Multivariate Analysis of Refusal Strategies in Request Situations: The Case of Russian JFL Learners

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Abstract—Using d*ecision tree analysis* by SPSS Classification Trees (Version 18.0), the present study investigated the rank order of significance between the five factors (i.e., power factor, distance factor, situational factor, culture/language factor, and type of refusal strategy) when predicting the choice of refusal strategies in request situations. To examine the frequency of refusal strategies, we conducted a discourse completion test in the L1 and L2 of Russian JFL students and compared them with Russian and Japanese native speakers. The findings show that there is a hierarchical order among the factors involved in realization of request refusals. The effects of cultural and language differences are very complex and deeply intertwined with the content of refusal situations and nature of specific strategies. The results were able to demonstrate in which conditions the following occurred: the influence of L2 (Japanese) onto L1 (Russian), the maintenance of Russian national identity, and the accommodation to the target language culture.

Index Terms—decision tree analysis, request refusal, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, Japanese language, Russian JFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Refusing is a complex issue, as the speaker directly or indirectly says "no" to the expectations and wishes of the interlocutor, thus running the risk of appearing impolite or causing offense. The speaker on the refusing side must clearly indicate the intention to refuse, and, at the same time, must use various pragmatic strategies according to the context of the situation and the status of the interlocutor in order to maintain a good relationship (Murai 2009). The expressions that show consideration toward the interlocutor in refusal situations can differ widely depending on the culture, and consequently misunderstandings may arise between native and non-native speakers. Such dissonance occurs because fundamental cultural values are not easily waived. As noted by Beebe et al. (1990), incomplete knowledge of the sociolinguistic patterns of the target language and also the social psychological motivation to draw on one's deeply held native values will always create a complex picture in non-native refusals.

Consideration toward the interlocutor when performing speech acts that require such delicate interpersonal communication as refusals usually involves indirectness. The degree and manifestation of indirectness vary across languages and cultures. In Russian, for example, a simple and clear refusal is considered to be more polite than an indirect one. Native Russian speakers learning Japanese face many differences when trying to master the indirect ways of refusing that are expected in Japanese culture. Such cross-cultural tensions provided the impetus for this study which aims to examine the differences between Russian and Japanese culture by comparing refusal strategies in request situations.

In this research, we conducted a discourse completion test (DCT) to compare the frequency of refusal strategies of the following three groups of respondents: (1) Russian native speakers who speak only Russian, (2) native Russian speaking JFL learners (3) Japanese native speakers. The purpose of the survey was to look into the following four points. First, we analyzed effects of multiple factors influencing the situation of request refusal by conducting classification tree analysis (which is one type of decision tree analysis). Second, to find out if studying Japanese influences the L1 (in this case, Russian), we compared the data of Russian native speakers who have no previous study with that of Japanese language learners whose L1 is Russian. Third, to examine whether Russian JFL learners distinguish between refusing in Japanese and Russian we compared their Japanese and Russian data. Fourth, to investigate the influence of Russian (L1) on Japanese (L2), we compared the data of the Japanese language learners' refusal strategies with that of Japanese native speakers.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: POLITENESS THEORY

Interpersonal communication can be viewed as a process of "facework" where face is constantly being threatened or saved. Following Goffman (1967), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) assumed that the motivation behind facework behavior is universal while there are cultural differences in the ways that particular facework behaviors are realized. Brown and Levinson assume that the weightiness (Wx) of a face-threatening act (FTA) is based on the speaker's

assessment of the following three variables: Social Distance between the speaker and the hearer [D (S, H)], Power that the hearer has over the speaker [P (H, S)], and culturally influenced Ranking of Imposition of the particular act (Rx).

Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim is not that P, D, and Rx are the only relevant factors, but simply that they subsume all others that might have an effect on the assessment of FTAs' risk. The present research also used Brown and Levinson's politeness theory as the basic framework for the analysis to find out the patterns of refusal strategies in request situations. For the purpose of the analysis we assumed the Rx factor as consisting of three sub-factors: the intrinsic content of the situation (R_i), differences in language/linguaculture (R_l), and the type of refusal strategy (R_s). In the present study, we attempt to show a rank order of significance between the 5 factors (i.e., power factor, distance factor, situational factor, culture/language factor, and type of refusal strategy) from the perspective of refusal strategies. To estimate the degree of an FTA, we used the following formula: $Wx = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_i + R_l + R_s$.

III. METHOD

A. Subjects

In May and June of 2011, we conducted a DCT for 150 undergraduate students from Russian and Japanese universities, consisting of 50 Russian students with no Japanese language study background (32 female, 18 male; average age: 20 years 4 months), 50 JFL students whose native language is Russian (24 female, 26 male; average age: 21 years 2 months) and 50 Japanese students with no Russian language study record (26 female, 24 male; average age: 20 years 11 months). The average of Japanese language study experience was 4 years and 5 months.

B. Material

1. Details of refusal scenarios. To conduct DCT we set up 9 request scenarios (the English translation is given in Appendix A) to which respondents were asked to refuse. We selected situations that can occur naturally in both Japanese and Russian society. The conditions of Power were differentiated using three levels: higher, equal and lower. 3 scenarios were made for each level. Furthermore, we added a Social Distance factor to Power relations. We defined distance as "degree of familiarity" based on the frequency of interaction, differentiating between "familiar interlocutor" (one whom you talk with frequently) and "unfamiliar interlocutor" (one with whom you don't have frequent interactions).[1] We made slight changes in the Japanese and Russian version of the DCT in Scenarios 1 and 6 for the purpose of localization. In the Japanese version of Scenario 1, the request was to buy famous "White Lover" cookies while travelling to Hokkaido, and in the Russian version of the questionnaire respondents were asked to buy some green tea while travelling to China. The Japanese version of Scenario 6 took place during a traditional summer festival and the request was to lend the interlocutor five thousand yen, while the Russian version took place during the Vladivostok Port Anniversary which is held in July (the respondents were asked to lend five hundred rubles). We assumed that these differences did not influence actual perception of request situations.

2. DCT procedure. Data was collected using a Discourse Completion Test. As noted by Kwon (2004), DCT allows respondents to provide the prototype response occurring in one's actual speech. Therefore, DCT is more likely to trigger participants' mental prototype while natural data are more likely to bring on unpredictable and uncommon items in speech. Since the objective of this research is to obtain information about strategies that respondents use to implement the communicative act of refusing a request, and about their sociopragmatic knowledge of the context factors under which particular strategies are appropriate, we believe that DCT was a suitable instrument for this study.

Respondents were given a DCT with 9 request scenarios (as shown in Appendix A). The DCT questionnaire had an explanation of each scenario followed by the question "how would you refuse", then the actual request by the interlocutor and a space where respondents needed to write their refusal. The English translation of the DCT example (Scenario 2, Power – higher status, Distance – familiar) is given in Appendix B.

Russian native speakers filled in DCT only in Russian. Russian JFL learners completed the tests in both Japanese and Russian. To avoid influence from Russian, they first did the task in Japanese and after that we asked them to do DCT in Russian. Japanese native speakers did DCT only in Japanese. It took participants up to 30 minutes to complete DCT in the native language. The Japanese DCT took Russian students approximately 50 minutes to complete.

