

Research Article

Perception and Modification: A Pragmatic Study of Irai Hyougen by Japanese Learners

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Abstract

This research focused on describing how perceptions about the degree of imposition are manifested in requests in Japanese used by learners and how these perceptions are translated into choices of pragmatic modification. Through qualitative methods using the discourse completion test, it is known that perceptions of the degree of an imposition when requesting something are not manifested into the choice of request type used by learners. Instead, it is more visible from the variation in the choice of syntactic patterns used in request expression. The perception of the degree of imposition translated into a choice of external and internal pragmatic modifications. Although learners have varying perceptions of the degree of imposition for the same request, it does not appear that learners differentiate the choice of pragmatic modification based on the heaviness of the request's imposition.

Keywords: irai hyougen; learner's perception; pragmatic modification; request

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1. Introduction

The speech act of request or *irai hyougen* is commonly used in everyday life, both in Indonesian and Japanese. In Indonesian, it is sufficient to say 'tolong' (*please*) and 'mohon' (*please*) when requesting something. Meanwhile, in Japanese, a request can be expressed in various ways, which needs to be differentiated based on specific considerations. When requesting something, the speaker needs to consider the content of the request. The speaker usually has preconceived notions regarding the degree of imposition of the request, and there is also the consideration about whom the request is addressed. Thus, the request forms might vary (see Sunarni, 2015; Chandrawisesa et al., 2019). Considerations about contents, preconceived notions (or

the speaker's perception) about particular speech acts, and the people involved in a speech act are a few examples of assessment points in pragmatic language skills, which can be said to use the language according to a speech context.

Leech (1983, 2014) describes the context in pragmatics includes speaker and hearer, the context of the speech, the purpose of the speech, forms of action from speech, and verbal products of speech (or the illocutionary acts). In general, the speech act of request consists of two things: the requested content (what is being requested), and the target of request (to whom the request is addressed). The two things that build the speech act of request are in line with the concept of pragmatic context suggested by Leech. Meanwhile,

the concept of the degree of imposition of the request that will affect the form of speech is a concept introduced by Brown and Levinson (1987). The degree of imposition's rank is considered a component that also affects speech because the higher the degree of imposition, the higher risk of threatening the hearer's face is. Some strategies are needed in conducting requests to mitigate the face-threatening act (FTA) to the hearer. One of these strategies is to make pragmatic modifications in speech acts to achieve the speech objectives. The speech act of request is a potentially face-threatening act (see Brown and Levinson, 1987). Therefore, it is necessary to modify speech when making a request to mitigate the FTA, so the purpose of the request can be achieved.

When communicating in a multicultural and multilingual society, using an appropriate language within the context is necessary. Using appropriate language can help minimize cultural friction and avoid misunderstanding, especially in communication with a specific purpose, such as asking for something, particularly in Japanese. Ide (2012) states that Japanese people highly valued *wa* or social harmony; in maintaining social harmony, a member of society needs to be aware of social norms when communicating. Since the social norms are embedded in a speech context, ignoring context and inappropriate use of language possibly hinders social harmony and obstructs communication goals.

In Japanese textbooks used by learners, several sentence patterns are introduced as an expression of requests, whether in books aimed at elementary, intermediate, and upper levels. Studies regarding the speech act of request by Japanese learners have been brought up in recent years (e.g., Indraswari and Meisa, 2018; Wahyuningtias, 2014). Previous research by Indraswari and Meisa on the expression of requests by Japanese learners still focuses on variations in learners'

grammatical forms. Meanwhile, the research conducted by Wahyuningtias is focused on the comparison of politeness strategy between native speakers and Japanese learners when making a request. In the studies about speech act of request by Japanese learners, several topics have not been studied yet. Few examples of the topics are the learner's perceptions about the degree of imposition in specific request, how the perception of the degree of imposition is manifested in the request forms, and how the perception is translated into a choice of pragmatic modification forms as a reflection of learners' understanding of the context. Therefore, the focus of this study aims at the learner's perception about the degree of imposition in specific requests, the forms of the request expression used by the learner, the type of pragmatic modification in the request based on the learner's perception about the degree of imposition.

This paper focuses on these three main concepts: the context in pragmatics, pragmatic modifications, and the expression of request in Japanese. So it is appropriate first to address the three concepts in brief. The context in pragmatics can be divided into several types. Rahardi et al. (2019) divided the context into three: communicative context, the context of speech act, and socio-cultural context. Rahardi's opinion is summarized based on the opinion of Verschueren (1999), Leech (1983), and Hymes (1974). According to Verschueren, the communicative context includes four key points: The Utterer and The Interpreter, mental aspect of language users, social aspects of language users, physical aspects of language users. The mental aspect of language users consists of personality, emotions, desires, wishes, motivation, intentions, and beliefs. The social aspects of language users cover social class, ethnicity, and race, nationality, linguistics group, religion, age, level of education, profession, kinship, gender, and preference. Meanwhile, the physical aspect

of language users focused on persona deixis, attitudinal deixis, temporal deixis, and spatial deixis.

The context of speech act according to Leech includes speaker and hearer, the context of speech (textual context/cotext, pragmatic context, socio-cultural context), the purpose of the speech, speech as a form of action, and speech as a product of verbal action (illocutionary acts). Meanwhile, according to Hymes' socio-cultural context includes the situation (setting and scene), the participant (speaker - speaker/sender, sender - addressor, listener - hearer, receiver, audience, receiver - addressee), ends (goal; purpose-outcome, purpose-goal), act sequences (speech sequence, message form, message content), keys (speech keys), instrumentalities (channels, forms of speech), norms (interaction norms, interpretation norms), and genres (discourse categories).

