A cross-generational study of Japanese interview data on attentiveness

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Abstract

This study makes a cross-generational comparison between two different generations (the younger Japanese (YJ) and the older Japanese (OJ)) of Japanese females on the metapragmatic data elicited through interviews. More specifically, a cross-generational comparison is made on how two groups of the participants answered the interview questions on attentiveness and its related concepts, namely, anticipatory inference and empathy. The results show that some cross-generational differences emerged in the way the participants answered the questions in the interview, namely, in giving the examples of anticipatory inference and empathy and stating the reasons why attentiveness was important. OJ used many more turns than YJ. Co-constructions and overlaps were found only in OJ's interview data. Identity of the interviewer was relational in the interviews with OJ, namely, the interviewer was not only an elicitor, but she was sometimes a participant of the interviews. It could be said that politeness1 was interactionally achieved in OJ's interview data through co-constructions.

Keywords

1. Introduction

The present study makes a cross-generational comparison of the Japanese metapragmatic data on attentiveness and its related concepts, namely, empathy and anticipatory inference,[1] elicited through interviews. In other words, the participants in this study talked about attentiveness, anticipatory inference and empathy. Haugh (2007b: 309) argues that "a theory of (im)politeness may also benefit from a better understanding of how people 'talk' about (im)politeness (metapragmatics politeness1), both in conversation and in written discourse." A focus on metapragmatic data, that is, instances of talk about politeness as a concept (Eelen 2001: 35), is seen as the way to further develop theorizing about im/politeness (Haugh 2010a). According to Culpeper (2012: 1132), the use of metapragmatic data helps tap into first-order understandings of im/politeness. It is, therefore, hoped that this study would contribute to the understanding of the first-order im/politeness (im/politeness1)[2] in Japanese.

This study follows discursive approaches, investigating interview data (following the third characteristic of discursive approaches, reviewed in section 2), and examining co-construction of im/politeness, including identity construction (the second point of the characteristics of discursive approaches, reviewed in section 2) manifested in the interview data on the three concepts, namely, attentiveness, anticipatory inference and empathy.

In Fukushima and Haugh (2014), metapragmatic interviews on attentiveness, empathy and anticipatory inference were conducted in Japanese and Taiwanese Mandarin Chinese; and a cross-cultural comparison between the Japanese and Taiwanese participants on emic understandings of the three inter-linked notions above was made. The results showed that there were both similarities and differences. Both the Japanese and Taiwanese participants evaluated the three concepts positively; and in some instances they linked them to politeness concerns. Both groups of the participants evaluated some instances of attentiveness and empathy negatively as meddling. Only the Taiwanese participants reported that the excessive

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1 It is *sasshi* in Japanese, which is glossed as a form of anticipatory inference in order to demarcate its scope as being narrower than the broader notion of inference in pragmatics, which refers to a whole range of different types of logical and sociocognitive process by which participants figure out what is meant (Fukushima and Haugh 2014: 169)

2 Watts et al. (1992: 3) argue that a distinction needs to be made between first-order and second-order politeness. They take first-order politeness to correspond to the various ways in which polite behavior is perceived and talked about by members of sociocultural groups. It encompasses, in other words, commonsense notions of politeness. Second-order politeness, on the other hand, is a theoretical construct, a term within a theory of social behavior and language usage. Eelen (2001: 29-48) takes up this distinction and gives a detailed explanation of the two, adding his own concepts. Watts (2003: 8-9) further develops these two concepts from a discursive perspective.

or unwanted empathy and attentiveness can be perceived as calculating and the demonstration of attentiveness can also create emotional debts. Intracultural variability also emerged in the course of the cross-generational-cultural comparison. For example, younger Japanese stated they needed to demonstrate attentiveness to those of higher status, while younger Taiwanese would demonstrate attentiveness only to insiders. Older Japanese and Taiwanese did not hold the same stance. Although a cross-generational-cultural comparison was made in Fukushima and Haugh (2014), the main focus was on a cross-cultural comparison between the Japanese and Taiwanese participants. Thus, this study makes a cross-generational comparison between two groups of the Japanese participants. While the focus in Fukushima and Haugh (2014) was on *what* (the content) the Japanese and Taiwanese participants stated about the three concepts above, this study focuses on *how*[3] (the way) the Japanese participants of two different generations talked about them.

A cross-generational comparison is made, also because of the following reasons. As reviewed in Fukushima (2013b: 278), cross-cultural differences may not be due only to national groups. A generation is one of the important variables which constitute culture. In spite of the relative importance of generation or age as a variable, cross-generational studies in im/politeness research are, to my knowledge, still limited, except for the studies by Bella (2009) (investigating invitations in Greek), Fukushima (2011) (investigating demonstration of attentiveness), Fukushima (2013b) (investigating evaluation of attentiveness), He (2012) (investigating compliment responses in Chinese) and Sifianou and Tzanne (2010) (investigating what people conceive politeness and impoliteness in Greek).

The next section reviews the literature relevant to the present study, mainly on attentiveness, discursive approaches, co-construction, overlaps and identity. Section 3 presents the study; and the results and discussion follow.

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3 An analysis of the dynamics of interaction, including how it is said, can provide important clues for the analyst in making inferences about attitudes on the part of participants (see Culpeper and Haugh 2014: 232).

