

**EFFECTS OF PROFICIENCY AND LENGTH OF RESIDENCE ON  
THE PRAGMATIC COMPREHENSION OF JAPANESE ESL  
LEARNERS**

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Studies comparing native speaker (NS) norms in the realization strategies of a variety of speech acts (SAs) with behavior by Japanese learners of American English show a tendency for these learners to produce—despite what might be expected based on stereotypes about the ultra-polite, indirect, ambiguous Japanese—overly direct responses in a variety of face-threatening acts: correction (Takahashi & Beebe, 1993); disagreement and chastisement (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989b); disagreement and conveying embarrassing information (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989a); invitation and request (1985 data of Fukushima and Iwata, cited in Kitao, 1990); and refusal (Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz, 1990). In her study of Japanese learners of ESL in Hawaii, Endo (1982) reports that, when questioned as to why they had trouble finding opportunities to interact with Americans, some of her respondents replied, “I don’t know how to speak directly.” This suggests that the corresponding stereotype about American directness prevails among at least some Japanese learners of ESL.

Questions which have received less attention in the literature are whether and in what ways Japanese learners comprehend and interpret *indirectness* in American English. For example, are Japanese learners able to use conversational implicature and inferencing to interpret indirectness in English as NSs do? If they are, to what degree does this ability seem to develop “naturally,” along with increased general proficiency, or is it a skill that somehow requires regular exposure to a variety of contexts in daily life among NSs, the kinds of situations that can be experienced only by learners who reside in the target language culture?

As Thorndyke (1976) notes, a major function of inference in discourse comprehension “is to provide an integrating context for the interpretation of incoming information in order to establish coherence and continuity” (p. 437). By “contextualizing” an utterance, in Gumperz’s definition, listeners make use of verbal and nonverbal signs to relate what is said at any one time and in any one place to knowledge acquired through past experience, in order to retrieve the presuppositions they must rely on to maintain conversational involvement and assess what is intended. (Gumperz, 1992, p. 230)

We can assume from this that when a conversation takes place among NSs of a language, the listeners will tend to make use of the same verbal and nonverbal signs to interpret the speaker’s intentions, to the degree that they have access to the same knowledge. Can non-native speakers (NNSs) be expected to utilize these same clues in their comprehension of indirect speech? In discussing her 1992 article on pragmatic transfer, Kasper (1994) claimed that the notion of “implicature” is a good candidate for a pragmatic universal, in that speakers of all languages probably share the strategy of connecting what is being said to the relevant context in order to understand what is going on in a given conversation. However, she added the caveat that the clues that they use and the situations in which they use inferences are probably culturally specific. If Japanese learners of ESL misinterpret a speaker’s intended meaning in a situation that requires the use of inferencing or implicature, is it because they fail to make use of the relevant contextual clues that NSs of English would have used?

The production of target language forms by second language (L2) learners cannot be at a higher level than their comprehension of these forms; this applies to the pragmatics of the L2 as well as to its grammar. Bardovi-Harlig (2001) suggests that “if we expect learners to use speech addressed to them as input, we need to investigate how learners perceive and understand such input” (p. 24). In the following paragraphs, I will examine several studies that focus on pragmatic comprehension.

In one such study, Kasper (1984) examined 48 face-to-face dialogues (role plays) between German EFL learners and NSs of British English. Her analysis of the learners’ inappropriate responses to NS utterances led her to posit that, among other things, (a)

learners rely more on bottom-up (data-driven) rather than top-down (frame-driven) processing of input and (b) they have problems in activating frames relevant in the given context (p. 16). Discussing the pedagogical implications of her findings, Kasper suggests that learners “be made aware of the relevance of context-determining features in communicative situations. For this purpose, context analysis should be carried out explicitly” (p. 17). Rose (1994) echoes this suggestion in his discussion of pragmatic consciousness-raising, which he says “attempts to sensitize learners to context-based variation in language use and the variables that help determine the variation” (p. 57).

A few studies have compared the use of inference and conversational implicature by NSs and NNSs of American English. Carrell (1984) used data from both advanced and high intermediate ESL learners and compared it to data from NS controls to investigate the drawing of two types of inferences, presuppositions and implications. The learners performed better with implications than with presuppositions; Carrell’s results also revealed that the semantic content of the verb (positive or negative, factive or non-factive) used in the utterance had an effect on learners’ ability to make inferences. Carrell concluded that the learners were in the process of acquiring the ability to make inferences in English, but that “this aspect of pragmatic competence appears to be related to overall ability in English” (p. 14). It should be noted that the procedure for Carrell’s study was essentially her reading of 32 premise-conclusion test items; subjects in the study then made true-false judgments about each utterance. Thus her study focuses less on the use of *context* and more on the understanding of *semantic content* in making inferences; one would indeed expect the latter to be closely related to overall proficiency in English.

In a 1983 report, Devine questioned the universality of the Gricean maxims (Grice, 1975), stating that “the failure to recognize implicature is related to the conversational expectations of the interlocutors and that these expectations may vary because of cultural or situational constraints on the operation of these rules” (p. 203). In her study, Devine used a fairly small sample size (15 advanced-level NNSs from four language backgrounds and 15 NS controls) and an open-ended written instrument for data collection to investigate the ability to understand implications in a second language. One

interesting aspect of Devine's study is that she looked into the type of maxim violation (quantity, quality, relation, or manner) and found NNSs closest to NSs in their interpretations of implicatures related to the maxims of quality and manner, and furthest in their interpretations of those related to relation and quantity (pp. 199-200). Rather inexplicably, a full 44% of Devine's NS respondents also failed to understand the violation of the maxim of quantity (p. 200).

Bouton (1988) attempted to elicit data on NNS interpretations of implicatures in English using the same kind of instrument that Devine had used. He found the open-ended form of elicitation problematic, however, due to the fact that "the individually crafted paraphrases by both the NS and the NNS could often be either taken literally or read as if the answer, like the utterance in the question itself, contained an implicature" (Bouton, 1992, pp. 43-44). Much of Bouton's pilot study data was unusable due to this ambiguity; in effect, the subjects had turned the tables on the researcher with their own indirect responses. Ultimately, Bouton developed a 33-item multiple-choice questionnaire which featured implicatures related to understated criticism, sequence of events, irony, and what Bouton calls "the POPE Q," i.e., the "Is the pope Catholic?"-type of retort (1992, p. 54). Bouton used this instrument to test the ability to interpret implicature of 731 NNS subjects from eight culturally and linguistically homogeneous groups, all of whom were incoming international students at a university in the Midwest. Bouton compared their responses to those of 28 NSs of American English, and later to 28 and 15 NSs of British and Canadian English, respectively. Thus Bouton seems to be on safer ground, statistically, than Devine. In general, Bouton found that his NNS subjects interpreted the implicatures found in the contextualized dialogues on the test differently from the NS subjects, and that the difference was significant (1988, p. 187). In particular, in comparing the performances of the different language groups, he found that "culture-based groups can differ from each other both in the extent to which their interpretations are like those of the NS, and also in the type of interpretations that they do make when they differ from the NS" (1992, p. 53) as well as that "implicatures themselves can differ in terms of the inferential process necessary in order to interpret them satisfactorily—and of the relative ease with which they can be taught and/or

learned” (1992, p. 53).

Four and a half years after conducting the original project described above, Bouton (1994) re-tested 30 of the 60 original subjects who were still on campus. He reported that, while a statistically significant difference remained between the scores of the NSs and those of the NNSs, “clearly the scope of the difference between NS and NNS interpretations of implicature had greatly diminished” during the four and a half years that these learners had spent studying and living at a university in the United States (1994, p. 161). Moreover, the only specific type of implicature that remained problematic for the NNS participants was *irony* (Bouton, 1999, p. 59). Interestingly, in both the original and the four-and-one-half-year follow-up studies, Bouton found “little meaningful correlation” (1994, p. 160) between scores on his implicature questionnaire and on a battery of proficiency tests that had been administered to his subjects at the same time. This led him to posit that “we cannot measure a person’s ability to interpret implicature by using a general language proficiency test” like that used at his university (1994, p. 161).

In the next phase of this series of studies, Bouton re-tested a group of subjects ( $N=34$ ) 17 months and, again, 33 months after their original participation in the project in order to explore how the ability to process implicature may develop over time (1994, p. 164). He found a narrowing gap between the performances of the NNSs and the NS controls, but a gap that was still statistically significant. Meanwhile, the difference between the 17-month and 33-month scores was *not* statistically significant, which suggested to Bouton that “overall growth in the ability of NNSs to interpret American English implicatures was rather slow after the first 17 months” (Bouton, 1999, p. 56).

While Bouton’s findings are interesting, they also raise a few questions. First, Bouton tells us nothing about the ages at testing of his subjects—NSs or NNSs—although it is certainly possible that age could affect the ability to make inferences for both groups, especially if the NSs were, for example, university faculty and the NNSs were all recent high school graduates. Moreover, Bouton does not indicate whether he controlled for prior exposure to spoken English among the NNS subjects. For example, had any of his subjects ever lived in or spent a significant amount of time in a country where English

was the native language? Even with TOEFL scores in the same general range, it is difficult to predict what the aural and pragmatic comprehension of American English of a NNS learning in an EFL setting might be, given the variability among cultures and individuals in terms of ease of access to and desirability of exposure to American culture in the form of native speakers, movies, and radio and television programs. Finally, I believe that the written instrument Bouton used, including the fact that he imposed no time limit on the filling out of the questionnaires, could be improved upon to better reflect the actual situational demands on learners trying to make sense of indirectness in spoken English.

Several authors have encountered problems with or suggested possible improvements to the classic DCT and multiple-choice questionnaire instruments so frequently used in pragmatics research. Nelson, Carson, Al Batal, and El Bakary (2002), in their study comparing strategy use in Egyptian Arabic and American English refusals, found disparity between data obtained by means of an oral DCT (with audiotaped responses) and post-test interviews with the subjects, and concluded that “the DCT may not capture the sociopragmatic complexity of refusing in Egyptian Arabic” (p. 183). The subjects had been instructed to refuse in each situation on the instrument, although the Egyptian interviewees later stated that they would not have felt it possible to refuse in certain status-unequal situations if they actually faced them.

Yamashita (1996) investigated the effectiveness of six measures for evaluating the cross-cultural pragmatics of NSs of English learning Japanese in Japan: two oral production measures, two forms of self-assessment, and two written DCTs, one open-ended and the other multiple-choice. The multiple-choice DCT (MCDCT) was the only one of the six measures Yamashita used that did not have a high reliability estimate (p. 56). She suggested that one problem with this instrument in her study was that strategies used in the measures of pragmatic production (role play and open-ended DCT) by both NSs in a pilot study and by the NNS participants from all proficiency levels “were not represented in the MCDCT,” and concluded that “authentic Japanese language data should have been studied, and the MCDCT should have been adapted or revised based on both the pilot data and authentic data” (p. 78). Discussing practicality issues

related to the various measures, Yamashita says:

The least practical test seems to be the role play test because it takes time, and it requires an interlocutor and raters, as well as equipment such as a video camera, videotape, and so forth and a room for videotaping. However, the role play test elicited the results closest to natural and authentic interactions. (Yamashita, 1996, p. 75)

Billmyer and Varghese (2000) investigated the effect of enhancing a DCT with enriched contextual information in their study, which focused on request strategies by NSs and NNSs of English. They found that the enriched prompts seemed to help the subjects personalize their request strategies, rendering them more complex (p. 541) and, presumably, less abrupt.<sup>1</sup>

All of these examples examining the type of instrument used for data elicitation focus on pragmatic production. In the case of a large number of subjects in a production-oriented study, it is understandable that a written instrument, which is generally quite easy to score, may seem to be the best data-gathering option to a researcher contemplating the evaluation of hundreds of audiotapes or videotapes of subject performances. However, to test L2 pragmatic *comprehension*, the presenting of material in the target language on video is appealing for the opportunity to provide more realistic contextual support than could be offered on even an enriched-context written instrument. As part of a study they conducted with both ESL and EFL learners, Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei used a video instrument to present a judgment task aimed at determining the learners' awareness of pragmatic *versus* grammatical errors and their assessments of the seriousness of each type of error. In discussing their use of videotaped role plays for this purpose, the researchers explained:

We used a videotape rather than written scenarios because the richness of the contextual information provided by the video recording allowed the learners to view

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<sup>1</sup> It seems likely that this contextual enrichment would be especially useful for subjects with an L1 encoded with a high degree of sensitivity to relative social status of interlocutors, such as Japanese. Discussing Japanese L1 strategies for expressing gratitude and for refusing, respectively, Ikoma (1993, p. 48) and Kinjo (1987, p. 95) state that among status equals, Japanese NSs tend toward more direct, even abrupt, SA realization strategies. The overly direct responses by Japanese ESL learners on traditional DCTs lacking contextual enrichment may be due in part to this tendency, a kind of negative L1 transfer.

the type of interaction that best captures the sense of pragmatic infelicities.

(Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998, p. 242)

To test the ability to draw correct inferences of Japanese learners of American English without relying solely on a written instrument, I developed a video-based pragmatic comprehension test consisting of 12 excerpts from six types of television programs and an accompanying 12-item multiple-choice questionnaire. For each question, the subjects were to (a) view the vignette, (b) make an inference as to the speaker's message or intention based on what they had just seen and heard, and (c) indicate the contextual clue(s) that they had used to make each inference. Japanese learners of ESL at varied proficiency levels were targeted for participation, including both those in intensive ESL programs and those not enrolled in any ESL courses but in content courses only, in an attempt to examine how proficiency and length of residence in the United States may interact in the development of the ability to draw correct inferences. The purpose of the study was twofold: to see, first, what benefits and problems might result from using a video instrument in this way, and second, to determine to what degree performance on the questionnaire would be influenced by the subjects' proficiency and length of residence in the United States. My research questions were:

1. Will NSs of Japanese perform differently than NSs of American English on the questionnaire?
2. Assuming the answer to the question above is "yes," of higher proficiency and longer term of residence in the U.S., which will be the more important predictor of success on the questionnaire by the Japanese learners?
3. Do Japanese learners who answer an item incorrectly on the questionnaire fail to notice the contextual clues used by the NSs for that vignette?
4. Do some inference types seem more difficult than others for the Japanese learners?

## METHOD

### *Participants*

*Native speakers of English.* Thirteen NSs of American English were included in the study to provide a standard by which to judge the Japanese participants' performance on the video questionnaire. NSs representing a wide range of ages were included to insure that the "NS-standard" interpretations of indirectness did not reflect a generational influence related to, for example, the genres of the programs represented on the individual video clips. The average age of the NS subjects was 39.08 years, and the age range was 15 to 76.

*Japanese speakers of ESL.* Because the purpose of this study was to see how L2 proficiency and length of residence in the target language culture affect comprehension of indirectness and the ability to make inferences, Japanese speakers of ESL representing a range within each of those variables were included. A total of 43 Japanese subjects participated in the study, representing four groups: 10 students from a beginner-level ESL class at a private university in Honolulu, 12 intermediate-level students from the same institution, 7 intermediate-level students in an intensive English program at a university in the Midwest, and 14 graduate students at the same Midwestern university who were not (or were no longer) enrolled in any ESL courses. The average age of the Japanese participants was 24.04, with an age range of 18 to 38 years.

### *Materials*

A cloze test whose validity (correlation of  $r=.90$  with the English Language Placement Examination at the University of California at Los Angeles) had been reported by Brown (cited in Brown, 1988, p. 51) was used to determine the English proficiency of the NNS subjects. In addition to the cloze test, the materials for this study consisted of two different background information sheets, one for NSs and another for NNSs (Appendix A); the videotape (see Appendix B); and the multiple-choice questionnaire (Appendix C). The video included 12 excerpts from recently aired television programs.

Care was taken to include video clips from a variety of programs (e.g., comedy shows, interview programs, group discussion situations, daytime dramas). To avoid overloading the attentional resources of the participants by requiring that they adjust to a dozen different contexts and casts of characters, when possible, more than one video clip from the same program was used (see video script in Appendix D). For each situation, there was one multiple-choice question aiming at the correct interpretation of indirect speech or inference (where “correct” means conforming to the NS standard), and, directly below that, a space for the subjects to note the contextual clue(s) they had used to make their choice from among the four multiple-choice options.

### ***Procedures***

All participants completed a background information sheet, answering questions about their native language, other languages spoken, time lived abroad, etc. The cloze test was administered to the NNSs to assess their level of proficiency in English. Questionnaire forms were distributed, and the two sample vignettes were viewed and discussed by the group. Answers to the accompanying questions and examples of contextual clues were suggested and noted on the questionnaire forms by the subjects. Once it was clear that the subjects understood the procedure, the test was begun. (In the case of the two Midwestern university groups, the test was administered by a trained assistant.) Before showing each of the 12 vignettes, the test administrator read the brief description of the scene and characters written on the questionnaire form. These descriptions were provided to help introduce the subjects to the kind of conversation they were about to view. The test administrator was also able to model the pronunciation of any character names that would be used in the dialogues at this time by freeze-framing the start of each vignette and pointing out the characters in the scene by name. Subjects were not permitted to read any question before viewing the videoclip it accompanied. After a vignette was shown, a one-minute pause was taken before cueing the next vignette to allow the participants time to answer the accompanying multiple-choice question and respond to the contextual clue question. The NNS subjects were given the option of writing these clue responses in Japanese.

### ***Data Analysis***

Descriptive statistics for performance on the implicature questionnaire by the two subject groups, NSs and NNSs, were calculated. A *t*-test was performed to investigate the possibility that a significant difference existed between the means for the two groups. Correlations between each of the independent variables (proficiency and length of residence) and scores on the questionnaire (the dependent variable) were calculated. The NS and NNS subjects were sub-categorized by proficiency and length of residence group status, and differences in the means by group were examined using one-way analyses of variance and Bonferroni *t*-tests. Results from the above analyses appear in Tables 1-7. All analyses were performed using SPSS11.5-J. Although earlier studies by Bouton had found no correlation between his subjects' proficiency and their scores on his implicature questionnaire, suggesting the possibility of a similar outcome in this study, because this project is not a replication of Bouton's work, the alpha level here was set at .05, nondirectional. Since two ANOVAs and one *t*-test are conducted in this study, the Bonferroni adjustment was used to maintain an approximate experiment-wise alpha level of .05. Thus the alpha level for individual decisions was set at .017.

When each of the 12 televised vignettes was selected for inclusion on the video instrument, it was categorized by the type of implicature required to interpret it, e.g., irony, implied negative comparison/evaluation, parody, rhetorical question, etc. The relative difficulty of a specific test item was examined by calculating, for each item on the questionnaire, the percentages of NSs and NNSs whose responses conformed to the NS standard. The NNS scores were recalculated by residence group and proficiency group, to see if any patterns relating to implicature type could be identified by comparing "success rates" for each item by group.

Finally, to evaluate the contextual clue data, the NS responses were first categorized and tallied. The NNS questionnaire forms were then examined to see, for those subjects who had indicated the clue(s) they had used to answer a particular item, whether those who had successfully answered a particular item on the questionnaire had noted similar clues to those used by the NSs, and if the reverse were true as well. Because the pattern of response to the elicitation of contextual clue data was not uniform—that is, some

subjects provided clues for each vignette, some only for certain vignettes, and some for none at all—contextual clue data is not presented in table form and is therefore not addressed in the **RESULTS** section; instead, all contextual clues written by the NNSs on the questionnaire forms are listed in Appendix E, and noteworthy examples of contextual clue use are presented in the Discussion section.

## RESULTS

NS and NNS means on the questionnaire were calculated and are listed in Table 1, along with the ranges of scores. The difference between the means of the NSs and NNSs was found to be statistically significant on the basis of a *t*-test ( $t=7.41, df=54, p=.000$ ). The NS mean value of 11.08 represents a 92% rate of agreement among the NSs on the implicature test. The NNS mean value of 6.12 represents a 51% rate of agreement with the NS standard on the test. The modes and medians for the NSs and NNSs were (11, 11) and (7, 6), respectively. An internal consistency analysis for the video-based questionnaire showed a Cronbach alpha estimate of .58.

Table 1  
*Summary of Questionnaire Results*

Statistic	NSs	NNSs
<i>N</i>	13	43
Mean	11.08	6.12
Standard deviation	0.76	2.36
% of items answered correctly	92	52
Range	3(10~12)	10(2~11)

Pearson's *r* correlation coefficients were calculated for both of the independent

variables, proficiency and length of residence, to assess which of them was the better predictor of success on the implicature questionnaire. The correlations between questionnaire scores and each of the independent variables were statistically significant ( $df=41, p=.001$ , two-tailed); contrary to what was expected, however, the correlation coefficient for proficiency was fairly high ( $r=.603$ ), higher than that for length of residence ( $r=.497$ ).

Because the results of the correlation calculations suggested that the effect of proficiency in this study differed from what had been expected based upon Bouton’s work (Bouton, 1994, p. 160), the NNS subjects were divided into proficiency groups for further analysis. This was done to see if the correlational differences found between implicature questionnaire score and proficiency in Bouton’s studies and the present study may be related to the fact that, while 95% of Bouton’s subjects had scores between 500 and 600 on the TOEFL, with a range of 467~672 (Bouton, 1988, p. 186)—a relatively high proficiency level—the subjects in the present study represented a wider range of levels (cloze score range=3~49 out of 50). The 13 NSs were assigned a proficiency group of their own, while the 43 NNSs were divided according to performance on the cloze test, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

*Subjects divided into proficiency groups*

Group	<i>N</i>	Proficiency level	Mean
1	16	<25% (=12 items or fewer correct out of 50 on cloze test)	5.12
2	9	25~49% (13~24 items correct)	5.00
3	9	50~74% (25~37 items correct)	6.56
4	9	75~100% (38~50 items correct)	8.56
5	13	Native speaker	11.08

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and follow-up Bonferroni *t*-tests were performed to quantify and examine the significance of differences in performance on the questionnaire by proficiency group. The ANOVA showed that the differences in means among the various proficiency groups were significant,  $F(df\ 4, 51) = 26.27, p=.000$  (see Table 3). The results of the Bonferroni analysis appear in Table 4. The performance on the questionnaire by NNSs differed significantly ( $p=.017$ ) from that of NSs for all four NNS proficiency groups. Differences in means were also significant between groups 1 and 4 ( $p=.000$ ) and groups 2 and 4 ( $p=.001$ ).

Table 3  
*Results of ANOVA for Proficiency Group Means*

	Sum of squares	<i>df</i>	Mean square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between groups	327.865	4	81.966	26.272	.000
Within groups	159.118	51	3.120		
Total	486.982	55			

Another one-way ANOVA and follow-up Bonferroni *t*-tests were performed by dividing the 13 NSs and 43 NNSs into groups by length of residence. This was done to see if the correlation found between implicature questionnaire score and residence fell into any patterns according to group. Bouton (1999, p. 59) had compared group performances on his questionnaire using 17-month- and 54-month- cut-off points. For this analysis, NSs were assigned a residence group of their own, and, following Bouton, the variable of NNS length of residence was operationalized as shown in Table 5.

Table 4

*Differences Between Means for Each Pairwise Comparison by Proficiency Group*

(I) Subjects divided by proficiency group	(J) Subjects divided by proficiency group	Mean difference (I-J)	<i>p</i>
1	2	.1250	1.000
	3	-1.4306	.575
	4	-3.4306(*)	.000
	5	-5.9519(*)	.000
2	1	-.1250	1.000
	3	-1.5556	.675
	4	-3.5556(*)	.001
	5	-6.0769(*)	.000
3	1	1.4306	.575
	2	1.5556	.675
	4	-2.0000	.200
	5	-4.5214(*)	.000
4	1	3.4306(*)	.000
	2	3.5556(*)	.001
	3	2.0000	.200
	5	-2.5214	.018
5 (NSs)	1	5.9519(*)	.000
	2	6.0769(*)	.000
	3	4.5214(*)	.000
	4	2.5214	.018

\* The mean difference is significant at the .017 level.

Table 5

*Subjects Divided into Residence Groups*

Group	<i>N</i>	Length of residence	Mean
1	26	Short-term (0~17 mos.)	5.34
2	10	Medium-term (18~53 mos.)	6.30
3	10	Long-term (54 mos.+)	8.71
4	13	Native speaker	11.08

Table 6 shows the results of the ANOVA comparing the means of the four residence groups. The difference between group means was found to be significant,  $F(df\ 3, 52) = 29.999, p=.000$ , and so the Bonferroni *t*-tests were performed again as for the proficiency groups. The Bonferroni *t*-test results shown in Table 7 indicate that significant differences in means on the questionnaire can be found between the NS group and both short- and medium-term residents ( $p=.000$ ). A significant difference in means can also be seen between short-term and long-term NNS groups ( $p=.000$ ); however, there was *no* significant difference found between the means of the long-term NNS residents and the NS group. (*n.b.*, This was also checked with the more conservative Scheffé analysis and remained true.)

Table 6

*Results of ANOVA for Residence Group Means*

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Between groups	308.646	3	102.882	29.999	.000
Within groups	178.336	52	3.430		
Total	486.982	55			

Table 7

*Differences in Means for Each Pairwise Comparison by Residence Group*

(I) Subjects divided by residence group	(J) Subjects divided by residence group	Mean difference (I-J)	p
Short-term	Medium	-.9538	1.000
	Long	-3.3681(*)	.000
	NS	-5.7308(*)	.000
Medium-term	Short	0.9538	1.000
	Long	-2.4143	.065
	NS	-4.7769(*)	.000
Long-term	Short	3.3681(*)	.000
	Medium	2.4143	.065
	NS	-2.3626	.053
Native speaker	Short	5.7308(*)	.000
	Medium	4.7769(*)	.000
	Long	2.3626	.053

\* The mean difference is significant at the .017 level.

After calculating correlations and comparing means among groups, the questionnaire items were examined individually to assess their relative difficulty. The percentages of items correctly answered are shown in Table 8 (by residence group) and in Table 9 (by proficiency group).