This research focuses on describing the expression of request (*irai hyougen*) and the pragmatic modification used by Japanese learners in expressing requests. The main parts of the speech act of request are: who is making the request, to whom the request is addressed, how is the speaker expressing the request, and what is the content of the request. In line with the research focus, in this study, the context is limited to the following points: (1) speaker and hearer (by whom the request is expressed, to whom the request is addressed), (2) the purpose of the speech (what is the content of the request itself), and (3) the product of the speech act (what is the forms of request expression).

In a speech act, the speaker will use modification when speaking so that the purpose of speaking can be achieved. Speech modification can be done at a grammatical or pragmatic level. Pragmatic modification is a concept first introduced by Blum-Kulka and Olhstain in 1985, then discussed again by Leech in 2014. Blum-Kulka and Olhstain use the term *speech act realization patterns* to describe language

patterns, which are a form of modification in the speech act. Meanwhile, Leech uses the term *pragmatic modifier* to describe the same concept.

In principle, the modifier categories proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olhstain and Leech are not much different; both of them divide modifiers into two primary types: internal modifier and external modifier. Even so, there are still slight differences in each modifier model. Blum-Kulka and Olhstain's categorization of modifiers focused on modifiers' forms from the speech acts of requests and where they appeared, whether on the head act, before the head act, or after the head act.

Leech's pragmatic modifier categorization is based on the modifier's form and function; It can be said that the pragmatic modifier proposed by Leech is a complement version of the modifier model proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olhstain in 1985. For this reason, this study will use Leech's pragmatic modification model as a theoretical basis. In this study, the term pragmatic modification refers to modifications in speech used at the pragmatic level. The types, forms, descriptions, and examples of Leech's pragmatic modifier can be seen in Table 1.

The expression of request in Japanese is called *irai hyougen*. Iori (2000, pp.148-150) describes *irai hyougen* as an expression uttered by the speaker so that the hearer does something or does not do something, for the benefit of both the speaker (*hanashite*) and the hearer (*kikite*). Classification of types and forms of *irai hyougen* can be done based on several points of view, such as division based on syntactic patterns, directive strategies, and division based on speech participants' aspects. In the *irai hyougen*, three things are taken into consideration to determine the type or classification, namely (1) the syntactic form, (2) the type of function of speech (such as commands, statements of desire, for example), and (3) the usage context.

Research by Masamune (2000) and Gong (2015) presents a discussion of *irai hyougen*, which is associated with the context in the form of conversation participants and the physical form of speech. Masamune and Gong's research presents direct and indirect types of *irai hyougen* and presents types of *irai*

hyougen in the form of hints. For this reason, this study will use the classification of types and forms of *irai hyougen* suggested by Masamune (2000) and Gong (2015), which are summarized in Table 2.

Table 1: Leech's Pragmatic Modifier

Type	Form	Description
<i>Internal modifier</i>	<i>Downtoner</i>	generally in the form of adverbs used to soften the directive power of speech acts; as an effort to reduce the burden (cost) of the action. Example: <i>perhaps, maybe, could, a bit, a little</i>
		Downtoner can also be a verb or noun which has an association of "small" meanings. Example: <i>Will you <u>pop</u> and get some chips if I get you some money?</i> The use of downtoners that have "small" meaning associations is considered more polite. Example: <i>Can I have a tiny <u>sip</u>, please?</i> <i>Can I have a <u>word</u> with you, please?</i>
	<i>Politeness marker please</i>	<i>please</i> is commonly used as a marker of politeness. However, on the other hand, it has a function as an illocutionary marker that strengthens utterances as an act of request in a particular context. Example: <i>John Graham, <u>please</u> (the name of a patient is called out in a hospital, requesting him to follow the caller)</i>
	<i>Deliberative opening</i>	the use of interrogative words as a request to provoke consideration from the hearer to take any action that the speaker wants; the sentences used are the reported question type. Example: <i><u>Do you think you could come by on Thursday?</u></i>
	<i>Appreciative opening</i>	the use of specific clauses or sentences to show a positive attitude toward the hearer as a sign of appreciation for the cooperation (to be) given. Example: <i><u>I'd be very grateful if you would investigate this.</u></i>
	<i>Hedged performative opening</i>	the hedged performative opening is an opening clause in a request, generally located at the beginning of the main clause, followed by a modality or interrogative sentence. Example: <i><u>May I ask all those in favour, please, to show their hands</u> <pause> <u>those against</u> (spoken by the chair at a business meeting)</i> Generally appears at formal conversations conducted in public, used to soften performative speech. Example: <i>... therefore <u>I must ask the indulgence of the general assembly to change the verb.</u> (after noticing a grammatical error at a Church of Scotland meeting)</i>
	<i>Negative bias</i>	the use of the negative form in a sentence to express a request. Example: <i><u>Do you mind if I use the ladder?</u></i> Negative bias can be expressed through the negative form of a volitional statement that uses the word <i>mind</i> (a word that means negative volition) or a negative statement. Example: <i><u>I don't suppose you could be persuaded to come up by train for a night or two, could you?</u>—that would be so very super, a treat of the first order.</i>

