Pragmatics SIG

How to cite the article:

Research Article

Politeness Strategy Addressed in English Grammar Books

Chie Kawashima

Oyama Johnan High School

Abstract

This study explores the most recently published English grammar reference books focusing on politeness features in relation to grammar knowledge. Initially, the examination identifies instances of grammar information where politeness features are explicitly mentioned based on the terminologies related to politeness. Subsequently, the focus shifts to determine the politeness features of identified instances. The study also investigates how these politeness features are demonstrated in relation to pragmatic information and grammatical knowledge. Additionally, the study examines communicativeness of the tasks to practice identified politeness features. The findings underscore the significant role of grammatical knowledge in shaping communicative strategies as (im)politeness, intensifying, softening, indirectness, and formality alongside related cultural values. The most significant gap is underpresentation of communicative tasks to practice politeness strategies.

本研究は、最新の英文法参考書における文法知識に関連したポライトネスの紹介についての調査である。まず、ポライトネスに関する明示的記述を含む文法事項の例を特定し、文法事項を絡めて導入されたポライトネスの特徴を分析した。また、本研究はポライトネスの特徴に関する説明を語用論的情報と文法事項との関連についての調査も行った。さらに、これらのポライトネス表現の実践的な適用に関する検討を行った。結果として、日本の文化的価値観の反映と共に婉曲表現やフォーマル表現といったポライトネス戦略を形作る上で文法知識の重要性が浮き彫りになった。しかし、学習者の語用論的コミュニケーション能力を養うためのタスクの欠如がみられた。

Appropriate language use, including knowing when to be polite depending on the situation, is crucial for effective communication especially in a second language. Politeness strategies are necessary depending on the speaker-hearer power relations or social distance. This skill involves pragmatics and goes beyond grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation (Barron et al., 2024). Failure to use pragmatically appropriate language can lead to perceptions of uncooperativeness, rudeness, or insult even in speakers with high linguistic proficiency (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991). Pragmatic competence, or being able to use language appropriately in context, appears in theoretical models of communicative competence involving both knowledge of L2 grammar and the ability to use this system in actual communication (Taguchi, 2012).

Since the implementation of the new Course of Study in 2022, the Japanese education ministry has enhanced learners' communicative competence. Ministry-authorized textbooks try to prioritize communicative activities over detailed linguistic information. However, the users of these textbooks tend to adhere to a grammar-based syllabus and classroom instruction remains centered on grammar. While memorizing decontextualized example sentences can impede learners' pragmatic competence (Mizushima, 2016), grammatical knowledge remains crucial in supporting learners' pragmatic performance, especially varying levels of politeness (Ishihara, 2022; Taguchi & Rover, 2017). Ishihara (2022) stated that learners' divergence from pragmatic norms is commonly attributed to their underdeveloped grammatical competence in the L2. Thus, learners' grammatical knowledge may help learners' appropriate use of language. Politeness strategies using a range of modals for conversational indirectness can be instructed and practiced in a classroom according to learners' proficiency levels (Rover, 2022).

This study explores the most recently published English grammar reference books to examine the presence of politeness features, which were underrepresented in textbooks for classroom instruction. By analyzing these resources, the research aims to understand the extent and types of grammar information that convey politeness features. It also investigates how these features are introduced and the relationship between politeness strategies and elements such as syntax structures, pragmatic information, and cultural values. Additionally, the study examines whether the identified politeness features are practically applied, shedding light on the role of grammatical knowledge in helping learners use politeness strategies in everyday interactions.

Literature Review

Politeness strategies are employed to save the speaker's or hearer's face and relate to power, distance, and the weight of imposition in calculating the intensity of a face-threatening act (FTA) with positive politeness and negative

politeness (Yule, 2023). Ryabova (2015) interpreted negative politeness as avoiding interference with the hearer's face by using indirect speech acts, while positive politeness involved the speaker showing interest in the hearer and sharing goals using the pronoun we.

