained alternative/advice, but JSL refusals did not.

## (2) Invitations

### Higher-status

- JSL refusals did not contain the explicit statement of "I can't," unlike in the request situation.
- JSL put an expression of gratitude in the second position, while NSJ put a statement of positive opinion or feeling there.

### Equal-status

- JSL subjects did not offer apology as much as NSJ subjects did.

### Lower-status

- While NSJ refusals contained a request for future invitation or promise of future acceptance, JSL refusals did not.

## (3) Offers

### Higher-status

- All but one of the NSJ subjects expressed *enryo*, but the majority of the JSL subjects did not.
- Half of NSJ refusals contained the explicit statement of "No, thank you," and the other half did not.

### Equal-status

- NSJ subjects expressed gratitude, but JSL subjects tended to omit it.
- The majority of the JSL subjects used, "(*moo*) *kekko desu*" (polite expression), as opposed to NSJ subjects' "*moo ii*" (plain expression).

### Lower-status

- Both JSL and NSJ groups tended to begin refusals by saying "*ii yo*" or "*daijoobu*," but NSJ subjects tended to repeat it right after the first "*ii yo/daijoobu*."

The frequency of the uses of the qualifier *chotto*, unfinished sentences, and honorifics in each situation for JSL and NSJ groups were presented. JSL subjects seemed to have employed the qualifier *chotto* successfully, in a native-like manner, and no apparent problem was found with the use of *chotto*. In terms of the use of unfinished sentences, JSL subjects did not use them as

frequently in the situation of the request of a higher-status interlocutor as they did in the situation where the higher-status interlocutor made an offer. The NSJ subjects' use of unfinished sentences in those situations was equally high. As for the use of honorifics, while NSJ subjects used them only to the higher-status interlocutor, some JSL subjects used honorifics to equal- and lower-status interlocutors as well.

The next chapter will discuss these results and their possible implications.

## CHAPTER V

## DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results of the DCT data are reviewed and discussed in terms of the transfer of English rules of speaking to Japanese, use of pragmatic knowledge about Japanese rules of speaking, and taking into account the status differences between themselves and their interlocutors. The findings from the DCT data are compared with the findings of Ikoma and Shimura's (1992) study which dealt with pragmatic transfer in the speech act of refusing in the Japanese of native speakers of English. The findings are also compared with the findings from Beebe et al.'s (1990) study, particularly in terms of rules of speaking, both in Japanese and in English (see footnote 3).

**5.1 Transfer of English Rules of Speaking****5.1.1 The Number of Semantic Formulas**

In terms of the selection and the order of semantic formulas, there was no situation in which JSL subjects' characteristic selection/order of semantic formulas was exactly the same as that of NSJ subjects'. In many situations, the number of JSL's semantic formulas was one or two short of that of NSJ's. Ikoma and Shimura's (1992) study of pragmatic transfer in refusals of American JSL learners, which used an analysis similar to that used in the present study, did not refer to the number of formulas used in each situation. Beebe et al.'s (1990) study, which focused on pragmatic transfer of Japanese ESL learners, briefly referred to this point; that Americans speaking English used more formulas when refusing an invitation from a friend than they did when refusing an invitation of status unequals. In the present study, JSL subjects did not show such a tendency. According to Beebe and Takahashi (1989), whose study involved Japanese ESL subjects with high-intermediate to advanced levels of ESL proficiency, short answers are characteristic of all ESL learners (not just these researchers' ESL subjects). They concluded that their ESL subjects' responses reflected "lack of fluency and lack of proficiency in the target-language social rules of speaking" (p. 207). Therefore, it cannot be assumed that simply the fewer semantic formulas of JSL subjects compared to that of NSJ subjects is evidence of pragmatic transfer.

### 5.1.2 The Selection and Order of Semantic Formulas

In the situation of the invitation of a higher-status person (DCT #3), JSL and NSJ refusals were similar in terms of the typical order of semantic formulas used, except for the second formula. In the second position, some JSL subjects put an expression of gratitude, such as "*waza waza sasotte itadaki mashite arigatoo gozaimasu*" ("thank you for inviting me"), while NSJ subjects put a statement of positive opinion or feeling; e.g., "*ikitai no wa yama yama nan desu kedo*" ("I really would like to go but"). None of the NSJ subjects presented an expression of gratitude in this situation. Findings from the Beebe et al. (1990) study also showed that Americans expressed gratitude more than did the Japanese in the situation where subjects refused a boss' invitation to a party at his house. Therefore, there might have been influence of pragmatic transfer. (However, it does not mean that an expression of gratitude is nonexistent in a situation like this in Japanese.) It may be suggested that the appropriate use of this type of qualifier in invitation situations, along with seemingly more prevalent qualifiers, such as *chotto*, is important pragmatic knowledge to be acknowledged by JSL teachers and learners.

Contrary to Beebe et al.'s (1990) findings and the findings from the present study discussed above, however, many JSL subjects omitted an expression of gratitude in refusals of the friend's offer of another piece of cake (DCT #9), while most NSJ subjects put it into the third position. The following are excerpts from retrospective interviews in which some NSJs commented on their inclusion of an expression of gratitude in their refusals:

- Regardless of the taste of the cake, I say, "Thank you" anyway, since she is giving me something. [NSJ 9]
- I say, "Thank you, but I'm full," making sure to get across the message that it is not that this cake doesn't taste good, but it is only that I'm full. [NSJ 12]
- It is courteous to thank her in a situation like this and never to say, "It doesn't taste good." It is best to say, "*onaka ga ippai*" ("My stomach is full") as an excuse. I'll even lie and say, "*oishikatta yo*" ("It was delicious") to spare her feelings. [NSJ 14]

The following is one of JSL subjects' retrospective report explaining why he said what he did, which was similar to the NSJ refusal in terms of the selection and ordering of formulas, including the expression of gratitude.

I don't want to offend my friend's feelings so I say, "My stomach is full; I have eaten too much cake," and still say "Thank you." Polite refusal without offending feelings and saying "Thank you" at the same time. [JSL 1]

As for other JSL subjects, they seemed to have transferred what they would say in English into Japanese in this situation (e.g., "No, thank you. I've had enough."). "No, thank you" is listed as a semantic formula in Table 12 for a formulaic expression, "*(moo) kekkoo desu*," which is a straightforward, polite expression of refusal to an offer. Many textbooks assign to "*kekkoo desu*" used in a refusal of an offer the English gloss, "No, thank you," but *kekkoo* is in fact an adjective that describes the state of being satisfied with the current state/situation and not needing anything more, and thus, "No, I'm fine" may be closer in meaning. The expression in itself thus does not have the meaning of "thank you." However, by saying "*kekkoo desu*," JSLs seemed to have thought that they said "thank you," as in "No, thank you," as the following retrospective report from one of JSL subjects whose response included "*kekkoo desu*," but not "*arigatoo*" ("thank you"), illustrates:

I say, "Thanks, but no. I already ate," a typical American answer, "so I can't eat any more."  
I do this sort of a lot, by the way. [JSL 4]

The frequent use of this formulaic expression in declining a friend's offer of a piece of cake was found in Ikoma and Shimura's (1992) study as evidence of pragmatic transfer. While JJs (native speakers of Japanese) used excuses such as "*onaka ga ippai*" (lit. "My stomach is full"), AJs (Americans speaking Japanese) sounded more blunt by simply saying, "*kekkoo desu*," without presenting any excuses, as JJs did. In a similar situation in the present study (DCT #9), JSL subjects did use excuses, unlike AJs in Ikoma and Shimura's study, but they also used this formulaic expression, "*(moo) kekkoo desu*," which is, as mentioned earlier, a straightforward, polite expression of refusal to an offer. In contrast, none of the NSJ subjects said "*kekkoo desu*" in their refusals to the friend's offer. This is because, as mentioned above, "*kekkoo desu*" is a polite

expression, and thus used to refuse an offer made by someone of higher status. In other words, this expression is never used to someone in equal status; if it is used, then it will imply undue politeness or sarcasm, and thus, the refuser may risk offending the offerer. The expression that NSJ subjects used instead was "*moo ii*" ("no more"), which may be considered as a plain expression for "*moo kekkoo desu*."

It was found in Beebe et al.'s (1990) study that Japanese apologized about twice as often as Americans. In the present study, however, there was one situation in which apology was expressed in JSL refusals but not in NSJ refusals.

In the situation where a request was made by a friend who often sleeps in and misses the class that the friend and the subject take, to lend her/him lecture notes (DCT #6), some JSL subjects expressed apology, while the expression of apology was nonexistent in NSJ data. The following are NSJ and JSL retrospective reports with respect to apology in this situation (R: researcher).

- I didn't do anything wrong, so I don't need to say, "*gomen na*" ("sorry") or anything like that. [NSJ 6]
- He's taken a lot for granted and that makes me mad. It's his fault [to have missed the class], and with him I don't care about an interpersonal relationship, which is usually very important to me. [R: No apology?] No. [NSJ 10]
- I made up some excuse; my notes would be bad so I wanted to put it like, "I'm sorry but my notes aren't very good, so why don't you ask somebody else?" [JSL 3]
- If I really don't want to lend him my notes, then I'd say, "Sorry, I gave them to somebody else." That's what I always use. [JSL 8]

In this particular situation, NSJ subjects demonstrated that apology was inappropriate. Thus, the JSL subjects' inclusion of an apology in their refusals suggests that there was an effect of pragmatic transfer in the selection of semantic formulas considered appropriate. The need to fill a certain semantic slot (i.e., apology) seemed to be transferred into their Japanese from English.

## **5.2 The Use of Politeness Strategies**

### **5.2.1 Indirectness and *Enryo***

One of the often-used devices to show indirectness, and thus politeness, is an unfinished sentence which helps one to make the refusal more indirect and less harsh than saying everything



explicitly. NSJ subjects used unfinished sentences most often when refusing a request or invitation from the higher-status interlocutor. JSL subjects used this particular linguistic device to the same degree as NSJ subjects in the invitation situation, but the frequency of their use of unfinished sentences was much lower when refusing the request.

The last formula used to complete refusals of the higher-status interlocutor's request was another apology in NSJ data, while it was the explicit statement of "I can't" in JSL data (see Table 4 and its examples of typical responses). In both data, the formula preceding the last was an excuse. NSJ excuses trailed off, while JSL excuses led the explicit statement of "I can't." In retrospective interviews, all subjects, both NSJ and JSL, first answered that they either noticed or were paying attention to the fact that the requester was a professor. Then NSJ subjects continued to say that they tried not to seem rude, and thus tried to be indirect. JSL subjects said that they tried to be polite, but none referred to indirectness (unlike in the situation where the requester was of equal status). Consequently, indirectness in NSJ refusals was seen in their frequent use of unfinished sentences; leaving part of their speech, most likely the statement of "I can't," unsaid. For many JSL subjects, being polite seemed to only refer to the use of polite linguistic forms.