Table 8

*Percent Success Rate on Questionnaire, Item-By-Item, by Residence Group*

Item	NS	NNS*	NNSs by residence group**		
			short	Medium	Long
1	92	65	62	60	71
2	100	86	81	90	100
3	70	56	42	70	71
4	92	58	42	80	86
5	92	65	38	70	71
6	100	28	31	20	29
7	100	60	50	50	100
8	85	21	11	30	43
9	100	56	50	50	86
10	77	51	42	40	100
11	100	35	35	40	29
12	100	37	19	40	100

\*  $N = 43$

\*\* Group success rates: short=45%, medium=52%, long=73%; See Table 4 for group definitions.

Table 9

*Percent Success Rate on Questionnaire, Item-By-Item, by Proficiency Group*

Item	NNSs by proficiency group**					
	NS	NNS*	1	2	3	4
1	92	65	44	56	89	89
2	100	86	81	78	89	100
3	70	56	44	67	56	44
4	92	58	50	33	56	100
5	92	65	62	56	67	78
6	100	28	44	11	22	22
7	100	60	31	67	78	89
8	85	21	19	11	11	44
9	100	56	44	56	67	67
10	77	51	38	33	56	89
11	100	35	38	11	22	56
12	100	37	12	22	56	78

\*  $N = 43$

\*\* Group success rates: Group 1=43%, Group 2=42%, Group 3=55%, Group 4=71%;  
See Table 2 for group definitions.

## DISCUSSION

It is clear that there was a significant difference in the average performance of the NSs and NNSs on the 12-item questionnaire used in this study, at 92% and 51% agreement rates with the NS standard, respectively. As a point of reference, the NSs in Bouton's study ( $N=28$ ) had an agreement rate of 86% on his original 33-item test (Bouton, 1988, p. 186). Fine-tuning his multiple-choice questionnaire as he repeated his study with different groups of NNSs, Bouton deleted five items that had appeared on the original instrument and his NS agreement rate rose to 90% (1999, p. 52). (In the process, the agreement rate of Bouton's original NNS subjects also rose, from 75% to 80%.) It is

likely that the NSs in this study—even while operating under the time constraint of the advancing videotape, in contrast to the NSs completing the written questionnaire under no time constraint in Bouton's study—benefited from the availability of valuable audiovisual clues such as tone of voice, body language, etc. (see Appendix E) in interpreting the inferences found in the videotaped vignettes; this could explain the fairly high NS agreement on the admittedly unrefined questionnaire used in this study (see discussion below).

The correlation between NNS scores on the questionnaire used in this study and on the cloze test is fairly strong ( $r=.603$ ), especially for two tests that are quite different in nature, the cloze test being a written measure of general proficiency and the video-based questionnaire being a measure of aural comprehension of indirectness. The shared variance ( $r^2$ ) between the two measures is just over 36%, indicating that a relationship does exist between these two variables for this group of NNS subjects, one that is certainly not negligible. On the other hand, the correlation between NNS scores and length of residence reveals less shared variance, with a Pearson's  $r$  of .497, indicating that the overlap between these two variables, for this group of NNSs, is under 25%. Therefore, the situation for this NNS sample seems to be that general English proficiency (as measured by the cloze test) is a better predictor of success on this video-based questionnaire than length of residence in the culture of the target language.

As was pointed out in the **RESULTS** section, Bouton had found no significant correlation between the questionnaire scores of his NNS subjects and their proficiency, as measured by the written proficiency tests administered to all incoming international students at the institution where his study was conducted (1999, p. 160). He indicated that the TOEFL scores of 90% of his NNS subjects were between 500 and 600, with a mean of 554 (Bouton 1988, p. 186). The NNSs who took part in this study, by contrast, seem to represent a broader range of proficiency levels, with a mean on the 50-item proficiency test administered to them of 22.33 and a range of 47 (minimum 3, maximum 49). It is possible that the different relationships found in Bouton's work and in this study between proficiency and performance on the respective implicature tests are related to this difference in the two groups of subjects. Bouton's NNS sample, while much larger

than the NNS sample in this study, was also more homogeneous in proficiency, and this may have precluded a significant effect of proficiency on his subjects' questionnaire scores.

In a study which focused on the SA of suggestion in Spanish, Koike (1996) found a proficiency effect in the recognition of intent of the SA and the perception of speaker attitude by the subjects, 114 NSs of English. The SAs were performed as role-play monologues on videotape by NSs of Spanish. In general, Koike found that subjects at the lower proficiency levels (those enrolled in first- and second-year Spanish courses at the college level) comprehended the global intent of the SAs only one-fourth to one-third of the time, while the advanced subjects (third- and fourth-year students) were "much more competent in understanding the true intent of the speech acts" (p. 274), i.e., more than half of the time. Koike's results suggest that some intermediate level of proficiency may have been required for the subjects to correctly interpret the intent and judge the attitudes of the speakers in the videotaped scenarios even only about half of the time. The same seems to be true in the present study, as seen in Table 9.

Another difference between the present study and Bouton's work is that, while Bouton found a statistically significant difference between NS and NNS scores remaining even after the NNSs had spent 4.5 years in the target language culture (Bouton, 1994, p. 161), and in another sample, from 4-7 years (1999, p. 59), in this study the group mean for subjects who were in the highest NNS residency group, that is, who had spent 4.5 years or more in the United States, was *not* significantly different from the NS mean at  $p=.05$  (see Table 7). In fact, on 9 out of 12 questionnaire items the members of this residency group (long) achieved a 50% or better success rate, including four items, one-third of the entire test, for which the rate of agreement with the NS standard was 100% (see Table 8).

Similarly, Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) compared acceptability ratings of positive politeness strategies in Hebrew by NSs and by learners of Hebrew as a second language and found an "increasing approximation of native response patterns, as a function of the nonnatives' length of stay in the target speech community" (p. 303). Specifically, the ratings of learners of Hebrew who had lived in the target language

community for over 10 years were not significantly different from those of native speakers, in contrast to the ratings of Olshtain and Blum-Kulka's short-term (under 2 years) and medium-term residents (2-10 years).

In her detailed report of the results of six measures of pragmatic competence administered to 47 North Americans studying Japanese at several universities in Japan, Yamashita (1996) found significant differences for both proficiency level and length of residence on the two oral production measures used in the study (p. 77). In one example cited in the report, Yamashita noted that the refusal strategies of two subjects who had been assigned to the beginning level of the Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) course (based on placement test scores) were evaluated very differently by NS raters.<sup>2</sup> One of these subjects had arrived in Japan just two weeks before Yamashita conducted her study, and is in fact therefore identified in the study as a student of Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) rather than of JSL. The other subject in the example had been working in Japan for two years prior to enrolling in the JSL course. In her role play performance, the JFL student was "not able to use clear refusal strategies" and in fact "depended totally on oral interpretation by the [NS] interlocutor" (p. 71). On the other hand, the JSL subject was evaluated positively for "successfully refusing the interlocutor's request in a sophisticated way, or very indirect way, as most native Japanese would do..." (p. 71), i.e., by utilizing strategies such as repetition, hedging, expressing difficulty should he accept the request, etc., in order to lead the interlocutor to *infer* his refusal. Based on the overall results of her study, Yamashita suggests that pragmatic oral production may be associated with living in a target culture (p. 69). If this is the case for pragmatic oral production, it would certainly be true as well for pragmatic comprehension, the focus of this paper.

Investigating the degree to which performance on the questionnaire was influenced by the Japanese subjects' levels of proficiency and length of residence in the United States was one of the purposes of this study. The other was to see what benefits and problems might result from using a video-based instrument to test the inferencing ability of Japanese learners of American English. In general, I identify four arguments in favor

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<sup>2</sup> The placement test at the institution where these subjects were studying JSL included measures of aural comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and reading (Yamashita, 1996, p. 71).

of using a video instrument:

**1. To enhance contextual information.** This is the obvious advantage of a video-based versus purely paper-and-pencil test of pragmatic comprehension, particularly the interpretation of indirectness, for which clues such as setting, tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures can convey so much meaning.<sup>3</sup> Brown posits that even advanced foreign language learners continue to have difficulty in drawing appropriate inferences because they tend to process what they hear sentence-by-sentence, each in isolation (1995, p. 68). In so doing, they seem to rely on the data-driven processing that Kasper describes (1984) and fail to access the frame-driven processing needed to construct the inference which makes sense of the whole. The availability of both audio and visual input on a videotape may help L2 learners balance the two kinds of processing, allowing them to draw the correct inference more easily than they could simply by reading contextual information on a written questionnaire.

**2. To make input as authentic as possible.** Except for interviews on news and talk shows, and conversations on panel discussion programs, most of what is seen and heard on television is scripted; however, Judd (1999) argues that snippets of television programs “provide natural language samples because they were not originally designed for teaching purposes but for genuine communication” (p. 158). Stempleski says that many teachers use authentic video in L2 classrooms even though there is not yet much definitive research on its effectiveness. She cites the fact that it is “real” language, not graded for ESL/EFL levels, as one of several advantages it offers (Stempleski, 1990, pp. 8-9). Washburn (2001) also argues the advantages of using television, particularly situation comedies. She distinguishes among the various genres available on television regarding the level of scriptedness of programs and characterizes authenticity as “a matter of degree, rather than as a dichotomy” (Washburn, 2001, p. 22). Washburn charges that the materials developed explicitly for teaching pragmatic language use are “basically

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<sup>3</sup> These clues can convey meaning to raters of pragmatic competence tests as well: in Yamashita’s study described above, the same expressions, used in the same situations, were evaluated by the Japanese NS raters positively on some measures of pragmatic ability and negatively on others, depending on the appropriateness of the intonation used by the subjects (Yamashita, 1996, p. 73).

impoverished in terms of the characters, their relationships and motivations, and even the language” (p. 22).

**3. To provide a more “natural” test condition related to the constraints of processing time.** Language learners experience definite real-time constraints on the processing of L2 input—they cannot pause, back up, and re-play what a speaker has said, although they can request clarification, provided they are in a setting which allows for negotiation of meaning with the speaker. In real life, therefore, their pragmatic comprehension is being “tested” constantly, so a *test* measuring pragmatic comprehension of spoken language should surely simulate that condition; this would be difficult if not impossible to accomplish with a written instrument alone.

**4. To make use of available technology.** Feak and Salehzadeh (2001), who developed a video listening placement assessment to replace the former audio-only listening assessment used to test incoming international students at their university, put it this way: “With video technology so accessible these days, an audio-only listening assessment seemed like an anachronism” (p. 482).

These are some general advantages of using a video-based instrument to measure pragmatic comprehension. One specific problem related to instrumentation encountered in this study is not one inherent with the use of video; rather it is that the questionnaire for both the NSs and NNSs was presented in English only. Failing to translate the questionnaire into Japanese may have turned what might otherwise have been a true test of the ability of the NNSs to draw correct inferences from spoken English into one that was more closely tied to their L2 reading proficiency, a certain level of which was a precondition to success on the questionnaire. Translating the questionnaire into Japanese might have run the risk of subject expectancy problems, since by reading the situations and questions in their L1 the subjects might have been better able to “figure out” what the point of the study was; however, that would have been a small risk to take. There is a very good chance that the correlation between proficiency and score on the questionnaire would have been different if the subjects at lower proficiency levels had not had to face the barrier of the limits of their own L2 reading ability. Indeed, on one item, a subject at a lower proficiency level who did not select any of the four multiple-choice options

indicated in the clue responses section (writing in Japanese) that he had not understood the question, but he proceeded to write the exact translation of one of the clues that successful NSs and NNSs had used to arrive at the correct answer. In other words, he did draw the correct inference of the speaker's meaning; he simply was unable to recognize that inference in written English.

One year before the present study was conducted, when the video instrument and questionnaire were pilot-tested, NNS proficiency assessments had been made by simply relying on the NNS subjects' self-reports of their most recent TOEFL scores; the unreliability of that method was seen as the biggest problem in interpreting the pilot study data. In this study, proficiency was uniformly measured at the time the video-based questionnaire was administered, but the results of the project might have been of greater interest if the proficiency test had measured *listening* comprehension and the questionnaire had been translated into the subjects' L1, making it a truer test of pragmatic comprehension.

Still, all of the NNS subjects were 18 years or older, and since none had indicated on their background information forms that they had received any part of their secondary education outside of Japan, it can be assumed that all of them had completed the six years of English study that are compulsory in Japanese junior and senior high schools prior to their arrival in the United States. In other words, even those assigned to the lowest proficiency group (see Table 2) were almost certainly not actual beginners at the study of English. Moreover, the proficiency test they took as part of this study was one that required both receptive and productive skills (the cloze test), while the video-based questionnaire they filled out required only receptive skills, listening and reading. (While they had been asked to provide contextual clue data, they were not required to do so.) In other words, their ability to *comprehend* spoken and written English may have been higher than their cloze test scores might suggest. In fact, some of the subjects who were assigned to the lower two proficiency groups (i.e., they scored less than 50% correct on the cloze test) scored higher on the video-based questionnaire than some subjects in the higher two proficiency groups, and wrote appropriate contextual clues in doing so, indicating that their relatively successful performance on the questionnaire was not

simply a matter of lucky guesswork.

