

Remedying the Problematic Situation Using Apologies: The Case Study of American and Japanese Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

This study investigates how Japanese non-native English-speaking students and American native English-speaking students in an American University remedy problematic situation that require apologies. In order to achieve this aim, data was collected from seven participants using the Discourse Completion Task (DCT), emails and follow up interview. Participants gave their responses to different situations presented to them. Data was analyzed qualitatively in order to find the different linguistic patterns in both NS and NNS responses and interpret them accordingly. This study revealed that the usage of apologetic expression itself by both groups didn't significantly different in all the situations provided in the DCT. However, it was confirmed there were some differences regarding the use of interjections, politeness strategies that could have the potential to cause them to misjudge each other. This study suggests language teachers encourage their students to reflect on their own beliefs and values that could be different from that of other language speakers, and to learn appropriate ways to communicate with people depending on hearer's values and assumptions on speech act.

Keywords: apology, cross-cultural pragmatics, pragmatic development, L1 transfer, pragmatic competence.

The present study analyzes responses to remedy situations of native and non-native speakers in an American university. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory focused on face theory (LoCastro, 2012) where interlocutor or speaker's face is saved. Thus, apology speech acts signify one humbling oneself and it can be complex interactions when people attempt to simplify them to say *sorry* or no apology at all. Therefore, it is important to note that apology has different social meaning where it is used for different situations to save speaker's face and interlocutor's in order to remedy or satisfy the offended interlocutor's needs and wants. Hence, it can be problematic in some cultures where there is a high expectation in apologizing while it is not considered as high stake in another culture. This means that social behavior may be different in one's native and target language culture, hence, causing pragmatic failure where apology speech act can be interpreted differently.

In addition, apology is defined as an act of saving one's face and the interlocutor's face after an offence has been committed (Guan, Park, & Lee, 2009). Due to the differences in the way apology is perceived between native speakers and nonnative speakers, native speakers often consider international students to be impolite. Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) states that nonnative speakers are often direct when expressing politeness act. When using a target language, doing or saying something wrong is not desirable in intercultural encounters because it can result in pragmatic failure where native speakers will have the wrong perception of nonnative speakers. Hence, English language learners should be equipped with appropriate linguistic resources that will help to develop their pragmatic competence in this speech act. In this light, apology speech act is important to this study as we will examine the cross-cultural differences between American native students and Japanese students.

Considering the number of international students in the United States and as we interact with native speakers of English, we observed that international students and native English-speaking students express politeness differently when expressing apology speech act in different situations.

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Since the process of learning and using a foreign language almost inevitably takes non-native speakers (NNSs) into situations in which they transgress a norm, learners need to know when and how to use remedial actions to compensate for their inappropriate behavior. (Smith, 2015).

Based on the research literature reviews, the hypothesis would be that Japanese the use of *I am sorry* or other apologetic expressions could be different quantitatively and qualitatively than that of native speakers because of cross-cultural or interlanguage pragmatic issues, which has the potential to cause misjudging or stereotyping to each other. Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz (as cited in Kotani, 2010) note that most people “interpret the other person’s way of speaking according to their own conventions” (p. 68), thus, how participants might interpret the other group’s use of apologetic expression and the cultural assumptions they hold will also be examined. The aim of this study is to investigate how Japanese non-native English-speaking students (JNNSs) and American native English-speaking students (NSs) in American University remedy problematic situations that require apologies. The research questions are:

1. What are the similarities and differences between American native speakers and Japanese non-native speakers of English in terms of how to remedy problematic situations?
2. Are there any differences between apologetic phrases used by native and non-native speakers?