A possible explanation for the frequent use of the explicit statement of "I can't" in JSL data may be, as Ikoma and Shimura (1992) suggest, due to JSL's tendency to use finished sentences. It is often the case that teachers and learners use complete sentence questions and responses in classroom discourse, which Thomas (1983) suggests may be a factor of pragmalinguistic failure in the learner's L2 speech act performance. JSL subjects' non-use of unfinished sentences, therefore, might be "teaching-induced errors" (Thomas, p. 101). Complete sentence questions and responses in the classroom may reinforce learners' grammatical accuracy. However, NSJ subjects' frequent use of unfinished sentences suggests that a direct "no" or the explicit statement of negative ability/willingness is avoided in actual refusals of a higher-status interlocutor's request in Japanese. The use of unfinished sentences is a violation of the maxims of Quantity and Manner (Grice, 1975), and falls into one of Brown and Levinson's "off-record" strategies: "Be incomplete, use ellipsis" (1978, p. 232). Brown and Levinson claim that the use of unfinished sentences, or "leaving an FTA

half undone" (p. 232) is one of the most favored politeness strategies in negative politeness societies, especially to someone of higher status.

The effect of taking the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) before the DCT on the same day may not be excluded as a possible explanation of JSL subjects' failure to use unfinished sentences in the DCT. That is, such formal written test as the JLPT may have been one of the factors that caused them to use overly complete sentences in their DCT (which was also a written task).

However, unlike in refusals of the professor's request, JSL subjects did not explicitly say "I can't" or "I won't" when refusing the invitation from the higher-status interlocutor. The reason was not apparent in the DCT data alone, but in retrospective interviews, some JSL subjects explained the difference. In the request situation, the professor said, "*Mokuyooobi no gogo ni shimbun no kirinuki o tetsudatte kureru gakusei o sagashite iru n desu ga, yatte moraemasu ka,*" which may be roughly translated to English as "I'm looking for someone who could help me clip newspaper articles on Thursday afternoon. Could you do it?" In the invitation situation, however, the professor did not complete his utterance and used an unfinished sentence, saying, "*Kondo no doyoobi ni minna o yonde uchi de shokuji demo, to omotte iru n desu ga,*" or "I'm thinking of inviting everyone over to my house for dinner this Saturday, but..." Because the professor completed his sentence in the request situation, JSL subjects seemed to take it as a direct question, and thus they answered directly, saying "I can't," and in this situation where the professor used the unfinished sentence, they did not. As for NSJ subjects, they did not respond directly in either situation; it was not whether the professor completed his sentence that changed how they constructed their speech, but rather a matter of discerning the relative status of the interlocutor to them. By acknowledging the status difference, they decided how much politeness should be assigned.

One of the JSL the subjects who did use an unfinished sentence in her refusal to the higher-status interlocutor's request said in her retrospective report that:

I don't know if I actually learned it (the use of unfinished sentences) anywhere, but I think it's from when I was here last time just living here. You just listen to how people refuse things and you do it the same way. (...) Most things I've learned so far were learned

through interactions. (...) It's so easy to turn off and not learn anything, but you really have to listen all the time to what everyone else is saying. [JSL 3]

It is often said that the best way to learn a foreign language is to immerse oneself in the target language community, and it seems that JSL 3's retrospect report supports the claim. According to her background information questionnaire, she had spent one school year at a Japanese high school when she was 17 years old, three years prior to her study at Kansai Gaidai. She "just listened to how people refuse things," which made her refusal quite native-like. However, those who cannot learn the language through direct exposure to the target language environment are deprived of such an opportunity. In such cases, then, it becomes more important for the language teacher to try to create situations in the classroom in which learners could learn this type of politeness strategy; i.e., how to be indirect and thus polite so that they may be able to communicate effectively and appropriately in Japanese.

Japanese ESL subjects' verbal reports in Robinson's (1990) study indicated that the subjects' culture-specific perceptions of Japanese and American refusals were sometimes influenced by instruction in the classroom (i.e., teaching-induced), and sometimes by overgeneralization of their own observation of American communicative practices. In the present study, in addition to the teaching-induced error which was discussed above, there were some pragmatic failures that seemed to be caused by the latter, or a "stereotype-induced error" in Beebe and Takahashi's terms (1989, p. 214).

Evidence of stereotype-induced errors was found in the JSL refusal of the friend's request to lend her/him lecture notes (DCT #6). Many NSJ subjects criticized the equal-status requester in this situation, but many JSL subjects did not. JSL subjects appeared to have considered it inappropriate to criticize and thus offend the requester because this took place in a Japanese setting, as the following JSL retrospective reports may illustrate (R: researcher):

- [R: Alternative response?] "You sleep in. Forget it. No way." But not to a Japanese friend. It's cultural rules: not to offend, not to hurt other people's feelings. It's kind of shocking to be direct because it's not customary. [R: Where did you learn these?] I learned these through interactions with Japanese in Canada and in Japan. [JSL 1]

- In Japan, you don't want to be rude and you want to do things for people, so therefore I didn't want to be direct....no criticism in Japanese but probably in English....I'm probably much nicer when I'm speaking Japanese. I'm used to being Japanese and just blend in so you don't want to ever offend anybody or ever do anything like that. I'd never say anything direct in Japanese. [JSL 3]
- [R: Alternative response?] "Sorry you missed class, but I went to class, and these are my notes. But I don't think that I need to give them to you because I did the work for the class. It's your own fault so go ask somebody else if there's somebody nicer around." Probably not in Japanese. You don't say things like that in Japan. [JSL 5]

Whereas most of NSJ refusals contained criticism, many JSL refusals did not. In other words, the stereotypes that many JSL subjects appeared to have of Japanese (e.g., that the Japanese are always 'nice' and that they are always indirect) did not seem to be entirely true. However, JSL refusals in this case seemed to have been affected by these stereotypes, which even the literature on comparative culture seem to reinforce. For instance, Deutsch (1983) advises the following, with regard to 'criticism', to Americans:

It is not appropriate, according to Japanese custom, to criticize someone openly, thus causing him to lose face; embarrassment should be avoided whenever possible by refraining from negative or combative statements that will make the Japanese look wrong or foolish. (p. 182)

JSL subjects' pragmatic knowledge about Japanese rules of speaking which was manifested in their retrospective reports above may be applicable in many situations, but apparently not in this particular situation. The majority of refusal situations require 'face-saving' strategies. In this particular situation, however, NSJ subjects were very direct and did not try not to offend the interlocutor, because the requester was equal in status to them. Among status equals, it seemed that some directness was called for. (Some NSJ subjects said in retrospective interviews that they criticized the friend for her/his own good.)

In addition to the use of unfinished sentences, there are other devices to show politeness, and one such device is the demonstration of *enryo*, or 'reserve'. Makino (1983) points out that it is difficult for JSL learners, especially those from North America, to grasp the concept of *enryo*.

However, some of the JSL subjects in the present study demonstrated a high level of acquisition in terms of this particular politeness strategy in one situation where a higher-status interlocutor offered to give the subject a ride to the airport (DCT #7).

*Enryo* refers to the restraint one imposes upon her/himself in interaction with another when s/he is offered something, and also refers to polite hesitation to accept a desired offer or polite refusal of an undesired offer (Lebra, 1976). *Enryo* decreases proportionately with familiarity and increases with distance (Doi, 1974). Likewise, Honna and Hoffer (1989) explain that 'holding back' (*enryo*) is a form of politeness, a device for maintaining a certain distance from those one considers as one's superiors. Therefore, it was expected that the demonstration of *enryo* would be inevitable in this situation where the eliciting speech act was an offer, and the offer was made by the professor; i.e., superior to the subjects.

Many JSL subjects began by thanking the professor, and then gave an excuse or explanation why it was not necessary (e.g., "Thank you, but my friend is taking me"). Some JSL subjects and all but one NSJ subject expressed *enryo*. For instance, the subjects made such statements as: "*kyooju mo o-isogashii deshoo*" ("you must be busy"), "*go-meiwaku deshoo*" ("it would be inconvenient for you"), etc. In other words, they expressed their "empathetic considerations for [the professor's] convenience or comfort" (Lebra, 1976, p. 252). Without such statements, one may be considered lacking in empathy.

Closely related to the concept of *enryo* is a token refusal. Half of NSJ refusals contained the explicit statement of "No, thank you" ("*ii desu*" / "*kekko desu*") in this situation. NSJ subjects who did not explicitly say "No, thank you" stated in retrospective interviews that if the professor insisted after their initial refusal, then they would probably accept the offer. In other words, the refusal was only token. Likewise, according to retrospective reports of those who did say "No, thank you," they assumed that the professor would understand their refusal to be the exhibition of appropriate *enryo* according to the social conventions, and would most likely resume his offer. However, the difference was that NSJ subjects whose refusals contained the statement of "No, thank you" had no intention of accepting the offer even if the professor insisted.

Only 2 out of 10 JSL refusals contained the statement of "No, thank you," but those who did, just as did NSJs with the same formula, truly meant to refuse the professor's offer. The following is one of the JSL subjects' retrospective report in this regard:

With this "*ii desu yo*" ("No, thank you"), I wanted to be quick and just say "No, no, that's okay," and not "Well, I'll think about it," because I really didn't want him to take me...we learned about [refusing an offer twice] a lot in our classes in Pittsburgh; a lot of different drills with taking food and drinks, and trying to refuse drinks and food and the Japanese keep offering and offering. [JSL 5]

JSL subjects who expressed *enryo* but did not say "No, thank you" were also similar in intention to the NSJ counterparts, as the following retrospective reports depict:

Because it's a teacher, I don't want to accept right away. So I'll refuse once or twice. It's a learned response through just viewing, observing, and interacting with Japanese people. Usually once or twice refusals and then "Okay, since you push me so hard." The key is 'your seminar professor'. You are taking his class. So it's very important, in Japanese, to be polite. In English, I'd say "Sure." In Japanese, I'll refuse twice at least. [JSL 1]

All JSL subjects but one noted in retrospective interviews that they were aware of such a token refusal, and many of them had learned it in class and/or through observation of Japanese interactions. For instance, JSL 8 learned about the Japanese 'holding back' way of behavior, which seemed quite confusing at first, through interacting with the Japanese:

In classroom, I heard such a custom (referring to 'refuse at least twice'). I think it's true, too. Someone, not a friend, maybe an acquaintance, asks you, "Do you want some cake?" and in America, you'd say, "Oh no, thanks. I'm fine," and he says, "Are you sure?" and I say, "Yeah," then he says, "Okay," then it's over. I asked two or three times the same thing to a Japanese girl and she refused, but then someone else gave the cake to her, and she took it. So I was like, "Huh? What's the difference between asking and giving it to you?" [JSL 8]

The 'Japanese girl' was, needless to say, practicing her self-constraint. With or without the explicit statement of "No, thank you," most of the NSJ subjects and some of the JSL subjects expressed their *enryo*, which is the expected norm of speech appropriate to this type of situation where the offerer is higher in status. The results showed that the concept of *enryo* can be taught in the classroom.