3. Coding procedure. The refusals were analyzed as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas (see Appendix C for a complete list and examples). Considering the applicability to Russian, the coding scheme of semantic formulas (i.e., refusal strategies) is based on the initial classification suggested by Beebe et. al (1990) and also series of research on JSL/ JFL refusals (mainly Ikoma and Shimura 1993, Fujimori 1994, Murai 2009, Ito 2001). As summarized in Appendix C, 7 types of broad categories were set up: (1) reason / explanation / excuse, (2) empathy, (3) non-perforrmative refusal, (4) apology / expression of regret, (5) statement of alternative proposal, (6) promise of future acceptance, (7) condition for future or past acceptance / reserve refusal. For example, if a respondent refused a request to lend his or her class notes, saying: "*Watashi ha ashita ichi nichiju shiken ga aru kara, gomen ne. Tanaka ni tanondemitara* [I have an exam tomorrow, so I`m sorry. What if you ask Tanaka?]", this was coded as [reason/explanation/excuse] [apology/expression of regret] [statement of alternative proposal]. Compared to the previous research we put semantic formulas into broader categories in this paper so that each semantic category would be filled with a sufficient number of tokens. It was quite common for our respondents to use multiple strategies in combination within a single response. The use of refusal strategy was counted as 1, even though the same type of

strategy was sometimes used more than once within one response of a given respondent. Not using a refusal strategy was counted as 0.

IV. Data Analysis

In order to examine the rank order of significance between the 5 factors (i.e., power factor, distance factor, situational factor, culture/language factor, and type of refusal strategies) that are influencing the frequency of refusal strategies of Japanese native speakers in Japanese, Russian JFL learners in Japanese, Russian JFL learners in Russian, Russian native speakers in Russian, we employed *decision tree analysis* by SPSS Classification Trees (Version 18.0) for our analysis. The independent variables in the present survey were arranged in a 3×3×2×4×7 design: (1) power (P) (i.e., higher / equal / lower status interlocutor), (2) content of the situation (R_i) (i.e., three scenarios for each power level), (3) distance (D) (i.e., familiar / unfamiliar interlocutor for each of the settings), (4) subject group and language (R_1) (i.e., Japanese native speakers in Japanese, Russian JFL learners in Japanese, Russian JFL learners in Russian, Russian native speakers in Russian), (5) type of refusal strategy (R_s) (i.e., 7 types of semantic formulas, shown in Appendix C). The frequency of refusal strategies was set as a dependent variable. The present survey elicits categorical data (i.e., frequency of seven types of responses), so for this type of data, chi-square values were employed for growing the decision tree and this particular analysis is called 'classification tree analysis.'

Classification tree analysis aims to select a useful subset of predictors in descending order from a larger set of independent variables with respect to a dependent variable. This tool is built on the basis of CHAID (chi-squared automatic interaction detector) which automatically chooses the independent variable which has the strongest interaction with the next highest variable. In the tree-growing process, each parent node splits into child nodes only if a significant main effect or interaction is found among independent variables. Thus, this analysis shows the order of significance of factors that serve as independent variables when predicting a dependent variable and the results come out in the form of a dendrogram. Therefore, if the situation is like in the present research where we need to find out how 5 factors influence the frequency of refusal strategies, classification tree analysis can be considered the most suitable method of multivariate analysis (Tamaoka, Miyaoka, 2008; Tamaoka, Lim, Miyaoka and Kiyama, 2010; Kiyama, 2011; Lim, Tamaoka, Miyaoka, Kim, 2011; Kiyama, Tamaoka and Takiura, 2012).

V. Results

A. Results of the Classification Tree Analysis

Overall, as shown in Figure 1, the results of the classification tree analysis showed that the type of the refusal strategy (R_s), which was assumed as a sub-factor of Rx influencing the choice of refusal strategies, ranked on the top of the classification tree (Node 0) [$\chi^2(6)=9882.105$, $p<.001$]. It had consistent influences on the responses of all subject groups for all the settings. The next strongest factor differed depending on the type of the refusal strategy. The whole classification tree (i.e., dendrogram) including all independent variables is too large to display on a single page, so in the following sections it was divided into seven dendrograms in Figures 2,3,4,5,6,7,8, which present detailed results of the survey.
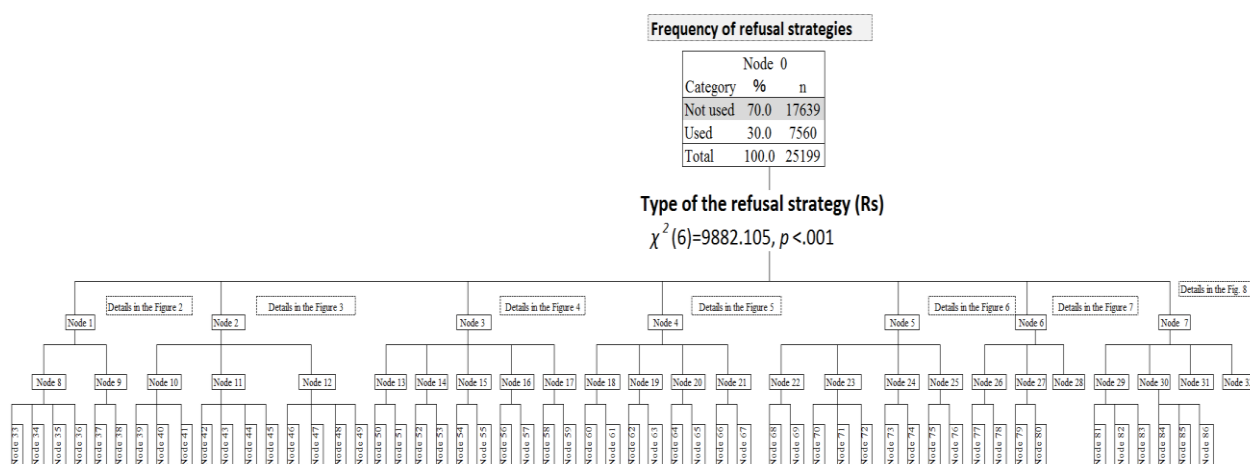
Figure 1 Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of refusal strategies in request situation

B. Results of the Classification Tree Analysis for the Frequency of [Reason / Explanation / Excuse]

As shown in Figure 2, [Reason / Explanation / Excuse] was the most frequently used refusal strategy (85.3%, Node 1). Node 1 generated a further split to Nodes 8 and 9, which indicated a significant effect of the social distance factor (D) [$\chi^2(1)=39.728$, $p<.001$]. These results showed that respondents tended to use reason more frequently when refusing

the requests of familiar interlocutors (89.0%, Node 8) than unfamiliar ones (82%, Node 9). Node 8 split into Nodes 33 – 36, representing the effect of the content of the situation factor (R_i) [$\chi^2(3)=77.462$, $p<.001$], the same for all respondent groups. The fact that several scenarios came out in the same node like in Nodes 33 and 34, means that there was no significant difference in the frequency of [Reason / Explanation / Excuse] for these situations. The content of the situation did not show any significant effect on using [Reason / Explanation / Excuse] when refusing the requests of unfamiliar interlocutors. It differed depending on the subject group and language (R_l) [$\chi^2(1)=43.078$, $p<.001$]. Russian JFL learners showed the same tendency when refusing in Japanese as Japanese native speakers (87.6%, Node 37), and when refusing in Russian had the same frequency of reason as Russian native speakers (75.6%, Node 38).

