

# A Longitudinal Experimental Case Study of How an L2 Japanese Learner Makes Requests in Japanese

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**Summary** This study aims to elucidate the development of request expressions in JSL (Japanese as a Second Language) and to contribute to a better understanding of pragmatic development in general. To this end, a longitudinal investigation was conducted on the development of request expressions of a JSL learner. The participant was an international student in Kyoto, and the data was collected from observations of online classes in which the subject took part, oral discourse completion tests (ODCTs), and follow-up interviews after each ODCT. The data from the ODCTs was quantitatively analyzed for response speed, formal complexity, directness, and diversity. The data from the interviews and the observations of online classes were used to evaluate the quality of learner's attitude such as motivation, changes in language environments, and engagement in the learning process. The result was consistent with the two-dimensional model proposed by Bialystok (1990, 1993, 1994), and a mixture of the first two out of the five stages of requests development was observed. Among factors that might have affected learner's development of request expressions, motivation and the online lessons as input were identified as key factors, while the learning environment seems to play a minor role.

**Keywords:** interlanguage pragmatics; requests; L2 acquisition; Japanese as a second language

## 1 Introduction and purpose

Second language acquisition (SLA), a research field that focuses on language learning mechanisms and how learners improve their language competence, "has continued to arouse enormous interest since its beginnings in the 1960s" (Ellis, 2015, p.3). Interlanguage, one of the classic concepts in SLA first proposed by Selinker (1972), is a developing language system of a language learner towards the target language. Due to the increasing attention paid to pragmatic aspects of language learning, a branch called interlanguage pragmatics in SLA has been established, it examines "L2 learners' knowledge and use of language in social interaction" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 5).

The scope of interlanguage pragmatics includes interactional acts and speech acts (Ellis, 2015). According to Taguchi & Roever (2017), most work in L2 pragmatics research has been done on speech acts, so this study will focus on speech acts. Speech acts focus on how speakers perform specific actions, especially interpersonal functions such as compliments, apologies, requests, and complaints (Ellis, 2015).

Among the research in L2 pragmatics, the development of request expressions is one of the most thoroughly investigated areas (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). Based on previous longitudinal studies (i.e., Achiba, 2002; Ellis, 1992; Schmidt, 1983), Kasper and Rose (2002, pp. 135-147) proposed five stages of request development describing English as a second language (ESL)

learners' development patterns. Further research including longitudinal (e.g., Barron, 2003; Schauer, 2009) and cross-sectional (e.g., Félix-Brasdefer, 2007; Trosborg, 1995) studies lend support to Kasper and Rose's (2002) proposal of the five stages of requests development.

Compared to the development of request expressions research on ESL, studies on Japanese as a second language (JSL) learners' development of request expressions is limited. Concretely, to the best of the author's knowledge, only one longitudinal study (i.e., Cohen, 1997) and two cross-sectional studies (i.e., Kahraman & Akkuş, 2007; Sameshima, 1998) exist. Cohen (1997) investigated the request expressions development of an elementary level Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) learner based on data collected by diary. Results showed that the learner became capable of producing requests but could not yet use them appropriately in accordance with context. Kahraman & Akkuş (2007) investigated the use of Japanese request expressions by 82 Turkish learners of Japanese. Sameshima (1998) focused on the fixed expressions and sentence-ending from the request made by Chinese learners of Japanese. A specific order of fixed expressions and sentence-ending emersion was confirmed. Notably, these studies utilized different frameworks to analyze the data from subjects with different levels of proficiency. Hence, a systematic framework for JSL development of request expressions analysis is still missing. Moreover, it is unknown whether the development of request expressions in Japanese follows the five stages of request development proposed for ESL by Kasper & Rose. Thus, further research that considers perspectives (e.g., formal complexity; directness) from ESL studies may contribute to a clearer picture of L2 Japanese learners' development of request expressions and verify the universality of the five stages of request development. This study is a longitudinal investigation of how a second language (L2) Japanese learner makes requests in Japanese.

The aim is to contribute to development of request expressions research on Japanese as a second language (JSL). Concretely, this research aims to answer two main questions:

- (1) How do requests develop in a beginner L2 Japanese learner?
- (2) How do the potential factors affect the acquisition process?