<i>Happence indicators</i>	<p>the use of certain words such as <i>happen to</i> or <i>by any chance</i> implies the speaker is pessimistic that the request will be granted or the speaker does not expect the request to be carried out.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>1. “... <i>I don’t think anything’s broken, by the way.</i>” <i>“Apart from the bonnet, of course,” said Tuppe. “And the fan belt. <u>You don’t happen to carry a spare, I suppose.</u>”</i></p> <p>2. <i>Okay, do you have the referral form <u>by any chance?</u></i></p>
<i>Temporal availability queries</i>	<p>Temporal availability queries</p> <p>Hinting questions were used to provide an opening for the hearer to refuse requests on the grounds of limited time.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>A: <i><u>Would you have time to get me a refill?</u></i> B: <i><u>Absolutely! What are you having?</u></i></p>
<i>Hypothetical past tense</i>	<p>the use of past tense to show tentativeness of requests; the use of a modality indicating willingness or prediction; although the past tense is used, the action/ action has not been done; hypothetical past tense is used to express modal distancing</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i><u>Would you mind if I left early tomorrow?</u></i></p>
<i>Past time past tense</i>	<p>Using past tense shows tentativeness in requests; the use of a modality indicates willingness or prediction; although the past is used, the action/ actions have not been done; this form of modification is used to express temporal.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i><u>I wondered if you would mind if I recorded our conversation for the next few minutes...</u></i></p>
<i>Progressive aspect</i>	<p>the use of the progressive aspect form to show tentativeness expresses the meaning of wondering, hoping from the speaker so that the hearer is willing to take the desired action.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i><u>I was wondering if you would mind if I recorded our conversation for the next few minutes...</u></i></p>
<i>Tag questions</i>	<p>the use of interrogative words to soften the request so that it does not give the impression of commanding; the question tag must have the same polarity as the clause it follows.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i><u>Perhaps you <u>could</u> open the door, <u>could you?</u></u></i></p>
External Modifiers	<p><i>Apologies</i></p> <p>the modifier in the form of an apology; has two functions, 1) serves purely as a speaker’s apology because the speaker will put a burden on the hearer or when the speaker realizes that he or she violates conversational manner 2) as an alert to attract the attention of the hearer before submitting a request.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i><u>Excuse me, could you speak up just a little bit?</u></i></p>
<i>Thanks</i>	<p>The modifier in the form of a statement of gratitude from the speaker, even though the hearer has not done the requested action (premature gratitude); used as a politeness sign.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i><u>Can you do the next one, James, please? Thank <u>you.</u></u></i></p>
<i>Vocatives</i>	<p>the use of modifiers in the form of terms of address toward the hearer; has three functions:</p> <p>1) a way to attract the attention of the person to be addressed. Example of family vocatives: <i>Mother, Mom, Mummy.</i> Example of familiar vocatives: <i>nicknames (Blondie), endearments (dear), and familiarizers (guys, folks, man, bro)</i></p> <p>2) clarifying the focus/ the target person to whom the request is addressed (making it clear that it is the person who is being asked for something, not someone else)</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i><u>Oliver, now come on <u>darling</u>, be a good boy and give me that</u></i></p> <p>3) a way to build a social relationship with the person who is being requested Example of honorific forms/ honorific titles: <i>sir, madam, Dr Smith</i> Example: <i>There you go, <u>sir</u>, that’s two ninety-eight there please altogether there now. [S is a tradesman selling eggs and showing the traditional respectful sir to a customer] [BNC KB8]</i></p>

<i>Supporting Moves: Grounder</i>	complementary sentences accompanying the head act; can appear before or after the head act; generally have a function to justify the request, by presenting the reasons for the request; through the use of grounder the speaker impression that his request is reasonable Example: <i>Judith, I missed class yesterday. Could I borrow your notes?</i>
<i>Supporting Moves: Preparators</i>	complementary sentences accompanying the head act, as a prologue of request from the speaker by stating the intention of asking for permission Example: <i>Arnold, would you do me a favour please? Could you slip out <pause> and retrieve our pianist?</i>
<i>Other Supporting Moves</i>	The complementary sentence that accompanies the head act, this complementary sentence can have implications for politeness; the types consist of: <i>disarmer</i> , a complementary sentence used to postpone the hearer's objection to the speaker's request (forestalling objections). Example <i>You've got such green fingers. Could you just help me plant this orchid?</i> <i>Promise reward or recompense</i> , complementary sentences in the form of a statement of promise, compensation, or feedback from the speaker to the hearer if the request is fulfilled. Example: <i>Would you do just do it then I'll make you a cup of coffee</i> <i>Minimization of the imposition</i> , is a complementary sentence in the form of a statement containing a sentence that aims to reduce the burden on the hearer. Example: <i>Would you just check the money? It won't take long.</i> <i>Sweetener</i> , complementary sentences in the form of complements/ flattering statements by speakers to increase the hearer's self-image. Example: <i>Would you mind if I ask you how old you are. You look really young?</i>

(Leech, 201, pp. 160-176)