2. Literature review

Attentiveness was defined as "a demonstrator's preemptive response to a beneficiary's verbal/non-verbal cues or situations surrounding a beneficiary and a demonstrator, which takes the form of offering" (Fukushima 2009: 504; 2011: 550). It is redefined as follows: "attentiveness means paying attention to the others by the work of *ki,* that is, reading the atmosphere in a situation and anticipating or inferring the other party's feelings, needs and wants through a potential recipient's verbal and non-verbal cues.　A preemptive response, which can take the form of offering, may consequently arise" (Fukushima and Haugh 2014:167).　After observing situations or considering a potential recipient's verbal/non-verbal cues, a potential demonstrator of attentiveness infers a potential recipient's needs and wishes (Fukushima 2013a: 21).　That is, for attentiveness to arise, inference is needed by a demonstrator of attentiveness (Fukushima 2013b: 280).[4]　As a result of considering such factors as cultural and personal values and behavioral conventions, a demonstrator can decide to demonstrate attentiveness (Fukushima 2013a: 21).　A demonstrator of attentiveness may empathize with a potential beneficiary and demonstrates attentiveness through action as a result (Fukushima 2013a: 26); and inference may exist in the process in which a demonstrator of attentiveness converts the empathy into attentiveness (Fukushima 2013a: 28).　It was suggested in Fukushima (2013b: 295) that an investigation of metadiscursive commentary on attentiveness, an underlying concept of attentiveness such as empathy, and a prerequisite for attentiveness to arise, namely, anticipatory inference, will further the understanding of attentiveness.　The participants in this study were, therefore, asked to talk about anticipatory inference, empathy and attentiveness, answering interview questions; and metaparagmatic data were elicited.[5]

　In previous research on attentiveness (Fukushima 2000, 2004, 2009, 2011, 2013b), not many

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4　Attentiveness has some similarities with implicature, which Haugh (2007a: 85) defines as "something implied in addition to what is literally said (Haugh 2002), which having been communicated in this way shows what the speaker thinks of the hearer or the speaker (Haugh and Hinze 2003; Haugh 2003; 2004)".　As Haugh (2007a: 93) argues that "for an implicature to arise in an interaction what is implied must be available to the hearer."　Haugh (2007a: 93) further argues that "for an implicature to arise, what the speaker implied and what the hearer understood to be implied must be co-constituted, taking into account both the speaker's and the hearer's perspectives."　For both attentiveness and implicature to arise, a relevant inference by a hearer or a demonstrator of attentiveness is needed.　See more discussion on attentiveness in relation to inference and implicature in Fukushima (2011: 551).

5　Some different ways of eliciting metapragmatic data are possible.　For example, Blum-Kulka (2005: 257) asked the participants how they perceived the notion of politeness expressed in Hebrew by the words *nimus* and *adivut*.　In this study, the participants were asked to talk about anticipatory inference, empathy and attentiveness in interviews.

differences were found in demonstration and evaluation of attentiveness by the participants of different cultural backgrounds (Japanese, Americans, British, Swiss) or those of different generations (university students and their parents). Previous studies which investigated cross-generational differences were either on demonstration (Fukushima 2011) or evaluation of attentiveness (Fukushima 2013b). This study further investigates cross-generational differences on attentiveness from the metapragamtic perspective, using interview data.

Attentiveness is closely related to politeness. Indeed, attentiveness is considered as one way of conceptualizing politeness. According to Ruhi and Işik-Güler (2007: 708), "the display of genuine concern for others and the display of *sensitivity toward other's feelings* conceptualized in Turkish through the metaphorization of *gönül* hark back to Strecker's study on emic face in Hamar, where he noted that *attention to the well-being of others is the central conceptualization of politeness* in the culture" (emphasis added).[6] As a demonstrator of attentiveness thinks of the well-being of a potential recipient (Fukushima 2011: 550) and a demonstrator of attentiveness has to be sensitive to (or to infer) other's feelings, wishes and needs in order to demonstrate attentiveness, attentiveness is very similar (or almost identical) to the notion above. It may be, therefore, said that an investigation of attentiveness helps clarify what constitutes im/politeness. Svennevig (1999: 136-160) proposes that politeness arises when speakers show attentiveness through their orientation to others.[7] This display of attentiveness is implicit in the self-presentational sequence, mutual self-selection (as speaker) to show involvement, self-revelatory comments that build intimacy, and self-oriented comments to show alignment (Haugh 2011: 167).

Mills (2011: 34-50) summarizes the characteristics of discursive approaches to the analysis of politeness and impoliteness, presenting the following as the shared elements of discursive theorizing headings: discursive theorists (1) share a view of what constitutes politeness, (2) try to describe the relation between individuals and society in relation to the analysis of politeness (they generally do not consider that identity is pre-formed, and they argue that politeness is constructed jointly within groups), and (3) tend to use a similar form of analysis. With regard to the first point, discursive theorists argue that politeness does not reside in utterances, being interested in relation between politeness and impoliteness, and that they tend to focus on process rather than product (Mills 2011: 38-41). Commenting further on the second point, Mills (2011: 41-42) summarizes that these discursive theorists do not presuppose that individuals

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6 The Hamar of southern Ethiopia are the southernmost group of Omotic-speaking peoples (Strecker 1993: 123).

7 "Attentiveness" what Svennevig (1999) means is different from the definition of attentiveness in this study. Attentiveness in Svennevig (1999: 136) is based on Brown and Levinson's (1987: 103) positive politeness strategy, i.e., "Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods). Svennevig (1999: 136) argues that by continuing to ask questions s/he intensifies this attentiveness.

have pre-formed identities/roles which influence their choice of politeness and impoliteness routines. Rather identities are constructed in the process of interaction and politeness is one of the tools/means which individuals use to construct their identity. And discursive theorists of politeness assume that individuals construct politeness and impoliteness together (Mills 2011: 42). This is labeled as "co-construction." Regarding the third point, discursive theorists tend to analyze longer stretches of talk to see how politeness and impoliteness are interpreted over time, because of their belief that politeness and impoliteness are not instantiated in individual utterances but are played out over discourse level units (Mills 2011: 47).

"The term co-construction is used to denote instances where a syntactic unit (often what is loosely termed an "utterance") is uttered by two or more speakers" (Haugh 2010c: 352-353). Co-construction refers to "jointly saying", that is, "jointly-achieved" utterances towards which two or more people contribute (Haugh 2013). Pragmatic acts are jointly constructed through the efforts of not just the speaker but also the recipient(s), sometimes termed co-construction (Culpeper and Haugh 2014: 185). Co-construction phenomena are generally divided into two broad types: completions and expansions (Hayashi 2003: 25, 173; Ono and Thompson 1996: 72, 78; Rühlemann 2007: 100 in Haugh 2010c: 353). Completion type co-constructions encompass instances where "the next speaker completes a syntactic unit that the first speaker has left incomplete" (Rühlemann 2007: 100 in Haugh 2010c: 353). Expansion type co-constructions are defined as instances where "the first speaker articulates an utterance that is syntactically complete and the next speaker expands the first speaker's utterance into a longer syntactic unit, e.g., by adding a prepositional phrase or a dependent clause" (Rühlemann 2007: 100; Ono and Thompson 1996; cf. Hayashi 2003: 173 in Haugh 2010c: 353).