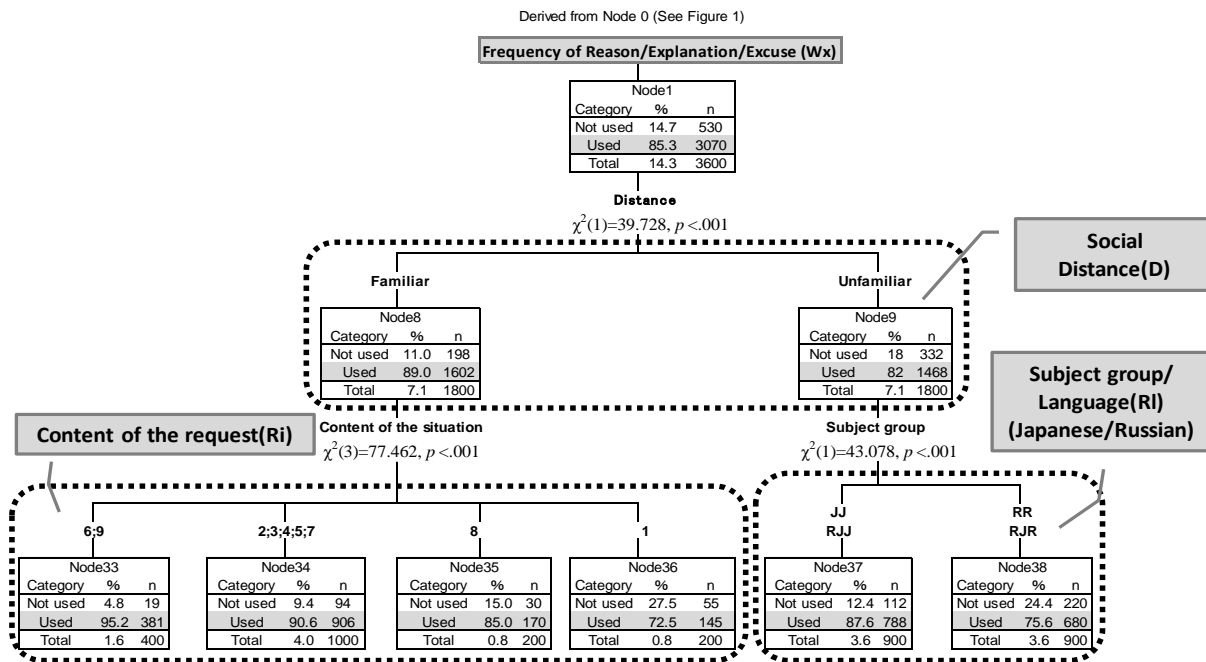

Figure 2   Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of [Reason/Explanation/Excuse] used in request refusals
Note: Shaded parts indicate a higher frequency (whether the strategy is used or not used);
JJ - Japanese native speakers, RR - Russian native speakers, RJJ - Russian JFL learners refusing in Japanese, RJR - Russian JFL learners refusing in Russian

C.   Results of the Classification Tree Analysis for the Frequency of [Apology / Expression of Regret]

This was the second most frequently used refusal strategy (57%, Node 2). As shown in Figure 3, there was a significant effect of the subject group and language (R_l) on the frequency of apology [$\chi^2(2)=307.693$, $p<.001$] . Russian JFL learners in Japanese showed the highest frequency of apology (73.2%, Node 10). Russian JFL learners in Russian had the same tendency as Japanese native speakers (60.6%, Node 11). Russian native speakers had the lowest frequency of apology (33.6%, Node 12). Nodes 10 – 12 generated a further split to Nodes 39 – 49, representing the effect of the content of the situation (R_i) following the difference between the subject group and the language factor. All respondents showed different tendencies of using apology depending on the content of the situation.

D.   Results of the Classification Tree Analysis for the Frequency of [Non-performative Refusal]

Non-performative refusals were the next most frequently used strategy after the apologies (33.8%, Node 3, cf. Figure 4 for details). Node 3 split into Nodes 13 – 17 indicating that the content of the situation (R_i) was the strongest predictor of the frequency [$\chi^2(4)=223.553$, $p<.001$]. The subject group and the language factor (R_l) was the next

Derived from Node 0 (See Figure 1)

Frequency of Apology/Expression of regret (Wx)

Node2		
Category	%	n
Not used	43.0	1549
Used	57.0	2051
Total	14.3	3600

Subject group/Language(RI) (Japanese/Russian)

Subject group
$\chi^2(2)=307.693$, $p<.001$

Node10 (RJJ / JJ)		
Category	%	n
Not used	26.8	241
Used	73.2	659
Total	3.6	900

Node11 (RJR)		
Category	%	n
Not used	39.4	710
Used	60.6	1090
Total	7.1	1800

Node12 (RR)		
Category	%	n
Not used	66.4	598
Used	33.6	302
Total	3.6	900

Content of the situation $\chi^2(2)=27.528$, $p<.01$

Content of the situation $\chi^2(3)=72.796$, $p<.001$

Content of the situation $\chi^2(3)=46.592$, $p<.001$

Content of the request(Ri)