Literature Review

Japanese Apologetic Word and Its Functions

The word *sumimasen* is commonly used in Japanese everyday discourse and it is used to express both gratitude and apology. Ide (1998) examine functional and contextual meaning of *sumimasen* from natural occurring conversation, and also to discuss the social meaning of the term through its everyday pragmatic usage. Data was collected in a naturally occurring conversation where participant were observed in their use of everyday language. Ide found seven multiple functions of *sumimasen* in the recorded data collected. They include; sincere apology, quasi-thanks and apology, request marker, attention-getting device, leave-taking device, affirmative and conformational response, and reciprocal exchange of acknowledgement. The meanings of the multiple function of *sumimasen* in public discourse in the data collected were examined and indicates that some use of *sumimasen* shows higher semantic explicitness as it depicts sincere regret expressed by the interlocutor. In that situation, *sumimasen* functioned as a remedial, compensating for the offense by showing indebtedness toward the other person, the hearer. Also, indicate ritualistic function, remedial and supportive function, and was used to improve social rapport. Ide also points out that *sumimasen* is used in public discourse to show indebtedness where the speaker is either expressing thanks or apologies, so it indicates formality and politeness.

Long (2010) studied the multiple pragmatic functions of the Japanese expression, *sumimasen*, in order to find out how apology expressions are used in a more general way to mark the boundaries of interlocutor role-relations. The participants were thirty-nine native Japanese speakers who are volunteers. DCT was used to get data from the participants. They were all given the same 11 situations when addressing six interlocutors of various social distance and power. The situations and effects of social distance and power the participants may experience over the use of apology and gratitude in all the 11 situations were investigated. The result shows that apology was used more towards superiors and non-intimates. Also, the expression of the interlocutors reflects different variation of apology from highly informal apology expression to highly formal. More apology was used in a situation where there is a burden on the hearer, and apology was used more in all the situation. The perceived burden was determined by the relationship between the interlocutors. Also, the apology and gratitude expressions are used based on interlocutor’s role-relations. It also reflects that the use of apology increased with a decrease in expectedness and simultaneous increase in regret.

Japanese and English Speakers' Views of Explanations and Apologies

Kotani (2016) examined speech codes used by Japanese and American university students in coping with problematic situations which require apologies. The author describes the both Japanese and English speakers’ assumptions, socially constructed premises, and rules regarding how to remedy such problematic interpersonal situations. She conducted in-depth interviews with 15 Japanese-speaking and nine English-speaking students in the American university and analyzed their narrative regarding their past problematic interpersonal situations in communication between Japanese and English speakers. The analysis revealed, in such problematic situations that require an apology, the Japanese-speaking participants viewed offering a detailed explanation as unnecessary since doing so can mean denying having caused the other discomfort, which cannot be compatible with an apology.

On the other hand, the English-speaking participants assumed offering explanations in situations that required an apology to be an appropriate action since they thought in doing so, one could deny the intentionality of the offense and disrespectful attitude toward the others. Thus, the one who receives such apology and explanation is expected to care about how and why the offense occurred by listening to the offender to forgive him or her.

Developing Pragmatic Competence in the EFL Context

Kondo (2004) explores how English learners in the EFL context, Japanese students at a junior college in Japan, can develop their pragmatic competence. The focus is on what kinds of pragmatic aspects the learners need to know to raise their awareness through explicit instruction in pragmatics. As a language teacher, the author worked with the aforementioned Japanese students in the junior college level classroom, and she gave instruction on speech acts to them once a week for 12 weeks. The goal of the course included raising awareness that the differences in performing speech acts by Japanese and Americans could cause misunderstandings between the two groups and that they might have a pragmatic knowledge that is transferable from their first language to the second language contexts. Provided, in class, with sample refusal situations and speech act strategies used by the Japanese and Americans in the situations, the students analyzed the differences of the speech acts by the both groups and discussed the reasons behind them while examining their own beliefs as Japanese that shaped their speech acts. The class discussion revealed that the explicit instruction successfully raised students' pragmatic awareness on the following aspects, which include the use of different refusal strategies among native speakers of Japanese, native English-speaking learners of Japanese, and American native speakers of English, the fact both Japanese and Americans attend to the face of an interlocutor and use politeness strategies in refusals, the pragmatic transfer from speaker's L1 in the speech acts, the fact such transfer might cause misunderstandings in refusal situations, the limitation of the linguistic ability of Japanese learners contributing to the difference in strategy choices.