## 2 Theoretical background

Two cognitive processing theories from SLA are commonly used to understand pragmatic development, namely, the two-dimensional model hypothesis and the noticing hypothesis. The two-dimensional model (Bialystok, 1990, 1993, 1994) aims to explain the mechanisms behind language acquisition in adults. Differently, the noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1993, 1995, 2001) focuses on the conditions for language development.

The two-dimensional model, as first proposed by Bialystok (1990), states that language ability contains two aspects: analysis of knowledge and control of processing. Recent studies have observed development of these two dimensions (Hassall, 2003). Later, Kasper (2001) further developed a similar model to explain pragmatic development. This model states two major aspects in pragmatic development: acquisition of pragmatic knowledge (i.e., knowing the form-function-context mapping) and gaining automatic control in processing this knowledge in real time (i.e., being able to use it correctly and smoothly). Notably, Taguchi and Roever (2017) reviewed the studies that investigated development at two distinct levels and confirmed that knowledge and processing dimensions do not develop in parallel.

The noticing hypothesis contends that learners' attention to input, including linguistic forms and their functions, is a necessary condition for L2 learning (Schmidt, 1993, 1995, 2001). The input can only be captured if the learner notices it and, only

once captured, can it lead to learning (Schmidt, 1993, 1995, 2001). In pragmatics, attention to linguistic forms, functional meanings, and relevant contextual features (form–function–context mapping) are the most critical conditions for pragmatic input to become intake. Therefore, noticing to the form–function–context mapping was considered as prerequisite of pragmatic development in this study.

Finally, in this study, learners' accurate demonstration of pragmatic knowledge (i.e., how to perform) and processing capacity of the knowledge (i.e., the speed with which learner access and process pragmatic functions), were considered, based on the theories mentioned above, as two aspects of learners' pragmatic competence. Participants' response times were measured to assess their processing capacity, and form–function–context mapping was considered as a marker of pragmatic knowledge. Meanwhile, follow-up interviews were used as a mean to access multiple factors of learner's learning process.

### 3 Methodology

This study examined Japanese request abilities of an international student by analyzing the interactions from the online classes and the data that elicited by oral discourse completion test (ODCT). Personal information questionnaires and follow-up interviews were conducted with the purpose of collecting qualitative information of common factors that influence language acquisition, namely, motivation and changes in natural context. Differently, ODCTs were conducted with the purpose of collecting quantitative data, namely, response time, details of formal complexity, directness and diversity, further details are provided in **Section 3.3**.

#### 3.1 Participant

One international student (hereinafter referred to

as Angel) from India participated in this study. Angel was first enrolled in a PhD program in Kyoto, Japan, and started working in Mie, Japan after graduating. At the beginning of this study, Angel had stayed in Japan for around four years, however, the participant had not learned Japanese before and could not understand any basic Japanese conversation. Angel was 32 years old. Angel's native language is Hindi. As for second language, Angel has an advanced level of English. The research objective and methodology was fully explained to Angel before it was started, and the paper was sent to Angel after it was completed. Angel has agreed on for this paper to be published with anonymous personal information.

#### 3.2 Online Japanese lessons

The full online Japanese coursework included 25 lessons following the series of mainstream beginner Japanese textbook for international students in Japan (Genki), namely, 12 lessons of Genki beginner I and 13 of Genki beginner II. Each lesson includes conversation, grammar, Kanji and oral practice sections. The lessons were carried out by the author to 8 students in total.

Angel completed 9 out of 12 lessons of the first half (i.e., absent in lessons Nos. 3, 4 and 7) and 3 out of 13 lessons for the second half (i.e., only joined lessons Nos. 1, 3 and 5). **Table 1** shows the 10 request expressions input that Angel had received from the online lessons.

#### 3.3 Data collection

Data sources included audio-recorded ODCTs (e.g., You are a policeman now and ask me for my ID; You are a boss of a company now and ask your employee for a report.), observations during the online Japanese lessons and follow-up interviews. Six ODCTs, started in the beginning of August, 2021, and the Japanese classes started in the middle of August, 2021. Follow-up interviews were utilized after the ODCTs.

**Table 1.** List or request expressions presented to the participant during online lessons. Lesson 2.3 refers to lesson 3 of volume No. 2. Observations of the participant's attitude during each lesson are also provided.

