The Significance of Apology in Japanese Account-Giving

A Thesis

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By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines a type of language behavior, account-giving, in a Japanese business setting. Account-giving occurs when people sense that giving a reason or an explanation will mitigate the situation somehow and reduce uneasiness caused by a certain unexpected or unusual behavior; the account serves to fill the gap between the behavior and the expectations.

Apologies have been identified as an integral component of account-giving in Japanese. The present study investigates 1) whether or not an apology is a significant factor in account-giving in a Japanese business setting, and if so, 2) to what extent an apology becomes significant, 3) whether or not the severity of harm has an impact on the need for an apology in the account-giving, and 4) what feelings or attitude an apology in Japanese account-giving can express.

Survey data collected in Japan in 2010 from nine native speakers of Japanese with working experience in a Japanese company are analyzed using Bakhtin’s notion of speech genres. The concept of speech genres makes it possible to clarify elements of culturally appropriate utterances in particular contexts with particular goals of the interaction.

The analysis of the data reveals that apologies are a significant component of Japanese account-giving delivered in a business setting. The absence of apology causes ancillary utterances to be seen as inappropriate, and this in turn yields a negative
impression about the account-giver. In the case of high severity of harm, the evaluation of
the appropriateness of the utterances as well as the impression of the account-giver, is
negatively affected more than in the case of low severity of harm, but the need for an
apology remains unchanged. The data show that apologies are necessary regardless of the
harm severity level. If the account-giver does not give an apology, that person tends to be
perceived as unrepentant (hansei shitenai), discourteous (reigi ga nai), and immature
(mijukumono). These personality characterizations are related more to a social manner
and moral character (hinsei) than the representative meaning of apology.

This study also reveals that in Japanese account-giving in a business setting,
apologies express, in variable combinations, the emotions/thoughts/attitudes of four
different stances: (1) deep sincerity and responsibility for one’s job, (2) self-reflection, (3)
concern about the offended party, and (4) regret about the negative outcome. Expression
of these during account-giving is highly valued in Japan. Even if the account-giver feels
that he or she is not responsible for the outcome, if s/he was involved in any way in
events related to the outcome, demonstrating these feelings/attitudes is evaluated
positively. Apologies in Japanese account-giving play a vital role in maintaining or
improving trust, and help to maintain lasting relationships in Japanese society.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Goals of the Present Study

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate what particular characteristics constitute an appropriate, i.e. effective performance of Japanese account-giving, as well as to clarify whether or not a lack of apology in an act of account-giving causes the addressee (recipient) to form a negative impression of the acting individual. It also attempts to illuminate reasons why the act of apology is significant in Japanese account-giving. This research focuses on a speech genre account-giving in Japanese business settings.

The norms of language behavior differ across cultures, and a violation of these norms may cause a misunderstanding between speaker and listener, and even harm their relationship. Also, a second language learner who is unacquainted with the sociolinguistic norms of the target culture is likely to transfer his or her base culture’s norms onto the target culture, and in doing so may violate the norms of that target culture. Therefore, it is crucial that second language learners become capable of adjusting their performance of account-giving to fit the particular norm/culture.

The sociocultural norms that govern apologies in Japanese account-giving differ significantly from those of the United States. Yao 2009a found that native speakers of Japanese apologized more than native speakers of American English. (A more detailed
These results raised new questions concerning the appropriateness of accounts given without an apology and about the impression that hearers have form of the speakers of those accounts. The aims of the present study are thus two-fold: first, analyzing data to shed light on the appropriateness of utterances and the impressions consequently formed by addressees (recipients) of the addresser, and second, to examine the significance of apologies in account-giving.

1.2 Identifying and Describing Account-giving

We practice a myriad of language behaviors everyday, actions such as refusing, thanking, greeting, and so forth. Account-giving is also one such type of language behavior. Goffman’s (1971) notion of accounts is useful for understanding the concept of account-giving. He states that “The nature of accounts has been considered somewhat by students of law in connection with the issue of defenses, pleas, the mitigation of offenses, and the defeasibility of claims” (1971, p. 109). Schoenbach (1980) defines accounts as verbal strategies for dealing with faults. According to Read (1992), people construct an account when they are accused due to some social failure, such as harming someone or violating important social rules (p. 3). In addition, many researchers explain that account-giving occurs when people have to give a reason or an explanation regarding a certain unexpected or unusual behavior in order to fill the gap between behavior and expectations (Fritche, 2002; Takaku, 2000; Tata, 2000; Ohbuchi and Fukuno, 1998; Itoi, Ohbuchi, and Fukuno, 1996; and Hamilton and Hagiwara, 1992). Typical examples of account-giving might include 1) giving a reason why you forgot to bring an important document to a meeting, 2) explaining why you were late for a class, or 3) providing a
rationale for why your superior is absent at a joint meeting, to a person from a different company.

People, however, practice account-giving even when they are not pressed a reason or even when no actual harm has been done as far as another person is concerned. The following situation illustrates a case in which an account was given when there was no perceived harm done to the person to whom the account was given.

In the Japanese language course for which the investigator is an instructor, students receive a performance score on a 4-point scale for each class. If students are absent, they receive a score of zero for that day, regardless of the reason. Students do not need to provide excuses for their absences, and the course has a strict policy that excuses do not raise the score of zero to anything else. The class also has a policy that the lowest score of the term is to be dropped in calculating the course grade; thus, the first absence can be disregarded. The class also has a policy regarding homework; if students do not turn in their homework, they receive zero points. However, late homework is accepted up to three school days after the original due date with a penalty of 0.5 points off the full score of 4 for each day it is late.

One of the students enrolled in this course missed a class and failed to submit the homework that was due on the same day. Because it was the beginning of the quarter, and students often forget the policy, the instructor sent an e-mail message to the student to remind him of the attendance policy and to encourage him to submit his homework for partial credits. In his reply message, the student first thanked the teacher for the reminder, and apologizes for the absence. After the apology, he stated his reason why he did not attend class. He mentioned that he thought that an excuse was unnecessary, but also that
he had a family emergency and for that reason had to miss class. In closing, he wrote that next time he will be careful about attendance and submitting homework on time.

The instructor’s message was a friendly reminder and did not accuse him or asked for a reason for his absence. However, the student not only wrote acknowledging the policy, but also apologized and provided an explanation for his absence; that is, he gave an account nevertheless. Absence can hurt the student’s course grade, but there is usually no harm to the teacher beyond a sense of disappointment. Also, the student knew that even if he provided a reason for his absence the absence would still be counted against him. Despite the fact that there was no harm inflicted on his teachers, and that skipping one session was not a severe issue as far as his course grade was concerned, the student apparently felt bad about this incident, and so proceeded with an account-giving. As illustrated in this case, an account is given not only because of some serious failure or accusation, but also when there is some perceived sense of wrongdoing or inconvenience to others on the part of the account giver.

The working definition of account-giving used here is a type of language behavior that occurs when people sense that giving a reason or an explanation will somehow mitigate negative affect in a situation by reducing uneasiness regarding a certain unexpected or unusual behavior, with the ultimate goal of bridging the gap between actual behavior and the perceived expectation.

An ‘account giver’ is hereafter used to refer to a person who delivers accounts, and an ‘account receiver’ refers to a person who receives the accounts. A ‘harm-doer’ refers to a person who does a certain unexpected or unusual behavior. An account giver and a harm-doer are not always the same person. For example, parents sometimes have to give
accounts to a teacher about certain inconveniences that are caused by their child. In this case, the parents are the account giver(s), the child is the harm-doer, and the teacher is the account receiver. However, the present study does not deal with such cases. The harm-doer and the account-giver are the same person in the present study. An ‘evaluator’ refers to a person who judges accounts produced by an account giver as well as judging impression of the account giver.

Depending on the type of incident, the level of severity differs. For example, breaking a vase of historical significance which costs a million dollars is more severe than breaking a vase worth only one dollar. Another example is that being an hour late to an important appointment would likely be acknowledged as more severe than being one minute late. In the present study, these negative outcomes are perceived as likely to cause harm; that is, they are perceived as rude, an inconvenience, or as insult to the other party. Those incidents/instances that possess a relatively high level of severity are described as having “high severity harm,” while those that possess a relatively low level of severity are described as having “low severity harm.” The “harm” may be viewed either from the evaluator’s perspective or the account giver’s perspective.

1.3 Describing the Relation between Account-Giving and Apology

Accomplishing a speech act may require multiple utterances of varying functions. For example, Takahashi and Beebe (1993, p. 141) find that in order to accomplish the speech act of correction, a positive remark such as “It was a very good presentation” was typically followed by a correction such as “But just one mistake—the date”. In short, the researchers uncover a pattern in which the speech act of correction in American English typically consists of an ameliorating remark followed by the correction. So, when native
speakers of English make a correction, they not only identify the error, but also give a positive remark before identifying the error. In their account, Takahashi and Beebe explain that a speech act consists of a sequence of utterances expressing semantic formulas associated with a particular intention. In fact, in the pragmatic realization of language behavior, multiple utterances with various semantic functions are routinely deployed consecutively to accomplish a given speech act.

Account-giving is no exception to this phenomenon, and in the performance of account-giving, apologies are sometimes involved. This is because of the very nature of account-giving, since accounts are sometimes given under conditions of negative outcome as perceived by either an account giver or an account receiver, or by both of them. Conversely, even if a speaker apologizes a few times within a single interaction, it does not mean that the primary purpose of that interaction is an apology, plain and simple. Rather, this should often be perceived as apology used as a verbal tactic to accomplish an account-giving. The purpose of an interaction should be primarily determined by the speaker’s intent. If a speaker has been asked for an explanation of a certain outcome, the purpose of speech is most likely to be account-giving instead of apology, even though the speaker may include apologies.

Although the present study deals with the use of apology in account-giving, the term “apology” in this study does not refer to the speech act of apology, but rather to the semantic functions associated with apologies such as Japanese sumimasen and mooshiwake arimasen, or English I’m sorry. The word apology in this thesis describes one type of account that is employed as a verbal strategy in account-giving.
1.4 Genres in Language Learning

The difficulty of foreign language learning lies not only in mastering grammar and the four skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading), but also in mastering culturally appropriate behavior within different social contexts. Since each culture has different social norms, even if a particular behavior is proper in one culture, that behavior might be inappropriate in another. This difference makes mastering appropriate behavior difficult; learners often do not realize that their behavior is inappropriate in the target culture, since this inappropriate behavior is actually appropriate in their native culture.

Yotsukura (1997) discusses this type of pragmatic failure by relating some of her personal experiences. When she was teaching Japanese at a small liberal arts college in the United States, she selected two students to perform the role of the waiter and customer in a role playing experience. These students had practiced ordering food and drink prior to their class, and their performance went well and was natural; however, problems began to manifest when the situation called for behavior beyond simply ordering. In the United States, a waiter checks whether the customer needs something or if the customer is satisfied with everything by asking “How is everything?”, and this kind of attention paid to customers is perceived as a mark of good service. However, even when grammatically correct, for a waiter or waitress to ask this sort of thing is inappropriate in the context of a Japanese restaurant service encounter. In Japan, waiters/waitresses usually do not return to the customer after serving meals to check if they are satisfied. Instead, whenever customers need assistance, they call for assistance. Yotsukura (1997) calls this context the ‘restaurant service encounter genre’, and argues
that the contexts of these behaviors in American English and Japanese are significantly different.

Since learning social appropriateness is crucial, learners must be able to utilize proper expressions or behaviors without premeditation that will be suitable to their situation in order to carry on a smooth conversation. If they practice inappropriate behavior, it may cause a misunderstanding, and may eventually harm a relationship in good-standing. Also, realizing or knowing proper behavior in a variety of different contexts is difficult. Therefore, it is essential for learners to learn appropriate social behavior as well. Genres help learners use appropriate behaviors and utterances in specific contexts, as well as help deepen their understanding of Japanese culture.

1.5 Organization of the Remaining Chapters

This study has five chapters. Following the present chapter, Chapter Two provides a review of theory and previous studies. I describe genre and speech-act theory proposed by multiple researchers; also, previous research on account-giving is critically reviewed, focusing on the preferences in account-giving among Japanese people and the concept of “influence of harm severity” in Japanese account-giving. Finally, research questions and hypotheses are presented.

In Chapter Three, the methodology used to collect data for this study is described, and I present and discuss this data in Chapter Four. This study focuses on analyzing the evaluation of the appropriateness of account-giving that lacks an apology, the impressions this behavior creates of the account-giver, and the impact and extent of potential harm to social relationships. I also discuss the significance of apology in Japanese account-giving in a Japanese business setting.
The final chapter, Chapter Five, presents the conclusions of the study, suggests possible areas for future research, and finally discusses pedagogical implications.
Chapter 2
Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss related theories and existing research on account-giving to put the findings discussed in Chapters four and five into perspective. First, the theoretical frameworks of genre and speech act are presented, followed by previous research on the function of an apology and the particularities of Japanese communication. This chapter also gives critical account of empirical research on account-giving. Finally, research questions motivating the present study and my hypotheses are presented.

2.2 Genre

The notion of genre is useful for categorizing types of communication. One may be tempted to assume that genres are unique to literary works, but genres also govern our daily speech (Morson and Emerson 1990). Bakhtin (1986: 60) describes speech genres as follows:

All the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language. Quite understandably, the nature and forms of this use are just as diverse as are the areas of human activity. This, of course, in no way disaffirms the national unity of language. Language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (Oral and Written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. These utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each such area not only through their content (thematic) and linguistic style, that is, the selection of the lexical, phraseological, and grammatical resources of the language, but above all through their compositional structure.
All three of these aspects – thematic content, style, and compositional structure- are inseparably linked to the whole of the utterance and are equally determined by the specific nature of the particular sphere of communication. Each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own relatively stable types of these utterances. These we may call speech genres.

Although speech genres contain multiple significant features, one of the fundamental characteristics of speech genres is that speech genres consist of “particular forms of utterances with a particular theme, style(s), and context” (Yotsukura 1997, p. 141). Bakhtin (1996, p.87) states that:

A speech genre is not a form of language, but a typical form of utterance… Genres correspond to typical situations of speech communication, typical themes, and, consequently, also to particular contacts between the meanings of words and actual concrete reality under certain typical circumstances.

According to Bakhtin, utterances are a unit of human communication and constitute the “rejoinder of daily dialogue” (Ibid., p. 60). The key to Bakhtin’s notion of utterances is that they are the boundaries where control of the conversation changes from one speaker to another. Therefore, the end of one utterance is where a speaker delivers a sign to relinquish his/her floor.

Any utterance - from a short (single-word) rejoinder in everyday dialogue to the large novel or scientific treatise – has, so to speak, an absolute beginning and an absolute end: its beginning is preceded by the utterances of others, and its end is followed by the responsive utterances of others… The speaker ends his utterance in order to relinquish the floor to the other or to make room for the other’s active responsive understanding. The utterance is not a conventional unit, but a real unit, clearly delimited by the change of speaking subjects, which ends by relinquishing the floor to the other (Bakhtin 1986, p. 71).
Another important aspect of utterances is that genres are not defined merely by linguistic categories, such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Medvedv (as cited in Morson and Emerson 1990, p. 275) explains that “utterances are ultimately formulated according not to ‘syntactic’ but to ‘generic’” principles. Bakhtin also makes a similar point, and insists that:

Many people who have an excellent command of a language often feel quite helpless in certain spheres of communication precisely because they do not have a practical command of the generic forms used in the given spheres (1986, p. 80).