Although I believe that having used a videotape as part of the instrument is one of the strengths of this study, one weakness already identified is the problem of not having translated the questionnaire into Japanese. Both of these methodological factors may have negatively influenced the reliability estimate obtained for the questionnaire. Although a videotape instrument does probably provide for a more “natural” test condition in terms of processing time, as discussed above, it may be that reliability estimates tend to be lower for tests that incorporate an instrument-based time pressure factor in this way. In this study, the small number of items on the questionnaire (12) and the quality of some of the items themselves may also have contributed to the low reliability estimate. Because the reliability of the instrument is relatively low, the results of this study should be interpreted cautiously.

Another weakness I have identified in this study, which may also be associated with the relatively low reliability coefficient obtained for the questionnaire, concerns the quality of several of the items on the multiple-choice questionnaire. It comes as no surprise that 100% agreement was not achieved among the NS subjects on all of the items on the questionnaire—after all, indirectness *is* indirectness, and one of a number of reasons why it may be used in a particular situation is precisely to see who “gets it” and who doesn’t, or as Gibbs (1994) says, who shares “common ground” (p. 114). Still, I have identified three items on the questionnaire that were problematic because of the way they were written, or because of their subject matter. (Please refer to the video script and questionnaire form in Appendices C and D for the next section, which addresses individual items on the questionnaire.)

First, Item 3 was missed by four of the 13 NSs, giving it the lowest agreement rate with the NS standard for this group of NSs. In this video clip, which features an excerpt from an episode of *Seinfeld*, Jerry Seinfeld’s frail-looking, elderly grandmother encounters a rough-looking young man in a dirty urban alley. She is looking for her bank, but unbeknownst to her the bank burned down and has been rebuilt elsewhere. The young man approaches her, unsmiling, amid wailing sirens; the music on the sound track for the audience is the sort that one hears in particularly tense moments in classic horror

movies. Once he learns what the woman is looking for, the young man speaks to her in a menacing, half-crazed tone, yelling at her that the bank *burned* and is *GONE*. The ironic humor of this scene is then revealed when, far from being the threat he had appeared to be, the young man suddenly becomes cheerful and even informative, advising the woman not only of her bank's new location but even telling her the name of the employee whom she should ask for help once she finds it. The scene ends with the young man cheerfully walking off down the alley, his good deed done, as the grandmother gapes after him. What is implied is the surprise she feels at having been helped rather than harmed by the young man, which was the idea behind option "c," the "NS standard" response on the questionnaire. However, all four of the NSs who missed Item 3 chose option "b," as did 74% of the 19 NNSs who missed it. In fact, "b" and "c" *together* best describe the reason for the woman's surprise: not only was the young man not dangerous (the gist of option "c"), but he actually advised her about where to find her bank and whom she should consult there (the gist of option "b"). The fact that the best answer was really a combination of these two options was even pointed out by one of the NNSs who missed the question (see Appendix E, contextual clue (16) under Item 3). Clearly, the distractors for this item should be revised, though the item itself is a vivid example of situational irony.

Item 10 was missed by three of the 13 NSs, and its relative difficulty for the NS subjects in this study can probably be explained by the topic which was the focus of the speakers' remarks, Hawaii Creole English, referred to by the speakers as "pidgin English." Only two of the 13 NSs were Hawaii residents, and those who were not had quite possibly never heard of "pidgin." The responses of these non-residents of Hawaii provided a good opportunity to see how NSs with no background knowledge (or preconceptions) of the topic would interpret the underlying negative evaluations given to pidgin English by the three people who talk about it in the political discussion featured in Item 10. Three out of 11 of the NSs who were not Hawaii residents missed the inference of negative evaluation, two believing that the speakers were evaluating pidgin as *superior to* (option "b") rather than *inferior to* standard English, and one apparently missing the direct statement by one of the three speakers that pidgin should not be used

in the classrooms of Hawaii. In this type of speech event, a panel discussion among candidates for political office, it is sometimes difficult even for NSs to pick up on the inferences being made by the interlocutors, and so it is rather surprising that the NNSs did not have more trouble than they did, managing 51% agreement with the NS standard to the NSs' 77%, one of the narrower NS-NNS gaps in performance on the entire test (see Tables 8 and 9). One NNS (incidentally, not a resident of Hawaii) who answered this item correctly wrote as his contextual clue that all three speakers in this scene "are aware that English is more powerful. Of course the two men didn't say so explicitly, but they know what pidgin's situation in general is." It is interesting that this subject recognizes that the negative comparison is implied, not "explicit"—and that he understands the inference strategy anyway.

Finally, Item 8 was missed by two of the 13 NSs; this is most likely attributable to the fact that among the distractors are the "both a and b" and "none of the above" types of options which can often create confusion among test-takers. This case was no exception to that tendency, because while only 15% of the NSs missed Item 8, 79% of the NNSs missed it, making it the most difficult item on the test for them. One those options should probably be revised.

While space does not permit an item-by-item discussion of the considerable contextual clue data provided by both NSs and NNSs (see Appendix E), a look at the clues written for even a few items indicates that the answer to Research Question #3 ("Do Japanese learners who answer an item incorrectly on the questionnaire fail to notice the contextual clues used by the NSs for that vignette?") is probably "yes."

In Item 2 we find Jerry Seinfeld and his new girlfriend in the middle of an argument, as she has discovered the greeting card she recently sent him in his wastebasket. He attempts to defend himself against her charge that he has no sentimentality, but she leaves in a huff. The implication in this skit was that, although Jerry liked the woman very much, he did not attach special importance to the fact that she had sent him a greeting card. The NS agreement rate for this item was 100%, and the success rate among NNSs was 86%, the highest for any item. In fact, only six of the 43 NNSs missed this item, and five of those six chose options "c" or "d." In doing so, they ignored the

clear signals given by Jerry and his girlfriend throughout the skit, and noticed by NSs, that both really were interested in each other. As one of the NSs specified in a clue response, the answer is “not ‘c’ since [Jerry] kept explaining himself,” the implication being that if Jerry didn’t really like his girlfriend, he would not be trying so hard to smooth over her hurt feelings about the greeting card. The NNSs who missed this item, on the other hand, wrote responses such as (6) and (7) for option “c,” focusing on the idea that Jerry’s having thrown away the card meant he did not really like his girlfriend. Those who chose option “d” seem to have inferred that the fact that the woman was upset with Jerry, (9), and that she left him in the apartment, (8), were proof that she did not really like him.

While Item 2 shows the smallest gap between NS and NNS performance, Item 6 shows the largest, with agreement rates of 100% and 28% with the NS standard, respectively. In the videoclip for this item, the interview between Larry King and Marlon Brando that was introduced in Item 4 continues, with a woman now calling in during the live interview show to ask why Brando, who is considered to be a very private person, has just written an autobiography. Brando begins meandering around the topic, and when King redirects him, Brando begins philosophizing that “money is everything...and it determines everything that we do.” King latches onto these words and turns them back on Brando, remarking facetiously, “So they paid you to do it,” as if this were indeed Brando’s answer, i.e., that he was motivated to write his book in order to make money. While all of the NSs recognized that this cynical implication by King was the target of the question for Item 6, most of the NNSs who missed this item chose option “d.” Brando had indeed described his desire to express his freedom in the writing of his autobiography in the previous vignette, and this is what he begins reiterating in the video clip for Item 6 before King redirects him to answer the caller’s specific question. The NNSs who were unsuccessful on this item seemed to favor option “d” because they had heard Brando use the words “freedom” and “expression” in the previous clip [see responses (50) to (53), (55) to (57), and (59)], apparently unaware that this item was actually asking about what King’s words implied, not Brando’s.

Another item for which the NSs showed 100% agreement and which proved much

more challenging for the NNSs was Item 12, on which their rate of agreement with the NS standard was only 37%. In this item, the sarcasm of Brooke appears to have been completely transparent to the NSs, four of whom in fact used the word “sarcasm” in their contextual clue responses. This recognition easily led them to option “d,” i.e., the idea that Brooke had no sympathy whatsoever for Adam and his problem with his son. The NNSs who missed this item, on the other hand, favored options “b” and “c,” the selection of either of which ignores the utterly disdainful and sarcastic attitude Brooke displays toward Adam throughout their conversation. For example, the NNS who wrote response (127) seems to have interpreted Brooke’s facetious replies to Adam’s questions as evidence of her intimidation by him, while the NNS who wrote response (130) may have transferred her own feelings toward Adam onto Brooke. The NNSs who chose option “c” seem to have mistaken Brooke’s dislike for Adam, which she strongly expresses via sarcasm, for feelings of regret or possibly guilt [see, e.g., response (131)].

Do some inference types seem to be more difficult than others for the Japanese learners? The NNS subjects certainly had higher agreement rates with the NS standard on some of the items than on others, but to answer this final research question, the 12 items on the questionnaire must first be categorized as to inference type. This is done in Table 10.

Table 10

*Types of inferences and success rates on the 12-item video-based questionnaire*

Item	Inference type	% agreement with NS standard	
		NSs	NNSs
1	facetious/sarcastic question	92	65
2	implied neg. evaluation	100	86
3	irony	70	56
4	violation of maxim of relevance	92	58
5	violation of maxim of relevance	92	65

6	cynicism/irony	100	28
7	parody	100	60
8	rhetorical question	85	21
9	implied neg. comparison	100	56
10	implied neg. comparison	77	51
11	sarcasm	100	35
12	sarcasm	100	37

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A relatively large gap between the NS-NNS percentages of agreement with the NS standard indicates that an item was relatively difficult for this group of NNSs. In descending order, the four most difficult items were: Item 6, Item 11, Item 8, and Item 12. The content of Items 6 and 12 have already been discussed above. Item 11 focuses on the use of sarcasm and features a classic setup to a sarcastic remark: (a) comment about a third party (in this case, Adam’s son Junior); (b) dramatic pause, while speaker looks at the target of the sarcastic remark to come; and (c) delivery of sarcastic remark: “Now let’s see...who does that *remind* me of?” From the fact that all of the NSs agreed on the interpretations of these three items, it seems clear that the use of sarcasm and cynical/ironic remarks are well-recognized strategies of indirect expression in American English.

Even for Item 8, already discussed above for the ill-phrased distractors in the multiple-choice question and relatively low agreement rate among the NSs, the contextual clues written by the NSs quite uniformly center around the rhetorical question posed by the man at the end of his interview in the news clip about the problems with Hawai‘i’s schools: “So who do we really blame for things that don’t work?” Most of the clues the NSs wrote for this item either paraphrased this question or otherwise referred to it, suggesting that the use of a rhetorical question is a familiar strategy among speakers of American English to indicate one’s inability or reluctance to go on the record about the topic under discussion (e.g., “Who knows?”; “What can you do?”).

Bouton had found that even after four and a half years of living and attending college in the United States, his NNS subjects continued to have trouble interpreting the following types of implicatures: sequence of events, understated criticism, the Pope-question, and irony (Bouton, 1994, 1999). While the present study did not include any sequence implicatures, irony was problematic for the NNSs here as well, as seen in Item 6, the most difficult item for them. Implied negative comparisons or criticisms were involved in the two “political” items, 9 and 10, but, at least on Item 10, the NNSs in the long-term residence group and the NNSs in the highest proficiency group *outperformed the NS group*, indicating that this type of inference was certainly not as difficult for them as other types. The implied negative evaluation in Item 2 (the discarded greeting card) was the easiest inference to draw for the NNSs as a whole.

Gibbs (1994) writes of the pervasiveness of poetic and non-literal thought in our everyday talk and notes that we use irony especially frequently, in part “because of a fundamental ability to conceptualize situations as being ironic” (p. 13). Gibbs posits that “in one form or another, almost all comedy contains irony” (p. 366). He considers sarcasm a form of irony (p. 372),<sup>4</sup> and says that sarcasm is sometimes conveyed “by mocking the kind of speech act a speaker utters,” as in:

A: Is she still mad at me?

B: Do birds fly? (mocks the act of interrogation)

A: I have a national reputation.

B: And I’m the Queen of England. (mocks a claim)

A: I promise this won’t hurt.

B: And the check is in the mail. (mocks a promise) (Gibbs, 1994, p. 378)

Thus, for Gibbs, the “Is the Pope Catholic?” type of remark, which Bouton treats as a separate category of implicature, would fall into the same category as the mocking question in the first of the three dialogues above, and would be regarded as a form of sarcasm (p. 378). If this definition of implicature types is accepted, both Bouton’s NNSs and the NNSs in this study found irony (and its sub-category, sarcasm) to be among the

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<sup>4</sup> Many comedy programs in the United States feature this type of humor. Two long-running comedy series which make frequent use of irony and sarcasm are *Seinfeld* and *Saturday Night Live*, excerpts from both of

most difficult implicature types. Note, however, that the agreement rates among NNSs in this study for Item 12, which focused on sarcasm, were 100% for the long-term residence group and 78% for the highest proficiency group, suggesting that the interpretation of irony can be learned.