Lesson	Request Expressions	Angel's status
1	~ <i>wo kudasai</i> , 'give me...'	Actively reacted
2	~ <i>masenka</i> , 'Why not...'	Actively reacted
5	~ <i>masyou</i> , 'Let's...'	Actively reacted
6	~ <i>tekudasai</i> (~ <i>te</i> ), 'Do...' / ~ <i>temoii</i> , 'It is okay...' / ~ <i>tehaikemasen</i> , 'You can not do...' / ~ <i>masyouka</i> , 'How about doing...'	Actively reacted
8	~ <i>naidekudasai</i> , 'Do not...'	Actively reacted
12	~ <i>hougaiti</i> , 'It is better...'	Actively reacted
2.3	~ <i>you</i> , 'Let's...'	Actively reacted

### 3.3.1 Oral discourse completion tests and follow-up interviews

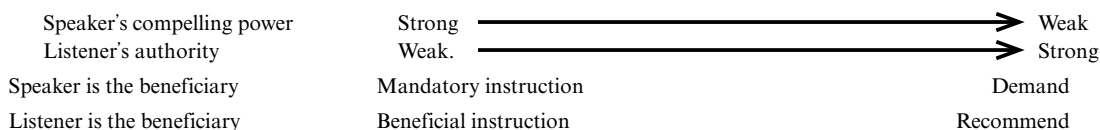
The ODCTs were designed based on the four functions in requests proposed by Takanashi (2011, see **Figure 1**). Two or three situations with different relationships between the interlocutors were set up for each function. **Figure 1** shows the relationship of all the situations in the ODCTs. ODCTs were applied for seven months with one-month intervals between each ODCT. ODCTs No.1 and No.5 are identical so it was decided to insert a four months interval between ODCTs No.1 and No.5 ensure that the participant would not remember the previous result. The same is true for ODCTs No. 2 and No. 6. Follow-up interviews were carried out after the ODCTs to investigate what affected learners' development.

### 3.4 Data analysis

Based on previous studies (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Ellis, 1992; Takanashi, 2011), a framework to assess learners' accurate demonstration of pragmatic knowledge (i.e., how to

perform) was developed. The three perspectives investigated were formal complexity, level of directness and diversity.

Formal complexity includes propositional completeness and modification. For propositional completeness, whether participants' performances contained verbs or not were analyzed. For modification, whether it is internal or external were identified first. According to the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, 19), internal modifiers elements are part of the head act. At the same time, they are not essential for the utterance to be potentially understood as a request. On the other hand, external modifiers are a move before or after the head act. Both internal and external modifiers can be separated into downgraders and upgraders: internal downgraders are used to mitigate, soften the acts by means of either a syntactic or lexical modifier; internal upgraders are used to increase the coercive force of the request. As for external modifiers, supplying a reason, recommendation, etc., can serve as a downgrader, and adding an



**Figure 1.** Scheme of the strength of speaker's compelling power and listener's authority in request situations

insult is one example of an external upgrader.

According to the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 18), head acts can be identified by their level of directness, which include (1) Mood derivable: the grammatical mood of the verb signals the illocutionary force. (2) Performatives: the illocutionary force is explicitly named. (3) Hedged performatives: hedging expressions modifies the naming of the illocutionary force. (4) Obligation statements: state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act. (5) Want statements: state the speaker’s desire that the hearer carries out the act. (6) Suggestory formulae: contain a suggestion to do x. (7) Query preparatory: contain a reference to preparatory conditions (e.g., ability, willingness) as conventionalized in any specific language. (8) Strong hints: contain partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act. (9) Mild hints: make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context. These 9 strategy types are distinct between three main levels of directness: direct, which include strategies (1) to (5); conventionally indirect, comprised of strategies (6) and (7). non-conventionally indirect, comprising strategies (8) and (9).

Finally, the diversity of participants’ production such as how many different forms they had used was investigated.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Results of oral discourse completion tests (ODCTs)

The data collected from the ODCTs consists of 54 request performances covering approximately seven months of observation.