Table 2: Type and Forms of *Irai Hyougen*

Type	Forms	Description
<i>direct</i>	<i>meireikei</i>	a request whose meaning is close to a command, generally used by male speakers of familiar people; there is a marker verb in the imperative form; as in the sentence <i>omae wakatte kure yo</i> or <i>soredake zettai wasureruna</i>
	<i>shijikei</i>	a request that can be said to be a subtle command (<i>karui meirei</i>), generally used by conversation participants who have a close relationship, generally using the <i>-te</i> form, as in the sentence <i>oi Tsukamoto moukei mo motte kite</i> including <i>irai</i> using <i>juju doushi</i> in the <i>hitei</i> form using <i>-koto</i> ; like the use of <i>-koto</i> in the sentence <i>kaite itadakenai koto</i>
<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi hyoumeikei</i>	requests that are expressed in the form of the statement of intention from the speaker conveyed to the hearer, generally use the form <i>-tai</i> , <i>-te moraitai</i> , <i>-te hoshii</i> , <i>-(yo)u to omou</i> ; as in the sentence <i>Yuki, yahari dekirukagiri isshoni iyou</i> or <i>sumimasen, gogo no kaigi no shiryuu o itadakitain desu ga</i>
	<i>ganboukei</i>	The direct expression of the speaker's desire, which is expressed politely (<i>teinei</i>) or directly (<i>ricchou</i>); a statement of desire in theory generally uses the form <i>-you ni onegaishimasu</i> , <i>-te choudai</i> , or <i>-te kudasai</i> while a direct statement of desire generally uses the word <i>-tanomu</i> as in the sentence <i>kore de hacchuu onegaishimasu</i> or <i>socchi no hou tanomu na</i> including the type of <i>irai hyougen</i> which brings up the expression of gratitude (<i>kansha no kimochi o hyoumei suru irai</i>) as in the sentence <i>okaki itadakereba saiwai desu, okaki itadakereba arigatain desuga</i> It is also included <i>irai</i> in the form of an indirect request (<i>enkyokutekina irai</i> ; <i>kansetsu tekina hyougen</i>) which is expressed through a statement of the hearer's ability to do something (<i>kanousei o arawasu enkyokutekina irai</i>) as in the sentence <i>koko ni okaki itadakemasu/ okaki itadaku kota ga dekimasu</i>

	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	the request through affirmative sentence, stating whether the hearer has the same intention as the speaker or not. The marker is the question word <i>-ka</i> , or by using a request sentence with an increasing intonation at the end of the sentence Usually using syntactic forms such as <i>-te moraeruka</i> , <i>-te kureruka</i> , <i>-te kureru?</i> , <i>-te iika</i> , as in the sentence <i>saiketsusuru shimasu ne hidari ude dashite mo ii desu ka</i> or <i>sugu modotte kurerukara, mattete kureru?</i> including <i>irai</i> which uses <i>gimonkei</i> (<i>koutei gimonkei</i> , <i>hitei gimonkei</i> , <i>suiryō no gimonkei</i> such as <i>-darouka</i> , <i>-deshouka</i>) and <i>irai</i> in the form of asking permit (<i>kyouka motomeru hyougen o tsukau irai</i>)
<i>hints</i>	<i>honomekashikei</i>	the request in the form of hint sentence, it does not have a particular marker indicating the request, but the hearer (<i>aite</i>) understands the phrase as a request, as in the sentence <i>shitsurei desuga</i> , <i>sakihodo onegaishita shiryō nan desuga</i>

2. Methods

The research employed qualitative methods to study conversational discourse containing the expression of request. The discourse studied is non-authentic (observation on contrived discourse) obtained through discourse completion tests (DCT) on data sources. Data is collected using questionnaires and online tests through WhatsApp chat and Google Forms. Data were collected from 38 Japanese learners, with the duration of the Japanese learning experience varying from six months to more than two years.

Data collection was carried out in two stages, namely the pre-research stage and the research stage. In the pre-research, information collected about the request expression in everyday life (to whom the student usually makes the application, the purpose of the application, the content of the application) and the perception of the degree of imposition (what request are categorized as “mild,” “moderate,” and “severe” request) become the basis for the DCT. Description for mild, moderate, and severe can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Description of Limitation of Degree of Imposition

Mild	Moderate	Severe
You do not hesitate to make requests	You are reluctant to make requests.	You are very reluctant to make requests.
You can request without weighing too much on what the requested content is about	When you make a request, you need to consider what the request contains.	You need to weigh carefully what the request contains.
You can ask a request without weighing too much on who is being requested.	When you make a request, you need to weigh who is being requested.	You need to weigh carefully the person who is being requested.
You can request without weighing too much about how the request will be conveyed.	When you make a request, you need to consider how the request will be conveyed.	You need to weigh carefully the ideal way to convey the request.

Information gathering in the pre-research stage was carried out via WhatsApp chat and questionnaires via Google Forms. Based on the survey results, it was concluded that

1. the target of request (to whom usually students make requests) includes classmates, seniors, family members who are older and younger,

lecturers or staff on campus, as well as strangers,

2. the request generally intended for the hearer (the person being requested) to do something for the speaker (the learners), and
3. the content of the request deemed applicable to all groups (including the targets of the request) and can be

categorized as mild, moderate, or severe, are “requests to lend a pen.” For this reason, DCT is structured based on the following contexts:

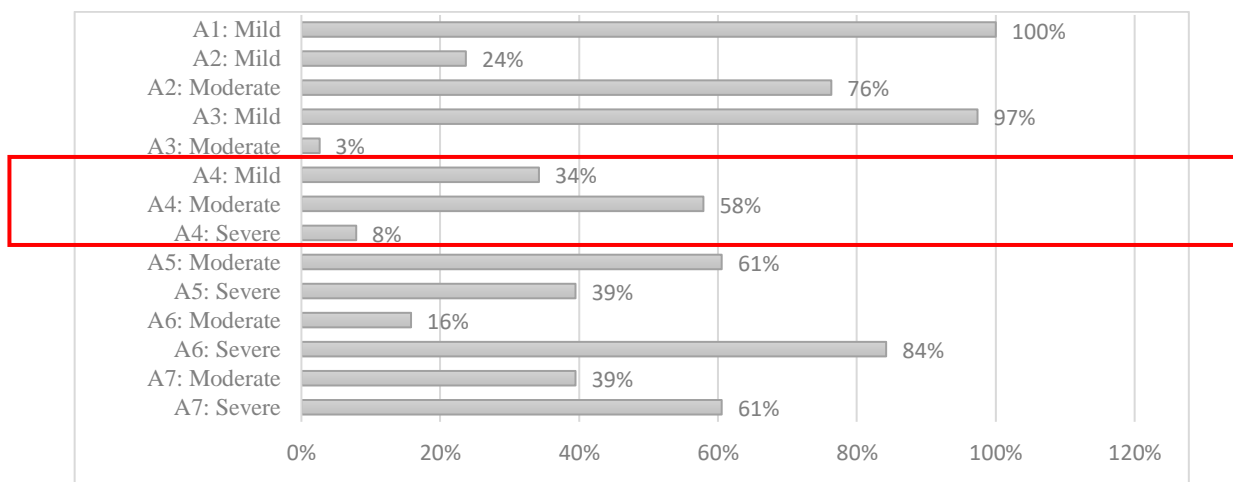
1. Speech situation (includes Speakers and Hearers), Speakers are learners, termed “you” on the DCT. A hearer is a person who is being requested, includes classmates, seniors, family members, both older and younger, lecturers and academic staff on campus, as well as strangers.
2. The speech’s content is requested to be lent a pen by someone near you (the speaker).
3. The speech’s purpose is that the speaker is willing to lend a pen to you (the speaker).
4. Products of verbal acts (illocutionary acts) are syntactic forms that appear as requests, along with pragmatic modifications in requests.
5. Socio-cultural context includes situations, conversation participants, and the order of speech.
6. The situation is a narrative/ description of the situation that

becomes the background for a conversation containing a request.

7. Conversation participants include speakers (learner) and hearers (classmates, seniors, family members, older and younger, lecturers and academic staff on campus, and strangers).
8. Speech order/ message form/ message content is a narrative sequence of conversations in the form of a conversation sequence.

DCT is made based on the contexts mentioned above so that there are seven DCT contexts; each is coded A1 through A7. Conversation A1 is a request to a classmate, conversation A2 is a request to the upperclassmen, and conversation A3 is a request to a younger family member. Conversation A4 is a request to an older family, conversation A5 is requested to campus staff/ educational personnel, conversation A6 is requested to the lecturer/ teacher, and conversation A7 is requested to a stranger. Based on the questionnaire’s data, respondents have different perceptions of the degree of imposition for the same request content. See Graph 1 below.

Graph 1: Perception of The Degree of Imposition



The graph 1 shows that the conversation includes the perception of mild, moderate, and severe imposition is conversation A4. In this study, the

discussion will be limited to data obtained from conversations A4. In conversation A4, three types of degree in imposition (i.e., mild, moderate, and severe) emerge in

the same category. From the emerging evidence, it can be seen how the perception is manifested in the choice of request forms. The choice of pragmatic modification as a reflection of the learner's understanding of speech context when making a request can also be observed through this data.

The data gathered from DCT are then analyzed based on the following steps: data sorting and identification, analyzing the speech act of request and analyzing pragmatic modifications on the speech acts of requests. The identification of request forms by learners is based on Gong (2015) and Masamune's (2000) theory, while the pragmatic modification is identified is based on Leech's (2014) theory.

The collected data then divided into two main categories according to the research questions, which are 1) description of the learner's perception of the degree of imposition and the form of request expression used by the learner, 2) learner's choice of pragmatic modification in the request based on the perception of the degree of imposition.

3. Result and Discussion

In the following section, the perceptions of the degree of imposition and the form of request used by students and the pragmatic modification form in request based on learners' perceptions of the degree of imposition will be described.

3.1 Learner's Perception about The Degree of Imposition and The Forms of *Irai Hyougen*

Table 4 summarizes the learner's perception of the degree of imposition in a request, and its manifestation in request forms performed by learners. From the questionnaire, 38 data were obtained. However, one data (P24) was not analyzed because the sentence does not meet the criteria for the request sentence's syntactic structure, and the meaning of the sentence is ambiguous.

Based on the presentation in Table 4, it can be understood that the majority of learners consider context A4 to have a 'moderate' degree of imposition (22 data). Some others consider the degree of imposition in context A4 as 'mild' (13 data), and a small proportion consider the burden application for 'severe' (3 data). Although the learners have different perceptions of the degree of imposition, the expression is not much different. Most learners use the *ishi kakuninkei* form but in various syntactic patterns.