Thus, even if a speaker possesses sufficient language knowledge, unless the speaker utilizes forms whose propriety depends on a specific context, s/he will not be able to accomplish his/her communicative goal effectively.

Genres are not only defined by linguistic features, but are also formulated over time through different activities and behaviors. Morson and Emerson (1990, p. 290) state that “Genres are the residue of past behavior, and an accretion that shapes, guides, and contains future behavior.” New experiences combine with previous genres and help to redefine them. Briggs and Bauman (1992) also point out that genres are strongly affected by historical and social associations.

In short, genres play a key role in connecting social and linguistic history. Bakhtin (1986, p. 65) argues that:

[...] one must develop a special history of speech genres… that reflects more directly, clearly, and flexibly all the changes taking place in social life. Utterances and their types, that is, speech genres, are the drive belts from the history of society to the history of language.
As the world changes, social norms and linguistic features also change, and language’s social associations have a great impact on the formation of genres. Morson and Emerson (1990, p. 292) claim that “each individual genre records the minutest shifts in daily practices and values.” Thus, in addition to linguistic style (such as grammar, vocabulary, and intonation), genres also contain social norms, and texts and forms of utterances can reflect social values and norms. Therefore, just knowing the grammar and vocabulary of a language does not help a speaker handle a situation in a culturally appropriate manner. A speaker being unable to deliver his or her intention accurately in a culturally appropriate manner is not a matter of vocabulary or grammar, but rather “it is entirely a matter of the inability to command repertoire of genres of social conversation” (Bakhtin 1986, p. 80).

Since genres are formulated not only with linguistic styles but with social values, possession of social knowledge also helps a speaker produce proper utterances in specific contexts. In other words, a wide range of genre knowledge expands our capacity to practice successful social interaction. Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995, p. 5) claim a similar point, and propose a theoretical framework:

Genres are dynamic rhetorical forms that are developed from actors’ responses to recurrent situations and that serve to stabilize experience and give it coherence and meaning. Genres changes over time in response to their uses’ sociocognitive needs... Genre knowledge embraces both form and content, including a sense of what content is appropriate to a particular purpose in a particular situation at a particular point in time.

Berkenkotter and Huckin suggest that genres are always situated somewhere between “stability” and “change” (1995, p. 6), and an appropriate genre will change depending on the particular goals of the conversation within a specific context. Additionally, Morson...
and Emerson (1990, p. 292) point out cultural differences: “Because each culture engages in a vast array of activities practiced by many different social groups in a variety of circumstances, each culture possesses a vast number of speech genres.” Scholars (Morson & Emerson, 1990; & Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995) have pointed out the significance of genres in foreign language learning, as well. As Morson and Emerson (1990, p. 275) state:

> Although comprehension and vocabulary might be strong, learners continue to use the genres of their native language. In both one’s own and a second language, the ability to command a wider set of genres enriches one’s capacity to conceptualize and participate in varying aspects of social life.

Quinn (2003) also discusses the usefulness and importance of use of genres for the L2 pedagogy of Japanese, and explains them with reference to Wittgenstein’s notion of language games. He describes language games as “any activity that constrains and informs the use and meaning of language.”(p.39) and describes genres as “a specific type of language game…(which is) any recognized social activity that constrains and informs the use and meaning of language” (p. 40). He states that “[the] readiness with which we respond to a message (a word, a phrase, a sentence, and so on) is ultimately a matter of our familiarity with the language game(s) (p.46).

Since, like genres, language games are also established in social and linguistic historical practices, they demonstrate not only the mere meaning of words or sentences, but also what participants can presuppose within the specific culture and context (2003). Therefore, Quinn (2003) states that the characteristics of language games provide instructors with proper models of social practices for learners, as well as socially
authentic parameters to guide learner to practice as they expand on those models. In other words, learners need access to accepted “ways of doing, saying or writing” in specific contexts, and on top of that, opportunities to practice them. However, since those ways vary depending on culture, it is crucial that learners learn the target language as specific types of language gems, namely genres. (This is discussed further in section 5.3).

In short, a speech genre joins a particular goal or goals, social knowledge and linguistic styles, and all three are closely related and influence one another in shaping entire utterances. They help us comprehend texts and utterances as intended and deliver our intentions in a culturally coherent manner, and the knowledge is also beneficial to foreign language learners as well.

2.3 A review of speech act theory

Austin (1962) proposed the seminal insight that an utterance can be employed to perform an act in his book, *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). Before his proposal, philosophers took it as axiomatic that sentences were used to say something; but Austin claimed that sentences are used both to say something and to do something. He proposed two acts of using language: 1) Locutionary Acts and 2) Illocutionary Acts.

A locutionary act is an act of simply uttering the words of a sentence, whereas an illocutionary act is an act with which a speaker does something else, in addition to uttering that sentence. For instance, if you say “Please turn on the light” in an office to your colleague, you are not just producing this utterance but also making a request.

John Searle (1979, p. 147-153) examines illocutionary acts further, and classifies the numerous illocutionary acts into five categories:

1) Assertive. An assertive is an utterance used to describe what the
speaker commits (in varying degrees) to something’s being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition.

2) Directive. A directive is an utterance used to attempt to get the hearer to do something; for instance, requesting, warning, and recommending.

3) Commissives. A commisive is an utterance used to commit the speaker to adopt some future course of action, such as promising, offering, vowing, and pledging.

4) Expressives. An expressive is an utterance used to express the psychological state of the speaker, such as apologizing, thanking, and welcoming.

5) Declarations. A declaration is an utterance used to change some state. “Successful performance brings correspondence between the propositional content and reality.” For example, it involves appointing, nominating, and marrying someone.

Austin (1962) claims that context is a crucial factor in the proper performance of an illocutionary act, and he further states that the participants and the situations must be appropriate for the act; he called these conditions for proper performance of such acts felicity conditions. Felicity conditions are concerned with the relationship among an utterance, its context, its situational appropriateness, and the conversation participants who are engaged in the utterance. Austin’s account of felicity conditions is important for this study because it closely examines the produced utterance, the context, and the particular speaker and audience, and delineates appropriateness as a product of their regular intersections.

2.4 Characteristics of Japanese communication

Maynard (1997, p. 57) states that Japanese people actively pursue social comfort through the recognition and overt expression in their language of situational and social
differences among speakers, and she explains that Japanese attempt to emotionally and physically accommodate others, as when thanking someone multiple times or giving a gift, so that they can show their appreciation and esteem for others. Watanabe (1993) discusses features that characterize Japanese communication as “nonconfrontational communication.” She explains that the practice of non-confrontational communication, which is variously indirect and/or deferentially “ambiguous”, is motivated by the maintenance of harmony, which is highly valued in Japanese culture. Japanese people tend to avoid the appearance of confrontation because it breaks social harmony. In addition, Japanese people are sensitive about the concept of face, such that embarrassing others is perceived as an unfavorable practice (Watanabe, 1993; & Coulmas, 1981).

Watanabe (1993, p. 180) also notes the use of “nonreciprocal language”, a concept first presented by Goldstein and Tamura (1975) in the context of Japanese communication. Goldstein and Tamura (1975, p. 11) explain that “[n]on-reciprocal language patterns are those which are restricted according to the nature of the person spoken to… [They] refer directly to the problem of who is related to whom and how.” This means that the choice of language depends on the social role of the person to whom one is speaking.

Vertical hierarchy is one of the organizing factors in Japanese social structure, and Japanese people who want to be considered socially mature are always expected to interact with a socially appropriate style of speech, such as politeness forms that overtly (signal) hierarchical differences among the individuals being referred to, addressed, and the speaker. The speaker’s age, social rank, occupation, and gender are key factors in determining the speaker’s relational position with others on any occasion. In order to
speak in a manner that is culturally appropriate in Japanese, that is to maintain harmony and avoid confrontation, speakers of Japanese have to consider social factors, and then carefully choose proper linguistic forms.

2.5. Functions of an Apology

Goffman (1971) views apologies as one of the strategies for remedial work in communication, serving to re-establish social harmony after an offense. He (1971, p.113) suggests that an apology serves one or more of the following purposes and identifies five elements of apologies:

1) Expression of embarrassment and chagrin,
2) Clarification that one knows what conduct has been expected and sympathy [for the application] of negative sanction,
3) Verbal rejection, repudiation, and disavowal of the wrong way of behaving along with vilification of the self that so behaved,
4) Espousal of the right way and an avowal henceforth to pursue that course, and
5) Performance of penance and the volunteering of restitution.

In sum, an apology, according to Goffman (1971), involves feelings of regret and sympathy toward a previous unfavorable occurrence, an acknowledgement that what the speaker apologizing has done has been wrong, and an admitting that there exists a correct way of action or behavior that has not been followed. Moreover, recent research on account (Takaku, 2000; Fukuno & Ohbuchi, 1998; Itoi et. al., 1996) also offer further clarification on Goffman’s analysis of an apology. They observe an apologizing person acknowledges causal association with the event being referred to in the apology, harmfulness of the event, and his or her responsibility for the harm done. An apology, thus, does not merely express one thing, such as a feeling of being sorry, but also contains other functions as well.
Bargman and Kasper (1993) and Coulmas (1981) claim that the usage of apologies varies depending on culture. Coulmas (1981) compares the act of apology and expressing gratitude across English and Japanese, and concludes that in Japanese culture there are more contexts where people have to apologize, when compared to American culture; conversely, there are more situations in which people are expected to show their gratitude in the United States. So, in situations that Americans thank, Japanese apologize, saying ‘sumimasen ‘I’m sorry.’” The act of apology does not carry the same cultural value in Japan and in the U.S.

Bergman and Kasper (1993) have put forth the idea that foreign language learners encounter great difficulty in learning to behave in a culturally proper way when apologizing, since their native cultural knowledge is so often different from the target culture’s norms. It is therefore essential to identify the contextual affinities, such as those that serve to express apology, and to learn how to deploy them in ways that are culturally appropriate. As Coulmas (1981, p.84) avers, “Japanese are very particular about using the appropriate form in the expected context.” Consequently, an examination of need for apologies in particular genres should be helpful in framing a pedagogy that supports culturally appropriate communicative behavior.

2.6 Classification of Accounts

If we combine what (Takaku, 2000; Tata, 2000; Fukuno and Ohbuchi 1998; Itoi, Ohbuchi and Fukuno, 1996; & Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992) have to say on the matter, there are five major types of accounts:

1) “Apology” (I am very sorry for breaking the rules).
2) “Excuse”
   2a) “External excuse” (I was late because the bus was delayed.)
   2b) “Internal excuse” (I was late because I overslept.)
3) “Justification” (I haven’t spilled coffee a lot.)
4) “Denial” (I have nothing to do with the rules.)
5) “Avoidance” (Let’s not talk about it now.)

In apology, the actor (account giver) acknowledges the causal link between his/her act and its harmfulness. Also, s/he socially acknowledges responsibility for the harm done (Itoi et al., 1996). With excuses, the account giver accepts responsibility for the negative outcome and the harm it has caused, but attempts to reduce his or her level of responsibility by blaming an external factor. Hamilton and Hagiwara (1992) classify excuses into two types: 2a) external excuse (“I was late because the bus was delayed”), and 2b) internal excuses (“I was late because I overslept”). External excuses refer to an occurrence that the account giver cannot control, e.g. the delay of a bus. On the other hand, internal excuses refer to something within the control of the account giver, such as oversleeping. Justification is observed when the account-giver attempts to deny responsibility for a bad outcome by rationalizing his or her act, while also attempting to minimize the harmfulness it caused; this can include reference to an ameliorating detail, as in “I haven’t spilled coffee a lot.” (italics added; Fukuno & Ohbuchi, 1998). In denial, the account giver expresses a lack of individual responsibility or association with the event, as when claiming “I have nothing to do with the rules.” In avoidance, the account giver attempts to avoid talking about the occurrence either at the moment or for good, as in “Let’s not talk about it now.”
To summarize, accounts may be categorized into five types: 1) apology, 2a) external excuses, 2b) internal excuses, 3) justification, 4) denial, and 5) avoidance.

2.7 Existing studies of account-giving

If one has the ability to effectively and successfully give an account for a negative outcome, the negativity may be mitigated with some positive effects, such as the alleviation of anger, improvement of the other’s impression of the account-giver, and maintenance of one’s self-image. According to previous empirical studies in Japanese, apology is the most effective account type among the six types identified above for resolving a conflict, as well as for reducing negative impressions of the account giver (Takaku, 2000; and Ohbuchi & Fukuno, 1998). Excuses reduce personal responsibility (Takaku, 2000) and mitigate social conflict (Itoi, Ohbuchi, & Fukuno, 1996). However, what is appropriate in performing an account-giving varies depending on several inter-related factors. Some that have been identified include the level of harm severity (Fukuno & Ohbuchi, 1998; & Itoi et al., 1996), which concerns whether the harm is severe or not, the assumed level of intimacy between the account giver and the account receiver (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 2001; Fukuno & Ohbuchi, 1998; & Itoi et al., 1996), gender difference (Tata, 2000; & Itoi et al., 1996), status difference between the account giver and the account receiver (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 2001; & Itoi et al., 1996), and cross-cultural difference, such as the difference between American and Japanese common practice (Takaku, 2000; Tata, 2000; Itoi, Ohbuchi, Fukuno & Ohbuchi, 1998; & Itoi, Fukuno, 1996). The present study focuses on the level of severity of harm, controlling other potential variables such as the degree of intimacy involved, and gender.
2.7.1 Preferred accounts in Japanese

In the earlier section, 2.6, five account types are discussed (apologies, excuses, justification, denial, and avoidance). The researchers cited (Takaku, 2000; Fukuno and Ohbuchi, 1998; and Itoi, Ohbuchi and Fukuno, 1996) are agreed to further categorize denial and justification as aggravation/assertive accounts as well as apologies and excuses as mitigation/nonassertive accounts.

Several researchers (Takaku, 2000; Tata, 2000; & Fukuno & Ohbuchi 1998) have argued that collectivists, such as the Japanese, prefer nonassertive accounts (apologies and excuses) in order to maintain social harmony, rather than assertive accounts (e.g., justifications, denials), which tend to be preferred by individualists, such as Americans. However, their discussion lacks a reason why each account belongs to either assertive or nonassertive accounts, and it remains to be seen which excuses should be categorized as such, especially with respect to Japanese culture.

Takaku (2000) conducted an empirical study of different account preferences between Americans and Japanese, as well as the influence of status and culture on account-giving. He asked 52 Japanese (28 males and 24 females) and 52 American (16 males and 36 females) subjects to read scenarios that described a conflict situation at work and then to read four different account types offered in response to that situation: an apology, an excuse, a justification, and avoidance following each description. Subjects were then asked to rate how appropriate each account would be, on 0 to 7 scale. The questionnaire was administered in the subject’s native language, that is, in English for American subjects and in Japanese for Japanese subjects.

He finds that the respondents felt that mitigating accounts (apologies and excuses)
would reduce the account-receiver’s anger more than assertive accounts (justification and avoidance) would, and that within this meta-type, responses for both Japanese and English were the same. However, Japanese respondents were more likely to think that an apology was more appropriate, compared to American subjects. In contrast, American subjects judged that excuses were more appropriate, and justification was also perceived as more appropriate than it was among Japanese respondents. He concludes that Japanese people are more likely to employ mitigating accounts than assertive accounts.