Methodology

Participants

Participants were students of Minnesota State University, Mankato. Japanese participants, were all undergraduate students while the native speaker participants, were mix of graduate and undergraduate students.

Data collection Instruments

Discourse Completion Task, follow-up interviews and emails were used to elicit data from participants.

Although the DTC has been criticized, Ogiermann (2009) affirmed that the participants' responses will truly reflect the pragmatolinguistic and sociopragmatic norms of participants' L1 culture. In order to ensure that participants' responses are as natural as possible, the purpose of the data collection was not reviewed. Overall, six situations were created with different categories such as; accident, failure of fulfilling responsibility, and request. Below are the questions used in this study:

1. Accident

- Your friend from university is visiting your apartment. While you were reading the magazine she brought, you accidentally spill coffee over it.
- You are walking on a crowded street with your friends. You almost bump into a stranger who is coming toward you.

2. Failure of fulfilling responsibility

- You were supposed to meet your friend on campus to discuss a project for class, but you were 20 minutes late for the meeting because there was frost on your car. (And you couldn't call or text your friend to let him/her know you were coming late.) You meet your friend on campus
- You are an undergraduate student and have a presentation in pairs for class. Since you had a part time job one day before the presentation, your partner had to modify and complete the PowerPoint slides all by him/herself. You couldn't work together. On the day of the presentation, you meet him at school.

3. Request

- You are an undergraduate student. You are at the table for lunch with your advisor (professor). You want salt on the table, but you cannot reach it because it's near your advisor.

- You are an undergraduate student. You want to meet your professor (Imagine one of your professors you're working with.) to ask him/her for a paper extension. You also want to talk about why you need it in person. (You were sick in bed for a while.) You stick your head into the professor's office without an appointment.

Data Analysis

The participants' responses were analyzed based on their linguistic elements and categories of apology. Responses were analyzed based on each of the situations given to participants. Follow up emails from participants were also transcribed.

Findings

The seven participants provided 42 responses to all the situations in the DCT. The data collected from the DCT was analyzed based on their linguistic element and categories of apology.

As the Table 1 shows, in Question 1 where they were asked to remedy an accidental situation, the elements seen in the participants' response were 1) exclamatory words/phrases, 2) apologizing, 3), acceptance, 4) solution, and 5) explanation. It's not surprising to see all NSs and JNNSs expressed an apology by saying *I'm sorry* in such accidental situation where they have to bear full responsibility for a damaged item of their hearer. A striking difference, however, was seen in terms of the use of explanatory words or phrases. All the four NSs used a variety of emotive interjections such as *Ah, damn!, Oh, no!, and Oh my gosh!* while no JNNS employed such explanatory words or phrases as a first utterance of their response. In the follow-up interview and email correspondences J1 expressed the reason of the absence of an English interjection:

Participants (E1-E4 are NSs, J1-J3 are JNNSs)	Response	Elements that consist of the response				
		exclamatory words/phrases	Apologizing	Acceptance	Solution	Explanation
E1	Ah, damn! I'm sorry about that man, my bad.	Ah, damn!	I'm sorry	My bad		
E2	Oh, no! I'm so sorry! I'll go get something to clean that up quick.	Oh,no!	I'm sorry		I'll go get something to clean that up quick	
E3	Oh no! I'm so sorry!	Oh, no!	I'm sorry			
E4	Oh my gosh, I'm so sorry! I promise I'll buy you a new magazine right away!	Oh my gosh	I'm sorry		I promise I'll buy you a new magazine right away!	
J1	I was not on purpose, but I spilled my coffee, I am sorry. Can I buy another one for you?		I'm sorry		Can I buy another one for you?	I was not on purpose,
J2	I'm sorry.		I'm sorry			
J3	I'm sorry I spilled coffee on your magazine...		I'm sorry			I spilled coffee on your magazine...

