A Contrastive Analysis Between Japanese Learner, Japanese Native Speaker, and Indonesian Native Speaker Use of Request Speech Act in E-mails

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Abstract: *Salah satu media tulisan yang dapat digunakan untuk mengungkapkan permohonan adalah e-mail. Mengungkapkan permohonan melalui e-mail bisa digunakan ketika ada jarak jauh atau situasi yang tidak memungkinkan untuk dilakukan permohonan secara verbal. Pembelajar bahasa Jepang pun pastinya pernah menggunakan e-mail untuk bermacam hal dan mereka mungkin akan menggunakan e-mail nantinya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bentuk dan strategi tindak tutur ungkapan permohonan orang Indonesia pembelajar bahasa Jepang lalu membandingkannya dengan penutur asli bahasa Jepang dan penutur asli bahasa Indonesia untuk melihat persamaan dan perbedaan ketiganya, serta menganalisis apakah tindak tutur pembelajar lebih dekat dengan bahasa ibunya atau bahasa yang dipelajarinya. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah analisis deskriptif dan sumber data yang digunakan adalah jitsurei total 45 transkrip e-mail oleh Japanese Speaker (JS), Indonesian Speaker (IS), dan Indonesian Japanese Learner (IJL). Dari hasil analisis data, JS dan IS cenderung memilih bentuk permohonan langsung ① (kalimat deklaratif), sementara IJL cenderung menggunakan bentuk langsung ② (kalimat interogatif). Untuk penggunaan strategi, sebagian besar IJL telah dapat beradaptasi dengan strategi permohonan JS (atena, yobikake, futan keigen, shosan, kansha, dan aisatsu akhir) walaupun dalam beberapa bagian (aisatsu awal, nanori, dan shomei) masih ada gaya menulis IS yang tertinggal dalam cara menulis e-mail IJL.*

1. FOREWORD

In the process of communication, there are two phenomenons called speech event and speech act. Speech event is a linguistic interaction happening in one or more form of utterance involving two persons, speaker and listener with one main utterance in a specific time, place, and situation (Chaer, 2004, p. 47). Speech act is an individual phenomenon, psychological, and its continuity determined by speaker's language ability to confront a situation (p. 50). From many variations of speech act, there is one variation called directive speech act. Searle in Chaer (2010, p. 29) states that directive speech act is a speech act done by the speaker with the intention making the listener do the act said in the utterance. In example, ordering, requesting, demanding, advising, and challenging. Communication itself gives us many situations where we have to make requests to people so they do something that we want them to do. Even in Japanese, request expression does not escape everyday use. Those request expressions could be conveyed verbally or in a non-verbal way such as writing.

One of writing medium that can be used to express a request is *e-mail*. *E-mail* or *electronic mail* is a modern communication instrument that has been widely used in all parts of the world including Japan and Indonesia. Rouse (2005) stated that e-mail is the beginning of internet use and is still the most popular use. From the total traffic on

the internet, a large amount of the percentage is e-mail.

Many examples of using e-mail as a medium to express a request, such as the use of e-mail in business world, e-mail when asking someone to send a particular document, or asking someone to check a document. Japanese learners must have used e-mail for various things and if not, they might use e-mail in the future when they are in the business world or when they go to Japan where most of the people regularly use e-mail. So, to think of it, knowledge of good and proper speech act in request e-mails is needed by the Japanese learners.

In Japanese, request expression is called *irai hyougen*. Iori in Zulaika (2012, p. 2) describes *irai* as following:「依頼とは話し手の利益のために何らかの行為をすること（しないこと）を聞き手に頼む表現です。」'*Irai to wa hanashite no rieki no tame ni naniraka no koui wo suru koto (shinai koto) wo kikite ni tanomu hyougen desu.*' Definition of *irai* by Iori can be translated as following, request is an expression that asks the other person to do (or not to do) something to benefit the speaker. While Okamoto (1988, p. 7) states that in Japan there are many variations of *irai hyougen* commonly used such as: (1)窓開けて, (2)窓開けてくれよ, (3)窓開けてく れないかなあ？, (4)窓開けてもらえない？, (5)窓開けてほしいんだけど, (6)窓を開けてくだ さい, (7)窓を開けてくれませんか？, (8)窓を開 けていただけないでしょうか？, etc. Okamoto suggested that *irai hyougen* can be grouped by *keigo* usage, expression forms (command, positive or negative question, intention, direct or indirect, etc.) or by the auxiliary verbs used (*kureru*, *morau*, *kudasaru*, etc). With how many forms an expression can take, it will also create different impressions (polite or not, high or low the pressure is, etc).