In addition to investigating what an effective and appropriate account is, Takaku (2000) also examined the influence of status, and found that when the account receiver’s status is higher than the account giver’s, Japanese subjects thought that apologies were more appropriate than excuses, and that excuses were more appropriate than justification. On the other hand, Americans thought that excuses were more appropriate than apologies or justification. Even when the account receiver’s status was lower than the account giver’s, Americans’ preferences under this particular social asymmetry remained the same. Given the same asymmetrical relationship, Japanese subjects rated an excuse as a more appropriate account than an apology. Status differences, thus, have an impact on preferred account types in Japanese.

Itoi et al., (1996) also conducted a similar empirical study. Their intent was to investigate differences between Americans and Japanese in preferred accounts, in terms of (a) alleviating the account receiver’s anger and (b) improving the account receiver’s impression. They asked 174 American subjects (88 males and 86 females) and 169 Japanese subjects (85 males and 84 females) to read four different scenarios in which a account giver unintentionally causes a negative outcome; each of these was followed by
each six account types (Apology, Excuse, Justification 1, Justification 2, Denial, and No account), and they asked the subjects to rate how likely they would be to employ each, on a scale of 0 to 10.

Their results are consistent with those found in Takaku (2000). They find that both Japanese and American subjects use apologies the most, but Japanese generally preferred mitigating accounts more than American did, while American subjects preferred assertive accounts, in particular justification, more so than the Japanese did. However, although the preference of apologies was remarkable, excuses were not preferred. Therefore, it is difficult to conclude with absolute certainty that Japanese prefer mitigating accounts, because excuses are also categorized as a kind of mitigating accounts. On top of that, the present study casts doubt on this conclusion by showing that Japanese people find excuses to be offensive (further discussed in Chapter 4).

Yao 2009a was a small-scale study intended to investigate differences in how Americans and Japanese produce apologies when engaging in account-giving. In the study, I asked 11 native English speakers and 6 native Japanese speakers to read four scenarios, which can be categorized into two contexts: a) the outcome occurs due to an external cause, and b) the outcome occurs due to an internal cause. Afterwards, an open-ended role-play was conducted in each language, to examine what kinds of patterns in the characteristics of speech acts could be seen between the two groups. The Japanese subjects apologized nearly twice as often as their American counterparts in the study. Almost all of the Japanese subjects used an apology at least once, regardless of the situation. In contrast, in two out of four scenarios approximately half of the 11 American subjects never apologized. The average number of apologies produced per subject was 2
for the Japanese and 0.56 for the Americans.

As discussed, these three studies’ results clearly suggest that apologies are a significant account in Japanese account-giving. I would therefore predict that if Japanese speakers receive an account that does not include an apology, they will regard the account as inappropriate. I furthermore predict that Japanese speakers will form a negative impression of the account giver when the account giver does not apologize.

2.7.2 Influence of Harm Severity in Japanese Account-Giving

In addition to their research on preferred accounts, reviewed in the previous section, Itoi et. al., (1996) also attempted to investigate the impact of different levels of harm severity. They find that when Japanese subjects judged the severity of harm to be greater, they tended to avoid assertive accounts, and preferred an apology more strongly. Their findings also confirm that Japanese subjects rated the appropriateness of apology higher than Americans did. Therefore, I would expect that when the severity of harm is high and if the account giver does not apologize, Japanese will form a more negative impression of the account giver than when the severity of the harm is mild.

2.8 Research Questions

Much cross-cultural research is available on preferred types of accounts. However, little attempt has been made to clarify the account-receivers’ impressions of the accounts in which the account giver fails to apologize. In addition, no research as of yet has identified a reason (or reasons) why an apology should have a particular importance in account-giving in Japanese. Moreover, I wonder whether there are other factors preferred by Japanese people in addition to apologies. For these reasons, the research reported in this thesis has attempted to identify functions of apologies in Japanese account-giving.
The following research questions were addressed:

**Research Question 1.**
What factors make accounts given in Japanese cultural contexts culturally appropriate?

**Research Question 2.**
What kinds of impressions do Japanese people form when they receive an account without an apology?

**Research Question 3.**
Does the nature of the “harm” have an impact on the significance of apology in Japanese account-giving?

**Research Question 4.**
Why is apologizing so markedly significant among all account types in Japanese society? What is the function of an apology in Japanese account-giving?

### 2.9 Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1.**
When an account is given in typical Japanese business settings (face-to-face conversation with one’s subordinate) in Japan, the lack of an apology will be a significant reason why Japanese natives will think the account is inappropriate.

**Hypothesis 2.**
When an account is given in such settings, the lack of an apology will be a significant reason why Japanese natives will form a negative impression of the account-giver.

**Hypothesis 3.**
The absence of an apology in such settings will cause the native Japanese professional to form a more strongly negative impression of the account giver when the severity of harm is great than when it is low.
Chapter 3

Procedures for Data Collection

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the instruments used during the experiment, introduce the participants in the study, and give an overview of the procedures employed in the collection of the data set.

Quantitative methods have been employed in this study, and a set of procedures was designed in order to accomplish the following three goals: 1) to investigate what kind of impression the performance of account-giving without apology makes on Japanese people in a business setting, 2) to discover whether or not the practice of account-giving without an apology is a significant reason why Japanese people were left with a negative impression, and 3) to find out whether or not a different level of severity of harm results in a different impression left on the listener.

3.2 Instruments

Two types of instruments were employed for data collection: a background questionnaire and two surveys. All were administered entirely in Japanese. See Appendix A for the background questionnaire used and Appendix B for its English equivalent. See Appendices C and D for Surveys I and II, respectively, and Appendices E and F for their
English equivalents. This section describes each instrument, the background questionnaire, and Surveys I and II.

3.2.1 Background Questionnaire

Because every scenario in this study is limited to a Japanese business setting, the main purpose of this questionnaire was to collect demographic information about the subjects and to confirm that they had experience working for a Japanese company.

The background questionnaire asked the subjects about their age, gender, hometown, and their international and domestic employment experience(s).

3.2.2 Surveys

3.2.2.1 Survey I

Survey I was designed based on Yao 2009b, and this research came to play the role of a pilot study for this analysis. In Yao 2009b, ten native speakers of Japanese participated: two were studying as graduate students at an American university in the Midwest and eight lived in Japan and worked full-time in Japanese companies. After the data collection, one problem presented itself, and I made two modifications to Survey I. The explanation of these modifications follows after the description of Survey I.

Survey I, used in the present research, aimed to investigate 1) the degree to which a lack of an apology was viewed as the reason for the utterances being considered inappropriate, 2) whether lack of an apology was related to negative impressions that subjects formed of the person giving the account, and 3) how people perceived the personality of an account-giver who did not apologize during an account-giving act (see Appendix C for the survey I and Appendix E for its English equivalents). Survey I consists of nine scenarios, each followed by a set of four questions.
All nine scenarios describe situations occurring in the same general workplace setting and involve two people, one having a higher status (the role of the respondent) and the other an assistant or subordinate to the role that that subject plays. A workplace in Japan was used as the general context for all of the scenarios in order to generate data relevant to Japanese business settings.

Each scenario described a particular situation, and provided an utterance by a subordinate person. Six of the nine scenarios involved some action or inaction on the part of the subordinate and an utterance by the subordinate that accounted for that action/inaction. The account giver in each scenario is also referred to as the “harm-doer”, and the supervisor (the subject), as the “evaluator.” The “harm” may be viewed either from the evaluator or the account-giver’s perspective. The situation described in the scenario is from the evaluator’s point of view. The account that the subordinate gives in the scenario reflects the account-giver’s perspective.

Based on the researcher’s intuition about relevant social norms and expectations, three of the nine scenarios in the survey (I, II, and VII) indicate low severity of harm and three (III, V, and IX) indicate high severity of harm. Scenarios I, II and VII are judged as low severity of harm because the necessity of completing the asked task is not urgent, and there is plenty of time to complete the task in scenarios I and VII. In scenario II, since the item (DVD) which the account-receiver lends to the account-giver is cheap and easy to find and s/he can easily obtain another one even after losing it, the harm in scenario II is determined to be low. On the other hand, Scenarios III, V, and IX are determined as high severity of harm because the account-giver does not treat an important document carefully, such as spilling coffee on the important document in scenario III and not
checking whether the contract has been sent to the customer successfully despite knowing that the fax machine was not working well in scenario IX. In scenario V, the level of harm is high because the necessity of completing the requested task is urgent but the account-giver has not finished the task, even though the account-receiver gave enough time to complete the task. Three scenarios (IV, VI and VIII) depict situations that involve no harm (from the researcher’s perspective) and therefore the utterances in them are not taken to represent account-giving behavior. They were included in the survey as distracters.

After reading each scenario, respondents answered a set of four questions. In every set, the first question asked whether they received a positive, negative or neutral impression from the described behavior (action or non-action) of the subordinate person in the scenario. The second question asked whether the respondents felt the expression that the subordinate used or the explanation given by the person was appropriate, inappropriate, or neither. They were also asked to provide their reason for selecting “appropriate” or “inappropriate” in response to this question. Question 3 asked about the impression that the subjects formed about the subordinate person: good, bad, or no special impression. They were then asked to provide a reason for their selection of either a “good” or “bad” impression about the subordinate person. Question 4 listed personality characterizations and asked the subjects to select all that they feel matched their impression of the utterances that the subordinate person used. If they selected “other,” they were asked to write the specific characterizations.

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, I made two modifications to Survey I after the pilot study (Yao 2009b), one of which is that I added Question 1 to Survey I,
and the other of which was made to Question 4.

In order to achieve the goals of the present study, an evaluation of language use is required. However, with regards to the question (whether or not they formed a positive, negative, or neutral impression from the utterances of the subordinate person, and their reasoning thereof), some of the subjects evaluated the impression from what the subordinate had done instead of evaluating his or her account-giving utterances. Such evaluations were not relevant to the investigation of proper language use within Japanese account-giving. In order to ensure that subjects evaluated the language use during account-giving, I included Question 1, which asks the subjects to evaluate what the account-giver did, so that the subjects can focus more on evaluating the produced utterances in Questions 2 and 3 of Survey I. In addition, I specifically requested that the subjects evaluate the utterances rather than the behavior itself that necessitated the account-giving utterance in Questions 2 and 3.

I also made one modification for the present research to Question 4 of Survey I. Although the second task in the original survey (that is, selecting personality characteristics that the respondent felt matched the personality of the subordinate person from a list) presented no conceptual issues, it was conceivable that the selections listed were not comprehensive enough. In order to address this potential issue, I interviewed two native Japanese speakers who live in Japan to elicit additional personality characteristics. Both of these subjects were male and in their sixties. Most of the personality characteristics that they mentioned had already been listed, but there was one that both of them mentioned but was not on the list, that is ‘courteous’ (reigi tadashii).
This characteristic was added to the original list of personalities for the survey used in the present study.

3.2.2.2 Survey II

The purpose of Survey II was to reveal reasons why apologies are considered a significant act of account-giving in Japanese (see Appendix D for Japanese equivalents and Appendix F for English equivalents). Survey II consists of four questions, and Questions 1 and 3 attempt to clarify what kinds of thoughts or emotions an apology depicts, whereas Questions 2 and 4 aim to reveal reasons why an apology is significant in Japanese account-giving.

3.3 Participants

A total of nine women between the ages of 28 to 58 agreed to participate in the study. A majority of them were in their 40s and 50s. Since every scenario occurs in an office, I asked only people who were working or had worked for at least three years for a Japanese company to participate in this study, with the goal of collecting more accurate data. All subjects, thus, had worked for a Japanese company for 6 to 27 years, depending on the person; the majority of subjects had worked for fifteen years. The subjects live in Japan, and seven of them were working in a company at the time of data collection, with two having already retired.

3.4 Procedures

Data were collected entirely in Japanese through e-mails with the nine subjects. Survey instruments were sent as attached Word documents, and subjects were asked to respond to them by inserting their responses, saving the files, and sending the saved files back to the researcher as attachments to e-mail messages. Subjects were first asked to
respond to the background questionnaire, upon completion of which they were asked to complete Survey I, followed finally by Survey II.

As mentioned in the earlier section 3.2.2.1, Yao (2009b) showed that subjects tended to evaluate the harm-doer’s behavior (action or lack thereof) rather than the utterance. Question 1, concerning the reaction to the harm-doer’s behavior, was included in Survey I in order to avoid such evaluation, though the actual responses the subjects gave to this question were not the target of the present investigation. Even so, some of the subjects still formed an impression of the harm-doer based on the actions of the harm-doer, instead of evaluating it based on the language use attributed to the harm-doer. When this was noted for any of the subjects, I sent the survey back to them, and asked them to re-evaluate their impression, emphasizing that they should base their evaluation on the account-giver’s language use. E-mail correspondence for the purpose of data collection permitted such exchanges, making the resultant data more usable.

After the completion of Survey I, subjects were asked to answer Survey II. Since the purpose of Survey II was to reveal the significance of an apology in account-giving, I limited Survey II to subjects who answered in Survey I that a lack of an apology causes them to form a negative impression of the harm-doer, or to judge the utterance produced by the harm-doer as inappropriate. However, every subject satisfied this condition and took Survey II, and again sent the answers to me through an exchange of e-mail messages.
Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present data from Surveys I and II and examine the original three research questions and hypotheses. Each section consists of a data presentation followed by a discussion of the data in question. I first consider the evaluations by respondents concerning the appropriateness of the account-giving, followed by a discussion of the kinds of impressions that subjects formed of the harm-doer, and the influence of the severity of harm condition on Japanese account-giving. Finally, I examine the degree to which apology is perceived to be significant, and what emotions or thoughts it can convey. The research questions and hypotheses motivating this analysis are repeated below:

**Research Question 1.**
What factors make accounts given in Japanese cultural contexts culturally appropriate?

**Research Question 2.**
What kinds of impressions do Japanese people form when they receive an account without an apology?

**Research Question 3.**
Does the nature of the “harm” have an impact on the significance of apology in Japanese account-giving?

**Research Question 4.**
Why is apologizing so markedly significant among all account
types in Japanese society? What is the function of an apology in Japanese account-giving?

**Hypothesis 1.**
When an account is given in typical Japanese business settings (face-to-face conversation with one’s subordinate) in Japan, the lack of an apology will be a significant reason why Japanese natives will think the account is inappropriate.

**Hypothesis 2.**
When an account is given in such settings, the lack of an apology will be a significant reason why Japanese natives will form a negative impression of the account-giver.

**Hypothesis 3.**
The absence of an apology in such settings will cause the native Japanese professional to form a more strongly negative impression of the account giver when the severity of harm is great than when it is low.

### 4.2 Making Japanese Account-Giving Appropriate: the Role of an Apology

#### 4.2.1 The Significance of an Apology in the Evaluation of Appropriateness of Account

As discussed in Chapter 3, Question 1 for each of the nine situations in Survey I, which requested an evaluation of what the harm-doer did, was employed to ensure that the subjects evaluated a harm-doer’s offending action separately from the language act used in the account-giving for that action (asked in Question 2). Since this study focuses only on the appropriateness of language acts in account-giving, only the responses given to Questions 2 through 4 are examined. Also, of the nine scenarios presented to the respondents, three do not involve harm-doing but were included as distracters. Only results from answers following situations I, II, III, V, VII, and IX are discussed in the following sections. Three of these situations (Scenarios I, II, and VII) are assumed -from the researcher’s perspective- to involve a low level of harm by the subordinate person,
and the other three (Scenarios III, V, and IX) are assumed to involve a relatively high level of harm by the subordinate person.