Haugh (2007b: 306) argues as follows with regard to co-construction: "(Im)politeness is … conceptualized as being conjointly co-constituted[8] in a collaborative non-summative manner through interaction by participants. In this way, we can move our understanding of politeness1 beyond the problematic encoding-decoding model of communication implicitly relied upon in the discursive approach to politeness." In relation to this, Haugh (2007b: 306) advocates the need of another category, namely, interactionally achieved politeness1, in addition to Eelen's (2001: 35) three kinds of politeness1: expressive, classificatory and metapragmatic. By interactionally achieved politeness1, Haugh (2007b: 306) means that "each participant's cognitive processes in interpreting and designing are responsive to prior, current, or potential contributions the other participants make to the stream of interaction", citing Arundale (2005: 59). Or, interactionally achieved politeness1 is where two or more persons "jointly achieve" an understanding that they are evaluating an action/meaning as "polite". This is most clear when such evaluations surface in metapragmatic comments (e.g. "don't be so polite") (Haugh 2013). Haugh (2010b: 156) also argues that an interviewer is not simply a neutral elicitor, but rather a

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8 Co-constructions and co-constitutions are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature
   (Haugh 2013).

co-constructor of the event, both in terms of the content of the interview data and the ways in which the interviewee and interviewer may attempt to position themselves.

Overlaps are a departure from the basic one-at-a-time design feature of talk in interaction (Sacks et al. 1974; 1978). They reflect a preference for minimizing gaps and overlaps between turns, that is, achieving precise placement in taking a turn by anticipating points of possible turn completion, or transition relevant places (TRPs), in the construction of turns from turn-constructional units (TCUs) (Guillot 2012: 308).

Geyer (2008: 49) sees identity as "interactants' discursive ascription to a membership category." According to De Fina (2010: 205- 206), "… there has been a shift from a vision of identity as a fixed set of categories that can be attributed to the individual or to the group towards an investigation of identity as a process in flux enacted in concrete social encounters and social practices. This shift implies a strong connection between identity studies and interpersonal pragmatics since identities are seen as highly negotiable in interaction, emergent and largely co-constructed." Likewise, Bucholtz and Hall (2005: 585-586) argue for the analytic value of approaching identity as a relational and sociocultural phenomenon that emerges and circulates in local discourse contexts of interaction rather than as a stable structure located primarily in the individual psyche or in fixed social categories. Bucholtz and Hall's (2005: 586) definition of identity constitutes the social positioning of self and other. They (2005: 605) further state that identity is inherently relational, thus it will always be partial, produced through contextually situated and ideologically informed configurations of self and other. According to Bucholtz and Hall (2005: 591), identity emerges in discourse through the temporary roles and orientations assumed by participants, such as evaluator, joke teller or engaged listener. The study by Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2009), which focused on current news interviews broadcast in the USA, shows how impoliteness is inextricably linked to the (co)construction of the identity of the hosts, the guests and the audience of an emergent "new" news genre: news as confrontation. Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2013: 16-17) argues that identity construction is at the heart of discursive processes. She (2013: 17) further states that identity work processes encompass relational work, that is, relational work is embedded in identity work. Similarly, Locher (2008: 509) argues that politeness research can fruitfully be combined with research on identity construction. Locher (2008: 511) further states that relational work refers to the ways in which the construction of identity is achieved in interaction, while identity refers to the "product" of these linguistic and non-linguistic processes. Locher (2011: 204) also argues that there is no communication without a relational aspect and she agrees to Bucholtz and Hall's (2005: 605) contention, that is, identity is inherently relational.

3. The study

3.1. *Participants*

Twenty Japanese people of two different generations served as the participants: (1) the younger group which consisted of ten university students (the younger Japanese (YJ) hereafter) (mean age: 21.4; age range: 20-22) and (2) the older group which consisted of ten educated middle-class people[9] (the older Japanese (OJ) hereafter) (mean age: 52.6; age range: 46-60). The participants were all females to control for possible gender-based influences on the data. The interviewer was also a female. The interviewer was the same throughout the interviews so that there may be no influence on the data. In a genuine sense, it would be almost impossible to exclude all sorts of gender-based influences, as was pointed out in Fukushima (2013b: 282). That is, an interview between females may be influenced by a female style of communication, which may differ from an interview between males. It would be, however, able to exclude at least mixed interactions by confining the participants and the interviewer only to females (Fukushima 2013b: 282); and the homogeneity of the participants would be secured.

3.2. *Procedure*

Interviews were conducted in the participants' mother tongue, namely, Japanese. The participants were asked about their experiences on anticipatory inference, empathy and attentiveness. More specifically, they were asked whether they had practiced anticipatory inference, or felt empathy by the others, and whether they had thought attentiveness was important. They were also asked to cite some examples. All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed.

4. Results and discussion

There were not many differences between the participants of the two generational backgrounds in the way the participants answered the former part of the questions (e.g., "Do you often infer the wishes/needs of the other party?"). In the latter half of the questions (e.g., "If so, can you give us some examples?"), however, some differences emerged between the younger Japanese (YJ) and the older Japanese (OJ). While YJ completed giving the examples of anticipatory inference and empathy or stating the reasons why attentiveness was important by themselves in one turn, OJ used many more turns. OJ had a tendency not to complete giving the examples

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9 They were approximately in the same age group as the parents of the university students (the younger Japanese), but they did not have to be blood-related to the students.

and stating the reasons by themselves. In such cases, an interviewer tried to help OJ complete them. As a result, the interviews with OJ lasted longer than those with YJ.[10] Overlaps and co-constructions were found only in OJ's interview data. Next, some excerpts are presented to show these findings in more detail. Two excerpts (one from an interview with YJ and another from an interview with OJ) are presented for each concept, namely, anticipatory inference (excerpts 1 and 2), empathy (excerpts 3 and 4) and attentiveness (excerpts 5 and 6) (see the appendix for the copies of the excerpts in the original language). Pseudonyms are used for all the participants.

