

Running head: CROSSLINGUISTIC INFLUENCE ON PRAGMATICS

Crosslinguistic influence on pragmatics:
The case of apologies by Japanese-first-language learners of English

Kanako HIRAMA

Department of Integrated Studies in Education

Faculty of Education

McGill University, Montreal

September, 2011

A thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of
the degree of Master of Arts in Second Language Education

© Kanako Hirama 2011

Abstract

It is said that Japanese tend to overuse *I'm sorry*, and a number of studies have confirmed this. Some studies attribute it to Japanese culture; however, does Japanese language have any influence on that? This study, therefore, investigates the uses of the English apologetic phrases, namely, *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* by Japanese-L1 learners of English, comparing them with some counterparts in Japanese, *sumimasen* and *gomen* (*gomennasai*). This study also takes the length of residence in English-speaking countries (LOR) into consideration. The data were collected from three different groups: Japanese in Japan whose LOR is less than a year (JJ), Japanese in Montreal whose LOR is over a year (JMtl), and native speakers of English (NSE) in Montreal. Questionnaires and follow-up interviews were administered to answer the research questions.

The results showed that JJ group used *I'm sorry* more often than NSE group. One of the reasons of the overuse of *I'm sorry* was transfer of Japanese apologetic expressions. However, there were some cases when they said *sorry* less often than NSE group and JMtl group, and that was probably attributed to their unfamiliarity with the sorry-to-bother-you type of expressions. It was also found that the JJ group sometimes had difficulty using *excuse me* appropriately, and the reason could be insufficient input of *excuse me*. Overall, the study showed that Japanese learners' use of these expressions becomes closer to that of the NSE group the longer they stay in an English-speaking country.

Keywords: crosslinguistic influence, transfer, apologies, Japanese, pragmatics

Résumé

Il a souvent été dit que les Japonais utilisent abusivement l'expression « je suis désolé », affirmation qui a d'ailleurs été vérifiée par plusieurs études. Certaines d'entre elles l'attribuent à la culture japonaise, mais la langue japonaise a-t-elle réellement une influence sur l'utilisation du « je suis désolé » en Anglais ? Cette étude explore l'utilisation des phrases d'excuses en Anglais, soit « I'm sorry » et « Excuse me » par des étudiants Japonais-L1 apprenant l'Anglais, en les comparant aux termes japonais « sumimasen » et « gomen (gomennasai) ». Cette étude prend aussi en considération la durée de résidence de l'individu dans des pays anglophones (LOR). Les données ont été recueillies chez trois groupes différents : des Japonais au Japon dont le LOR est inférieur à un an (JJ), des Japonais à Montréal dont le LOR est supérieur à un an (JMtl), et des Montréalais dont la langue natale est l'Anglais (NSE). Des questionnaires et des entrevues de suivi ont été administrées afin de répondre aux questions de recherche.

Les résultats indiquent que le groupe JJ utilisait « je suis désolé » plus souvent que le groupe NSE. Une des raisons de cette utilisation excessive serait le transfert des expressions d'excuses japonaises. Néanmoins, certains utilisaient « désolé » moins souvent que les groupes NSE et JMtl, ce qui peut être probablement attribué à l'absence de familiarité avec les expressions du type « désolé de vous déranger ». Il a aussi été noté que le groupe JJ avait parfois des difficultés à utiliser « je m'excuse » aux bons moments, et la raison pourrait être un input insuffisant de l'expression « je m'excuse ».

Globalement, cette étude démontre que plus la durée de résidence des étudiants Japonais dans des pays anglophones est longue, plus leur utilisation des expressions d'excuses se rapprochait de celle du groupe NSE.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Mela Sarkar. Mela has been a constant source of support and encouragement throughout this research. She taught me how to swim and showed me the path when I was almost drowned in the middle of the ocean named academia. Thanks to her, I could notice that it is not about how fast I go, but rather, where I get to, and the pleasure of the journey.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Joyce Cunningham, who believed in me and gave me a constant warm support to pursue a Master's degree. Without her, my life would have been headed to a completely different direction.

I am truly grateful to my second reader, Dr. Carolyn Turner for her thoughtful feedback and suggestions with the encouraging comments.

I extend great appreciation to my friends and colleagues. Dr. Kimiko Hinenoya helped me not to fall into pitfalls from the stage of research proposal. I felt as if she was my big sister with her generosity and patience. Critical and constructive feedback from Alison Crump and Dr. Kazuya Saito also helped me further delve into the topic. I would also like to thank all my McGill friends for their inspiring conversation, laughter, and smiles.

This study would not have been possible without the cooperation of 65 participants. The six interview participants especially deserve special thanks for voluntarily sharing their precious opinions and experiences with me.

I am forever indebted to my family, especially my parents. Their unconditional love and support certainly make me feel confident and strong. Thank you for keeping believing in me and for always being on my side.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my boyfriend, Hector Solis for his mental support. His cook, smile, hugs, jokes and talk over some tequila definitely helped me refresh my mind and recharge my battery.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Résumé.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
List of Figures	viii
List of Tables.....	viii
 Chapter One: Introduction	 1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Motivation for the Study	2
1.3 Pragmatics and Transfer	2
1.3.1 Pragmatics.....	2
1.3.2 Pragmatic failure.....	3
1.3.3 Transfer.....	5
1.4 Statement of Purpose.....	6
1.5 Organisation of the Thesis	6
 Chapter Two: Review of the Literature.....	 7
2.1 Definition of Terms	7
2.2 Types of Crosslinguistic Influence	8
2.3 Brief Overview of CLI	10
2.3.1 Contrastive analysis hypothesis.....	10
2.3.2 Error analysis.....	11
2.3.3 Relativism and conceptual transfer.....	12
2.4 Pragmatic Transfer.....	14
2.4.1 Pragmatics in communicative competence models.....	15
2.4.2 Some earlier issues.....	17
2.4.3 Issues for Japanese learners of English.....	17
2.4.4 Factors interacting with CLI	19
2.5 Expressions of Apology.....	21
2.5.1 English: <i>I'm sorry</i> and <i>excuse me</i>	21
2.5.2 Japanese: <i>Sumimasen</i> and <i>gomennasai</i>	21

Chapter Three: Methodology	24
3.1 Research Questions.....	24
3.2 Research Design	24
3.3 Pilot Study	25
3.4 Method.....	26
3.4.1 Target population.....	26
3.4.2 Instruments.....	26
3.5 Data Collection Procedures	30
3.5.1 JJ group: Japanese learners of English in Japan.....	30
3.5.2 JMtl group: Japanese learners of English in Montreal.....	31
3.5.3 NSE group: NSE of English who reside in Montreal.....	33
3.6 Data Analysis Procedures	33
3.6.1 Questionnaires.....	33
3.6.2 Follow-up interview.....	35
Chapter Four: Results.....	36
4.1 Baseline Data of the Participants	36
4.2 English Discourse Completion Test (English DCT).....	37
4.2.1 Quantitative data.....	37
4.2.2 Qualitative data.....	49
4.3 Comparison of Japanese and English DCTs	72
4.3.1 Influence of Japanese.....	73
4.4 Individual Differences	76
4.5 Summary of the Chapter	77
Chapter Five: Discussion	78
5.1 Use of I'm Sorry and Excuse Me	78
5.1.1 Native speakers of English (NSE).....	78
5.1.2 Japanese in Japan (JJ).....	80
5.1.3 Japanese in Montreal (JMtl).....	81
5.2 Comparison Among JJ, JMtl, and NSE	82
5.2.1 Overuse of I'm sorry.....	82
5.2.2 Less use of I'm sorry.....	83
5.2.3 Overuse of excuse me.....	84
5.2.4 Less use of excuse me.....	85
5.2.5 Comparison of all data across situations.....	86

5.2.6	Combination of I'm sorry and excuse me.....	86
5.3	Japanese Apologetic Terms in Relation with English Ones	87
5.4	Crosslinguistic Influence	89
5.4.1	Overuse of I'm sorry.	89
5.4.2	I'm sorry vs. thank you.	91
5.4.3	I'm sorry vs. excuse me.	94
5.4.4	Combination of I'm sorry and thank you.....	95
5.4.5	Difficulty of excuse me.....	96
5.5	Politeness	97
5.6	Cultural Influences	98
Chapter Six: Conclusion		102
6.1	Contribution of This Study	102
6.2	Limitations.....	103
6.2.1	Participants.....	104
6.2.2	Instruments.....	104
6.2.3	Methods.....	105
6.3	Implications	106
6.3.1	Implications for future research.	106
6.3.2	Implications for classroom teaching.	108
6.4	Spin-Off Findings	109
6.5	Epilogue.....	110
References		111
Appendix A: English Discourse Completion Test (DCT).....		117
Appendix B: Japanese Discourse Completion Test (DCT).....		121
Appendix C: Follow-up Questionnaire		125
Appendix D: Interview Protocol		126
Appendix E: Consent Form for JJ and JMtl Questionnaire Participants		127
Appendix F: Consent Form for JJ and JMtl Interviewees		128
Appendix G: Online Advertisement for JMtl Participants Recruitment		129
Appendix H: Online Advertisement for NSE Participants Recruitment.....		131

List of Figures

Figure 3.1	Sequential Mixed Methods Design (Adapted from Creswell, 2009).....	25
Figure 3.2	Procedures that the JJ, JMtl, and NSE Groups Followed.....	27

List of Tables

Table 2.1	Characterization of CLI Types Across Ten Dimensions.....	9
Table 4.1	Summary of the Participants.....	37
Table 4.2	Situation One: Bumping Into an Elderly Lady.....	39
Table 4.3	Situation Two: Decline a Party Invitation from Your Boss.....	40
Table 4.4	Situation Three: Spill Coffee Over Friend's Magazine	41
Table 4.5	Situation Four: Customer Picks Up Your Dropped Cans.....	42
Table 4.6	Situation Five: Your Classmate Did Your Work.....	43
Table 4.7	Situation Six: Women Blocking Your Way.....	44
Table 4.8	Situation Seven: Ask Your Boss Something Urgent.....	45
Table 4.9	Situation Eight: Call Landlord at Bad Time.....	46
Table 4.10	Situation Nine: Almost Bump into a Stranger.....	47
Table 4.11	Situation Ten: Professor Keeps on Talking over Time.....	48
Table 4.12	Complete Data Overview.....	49
Table 5.1	Japanese Sumimasen and English Counterparts.....	88

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

“I’m sorry, I’m very sorry!”

What do you imagine might have happened when you hear this type of utterance in an interaction? There are a number of possible situations you may picture; however, not many English speakers would imagine a situation where a stranger is handing you something that you dropped. Yet, it was actually the utterance of a Japanese lady when somebody walking behind her in the airport gave her back the handkerchief she had dropped (Shimizu, 2008). The most probable reason for this utterance, which seems out of context in English is the influence of Japanese.

The Japanese word *sumimasen* is generally considered as equivalent to *I’m sorry* and *excuse me* in English; however, the Japanese word *sumimasen* covers some functions that the two English words do not. In fact, *sumimasen* has seven functions (Ide, 1998). One of the functions, for instance, is conveying a grateful and indebted feeling. In the case of the Japanese lady above, it is highly probable that she used *I’m sorry* as a direct translation of *sumimasen*. In Japanese, use of *sumimasen* is entirely appropriate for expressing a feeling of thanks and indebtedness in this type of situation.

Four out of the seven functions of *sumimasen* that Ide (1998) categorized are unique and cannot be translated to *I’m sorry* nor *excuse me* in English. If Japanese learners learn and are taught that *sumimasen* is exclusively connected with *I’m sorry* and *excuse me* in English, this may result in communication breakdown.

1.2 Motivation for the Study

The original motivation for this study stems from my own experiences as a Japanese graduate student in Montreal. Even though I have been in Montreal studying Second Language Education (SLE) at the MA level for over two years, I still occasionally have a little confusion as to the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* in English. For example, after sneezing, I often say, "I'm sorry" almost as a reflex. Although I understand in my mind that *excuse me* would be more appropriate in this case, those words usually do not come out of my mouth before *I'm sorry*. There is no habit of saying something particular after sneezing in Japanese; however, if I did, it would be *sumimasen*, *gomennasai* or *gomen* (depends on the relationship with an interlocutor), which mean *I'm sorry* in English. Therefore, it is possible that my reflex to say *I'm sorry* after I sneeze is influenced by Japanese.

The case above may be also because I habitually say *I'm sorry* more than native English speakers in Canada. Non-native speakers of Japanese who speak English sometimes tell me that I do not have to be sorry. For example, I tend to say *I'm sorry* if I make noise when eating, drop a fork on the floor in a restaurant, interrupt somebody, pass in front of people, and so forth. Therefore, I became interested in the way Japanese use *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* and the connections between Japanese and English apologetic expressions in Japanese learners of English.

1.3 Pragmatics and Transfer

1.3.1 Pragmatics.

The events illustrated in the preceding two sections could be explained by many different kinds of linguistic elements, like any other language acts; however, I would like

to focus on the pragmatic sphere, because pragmatics seems to be involved in miscommunications or unnatural-seeming language use.

Now, the question is, what is pragmatics? According to Verschueren (2009), pragmatics deals not language as such but “language use and the relationships between language form and language use” (p. 1). Language use can be interpreted as making linguistic choices continuously at all linguistic levels, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics (Verschueren, 2009). Therefore, Verschueren further claims that the theory of language use could and should be the study of investigating why language users make such choices, what the choices result in, and/or with what intentions the choices are made. As can be seen, the field of pragmatics is interdisciplinary and vast in nature.

Pragmatics is commonly divided into *pragmalinguistics* and *sociopragmatics*. Leech (1983) defined pragmalinguistics as “the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions” (p. 11), or the ability to generate linguistically appropriate sentences in order to perform speech act. Likewise, he defined sociopragmatics as “the sociological interface of pragmatics” (p. 10), or the social perception affecting one’s language action. The main difference of these terms is that the focus of pragmalinguistics is more on language itself, while that of sociopragmatics is more on social and cultural influences on language use. However, it should be noted that the division between the two types is not clear-cut. This study expects to observe either or both phenomena in the data.

1.3.2 Pragmatic failure.

Errors can happen at the pragmatic level just as they can happen at the grammatical

level. For example, the utterance of the Japanese lady in the airport described in the first section, “I’m sorry, I’m very sorry,” does not seem to have grammatical errors; however, it contains what Thomas (1983) would have called a pragmatic failure, or a communication breakdown brought by the ineffective understanding of ‘what is meant by what is said.’ The issue of the story of the Japanese lady is that the person who picked up her handkerchief did not understand what she meant (the feeling of thanks and indebtedness) by what she said (I’m sorry). This example did not lead to a negative outcome; however, pragmatic failure can result in serious misunderstandings. “While grammatical error may reveal a speaker to be a less than proficient language-user, pragmatic failure reflects badly on him/her as a *person*” (Thomas, 1983, p. 29; italics in original).

Thomas (1983) further divided pragmatic failure into pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure, as the two terms, pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, indicate. For instance, the Japanese lady’s utterance “I’m sorry” towards the stranger involves pragmalinguistic failure since the reason underlying this utterance is the lady’s not knowing the pragmatic force of *I’m sorry* in English. On the other hand, my excess use of *I’m sorry* is likely to be sociopragmatic failure, because it is highly probable that I am not entirely sure on which occasions in a Canadian context I should “be sorry for,” since they are culturally different from a Japanese context.

On the basis of the difference between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, Thomas (1983) stressed that it is more difficult to teach learners how to avoid sociopragmatic failure because that involves the language user’s beliefs (not merely vocabulary), which differ from the interlocutor’s.

Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure reflect two fundamentally different types of pragmatic decision-making. The first is language-specific and it should be possible for the teacher to correct it quite straightforwardly. The second is in part culture-specific, a reflection of the student's system of values and beliefs, and should not be 'corrected', but only pointed out and discussed. (Thomas, 1983, p. 109)

Kramsch (1995) also placed a special emphasis on the importance of teaching culture and/in language. The reason of the importance is because language has a role that mediates cultures: "[m]aterial culture is constantly mediated, interpreted and recorded – among other things – through language" (Kramsch, 1995, p. 85). Kramsch (2001) considered language teachers to be agents of social change and she suggests that English teachers should not only think about how to teach English more effectively, but also that they consider the possible effects of teaching English in the society. Therefore, it is useful for teachers to be aware of the sociopragmatic background underlying their students' utterances, and of the differences between them and the target language's.

1.3.3 Transfer.

One of the possible reasons for pragmatic failure that Thomas (1983) pointed out is transfer. According to Odlin (1989), "[t]ransfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (p. 27). Transfer seems to explain the Japanese lady's utterance in the airport; she said "I'm sorry" because it is quite natural to say *sumimasen* in Japanese, the translation of which would be *I'm sorry*

in English. Therefore, transfer is an important factor to take into account when studying pragmatic failure.

1.4 Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how adult Japanese-L1 learners of English use *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* and how Japanese influences the use of the two phrases in English. Also, the effect of length of stay in an English-speaking country will be examined. This current study will contribute to our knowledge about Japanese learners of English in terms of crosslinguistic influence. Furthermore, my final goal is to facilitate Japanese learners to acquire the correct and appropriate usage conventions for these English apologetic expressions, *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*.

1.5 Organisation of the Thesis

In the next chapter, I provide a review of the literature. In Chapter Three, the research design is outlined in detail. In Chapter Four, I present the data from the questionnaires and follow-up interviews, and in Chapter Five, I discuss the results. Then, in Chapter Six, I conclude this study, discuss the implications and limitations, and make suggestions for future research.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

In this chapter, I begin by defining the term crosslinguistic influence (CLI), which is the main theoretical construct underlying the present study. In the following section, I discuss Jarvis and Pavlenko's (2008) model of CLI types. The subsequent two sections focus on two types of CLI, namely, pragmatic transfer and conceptual transfer. Then, in the last section, I focus on two apologetic expressions in Japanese, *sumimasen* and *gomenasai*, and *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* in English, the focal points of the present study.

2.1 Definition of Terms

The phenomenon of CLI has been referred to in many different ways, such as *language transfer*, *linguistic interference*, *the role of the mother tongue*, *native language influence*, and *language mixing* (Odlin, 2003). In this study, following Odlin (2003), I use the terms *crosslinguistic influence* and *transfer* interchangeably because, unlike the other terms, they focus on the phenomenon of CLI in a theoretically neutral manner.

At present, there is no perfect definition of CLI, perhaps because the phenomenon has many varieties and is complex. For example, Odlin (1989) defined CLI as "the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (p. 27). At first glance, his definition seems to cover the entire phenomenon; however, "the influence" is not well explained. Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) provided a more detailed and flexible definition: CLI is "the influence of a person's knowledge of one language on that person's knowledge or use of another language" (p. 1). As can be seen, they

narrow ‘the influence’ down to the perception and production of language. In addition, they imply that CLI does not necessarily have to involve the target language; transfer can occur between languages that one has acquired and is not currently learning. Also, it should be noted that the direction of the influence is not determined, which means that CLI occurs not only from the L1 to the L2, but also from L2 to L1, L2 to L3, L1 to L3, and so forth. However, this study will only focus on the effect of Japanese as the L1 on English as the L2. Drawing on the above definitions, in this study I am defining CLI as “the influence of a person’s knowledge of one language on that person’s perception or production of another language either at linguistic or conceptual level.”

2.2 Types of Crosslinguistic Influence

Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) organized CLI types into ten dimensions. These are summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Characterization of CLI Types across Ten Dimensions

<i>Area of Language</i>	<i>Intentionality</i>	<i>Form</i>
<i>Knowledge/Use</i>	- Intentional	- Verbal
- Phonological	- Unintentional	- Nonverbal
- Orthographic		
- Lexical	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Manifestation</i>
- Semantic	- Productive	- Overt
- Morphological	- Receptive	- Covert
- Syntactic		
- Discursive	<i>Channel</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
- Pragmatic	- Aural	- Positive
- Sociolinguistic	- Visual	- Negative
<i>Directionality</i>	<i>Cognitive Level</i>	<i>Type of Knowledge</i>
- Forward	- Linguistic	- Implicit
- Reverse	- Conceptual	- Explicit
- Lateral		
- Bi- or multi-directional		

From Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008, p. 20)

An instance of transfer can be described with all the ten dimensions at the same time. For example, a pronunciation error influenced by L1, such as when a Spanish-speaking learner of English says ‘sleep’ [slip] to mean ‘slip’ [slɪp], could be categorized as phonological, forward, linguistic, implicit, unintentional, productive, aural, verbal, overt, negative transfer (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). As Jarvis and Pavlenko mentioned, this scheme will be a great help for CLI researchers to visualize which dimension has been explored and which dimension has not. The current study focuses on the use of *I’m sorry* and *excuse me* by Japanese-L1 learners of English, and in particular will explore the effects of Japanese (L1) on the use of these expressions. I

will also focus on their oral language production. Therefore, I expect that the types of CLI that this study will uncover will be pragmatic, forward (L1 to L2), productive (speaking or writing), aural (speech), and verbal (language involved) transfer. I hope to be able to comment on the type of knowledge, the intentionality, the cognitive level, the manifestation, and the outcome after the actual utterances of participants have been observed and analyzed.

2.3 Brief Overview of CLI

2.3.1 Contrastive analysis hypothesis.

The contrastive analysis hypothesis was one of the most popular hypotheses in the early years of CLI research. The theory, which was originally proposed by Lado (1957), was based on behaviourist psychology. Lado believed that L2 acquisition was basically a process of habit formation, which could be reinforced or impeded by already acquired habits. Thus, he claimed that the L2 elements similar to those of the L1 would be easier to acquire, and conversely, the L1 elements different from those of the L2 would be more difficult; in other words, the types of error a learner would make could be predicted to some extent by contrastive analysis.

Contrastive analyses were vigorously carried out during the 1950s and 1960s. In order to observe the differences and similarities between languages, researchers compared two or more languages systematically and contrasted the performance of two or more groups of learners. However, Lado (1957) admitted that the analysis had important limitations: “Contrastive analysis must be considered a list of hypothetical problems until final validation is achieved by checking it against the actual speech of students” (Lado, 1957, p. 72). As he states, contrastive analysis only focuses on

languages themselves and tends to ignore the actual language that learners use.