To test Hypothesis 1, Question 2 in Survey I asked subjects whether they felt that the account-giving utterances that the subordinate person had given were appropriate, inappropriate, or neither, in each of the six harm-involving situations. They were also asked to provide a reason for deeming the utterance to be appropriate or inappropriate. Table 1 below summarizes the responses to Question 2 in Survey I. Each table cell under “Appropriate,” “Inappropriate,” and “Neither” denotes the total number of respondents who elected that particular choice and the associated percentage of the nine participants who did so. The column under “Inappropriate due to absence of apology” shows the number of subjects who gave the absence of an apology as their justification for feeling that the subordinate person’s account-giving utterance was inappropriate.

Table 1
Appropriateness of accounts without an apology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Appropriate (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Inappropriate (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Neither (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Inappropriate due to absence of apology (% of “inappropriate”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1 (11%)</td>
<td>5 (55.6%)</td>
<td>3 (33.4%)</td>
<td>4 (80.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
<td>1 (11.2%)</td>
<td>5 (62.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (66.7%)</td>
<td>3 (33.4%)</td>
<td>3 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (66.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>46 (85.1%)</td>
<td>7 (12.9%)</td>
<td>30 (65.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=9)
Since there were nine subjects considering six different situations, there are a total of 54 possible selections. Of the fifty-four possible, forty-six selections (85.1% of the total) indicated that the account-giving utterances were inappropriate, while only one (1.9%) indicated that the utterances were appropriate. Seven selections (12.9%) indicated indecision or ambivalence with regard to the appropriateness of the account-giving utterances. In every scenario, at least more than half of the subjects thought that the utterances were inappropriate.

Of the 46 times that subjects deemed the account utterances inappropriate, subjects felt that the inappropriateness was due to the absence of an apology thirty times (65.2%). For every scenario, with the exception of scenario V (high harm severity), more than half of the subjects who thought the utterances were inappropriate indicated that the inappropriateness was due to the absence of an apology. For Scenario V, four of the nine subjects (44.5%) who felt the utterances were inappropriate indicated that lack of an apology was what made the utterances inappropriate in this scenario.

The majority of subjects thought that the account-giving utterances were inappropriate due to a lack of apology. These results therefore lend support to Hypothesis 1, which states that when account-giving occurs in a business setting, the lack of an apology is a significant factor for why a Japanese native judges it to be inappropriate.

In this experiment, then, the presence or absence of an apology has a strong impact on the perceived appropriateness of account-giving utterances in a Japanese business setting. We can conclude that an apology constitutes a key factor in the formation of appropriate utterances for account-giving in a Japanese workplace.
4.2.2. The Significance of an Apology in the Evaluations and Impressions of a Harm-Doer Who does not Apologize

Question 3 in Survey I was designed to test Hypothesis 2: when an account is given in such settings, the lack of an apology will be a significant reason why Japanese natives will form a negative impression of the account-giver. Question 3 asks what kind of impression (positive or negative or neither) the subjects form of the harm-doer in each of the six harmful scenarios, based solely on the language by which they convey accounts. It also asks subjects to provide their reason(s) for their selection of a “positive” or “negative” impression about the harm-doer. Table 2 below summarizes the responses. Each table cell under “Positive,” “Negative,” and “No special impression” denotes the total number of subjects who made that particular choice and its percentage out of the nine participants. The cell under “Negative Impression due to a lack of apology” denotes the number of subjects who gave the absence of an apology as their reason for forming a negative impression of the harm-doer.
Table 2
Impressions formed by account-givers when accounts without an apology are given

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Positive (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Negative (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>No special Impression (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Negative Impression due to a lack of apology (% of those who had negative impressions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1 (11%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>5 (55.6%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>5 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>1 (11.1%)</td>
<td>6 (66.7%)</td>
<td>2 (22.3%)</td>
<td>4 (66.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
<td>1 (11.2%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>5 (55.6%)</td>
<td>3 (75.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
<td>1 (11.2%)</td>
<td>6 (75.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2 (3.7%)</td>
<td>35 (64.8%)</td>
<td>17 (31.5%)</td>
<td>25 (71.42%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=9)

Subjects formed negative impressions about harm-doers on the basis of their accounts in 35 of 54 possible instances (64.8%), whereas they formed positive impressions in only two instances (3.7%). Subjects formed neither positive nor negative impressions in seventeen cases (31.5%). Of the 35 instances of negative impression formation, twenty-five (71.4%) were due to the lack of an apology. This 71.4% shows that a clear majority of negative impressions were formed first and foremost due to a lack of apology, thus lending support to Hypothesis 2. Although the absence of an apology is constitute the primary reason why the subjects formed a negative impression toward the harm-doer, there are a few minor reasons as well. These are discussed further in 4.2.5.

4.2.3 Influence of Harm Level

4.2.3.1 Influence of Harm Severity on the Evaluation of Appropriateness

Question 2 in Survey I attempts to reveal whether different levels of harm severity have an impact on appropriateness evaluations of utterances produced by an
account-giver. Tables 3 and 4 below summarize the responses to Question 2 in Survey I. Table 3 summarizes the responses in high-harm-severity scenarios (Scenarios III, V, and IX), and Table 4 summarizes the responses in low-harm-severity scenarios (Scenarios I, II, and VII). Each table cell under “Appropriate,” “Inappropriate,” and “Neither” denotes the total number of subjects who made that particular choice and its percentage out of the nine participants. The cell under “Inappropriate due to a lack of apology” denotes the number of subjects who gave the absence of an apology as their reason for feeling that the subordinate person’s account-giving utterance was inappropriate.

Table 3

Appropriateness of accounts without an apology under a high level of harm severity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Appropriate (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Inappropriate (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Neither (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Inappropriate due to a lack of apology (% of “Inappropriate”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
<td>1 (11.2%)</td>
<td>5 (62.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (66.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>26 (100%)</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of high severity harm (N=9)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8.7 (96.2%)</td>
<td>0.3 (3.7%)</td>
<td>5 (57.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4
Appropriateness of accounts without an apology under a low level of harm severity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A low level of harm severity (Assumed harm severity level)</th>
<th>Appropriate (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Inappropriate (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Neither (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Inappropriate due to a lack of apology (% of “Inappropriate”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1 (11%)</td>
<td>5 (55.6%)</td>
<td>3 (33.4%)</td>
<td>4 (80.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (66.7%)</td>
<td>3 (33.4%)</td>
<td>3 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of low severity harm (N=9)</td>
<td>0.3 (3.7%)</td>
<td>6.7 (74.1%)</td>
<td>2 (22.2%)</td>
<td>5 (75.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A great majority of subjects (96.2%) answered that the given accounts were inappropriate in high severity of harm scenarios, whereas a lower number of subjects (74.1%, still a majority) answered that the given utterances were inappropriate in low severity scenarios. In a high harm severity scenario, evaluations were concentrated in ‘Inappropriate’- of the twenty-six instances (96.2%), zero (0%) were ‘Appropriate’, and only one instance (3.7%) was ‘Neither’. Cases of low harm severity elicited somewhat different results from those of high harm severity. The significant difference was that evaluations were not quite as concentrated in ‘Inappropriate’ as in high severity of harm scenarios, and subjects chose neutral responses indicating ‘Neither’ more than they did in cases of high harm severity: one subject answered that the utterance was inappropriate (3.7%), and six subjects thought the utterance was ‘Neither’ appropriate nor inappropriate (22.2%). Even in a low harm severity scenario, the majority of people did not think that
the harm-doer’s utterances were appropriate, but compared to the scenarios involving high severity of harm, fewer subjects thought the utterance was inappropriate, and more subjects (18.5% more) thought that the utterances were neither appropriate nor inappropriate. These results indicate that the level of severity of harm influences the judgment of the appropriateness of account-giving.

This fact, however, does not affect the requirement of an apology. In scenarios of both high and low severity of harm, more than half of the subjects answered that a lack of apology caused the inappropriateness of the given account, indicating the strong impact that a lack of apology can have on the appropriateness judgments. Under high severity of harm, more people thought that the delivered account was inappropriate compared to low severity of harm (a twenty percent higher rate), but under low severity of harm more people (75.0%) thought that the utterances were inappropriate due to no apology than in high severity of harm was high (57.7% of subjects thought the delivered utterances were inappropriate due to no apology). These results show that although apologizing is effective in improving the perceived appropriateness of harm-doer’s account-giving in Japanese in a Japanese business setting, the necessity of an apology is not affected by the level of severity. Apologies are an effective means of improving the perceived appropriateness of an account in both high and low levels of severity. Evaluation of accounts in terms of their appropriateness also showed similar results from the influence of the level of severity on the evaluation of appropriateness.

4.2.3.2 Influence of Harm Severity on the Evaluation of Impression of the Harm-Doer

In order to assess Hypothesis 3, Question 3 in Survey I asked whether subjects
formed a positive or negative impression of the account-giving harm-doer from the utterance delivered, and asked subjects to provide a reason for their doing so. Tables 5 and 6 below summarize the responses to Question 3 in Survey I. Table 5 lists the responses associated with high-harm-severity scenarios (Scenarios III, V, and IX) whereas Table 6 summarizes the responses associated with low-harm-severity scenarios (Scenarios I, II, and VII). Each cell of each column under “Positive,” “Negative,” and “No special impression” lists the total number of subjects who elected that particular choice and its percentage out of the nine participants. The column falling under the heading “Negative impression due to no apology” shows the number of subjects who gave the absence of an apology as their primary reason for forming a negative impression of the harm-doer.

Table 5
Impressions of account givers when accounts without an apology are given under a high level of harm severity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A high level of harm severity (Assumed harm severity level)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive (% of all subjects)</td>
<td>Negative (% of all subjects)</td>
<td>No special impression (% of all subjects)</td>
<td>Negative Impression due to no apology (% of “Negative”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>1 (11.1%)</td>
<td>6 (66.7%)</td>
<td>2 (22.3%)</td>
<td>4 (66.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
<td>1 (11.2%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
<td>1 (11.2%)</td>
<td>6 (75.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (11.1%)</td>
<td>22 (88.9%)</td>
<td>4 (22.3%)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of high severity harm (N=9)</td>
<td>0.3 (3.7%)</td>
<td>7.3 (81.4%)</td>
<td>1.3 (14.8%)</td>
<td>3.7 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In scenarios characterized by high harm severity, subjects formed a positive impression in only one of 27 total cases (3.7%), and formed negative impressions in 22 of 27 cases (81.4%), and formed no particular impression in 4 out of the 27 cases (14.8%). It is at once obvious that negative impressions dominate the evaluations of accounts without an apology in high harm severity scenarios. “No special impression” was selected three more times than a positive impression, but still received a low percentage compared to a negative impression.

In scenario with low harm severity as well, there was only one instance out of 27 (3.7%) in which a subject elected a positive impression. However, in contrast to high severity of harm scenarios, in which subjects formed a negative impression in 22 of 27 cases (81.4%), subjects formed a negative impression of the account-giver via the utterance in only 13 of 27 cases (48.2%). They also formed no special impression in 13 of 27 cases in low severity of harm scenarios, compared to only 4 of 27 cases (14.8%) under high-severity-of-harm scenarios.
Table 6
Impressions of account givers when accounts without an apology are given under a low level of harm severity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Negative (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>No special impression (% of all subjects)</th>
<th>Negative Impression due to no apology (% of “Negative”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1 (11.1%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>5 (55.6%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>5 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (44.5%)</td>
<td>5 (55.6%)</td>
<td>3 (75.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of low severity harm (N=9)</td>
<td>0.3 (3.7%)</td>
<td>4.3 (48.2%)</td>
<td>4.3 (48.2%)</td>
<td>2.7 (61.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

81% of subjects formed a negative impression about the harm-doer in high harm severity scenarios, whereas 48.2% of the subjects formed a negative impression about the harm-doer in low harm severity scenarios. This result demonstrates that the subjects form a negative impression about the harm-doer more under high harm severity than under low harm severity.

Yet, the evaluators are likely to form a negative impression when they do not hear apologies, regardless of the situations. In other words, the level of harm severity does not have an impact on the formation of negative impressions due to the lack of apology. Half of the respondents (50%) formed a negative impression due to the lack of apology in scenarios of high harm severity. On the other hand, 8 subjects out of 13 (61.5%) formed a negative impression due to the lack of apology in the low harm severity case. The percentages for forming a negative impression due to the lack of apology in both high
and low harm severity are thus not quite decisively different. These data show that a lack of apology causes the formation of a negative impression of the harm-doer regardless of the level of harm severity. Thus, the results do not support Hypothesis 3.

### 4.2.3.3 Conclusion

The questionnaires on appropriateness and impression generated similar results. They revealed that harm severity has an impact on alleviating negative evaluations of appropriateness, as well as on forming a good impression of a harm-doer in a Japanese business setting. When the harm is more severe, utterances are more likely to be evaluated as inappropriate, and evaluators are more likely to form a negative impression of the harm-doer. Thus, providing apologies in Japanese account-giving in a business setting is recommended to maintain a better social atmosphere.

However, harm severity does not have much influence on the need for apologies in account-giving. The data on the appropriateness of the utterances and on impressions formed of harm-doers showed that low harm severity actually correlated more with judgments of inappropriateness and negative impressions due to no mention of apology, when compared to a high harm severity.

Furthermore, there is one more remarkable finding. Even if subjects felt that an utterance was inappropriate, it was not always the case that they formed a negative impression of the harm-doer. The subjects felt that the utterances were inappropriate in forty-six out of fifty-four possible cases (85.1%), but in seventeen (31.5%) cases they did not form a negative impression. This seems to indicate that Japanese workers do not form a negative impression of their account-giving interlocutors simply on the basis of the language that they use in their accounts.
4.2.4 Additional Factor in the Evaluation of Appropriateness of Account

The lack of apology is the primal reason why the subjects felt that utterances were inappropriate, as demonstrated earlier in the earlier Section 4.2.1, but in addition to the lack of apology, another minor reason was found. Four subjects thought that a harm-doer’s utterances were inappropriate due to the absence of a follow-up pledge to prevent a repetition of a similar negative outcome in the future. They wrote that the harm-doer should have mentioned how to solve the problem if it happens again, especially in scenario VII (low harm level) and IX (high harm level), given below (see footnotes 1 and 2 for Japanese equivalents):

**Situation VII**
You and your assistant, Ms. Yamamoto, were talking about a popular restaurant, which she went to yesterday. You got interested in the restaurant and she told you that she would email the information about the restaurant later. You have not received an email from her, but since you want to go to the restaurant this weekend, you ask her about the information. (It is Tuesday today.) Ms. Yamamoto answered;
“I e-mailed you yesterday, but the internet connection was bad yesterday. So maybe it was not working well. I’ll try e-mailing you again.”

**Situation IX**
You asked your assistant, Ms. Kimura, to fax the contract document to a customer yesterday. This morning, you had a phone call from the customer and were told that she has not received the document yet. The customer was very upset. You asked Ms. Kimura about it. Ms. Kimura answered;
“I faxed it yesterday, but the fax machine was acting...”