#### 4.1.1 Response time

Figure 2 shows the time that the participant took to complete each question and the total time necessary to complete each ODCT. The response time was measured from the moment the questions was enunciated until the moment the participant completed the task. The total time taken to complete each ODCT tended to decrease except for ODCT No.4 in which an increase was observed.

The most significant reduction was observed for ODCT No.2 with respect to ODCT No.1. Notably, this decrease was driven by large response times in questions No. 2, No.7 and No. 8. Moreover, the most significant time reduction within a single ODCT was observed during ODCT No. 1 in which

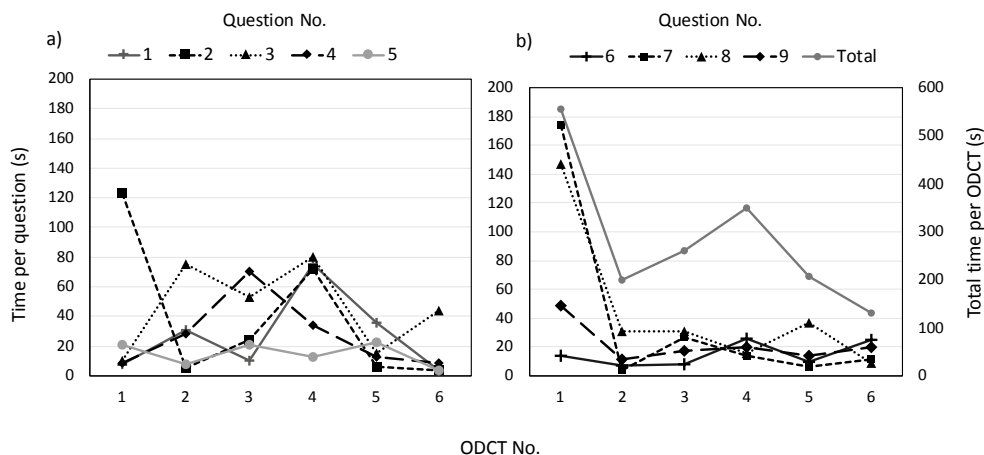
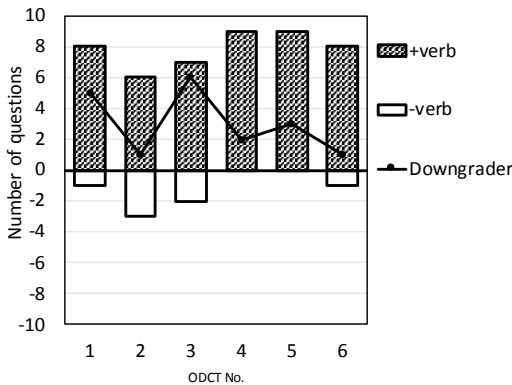


Figure 2. Time taken by the participant to complete a) questions Nos. 1 to 5 and b) questions Nos. 6 to 9 each in each of the six ODCTs, Additionally the total time taken to complete each of the ODCTs is shown in red; values are shown in the secondary axis of b).

response of question No.9 was 98 seconds faster than question No. 8. The reasons for this notable decrease in response time will be discussed in **section 5.1**. Considering individual questions in different tests, the most notable time reduction was observed for question No.7 in ODCTs 1 and 2.

**4.1.2 Formal Complexity**

**Figure 3** shows the details of Angel’s formal complexity. First, in terms of propositional completeness, the number of responses with verb was always larger than the number of responses without a verb. For all ODCTs the participant successfully utilized a verb in more than 6 out of 9 questions. The use of modifications was overall poor, concretely, upgraders were never used and just one external downgrader was used among all ODCTs. Internal downgraders were rarely used (i.e., less than 3 times) in ODCTs Nos. 2, 4 and 5. The largest use of internal downgraders was observed during ODCt No. 3. Overall there is no clear trend in the use of modifications and propositional completeness remained high.

