Analysis of Native Speakers’ Appropriateness Judgment on the Speech Act of Complaining by Japanese EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine and identify the way in which native English speakers judge complaints realized by Japanese EFL learners. Previous studies have demonstrated that interrater variance exists in the assessment of EFL learners’ speech acts. Very little is known, however, about the underlying mechanisms of raters’ appropriateness judgment. Therefore, this study looked at the categories that native speakers’ appropriateness judgement. The Raters in this study comprised 25 Japanese intermediate-level EFL learners and four native speakers of English. The Japanese EFL learners were asked to complete a discourse completion task (DCT) in English with the task conditions consisting of five settings: four academic and one nonacademic. The native English speakers were invited to rate the appropriateness of the complaints taken from the DCT using a five-point rating scale, and were individually interviewed about the basis of the processes upon which they rated the appropriateness of the given complaints. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and qualitatively analyzed using the Modified Grounded Theory Approach. The analyses led to the construction of six categories and the structure of the judgment processes. The study’s pedagogical implication is that these six categories could be used as criteria of appropriateness judgment, which might help teachers assess the appropriateness of complaints realized by Japanese EFL learners.

1. Background

Research in the realization of complaints in a second language (L2) has demonstrated that L2 learners tend to realize the speech act of complaining differently from native speakers in terms of language or strategy use (e.g., DeCapua, 1998; Murphy & Neu, 1996; Olshtain & Weinbach 1987; Rinnert, Nogami, & Iwai, 2006). The differences between L2 learners and native speakers arise from a first language (L1) transfer; therefore, L2 learners are at a great risk of pragmatic failure especially in L2 contexts (Tatsuki, 2000). Although numerous studies have investigated the realization of complaints, very few studies have been conducted on how native speakers perceive or judge L2 learners’ complaints. Regarding other speech acts such as request, refusal, and so forth, however, there has been a gradual increase of studies concerning how native speakers
perceive or judge L2 learners’ speech acts. Previous studies have shown that native speakers tend to judge speech acts as inappropriate especially in a situation where L2 learners, as students, realize speech acts to their teachers or professors (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). In addition, the inter-rater variance occurred in appropriateness judgment (Taguchi, 2011). Of these, this study focuses on identifying the underlying mechanisms of raters’ appropriateness judgment on the complaining speech act realized by Japanese EFL learners. Thereby, this might provide teachers with the information on how they can assess the appropriateness of their students’ utterances in the EFL setting. Besides, this might also help L2 learners avoid pragmatic failure by considering the criteria used by native speakers in their appropriateness judgment.

1.1 L2 learners’ complaints

Previous research has typically focused on L2 complaint realization, such as strategies and language use. Among them, the representative study is the research by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987). They claimed that the speech act of complaining comprised three parts: opening, head act, and adjunct. The head act is the segment of speech that realizes the core component of the complaint; therefore, their research focus was on the head act to investigate the types of strategies native and non-native speakers of Hebrew used in complaints. In their research, 35 native and 35 non-native speakers of Hebrew were asked to complete the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The DCT consisted of one setting where a friend arrived late for the appointment. They classified the data collected from DCT under five strategies: (a) below the level of reproach, (b) expression of annoyance or disapproval, (c) explicit complaint, (d) accusation, and (e) warning and immediate threat. They compared the strategies used by native speakers of Hebrew with those by non-native speakers of Hebrew. One of the findings is that non-native speakers of Hebrew were more likely to use the strategies with smaller risk of face-threatening act than native speakers of Hebrew did.

Following Olshtain and Weinback (1987), the head act has been the target in research to examine about complaints strategies. DeCapua (1998) also conducted a comparative study on the use of complaints strategies by 50 German learners of English and 50 American native speakers of English. The research showed that most of the German learners of English used strategies such as requests for repair, justification, and criticism, whereas American native speakers tried not to employ these three strategies. This result suggests that L1 transfer contributed to making this difference between German learners of English and American native speakers of English. Nakabachi (1996) investigated the speech act of complaining in Japanese and English realized by Japanese learners of English, and compared the complaint strategies used in English with those used in Japanese. The data in the study were collected using DCT. Nakabachi demonstrated that Japanese learners of English tended to use more direct strategies in English than in Japanese, which concurs with previous research in that L2 learners’ adoption of strategies is crucial in the direct complaint realization in the second language.
Overall, previous research in L2 learners’ complaint realization has placed some limitations. The first limitation is that studies on the speech act of complaint remain scarce; for that reason, further research is still needed to develop a much deeper understanding of L2 complaints. In addition, research on L2 complaints has focused on production-based investigations, and perception-based studies have been limited, especially in ascertaining native speakers’ judgment on L2 complaints and the appropriacy of L2 complaint realization.

