

## Research Forum

### **But I Don't Want to be Rude: On Learning How to Express Anger in the L2**

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This research investigates pragmatic use of rudeness, focusing on use of rude expressions as a result of anger, and contrasting native and non-native expression of anger. Ten native speakers of English and 10 native speakers of Japanese with advanced English proficiency were presented with five situations in which anger was expected. During interviews, subjects were asked 1) how they would feel in each situation, 2) how they would or would not express their emotions verbally and/or non-verbally, and 3) why they would or would not express themselves in those ways. In general, NSs were more expressive, however, the difference in reactions was smaller than expected. Results confirm that sources for learning rudeness are limited for NNSs and that the learners have little confidence in its use.

この研究は、怒りの結果としての無礼な表現の使い方に焦点をあて、母語話者と非母語話者の怒りの表現を比較しながら、無礼さの語用論的用法を探究するものである。英語母語話者と上級英語学習者である日本語母語話者それぞれ10人に、怒りを感じるであろう5つの場面を提示し、インタビューにより、1) そのような状況ではどんな感情をもつか、2) その感情を言語的に、また非言語的にどのように表現するか、どのような表現はしないか、3) それらの表現をなぜする、あるいはしないのかを聞いた。一般的にいて、母語話者はより表現が豊かであるが、非母語話者との相違は予想より小さかった。調査の結果、非母語話者が無礼さの表現を学習するリソースは限られており、学習者はその使用にほとんど自信がないということがわかった。

Just as pragmatic competence using politeness is a critical aspect for L2 acquisition, rudeness is another important target language aspect. Although it is not an area which has been much discussed or researched, Lakoff (1989), in her analysis of courtroom discourse, mentions intentional, systematic rudeness in her analysis of courtroom discourse in contrast to polite behavior and non-polite behavior. This definition of rudeness, the failure to convey politeness where expected, is further explained by Kasper (1990) as "being constituted by deviation from whatever counts as politic in a given context," and "confrontational and disruptive to social equilibrium" (p. 19). Kasper proposes further the distinction between "motivated" and "unmotivated" rudeness (1990, pp. 19-20). Unmotivated rudeness is mere lack of politeness where it is expected. Kasper claims that L2 learners, having different pragmatic norms in their L1 culture, would learn to minimize this kind of rudeness as they become more competent in the target language (TL). L2 learners would become familiar with the forms and eventually use them, just as L1 children do when they become competent adults. Motivated rudeness falls into three categories: a lack of affect control, strategic rudeness, and ironic rudeness (Kasper, 1990, p.20). The first is very distinctive from the others in that it is not goal-oriented. The rudeness as a result of affect control is strongly associated with apparently rude speech acts, such as cursing and insults, often considered marks of anger. In contrast, strategic and ironic rudeness are employed with an expectation of certain outcomes.

Of the three categories used by Kasper, we focus on the category of rudeness resulting from a lack of control, or anger, to determine whether L2 learners can master two different norms of expressing emotions, especially Western and Oriental norms. First, there is the question of why people become angry and how the situations in which people feel angry differ. Stipek, Weiner, and Lei (1989, in Markus & Kitayama, 1991) report that Chinese showed a tendency to get angry at people who did something wrong to others, while Americans reported being angry more when they themselves were mistreated. Similarly, Japanese are less likely than Americans to experience anger when there is a close relationship (Matsumoto, Kudoh, Scherer & Wallbott, 1988; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Although we should not over-generalize the situations which can be the stimuli for anger, the psychology of anger, which is culturally bound, would be difficult to change even when the L2 is spoken, for learning an L2 does not necessarily mean that one feels angry in situations different from those of the L1 culture.

Second, literature indicates that the expression of emotions has different values in Oriental and Western cultures. Tavris (1984) refers to

the Japanese practice of emotional constraint, claiming that "a Japanese who shows anger the Western way is admitting that he has lost control, therefore lost face," whereas in Western culture, the opposite is true; "a man may lose face if he does *not* show anger when it is appropriate and *manly* to do so" (p. 67). In Western society, "showing anger may simply mark the beginning of an exchange, perhaps to show that negotiator is serious" (Tavris, 1984, p. 67). In Japanese society, the overt expression of anger and verbal attack is interpreted as evidence of immaturity and childishness. Rude language is more commonly utilized by young children and teenagers as they are generally excused from adult norms, however, this kind of language would be employed less by the time adulthood is reached (Hoshino, 1989).

