

Completion Report

Indonesia Education University

Hayati Novia

Subject of Research Project :
An Analysis of “Adjuncts to Refusal Expressions” for Politeness in Refusal Discourses: A Constructive Study of Native Speakers of Japanese and Indonesian Learners of Japanese

This study examines the use of *adjuncts to refusal expressions* in the refusal discourse of Japanese native speakers (JNS) and Indonesian learners of Japanese (IJL). Two research questions guide this investigation: firstly, the role of *adjuncts to refusal expressions* as acts of politeness in refusal interactions, and secondly, the similarities and differences in their use between Japanese native speakers and Indonesian learners of Japanese.

This study involved 120 participants, comprising 30 pairs of same-sex university students from both JNS and IJL backgrounds. Refusal discourse data were collected using the role-playing method and transcribed following Usami's (2011) transcription principles. The transcribed data were classified according to the semantic formal category frameworks proposed by Beebe et al. (1990), Yoshida (2015), and Hayati (2020, 2023). Utterances identified as *adjuncts to refusal expressions* were then extracted and analyzed.

The analysis showed that both JNS and IJL use *adjuncts to refusal expressions* similarly in their refusal discourse. However, IJL participants tended to use these adjuncts more frequently than JNS, though this difference was not statistically significant ($\chi^2(1)=1.270$, $p=.2598$). The IJL participants, being at elementary and intermediate proficiency levels (N5, N4, and N3), may have had their lower proficiency in Japanese language and sociolinguistic skills influencing the results. Future research should therefore include higher proficiency learners such as levels N2 and N1.

Regarding the usage of *adjuncts*, both groups frequently used *information requests*. However, IJL showed a higher usage of *confusion*, whereas JNS more commonly employed *back-channel responses*, highlighting distinctive characteristics of each group. This finding supports previous research that indicates Japanese speakers prefer using *adjuncts to refusal expressions* as part of their refusal strategies, often preceding the refusal utterance due to Japan's high-context culture where refusal is viewed negatively.

In contrast, the frequent use of *confusion* by IJL, which was not observed among JNS, could be influenced by the learners' native Indonesian language. This aligns with Hayati's (2020) analysis of refusal discourse among Indonesian (Sundanese native speakers), which confirmed that *confusion* is commonly used as an adjunct expression by Indonesians (Sundanese native speakers).

The findings of this study elucidate the communication behaviors between Japanese native speakers and Indonesian learners of Japanese, particularly in refusal discourse. They also highlight specific language behaviors and issues for Indonesian learners of Japanese, suggesting appropriate learning methods for Japanese education, especially in conversational classes. Furthermore, the results provide fundamental resources for intercultural communication education more broadly.