However, that more than half of the JSL subjects did not express *enryo*, though most of them had knowledge of a token refusal which is closely related to the concept of *enryo*, may suggest that how such a politeness device can be actually used should also be exercised in the classroom.

### 5.2.2 Apology, Promise, and Alternative

JSL subjects were more apologetic than NSJ subjects in one situation (DCT no. 6: Lecture Notes), as discussed in the previous section. However, it was because NSJ subjects considered it inappropriate to apologize in that particular situation where criticisms were evoked due to the friend's repeated irresponsible action (i.e., sleeping in and repeatedly missing the class). In other situations, Beebe et al.'s (1990) claim that Japanese are more apologetic than Americans seemed to be supported. Maynard (1990) states that apology is considered a virtue in Japan.

In the NSJ refusal to the higher-status interlocutor's request, apology was expressed twice; at the beginning (after a pause filler), and the end of the speech. This pattern was displayed by only one JSL subject. The following are retrospective reports made by some NSJ subjects and one JSL subject who presented the [Apology] [Excuse] [Apology] pattern. (The JSL subject's refusal consisted of [Apology] [Excuse] [Can't] [Apology].)

- *Sumimasen* ("I'm sorry") is almost like my pet phrase. Even if I don't really mean it, I would still say that because he is a professor. By saying it at the beginning and at the end, I guess I wanted him to think that I'm really sorry that I can't help him. [NSJ 6]
- Because it was a professor, I was trying to be polite. And so I started with an apology and ended with another apology. [NSJ 15]
- My intention was to say that because I'm leaving for America, I don't have much free time left and that I'm really sorry I can't help him. [JSL 2]

Apology is one of the politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1978). By apologizing for being unable to comply with the request, the requestee redresses the refusal. Maynard (1990) points out that apologies convey that one recognizes the failure to meet the expectations of others, which in turn relieves the blame on others, and therefore shows consideration for others. Indeed, some NSJ subjects stated in retrospective interviews that they would blame themselves for not being able to comply with the professor's request. Those who presented apology twice appeared to have tried to

make sure that they were being as polite as possible by conveying to the professor (or making him think) that they were really sorry that they could not be of help. Maynard (1990) notes that "when one apologizes and shows regret, Japanese are often emotionally moved and are more willing to forgive" (p. 160). By completing their refusals with a second apology, they sounded as if they were begging for the requester's forgiveness. This pattern was not seen in other situations, and thus, apologizing twice may be the politeness strategy used in Japanese refusals of request made by a higher-status interlocutor.

NSJ subjects apologized more frequently than JSL subjects, especially in invitation situations. NSJ subjects seemed to consider apology a necessity when refusing invitations. The following retrospective reports are in respect to the refusals of the friend's invitation to go to the movie (DCT #5), in which many NSJ subjects expressed apology but many JSL subjects did not:

- I thank the person because it is an invitation, but I didn't apologize because I don't really feel bad about not going because it's no big deal. [JSL 5]
- When I refuse an invitation, I always say "*gomen*" ("sorry"). [NSJ 2]

JSL subjects did not seem to think it necessary to apologize to the friend for not going to the movie, but NSJ subjects seemed to apologize not only in this situation, but whenever refusing an invitation. Considering that an invitation is, as Wolfson (1981) suggests, often for a closer social relationship, criticisms are not likely to be called for. The interlocutor who offers an invitation may meet less face threats than may the interlocutor who makes a request because by making a request, the requester impinges on the requestee's claim to freedom of action and freedom from imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1978). An invitation is usually based on the inviter's goodwill and is often for the invitee's benefit, unlike a request in which the requester is the beneficiary. Therefore, the invitee may feel bad to put the good-willed person in a position to be refused and/or to lose the inviter's face. The degree to which the invitee redresses the refusal may well depend upon the inviter's and invitee's positions relative to one another. NSJ subjects' refusal patterns showed that the expression of apology is a must in refusing an invitation made by an interlocutor of any status, and as the semantic



formulas used in DCT #2 (see Table 10) show, when the inviter is in lower status, s/he seems to take yet another redressive action; i.e., request for future invitation or promise for future acceptance.

While NSJ refusals contained a request for future invitation or promise of future acceptance in the situation where *koohai* invited the subject to go to a soccer game, JSL refusals did not. It appeared that by referring to a possibility of accepting an invitation some other time in the future, NSJ subjects not only showed their consideration for the inviter, but they also made the tone of the refusal milder. According to Brown and Levinson (1978), offers and promises are one type of positive politeness strategies used in order to redress the potential threat of some FTAs; "even if they are false, they demonstrate the speaker's good intentions in satisfying the hearer's positive-face wants" (p. 130).

Similarly, while many NSJ subjects offered alternatives to the equal-status and more to the lower-status requesters, JSL subjects did not offer alternatives as often as did NSJs in either situation. As noted by Ikoma and Shimura (1992), who observed the same tendency in their study, when one refuses a request in Japanese, it seems to be customary to offer an alternative, such as, "*hoka no hito ni kiite ageru*" ("I'll ask someone else for you"), rather than simply refusing the request. JSL learners may be considered lacking in consideration for the requester due to abrupt refusals without such 'face-saving' strategies as offering an alternative in request situations.

As discussed above, NSJ subjects were equally or even more empathetic to *koohai*, contrary to the *sempai-koohai* (senior-junior) relationship stereotype that many JSL learners and Japanese have. This stereotype is discussed in section 5.3.2 of the topic of perception of status difference below.

### **5.3 Perception of Status Difference**

#### **5.3.1 Higher Status**

As previously mentioned, in the situation where the higher-status interlocutor asked the subject to help him clip newspaper articles (DCT #9), both NSJ and JSL subjects were paying attention to the fact that the requester was a professor, and thus were trying not to seem rude and/or were trying to be polite. In this sense, it may be said that NSJ and JSL perceptions of the higher-

status interlocutor were similar. However, when NSJ's prime concern was to maintain a good relationship with the professor, JSL subjects were more concerned about the possible damage that refusing the professor's request could do to them; more specifically, the effect it would have on their grades in the class. The following are some subjects' retrospective reports on these points:

- I want to keep a good relationship with him. I don't want to be disliked by him. [NSJ 3]
- What I was most concerned about was that refusing his request might give him a bad impression of me. I want to keep a good relationship with the professor. [NSJ 12]
- He is a Japanese professor and I'm in his class, so you know, I don't want to get a bad grade or anything by being rude, so I tried to be as polite as possible. [JSL 3]
- If it's one of your professors and he asks you to help or something and you say that you can't do it, then it might, well, it shouldn't really affect your grades because it's something outside of class, but you might think, "Well, if I would have helped, my grade could be better." [JSL 5]
- I said what I said not to hurt the professor's feelings so he might not give me a bad grade. [JSL 6]

These reports reflect that both JSL and NSJ subjects recognized that there is a high P (i.e., relative power of speaker and hearer) differential between the professor and themselves, and that the professor has the power to influence their future. Both groups of subjects clearly displayed their perceptions of the reward power held by the professor, but JSL and NSJ perceptions were different in that the reward power in this case related to maintaining (or possibly obtaining) a good grade for JSLs, and to maintaining (or improving) a relationship with the professor for NSJs. In other words, both JSL and NSJ subjects appeared to have calculated the size of this FTA to be great, but there was a difference between their perceptions.

### 5.3.2 Equal and Lower Status

It was reported in Beebe et al.'s study (1990) that the Japanese ESL subjects omitted apology/regret when the requester was lower in status, and their study concluded that the Japanese ESL subjects "were transferring into English a sensitivity to status that exists in Japanese" (p. 61). However, in the present study, NSJ subjects did not omit an apology in the situation where the requester was *koohai*, or lower in status (DCT #4: Textbook).

Differences between the findings from Beebe et al.'s study and the present study may be due in part to the difference of assumed interlocutor relationships between the two studies. While the subjects in Beebe et al.'s study had to pretend to be a bookstore owner and refuse one of the employee's request, the subjects in the present study retained their identities as students and did not need to act as someone else. It is highly likely that Beebe et al.'s subjects' responses were influenced by stereotypes which even Japanese seem to have of such a relationship; i.e., Japanese are indirect and polite to their higher-status, but direct and rude to the lower-status. Interestingly, JSL data in the present study seemed to confirm such stereotypes, but NSJ data did not.

JSL's perception about status difference between *sempai* and *koohai* are presented from their retrospective reports as follows:

- Basically I could just say "No" [to *koohai*] and that could be fine. If it was opposite, though, I might have done it differently (referring to her answer in situation #4). If I was *koohai* talking to a *sempai*, I probably wouldn't refuse it then. Only in Japan, though. In America, it doesn't matter. That wouldn't bother me if I was *sempai* or *koohai*. [JSL 2]
- Ordinarily *sempai* doesn't have to talk politely to *koohai* so I can come straight out and refuse. With *koohai*, you can do whatever basically because they have to look up to you. I don't have to say anything in roundabout way. [JSL 7]
- I'm in upper level, position-wise, so I can be mean, I can get away with being mean....I'm kind of expected by my *koohai* to say things like that because I'm *sempai*. [JSL 8]

These are only some of the JSL reports; all of JSL subjects stated something similar to the comments above. JSL subjects' perception about status difference between *sempai* (senior; in this case, the subject) and *koohai* (junior) seemed to reflect that of stereotypical image. As a result, some JSL refusals to the lower-status sounded harsh compared to NSJ refusals.

There was one situation in which a *koohai* offered to clean the club office for the subject (i.e., *sempai*) (DCT #8). This kind of situation often arises in Japan where there are, among others, established rules which must be honored between *sempai* and *koohai*. Traditionally, it is common particularly in some (sports) clubs in which careful consideration is given by *koohai* to the needs and expectations of *sempai*. But also in this situation, NSJ refusals were not blunt, contrary to the stereotype seemingly held by JSL subjects that Japanese are not as nice to lower-status interlocutors

as they are to higher- or equal-status interlocutors. NSJ subjects stated in retrospective interviews with respect to this situation that they did not want to sound arrogant, and that they wanted to assure the *koohai* that s/he did not need to take over the cleaning of the club office. (On the lexical level, this may be seen in the repetition of "*ii yo*" ("that's OK") or "*daijobu*" ("that's all right") at the beginning of their refusals). They did not want their *koohai* to do them a favor just because they were *sempai*. In fact, 10 out of 18 NSJ subjects (55%) stated in retrospective interviews that they treat friends (equal-status) and *koohai* (lower-status) equally, and only 5 NSJ subjects (28%) said that they are not as considerate to *koohai*. Three NSJ subjects (17%) said they are nicer to *koohai* than to friends, because they are usually not as close to *koohai* as they are to friends (i.e., they are between friends and professors on the in-group/out-group scale). Contrary to the stereotypical images that JSL subjects have of *sempai-koohai* relationships, some NSJs in this study expressed an aversion to the distinction between *sempai* and *koohai* and claimed that they try to treat their *koohai* as equal to them. One interesting point to note here, however, is that the same NSJs also asserted that even though they treat their *koohai* the way they treat their friends (status equals), they nonetheless expect their *koohai* to treat them as *sempai*, with respect.