Therefore, the results from contrastive analysis are often too general and theoretical to apply to authentic L2 learning and teaching. Although some researchers, including Lado, claimed the need for empirical research on transfer, it was not actively conducted until the mid-1970s.

2.3.2 Error analysis.

Error analysis, which was pioneered by Pit Corder in the 1970s, focused on the errors that actual L2 learners made and sought to determine the types and causes of the errors. In terms of the method, error analysis is, in effect, the opposite of contrastive analysis, which does not pay much attention to actual L2 learners' language. In fact, according to Odlin (1989), error analysis challenged contrastive analysis by clarifying two things. First, the errors that L2 learners actually made were not always the same as the ones predicted by contrastive analysis. Furthermore, researchers found some errors that learners of many different language backgrounds commonly make. In other words, the difficulties that L2 learners face are not necessarily coming from CLI. Researchers explained that these errors might stem from other sources such as transfer of training, meaning "influences on the production or comprehension of a second language that are due to the ways learners have been taught (or to ways learners have taught themselves)" (Odlin, 1989, p. 169).

Second, error analysis demonstrated that L2 learners made the same mistakes as children learning their L1 who do not have any knowledge of other languages.

Researchers considered these kinds of errors as developmental errors, which are normal errors that people make in the process of learning a language regardless of the L1 or the

L2 (i.e., they occur in the context of developmental sequences). Because of this finding, some researchers (e.g., Krashen, Dulay and Burt) independently claimed that L2 learning should be considered to be the same as L1 acquisition and argued that the influence of transfer is very small during the acquisition of L2 grammar. However, this claim does not seem to hold true; both CLI and developmental sequences seem to play important roles in learners' interlanguage development. For example, Schumann (1986) investigated the speech of Spanish, Japanese, and Chinese learners in their earliest stage of ESL learning and found that they all omitted English prepositions. However, his study revealed that the frequency of omitting prepositions by Spanish speakers, whose L1 has prepositions similar to those in English, is much lower compared to that of the Japanese and Chinese speakers, whose L1s do not have prepositions similar to English. Therefore, it would be possible to say that the effect of L1 to L2 transfer may be combined with developmental processes related to the L2 proper in ways that are hard to tease apart.

2.3.3 Relativism and conceptual transfer.

As Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) stated, researchers interested in CLI are now more concerned with linguistic relativity, which is closely related to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. Linguistic relativity is "the hypothesized influence of language on thought" (Odlin, 2005, p. 5). Conceptual transfer can be understood as the influence of linguistic relativity which "might affect either comprehension or production, and such influence could, of course, affect comprehension or production in a second language (or a third, a fourth, etc.); moreover, the influence might be where the L1 is influenced by the L2" (Odlin, 2005, p. 5). Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) explain the difference between the two

terms as follows: the theory of linguistic relativity starts from language and ends with cognition (i.e., language > cognition), while conceptual transfer goes back into language again (i.e., language > cognition > language). Therefore, conceptual transfer is accordingly transfer involving linguistic relativity. For example, Imai and Gentner (1997) examined how Japanese monolingual speakers and English monolingual speakers categorize objects differently. Japanese monolingual adults generally showed a preference for material-based classifications while English speakers preferred shape-based classifications. This is because Japanese is a classifier language that does not have a morphosyntactic count/mass distinction. For example, two pencils are *ni hon no enpitsu* in Japanese (two *hon* of pencil; a classifier, *hon* is for objects that has one-dimensional extension). As can be seen, Japanese does not have an equivalent of plural “s” in English. Whether it is singular or plural, *enpitsu* (“pencil”) does not change its form. A follow-up study was conducted by Cook, Bassetti, Kasai, Sasaki, and Takahashi (2006) and their results were consistent with the initial Imai and Gentner (1997) study. These studies did not actually investigate conceptual transfer, but rather linguistic relativity; however, Yoon’s (1993) study illustrated that the perception of nouns by Japanese learners of English differs slightly from that of English native speakers in terms of countability, and the differences of perception affected the Japanese participants’ use of articles in English. Although the studies discussed in this section deal with semantics, if conceptual transfer can be observed at the semantic level, it might be possible to assume that conceptual transfer also occurs at the pragmatic level. Accordingly, I will adopt this as a working hypothesis, which underlies the research questions for the current study.

Conceptual transfer occurs because of the similarities and the differences between

conceptual categories of L1 and L2 that link linguistic features, while linguistic transfer is due to the similarities and the differences between the linguistic structures of L1 and L2 (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). The following example clarifies that not all transfer occurs at the conceptual level. Suppose that a native speaker of Finnish says, “He bit himself in the language” in English with the intention of “He bit himself in the tongue.” (The translation of *kieli* in Finnish is ‘language’ or ‘tongue’ in English.) This case should not be sorted as conceptual transfer but as semantic transfer, because the Finnish word *kieli* is a polysemous word, and the Finnish speaker distinguishes the difference between language and tongue in their mind (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). Therefore, in this case, he had an image of tongue in his mind when he gave an incorrect utterance by saying language, which means that this transfer is at a linguistic level, not at a conceptual level.

In the next section, I will discuss pragmatic transfer, because the topic of this study is pragmatics and these studies are considered to be a foundation to my own research.

2.4 Pragmatic Transfer

As mentioned in the previous section, transfer can be described using ten categories. In this section, I will look at pragmatic transfer from a view of *Area of Language Knowledge/Use* in the Jarvis and Pavlenko’s (2008) ten categories, because this has been one of the most common approaches to CLI since the beginning of CLI studies (see Coulmas, 1981b; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993 as examples). First, I will position pragmatics by discussing two models of communicative competence, by Canale (1983a, 1983b) and by Bachman and Palmer (1996). After that, I will introduce some

earlier pragmatic issues, and then shift to recent issues around Japanese learners of English.

Before proceeding to the next section, I would like to review some key terms: negative and positive transfer and pragmatic failure. Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) explained that:

Determining whether an instance of CLI is positive or negative requires examining either whether it interfered with the intelligibility, success, or situational appropriateness of the language that was used, or, more commonly, whether it violated the grammaticality constraints that are adhered to by monolingual native speakers of the recipient language.
(p.25)

Therefore, at pragmatic level, negative transfer can cause communication breakdown, and positive transfer facilitates smooth communication.

The term *pragmatic failure* was explained by Thomas (1983) as “the inability to understand ‘what is meant by what is said’” (p.91). She uses this term intentionally separated from *pragmatic error* because it is not possible to distinguish whether the pragmatic force of an utterance is wrong or correct, and whether, rather, the speaker just failed to convey the message to the hearer, for reasons that may be located in the hearer. These terms will be used in this study with this meaning

2.4.1 Pragmatics in communicative competence models.

The communicative competence model proposed by Canale (1983a, 1983b) includes four competencies: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. In this model, pragmatics fits under

sociolinguistic competence, which is the “mastery of appropriate use and understanding of language in different sociolinguistic contexts, with emphasis on appropriateness of meanings and forms” (Canale, 1983b, p. 339).

There is another detailed model of communicative language ability, by Bachman and Palmer (1996). In this model, there are two categories of language knowledge: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. Basically, organizational knowledge relates to knowing the form of a language; on the other hand, pragmatic knowledge is involved in performing a language in a particular setting. Both of these types of knowledge are necessary when communicating in any language. Pragmatic knowledge is further comprised of two types of sub-knowledge: functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge. Functional knowledge is what Bachman (1990) called illocutionary competence, which makes it possible for an addressee to fill in the gaps between the literal meaning of an utterance and the language user’s intension. For example, when someone says “Could you tell me how to get to the post office?”, this sentence functions not as a yes-no question but as a request for directions (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Functional knowledge is further sorted into four types of knowledge: knowledge of ideational functions, knowledge of manipulative functions, knowledge of heuristic functions, and knowledge of imaginative functions. Sociolinguistic knowledge, on the other hand, enables language users to adjust their language so that it is in line with the social conventions which surround the speaker. In other words, it is “knowledge of the conventions that determine the appropriate use of dialects or varieties, registers, natural or idiomatic, expressions, cultural references, and figures of speech” (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p. 70). Some scholars maintain that the term pragmatics is used primarily for functional knowledge in the literature; however, since functional

knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge seem to overlap and that may not be accurate. The use of apologetic expressions, which are the main focus of the current study, also have ties to both functional and sociolinguistic knowledge.

As discussed above, language learners need to have both organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge to become competent language users. Therefore, negative effects of CLI on pragmatic knowledge can cause serious communication breakdowns.

2.4.2 Some earlier issues.

Pragmatic transfer has recently been given more attention compared to the other types of transfer (e.g., lexical transfer and semantic transfer); however, the earliest studies on the pragmatics of language learners only date back to the late 1970s. In these studies, evidence of transfer was not always detected (e.g., Rintell, 1979; Walters, 1979). One particular area that these studies investigated was politeness in learners' speech acts such as requests and apologies. For example, Coulmas (1981b) mentioned that the Japanese language has phrases expressing either appreciation or apologies such as *O-jama itashimashita* ("I have intruded on you"). This may lead Japanese learners of English to directly translate the phrase in order to show their appreciation, which is not likely to be perceived as appreciation by native English speakers. This problem of direct translation also applies to the use of *sumimasen*, an expression both of gratitude and of apology, which will be further discussed later in this chapter.

2.4.3 Issues for Japanese learners of English.

Nakano (2005) investigated four speech acts in English by Japanese-L1 learners,

namely, the expression of thanks, apologies, request, and offering. It was found that Japanese seem to confuse the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*. Her Japanese participants used *I'm sorry* to open conversations where *excuse me* would be appropriate. The author attributed it to the transfer of *sumimasen*, the apologetic word in Japanese, because it is quite natural to start a conversation with *sumimasen* in Japanese. *Sumimasen* is the word that is usually considered to correspond to *I'm sorry* or *excuse me* in English as will be discussed in Section 2.5.2. However, Nakano suggested that Japanese tend to associate *sumimasen* more with *I'm sorry* rather than with *excuse me*; she observed cases when Japanese use *I'm sorry* where native speakers of English (NSE) would say *excuse me*, but the opposite seldom occurred.

Kanekatsu (2007) raised an interesting point concerning CLI even though her main focus was not on CLI. She examined how Japanese students in an English immersion program make requests in English. The students' preference was different from their native-speaker peers'. The participants followed typical interlanguage pragmatic developmental patterns; however, Kanekatsu pointed out that the absence of English equivalents to *keigo* (honorifics) could have been one of the reasons for their pragmatic failures. As this example illustrates, Japanese is a language that requires its speakers to use different language forms depending on the interlocutors' status and age. This perception of the relationship with interlocutors in Japanese seems to be transferred when Japanese speakers communicate in English.

Takahashi and Beebe (1993) focused on one's way of correcting others' utterances. They found that Japanese learners of English tend to transfer their perception of the relationships between professors and students into the L2 in order to decide which form to use. The study also clarified that style-shifting patterns according to the interlocutors

are transferred from the L1. The difference in language use depending on the interlocutors (higher or lower status to the subject) was greater among Japanese learners of English than among native speakers of English. Another example is Yamamoto (2004), who discovered in a study of Japanese pragmatics that *gomennasai*, one of the expressions of apology in Japanese, is more often used when speakers have closer relationships with their interlocutors, whereas *sumimasen*, another form to express the feeling of apology, is more often used when the relationships between the speakers and the interlocutor are not as close. Although Yamamoto's study did not involve CLI, judging from Takahashi and Beebe's (1993) study discussed above, this style-shifting can be viewed as an important factor in speakers' pragmatic choices. Therefore, the relationships between the speaker and the interlocutor will be a factor that will be taken into consideration in this study.

2.4.4 Factors interacting with CLI

There are many other factors that interact with CLI, and therefore, these elements should be taken into account when conducting research. Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) listed such factors and fully described them; namely, linguistic and psycholinguistic factors, cognitive, attentional, and developmental factors, factors related to cumulative language experience and knowledge, factors related to the learning environment, and factors related to language use. Because there are a lot of factors interacting with CLI to a greater or lesser degree, researchers should select the most important and crucial factors underlying the context of their own questions and take them into account (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008).

For example, some studies have shown the relationship with target language

proficiency. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) proposed a hypothesis that the L2 proficiency positively correlates with pragmatic transfer, meaning less proficient learners are less likely to transfer their pragmatic knowledge from the L1 to the L2 than more proficient learners, due to the language barrier. Some studies such as Cohen (1997) and Hill (1997) supported this hypothesis; however, others illustrate the opposite. For example, Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper, and Ross (1996) focused on apologies by Japanese learners of English. They found that in terms of the apology strategies, positive transfer (i.e., with no communication breakdown) was much more frequently observed than negative transfer (i.e., transfer with a negative effect), and that intermediate learners displayed more negative pragmatic transfer than advanced learners.

Other studies have illustrated the effects of the length of residence in the L2 environment, and have shown that as people stay in the L2 environment longer, the amount of transfer from the L1 to L2 and the L2 to L3 decreases (Guion, Flege, Liu, & Yeni-Komshian, 2000; Hammarberg, 2001). Guion et al. (2000) focused on the relationships between length of residence in the U.S. and sentence length in the English-L2 speech of immigrants from Italy and Korea. Even though the results of the study seem to be also affected by the age at which the subjects immigrated, the study illustrated that immigrants with a longer stay in the U.S. have more native-like sentence length. I will take the factor of the length of residence in the L2 country as an important variable interacting with CLI and investigate, among other things, the relationship between this element and CLI.

2.5 Expressions of Apology

2.5.1 English: *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*.

Borkin and Reinhart (1978) defined these two expressions: *excuse me* is “a formula to remedy a past or immediately forthcoming breach of etiquette or other minor offense on the part of the speaker” (p. 57), and *I'm sorry* is “an expression of dismay or regret at an unpleasantness suffered by the speaker and/or the addressee” (p. 57). There are other, non-apologetic uses of *excuse me* and *I'm sorry*, such as when a mother is surprised at swear words that her child has said; however, this study only focuses on the apology function because *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* are located as the counterparts of *sumimasen* in this study.

2.5.2 Japanese: *Sumimasen* and *gomennasai*.

The Japanese word *sumimasen* is probably one of the most common phrases used in everyday Japanese conversation. *Sumimasen* is usually considered to correspond to *I'm sorry* or *excuse me* in English; however, its use is not exactly equal to *I'm sorry* or *excuse me*. This is seen clearly in the example given the Introduction chapter. A lady picked up the handkerchief that a Japanese lady had dropped and gave it back to her in the O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. The Japanese lady bowed several times saying “I'm sorry! I'm very sorry!” The American lady looked very confused (Shimizu, 2008). In this case, *thank you* would have been appropriate; however, since the Japanese expression *sumimasen* originally contains a feeling of “I am sorry to have troubled you. I owe you and have not returned you the favour,” she probably transferred the phrase and used *I'm sorry*, one of the translations of *sumimasen*. There is another real story that sees it from the other side. An English learner of Japanese I spoke to

noticed that the characters in a Japanese movie seldom said *arigatou* (“thank you”), which he had just learned in Japanese class. This might be attributed to the existence of *sumimasen*, because *sumimasen* also has the role of *thank you* in English.

The closeness of Japanese concepts of apologies and gratitude have been discussed by a number of scholars (e.g.; Coulmas, 1981b; Ide, 1998; Kimura, 1994; Kotani, 2002). Nakai and Watanabe (2000) found that Japanese learners of English sometimes use apologies in order to show a feeling of gratitude. The researchers administered a questionnaire with ten thanking scenarios to 13 Japanese participants, and found that 18 percent of the responses in Japanese were apologetic expressions used for the purpose of thanks; whereas only a few native speakers of English (NSE) used apologies in English. Although Nakai and Watanabe’s (2000) study investigated Japanese use of apologies in thanks scenarios in Japanese, the close relationship of thanks and apologies is likely to be one of the reasons for Japanese people’s overuse of *I’m sorry*. Some scholars attribute this overuse to Japanese culture that values obedience and keeping harmony with addressees (Kondo, 1997, 2004; Kumagai, 1993; Kumatoridani, 1993). Wierzbicka (1991) also supported this observation of Japanese culture: “[i]n Japanese culture, [...] the prevailing norm with respect to emotion is this: I don’t want someone to feel something bad” (p. 126). She further stated that Japanese tend to feel bad not only when they did something bad, but also when someone did something good for them because they feel indebted to that person. This cultural component could also contribute to Japanese saying *I’m sorry* often.

It was illustrated above that *sumimasen* is usually translated to *I’m sorry* or *excuse me* in English; however, some of its functions differ from the English phrases. Ide (1998) defined seven categories of *sumimasen* according to functions (she

emphasized that these categories overlap one another): (a) sincere apology, (b) quasi-thanks and apology, (c) request marker, (d) attention-getting device, (e) leave-taking device, (f) affirmative and confirmational response, and (g) reciprocal exchange of acknowledgment. In relation to English expressions, (a) corresponds to *I'm sorry*; (b) is both *I'm sorry* and *thank you*; (c) and (d) are *excuse me*; and (e) to (g) do not have counterparts in English. This categorization was taken into consideration when developing the instruments for the present study.

Besides *sumimasen*, Japanese has another word for apologies: *gomennasai*. It is a much simpler word compared to *sumimasen*. As described in the introduction chapter, *gomennasai* can only express the feeling of apology and tends to be used when communicating with those who have closer relationships (Yamamoto, 2004).

In the light of the previous studies illustrated in this chapter, the remainder of this thesis will describe my study on the crosslinguistic influence on apologies by Japanese-L1 learners of English. More specifically, I have investigated how the Japanese apologetic word, *sumimasen* has influence on the English counterparts, and the effect of length of residence. The research questions will be stated at the beginning of the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In the previous chapter, I reviewed the literature and indicated the direction of this current study. In this chapter, I will begin by specifying the two research questions. Then, I will describe the methods of this study. This is followed by the data collection and analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Questions

The previous chapter illustrated that earlier studies have shown the tendency of Japanese confusing the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*, and of overusing *I'm sorry*. Some studies have inferred that one of the reasons for these tendencies is the Japanese apologetic expression, *sumimasen*. Based on the earlier studies presented in the previous chapter, the two main research questions that I investigated are:

1. Do advanced Japanese-L1 learners of English and English native speakers use *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* differently in identical contexts? If so, how?
2. Is there an effect on Japanese learners' use of these expressions that is related to residence in an English-speaking country longer than one year?

These questions are the driving forces of the present study and guide the research.

3.2 Research Design

This study has adopted the sequential explanatory strategy of mixed methods research (MMR), putting equal focus on quantitative and qualitative data. I first collected and analyzed quantitative data, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis (see Figure 3.1). MMR is “an approach to inquiry that combines or associates

both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study” (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). The perspective underlying this study was pragmatism, where various choices are available for mixed methods researchers in terms of methods, worldviews, assumptions, and forms of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009).

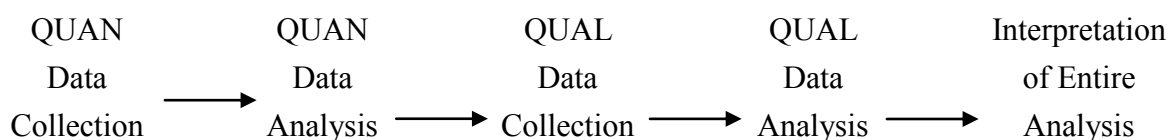


Figure 3.1. *Sequential mixed methods design (Adapted from Creswell, 2009).*

3.3 Pilot Study

A pilot study, consisting of a questionnaire with 12 fill-in-the-blank type questions distributed to ten NSE, was conducted prior to the study proper. The results suggested that the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* by the NSE was basically in line with Borkin and Reinhart's (1978) definitions. In addition to those definitions, the pilot study suggested that *I'm sorry* is likely to be more often used when the speaker is feeling bad about what he/she has done, whereas the speaker is not necessarily feeling bad when using *excuse me*, and in a rather strong sense, might feel that he/she had a right to do what he/she did. In short, *excuse me* seems much dryer than *I'm sorry* to NSE. For instance, seven out of the ten participants answered that they would use *excuse me* for a student's reminder to a teacher that class time is up, while nine out of ten indicated that they would use *I'm sorry* when stepping on a stranger's foot on a crowded bus. Therefore, it is one of the goals in the current study to discover if the hypotheses inspired by the pilot study are true for NSE.

3.4 Method

3.4.1 Target population.

Data were collected mainly from three different groups:

1. Japanese learners of English in Japan (JJ group).
2. Japanese learners of English in Montreal, Canada (JMtl group).
3. Native speakers of English who reside in Montreal (NSE group).

JJ group was made up of first-year students at Ibaraki University in Japan. Their length of stay in an English speaking country, if any, was less than one year. JMtl group consisted of first generation Japanese in Montreal who speak Japanese as their L1 and have lived in English-speaking countries for more than one year. NSE group was defined in the current study as those who live in Montreal, speak English as their L1 and feel more comfortable communicating in English than any other language. The number of participants in each group ranged from 19 to 23, and all the participants were over 18 years of age, so that the cognitive level of all the participants was deemed comparable.

3.4.2 Instruments.

I used two different methods to collect data pertaining to the two research questions above; namely, questionnaires and follow-up interviews. There were three different types of questionnaires used in the study: the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT) (see Appendix A), the Japanese DCT (see Appendix B), and the follow-up questionnaire (see Appendix C). The procedures that the participants followed are illustrated as in Figure 3.2 below.