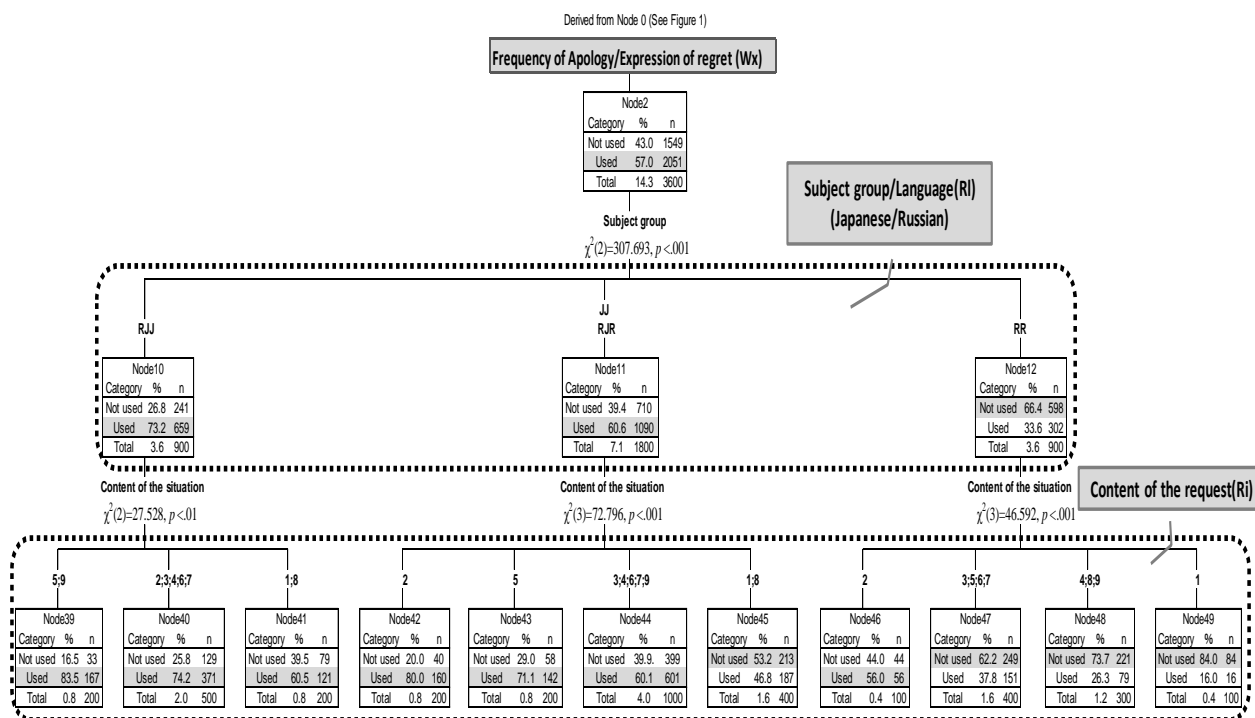| Node	Situation	Not used	Used	Total
Node39	5;9	16.5 / 33	83.5 / 167	0.8 / 200
Node40	2;3;4;6;7	25.8 / 129	74.2 / 371	2.0 / 500
Node41	1;8	39.5 / 79	60.5 / 121	0.8 / 200
Node42	2	20.0 / 40	80.0 / 160	0.8 / 200
Node43	5	29.0 / 58	71.1 / 142	0.8 / 200
Node44	3;4;6;7;9	39.9 / 399	60.1 / 601	4.0 / 1000
Node45	1;8	53.2 / 213	46.8 / 187	1.6 / 400
Node46	2	44.0 / 44	56.0 / 56	0.4 / 100
Node47	3;5;6;7	62.2 / 249	37.8 / 151	1.6 / 400
Node48	4;8;9	73.7 / 221	26.3 / 79	1.2 / 300
Node49	1	84.0 / 84	16.0 / 16	0.4 / 100

Figure 3 Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of [Apology/Expression of regret] used in request refusals

Note: Shaded parts indicate a higher frequency (whether the strategy is used or not used);
JJ - Japanese native speakers, RR - Russian native speakers, RJJ - Russian JFL learners refusing in Japanese, RJR - Russian JFL learners refusing in Russian

Derived from node 0 (See Figure 1)

Frequency of Non-performative refusal (Wx)

Node3		
Category	%	n
Not used	66.2	2383
Used	33.8	1217
Total	14.3	3600

Content of the request(Ri)

Content of the situation
$\chi^2(4)=223.553$, $p<.001$

Node	Situation	Not used	Used	Total
Node13	5	45.5 / 182	54.5 / 218	1.6 / 400
Node14	2;8	54.2 / 434	45.8 / 366	3.2 / 800
Node15	3	63.0 / 252	37.0 / 148	1.6 / 400
Node16	1;4;7	73.1 / 877	26.9 / 323	4.8 / 1200
Node17	6;9	79.8 / 638	20.2 / 162	3.2 / 800

Subject group $\chi^2(1)=17.391$, $p<.001$

Subject group $\chi^2(1)=13.130$, $p<.01$

Subject group $\chi^2(1)=11.211$, $p<.01$

Subject group $\chi^2(1)=14.393$, $p<.001$

Subject group $\chi^2(1)=15.332$, $p<.001$

Subject group/Language(RI) (Japanese/Russian)