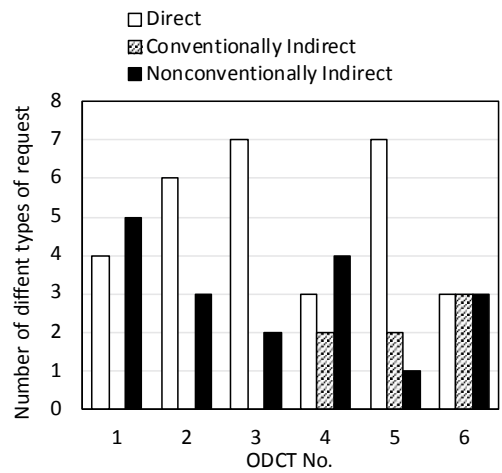


**Figure 3.** Number of requests in each ODCt in which a verb was used (+verb) or omitted (-negative). The omission of verbs is shown as negative values to suggest the overall balance between use and omission of verbs. Moreover, “Downgrader” trend refers to the number of requests in which an internal downgrader was used by the participant.

**4.1.3 Level of Directness and diversity**

**Figure 4** shows the different types of requests

according to their level of directness. Most of the participant’s requests were direct (i.e., 54.55%). Conventionally indirect expressions were less common (i.e., 12.72%) and appeared only during ODCt No.4 and onwards. Non-conventionally indirect expressions were replaced by conventionally direct expressions as the participant progressed with the lessons, that is, there is a shift to use of non-conventionally indirect expressions from ODCt No.1 to No.3



**Figure 4.** Number of different types of request according to their level of directness in each of the ODCts.

**Table 2** shows the number of different request forms that the participant used during the ODCts. However, no notable change was observed over time.

**Table 2.** Number of different request forms that the participant used during the six ODCts

Term	Number of Forms
1	4
2	6
3	4
4	7
5	5
6	5

#### 4.2 Observations during online Japanese lessons

As shown in **Table 1**, Angel was actively participating during all lessons in which request expressions were presented. The participant was considered an active learner in the course considering the level of interacting with the teacher including actions such as asking questions and making suggestions for the class. High enthusiasm towards learning Japanese was evident. However, during conversation practice, poor performance was observed. This poor performance was attributed to lack of vocabulary and unfamiliarity with grammar. Further discussion is included in **section 5.5**.

The participant tended to use two expressions (i.e., *~wo kudasai*, 'give me...' ; *~tekudasai*, 'Do...') provided in the course for the ODCTs. Moreover, during the online lessons Angel used mostly English, except throughout the conversation practice sessions. Thus, the online course did not provide sufficient interactive data in Japanese. *~masyou*, 'Let's...' was the only expression that Angel used during the lesson, this expression was mainly used during conversation practice with fixed templates.

#### 4.3 Results of follow-up interviews

A semi-constructed interview centered on Angel's motivation and the actual usage of Japanese in daily life was conducted after every ODCT. **Table 3** shows changes in motivation and language environment during the period in which the Japanese lessons

took place. In general, the main motivation for learning Japanese was an external need according to Angel's self-evaluation. From the changes in each survey, Angel's motivation to learn Japanese fluctuated over the seven-month survey period. At the beginning of August, Angel's Japanese language study motivation was very high due to the need to find a job: "They need me to learn conversation level Japanese at least, I really need to work hard on this.", and this highly motivated status continued until Angel got a job offer. Angel's active participation in the online Japanese language course and active questioning during and after the class showed high motivation as well. Angel's motivation to learn Japanese decreased after successfully finishing job hunting and the part-time job: "I will be very honest. I'm the kind of person who only like does the things when it is too necessary, okay? So that now I know, from January onward, I will be working in a Japanese company, so I really need to push myself, so I will be learning after joining the company, okay?" The business of life had precluded Angel's attendance of the Japanese lessons several times. In December, Angel traveled back to India, and did not attend the lessons for two weeks. Angel's motivation for Japanese learning became high again in January because it is when the new job started, and since few people in the company speak English, Angel wanted to learn Japanese in order to do the job well without causing trouble to others. "I'm motivated now, it's not the forced, I mean, I

**Table 3.** Factors expected to influence the participant's learning process and the changes within the time frame of the experiment.

Period	Input	Motivation	Language environment	ODCT
August	Lesson 1/2	High motivation	School life	1
September	Lesson 5/6/8/9	High motivation	School life	2
October	Lesson 10/11/12	High motivation	School life	3
November	Lesson 1/3 of book 2	Medium motivation	School life	-
December	Lesson 5 of book 2	Low motivation	School life	4
January	-	High motivation	Working life	-
February	-	High motivation	Working life	5
March	-	High motivation	Working life	6

know I can do much better in my work place if I learn it fast, yeah. They are being very patient.” In the last survey, Angel mentioned that Japanese learning was needed for changing the job. Angel’s current job is in a suburban area and there are few foreigners, so Angel feels lonely and understands the necessity of the Japanese language..