A lack of politeness strategies in pedagogical materials has been observed despite numerous studies identifying speech acts. Diepenbroek and Derwing (2013) found limited occurrences of formality and politeness in popular ESL textbooks and noted a lack of contextualization in teaching pragmatics related to politeness. They suggested that teachers should emphasize context variables to raise learners' awareness of appropriate language use in different settings. Similarly, Roohani and Alipour (2017) found that EFL textbooks used in Iranian high schools presented speech acts out of context without explicit information about speaker-hearer relations. They argued that the absence of contextual information makes it difficult to determine the politeness or face-threatening nature of speech acts. Nozawa (2014) examined the use of modal verbs related to politeness strategies in upper-intermediate and lower-secondary EFL textbooks in Japan. They found an underrepresentation of polite requests using modal verbs and limited explicit instruction, leading to a mismatch between high grammar competence and low pragmatic competence. More recently, Kawashima (2022) found that Japanese high school EFL textbooks underrepresented tasks for practicing politeness-sensitive speech acts like requests and offers, despite using complex syntax. Liam (2023) noted that Hong Kong ELT textbooks focused on directives tied to grammar points with limited inclusion of indirect speech acts, making it difficult for learners to use language appropriately outside the classroom. Addressing the lack of contextualization and metapragmatic information is necessary to enhance learners' pragmatic awareness and language use.

Politeness strategies in language use may be closely related to cultural values, and are sometimes reflected in pedagogical materials. Meiratnasari et al. (2019) investigated politeness strategies in Indonesian English textbooks based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework and found a higher percentage of positive politeness (46%). They suggested that this reflects Indonesian society's character, where people show interest and friendliness toward others. Similarly, Mohd Nabil and Kaur (2020) found a higher portrayal of positive politeness with exaggeration in conversations in both local and global English textbooks used in Malaysia. They implied that exaggeration helps to please those of higher social status in their culture, suggesting that awareness of such values helps learners develop communication skills alongside language skills. These cultural values and polite language use can be reflected in pedagogical materials.

Furthermore, some studies have found that learners' grammatical knowledge can aid in developing pragmatic competence if instructed appropriately. Ashoorpour and Azari (2014) studied the relations between grammatical and pragmatic knowledge, and found that advanced-level Iranian university EFL students' pragmatic competence positively correlated with their grammatical knowledge regarding the speech act of requesting. They emphasized the need to keep focusing on appropriate language use in diverse contexts for successful communication exposing learners to authentic language use situations. Huschova (2021) explored modalized speech acts in a spoken learners' corpus in Czech tertiary education, and discovered the use of tentative could to show social remoteness with a high degree of politeness, although this was infrequent, while can was more common. They stated that B2 level learners of English might communicate successfully using modalized speech acts as they can produce and interpret these acts. Among grammar items, modals play a key role in producing speech acts. Modal verbs, including hypothetical forms such as *would* or *could*, hedges, downgraders, and intensifiers encode politeness through the morphological, syntactic, and lexical resources of languages (Leech, 2014). As learners' grammatical knowledge increases, they may apply their grammatical knowledge to pragmatic language use appropriately.

Alief and Nashruddin (2022) observed that junior high school learners' language use was influenced by classroom examples. They emphasized the importance of teaching appropriate language use according to the situation and incorporating politeness into the learning process. According to Rover (2022), lower-level learners have difficulties producing more indirect speech acts using modals, whereas A2 level or upper-beginner/lower-intermediate level learners display the ability to use modals such as *can*, *could*, and *would*, and interrogatives for pragmatic purposes such as making conventionally indirect requests. He suggests pragmatics curriculum developmentally sensitive enough to bridge each level of learners' proficiency such as incorporating different levels of indirectness.

Methods

Data Collection

The data for this study consist of instances of grammar information introduced with politeness features in the selected materials. Four recently published English grammar reference books designed for upper secondary education in Japan were selected: Crown, Quest, My Way, and Zoom as shown in the Appendix. These books are used in both public and private high schools as ancillaries alongside coursebooks to supplement learners' grammatical knowledge. These four grammar reference books were selected due to their widespread use in Japanese high school EFL classrooms and popularity as top-selling supplements to MEXT-approved textbooks for reinforcing grammatical instruction. This selection was made through informal interviews with school textbooks sales representatives. The grammar information in these reference books closely aligns with the MEXT prescribed textbooks. As the grammatical knowledge introduced in the MEXT prescribed textbooks is surface level, these reference books provide learners with more detailed syntactical information with metalanguage.