Based on the above, there are many things that can be considered by Japanese learners when expressing requests in Japanese. One of them is to understand the concept of speech acts of Japanese native speakers so that the request expression made by learners could be good and appropriate. Japanese learners should also want to avoid the influence of their mother tongue, in this case Indonesian, on their Japanese speech acts. This is because Indonesian and Japanese languages have different cultures and perspectives on polite requests.

Researches on this topic has been done many times, but the existing researches are done separately, such as a comparison between Japanese learners and Japanese native speakers by Hani Wahyuningtyas (2014) entitled *"Study of Politeness In E-mail: Request Written by speaker of Japanese and Learners Indonesia"* or a comparison between Indonesian and Japanese language by Runi Nalini C. (2017) entitled *"Contrastive Analysis of Request Expressions in Japanese an Indonesian Language"*. While some Japanese studies are「日本語学習者の電子メールにおける依頼表現の諸問題」by Okuyama et al. (2007) and「日本語母語話者とタイ人日本語学習者の電子メールにおける依頼：―親しい友人へのメールの場合―」by Miyazaki Reiko (2007).

Therefore, this research intends to analyze request e-mails written by Indonesian Japanese Learners, Japanese Speakers, and Indonesian Speaker. The goals of this research are:
(1) To find out the request expression forms widely used in e-mails written by Japanese native speakers, Indonesian native speakers, and Japanese learners;
(2) To find out the similarities and differences in request speech act strategies used in e-mails written by Japanese native speakers, Indonesian native speakers, and Japanese learners; and
(3) To determine the tendency of request speech act strategies used e-mails written by Japanese learners.

2. METHODS

Based on the goals of the study and aligning with the used data, this study is using descriptive method with qualitative approach. The data that is being used is *jitsurei* type, which means real e-mails that has been sent by the writers. The type of the e-mail is the general e-mail and not carrier mail. The content is formal and the relationship between the speaker and listener is not close. Overall, there are 45 e-mails,

each 15 transcripts from three types of speaker.

To gather data for this study, analysis of documents is necessary. The data analysis method is using Sekiguchi (2007) and Miyazaki (2007) studies as references.

The form of request speech act is sorted as followings:

a. Direct request (*chokusetsuteki irai*) 1: not using question form and directly express the request
b. Direct request (*chokusetsuteki irai*) 2: using question form in positive or negative way and directly express the request
c. Indirect request (*kansetsuteki irai*): asking for sympathy from the listener by expressing a wish that is related to the request

Meanwhile the request speech act strategies are sorted in three parts:

(1) 開始部‘*kaishibu*’<opening part>:
- *atena* <listener's name>
- *aisatsu* <greetings> (ex: こんにちは)
- *nanori* <speaker's introduction>
- *owabi* <apology>

(2) 主要部 ‘*shuyoubu*’ <main part>:
- *yobikake* <call>
- *yokoku* <early notice>
- *riyuu/ jijou setsumei* <reason/state explanation>
- *irai* <request> (direct 1, direct 2, indirect)
- *futan keigen* <easing burden>
- *shousan* <compliment>
- *ganbou* <hope>

(3) 修了部 ‘*shuuryoubu*’ <closing part>:
- *owabi* <apology>
- *henshin youkyuu* <demanding reply>
- *kansha* <gratitude>
- *aisatsu* <greetings> (ct: よろしくお願いします)
- *shomei* <signature>

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Forms of Request Expressions

Forms of request speech act that have been found in e-mail transcripts by Japanese Speaker (JS) is 16 with one email using two kinds of request. *Irai hyougen* type used by JS are mostly a direct form ① (62,5%), which is a direct way without interrogative sentence, such as ～てください and お願いいたし ます／ お願いします. Meanwhile direct form ② takes 31,25% from total request, this form is a direct request with interrogative sentence in positive and negative way, for example ～てくれますか, ～ていただけませんか？ , etc. And the last form is indirect form with only one speech act which is ～ていただきたいと思います.