This study also set up several questions to investigate Angel’s usage of Japanese. Before starting the new job, Angel did not encounter many situations where Japanese is necessary. “I don’t need Japanese in my lab, my sensei speaks good English, the only Japanese is on the machines, but only few kanji.” Angel’s teachers and lab mates were proficient in English during the PhD study. When it came to academic publications, English was the common language. Outside of school, Angel has many friends who are fluent in English, and many of them are even foreign students themselves. Therefore, Angel did not need to use Japanese at all in daily life. Most of the supermarkets and restaurants that Angel patronized were near the school, and their clerks were already used to dealing with foreign students who did not speak Japanese, so even if Angel did not know Japanese, it was not a big problem. However, this situation changed dramatically after Angel started working. Most of the people in Angel’s company did not speak English. Even though the company had an English-speaking senior to help Angel with work, Angel was still anxious about Japanese proficiency, and felt that this was causing a lot of trouble for the company. Meanwhile, at the local supermarket near angel’s new house, the clerk has never dealt with a foreigner before, as Angel had to use broken Japanese to do the necessary shopping.

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Response time

As shown in **Figure 2**, Angel made significant progress during the second ODCT, namely, the total

response time for ODCT No.2 was nearly 120 seconds less than the response time for ODCT No. 1. This progress is attributed to the automation of the formulaic forms: *Onegaishimasu* means ‘please’ in Japanese, and this form first appeared in the first ODCT. In the question two of the first ODCT, where the participant needed to ask a student for the homework as a teacher, Angel spent 123 seconds to recall this form. Angel was not sure that *Onegaishimasu* could be used for making requests. After the successful application of *Onegaishimasu*, Angel had utilized it whenever it was suitable for the question. In the scenarios where *Onegaishimasu* was not appropriate, Angel spent longer time answering because he needed to recall another way to finish the task. However, the participant’s response time shortened successfully after responding question seven which took Angel 174 seconds, as for question eight it took 147 seconds for Angel to use Japanese to make a recommendation, and utilized the same form in question nine which took Angel only 49 seconds. In terms of second ODCT, Angel had no trouble to use *Onegaishimasu*. The difficulties that cost long time were the negative forms and the conjugation of te-form which has no direct connection with request.

Overall the response time decreased for items which that Angel had already mastered during the previous ODCT. Moreover, Angel’s grammar and vocabulary did not improve significantly during the whole investigation. Hence, it is hypothesized that the main reason of Angel’s response speed improvement was the automation of the formulaic forms. Conversely, the long response times might be contributed by missing of the correspondence between form and function, the shortage of corresponding words, and the difficulty of recalling the specific form.

### 5.2 Formal Complexity

After inspecting the results of the ODCTs, it was observed that verb vocabulary of Angel was limited,



and *Onegaishimasu* predominated among the verbs used. During the ODCCT, Angel asked for a specific verb several times. That said, Angel had the awareness of producing sentences with verbs, even while not being capable of doing it. Most of the verb-less requests were from the scenarios that the participant needed to recommend something to someone else. Angel used hints such as 'this book is interesting' to finish the task.

As shown in **Figure 3**, Angel relied primarily on internal downgraders, especially the lexical item *sumimasen* 'Excuse me'. On the other hand, external downgraders appeared only once, and consisted of only one type of supportive move in Angel's requests: grounder, which means a reason, justification or explanation of the request (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989).

### 5.3 Directness and diversity

The results shown in **Figure 4** suggest that non-conventionally indirect forms were used when Angel did not know the direct request form. As mentioned in the response time finding (**Section 5.2**), Angel mainly relied on using *Onegaishimasu* to finish the task. When *Onegaishimasu* was not appropriate for the scenarios, Angel tried other strategies, such as giving a statement (e.g., *Arukōru nomanaidesu* 'Do not drink Alcohol'). These utterances were counted as non-conventionally indirect requests, which belong to hints. Later, Angel learned words for recommendations such as *Osusume* 'recommendation', so that use of non-conventionally indirect requests increased as the participant progressed.

