

**Methodology for a DCT-Based Pre-Study:
Approaching Assertions, Complaints and Requests in Japanese**

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With this pre-study I would like to investigate pragmatic and morphosyntactic realizations of speech acts, specifically requests, complaints and assertions by native speakers of Japanese using written Discourse Completion Tasks. As a preparatory phase for more extensive research, the study aims to generate hypotheses regarding variation in speech act formulation across different contexts while also evaluating the methodological feasibility of the chosen instrument. Twenty DCT scenarios were administered to four native Japanese speakers, controlling for power, social distance and imposition in the speaker-hearer interaction. The scenarios were adapted from the Variprag project (Variprag 2024), translated and subsequently refined via consultation with native speakers in order to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness. Analysis is conducted at two levels: 1) a morphosyntactic level focusing on sentence types, present politeness markers and modality, and 2) a pragmatic level identifying the speech act elicited in the head act (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984) and the presence of supportive moves. As data analysis has not yet been carried out, this presentation invites discussion that may help refine the analytical approach for both for the current pre-study, as well as subsequent research phases and as such I particularly welcome critical perspectives and suggestions of all kinds.

References:

- Blum-Kulka, S. & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). *Applied linguistics*, 5(3), pp.196-213.
- Variprag (2024). Variprag: Variantenpragmatik des Deutschen [Online]. Available at: variprag.net (Accessed: 9 June 2025).