---

1 場面 VII 先日アシスタントの山本さんが行った美味しいレストランの話を山本さんと一緒に話していいました。あなたはそのレストランに興味を持ち、山本さんはそのレストランの情報をメールすると言いました。今週末にそのレストランに行きたいと思っていますのですが、まだメールが届いていないので山本さんに聞ききました。（今日は火曜日です。）すると・・・山本：「昨日 E メールしたんですかけど、インターネットの調子があまり良くなかったので、送れなかったのかもしれません。またメールしてみます。」
strangely so maybe there was a problem. I will try sending it again now.”

The negative outcomes in both of these scenarios ensued because of a technology problem, and the same problem might happen again if the assistant were to try again. In this kind of situation, if an account-giver does not provide apologies, the utterances are likely to be viewed as inappropriate because subjects tend not to view such accounts as sufficiently thorough. The four subjects stated that talking about how to deal with future problems can show a harm-doer’s concern for his or her job and for the evaluator. For example, consider the following English translation of the reaction that one of subjects had about the account-giving utterance in scenario VII in Survey I. The original answer is given in the footnotes.

“The harm-doer should have confirmed whether or not the e-mail reached the recipient successfully at the time s/he sent it, so it is doubtful as to whether the harm-doer really sent the e-mail. I do not believe that further explanation of the situation is needed, but I feel that the harm-doer could have added a follow-up such as “I will try to send the e-mail again, so could you let me know if it is not delivered? If not, I will print it out and bring it to you.”

The subject who provided the above answer thought that the explanation offered of problem was sufficient, but that it would have been more appropriate if the assistant had indicated what s/he would do if the same negative conditions were to occur again.

---

2 場面 IX 昨日アシスタントの木村さんに出来上がった契約書をすぐ顧客のところにFAXするように頼みました。今朝、そのお客さんから契約書をまだ受け取ってないという電話があり、そのお客さんは怒っていました。あなたは木村さんに聞きました。すると・・・木村:「昨日ファックスしましたけど、ちょっと機械の調子が悪かったので、もしかしたら故障していたのかかもしれません。今からもう一度送ります。」

3 メールが届いたかどうかはその時に確認すべきで本当に送ったかどうか疑わしい。状況の説明はこれ以上に別に付け加えなくてもいいと思うが、「またもう一度送ってみますので、また着かなかったら教えてください。印刷してお持ちしますので。’ ぐらいのフォローがあってもいいで

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Another subject also had a similar reaction after reading Scenario VII, but this subject also explained a reason why a follow-up solution is needed, namely because doing so can show sincerity:

I get an impression that makes me wonder whether the assistant really sent the e-mail, but at the same time, since this was a personal request, I also think that I am stuck with it. I think that I would not formed a negative impression if I could have the assistant’s intention to confirm that s/he sent the e-mail; by saying, for example, ‘I sent an e-mail yesterday, but since the condition of the internet was not so good, I was thinking to ask you if you have received my e-mail.’ If the internet is not working well, even one sends an e-mail again, it wouldn’t be delivered successfully, so I cannot feel the assistant’s sincerity in saying ‘I’ll email again.’ The assistant’s sincerity that s/he really wants to provide the information in question would cause through if she said some thing like ‘Since the internet is not working well, may I call you to confirm after I e-mail you?’ or ‘Since the internet is not working well, would it be convenient for you if I print them out and give them to you?’

Previous empirical research (Takaku, 2000; Tata, 2000; Ohbuchi and Fukuno, 1998; and Itoi, Ohbuchi, and Fukuno, 1996) has attempted to reveal the most effective account to mitigate the situation or the most preferred account among all types of accounts. However, I would like to emphasize that the appropriateness of account-giving utterances is not merely dependent on only one factor. Bakhtin (1986) claims that language is realized in the unity of individual utterances by speakers. A particular goal, style(s), and

---

4 本当にメールを送ってくれたのかしら？と思いたくなる印象ですが、個人的なお願いだったので仕方がないとも思えます。「昨日メールお送りしましたが、インターネットの調子があまりよくなかったので、受信されたか伺いしようと思っていたところです。」としたほうが送信した確認の意思があると受け取れるので悪い印象ではなくなると思います。インターネットがまだ調子が悪いので再度メールを送っても受信はできないので、「またメールしてみます。」では誠意が感じられません。「インターネットの調子が悪いので、送信したら確認のお電話をさせて頂いていいですか？」とか、「インターネットの調子が悪いので、印刷して差し上げたいと思いますがよろしいですか？」ですと、本当に情報を差し上げたい誠意が伝わります。
context relate to the entire set of utterances, and the whole consists of one type of speech genre. In Scenarios VII and IX, subjects felt that providing a follow-up solution is the essential point to making the given utterance a complete account. Therefore, even if a harm-doer uses the most preferred account, e.g. apologies, it does not guarantee that the entire utterance -or multi utterance account- will be appropriate. Also as Austin (1962) demonstrates in regard to felicity conditions, the appropriateness of a produced utterance closely relates to its context. The results of the present study also show that the appropriateness of an account is determined more by a combination of different types of accounts, each of which depends on a particular situation.

With respect to Japanese account-giving in a Japanese business setting, in addition to apologies, selecting accounts that suit the particulars of each context is a vital key to generating appropriate utterances.

**4.2.5 Other Salient Factors in the Evaluation of Impression of the Harm-Doer who does not Apologize**

Question 3 in Survey I was designed to test Hypothesis 2, and it clarified that the absence of an apology constitutes the primary reason why subjects received a negative impression. In addition to this finding, data gained from Question 3 in Survey I also revealed two other common reasons: a) a lack of concern extended to the evaluator, and b) the use of defensive speech (*iiwake gamashii*).

Respondents indicated that the absence of a suggestion for solving the problem or a lack of thoughtfulness (*hairyo*) constituted the reason behind the negative impression they formed of the harm-doer. As in their evaluations of appropriateness, some subjects were annoyed by the lack of thoughtfulness that the subordinate displayed toward the
evaluator. Showing one’s consideration is one of the key factors in creating a positive impression on the part of the evaluator.

The second common reason that the subjects gave for forming a negative impression of the subordinate person in each scenario is related to particular account that the harm-doer gave. For all of Question 3 in Survey I, seven subjects out of nine thought that the harm-doer tried to make an excuse for the negative outcome, and two subjects thought that the harm-doer tried to justify his/her actions. (The subjects used “iiwake” ‘an excuse’ or “iiwake gamashii” ‘defensive’.) From the given utterances, the subjects thought in 8 instances out of 54 possible instances that the harm-doer attempted to make an excuse. This reason, “iiwake” ‘an excuse’ or “iiwake gamashii” ‘defensive’, constitutes the second most important reason for why the subjects formed a negative impression of the harm-doer.

This response, ‘defensive’, was prominent in responses to Scenario V. Scenarios III, V, and IX represent high harm severity. In high-harm-severity situation, a majority of subjects formed a negative impression of the harm-doer: of the nine possible instances, there were six cases (66.7%) in Scenario III, eight cases (88.9%) in V, and eight cases (88.9%) in Scenario IX in which subjects formed negative impressions. However, although many of the subjects formed a negative impression of the harm-doer due to the absence of apologies in both Scenarios III and IX (four out of six cases in Scenario III, and six out of eight cases in Scenario IX), only one subject (12.5%) out of eight subjects formed a negative impression due to the lack of apologies in Scenario V. In accounting for reasons why subjects formed negative impressions in Scenario V, one significant commonality was found the characterization of the account as ‘defensive.’ The
descriptions below form the context of Scenario V (please see the footnotes or Appendix C for Japanese equivalents), and seven participants’ responses to Question 3 in Survey I are given below, responses for which subjects noted that their reason for a negative impression was not due to the lack of an apology:

**Situation V**
There will be a meeting from 11 a.m. today, and you are going to give a presentation at the meeting. You asked your assistant, Mr. Sato, one hour ago to make 50 copies for the presentation. It is 10:55 am now. Since the meeting will start in 5 minutes, you asked Mr. Sato if he finished making copies. Mr. Sato answered;
“I really tried. I’ve been waiting to use the copy machine for an hour, but there were other people there who were using the copy machine I never got to it until now. If you give me a few more minutes, I’ll make them.”

**Seven comments about the account giver in Scenario V**
Comment 1. The assistant is blaming others for his bungled handling.

Comment 2. I got the impression that the assistant is blaming others using the copier for his poor preparation.

Comment 3. It is unnecessary to make an excuse.

Comment 4. The first sentence sounds defensive / like making an excuse. I do not get the impression that the assistant is willing to complete his work.

Comment 5. There is no explanation for the assistant’s effort, and I only get the impression that he did not put in any effort at all.

Comment 6. The explanation misses the point. The assistant did not say when he can have his work done.

Comment 7. It is not well explained why he has not made the copies yet.

---

5 場面 V 今午前10時55分です。11時から始まる会議でプレゼンテーションをすることになっています。10時に対しては資料のコピー50枚をあなたのアシスタントの佐藤さんに頼みました。5分後で会議が始まるでコピーが出来上がったか確認しました。すると・・・佐藤：「コピーしようとしてるんですが、加藤さんがずっとコピー機を使用していて、他のコピー機も使用中に、まだコピー出来てないんです。あと数分だければ、今作ってきます。」

6 Comment 1. 自らの不手際を他人のせいにしている。言い訳がしましくこえます。
The most significant commonality motivating negative impressions of the harm-doer among these seven answers was that the utterance was viewed to be defensive or “iiwake gamashii”; three subjects out of seven thought that the account giver was defensive (Comments 1, 3, and 4 above). These subjects formed a negative impression of the harm-doer due to the fact that the way the harm-doer offered his account and explained his situation seemed to be aimed at reducing his or her personal responsibility.

In addition to a defensive or “iiwake gamashii” type of response, there are two more noteworthy commonalities: 1) two of the subjects thought that the harm-doer was attempting to justify his poor preparation, as in comments 1 and 2, and 2) two of the subjects formed a negative impression due to a perception of the explanation as poor, as in comments 6 and 7. There were two additional minor commonalities as well: a failure on the part of the subordinate to express effort or willingness to complete his responsibility, and a failure to mention an estimated time for the completion of the job.

In Scenario V, a major impetus behind participants forming negative impressions was a perceived effort on the part of the harm-doer to make excuses or justify his actions, with a secondary reason being an appeal to poor excuses; this stands in contrast to previous results in that the absence of an apology does not appear to be significant.

The finding of this study that subjects were annoyed by an excuse is interesting.

This result does not entirely support research conducted by Itoi, Ohbuchi, and Fukuno in

Comment 2. 自己の事前準備不足を他人がコピー機を使っていないせいにしている印象を受ける。
Comment 3. 言い訳無用です。
Comment 4. 最初の一文が言い訳がましく聞こえる。処理しようという意欲が感じられない。
Comment 5. 仕事を処理しようという努力の説明がなく、何も努力をしなかったことしか印象にならない。
Comment 6. ポイントがずれている。いつ出来るか、間に合うか言っている。
Comment 7. コピーが出来ていない説明になっていない。
1996. Itoi, Ohbuchi, and Fukuno (1996) finds that Japanese people prefer mitigating accounts (apology and excuses) over assertive accounts (justification and denial). Other researchers, Takaku (2000) and Fukuno and Ohbuchi (1998), are also in agreement in seeing excuses as mitigating accounts. Yet, some subjects in the present study clearly expressed a negative feeling toward making excuses and formed a negative impression about excuses. Thus, the data of the present study can suggest that ‘excuse’ is not a mitigating account, at least in Japanese account-giving taking place in a business setting.

In order to leave a positive impression, it is essential that a harm-doer not only offer an apology but also offer an account that explains the situation while avoiding the appearance of deflecting responsibility. However, the interpretation of the utterances as an excuse differed depending on the person. Some subjects thought that the harm-doer’s utterances were a mere explanation of the current situation, and other subjects thought of the utterances as making an excuse or *iiwake*, and some other subjects thought of them as defensive or *iiwake gamashii*. The same utterances were perceived in three different ways.

*IIwake* literally means ‘making an excuse’, whereas the meaning of *iiwake gamashii* ‘defensive’ means that the utterance sounds like making an excuse. These different perceptions are probably caused by similar characteristics common to both mere explanations and excuses. Both an explanation and an excuse contain a detailed explanation of the occurrence, and an explanation is done before the blame to deflect it, whereas an excuse is given after the accusation to diminish blame (Goffman 1971).

Since the supervisor simply ascertains the current condition in each of these scenarios, some subjects who thought of an utterance as “*iiwake gamashii*” perceived the
harm-doer’s utterance as an explanation, but from the utterances formed an impression that the harm-doer was attempting to diminish blame. On the contrary, subjects who thought of the utterance as making an excuse probably did not leave any leeway to consider the utterance as an explanation, but instead thought that the purpose of the utterance was to diminish blame. This analysis, however, remains conjecture. What exactly makes an utterance sound more “**iiwake gamashii**” ‘defensive’? There are likely many different variables at play in these scenarios, from external or internal excuses to the types of account given, but there remains the intriguing question of what makes subjects perceive an utterance as “**iiwake gamashii**” ‘defensive’. Moreover, does an apology have the ability to make utterances unjustifiable? Further investigation is needed to address these questions.

### 4.2.6 Perceived Personality of a Non-Apologizing Account-Giver

Question 4 in Survey I was designed to answer Research Question 1, namely “What kind of impressions do Japanese form when they receive an account without apologies?” It asks the subjects to provide descriptions of personality characteristics that they felt matched the personality of the account givers. Table 7 below summarizes the responses to Question 4 in Survey I. Each table cell under “Personality” shows personality descriptions that the evaluator would assign to a harm-doer who does not apologize in account-giving (these descriptions are listed in Question 4). Each table cell under “The number of votes” denotes the total number of votes aligning with a particular choice and its percentage out of the total number of votes. The total number of votes was 75. Table 7 only shows the description selections that subjects indicated when they formed a negative impression of the account-giver due to a lack of apology.
### Table 7
Perceived Personality of a Harm-Doer Who Does Not Apologize

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>The number of votes (% of all votes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Unrepentant (<em>Hansei shite inai</em>)</td>
<td>20 (27.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Discourteous (<em>Reigi ga nai</em>)</td>
<td>14 (19.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Immature (<em>Mijukumono</em>)</td>
<td>13 (17.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Disrespectful (<em>Keii no nai</em>)</td>
<td>11 (15.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Unpleasant (<em>Kanji no warui</em>)</td>
<td>7 (9.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Other (<em>Sonota</em>)</td>
<td>5 (6.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Dense/obtuse (<em>Kuuki ga yomenai</em>)</td>
<td>3 (4.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Respectful (<em>Keii no aru</em>)</td>
<td>1 (1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Pleasant (<em>Kanji no ii</em>)</td>
<td>1 (1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Courteous (<em>Reigi tadasii</em>)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When a harm-doer does not apologize, he or she is most likely to be thought of as unrepentant (*hansei shite inai*). Discourteous (*reigi ga nai*) ranked second, immature (*mijuku-mono*) ranked third, and disrespectful (*keii no nai*), fourth.