Table 1. Responses on Question 1 (Spilling coffee)

I think that I would focus on action for example, cleaning coffee up or buying another magazine than saying “oh my gosh” or “oops” in this situation. Moreover, I feel like saying just “oh my gosh” is pretending being sorry. In other words, if someone said just “oh my gosh” in this situation, I feel that he/she actually don’t feel sorry. Lastly, I think Japanese don’t use exclamation because of our culture. That’s why I don’t use exclamation in this kind of situation. In the interview, she mentioned that she doesn’t feel comfortable enough to use English interjections as she thinks her using them would fail to show a sincere apology. As the Excerpt 1 shows, J1 thinks that she should focus on expressing a genuine apology to remedy the situation, and interjections are not necessary there. J1 also mentioned in the interview that the fact she is not fluent in English is another reason for the absence of English interjections.

In the Excerpt 1, J1 also expressed her own perspective on using interjections in accidental situations. For her, using English interjections is something that makes her sound superficial, thus, faking being sorry, and she also feels the same way when others use them to her. Another interesting difference is the use of the positive strategies between the two groups. In the Question 3, 5 (failure of fulfilling responsibility), 2, and 6 (requesting), NSs relatively showed a high usage of positive politeness strategies in their responses while JNNSs did not at all.

As Shown in Table 2, E1 and E2 used a discourse marker *hey* before apologizing in Question 3, and E4 also did so in Question 5 where they had to apologize (see, for example, Table 3). This discourse marker seems not only to function as attention-getting but also to show intimate relationship between the addresser and the addressees. Also, in the situations where they had to request something to a hearer (Question 2 and 6), E1 consistently used hearers’ first name for attention-getting even though they are advisers (professors), who are superior for him (see, for example, Table 4 and 5)

In response to a question about what’s in his mind when he says so, he answers as follows:

Participants	Response	Elements that consist of the response			
		Discourse marker	Apologizing	Explanation	Question
E1	Hey man sorry I’m late! My phone wasn’t working for some reason. I just had frost on my car and whatnot. I’m sorry about that.	Hey	Sorry I’m late	My phone wasn’t working for some reason. I just had frost on my car and whatnot	
E2	Hey, sorry I’m so late! I couldn’t get my car defrosted and I didn’t have service to call you. Were you here long?	Hey	Sorry I’m so late	I couldn’t get my car defrosted and I didn’t have service to call you	Were you here long?
E3	I’m sorry, I meant to get here earlier but there was a lot of frost on my windows. Did you get far on the assignment without me? I’m sorry!”		I’m sorry	I meant to get here earlier but there was a lot of frost on my windows	
E4	I’m so sorry I’m running late, I had to deal with something beforehand. What did I miss?		I’m so sorry I’m running late	I had to deal with something beforehand	What did I miss?
J1	I am so sorry for kept you waiting. I should have called you, but my phone didn’t work, and my car was frosted. Can we still work on a project?		I am so sorry	I should have called you, but my phone didn’t work, and my car was frosted	Can we still work on the project?
J2	I’m sorry about being late, I did not expect the frost in my car.		I’m sorry	I did not expect the frost in my car	
J3	Sorry I’m late. It takes a while to take off the frost on my car.		Sorry I’m late	It takes a while to take off the frost on my car	

Table 2. Responses on Question 3 (Being late)