It should be noted that not all JSL subjects sounded too blunt to *koohai*. A few JSL subjects, in their retrospective interviews, commented on how they felt about the way *koohai* were treated in the Japanese society, but it did not mean that they would act accordingly. For example, JSL 1 said, "I was in the tennis club and I was of all the members older and was '*sempai*,' but I don't do that sort of stuff." In other words, what JSL subjects stated in their retrospective reports may reflect their knowledge of how *koohai* should be treated in Japanese society (i.e., the stereotype that politeness is unnecessary; it is fine to directly say "no," or to be mean to *koohai*, etc.), but that knowledge did not appear to be reflected in all of the JSL's actual refusals to *koohai*. It seemed that JSL subjects, although just a few, were similar in intentions to NSJ subjects in that they would treat *koohai* in no less considerate a manner than they would treat their status equals.

It may be suggested, from the difference between NSJ and JSL subjects' perceptions on how *koohai* should be treated, that stereotypes that JSL learners have of Japanese society, rules of

speaking, etc. be dealt with in the Japanese language classroom. To some extent, there may be accurate cultural observations which underly stereotypes, but the language teacher should be aware of the possibility that some stereotypes could negatively affect JSL learners' speech act performances, and that they may lead the learner to strive toward a false goal.

#### 5.4 The Use of Honorifics

Both groups of subjects used honorifics in the situations where the interlocutor was higher in status in order to show their respect. In this sense, it may be said that they behaved according to *wakimae*, or discernment. In retrospective interviews, however, the majority of the JSL subjects said that it was difficult for them to use exalting form (referent honorific) and humble form (humble honorific) appropriately. Consequently, there were only 2 JSL subjects who used exalting form, and 1 JSL subject who used humble form in their refusals (both cases in the invitation situation). Some NSJ subjects also stated in retrospective interviews that they thought it was difficult to use honorifics appropriately, but 10 NSJ subjects used exalting forms in the invitation situation, and 5 NSJ subjects used humble forms (2 cases were in the invitation situation and 3 were in the offer situation). Table 16 shows that 100% of both JSL and NSJ groups used honorifics with the higher-status interlocutor. Those honorifics refer mostly to formal forms (addressee honorifics), or the so-called *desu/masu* style. The following JSL retrospective reports illustrate their way of handling difficulty with honorifics:

- When you have to...use something like "*mairimasu*" (humble form for "to go"), all that sort of honorific form and humble form, that's pretty difficult. But what I basically stick to is, if I have to be polite, *masu* form and say "*hai*" ("yes") a lot, and you basically get out of any situation. [JSL 3]
- When I try to use *keigo* (honorifics), I always screw up, so I just use *masu* form. [JSL 4]

Their use of these forms was grammatically error-free, probably because JSL learners are generally taught *desu/masu* forms first in class and dominant speech style of classroom discourse is *desu/masu* style. However, there were two areas which appeared to be problematic: they omitted the honorific prefixes *o-* and *go-* (e.g., *o-isogashii* (busy), *go-mendoo* (trouble)) when addressing the higher-status interlocutor, and they used *desu/masu* forms even in situations where the interlocutor was not

higher in status. These honorific prefixes are honorific conventions which have already been taught to JSL subjects in this study. One JSL subject said in her retrospective report that:

*Keigo* (honorifics) is more of a memorization, but I never use it, so it's very difficult, and it's not something you can just spit out, start speaking.... You need more actual experiences. [JSL 5]

As JSL 5 suggests, the problem of their frequent omission of the honorific prefixes may be alleviated by more practice. The same thing could be said of the JSL's use of *desu/masu* forms to equal- and lower-status interlocutors. However, while the problem with the honorific prefixes may be pragmalinguistic because JSL subjects do not have the English counterparts to the honorific prefixes, the inappropriate use of *desu/masu* forms may be sociopragmatic, as well as pragmalinguistic. This is because the usage was facilitated by JSL's decisions about how much politeness should be invested in their refusals, which are based on their assessment of contextual factors. When the equal-status interlocutor offered another piece of cake, many JSL subjects used *desu/masu* forms, due in part to the transfer error "*kekko desu*" for "No, thank you." But many JSL subjects were also aware that they were using formal forms to be 'polite', as the following retrospective reports show:

- Not so polite because it's a friend, but I'm still sort of polite, sort of interchanging between polite and impolite. I'm still using "*sumimasen*" (polite form for "I'm sorry"). [JSL 1]
- It was nice of this person to make a cake....I wanted to say as politely as possible that I didn't really want it. [JSL 7]

JSL subjects did not want to offend the friend, and thus tried to be polite, which was also what NSJ subjects tried to do. However, in this situation where the interlocutor was of equal status, while JSL subjects employed *desu/masu* forms to show politeness, and thus to mitigate the impact of refusal, NSJ subjects employed previously reviewed politeness strategies, such as the semantic formulas of gratitude and compliment, and not formal forms of language. NSJ's decisions as to how much politeness to invest may be based on what was offered, but the decision to use *desu/masu* forms or not was based solely on the status of the interlocutor.

The JSL's inappropriate use of *desu/masu* forms was not only due to their desire to be polite to the interlocutor. One JSL subject said in her retrospective report, "I'm used to, when people speak

to me, responding the same way." Regardless of the eliciting speech act, she chose her style of speech according to that of the interlocutor. As a result, she used plain forms when the interlocutor was equal in status, but used *desu/masu* forms to the lower-status interlocutor who, according to Japanese rules of speaking, spoke to her with formal forms. Such occurrence was not observed in NSJ data, because these native speakers know that *desu/masu* forms are inappropriate with lower-status interlocutors.

The use of formal forms to someone who is not higher in status is not entirely inappropriate, however; Japanese speakers may use them with equal- or lower-status interlocutors, if s/he perceives the interlocutor to be a stranger or a member of the out-group. However, it was presumed in the present study that none of the interlocutors were strangers to the subjects. The subjects seemed to have considered the professor to be a member of the out-group, though their assumed interlocutor relationship was of non-strangers because he was their 'seminar professor', because of high D (social distance between speaker and addressee) and P (relative power of addressee over speaker) value assigned to his social standing. This in turn led them to employ honorifics, which was the expected norm of speech. On the other hand, the equal-status interlocutor was a friend (not just an acquaintance) who was taking the same class as the subjects and who would bake cake for her/him, and the lower-status interlocutor was a younger member of the club to which the subjects belonged. Therefore, the use of formal forms was inappropriate.

While many JSL subjects seemed to think being polite meant that one needed to use formal forms (one JSL subject said that he used formal forms to the lower-status to be 'nice'), a few of them demonstrated different interpretations of being polite to equal- and/or lower-status interlocutors. One JSL subject, whose refusal of the equal-status interlocutor's offer was similar to NSJs in the selection of linguistic form and semantic formulas, and also in intentions, said:

I wanted to be polite because she baked me the cake and it was very nice of her. [R: No polite forms, though?] No, more *omoiyari* (consideration). [JSL 9]

Another JSL subject whose refusal of the lower-status interlocutor's offer was similar in intentions and in choice of linguistic form with NSJs explained that:

This one is a little bit different because somebody else is trying to give you a favor. So I'd be really polite. I'd probably accept it. But if I was to refuse, I'd do so very politely and I'd thank him. [R: Being polite doesn't necessarily mean that you use polite form?] Right. I really meant to be polite here. [JSL 8]

These reports as well as NSJ refusals suggest the importance of teaching/demonstrating to JSL learners that the use of formal forms is not the only way of showing politeness. Especially when the interlocutor is equal or lower in status (and a member of the in-group), it is not polite to use formal forms. In fact, JSL learners' use of formal forms to the equal- and/or lower-status seems to give Japanese the impression that the learners are distant, which in turn hinders them to develop social relationships with Japanese speakers. JSL subjects' employment of formal forms regardless of the status of their interlocutors may be similar to their tendency to use finished sentences, which was discussed earlier, in that both problems may be due to classroom discourse. Teachers and learners (and even equal-status learners) generally use formal forms in the Japanese language classroom, which can be attributed to an exclusive concern in the classroom for correct (but apparently not appropriate) use of formal forms.

Some JSL subjects were aware that their choice of linguistic forms might be inappropriate, as the following reports reveal:

- Sometimes I feel silly; my roommate (Japanese) speaks *Osaka-ben* (Osaka dialect) and I'd be really polite, and she goes, "What?" [JSL 3]
- I do use *desu/masu* form to friends sometimes and some people think I'm too polite, but that's how they teach us half the time. [JSL 6]

These reports, along with the evidence of JSL subjects' high level of grammatical acquisition in terms of formal forms, suggest that more opportunities be given to JSL learners to practice different styles of speech appropriate to interlocutors of different status. JSL teachers may have good reason for emphasizing grammatical, formal speech in the classroom; i.e., it is more damaging for JSL learners to be impolite to someone of higher status than to be too polite to someone of equal or lower status. However, the retrospective data revealed that when JSL subjects used formal forms to the friend or *koohai*, they did not mean to be polite, as they were to the professor. If JSL learners were to



maintain smooth relationships with their interlocutors, they would need to acquire not only polite forms but also appropriate forms. One JSL subject said that (R: researcher):

...before I came here in our classroom, our style of speech was mostly *desu/masu* form, and we weren't using very casual style speech in class. Every once in a while, they would have a practice session where we would have to use very casual type of speech and that was very difficult. And then I came here and...just everyone in the [host] family spoke in casual style, so it was kind of a little odd for me to speak with *desu/masu* style, so I got used to using the casual style speech. Now *desu/masu* style gets more difficult and also when I go to other host families, they are people that I don't really know and that I should show respect to, so I should be using more *desu/masu* style speech. But I end up, just for saving time sake [sic] and being able to converse better, using just casual style speech and sometimes I feel like where I'd draw that line between those two is difficult. [R: Do they consider you rude by that?] I don't know. Being a foreigner, I think they are definitely taking that into consideration. But I think appropriateness is very important for learning, especially learning this language, you need to learn the appropriate language and know what to use when and what is the best in these situations. [JSL 5]

As illustrated by this report, knowledge of appropriate usage may be as important as that of grammar and lexicon. In other words, learners with high linguistic competence may not be able to communicate successfully with Japanese speakers, if they do not have knowledge of appropriate usage. Therefore, it seems important to create such situations in the classroom so that JSL learners can improve their pragmatic competence (i.e., knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness) and their ability to assess contextual factors as Japanese do, which in turn may enable them to communicate more effectively and appropriately with Japanese speakers of different status in different situations.