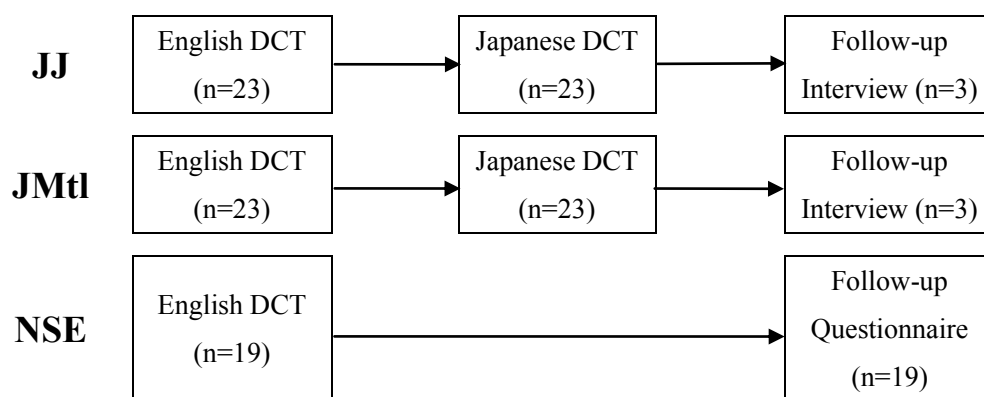


Figure 3.2. Procedures that the JJ, JMtl, and NSE groups followed.

3.3.2.1 English DCT.

The English DCT was answered by all the participants. It consisted of a brief biodata section, a 10-item DCT section, and a section on the perceptions of the interlocutors about the situations in the DCT. The DCT presented 10 different situations where one of three possible translations of *sumimasen* in English, *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, or *thank you* was likely to be used. Some scenarios were adapted from the crosslinguistic influence (CLI) study conducted by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990). Participants completed each dialogue in English. For each question, the participants were asked to give a short description of what they had on their mind as they read about the situation ("Mind Question"). Two examples from the DCT are:

1. You are a top executive at a very large accounting firm. One day the boss calls you into his office.¹

Boss: Next Sunday my wife and I are having a little party. I know it's short notice but I am hoping all my top executives will be there

¹ Scenario adapted from Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990).

with their spouses. What do you say?

You: _____

Boss: That's too bad. I was hoping everyone would be there.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

2. You are working in a grocery store. When you are carrying lots of cans in order to move them into the other shelf, you drop some of them.

Customer: (Picking up the cans) Are you all right?

You: _____

*What was on your mind in this situation?

3.3.2.2 *Japanese DCT.*

The Japanese DCT consisted of a 10-item DCT section, and a section on the perceptions of the interlocutors. The DCT had the 10 same scenarios as the English DCT, but in Japanese. The participants answered the English DCT first, and after completing it, filled out the Japanese DCT without referring to their own answers on English DCT. Likewise, they were not allowed to modify their answers on the English DCT once they started the Japanese DCT. Also, it was assumed that the participants would switch their mental languages as they answered each DCT; more specifically, they would think in English when filling out the English DCT, and think in Japanese when answering the Japanese DCT. However, there could have been an order effect (English

DCT > Japanese DCT), influencing the results.

3.3.2.3 Follow-up questionnaire.

This questionnaire was a replacement for the follow-up interview; therefore, the main aim of this questionnaire was to establish a native-speaker baseline for the use of each expression, *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*, that I observed in the English DCT. It also attempted to reveal their assumptions for each phrase, *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*, and to draw real-experience stories from English non-native speakers (NNSs) when the two phrases are involved.

The reasons for not conducting follow-up interviews with NSE group were mainly my own time constraints and the different purpose of the follow-up between the Japanese groups and NSE group. On the one hand, the JJ and JMtl groups had filled out English and Japanese DCTs, and one of the main purposes of the follow-up interviews was to investigate further the CLI phenomena seen in the DCTs. On the other hand, NSE answered English DCT, and the follow-up questionnaire was aimed to confirm their use of *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and *thank you* in order to establish a NSE baseline. Therefore, the follow-up interviews with NSE group were replaced by the follow-up questionnaires.

3.3.2.4 Follow-up interviews.

The interviews were intended as a follow-up to the English and Japanese DCTs in order to confirm or further probe the intentions of the participants as to why they put the answers they did; accordingly, they were open-ended and semi-structured interviews (see Appendix D for the interview protocol). The purpose of the follow-up interviews was

twofold: to examine how the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* differed among the three groups, and to investigate whether the transfer they made in the questionnaire, if any, was at a linguistic or conceptual level.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

I obtained ethics approval from the Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee in December, 2009. The following sections describe the data collection procedures for each group.

3.5.1 JJ group: Japanese learners of English in Japan.

3.5.1.1 Questionnaires.

After receiving permission from a professor at a national university in Kanto area, I administered 27 questionnaires in her English class in January 2010. Since each participant filled out the two questionnaires on different dates (the time interval was two days), it was not possible for the participants to refer to their answers on the English DCT as they filled out the Japanese DCT, and vice versa. However, there might have been an order effect of filling the English DCT first and the Japanese DCT second, as mentioned above.

The number of students who had registered for the class was 27; however, I obtained only 23 complete sets of questionnaires because some students were absent for one or both classes. The consent form (see Appendix E) was signed by all the participants on the first day of data collection. After completing each questionnaire, all the participants in this group received some chocolate as a token of my appreciation.

3.5.3.2 Interview.

After collecting the English and Japanese DCTs, I obtained the consent form for the interviews (see Appendix F), and conducted the follow-up interviews. The interview participants were selected from among the questionnaire participants who indicated in the questionnaire that they were willing to be interviewed. Two out of 23 students agreed to be interviewed. The interview with the first student was conducted after school on the second day in a quiet empty classroom. The second, due to a scheduling problem, had to be over the phone after I came back to Canada. Conversations with the two interviewees were audio-recorded. The recorded length of the interview was approximately 10 minutes with the first student and 34 minutes with the second student. I attribute the difference in interview durations to the amount of my preparation for each interview. While I had only a few hours to analyze her English and Japanese DCTs for the first interview, I had more than ten days before the second interview; as a consequence, more questions came up for the second interviewee. Because of this, the two sets of interview data were not the same, which might result in making the data difficult to compare. Therefore, data from those interviews were considered as case studies.

3.5.2 JMtl group: Japanese learners of English in Montreal.

3.5.2.1 Questionnaires.

For the JMtl group, I recruited questionnaire participants by e-mail at the beginning of March, 2010, from international student organizations across two English universities in a metropolitan city in eastern Canada. I also posted some advertisements online (see Appendix G) and asked my Japanese friends for their cooperation. At the

end of May, I contacted a Japanese school in the same city as well, requesting that they to allow me to attend their end-of-semester meeting to recruit participants for my study.

With this group, I mainly adopted snowball sampling, a way of recruiting participants by asking “participants to identify others to become members of the sample” (Creswell, 2008, p. 155). Three months after starting recruitment, the number of the JMtl group was 23.

For this group, I converted the consent form and two questionnaires (English and Japanese DCTs) into electronic versions so that they could be filled out individually by computer. Each participant voluntarily contacted me after seeing my notice, and received the consent form and questionnaires by email. They were asked to sign the consent form first (see Appendix E), and then, to start filling out the English DCT, and lastly, the Japanese DCT without referring to the English DCT. The time interval between answering the English and Japanese DCTs was not specified; therefore, it depended on each participant. Nevertheless, the most important point in the instructions for answering the questionnaires was that the participants did not refer to their answers on one DCT when completing the other, in order to make sure that their answers on one DCT were not explicitly affected by the other language. Therefore, this factor should not negatively affect the validity of the results; however, there are no means to verify that the participants did follow the directions; thus, it is a possible limitation of this study.

3.5.2.2 Interview.

The interviewees were also selected based on their willingness, indicated in the email when they returned their English and Japanese DCTs. Although there were about

10 participants who agreed to be interviewed, only the first three participants were interviewed because of my own time constraints. The consent form (see Appendix F) was read and signed by all three participants before the interviews. The procedure for the follow-up interviews was the same as for the JJ group. All the interviews were conducted in a closed office at a university and were audio-recorded. Each interview lasted approximately one hour.

3.5.3 NSE group: NSE of English who reside in Montreal.

I contacted a faculty member of a university in the same city in Canada at the beginning of March and put some postings on their homepage, as well as on some other websites (see Appendix H). Also, I asked my friends who are native speakers of English to be questionnaire participants. As with the JMtl group, snowball sampling was adopted to recruit the participants for this group. I used the electronic versions of the consent form and two questionnaires, the English DCT and the follow-up questionnaire. The participants in the NSE group went through a very similar process as the JMtl group – contacting the researcher voluntarily, filling out the consent form and the two questionnaires individually using computer, and returning them to the researcher by email.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

3.6.1 Questionnaires.

I used quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the questionnaire data. On the one hand, I analyzed the English DCT quantitatively by transforming the qualitative data to quantitative one. I put the participants' utterances into eight

categories: sorry alone, excuse me alone, thank you alone, combination of sorry and excuse me, combination of sorry and thank you, pardon me, others, and no answer. For example, an utterance, “Sorry, I already have an engagement” (NSE-18 in Situation two) was labelled as I’m sorry alone, and “I am sorry! I am fine. Thank you very much for your kindness” (JMtl-3 in Situation four) was combination of sorry and thank you. The category “others” was for the utterances in which none of the key phrases were used, such as “can I ask you something now?” (JJ-12 in Situation seven), because the utterance did not include any of the focal phrases.

On the other hand, I qualitatively identified the relationships between the utterances and thoughts in English DCT and looked for patterns behind the apologetic phrases *I’m sorry* and *excuse me*. This was an independent research decision on my part and was not based on previous instances in the literature. I did this qualitative data by hand rather than using computer software for the analysis because my database was small enough for me to be able to keep track of files, and I preferred “to be close to the data and have a hands-on feel for it without the intrusion of a machine” (Creswell, 2008, p. 247). First, I set a native speaker baseline using the results of the NSE group and confirmed the pragmatic functions of the expressions *I’m sorry* and *excuse me* in the light of the literature. Then, I shifted my focus to the use of these English expressions by Japanese groups, and identified the differences among the three groups.

After the English DCT, I compared the English expressions that were used differently from the NSE group with the counterparts for each question in the Japanese DCT, which allowed me to identify if any possible phenomena of CLI had occurred.

3.6.2 Follow-up interview.

With the follow-up interviews, the mental state underlying the use of *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and *thank you* in each situation for both English and Japanese DCTs was further investigated. I endeavoured to delve more deeply into the question of whether transfer had truly occurred, and if so, what kind of transfer it was in the light of Jarvis and Pavlenko's (2008) characterization of CLI types across ten dimensions. For example, with regard to cognitive level, if the participants keep the same mentality when they used English and Japanese under the same situation, the transfer could be categorized as conceptual. For example, suppose that the lady in the airport, who said *I'm sorry* when the other lady picked up her handkerchief, was feeling "Thank you! But, I also feel indebted for that." Recall that the concept behind the Japanese expression *sumimasen* is one that combines gratitude with an acknowledgement of a debt. The debt is incurred because the lady picked up the handkerchief for the Japanese lady, which made her feel like she owed a favour. In this case, the transfer is at a conceptual level because her mental state was also transferred from that underlying the Japanese word, *sumimasen*. In contrast, if the participants distinguished the concepts, or pragmatic functions underlying the expressions in English and in Japanese, and still used the direct translation from Japanese, the transfer was deemed to be at a linguistic level. For example, if the Japanese lady whose handkerchief was returned to her was feeling sorry, in the literal *I'm sorry* sense, then, the transfer would have occurred at a linguistic level because it means that her mind was not affected by the concept of *sumimasen*.

Finally, it should be noted that throughout the analysis, I compared the two Japanese groups in order to see if the factor of experience in an English-speaking country affected their use of the English expressions, *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*.

Chapter Four: Results

In this chapter, I will present the findings of this study; how participants used *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*, and the Japanese influence on these usages. I start by introducing my participants. Then, I show the data of the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and the interviews, in order to compare the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* across the three groups. After that, some Japanese influences on these English phrases are illustrated by showing the data extracted from the Japanese DCT and the follow-up interviews, followed by the section of individual differences. In this study, the questionnaire participants will be called by the group name and number (e.g.; NSE-8, JJ-20), and the interview participants will be called by pseudonyms in order to ensure the participants' confidentiality.

4.1 Baseline Data of the Participants

First, the JJ group had 12 females and 11 males, making 23 participants in total, and the age range was between 18 and 20 ($M = 19$, $SD = 0.4$), which is slightly younger than the other two groups. No one had been in English-speaking countries, except for one participant with 2-week experience in such a country.

Second, the JMtl group also had 23 participants with 17 females and 6 males, and the mean age was 25 (19 to 35 years old). The standard deviation was 4.06. On average, the length of their stay in English-speaking countries was 4 years 2 months. The shortest stay was 1 year and the longest stay was 8 years 7 months.

Finally, there were 19 participants in the NSE group, with 14 males and 5 females. The age range was from 20 to 38, with the mean of 24 years of age ($SD = 4.2$). They

were all native speakers of English, that is, those who spoke English as their L1 and felt most comfortable communicating in English. Sixteen participants grew up in Canada, and three in the USA. Eighteen out of 19 participants spoke French in addition to their L1, English.

Table 4.1

Summary of the participants

	Number		Range	Age		LOR	
	Total	Male vs Female		Mean	Standard Deviation	Range	Mean
JJ	23	11 vs 12	18-20	19	0.4	0-2 wks ^a	----
JMtl	23	6 vs 17	19-35	25	4.06	12-103 mths	50 mths
NSE	19	14 vs 5	20-38	24	4.2	----	----

Note. ^aNo JJ participants had been to an English-speaking country except for one with two-week experience.

4.2 English Discourse Completion Test (English DCT)

In this section, the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* by the three different groups will be presented. Accordingly, this section will show the results corresponding to my first research question, which is: Do advanced Japanese-L1 learners of English and English native speakers use *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* differently in identical contexts? If so, how? In addition, this section also addresses my second research question to some extent, i.e., Is there an effect on Japanese learners' use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* that is related to residence in an English-speaking country longer than one year?

4.2.1 Quantitative data.

In this section, I will take a close look at the English DCT data and will compare

how the three groups use *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and *thank you*. Table 4.2 to Table 4.12 show the number and percentages of participants who used the key phrases. For the explanation of the coding, see the last section of the previous chapter.

4.2.1.1 *Situation one: Bump into an elderly lady.*

This was a situation in which participants bumped into an elderly lady at a department store. As can be seen in Table 4.2, *I'm sorry* was the dominant type of answer among all the three groups. However, there were two points observed as differences among the groups. First, the NSE group used *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* together frequently (26.3%²), and it was their second most common type of response following *I'm sorry* alone (52.6%). However, none of the JJ and JMtl participants used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*. Second, the JJ group used *excuse me* less often than the other two groups. It may look like it is the NSE group who used *excuse me* least often; however, if the categories of *excuse me* and *I'm sorry and excuse me* are collapsed, seven out of 19 (36.8%) NSE participants said *excuse me* in their utterances. In contrast, the ratio of JJ group who said *excuse me* is only 13%, and they seem to have used *I'm sorry* more as an alternative to *excuse me*. In other words, the JJ group's absolute number of saying *excuse me* was smaller when compared with JMtl and NSE groups.

² The percentages shown in this study have been rounded off to the first decimal place, which might result in mismatches if some of them are added.

Table 4.2

Situation one: Bumping into an elderly lady

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S & T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	16	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	23
	69.6%	13.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4.3%	13.0%	100%
JMtl	13	5	0	0	0	0	4	1	23
	57.0%	21.7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17.4%	4.3%	100%
NSE	10	2	0	5	0	2	0	0	19
	52.6%	10.5%	0%	26.3%	0%	10.5%	0%	0%	100%

4.2.1.2 *Situation two: Decline a party invitation from your boss.*

This was a situation in which participants needed to decline an invitation to a weekend party from a boss. As expected, Table 4.3 shows that *I'm sorry* was the most common response in all the groups; however, if the categories of *I'm sorry and excuse me* and *I'm sorry and thank you* were put together with *I'm sorry*, it becomes clear that the JJ group's ratio of saying *I'm sorry* (16 out of 23; 69.6%) was the highest, followed by the NSE group (12 out of 19; 63.1%) and the JMtl group (13 out of 23; 56.5%).

Also, it should be noted that the combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you* was observed in both of the Japanese groups, but not in the NSE group, and the combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* was used only by a NSE. Furthermore, the table shows that two JJ participants did not say anything: one explained her underlying feeling of sorry in the following "mind" question, whereas the other left the section blank. This might imply that one did not dare to say anything, and the other might not have understood the scenario.

Table 4.3

Situation two: Decline a party invitation from your boss

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S & T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	15	0	0	0	1	0	5	2	23
	65.2%	0%	0%	0%	4.3%	0%	21.7%	8.7%	100%
JMtl	10	0	1	0	3	0	9	0	23
	43.5%	0%	4.3%	0%	13.0%	0%	39.1%	0%	100%
NSE	11	0	2	1	0	0	5	0	19
	57.9%	0%	10.5%	5.3%	0%	0%	26.3%	0%	100%

4.2.1.3 Situation three: Spill coffee over friend's magazine.

In this situation, participants carelessly spilled coffee over their friend's magazine; therefore, a phrase of apologies was expected. Table 4.4 shows that the expectation was met: the response of almost all the participants was *I'm sorry* regardless of groups. The only exceptions were the three NSE participants (15.8%) who responded with their own original expressions without saying *I'm sorry* such as "Shit! I will buy you a new one" (NSE-17). Two out of the three NSE participants whose answer did not include *I'm sorry* followed a certain pattern. Both of them swore first (i.e., "shit" and "bollocks") and offered to buy another copy. The other NSE participant just described what had happened: "Oops! I just spilled coffee on your magazine!" (NSE-2).

Table 4.4

Situation three: Spill coffee over friend's magazine

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S & T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	23
	95.7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4.3%	100%
JMtl	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
NSE	16	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	19
	84.2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	15.8%	0%	100%

4.2.1.4 Situation four: Customer picks up your dropped cans.

This was a situation in which a participant, as a shop clerk, dropped some cans on the floor, and a customer helped him/her pick them up. It turned out that the most common response was *thank you* among all the groups; however, there was a difference observed between the Japanese and NSE groups. While none of the NSE participants' utterances included *I'm sorry*, it was not the case for the JJ and JMtl groups. Some participants in the JJ and JMtl groups said *I'm sorry* or *I'm sorry and thank you* as shown in Table 4.5 below. For example, JJ-13 said, "I'm sorry!" with "white in my head" (*sic*; 'my mind went blank') on his mind, and another JJ participant said, "I'm sorry. Thank you very much!!" (JJ-19). An example of such an utterance from the JMtl group is "I am sorry! I am fine. Thank you very much for your kindness" (JMtl-3).

Table 4.5

Situation four: Customer picks up your dropped cans

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S & T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	2	0	19	0	1	0	0	1	23
	8.7%	0%	82.6%	0%	4.3%	0%	0%	4.3%	100%
JMtl	1	0	19	0	1	0	2	0	23
	4.3%	0%	82.6%	0%	4.3%	0%	8.7%	0%	100%
NSE	0	0	18	0	0	0	1	0	19
	0%	0%	94.7%	0%	0%	0%	5.3%	0%	100%

4.2.1.5 Situation five: Your classmate did your work.

This was a situation in which the participant met a classmate on the day of a presentation. The classmate had completed the PowerPoint slides alone for the pair project the day before because the participant was sick. In this situation, *I'm sorry* was the most common response in all the groups. Focusing on *I'm sorry and thank you*, it became clear that the percentage for the JMtl group (43.5%) was much higher than those of the JJ and NSE groups (17.4% and 10.5% respectively). This combined use of *I'm sorry* and *thank you* could also be seen by some JJ and JMtl participants in Situation two and four. Also, Table 4.6 shows that the NSE group tended to use their own original responses more frequently than Japanese. These did not include *I'm sorry, excuse me*, and/or *thank you*. Such instances are “Hey...I hope the presentation came out well” (NSE-2), “Beers on me tonight” (NSE-10), “Oh god, I wish I could have helped” (NSE-11), and “I hope everything went okay” (NSE-16).

Table 4.6

Situation five: Your classmate did your work

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S&E	S&T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	12	0	4	0	4	0	2	1	23
	52.2%	0%	17.4%	0%	17.4%	0%	8.7%	4.3%	100%
JMtl	10	0	1	0	10	0	2	0	23
	43.5%	0%	4.3%	0%	43.5%	0%	8.7%	0%	100%
NSE	11	0	1	0	2	0	5	0	19
	57.9%	0%	5.3%	0%	10.5%	0%	26.3%	0%	100%

4.2.1.6 Situation six: Women blocking your way.

In this situation, the participant needed to ask some ladies ahead to move aside.

As illustrated in Table 4.7, *excuse me* was the most frequently chosen phrase throughout the three groups. However, the proportion of *excuse me* by the JJ group was much lower (56.5%), compared with the JMtl and NSE groups (100% and 78.9% respectively). Instead, the JJ group answered with their own response without *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and/or *thank you* (26%). Such utterances of JJ participants were mainly intended to ask the women to move aside or to tell them that they were going to pass through (e.g., "Can I pass?" by JJ-7), which were different from those by NSE (e.g., "Beep beep" by NSE-5). Interestingly, a few of the JJ and NSE participants used *I'm sorry* or the combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* while all the 23 JMtl participants chose to say *excuse me*. Also, a NSE participant's utterance included *pardon me*, which was not observed in the JJ and JMtl groups' utterances. Furthermore, it is notable that two JJ participants (8.7 % of the JJ group) did not say anything in this scenario.

Table 4.7

Situation six: Women blocking your way

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S&T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	1	13	0	1	0	0	6	2	23
	4.3%	56.5%	0%	4.3%	0%	0%	26.0%	8.7%	100%
JMtl	0	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
NSE	1	14	0	1	0	1	2 ^a	0	19
	5.3%	73.7%	0%	5.3%	0%	5.3%	10.5%	0%	100%

^a One of the participants wrote *Accuse me*, which I assume was meant to be *excuse me*.