In the e-mails by Indonesian Speaker (IS) there is a total of 17 request forms with two e-mail having two requests. *Irai hyougen* type used by IS are mostly a direct form ① (68.75%), without interrogative sentences like *mohon, harap, minta,* etc. Meanwhile direct form ② is the least being used, for only one time or 6.25% from the total. This form is a direct form in an interrogative sentence negatively or positively, like *"Bisakah~?"*. The last form is indirect form that takes 31.25%, such as *ingin, bermaksud, senang, bila,* etc.

On request e-mails by Indonesian Japanese Learner (IJL), *irai hyougen* type that has been found is up to 16 with one e-mail has two requests. There is none of direct form ① which means IJL isn't using it at all. Meanwhile direct form ② with interrogative sentence takes 68.5%. This means the majority of IJL use this form to express their request, mostly using ～ていただけませんか. And for indirect form, it takes 31.25%. The examples for this form are ～ていただけると幸いです、 ～てもらえると助かります, and so on.

Comparing the use of request expression forms by the three variables, direct request ① use by JS and IS is almost similar. Which means that JS and IS usually choose to directly request their wishes. In contrast, IJL doesn't really use direct form ①. Then there's a variety of direct form ② use where IJL used it the most, with JS, and then IS following behind.

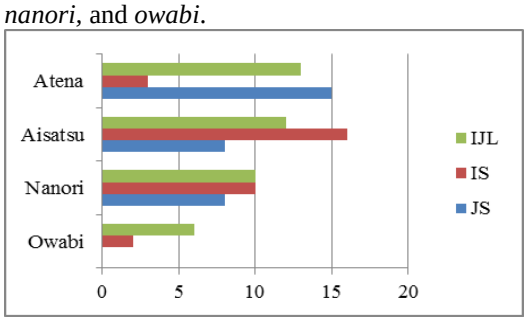
In writings itself, JS are balanced in using negative and positive interrogative, but IJL prefer using negative interrogative more with ～ていただけませんか. Meanwhile, IS are usually using declarative sentence when expressing a request

Three of them (JS, IS, and IJL) have the

same frequency in using indirect form, with 5 being the largest number and 1 is the smallest. This thing reflects that the three of them are sometimes trying to be more polite than usual, but still mainly choose to get to the point so they could directly convey the request.

B. Comparison of Request Speech Act Strategies

Opening part in the e-mails consists of four strategies and those are *atena*, *aisatsu*, *nanori*, and *owabi*.



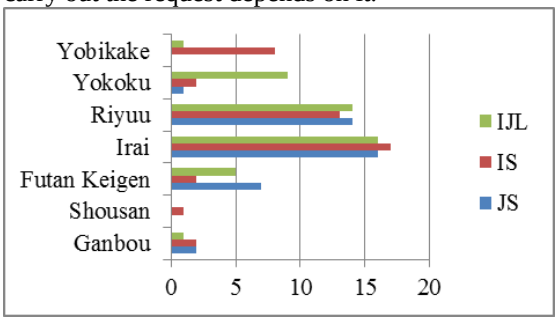
Graph 1. Comparison of Request Speech Act Strategies in *Kaishibu*.

In the opening part of the e-mail by Japanese Speaker (JS), the receiver's name is ensured to be written using ～さん or ～さま in all of the e-mails. Sometimes als followed by the particle「へ」which in Indonesian usually functions as a marker of "Kepada". *Aisatsu* and *nanori* which functions as introductions for speakers are used 8 times. Both strategies are not used as much as *atena* because there are several e-mails where the sender and the receiver have exchanged e-mails before, so greetings and introductions are sometimes not included again. *Owabi* in the opening is not used at all by JS.

Meanwhile, IS has a significant difference with JS. Mentioning the receiver's name which has been ensured in JS e-mails, is not the same with IS who does it only in 3 e-mails. This proves that the mention of speech partner's name is not a prioritized strategy for IS. Furthermore, *aisatsu* is always used in every e-mails by IS, there is even one e-mail that uses two greetings in the opening. While *nanori* also used quite a lot by IS (10 times) with the usual phrase written is *"saya~(nama)"* and *"perkenalkan saya~(nama)"*. For *owabi*, used only twice by IS.