In the perception of "severe" imposition, the expression of request is manifested in the form of *ishi kakuninkei* through a syntactic pattern of *-temo ii desuka*, *-temo itadakenai deshouka*, and *-temo itadakenai deshouka*. This behaviour shows that when the request is considered "severe", the learner tends to include honorific language elements (*keigo*) when expressing requests.

In the perception of "moderate" imposition, the expression of request is manifested in the form *ishi kakuninkei*, *ganboukei*, and *honomekashikei*. *Ishi kakuninkei* is manifested in the syntactic pattern *-te ii*, *-temo ii desuka*, *-te kuremasenka*, *-te kurenai*, *-temo ii*, *-te ii*, *-te moraimasenka*, *-temo ii desuka*, *-temo ii*, *-temo ii desuka*, *-temo ii*, *-te moraemasenka*. *Ganboukei* is manifested in the syntactic pattern *-te onegaishimasu*, *-te kudasai*, and *-te choudai*. Meanwhile, *honomekashikei* is manifested through the use of the word *-arimasuka?* Furthermore, there are also request expressions that use *ganboukei* and *ishi kakuninkei* through the word *onagai* followed by a syntactic pattern *-te kuremasenka*.

In the perception of "mild" imposition, the expression of the request is manifested in the form of *ganboukei*, *ishi kakuninkei*, *honomekashikei*, and *shijikei*. *Ganboukei* can be seen from the use of the word *onagai* and the syntactic pattern *-te kudasai*. *Ishi kakuninkei* can be

seen from the use of *-te ii*, *-temo ii desuka*, *-temo ii desuka*, *-temo ii*, *-te kurenai*, *-temo ii*, *-te ii*. *Honomekashikei* can be seen from the use of the *-arun desuka?*, and *shijikei* can be seen from the use of the *-te* pattern. In the perception of “mild”

imposition, it appears that learners tend to use *ishi kakuninkei* in the form of informal language (*futsuukei*) and polite language (*teineikei*). See table 4 below.

Table 4: Perception about The Degree of Imposition and The Forms of *Irai Hyougen*

No	Perception of Degree of Imposition	Type of <i>Irai Hyougen</i>	Forms of <i>Irai Hyougen</i>	Syntactic Patterns of <i>Irai Hyougen</i>	Data no.	Sentence Example
1	Severe	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P6	兄さん、ボールペンを貸してもいいですか
2	Severe	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo itadakenai deshouka</i>	P10	すみません。。父、ボールペンを借りてもいただけないでしょうか？
3	Severe	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te itadakemase nka</i>	P33	あの、すみませんが、ボールペンをお借りしていただけませんか？
4	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te ii</i>	P1	借りていい
5	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P3	Bさん、ボールペンに 借り手も いいですか？
6	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te kuremasenka</i>	P5	お母さん、ボールペンを貸してくれませんか？
7	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te kurenai</i>	P7	ボールペンを借りてくれない。
8	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii</i>	P8	すみません、ボールペン借りてもいい？
9	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te ii</i>	P9	借りていい
10	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te moraimasen ka</i>	P11	Bさん、を借してもらいませんか。
11	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ganboukei, ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>onogai, -te kuremasenka</i>	P12	おじいさん、お願いがあるんですが、ちょっとボールペンを貸してくれませんか。私のボールペンは無くしちゃったんですから。
12	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ganboukei</i>	<i>-te onegaishimasu</i>	P15	お父さん、ボールペンを貸してをおねがいします
13	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P17	すみません、ボールペン借りてもいいですか
14	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii</i>	P19	ママ、ボールペンを貸してもいいですか？
15	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P20	お父さん、ボールペンを借りてもらっていい？
16	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>honomekashikei</i>	<i>sumimasen</i>	P21	すみません、貸してもいいですか？
17	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ganboukei</i>	<i>-te kudasai</i>	P22	お父さんすみません、ボールペンを貸してください？

18	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii</i>	P23	〇〇さん、ボールペン消してもいい?
19	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>honomekashikei</i>	<i>arimasuka</i>	P27	姉さん、ボールペンありますか。
20	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te moraemasen ka</i>	P28	すみません、ボールペンをかしてもらえませんか。
21	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P29	sumimasen, boorupen wo karite mo ii desu ka?
22	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te kuremasenka</i>	P31	お姉さん、ボールペンを貸してくれませんか。
23	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P35	sumimasen, borupen o karite mo ii desuka?
24	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P36	すみませんが、借りてもいいですか。
25	Moderate	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ganboukei</i>	<i>-te choudai</i>	P37	あのすみませんが、を借りてちょうだい
26	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ganboukei</i>	<i>onagai</i>	P2	あの、お願い
27	Mild	<i>hints</i>	<i>honomekashikei</i>	<i>arun desuka</i>	P4	B,ボールペンあるんですか?
28	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ganboukei</i>	<i>-te kudasai</i>	P13	お父さん、ボールペンを借りてください
29	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ganboukei</i>	<i>-te kudasai</i>	P14	Bさん、貸して下さい
30	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te ii</i>	P16	兄さん
31	Mild	<i>direct</i>	<i>shijikei</i>	<i>-te</i>	P18	兄ちゃん、ボールペン貸してよ
32	Mild	*	*	*	P24	状況:Bが兄だったら B兄さん、ボールペン借りない?
33	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P25	Sumimasen, borupen o kashitemo ii desuka
34	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii desuka</i>	P26	お姉さん、ボールペンを借りてもいいですか。
35	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii</i>	P30	お父さん、
36	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te kurenai</i>	P32	母さんごめん、取ってくれない?
37	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-temo ii</i>	P34	お姉ちゃん/お兄ちゃん(dsb)、借りてもいい?
38	Mild	<i>indirect</i>	<i>ishi kakuninkei</i>	<i>-te ii</i>	P38	ジョニさん、を借りていいですか?