4.2.1.7 *Situation seven: Ask your boss something urgent.*

This situation required the participant to ask something urgent to the boss who looked busy. As can be seen in Table 4.8, only one JJ participant said *I'm sorry* (4.3%) whereas that was the most common kind of response for the JMtl and NSE groups (52.2% and 47.4% respectively). Instead, the most frequently used phrase among the JJ group (52.2%) was an original response, not *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and/or *thank you*, such as “May I have your time?” (JJ-5) and “Boss! Can I ask question” (JJ-11). Many of the NSE participants’ utterances (36.8%) also did not include those key phrases, such as “Do you have a moment? I have an urgent question” (NSE-9) and “Hi, do you have a moment?” (NSE-17). Also, the data suggest that *excuse me* was more often used by the JJ and JMtl groups (34.8% and 26.0% respectively) than the NSE group (10.5%). Table 4.8 also shows that the percentages of the participants who used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* were almost the same among the three groups.

Table 4.8

Situation seven: Ask your boss something urgent

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S&T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	1	8	0	1	0	0	12	1	23
	4.3%	34.8%	0%	4.3%	0%	0%	52.2%	4.3%	100%
JMtl	12	6	0	1	0	0	4	0	23
	52.2%	26.0%	0%	4.3%	0%	0%	17.4%	0%	100%
NSE	9	2	0	1	0	0	7	0	19
	47.4%	10.5%	0%	5.3%	0%	0%	36.8%	0%	100%

4.2.1.8 Situation eight: Call landlord at bad time.

This was a situation in which the participant made a phone call to the landlord, but apparently it was not a good time. It can be seen in Table 4.9 that the most common type of utterances was *other responses* throughout the three groups. The instances were “Hi, did I catch you at a bad time?” (NSE-9), “Hello. Are you busy with something right now? Can I talk to you for a second?” (JMtl-5), and “Hello? I call again later” (JJ-17). The table also shows that the percentage who used *I’m sorry* was JMtl (17.4%) < JJ (26.0%) < NSE (36.8%). Moreover, all the utterances by the JMtl and NSE groups were sorted into either *I’m sorry* or *other responses*, whereas some of those by the JJ group fell into *excuse me* (4.3%) or *no answer* (17.4%) besides *I’m sorry* and *other responses*.

Table 4.9

Situation eight: Call landlord at bad time

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S&E	S&T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	6	1	0	0	0	0	12	4	23
	26.0%	4.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	52.2%	17.4%	100%
JMtl	4	0	0	0	0	0	19	0	23
	17.4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	82.6%	0%	100%
NSE	7	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	19
	36.8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	63.2%	0%	100%

4.2.1.9 Situation nine: Almost bump into a stranger.

In this situation, a stranger almost bumped into the participant on the street. As shown in Table 4.10, *I'm sorry* was a very common answer throughout the three groups; however, besides that, the tendency of each group looked different. *No answer* was another common response for the JJ and NSE groups (47.8% and 36.8% respectively), while it contributed only a small portion for the JMtl group (13.0%). Instead, the JMtl group used more *excuse me* and *other responses* than the other two groups. The percentage of *excuse me* used by each group was: JJ (4.3%) < NSE (10.5%) < JMtl (21.7%), and that of *other responses* was: NSE (0%) < JJ (4.3%) < JMtl (13.0%). Such instances of *other responses* were “Oops, I almost tuckled (*sic*; “tackled”) that guy's sholder (*sic*)! Phew!!!” (JMtl-7) and “Oops” (JMtl-9 and 20).

Table 4.10

Situation nine: Almost bump into a stranger

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S&T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	10	1	0	0	0	0	1	11	23
	43.5%	4.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4.3%	47.8%	100%
JMtl	10	5	0	1	0	1	3	3	23
	43.5%	21.7%	0%	4.3%	0%	4.3%	13.0%	13.0%	100%
NSE	9	2	0	0	0	1	0	7	19
	47.4%	10.5%	0%	0%	0%	5.3%	0%	36.8%	100%

4.2.1.10 Situation ten: Professor keeps on talking over time.

In this situation, the participant, as a university student, had to get to the next class but the professor kept on talking after the class was over. As can be seen in Table 4.11, the difference between groups did not seem immense; however, the JJ and JMtl groups were more likely to say *excuse me* (21.7% and 17.4% respectively) than the NSE group (10.5%), and the ratio of NSE participants who chose not to say anything was higher (73.7%) than the JJ and JMtl groups (47.8% and 43.5% respectively). Also, no NSE participants used *other responses*, while some of the JJ and JMtl participants did (17.4% and 8.7% respectively) (e.g., “(Raise my hand) Professor, (pointing the time) it has been 10 minutes past....” By JMtl-13, “Teacher, I have to go next class” by JJ-18). Moreover, the combination of *I’m sorry* and *excuse me* was observed only in the JMtl group (e.g., “Excuse me.. I’m sorry for intrupting (*sic*) you but I have to run to the next class. Can I go?” by JMtl-3).

Table 4.11

Situation ten: Professor keeps on taking over time

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S&T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	3	5	0	0	0	0	4	11	23
	13.0%	21.7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17.4%	47.8%	100%
JMtl	5	4	0	2	0	0	2	10	23
	21.7%	17.4%	0%	8.7%	0%	0%	8.7%	43.5%	100%
NSE	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	14	19
	15.8%	10.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	73.7%	100%

4.2.1.11 Summary.

Table 4.12 shows the overview of the data of all ten Situations. The content of this table identifies if there are any overall differences in the uses of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* among the three groups.

There was no big difference among the groups on the use of *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and *thank you* alone. However, each group seemed to have some specific features. First, the NSE group used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* more frequently. They also sometimes used *pardon me*, which could barely be seen from the JMtl group, and not at all from the JJ group. This unfamiliarity of *pardon me* by Japanese learners was in line with Nakano's findings (2005). Second, the JJ group used *I'm sorry* and *thank you* relatively often, and the rate of no answer was higher. Third, the JMtl group used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you* even more frequently than the JJ group. Also, the JJ and JMtl groups used their own expressions, that is, utterances without using *sorry*, *excuse me*, and/or *thank you*, slightly more than the NSE group.

Table 4.12

Complete data overview

	Coding								Sum
	Sorry	Excuse	Thanks	S & E	S & T	Pardon	Others	No answer	
JJ	88	31	23	2	6	0	45	35	230
	38.3%	13.5%	10.0%	0.9%	2.6%	0.0%	19.6%	15.2%	100%
JMtl	88	43	21	4	14	1	45	14	230
	38.3%	18.7%	9.1%	1.7%	6.1%	0.4%	19.6%	6.1%	100%
NSE	77	22	21	8	2	4	35	21	190
	40.5%	11.6%	11.1%	4.2%	1.1%	2.1%	18.4%	11.1%	100%

4.2.2 Qualitative data.

In this section, I will present the data broken down by expression used. The purpose of the qualitative data analysis was to identify the relationships between the utterances and thoughts in English DCT and looked for patterns behind the apologetic phrases *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*. The performance of the three groups will be compared by presenting both the questionnaire data and the interview data.

4.2.2.1 *I'm sorry.*

I'm sorry was likely to be more heartfelt and involve more speaker's emotion than *excuse me*.

4.2.2.1.1 *Feeling Bad or Guilty.*

Feeling bad or guilty tended to make participants say *I'm sorry*, regardless of their group. For example, in Situation three, when spilling coffee over the friend's magazine, NSE-16 said:

NSE-16: “Oh, no! I'm so sorry!”

Friend: Don't worry.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

“Through my own carelessness, I've ruined something which might be of value to someone else. I feel guilty.”

*Why did you say *I'm sorry*?

“I feel bad, and I'm worried my friend will think less of me or be angry with me.”

Also, the answers of JJ-20 for Situation one were:

Old lady: Oh, my!

JJ-20: “I'm sorry, sir.”

*What was on your mind in this situation?

“女性が邪魔だったけど...ぶつかってしまって悪いと思っている。[She was blocking the way... but I feel bad having bumped into her.]”

The two examples show that their utterance, “I'm so sorry!” and “I'm sorry, sir” came out of the feeling of bad and guilty. Aki, a JMtl interviewee, also supports this hypothesis.

Kanako: [...] 7番は...えっと、上司の...。この時は I'm sorry to bother you
で、その後時間をいただけるかどうかって言うのを言っていますよね。
この I'm sorry っていうのは、どうして I'm sorry って言ったんで
すか? [Situation seven... well, the story of the boss... In this case,
you say "I'm sorry to bother you," and after the phrase, you ask
your boss if s/he has a minute for you. This *I'm sorry*, why did you
say it?]

JMtl_Aki: あ、多分その状況的に、ボスがお取り込み中だったのかな? (ア
ンケートをチェックする) ...そうですね、そうですね。あのまあ、そ
れを邪魔して悪いっていう、うん、そこですね。 [Ah, I guess in that
situation, the boss was busy? (Checks the questionnaire) ... Yes,
that's it. So, the point is that I feel bad to interrupt him/her.]

Kanako: それも悪いっていう気持ちからですか? [It comes from your
feeling bad?]

JMtl_Aki: そうですね。 [Yes.]

4.2.2.1.2 Fault.

The relationship between *I'm sorry* and admission of fault could be observed in the three groups, but to differing degrees between groups. In the English DCT, more NSE participants pointed to the whereabouts of fault than Japanese did. In the JJ group, three mentioned who was at fault, whereas there were four mentions of fault in the JMtl group and seven the NSE group. Thus, the level of awareness of whose fault it was when saying *I'm sorry* seemed to be: $JJ \leq JMtl < NSE$.

The three examples illustrated below show the correlation between feeling at fault

and saying *I'm sorry*. The first example comes from NSE-9 in Situation five:

NSE-9: "I'm sorry you had to do my part."

Buddy: It's okay. There were a few parts to change.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

"Grateful that the friend helped"

*Why did you say *I'm sorry*?

"Because it was my fault, though I couldn't have changed it"

The second example comes from Aki (in the JMtl group), who reported in the interview that in Situation three she used *I'm sorry* because the fault was hers. (Her actual utterances were "Oh my god, I'm really sorry. Let me get a towel first!")

Kanako: [...] コーヒーをこぼしちゃったやつですね。んっと、これも I'm sorry ですね。これは...? [This is the situation in which you spilled the coffee. Well, you said, "I'm sorry." This case...?]

JMtl_Aki: これはやっぱりもう、完全に自分のミスでこぼしちゃってるので。はい。まあそこは謝らないと。[This case, the spill is completely my error, yes. So, then, I have to apologize.]

The third example comes from JJ-20 in Situation three:

JJ-20: “I’m sorry. I’ll buy a same one.”

Friend: Don’t worry.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

“自分が悪いので新しいものを買おう。 [I was wrong³, so I will buy another copy.]”

Related to admission of fault, some NSE participants used the term responsibility. For example, in Situation five, a participant (NSE-15) said, “I’m so sorry about that - what can I do to help?” to her partner who had wrapped up the PowerPoint slides alone. The reason why she said *I’m sorry* was that “it was my responsibility and I let my partner down.” Another example was a participant (NSE-10) in Situation one. After bumping into an elderly lady, he said, “I’m sorry! Are you alright?” and he wrote “I felt responsible for harm, and my conscience wants closure” as the reason for saying *I’m sorry*. It appears these cases can be considered to be similar to the ones mentioned above of admitting fault.

The three examples above showed that participants said *I’m sorry* when they felt that they were at fault. In contrast, there were some cases of *I’m sorry* when the speakers thought the fault was not theirs, and sometimes it was even their addressee’s. This type of descriptions could be observed only from JMtl and NSE group, but not from JJ group. The answer of a JMtl participant (JMtl-5) in Situation one was as follows:

³ The original utterance “自分が悪い (Jibun ga warui)” could be translated as ‘It was my fault.’ However, I translated it as ‘I was wrong’ because that is what the Japanese expression literally means. It can be interpreted as an admission of fault.

Elderly lady: Oh my!

JMtl-5: “Oops, sorry mam [sic]. I couldn't see the front.”

*What was on your mind in this situation?

“Probably I need to apologize even though it is not my fault.”

Also, there was an example of a NSE participant (NSE-7) in Situation two:

NSE-7: “Oh, sorry, I'm already busy, please excuse me.”

*What was on your mind in this situation?

“I feel bad but it's his fault and I won't cancel my own plans, but I must be polite about it.”

As can be seen, some JMtl and NSE participants said *I'm sorry* not only when they thought it was their fault, but also when they did not think it was their fault. Focusing on those cases, it appears that this happens especially when the addressee is older or in a position of authority, which makes it likely that politeness would come into play. Relationship with politeness will be discussed in detail under the section, 4.2.2.4.

4.2.2.1.3 Sympathy.

This is a type of using *I'm sorry* that was not seen in the Japanese groups. The only example was a NSE participant (NSE-19) in Situation five, where the partner had wrapped up the PowerPoint slides alone for a pair work project, because the participant,

as his partner, could not help him due to sickness. He said, “I’m really sorry you got stuck finishing it alone. I owe you one.” He explained the reason for saying *I’m sorry* was “to sympathize with him for the inconvenience I caused (but not my fault).” As can be seen, he used *sorry* to sympathize with his partner.

4.2.2.1.4 *In case Sorry.*

This type of *I’m sorry* was identified when the speaker was not quite certain if the action really interrupted or irritated the addressee. This was observed only in the NSE group in Situations eight and nine. There were three cases detected. In the first example, participant NSE-3 in Situation eight made a phone call to her landlord and he answered in a whisper. She responded, “Sorry, is now a bad time to call? I can call back later if I’m disturbing you.” For the mind question, she answered, “I wouldn’t feel that bad, unless I realized that I was calling at a time when people would be sleeping, but I would apologize anyway because it seems that you likely did disturb them.” Also, she explained the specific reason of using *I’m sorry* as “This would be an ‘in case’ apology, since you don’t really know if you caused any harm or not.” Another participant (NSE-10) also used this type of *I’m sorry* in Situation eight, the same situation as the example above. He said, “Sorry, you busy?,” and his reason of this *sorry* was “Just in case.”

The third example comes from participant NSE-3 in Situation nine, where she almost bumped into a stranger on a crowded street. Her utterance was “Oops, sorry.” Her reason for saying *sorry* was “Because the other person could be annoyed, you would say you are sorry just in case. You would expect them to apologize to you too.” This case can be forestalling *sorry*; however, it may also be possible to consider it as a

customary *sorry* as she (NSE-3) explained her thinking as “I wouldn't really feel bad since this is a pretty normal thing, but it's customary to apologize for getting into someone else's space.”

4.2.2.1.5 *Perception of sorry by participants.*

In Q.2 of *Questionnaire 2*, the NSE group was asked to write their assumptions for *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* (For *excuse me*, see 4.2.2.2.5). Their responses were mainly sorted into three types, which were *sincere apology*, *cultural and linguistic convention*, and *expression of sorrow and sympathy*. First, sincere apology was used when they felt guilty or at fault. For example, participant NSE-8 said, “That I AM sorry. I tend to use it to express how I (supposedly) feel.” Another participant (NSE-15) said, “When it's your fault and you feel guilty about something.” Second, the type of cultural and linguistic convention had a broad sense because this entailed the factors of politeness and culture. It included but not was limited to:

When you have caused any kind of harm or inconvenience to someone else. Also sometimes if you didn't hear or understand what someone said, and sometimes just for politeness, like if someone else bumps into you (NSE-3 in Q.2 of *Questionnaire 2*).

The third type was an expression of sorrow and sympathy as a participant (NSE-2) said, “[*I'm sorry* is used] to express sorrow (a death, a funeral, hurting someone inadvertently)”.

Besides the three types of *I'm sorry*, some participants raised an interesting

point, which was that *I'm sorry* is used when the addressee has authority. A participant's (NSE-19) answer was "situations where you did something wrong or are in an inferior position." Another participant's (NSE-10) answer also seems to support this idea: "When I might have done something wrong, when I want them to feel in controll [sic]."

In contrast, the JJ and JMtl interviewees were asked when and how they used *I'm sorry* in general and what its definition in their mind was. Only the sincere apology type was mentioned by the JJ interviewees. For instance, Tomoko said she used *I'm sorry* when she felt bad.

Kanako: *I'm sorry* っていうのはどういう時に、どういうシチュエーション

で、どういう気持ちで使いますか？こう、定義じゃないですけど。

[About *I'm sorry*, when, in what kind of situation, and with what kind of emotion do you use it? Like definition for you?]

JJ_Tomoko: ああ、えっとー、悪いことした時とか...んー、そうなんか、ん

ー。[Ah, well... for example, when I did something wrong...

mm... yes like... mmm...]

Kanako: 自分に非がある時に言うイメージ？[When you are at fault?]

JJ_Tomoko: ああ、そうですね。でも結構すごい申し訳ないなと思ってる時

とかじゃないとごめんなさいは使わない感じ。[Ah, yes. But, I

wouldn't use *gomennasai* (*I'm sorry*) unless I feel very sorry.]

Another JJ interviewee, Mitsuru said, "*I'm sorry* は謝る時だけかな。[I use *I'm sorry* only for apology.]" JMtl participant, Aki also mentioned the sincere apology type in the

interview:

多分自分に非があるな、とか自分のミスでこうなっちゃったなとか、そういう時には多分 *I'm sorry* を使うと思うんですよ。[I think I use *I'm sorry* in cases like when I feel that I am at fault, or when my error causes something negative.]

Another JMtl interviewee, Mayu reported some cases of cultural and linguistic conventions:

[...] で、*I'm sorry* っていうパターンの時には...そうですね...*I'm sorry*...ぶつかりそうになった時はもちろん、邪魔なところを通ろうとした時にも *sorry* って言いますね。[...] 本当は *excuse me* っていうコなんですけど。[[...] and, in case of saying *I'm sorry*... well... *I'm sorry*... I say *sorry* not only when almost bumping into somebody, but also when I try to pass through people. [...] where *excuse me* would be appropriate.]

4.2.2.2 *Excuse me.*

Compared with *I'm sorry*, *excuse me* is a phrase that has more to do with a social politeness function (Borkin & Reinhart, 1978).

4.2.2.2.1 *Feeling annoyed.*

It was seen from all the groups that *Excuse me* was used when the participants felt annoyed. For example, a NSE participant (NSE-4) said, “Excuse me” after

bumping into an elderly lady in Situation one. He explained that when he said this phrase, he was “A little annoyed but wanting to be polite.” For the question that asks why he said *excuse me*, he also answered that it was a “Normal thing to say when bumping into someone.” Also, a JMtl participant (JMtl-8) said, “Excuse me” in the same scenario, with “I get annoyed” in her mind. The third example was the utterance and mind of a JJ participant (JJ-11) in Situation six where some ladies blocked his way while he was in a hurry. He said, “Excuse me!” to the ladies in the front, and his answer for the mind question was “イライラしている [I am irritated.]”

Although *excuse me* was the common utterance throughout the groups when feeling annoyed, some cases of saying *I’m sorry* were seen in the JJ and NSE groups to convey this feeling, but not in the JMtl group. In the JJ group, there were ten comments referring annoyance for the mind question, and three of them used *excuse me*, two used *I’m sorry*, and five said nothing or used their own responses. In the NSE group, there were five comments referring to annoyance: three of them said *excuse me*, one used *I’m sorry*, and one said nothing.

4.2.2.2.3 Interruption (attention-getting form).

Excuse me was used also when the participants tried to get the addressees’ attention, which was commonly seen in the three groups. A NSE participant (NSE-16) who said, “Excuse me” in Situation six where he asked the ladies walking ahead to move aside explained this use of *excuse me* as “Only to get their attention, so they could move out of my way and I wouldn’t have to push.” A JMtl interviewee, Mayu mentioned why she used *excuse me* in Situation seven, where she had to ask the boss something urgent.

Kanako: [...] (マユさんの発言は) “excuse me, sir”でその後に“I’m really sorry”がついてますけど、これはどういう心境で excuse me と I’m sorry がついてますか? [(In your response, “I’m really sorry” follows “excuse me, sir.” What was your intention of saying each phrase?)]

JMtl_Mayu: そうですね、“excuse me”で、もうテンションはもうあの”excuse me!”って、パッって見てくれてるんで、[...]。 [Mm, with the “excuse me,” I assume that I can grab the attention of the boss, and he would notice me, [...].]

Also in the interview with JJ participant, Mitsuru, he explained why he said “excuse me” in Situation seven.

Kanako: [...] どうして excuse me? [Why did you say “excuse me?”]

JJ_Mitsuru: 相手が気づいてないだろうから。忙しくて。[Because the boss would not have noticed me. Since he is busy.]

Kanako: じゃあ気づいて欲しいっていう excuse me? [So, it is the *excuse me* with the intention of getting his attention?]

JJ_Mitsuru: うん。[Yah.]

4.2.2.2.4 Request.

In addition to the two forms mentioned in Borkin and Reinhart’s (1978) definition of *excuse me*, the request form might also be added. This form was frequently observed in Situation six, when participants wanted to pass through some ladies ahead on the street.

The first example was a NSE participant's (NSE-3) utterance and comments in Situation six where participants would like to overtake some ladies walking slowly on the street. She said, "Ahem (clearing throat noise) (and if that didn't work I would say 'Excuse me.')." She explained why she used *excuse me* as "Because I'm asking them to move out of my way," and for the mind question, she answered as followed:

I would think they were being inconsiderate and try to remind them of their social obligation to others by making them aware of my presence first, and only really point out that I was trying to get by directly (by using 'excuse me') if they didn't move. (The thoughts of NSE-3 participant in Situation six)

The second example was a JMtl participant (JMtl-14) in the same situation. She said, "Excuse me," with "Please move" in her mind. The third example was a participant (JJ-21) from the JJ group, who said, "Excuse me." She explained her thoughts in this situation as "急いでいるのでどいてほしかった。[I wanted them to move aside because I was in a hurry.]"