Data Analysis

The study initially identified the instances of grammatical knowledge with explicit mentioning politeness features including the terminologies such as (im)politeness, indirectness, formality, intensifying, and softening. Alongside, the average number of the identified instances per page was calculated to determine the frequency of these identified instances in each book. As each type of grammar information was present in particular units for grammar items such as modals, conjunctions, and hypothetical conditions, etc, the identified instances were categorized based on the unit for grammar items to see the types of grammar information involving politeness features. Subsequently, the identified instances were categorized according to different politeness features following the terminologies related to politeness. This categorization aimed to determine which types of politeness features were explained and to assess their frequency.

For the sake of understanding how different types of politeness feature were explained and reflection of cultural values, the categorized instances from the previous stage were labeled according to its type of pragmatic information and examine syntactic structures used for each type of pragmatic information. Furthermore, in order to examine the reflection of Japanese cultural values in these reference books, the instances involving the directive speech acts as requesting or seeking permission were assessed in terms of positive and negative politeness strategies, following the concepts introduced by Brown and Levinson (1987). At the same time the frequency of these speech act types was also examined.

Contextualized activities provide learners with pragmatic language choice according to the situation. The study, additionally, examined whether or not politeness strategies presented in these books could be practiced. After identifying the tasks to practice politeness features in each unit, they were assessed with regard to contextualization and communicativeness. Those with contextualized interactive activities were determined to be communicative tasks.

Results and Discussion

The results of the data analysis highlighted the benefits of using grammatical knowledge to enhance learners' awareness of polite language use in different contexts. The findings are presented with a focus on both grammatical knowledge and politeness features. Additionally, the analysis identified gaps that teachers need to address.

Grammar Information Containing Politeness Features

Table 1 summarizes the instances of grammar information with politeness features. *Crown* had the highest frequency with 43 instances. Although the number of instances varied between *Quest* and *My Way*, their frequencies did not differ significantly.

Table 1

Number of Instances with Politeness Features

Book	Number of Instances	Frequency
Crown	43	0.061
Quest	22	0.033
My Way	11	0.037
Zoom	6	0.014

Note. Frequency is calculated through page-by-page analysis.

Overall, considerable differences were observed across these books regarding the inclusion of politeness features. The inclusion of politeness features in grammar information may be incidental as the primary purpose of these books is supplementing learners' grammatical knowledge.

The types of syntactic structures with politeness features are shown in Table 2. *Crown* provided the broadest range with modal units containing the highest number of instances. However, *Crown* had a lower percentage of these instances compared to other books, but a notable number of hypothetical conditions and tense and aspect features were present. *My Way* uniquely included colloquial expressions with politeness features.

Modal verbs were prominently featured as politeness markers in these books. According to Leech (2014) and Rover (2022), modal verb structures play a key role in conveying indirectness in requests. These structures are included in secondary-level foreign language education curricula (Ishihara, 2022) and learners may be able to use them practically if properly instructed. Leech (2014) stated that hypothetical statements containing the modals would or could exhibit less imposition maintaining interlocutors' distance. Similarly, politeness is conveyed through the hypothetical use of past tense and progressive aspect forms in requests (Leech, 2014). Overall, these politeness features can be an important means of presenting grammatical knowledge.

Table 2

Number of Instances with Politeness Features

Title of Unit	Crown	Quest	My Way	Zoom
Adverbs	1 (2.3%)			
Colloquial Expressions			4 (36.0%)	
Conjunctions	2 (4.7%)			
Hypothetical Conditions	9 (21.0%)	1 (4.5%)		1 (16.0%)
Interrogatives	3 (7.0%)			
Modals	21 (49.0%)	16 (73.0%)	6 (55.0%)	5 (84.0%)
Sentence Types	3 (7.0%)	3 (13.5%)		
Tense and Aspects	4 (9.0%)	2 (9.0%)	1 (9.0%)	
Total	43	22	11	6

Modal verbs were prominently featured as politeness markers in these books. According to Leech (2014) and Rover (2022), modal verb structures play a key role in conveying indirectness in requests. These structures are included in secondary-level foreign language education curricula (Ishihara, 2022) and learners may be able to use them practically if properly instructed. Leech (2014) stated that hypothetical statements containing the modals would or could exhibit less imposition maintaining interlocutors' distance. Similarly, politeness is conveyed through the hypothetical use of past tense and progressive aspect forms in requests (Leech, 2014). Overall, these politeness features can be an important means of presenting grammatical knowledge.