Participants	Response	Elements that consist of the response					
		Discourse marker	Calling name	Attention getting	Question	Please	Thanking
E1	(Professor's first name) would you mind passing me the salt? Thanks.		Professor's first name		Would you mind passing me the salt?		Thanks
E2	Hey, could you pass me the salt please?	Hey			Could you pass me the salt please?	Please	
E3	Can you give me the salt?"				Can you please pass me the salt?	Please	
E4	Could you please pass me the salt?				Could you please pass me the salt?	Please	
J1	Could you pass me the salt, please? (sir)				Could you pass me the salt?	Please	
J2	Excuse me, could you pass me the salt.			Excuse me	Could you pass me the salt?		
J3	Can you please pass me the salt for me?				Can you please pass me the salt for me?	Please	

Table 4. Responses on Question 2 (Passing salt)

Participants	Response	Elements that consist of the response				
		Attention getting	Greeting	Apologizing	Question	Explanation
E1	Hi (Professors first name) do you have time to discuss something with me? It's about an assignment on the paper we had to write?	Hi	professor's first name		do you have time to discuss something with me?	It's about an assignment on the paper we had to write?
E2	Hi, Dr. Jones. Could I talk to you for a moment? So, this week I really tried to get the paper done, but I've been sick. Is there any way I can get an extension on it, so it can be quality	Hi	last name with a title		Could I talk to you for a moment?	So, this week I really tried to get the paper done, but I've been sick.

	work?					
E3	X (She explained that this situation is never going to happen to her, so she couldn't think of the response.)					
E4	Excuse me Dr. ____, I was wondering if you'd have a quick minute to speak with me regarding the upcoming paper?	Excuse me	last name with a title		I was wondering if you'd have a quick minute to speak with me regarding the upcoming paper?	
J1	I came here to ask about my paper extension. I have been sick for a while so is there any possible to extend my paper due?				Is there any possible to extend my paper due?	I have been sick for a while
J2	Excuse me, I have been sick whole week and could not work on the paper. Is there any way you can extend the due for me?	Excuse me			Is there any way you can extend the due for me?	I have been sick whole week and could not work on the paper.
J3	Hello, sorry for visiting you without the appointment. I want to talk about the paper due and the reason. I got sick and I was not feeling OK to work on a paper. Could you please extend the due date for me? I need your help because I do not want to miss the homework.	Hello		Sorry	Could you please extend the due date for me?	I got sick and I was not feeling OK to work on a paper

Table 5. Responses on Question 6 (Paper extension)

(In response to Question 2) I am perfectly comfortable with saying my advisors first name, as we have gotten to know each other for some time. I also thank my advisor for passing me the salt.

(In response to Question 6) I don't want to intrude or be rude, so I simply ask if they have time and give a brief description on what it is that I want to talk about. If they have time, great! If they do not, then I would ask when they do have time to discuss the paper extension. Again, I use their first name because this Professor so happens to be my advisor as well. In these excerpts, he elaborated on the relationship with the advisor to explain the reason why he used their first name to initiate the conversation.

He clearly employed a positive politeness strategy in Question 2 and 6 by calling them by their first name, which wasn't observed in JNNSs responses at all. J1 explained reasons why she didn't call the hearer's first name in this situation:

Participants	Response	Elements that consist of the response					
		Discourse Marker	Apologizing	Regretting	Thanking	Explaining	solution
E1	I'm sorry that I couldn't really help you out. I feel bad that work got in the way. Would you mind filling me in quick about the modifications that you made to the slides?		I'm sorry that I couldn't really help you out	I feel bad that work got in the way			Would you mind filling me in quick about the modifications that you made to the slides
E2	So what changes did you make to the slides?						So what changes did you make to the slides
E3	Was there anything I needed to know that's different on the PowerPoint?"						Was there anything I needed to know that's different on the PowerPoint
E4	Hey, I'm really sorry I was tied up with work yesterday. What parts of the project would you like me to cover during the presentation?	Hey	I'm really sorry				What parts of the project would you like me to cover during the presentation?
J1	I am sorry for letting you modify slides by yourself. And thank you very much! How are they going? Can I see?		I am sorry for letting you modify slides by yourself		And thank you very much!		How are they going? Can I see?
J2	I'm sorry, I've been too busy and could not work on the presentation.		I'm sorry			I've been too busy and could not work on the presentation	
J3	Thank you so much for your hard work I appreciated!!				Thank you so much for your hard work I appreciate		

Table 3. Responses on Question 5 (Presentation)

First of all, there is not such culture in Japan. (calling my professor by their first name). Moreover, I have to ask for his/her permission of extending my paper due, which means I have to ask him/her. Therefore, I feel that I need to show respectful to him/her more than anything because I am asking for a favor.