4.2.2.2.5 Perception of "excuse me" by participants.

The data obtained from Q.2 of *Questionnaire 2* shows how the NSE participants perceived *excuse me*. The responses were sorted by its topic into three types; *etiquette*, *attention-getter*, and *request*. First, the *etiquette* type did not involve the feeling of guilt, and *excuse me* was mainly used for politeness as a NSE participant (NSE-4) said, "I want to be polite but I don't feel like I'm doing something wrong." An example that some

NSE participants pointed out was when they made rude natural sounds such as sneezes or burps in public. Second, *excuse me* was used as an attention-getter when they wanted to get the attention of somebody. A participant (NSE-6) said, “[*Excuse me* is u]sed either to grab their attention or if I have accidentally already grabbed their attention.” Third, the request type was used when they asked somebody to do something. For example, a participant (NSE-3) answered, “if you need someone to move out of your way.” This type sometimes had a sense of claiming the right. As a participant (NSE-12) stated, “I say ‘excuse me’ [...] when I feel right to do something.” Actually, eight out of nineteen participants answered yes to the question that asked if they had a kind of feeling that they had the right to do something when they said *excuse me* (Q.3 in Questionnaire 2), whereas five said no or not really, and six said that it depends on the situation.

Also, some participants mentioned a relationship with *I’m sorry*. A participant (NSE-7) said, “[...] to ask forgiveness following ‘sorry’,” and another (NSE-9) said, “interchangeable with ‘I’m sorry’ in less serious situations.” In relation to the interlocutor’s status, a participant (NSE-19) said, “interrupting others, especially when you’re in a higher position.” This was the opposite of *I’m sorry*, where some participants mentioned that the addressee has more status.

In the interviews with the JJ and JMtl participants, some expressed how they used *excuse me* and what their assumptions were. Only the attention-getter type was mentioned by JJ interviewees. For example, Mitsuru said, “相手が[自分に]気づいてない時は *excuse me*。そして人に呼び掛ける時は *excuse me*。[I use *excuse me* when the addressee hasn’t noticed [me]. Also when I call somebody.]” Another JJ interviewee, Karin, reported that she did not say *excuse me* to her friends because she felt that the phrase *excuse me* was used with somebody with whom she had psychological distance.

In the interviews with the JMtl participants, the etiquette and attention-getter types were clearly mentioned. On the other hand, while the request type was not explicitly mentioned, I was able to infer this type from the participants' responses. For example, Aki said,

Excuse me はまあ、その、自分がちょっと強気に出たいっていうか、そういう時か、まあ自分は悪くないって言う時...うん、に *excuse me* を使うかな。後はでも、例えばこっちでレストランとか、こっちで例えばあの、すごいくしゃみをしちゃったとか、そういう時はみんな *excuse me* って言いますよね。だからそういう時は、[...]私もじゃあそう言う、みたいな。うん。[As for *excuse me*, well, I use it when I want to show a kind of bold me, or when I'm not wrong. Besides that, for example in a restaurant, people from here say *excuse me* when they sneeze. So, then, in that case, [...] I say so just like them.]

She presented examples for the etiquette type of *excuse me*. Her phrase, “自分がちょっと強気に出たい[I want to show a kind of bold me]” might be seen as an example of request. Another JMtl interviewee, Mei addressed the attention-getter type.

JMtl_Mei: *excuse me* は...ただ単に...例えばレストランに行ってちょっとウェイターさんと呼んだり。まあ、[...] 道を「ごめんちょっと通してくれる？」っていう *excuse me* かなあ。[About *excuse me*... simply... for example, when I call the waiter in a restaurant. Well, [...] or, on the street, “excuse me, could you let me pass?”]

Kanako: はい。じゃあそのさっきふたつの状況を見ると、共通点としては気を引きたい時って事ですかね？[Yes. Then, considering the two situations you just described, the common thing is that you wanted attention?]

JMtl_Mei: そうですね。[That's right.]

4.2.2.3 *Sorry or thank you?*

Situations four and five were the ones in which participants might feel the mixed feelings of sorry and gratitude. Otherwise there were two major differences between the two situations. One was the relationship between participant and the addressee: the interlocutor in Situation four was the participant's customer, while in Situation five it was their classmate. The other was the level of seriousness of the situation: in Situation four, they dropped some cans onto the floor, and a customer helped them pick up the cans, while in Situation five, they could not contribute to wrapping up the PowerPoint slides of the pair work for a class because of sickness. In these situations, some differences among the groups were observed in terms of which feeling the participants inclined to, and of what they actually said as their utterance.

First, as described in the section 4.2.1.4 Situation four: Customer picked up your dropped cans, no NSE participants said *I'm sorry*, while some JMtl and JJ participants expressed the feeling of sorry in this situation. Accordingly, in the mind question, no apologetic expressions were seen from the NSE group in this situation.

On the other hand, a JJ participant (JJ-19) answered as follows:

Customer: (Picking up the cans) Are you all right?

JJ-19: “I’m sorry. Thank you very much!!”

*What was on your mind in this situation?

“すみませんと申し訳なさ感謝の気持ちでいっぱい。 [(My mind was) filled with the feeling of *sumimasen*, sorry, and thanks.]”

The other two JJ participants out of three who used *I’m sorry* in this situation did not mention the apologetic feeling in the mind question; however, one of them described the reason why he said, “Oh, I am very sorry” in the interview.

Kanako: [...] この I’m very sorry っていうのはどうして? [This *I’m very sorry*, why did you say so?]

JJ_Mitsuru: 落として言うんだから、なんか普通に I’m sorry とは言わないかなあと思って。「誠に申し訳ございません」って、そこまではいいかないけど「申し訳ありません」っていう感じで言うかなあと思って。 [I said this because I dropped the cans, so, I thought I would not say just *I’m sorry* alone. If it is in Japanese, I would say “Makoto ni moushiwake gozaimasen (I am sincerely sorry),” well, that may be too much, but I thought I would say something like “Moushiwake arimasen (I am very sorry)”]

As can be seen in the interview script above, a JJ participant, Mitsuru explained the reason that he had said *I’m very sorry* stemmed from Japanese apologetic expressions. The data which show the possible influence of Japanese on English will be further

presented in the section 4.3.1.

Likewise, apologetic expressions were observed in the JMtl group in the mind question of Situation four. A JMtl participant said “Oh, sorry to bother you...” and answered “I am sorry” for the mind question. Another JMtl participant, Mayu, reported in the interview about her thoughts when she said “I am sorry! I am fine. Thank you very much for your kindness” in this situation.

Kanako: [...] この英語の場合だと、I’m sorry とその thank you は、まあ、
 どうですか？（それぞれの比重はどうですか？） [In this situation
 in English version, what are they like, I’m sorry and thank you?
 (Which phrase is your emphasis put on?)]

JMtl_Mayu: そうですね、もう全然イコールな感じですね。全然、はい。むしろ「あ、拾ってくれてありがと！」みたいな。 [Well, they are
 equal. Yes. Rather, emphasis is on “Oh, thank you for picking
 them up!”]

Mayu reported that when she used the combination of *I’m sorry* and *thank you* in this situation, she felt both feelings, with more emphasis on gratitude.

Second, in the case of Situation five, the utterance *I’m sorry* was seen in all the groups as described in the section “4.2.1.5 Situation five: Your classmate covered your work.” However, there seemed to be a considerable difference between the Japanese groups and the NSE group in terms of the thoughts behind their utterances. Whereas thoughts of Japanese participants (especially JJ group) underlying their utterances were relatively consistent with their utterances, this was not always the case for the NSE

participants. That is, when the JJ and JMtl participants used *I'm sorry* and/or *thank you*, it mainly stemmed from the literal meanings of the phrases, while NSE participants' *I'm sorry* and/or *thank you* did not always describe what they really felt. Some examples of JJ group will be shown first, followed by JMtl group's, and lastly, NSE group's.

Nine out of twelve JJ participants who said *I'm sorry* explained their thoughts as either “申し訳ない[feeling sorry],” “悪かった[feeling bad],” or “謝罪[apologize],” and all four participants who said *thank you* described their thoughts with grateful expressions such as “パワーポイントをやってくれたので感謝している[I appreciate that he wrapped up the PowerPoint slides].” Also, two out of the four JJ participants who used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you* provided the combination of such feelings for the mind question.

In the JMtl group, eight out of ten participants who said *I'm sorry* provided their thoughts with apologetic words, such as “すまない[feeling sorry],” “罪悪感 [guilty],” or “I feel bad,” (two of the eight participants showed combinations of apologetic and grateful words) and one participant who said *thank you* answered “心から感謝の意を表したいので、簡潔に。[I would like to show my feeling of gratitude from the bottom of my heart, so I would be concise.]” With regard to the thoughts of the ten participants who said both *I'm sorry* and *thank you*, three had mixed feelings, four felt either bad, sorry, guilty, or apologetic, one had a feeling of thanks, and the other two wrote something other than the above. Judging from these, the JMtl group tends to feel sorry rather than gratitude when using the combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you*. The three interviewees, Aki, Mayu, and Mei used this combination in Situation five. In the follow-up interview, Aki said that she would feel bad rather than gratitude in the Situation:

Kanako: [...] (アキさんの発言は) I'm really sorry about that で、うん、埋め合わせ? (をするような事を言って、) で、thank you very much. これも...これは...うん、悪いなっていう? [You said *I'm really sorry about that*, and then, said that you would make up for it, and after that, *thank you very much*. How about this...? Feeling bad?]

JMtl_Aki: 悪いなっていう、私はその気持ちが強いですね、うん。[Feeling bad, I would have that feeling strongly, yes.]

Mayu gave a more detailed response as to why she had used this combination.

Kanako: Sorry とか謝った後に thank you が入ってますけど、これは (どうしてですか) ? [After you apologized with *sorry*, you said *thank you*. (Why is) this?]

JMtl_Mayu: これはですね、あの、こっちに来てからあの、「sorry をあんまり言うな！」って言われたからですかね。[...]「ありがとう」っていうことを言って、sorry は言わないんだよ、みたいな感じで言われてからですね、[...] もうなるだけ何かをしてもらったっていう事自体を感謝する、って (意識するようにしている)。(だからこの thank you は) もう sorry より感謝するっていう事を心がけて出てきた感じですね。[This is, well, maybe because after coming here, I have been told, “Don’t say *sorry* too much!” [...] Since I was told that people would say something like *thank you*, not *sorry*,

[...] I have been trying to be grateful for what somebody did to me. So, this *thank you* came out because I was consciously trying to be grateful rather than sorry.]

As for the NSE group, out of eleven participants who said *I'm sorry*, only four explained their thoughts as “guilty,” “feel bad,” or “my fault,” and one participant had mixed feelings of sorry and thanks. As for the combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you*, two participants used both phrases together. One of the participant's answer for the mind question was “Grateful that my buddy covered for me”, and she also wrote “Felt bad, but grateful” in the section asking the reason for using *I'm sorry*. From these answers, it can be expected that although she had mixed feelings of sorry and gratitude, she might have put more emphasis on gratefulness. Another point that was different from Japanese participants was that some NSE participants said *I'm sorry*, with no such thoughts as feeling bad, guilty, or acknowledging the fault as described in the sections 4.2.2.1.1 Feeling bad or guilt or 4.2.2.1.2 Fault. A participant (NSE-5) said “I'm so sorry. HATE being sick. I was puking all over the bathroom last night,” to his classmate, and explained the reason of saying *sorry* was “to acknowledge the unfortunateness of my illness.” Another participant (NSE-12) said “I am so sorry - [proof of illness], I will make it up to you,” and replied to the question asking the reason for using *I'm sorry* as “It was unfortunate and unavoidable. The apology wasn't technically necessary, but I'm sure my partner appreciates it.” They seemed to have a more objective point of view when saying *I'm sorry* than Japanese do. Recall that there were differences between Japanese groups and NSE group with regards to the consistency between utterances and thoughts. The thoughts of the JJ and JMtl groups tended to be the same as their

utterances, while the thoughts of the NSE group were not always in line with their utterances. These findings probably had something to do with different points of view concerning politeness between Japanese groups and NSE group, which will be further demonstrated in the following section, 4.2.2.4 Politeness.

4.2.2.4 Politeness.

Politeness, defined by Brown and Levinson (1978) as compensatory moves taken to soothe the disruptive effect of face-threatening acts, is one of the factors that commonly underlies *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*. The descriptions of politeness on the English and Japanese Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) showed that the Japanese groups may not be as conscious about being polite as the NSE group. No explicit expressions of politeness were seen from the JJ group, whereas nine cases were observed in the NSE group, and the number of politeness expressions from the JMtl group was four. Thus, the number of participants who explicitly mentioned politeness is represented as: $JJ < JMtl < NSE$. Judging from these data, it may be possible to say that the NSE group was more conscious of politeness, while the Japanese groups were not explicitly aware of it. Interestingly, the four JMtl participants who mentioned politeness answered the mind questions in English, rather than in Japanese.

4.2.2.5 Difficulty of using “excuse me”.

Interestingly, the interview with Japanese participants clarified that they have more difficulty using *excuse me* than *I'm sorry*. For example, Tomoko, a JJ participant, did not use one single *excuse me* in the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT).

Kanako: [...] *excuse me* っていうのが、あの、(アンケートの中で) 使われてなかったんですけど [...] *excuse me* っていうのは使いますか？
どういう時か？ [[...] *Excuse me* was not used (in the questionnaire), [...] but do you use *excuse me*? In any occasions?]

JJ_Tomoko: なんか、授業でしか聞いたことないんで、なんか、あんまり使うのかな？ うーん、ジョイス (英語の先生) もあんまり使っていない気がして。普段言う言葉じゃないのかなあと思って。 [Well, I have heard that only in English classes, so, I wonder if people use it often? Mmm... I think Joyce (her English teacher) does not really use it. So, I wonder if it is not a phrase that people use in their daily life.]

Kanako: ああー、なるほど。じゃ、あんまり (*excuse me* を) 聞いた事がないから... どうなのかな？ と思って？ [I see. So, you wondered because you have not really heard *excuse me*?]

JJ_Tomoko: うん、使い方どうなんだろうなって思って。 [Yah, I wonder how it is used.]

She reported that she did not really know how to use *excuse me* because she had not had enough input to understand its usage. Aki, a JMtl participant, also seemed to have had a difficult time using *excuse me* at the beginning of her stay in Canada.

JMtl_Aki: なんか始めの頃はその *excuse me* って言うのがなんか恥ずかしくて。 [...] なんかあんまりこう、自分の中で、そんなに使える言葉

じゃなかったの。 [...] [At the beginning, I was a kind of shy to say *excuse me*. [...] Well, in my mind, it was not a kind of word that I can use very well. [...]]

Kanako: その、なんか恥ずかしい [...] っていうのはどうしてですか? [You were a kind of shy [...] Why was that?]

JMtl_Aki: やっぱり多分慣れてな...その言葉自体にも慣れてないし、 [...] なんかこう、自分の中でまだ自分の物になりきってなかったというか。多分。その *excuse me* っていうその expression が。 [Probably, I was not used to the phrase itself, [...]. Well, probably, I had not yet fully acquired it, the expression, *excuse me*.]

The difficulty of using *excuse me* for Japanese learners seemed to be supported also by the English DCT data of the JJ group: seven participants (30.4% of the JJ group) did not use one single *excuse me*. That means, only 16 of the JJ participants (69.6%) used *excuse me*. In contrast, 23 of the JMtl participants (100%) and 16 of the NSE participants (84.2%) used it.

4.3 Comparison of Japanese and English DCTs

In this section, I will present the results of Japanese participants' use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* in comparison with Japanese apologetic phrases. Thus, this section addresses my second research question, which is: Is there an effect on Japanese learners' use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* that is related to residence in an English-speaking country longer than one year?

4.3.1 Influence of Japanese.

In the section 4.2.2.5 above, Aki reported that she had a difficult time using *excuse me* in her early time in Canada. She further reflected on her past and attempted to provide the reason for it, comparing *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* with Japanese.

JMtl_Aki: I'm sorry は訳すと「すみません」だったんですよ、多分。日本語の。うん。だからあの、「すみません、すみません」って言いながら、通る時にそうやって多分使ってたんだと思う。[If I translated *I'm sorry*, probably it was *sumimasen* in Japanese, yes. That's why, when I passed through people, I think I was saying "*sumimasen, sumimasen.*" (actual utterance was "I'm sorry, sorry")]

Kanako: あ、じゃあ始めは「すみません」が I'm sorry と、こう、同じような、対になってて... [Oh, then, at the beginning, *sumimasen* and *I'm sorry* were equivalent in your mind...]

JMtl_Aki: そう、「すみません」はもう I'm sorry でしかなかった、みたいな。[...] で、なんか「すみません」と *excuse me* がなんか繋がってなかったので[...] *excuse me* っていうのはなんか、自分の中では何とも多分あんまり繋がってなくて。うん、だから多分使いにくかったんだと思います。[Ya, it was like, *sumimasen* only equalled *I'm sorry*. [...] and, somehow *sumimasen* was not connected to *excuse me*. [...] Therefore, maybe, in my mind, *excuse me* did not have connection to anything. Yah, as a result, it (*excuse me*) was difficult to use.]

She said that in her mind, *sumimasen* was equal to *I'm sorry*; therefore, she said *I'm sorry* when trying to pass through people. She also explained that the reason for the difficulty of using *excuse me* was because she didn't have a connection to previously acquired Japanese words in her mind. Similarly, a NSE participant (NSE-1) reported an interesting story that he experienced in Tokyo, Japan:

I was in the middle of this huge crowd of people getting in and off the subway, someone pushed me from behind and I bumped into this lady. Before I got pushed away again, the lady muttered "I'm sorry" to me. I found that interesting because it wasn't her fault that I bumped into her (Q.4 in the Questionnaire2).

The lady in his story seems to share the reason for saying *I'm sorry* in common with Aki. Recall that in 4.2.2.5, a JJ participant, Tomoko also reported that she experienced the same difficulty. Her story and Aki's suggest that length of residency has an influence: Japanese learners acquire the usage of *excuse me* as they immerse themselves longer in the target language.

Concerning *I'm sorry*, some Japanese participants used *I'm sorry* repeatedly in one utterance (e.g., "I'm sorry! Very sorry! Really sorry!" by JJ-19 in Situation three). In the JJ group, there were four utterances with a repetitive use of *sorry*, and the JMtl group had two. Looking at their utterances in same situations in the Japanese Discourse Completion Test (DCT) clarified that they also repeated *sumimasen* or *gomennasai*, which are the equivalents of *I'm sorry* in Japanese. For example, a JJ participant (JJ-19) said, "Sorry. I'm sorry. Excuse me, now I want to question" in the English DCT,

while she said “すみません、今、いいですか？すみません。 [Sumimasen, do you have a minute now? Sumimasen.]” in the Japanese DCT. Their repetitive use of *sorry* might have resulted from the influence of Japanese, where it is normal to use apologetic phrases repeatedly.

Besides *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*, I observed several cases of an interesting phenomenon – a possible negative transfer. In Situation seven, a JJ participant (JJ-6) said, “Are you OK now?” to the boss trying to ask the boss something urgent. It was obvious that he did not intend to worry about the boss, because his thought under this situation was “申し訳なく思う。 [I feel sorry.]” The reason why he said “Are you OK now?” became clear when this utterance was compared with his utterance in the same situation in the Japanese DCT. In the Japanese DCT, he said, “今、大丈夫ですか。 (Ima, daijoubu desuka.)” “Ima daijoubu desuka?” is one of the ways to ask somebody for some time. The direct translation is “are you okay now?” Thus, his utterance, “Are you OK now?” to the boss appears to be explained by transfer from the Japanese expression, “ima daijoubu desuka?” There were two more cases similar to this example: a JJ participant (JJ-8) in Situation seven, and a JJ participant (JJ-6) in Situation eight.

Another possible case of negative transfer besides *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* was the use of *come* and *go* by the JJ group. In Situation two, the boss invited the participants to a party, but they had to decline the invitation. In this case, some JMtl and NSE participants used *come* to let the boss know that they would not be able to make it, such as “I am very sorry, but I cannot *come*. I will not be in town on that day (JMtl-25),” and “I'm sorry, I won't be able to *come* as I will be somewhere else. I'll let my wife know, though (NSE-12).” However, all the six JJ participants who used this

expression said *go* instead of *come* (e.g., “I’m sorry, I can’t *go* to this party (JJ-9),” “Sorry, I can’t *go* (JJ-12)”). This may be a Japanese influence, since in Japanese, *iku* (go) would be used in this utterance. The participant (JJ-12) above, who said “Sorry, I can’t go,” said, “すいません、その日は他に用事があつて行けません。[Suimasen, sono hi wa hoka ni youji ga ate ikemasen. / I’m sorry, I will not be able to *go* because of another engagement.]” in the same situation in the Japanese DCT.

These types of phenomena were not seen in the JMtl group; therefore, it is likely that Japanese learners adjust language acts as they stay in English-speaking countries, or as they further acquire the language.

4.4 Individual Differences

This study also found several characteristics unique to each individual. For instance, one NSE participant (NSE-17) used *I’m sorry* only once out of the ten situations, whereas another NSE participant (NSE-8) used it eight times in total. As for *excuse me*, three NSE participants (NSE-5, NSE-6 and NSE-10) did not say one single *excuse me* in the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT). Of the three, one participant (NSE-6) used *pardon me* frequently (three times), which might be an alternative of *I’m sorry* or *excuse me*. Taking into account that there were just four cases in which *pardon me* was used in the all participants’ English DCT responses, his use of *pardon me* can be considered as unique.

Those differences of frequency of using *sorry* and *excuse me* were seen also in the Japanese groups; however, the gaps were not as obvious as the ones of NSE stated above. One exception is seen in the JJ group, in which two participants (JJ-14 and JJ-15) said *I’m sorry* just two times in the English DCT, while another JJ participant

(JJ-13) used the phrase in nine out of the ten situations.

4.5 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I presented the questionnaire data and the interview data. First I presented them quantitatively using tables, and then, qualitatively by providing and describing examples. It has been found that in some situations, the JJ group used *I'm sorry* more frequently than the NSE group, while in other situations, they used *I'm sorry* less than the NSE group. It has been also found that it seemed to take more time for Japanese to acquire how and when to use *excuse me* than *I'm sorry*. In general, the JMtl group's use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* seemed closer to that of NSE group than the JJ group's use did. In the next chapter, I will further discuss the data presented in this chapter in relation to previous literature.

Chapter Five: Discussion

In the previous chapter, the data collected from the questionnaires and the follow-up interviews were presented. The quantitative and qualitative data showed that the uses of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* by JJ, JMtl, and NSE differ from one another. In this chapter, I will interpret and discuss the results illustrated in the previous chapter.