There were five subjects who checked “other,” and wrote the following descriptions of the account givers: 1) neither bad nor good personality (*Kanji ga ii wake de mo warui wake de mo nai*.), 2) irresponsible (*musekinin*), 3) a lack of consideration to others (*Aite/tanin e no hairyo ni kakeru*) (two votes), and 4) a lack of genuine sincerity (*huseijitsu*). Just as the importance of showing consideration was given as the reason for
evaluating the utterances as inappropriate or forming negative impressions about the account givers, consideration for the feelings of others is mentioned in this question as well. Technically, there was only one subject who wrote this, but since this key word “consideration to others” was mentioned in many cases, we can conclude that showing consideration to others must be one of the significant aspects of appropriate Japanese account-giving.

It is not so surprising that unrepentant (hansei shite inai) received the most votes (twenty votes, 27.4%) since apologizing can be typically interpreted as feeling sorry or self reflection (hansei), and unrepentant (hansei shite inai) is precisely the opposite interpretation from the typical one. However, it was a remarkable finding that discourteous (reigi ga nai), immature (mijuku-mono), and disrespectful (keii no nai) were ranked in the top two to four: discourteous (reigi ga nai) received fourteen votes (19.2%), immature (mijuku-mono) thirteen votes (17.8%), and disrespectful (keii no nai) eleven votes (15.1%). These three personality traits are not representative of an apology’s meaning or function, but are related more to social manners and moral character (hinsei).

This phenomenon implies that apologizing in account-giving has become a part of common custom and good manners in Japanese society. This custom is precisely why Japanese deem the lack of an apology to be a sign of immaturity, and will judge an offender’s manners (that is, no use of apology in account-giving) to be poor. One subject commented on Question 3 in Survey II (what kind of emotion or thought would you feel from an apology?) that “the harm-doer has skill in making apologies”⁷. The subject formed the impression that the person in question can quickly grasp and handle a

⁷ 謝るだけの才覚があること
situation: for example, immediately recognizing that a negative outcome may have been caused by oneself, knowing that the problem inflicts inconvenience on the other person, or recognizing when he or she should apologize. Also, this judgment can hinge on whether or not the person in question can grasp the situation and apologize, even when the negative outcome is not caused by him or her.

In sum, when the harm-doer does not apologize, the evaluator perceived his or her character negatively in a Japanese business setting. This research also presents the new finding that many Japanese people think that apologizing constitutes a part of social manners. Additionally, if harm-doers do not apologize, Japanese people are likely to think of them as rude or that they do not know proper behavior, which leads them to judge the harm-doers as immature.

4.3 Why and How an Apology Matters

As has been repeatedly discussed in the precious sections, apologies have a significant influence on account-giving in a Japanese business setting. In this section, I describe the results of Survey II and examine Research Question 2, that is, why is an apology a significant account among all accounts in Japanese society? What is the function of apology in Japanese account-giving?

In order to probe Research Question 2, subjects who mentioned a lack of apology in Survey I were asked to answer four questions in Survey II (see Appendix D for the original survey, administered in Japanese and Appendix F for English equivalent), questions concerning their feelings or thoughts about what an apology can indicate. Questions 1 and 3 in Survey II attempted to uncover the emotions or thoughts that an apology can express, whereas Questions 2 and 5 were aimed at investigating the
functions of apologies in Japanese account-giving. Survey II is an open-ended question, but since I found commonalities in responses, I have listed and quantified their commonalities.

**4.3.1 Emotions and Thoughts that an Apology can Express**

Questions 1 and 3 in Survey II were designed with answering Research Question 2 in mind. Table 8, below, summarizes responses to Questions 1 and 3 in Survey II. Each table cell under “Emotion/Thought/Attitude” is a list of responses given by the subjects. Each table cell under “Question 1” and “Question 3” denotes the total number of subjects who chose that particular answer. Each table cell under “Total of Q1 and Q3” lists the total number of attestations for those particular responses in Questions 1 and 3.

**Table 8**  
**Emotions and Thoughts that Apologies Express**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Emotion / Thought/ Attitude</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Total of Q1 and Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 1</strong></td>
<td>Responsibility for one’s job (shigoto e no sekinin kan)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deep sincerity toward one’s job (shigoto e no seii / shinken sa)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 2</strong></td>
<td>Feeling sorry for others (aite e no mooshiwake nasa)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consideration for the evaluator (aite e no omoiyari)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperativeness (kyouchousei)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acknowledgement that the harm-doer caused inconvenience to others (aite ni meiwaku o kaketa)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 3</strong></td>
<td>Acknowledgement of one’s mistake (misu no ninshiki)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 4</strong></td>
<td>Feeling sorry for the negative outcome (hansei shite iru)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the results, apologies in Japanese account-giving delivered in a Japanese business setting can express eight different thoughts or emotions. Most of these thoughts and emotion involve a meaning different from those typically associated with apologies, an uneasiness or bad feeling about the disappointment, or regret.

In addition to indicating typical emotions, apologies in Japanese account-giving can index eight different feelings or thoughts. These feelings and thoughts can be categorized into four types: 1) attitude toward one’s job, 2) emotions and thoughts about the other (account-receiver/ the evaluator), 3) self-reflection, and 4) emotions and thoughts about the negative outcome.

The first category involves ‘responsibility for one’s job (shigoto e no sekinin-kan)’ and ‘deep sincerity toward one’s job (shigoto e no seijitsu sa / shinken sa)’. These characterize attitudes toward one’s job rather than emotions or thoughts. For the combined responses for questions 1 and 3, instances where responses corresponded to ‘responsibility’ (sekinin-kan) and ‘deep sincerity’ (sei/shinken sa) numbered six and ten (times) respectively.

The second category involves three emotions. There were three instances where responses corresponded to ‘feeling bad about disappointing others’ (aite e no mooshiwake nasa), three times to ‘consideration for the evaluator’ (aite e no omoiyari), once to ‘cooperativeness’ (Kyouchoisei), and two times to ‘acknowledgement that the harm-doer caused an inconvenience to others’ (aite ni meiwaku o kaketa).

The third category (self-reflection) involves ‘acknowledgment of one’s mistake’ (misu no ninshiki). The fourth category (feelings about the negative outcome) demonstrates that ‘one feels responsible for the negative outcome’ (hansei shiteiru). The
instances where responses corresponded to ‘acknowledgment of one’s mistake’ (misu no ninshiki) numbered two times, and ‘feeling sorry for the negative outcome’ (hansei shiteiru) numbered seven times.

It is a new discovery that apologies in Japanese account-giving can index four different types of emotions/thoughts/attitudes. In Goffman’s (1971) summary of characteristics of apologies, self-reflection and emotion/thoughts about the negative outcome are included, but Goffman’s characteristics do not involve attitude toward one’s job and the emotions/thoughts about account-receiver and/or the evaluator.

The first category, ‘responsibility for one’s job’ (shigoto e no sekinin-kan) and ‘deep sincerity toward one’s job’ (shigoto e no seii / shinnen sa), and the fourth category, ‘feeling sorry for the negative outcome’ (hansei shiteiru), generated more instances compared to the other two categories. It is not a prominent result that ‘feeling sorry for the negative outcome’ (hansei shite iru) receive many votes, but it is remarkable that many subjects agree that apologies expressed ‘responsibility for one’s job’ (shigoto e no sekinin-kan) or ‘deep sincerity toward one’s job’ (shigoto e no seii / shinnen sa) because the typical meanings associated with apologies do not contain these elements.

It is likely that since the setting of all of the scenarios is a work place, the first category (attitude toward one’s job) may have naturally received the most number of selections. However, even if the context were to change, apologies alone would probably be able to depict one’s responsibility or deep sincerity toward one’s tasks or toward one’s engagements with the account receiver. Two subjects commented that “once we make a promise with others or undertake a task, we should meet certain expectations”. We
generally expect to meet expectations, especially when we are requested to do tasks. Therefore, in the context where the harm-doer fails to meet that expectation, even in informal or a casual setting, apologies may be able to show the harm-doer’s commitment to the request. However, when the harm-doer fail to live up to an expectation in an office setting, it is more likely to be expected that sincerity about his or her work be overtly stated. Apologies play a role of indexing deep sincerity or responsibility in a variety of situations. Further research is required to reveal whether or not apologies express these four types of emotions/thoughts regardless of the general linguistic environment.

It is also remarkable finding that apologies can depict concern for an evaluator as well. There are not quite as many votes for each of the individual emotions in the second category, but if all are combined, the total number of votes becomes sizeable: ‘feeling bad about disappointing others’ \( (aite e no mooshiwake nasa) \), ‘consideration for the evaluator’ \( (aite e no omoiyari) \), ‘cooperativeness’ (kyouchosei), and ‘acknowledgment that the harm-doer caused inconvenience to others’ \( (aite ni meiwaku o kaketa) \).

In sum, the results show that in Japanese account-giving in a business setting, an apology expresses emotions/thoughts/attitudes toward four different things: deep sincerity and responsibility for one’s job, self-reflection, concern about the evaluator, and regret about the negative outcome. Subjects noted that mentioning ‘sorry’ within account-giving was necessary because it can express these four thoughts.

If we analyze the fact that apologies in Japanese account-giving can index these four thoughts from a different perspective, this can be interpreted as an evaluator expecting these four things to be expressed from a harm-doer. If a harm-doer does not
express these emotions, it negatively affects the maintenance of a good relationship with an evaluator.

One subject who has been working in customer service for thirteen years commented about the strength of the Japanese desire to receive apologies, and wrote that she had become aware from her experience that “there are so many people who will never be happy even if we provide a solution unless we apologize.” Since this is a customer service counter setting, it may differ somewhat from the setting used in the present study, an office setting, but it shows the strength of the Japanese expectation to receive “sorry”. In this way, we can see that an apology holds great power in Japanese culture. The following section examines how an apology functions in Japanese account-giving.

4.3.2 Functions of an Apology in Japanese Account-Giving

Questions 2 and 4 in Survey II were designed to provide an answer to Research Question 2, namely to provide a reason for why an apology is important and a description of its functions. Table 9 below summarizes the responses to Question 2 and 4. Although we have already discussed emotions and attitudes in the previous section, since many such responses were provided, and since I have found that the function of apology and these emotions greatly influence each other, the associated emotions are listed in table 9 as well. Each table cell under “Question 2” and “Question 4” shows the total number of subjects who chose that particular answer. Each table cell under “Total of Q2 and Q4” shows the total number of attestations of each particular responses in Q2 and Q4.
Table 9
Functions of an Apology and Emotions that Apologies express

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Total of Q2 and Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To mitigate the other’s anger (aite no kimochi o sizumeru/yawarageru)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show a good impression (ii inshou o ataeru)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve a trust relationship (shinrai kankei no koujou)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion/Attitude</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Total of Q2 and Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category 4 Feeling of sorry for the negative outcome</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 2 Understanding evaluator’s feeling (aite no kimochi ni kyoukan suru/shinjou rikai)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consideration for the evaluator (aite e no omoiyari)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentleness (yasashisa)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 3 Acknowledgement of one’s fault (hi o ninshiki site iru)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 1 Deep sincerity toward one’s job (shigoto ni shinken de aru)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses to Questions 2 and 4 clarified both the functions of apology and the emotions/attitudes that apologies express in Japanese account-giving. Three functions of an apology were found: 1. mitigation of the other’s anger (aite no kimochi o sizumeru/yawarageru), 2. giving a good impression (inshou wo ataeru), and 3. improving a trust relationship (shinrai kankei no koujou). For the combined responses for Questions 2 and 4, instances where the answers corresponded to the mitigation of the evaluator’s anger (aite no kimochi o sizumeru/yawarageru) numbered six times, showing a good
impression numbered one time, and improvement of a trust relationship numbered four times.

In addition to the functions of apologies, the subjects also responded with the emotions and attitude that apologies can express. Most of these have already appeared in the previous section, but ‘gentleness’ (yasashisa) is newly included (see Table 9). These emotions and attitudes gathered from responses to Questions 2 and 4 also can be categorized into the same four categories mentioned in the previous section, but the ratio of instances is slightly different. In Questions 2 and 4, category 4, ‘regret for the negative outcome’ (warui kekka ni taisite mooshiwake nai) obtained five instances, which is the highest number of instances among all 4 categories. Each subsection of Category 1, deep sincerity toward one’s job, numbered low, and Category 3, self-reflection, generated only one instance. In Questions 2 and 4, Category 2 involves three kinds of emotions/concern toward the evaluator: 1. Understanding the evaluator’s feelings (aite no kimochi ni kyoukan suru/shinjou rikai) generated three instances, 2. Gentleness (yasashisa) generated one instance, and 3. Consideration for the evaluator (aite e no omoiyari) which generated two instances. If all attestations of these three emotions are combined they total to six times, which represents the highest number of instances among four categories. This high number of instances denotes the importance of indicating concern towards the evaluator.

The results of the present study regarding the functions of an apology are consistent with previous studies of accounts. In addition, they reveal that the emotions/thoughts/attitudes that an apology expresses trigger the function of an apology. For instance, an evaluator’s anger would be mitigated because he or she learned that the harm-doer is sincere toward one’s job, cared about the evaluator, and is regretful about
the negative outcome by giving an apology. Furthermore, this would consequently bring about harmony and contribute to the maintenance of a good relationship.

4.4 Additional Points about Japanese Account-Giving

In this section, I highlight other opinions that the subjects expressed about proper Japanese account-giving. First, participants noted that it is better to ask for the account-receiver’s approval of a proposed solution. For example, in situation V, instead of saying “I am going to make copies as soon as possible,” one could offer, “I am going to make copies as soon as possible, but is that okay with you?” Second, it is good to mention how the account giver is going to deal with a negative outcome and also how future cases of a similar problem will be resolved. As discussed earlier, many subjects said that by mentioning these details, you can show that you are dealing with the problem carefully for the account-receiver. Third, mentioning what the harm-doer has done to solve a negative outcome can express sincerity towards the job. Finally, a simple explanation is also important. All of these observations have pedagogical implications that are discussed further in Chapter 5.

Even if speakers were to follow tips offered in how-to volumes on Japanese account-giving, some account-receivers might deem certain cases of account-giving defensive or *iiwake gamashii*. Whether a particular evaluator feels that the account is an excuse depends on the evaluator. Further research is needed in order to investigate what in particular makes evaluators feel that certain accounts are excuses.

One of the subjects mentioned that nowadays, there are many how-to books in Japan, such as on how to apologize or how to talk politely. Because of the abundant availability of such guides, when this subject receives utterances that followed the models
in these books too closely, she feels that they lack sincerity, and that the person does not personally care about the problem much. Therefore, although such tips may help speakers give appropriate accounts, the attitude held by the account-giver, along with the words themselves, should be honest and sincere.

4.5 Conclusion

The following is a summary of the results of testing these hypotheses. We have examined the results of this study and discussed their ramifications, in addition to revisiting the initial hypotheses and research questions that motivated this study.

Hypothesis 1, which states, ‘When an account is given in typical Japanese business settings (face-to-face conversation with one’s subordinate) in Japan, the lack of an apology is a significant reason why the Japanese natives would think the account is inappropriate.’, is supported

Hypothesis 2, which states, ‘When an account is given in such settings, the lack of an apology is a significant reason why Japanese natives would form a negative impression of the account giver. ‘ is supported, and

Hypothesis 3, which states ‘The absence of an apology in such settings would cause the native Japanese professional to form a more strongly negative impression of the account giver when the severity of harm is great than when it is low.’ is not supported.