Overall, due to the reliance on formulaic forms (e.g., *Onegaishimasu*), Angel showed a great amount of direct response which conform with the five stages of requests development. Non-conventionally indirect requests were mainly used because Angel did not know the correct Japanese expressions, so instead the participant opted for hints. Furthermore, Angel, as a beginner, is very limited in the request expressions. *Onegaishimasu*,

'please', and *~tekudasai*, 'please do ...' were the only two we have observed in all the ODCCTs. Angel's reliance on these two expressions has resulted in low diversity.

### 5.4 The development of beginner L2 Japanese learner's requests

Following the research questions stated in **Section 1**, development of the beginner Japanese learner's request performance will be discussed in this section. Later, in **Section 5.5**, factors that may have an impact on the developmental process of the learner will be discussed.

The results suggest that the development of Angel's Japanese request performance is a mixture of the first and second stages proposed by Kasper and Rose (2002). Angel was a beginner level Japanese learner. At the start of the research, Angel produced some requests that contained no syntax or relational goals. At the same time, Angel relied on unanalyzed formulas (e.g., *Pen onegaishimasu*. 'Pen, please.') for some tasks, which are considered as the second stage, formulaic. By the end of the study, the formulas used by Angel did not increase. Meaning that the participant did not reach the third stage.

Overall, Angel improved the response speed of ODCCT, but a clear tendency towards improvement was not observed for formal complexity, diversity of form usage, nor the degree of directness. As mentioned in **Section 5.1**, the main reason of Angel's response speed improvement was the automation of the formulaic forms. Overall, both the response speed data and the diversity data showed that acquisition of pragmatic knowledge and gaining automatic control in processing this knowledge in real time do not develop in parallel, which coincides with the two-dimensional model.

### 5.5 Factors that affected the acquisition process.

Several scholars have offered overviews regarding the factors that may influence acquisition processes (Kasper, & Rose, 2002; Ellis, 2015; Taguchi, &

Roever, 2017). The following discussion will focus on three aspects: input, motivation and language environment (Table 3). In this case, input refers to online Japanese language courses. According to Angel's answer in the interview, Angel did not study Japanese consciously during the PhD life because it was not necessary. Angel was able to recognize some Japanese that can be heard often, but the investigation by ODCT showed that Angel did not convert these environmental inputs into intakes, much less into outputs.

Before the experiment started, Angel had the first ODCT, and at that time, Angel did not have any serious plans to study Japanese. Angel decided to join the online Japanese course because the participant wanted to find a job in Japan. According to Angel's self-evaluation, the motivation to learn Japanese was very high. At this time, Angel was still busy with the laboratory research, but active interaction with teacher and the determination to learn Japanese were observed during the online Japanese course.

The second ODCT was carried out in September. At that time, Angel concentrated all the efforts on preparing for the job interview, and the enthusiasm for learning Japanese was also at a high level. In Angel's daily life, there were still not many opportunities to practice Japanese. However, in the second ODCT, Angel's reaction speed improved dramatically, and the accuracy in using ...*Onegaishimasu*, 'Please...' and ...*kudasai*, 'Please give...' also improved. After being able to use these two known forms proficiently, ...*tekudasai*, 'Please do...' a new form that appeared in the online course, was also observed.

The third ODCT was held at the end of October, and Angel had gotten the job offer just before it. Hence, Angel's motivation to study Japanese, which had been high in order to find a job, dropped. At the same time the participant explained that when Japanese was no longer needed urgently, studying Japanese became less of a priority. Therefore, in November, Angel's absences from Japanese classes

increased, and the opportunities to use Japanese remained low. During the free interval of the third ODCT and the fourth ODCT, Angel was focusing on the part-time job which had resulted in absences from Japanese classes. In December, Angel went back to India for two weeks. For almost a month, Angel did not study Japanese. Therefore, it is not a surprise that no significant change was observed in the third and fourth ODCTs.