5.1 Use of I'm Sorry and Excuse Me

Borkin and Reinhart (1978) said that one of the criteria for choosing *I'm sorry* or on the other hand, *excuse me* is based on whether the speaker violates the addressee's rights or feelings, or, on the other hand, breaks social rules. In this section, I will discuss the NSE and Japanese groups' uses of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* in the light of previous literature.

5.1.1 Native speakers of English (NSE).

The English DCT data showed that the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* by the NSE group was basically in line with Borkin and Reinhart's (1978) definitions. On the one hand, the NSE group used *I'm sorry* to express dismay or regret. In section 4.2.2.1, it was illustrated that the NSE group said *I'm sorry* as *sincere apology*, *just-in-case apology*, *cultural and linguistic convention*, and *expression of sorrow and sympathy*. On the other hand, the NSE group used *excuse me* to neutralize a breach of etiquette. The data in section 4.2.2.2 demonstrated that NSE group said *excuse me* as *etiquette*, *attention-getter*, and *request*.

Another point that Borkin and Reinhart (1978) made was that when a NSE uses

I'm sorry, the speaker's main concern is having violated the addressee's rights or feelings. When a NSE uses *excuse me*, mere conventional politeness and a concern for observing social rules may be all that is implied. This statement partly describes the data of this study; however, it does not cover all of uses shown in the data. For example, three out of the four functions of *I'm sorry* that were observed, namely, *sincere apology*, *just-in-case apology*, and *expression of sorrow and sympathy* are likely to concern the addressees' rights or feelings. However, the other function, *cultural and linguistic convention* seems to be a mixture of concern regarding the addressee's feelings and social rules. As a NSE participant explained, she uses *I'm sorry* "[...] if you didn't hear or understand what someone said, and sometimes just for politeness, like if someone else bumps into you" (by NSE-3 in Q2 of Questionnaire 2).⁴

As discussed above, although differences between the phrases exist, it has been found that the borderline between them may not be clear-cut. This tendency could also be confirmed by the data from the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as NSE participants sometimes used the two phrases in a same utterance (e.g., "Oh, I am verry [sic] sorry. Excuse me!" by NSE-11 in Situation one). Moreover, a NSE participant stated:

"[I use *excuse me* in order] to bring attention to my intention to do something [. It is] interchangeable with 'I'm sorry' in less serious

⁴ NSE-3 is Canadian, which might be the reason for saying *sorry* when she was bumped into. I found a non-academic reference comparing Americans and Canadians, and the author emphasised how often Canadians use *sorry* – even when they are not at fault (Cariou, 2010). A JMtl interviewee, Mei also reported the impression that Canadians apologize more than Americans.

situations” (NSE-9 in the questionnaire that was a substitute for the interview).

The statement above reinforces the idea that the uses of *I’m sorry* and *excuse me* do overlap to some extent: The function of less serious *I’m sorry* is similar to that of *excuse me*.

5.1.2 Japanese in Japan (JJ).

As for *I’m sorry*, it has been found that JJ group mainly used it as *sincere apology* (see Section 4.2.2.1.5), and this usage is covered by the definition of *I’m sorry* by Borkin and Reinhart (1978). This type of *I’m sorry* was seen in the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and was also mentioned as the JJ participants’ definition of *I’m sorry* in the follow-up interviews. This means that the JJ group is not only able to employ *I’m sorry* as sincere apology, but also is explicitly aware of its function. Besides the sincere apology type, some utterances and their reported state of mind in the English DCT suggest that *just-in-case apology* was used by the JJ group, although these types were not mentioned in the interviews. For example, in Situation one, JJ-9 explained the reason for saying *sorry* to the elderly lady as “とりあえず謝っておこう。 [I would apologize just in case.]”. The type of *cultural and linguistic convention* was very limited in the JJ group, although JJ-21 said “I’m sorry” when she almost bumped into a stranger with “ぶつかりそうになったので謝った。 [I apologized because I almost bumped into the person]” on her mind. However, it is likely that JJ group has not quite acquired this type of *I’m sorry*.

With regard to *excuse me*, this study has found that the JJ group uses it as an

attention-getter as illustrated in Section 4.2.2.2.5. Also, the *request* type was seen in Situation six where some ladies blocked the way when participants were in a hurry: JJ-21 explained the reason for her saying “excuse me” as “急いでいるのでどいてほしかった。[I wanted them to move aside because I was in a hurry.]”. From her explanation, it was assumed that she used *excuse me* in order to request the ladies to step aside.

5.1.3 Japanese in Montreal (JMtl).

The use of *I’m sorry* by the JMtl group observed in this study was partly similar to that of JJ group. Like the JJ group, the *sincere apology* type was seen both in the English DCT and the interviews, and possible *just-in-case apology* type was seen only in the English DCT. Where the JMtl group differs from the the JJ group is that the former seems to be more aware of *cultural and linguistic convention* type. For example, Mayu, a JMtl interviewee mentioned this type when the definition of *I’m sorry* was asked in the interview (see Section 4.2.2.1.5). This difference likely stems from the difference in LOR between JJ and JMtl groups, which means that as Japanese immerse themselves into a circumstance where English is used as a daily language, they start to acquire the conventions of when and where to use *I’m sorry*.

The use of *excuse me* by the JMtl group was comparable to that of the NSE group, since the JMtl group employed *excuse me* as *etiquette*, *attention-getter*, and *request* (see Section 4.2.2.2.5). The comparison with the JJ group implies that Japanese become more familiar with the *etiquette* type of *excuse me* as LOR exceeds one year.

5.2 Comparison Among JJ, JMtl, and NSE

In this section, I will compare the results of the JJ, JMtl, and NSE groups in order to clearly illustrate the similarities and differences of the usage of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* observed mainly in the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT).

5.2.1 Overuse of I'm sorry.

This study revealed that Japanese learners in Japan whose length of residence in English-speaking countries (LOR) was almost zero (JJ group) tend to overuse *I'm sorry*, and these results are consistent with other studies claiming that Japanese say *I'm sorry* too often (Coulmas, 1981b; Kondo, 1997, 2004; Kumagai, 1993; Kumatoridani, 1993). This tendency could be observed in Situations two and four of the English DCT (see Table 4.3 and 4.5). The reason for overuse of *I'm sorry* can be the influence of Japanese (see Section 5.4.1); however, some scholars attribute it to the Japanese culture in which obedience is highly valued (Kondo, 1997, 2004; Kumagai, 1993; Kumatoridani, 1993). Even though cultural influence has not been principally investigated in this study, it must be one of the major reasons for Japanese overuse of *I'm sorry*. This will be discussed further in Section 5.6.

Furthermore, in the situations where Japanese used *I'm sorry* more frequently, especially in Situation two, it was found that Japanese whose LOR is over a year (JMtl group) used *I'm sorry* less frequently than the JJ group did. JMtl participants seemed to start using *excuse me* more frequently in Situation one and *thank you* more frequently in Situation two instead of *I'm sorry*. These results suggest that as the LOR exceeds one year, Japanese overcome the habit of overusing *I'm sorry* and modify their utterances based on their experience.

5.2.2 Less use of I'm sorry.

In Situation seven and eight in the English DCT, I observed that Japanese said *I'm sorry* much less frequently than the NSE group did (see Tables 4.8 and 4.9), which seems inconsistent with what was discussed in the previous section. By focusing on each situation, two possible reasons have been raised from this finding. First, in the case of Situation seven, the less frequent use of *I'm sorry* is probably attributed to their unfamiliarity with the *sorry-to-interrupt-you* type of phrase. In this situation, a certain number of the JMtl and NSE participants talked to the boss by saying "I'm sorry for bothering you (JMtl-25)," "I'm very sorry to interrupt you, (JMtl-13)," or "sorry for disturbing you (NSE-3);" however, no JJ participants employed this type of sentence. Instead, the JJ group addressed the boss with *excuse me*, or by asking him for some time without any conversational buffers (e.g., "May I have your time? (JJ-5)," "Can I ask you something now? (JJ-12)"). Judged from the discussion above, it could be interpreted that Japanese acquire that type of phrase as they stay in an English-speaking country and immerse themselves into an English-speaking society.

Second, in Situation eight, the reason for not saying *I'm sorry* as frequently as the NSE group could have to do with consistency between language and mind. In the case of the NSE group, *I'm sorry* was used as a sincere apology or a just-in-case apology, while in the JJ and JMtl groups, it was mainly used as a sincere apology, with fewer cases of the just-in-case apology type. Since Situation eight is where the landlord answered the phone in a whisper, it was not yet certain for participants to judge whether or not they were bothering the landlord. Therefore, many Japanese participants might have considered this situation as an apologies-unnecessary situation. It is important to note that this tendency does not seem to be modified by the LOR.

5.2.3 Overuse of excuse me.

There were two Situations in which the Japanese groups used *excuse me* more frequently than the NSE, namely, Situations seven and ten. First, in Situation seven, as discussed in the previous section, it is likely that this occurred because the JJ group was not familiar with the *sorry-to-bother-you* type of phrase, and therefore, they might have used *excuse me* as an alternative when addressing the boss. In this situation, the ratio of JMtl participants who used solely *excuse me* decreased and became closer to that of the NSE group.

The data from Situation ten show a slightly different nature from Situation seven because of the effect of a flaw in this scenario. This situation was where participants needed to get to the next class while the professor kept on talking after the class was over. Since the scenario did not describe the class size, some participants might have imagined a spacious auditorium that they could easily sneak out of, while others might have pictured a small cozy class and therefore had to ask the professor permission to leave the class. In fact, a JJ interviewee, Tomoko explained how differently she imagined the class between the Japanese and English Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) as follows:

これ（日本語の状況）は、普通にいつもの授業の事を考えて、そういう場合だったら目立つのが本当に嫌で、そのまま黙って後ろのドアから出て行くと思うんですけど、これ（英語の状況）はジョイス（英語の先生）のクラスだったらどうだろうと思って。そしたら少人数なんで結構すぐ分かっちゃうから、そういう時はちゃんと声掛けてちゃんと出てくかなあって。 [In this (Japanese) case, I imagined one of my taken classes, and in such a case, since I truly hate grabbing everyone's attention, I would get out of the class from the back

door. However, in this (English) case, I asked myself what I would do in Joyce's (her English teacher) class. Then, I thought I would ask for her permission to leave because the class size is small and she would notice immediately.]

As illustrated by interview with Tomoko, this scenario gave each participant some room to imagine different situations. Thus, the finding that the JJ and JMtl groups used *excuse me* more than the NSE group did in this situation is likely to be influenced by this.

5.2.4 Less use of excuse me.

In Situation six where participants wanted to pass through some ladies chatting and walking slowly on the crowded road, the JJ group said *excuse me* less frequently (56.5%) than the NSE group (73.7%), while the JMtl group used it more (100%) than the NSE group. This could be explained by the JJ group's difficulty of knowing when and how to use *excuse me*. This will be further discussed in 5.4.5.

Considering the fact that some JJ participants talked to the ladies without using *I'm sorry* or *excuse me* and directly asked them to move aside even though they said the equivalent of *I'm sorry* or *excuse me* in the Japanese DCT, there is a possibility that the JJ participants did not fill out this conversation spontaneously as instructed in the English DCT. Rather, they might have thought how they could make a grammatically correct sentence to ask the ladies to move aside. This could have occurred because the JJ group's English competence was lower than the JMtl group, and no responses could spontaneously come to their minds without thinking about grammar. The gap in English competence between the JJ and JMtl groups is one factor that explains the

differences in apologetic usages in this study.

5.2.5 Comparison of all data across situations.

The overview of all data from the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT) (Table 4.12) shows an interesting point: the overall amount of usage of *I'm sorry* alone by the NSE and JJ groups was almost the same. As discussed above, the JJ group used *I'm sorry* more in some cases, while they used it less in other cases. Therefore, these results imply that Japanese learners might not use *I'm sorry* too much on the whole, but, rather that they use it in different situations than the NSE group. This is a good illustration that quantitative analyses of data can be misleading, and supports the combination with qualitative methods (i.e., mixed methods research: MMR) in certain cases. In the case of the current study, if I had focused only on the quantitative data, the results would have shown that there was not a difference in the usage of *I'm sorry* between the Japanese and NSE groups, which does not reflect the authentic language use of Japanese learners. A close look at each situation by quantitative and qualitative methods has contributed to finding more robust such results. This support for MMR for this study is the same for *excuse me*.

5.2.6 Combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*.

As discussed in Section 5.1.1, the NSE group seemed to sense that the assumptions of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* overlap, which can explain why they occasionally used the combination of those two phrases. Interestingly, Japanese participants from both the JJ and JMtl groups did not use this combination frequently. Data from Situation one reveal that 0% of the JJ and JMtl groups used the combination

of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* while 26.3% of the NSE group did this. This finding indicates that Japanese might not consider that the two phrases overlap, but rather that they tend to think of them as distinct concepts from one another.

5.3 Japanese Apologetic Terms in Relation with English Ones

The focus of this section will shift to the data from the Japanese Discourse Completion Test (DCT). As described in Chapter two, *sumimasen*, an apologetic word in Japanese, has a number of functions including apologies and gratitude. According to Ide (1998), the functions could be categorized into seven, and some of them have their counterparts in English, namely, *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and *thank you*. With her categorization, the Japanese participants' (both JJ and JMtl groups) use of *sumimasen* in each situation can be sorted as shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1

Japanese sumimasen and English counterparts

Situation	Category	English Counterpart
Sit.1 (Elderly Lady)	Sincere apology	I'm sorry
Sit.2 (Boss' Party)	Sincere apology	I'm sorry
Sit.3 (Friend's Magazine)	Sincere apology	I'm sorry
Sit.4 (Customer's Help)	Sincere apology/ Quasi-thanks and apology	I'm sorry/ Sorry and thanks
Sit.5 (Classmate)	Sincere apology/ Quasi-thanks and apology	I'm sorry/ Sorry and thanks
Sit.6 (Ladies Blocking the way)	Request marker/ Attention-getting device	Excuse me/ Excuse me
Sit.7 (Ask the Boss)	Sincere apology/ Attention-getting device	I'm sorry/ Excuse me
Sit.8 (Call the Landlord)	Sincere apology/ Affirmative and conformational response	I'm sorry None in English
Sit.9 (Almost Bumping)	Sincere apology/ Affirmative and conformational response	I'm sorry None in English
Sit.10 (Leave the Class)	Attention-getting device	Excuse me

As can be seen in the table above, Japanese *sumimasen* and English counterparts are not a simple one-to-one mapping.

The use of *sumimasen* by the JJ and JMtl groups was similar, and this appeared to be the case in almost all of the Situations. The only Situations where *sumimasen* was not used were Situation three by the JJ group and Situation five by the JMtl group. The reason for not having used *sumimasen* is probably because *sumimasen* tends to be used more for someone with whom the speaker feels psychological distance (Yamamoto, 2004). Likewise, Hirata (1998) found that *sumimasen* is the word used most commonly among Japanese apologetic words when the addressee is a stranger. Therefore, the JJ and JMtl participants did not use *sumimasen* with the friend and the classmate in

Situations three and five respectively because friends and classmates are people they would tend to feel affinity with.

In addition to *sumimasen*, there are two more key phrases observed in the Japanese DCT. The first key apologetic word is *gomennasai* or *gomen*, whose function is simply to apologize. Yamamoto (2004) states that *gomen* is prone to be used in less formal situations. In the Japanese DCT, *gomennasai* was used in Situations one (old lady), two (boss), three (friend), and five (classmate) by the JJ group, and in Situations one, three, five, and nine (stranger) by the JMtl group. As can be seen, Japanese participants in this study generally followed Yamamoto's (2004) theory.

The second word is *moushiwake arimasen* (I have no excuse; I am very sorry), which is quite a formal expression for apologies. In Hirata's (1998) study, this phrase was used mainly with somebody with higher status than the speaker. In the Japanese DCT, *moushiwake arimasen* was used in Situations two (boss) and four (customer) by the JJ group, and in Situations two, four, and seven (boss) by the JMtl group, which means that the use of *moushiwake arimasen* in this study is also consistent with Hirata's (1998) finding.

5.4 Crosslinguistic Influence

In this section, I will compare the results of the Japanese and English DCTs in order to see if any influence of Japanese on *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* in English could be found. Also, the findings from the interviews will be illustrated and discussed.

5.4.1 Overuse of I'm sorry.

It was found that the Japanese groups were prone to use *I'm sorry* more often

when compared with the NSE group in Situation two and four in the English DCT. In Situation two where participants had to decline the weekend party invitation from the boss, 18 out of 23 (78.2%) of the JJ participants used *sumimasen*, *gomennasai*, and/or *moushiwake arimasen* in the Japanese DCT. Considering that *sumimasen* in Situation two was used as sincere apology (see Table 5.1), all three kinds of expressions in this situation were used for the purpose of apology, which means that all three expressions are equivalent to *I'm sorry* in this case. By comparing the Japanese and English DCTs, it became clear that the percentage of using these three Japanese expressions (78.2%) was even higher than that of their saying *I'm sorry* in the English DCT (69.6%). These findings suggest that Japanese participants carried the habit of apologies in Japanese into English.

The other situation in which Japanese tended to use *I'm sorry* more was Situation four, where a customer helped pick up the cans that participants dropped. In this situation, nine out of 23 (39.1%) of the JJ participants used either *sumimasen* or *moushiwake arimasen* in their utterances in the Japanese DCT, and three JJ participants (13.0%) used *I'm sorry* in the equivalent situation in the English DCT. This means that many of them did not transfer the use of *sumimasen* negatively in this situation; however, there may be certain number of Japanese participants whose use of *I'm sorry* was affected by Japanese apologies. The three JJ participants who said *I'm sorry* in the English DCT used *sumimasen* or *moushiwake arimasen* in the Japanese DCT, which means that it is likely that they said *I'm sorry* because they carried the habit of apologies in Japanese into the English situation.

5.4.2 I'm sorry vs. thank you.

What the two situations discussed in the previous section share is that the NSE group put more emphasis on the feeling of gratitude than the JJ group, which might stem from the influence of Japanese. Kondo (2004) found that her Japanese participants just said *I'm sorry* and did not say *thank you* in Japanese in refusal situations. A JMtl interviewee, Mei also explained that apologies tended to be more emphasized than gratitude in Japanese.

JMtl_Mei: (日本語の場合、)何かした時に対して、なんか謝る事を重視しなきゃいけないじゃないですけど。「ありがとう」というより謝る事に対してかなと思ったんですけど。[(In the case of Japanese,) when someone did something for you, you have to emphasize apologies. I think we put more emphasis on apologizing rather than thanks.]

Kanako: うん、それはどうしてだと思いますか？[Yah, why do you think that happens?]

JMtl_Mei: やっぱり日本人って何に対しても謝るじゃないですか。[Well, Japanese always apologize for anything.]

An example from the data was when a JJ participant, Mitsuru said “Oh, I am very sorry” when the customer helped pick up the dropped cans in Situation four. In contrast, the NSE group expressed their feeling of thanks. Mitsuru seemed to have no doubt of using *I'm sorry* in this case judged from his explanation in the interview (see Section 4.2.2.3). He explained that he said “I am very sorry” because he wanted to say *moushiwake arimasen*, a very polite apology. This is likely to be a case of CLI, where the Japanese,

moushiwake arimasen has an influence on the use of *I'm sorry* in English. Drawing on the characterization of CLI types by Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008), this transfer would be pragmatic, forward, conceptual, intentional, productive, aural, verbal, negative transfer. As stated in Section 2.2, pragmatic, forward, aural, verbal aspects were already expected to observe. First, it is likely to be conceptual transfer because he carried the state of mind of *moushiwake arimasen* in Japanese when he said *I'm sorry*. Second, he transferred *moushiwake arimasen* into English intentionally; therefore, it is intentional transfer. Finally, some might see this as negative transfer because the transferred utterance *I'm sorry* likely interfered with situational appropriateness. However, by taking the nature of pragmatics into account, it is hard to claim that it is truly negative transfer – rather, following from Thomas (1983), it might be more appropriate to use the term pragmatic failure.

Furthermore, a JMtl interviewee, Mayu reported her interesting experiences concerning *I'm sorry* and *thank you*:

Kanako: (Situation 5 で、) Sorry とか謝った後に、thank you が入ってま
すけど、これは(どうしてですか) ? [(In Situation five,) you said
thank you after apologizing saying sorry. Why is this?]

JMtl_Mayu: こっちにきてからあの、「sorry をあんまり言うな！」っていわ
れたからですかね。[...] 「みんな thank you って言う」って。「あ
りがとうっていう事を言って、sorry は言わないんだよ。」みたいな
感じで言われてからですね、[...] もうなるだけ何かをしてもらった
事自体を感謝するって。もう sorry より感謝するっていう事を心が
けて出てきた感じですね。 [Because after coming here, I was told,

“don’t say sorry too much!” [...] “We say thank you instead, and don’t say sorry.” Since then, [...] I’ve tried to be grateful for what somebody did for me, rather than sorry. So, this also came out of my trying to show more gratitude.]

She said that she used to say *I’m sorry* in situations where NSEs would usually say *thank you*, but, after a few years in Canada, she now says *thank you* because she has tried to adjust her use of those phrases. This kind of story has been also heard from the other two JMtl interviewees.

JMtl_Aki: なんかこっちの人ってなんかこう、断った後でもなんか「あ、ごめん、あ、でもありがとう誘ってくれて」とか、そういうのを日本語よりも多分言う気がするんですよ。[...] だからその、まあ、型じゃないですけど、まあ、まず謝らなきゃいけない事を謝って、まあ、でも誘ってくれた事に対しては嬉しいんですよっていうのを...表現しなきゃいけないのかなと思って。
[I feel like people from here say something like “Oh, sorry, but thank you for inviting me” after declining an invitation more often than Japanese.
[...] So, well, as a matter of form, I think I have to apologize first, and then, express that I am feeling grateful for inviting me.]