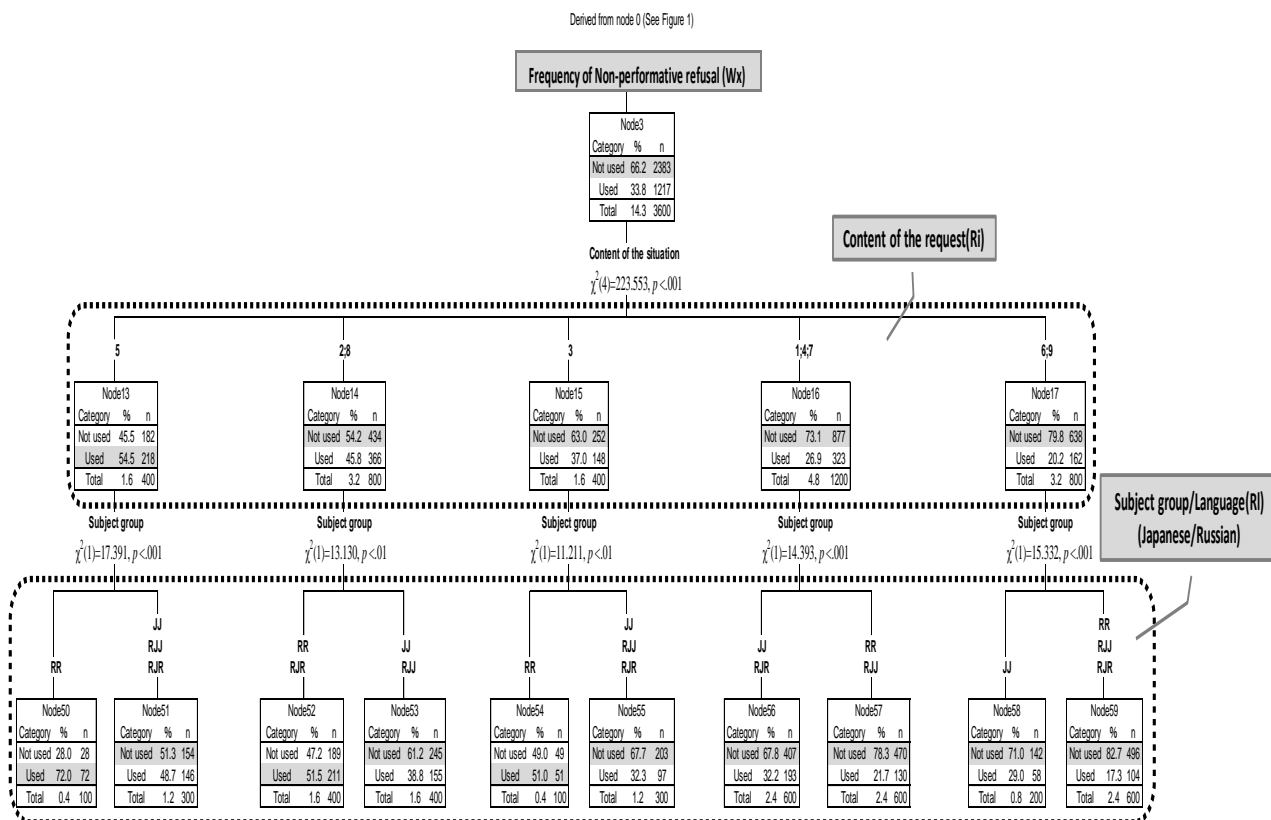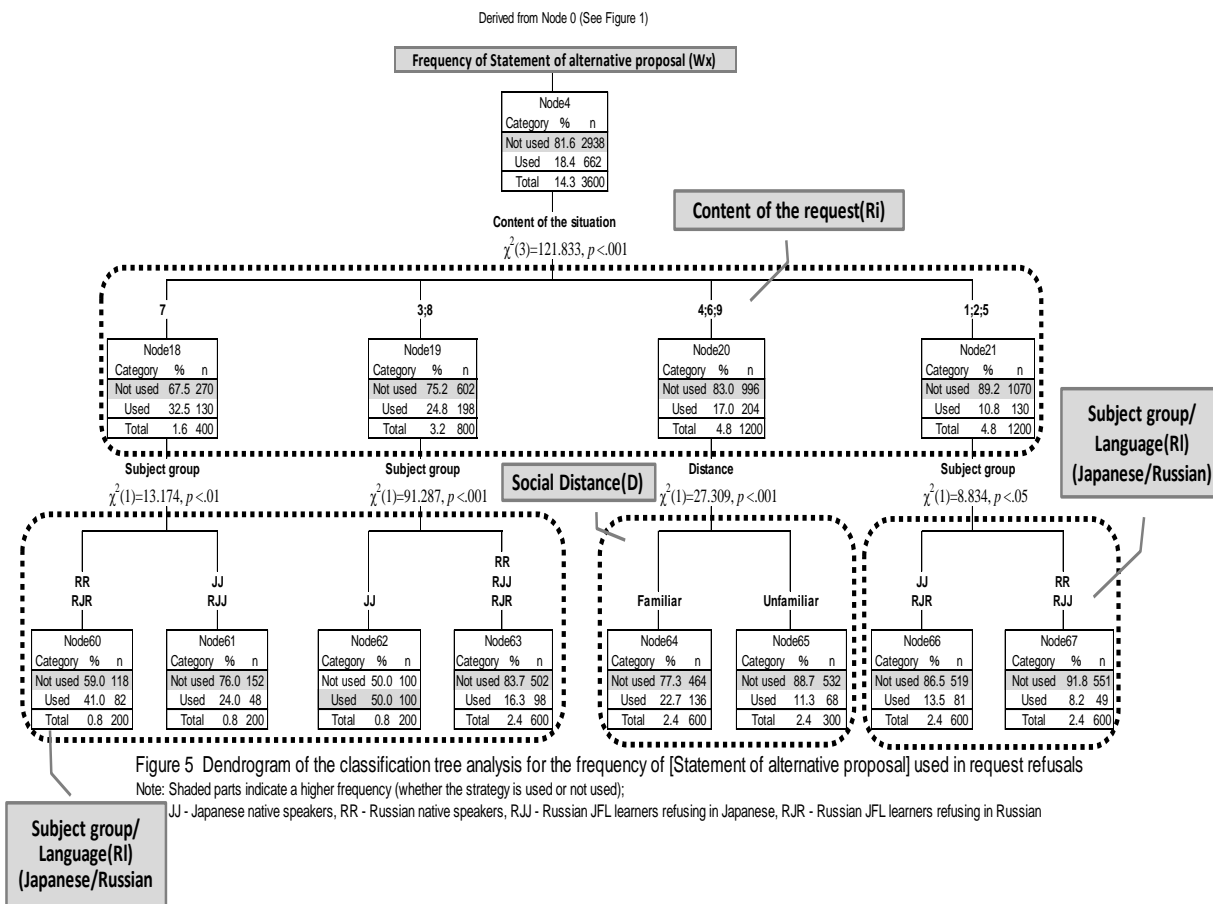| Node	Group	Not used	Used	Total
Node50	RR	28.0 / 28	72.0 / 72	0.4 / 100
Node51	JJ; RJJ; RJR	51.3 / 154	48.7 / 146	1.2 / 300
Node52	RR; RJR	47.2 / 189	51.5 / 211	1.6 / 400
Node53	JJ; RJJ	61.2 / 245	38.8 / 155	1.6 / 400
Node54	RR	49.0 / 49	51.0 / 51	0.4 / 100
Node55	JJ; RJJ; RJR	67.7 / 203	32.3 / 97	1.2 / 300
Node56	JJ; RJR	67.8 / 407	32.2 / 193	2.4 / 600
Node57	RR; RJJ	78.3 / 470	21.7 / 130	2.4 / 600
Node58	JJ	71.0 / 142	29.0 / 58	0.8 / 200
Node59	RR; RJJ; RJR	82.7 / 496	17.3 / 104	2.4 / 600

Figure 4 Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of [Non-performative refusal] used in request refusals

Note: Shaded parts indicate a higher frequency (whether the strategy is used or not used);
JJ - Japanese native speakers, RR - Russian native speakers, RJJ - Russian JFL learners refusing in Japanese, RJR - Russian JFL learners refusing in Russian

Significant factor. Russian native speakers generally had a higher frequency of non-performative refusals than Japanese native speakers (in Scenarios 5, 2, 8, 3 – given in descending order of the frequency). However, Japanese

native speakers used more non-performative refusals than Russian native speakers in Scenarios 1, 4, 7, 6, 9. Russian JFL learners (in both, Japanese and Russian) either had the same tendency as Japanese native speakers (Scenarios 5 and 3) or as Russian native speakers (Scenarios 6 and 9). Then, for the rest of the Scenarios there was a split between Russian and Japanese data of Russian JFL learners with a consistent tendency: Russian data had more non-performative refusals than Japanese.
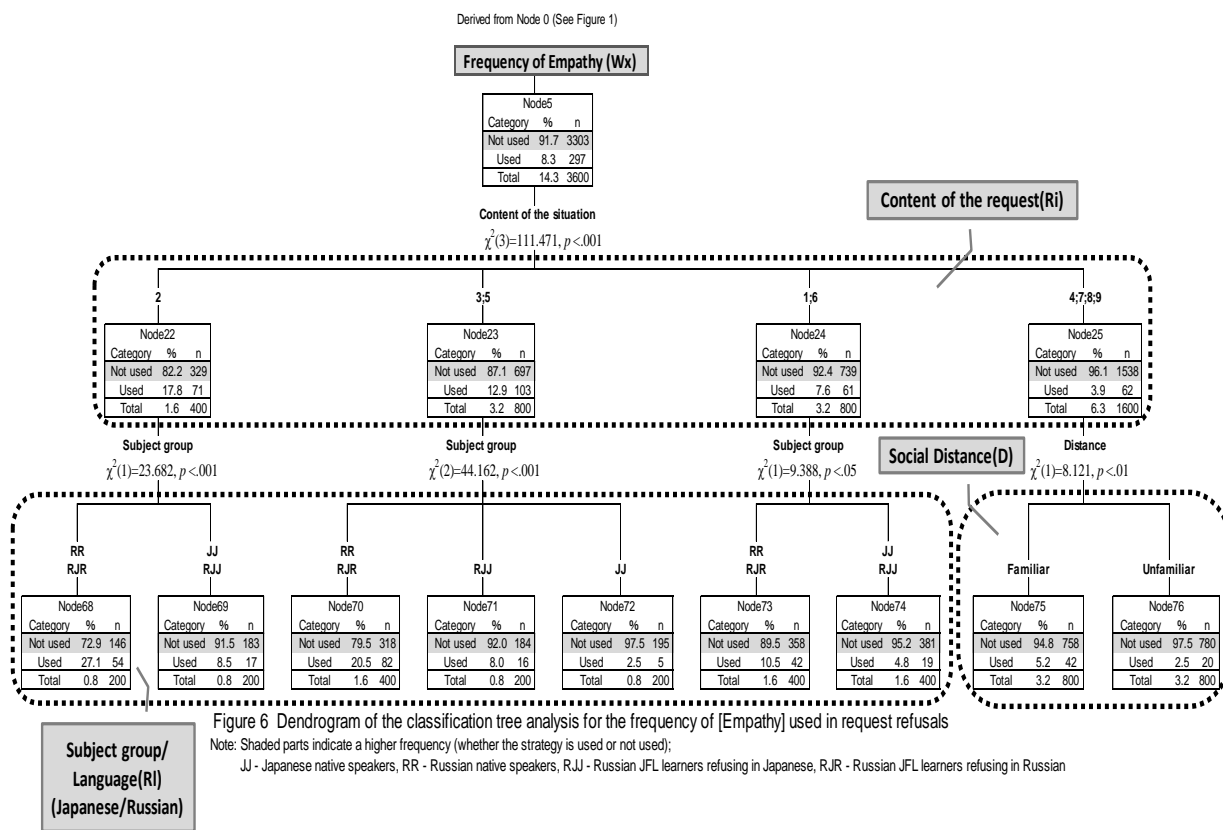
E.   Results of the Classification Tree Analysis for the Frequency of [Statement of Alternative Proposal]