The fifth and sixth ODCTs were conducted after Angel moved to a new city and started the new job. Angel's enthusiasm for learning Japanese was renewed. Because in Angel's company, most of the employees do not know English. Angel felt sorry for this and wanted to learn Japanese quickly. From the interview, we could see that Angel was trying to memorize as much Japanese vocabulary as possible in the work environment. The staff at the supermarket nearby also did not speak English, so Angel tried to use Japanese as much as possible. In the interview after the sixth ODCT, Angel showed the desire to study Japanese harder to get a better job. The current company is in a rural area of Japan where only few foreigners live. This makes Angel feel very lonely. Therefore, Angel is trying hard to learn Japanese outside of work.

The results suggest that motivation largely influenced Angel's learning process. With high level of motivation, Angel is willing to take online Japanese courses and memorize Japanese words. Moreover, it was clear that the input of the Japanese course also influenced Angel's development. Concretely, the results of response time suggest that the lessons reinforced Angel's proficiency in its usage as well as the accuracy. However, the online lessons did not have a positive impact in areas such as diversity and formal complexity so it can be argued that the influence of the lessons as input was limited.

## 5.6 Limitations of the present study

The participant is beginner level and during the

research period, the participant did not go beyond the beginner level. Further research may focus on collecting data from beginner to advanced level.

In previous studies (i.e., Achiba, 2002; Ellis, 1992; Schmidt, 1983), data that contributed to the five stages model were collected from natural interactions. However, this study involved non-interactive production data collected by ODCTs. The author acknowledges that this type of data cannot fully reflect learners' actual performance (Golato, 2003; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2013). However, it is expected that ODCTs can offer valuable insights of pragmatic intuitions as noted by Kasper (2008). In terms of form-function-context mapping, the data from ODCTs did yield reliable conclusions.

In short, to draw a complete description of pragmatic competence development of requests in L2 Japanese, a natural interaction dataset-based study with a bigger sample size would be indispensable.

## 6 Conclusions

The present study examined one international student's development of request expressions. Three methods were applied to collect learner's data: ODCt to elicit learner's production, online Japanese course to observe learner's Japanese study, and follow-up interviews to investigate the potential factors that affect learner's development.

The data of learner's response speed and their form usage indicated that acquisition of pragmatic knowledge and gaining automatic control in processing this knowledge in real time develop in different dimensions. The main reason of Angel's response speed improvement was the automation of the formulaic forms. In cases where the participant took longer times to complete the task, it was concluded that a lack of development in correspondence between form and function, the shortage of corresponding word, and the difficulty

of recalling the specific form were the main factors. Finally, considering the request development stages as proposed by Kasper and Rose (2002), the participant exhibited a mixture of the first and the second stage of the five stages of request development.

Motivation and input were considered as the factors that had the largest influence in the participants development. The results suggest that the learning environment played a minor role.

Finally, this study utilized the same analysis framework as previous studies (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Ellis, 1992; Takanashi, 2011) to investigate the requests development of L2 Japanese learner by the longitudinal method. Kasper & Rose's five stages of request development, which was proposed for ESL, was utilized to study L2 Japanese and it was confirmed that it is a useful tool in Japanese, and development of request expressions in Japanese follows similar patterns.

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## 第二言語としての日本語学習者における要求表現の発達に関する 縦断的ケーススタディ

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**要旨** 本研究の目的は、第二言語としての日本語学習者（JSL）における要求表現の発達を明らかにし、一般的な語用論の発達に貢献することである。そのために、本研究では JSL 学習者の要求表現の発達を縦断的に調査した。調査参加者は京都の留学生であり、学習過程のデータはオンライン日本語クラスの観察、口頭談話完成テスト（ODCT）およびフォローアップインタビューによって収集した。ODCT で得たデータは、応答速度、形式的複雑性、直接性、多様性の観点から定量的な分析を行った。また、授業観察とフォローアップインタビューで得たデータは、参加者の学習意欲、自然な文脈の変化、学習過程への関与について質的な分析を行った。その結果、参加者の発達過程は 2 次元モデル（Bialystok, 1990, 1993, 1994）と一致し、要求表現発達の 5 段階のうち、最初の 2 段階が混在していることが明らかとなった。また、学習者の要求表現発達に影響を与えたと思われる要因として、動機づけと、インプットとしてのオンラインレッスンが重要な役割を果たしているのに対し、学習環境はあまり関与していないことも明らかとなった。