Below are the excerpts of an interview on anticipatory inference, excerpt 1 being an interview with YJ and excerpt 2 being an interview with OJ ('I' indicates an interviewer and 'YJ5' and 'OJ3' indicate interviewees). After presenting excerpts 1 and 2, an analysis of them follows.

Excerpt 1

1 I: 'Do you often infer the wishes/needs of the other party?'

2 YJ5: 'Yes, I think I infer them.'

3 I: 'Then, could you give us some examples?'

4 YJ5: 'Well, when I went to a library, I used an elevator. There was a woman standing in front of me with a baggage, mm, she had a lot of books, as it was in the library. As she had her hands full, she could not push a button. When I realized that, I pushed a button.'

Excerpt 2

1 I: 'Well, the first question. Mm, do you often infer the wishes/needs of the other party?'

2 OJ3: 'Yes, I do. Yes.'

3 I: 'Mm, could you give us some examples?'

4 OJ3: 'Mm, for example, when somebody asks me something, I say that there is another opinion, after thinking a while.'

5 I: 'Mm, could you be more specific?'

6 OJ3: 'Specifically, ah.'

7 I: 'It would be great if you could give us some specific examples. Are there any examples, such as Mrs. Yamada inferred what the other people wished?'

8 OJ3: 'Examples, well, mm, examples, specifically'

9 I: 'Ah, any examples are fine, examples at work, or in your family, or in your neighborhood, wherever you are engaged with people.'

10 OJ3: 'Yes, that's right. We are engaged with people in the neighborhood. My mother is criticized in the neighborhood. I live with the mother, the mother of my husband.'

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10 The mean duration time of interviews with OJ was 9 minutes and 35 seconds; and that with YJ was 6 minutes and 37 seconds. The longest interview with OJ lasted 19 minutes and 34 seconds; and that with YJ lasted 9 minutes and 38 seconds.

11 I: 'The mother of your husband?'

12 OJ3: 'Yes, when my mother is criticized, she consults with me. I give her a piece of advice, (saying that) it would be all right not to think so seriously.'

13 I: 'Uhhuh. You live with your mother-in-law. Are there any cases that Mrs. Yamada did something your mother-in-law wished, before she asked you, inferring her needs?'

14 OJ3: 'I do not do it every time, but I am sometimes attentive to her needs. I am not always attentive.'

15 I: 'Well, on what occasions are you attentive to her needs?'

16 OJ3: 'Mm, hmm, in advance, ah, before being said, mm, what should I say, I prepare goods for her.'

17 I: 'You prepare goods before she goes out?'

18 OJ3: 'Before she goes out, yes, I prepare goods for her, or something like that, yes.'

Excerpts 1 and 2 tell us that there were not many differences between the younger Japanese (YJ) and the older Japanese (OJ) in the way they answered the former part of the question (Do you often infer the wishes/needs of the other party?). Both YJ and OJ answered in one turn (see turns 2 in excerpts 1 and 2), saying that they would infer the wishes/needs of the other party. The differences, however, emerged in answering the latter half of the question, that is, giving examples (see from turn 4 onwards in excerpts 1 and 2). Whereas YJ gave an example in one turn (turn 4 in excerpt 1) (and that was the end of an interview), OJ did not give a specific example until the last turn (turn 18 in excerpt 2). OJ tried to give some examples (turns 4 and 6), but she did not specify any. OJ's statement in turn 4 was rather vague; and in turn 6 OJ just repeated the question made by the interviewer (in turn 5). Therefore, the interviewer asked her again to give specific examples in turn 7. Turn 8 was similar to thinking aloud by OJ, trying to think of an example. The interviewer tried to elicit an example in turn 9 again, giving the interviewee some hints (saying "examples at work, or in your family, or in your neighborhood, wherever you are engaged with people") from which OJ may be able to find some examples. OJ tried to say something about her mother-in-law in turn 10 and the interviewer repeated what she said (the mother of your husband) in turn 11, trying to let OJ continue to say something about her mother-in-law. OJ said that her mother-in-law was criticized in her neighborhood in turn 12, but she did not give an example of anticipatory inference. The interviewer focused on a mother-in-law in response to turns 10 and 12, and tried to elicit an example in turn 13. In turn 14, OJ mentioned that she was sometimes sensitive to her mother-in-law's needs, but she did not give any specific example. In turn 15, the interviewer tried to elicit an example again. In turn 16, OJ began to give an example, but it was not complete. In turn 17, the interviewer tried to help OJ complete an example. This may be considered as an expansion co-constitution, as the interviewee added "before she goes out" to what the interviewee said in turn 16. Finally in turn 18, OJ completed giving an example, using the words of the interviewer in turn 17. While neither overlaps nor co-constructions were found in the interview with YJ, (excerpt 1), there were many overlaps (see turns 5 and 6, 7 and 8, 9 and 10, 10 and 11, 16 and 17 in excerpt 2) and co-constructions (see turn 17) in the interview with OJ.

Below are the excerpts of an interview on empathy, excerpt 3 being an interview with YJ and excerpt 4 being an interview with OJ ('I' indicates an interviewer and 'YJ1' and 'OJ10' interviewees). After presenting excerpts 3 and 4, an analysis of them follows.

Excerpt 3

1 I: 'Have you felt empathy by the others?'

2 YJ1: 'Mm, yes, hmm, I have got a cold. I was absent because of the cold. I went (to university) the next day after recovering. Everybody talked to me, worrying about me, "Did you get over the cold?" "Are you all right?" I felt empathy at that time.'