Politeness Features Introduced through Grammar Information

This section examines politeness features presented through grammar. Table 3 categorizes these features using the terminologies found in the books: formality, impoliteness, indirectness, intensifying, politeness, and softening. While most instances were labeled as politeness, Crown and Quest also included a notable number of other features.

Table 3

Politeness Features Addressed through Linguistic Information

Feature	Crown	Quest	My Way	Zoom
Formality		1 (4.6%)	1 (9.0%)	
Impoliteness	4 (9.5%)			
Indirectness	3 (7.0%)	1 (4.6%)	1 (9.0%)	
Intensifying	6 (14.0%)	6 (27.0%)		1 (17.0%)
Politeness	26 (60.0%)	11 (50.0%)	9 (82.0%)	3 (50.0%)
Softening	4 (9.5%)	3 (13.8%)		2 (33.0%)
Total	43	22	11	6

Politeness terminology was common across the books and frequently used to explain language use. Despite cultural and contextual influences on interaction (Barron et al., 2024), politeness remains central in teaching pragmatics. In addition to politeness, modification strategies like intensifying and softening were predominant both lexically and grammatically, which aligns with Leech's (2014) findings. Indirectness appeared occasionally, which, according to Thomas' (1995) reflects power dynamics and social factors. Formality, marked by modal verbs like *may* and *can*, signaled authority or urgency as Ishihara (2022) stated. Impoliteness appeared in only one book, though Ishihara (2022) highlights its role in understanding politeness. Overall, these books offered diverse politeness-related terminologies although inconsistently present across the books. *Crown*, in particular, provided stronger links between grammar and politeness benefiting its users more than the others.

Factors to Feature Politeness Strategies

This section explores how the identified politeness features were demonstrated as politeness strategies in relation to pragmatic information and grammar information alongside cultural values, which influence language use. The key findings of this assessment are summarized according to the identified politeness features as follows:

Politeness in Communication

- Requests with Modals: Using modals as *can/could* and *will/would* to indicate varying degrees of politeness based on power relations and proximity between interlocutors.

- Requests with Tense and Aspect: Utilizing phrases such as "I wonder if you could," "I wondered if you could," and "I was wondering if you could" to show politeness.

- Requests with Hypothetical Conditions: Using "Could I" instead of "Could you" to make a polite request.

- Requests Using the Future Progressive: Using future progressive tense, e.g., "When will you be giving back the book?" to make the request more tentative.

- Seeking Permission with Modals: Using *can/could* and *may/might* to reflect the degree of politeness based on power relations and proximity.

- Seeking Permission with Hypothetical Conditions: Using phrases like "Would you mind if I did?" depending on the proximity of interlocutors.

- Offers and Suggestions with Modals: Using "would like" instead of "want" based on the proximity of interlocutors, e.g., "Would you like a drink?"

- Greetings Using Imperatives: Using imperatives for the benefit of the addressee, e.g., "Have a nice trip."

Intensifying in Communication

- Advice, Orders, Suggestions, Obligation, and Prohibition with Modals: Using modals as *had better*, *must*, and *should* to vary in forcefulness depending on the power relations and proximity between interlocutors.

- Offers and Suggestions with Modals: Using must for the benefit of the addressee, e.g., "You must try this dish."

Softening Techniques

- Advice with Modals: Using "might want to" to soften advice. Using *should* instead of *must* to reduce intrusiveness.

- Requests with Adverbial Hedges: Incorporating adverbs like "possibly" with the modal *could*, e.g., "Could you possibly speak a little louder?"

- Assertions with Adverbial Hedges: Using hedges, e.g., "This is a relatively common problem."