This study also reveals that harm severity influences the appropriateness of a harm-doer’s utterance as well as the amelioration of negative impressions about that harm-doer; however, it does not have an impact on the necessity of apologies in account-giving. Even in low harm severity, the mention of an apology is highly recommended.

In Japanese society, when a negative outcome occurs, even if account givers
personally believe that they are not responsible for whatever outcome may have befallen them, if they are involved in any way in events related to the negative outcome, showing consideration to the perceived evaluator is useful.

Furthermore, this study discovered that apologies can express four kinds of thoughts or attitudes: deep sincerity and responsibility for one’s job, self-reflection, concern about the evaluator, and regret about the negative outcome. Indication of these thoughts helps to maintain a good relationship with the evaluator. Especially in cases when one cannot meet a superior’s expectations or is unable to keep promises, apologizing helps to indicate a serious attitude towards that particular job and/or promise. It is therefore insufficient to simply mention what has occurred and how one is going to deal with the problem.

The function of apologies, then, is significant in terms of alleviating the effects of a negative outcome and/or an unfavorable impression towards the harm-doer not only within a business setting, but with respect to Japanese culture as a whole, it can also ease potentially strained relationships between people on many different levels and facets of society.
Chapter 5
Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Research

5.1 Conclusions

The present study has primarily examined the uses and functions of apologies in account-giving in a Japanese business setting. Given the assumption that an apology is the significant factor which makes Japanese account-giving appropriate in the Japanese cultural context, I have examined it through an evaluation of utterances without apologies given by a harm-doer, looking at these utterances both for their appropriateness in the particular business setting as well as the evaluator’s impressions toward the harm-doer. A lack of apologies are found to be the key component in making the performance of account-giving in Japanese business setting inappropriate and forms negative impression of the harm-doer.

This research also looked into the impact on the perceived severity of harm on these evaluations. Perceived high severity of harm elicited negative evaluations than low perceived severity of harm. Even so, respondents expected harm-doers to apologize regardless of whether they judged the harm to be high or low. Thus, regardless of perceived harm level, a harm-doer should provide apologies when accounting for negative outcomes in Japanese business settings.

In Japanese account-giving, an apology is a key to creating and maintaining a good
standing relationship. The significance of apologies may change depending on the setting, but at least in the presence of certain thematic content, namely an explanation of a negative outcome in a Japanese office, saying the equivalent of “I’m sorry” helps greatly in creating positive effects. Words or phrase(s) that count as apologies in Japanese cultural contexts typically convey more than one meaning. The present study reveals that apologies during account-giving express four different things in a Japanese business setting: 1) deep sincerity and responsibility for one’s job, 2) self-reflection, 3) concern about the evaluator, and 4) regret about the negative outcome. The recipient of an account for undesirable events expects the account-giver to express these emotions/thoughts/attitudes. Since apologies can express these culturally significant attitudinal stances, it functions as a device that makes the account-giving culturally desirable, and is thus effective in maintaining a good relationship. If an account-giver in these circumstances fails to express an apology, s/he is most likely to be thought of as ‘unrepentant’ (*hansei shite inai*), ‘discourteous’ (*reigi ga nai*), or ‘immature’ (*mijuku-mono*), and to be considered to be either ignorant of proper behavior or rude.

Words or phrases that are recognized as an apology may be required to maintain a good relationship, but simply providing an apology is not sufficient, either. The appropriateness, and thus efficacy, of Japanese account-giving is not determined by merely uttering words associated with being sorry, but rather through entire utterances, tailored to fit the situation. For example, when the same negative outcome might possibly recur, providing a preventive solution is effective in terms of making the utterance culturally appropriate and conducive to creating a positive impression of oneself in one’s audience.
5.2 Areas for Future Research

As discussed in Chapter 4, factors which make the utterances sound ‘defensive,’ *iiwake gamashii*, can be clarified further: for instance, we can closely examine the circumstances in which the utterances were delivered as well as analyze the utterances that are perceived as ‘defensive.’

While the present study has focuses on Japanese business settings, it would be useful to compare the results with responses obtained for casual settings, such as an interaction between friends. In contexts where professionalism is expected, showing ‘sincerity’ (*shiken-sa*) is important to create a positive effect, such as forming a good impression. But since professionalism is not expected between friends, the functions of an apology in business-oriented account-giving might differ from what apologies count for when an account is given in a casual setting. Consequently, the uses of apologies between friends might differ from the uses this study has identified.

Future research can also look into the impact of the harm-doers and evaluators, such as a business setting in which the harm-doer is in the higher position and the evaluator is in the subordinate as well as in a situation where the social convention leave no expectation of poor apology, (for example, when a customer causes difficulty for a sales person).

Furthermore, the positive effect of apologies in account-giving can be tested: for instance, the number of apologies and when in the overall utterance the apology is given, at the beginning, toward the end, or both. Moreover, it can be tested whether or not giving excuses is effective if given with an apology. Another area is how well learners of Japanese acquire the account-giving strategy. It would be useful to analyze how this
strategy is being treated in current textbook.

The present study observes performances that are defined concretely by the social roles of the evaluator and the harm-doer, as well as the timing and place of the account-giving event. It does not involve other people who may be present when the harm-doer produces accounts. Future research can also examine the influence of the presence of an audience on account-giving.

5.3 Pedagogical Implication

Bakhtin (1986) states that the formation of speech genres greatly involves historical and social associations. Therefore, they provide the authentic models of social of recognized activities (Quinn 2003), including, for example, effective ways of behaving within specific context. Bakhtin (1986) claims that possessing a wide repertoire of speech genres enables speakers convey messages successfully in different situations.

However, since the ways of social activities are carried out depending on culture, in order to take command of speech genre, learners must understand the target language’s social norms and how linguistic features reflect and help to maintain those social norms. Quinn (2003: p. 43) states that “for memories so specific as those that allow us to cope in a particular lifeway, or culture, it seems safe to say that these are not established except in the embodied practice of coping in that culture.” Therefore, language instructors must provide learners proper models which are used in the target culture.

Quinn (2003: p.40) discusses two significant pedagogical points for foreign language education:

1. To develop language in the narrower, verbal sense, instructors must make use of language games, which involve more than the verbal language of words and grammar, sounds and graphs.

2. If the verbal language we assist our students in developing is to
serve their needs in the foreign culture, it must be developed in language games of that culture.

The first point he makes is to teach language in its specific contexts (where certain participants, place, time, and goals of communication coincide naturally), so that learners can develop a grasp of how the activities convey meaning in context. The second point is that instructors must introduce their learners to those communicative genres specific to the target culture. In addition to enhancing learner’s knowledge of the target language’s genres, Quinn also underscores on the importance of actual, real-time practice in a language classroom, based on the presented models, but going on to vary the contextual parameters (participants, place, time, etc.) as allowed.

Yotsukura (1997) argues that an item-oriented approach (focusing on learning vocabulary and grammar in isolation), a concept first presented by Galal Walker (1989), is likely to cause interlanguage failure. She suggests a performance-oriented approach, and explains that the performance-oriented approach can provide students with an opportunity to both observe and practice a numerous variety of models of native speaker behavior in particular contexts, which in turn facilitates the process of learning how to communicate in both grammatically correct and culturally appropriate ways. She notes two important steps in the process: 1) making the practice gradually more complex, and 2) guiding rehearsal and giving feedback on students’ performance. This helps learners to handle a wide range of disparate situations in culturally appropriate manner and offers them the flexibility to communicate in a wide range of situations.

In addition, a performance-oriented approach has to be one that includes an awareness of the values that underlie behavioral distinctions actually practiced in the
target culture, and to alert learners to the potential consequences of not performing such behaviors. The potential discomfort associated with performing linguistic behaviors that do not conform to the norms of one’s native language makes teaching these skills especially important. If learners are able to grasp the significance of certain behaviors, they can be more conscious of and confident in their communication in those contexts.

With regard to Japanese account-giving delivered in a Japanese business setting, it is highly expected by an account-receiver that the account-giver will demonstrate 1) devotion to one’s job, 2) acknowledgement of responsibility, and 3) feelings of remorse to the account-receiver. The presence of an apology fulfills an account-receiver’s expectations for this kind of stance. As the results of Survey II reveal, apologies (at least) in Japanese account-giving function 1) to mitigate the other’s anger, 2) to give a good impression, and 3) to improve upon a trusting relationship. In addition, results of Survey II also show that an account-giver can convey the emotions/attitude that they are expected to show through apology. In language classrooms, the background information (namely expectations and how to meet them) should be taught, to raise awareness of the value system that underlies distinctions of apologizing in Japanese account-giving. When learners become aware of the cultural significance of their behavior, such as when apologizing, it can motivate them to actually act to produce apologies.

In addition to the information alone, the potential discomfort associated with those linguistic behaviors that do not follow the norm (such as not providing apologies) can also motivate the students. As the results of Survey I show, without apologies, an account-giving utterance would be perceived as inappropriate, to the detriment of the account-receiver’s impressions of the harm-doer. For instance, the account-giver will be
thought of as ‘unrepentant’ (hansei shite inai), ‘discourteous’ (reigi ga nai), or ‘immature’ (mijuku-mono). As previously discussed, in order to practice linguistic performance comfortably and with confidence, it is pedagogically more sound to teach students culturally appropriate language behaviors-- the reason why those certain behaviors are important, and the detrimental consequences of inappropriate actions.

The use of an apology in account-giving differs between Japanese and English, and consequently it comes as no surprise that it may prove difficult for second language learners to master the use of an apology. However, repeated situational practice on the part of students and feedback from teachers will help to overcome these hurdles, and examining the different usages of an apology in account-giving provides learners with the insights necessary to function appropriately in a culture vastly different from their own. Moreover, this close examination will also help learners understand Japanese people’s mind-sets as well. It is likely that the importance of employing an apology for what it can express, such as concern for the feelings of others, is not limited solely to account-giving, but rather is important also in a variety of speech genres. An expression of empathy toward others seems to be strongly expected in an account-giving performance, and thus is likely to be demonstrated in many other situations as well. Therefore, a well-modeled focus on and examination of apology in context should also help learners learn behavioral and perceptual tendencies that they are likely to encounter when interacting with Japanese people, in addition to imparting a knowledge of favorable attitudes and linguistic norms in Japanese culture.
Bibliography


Appendix A

Background Questionnaire (Japanese equivalents)

研究をすすめるにあたってのアンケート
Survey for subject’s background information (Japanese)

1. 性別：男性 ・ 女性 (gender)

2. 年齢________才 (age)

3. ご出身はどちらですか。________都道府県
(Which prefecture are you from?)

4. 外国の滞在経験はありますか  はい  いいえ
「はい」の方、お手数ですが、国名、期間、目的をお教えください。
(Have you ever lived in any countries other than America? If yes, write where, how long, and purpose.)

国________  期間________  目的____________________

5. 日本の企業で働いた経験はありますか

正社員として  嘱託社員として  非常勤として  派遣社員として

期間____年  部門（例：営業、企画など）________________
Appendix B

Background Questionnaire (English Equivalents)

1. Gender: Male / Female (Circle one)

2. Age:

3. Which prefecture are you from?

4. Have you ever lived in any countries other than America? If yes, write where, how long, and purpose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. Have you ever worked in a Japanese company?

As;
Full-time worker   Temporary Employee   Part-time worker

Duration   Branch (e.g. promotion)
Appendix C
Survey I: Questionnaire (Japanese Equivalents)

アンケート

<全体の設定>
全ての状況において、あなたは日本にある、日本企業の正社員として、部下やアシスタントを指導したりまとめたりする立場にいます。

＜会話の状況＞このような立場のあなたが遭遇するかもしれない場面九つと、それぞれの場面で会話の相手があなたに言うことが提示されます。会話相手やその人が言ったことに対しどのような印象をお持ちになるかを考えてください。選択肢の中から当てはまるものに○印をつけてください。

場面I
新入社員が3ヶ月後に入社してくるため、あなたはその準備を始めました。まずオフィスに入るために必要なIDカードの作成を、担当部門の部下の小池さんに頼み、IDカードが出来次第連絡をくれるように頼みました。特に期日は特定しなかったものの、2、3日で出来ると予想してたところ、一週間たっても何も連絡がありません。そこで小池さんに電話して聞いてみることにしました。すると・・・

小池:「この一週間、他の仕事で忙しくて出来ませんでした。今IDカードを作っているところで、今日中には出来ると思います。出来たらそちらにお持ちします。」

Q1.
上記の状況から小池さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

_____ a. いい印象を受ける

_____ b. 悪い印象を受ける

_____ c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2.
起こった状況を踏まえた上で、小池さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと
と思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a, bについては理由も述べてください。

____a. 適切 理由:

____b. 不適切理由:

____c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 小池さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a, bについては理由も述べてください。

____a. いい印象を受ける 理由:

____b. 悪い印象を受ける 理由:

____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4.
小池さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックをしてください。

___ 敬意のある ___ 感じ良い ___ 礼儀正しい
___ 敬意のない ___ 感じの悪い ___ 礼儀がない
___ 反省していない ___ 未熟者 ___ 空気が読めない
___ その他（つまり_________________）

場面 II.
部下の柏木さんは映画のダイタニックを見たことがなく、ぜひ見てみたいと言っていました。あなたはちょうど安く買ったダイタニックの DVD を持っていて、それを最近は全然見ないため、一週間貸してあげることにしました。一週間後、柏木さんがあなたに話しかけてきました。

柏木：「あのう、お借りした DVD がどうしても見当たらなくて、全く同じ DVD を新しく買ってきたのですが、これでもよろしいでしょうか。」

Q1.
上記の状況から柏木さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

____a. いい印象を受ける

____b. 悪い印象を受ける
c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2.
起こった状況を踏まえた上で、柏木さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、b については理由も述べてください。

a. 適切 理由：
b. 不適切 理由：
c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 柏木さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、b については理由も述べてください。

a. いい印象を受ける 理由：
b. 悪い印象を受ける 理由：
c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4.
柏木さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックをしてください。

敬意のある ☐ 感じ良い ☐ 礼儀正しい ☐
敬意のない ☐ 感じの悪い ☐ 礼儀がない ☐
反省していない ☐ 未熟者 ☐ 空気が読めない ☐
その他（つまり_________________）

場面 III.
あなたは部下の木村さんと一緒に喫茶店でお昼を食べています。木村さんがコーヒーを飲んでいる時に、喫茶店を走り回っていた子どもが木村さんにぶつかり、飲んでいたコーヒーがあなたの大切な書類にかかってしまいました。すると木村さんはそばにあったナプキンでその書類を拭きながら、こう言いました。

木村さん：「子どもにおされて・・・。会社に戻ったら私がその書類を作り直します。もう少しナプキン持ってきます。」
Q1.  
上記の状況から木村さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

____a. いい印象を受ける  
____b. 悪い印象を受ける  
____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2.  
起こった状況を踏まえた上で、木村さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

____a. 適切  理由：  
____b. 不適切  理由：  
____c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 木村さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

____a. いい印象を受ける  理由：  
____b. 悪い印象を受ける  理由：  
____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4.  
木村さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックをしてください。

__敬意のある  __感じ良好  __礼儀正しい  
__敬意のない  __感じの悪い  __礼儀がない  
__反省していない  __未熟者  __空気が読めない  
__その他（つまり_________________________________________）
場面 IV.
昨晩、新入社員のための勉強会があり、あなたはセキュリティーのことについてプレゼンテーションをしました。今はお昼休みで、あなたが会社の食堂で食べているところに、部下の野上さんが来て、こう言いました。

野上：「昨日の勉強会、大変勉強になりました。もっと勉強したいと思っているのですが、もし、お勧めの参考書などあれば教えていただきたいのですが・・・。」

Q1. 上記の状況から野上さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

____a. いい印象を受ける
____b. 悪い印象を受ける
____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2. 起こった状況を踏まえた上で、野上さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

____a. 適切 理由：
____b. 不適切 理由：
____c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 野上さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

____a. いい印象を受ける 理由：
____b. 悪い印象を受ける 理由：
____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4. 野上さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックしてください。

敬意のある  感じ良好  礼儀正しい
場面 V
今午前 10 時 55 分です。11 時から始まる会議でプレゼンテーションをすることになっています。10 時にそのプレゼンで使用するための資料のコピー 50 枚をあなたのアシスタントの佐藤さんに頼みました。あと 5 分程で会議が始まるのでコピーが出来上がったか確認しました。すると・・・
佐藤：「コピーしようとしてるんですが、加藤さんがずっとコピー機を使用していて、他のコピー機も使用中で、まだコピー出来てないんです。あと数分くらいで、今作ってきます。」
Q1.
上記の状況から佐藤さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

a. いい印象を受ける
b. 悪い印象を受ける
c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2.
起こった状況を踏まえた上で、佐藤さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、b については理由も述べてください。

a. 適切 理由:
b. 不適切理由:
c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 佐藤さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、b については理由も述べてください。

a. いい印象を受ける   理由:
b. 悪い印象を受ける   理由:
Q4.
佐藤さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックしてください。

敬意のある
敬意のない
反省していない
その他（つまり_________________）

感觉良い
感じの悪い
未熟者
空気が読めない

礼儀正しい
礼儀がない

Q4.