Excerpt 4

1 I: 'Have you felt empathy by the others?'

2 OJ10: 'Yes, I have.'

3 I: 'Sorry to ask you again, but could you give us some examples?'

4 OJ10: 'Hmm, when someone talks to me, I feel that someone thinks of me.'

5 I: 'Ah, when I go to a library, I often … to everybody'

6 OJ10: 'You talk to us. I think that's great.'

7 I: 'I say, "How are you, Yoshiko?"'

8 OJ10: 'Great, great. I think that's fine.'

9 I: 'Do you feel empathy?'

10 OJ10: 'Yes. I feel it.'

In answering the former part of the question (Have you felt empathy by the others?), both YJ and OJ in excerpts 3 and 4 respectively took one turn, saying that they have felt empathy by the others. There were some differences between YJ and OJ in the way of giving the examples. YJ gave an example in one turn (turn 2 in excerpt 3), before being asked to give the examples. That is, YJ answered the former part of the question and completed giving the examples by herself in one turn. In an interview with OJ in excerpt 4, it is shown that concrete examples are co-constructed between OJ and the interviewer. OJ stated a rather general example in turn 4 (i.e., I feel empathy when someone talks to me). In turn 5, the interviewer started to state what she usually did when she went to a library (giving a concrete example) in response to turn 4 (the interviewee was a librarian). From this result, it can be said that the interviewer was also a participant of the interview, co-constructing the interview in terms of the content. And in turn 6, the interviewee stated what the interviewer usually did (i.e., *"koe kake tari"* 'talk to' (the librarians)) before the interviewer finished her statement (or before she said a verb) in turn 5.[11] That is, a completion co-construction occurred in turn 6. This co-

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11 As Hayashi and Mori (1998: 77) argue, Japanese is a so-called verb-final language and a sequential unit canonically ends with a verb or a predicate.

construction can be considered as pragmatic co-construction. According to Haugh (2010c: 361), pragmatic contributions to co-constructions can be divided into at least four different types: world knowledge, shared knowledge, sociocultural assumptions and conscious pragmatic inference. The pragmatic co-construction in turn 6 is derived from shared knowledge, which involves "understandings of the world or a particular environment that are shared only between selected persons" (Haugh 2010c: 361). The interviewee added her evaluation (I think that's great) to what the interviewer usually did in the latter half of turn 6. In turn 7, the interviewer further stated how she usually talked to the interviewee. The interviewer participated in the interview in terms of the content, too, that is, the interviewer was a participant again, as shown in turn 5. It may be said that the interviewer and the interviewee co-constructed solidarity through co-construction of a concrete example. Laughter arose between the interviewer and the interviewee (turns 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10). Laughter may have contributed to creating solidarity between the interviewer and the interviewee. In turn 8, the interviewee stated how she thought of what the interviewer usually did (I think that's fine). This is the same as the evaluation in the latter half of turn 6. The interviewee was not asked to make any evaluations. These statements (evaluation) were not found in YJ's data. This shows that OJ tended to say many more things (the things they were not asked) than YJ. As was found in an interview on anticipatory inference, overlaps could be found only in the interview with OJ (see from turn 4 onwards in excerpt 4). In excerpt 4, the interviewer did not identify herself as a participant consciously, but from the results (turns 5 and 7) it can be said that the interviewer was a participant as well. Identity of the interviewer as a participant was constructed through the content of an interview as well as the way she participated in the interview.

Below are the excerpts of an interview on attentiveness, excerpt 5 being an interview with YJ and excerpt 6 being an interview with OJ ('I' indicates an interviewer and 'YJ1' and 'OJ4' interviewees). After presenting excerpts 5 and 6, an analysis of them follows.

Excerpt 5

1 I: 'Do you think attentiveness is important in your culture or in your daily life?'

2 YJ1: 'I think it is important.'

3 I: 'To what extent is it important?'

4 YJ1: 'I think it is very important.'

5 I: 'Why is that so?'

6 YJ1: 'I was raised up in an environment in which everybody demonstrates attentiveness. It is ordinary for me to demonstrate attentiveness. Probably, it would be unpleasant if somebody could not infer my needs. If not, I would feel irritated a bit. I feel that somebody should recognize my needs. If not, I would have a negative feeling, not a positive one. If there were no attentiveness, that would prevent us from maintaining good human relationships.'

Excerpt 6

1 I: 'Do you think attentiveness is important in your culture or in your daily life?'

2 OJ4: 'I think attentiveness is important.'

3 I: 'Is it very important or a little important?'

4 OJ4: 'Hmm, recently, recently, it seems to me that it is a little important.'

5 I: 'Mm, what do you mean by "recently"?'

6 OJ4: 'Um, when we were children, a long time ago, my grandparents and my parents were, what can I say, totally attentive, and our neighbors and relatives were also very attentive. However, recently, our generation, upon entering adulthood, well, we can see cases where people pretend to see or not to see, yeah. To that extent … I think there are cases where it is better not to say anything. But that does not mean that we are neglecting those around us or that we do not want to get involved (with others), but what can I say, the degree is very, very, what can I say, I feel that (people) don't connect as strongly with others, but we deal with people lightly.'

7 I: 'Mm, you take a stance of stepping back, or you try not to impose on the others.'

8 OJ4: 'We try not to impose on the others. We do not get too close. We socialize with others, not becoming indifferent to each other.'

9 I: 'Is that a kind of tip to deal with others well? Your parents move a step closer to people.'

10 OJ4: 'Yes, they move a step closer to people. My parents do not live with young people. When somebody in the neighborhood gets injured, my parents would take her/him to a hospital. Mm, that is natural, but I feel like it is too much.'