1.2 Perception studies in L2 speech acts

As stated above, there are very few studies concerning native English speakers’ appropriateness judgment on L2 complaints; however, the number of studies in appropriateness judgment on other speech acts such as request, apology, and so forth has increased.

Olshtain and Cohen (1983) pointed out that we need to reveal how people perceive speech acts in order to derive a deeper understanding of speech acts realized by native and non-native speakers. In addition, they suggested that research on speech acts should pay more attention to how a hearer perceives the speech act. Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) examined the perceptions of L2 learners of Hebrew on the level of politeness and directness in the speech acts of apology and request. The study included four settings, which varied in terms of power and distance between the speaker and hearer. The result showed that proficiency levels did not help the L2 learners perceive speech acts as native speakers did. However, they found that the L2 learners who stayed for relatively longer time had the more similar way of perceiving the speech acts’ directness and politeness. Looking at more recent studies, Ren (2014) conducted a longitudinal study on the cognitive process of change in perception with 20 Chinese learners of English through one-year experience of living in a target community (i.e., Britain). DCT, concurrent verbal report, and retrospective verbal report were used in the study. An important finding was that the Chinese learners of English came to realize the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic differences between Chinese and English, and this brought more similar perception to people living in the target community.

In line with the increasing number of research on speech acts using email, Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011), for instance, investigated how native speakers of English perceived the speech act of request in emails from Greek Cypriot university students. Economidou-Kogetsidis showed that native speakers considered email requests without Thank you at the end as inappropriate, and evaluated as soon as possible negatively.

Among the studies on the assessment of L2 speech acts’ appropriateness, Taguchi (2011) examined the raters’ orientation and variations occurring in the assessment of L2 speech acts. Taguchi collected the data from Japanese EFL learners using a computerized oral discourse completion test, and asked four native speakers of English to judge the appropriateness of the L2 speech acts collected from oral discourse completion test. The results in this study showed that native speakers judged appropriateness using not only the criteria adapted in the study but also
their own respective criteria, and inter-rater variance existed in the assessment of EFL learners’ speech acts.

Of these previous studies, the limitation of perception studies in L2 speech acts revealed that, first, perception studies have not yet revealed the appropriateness of L2 complaints due to the distinctly limited number of perception research in the complaining speech act. Second, the limitation is that inter-rater variance occurred among native speakers because of very few attempts to identify the criteria for appropriateness judgment in speech acts.

1.3 Summary and Research questions

To sum up, previous research in L2 complaints has shown how L2 learners realized the complaining speech act by focusing on linguistic features and complaints strategies, and revealed that L2 learners tended to use different strategies and linguistic features from native speakers due to the influence of L1 transfer. Additionally, L2 learners’ perception of appropriateness judgments became closer to that of the native speakers as the length of stay in a target community is longer. However, previous studies on L2 complaints have not revealed how native speakers judged L2 complaints. In addition, the criteria for appropriateness judgment in speech acts have not been developed; therefore, the raters tend to use their respective criteria, which results in inter-rater variance.

The present research examines the underlying mechanisms of raters’ appropriateness judgment. This research, therefore, addresses the following research questions:

(1) What kind of categories do English native speakers utilize when they judge the appropriateness of the complaining speech act realized by Japanese learners of English?
(2) What mechanism underlines native speakers’ appropriateness judgment on the speech act of complaining by Japanese EFL learners?

2. Method

2.1 Participants

25 Japanese learners of English volunteered for this study. These students were first year undergraduates enrolled in a TESOL course and were first-year undergraduates in a university. Their English proficiency was intermediate. There were 14 female and 11 male students, ranging from 18 to 20 years old. Eight students had never been abroad, whereas the others had less than a few years of study abroad experience. They had not taken any lessons about pragmatics in their university.