Aki’s report is consistent with Aramaki (1999) investigation of Japanese ambiguity. She found that in a refusal situation, Japanese commonly used apologies in Japanese, whereas Americans first expressed the feeling of gratitude. As discussed, Japanese tend to express the feeling of apologies more than gratitude in Japanese, and this tendency is

probably transferred to their use of *I'm sorry* in English. Therefore, Japanese overuse *I'm sorry* in some cases; however, at a certain point of staying in an English circumstance, their awareness is raised, and the NSE pragmatic norms are acquired.

5.4.3 I'm sorry vs. excuse me.

There also seems to be an influence of Japanese on the choice of either *excuse me* or *I'm sorry*. For example, Aki, a JMtl interviewee looked back at her early times in Canada and reported her use of *I'm sorry* in relation to *sumimasen* in Japanese:

I'm sorry は訳すと「すみません」だったんですよ、多分。日本語の。うん。
だからあの、「すみません、すみません(I'm sorry, I'm sorry)」って言いなが
ら、うん、通る時にそうやって多分使ってたんだと思う。[...]「すみません」
はもう I'm sorry でしかなかった、みたいな。[*I'm sorry* was probably
sumimasen in Japanese if translated. Yes. So, I think I used to say
“Sumimasen, sumimasen (I'm sorry, I'm sorry)” as I walked through
people. [...] Like, *sumimasen* used to be connected only with *I'm sorry*.]

She explained that she used to say *I'm sorry* to pass through a group of people because *I'm sorry* was equivalent to *sumimasen* in her mind. In Japanese, *sumimasen* is quite appropriate to say when passing through a group of people. In her case, the reason for saying *I'm sorry* instead of *excuse me* is likely because she did not know how to use *excuse me*. In light of Jarvis and Pavlenko's (2008) characterization of CLI types, this transfer might be defined as pragmatic, forward, linguistic, unintentional, productive, aural, verbal, negative transfer. Pragmatic, forward, aural, and verbal aspects were

expected from the beginning of this study (see Section 2.2). First, it is unintentional transfer because when she said *I'm sorry* as she passed through a group of people, she was not at all thinking of *sumimasen* in Japanese. Also, it is likely to be negative transfer because a NSE would say *excuse me* in this case, and her utterance, *I'm sorry* did not seem to be appropriate.

Another JMtl interviewee, Mayu also explained her experiences of saying *I'm sorry* instead of *excuse me*; however, in her case, the reason seems different from Aki's case above.

人の邪魔な場所を通って行く時とかは *sorry* って言ってます。本当は *excuse me* って言うトコなんですけど。そこはもう *sorry* なんで *sorry* って言っていきます。[...] 実際あの、*excuse me* って言わないといけないっていう事も分かってるんですけど、でもまだもう *sorry* っていうのを言いたいんで。[I say *sorry* when passing through people. Although *excuse me* would be appropriate, I say *sorry* because I feel sorry. [...] I know that I should say *excuse me*, but I still want to say it and express my feeling of being sorry.]

She said that even though she knew that *excuse me* was more appropriate when passing through a group of people, she still said *I'm sorry* because she did feel sorry and wanted to express that feeling. In this case, her use of *I'm sorry* should be conceptual, intentional transfer, instead of linguistic, unintentional transfer.

5.4.4 Combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you*.

This study has also found that the Japanese groups used *I'm sorry* and *thank you*

together much more often than the NSE group did. This tendency could be seen in Situations two and five, in which participants declined the party invitation from the boss and the classmate covered the pair-work, respectively. Interestingly, the ratio of participants who used the combination was: NSE < JJ < JMtl. This could be because initially, the JMtl group probably would have been using *I'm sorry* to express the mixed feelings of sorry and thanks, as the JJ group did. However, after staying longer in Canada, the JMtl group noticed that NSE say *thank you* rather than *I'm sorry* and started to try expressing the gratitude (see Section 5.4.2). Yet, the habit of saying *I'm sorry* still lingers; therefore, as a result, the JMtl group used the combination the most among the groups.

5.4.5 Difficulty of excuse me.

The in-depth interview data suggest that the JJ group has difficulty using *excuse me* properly (See Section 4.2.2.5). The interviews with JJ participant, Tomoko, and JMtl participant, Aki, suggest that the difficulty may stem from an insufficient amount of input of *excuse me* (See the interview inserts in Section 4.2.2.5). Tomoko declared that she was not certain how to use *excuse me* because she had not had enough input to analyze the usage. Aki's opinion also supported her idea.

Besides the insufficient amount of input, this difficulty might stem from a lack of connection with Japanese expressions. For example, JMtl interviewee, Aki said:

なんか、「すみません」と **excuse me** がなんか繋がってなかったので、なんか
 すごい...こう、未知の、これは **excuse me** っていうのはなんか、自分の中では
 何とも多分あんまり繋がってなくて。うん。だから多分使いにくかったんだと思

います。[Probably *sumimasen* and *excuse me* were not connected, and well, it was unfamiliar... *Excuse me* used to have no link with anything in my mind, probably. Yes. That's why, it was not easy for me to use.]

She explained that *excuse me* was not very accessible for her because it had no connection to other words in her mind.

5.5 Politeness

As mentioned in Section 5.2.2, Japanese participants did not often use *I'm sorry* as a just-in-case apology in such situations as Situation eight where the landlord answered the phone in a whisper. This might imply the possibility that the utterances of both Japanese groups are more consistent with their perceptions than those of the NSE group as discussed in Section 4.2.2.3. Aki, a JMtl interviewee commented that being polite especially with somebody of higher status is not only about words but also about attitudes.

(目上の人と話す時は) まあ言葉で尊敬[...]とか表現できますけど、まあ多分気持ちの問題だと思うので。[...] やっぱ(どの言葉にしても) 尊敬とかそういうのは、まあ、言葉プラス気持ちが入ってないといけないと思うので。まあ英語では言葉が少ない分、丁寧に話す、まあ態度とかそういうところで表現するようにはしてますかね。[(When talking with somebody of higher status,) I can express my respect with words, but I think it is more a matter of heart. [...] After all, (no matter what language,) respect or politeness should be shown with your heart besides language itself, I

believe. Well, in case of English, there are fewer expressions, so I try to express politeness in my attitude.]

Some Japanese participants mentioned *keigo* (honorific speech in Japanese) in the interview. *Keigo* is the main body of politeness expression in Japanese, and it clearly enables the speaker to show politeness to the addressee. Karin, a JJ participant, reported that in Situation two in the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT), when she had to decline the invitation from the boss, she was not sure how she could be polite because English does not have *keigo*. She said, “なんか、こう日本語っぽく敬語で言いたいんですけど、浮かばないって感じですね。[Mm, I want to say something polite like Japanese *keigo*, but such things do not come up to my mind in English.]” Her report raises the issue that the JJ group does not know how they can be polite in English because English does not have the equivalent of *keigo*, which was also found in Kanekatsu’s (2007) study on pragmatic performance of English immersion students in Japan. This might be able to explain why some participants in the JJ group interrupted the boss and asked for some time without using sorry-to-interrupt-you type phrases, which means that the JJ group might not be familiar with politeness strategies in English.

5.6 Cultural Influences

As I analyzed the data, it became clear that cultural influences on the use of *I’m sorry* and *excuse me* by Japanese groups could not be bypassed. As Kondo (1997, 2004), Kumagai (1993), and Kumatoridani (1993) noted, one of the main reasons for Japanese overusing *I’m sorry* is that Japanese culture values obedience. Concerning this, Wierzbicka (1991) said that “[i]n Japanese culture, [...], the prevailing norm with

respect to emotion is this: I don't want someone to feel something bad" (p. 126). Her statement suggests a clue to the reason why Japanese tend to want to be obedient. That is, because Japanese do not want the addressee to feel bad, they are unwilling to deny, which is likely to result in being compliant in a sense.

Wierzbicka (1991) further evolved her theory on Japanese culture as follows:

The theme of indebtedness which pervades Japanese social interaction is related to this omnipresence of apologies, and also to the lack of boundaries between acts which from a Western perspective would be interpreted as apologies and thanks. Roughly:

(1) I did something (that was bad for you)

I think you could feel something bad because of this

I feel something bad because of this

(2) You did something good for me

I didn't do something like this for you

I feel something bad because of this. (p. 126)

As stated, apologies are important in Japanese culture and the concepts of apologies and thanks are close to one another. Coulmas (1981b) also discussed the similarities of thanks and apologies. He claimed that "[u]nder the effect of an ethics of indebtedness, the Japanese tend to equate gratitude with a feeling of guilt" (Coulmas, 1981b, p. 89). This close relationship of these two concepts could explain the reasons for Japanese participants' using the combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you*, and of Japanese overuse of *I'm sorry*. As shown in (1) and (2) above, both kinds of situation are situations in

which the speaker apologizes in Japanese. Situation four in the English and Japanese Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) would fit into (2), because the customer helped participants pick up the cans that they dropped, some Japanese participants might have felt indebtedness because of this, and therefore, said *I'm sorry*.

5.7 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have discussed the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* by three different groups: native speakers of English in Montreal (NSE group), Japanese in Japan whose length of residence in English-speaking countries (LOR) is almost zero (JJ group), and Japanese in Montreal whose LOR is over a year (JMtl group). I found that the JJ group overused *I'm sorry* in some situations, which was in line with findings of many other studies (Coulmas, 1981b; Kondo, 1997, 2004; Kumagai, 1993; Kumatoridani, 1993), and that could stem from Japanese apologetic expressions. I also found that the JMtl group had acquired the proper use of *excuse me*, but the JJ group had not. Also, it was found that the JJ and JMtl groups often used *I'm sorry* and *thank you* together, while the NSE group used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*.

I conclude this chapter by answering the two research questions stated at the beginning of this study.

RQ1: Do advanced Japanese-L1 learners of English and NSE use *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* differently in identical contexts? If so, how?

- Sometimes yes.

1. Japanese participants, especially the JJ group said *I'm sorry* more often than the NSE group in some cases, and less in other cases.

2. Japanese participants, especially the JMtl group used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *thank you* more often than the NSE group did.
3. NSE participants used the combination of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* relatively often, whereas the JJ and JMtl groups did so much less frequently.

RQ2: Is there an effect on Japanese learner's use of these expressions that is related to residence in an English-speaking country longer than one year?

- Yes.

1. The use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* became closer to that of NSE group.
2. Japanese participants overcame their initial difficulty about knowing how to use *excuse me*.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

In this study, I explored the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* by native speakers of English (NSE) and Japanese-L1 learners of English, and investigated how residence in an English-speaking country for more than one year affects Japanese learners' use of these expressions. I found that Japanese who have seldom stayed in an English-speaking country (JJ group) said *I'm sorry* more often, which is in line with findings from other studies on Japanese-L1 learners of English. One of the reasons for the overuse of *I'm sorry* is transfer of Japanese apologetic expressions. However, there were some cases that they said *I'm sorry* less often than NSE and Japanese with more than one year of stay in an English-speaking country (JMtl group). This is probably attributed to their unfamiliarity with the "I'm sorry to bother you" or "I'm sorry for interrupting you" type of expressions. I also found that the JJ group sometimes has difficulty using *excuse me* at the appropriate time, and the reason can be insufficient input of *excuse me*. Overall, the study shows that Japanese learners' use of these expressions becomes closer to that of NSE as they stay in an English-speaking country.

6.1 Contribution of This Study

This study will be useful for educational practitioners and Japanese-L1 learners of English by clarifying the different uses of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*. The first finding is that Japanese generally overuse *I'm sorry*, which stems from Japanese expressions and culture. However, in such cases as interrupting someone, Japanese with no experience in English-speaking countries tend not to say *I'm sorry*, because they are not familiar with *sorry-to-bother-you* type of usage. Second, some Japanese have difficulty using

excuse me, and that could be attributed to insufficient input, to lack of clear explanation of its use, or to the absence of the connection with other Japanese words in the learners' mind. These findings will help those involved in second language education better understand the problems that the learners might be facing.

In Section 2.2, I stated that "I hope to be able to comment on the type of knowledge, the intentionality, the cognitive level, the manifestation, and the outcome" of the ten dimensions of CLI (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). However, after the actual utterances of participants have been observed and analyzed, I gradually noticed that it was difficult to elucidate every dimension in one study because of other elements interacting with CLI. For example, Japanese overuse of *I'm sorry*, which is influenced by Japanese apologetic words, could be intentional or unintentional because some might transfer Japanese expressions to English on purpose while others might not. This depends on the individual. Thus, investigating the ten dimensions remains something that needs to be done in future research even though it will be challenging.

As has been discussed, this study has elicited some issues of the Japanese use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*. Behind some of those results, the influence of transfer certainly exists; however, I emphasize that the cause for the language acts discussed here is a complicated hybrid of CLI influenced by many other factors such as culture, instructions, and individual meaning. Therefore, it is important to note that CLI is not the only factor that describes the language acts by L2 learners.

6.2 Limitations

There are some limitations in this study in terms of participants, instruments, and methods. These will be discussed below.

6.2.1 Participants.

There were some gaps between the JJ and JMtl groups in terms of their biodata, which could have resulting in confounding with the focal factor of this study; the length of staying in an English-speaking country. First, there was a fairly large gap between the JJ and JMtl groups in their English competence. In general, the JJ group made more grammar mistakes than the JMtl group did, and some JJ participants seemed to misunderstand some of the situations in the English Discourse Completion Test (DCT). Therefore, judging from their performance on the English DCT, JMtl participants were upper advanced English learners while JJ participants were intermediate learners.

Second, an age difference was also seen between groups. The mean age of the JMtl (25 years old; $SD = 4.06$) and NSE groups (24 years old; $SD = 4.20$) were similar; however, that of the JJ group was younger (19 years old; $SD = 0.4$). This gap might have influenced the participants' level of maturity, which might have further affected their utterances on the English and Japanese DCTs especially in the situation of interacting with the boss. These differences could have influenced the effect of LOR on the use of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*.

6.2.2 Instruments.

There were also some limitations in the English and Japanese DCTs. First of all, it should be noted that DCT results slightly differ from natural spoken data as Beebe and Cummings (1996) pointed out. For example, in Situation seven where participants want to ask the boss something urgent, there were just three NSE participants who opened the conversation with *excuse me*, but in a natural setting, more people may say it. For all the weaknesses, however, Beebe and Cummings (1996) concluded that:

Discourse Completion Tests are highly effective research tools as a means of 1) Gathering a large amount of data quickly; 2) Creating an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will likely occur in natural speech; 3) Studying the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response; 4) Gaining insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance; and 5) Ascertaining the canonical shape of speech acts in the minds of speakers of that language. (p. 80)

A second limitation of the instruments is that it is possible that some situations might have been perceived differently by individuals. For example, in Situation ten in which participants needed to leave the class while the professor kept on talking, some might have imagined the class in a small cozy classroom and asked the professor for permission, while others might have pictured a spacious auditorium and snuck away without saying anything.

Another instrument-related limitation is Situation two in the DCTs. This scenario required the participants to respond to the boss as one of the top executives, which was an unlikely situation for most of my participants to encounter because they were university students. This concern might be especially significant for the JJ group whose average age was younger than the other two groups. Thus, the results of this particular situation might not have been very realistic.

6.2.3 Methods.

As mentioned in the section 3.3.2.1 Questionnaire under Chapter Three, the interval between the administration of the English DCT and the Japanese DCT was not

controlled for the JMtl group. The participants who filled out the DCTs via e-mail agreed not to refer to the information they provided on the English DCT when they filled out the Japanese DCT. The research was carried out on this assumption although there was no way of verifying that the participants did indeed follow through with it in practice.

Another limitation is that follow-up interviews were replaced by a questionnaire for the NSE group. Although the follow-up questionnaire provided me necessary information, if I could have conducted interviews, I might have been able to obtain deeper insight about their uses of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*.

Also in the follow-up interviews, sometimes I might unintentionally have asked leading questions, such as “[...] 悪いなっていう？[Feeling bad?] (p. 68),” which is different from open-ended questions such as “why did you use...?” as listed in the interview protocol. Those leading questions might have had some influence on the participants’ responses although I constantly tried to avoid such questions.

Also, there might have been an order effect influencing the results. The JJ and JMtl participants filled out the English DCT first, and after completing it, filled out the Japanese DCT. Although the participants were not allowed to modify their answers on one DCT on the other, and it was assumed that they would switch their mental languages as they answered each DCT, the results might have slightly different if they had completed the Japanese DCT first.

6.3 Implications

6.3.1 Implications for future research.

In this study, I have looked at Japanese-L1 learners’ uses of *I'm sorry* and *excuse*

me and compared them with those of a NSE group using the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and follow-up interviews. The results show that Japanese-L1 learners tend to say *I'm sorry* more than NSE group in many cases as other scholars have pointed out (Kondo, 1997, 2004; Kumagai, 1993; Kumatoridani, 1993). However, the results of the overview of all data of the DCT illustrate the contrary; there was no big difference in saying *I'm sorry* between Japanese and NSE groups. Therefore, future research should focus on the finding that Japanese participants used *I'm sorry* less frequently than NSE group did in the English DCT, and confirm if that is accurate. In order to do so, the future investigator might consider duplicating this mixed method study. First, I would suggest increasing the number of participants for the questionnaire data and to do some baseline statistics (e.g., descriptive statistics, frequency counts, factor analysis) in order to further probe the findings in this study. Then, I would recommend taking a small sample from among those participants and pursue case studies using interviews and observations. Furthermore, addressing the limitations described above would help strengthen the research design.

In this study, length of residence in the target language environment was taken into consideration as interacting with transfer. However, as researchers such as Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) emphasized, abundant factors have been found to affect transfer and transferability. Thus, factors other than the length of residence should be examined in future research. Other factors could be age, level of proficiency, or length, frequency, and intensity of language exposure (for details, see Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008).

Furthermore, in terms of directionality, this study focused on forward transfer, transfer from L1 (Japanese) to L2 (English), as it explored the effect of *sumimasen*, a Japanese apologetic word, on *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* in English. In order to obtain a

bigger picture, reverse transfer, transfer from L2 (English) to L1 (Japanese) should also be focused on. Exploring the effect of apologetic words in English on those in Japanese will enable us to better understand the phenomenon of transfer. This would further inform approaches to second language education.

Also, it might be quite interesting to investigate how English-L1 learners of Japanese use *sumimasen*, and the influence of *I'm sorry*, *excuse me*, and *thank you* on their use of Japanese apologetic and gratitude phrases.

6.3.2 Implications for classroom teaching.

When I conducted an interview with a Japanese participant, she excitingly opened the conversation by telling me how much she enjoyed filling out the questionnaires. This gave me the idea of using the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as a tool for teaching pragmatics. Actually, this idea has already been adapted into actual classroom teaching. Kondo (2004) used the textbook, “Heart to heart: Overcoming barriers in cross-cultural communication” (Yoshida, Kamiya, Kondo, & Tokiwa, 2000), which contains DCTs as one of the tools for students to learn pragmatics. Her study clarified that teaching pragmatics with this textbook seemed effective in raising students’ pragmatic awareness.

This study has revealed that Japanese tend to overuse *I'm sorry*, but are not very familiar with politeness formulae, such as *I'm sorry to bother you, but....* Furthermore, the study has illustrated that *excuse me* seems harder to employ for Japanese learners. In order to overcome these issues, it might be effective to teach *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* together in order to raise the students’ awareness of the uses of these words. For that, plenty of examples would also be a help; for example, picture books or movies can be

good materials.

At the same time, it would be useful to teach cultural differences related to emotions. As Wierzbicka (1991) explains, Japanese tend to feel indebted for someone's favor. Being aware of the different ways of thinking depending on cultures will make it easier for Japanese learners to better understand why they use *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* in such a way, which slightly differs from the NSE group, and also to help them use the words properly.

6.4 Spin-Off Findings

In addition to the apologetic expressions which this study has focused on, the English and Japanese Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) found two other areas where CLI is likely to play an important role, namely, the JJ group's use of the verbs, *come* and *go* and of the phrase "are you okay?".

First, I found in Situation two that the JJ group tended to confuse how to use *come* and *go*. When they declined the party invitation from the boss, they said, "Sorry. I can't go" (JJ-12), instead of saying "I can't *come*." This confusion is most likely influenced by Japanese, because in the Japanese DCT, they said, "Suimasen, sono hi wa hoka ni yooji ga atte *ikemasen*. [Sorry, I can't *go* because I have another engagement on that day.]" (JJ-12). In Japanese, *iku* (go) and *kuru* (come) are speaker-centered, and the matter of concern is where the speaker is. However, in contrast, English *come* and *go* are addressee-centered. Therefore, it is most likely that the JJ participants negatively transferred the concepts of *iku* and *kuru* in Japanese into English counterparts.

A second additional finding is that in Situation seven, when JJ participants asked the boss for some time, some of them said, "are you okay?", This also seems to be

explained by the influence of Japanese because in Japanese “ima daijoubu desuka? [are you ok now?]" is often used to ask somebody to spare some time. Thus, this utterance, “are you okay?” is likely to be a result of pragmatic transfer from the Japanese expression.

6.5 Epilogue

Each step in the process of discovering the uses of *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* was thrilling for me. This study was initially motivated by a slight wonder about my use of these expressions, and I have now come to this point where I can fully appreciate the complicated relationships among acquired languages, concepts, and cultures, and how they influence one another. I am hoping that, first, this research contributes to research methodologies; second, improves our theoretical understanding of crosslinguistic influence; and, last but most important from the practitioner's point of view, that the results of this study are useful for pedagogical development, and applied to classroom practice that will lead to better success for future learners.

References

- Aramaki, T. (1999). *Americajin to nihonjin no kotowari hyougen no hikaku* [A Comparison on the refusal expressions between Americans and Japanese]. *Nagasaki daigaku ryuugakusei sentaa kiyou* [Bulletin of international student center in Nagasaki University], 7, 105-137.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice: Designing and developing useful language tests*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Beebe, L., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. C. Scarcella, E. S. Andersen & S. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 55-73). New York: Newbury House.
- Beebe, L. M., & Cummings, M. C. (1996). Natural speech act data versus written questionnaire data: How data collection method affects speech act performance. In S. M. Gass & J. Neu (Eds.), *Speech acts across cultures: Challenges to communication in a second language* (pp. 65-86). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Borkin, A., & Reinhart, S. (1978). Excuse me and I'm sorry. *TESOL Quarterly*, 12, 57-69.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1978). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Canale, M. (1983a). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 2-27). London: Longman.