11 I: 'Your value systems are a little different from those of your parents.'

12 OJ4: 'I think our value systems are different from those of my parents. I know they are right, but …'

13 I: 'You don't like to be thought that you are meddling.'

14 OJ4: 'Yes, the person who was injured surely has family members. I say to my parents that they do not have to take her/him to a hospital, but …'

The tendencies found in the excerpts 5 and 6 were similar to those in the other interviews we have seen so far. In response to the former half of the question (Do you think attentiveness is important in your culture or in your daily life?), there were not many differences between YJ and OJ (see turn 2 in excerpt 5 and turn 2 in excerpt 6). Both YJ and OJ completed their answers in one turn, saying that attentiveness was important.[12]

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12 YJ stated that it was very important and OJ stated that it was a little important. It may not necessarily mean that OJ thought attentiveness was less important than YJ, just because of the words, "a little important". OJ compares her perspective of attentiveness with that of her parents and her grandparents in the interview. What she meant was that attentiveness was "a little" important, compared to her parents and grandparents.

The major differences between YJ and OJ emerged in answering the latter half of the question, namely, when stating the reasons why attentiveness was important. YJ completed stating the reasons in one turn (turn 6 in excerpt 5). On the other hand, OJ stated the reasons in several turns (from turn 6 onwards in excerpt 6), and the reasons were not always clear. Therefore, the interviewer tried to clarify what OJ wanted to say (see turns 7 (not to impose on the others), 9 (a tip to deal with others well) and 11 (Your value systems are a little different from those of your parents.)) And OJ responded to what the interviewer said. OJ actually repeated some of the words the interviewer used (e.g., "not to impose on the others" in turn 8, "move a step closer to people" in turn 10 and "Our value systems are different" in turn 12). In turn 13, the interviewer added a possible reason (You don't like to be thought that you are meddling) why OJ had a different attitude or different value systems concerning attentiveness from her parents in response to turn 12. It can be said that the interviewer tried to fill OJ's ellipsis in turn 12. This can be regarded as an expansion co-construction. While there were neither overlaps nor co-constructions in an interview with YJ in excerpt 5, those existed in the interview with OJ (see from turn 6 to turn 14 in excerpt 6).

The results of this study shown above confirmed some of the literature. For example, the results revealed that the interviewer and the interviewee co-constructed interviews. These results are in line with what discursive theorists advocate, that is, individuals construct politeness and impoliteness together (Mills 2011: 42). The results also showed that identities were constructed in the process of interaction, which is the same as what Mills (2011: 42) summarizes. As Haugh (2012: 123) argues, "one person may simultaneously be both a participant and an analyst". This was shown particularly in excerpt 4 (the interview with OJ). Although the interviewer identified herself as an elicitor as well as an analyst, trying to elicit metapragamtic data, she co-constructed the interview (becoming a participant) unconsciously. This may confirm that identities are seen as highly negotiable in interaction, emergent and largely co-constructed, as De Fina (2010: 206) advocates, and that identity is relational, as argued by Bucholtz and Hall (2005: 605), Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2013: 17) and Locher (2008: 511) (see section 2).

Overlaps and co-constructions were found only in OJ's interviews. Overlaps reflect a preference for minimizing gaps, according to Guillot (2012: 308). It may be, therefore, said that an interviewer and an interviewee in OJ's interviews tried to minimize gaps. And solidarity was constructed through co-constructions. Overlaps or co-constructions would not occur, if people were indifferent to each other. Chang and Haugh (2011: 412) state that one way in which the analyst can make inferences about evaluations of im/politeness co-constituted by participants is to focus on the ways in which participants (dis)affiliate with each other through the interactional achievement of meanings and actions. It may be said that OJs and an interviewer in this study were affiliated with each other through interactions, and as a result, overlaps or co-constructions occurred. Overlaps and co-constructions would mean pragmatically that they indicate politeness in a sense, as it can be said that they are the products of showing interests between the interactants. The frequent occurrence of overlaps and co-constructions

in OJ's interviews may suggest that politeness was interactionally achieved, as Haugh (2007b: 306) argues that (im)politeness is conceptualized as being conjointly co-constituted in a collaborative, non-summative manner through interaction by participants. Creating solidarity through co-construction, therefore, may contribute to the conceptualization of politeness1. Solidarity may be one of the key issues in understanding politeness1. Both co-construction and rapport management (see Spencer-Oatey 2000) may have to do with solidarity. This needs a further investigation on how co-construction, solidarity and rapport management are related to politeness1.

   Although YJ completed giving the examples (of anticipatory inference and empathy) and stating the reasons (why attentiveness was important) by themselves, OJ did not do so. From this result, it may be said that YJ have more confidence than OJ. OJ may have conformed to traditional norms of Japanese culture, namely, avoiding clear statements or avoiding finishing statements directly, although this needs a further investigation.[13] A similar tendency can be found in another culture, too. For example, He's (2012) (investigating naturally occurring compliment responses in Chinese from a cross-generational perspective) findings showed that the older generation (a generation deriving before the launch of China's reform) tended to maintain or enhance their own and co-participants' face by observing conventional cultural norms and values such as modesty, whereas the younger (a generation after the China's reform) seemed to be more concerned about presenting a new self-image and identity by displaying such personal traits as confidence and individualism (2012: 48).

5. Summary and conclusion

This paper has examined metapragmatic interview data of two different generational groups of the Japanese participants on attentiveness and its related concepts, namely, anticipatory inference and empathy. Although not many cross-generational differences were found between two groups of the participants in answering the former part of the questions (e.g., Do you often infer the wishes/needs of the other party?), some differences emerged in answering the latter half of the questions, that is, giving examples of anticipatory inference and empathy and stating the reasons why attentiveness was important. The differences between YJ and OJ found in the interview data can be summarized as follows. While YJ completed giving examples or stating the reasons by themselves in one turn, OJ used many more turns than YJ. OJ tended not to complete giving examples or stating the reasons by themselves. As a result, the interviewer helped OJ complete giving the examples or stating the reasons. There were some statements by OJ that were rather vague. In such cases, the interviewer tried to clarify what OJ stated. The

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13 The topic of the interview was rather abstract, namely, anticipatory inference, empathy and attentiveness. This may have influenced the interview data.

interviewer identified herself as an elicitor, but the results tell us that she was also a participant in some parts of the interviews with OJ. In other words, identity of the interviewer was constructed in the process of interaction and it was relational. There were overlaps between the interviewer and the interviewee in the interviews with OJ. Co-constructions (both completion and expansion) by the interviewer and the interviewee were found only in OJ's interview data.