There are no doubt a number of factors besides proficiency and length of residence in the target language culture that contribute to L2 learners' ability to interpret implicature. Included among them may be variables such as degree of interaction with NSs, field of study or occupation, amount of television viewing in the L2, and even sensitivity to indirectness in the L1 (positive pragmatic transfer). In the report of their replication of the 1998 study by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei on pragmatic assessment, Niezgodá and Röver ask whether proficiency or pragmatic awareness comes first, and how environment (ESL vs. EFL) influences the balance between grammatical and pragmatic awareness (Niezgodá & Röver, 2001, p. 78). They conclude that the answer lies in the interaction of individual learner characteristics and environment, rather than environment alone (p. 79). The same is probably true for the focus of the present study, the effects of proficiency and length of residence on pragmatic comprehension of indirectness. In future studies targeting pragmatic comprehension, it would be helpful to conduct retrospective interviews with the subjects to investigate why they made the choices they did on the instrument used. Information on variables such as those listed above could also be compiled during this type of interview, which might prove useful in understanding the development of pragmatic competence.

Twenty years ago, Thomas called upon teachers to draw on research to help students develop metapragmatic awareness, "so that they are able to express themselves as they choose" (1983, p. 91). In the interest of what she calls "fair play: giving the learners a fighting chance," Bardovi-Harlig advocates that L2 teachers provide authentic input and assist learners with comprehension (2001, p. 30). Kasper (1984) and Rose (1994) advocate pragmatic consciousness-raising, and Judd (1999) argues that failing to instruct ESL students in the pragmatic knowledge of English "can only expose [them] to frustration, and perhaps ridicule, when dealing with native speakers" (p. 160). Bouton

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which are included on the videotape used in this study (Items 1-3 and 7).

found that as little as six weeks of instruction in the interpreting of implicatures helped raise scores on his implicature questionnaire among newly arrived international students, to the point where, after instruction, there was no statistically significant difference between the instructed NNSs' scores and the scores of NNSs who had been studying in the United States from between 17 months to seven years, but who had received no explicit instruction in implicatures (Bouton, 1999, p. 65). Finally, while Kasper (1997) reminds us that pragmatic competence is something that is *developed*, not taught, she encourages teachers of foreign or second languages to "arrange learning opportunities" so as to maximize its development, and suggests that even short periods of instruction in pragmatics can be effective "when learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom are combined" (Kasper, 2001, p. 56).

Pragmatics experts thus seem to agree that instruction in pragmatics for ESL learners is desirable. Before pragmatic competence can be demonstrated using the productive skills, pragmatic comprehension must be developed using the receptive skills. Pragmatic consciousness-raising activities in the classroom can provide the input without which acquisition cannot take place. Rubin, for example, cites her own and others' research corroborating the watching of video in L2 classrooms and improvement in listening comprehension (1995, p. 152).

This study focuses on pragmatic comprehension of implicature. I believe that ESL instructors can help their students improve their comprehension of implicature by using videotapes of English-language television programs to introduce specific types of inferences. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) cite research estimating that "we listen to twice as much language as we speak, four times as much as we read, and five times as much as we write" (p. 102). If this is true for our students, we owe it to them to provide as many opportunities as possible to see, hear, and discuss authentic, contextualized language use in the L2 classroom, and thereby help them to open their eyes and ears to the pragmatics of the target language in the world outside their classroom.

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**APPENDIX A:  
BACKGROUND INFORMATION FORMS, NS AND NNS**

**INFORMATION SHEET (NNS)**

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is your...
  - ...native language \_\_\_\_\_
  - ...native country \_\_\_\_\_
  - ...age \_\_\_\_\_
  - ...most recent TOEFL score \_\_\_\_\_ (date: \_\_\_\_\_)
  
2. Have you studied at the college level? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, what was your major and in what country did you study?  
  
Have you studied at the graduate school level? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, what was your field of study and in what country did you study?
  
3. How long have you been living in Hawaii? \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Have you lived anywhere else in the U.S. or in any other foreign country  
before? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, where and for how long?
  
4. Do you have opportunities to speak English (with native speakers of English) every  
day? \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Approximately what percent of your day do you spend speaking your native  
language? \_\_\_\_\_ %
  
5. Approximately how many hours of English-language television do you watch per  
week? \_\_\_\_\_ hours  
  
What kinds of TV shows do you watch most?

INFORMATION SHEET (NS)

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is your...  
...native language \_\_\_\_\_  
...age \_\_\_\_\_  
...highest education level achieved to date: \_\_\_\_\_
  
  2. Have you ever lived in a foreign country? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, where and for how long?
  
  3. Can you use any languages besides English? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, please describe:  
  
Which language(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
How long you have been able to use it (them) \_\_\_\_\_  
How you learned it (them) \_\_\_\_\_  
How fluent you are \_\_\_\_\_  
When you use it (them) \_\_\_\_\_
  
  4. If you answered "yes" to Q#3, what percent of your average day do you spend  
using the other language(s)? (your best estimate) \_\_\_\_\_ % of the day
  
  5. Describe any extended\* interaction you have currently with non-native speakers of  
English:
- |            |       |            |            |            |               |
|------------|-------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| Frequency: | 1     | 2          | 3          | 4          | 5             |
|            | Never | Rare       | Occasional | Frequent   | Very Frequent |
|            |       | (1-2x/yr.) | (1-2x/mo.) | (1-2x/wk.) | (daily)       |
- Language(s) used: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type(s) of encounter (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

\* "Extended" here means more than 1 or 2 question/answer exchanges

**APPENDIX C:  
MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Watch the video and circle the best answer to each question below.

**EXAMPLE 1**

*Characters:*

1. Elaine (F)
2. office supplies store clerk (M)
3. Jerry (M), Elaine's friend

Ex. 1. What does Elaine think about the clerk?

SHE THINKS...

- a. he's a nice guy.
- b. he's interested in her.
- c. he's a bad employee.
- d. he shouldn't ask for her phone number.

Clues you used to make your decision:

**EXAMPLE 2**

*Characters:*

1. Elaine
2. the store clerk

Ex. 2. (same situation, one week later) Why does Elaine agree to go out with the clerk?

BECAUSE ...

- a. he's a nice guy.
- b. he's interested in her.
- c. she's interested in him.
- d. she feels guilty.

Clues you used to make your decision:

Situation 1

*Characters:*

1. Elaine
2. George (M), a friend of Elaine's

Note: Earlier in the day, George and his girlfriend Julie had invited Elaine to go to lunch with them. She couldn't go, but she asked them to bring her back something from the restaurant. Now George and Elaine are sharing a taxi.

Q1. How does Elaine feel about what George is saying?

- a. She understands his complaint.
- b. She feels guilty.
- c. She thinks it's not her fault.
- d. She thinks his complaint is trivial.

Clues you used to make your decision:

Situation 2

*Characters:*

1. Jerry
2. Jerry's new girlfriend

- Q2. What do we learn from their conversation?
- a. He's happy that she sent him a card.
  - b. He doesn't think her card was very important.
  - c. He doesn't really like her.
  - d. She doesn't really like him.

Clues:

Situation 3

*Characters:*

1. Elderly woman
2. Young man

- Q3. Why does the woman look surprised at the end of the conversation?
- a. She suddenly remembered that she had met him before.
  - b. She didn't think he would know about her bank.
  - c. She thought he would be dangerous, but he wasn't.
  - d. She thought he was rude to her.

Clues:

Situation 4

*Characters:*

1. Larry King (M), well-known American TV interviewer
2. Marlon Brando (M), famous American actor

- Q4. Regarding the questions about his career, how does Marlon Brando behave during the interview with Larry King?

HE SEEMS...

- a. to avoid answering the questions.
- b. eager to answer the questions.
- c. happy to be interviewed.
- d. upset about being interviewed.

Clues:

Situation 5

*Characters:*

1. Larry King
2. Marlon Brando

Note: Mr. Brando is being interviewed because he has recently written his autobiography.

Q5. Did Marlon Brando enjoy writing his autobiography?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. We can't be sure, from what he says.
- d. He refuses to discuss anything about his book.

Clues:

Situation 6

*Characters:*

1. Larry King
2. Marlon Brando
3. Natalia (F), who calls in on the talk show

Q6. The caller, Natalia, asks Mr. Brando why he wrote his autobiography. Larry King implies that Mr. Brando wrote it in order to...

- a. make money.
- b. tell the truth about his life.
- c. become more famous.
- d. express his freedom.

Clues:

Situation 7

*Characters:*

1. "Larry King" and
2. "Marlon Brando"

Q7. What is the main message of this skit?

- a. Marlon Brando was a difficult interview subject.
- b. Larry King is not a good interviewer.
- c. Marlon Brando is a funny man.
- d. Larry King dislikes Marlon Brando.

Clues:

Situation 8

*Topic:* Financial problems in Hawaii's public schools.

Q8. What is the man's point?

\_\_\_\_\_ are to blame for these problems.

- a. The legislators.
- b. The public school students.
- c. Both a and b.
- d. None of the above.

Clues:

Note: Situations 9 and 10 are set within a panel discussion including 3 of the candidates for governor of Hawaii.

Situation 9

*Character:* 1. Pat Saiki (F), candidate

Q9. Ms. Saiki implies that her opponent, Mr. Cayetano, ...

- a. is not concerned with education.
- b. will not make education his number-one priority.
- c. feels the same way that she does about education.
- d. is overly concerned with education.

Clues:

Situation 10

*Topic:* The use of pidgin English in Hawaii's schools.

*Characters:* 1. Male questioner in the audience

2. Pat Saiki

3. Keoni Dudley (M), another candidate for governor

Q10. All of the 3 people who speak about pidgin imply that ...

- a. it is inferior to standard English.
- b. it is superior to standard English.
- c. it is fine to use in the classroom.
- d. no one should use pidgin at all.

Clues:

Situation 11

*Characters:*

1. Adam (M), a white-haired man
2. Junior (M), Adam's young son
3. Tad (M), Junior's stepfather
4. Dr. Martin (M), Tad's father
5. Gloria (F), Adam's ex-wife

- Q11. Junior is upset because Adam was recently in prison. Gloria implies that...
- a. Adam is a bad father.
  - b. Junior shouldn't show disrespect to Adam.
  - c. Adam has been as unforgiving as Junior is now.
  - d. she is also upset because Adam went to prison.

Clues:

Situation 12

*Characters:*

1. Adam
2. Brooke (F), a friend of Gloria's; she is an editor at the magazine company Adam owns

- Q12. Adam comes to Brooke's office to confront her about his unhappy meeting with his son Junior. Brooke feels...
- a. sorry for Adam.
  - b. afraid of Adam.
  - c. regret, because Adam blames her for his problem.
  - d. that Adam doesn't deserve sympathy.

Clues:

**APPENDIX D:**  
**VIDEO SCRIPT**

E X A M P L E 1

Two friends, Elaine and Jerry, are in an office supplies store. While Jerry browses elsewhere in the store, Elaine inquires at the cash register about a special pencil her boss has asked her to buy. A male clerk is assisting her.

**Clerk:** (smiling unctuously) *We* sell the Roll-a-mech 1000...

**Elaine:** (nervously) I'm sure you do...

**Clerk:** They're pretty expensive!

**Elaine:** Well, it's for my boss...

**Clerk:** (with great interest) What do *you* do?

**Elaine:** (shaking head, obviously not wanting to share any information with him) ...Whatever...

**Clerk:** Well, we don't have any in stock right now but I would be *happy* to order it for you. Just...give me your phone number...(Elaine freezes)...and when it comes in, I'll give you a call (smiles). Your name is?

**Elaine:** (distastefully) Elaine?

**Clerk:** (repeating reverently as he writes) Elaine! (looking up) And, your last name?

**Elaine:** It's just Elaine...like Cher! (laughs artificially as Clerk chuckles)

**Clerk:** And your number?

**Elaine:** Uh...it's...KL5-2390... (waves off Jerry, who is approaching the register with a quizzical expression)

**Clerk:** (smiling) Ok. Thanks a lot. You'll be hearing from me...

**Elaine:** (hurrying away) Ok. So long.

**Jerry:** (in a half-whisper, as he is dragged out of the store and shushed by Elaine) Why did you give him *my* number?

E X A M P L E 2

One week later, Elaine has been called to the office supplies store to pick up the pencil she ordered. The same clerk is on duty as she explains that she has already purchased the pencil elsewhere and wants to cancel the order.

**Elaine:** (apologetically) My boss is very demanding and he needed the pencil right away.

**Clerk:** (petulantly) Well, why did you tell me to order it, if you knew you were going to get it someplace *else*?

**Elaine:** No, no, no—I didn't *know*! I'm sorry!

**Clerk:** (in disbelief) I went *all* the way down to the warehouse...it took me *three* hours...I had a *big fight* with the foreman.

