

Pragmatic Analysis of Request Dialogues in Junior High School English Textbooks

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Chapter 1 Introduction

❖ Aims

- ❖ to investigate the similarities and differences in the usage of requests between native speakers of English (NS) and junior high school English textbooks, and offer pedagogical implications based on the results of computational analyses

❖ Background

- ❖ Strict demand of acquiring English communication skills (Japan Today, 2014; Harvard Business Review, 2015)
 - ❖ Communication skill: “the knowledge that NS have acquired which enables them to interact *effectively* with one another” (Macaro, 2013)
- ❖ To carry out a conversation smoothly, Japanese learners of English should acquire pragmatics ability
- ❖ High school English production skills fell under the government’s expectation (The Japan Times, 2015).
- ❖ Textbooks are the main input: do they contain ‘meaningful’ contents in nurturing students’ communicative competence?
- ❖ Focus on the usage of request, as requesting is “an essential speech act that is frequently used in social interactions” (Wang, 2011).

Chapter 2 Review of Related Literature

Textbook Analyses from Pragmatics' Perspectives

- ❖ Konakahara (2011) pointed out the narrowness of contextual factors, stressing the importance of more input to enhance pragmatics learning
- ❖ Akutsu (2006) pointed out its excessive use of direct strategies, and not as many indirect level of sentences were included in the textbooks.
- ❖ Yamamori, *et al.* (2003) urge teachers to instruct according to the characteristics of each textbook, as they show different distributions of factors, and concluded that contexts should be more specific.
- ❖ Negishi (1990) pointed out that they do not adequately provide natural situations, or general language usage.
- ❖ Alemi, *et al.* (2013) found that the frequency of speech acts were not equal; hence ESL/EFL teachers need to ensure the quality of students' pragmatics learning.

Research of Requests in English Textbooks

- ❖ Kawamura (2002) found that Japanese textbooks do not necessarily reflect the difficulty level of politeness in order to make requests.
- ❖ Kaneko (2008) revealed that NS use variety of different requests according to the context; he proposed that teachers need to teach students requests with specific context to make them realize that language is spoken in a context
- ❖ Blum-Kulka, *et al.* (1989) conducted a research to compare the realization of the speech acts of requesting and apologizing of the seven languages and language varieties in the project of Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CSARP).
- ❖ Many investigations have been carried on English textbooks and requests, but most of them focus on the textbook itself or making comparisons with other similar textbooks.

Chapter 3 Method

- ❖ **Q1:** What type of requests are presented in each grade level of junior high school textbooks authorized by MEXT?
- ❖ **H1:** The lower the grade level is, the more direct requests they use.
 - ❖ Ervin-Tripp *et al.*'s (1987): "low-level learners are likely to have problems selecting request strategies that are appropriate to different situations" (Ellis, 2008, p.174).
- ❖ **Q2:** Do the interlocutors presented in the dialogues use requests appropriately according to the context, compared to the native speakers of English?
- ❖ **H2:** The interlocutors do not use requests appropriately according to the context.
 - ❖ Thomas Kilburne-Gally (2006): pointed out some inappropriate polite expressions on junior high school English textbooks.
- ❖ **Q3:** If the requests are not used appropriately, what kind of requests do native speakers actually use? In what way are they different from the ones presented in the Japanese English textbooks?
- ❖ **H3:** I cannot predict the outcome until I actually examine the data collected from junior high school textbooks and a corpus.