As shown in Figure 5, the frequency of [Statement of alternative proposal] was first influenced by the content of the situation (R_i) [$\chi^2(3)=121.833$, $p<.001$]. Node 4 split into Nodes 18 – 21, representing the effect. The subject group and the language factor (R_l) was the next significant factor. Scenarios 4, 6, 9 (Node 20) which contained the requests to lend several things (class notes, money, textbook) showed a significant effect of the distance factor (D) [$\chi^2(1)=27.309$, $p<.001$]. This result indicated that all subjects tended to use more alternative proposals when refusing requests of familiar interlocutors (22.7%, Node 64) than unfamiliar ones (11.3%, Node 65).

Figure 5 Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of [Statement of alternative proposal] used in request refusals
Note: Shaded parts indicate a higher frequency (whether the strategy is used or not used);
JJ - Japanese native speakers, RR - Russian native speakers, RJJ - Russian JFL learners refusing in Japanese, RJR - Russian JFL learners refusing in Russian

F.   Results of the Classification Tree Analysis for the Frequency of [Empathy]

As shown in Figure 6, the content of the situation (R_i) was the strongest predictor of the frequency of [Empathy] [$\chi^2(3)=111.471$, $p<.001$]. All Scenarios were divided into 4 Nodes (from 22 to 25). Nodes 22, 23, 24 generated a further split into a third level of branches, showing the effect of the subject group and the language factor (R_l). The results showed that Russian native speakers and Russian JFL learners in Russian tended to use more [Empathy] than other subject groups. When refusing in Japanese, Russian JFL learners either showed the same tendency as Japanese native speakers or used [Empathy] more often than them. Node 25 (Scenarios 4, 7, 8, 9) split into Nodes 75 and 76, representing the effect of the distance factor (D) [$\chi^2(1)=8.121$, $p<.01$]. All subject groups used more [Empathy] when refusing the requests of familiar interlocutors (5.2%, Node 75) than unfamiliar ones (2.5%, Node 76).
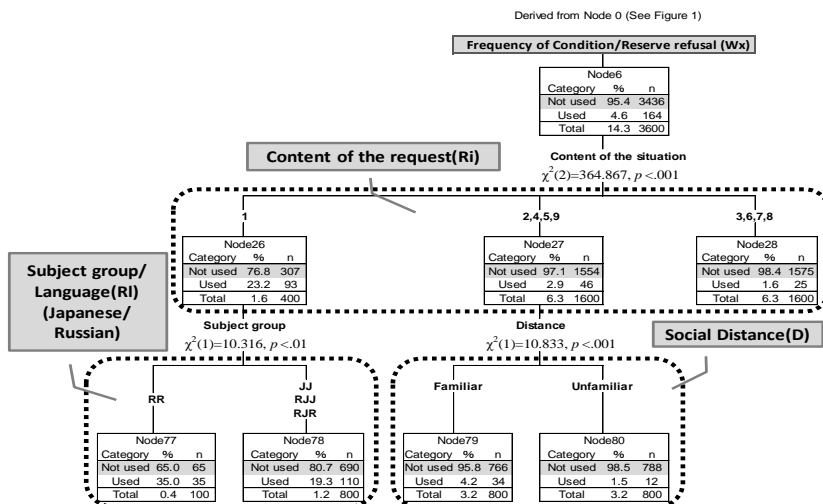
Figure 6 Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of [Empathy] used in request refusals
Note: Shaded parts indicate a higher frequency (whether the strategy is used or not used);
JJ - Japanese native speakers, RR - Russian native speakers, RJJ - Russian JFL learners refusing in Japanese, RJR - Russian JFL learners refusing in Russian

G. Results of the Classification Tree Analysis for the Frequency of [Condition / Reserve Refusal]

Figure 7 shows a significant effect of the content of the situation factor (R_i) [$\chi^2(2)=364.867$, $p<.001$] on the frequency of [Condition / Reserve refusal] strategy. Scenario 1 (Node 26) was affected by the subject group and the language factor (R_l) [$\chi^2(1)=10.316$, $p<.01$]. Russian native speakers used more of condition statements (35%, Node 77) than other subject groups (19.3%, Node 78). Nodes 79 and 80 represent the effect of the distance factor (D) [$\chi^2(1)=10.833$, $p<.001$] for Scenarios 2, 4, 5, 9. All respondents tended to use more condition strategies when refusing requests of familiar interlocutors than unfamiliar ones (4.2%, Node 79 versus 1.5%, Node 80). In Scenarios 3, 6, 7, 8 no other factor besides the content of the situation was significant in predicting frequency of [Condition / Reserve refusal], as no further child nodes were generated from Node 28.
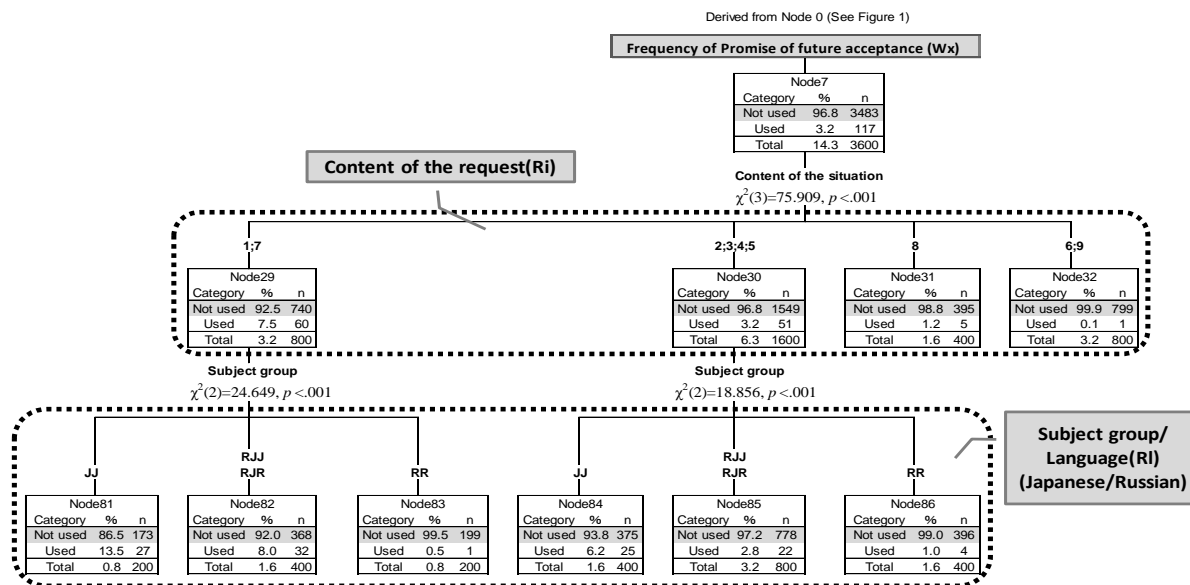