## 5.5 Summary

Several differences were found between JSL and NSJ refusals. There were situations in which JSL subjects tended to omit the semantic formulas that the majority of the NSJ subjects used in order to qualify their refusals (i.e., a statement of positive opinion/feeling in their refusal of the higher-status interlocutor's invitation, and an expression of gratitude in their refusal of the equal-

status interlocutor's offer). The appropriate use of this type of qualifiers may be important pragmatic knowledge to be acknowledged by JSL teachers and learners.

JSL's failure to use gratitude in the offer situation may be due to the formulaic expression "(*moo*) *kekko desu*," which many textbooks give "No, thank you" as the English equivalent. This is a straightforward, polite expression of refusal to an offer, and thus appropriate to be used to interlocutors of higher-status, but inappropriate when uttered to those of equal- or lower-status.

In the situation of the request of the equal-status interlocutor, apology was expressed in JSL refusals but not in NSJ refusals. The data from retrospective interviews with respect to this particular situation indicated that there might be an effect of pragmatic transfer in JSL refusal. It appeared that the need to fill the apology slot was transferred into their Japanese from English.

JSL and NSJ refusals also differed in their use of politeness strategies. Some examples of these were the use of unfinished sentences, *enryo*, apology, promise of future acceptance/request of future acceptance, and alternatives.

An unfinished sentence helps in making the refusal more indirect and less harsh than explicit statements, and thus is used to show politeness, especially to someone of higher status. NSJ subjects frequently used unfinished sentences to refuse both request and invitation from the higher-status interlocutor. JSL subjects tended to explicitly state "I can't" in their refusal to the request. This was seen as evidence of a teaching-induced error, the error caused by the use of complete sentence questions and responses in classroom discourse. It should be taken into consideration that JSL subjects had taken the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), a formal written test, prior to the DCT. This might have caused them to use more complete sentences than they would otherwise. However, JSL subjects used unfinished sentences in the invitation situation. It appeared that JSL's use of unfinished sentences depended upon whether or not an unfinished sentence was used in the eliciting speech, while that of NSJ's was dependent upon the interlocutor status; i.e., whether the interlocutor was higher in relative status to them. It seems obviously important, then, that such situations be created in the classroom so that learners can learn to communicate successfully in Japanese not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom.

There was also evidence of pragmatic failures which seemed to be caused by stereotype-induced errors as well as teaching-induced errors. The stereotypes held by JSL subjects (e.g., that the Japanese are always 'nice' and that they are always indirect) appeared to have affected their refusals to the equal-status interlocutor's request. That is, while the majority of NSJ refusals in this situation contained criticism, JSL subjects refrained from criticizing the requester, because, as one of the JSL subjects said in his retrospective report, "it's not customary" to be direct in Japanese. However, according to NSJ data, it seemed that directness to some degree was called for among status equals.

JSL data showed that the concept of *enryo*, which many researchers assume is difficult for non-Japanese to conceive of, seemed teachable/learnable in the classroom. However, more than half of the JSL subjects did not demonstrate *enryo* in their refusals to the offer of the higher-status interlocutor, to which almost all NSJ subjects did show their *enryo*. Therefore, it may be important to create situations whereby learners exercise in the classroom the concept of *enryo* and how it can be applied to actual interactions with the Japanese. In addition to unfinished sentences and *enryo*, other politeness strategies, such as apology, promise, and alternatives, were not used in JSL refusals as frequently as they were in NSJ refusals. It may be useful for JSL learners to know that there are ways to qualify refusals so that both the speaker's and hearer's faces may not be threatened.

In addition, there seemed to be differences between JSL and NSJ groups in the perception of status differences of the interlocutors. Their perceptions were similar in that both groups were careful not to seem rude and/or were trying to be polite to the higher-status interlocutor. However, there was a difference in their reasons to be polite to the higher-status interlocutor, or, more specifically, a professor. Whereas NSJ's prime concern was to maintain (or to improve) a good relationship with the professor, that of JSL's was to maintain (or possibly to obtain) a good grade in the class.

It was evident that JSL subjects held stereotypical images of the *sempai-koochai* (senior-junior) relationship. While the majority of the NSJ subjects had the opinion that they would treat friends (equal-status) and *koochai* (lower-status) equally, JSL subjects were inclined to treat *koochai* in a less considerate manner than they would treat their friends, which they seemed to consider was the

expected norm. As a result, JSL refusals to the lower-status sounded harsh compared to NSJ refusals. It may be suggested that stereotypes that JSL learners have of Japanese society, rules of speaking, etc. be dealt with in the Japanese language classroom so that learners do not strive toward a false goal in Japanese communication.

In terms of the JSL's use of honorifics, although they demonstrated a high level of acquisition in grammatical use of *desu/masu* forms, there were two areas that appeared to be problematic: the omission of the honorific prefixes *o-* and *go-* when addressing the higher-status interlocutor, and the use of *desu/masu* forms even when the interlocutor was not higher in status. The problem with the honorific prefixes are pragmalinguistic because JSL subjects do not have the English counterparts to these prefixes, and it seems possible that more practice will alleviate the problem of their omission of honorific prefixes. On the other hand, the inappropriate use of *desu/masu* forms may be sociopragmatic, as well as pragmalinguistic, because the usage was facilitated by JSL's decisions about how much politeness should be invested in their refusals, which are based on their assessment of contextual factors. JSL learners' use of formal forms to equal- and/or lower-status interlocutors seems to give Japanese the impression that the learner is distant, which in turn hinders her/him to develop social relationships with Japanese speakers. If JSL learners were to maintain smooth relationships with their interlocutors, they would need to acquire not only polite forms but also appropriate forms. It seems important to create such situations in the classroom so that JSL learners can improve their pragmatic competence and ability to assess contextual factors as Japanese do, which in turn may enable them to communicate more effectively and appropriately with Japanese speakers of different status in different situations.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, attempts are made to answer the research questions posed in this study. Implications of the findings of this study for teaching in the Japanese language classroom are also discussed. Finally, limitations of the present study and suggestions for further research are presented.

#### 6.1. Research Questions and Implications for Teaching

1. To what extent, with respect to the speech act of refusals, is there a tendency on the part of learners of Japanese as a second language (JSL) to transfer English rules of speaking to Japanese, as judged by their written production and their retrospective reports?

Pragmatic transfer in the JSL refusals that seemed to be attributed to transfer of English rules of speaking observed in the present study were:

1) JSL's inclusion of an expression of gratitude in their refusals to the higher-status interlocutor's invitation. (NSJ stated positive opinion or feeling, but did not express gratitude.) Beebe et al. also reported that Americans in their study frequently expressed gratitude in refusing the boss' invitation.

2) JSL's omission of an expression of gratitude in their refusals to the equal-status interlocutor's offer. JSL subjects seemed to have thought that they said "thank you" by simply saying "*kekko desu*," which they probably took as the Japanese equivalent of "no, thank you." "*Kekko desu*," however, does not have the meaning of "thank you" as does "no, thank you."

3) JSL's use of "*kekko desu*" to the equal-status interlocutor. Falsely assuming that "*kekko desu*" could be used in the same way as "no, thank you" (i.e., this can be used regardless of the status of the interlocutor in English), they used this formulaic expression to the equal status, when in fact this expression is used only to someone of higher status.

#### 4) JSL's need to fill the apology slot in refusing the equal-status interlocutor's request.

Those JSL subjects who apologized seemed to have simply said what they would have said in English.

#### 2. How do native speakers of Japanese (NSJ) and learners of JSL minimize the risk of offending interlocutors?

Refusals, in that they involve imparting unpleasant information to an interlocutor, require the refuser to build support and help the interlocutor avoid embarrassment. In order to do so, the refuser needs to employ some 'face-saving' strategies. Without such strategies that qualify the refusal, the refuser may run the risk of offending the interlocutor (and damaging the self-image of the refuser her/himself).

##### (1) NSJ subjects

Some semantic formulas were seen to act as qualifiers of refusals. Such formulas used by NSJ were: *enryo*, apology, promise of future acceptance and/or request for future invitation, and alternative. *Enryo*, or reserve, was used exclusively in the situation of the offer of the higher-status interlocutor. By expressing their *enryo*, NSJ not only made their refusals polite, but they also demonstrated their empathetic considerations for the higher-status offerer's convenience or comfort, which would be essential in maintaining smooth interpersonal relationships in Japanese.

Apology was the semantic formula used next often to excuse (all 9 situations evoked at least one excuse/explanation). It seemed apology was indispensable in most refusals in Japanese. Of all, most noticeable was the NSJ's use of apology in the situation of the higher-status interlocutor's request: they apologized twice, at the beginning, and the end of the speech. By completing their refusals with a second apology, their refusals had an effect of sounding as though they were begging for the requester's forgiveness. Upon receiving such a refusal, the requester may be more willing to let the refuser off the hook. Another characteristic use of apology in NSJ refusals was its inclusion in virtually all invitation situations. Whereas JSL did not express apology in their refusals to the equal-status interlocutor's invitation as frequently as did NSJ because "it [was] no big deal," as JSL 5 explained in his retrospective report, NSJ did because it was an 'invitation'.

In addition, promise of future acceptance and/or request for future invitation in the invitation situations, and offer of an alternative in the request situations may all be attributed to NSJ's attempt to redress the potential threat of FTAs. By referring to a possibility of accepting an invitation some other time in the future, they not only showed their consideration for the inviter, but they also made the tone of the refusal milder. As Brown and Levinson (1978) note, "even if they are false, they demonstrate the speaker's good intentions in satisfying the hearer's positive-face wants" (p. 130). Similarly, when one refuses a request in Japanese, it seems customary to offer an alternative, rather than simply refusing the request. By offering an alternative (e.g., "*hoka no hito ni kiite ageru*" ("I'll ask someone else for you"), "*hoka no hito ni kiite mite kureru*" ("Can you ask someone else?"), etc.), NSJ showed that s/he cared about the requester and/or that whatever the requester wanted or needed, s/he wanted for the requester.