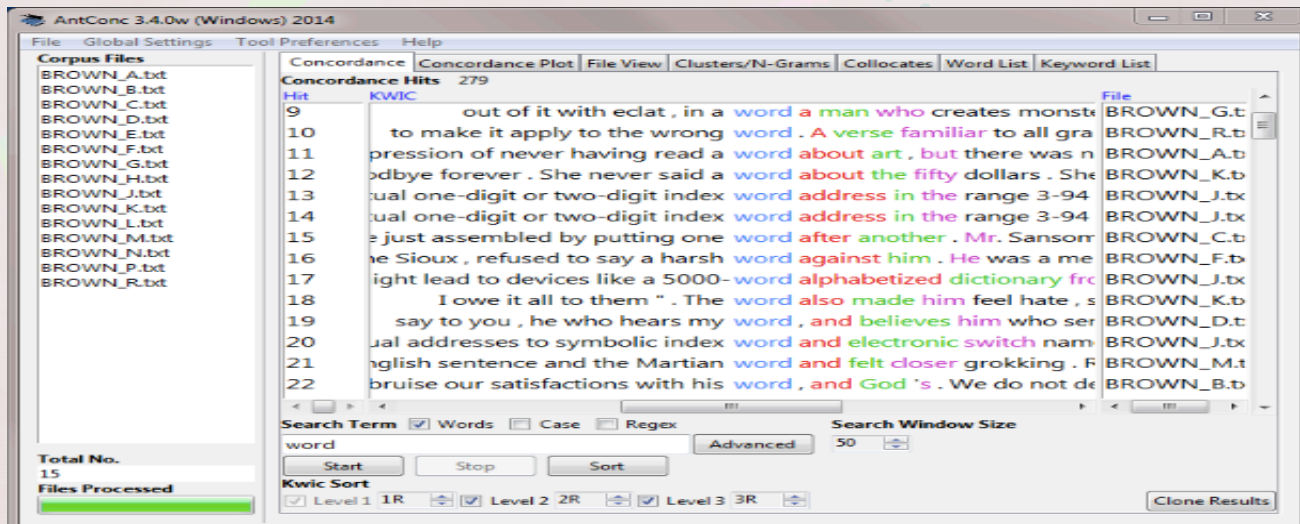
Junior High School English Textbooks Used in the Research

- ❖ *NEW CROWN English Series 1, 2, and 3*
 - ❖ published by *Sanseido Co., Ltd.*
 - ❖ authorized by MEXT in 2011
 - ❖ extensively used in Japan



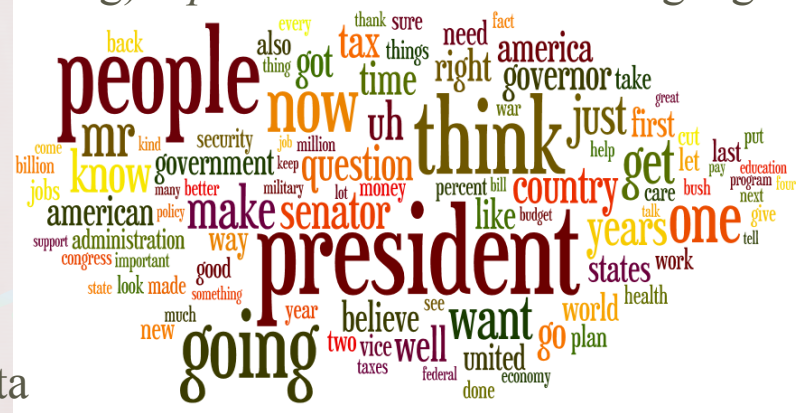
Freeware Corpus Toolkit: *AntCoc*

- ❖ Created by Lawrence Anthony, Ph.D
- ❖ Seven tools: (1) Concordance, (2) Concordance Plot, (3) File View, (4) Clusters / N-Grams, (5) Collocates, (6) Word List, and (7) Keyword List
 - ❖ Used 'Corcondance' tool to collect the request dialogues from text data



What is a Corpus?

- ❖ “[...] They are generally assembled with particular purposes in mind, and are often assembled to be (informally speaking) *representative* of some language or text type” (Leech, 1992).
- ❖ Four specific features:
 1. machine-readable
 2. authentic text(s): includes spoken data
 3. a representative sample of particular language or language variety
 4. various metadata: sex, age, etc. (sociolinguistic variables of a speaker)
- ❖ Thousands of corpora available: general, specialized, synchronic, diachronic, learner, and monitor corpora



Corpus used in the research

- ❖ British National Corpus (BNC)
 - ❖ 100, 106, 008 words (appr.100 million words)
 - ❖ 90% written texts and 10% transcripts of spoken data
 - ❖ spoken data were gathered on the basis of two criteria: ‘demographic’ and ‘context-governed’.
- ❖ To compare with request dialogues presented in the junior high school English textbooks



Data of the native speakers of English used in the research

❖ BNC web

- ❖ “a web-based client program for searching and retrieving lexical, grammatical and textual data from the BNC” (Retrieved from <http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/BNCweb/>).
- ❖ fast speech of processing
- ❖ constructed easy enough for beginners