As the excerpt indicates, J1's values and assumptions shaped in the L1 culture plays an important role in employing politeness strategies and it seems she would rather use negative politeness strategy by not calling her professor by their first name in the situation. However, as Table 5 shows, none of Japanese participants, including J1, addressed the hearer's name or their title at all, which failed to show the existence of the negative politeness strategy. Therefore, the researcher interviewed J1 about addressing the hearer's name in the situation. In the interview, she mentioned that she always calls her teachers their last name with *sensei* (teacher) in Japanese and thus she calls American professors by their last name with title Mr. or Ms.

This proved that she normally addresses the hearer's name in the situation, and her using their last name with title indicates the existence of negative politeness strategies, although the appropriate title in this situation is not Mr. or Ms. but Dr. or Professor.

Despite the assumption about how NSs and JNNSs would remedy problematic situations by using apologetic phrases, the results also showed interesting similarities between the two groups, in addition to aforementioned differences. First, the apologetic expressions used by the two groups didn't differ qualitatively or quantitatively. The phrase *I'm sorry* was mainly observed in the both group's responses, and no pragmatic issues were confirmed in this regard. Second, as Table 2 shows, in Question 3, where the addresser causes inconvenience to their addressee and apologies are required to remedy the problematic situation, both NS and JNNS groups offered a detailed explanation after expressing an apology, *Sorry* or *I'm sorry*. The findings, however, indicated JNNSs well understand one of the American perspectives of being polite and employed an appropriate strategy for English communication with Americans.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study has first attempted to analyze the differences in the use of apologetic expressions for remedying problematic situations between American native speakers of English and Japanese non-native speakers in an American university. Despite the expectation that the use of *I am sorry* or other apologetic expressions by Japanese students could be different quantitatively and qualitatively than that of native speakers because of cross-cultural or interlanguage pragmatic issues, the usage of apologetic expression itself by both groups didn't differ in all the situations provided in the DCT.

The first difference between the two groups was observed in the use of interjections. While NSs initiated their response by using different kinds of explanatory words or phrases, JNNSs didn't at all. The follow-up interview indicated this is due to both interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics issues. First, interjections used by NNs such as *Oh my gosh* or *Ah, damn!* cannot be easily translated into Japanese.

To be able to use those interjection, it seems it requires learners to have pick them up in their everyday life and to develop acculturation toward English language use or L2 social identity. Second, perspectives and assumptions toward the use of interjections could vary between Japanese and Americans. J1 expressed in the interview her perspective that interjections are not compatible with a sincere apology.

On the other hand, for the American participants, the Japanese speakers in this study might be seen less emotional, or even rude, due to the lack of emotive interjections. This cross-cultural difference might have a potential to cause misunderstanding between the two groups. Hence, language teachers are encouraged to explicitly teach pragmatics of the interjections, which is little paid attention to in formal instructions in Japan.

Another interesting difference was observed in the use of politeness strategies. Overall, some NSs used a positive politeness strategy while JNNSs in this study seemed to have employed a negative politeness strategy. This finding supports the fact the Japanese culture is more compatible to negative politeness and it is assumed that one can show politeness and respect toward hearer by maintaining greater social distance while the American culture values the lack of social distance and group solidarity (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000).