Four native speakers of English also participated in the study as raters: Rater A, B, C, and D. They were second-year undergraduates studying architectural engineering in a university located in southwest of England. They were all born and raised in southern England and have never
traveled to Japan. Rater A and B are female, and Raters C and D are male. Among the four native speakers of English, Rater C alone had a working experience in a restaurant, similar to a setting (Situation 5), which appeared in the DCT described below.

### 2.2 Instrument

In this research, DCT was used to elicit the speech acts of complaining by Japanese EFL learners. DCT was consisted of five settings shown in Table 1. Four settings in the DCT manipulated the power and distance factors in academic settings based on the politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). The last setting was a non-academic situation that is known for its difficulty for L2 learners to perceive the judgment of the power and distance factors. Each situation had a description, and the Japanese learners of English wrote a complaint for each situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>P/D</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation 1</td>
<td>+P/-D</td>
<td>A student whose supervisor is you (a familiar supervisor) came to your office and complained about the grade that you had marked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 2</td>
<td>+P/+D</td>
<td>A student to whom you (an unfamiliar professor) have hardly talked came to your office and complained about the grade that you had marked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 3</td>
<td>-P/-D</td>
<td>Your friend sitting behind you (a familiar student) complained to you because you were chatting loudly with your friend sitting next to you during class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 4</td>
<td>-P/+D</td>
<td>A student sitting behind you (an unfamiliar student) complained to you because you were chatting loudly with your friend sitting next to you during class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 5</td>
<td>±P/±D</td>
<td>A customer complained to you (waiter) that the dish has not come out although it has been 40 minutes since he/she ordered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. “P” represents power and “D” represents distance. See Appendix for the complete material.

The present study developed a questionnaire to judge the appropriateness of the complaints that the Japanese learners of English made based on the elicited speech act data from DCT. The questionnaire consisted of five settings used in the DCT, and three written complaints were selected from the DCT data in each situation. The questionnaire required the raters to judge the
appropriateness of each complaint produced by the Japanese learners of English using a five-point rating scale: very inappropriate, inappropriate, neutral, appropriate, and very appropriate.

2.3 Procedure

The raters were asked to judge the appropriateness of each complaint in the questionnaire using a five-point rating scale. Before completing the questionnaire, the researcher explained that all the complaints in the questionnaire were produced by Japanese learners of English. The present research conducted a semi-structured interview with each native speaker of English between 20 to 25 minutes. By using the questionnaire as the interview guide, in this interview, the researcher focused on why they chose the rating score, and how they judged the appropriateness of each complaint. The four interviews, in sum, were recorded and transcribed with the help of a native speaker of English who was not one of the Raters.

The researcher qualitatively analyzed the interview transcripts using Grounded Theory Approach (M-GTA). Kinoshita (2014) suggested that this analysis method is especially suitable for studies aiming to examine process or mechanism of phenomenon, and reveal the social interaction between humans. M-GTA was applied to the research under the theme “The underlying mechanism of native speakers’ appropriateness judgment on the complaining speech act by Japanese EFL learners.” The procedure of M-GTA is illustrated in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Procedure of M-GTA (Kinoshita 2007, 2014)](image)

After reading all the transcripts of raw data (1), an analytical work sheet was used to group the similar kinds of utterances into concepts, and conceptualized the similar kinds of utterances (2). Since M-GTA was developed from the idea of constant comparative analysis, the analysis in this research was conducted by one native speaker of English. The researcher categorized the concepts developed in (2) into categories, upon due consideration of the relationship between these concepts (3). At last, the researcher scrutinized the underlying mechanism of appropriateness
judgments by the native speakers of English, concerned with how the generated categories are related to each other under the same theme as the prior procedure (4).

3. Results and Discussion

The researcher qualitatively analyzed the data collected from the semi-structured interview in order to answer the research questions. Since the qualitative research requires interpretation by a researcher to proceed data analysis, this chapter will illustrate the results and discussion at the same time.