In addition to these semantic formulas, NSJ employed other devices to qualify their refusals, such as the adverb *chotto* and unfinished sentences. *Chotto* was used frequently in refusing the higher-status interlocutor's request and invitation. By attaching *chotto* to their excuses, and sometimes to an explicit statement of "I can't," their refusals expressed their hesitant and apologetic feeling for telling the higher-status interlocutor that they could not comply with his request or accept his invitation. Similarly, unfinished sentences were used most often to the higher-status interlocutor's request and invitation. As mentioned earlier, refusals involve telling an interlocutor something s/he does not want to hear. By using unfinished sentences, along with other semantic formulas, all they did was hinted to the interlocutor that they could not comply with the request or accept the invitation, and avoided explicitly stating their negative ability or willingness. By using unfinished sentences and avoiding a direct refusal (i.e., explicit statement of "I can't" or "I won't"), they indicated hesitation in making the refusal, and attempted to mitigate the presumed rudeness of not complying with the request or accepting the invitation, in an effort to minimize the risk of offending the interlocutor.

## (2) JSL subjects

JSL's efforts to mitigate the impact of their refusals were seen in their use of formal forms to equal- and lower-status interlocutors, which was not observed in NSJ refusals. NSJ used formal forms exclusively to the higher-status interlocutor as a means to show that they acknowledged "the distinction between the ranks or the roles of the speaker and the addressee" (Ide, 1989, p. 230), and not as a means to mitigate the impact of their refusals. Non-use of honorifics to someone of higher status would offend her/him, but the use of honorifics to someone who is not higher in status would by no means be seen as a strategy to qualify a speech act. This will be discussed in more detail with respect to the choice of linguistic forms of NSJ and JSL learners (i.e., research question #3) below.

The frequency of the JSL's use of those semantic formulas seen to be used as qualifiers in NSJ refusals (i.e., *enryo*, apology, promise of future acceptance and/or request for future invitation, and alternative) was not very high. *Enryo* is a concept unique to Japanese culture, and thus JSL subjects might have had difficulty weaving this device into their refusals. However, the data showed that they did have knowledge of this concept. It seems important that *enryo* should not only be introduced as a concept *per se*, but also as a politeness device which is essential in Japanese social interactions, particularly with someone of higher status.

Other semantic formulas used by NSJ as qualifiers of refusals, such as apology, promise of future acceptance and/or request for future invitation, and alternative, were not used by JSL as frequently. For instance, contrary to NSJ's apologetic tone of their refusals to the equal-status interlocutor's invitation, JSL's refusal in the said situation lacked this formula. Japanese are known to be apologetic, and JSL may think that Japanese apologize more often than necessary. JSL may not feel those semantic formulas used by NSJ are necessary when they make refusals in Japanese because those formulas are not used as frequently in their native language situations similar to those examined in the present study. It would not be necessary for JSL teachers to encourage learners to imitate what Japanese people do. The Japanese language classroom is not a laboratory to make Japanese clones out of JSL learners. However, it may be useful for learners to know how Japanese handle difficult situations, and from there, what options they may have. If they are equipped with



such knowledge, then they may make their own choice among such strategies as those used by NSJ in the present study, with which they would feel comfortable to use.

One of the linguistic devices of qualifying refusals examined in the present study was the adverb *chotto*. JSL demonstrated a high level of acquisition in terms of this qualifier and used it appropriately and effectively in their refusals. However, the use of the other device, unfinished sentences, was not as problem-free. They used unfinished sentences in their refusals to the higher-status interlocutor's invitation as did NSJ. However, it appeared that JSL's use of unfinished sentences depended upon whether or not an unfinished sentence was used in the eliciting speech, while that of NSJ's was dependent upon the interlocutor status; i.e., whether the interlocutor was higher in relative status to them. The frequency of their use of this device in the situation of the request of the higher-status interlocutor was very low. As a result, their refusals of the higher-status interlocutor's request sounded direct, which in turn may offend the interlocutor. JSL's use of explicit statement of negative ability/willingness (i.e., "I can't"/"I won't") might be due to the use of complete sentence questions and responses in classroom discourse. It may be needed to direct learners' attention to more "non-educational" (i.e., natural) discourse and appropriate use of such discourse (including unfinished sentences) so that they may be able to communicate effectively not only inside but also outside the classroom as well.

### 3. How does the social status difference of the interlocutors influence the choice of linguistic forms of NSJ and JSL learners?

Both NSJ and JSL tried not to seem rude and/or tried to be polite to the higher-status interlocutor, and thus used formal forms of language. In other words, both groups of subjects acknowledged the status difference of the interlocutor and themselves, and behaved according to *wakimae*, or discernment, when the interlocutor was higher in status. However, differences were found between the two groups' choice of linguistic forms in their refusals to the interlocutors who were not of higher status; i.e., those of equal and lower status. In the situations where the interlocutor was equal or lower in status, while honorific usage was nonexistent in NSJ data, some JSL used formal style of speech. Especially in the situation of the offer of the equal-status

interlocutor, the JSL's use of formal forms was notably high. What prompted them to use formal forms was their desire to be polite to the interlocutor who baked a cake for them. However, politeness among in-group status equals are not to be shown by the use of formal forms. NSJ's efforts to politely refuse the offer were seen in their empathetic consideration for the interlocutor (e.g., in this case, their use of the semantic formulas of gratitude and compliment), but they did not use formal forms because the choice of linguistic forms to conform to the expected norm of speech appropriate to the contextual situation (i.e., the interlocutor was equal in status and a member of the in-group) was plain forms.

NSJ made a distinction in their choice of linguistic forms according to the status of the interlocutors; i.e., they used formal forms to the higher-status interlocutor, and plain forms to the equal- and lower-status interlocutors. JSL used formal forms to the higher-status interlocutor and appeared to have indicated their acknowledgment of discernment aspect of linguistic politeness. However, overall data indicated that JSL's choice of linguistic forms was not made solely according to the status of the interlocutors.

When JSL learners use formal forms to their Japanese friend, it may make her/him feel that they are being distant. Because part of function of formal forms is to show distance between the speaker and the hearer, the friend might wonder if such a choice of linguistic forms is intentional, which in turn may hinder JSL learners to develop social relationships with the Japanese friend. When the interlocutor is equal or lower in status (and a member of the in-group), politeness is not exhibited by formal forms of language, but rather by empathetic considerations for the interlocutor. There may be different ways to demonstrate such considerations depending upon the situation, but some of those discussed in the present study are an expression of apology, promise of future acceptance, request for future invitation, offer of alternatives, etc. These semantic formulas exist in English as well, and so what is necessary in the Japanese language classroom is the opportunity for JSL learners to become aware of when such formulas can be used. It should be explained to JSL learners in the classroom that politeness is always assessed by context; it is not the linguistic form that makes the speech act polite or impolite, but rather a combination of the linguistic form + the context

of utterance + the relationship between the interlocutors (Thomas, 1995, p. 157). It seems from the findings of the present study that there also needs to be a place in the classroom for learners to work on the less formal forms of the language. JSL teachers may feel hesitant to do so because they are afraid that learners may use them inappropriately (e.g., to someone of higher status) if they are encouraged to use them in class. However, the classroom is where learners should feel free to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes, and most of all, it is where feedback can be provided on inappropriate usage; feedback which learners may not be able to obtain outside the classroom.

JSL subjects in the present study demonstrated a high level of acquisition in terms of grammar. However, this study revealed the lack of pragmatic competence --- knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom --- of JSL learners in making refusals. In interacting with non-native speakers, native speakers tend to be rather tolerant of grammatical errors. In contrast, when non-native speakers, especially those with high grammatical competence, do not act in accordance with rules of speaking, or what is considered to be appropriate speech behavior by native speakers, they could be considered impolite or offensive since the native speakers are unlikely to be aware of the fact that rules of speaking vary from one speech community to another.

The Japanese language teaching profession has become more aware of the significance of improving communicative competence of JSL learners. However, the findings of this study suggest that the current instruction in the JSL classroom needs to be re-examined. The classroom communicative activities that are now used to improve communicative competence still seem to be designed to reinforce grammatical accuracy (thus grammatical competence), rather than appropriateness (pragmatic competence), in learners' speech act production. Therefore, it seems advisable that situations be created in the classroom in which learners could use language with the purpose of maintaining smooth communication, and consequently relationships, with their interlocutors. The following are implications for teaching in the JSL classroom:

- 1) More attention should be paid to pragmatic aspects of language in teaching Japanese for improving communicative competence of JSL learners.

2) Teachers should give instruction to learners based on how native speakers actually speak in their everyday interactions, not based on how they *think* they speak. (In order to do this, a great deal of empirical analysis of everyday speech behavior of native speakers would be necessary.)

3) Communicative activities, such as role plays, involving interlocutors of different status in different settings should be made use of so that learners can practice using the language and linguistic devices appropriate to a variety of contexts. When inappropriate usage occurs, discussions on why it is inappropriate and/or what force they intended to convey are in order.

4) Japanese movies and TV dramas would be effective authentic materials for giving learners the opportunity to learn how native speakers of Japanese carry on conversations (i.e., the use of speech act strategies, style-shifting, etc.).

## **6.2 Limitations of the Study**

There are several limitations in the present study. First, the number of subjects involved in this study was small. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to broader populations. The number of NSJ subjects was 18, while that of JSL subjects was only 10. The researcher first intended to obtain at least 18 JSL subjects to meet the number of NSJ subjects. However, as the end of academic year was drawing near and most of the Asian Studies Program participants from which JSL subjects were recruited were busy preparing to return home, the researcher was unable to secure this number. In an attempt to use as much data as possible, the researcher decided to use all of the subjects despite the discrepancy of subject number in each group. Because the number of subjects in each group was different, percentage data was provided along with the number of subjects so that the reader would not be misled.

NSJ subjects had been in Canada for 6 months before the present study took place, and thus, their Japanese responses might have been different from those of native speakers of Japanese with no experience of living abroad. Similarly, since JSL subjects had been in Japan for 8 months when the research was conducted, the data obtained from those subjects might be different from those of JSL learners with no experience of living/studying in Japan.

The primary data collection instrument, a discourse completion test (DCT), while advantageous in many respects, is also limiting in that it does not involve negotiation with interlocutors which real-life situations would involve. Although the subjects in the present study were asked to respond as they would in actual conversation, because DCT is a written role-play questionnaire, the data might not have reflected the full range of formulas or even the length of the responses. One subject said in retrospective interview, with respect to one of his DCT responses, "I could've possibly made it a lot longer than that, but that was kind of simplest way of doing it." Also, since the DCT used in this study was made by the researcher (based on authentic refusal situations told to the researcher by Japanese university students), in many ways, the data was not comparable with previous studies.

The retrospective data collected in the present study provided insight into why subjects said what they said, and enhanced the overall informative value of the DCT data. However, since the researcher was not an officially trained interviewer, the retrospective data might have been affected by her lack of skill in conducting the retrospective interview. There could also have been different interpretative possibilities.