- Canale, M. (1983b). On some dimensions of language proficiency. In J. W. Oller (Ed.), *Issues in language testing research* (pp. 333-342). Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers.
- Cariou, H. S. (2010). Why Canadians are soooo polite. Retrieved March 5th, 2011, from <http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/articles-travel/25958>
- Cohen, A. D. (1997). Developing pragmatic ability: Insights from the accelerated study of Japanese. In H. M. Cook, K. Hijirida & M. M. Tahara (Eds.), *New trends and issues in teaching Japanese language and culture* (pp. 133-159). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Cook, V., Bassetti, B., Kasai, C., Sasaki, M., & Takahashi, J. A. (2006). Do bilinguals have different concepts? The case of shape and material in Japanese L2 users of English. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 10(2), 137-152.
- Coulmas, F. (1981). "Poison to your soul": Thanks and apologies contrastively viewed. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *Conversational routine: Explorations in standardized communication situations and prepatterned speech*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New Jersey, USA: Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). California: SAGE Publications.
- Eisenstein, M., & Bodman, J. (1993). Expressing gratitude in American English. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 64-81). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Guion, S. G., Flege, J. E., Liu, S. H., & Yeni-Komshian, G. H. (2000). Age of learning effects on the duration of sentences produced in a second language. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 21(2), 205-228.
- Hammarberg, B. (2001). Roles of L1 and L2 in L3 production and acquisition. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen & U. Jessner (Eds.), *Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: Psycholinguistic perspectives*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Hill, T. (1997). *The development of pragmatic competence in an EFL context*. Temple University, Koshigaya, Japan.
- Hirata, M. (1998). Apology in Japanese: How do native speakers of Japanese style-shift depending on the interlocutor? *Yokohama Kokuritsu Daigaku Ryuugakusei Sentaa Kiyou [Bulletin of International Student Center in Yokohama National University]*, 5, 34-48.
- Ide, R. (1998). 'Sorry for your kindness': Japanese interactional ritual in public discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 29, 509-529.
- Imai, M., & Gentner, D. (1997). A cross-linguistic study of early word meaning: universal ontology and linguistic influence. *Cognition*, 62(2), 169-200.
- Jarvis, S., & Pavlenko, A. (2008). *Crosslinguistic influence in language and cognition*. New York: Routledge.
- Kanekatsu, N. (2007). *Pragmatic performance of English immersion students in Japan: Politeness in second language requests*. Unpublished master's thesis, McGill University, Montreal, Canada.
- Kimura, K. (1994). The multiple functions of "sumimasen". *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 5(2), 279-302.

- Kondo, S. (1997). The development of pragmatic competence by Japanese learners of English: Longitudinal study on inter-language apologies. *Sophia Linguistica*, 41, 265-284.
- Kondo, S. (2004). Raising pragmatic awareness in the EFL context. *Sophia junior college faculty bulletin*, 24, 49-72.
- Kotani, M. (2002). Expressing gratitude and indebtedness: Japanese speakers' use of "I'm sorry" in English conversation. *Research in Language and Social Interaction*, 35(1), 39-72.
- Kramsch, C. (1995). The cultural component of language teaching. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 8(2), 83-92.
- Kramsch, C. (2001). Intercultural communication. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teach English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 201-206). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kumagai, T. (1993). Remedial interactions as face-management: The case of Japanese and Americans. In T. Matsuda, S. Yumoto, M. Sakurai & A. Baba (Eds.), *In honor of Tokuichiro Matsuda: Papers contributed on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, September 19, 1993* (pp. 278-300). Tokyo: Kenkyusha.
- Kumatoridani, T. (1993). *Hatsuwa kooi taishoo kenkyuu no tame no toogoteki apuroochi: Nichi-eigo no "wabi" o rei ni* [An integrative approach to contrastive speech act analysis: A case of apologies in Japanese and English]. *Nihongo Kyooiku*, 79, 26-40.
- Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across cultures*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.

- Maeshiba, N., Yoshinaga, N., Kasper, G., & Ross, S. (1996). Transfer and proficiency in interlanguage apologizing. In S. M. Gass & J. Neu (Eds.), *Speech acts across cultures: Challenge to communication in a second language* (pp. 155-187). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Nakai, M., & Watanabe, Y. (2000). A study on expressions of gratitude in Japanese and American English. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, 4(1), 200-216.
- Nakano, M. (2005). Japanese English: Pragmatic competence at the university level - some evidence from discourse completion tasks and naturally occurring data. Retrieved August 17th, 2009, from www.waseda.jp/cwAsianStudies9A-77WorldEnglishSpring2005Calendarnakano031104.pdf
- Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Odlin, T. (2003). Crosslinguistic influence. In C. Doughty & M. Long (Eds.), *The handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 436-486). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Odlin, T. (2005). Cross-linguistic influence and conceptual transfer: What are the concepts? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 25, 3-25.
- Rintell, E. (1979). Getting your speech act together: The pragmatic ability of second language learners. *Working Papers on Bilingualism*, 17, 97-106.
- Schumann, J. H. (1986). Locative and directional expressions in basilectal speech. *Language Learning*, 36, 277-294.
- Shimizu, T. (2008). *Total English: Communication hitokuchi column [4] "sumimasen" wa eigo de wa kansha no kotoba ni naranai!"*. Tokyo, Japan: Gakko Tosho.

- Takahashi, T., & Beebe, L. M. (1987). The development of pragmatic competence by Japanese learners of English. *JALT Journal*, 8, 131-155.
- Takahashi, T., & Beebe, L. M. (1993). Cross-linguistic influence in the speech acts of correction. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 138-157). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 91-112.
- Verschueren, J. (2009). Introduction: The pragmatic perspective. In J. Verschueren & J.-O. Östman (Eds.), *Key notions for pragmatics* (pp. 1-27): John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Walters, J. (1979). The perception of deference in English and Spanish. In C. A. Yorio, K. Perkins & J. Schachter (Eds.), *On TESOL '79: The learner in Focus* (pp. 288-296). Washington, D.C.: TESOL.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1991). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: The semantics of human interaction*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Yamamoto, M. (2004). *Apologies as social interactions*. Nagano, Japan: Shinshu University International Center.
- Yoon, K. K. (1993). Challenging prototype description: Perceptions of noun countability and indefinite vs. zero. *IRAL: International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 31(4), 269.
- Yoshida, K., Kamiya, M., Kondo, S., & Tokiwa, R. (2000). *Heart to heart: Overcoming barriers in cross-cultural communication*: Macmillan Languagehouse.

Appendix A: English Discourse Completion Test (DCT)**A. Please fill in the blanks or choose a statement that describes your situation most**

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: 1 Female 2 Male
3. Your major : _____
4. You are in: 1 the first year 2 the second year 3 the third year 4 the fourth year
5 over the fifth year
5. Languages you speak besides your first language (s): _____
6. Your native country: _____
7. The country you grew up in: _____
8. Your parents' (or your) occupation: _____
9. Your parents' (or your) income level:
 1. Less than \$10,000 2. \$10,001-\$20,000 3. \$20,001-\$30,000
 4. \$30,001-\$50,000 5. \$50,001-\$100,000 6. Over \$100,000
10. Duration of your full-time work experience: ____ years ____ months
11. Your First language: _____
12. The language you feel most comfortable to communicate: _____

B. Please fill in the blanks for the following 10 items. If you would not say anything at all, draw an X in the blank. After completing the conversation, please explain your emotions 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.

Situation 1.

You bump into an elderly lady at a department store. You could hardly have avoided doing so because she was blocking the way.

She: Oh, my!

You:

—

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 2.

You are a top executive at a large accounting firm. One day the boss calls you into his office.

Boss: Next Sunday, my wife and I are having a little party. I know it's short notice but I am hoping all my top executives will be there with their spouses. What do you say?

You: _____

Boss: That's too bad. I was hoping everyone would be there.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 3.

Your friend is visiting you. While looking at the magazine she brought, you accidentally spill coffee over it.

You: _____

Friend: Don't worry.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 4.

You are working in a grocery store. When you are carrying lots of cans in order to move them onto another shelf, you drop some of them.

Customer: (Picking up the cans) Are you all right?

You: _____

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 5.

You are a university student and have a presentation in pairs for class. Because you got sick one day before the presentation, your buddy had to modify and complete the PowerPoint slides by himself. On the day of the presentation, you meet him at school.

You: _____

Buddy: It's okay. There were only a few parts to change.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 6.

You are walking on a crowded street in a hurry. There are some ladies chatting and walking slowly blocking the sidewalk ahead of you.

You: _____

Ladies: Oh, sorry.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 7.

You are working in an office. You have something urgent to ask your boss, who looks very busy. You stick your head into the boss's office.

You: _____

Boss: No problem.

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 8.

You make a phone call to your landlord to tell him that you want to move out next month. He answers the phone, but it doesn't sound like a good time to ask.

Landlord: Hello? (in a whisper)

You: _____

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 9.

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

You: _____

*What was on your mind in this situation?

Situation 10.

You are attending a statistics class. The professor has been lecturing 10 minutes past time and keeps on talking. You have to get to your next class.

You: _____

*What was on your mind in this situation?

C. As for each situation above, how do you perceive the interlocutor's status in relation with you? Please choose one of the three statuses for the 10 situations.

	1. Higher	2. Same	3. Lower
Situation 1			
Situation 2			
Situation 3			
Situation 4			
Situation 5			
Situation 6			
Situation 7			
Situation 8			
Situation 9			
Situation 10			

- End of Questionnaire 1 -

Appendix B: Japanese Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

以下に10の不完全な会話文があります。それぞれの設問の状況を読み、あなたが当事者の場合に発するであろう発言を書き込んで会話文を完成させてください。もし何も言わない場合は空欄に「X」と書いてください。会話文を完成させた後、その状況でその発言をする際の、もしくは何も言わない際のあなたの心境について説明してください。

*これには正しい答えも誤った答え也没有ありません。あなたの頭に最初に浮かんだ受け答えを書くようにして下さい。

1. デパートであなたは年配の女の人にぶつかってしまいました。彼女は通路をふさいでいたので、ぶつからずに通ることは難しかったのです。

彼女： あらら！

あなた： _____

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

2. あなたは大きな金融系会社の重役です。ある日、上司があなたをオフィスに呼びました。上司： 今度の日曜日、妻とちょっとしたパーティーを開こうと思っているんだ。知らせるのが遅くなってしまったけれど、会社の重役全員が妻・夫同伴で来られたらいいなと思っているんだ・・・。どうだい？

あなた： _____

上司： そうか、残念だな。全員が揃ったらいいと思っていたのだが。

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

3. 友達があなたを訪ねてきています。彼女の持ってきてくれた雑誌を見ていたら、あなたは誤ってコーヒーをそれにこぼしてしまいました。

あなた： _____

友達： 大丈夫よ。

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

4. あなたは食品スーパーで働いています。棚換えをするため、缶詰をたくさん運んでいる時に、そのうちのいくつかを落としてしまいました。

お客さん：(その缶詰を拾う) 大丈夫ですか？

あなた：_____

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

5. あなたは大学生です。ある授業で、二人一組になってプレゼンテーションをすることになっています。プレゼンの前日、あなたは体調を崩してしまったため、あなたの相方がパワーポイントのスライドをひとりで最終調整し、仕上げなければならなくなりました。プレゼンの当日、あなたは学校で彼に会いました。

あなた：_____

相方：大丈夫だよ。変更する箇所はちょっとしかなかったから。

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

6. あなたは混雑した道を急いで歩いています。女の人が何人かでおしゃべりしながらのんびり歩いていて、あなたの行く道をふさいでいます。

あなた：_____

女の人：あら、ごめんなさい。

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

7. あなたはある事務所で働いています。あなたは緊急で上司に尋ねたいことがありますが、上司はとても忙しそうです。あなたは上司のオフィスに顔を出しました。

あなた：_____

上司：ああ、大丈夫だよ。

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

8. あなたは来月アパートから引っ越したいという旨を伝えるため、大家さんに電話をしました。彼は電話に出ましたが、タイミングが良くないようです。

大家さん：(ささやき声で) もしもし？

あなた：_____

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

9. あなたは混雑した道を友達と歩いています。あなたは向かいから歩いてくる人にぶつかりそうになりました。

あなた： _____

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

10. あなたは統計学の授業に出ています。授業終了時間が 10 分過ぎていますが、教授は講義をし続けています。あなたは次の授業に行かなければなりません。

あなた： _____

*この状況でのあなたの心境は？

上のそれぞれの状況について、相手はあなたにとってどんな関係ですか？当てはまる項目に✓を入れて下さい。

	1. 目上	2. 同じ	3. 目下
Situation 1			
Situation 2			
Situation 3			
Situation 4			
Situation 5			
Situation 6			
Situation 7			
Situation 8			
Situation 9			
Situation 10			

ご協力どうもありがとうございました。

このアンケートに続いて、今日中もしくは数日以内（あなたの都合のつく日程）にインタビューを行いたいと思っています。所要時間は大体 15～20 分で、このアンケートのあなたの答えについてさらにお尋ねしたいと考えています。もし参加することに同意していただける場合は、名前と携帯電話の E メールアドレス、それからインタビューの希望日時を下記にご記入ください。追って連絡いたします。

名前：_____

Eメール：_____

希望日時（複数回答可）：_____日の_____時から_____時ころまで
_____日の_____時から_____時ころまで

マギル大学大学院教育学研究科

第二言語教育専攻修士課程 2 年

平間可奈子

kanako.hirama@gmail.com

Appendix C: Follow-up Questionnaire**Q.1**

For each situation in the primary Questionnaire1, please explain why you said “I’m sorry” or “excuse me” if you used these phrases.

Situation1:

Situation2:

Situation3:

Situation4:

Situation5:

Situation6:

Situation7:

Situation8 :

Situation9:

Situation10:

Q.2

Explain in what kind of situations you use “I’m sorry” and “excuse me?” What are the assumptions for the each phrase?

I’m sorry:

Excuse me:

Q.3

When you say “excuse me,” are you having a kind of feeling that you have the right to do something? If so, please explain.

Q4

If any, tell me some interesting stories about “I’m sorry” and “excuse me” you experienced when communicating with non-native English speakers (indicate the nationality)?

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

HIRAMA Kanako

MA in Second Language Education, Department of Integrated Studies in Education

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

1. Background: English education and the experiences in an English-speaking country
 - How were *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* taught in school?
2. When speaking English, do you think in Japanese?
 - In general?
 - When using *I'm sorry* or *excuse me*?
 - When answered the English Questionnaire?
3. For each situation in the questionnaires, why did you use the apologetic and gratitude expressions (where applicable)? What motivated you to say the phrases?
4. Are there any links between *sorry* / *excuse me* in English and *sumimasen* / *gomennasai* / *moushiwake arimasen* in Japanese in your mind? If so, how?
5. In what kind of situations do you use *I'm sorry* and *excuse me*? What are the assumptions for the each phrase?
6. Do you have any comments on the questionnaires?
7. Do you have any episodes related to *I'm sorry* and *excuse me* that you experienced?

Appendix E: Consent Form for JJ and JMtl Questionnaire Participants

研究調査協力（アンケート）のお願い

はじめまして、平間可奈子と申します。私は第二言語の習得と教育に興味があり、現在カナダ・モントリオールにあるマギル大学の大学院で勉強しています。日本人英語学習者の第二言語（英語）に対する第一言語（日本語）の影響についての研究の一環として、この度皆さんに調査の協力をお願いしたく思います。最終的にこの研究は日本人の英語学習者の謝罪表現の一助になることを目的としています。

この段階では皆さんに2つのアンケートをお願いすることになります。まず始めのアンケートは英語で答えていただきます。記入し終わった後に次のアンケートを配布いたします。この二つ目のアンケートは日本語で答えていただきます。それぞれ質問は10問ずつ、2つのアンケートを記入し終わるまでにおよそ20～25分程度かかると思われます。

本調査によって得られたすべての情報は、私と指導教官以外の者が手にすることはありません。いずれの情報も純粋に研究の目的にのみ使用され、その結果が皆さんの学業の評価につながることは決してありません。個人情報厳重に管理し、アンケートは分析の段階でそれぞれ番号を割り振り、個人を特定できないようにいたします。研究結果は修士論文、プレゼンテーション、学会、そして出版物で使用される可能性があります。なお、この調査において生徒のみなさんへの損害やリスクはないと思われませんが、諸事情により本調査への参加が困難になる場合には、いつでも参加中止を申し出ることができます。

以上の事を踏まえた上この調査に賛同してくださる場合には、以下の同意書にご署名ください。この研究および調査に関してご質問がある場合は、遠慮なく下記のメールアドレスまでご連絡ください。

研究者
マギル大学大学院教育学研究科
第二言語教育学専攻修士課程2年
平間可奈子

指導教官
マギル大学教育学部
第二言語教育学科教授
メラ・サーカー

メールアドレス: kanako.hirama@gmail.com メールアドレス: mela.sarkar@mcgill.ca

同意書

私は以上の研究調査の説明を読み理解した上で、本調査に参加することに同意します。本調査の結果は修士論文、プレゼンテーション、学会、そして出版物で使用されます。私は自分の個人情報が守られ、かついつでも参加中止を申し出ることができることを理解しています。

氏名：
ご署名：
ご署名日：

Appendix F: Consent Form for JJ and JMtl Interviewees

研究調査協力（インタビュー）のお願い

先日はアンケートにご協力いただき、ありがとうございました。
今回のこの調査では、約 20～30 分のインタビューを予定しています。本インタビューは以前に行ったアンケートの追跡調査です。従って、インタビューの質問はあなたのアンケートの結果をもとにしたものになります。インタビュー中はすべての会話を録音し、それを書き起こす予定です。録音された音声は皆さんの匿名性を保証するため、その後破棄されます。

本調査によって得られたすべての情報は、私を含めた研究者以外の者が手にすることはありません。いずれの情報も純粋に研究の目的にのみ使用されます。個人情報 は 厳重に管理し、研究結果の発表の際には仮名を用い、個人を特定できないように配慮します。研究結果は修士論文、プレゼンテーション、学会、そして出版物で使用される可能性があります。なお、諸事情により本調査への参加が困難になる場合には、いつでも参加中止を申し出ることができます。

以上の事を踏まえた上この調査に賛同してくださる場合には、以下の同意書にご署名ください。この研究および調査に関してご質問がある場合は、遠慮なく下記のメールアドレスまでご連絡ください。

研究者
マギル大学大学院教育学研究科
第二言語教育学専攻修士課程 2 年
平間可奈子

指導教官
マギル大学教育学部
第二言語教育学科教授
メラ・サーカー

メールアドレス : kanako.hirama@gmail.com メールアドレス : mela.sarkar@mcgill.ca

同意書

私は以上の研究調査の説明を読み理解した上で、本調査に参加することを同意します。本調査の結果が修士論文、プレゼンテーション、学会、そして出版物で使用される可能性があること、それから、自分の個人情報は守られ、かついつでも参加中止を申し出ることができることを理解します。

氏名 :

ご署名 :

ご署名日 :

Appendix G: Online Advertisement for JMtl Participants Recruitment

こんにちは、はじめまして。

私は今マギル大学の **Master of Arts in Second Language Education** 過程にて、修士論文に取り組んでいます。研究は日本人英語学習者が英語を学ぶ際、母国語である日本語がどのような影響を及ぼしているかなのですが、その一環として、アンケートを行いたいと思っています。もし以下の条件に当てはまる方がいたら、ぜひ協力をお願いします。

- 母国語が日本語
- 英語圏滞在 1 年以上
- 18 才以上
- ファーストジェネレーション（日系 2 世・3 世は対象外）

アンケートは 2 つで、個人差はありますが、終えるのに **20 分** 位かかると思います。協力することに同意していただける場合は、プライベートメールにてご返信下さい。詳細をお伝えします。参加者にはささやかですがお菓子をお配りしたいと思います。

アンケートに協力していただいた方の中から、後日 2・3 人にインタビューも行いたいと考えているのですが、インタビューの参加者には **Second Cup** の 5 ドルのコーヒーチケットをお配りしようと考えています。

それでは返信をお待ちしています。

Hello,

I'm now working on my thesis for a degree of Master of Arts in Second Language Education. The thesis focuses on the influences of Japanese (the first language) on English (the second language) in terms of apologetic expressions. For this study, I need someone who:

- speaks Japanese as the 1st language
- was born in Japan
- has stayed in an English-speaking country (preferably Canada) more than 1 year
- is 18 years or older

The participants will be asked to fill out 2 questionnaires, which will take about 20 minutes to complete. They will get some chocolate after completing the questionnaires in return. Following the questionnaire, I'd like to conduct a follow-up interview with 2 or 3 people from the questionnaire participants who are willing to be interviewed. The interview participants will receive a \$5 Second Cup coffee ticket.

If you agree to participate, please send me a personal message. I'll let you know the details.

PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD!

Thank you!!!!

Appendix H: Online Advertisement for NSE Participants Recruitment**McGill MA student - Looking for Participants**

McGill University student, Ms. Kanako Hirama (MA student in Second Language Education) is currently working on her Master thesis and would like participants! Her thesis focuses on how Japanese as a first language, affects English learning in terms of apologetic expressions.

For the thesis, Ms. Hirama would like to recruit English native speakers who:

- speak English as their 1st language
- feel most comfortable communicating in English
- are over 18 years old

Participants will be asked to complete 2 questionnaires that have been emailed to them (approx. 20-30 minutes to complete both), then return them by email to kanako.hirama@mail.mcgill.ca.

If interested, please contact kanako.hirama@mail.mcgill.ca by May 15th (Questions are also welcomed!).

Participants will receive some free chocolates!

Thank you!

Kanako Hirama
MA student in Second Language Education
Department of Integrated Studies in Education
McGill University
Email: kanako.hirama@mail.mcgill.ca