Main menu		BNCweb (CQP-Edition)		
Query options		Restricted Range of Spoken Texts / Speakers		
Standard query		Query string: <input type="text"/>		
Written restrictions		Query mode: <input type="text" value="Simple query (ignore case)"/>		
Spoken restrictions		Number of hits per page: <input type="text" value="50"/>		
User-specific functions		<input type="button" value="Start Query"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/>		
User settings				
Query history				
Saved queries				
Categorized queries				
Make/edit subcorpora				
Upload external data file				
Additional functions		General Restrictions for Spoken Texts:		
Browse a text		Overall:		
Scan keywords/titles		Interaction Type:		
Explore genre labels		Region where Spoken Text was Captured:		
Frequency lists		<input type="checkbox"/> Demographically sampled		
Keywords		<input type="checkbox"/> Context-governed		
About BNCweb		<input type="checkbox"/> Monologue		
BNCweb book		<input type="checkbox"/> Dialogue		
The BNCweb team				
New features		Genre (description of codes):		
Bug reports		<input type="checkbox"/> S:brdcast:discussion		
The CLAWS-5 tagset		<input type="checkbox"/> S:brdcast:documentary		
Oxford BNC homepage		<input type="checkbox"/> S:brdcast:news		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:classroom		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:consult		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:conv		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:courtroom		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:demonstratn		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:interview		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:interview:oral_history		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:commerce		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:humanities_arts		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:nat_science		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:polit_law_edu		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:soc_science		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:meeting		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:parliament		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:pub_debate		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:sermon		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:speech:scripted		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:speech:unscripted		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:sportslive		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:tutorial		
		<input type="checkbox"/> S:unclassified		

Version 4.3, November 2013

Data Analysis of the Junior High School English Textbooks

- ❖ Broke down each request based on ‘Request Strategies’ created by Blum-Kulka, *et al.* (1989)

<i>Level of directness</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Semantic formulas</i>
Direct	1. Mood-derivable	You shut up.
	2. Performative	I am telling you to shut up.
	3. Hedged performative	I would like to ask you to shut up.
	4. Locution-derivable	I want you to shut up.
Conventionally indirect	5. Suggestory formulae	Let's play a game.
	6. Query-preparatory	Can you draw a horse for me?
Non-conventionally indirect	7. Strong hint	This game is boring.
	8. Mild hint	We've been playing this game for over an hour now.

Notes. Adapted from “The Study of Second Language Acquisition,” by Ellis, R., 2008, p.173

- ❖ Categorized each request presented in dialogues in *NEW CROWN English Series* as shown below:

Strategy	Requests	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Ninth Grade
Direct Strategies	Object			
	Object with please			
	Imperative			
	Imperative with please			
Conventionally Indirect Strategies	Can I [...] ?			
	Can you [...] ?			
	Will you [...] ?			
	Could you [...] ?			
	Would you [...] ?			
	May I [...] ?			
	Is it all right/ okay if [...] ?			
	I wonder/was wondering (if) [...] ?			
Non-conventionally Indirect Strategies	Would/ Do you mind [...] ?			

The categorical framework by Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989) with added forms of requests by the author

Data Analyses of the BNC

- ❖ Step 1: Select the ‘Spoken restrictions’ just under the far left bar of ‘Query options’

Main menu	BNCweb (CQP-Edition)
Query options	Standard Query
Standard query	
Written restrictions	
Spoken restrictions	
User-specific functions	
User settings	
Query history	
Saved queries	
Categorized queries	
Make/edit subcorpora	
Upload external data file	
Additional functions	

Query mode: [Simple Query Syntax help](#)

Number of hits per page:

Restriction:

- ❖ Step 2: In the box of ‘Query string’, you can search any words and/ or expressions; in this case, *Can you*, with ‘Simple query (case sensitive)’ selected.

Restricted Range of Spoken Texts / Speakers

Query string:

Query mode:

Number of hits per page:

- ❖ Step 3: Scroll down the interface, and select *Dialogue* for ‘Interaction Type’; for ‘Genre’ pick *S: classroom* and *S: conv* for informal situations, and *S: interview* and *S: meeting* for formal contexts.