場面 VI.
明日会社の同僚と一緒に飲みに行くことになりました。そこでアシスタントの近藤さんも誘うことにしました。すると・・・

近藤：「実は明日は祖母の病院にお見舞いに行こうと思っていて・・・。せっかく誘っていただいたのに、すみません。」

Q1.
上記の状況から近藤さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

a. いい印象を受ける
b. 悪い印象を受ける
c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2.
起こった状況を踏まえた上で、近藤さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

a. 適切理由：
b. 不適切理由：
c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 近藤さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選
択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

_____a. いい印象を受ける　理由：

_____b. 悪い印象を受ける　理由：

_____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4.
近藤さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックしてください。

敬意のある __ 感じ良い __ 礼儀正しい
敬意のない __ 感じの悪い __ 礼儀がない
反省していない __ 未熟者 __ 空気が読めない
その他（つまり_________________）

場面VII.
先日アシスタントの山本さんが行った美味しいレストランの話を山本さんと一緒に話ししていました。あなたはそのレストランに興味を持ち、山本さんはそのレストランの情報をメールすると言いました。今週末にそのレストランに行きたいと思っているのですが、まだメールが届いていないので山本さんに聞きました。（今日は火曜日です。）すると・・・

山本：「昨日 E メールしたんですけど、インターネットの調子が悪くなかったので、送れなかったのかもしれません。またメールしてみます。」

Q1.
上記の状況から山本さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

_____a. いい印象を受ける

_____b. 悪い印象を受ける

_____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2.
起こった状況を踏まえた上で、山本さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。
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適切 理由:

不適切理由:

d. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 山本さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

a. いい印象を受ける 理由:

b. 悪い印象を受ける 理由:

c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4.
山本さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックしてください。

敬意のある
敬意のない
反省していない
その他（つまり______________________）

敬意のある
感じ良い
礼儀正しい

感じの悪い
礼儀がない
未熟者
空気が読めない

場面 VIII

今午前10時です。あなたは部下の高橋さんから頼まれごとをされました。

高橋：「お忙しいところ申し訳ありません。お時間のある時にこの書類にサインいただきますでしょうか。」

Q1.
上記の状況から高橋さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

a. いい印象を受ける

b. 悪い印象を受ける

c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q2.
起こった状況を踏まえた上で、高橋さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと
思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

_____a. 適切　理由：

_____b. 不適切理由：

_____c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 高橋さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

_____a. いい印象を受ける　理由：

_____b. 悪い印象を受ける　理由：

_____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4. 高橋さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックをしてください。

敬意のある　 感じ良い　 礼儀正しい
敬意のない　 感じの悪い　 礼儀がない
反省していない　 未熟者　 空気が読めない
その他（つまり_________________）

場面 IX
昨日アシスタントの木村さんに出来上がった契約書をすぐ顧客のところにFAXするように頼みました。今朝、そのお客さんから契約書をまだ受け取っていないという電話があり、そのお客さんは怒っていました。あなたは木村さんに聞きました。すると・・・

木村：「昨日ファックスしましたけど、ちょっと機械の調子が悪かったので、もしかしたら故障していたのかもしれません。今からもう一度送ります。」

Q1. 上記の状況から木村さんという部下に対してどのような印象を持ちますか。3択のいずれか一つをお選び下さい。

_____a. いい印象を受ける

_____b. 悪い印象を受ける
Q2. 起こった状況を踏まえた上で、木村さんの上記の言葉遣いや説明の仕方は適切だったと思いますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

_____a. 適切 理由:
_____b. 不適切 理由:
_____c. どちらとも言えない

Q3. 木村さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものからどんな印象を受けますか。以下の選択肢のいずれかひとつを選び、a、bについては理由も述べてください。

_____a. いい印象を受ける 理由:
_____b. 悪い印象を受ける 理由:
_____c. 特別な印象は受けない

Q4. 木村さんの言葉遣いや説明の仕方そのものから受ける印象で、当てはまる全ての項目にチェックをしてください。

___敬意のある ___感じ良好 ___礼儀正しい
___敬意のない  ___感じの悪い  ___礼儀がない
___反省していない ___未熟者  ___空気が読めない
___その他（つまり______________________）
Appendix D

Survey II (Japanese Equivalents)

お答えが重複されてしまうこともあるかもしれませんが、全く構いません。思ったこと、お考えになったことを自由にお答えください。よろしくお願い致します。

1. アンケートのお答えの中に「謝罪の言葉がない」というお答えがありましたか、謝ることによって何が示されるか選択必要だと思いますか。（お答えは複数選択も構いません）

2. 何か悪い状況が発生しました時、必ずしも自分の責任ではないのに謝罪をすることがありますか、どうして謝罪をするのか、或いはなぜした方が良いと思いますか。

3. 謝罪の言葉から相手のどんな気持ちや考えを汲み取るでしょうか。（お答えは複数選択も構いません）

4. 謝罪をされる側にとっては謝罪があるとないとでは相手に対する気持ちや印象にも違いが現れると思いますが、謝罪によって気持ちなどに変化が起こる理由は何だと思いますか。
Appendix E

Survey I: Questionnaire (English Equivalents)

<Overall Setting>
You are a full-time worker in a Japanese company. You are in the position of directing and organizing your subordinates and assistants in every situation.

<Situation of the Conversation>
You will be given nine situations which you may encounter in real life, and in each situation you will be presented with utterances by a conservation partner. Please think of the kinds of impressions that each of the utterances might give you, and select item(s) which you think are applicable to the statements.

Situation I
New employees are going to start working in the office in three months, and you start the necessary preparation. You have first asked your subordinate, Mr. Koike, to make their ID cards needed to enter the office, and you asked him to contact you once he finished making the ID cards. It has been a week since you asked him, and he has not contacted you yet. Although you did not give him a due date, you were expecting him to contact you earlier. However, since he has not contacted you yet, you decide to call him. Mr. Koike answers the call and says:

Koike: “I was busy with other work, I could not make the ID card last week. But I am working on it right now. I think I can get it done within today. I will bring them to you later.”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Mr. Koike did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. positive impression

___ b. negative impression

___ c. No special impression
Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Mr. Koike? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. Appropriate  
   Reason:  

___ b. Inappropriate  
   Reason:  

___ c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate  
   Reason:  

___ b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate  
   Reason:  

___ c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4. From only the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___ respectful  ___ pleasant  ___ courteous  
___ disrespectful  ___ unpleasant  ___ discourteous  
___ unrepentant  ___ immature  ___ dense/obtuse  
Other ________________________________

Situation II
Your subordinate, Ms. Kashiwagi, has not seen the movie Titanic. She said that she wants to see it. You have the DVD, and since you have not watched it at all recently, you lend her your DVD for a week. After a week, she came to you and told you that

“I could not find your DVD, but I bought the same one to give back to you. Is this OK with you?”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Ms. Kashiwagi did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.
Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Ms. Kashiwagi? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. Appropriate
Reason:

___ b. Inappropriate
Reason:

___ c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
Reason:

___ b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
Reason:

___ c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4. From only the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___ respectful
___ disrespectful
___ unrepentant
Other ____________________________

___ pleasant
___ unpleasant
___ immature

___ courteous
___ discourteous
___ dense/obtuse

Situation III
You are having lunch with your subordinate, Mr. Kimura, at a restaurant. While he is drinking his coffee, a child running around the restaurant bumps into him, and the coffee spills on your important papers. Mr. Kimura tries to wipe it with a napkin and says:
“The child pushed me…..I will type up this paper after we return to the office. I am going to get more napkins.”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Mr. Kimura did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. positive impression  
___ b. negative impression  
___ c. No special impression

Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Mr. Kimura? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. Appropriate  
    Reason:  
___ b. Inappropriate  
    Reason:  
___ c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate  
    Reason:  
___ b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate  
    Reason:  
___ c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4. From only the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___ respectful  ___ pleasant  ___ courteous  
___ disrespectful  ___ unpleasant  ___ discourteous  
___ unrepentant  ___ immature  ___ dense/obtuse
Situation IV
Yesterday evening, you gave a presentation about security for new workers. It is lunch time now, and while you are eating lunch, your subordinate, Ms. Nogami, approaches you and tells you that:

“I learned a lot from your presentation yesterday. I’d like to study more about security, and I am wondering if you know of a recommended book that I could study by myself.”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Ms. Nogami did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___a. positive impression

___b. negative impression

___c. No special impression

Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Ms. Nogami? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___a. Appropriate
   Reason:

___b. Inappropriate
   Reason:

___c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:

___b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:

___c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.
Q4.
From only the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___respectful  ___pleasant  ___courteous
___disrespectful  ___unpleasant  ___discourteous
___unrepentant  ___immature  ___dense/obtuse
Other____________________________________

Situation V
There will be a meeting from 11a.m. today, and you are going to give a presentation at the meeting. You have asked your assistant, Mr. Sato, one hour ago to make 50 copies for the presentation. It is 10:55am now. Since the meeting will start in 5 minutes, you ask Mr. Sato if he has finished making copies. Mr. Sato answers:

“I really tried. I’ve been waiting to use the copy machine for an hour, but there were other people there who were using the copy machine, and I never got to it until now. If you give me a few more minutes, I’ll make them.”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Mr. Sato did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___a. positive impression

___b. negative impression

___c. No special impression

Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Mr. Sato? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___a. Appropriate
   Reason:

___b. Inappropriate
   Reason:

___c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate
Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
    Reason:
___ b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
    Reason:
___ c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4.
From only the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___ respectful ___ pleasant ___ courteous
___ disrespectful ___ unpleasant ___ discourteous
___ unrepentant ___ immature ___ dense/obtuse
Other ________________________________

Situation VI
You are going to have a drink with your co-workers tomorrow evening. You decided to invite your assistant, Mr. Kondoh, too.

The Assistant answered;

“Thanks a lot for the invitation. It sounds like fun, but actually I was planning on visiting my grandmother in the hospital today.”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Mr. Kondoh did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. positive impression
___ b. negative impression
___ c. No special impression

Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Mr. Kondoh? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.
___a. Appropriate  
    Reason:

___b. Inappropriate  
    Reason:

___c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate  
    Reason:
___b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate  
    Reason:
___c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4.
From only the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___respectful  ___pleasant  ___courteous
___disrespectful  ___unpleasant  ___discourteous
___unrepentant  ___immature  ___dense/obtuse
Other______________________________

Situation VII
You and your assistant, Ms. Yamamoto, were talking about a popular restaurant which she went to yesterday. You got interested in the restaurant and she told you that she would email the information about the restaurant later. You have not received an email from her, but since you want to go to the restaurant this weekend, you ask her about the information. (It is Tuesday today.) Ms. Yamamoto answers;

“I e-mailed you yesterday, but the internet connection was bad yesterday. So maybe it was not working well. I’ll try e-mailing you again.”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Ms. Yamamoto did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___a. positive impression
b. negative impression

c. No special impression

Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Ms. Yamamoto? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

a. Appropriate
   Reason:

b. Inappropriate
   Reason:

c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:

b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:

c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4. From only the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

- respectful
- unpleasant
- courteous
- disrespectful
- unpleasent
- discourteous
- unrepentant
- immature
- dense/obtuse

Situation VIII

It’s 10 am now. Your assistant, Mr. Takahashi, asked you for a favor. Mr. Takahashi says;

“Can you please sign this for me? I need it by 3 pm.”
Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Mr. Takahashi did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. positive impression
___ b. negative impression
___ c. No special impression

Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Mr. Takahashi? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. Appropriate
   Reason:
___ b. Inappropriate
   Reason:
___ c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:
___ b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:
___ c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4. From only the way your subordinate explained his conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___ respectful  ___ pleasant  ___ courteous
___ disrespectful  ___ unpleasant  ___ discourteous
___ unrepentant  ___ immature  ___ dense/obtuse
Other ________________________________
Situation IX

You asked your assistant, Ms. Kimura, to fax a contract document to a customer yesterday. This morning, you had a phone call from the customer and were told that she has not received the document yet. The customer was very upset. You ask the assistant about it, and Ms. Kimura answers;

“I faxed it yesterday, but the fax machine was acting strangely so maybe there was a problem. I will try sending it again now.”

Q1. Based on what your subordinate, Ms. Kimura did, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. positive impression

___ b. negative impression

___ c. No special impression

Q2. Based on the utterance above, what type of impression would you form about your subordinate, Ms. Kimura? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. Appropriate
   Reason:

___ b. Inappropriate
   Reason:

___ c. Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q3. Based only on the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and expression), what impression do you receive? Please select one response and provide your reason for selection (a) or (b) if applicable.

___ a. form positive impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:

___ b. form negative impression about the assistant/ the subordinate
   Reason:

___ c. do not receive any special impression about the assistant/ the subordinate.

Q4. From only the way your subordinate explained her conduct (e.g. word choice and
expression), what kind of impressions of your assistant do you receive? Please check all that apply.

___respectful  ___pleasant  ___courteous
___disrespectful  ___unpleasant  ___discourteous
___unrepentant  ___immature  ___dense/obtuse
Other ________________________________
Appendix F

Survey II (English Equivalents)

1. You answered “there is no apology” in your questionnaire. Why did you think that an apology is important? What can an apology indicate?

2. When a negative outcome occurs, people sometimes apologize even though the outcome happened not because of them. Why do you think they apologize? Why is it better to apologize?

3. What kind of emotion or thought would you feel from an apology?

4. The impression of the other person can vary depending on whether or not the person apologizes. Why do you think someone's impression would be different because of an apology?