Figure 7 Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of [Condition / Reserve refusal] used in request refusals
note: Shaded parts indicate a higher frequency (whether the strategy is used or not used);
JJ - Japanese native speakers, RR - Russian native speakers,
RJJ - Russian JFL learners refusing in Japanese, RJR - Russian JFL learners refusing in Russian

H. Results of the Classification Tree Analysis for the Frequency of [Promise of Future Acceptance]

As shown in Figure 8, the content of the situation factor (R_i) was the strongest predictor of the frequency of [Promise of future acceptance] [$\chi^2(3)=75.909$, $p<.001$] followed by the subject group and the language factor (R_l). In all scenarios Japanese native speakers used more of [Promise of future acceptance] than Russian native speakers, who practically did not use it (0.5%, Node 83 and 1%, Node 86). The Japanese and Russian data of Russian JFL learners fall in between the Japanese and Russian native speakers. In Scenarios 8, 6, and 9, the content of situation was the only significant factor for using [Promise of future acceptance].

Figure 8 Dendrogram of the classification tree analysis for the frequency of [Promise of future acceptance] used in request refusals

Note: Shaded parts indicate a higher frequency (whether the strategy is used or not used);
JJ - Japanese native speakers, RR - Russian native speakers, RJJ - Russian JFL learners refusing in Japanese, RJR - Russian JFL learners refusing in Russian

VI. DISCUSSION

The present survey examined refusal strategies in request situations preferred by Japanese native speakers, Russian JFL leaners in Japanese and Russian, and Russian native speakers. Using the framework of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, we conducted classification tree analysis of the DCT data to see how the 5 factors of Power (P), Distance (D), Content of the situation (R_i), Subject group and Language (R_l), Type of refusal strategy (R_s) influence the frequency of refusal strategies. The following sections describe detailed results in accordance with four objectives of the research outlined in the introduction.

A. How Different Factors Influence the Frequency of Refusal Strategies

The present survey demonstrated the effects of multiple factors influencing the frequency of refusal strategies. The results of the rank order of significance of 5 factors (i.e., power factor, distance factor, situational factor, culture/language factor, and type of refusal strategies) targeted in this research were shown in Figures 1 through 8. The results showed that the type of refusal strategy had the strongest influence on the frequency of strategies. Of the two factors regarding interpersonal relationships of power and distance, only the factor of distance showed a partial influence on the frequency of [Reason / Explanation / Excuse], [Statement of alternative proposal], [Empathy], and [Condition / Reserve refusal]. All respondents used more of those strategies when refusing the request of familiar interlocutors than unfamiliar ones. The factor of power had no effect throughout all conditions in all scenarios. Nevertheless, it would be premature to conclude that power relationships have nothing to do with refusal strategies in request situations. The present paper dealt only with the frequency of refusal strategies. We are still required to continue further investigations with focus on the effects of power on the content, order and linguistic form of refusal strategies. Factors concerning content of the request situation and subject group (sociocultural norms and language) also showed significant effects on the frequency of the strategies. The content of the situational factor was the strongest predictor of using [Non-performative refusal], [Statement of alternative proposal], [Empathy], [Condition / Reserve refusal] and [Promise of future acceptance] and the second strongest for [Reason / Explanation / Excuse] and [Apology / Expression of regret]. The subject group and the language factor had a crucial influence on the frequency of [Apology / Expression of regret]. In other refusal strategies, the effects caused by differences between sociocultural norms and language were smaller than those caused by the situational factor. In Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, all factors are treated equally. However, at least regarding the situation of request refusal, this survey explained more details about hierarchical relations between the factors. In the following sections, we are going to discuss the results related to the

effect of sociocultural norms and the language factor.

B.   Effects of Studying Japanese on the L1 (Russian Language)

According to Blum-Kulka and Sheffer (1993), there can also exist a "reverse transfer" when rules of the target language influence the native language. For example, sometimes Japanese language learners are becoming excessively polite, even compared to native Japanese speakers. In this research, we conducted survey in both, Japanese and Russian, for the Russian JFL learners and compared results with the control group of Russian native speakers who have no Japanese study record. The results confirmed a possibility of a partial influence of the target language on the native. In the case of [Apology / Expression of regret], Russian JFL learners used almost two times more of apologies than Russian native speakers when refusing in Russian (60.6% versus 33.6%, cf. Figure 3), showing the same tendency in their L1 as Japanese native speakers. In case of some other strategies, the Russian JFL learners partially demonstrated in Russian either the same patterns with Japanese native speakers or close to them, though the difference was not as dramatic as it was with apologies. They used considerably less [Non-performative refusals] than Russian native speakers for Scenarios 3 and 5, less [Condition / Reserve refusal] strategy for Scenario 1, more [Promise of future acceptance] for Scenarios 1, 7, 2, 3, 4, 5.

C.   How Russian JFL Learners Switch Between Japanese and Russian

One of the objectives of this research was to compare L1 and L2 data of Japanese language learners whose L1 is Russian and the results of the analysis showed that under several conditions the Russian data of Russian JFL learners were significantly different from the Japanese. When refusing in Japanese, Russian JFL learners demonstrated the same tendencies as Japanese native speakers and when refusing in Russian they had the same choice of refusal strategies as Russian native speakers. Such cases included frequency of the following refusal strategies: [Reason / Explanation / Excuse] in the situation of refusal to an unfamiliar interlocutor for all Scenarios (Japanese data had a higher frequency, Figure 2), [Non-performative refusal] in Scenarios 2 and 8 (Russian data had a higher frequency, cf. Figure 4), [Statement of alternative proposal] in Scenario 7 (higher frequency in Russian data, cf. Figure 5), [Empathy] for Scenarios 1, 2, 6 (higher frequency in Russian data, Figure 6). The results suggest that a kind of pragmatic switch mechanism was working in these settings. Russian JFL learners were aware of the differences between Japanese and Russian sociocultural norms, and when refusing in Japanese they made an effort to keep down their own national identity and represent Japanese identity.