For IJL, all strategies are quite frequent. *Atena* is used 13 times, with examples ～さん、～先生、and ～の担当者（へ）. Then, *aisatsu* is used 12 times with phrases like いつもお世話になっております、こんにちは、 and こんばんは. *Nanori* is used 10 times with the pattern ～です and ～と申します. *Owabi* in the opening is used 6 times. Overall, IJL always tries to be more polite in writing the each e-mail and it increases the strategies used.

The next part in the request e-mail is the main part or *shuyoubu* which contains the purpose of sending the e-mail in details. The right use of strategies is important because the decision whether the speech partner will carry out the request depends on it.



Graph 2. Comparison of Request Speech Act Strategies in *Shuyoubu*.

For *Shuyoubu*, JS does not use *yobikake* or calls to the speech partners at all. In addition, *yokoku* is also used only once because it is already written in *kenmei*, so repetition is not necessary. As a supportive move, *riyuu/ jijou setsumei* is used to state the reason and explain the situation why the speaker made the request. Most of the reasons stated using ～ の で. Also used is *futan keigen* which is intended to reduce the burden of listener and the pressure from the speaker. For example, ～可能であれば <if possible>, jika もし忙しくて難しいなら <if you are busy and difficult to do~> or ご都合がよければ <if the conditions are alright>. The next strategy is *shousan* which means praise that also functions as a supportive move, but JS does not use it in all the e-mails. The last is the *ganbou*, which expresses the hope or wish of the speaker's

heart so that the listener will do the request. This strategy is used twice, with the sentence like お 願 い <I beg> and ～ と 嬉 しい で す <I will be happy if ~>.

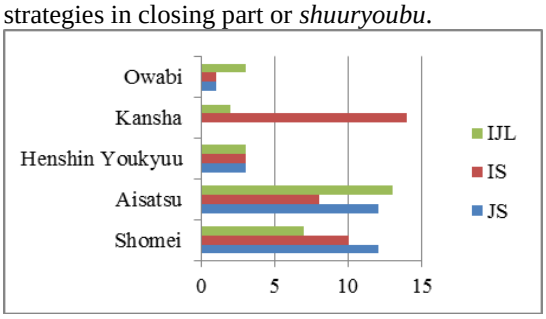
As for IS, the use of *yobikake* is sometimes used with calls like *mas, bu,* and *dok*. While for *yokoku*, just like JS, there are only a few of them. *Riyuu/ jijou setsumei* strategy has a total of 13. Therefore, it can be concluded that IS also often uses this strategy because it gives effect to the implementation of their request. For the second supportive move is *futan keigen* which is used only twice with example like *"kalau berkenan"*. Next is *shousan* or praise that IS discloses once when praising the media office where the listeners works. The speaker praises that the media has a unique, professional, and popular theme. Then, the last strategy is *ganbou* which is used twice and serves to express the speakers' wish, such as with the phrase like *"kami sangat berharap"* or *"besar harapan kami"*.

In e-mails by IJL, *yobikake* is only used once with the example sentence「先生 、こ ん ば ん は」. Whereas *yokoku* is used 9 times, even though in *kenmei* it has been written by IJL. The *yokoku* examples used by IJL are ～の件ですが、～についてなんですが、 and お願いしたいこと があります. For supporting move, *riyuu / jijou setsumei* strategy was used 14 times using the pattern ～ようと思います、実は～、～ので, et cetera.

If compared, *riyuu/ jijou setsumei* is often used by JS, IS, and IJL. All three have similar frequencies around 13 and 14 times use. In expressing request, it is normal to state the reason or situation behind it so that the listener can understand the urgency behind the request. This is a universal thing, so JS, IS and IJL often use it.

The second supporting move is *futan keigen* which is used 5 times, which considers the time it takes or difficulty that will be faced by the listener if they carry out the request, for example they use phrases like ご都合よろしい時間で～ and ご面倒でなければ. This strategy is used by JS and IJL with almost the same frequency, compared to IS which is less than both. And for *shousan* is not used at all by IJL. Here IJL once again shows their tendency to JS in using strategies. Lastly, the *ganbou* strategy is used once with the word どうか which describes the heart of the speaker that says *"if there is a way, please help."*

Then the next part is a comparison of strategies in closing part or *shuuryoubu*.