General Restrictions for Spoken Texts:		
Overall:	Interaction Type:	Region where Spoken Text was Captured:
<input type="checkbox"/> Demographically sampled <input type="checkbox"/> Context-governed	<input type="checkbox"/> Monologue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue	<input type="checkbox"/> South <input type="checkbox"/> Midlands <input type="checkbox"/> North
Genre (description of codes):		
<input type="checkbox"/> S:brdcast:discussn <input type="checkbox"/> S:brdcast:documentary <input type="checkbox"/> S:brdcast:news <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S:classroom <input type="checkbox"/> S:consult <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S:conv <input type="checkbox"/> S:courtroom <input type="checkbox"/> S:demonstratn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S:interview <input type="checkbox"/> S:interview:oral_history <input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:commerce <input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:humanities_arts <input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:nat_science <input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:polit_law_edu <input type="checkbox"/> S:lect:soc_science <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S:meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> S:parliament <input type="checkbox"/> S:pub_debate <input type="checkbox"/> S:sermon <input type="checkbox"/> S:speech:scripted <input type="checkbox"/> S:speech:unscripted <input type="checkbox"/> S:sportslive <input type="checkbox"/> S:tutorial <input type="checkbox"/> S:unclassified

- ❖ The results, in the case of *Can you* appeared as follows (988 instances were found):

Your query "Can you" restricted to "Type of Interaction: Dialogue and Genre: S:classroom or S:conv or S:interview or S:meeting" returned 988 hits in 215 different texts (6,024,378 words [336 texts]; frequency: 164 instances per million words) [0.071 seconds - retrieved from cache]

<

<<

>>

>

Show Page:

1

Show KWIC View

Show in random order

New Query

Go!

No	Filename	Hits 1 to 50	Page 1 / 20
1	D97 1402	Can you find out more [unclear] ?	
2	DCH 24 ¶)	Can you put your surname and address, so I can send you the minutes after this.	
3	DCH 419 ¶)	Can you give us a copy?	
4	F72 443	Can you sit nice and still please, on your bottoms, without touching anybody next to you.	
5	F72 714	Can you be quiet please, so that we can hear the people who want to speak.	
6	F72 876	Can you think of a word to describe that jungle where the girl went?	
7	F77 8 ¶)	Can you come through please.	
8	F77 71 ¶)	Can you remember that, when you did lino printing?	
9	F77 285 ¶)	Can you move round this side a bit.	
10	F77 295 ¶)	Can you see it alright from where you are?	
11	F77 329 ¶)	Can you sniff it?	
12	F77 430 ¶)	Can you not use the same bit [pause] twice?	
13	F77 497 ¶)	Can you check the watch again?	
14	F7A 1118 ¶)	Can you let me have a copy of the [pause] [unclear] lease [pause] as soon as you can?	
15	F7C 629	Can you not have a national logo which is kind of personal wise	

❖ Step 4: Choose ‘BNC thinning Option’ – a tool to randomly sample particular expressions

❖ 50 sentences were selected: enough for the investigation

BNC Thinning Options

Query thinning: (number of instances or percentage)

❖ The final results of 50 randomly-sampled instances appeared as follows:

1	F7C 797	Can you get, can you give me the name erm, the rest of the [unclear]
2	FY9 185 ⚡)	Can you find out how many flies, one swallow would eat in one hour?
3	JAA 443 ⚡)	Can you explain what is happening?
4	JTA 717 ⚡)	Can you can you try and er erm make some er plea for erm factory stab-- on the basis of factory stability.
5	KB0 2716 ⚡)	Can you pull that off?
6	KB8 1940	Can you see the buds [pause] on the conker trees?
7	KB8 2110	Can you hear the birds singing?
8	KB8 2139	Can you see the wind blowing the leaves?
9	KB8 3008 ⚡)	Can you drink it?
10	KBD 1580 ⚡)	Can you ?
11	KBD 5516 ⚡)	Can you just tell, I can ask if my photocopier part's in?
12	KBF 2180 ⚡)	Can you come on the neo-- have you come on the insurance?
13	KBG 3044 ⚡)	Can you just hold that?
14	KBH 5528 ⚡)	Can you remember?
15	KBK 4235 ⚡)	Can you , can you breed your own fur coat?
16	KBK 5040 ⚡)	Can you see, that ball weighs about a pound, so gotta be able to
17	KBM 1305 ⚡)	Can you say er, can, can you tell me the way to the nearest post office please?
18	KBU 889 ⚡)	Can you take the [unclear] ?
19	KBW 2219 ⚡)	Can you see [unclear] .
20	KBW 4874 ⚡)	Can you get a nice [unclear] .
21	KBW 6192 ⚡)	Can you be a path finder leader on the Sunday because [unclear]
22	KBW 10861 ⚡)	Can you what?
23	KBW 15826	Can you remember what made it sink to the bottom?
24	KBW 16026	Can you go and explain it to Mrs [gap:name] when she's finished talking to Christopher?
25	KBW 16577 ⚡)	Can you get up to five, fives?