**Elaine:** (guiltily) Really? A *fight* with the *foreman*?

**Clerk:** Yes!

**Elaine:** (sympathetically) Well again, I'm just...*awfully* sorry.

**Clerk:** (looks up quickly) Yeah? (pause) Well then how 'bout going out with me?

**Elaine:** (looks ill) Okay...

S I T U A T I O N 1

Elaine and George are friends. Earlier in the day, George and his new girlfriend Julie had invited Elaine to go to lunch with them. She couldn't go but asked them to bring her back something from the restaurant, which they did. Now George and Elaine are sharing a taxi.

**Elaine:** I like Julie. She's very personable.

**George:** Yes, she's lovely.

**Elaine:** (punching him playfully on the shoulder) That's great, George. (They laugh.)

**George:** (a pause as George looks around while making a nervous, popping sound with his lips as if hesitating to broach a subject; then turning to Elaine) So, did you enjoy your lunch?

**Elaine:** Yeah--The Big Salad! (laughs) It was very good. Actually it was *too* big! (They laugh again; Elaine turns to him) Why?

**George:** (shaking head back and forth quickly) Oh, no... (His face turns serious suddenly.) 'Cuz

you know *she* handed you the bag. *I* coulda *handed* you the bag, but she *happened* to pick it up at the restaurant, even *though*...

**Elaine:** (with a puzzled expression) Even though what?

**George:** (sheepishly) Nah, it's just...you thanked *her* even *though*... (laughs as if half-exasperated) ...what's the difference?

**Elaine:** (getting irritated at his hedging) What?--What are you trying to say, George?

**George:** ...It's just that *I* was the one that actually *paid* for the big salad... (Elaine releases a gasp of breath as if in disbelief) ...she just happened to *hand* it to you, but it's no big deal.

**Elaine:** (eyes closed, incredulously) You want the *money* for the big salad, George?

**George:** No, no, no!

**Elaine:** Then what is your problem?!

**George:** There *is* no problem... (Elaine rolls her eyes) ...just a small miscommunication in which you thanked *her* instead of the person actually responsible for the purchasing of the big salad... (Elaine turns face upward, opens mouth wide while "clawing" her hands over her face in a gesture of complete frustration.)

## SITUATION 2

Jerry and his new girlfriend are in his apartment. Jerry is rehearsing a pledge-solicitation speech he will deliver on air at the telethon for the public TV station where the girlfriend works.

**Jerry:** (stands as if speaking to an imaginary audience) I tell jokes for a living, but there's no joking about the financial crisis at PBS. Show us you care; call in your pledge now!

**Girlfriend:** (laughing) Jerry, I am *so* grateful that you're doing this...

**Jerry:** (smiling slyly, speaks insinuatingly) Oh I know you *are*....

**Girlfriend:** (walks to refrigerator, removes a bottle of water, unscrews cap) You got the card I sent?

**Jerry:** I did.

**Girlfriend:** So--where is it?

**Jerry:** What?

**Girlfriend:** The card! (Throwing away the bottle cap in the waste basket, she notices the card she sent Jerry among the trash and picks it up.) (upset) Is this it?--in the trash?!

**Jerry:** (gulps) ...No?...

**Girlfriend:** This is my *card*. You threw it away!

**Jerry:** Well!

**Girlfriend:** I put a lot of thought into this card!

**Jerry:** (arms out in a gesture of appeal) You signed your name and you addressed the envelope. It's not like you (guffaws) painted the picture and wrote the poem!

**Girlfriend:** (incredulous) Oh, fine... (pause) I gotta get back to the office.

**Jerry:** (half pleading) Oh, why?--Because I threw the card out? How long was I supposed to save it?

**Girlfriend:** (putting on coat) You *have* no sentimentality!

**Jerry:** (excitedly) I--I have sentimentality, really, I-I'm sentimental. (rushes over to desk drawer and pulls out a stack of greeting cards) Here, look! Here's some cards I saved. These are birthday cards from my grandmother. See, I'm not a bad guy!

**Girlfriend:** (upset, opens front door to exit) Oh, so you save *her* cards but not *mine*! Oh, *great*!

**Jerry:** (as Girlfriend disappears down hallway) Well, but you see...I saved *something*!...see? I *can* save!!

### SITUATION 3

In a dirty alley, a frail-looking elderly woman stands alone looking confusedly at a filthy building as she holds an address book. As menacing music plays and sirens wail in the background, a rough-looking young man in a leather jacket approaches her from behind.

**Man:** (grimly) Lookin' fo' somethin' *lady*?...

**Woman:** (turns around apprehensively) Isn't the Chemical Bank on this block?

**Man:** (menacingly, as if half-crazed) The *bank*?! It *burned*! It's *GONE*!

**Woman:** (still apprehensive) Oh, dear...

**Man:** (with a suddenly cheerful expression, in a higher, pleasant voice) You know whatcha wanna do is go down ta 49<sup>th</sup> Street. That's the main...customer service...branch. Ask for Mr. Fleming. He'll help ya!

**Woman:** (mouth agape) ...Fleming... (she mouths, nodding, as she watches him saunter away down the alley)

SITUATION 4

Television talk show host Larry King is interviewing actor Marlon Brando in Brando's home.

**LK:** By the way, did you want good reviews?

**MB:** I never read reviews.

**LK:** You know, people say that. That's really true? You never read--You wouldn't say, if I said to you, "Marlon--"

**MB:** (interrupting) I have read reviews, yes.

**LK:** "...the *Washington Post* tomorrow gives you a rave--"

**MB:** (interrupting) I've read reviews, but generally I don't, and I don't see the movie--Anybody can tell you that I didn't see the rushes, and I haven't seen *this* movie...that I did, uh... (voice fades out)

**LK:** When a movie comes on of yours like tonight, if it's playing on television, would--

**MB:** (interrupting) It all depends on the movie; some of 'em would bore the hell out of me...

**LK:** What movie would you definitely watch? What would you say, "This...is-- (A dog barks off camera.)

**MB:** Oh, there he is! (laughs) Tim!

**LK:** The dog! "This"--What movie would you say, "This is good work"? (Brando is obviously distracted by the dog and seems not to have heard the question.)

**MB:** (to an off-camera assistant) Bring him here, I want--

**LK:** (to the camera) He's got a dog you wouldn't believe!

**MB:** (with a quizzical expression, to King) What?

**LK:** What movie would you say, "Yes! This is good work!"?

**MB:** Uh...I tried hard in a movie called *Burn*.

**LK:** *Burn*.

**MB:** *Burn*. It was, uh, it was a movie about slavery...and a slave rebellion... (spying Tim, he addresses him) Come here, Tim. Tim, I want you to meet my friend. Tim, come here. Tim,

over here. Right here. Here. (to King) This is Tim.

**LK:** Look at this.

**MB:** (addressing Tim) Now, sit down like a good boy. Now shake hands with Larry. Shake hands. (Tim shakes hands with King.) Attaboy!

**LK:** Way to go, Tim!

**MB:** Now... (giving Tim a dog treat) Good, isn't that good?

**LK:** This is what kind of breed?

**MB:** This is a mastiff.

**LK:** How heavy is Tim? (pets Tim)

**MB:** Tim is 180--Here (handing King a dog treat)--

**LK:** (hesitates to accept it) I'm not gonna eat Tim's food.

**MB:** I don't want you to *eat* it, I want you to--

**LK:** (interrupting) Oh, *feed* him! (reaches for the treat)

**MB:** (continuing) --put it in your mouth like this... (He puts a dog treat between his lips and allows the dog to remove it from his mouth.) He's getting near-sighted. (addressing Tim) I'll have to get you glasses like Larry!

**LK:** (to camera) We'll be right back with Marlon and Tim. We'll take calls for Tim too, if your dog wants to call in.

**MB:** Tim--(to camera) Where's the close up?

**LK:** (to camera) Close up of Tim. (The camera operator does not oblige, but keeps the camera on King.) We'll be right back on *Larry King Live* with Marlon Brando in (laughs) Beverly Hills...at home! We'll be right back. (taps Tim on the head with a stack of papers)

## SITUATION 5

The King-Brando interview continues.

**LK:** (to camera) We're going to get some phone calls in, (turning to Brando) but you did want to say a word about the book. Did you enjoy writing it?

**MB:** Uh...one of the ...uh...objectives of the book was to be free. I wanted to be able to be in a

position of being whoever I am, with whoever I am, if it doesn't do some kind of harm to somebody.

**LK:** (after a pause which Brando doesn't fill) Were you happy with Random House and everything?

**MB:** What?

**LK:** Were you happy with Random House? (end of video clip)

#### SITUATION 6

Final segment of the King-Brando interview. A female caller phones in a question for Brando.

**LK:** Hello.

**Caller:** Hello, Mr. Brando?

**MB:** Yes.

**Caller:** Hi. I just wanted to ask you, considering that you're--

**MB:** (interrupting) What is your name, please?

**Caller:** Natalia.

**MB:** Natalia...*oh*... (sounding intrigued)

**LK:** (laughing) Ok, *calm*, Marlon! Go ahead, Natalia.

**Caller:** Ok, um, considering that you're a very private person, why after so many years of obscurity, of refusing to be in the spotlight, have you decided to publish your autobiography?

**MB:** I think that you, uh, have misunderstood something. I wouldn't be on that program, on *this* program--somebody in Louisiana, a woman, I don't know who she was, said anybody who shows his face in public is, an ass...and, uh...perhaps that's true by some standards. In any event, fate has brought me to this moment--

**LK:** (interrupting) All right, her question was, why did a *private* person write an autobiography?

**MB:** Oh, I was just explaining to Larry that the reason that I wrote it was, it was an exercise in freedom. I want to be able to say to you, or to Larry, or to myself, anything that I believe to be true. And it's a very, very difficult thing to do, to go through life...and one of the things that...in this culture, money is everything, money is god, money is our religion, and it determines everything that we do. And uh...also, uh...

**LK:** So they *paid* you to do it.

**MB:** What?

**LK:** They paid you to do the book.

**MB:** They paid me five million dollars to write the story of my life, but I decided to do it before.

SITUATION 7

In a skit on the comedy show *Saturday Night Live*, two actors dressed as Larry King and Marlon Brando parody the interview between King and Brando that had aired live that week.

**“LK”:** All right, we’ll be taking your calls a little later. We’re at the home of the great Marlon Brando in Beverly Hills--(“Brando” reaches over to pinch the nose of “King”) --All right, Marlon... (nasally) Beverly Hills, California...

**“MB”:** (to camera, laughing) He can’t talk right now because he’s got his nose pinched.

**“LK”:** All right, Marlon. All right, Marlon... (“Brando” stops pinching “King”) All right. Marlon, what made you get into acting?

**“MB”:** (picking up a jar from the table beside his chair) Larry, do you know what this is? This is an oil from--the Native Indians made. It’s the celiconia plant and they claim that the oils are very healing.

**“LK”:** Actually has the ability to heal...

**“MB”:** Yes it does. Why don’t you rub a little bit on my feet. (hands jar to “King”)

**“LK”:** (disbelieving) Heh-heh-heh! Come on, Marlon! (reluctantly takes jar)

**“MB”:** (propping his bare foot on “King”’s knee) No, go ahead Larry, and I’ll talk to you about acting.

**“LK”:** All right Marlon. (begins rubbing in the oil) Anything for the great Marlon. All right. (to camera) If you’re just tuning in, the book, an autobiography. The subject, acting. The oil-laden foot, Marlon Brando’s... (turns attention to “Brando”)

**“MB”:** I got my acting start in New York... (pauses) Oh that’s nice, Larry...oh that’s good. You see Larry, acting is belie--believing...oh that’s good...

**“LK”:** But *why acting*, Marlon?

**“MB”:** Well, you know, I... (turns to side table again) I want you to try one of these cookies. (reaches for a cookie on the table and hands it to “King”) Here. No, no, no, go ahead, try one.

And don't lie to me, if you like it, you tell me you like it.

“LK”: (reluctantly accepting cookie) Anything for the great Marlon Brando... (bites into cookie)

“MB”: What do you think?

“LK”: (chewing) Interesting. Are these also made from the celiconia plant?

“MB”: I'm not gonna tell you what it's made from.

“LK”: (still chewing) Is it something that could make me sick?

“MB”: Perhaps. Perhaps not.

“LK”: Is it something that cookies are not normally made from?

“MB”: Well let's just say, you know, maybe what it's made from will put a cookie-eating *grin* on your face. Ha-ha-ha-ha!

“LK”: (putting down the cookie) All right, Marlon. All right. Mr. B, let's talk about fame. What has it done for you?

“MB”: Well, it's allowed me a certain, certain lifestyle, you know, and it's--certain privileges.

“LK”: Right. You like acting.

“MB”: You know, Larry, I'd like to see you in this. (Pulling out an oversized baby bonnet, he begins to put it on “King.”)

“LK”: What are you doing Marlon? What are you doing? Come on, Marlon.

“MB”: Now just, just wear it Larry--

“LK”: Come on, Marlon--

“MB”: (interrupting) No, just wear it...

“LK”: --let's talk about acting. All right.

“MB”: (finishes fastening the bonnet on “King”) There you go, you look good.

“LK”: All right, Marlon. Whatever you say. All right, Marlon--

“MB”: (interrupting) It's a baby bonnet.