The difference of politeness strategies across different cultures should also be discussed in the classroom to better prepare learners to successfully communicate with speakers of the target language. It would also be important for learners to be able to select which strategy to use depending on the "1) the social distance between the speakers and addressee; 2) the power difference between the speaker and addressee; and 3) the weight of the imposition" (LoCastro, 2012, p. 141).

As for similarities between NSs and JNNSs, all the participants, both NSs and JNNSs, gave a detailed explanation after an apology to be polite. This finding is unique and different from the finding of the previous literature. Kotani (2016) found that Japanese speakers tended to avoid giving a detailed explanation when they had to give an apology. In the study, Japanese speakers assumed that giving reasons in problematic situation could give an impression that they were attempting to deny responsibility for causing the inconvenience and making an excuse while the American assumption was that giving an explanation is needed when they have to apologize. The fact that Japanese participants all gave an explanation when apologizing indicates that they have better understandings about American assumptions that offering an explanation is not an excuse and it's necessary to show the wrongdoing was not intentional.

In conclusion, the present study revealed there are some differences between NSs and JNNEs in terms of other cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics, which have the potential to cause misunderstanding between speakers from two different groups. The results call for attention to the importance of raising learners' awareness of pragmatics both in L1 and L2. As Kondo (2002) showed in her research, explicit instructions on pragmatics, even in the EFL setting where the authentic input tends to be scarce, do raise students' awareness on how the languages work depending on the speakers' values and assumptions. Language teachers should invite their students to reflect on their own beliefs, values, assumptions that are formed in the L1 community and then to learn and think through appropriate ways to communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds using L2.

Further research is needed since the present study only worked with the data from seven participants due to the limited time. Also, there are many variables the study didn't look at, such as gender, age, the English proficiency level and the acculturation level of JNNSs. In addition, the DCT used in the study might have failed to make our participants clearly visualize the social distance and the power difference between the speaker and addressee in the questions. These limitations should be taken into consideration in the future research. Well-designed DCT, in-depth interviews with more participants, and observation to acquire contextualized naturally occurring data would be needed to yield more reliable data.

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Appendix A

DCT for the American native speakers of English

Please fill in the blanks for the following 6 items. You will be given hypothetical situations where you communicate with someone but try your best to visualize someone you actually know while doing this task. If you would not say anything at all, put an X in the blank. After completing the conversation, please explain the emotion underlying your answer for each situation. There are no right or wrong answers; write down the response that comes to your mind first and that seems most natural for the situation.

The information in this questionnaire will be used only for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are. (The data without the personally identifiable information may be used for future classes/projects/research.)

1. Your friend from university is visiting your apartment. While you were reading the magazine s/he brought, you

accidentally spill coffee over it.

You say:

What is your mind in this situation?

2. You are an undergraduate student. You are at the table for lunch with your advisor (professor). You want salt on the table but you cannot reach it because it's near your advisor.

You say:

What is your mind in this situation?

3: You were supposed to meet your friend on campus to discuss a project for class but you were 20 minutes late for the meeting because there was frost on your car. (And you couldn't call or text your friend to let him/her know you were coming late.) You meet your friend on campus.

You say:

What is your mind in this situation?

4. You are walking on a crowded street with your friends. You almost bump into a stranger who is coming toward you.

You say:

What is your mind in this situation?

5. You are an undergraduate student and have a presentation in pairs for class. Since you had a part time job one day before the presentation, your partner had to modify and complete the PowerPoint slides all by him/herself. You couldn't work together. On the day of the presentation, you meet him at school.

You say:

What is your mind in this situation?

6. You are an undergraduate student. You want to meet your professor (Imagine one of your professors you're working with.) to ask him/her for a paper extension. You also want to talk about why you need it in person. (You were sick in bed for a while.) You stick your head into the professor's office without an appointment.

You say:

What is your mind in this situation?

- I'm a native speaker of (English / Japanese).
- I'm a (freshman / sophomore / junior / senior).

Thank you very much for your cooperation!!