❖ Step 5: Examine each sentence to determine the ‘Degree of Familiarity’ based on the context

❖ Vulgar expressions; ex.: *Will you stop it.* (File: KDM 9082)

❖ Implication of intimacy; ex.: *Can you put that away for me love?* (File: KPI 8962)

❖ As for the ‘Situation’, *S: conv*, *S: classroom*, *S: meeting*, or *S: interview* is annotated for every dialogues.

Chapter 4 Results

Q1: What type of requests are presented in each grade level of junior high school textbooks authorized by MEXT?

- ❖ A total of 10 direct strategies and 12 conventionally indirect strategies were presented in request dialogues from grades seven to nine.
 - ❖ Seventh → Eighth: direct strategies decreases, but conventionally indirect strategies remain the same
 - ❖ Eighth → Ninth: direct strategies decreases slightly, but conventionally indirect strategies increase tremendously
- ❖ No non-conventionally indirect strategies were observed; ex.: *You left some garbage on the table!* or *It's very hot in here.*

Strategy	Requests	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Ninth Grade
Direct Strategies	Object			
	Object with please	p.90, p.114	p.64	
	Imperative	p.48	p.10, p.48	p.10, p.99
	Imperative with please	p.23, p.48		
Conventionally Indirect Strategies	Can I [...] ?	p.90		
	Can you [...] ?	p.82, 90		
	Will you [...] ?		p.76	
	Could you[...] ?			p.10, p.90
	Would you [...] ?			p.34, p.78
	May I [...] ?		p.64, p.115	p.34, p.90
	Is it all right/ okay if [...] ?			
	I wonder/was wondering (if) [...] ?			
	Would/ Do you mind [...] ?			
Non-conventionally Indirect Strategies	None	None	None	None

Page numbers of request dialogues that appear in the NEW CROWN English Series

Q2: Do the interlocutors presented in the dialogues use requests appropriately according to the context compared to the native speakers of English?

Direct strategy of *Object* (with *please*)

- ❖ Use of advanced computational formula: [pos="N.*\$"][word="please"]
- ❖ 47 instances omitted; ex.: complete sentences
- ❖ Situations: conversational settings
- ❖ Familiarity: one familiar (between mother and daughter); two instances not assumable from the context

<i>Situations</i>	<i># of instances</i>
S: conv	3
	3

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	1
Unfamiliar	0
Undefined	2
	3

Direct strategy of *Imperative* (with *please*)

- ❖ Use of advanced mode: [pos="VVB.*"] [word="please"]
- ❖ 32 instances omitted: complete sentences, and ones not considered as requests; ex.: *Say please*. (Files: KC2 837, KC22013 and KDV 3054)
- ❖ Situations: 10 in conversation, six in classrooms, and two in meetings
- ❖ Familiarity: 17 familiar; ex.: family, teacher and students

<i>Situation</i>	<i># of instances</i>
S: conv	10
S: classrooms	6
S: meetings	2
	18

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	17
Unfamiliar	0
Undefined	1
	18

Conventionally indirect strategy of *Can I [...]* ?

- ❖ 17 instances omitted: incomplete sentences (verb and/or object droppings); ex.: *Can I, can I madam, please, if I may* (File: D96 23), and implications of interlocutors' physical abilities; ex.: *Can I summarize?* (File: F7F 618)
- ❖ Situations: 26 meetings and seven classrooms
- ❖ Familiarity: 15 familiar, six unfamiliar, and 12 undefined (not assumable from the context)

<i>Situations</i>	<i># of instance</i>
S: meeting	26
S: classroom	7
	33

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	15
Unfamiliar	6
Undefined	12
	33

Conventionally indirect strategy of *Can you [...]* ?

- ❖ 27 instances omitted: incomplete sentences (verb droppings); ex.: *Can you not [...]* (File: KDN 3404), *Can you what?* (File: KBW 10861), and implications of interlocutors' physical abilities; ex.: *Can you see the buds on the conker trees?* (File: KB8 1940), and *Can you see rabbit?* (File: KDP 1984)
- ❖ Situations: 18 in conversations, three in classrooms, and two in meetings
- ❖ Familiarity: 16 familiar, one unfamiliar, and six undefined.