Furthermore, the total time required of JSL subjects to complete the tasks involved in the present study was much longer than that of NSJ subjects because JSL subjects were required to take the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT). The researcher had originally planned to administer the JLPT to the 10 JSL subjects all at once on one day, and the DCT which was to be immediately followed by a retrospective interview on different days (one subject at a time). However, it was preferred by all the JSL subjects to complete all the tasks in one session. (The retrospective interview had to be held immediately after the DCT while the subject's memory was still fresh.) Although it was agreed that they take a break in between the JLPT and the DCT for as long as they needed, JSL subjects might have been fatigued with the JLPT before they filled out the DCT which was immediately followed by the retrospective interview.

### **6.3 Suggestions for Further Research**

The present study only examined Japanese responses of native speakers of Japanese and of North American learners of Japanese as a second language. It is suggested that future study examine, as well as native Japanese responses, both English and Japanese responses of JSL learners in order to seek evidence of pragmatic transfer in JSL interlanguage. Also, not only should the occurrence of pragmatic failure be noted, but also its causes investigated.

The findings presented in this study are only part of what Japanese rules of speaking may be. Rules of speaking seem normative rather than prescriptive, and as Thomas (1983) argues, pragmatic description has not yet reached the level of precision which grammar has attained in describing linguistic competence. It is possible for JSL learners to be extremely impolite or offensive unintentionally, while speaking Japanese with perfect grammar. In order to help teachers teach learners to speak not only grammatically but also pragmatically appropriate Japanese, sociolinguistic analysis with the principle aim of discovering the underlying patterns which make up the rules of speaking should also be pursued.

Compared to English, research on native and non-native Japanese speakers' acquisition and use of pragmatic knowledge is still scarce, therefore, much more research is deemed necessary in this area. Such studies would be useful in developing Japanese language curricula, syllabi, classroom activities, etc. The number of subjects involved in the present study was small, and thus the findings may not be generalized to broader populations. Future research should thus be conducted with larger number of subjects.

### **6.4 Conclusion**

The present study sought evidence of pragmatic transfer in the JSL interlanguage, and investigated the use of politeness strategies and linguistic forms of NSJ and JSL in the speech acts of refusal. The results of the study showed that pragmatic transfer occurred in the JSL refusals, by transferring English rules of speaking to Japanese. Those rules of speaking in English were: 1) expressing gratitude in refusing a higher-status interlocutor's invitation; 2) stating "no, thank you" in refusals of offers; and 3) apologizing when refusing an equal-status interlocutor's request.

Differences were found between NSJ and JSL refusals in the use of politeness strategies, with which subjects tried to minimize the risk of offending the interlocutors. NSJ used such semantic formulas as *enryo*, apology, promise of future acceptance and/or request for future invitation, and alternative, but JSL did not use those formulas to the same extent. Both groups frequently used the adverb *chotto* to qualify their refusals. However, JSL did not use another linguistic device to show politeness, i.e., unfinished sentences, as frequently as did NSJ. Differences were also found in the two groups' use of linguistic forms. While NSJ's use of formal forms was restricted to address the higher-status interlocutor, JSL used formal forms to the equal- and lower-status interlocutors as well.

It is concluded from the findings of this study that the current instruction in the JSL classroom should be re-examined. The classroom communicative activities that are now used to improve communicative competence still seem to be designed to reinforce grammatical accuracy in learners' speech act productions, rather than how and when they can speak what to whom appropriately. Therefore, it seems advisable that situations be created in the classroom in which learners could use language with the aim of maintaining smooth communication, and thus relationships, with their interlocutors.

Due to the limitations in the scope of this study, the findings presented here should not be generalized to broader populations. Despite its potentially significant contribution to JSL teaching and learning, IL pragmatics research in Japanese language and culture are still scarce. Therefore, much more research should be conducted in this field.

## References

- Andersen, E. (1989). Speaking with style: The sociolinguistic skills of children. London: Routledge.
- Aoki, H. & Okamoto, S. (1988). Rules for conversational rituals in Japanese. Tokyo: Taishukan.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). How to do things with words. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Azuma, H., Hess, R. D., Kashigawa, K., & Conroy, M. (1980). Maternal control strategies and the child's cognitive development: a cross-cultural paradox and its interpretation. Paper presented at the International Congress of Psychology, Leipzig.
- Barnlund, D. C. (1974). The public self and the private self in Japan and the United States. In J. C. Condon & M. Saito (Eds.), Intercultural encounters with Japan: Communication---contact and conflict (pp. 27-96). Tokyo: Simul Press.
- Beebe, L. M. & Cummings, M. C. (1985, April). Speech act performance: A function of the data collection procedure? Paper presented at the TESOL Convention, New York.
- Beebe, L. M. & Takahashi, T. (1989). Sociolinguistic variation in face-threatening speech acts. In M. R. Eisenstein (Ed.), The dynamic interlanguage empirical studies in L2 variation: Chastisement and disagreement (pp. 199-218). New York: Plenum.
- Beebe, L. M., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. C. Scarcella, E. S. Andersen, & S. D. Krashen (Eds.), Developing communicative competence in a second language (pp. 55-73). New York: Newbury House.
- Blum-Kulka, S. (1982) Learning how to say what you mean in a second language: A study of speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language. Applied Linguistics, 3, 29-59.
- Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (Eds.). (1989). Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Blum-Kulka, S. & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). Applied Linguistics, 5, 196-213.
- Blum-Kulka, S. & Olshtain, E. (1986). Too many words: length of utterance and pragmatic failure. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 8, 165-180.



- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1978). Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena. In E. N. Goody (Ed.), Questions and politeness (pp. 56-289). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. Applied Linguistics, 1, 1-47.
- Candlin, C. N. (1976). Communicative language teaching and the debt to pragmatics. In C. Rameh (Ed.), 27th round table meeting (pp. 237-256). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University.
- Clancy, P. M. (1986). The acquisition of communicative style in Japanese. In B. Schieffelin & E. Ochs (Eds.), Language acquisition and socialization across cultures (pp. 213-250). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coulmas, F. (1981). "Poison to your soul." Thanks and apologies contrastively viewed. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), Conversational routine. Explorations in Standardized communication situations and prepatterned speech (pp. 69-91). The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Coulmas, F. (1992). Linguistic etiquette in Japanese society. In R. J. Watts, S. Ide, & K. Ehlich (Eds.), Politeness in language (pp. 299-323). Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter.
- Deutsch, M. F. (1985). Doing business with the Japanese. New York: Mentor.
- Doi, T. (1973). The anatomy of dependence (J. Bester, Trans.). Tokyo.: Kodansha International. (Original work published 1971).
- Doi, T. (1974). Some psychological themes in Japanese human relationships. In J. C. Condon & M. Saito (Eds.), Intercultural encounters with Japan: Communication---contact and conflict (pp. 17-26). Tokyo: Simul Press.
- Eisenstein, M. & Bodman, J. W. (1986). 'I very appreciate': Expressions of gratitude by native and non-native speakers of American English. Applied Linguistics, 7, 167-185.
- Ellis, R. (1994). The study of second language acquisition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ericsson, K. A., & Simon, H. A. (1984). Protocol analysis: Verbal reports as data. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Færch, C., & Kasper, G. (1989). Internal and external modification in interlanguage request realization. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House, & G. Kasper (Eds.), Cross-cultural pragmatics (pp. 221-247). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Goffman, E. (1967). Interaction ritual: Essays on face to face behavior. NY: Garden City.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), Syntax and semantics 3: Speech acts (pp. 41-58). New York: Academic Press.
- Grimshaw, A. D. (1973). Rules, social interaction, and language behavior. TESOL Quarterly, 7, 2.
- Hill, B., Ide, S., Ikuta, S., Kawasaki, A., & Ogino, T. (1986). Universals of linguistic politeness: Quantitative evidence from Japanese and American English. Journal of Pragmatics, 10, 347-371.
- House, J., & Kasper, G. (1987). Interlanguage pragmatics: Requesting in a foreign language. In W. Loersch & R. Schulze (Eds.), Perspectives on language in performance (pp. 1250-1288). Tuebingen: Narr.
- Hudson, T., Detmer, E., & Brown, J. D. (1992). A framework for testing cross-cultural pragmatics (Tech. Rep. No. 2). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Price & D. Holmes (Eds.), Sociolinguistics (pp. 269-293). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Ide, S. (1982). Japanese sociolinguistics: Politeness and women's language. Lingua, 57, 357-385.
- Ide, S. (1989). Formal forms and discernment: Two neglected aspects of universals of linguistic politeness. Multilingua, 8(2/3), 223-248.
- Ide, S., Hill, B., Carnes, Y. M., Ogino, T., & Kawasaki, A. (1992). The concept of politeness: An empirical study of American English and Japanese. In R. J. Watts, S. Ide, & K. Ehlich (Eds.), Politeness in language: Studies in history, theory and practice (pp. 281-297). Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter.

- Ikoma, T. & Shimura, A. (1993) Eigo kara nihongo e no puragumatikku toransufaa: 'Kotowari' to iu hatsuwakooi ni tsuite [Pragmatics transfer from English to Japanese: The speech act of refusals]. Nihongo Kyoiku, 79, 41-52.
- Kasper, G. (1990). Linguistic politeness: Current research issues. Journal of Pragmatics, 14, 193-218.
- Kasper, G. (1992). Pragmatic transfer. Second Language Research, 8(3), 203-231.
- Kasper, G. & Dahl, M. (1991). Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics. (Tech. Rep. No. 1). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.
- Koike, D. A. (1989). Pragmatic competence and adult L2 acquisition: Speech acts in interlanguage. The Modern Language Journal, 73, 279-289.
- Lakoff, R. (1975). Language and woman's place. New York: Harper and Row.
- Lebra, T. S. (1976). Japanese patterns of behavior. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii.
- Leech, G. N. (1983). Principles of Pragmatics. New York: Longman.
- Levenston, E. & Blum, S. (1978). Discourse completion as a technique for studying lexical features of interlanguage. Working Papers in Bilingualism, 15, 13-21.
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). Pragmatics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Makino, S. (1983). Bunkagenri to gengo koodoo [The concept of culture and the speech acts]. Nihongo Kyoiku, 49, 1-11.
- Matsumoto, Y. (1985). A sort of speech act qualification in Japanese: Chotto. Journal of Asian Culture, 9, 143-159.
- Matsumoto, Y. (1988). Reexamination of the universality of face: Politeness phenomena in Japanese. Journal of Pragmatics, 12, 403-426.
- Matsumoto, Y. (1989). Politeness and conversational universals - Observations from Japanese. Multilingua, 8, 207-221.
- Matsumoto, Y. (1993). Linguistic politeness and cultural style: Observations from Japanese. In P. M. Clancy (Ed.), Japanese/Korean Linguistics Vol 2 (pp. 55-67). Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information.