Not only the cross-generational differences were found in the metapragmatic interview data in this study, but some of the findings also indicate that politeness1 in Japanese was demonstrated in the interviews. The occurrence of co-constructions that are used to create/index solidarity is a useful evidence of politeness1 as interactionally achieved. This study investigated only the aspect of how the participants answered the interviews; and the number of the participants was relatively small. Thus, further research is needed to confirm generational differences as well as similarities in metapragmatic interview data on the three concepts investigated here with many more participants along with the content of the interview data.

Transcription conventions (following Jefferson, 2004)

[ ]　　　　　overlapping speech
(0.5)　　　　numbers in brackets indicate pause length in seconds
(.)　　　　　micropause
:　　　　　　elongation of previous vowel or consonant sound
-　　　　　　word cut-off
.　　　　　　falling or final intonation
?　　　　　　rising, 'questioning' intonation
,　　　　　　continuing intonation
=　　　　　　latched utterances
underlining　contrastive stress or emphasis
CAPS　　　markedly louder
°°　　　　　　markedly softer
↓↑　　　　　sharp falling/rising intonation
££　　　　　hearably smiling voice
> <　　　　　talk is compressed or rushed
< >　　　　　talk is markedly slowed or drawn out
( )　　　　　blank space in parentheses indicates uncertainty about the transcription

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Appendix

(Numbers in the brackets indicate approximate pause length.)

Excerpt 1

1 I: *Anata wa yoku hoka no hito no youbou ya niizu o sasshi masu ka*?

2 YJ5 (0.2) *Hai sasshiru* (.) *sassuru hou dato omoi masu.*

3 I: *Jya nani ka rei o agete itadake masu ka*?

4 YJ5: *Sou desu ne* (.) *izen toshokan de erebeeta o* (.) *riyou shite ita toki nan desu ga*?(.) *maeni ita*? (.) *jyosei no kata ga*? (.) *eeto nimotsu o kakaete ite*? (.) *toshokan nanode hon o*? (.) *oomeni motte ita node*? (.) *te ga fusagatte imashi ta.* (.) *Sono sai ni*? (.) *botan o osu* (.) *aa te ga fusagatte iru kara* (.) *botan o osenain dana to omotte*? (.) *kizuita toki ni*? (.) *osu youni shima shi ta.*

Excerpt 2

1 I: *Jya mazu saisho no shitsumon desu ga* (.) *eeto anata wa yoku hoka no hito no* (.) *youbou ya niizu o sasshi masu ka*?

2 OJ3: *Sou desu ne* ££ (.) *hai* ££

3 I: *Ee* (.) *nanika rei o* (.) *agete itadaite ii desu ka*?

4 OJ3: *Eeto* (.) *tatoeba nanika iwaretari suruto sore ni taishite* (.) *sou desu ne chotto yappari kangaete kouiu* (.) *anoo iken mo attari* (.) *souiu koto mo ari ari masu yotte katachi de.*

5 I: *Ee* (.) *mou sukoshi nani ka* [*gutaiteki ni*

6 OJ3 [*Gutaiteki ni* ££ *sou desu ne* ££

7 I: [*Gutaiteki ni* ££ *agete itadakeru to* (.) *arigatai no desu ga.* (.) *Nani ka hoka no hito ga* (.) *kouiu koto o nozon deru no kanatte iuno o Yamada san ga nani ka kouiu toki ni sasshi ta* (.) *toiu ka nani ka* [*gutairei o*

8 OJ3: [*Gutairei desu ka sou desu ne ee* (2.1) (2.9) [*gutaiteki ni*

9 I: [*Maa oshigoto demo ii desu shi gokatei demo gokinjyo demo maa doko demo* (.) *nani ka hito*

to kakawatte iru [*naka de*

10 OJ3: [*Hai sou desu yo ne* (.) *Kinjyo no hito tokani maa kakawatte iru toki nan desu kedo* (.) *nanka chotto kinjyo de iware ta koto ga attari toka nani ka souiu no* (.) *okaasan to issho ni sunde iru mon desu kara* (.) *ano* [*shujin no*

11 I: [*Danna san no*?

12 OJ3: *Hai* (.) *sorede nani ka chotto konna koto ga ne atta yo tteiu iware ta toki ni doushitara ii* ↑ *tte iware te* (1.1) *anmari ne* (.) *sonnani fukaku kangae nakute mo iinjya nai no kana nante itte ee* (.) *itte* [*agetari toka.*

13 I: [*Ee, aa. Jya sono okaasama to sunde rashite* (.) *sono okaasama wa nani ka* (.) *ano Yamada san ni yatte hoshii na to omotta youna koto o* (.) *okaasama ga nani ka tanomu mae ni sasshi te agete* (.) *yatte ageta to iukoto wa ari masu ka*?

14 OJ3: *Itsumo dewa* ££ *nai desu kedo* (.) *tamani ki o kikaseru toki mo attari* (.) *demo soude nai toki mo attari* (.) *desu ne hai*

15 I: *Jya sono ki o kikaseru tokitte douiu toki desu ka*?

16 OJ3: *Ee uun saki ni* (.) *nandesu ka ne* (.) *ano iwareru mae ni* (.) *uun nante iuno kana* (3.1) *mono o youi shitoite agetari toka* (.) *mono o nani jyunbi suru* [*mono o ne*

17 I: [*Dekakeru youni shitaku toka*

18 OJ3: [*Dekakeru toki ni ee* (.) *shitaku shite agetari toka* (.) *desu yo ne* (.) *hai*

Excerpt 3

1 I: *Hoka no hito kara* (.) *omoiyari o kanji ta koto wa ari masu ka*?

2 YJ1: *Ah* (.) *hai* (0.1) *eeto* (1.0) *watashi ga taichou o kuzushite kaze o hiita toki nado ni*? (.) *kaze hiite yasunda toki ni*?(.) *naotta tsugi no hi ni itta toki ni*?(.) *minna ga kaze naotta no* (.) *daijyoubu nano* (.) *toiu fuu ni*? (.) *shinpai shite koe o kakete kureta koto ni omoiyari o kanji masu.*