Indirectness in Communication

- Requests with Different Tenses and Aspects: Employing past tense and past tense modals for indirect requests.

Formality

- Permission with Modals: Using *may* instead of *can* to reflect the degree of formality depending on power relations between interlocutors.

Impoliteness

- Advice Followed by Conjunctions: Using imperatives followed by conjunctions such as *and* or *or*, e.g., "Study hard, or you'll fail," displaying forcefulness.

- Requests with "Please": Adding "please" to imperative sentences, which does not necessarily make them polite.

- Permission with Modals: Granting permission using the modal *may* with a focus on the power relations between interlocutors.

Politeness features in grammar largely integrated requests and permission with requests appearing 29 times and permission 12 times out of 82 instances. All instances used negative politeness strategies, employing formal language and modal verbs to soften directives.

Politeness strategies were primarily demonstrated through directive speech acts of requesting or seeking permission, focusing on speaker-hearer relationships. The use of modal verbs for polite requests was emphasized. According to Huschova (2021) and Rover (2022), learners may become more adept at using them for pragmatic purposes as their language proficiency grows. Additionally, polite requests employed past tense, progressive tense, and embedded structures to soften the directive nature of requests by creating distance (Wigglesworth & Yates, 2007).

While non-native English speakers seldom used embedding techniques in workplace role-play tasks (Wigglesworth & Yates, 2007), Takimoto (2012) found that university-level EFL learners in Japan could employ statements like "I wonder if you could VP" after tasks followed by discussions on language use. Learners might adopt this mitigation device with practice. Furthermore, using future progressive and past tense modals with a first-person subject serves as a distancing mechanism (Leech, 2014).

Unlike requests, offers were made for the benefit of the hearer, sometimes at the speaker's expense. Direct forms for offers allows the hearer less room to decline, and is considered polite (Leech, 2014). However, Fukushima (1990) noted that using direct forms for offers might feel constraining unless there is a strong rapport between the speaker and hearer. Therefore, the phrase "would you like" is commonly used, and learners at A2 or higher proficiency levels are usually capable of expressing this speech act (Rover, 2022). Overall, complex sentence structures are frequently employed to produce appropriately polite speech in various contexts, and instruction and practice tasks may help learners use these devices effectively.

The modification of speech acts, as intensifying or softening, depends on grammatical knowledge. Intensifiers like *had better* were used for strong advice, which can seem impolite, while *should* conveys less obligation (Leech, 2014). Offers and suggestions often use direct forms like must for the addressees' benefit. Conversely, softening strategies increase politeness. Internal modification with modals like *may* or *might* could be softer directives based on speaker-hearer relations (Leech, 2014). Adverbial hedges such as "please" or "possibly" emphasize uncertainty or tentativeness (Barron et al., 2024; Leech, 2014). While non-native English speakers underuse these softening techniques (Wigglesworth & Yates, 2007), Rover (2022) suggested that learners may incorporate these hedges as their proficiency grows. Thus, learners' grammatical knowledge enables effective use of modification techniques.

Other politeness strategies were used differently albeit in fewer instances. The past tense is often used to convey indirectness in requests. Requests can be classified as direct or indirect with direct requests being easier to interpret while indirect requests require contextual understanding (Barron et al., 2024).

Communication failures may occur if speech acts are used inappropriately especially when indirect language is required. Using *may* for seeking permission is more polite and formal, but using it to grant permission can imply authority (Ishihara, 2022). Thus, granting permission with *may* to those of higher status may be impolite. In the reference books analyzed in this study, the syntactic structure "Imperatives and/or SV" was used to introduce conjunctions and was described as impolite. The adverbial hedge "please" can mitigate requests but may sound coercive depending on context (Leech, 2014). Past tense and modal verbs contribute to politeness strategies like indirectness and formality. Impolite language may appear in grammar books, but learners can differentiate language use according to politeness if teaching materials provide information on impoliteness.

Speakers' cultural values often influence their language use particularly when expressing politeness. In addition to requesting, seeking permission such as "Would you mind if I closed the window?" using hypothetical conditions was prominently featured as examples of politeness strategies. This emphasis may reflect Japanese cultural norms, where school culture strongly values discipline, respect, and hierarchy. Consequently, students are expected to seek permission for many activities, highlighting the influence of these cultural values on language use.

