

論文の英文要旨

論文題目

Corpus Pragmatics: Exploring Criterial Pragmalinguistic Features of Requestive Speech Acts produced by Japanese Learners of English at Different Proficiency Levels

氏名

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The current study aims to conduct a study on interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) with the use of a learner corpus, and attempts to prove how a learner-corpus-based study can contribute to the field of ILP. ILP is defined as the area which investigates “how L2 learners develop the ability to understand and perform action in a target language” as “pragmatic development” (Kasper & Rose, 2002, p. 5). Vyatkina and Cunningham (2015) recently stated “Increasingly, ILP researchers are able to learn more about how L2 learners develop their abilities to communicate effectively and appropriately in specific social settings by investigating and exploring the various texts housed in learner corpora” (p. 282).

In order to fulfill the main objective of the present study, the author attempts to extract the *criterial* pragmalinguistic features of the requestive speech acts produced by Japanese learners of English at different proficiency levels (or the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages [CEFR] A1, A2, and B1 learners). *Criterial features* are defined as “properties of learner English that are characteristic and indicative of L2 proficiency at each of the levels and that

distinguish higher levels from lower levels” (Hawkins & Filipović, 2012, p. 11).

The methodology of the study is to manually identify and annotate the linguistic patterns of requests in the shopping role-play tasks of the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology Japanese Learner English (NICT JLE) Corpus, drawing on the coding scheme developed in the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), which investigated sociopragmatic, cross-cultural, and interlanguage variation of the linguistic realizations of request and apology produced by speakers of eight different languages and dialects (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989). Applying some amendments to the CCSARP coding scheme to fit it into the target spoken learner data, the author classifies the identified requests into *direct strategy*, *conventionally indirect strategy*, and *not-classifiable* depending on the choice of linguistic features; for example, desire (e.g., *want*) is classified as direct, and ability/permission (e.g., *can*) is classified as conventionally indirect.

In fact, the CCSARP coding scheme was developed from the data collected via written elicitation tasks called the Discourse Completion Tests/Tasks (DCTs), which have been the predominant methodology in ILP to date. However, this methodology has also been criticized for not providing data that represent learners’ actual speech act performance in real situations, although it is easy to control social parameters involved with participants’ roles and situations in given tasks. Naturally occurring spoken data such as learner corpora, on the other hand, are advantageous as a quantitative source in terms of clarifying the developmental transition of learners’ pragmatic competence and re-examining the findings derived from the past studies.

Nevertheless, corpus-based ILP is a relatively new approach, and researchers must overcome several difficulties. It should be noted that pragmatics is concerned with determining the speakers’ intended meanings that are context-dependent and that are sometimes not realized in surface linguistic forms, as only the surface forms can be retrieved from corpora. The author discusses confronting the various challenges of merging a corpus-based study with ILP, especially in terms of mapping the forms and functions of the requests mainly produced by lower-level learners who tend

to manifest underdeveloped speech acts, referring to the past studies and preliminary studies of her own.

The present study adopts the following resolutions to tackle these challenges: first, to exclude the identification of *non-conventionally indirect* requests, which do not exhibit the requestive realizations in surface forms; second, to exclude the assessment of the learners' sociopragmatic competence, regarding the appropriateness and politeness of their requests, in which a high rate of agreement between respondents was not obtained (see Miura, 2017); third, to add a newly developed annotation scheme to identify the functions of the requests in order to overcome the task effects among learners at different proficiency levels; and finally, to add a newly developed annotation scheme to determine the degree of the grammatical accuracy/discoursal acceptability of the requests in order to highlight the differences among learners at different proficiency levels.

The findings from this study confirm that the ratio of conventionally indirect strategies increases and that of direct strategy decreases as the proficiency improves. This confirmation further supports the results derived from most of the past studies including non-corpus-based but DCT-based studies conducted by researchers such as Trosborg (1995), Hill (1997), Rose (2000, 2009), and Flores Salgado (2011).

However, the distributions of each linguistic pattern determining the requestive strategy are varied across the functions of the requests even within the same proficiency level. For example, A1 and A2 learners tend to produce more conventionally indirect strategies than direct strategies, especially exhibiting *ability/permission* to ask for permission to test items, when formulaic expressions are available at their disposal, as in "Can I try it on?" In contrast, A1 and A2 learners tend to exhibit requests with learner-specific unsuitable direct patterns when they have to construct the requests on their own. For example, in expressing the details of the item they want to buy, ellipses (or non-sentential phrases) or declarative statements with a topic-comment structure, influenced by their mother tongue, as in "The color is black," are evident. B1 learners are actually given a

negotiation task, which is different from the general purchasing task given to A1 and A2 learners. The major function that B1 learners produce in the requests is negotiating for an exchange or a return, and they tend to show more uses of conventionally indirect strategies than direct strategies, in addition to more internal and external modifiers of requestive head acts, with a higher degree of grammatical accuracy/discoursal acceptability, in comparison with A1 and A2 learners. However, it is suggested that B1 learners still exhibit some pragmatically deviant features, as in “Why can’t you exchange it?,” in the suggestory pattern of conventionally indirect strategies, without recognizing its rather coercive imposition on the hearer (i.e., face-threatening acts).

Despite several limitations with the methodology in the present study, the extraction of criterial pragmalinguistic features of the requestive speech acts from the NICT JLE Corpus allows the author not only make a distinction and determination of the pragmalinguistic competence of learners at different proficiency levels, profiling what the learners can actually do pragmatically at each level, but also supplement the non-corpus-based past studies with corpus evidence.