<i>Situations</i>	<i># of instances</i>
S: conv	18
S: classroom	3
S: meeting	2
	23

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	16
Unfamiliar	1
Undefined	6
	23

Conventionally indirect strategy of *Will you [...]* ?

- ❖ 10 instances omitted: implication of physical abilities; ex.: *Will you remember me in a million years?* (File: KBG 3202), incomplete sentences; ex.: *Will you reme [...]* (File: KCH 3932), and dialogue from a book
- ❖ Situations: 36 in conversations and four in meetings
- ❖ Familiarity: 26 familiar, one unfamiliar, and 13 undefined

<i>Situations</i>	<i># of instances</i>
S: conv	36
S: meeting	4
	40

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	26
Unfamiliar	1
Undefined	13
	40

Conventionally indirect strategy of *Could you [...]* ?

- ❖ Six instances omitted: verb droppings; ex.: *Could you [...]* (File: KD8 7872), and implication of physical abilities; ex: *Could you imagine it though going into so-- somewhere like Dotty's or whatever and saying well* (File: KCU 4889)
- ❖ Situations: 18 in conversations, 14 in meetings, 10 in classrooms, and two in interview
- ❖ Familiarity: 30 familiar, five unfamiliar, and nine undefined

<i>Situations</i>	<i># of instances</i>
S: conv	18
S: meeting	14
S: classroom	10
S: interview	2
	44

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	30
Unfamiliar	5
Undefined	9
	44

Conventionally indirect strategy of *Would you [...]* ?

- ❖ Three instances omitted: lack of verb or objects; ex.: *Would you righty nine?* (File: KCT 8920) or *Would you like your [...]* (File: KBL 2908)
- ❖ Situations: 36 in conversations, seven in meetings, three in classrooms , and one in interview
- ❖ Familiarity: 17 familiar, six unfamiliar, and 24 undefined

<i>Situations</i>	<i># of instances</i>
S: conv	36
S: meeting	7
S: classroom	3
S: interview	1
	47

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	17
Unfamiliar	6
Undefined	24
	47

Conventionally indirect strategy of *May I* [...] ?

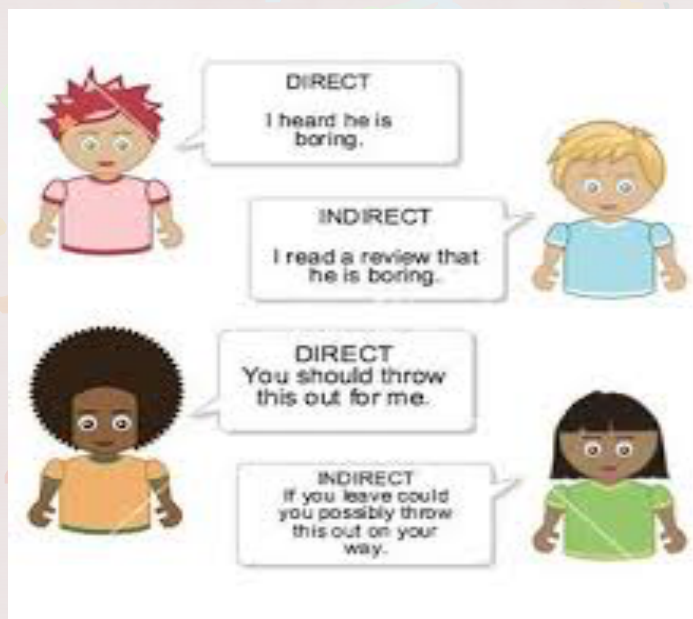
- ❖ Eight instances omitted: reading; ex.: *May I have some food*. (File: F72 139)
- ❖ Situations: 28 in meetings, and 14 in conversations
- ❖ Familiarity: 15 familiar, 23 unfamiliar, and four undefined

<i>Situations</i>	<i># of instances</i>
S: meeting	28
S: conv	14
	42

<i>Degree of Familiarity</i>	<i># of instances</i>
Familiar	15
Unfamiliar	23
Undefined	4
	42

Q3: If the requests are not used appropriately, what kind of requests do native speakers actually use? In what way are they different from the ones presented in the Japanese English textbooks?

- ❖ Previous studies showed both learners and NS chose more polite strategies with increased social distance; however, the data revealed that even the interlocutors with relatively close social distance use polite requests, like *Could you [...]* ?
 - ❖ Refer to the chart of *Irai Hyougen no Teineido Handan*, or 'Judgment of Appropriateness of Requests (translation mine)' (Aoki, 1987)
- ❖ Small children actually use conventionally indirect strategies such as *May I burrow [...]* ? (File: KB8 10564).
 - ❖ James (1978): Children between the ages of four and five were able to adjust the level of politeness according to the age of an addressee.



Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Discussions of the First Research Question

Q1: What type of requests are presented in each grade level of junior high school textbooks authorized by MEXT?

- ❖ The higher the grade levels were, the more indirect requests they use in the request dialogues of *NEW CROWN English Series*.
 - ❖ First time learners of English do not have enough lexical knowledge, as suggested by Negishi (1990).
 - ❖ Nurturing grammatical knowledge is on the top priority in the early stage of learning English (Ellis).

5.2 Discussions of the Second Research Question

Q2: Do the interlocutors presented in the dialogues use requests appropriately according to the context compared to the native speaker of English?

- ❖ The hypothesis that interlocutors do not use requests appropriately according to the context was not something I can judge entirely because of the limited number of instances I examined for analyses.

5.2.1 Discussions of the usage of direct strategy of *Object (with please)*

- ❖ The form of *Object (with please)* is not very commonly used among NS unless the speaker is in a small age.
- ❖ Textbook seems to show politeness as in the case on *NEW CROWN English Series 1* (p.90) where the addresser asks the addressee on the phone regarding take-home assignment:

Raj: Hello.

Emma: Hello. This is Emma. // Can I speak to Raj, please?

Raj: Speaking. What's up?

Emma: Can you help me with tomorrow's math homework? // I can't get an answer to it.

Raj: Sure. Is it Question 1 or 2?

Emma: Question 2, please.

- ❖ However, it is not entirely appropriate to judge above dialogues as inadequate.

5.2.2 Discussions of the usage of direct strategy of *Imperative (with please)*

- ❖ *Imperative (with please)* is commonly used among speakers with close social distance such as brothers: move please (File: KD6 3266) in which the addresser was older than the other.
- ❖ It can also be seen in the classroom situation to warn or make attention to students: Listen please. // *Erm each pair each pair no I haven't just listen [...]* (File: KP3 57).
- ❖ It might be impolite to use imperatives, even with *please*, to anyone who is older than the addresser, except when giving directions (Asano 2004).

5.2.3 Discussions on the usage of conventionally indirect strategy of *Can I [...]* ?

- ❖ *NEW CROWN English Series 1*, *Can I [...]* ? is frequently used between interlocutors with quite a degree of familiarity; in this case, a teacher and students:
 - ❖ It's on your chart Can I just write this on the wall, then I'll come back Right, pens down everybody then please, pens down who's feeling very brave this morning? (File: F7R 237)
- ❖ However, the results also show that *Can I [...]* ? is also used among speakers with relatively low degree of familiarity:
 - ❖ Can I say, I, I can express concern about that because I think that in terms of funding I've written A short term and B long term erm I think we've got a short term problem and [...] (File: F7C 562)
 - ❖ Can I, can I just say chairman, finally for point of clarification in case there's any doubt about it I'm not looking to turn it into the, into an absolutely like efficient business you know and everything succumbs to that. (File: F7A 445)

5.2.4 Discussions of the usage of conventionally indirect strategy of *Can you [...] ?*

- ❖ As shown in *NEW CROWN English Series 1*, *Can you [...] ?* is commonly used between the interlocutors of the same status – students, in this case:

Emma: Hello. This is Emma. // Can I speak to Raj, please?

Raj: Speaking. What's up?

Emma: Can you help me with tomorrow's math homework? // I can't get an answer to it.

Raj: Sure. Is it Question 1 or 2?

Emma: Question 2, please.

- ❖ It may be impolite to use it if the interlocutor is older, or with upper social status
- ❖ Relatively used in familiar settings:
 - ❖ Can you put that away for me love? (File: KP1 8962)
 - ❖ Can you turn it up again Daddy? (File: KE3 7663)
- ❖ The use of *Can you [...] ?* used in the unfamiliar context:
 - ❖ Can you say er, can, can you tell me the way to the nearest post office please? (File: KBM 1305)