In addition, the reference books investigated in this study all employed negative politeness strategies with the use of modals, past tense, or progressives to introduce directive speech acts reflecting cultural values. Wigglesworth and Yates (2007) found that in role-playing scenarios for mitigating difficult requests in the workplace, non-native English speakers tended to show deference to higher authority emphasizing hierarchy, while native English speakers focused on addressing solidarity.

In summary, information on politeness strategies was often provided alongside complex sentence structures such as hypothetical conditions, modals, and various tense and aspect forms. Although these structures may pose challenges for non-native English speakers or lower-level learners, they can learn to use them appropriately as their proficiency improves, provided they receive proper instruction and opportunities to practice. Additionally, cultural norms are also reflected in the politeness strategies featured in these books such as the use of specific speech acts and negative politeness strategies.

Practical Application of Politeness Features

The study revealed a lack of tasks aimed at providing interactive practice for utilizing politeness features in context. Instead, all tasks involving politeness features consisted of written exercises focused on deepening learners' grammatical knowledge. These exercises included translation from English to Japanese, fill-in-the-blank questions, multiple-choice questions, and word order exercises.

The absence of opportunities to practice language use may hinder learners from effectively applying the politeness strategies they have learned. While explicit consciousness-raising activities could potentially increase learners' awareness of using politeness routines (Wigglesworth & Yates, 2007), Ishihara (2020) emphasized the importance of contextualized output and interactive practice for acquiring fluent language use. Merely being aware of appropriate language use, as introduced in pedagogical materials, may not be sufficient for achieving fluency.

Limitation of the Study

The analysis of the four grammar reference books provided substantial data to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses in helping learners acquire politeness strategies through grammatical knowledge. However, the scope of this study is limited, as a wide range of grammar reference books are used in Japanese high schools, and the selection of only four—despite being top sellers according to sales representatives—may not fully represent the diversity of available materials. Additionally, the content of these reference books does not necessarily align with learners' actual grammatical competence, which could affect their ability to internalize politeness strategies effectively. To better assess the role of grammatical knowledge in developing pragmatic competence, future research should incorporate empirical data on learners' pragmatic abilities in relation to their grammatical proficiency.

Conclusion

This study identified numerous instances where grammatical knowledge related to politeness is presented in grammar reference books. These politeness features primarily appear in sections covering modals, hypothetical conditions, and tense-aspect distinctions. Additionally, these instances employ terminology associated with politeness. Some references also reflect cultural values linked to polite language use. The inclusion of politeness features in grammar reference books highlights their potential as valuable resources enabling learners to make informed language choices in different social contexts whereas these features are often absent from classroom textbooks. However, grammar reference books do not provide learners with contextualized communicative tasks necessary for practical application while politeness strategies are present. Appropriate language use in contexts is indispensable in everyday interaction. The speaker sometimes needs to minimize the imposition or save the hearer's face with language they use to maintain a good relationship. In order to maximize the benefits of grammatical knowledge related to politeness, it is essential for teachers to bridge this gap. By integrating their pragmatic expertise and modifying instructional tasks, educators can create interactive activities that encourage appropriate language use in real-world contexts. Furthermore, politeness strategies can be introduced at any stage of language learning with sentence complexity gradually increasing to match learners' proficiency levels.

References

Alief, K., & Nashruddin, N. (2022). Application of language politeness in learning activities. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Literature, 3*(1), 1–11.

Ashoorpour, B., & Azari, H. (2014). The relationship between grammatical knowledge and pragmatic knowledge of speech act of request in Iranian EFL learners. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, 3*(1), 39-47.