“LK”: (on the verge of impatience) Yeah I know it is. Has fame made you happy?

“MB”: Yes, I'm happy Larry. But how about you?

“LK”: I'm *very* happy.

“MB”: Well you don't look so happy. You look sad.

“LK”: I assure you, with great acting legend Marlon Brando on my show, I am *very happy!* (to

camera, as “Brando” searches for something on table) If you’re just joining us, the book, *Songs My Mother Taught Me*. Our guest, the incomparable Marlon--(“Brando” begins drawing a big smile on “King” with a black marker)--all right, Marlon. All right Marlon. All right. Anything for Marlon. Now I’m happy. Now I’m happy. All right. The book, *Songs My Mother Taught Me*. The cookie, probably excrement. The bonnet, a gift. The smile, magic marker. We’ll be taking calls--

“**MB**”: (interrupting, to camera, giggling) Now Larry’s happy.

“**LK**”: Now I’m happy.

#### SITUATION 8

As part of its gubernatorial campaign coverage, a news channel in Hawaii presents a story on financial problems in Hawaii’s public schools.

**Reporter:** (voiceover, as video footage of a classroom and then a school campus begins) The number of students in Hawaii’s public schools is nearly 183,000 and growing. But those students score below average on standardized tests and attend classes at 240 campuses in various states of disrepair. About 20% of our students attend private schools, compared with the national average of 10%. But while many recognize public schools’ problems, few agree on solutions. (Footage of a school board meeting accompanies these words, then a male interviewee appears onscreen.)

**Unidentified interviewee:** The DOE superintendant says the legislature needs to give us more funds...the legislature says the governor needs to release the funds...the Board of Education makes long-range plans, but they don’t control the *money*. So *who* do we really *blame* for things that don’t work?

#### SITUATION 9

At a town meeting involving three of the gubernatorial candidates in the election described in Situation 8, the topic is education and the candidate being questioned is Pat Saiki.

**Facilitator:** We need to ask Ms. Saiki the question Mr. Cayetano asked: where are you going to get the money to improve education? Ms. Saiki?

**Saiki:** Oh. Well yes, I would like to point out the difference between the philosophies of Mr. Cayetano and myself. I believe in funding education first; it's my number one priority; I will fund it as it is needed. I don't plan to make choices between prisons and education, between the Convention Center and education, between HVB and education. These are all needs we have in the community. I wouldn't want...to put this state in a situation where it's either/or. What I want to do is grow that economy so that we can afford everything we need, so that the slices of that pie are not cut into small little pieces, but the pie becomes bigger and we are then able to afford it. And so, when I say education *first*, I mean *funded* first...and *then* look at the rest of the priorities that we have.

#### SITUATION 10

At the same town meeting, a University of Hawaii student asks the candidates a question about the use of "pidgin English" (Hawaiian Creole English) in Hawaii's classrooms.

**Student:** Hi. This is for Mrs. Saiki. I'm taking classes at UH right now to become a high school teacher, and my question is, I'm asking your opinion about pidgin English. Now I love pidgin English. I speak it with my friends. It's what makes us unique as a state; we celebrate it as a broad range of cultures... (pause) In the *classrooms*, do you feel that we should, not *ban* it but in a sense *discourage* pidgin English and encourage our students to speak or use proper English grammar, for their own advantage, thinking future-wise?

**Saiki:** The answer to your question as far as I'm concerned is yes. We do come from various cultures and pidgin English has been part of our tradition, I mean, with the various ethnic groups coming in, we devised a language of our own. But today our children have to grow up and compete out there, in a world that uses English as a first language, and so I think we have to put the emphasis that in the schools, we *must* get our children to speak English so that *later* they are able to compete. Now, the use of pidgin English, uh, is something that I think all of us *appreciate*, to a great extent, but not in the classroom.

**Facilitator:** Would any candidate like to critique her answer? Mr., uh, Dr. Dudley.

**Dudley:** I think that the use of pidgin in the English class is something that can be really particularly helpful in teaching proper English. I think our kids grow up speaking a language that

is their mother tongue and that's pidgin, and then we expect them in school to automatically move into a foreign language and treat it like that's their mother tongue. Actually what pidgin is, is the, the imposition of English words over Hawaiian language, so maybe we ought to be teaching Hawaiian language and pidgin and English all together so that people could actually see what's going on there. I find that in teaching my students, and I've been in the DOE now for eight years, uh, it, it really is much easier to teach a pidgin-speaking child standard English, if you teach him standard English as a second language and teach him the difference between pidgin English and standard English, and we don't do that. You know, what, what we oughta do is have books like *Pidgin to Da Max* that are *backward*, and that way we could teach them "This is how locals say it, and *this* is the correct way."

#### SITUATION 11

In a scene from a daytime drama, Adam, a corporate executive who has just been released from prison, is visiting the home of his ex-wife Dixie (who does not appear in the scene) and her current husband, Tad, in order to see his young son Adam Jr., nicknamed "Junior," who lives with Dixie and Tad. Also present are Dr. Martin, who is Tad's father, and Gloria, who is Adam's most recent ex-wife. Junior, Dr. Martin and Gloria had been playing a board game together before Adam's arrival. Adam, not a beloved figure in the town, had enjoyed a good relationship with his son before this. However, he has just asked his son Junior for a hug; Junior refuses.

**Adam:** Hey, don't do this. I really missed you, son.

**Junior:** (crossing his arms across his chest) Stay away!

**Adam:** Junior!

**Dr. Martin:** Junior! (Junior runs to stand beside Tad, distancing himself from Adam)

**Adam:** (addressing Tad in an unpleasant tone) This is your doing, isn't it.

**Tad:** (disdainfully) Don't try throwing it at me. The only person responsible for this is you.

**Adam:** You just *had* to tell him, didn't you. You couldn't wait--

**Tad:** (interrupting) As a matter of fact Dixie and I did everything we possibly could to keep him from finding out--

**Adam:** (interrupting) You expect me to believe you--

**Tad:** (interrupting) I don't give a damn what you believe. The truth is, I don't know how he found out.

**Dr. Martin:** Wait a minute, wait a minute, now. (addressing Junior) I bet he heard about it in school. Did you? Is that where you heard about your dad? In school?

**Junior:** (bitterly) Yep. My friends said he *lied* to the police and...they sent him to jail! (shouts at Adam) Jailbird! Jailbird!

**Dr. Martin:** All right, easy! Enough of that, now.

**Tad:** Listen, we don't call people names, remember?

**Adam:** Junior, I won't lie to you. I did something bad. I broke the law and the law said that, well I had to go to jail for awhile. And, it's kind of like a--well, like time out. You know, when you misbehave? Well I've, I've taken my time out. And it's over now. So there's no reason to be mad any more. (pauses, then smiles at Junior hopefully) Now where's my big boy? Give your old dad a hug (reaches out to Junior, who backs away silently as Gloria enters the room).

**Gloria:** Here's some popcorn for the winner... (hands the bowl to Junior, then addresses Adam sarcastically) Junior doesn't forgive very easily. (pause) Now let's see...who does that *remind* me of?

## SITUATION 12

Following his unsuccessful visit with Junior, Adam heads for a confrontation with Gloria's friend Brooke, who edits a magazine published by a company Adam owns. Adam and Brooke were married to each other at one time as well, and their current relationship is hardly smooth. Brooke is working at her desk at the magazine offices. Adam enters her office without knocking and slams the door shut while glaring at Brooke.

**Brooke:** (pretending not to see Adam, addresses the air) Oh, I thought I heard someone come in...

**Adam:** (seething) You're going to be very, very sorry, Brooke.

**Brooke:** [garbled on video soundtrack] ...what I've done?

**Adam:** You know plenty well what you've done.

**Brooke:** Well let me see, I've made all my *deadlines*, so it can't be *that*...

**Adam:** Don't feign ignorance with me.

**Brooke:** Adam, my ignorance is genuine. I have not budged from this desk all day. (pauses, then continues facetiously) Well all right, I did go out and buy a candy bar...with almonds...and I went to the *ladies*' room...

**Adam:** It's not enough that you've stripped me of my wife and my daughter, you're going to take my son away too?

**Brooke:** (looking puzzled) Junior? What?

**Adam:** I went to Tad's house to try to see Junior.

**Brooke:** And Tad wouldn't--let you in?

**Adam:** My son wouldn't speak to me. Wouldn't even hug me.

**Brooke:** Why?

**Adam:** Called me a jailbird.

**Brooke:** (stifling a smile) Well, you know, if the species fits...

**Adam:** (upset) Don't you dare enjoy this!

**Brooke:** Adam, you know what they say, don't you? "Out of the mouths of babes..."

**Adam:** (pleading) You came so close to losing Jamie! How can you possibly revel in another parent's misery?

**Brooke:** (sarcastically) Well, *you* know, that's us "bitter old maids" for you. There's nothing that we like better than taking joy out of other peoples' pain.

APPENDIX E:  
CONTEXTUAL CLUE RESPONSES<sup>5</sup>

Research Question #3: “Do Japanese learners who answer an item incorrectly on the questionnaire fail to notice the contextual clues used by the NSs for that vignette?”

ITEM 1 (correct answer = d)

*Responses by successful NSs (92% agreement with NS standard)*

- ...tone of voice [2]
- ...gestures [5] Ex.: “covers face”
- ...facial expressions [9] Ex.: “Elaine’s disbelief”
- ...rhetorical Q by interlocutor [2] Ex.: “What’s your problem?”; “You want the money?!”
- ...other [1] “Even George acts like it’s hard to complain about it.”

\* The NS who missed this item chose option “c” but wrote no clue explaining why.

*Responses by unsuccessful NNSs (35% of N=43 missed this item)*

- ...who chose “a”: “changed face”
- ...who chose “b”: “Her face changed”; “nothing”
- ...who chose “c”: (1) “Her face”; (2) “She doesn’t pay him. She doesn’t feel to pay”; (3) “Elaine’s face and she said, ‘What are you talking about?’”; (4) “From her face and her voice sounds/”*Koodoo kara*” (from [her] behavior); (5) “*Komakai koto-o guchi-guchi iu.*” ([He] complains about trivial things.)

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<sup>5</sup> Refer to Appendices C and D for the multiple-choice questionnaire form and video script, respectively. Numbers in brackets indicate the number of NSs (of  $N = 13$ ) who wrote that type of clue response; note that some NSs wrote more than one type of clue per item, and others did not write any. The clue responses of unsuccessful NNSs are numbered consecutively to identify them for discussion in the text of the paper; identification numbers appear in parentheses before each such response. Responses originally written in Japanese by the subjects were translated by the author. Clue responses that were written in English are rendered as they appeared on the questionnaire forms.

**ITEM 2** (correct answer = b)

*Responses by successful NSs* (100% agreement with NS standard)

...facial expressions [2] Ex.: “her reaction--hurt”

...action of interlocutor [7] Ex.: “He threw it away.”

...attitude of interlocutor [1] “He laughed about it.”

...rhetorical/facetious Q by interlocutor [1] “Jerry asks ‘How long do you save cards?’”

...elimination of other options [1] “not ‘c’ since he kept explaining himself”

...other [2] “She didn’t make it herself.”; “He insists he does save some cards.”

*Responses by unsuccessful NNSs* (14% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “c”: (6) “He through away her card.”; (7) “He keep other card but he didn’t keep his girlfriend’s card.”

...who chose “d”: (8) “She was go anyware” [possibly refers to the fact that she left the apartment]; (9) “she is angry.”; (10) “He trashed her card”

...who chose none of the options: (11) “I can’t find a right answer. I think Jerry doesn’t care about saving cards very much.”

**ITEM 3** (correct answer = c)

*Responses by successful NSs* (70% agreement with NS standard)

...tone of voice [3] Ex.: “He sounded mean at first”

...body language [2] Ex.: “afraid at first”

...other visual clues [3] Ex.: “scary alley”; “She thought that because they were in the alley he might be dangerous.”; “his appearance”

...other audio clues [1] “music”

\* All four NSs who missed this item chose option “b.” Clue responses explaining that choice include: “her facial expression”; “Perhaps his appearance led her to this decision.”; “His appearance fooled her.”

*Responses by unsuccessful NNSs* (44% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose "a": (12) "Because street is dark and she is old women."; (13) "she said, promiss"[intention unclear]

...who chose "b": (14) "he said 'May I help you'"; (15) "her facial expression. She didn't look scared when he first talked to her and she remained unscary--exclusion of 'c'"; (16) "he wasn't her friend and looked dangerous type of man who doesn't know the bank well. (so, b & c are the answers)"; (17) "He told the person at bank/also told that bank was gone to new place."; (18) "She was surprised when she looked at him at first, however he wasn't."; (19) "He said to her 'I'll help you.'"; (20) "In fact, he was the bank clerk."; (21) "*Kare-ga kanojo ni setsumei shita kara.*" (Because he explained [it] to her.); (22) "*XX no shiten no dare-sore ni kiku to shitte-iru to adobaisu-o nokoshite satte itta kara.*" (Because he went away, leaving her with the advice, 'If you ask So-and-So at XX Branch, he'll know.'")