3.2 Learner's Perception about The Degree of Imposition and The Type of Pragmatic Modification in *Irai Hyougen*

Table 5 summarizes the learner's perception of the degree of imposition in a request, and its manifestation in type of pragmatic modification performed by learners. From the questionnaire, 38 data were obtained. However, one data (P24) was not analyzed because the sentence does not meet the criteria for the request

sentence's syntactic structure, and the meaning of the sentence is ambiguous.

Based on the presentation in Table 5, it can be understood that in the 'severe', 'moderate', and 'mild' imposition, most students use external modification, only a tiny proportion use internal modification. External modifications are generally manifested in the use of vocatives, apologies, and gratitude. There is also external modification through the use of a preparator, grounder, and sweetener.

Vocatives can be observed through terms of address in the form of family vocatives. The learner uses ‘neesan, niisan, otousaan’, or honorific forms ‘-san’ attached to the hearer’s name as vocatives.

Apologies are generally manifested through ‘sumimasen’, ‘sumimasen ga’, or ‘gomen’. Gratitude is generally manifested through the expressions “arigatou”, “arigatou gozaimasu”, or “arigatou gozaimashita”. There is also the use of preparators, which can be seen from the sentence that acts as a prologue before the primary request expression is uttered, such as ‘onegai ga arun desuga’. Grounders is identified from expressions that show the reason for a request, such as ‘watashi no borupen nakushichattan desu kara.’ Simultaneously, a sweetener is an

expression of compliments to the hearer, such as ‘ojiisan no koto daisuki da yo’ or ‘otousan yasashii’.

Internal modifications are generally manifested in downtowner, in the use of the expression ‘anou’. For the perceived imposition of “severe” and “moderate,” the external modification is expressed through the use of apologies, vocatives, and gratitude. However, the learners also using internal modifications in the form of a downtowner on request’s imposition that was considered “severe”. For the perception of “mild” imposition, the learners generally use external modification, manifested in vocatives, and gratitude. However, some learners use internal modification in the form of downtowner. See table 5 below.

Table 5: Perception about The Degree of Imposition and The Type of Pragmatic Modification in Irai Hyougen

No.	Perception of Degree of Imposition	Type of Modification	Modification Marker	Data No.	Sentence Example	
1	Severe	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative ‘niisan’, thanks: arigatou nee	P6	兄さん、ボールペンを貸してもいいですか	ありがとうねえ
2	Severe	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen, vocatives: terms of address-family vocative ‘chichi’, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P10	すみません。。父、ボールペンを借りてもいただけないでしょうか？	ありがとうございます
3	Severe	Internal modifiers, external modifiers	downtowner: anou, apologies: sumimasen ga, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P33	あの、すみませんが、ボールペンをお借りしていただけませんか？	ありがとうございます。
4	Moderate	External modifiers	thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P1	借りていい	ありがとうございます
5	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-honorific form ‘B-san’, thanks: doumo arigatou gozaimasu	P3	Bさん、ボールペンに 借り手も いい ですか？	どうもありがとうございます。
6	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative ‘okaasan’, thanks: doumo arigatou gozaimasu	P5	お母さん、ボールペンを貸してくれませんか？	ありがとうございます
7	Moderate	External modifiers	thanks: arigatou	P7	ボールペンを借りて くない。	ありがとう。

8	Moderate	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen, thanks: arigatou	P8	すみません、ボールペン借りてもいい?	ありがとう。
9	Moderate	External modifiers	thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P9	借りていい	ありがとうございます
10	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-honorific form 'B-san', thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P11	Bさん、を借してもらいませんか。	はい、有り難うございます。
11	Moderate	External modifiers, internal modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'ojiisan', preparator: onegai ga arun desuga, downtowner: chotto, grounder: watashi no borupen nakushichattan desu kara, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu, sweetener: ojiisan no koto ga daisuki desu yo	P12	おじいさん、お願いがあるんですが、ちょっとボールペンを貸してくれませんか。私のボールペンは無くしちゃったんですから。	あ、ありがとうございます。おじいさんのことが大好きですよ。
12	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'otousan', thanks: arigatou	P15	お父さん、ボールペンを貸してをおねがいます	ありがとう
13	Moderate	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P17	すみません、ボールペン借りてもいいですか	ありがとうございます
14	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'mama', thanks: arigatou gozaimashita	P19	ママ、ボールペンを貸してもいいですか?	ありがとうございますしました。
15	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'otousan', thanks: arigatou, sweetener: otousan yasashii	P20	お父さん、ボールペンを借りてもらっていい?	ありがとう、お父さん優しい...
16	Moderate	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen	P21	すみません、貸してもいいですか?	貸してもいいですか?
17	Moderate	External modifiers	vocative: terms of address-family vocative 'otousan', apologies: sumimasen, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P22	お父さんすみません、ボールペンを貸してください?	ありがとうございます
18	Moderate	External modifiers	vocative: terms of address-honorific form 'OO-san', thanks: arigatou	P23	〇〇さん、ボールペン消してもいい?	ありがとう
19	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'neesan', thanks: arigatou	P27	姉さん、ボールペンありますか。	ありがとう、姉さん
20	Moderate	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P28	すみません、ボールペンをかしてもらえませんか。	ありがとうございます
21	Moderate	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P29	sumimasen, boorupen wo karite mo ii desu ka?	arigatou gozaimasu.