Bachman, F., & Palmer, A. (1982). The construct validation of some components of communicative proficiency. *TESOL Quarterly, 16*(4), 449–465. https://doi.org/10.2307/3586464

Bardovi-Harlig, K., Hartford, R., Mahan-Taylor, R., Morgan, M.J. & Reynolds, D.W. (1991). Developing pragmatic awareness: Closing the conversation. *ELT Journal, 45*(1), 4–15. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/45.1.4

Barron, J., Celaya, M. L., & Watkins, P. (2024). *Pragmatics in language teaching*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003180210

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511813085

Diepenbroek, L., & Derwing, T. (2013). To what extent do popular ESL textbooks incorporat oral fluency and pragmatic development? *TESL Canada Journal, 30*(7), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v30i7.1149

Fukushima, S. (1990). Offers and requests: performance by Japanese learners of English. *World Englishes, 9*(3), 327–325. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.1990.tb00269.x

Huschova, P. (2021). Modalized speech acts in a spoken learner corpus: The case of can and could. *Topics in Linguistics, 22*(1), 27–37. https://doi.org/10.2478/topling-2021-0003

Ishihara, N. (2020). Going beyond the icing on the gingerbread: Teaching pragmatics more regularly, systematically, and communicatively. In J. Talandis, J. Roald, D. Fujimoto, & N. Ishihara (Eds.), *Pragmatics Undercover: The search for natural talk in EFL textbooks* (pp. 21–28). Pragmatics Special Interest Group of the Japan Association for Lanugage Teaching (JALT).

Ishihara, N. (2022). *Teaching and learning pragmatics: Where language and culture meet*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003168188

Kawashima, C. (2022). Learners' opportunities to practice speech acts in English language teaching textbooks. In P. Ferguson & R. Derrah (Eds.), *Reflection and new perspectives* (pp. 16–24). JALT. https://doi.org/10.37546/jaltpcp2021-03

Leech, G. (2014). *The pragmatics and politeness*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195341386.001.0001

Liam, W. D. (2023). Investigating the coverage of speech acts in Hong Kong ELT textbooks. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 20*(1), 50–73. https://doi.org/10.56040/lmdw2014

Meiratnasari, A., Wijayanto, A., & Suparno. (2019). An analysis of politeness strategies in Indonesian English textbooks. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies on Humanities, 2*(4), 529-540. https://doi.org/10.34050/els-jish.v2i4.8393

Mizushima, R. (2016). Investigation on pragmatic instructions in English textbooks for Japanese high school students: The case of English Expression I. *Journal of the Society of Humanities, Sapporo Gakuin University, 99*, 41–59.

Mohd Nabil, N. S. B., & Kaur, P. (2020). Politeness value in local and global English textbooks. In *Proceedings of the 4th UUM International Qualitative Research Conference (QRC 2020)* (pp. 28–36). Universiti Utara Malaysia. https://qualitative-research-conference.com/download/proceedings-2020/214.pdf

Nozawa, Y. (2014). An analysis of the use of modal verbs in EFL textbooks in terms of politeness strategy of English. 英語英文叢誌, *43*, 19–28.

Roohani, A., & Alipour, J. (2017). An investigation into the use of speech acts and language functions in Iranian high school English textbooks. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning, 6*(3), 25–33. https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrsll.2016.1432

Rover, C. (2022). *Teaching and testing second language pragmatics and interaction*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429260766

Ryabova, M. (2015). Politeness strategy in everyday communication. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Science, 206*, 90–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.10.033

Taguchi, N. (2012). *Context, individual differences and pragmatic competence*. Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847696106

Taguchi, N., & Rover, C. (2017). *Second language pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

Takimoto, M. (2012). Metapragmatic discussion in interlanguage pragmatics. *Journal of Pragmatics, 44*, 1240–1253. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2012.05.007

Thomas, J. (1995). *Meaning in interaction: An introduction to pragmatics*. Longman. https://doi.
org/10.4324/9781315842011

Wigglesworth, G., & Yates, L. (2007). Mitigating difficult requests in the workplace: What learners and teachers need
to know. *TESOL Quarterly, 41*(4), 791–803.

Yule, G. (2023). *The study of language*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009233446

Appendix A

Grammar Reference Books Evaluated in This Study

- Corpus Crown English Grammar & Expressions (Sanseido, 2022)
- Vision Quest Sogo Eigo, 3rd Edition (Keirinkan, 2022)
- My Way Sogo Eigo (Sanseido, 2022)
- Zoom Sogo Eigo, 3rd Edition (Daiichi Gakushusha, 2022)