...who chose "d": (23) "He told her."; (24) "She go to bank but she doesn't find. So, he told the banks where." [perhaps, 'the bank's location' is intended]

I T E M 4 (correct answer = a)

*Responses of successful NSs* (92% agreement with NS standard)

...behavior of interlocutor [13] Ex.: "Easily distracted"; "Changes subject"; "Feeds dog"; "looks away from Larry"; "says 'What?' repeatedly"; "doesn't answer Larry's questions"; "mumbles"

\* The NS who missed this item chose option "d" and wrote: "He (Brando) is easily distracted. He is disinterested."

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (42% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose "b": (25) "Marlon Brando does not like interview."; (26) "Marlon Brando play with dog"

...who chose "c": (27) "His dog barked and his dog entered the room."; (28) "*Inu to tanoshisoo ni shite-ita kara.*" (Because he seemed to be having fun with his dog.)

...who chose "d": (29) "He seems he doesn't like to be interviewed."; (30) "Almost he

didn't answer for questions.”; (31) “He called his dog and no answer about interviewed.”; (32) “He looks like a upset.”; (33) “*Kotaeyoo to shite-nai shi, inu to jarete intabyuu no jama-o shite-ta kara, sukoshi bokete-iru ka mo shirenai.*” (He didn't try to answer the questions and just played with his dog and disrupted the interview, so I think he may be a little senile.); (34) “*Shitsumon-ni kichin to kotaete-inakatta. Hanashi-o sorashite, tochuu de inu-o kamatte-ita.*” (He didn't answer the questions clearly. He changed the subject and started paying attention to the dog in the middle of it.); (35) “*Inu-ni ki-o torarete-ita kara. Hanashi-o shitakunasasoo.*” (Because he was distracted by the dog. He didn't seem to want to talk.)

...who chose none of the options: (36) (wrote “I don't understand” next to options) “He doesn't want to answer the question, because he didn't look other guy's eyes.”; (37) (wrote “No answer” next to options) “He is not sincere (*majime* [serious]) to answer. He doesn't avoid answer, but, just he has no intention to answer. It looks he doesn't think interview is important.”

I T E M 5 (correct answer = c)

*Responses of successful NSs* (92% agreement with NS standard)

...behavior of interlocutor [4] Ex.: “He's not clear in his answer.”; “No direct yes or no.”; “King changes the subject.”

...elimination of other option [1] “He discussed other aspects of his book but avoided answering the direct question.”

\* The NS who missed this item chose option “a” but wrote no clue explaining why.

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (35% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “a”: (38) “Because he said so.”; (39) “He said ‘can write free’, ‘can change who I am’”; (40) “Although he didn't say so explicitly, I think he accomplished his objective, i.e., being free. That's why I think he enjoyed.”

...who chose “b”: (41) “He isn't smile.”; (42) “*Kao iro kara.*” (From his facial expression.)

...who chose “d”: (43) “He like a difficulty.” [intention unclear]; (44) “He discussed anything about his book.”; (45) “His attitude and attempt to change the topic.”

I T E M 6 (correct answer=a)

*Responses of successful NSs* (100% agreement with NS standard)

...statement by interlocutor [6] Ex. “Larry mentions the money.”; “Larry talks about the \$5 million.”; “He asked him how much he got.”; “asks how much \$ the book made”; “I guessed this from Mr. Brando’s answer.”

...tone of voice [1] “Larry cynical--‘So they paid you to write it?’”

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (72% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “b”: (46) “He said money was everything.”; (47) He tell everything his life.”; (48) “He is silas faice.” [intention unclear]; (49) “He talked about his life.”

...who chose “d”: (50) “He was very difficult to express his freedom.”; (51) “He said freedom in TV.”; (52) “He said ‘freedom’.”; (53) “He wants to get freedom.”; (54) “He said ‘Lately money is religion, and money is power--‘.’”; (55) “He said something like that.”; (56) “He said.”; (57) “*Okane yori mo, hyoogen no jiyuu-o shoomei shitakatta yoo ni kotaete iru kara.*” (Because he answers as if, rather than [doing it for] the money, he wanted to demonstrate freedom of expression.); (58) “*Kare jishin no koto-o minna-ni tsutaetakatta kara.*” (Because he wanted to tell everyone about himself.); (59) “*Okane-ga kono yo de subete da to iu kangae no naka de kare-wa, jibun no gokai sarete iru puraibashii no koto no jijitsu-o kakitakatta kara.*” (Because, despite the world’s notion that money is everything, he wanted to write the truth about things people have misunderstood about his private life.)

...who chose none of the options: (60) “I didn’t understand. (find ans.) Larry frequently gave topics & Marlon changed topic to”; (61) “I missed it!”; (62) “I didn’t quite get this.”

I T E M 7 (correct answer=a)

*Responses of successful NSs* (100% agreement with NS standard)

...behavior of interlocutor [12] Ex.: “MB doesn’t stay focused”; “changes subject”; “interrupts”; “Fools around with props”; “Doesn’t answer the questions.”; “Making a point of Brando avoiding the question and changing the subject.”

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (40% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “b”: (63) “Marlon Brando *no warukuchi-o itte-ita kara.*” (Because he spoke disparagingly about Marlon Brando.)

...who chose “c”: (64) “‘Marlon Brando’ was acting to audience as a funny man.”; (65) “Marlon Brando play Larry’s face.”; (66) “Larry King enjoyed to interview.” (67) “Because he didn’t talk about interview at all.”; (68) “*Chanto intabyuu ni kotaezu, hen-na koto bakari King ni suru kara.*” (Because he doesn’t respond to the interview questions as he should and just does strange things to King.)

...who chose “d”: (69) “Marlon do bad thing.”; (70) “*Jibun no intabyuu-o mechakucha ni sarete-ru shi, etai no shirenai kukkii-o tabesaseraretari, kao ni majikku-o tsukeraretara kitto naishin okotte-iru to omou. De mo puro da kara bangumichuu-wa gaman.*” (He has his interview completely disrupted; he’s forced to eat a cookie of questionable origin; and he gets his face drawn on with magic marker--I’m sure he’s ticked off, inside. But he’s a pro, so while the show is on, he puts up with it.)

I T E M 8 (correct answer =d)

*Responses of successful NSs* (85% agreement with NS standard)

...tone of voice [1] “tone of voice, questioning”

...rhetorical Q by interlocutor [6] Ex.: “At end he says, ‘Who do we really blame for things that don’t work?’--implies to me that he doesn’t know.”; “His tone of voice, both blaming each other. ‘Who’s to blame?’”; “Tells of groups who act independently and don’t cooperate and says it is hard to pin the blame.”; “The legislature and all these groups were mentioned but at the end he says ‘Who do we blame?’”; “Because he said ‘Who do we blame?’”

\* Both NSs who missed this item chose option “a,” and one explained that choice in this way: “‘a’ was one of several different policy groups involved in poorly made decisions re: education.”

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (79% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “a”: (71) “from what he said”; (72) “He said ‘legislators...money’ and ‘who do we need the money?’”; (73) “He talks about who should do what.”; (74) “That’s what he was talking about.”; (75) “From his statement.”; (76) “They cannot control money.”; (77) “*Sekinin no aru hitotachi no* list up.” (It’s a listing of those who are responsible.)

...who chose “b”: (78) “The man said in the TV.”; (79) “This school think yourselves life.” [intention unclear]; (80) “public school”

...who chose “c”: (81) “He said both.”; (82) “The school was broken by them.”

...who chose none of the options: (83) “I couldn’t catch any words!”; (84) “I didn’t understand.”; (85) “I don’t know. Who is to blame? He didn’t say *none*.”

I T E M 9 (correct answer=b)

*Responses of successful NSs* (100% agreement with NS standard)

...tone of voice [4] Ex.: “Voice--emphasizing ‘I’ will do X.”; “She repeatedly states she’ll fund education *first*.”; “She said ‘I’ll *fund* education first,’ not weigh it against other programs.”

...implied negative comparison [4] Ex.: “She emphasizes that she’ll make education #1.”; “Stated she would contrast the priorities of opponent and herself”; “At first she said differences between her & Cayetano then she says that she will make it 1<sup>st</sup> priority.”

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (44% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “a”: (86) “She said there’s a difference between her and his philosophy. Prioritizing is her idea, not his.”; (87) “His opinion is less something.”

...who chose “c”: (88) “Ms. Saiki speaking very hard.”

...who chose “d”: (89) “Ms. Saiki asserted the importance of funding.”; (90) “She thinks that education is not the first thing.”; (91) “She said strongly.”

...who chose none of the options: (92) “I didn’t understand.”; (93) “I didn’t understand what her said.”

I T E M 1 0 (correct answer=a)

*Responses of successful NSs* (77% agreement with NS standard)

...implied negative comparison [3] Ex.: “OK outside class but standard more imp. to learn & teach in class.”; “They contrast it with ‘proper’ English.”

\* Three NSs missed this item, with two choosing option “b” and one option “c” instead. One of the NSs who chose option “b” explained: “Mr. Dudley definitely prefers it as the 1<sup>st</sup> language.”

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (49% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “b”: (94) “The last man said it was easier for children to speak pidgin English.”; (95) “Pat Saiki says English must be used in the classrooms.”; (96) “English is important.”; (97) “The candidate was addressing about importance of using pidgin English from now on.”; (98) “*Pejin-eigo-wa kodomo-ga eigo-o naraihajimeru no ni kantan.*” (Pidgin English is easier for children who are beginning to learn English.)

...who chose “c”: (99) “Saiki said yes.”; (100) “Pat Saiki said ‘Pidgin English is tradition.’”; (101) “She said it’s ok to use it, but also said that it is necessary to learn standard English to compete.”; (102) “There thinks about English and classroom. Doesn’t think about school.” [intention unclear]; (103) “There are two different opinion. 1) should 2) sometime should use pidgin.”; (104) “Because *sono hito no umaretsuite no kotoba da kara.*” (Because it is the native language of that person.); (105) “*Hitotsu no dentoo (bunka) to shite minna pidgin-o mitomeru taido-o tote-iru.* (They share the attitude of recognizing pidgin as a tradition (culture).)

...who chose none of the options: (106) “He said it’s good to use pidgin English. But she said you should use it out of school.”; (107) “Nobody said pidgin is inferior. It’s a property of their culture, but to be competitive, formal English should be used.”

ITEM 11 (correct answer =c)

*Responses of successful NSs* (100% agreement with NS standard)

...tone of voice [1] “vindictive tone of voice”

...facial expression [1] “sneer”

...hinting [1] “Hints that Adam and Junior have same characteristic.”

...use of sarcasm [4] Ex.: “She says ‘Let’s see who does that remind me of?’ and then looks at Adam.”; “sarcasm”; “‘Who does that remind me of’ & facial expression.”

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (65% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose “a”: (108) “From what she said.”; (109) “Everybody attac Adam.”; (110) “Just because he was a prisoner.”; (111) “*Kanojo no iikata kara, wakaru.*” (It’s apparent from the way she talks.)

...who chose “b”: (112) “Junior got angry.”; (113) “Junior is ungly.” [perhaps, ‘angry’ is intended]; (114) “Adam did bad things, but it’s time over but they cannot forgive him.”

...who chose “d”: (115) “She didn’t try to persuade Junior to forgive Adam. She emphasized Junior’s ‘madness.’” [perhaps, ‘anger’ is intended]; (116) “She said ‘Junior isn’t forgiving you.’ Also her attitude to Adam.”; (117) “She looks angry.”; (118) “Adam’s face.”; (119) “She understood Junior’s behavior & she is also angry w/him (from her tone of voice and facial expression).”; (120) “Her face was angry to Adam.”; (121) “People don’t forget easily fact that Adam was in prison.”; (122) “She said that Junior would not forgive Adam easily.”; (123) “Junior won’t forget easily, Gloria said.”; (124) “Her face was angry to Adam.”; (125) “*Saigo ni soo itte-iru.*” (She says this at the end.)

ITEM 12 (correct answer=d)

*Responses of successful NSs* (100% agreement with NS standard)

...tone of voice [3]

...sarcasm [4] Ex.: “Flip, sarcastic reply to his anger.”; “She talks sarcastically the whole time.”

...elimination of other options [1] “She didn’t act sorry and when he related it to her problem with Jamie she had a harsh comeback.”

*Responses of unsuccessful NNSs* (63% of N=43 missed this item)

...who chose "a": (126) "Adam think sorry to her."

...who chose "b": (127) "She tries to say something unrelated thing."; (128) "She said she thought someone come in."; (129) "She doesn't like him."; (130) "*Kare no shuunen-ga kowakute.*" (His vindictiveness is scary.)

...who chose "c": (131) "Because Brooke is angry."; (132) "He is ugly." [perhaps, 'angry' is intended]; (133) "Junior got angry."; (134) "Adam and Brooke talk about problems."; (135) "She said cannot and I have nothing."; (136) "Feel like."; (137) "*Kodomo-o kakushita no de okotte-iru.*" ([unclear subject] hid [unidentified] child, so [subject] is angry.)

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