- Maynard, S. K. (1989). Japanese conversation: Self-contextualization through structure and interactional management. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Maynard, S. K. (1990). An introduction to Japanese grammar and communication strategies. Tokyo: The Japan Times.
- Miller, R. A. (1967). The Japanese language. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mizutani, O. & Mizutani, N. (1987). How to be polite in Japanese. Tokyo: The Japan Times.
- Nakane, C. (1967). Tate-shakai no ningen-kankei: Tan-itsu-shakai no riron [Personal relations in a vertical society: A theory of a homogeneous society]. Tokyo: Kodansha.
- Nakane, C. (1970). Japanese society. Berkeley, CA: University of California.
- Nwoye, O. G. (1992). Linguistic politeness and socio-cultural variations of the notion of face. Journal of Pragmatics, 18, 309-328.
- Odlin, T. (1989). Language Transfer. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Olshain, E. (1983). Sociocultural competence and language transfer: The case of Apology. In S. M. Gass & L. Selinker (Eds.), Language transfer in language learning (pp. 232-249). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Olshain, E. & Cohen, A. (1983). Apology: A speech act set. In N. Wolfson & E. Judd (Eds.), Sociolinguistics and second language acquisition (pp. 195-208). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Richards, J. C., & Sukwiwat, M. (1983). Language transfer and conversational competence. Applied Linguistics, 4(2), 113-125.
- Robinson, M. A. (1992). Introspective methodology in interlanguage pragmatics research. In G. Kasper (ed.), Pragmatics of Japanese as native and target language (Tech. Rep. No. 3) (pp. 27-82). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.
- Schmidt, R. W., & Richards, J. C. (1980). Speech acts and second language learning. Applied Linguistics, 1(2), 129-157.
- Searle, J. R. (1975). Indirect speech acts. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), Syntax and semantics 3: Speech acts (pp. 59-82). New York: Academic Press.

- Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Failure. Applied Linguistics, 4(2), 91-112.
- Thomas, J. (1995). Meaning in interaction: an introduction to pragmatics. London: Longman.
- Ueda, K. (1974). Sixteen ways to avoid saying "no" in Japan. In J. C. Condon & M. Saito (Eds.), Intercultural encounters with Japan: Communication---contact and conflict (pp. 185-192). Tokyo: Simul Press.
- Uyeno, T. (1971). A study of Japanese modality-A performative analysis of sentence particles. Unpublished dissertaion. University of Michigan.
- Walters, J. (1980). Grammar, meaning, and sociocultural appropriateness in second language acquisition. Canadian Journal of Psychology, 34, 337-345.
- Watts, R. (1992). Linguistic politeness and politic verbal behaviour: Reconsidering claims for universality. In R. J. Watts, S. Ide, & K. Ehlich (Eds.), Politeness in language (pp. 44-69). Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1991a). Cross-cultural pragmatics. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1991b). Japanese key words and core cultural values. Language in Society, 20, 333-385.
- Wolfson, N. (1981). Compliments in cross-cultural perspective. TESOL Quarterly, 15, 117-124.
- Wolfson, N. (1983). Rules of speaking. In J. Richards & J. Schmidt (Eds.), Language and communication (pp. 61-87). London: Longman.
- Wolfson, N. (1989). Perspectives: Sociolinguistics and TESOL. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House.
- Yokoyama, S. (1993). Nihongo ni okeru 'nihonjin no nihonjin ni taisuru kotowari' to 'nihonjin no amerikajin ni taisuru kotowari' no hikaku: Shakaigengogaku no reberu deno forinaa tooku [Japanese refusals to other Japanese and non-Japanese (Americans): Is there any difference?]. Nihongo Kyoiku, 81, 141-151.

APPENDIX A  
BACKGROUND INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. 偽名：\_\_\_\_\_ 2. 年齢：\_\_\_\_\_ 3. 性別：男／女

4. 母語：\_\_\_\_\_ 5. 出身地：\_\_\_\_\_

6. 現在、立命館大学( )年生 7. 専攻：\_\_\_\_\_

～日本で～

8-1. 英語に接する時間：一日およそ( )時間

8-2. a. アルバイトの経験：有／無 b. 職種：\_\_\_\_\_

～カナダで～

9-1. 日本語に接する時間：一日およそ( )時間

英語に接する時間：一日およそ( )時間

9-2. ほとんどの時間を一緒に過ごすのは：

- a. ( )日本人の友達 b. ( )カナダ人の友達  
c. ( )日本人の教授／スタッフ d. ( )カナダ人の教授／スタッフ  
e. ( )その他：\_\_\_\_\_

9-3. 上記の人(達)と話す時は、ほとんど：

- a. ( )日本語 b. ( )英語 c. ( )その他：\_\_\_\_\_

10. 英語を話す時、何が一番難しいと思いますか(何に一番気を付けますか)。

11. 日本語を話す時、難しいと思うこと、気を付けることは何ですか。

12. 一週間以上海外で過ごした経験があれば、その 1) 時、2) 場所、3) 期間、4) 目的を書いてください。

## APPENDIX B

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE****Interlanguage Pragmatics Research  
The Case of Speech Act Refusals**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide the researcher with comprehensive information concerning your experience in Japanese language learning. Information provided through the questionnaire will be very helpful for the researcher to analyze collected data in detail. Please remember that you will use a **PSEUDONYM** (false name) for your identification. Please **DO NOT USE YOUR NAME**. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

1. Pseudonym: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Hometown: \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Sex: M / F 6. Native Language: \_\_\_\_\_ 7.

Have you ever studied any foreign language other than Japanese? ( ) Yes ( ) No

8. If you answered "yes" to question 6, please provide the following information:

Language(s)

Purpose of study

9. What is the purpose of your studying Japanese?

10. Length of Japanese Study: I have studied Japanese for \_\_\_\_\_.

11. Please list JAPANESE COURSES you are CURRENTLY taking:

course #

institution

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

12. Please list JAPANESE COURSES you PREVIOUSLY took (add more if any):

course #

institution

course #

institution

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

\_\_\_\_\_

( )

## 13. Proficiency Level in Japanese

I think my proficiency level in Japanese is beginner / intermediate / advanced.  
[circle one]

## 14. Most Recent Record in Proficiency Test

I have / haven't taken "The Japanese Proficiency Test" (Japan Foundation).  
[circle one]

I passed / failed at level \_\_\_\_\_ last time I took in \_\_\_\_\_.  
[circle one] [M / Yr]

## 15. I am a \_\_\_\_\_ year undergraduate student at UBC / other: \_\_\_\_\_.

My specialization / major is / would be \_\_\_\_\_.

## 16. Language for Daily Use

I speak \_\_\_\_\_ at home, and have had my education in \_\_\_\_\_.

17. I live in a homestay / Seminar House.  
[circle one]

## 18. What do you think is most difficult in your Japanese language learning?

## 19. If you have stayed in Japan more than one week, please describe your visit(s) briefly concerning: when and where you went, how long you stayed there, what was the purpose of your visit(s), etc.



In the following section (20 - 28), please check one for each question.

20. How often do you have a chance to listen Japanese?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ sometimes in and outside the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ only in the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):
21. How often do you write Japanese?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ sometimes in and outside the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ only in the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):
22. How often do you read Japanese?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ sometimes in and outside the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ only in the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):
23. How often do you speak Japanese?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ sometimes in and outside the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ only in the Japanese class  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):

With whom?

24. How often do you read Japanese newspapers?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ 2 - 4 times a week  
\_\_\_ not at all  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):
25. How often do you read Japanese magazines (except for comic books)?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ 2 - 4 times a week  
\_\_\_ not at all  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):
26. How often do you read Japanese comic books?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ 2 - 4 times a week  
\_\_\_ not at all  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):
27. How often do you read Japanese novels?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ 2 - 4 times a week  
\_\_\_ not at all  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):
28. How often do you watch Japanese TV shows or videos?  
\_\_\_ almost every day  
\_\_\_ 2 - 4 times a week  
\_\_\_ not at all  
\_\_\_ other (please specify):

## APPENDIX C

## Discourse Completion Test (談話完成テスト)

---

Please read the following situations. Your task is to **refuse** the request, invitation, etc., and write your response in Japanese in the blank after "あなた" PLEASE RESPOND AS YOU WOULD IN ACTUAL CONVERSATION. (Please read out each response after writing it down in order to make sure that what you wrote was what you would most likely say in an actual conversation.) Take your time and do not worry about grammar or handwriting. Please ask me questions if you do not understand something on the test.

---

1. A Japanese professor, with whom you are taking a seminar, asks you if you could help him clip some newspaper articles (新聞の切り抜き). You have some free time, but you do not want to do it.

教授：木曜日の午後に新聞の切り抜きを手伝ってくれる学生を探しているんですが、やってもらえますか。

あなた：

2. You belong to a club. A group of younger club members is going to a soccer game, and one of them asks you if you would like to go with them. However, you do not feel like going.

後輩：今度の金曜日、クラブのみんなでサッカーの試合を見に行くんですけど、先輩 (or your name さん) も行きませんか。

あなた：

3. Your seminar professor invites you over for dinner, but you do not feel like going.

教授：今度の土曜日に、みんなを呼んでうちで食事でも、と思っているんですが。

あなた：

4. A younger member (後輩) of a club that you belong to has decided to take the course that you took last semester and asks you if s/he can borrow your textbook. You do not want to lend it to her/him.

後輩：来学期から、去年、先輩 (or your name さん) がとっていたのと同じ教授の国際経済論とるんです。同じ教科書を使うらしいんで、もし良かったら貸してほしいんですけど。

\* 国際経済論：International Economics

あなた：

5. Tomorrow afternoon's classes are cancelled (休講) and you have nothing particular to do. A friend asks you if you would like to go to a movie with her/him. But you do not want to go.

友達：明日の午後、休講なんだってね。映画見に行かない？

あなた：

6. Your friend sometimes sleeps late and misses a class that you are also taking. This happened again and s/he asks if s/he can borrow your lecture notes. You have the notes but you do not want to lend them to her/him.

友達：ごめん。悪いけど、昨日の講義のノート、また貸してくれる？

あなた：

7. You have to go back to your hometown to take care of some personal matters. Your seminar professor offers you a ride to the airport, but you are not very comfortable with the idea.

教授：空港だったら、車で行った方が早いでしょう。乗せて行ってあげますよ。

あなた：

8. You are cleaning the club office. A younger member of the club comes into the office and offers to take over the cleaning, but you would rather do it yourself.

後輩：あっ、先輩 (or your name さん)、私／僕がやりますから、いいですよ。

あなた：

9. A friend of yours has baked a cake. She gave you a piece, but it did not taste so good. Now she offers you another piece.

友達：ケーキ、もう一切れどう？

あなた：

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_