3.1 Categories of Appropriateness Judgment by Native Speakers of English.

Following the procedure of M-GTA methodology, 11 concepts were extracted from the interview transcripts and six categories were established (Table 2). The six categories included situation, contents, wording, strategies, politeness marker, and responsibility.

Table 2
The Categories of Appropriateness Judgment by Native Speakers of English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>(a) Power, (b) Distance</td>
<td>To judge the appropriateness of a complaint in terms of (a) Power and (b) Distance between a speaker and hearer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>(a) Point,</td>
<td>To judge whether a complaint (a) makes a point conveys a point of the complaint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wording</td>
<td>(a) Wording, (b) Expression of the time (c) Paraphrasing</td>
<td>To judge whether (a) wording, (b) expression of time or (c) paraphrasing in a complaint are appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>(a) Explanation (b) Question</td>
<td>To judge whether a complaint (a) provides an appropriate explanation or (b) includes a question form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness Marker</td>
<td>(a) Politeness marker</td>
<td>(a) To judge whether politeness markers are used appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>(a) Sharing responsibility (b) Buck-passing</td>
<td>To judge if responsibility is expressed in complaints appropriately concerning (a) sharing responsibility or (b) buck-passing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concerning the frequency of categories in the interview transcripts, *wording*, which comprised of *paraphrasing* and *expression of time*, was the most often observed. The researcher
categorized them as *wording* by defining the judgment of whether specific expressions or words in complaints are appropriate or not, considering the concepts extracted from raters’ such as Extracts 1, 2, and 3.

In reference to Extracts 1, most of the native speakers of English identified *I have something to tell you and I did my best* as inappropriate expressions used in complaints to a familiar professor. The raters paraphrased some inappropriate expressions into their own way of complaint that they thought were more appropriate in the context. For example, in Extract 2, Rater D rephrased an inappropriate complaint sequence performed by Japanese participants. Extract 3 is the complaint produced in Situation 5, where a customer complained to a waiter because it had been *40 minutes* since the customer ordered. Three native speakers of English pointed out that the specific remark on time such as 40 minutes was rude. As Rater C explained in Extract 3, the customer did not have to mention about the specific time such as *40 minutes* since waiting for the food for *40 minutes* sometimes happens. Since Rater C also paraphrased *40 minutes* to a little while ago, the problem here is about the way of expressing time. Overall, they tend to focus on the same expressions when they judged some specific expressions as inappropriate.

Extract 1

*Yeah, I think they could probably have just been a little bit more polite. I think the way they say “I have something to tell you” is a bit rude. Um... saying “I did my best” probably wouldn't have that much impact on a professor.*

(Wording, Situation 1, Rater A)

Extract 2

*I’d give a little bit more context. I’d say “Hi. I’ve just got the result of your class. I’ve done worse than I expected. I did my best. Please tell me how you evaluated in detail.” So kind of you get more empathy if you say I'm disappointed rather than something's wrong.*

(Paraphrasing, Situation 2, Rater D)

Extract 3

*I mean the timing is a bit... Like over 40 minutes ago...you sound like you’re definitely moaning there. [...] I mean, 40 minutes here, like sometimes that happens. If restaurants are busy then 40 minutes... Sometimes that’s how long you have to wait. Um, yeah, the first bit’s fine. A little while ago would be better. Like the waiter is going to remember who you are. He doesn’t need to be told.*

(Expression of time, Situation 5, Rater C)
The category responsibility, which consisted of sharing responsibility and buck-passing, was also one of the categories seen frequently in interview transcripts. The analysis might suggest that native speakers of English judged appropriateness of complaints from the view of where the speaker places responsibility, which is illustrated in the four examples below.