5.2.5 Discussions of the usage of conventionally indirect strategy of *Will you [...]* ?

- ❖ The seventh grade textbook shows a telephone conversation between Kumi and her friend's father.
- ❖ The data shows that such requests are most frequently used among interlocutors with high degree of familiarity, such as family and friends:
 - ❖ *Will you sit on the chair, open your mouth, let him stick a mirror in?* (File: KBW 17944)
 - ❖ *Will you stop laughing.* (File: KGX 254)
- ❖ Such form of requests is also used in unfamiliar situation in which the addresser is in higher position than the other:
 - ❖ *Will you come back to me in terms of who you want to invite, taking on Liz Kermey's point about involving people themselves if they so wish, and we'll consult with the opposition liaison member and the vice-chair.* (File: KS1 664)
- ❖ It can be seen on the *Irai Hyougen no Teineido Handan* [Judgment of Appropriateness on Requests (translation mine)] (Aoki, 1987) in which Japanese speakers of English considered it as relatively polite (0.112) while NS thought of it as relatively impolite (-0.045).

5.2.6 Discussions of the usage of conventionally indirect strategy of *Could you [...]* ?

- ❖ *Could you [...]* ? is not only used between the persons with low degree of familiarity but also among those with high degree of familiarity like close friends, family, and a teacher and students.
 - ❖ Could you *could you write thief?* (File: FMF 51)
 - ❖ Could you *go and ask her how many bags she's got?* (File: MBW 18356)
- Again, if you refer to the chart of *Irai Hyōgen no Teineido Handan* [Judgment of Appropriateness on Requests (translation mine)] (Aoki, 1987), the judgment of politeness of *Could you [...]* ? differs between native speakers of English and Japanese learners of English; whereas the former is 0.136, the latter scored 0.632.

5.2.7 Discussions of the usage of conventionally indirect strategy of *Would you [...]* ?

- ❖ It is used in the conversation between interlocutors with close social distance
 - ❖ Would you like to pass your bowl over (File: KBW 1667)
 - ❖ Would you like a biscuit too with your wine? (File: KC2 804)
- ❖ It can also be used at a shop in which a staff asks the customer if he or she needs the receipt of purchase.
 - ❖ Would you like your receipt? (File: KC9 773)

5.2.8 Discussions of the usage of conventionally indirect strategy of *May I [...]* ?

- ❖ It is used in relatively formal situations such as meetings between unfamiliar interlocutors
- ❖ The eighth grade textbook shows:

A: May I use your computer?

B: Certainly.

- However, it may not be appropriate to use *May I [...]* ? in the conversation between the interlocutors with the same age, or with high degree of familiarization, although it should also be pointed out that *May I [...]* ? was also used in the family conversation: *May I have some more to eat?* (File: KBW 10899)

5.3 Discussions of Third Research Question

- ❖ Polite requests were also used among speakers with high degree of familiarity and also children who are NS.
- ❖ English is very complex and something that cannot be easily defined, but something that changes according to the context.
- ❖ It should be noted that textbooks only present specific situations, and do not adequately specify variety of situations in which requests are used.

5.4 Importance of the Research

- ❖ Textbooks do not necessarily reflect the general use of languages due to its limited context in the dialogue.
 - ❖ polite requests are not only used among interlocutors with distant relationship but also ones between close relationships.
- ❖ They do not adequately show the social factors such as age, sex, familiarity of the speakers
- ❖ The explanation of each request forms seems to be lacking.
- ❖ Pedagogical implications: at least make students familiarize with the use of requests is required for teachers in order to let students judge the appropriateness depending upon the context.

5.5 Limitations of the Research

1. The research itself turned out to be slightly subjective when determining the 'Degree of Familiarity' among the speakers.
2. There were no definite criteria as to what extent I should say *familiar* or *unfamiliar*.
3. It is may not be appropriate to generalize the results for I have only used *NEW CROWN English Series*.

5.6 Future Work

- ❖ Interested in looking at actual usages of requests in business settings among Japanese speakers of English
- ❖ Investigate the dialogues in high school English textbooks from pragmatics perspectives
- ❖ The usage of requests from cultural perspectives

Chapter 6 Conclusion

- ❖ Investigated the request dialogues in junior high school English textbooks to compare with the actual usage of requests among native speakers of English.
- ❖ Three findings:
 - ❖ The higher the grade levels are, the more indirect requests being presented in the textbooks.
 - ❖ The interlocutors may not necessarily be using the requests appropriately according to the text, although the data of some requests were not enough to conclude.
 - ❖ The polite requests which Japanese usually have in common with is actually used in the family or friends' conversations.
- ❖ Textbooks should contain more variety of contexts

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Thank you for listening!

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