Graph 3. Comparison of Request Speech Act Strategies in *Shuuryoubu*.

The use of *owabi* in the closing part by the JS, IS, and IJL is in similar frequencies. IJL uses it three times, while IS and JS only once. In addition, IJL also uses many *kenjougo*. Like *moushiwake gozaimasen/ arimasen/ nai desu*. Then, to state that the speaker is waiting for a reply from the listener, *youkyuu henshin* is used. This strategy is used if the proposed request is urgent or requiring immediate confirmation whether the listener can do it or not. The use of this strategy by JS, IS, and IJL is relatively low with the same number of 3 times usage.

Kansha or gratitude is mostly used by IS, used rarely by IJL, and not used at all by JS. The culture of saying thank you when requesting for something is not used in Japan because it is considered burdensome to the listener while it is not certain yet that the listener will carry out the request. Therefore, JS does not use it, but IS with a different culture often expresses gratitude when making a request. From this point of view, IJL is almost the same as JS, but sometimes there are those who follow their mother tongue strategy.

Not only in *kaishibu*, *aisatsu* is also used when ending messages in *shuuryoubu*. In connection with this, IJL again has a fairly high usage frequency similar to JS. But IS, its use is in the medium frequency. For *shomei* or adding signature at the end of the message, mostly done by JS, then IS, and lastly IJL.

C. *Indonesian Japanese Learner* (IJL) Tendency Analysis

Referring to the research by Miyazaki (2007), the author uses the same inference method which divides usage into three marks, those are sign (×) for 0%, sign (△) for use between 1–49%, and sign (○) for use above 50% .

Table 1. IJL Tendency Analysis.

	JS	IJL	IS
宛名	○ (100%)	○ (86,7%)	△ (20%)
挨拶	○ (53,3%)	○ (80%)	○ (100%)
名乗り	○ (53,3%)	○ (66,7%)	○ (66,7%)
お詫び	×	△ (40%)	△ (13,3%)
呼びかけ	×	△ (6,7%)	○ (53,3%)
依頼の展開	*Jijou setsumei* ⇓ *Irai*	*Yokoku* ⇓ *Jijou setsumei* ⇓ *Irai*	*Jijou setsumei* ⇓ *Irai*
負担軽減	△ (46,7%)	△ (33,3%)	△ (13,3%)
賞賛	×	×	△ (6,7%)
願望	△ (13,3%)	△ (6,7%)	△ (13,3%)
お詫び	△ (6,7%)	△ (6,7%)	△ (20%)
返信要求	△ (20%)	△ (20%)	△ (20%)
感謝	×	△ (13,3%)	○ (93,3%)
挨拶	○ (80%)	○ (86,7%)	○ (53,3%)
署名	○ (80%)	△ (46,7%)	○ (66,7%)

□ percentage is closer to JS
□ percentage is closer to IS
□ percentage of the three does not have a significant difference

As can be seen in the table above, IJL has a tendency to use the same strategy as JS. This is proved by IJL having 6 strategies that are closer to JS than IS. Meanwhile, with IS, the similar percentages are only 3. For the other three strategies, all three have almost the same usage.

4. CONCLUSION

From the results of data analysis and discussion, it was concluded that knowledge of request speech act that is learned by Japanese language learners could be further enhanced through this study. Learners can find out which parts needed to be improved so that the Japanese request speech act strategies they use is not mixed with their mother tongue. In addition, we can also understand that advanced level learners are close enough in using request speech act strategies in Japanese that is used by native speakers so they can overcome the difficulties and have it perfected. However, this research has many shortcomings both in terms of data and content. The data used in this study is *jitsurei* type, which is an e-mail that already exists and is in reality sent by the author. So for the next researcher, the author recommends to use more and varied data so that the accuracy is higher because the author only uses 45 e-mail transcripts. Further research can also be done using *sakurei* in the form of DCT. In addition, the author only analyzes the expression of requests in e-mail in general, so this can be developed or specified again.

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