Excerpt 4

1 I: *Hokano hito kara omoiyari o kanji ta koto wa ari masu ka*?

2 OJ10: Aa (.) <*ari masu ne*>

3 I: *Jya sore mo sumimasen. Nani ka rei o agete* [*itadaite ii desu ka*?

4 OJ10: [*Unnn* (.) *koe o kakete morauto* (.) *aa* (.) *nani ka* (1.1) *omotte kureru no kanatte* [*omoi masu.*

5 I: [*Aa jya watashi toshokan ikuto yoku* [*minna ni*

6 OJ10: [££ *Koe kaketari sugoi sugoitte* ££ *omoi masu* ££.

7 I: [££*Yoshiko san genki tokatte* [*ii masu yo ne* ££.

8 OJ10: [*Sugoi sugoi* ££ (.) *ii to* [*omoi masu.*

9 I: [*Omoiyari o kanjite* [*moratte masu*? ££

10 OJ10: [*Hai* (.) *kanjite masu yo* ££.

Excerpt 5

1 I: *Kikubari wa anata no bunka ya nichijyou seikatsu no nakade jyuuyou deshou ka*?

2 YJ1: *Jyuuyou* (.) *dato omoi masu.*

3 I: *Dono teido jyuuyou dato omoi masu ka*?

4 YJ1: *Tottemo* (.) *jyuuyou ££ dato omoi masu.*

5 I: *Doushite desu ka*?

6 YJ1: *Kizukai o* (.) *shite sarete toiu kankyou no nakade* (.) *sodatta koto mo aru node* (.) *yahari* (.) *watashi ga suru koto mo*?(1.0) *nan desu kanee nichijyouteki dato omoi masushi tabun sarenaitte iu koto mo* (.) *chotto nante iun desu kane fukai*? (2.0) *dewa nai keredo* (.) *sasshite hoshii noni na toiu toki ni*? (.) *watashi ga mawari ni sasshite*? (.) *morae naito*? (.) *yahari chotto* (.) *douiu kibun nan darou* (1.0) *uuun* (2.0) *iradachi dewa nai desu kedo* (.) *kizuite hoshii na*? (.) *mitaina fuuni omotte*? (.) *maa sore wa kouteiteki na kanjyou dewa nakute hiteiteki na kanjyou o idaku node*? (.) *ningen kankei o*? (.) *kizukai ga naito ningen kankei o* (.) *ryoukou ni tamotsu uede* (.) *shougai kanato iu fuuni omoi masu.*

Excerpt 6

1 I: *Kikubari wa anata no bunka ya nichijyou seikatsu no nakade jyuuyou deshou ka*?

2 OJ4: *Kikubari wa* (.) *jyuuyou dato omoi masu.*

3 I: *Sugoku jyuuyou desu ka soretomo chotto* [*jyuuyou desu ka*?

4 OJ4: [*Uun* (.) *saikin wa* (.) *saikinto ii masu ka* (.) *chotto no youna ki ga shi masu.*

5 I: *Aa saikin toiuno wa* (.) *douiu imi desu ka*?

6 OJ4: *Eeto mukashi watashitachi ga kodomono koro wa* (.) *eeto maa sofubo ni shite mo ryoushin ni shite mo* (.) *hontou ni nante iun deshou* (1.0) *kikubari no katamari jyanai desu kedo* (.) *kinjyo ni shite mo maa miuchi ni shite mo, deshi ta kedo, saikin toiuka watashitachi no sedai toiuka kou otonani natte kuruto* (.) *maa mite minai furi o ££ suru tokoro mo arushi uun* (.) *soko made* (2.0) *kuchi niwa dasanai hou ga gyaku ni iinjya nai ka mitaina*? (1.0) *fuuni omou koto ga ari masu ne.* (.) *Dakara toitte* (.) *anoo marukkiri mushi o shitari toka* (.) *kakawari takuwa nai toiu koto madewa* (.) *naranain desu kedo* (.) *nante iun deshou* (.) *doai ga kou sugoi* (.) *sugoku* (.) *nante iun deshou* (.) *tsuyoku sessuru yori mo* (.) *saratto toiu youna ki ga* [*shimasu kedo.*

7 I: [*Aa ippo sagatte toiu* (.) *ano anmari oshitsuke* [*gamashiku nai*

8 OJ4: [*Oshitsuke gamashiku mo naku sugoi shitashiku mo naranai keredomo*? (.) *marukkiri* (.) *shiranpuri mo sezu* (.) *tsukiatte iru youna ki ga* [*shi masu*

9 I: [*Sore wa yappari ningen kankei ga umaku iku kotsu mitaina kanji desu ka*? (.) *Goryoushin toka* (.) *miteruto mou chotto* [*fumikonde*

10 OJ4: [*Hai fumikonde ima mo maa ano jikka toka* (.) *ano wakai hito to isshoni inain desu kedo* (.) *miteruto kinjyo de* (.) *nanka anoo* (.) *chotto kega o shita tokatte iuto* (.) *byouin tsuretette douno kouno tokatte yatte yarun desu kedo sore ga maa atarimae nan desukedo kou miteru to* (.) *soko made shinakute iinjya naino tteiu* [*kankaku ni*

11 I: [*Chotto kankaku ga chigatte* [*kite iru*

12 OJ4: [*Chigatte kite iru youna ki ga shi masu* (.) *Honto wa iino wa wakatte irun* [*dakere domo ...*

13 I: [*Osekkaitte omowaretemo iya da natte* [*iu*

14 OJ4: [*Sou kitto sochira nimo miuchi no hito mo itari suru noni iinjyanai notte iu fuu ni itte shimau jibun ga* (.) *nanka...*