Extract 4

*Again, it’s putting too much emphasis on the person who “you” failed in “your” class. In “your” class, I just want you to tell “you” I’d like “you” to evaluate me fairly. I did my best in “your” classes. There’s already... it’s like separating yourself from the person saying “You are wrong, I’m right. Why didn’t you listen to me and why didn’t you judge me fairly.” It’s not appropriate so.*

(Buck-passing, Situation 2, Rater C)

Extract 5

*So the first one is really rude because obviously it’s not the servers fault anyway. Um, and I think it’s really condescending just saying “I ordered this didn’t I?”*

(Buck-passing, Situation 5, Rater A)

Regarding Extract 4 and 5 as the examples of buck-passing, firstly in Extract 4, Rater C mentioned about a complaint in Situation 2. Rater C particularly focused on the usage of *you* when he judged the appropriateness of the complaint. Rater C claimed subjectively that the student was blaming a professor on marking him/her down since a student emphasized *you* too much. Hence, Rater C judged a complaint as inappropriate, considering the student’s excessive use of *you* and blame on the professor. Extract 5 was concerned with Situation 5 where a customer complained to a server since the food had not yet arrived although it had been more than 40 minutes since the order. Rater A pointed out that just saying *I ordered this, didn’t I?* was really rude, and interpreted it as an inappropriate complaint to claim the waiter had a responsibility for the circumstance. Of these, Extract 4 and 5 commonly showed that the Raters focused on the fact that the speaker blamed on the hearer, and passed the buck to the hearer. Therefore, the researcher grouped this type of utterances into buck-passing as a concept.
Extract 6

That’s much better because it’s putting the emphasis on you. “I” took your class. “I” failed a credit. I don’t know why “I” failed. Please tell me the reason for my credit. That’s much better. Well, it lets them explain why they marked it as they did. That’s fine, that’s very well worded.

(Sharing responsibility, Situation 2, Rater C)

Extract 7

Um... the content of this one is better, less arrogant. They are not telling them how they felt. It's saying... you know, rather than saying you failed me because of this, they’re saying I don’t know why I failed, how... why did that happen.

(Sharing responsibility, Situation 1, Rater D)

Looking closely at the same type of utterances as Extract 6 and 7, the researcher classified them as a concept named sharing responsibility. Contrary to Extract 4, in Extract 6, Rater C pointed out that a student laid responsibility on him/herself by using I instead of you. Since it seemed like that a student accepted partial responsibility by using I, Rater C assessed a complaint as very appropriate. In Extract 7, Rater D focused on you and I to judge where the responsibility lay in complaints. When the complaint to a professor included you, the native speakers of English pointed out that the speaker passed the buck, whereas using I in complaints was judged as appropriate since it showed to the hearer that the speaker also took responsibility. Considering Extract 6 and 7, the Raters judged the appropriateness of the complaints focusing on whether the speaker accepted partial responsibility. Therefore, the researcher classified this type of utterances as a concept named sharing responsibility.

3.2 Structures of categories

The researcher examined in detail how the native speakers of English judged appropriateness of complaints with regard to the relationships between the six categories created by the 11 concepts, by considering the relationship between the six categories: The marker [ ] indicates core-categories, “ ” for categories, and ‘ ’ for concepts. The structure of appropriateness judgment by native speakers of English referred to Figure 2.

The structure of appropriateness judgment by the native speakers of English in the present study is considered the underlying mechanism of appropriateness judgment. The structure of appropriateness judgment consisted of three phases: (1) [situation], (2) [contents] and [forms], and (3) appropriate judgment. In the first phase, native speakers of English understand a situation by identifying the power and position of the speaker and hearer in terms of age and social status, and distance, that is, the degree of familiarity between the speaker and hearer. Considering [situation],
native speakers of English examine both [contents] and [forms], or either [contents] or [forms] in the second phase. They judge the appropriateness of [forms], by looking at four different points of view: (1) the appropriate use of “wording,” namely ‘wording’, ‘expression of the time’ or ‘paraphrasing’, (2) the appropriate employment of “strategies” such as ‘explanation’ and ‘question’, (3) the appropriate use of “politeness markers”, and (4) the appropriate placement of “responsibility” in a complaint, in terms of ‘sharing responsibility’ and ‘buck passing.’ Regarding “contents,” they judge if a ‘point’ and ‘gist’ are made clearly. In the last phase, native speakers of English give an overview of the appropriateness of a complaint, and finally choose a rating score.