D.   Comparing Japanese Data of Russian JFL Learners with Japanese Native Speakers

There is a process of cultural accommodation involved in studying any foreign language (Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993) and gradually foreign language learners get affected by the social and cultural norms of the target language country. All refusal strategies of Russian JFL learners partially demonstrated the same pattern of frequency as Japanese native speakers (except [Apology / Expression of regret] and [Promise of future acceptance]. We will discuss the findings regarding these two strategies after discussing the similarities with Russian native speakers. The Japanese data of Russian JFL learners had the same tendency with Russian native speakers regarding the frequency of [Non-performative refusal] in Scenarios 6 and 9, and [Statement of alternative proposal] in Scenarios 3 and 8. This could be explained by pragmatic transfer from Russian. However, as noted by Shimizu (2009), we should also take into consideration that though being aware of the pragmatic rules of the target language, language learners sometimes choose not to follow the norms of the target language because they want to keep their own national identity and be independent as foreign language learners.

In the case of [Apology / Expression of regret], Russian JFL learners had the highest frequency of this strategy when refusing in Japanese (cf. Figure 3). This important finding is different from the results of the previous research (Fujimori 1994, Ono, Mori and Yasuda 2004, Meng 2008, etc.) where Japanese native speakers had the highest frequency of apologies under any conditions in all refusal settings. The result of our research coincides with Fujiwara (2009) who compared refusals of Japanese native speakers and Taiwanese learners of Japanese. Fujiwara argues that it could be caused by 'overgeneralization' due to a developmental lack of pragmatic competence, because apology is thought to be one of the most important strategies in Japanese refusal. Also Olshtain (1983, 1989), in her research related to the production of L2 apologies, states that perception about language universality and uniqueness (i.e., understanding how the same speech act should be carried out in different languages) can greatly influence the way learners use apologies in their L2. The results of this study support this view. "Japanese people apologize a lot" is a common belief among JSL/JFL learners.

In the case of [Promise of future acceptance] the Japanese data of Russian JFL learners (together with the Russian data) fall somewhere between Japanese and Russian native speakers (cf. Figure 8), showing significantly different tendencies from both groups of native speakers. This result suggests that to some extent Russian JFL learners formed interlanguage culture, different from both native and target language cultures. Moreover, in Russian speech etiquette, this strategy is not used for refusals since it is considered more polite to come up with an alternative proposal or set a condition for past or future acceptance. The fact that Russian JFL learners used this strategy in both Japanese and Russian clearly demonstrates the effect of Japanese language instruction.

VII. CONCLUSION

The present study demonstrated effects of multiple factors influencing the frequency of refusal strategies in request situations. This research has proved that in refusal situations to a request, there is an order of significance among those factors when predicting frequency of refusal strategies. The results showed that the type of refusal strategy (R_s), content of the request (R_i), subject group and language (R_l), and social distance (D) were significant predictors of frequency. Absence of power (P) can be explained by the nature of the research since it is the content, order, or linguistic realization of refusal strategies that can be influenced more likely by power relations than frequency.

We also compared refusal strategies preferred by Russian JFL learners when refusing in Japanese and Russian using two control groups, one composed of Japanese and the other of Russian native speakers. The effect of subject group and language was very complex and deeply intertwined with the content of refusal scenarios and nature of specific strategies. Thus, sociocultural and language differences were not the strongest factor when predicting frequency of refusal strategies, so we can conclude that present study provides support for the universality of Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) formula and also gives us more insight into hierarchical order among the factors involved in realization of request refusals.

APPENDIX A.   DETAILS OF REFUSAL SCENARIOS

#	Content of the request (Wx: Ranking of imposition)	Power (P)	Interlocutor	Distance (D)	
1	Buy a gift at travel destination		Mother	Familiar	Unfamiliar
2	Help with moving the professor's office	Higher	Teacher	Familiar	Unfamiliar
3	Become an organizer of a corporate dinner at your place of work		Job superior	Familiar	Unfamiliar
4	Lend class notes	Equal	Classmate	Familiar	Unfamiliar
5	Fill in for a colleague at work		Colleague	Familiar	Unfamiliar
6	Lend five thousand yen		Friend	Familiar	Unfamiliar
7	Help with a homework assignment	Lower	Junior student	Familiar	Unfamiliar
8	Do some shopping for a BBQ		Junior student	Familiar	Unfamiliar
9	Lend a textbook		Junior student	Familiar	Unfamiliar

APPENDIX B.   DCT QUESTIONNAIRE EXAMPLE: SCENARIO 2

Professor with whom you have close relationships, asks you to help with moving his office after the class. How will you refuse?

Professor: (Your name), do you have some time today? We plan to move, and it would be great if you could help.

You: _____

APPENDIX C.   CLASSIFICATION OF REFUSAL STRATEGIES

#	Semantic Formula	Example (Japanese)	Example (Russian)
1	Reason / Explanation / Excuse	*Youji ga aru n dakedo* [But I have something to do] / *Hoka no hito ni kashita kara* [Because I gave it to somebody else]	*Zavtra kontroljnaya* [I have a test tomorrow] / *Mne samomu nuzhny* [I need them myself]
2	Empathy	*Zannen desu ga* [It is unfortunate, but] / *Ikitai kedo* [I want to go, but]	*K sozhaleniyu* [Unfortunately] / *Ya by s udovoljstviem, no* [I would love to, but]
3	Non-performative refusal	*Dekinai* [I can't] / *Sore ha muri kana* [This doesn't look possible] / *Ashita ha chyotto* [Tomorrow kind of…] / *Iie* [No]	*Ne mogu* [I can't] / *Ne poluchitsya* [It's not going to happen] / *Net* [No]
4	Apology / Expression of regret	*Moushiwake arimasen, Gomen ne, Warui kedo* [I'm sorry]	*Izvini* [I'm sorry]
5	Statement of alternative proposal	*Kare ni tanondara* [What if you ask him] / *Hoka no hito ni kiite mimashyouka* [Let's try to ask somebody else]	*Davai ya poproshu ego* [Let me ask him]
6	Promise of future acceptance	*Jikai ha yarimasu* [I'll do it next time] / *Mata kondo ne* [May be another time]	*V sleduyushchii raz obyazateljno* [Next time for sure]
7	Condition (for future or past acceptance) / Reserve refusal	*Jikan ga areba* [If I have time] / *Repooto wo kaite kara* [After I write the report] / *Dekiru ka dou ka wakaranai kedo* [But I don't know if I can do it or not] / *Yakusoku ha dekinai ga* [But I can't promise]	*Esli budet vremya* [If I have time] / *Esli poluchitsya* [If I can make it]

NOTES

[1]In the 1st Scenario the 'familiar interlocutor' is one's own mother and the 'unfamiliar interlocutor' is a friend's mother.

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