22	Moderate	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'neesan', thanks: arigatou	P31	お姉さん、ボールペンを貸してくれませんか。	ありがとう。
23	Moderate	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P35	sumimasen, borupen o karite mo ii desuka?	arigatou gozaimasu
24	Moderate	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen ga, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P36	すみませんが、借りてもいいですか。	ありがとうございます
25	Moderate	Internal modifiers, external modifiers	downtowner: anou, apologies: sumimasen ga, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P37	あのすみませんが、を借りてちょうだい	ありがとうございます。
26	Mild	Internal modifiers, external modifiers	downtowner: anou, thanks: arigatou	P2	あの、お願い	ありがとう
27	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-familiar vocative "B", thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P4	B,ボールペンあるんですか?	ありがとうございます
28	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'otousan', thanks: arigatou	P13	お父さん、ボールペンを借りてください	はい、ありがとうお父さん
29	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-honorific form "B-san", thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P14	Bさん、貸して下さい	ありがとうございます
30	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'niisan'	P16	兄さん	貸して良いかい?
31	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'niichan', thanks: arigatou	P18	兄ちゃん、ボールペン貸してよ	ありがとうね
32	Mild	*	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'niisan', thanks: arigatou	P24	状況:Bが兄だったら B兄さん、ボールペン借りない?	ありがとう
33	Mild	External modifiers	apologies: sumimasen, thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P25	Sumimasen, borupen o kashitemo ii desuka	Arigatou gozaimasu
34	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'onesan', thanks: arigatou	P26	お姉さん、ボールペンを借りてもいいですか。	ありがとう姉さん
35	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'otousan'	P30	お父さん、	かりてもいい
36	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'kaasan', apologies: gomen, thanks: arigatou	P32	母さんごめん、取ってくれない?	ありがとう!

37	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-family vocative 'oneechan'/'oniichan', thanks: arigatou	P34	お姉ちゃん/お兄ちゃん(dsb)、借りてもいい?	ありがとう
38	Mild	External modifiers	vocatives: terms of address-honorific form 'Joni-san', thanks: arigatou gozaimasu	P38	ジョニさん、を借りていいですか?	ありがとうございます

3.3 Discussion

When using the Japanese language, the learner's linguistic behaviour can be observed by examining the speech act of request they performed. The learner's linguistic behaviour can be seen not only by observing variations of grammatical forms when making a request or what particular politeness strategy is being used when making a request but also by using the language within a particular speech context. Based on the data analysis results regarding perceptions of the degree of imposition and the form of the request expression, it can be understood that the perception of the degree of imposition is not directly translated into the choice of request forms used by the learners. In the degree of 'severe,' 'moderate,' or 'mild,' the same form of request always appears, namely, *ishi kakuninkei* form. The perception of the degree of imposition is can much be seen from the smaller unit, which is the emergence of variation in *ishi kakuninkei* syntactic patterns. Requests with a perceived imposition that is considered 'severe' tend to generate syntactic patterns containing honorific language (*keigo*). Meanwhile, in requests considered 'moderate' or 'mild,' learners tend to use a syntactic pattern that indicates the informal language (*futsuukei*) and polite language (*teineikei*).

The perception of the degree of imposition is translated into a choice of pragmatic modification forms, both externally and internally. Learners are more likely to make external modifications through the use of expressions of apology

and gratitude. The learners also use vocatives in the form of terms of address when making requests. Although the learners have varying perceptions of the degree of imposition for the same request, it does not appear that learners differentiate the choice of pragmatic modification based on the perception of the degree of imposition.

Based on the findings, it is clear that there is a correlation between the learner's perception about the degree of imposition correlates and their choices of language forms and the strategy (in the forms of pragmatic modifier) they employed when making a request. This behaviour can be considered as a reflection of learners' understanding of the speech context. Hence, their linguistic behaviour can be seen as one of the assessment points in their pragmatic language skills.

However, the data analyzed in this research was only carried out in a specific request content (i.e the requests to lend a pen). The request also addressed to a specific hearer (i.e request to an older family). To conclude whether the learner adapts their understanding of speech context is also carried out in a different speech situation, further research is still needed, so the correlation between their choices of language forms and the strategy they employed when making a request can be understood more clearly.

4. Conclusion

In this research, the learner's perception about the degree of imposition, how the learner's perception correlates with request

expression, and the choice of pragmatic modification in the speech act of request has been discussed. From the findings, it is clear that the learner's perceptions of the degree of imposition in the request are manifested into their choices of syntactic patterns used in the expression of request and the type of pragmatic modifications they use when making a request. The learners have varying perceptions of the degree of imposition for the same request content. However, the learner's does not appear to differentiate the choice of pragmatic modification based on the severity of the request's imposition.

However, the discussion was only carried out in a limited pragmatic context; namely, the request addressed to a hearer who was an older family member. Further research still needs to be carried out in a broader pragmatic context. The relationship between the perceived degree of imposition and the form of speech and the choice of pragmatic modification forms can be seen more thoroughly.

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