Figur2. The structure of appropriateness judgment by native speakers of English

3.3 Discussion

This present research investigated the underlying mechanisms of raters’ appropriateness judgment based on two research questions. The first research question pertains to what kind of categories English native speakers have when they judge the appropriateness of the complaining speech act realized by Japanese learners of English. Following the result of M-GTA, six categories were established out of 12 concepts extracted from the interview transcripts. Among the six categories, four native speakers of English mentioned about the category named “wording” the most. A plausible reason is that by considering the Raters’ remarks such as unnatural on “wording,” the unnaturalness in the “wording” might draw the attention of native speakers more easily that the other categories. In addition to that, they focused on four specific expressions judged as inappropriate: *I have something to tell you, I did my best, I’m not satisfied, and 40 minutes ago*. According to Thomas (1983), all of these expressions exemplify socio-pragmatic failures, in that the L2 learners failed to understand “the social conditions placed on language in use.” The first expression *I have something to tell you* is regarded as a negative transfer, influenced by the L1 expression *Ohanashi shitai koto ga aruno desuga* in Japanese. However, the
remaining three expressions are not considered as a negative transfer nor pragmalinguistic failure caused by linguistic forms such as politeness markers; hence, it would be difficult for L2 learners to avoid this type of failure. The present study revealed which expressions can potentially become sociopragmatic failures. Therefore, by continuing with further research and exploring specific expressions that are potential sociopragmatic failures, L2 learners can avoid using these expressions. The second research question pertains to what structure these categories have. In short, native speakers of English first identified a “situation” by considering the ‘power’ and ‘distance,’ between the speaker and hearer. Second, they focused on both [contents] and [forms], or either [contents] or [forms]. Finally, they evaluated the appropriateness of a complaint, and chose a rating score. This structure, in Figure 2, proposes that appropriateness judgment comprises three phases. This proposed structure can guide raters in judging the appropriateness of a complaint by following the three phases and contribute to increased inter-rater agreement.

Nonetheless, some potential limitations need to be considered. First, the category named “wording” was observed more often than any other categories, but the present study unfortunately could not reveal the reason for the occurrence. Second, although this research revealed the criteria for appropriateness judgment as consisting of six categories, and the structure of those categories, they have not been put into practical use. Therefore, in further research, the applicability of the six categories to appropriateness judgment needs to be validated. Finally, in the second phase, native speakers judged appropriateness by focusing on [contents] and [forms]. In particular, [forms] comprised the categories of “wording,” “strategies,” “politeness marker,” and “responsibility.” Despite [forms] including these four categories, the present study could not establish the relation and regularity between them due to the limited data. Hence, future research is required to collect more data for both qualitative and quantitative analyses.

4. Conclusion

This present study examined the underlying mechanisms of native speaker raters’ appropriateness judgment on the complaining speech act realized by Japanese EFL learners. In particular, this study identified what kind of categories English native speakers have when they judge the appropriateness of complaints realized by Japanese learners of English, and what structure these categories have. The results showed that there were six categories comprising 12 concepts, which were extracted from the interview transcripts based on M-GTA, and these six categories are regarded as the criteria used by the native speakers of English in this research. Additionally, the structure of appropriateness judgment by native speakers of English was developed to reveal the underlying mechanisms of raters’ appropriateness judgment in the study. First, native speakers of English identified a “situation” by considering the ‘power’ and ‘distance’ between the speaker and hearer. Second, they focused on both contents and forms, or either contents or forms. Finally, they evaluated the appropriateness of the complaint, and chose the
rating score. The results suggest that native speakers of English judge the appropriateness of a complaint using certain points of view, such as the six categories developed in the present study. Additional study is required to further research on appropriate judgment on the complaining speech act realized by Japanese EFL learners.

Acknowledgement

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References

Appendix A: The Material for Discourse Completion Task (DCT)

場面1:
あなたは、あなたのゼミの先生の授業の成績が『不可』であったことを知ります。その原因として、つい最近その先生の意見に反対したことが原因であり、自分の成績が正しい評価を受けていないと確信します。先生の不公平な判断によって、あなたの努力へも向けられなかったことに不満や苛立ちを感じ、先生の研究室に行くことにしました。あなたは、その状況でゼミの先生へ英語で何と言いますか。

場面2:
あなたは、ほとんど話したことのない先生の授業の成績が『不可』であったことを知ります。その原因として、つい最近その先生の意見に反対したことが原因であり、自分の成績が正しい評価を受けていないと確信します。先生の不公平な判断によって、あなたの努力へも向けられなかったことに不満や苛立ちを感じ、先生の研究室に行くことにしました。あなたは、その状況で先生へ英語で何と言いますか。

場面3:
あなたは、ある授業を受けています。授業の最中にも関わらず、あなたの親しい友人がずっと話し続けています。あなたの前に座っている学生の話し声により、あなたや他の学生は、先生の話を聞きることもできず、授業に集中することができません。他の学生も迷惑だと感じており、真後ろに座っているあなたはとてもいらいらしています。あなたは、その状況で話し続けている学生へ英語で何と言いますか。

場面4:
あなたは、ある授業を受けています。授業の最中にも関わらず、前に座っている見知らぬ学生たちがずっと話し続けています。あなたの前に座っている学生の話し声により、あなたや他の学生は、先生の話が聞きとることもできず、授業に集中することができません。他の学生も迷惑だと感じており、真後ろに座っているあなたはとてもいらいらしています。あなたは、その状況で話し続けている学生へ英語で何と言いますか。

場面5:
あなたは夕食にレストランへ来ました。しかし、料理を注文してから40分以上経っても、一向にあなたの料理が来ません。また、店員もそれに全く気付いていません。40分以上も待ち、料理が来る気配もないので、店員を呼び出しました。あなたは、この状況で店員へ英語で何と言いますか。

Appendix B: The Material for Appropriateness Judgment on the Complaining Speech Act by Japanese EFL Learners

Situation 1:
Student A just found out that she/he failed a class taught by a professor who is also the student A's supervisor. The student was particularly upset since she/he felt the professor had ignored her/his effort because of simple bias. The student decided to go to the professor's office to complain to the professor. If you were the professor, how would you judge the appropriateness of the following complaints?
(1) Please grade us equally. Don't put your personal feelings into judging grades.
(2) I'd like you to evaluate me fairly. It is true that I objected to your opinion; however, I did my best in your classes. My objection to you and my grade are different things.
(3) I'm not satisfied with the evaluation. I did my best. Please tell me how you evaluated in detail.

Situation 2:
Student A just found out that she/he failed a class taught by a professor to whom student A had never directly talked before. The student was particularly upset since she/he felt the professor had ignored her/his effort because of simple bias. The student decided to go to the professor's office to complain to the professor. If you were the professor, how would you judge the appropriateness of the following complaints?
(1) Why is my grade an F?
(2) I am a student (who you failed) in your class. I have something to tell you. I'd like you to evaluate me fairly. While it's true that I objected to your opinion, I did my best in your classes. Our difference in opinion and my grade are separate things.
(3) I took your class and I failed the credit. I don't know why I failed. Would you please tell me the reason for my credit?
Situation 3:
Student A was taking a class where some friends were sitting in front talking. The student was not happy about this as it was keeping her/him from concentrating in the class to the point where he/she could hardly hear what the professor was saying. The student complained to the friends. If you were one of the friends who were chatting, how appropriate would you view student A’s complaints below for this situation?

(1) Be quiet.
(2) Hey, will you stop chatting? I cannot listen to the lesson. I cannot hear the teacher.
(3) The teacher looked at you!

Situation 4:
Student A was taking a class where some students were sitting in front of him/her chatting. The student was not happy about this as it was keeping her/him from concentrating in the class to the point where he/she could hardly hear what the professor was saying. The student complained to the students. If you were one of the students who were chatting, how appropriate would you view the complaints below for this situation?

(1) Could you stop talking, please?
(2) Excuse me, could you stop chatting? I cannot hear the teacher.
(3) Excuse me, I would like you to be quiet. We are in the middle of a lecture.

Situation 5:
Customer A went to a restaurant and ordered food. Although it had been more than 40 minutes since the order, the food had not yet arrived. Customer A complained to the server. If you were the server, how appropriate would you judge the complaints below?

(1) I ordered (dish), didn’t I?
(2) Excuse me, but the dishes haven’t been served yet even though I ordered them over 40 minutes ago.
(3) How long do we have to wait for my dish to arrive?