Research findings on cultural views of "self" may explain the different viewpoints regarding the expression of anger. Markus and Kitayama (1991) claim that the Western view of self, the "*independent* self," seems to encourage a person to express anger, frustration, and pride more often than the Oriental view of "*interdependent* self," reasoning that those negative emotions are "ego-focused" rather than "other-focused" (pp. 235-239). They also point out that many interdependent cultures seem to have developed strategies by which people avoid expressing negative emotions (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

These values begin to be instilled during childhood. Miyake, Campos, Kagan, and Bradshaw (1986) found that American mothers tend to have more verbal communication regarding emotions, whereas Japanese mothers use physical expressions rather than deal verbally with their children's emotions. They also reported that Japanese mothers infrequently show anger to their children. Japanese mothers are illustrated as "empathy trainers" in child-rearing, often interpreting the emotions of a third person, as well as their own, by saying things like: "Ms. Brown would be pleased with your nice behavior," or "I will get angry if you do such a thing" (Clancy, 1986, pp. 232-235), in effect training them to guess the feelings of others in certain contexts. This attitude differs from American mothers who might immediately say "No!" showing anger and/or frustration, in order to stop undesirable behavior. This may imply that competent Japanese adults would feel they should not express emotions overtly as others can guess these suppressed emotions and behave accordingly. In contrast, American society expects people to express their emotions outwardly, viewing this as an important and effective communication strategy (cf. Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Regarding *how* L2 learners can express anger, direct translation of swear words or insults is almost impossible. Hoshino (1989) points out that the

Japanese language does not have a large vocabulary of swear words. His list of rude expressions in Japanese (1989, pp. 114-115) shows that those which *do* exist differ from English swear words in that they seldom are related to Christianity or sexual connotations. Additionally, swear words often sound humorous when directly translated and lose much of their affective load (Cross, 1979). It is worth noting that the Japanese express rudeness by discarding the respectful form and by employing male speech patterns, especially when the speaker is female (Hoshino, 1989).

### The Study

Contrastive studies of Western (American) versus Oriental (Japanese) psychology illustrate the gap between these cultures' expression of emotion, clearly indicating expressing anger serves different functions. Based on Kasper's rudeness taxonomy (1990), we sought to determine whether the notion of rudeness could be explained as a lack of affect control, focusing on the expression of anger, to clarify the perceptive use of anger by English native speakers and Japanese learners of English, and to investigate the pragmalinguistic awareness of such rudeness.

### Method

#### *Subjects*

Subjects, 10 native speakers (NS) of English (5 males and 5 females) and 10 Japanese learners (NNS) of English (5 males and 5 females), were graduate students at an American university at the time of data-collection, majoring in ESL, East-Asian Studies, or Public Health. Ages ranged from 24 to 51, with 75% of the participants falling between the age of 25 and 33.

The NNSs length of stay in English speaking countries varied from 3 months to approximately 10 years. TOEFL scores before admission to the graduate (master's level) programs for seven NNS ranged from 565 to 630, with a mean of 607.3. Scores for three subjects were unavailable as they had been exempted from TOEFL requirements prior to enrollment.

#### *Materials*

Based on literature (Madow, 1972; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Tavris, 1984) and the researchers' observations, five situations were prepared in order to elicit different degrees of anger (see Appendix). In Situation 1, the target of anger is an inanimate object, a vending machine, whereas in the

other situations it is a person. Situation 2, an encounter with a friend, was selected based on the idea that the intimacy of the relationship would lead to different outcomes in expressing anger between NSs and NNSs of English. It was hypothesized that different patterns would be obtained in this context since Japanese seem to show more emotional control because of interdependence. Situation 3, an interaction with a stranger in a restaurant, supplied contrast with Situation 2. While Situations 1 to 3 might or might not have caused anger in respondents, Situation 4, a negative encounter between a cyclist and a driver, provided a context in which a person would feel intense shock and danger, and therefore would be more likely to express anger. While traffic anger, reported both in Madow (1972) and Tavris (1984), occurs in encounters between two cars or a car and a pedestrian, a car and a cyclist was used as this was a common experience for subjects and included a second part which we hoped would increase the sense of mistreatment. Situation 5 was different from the others in that the stimulus of anger was not mistreatment of self but mistreatment of a stranger. Based on the findings of Stipek, Weiner, and Lei (1989, in Markus and Kitayama, 1991), it was hypothesized that NNS informants would show more anger than NSs in such a context.

### *Procedures*

The subjects were individually interviewed by one of the researchers, a near NS of English and NS of Japanese. Subjects were shown each situation, written in English on index cards, and asked to tell how they would feel and how they would express these feelings. English was used as the primary language of communication. All interviews were audio recorded.

An introspective interview followed for the NNS subjects. They were asked in Japanese about whether: 1) there was anything more to add, looking at all the situations; 2) they had had much exposure to NSs using swear words; and 3) whether they would use those words themselves and why or why not. In addition, they were asked to give Japanese equivalents of English swear words they used. The recorded responses were transcribed and the Japanese sections translated into English. Responses were then coded onto flow charts for analysis.

## Results and Discussion

### *Part 1: Control of negative emotions*

Tables 1-6 show the coding of responses for each situation. Since interviews were open-ended, subjects could give more than one re-

sponse. With Situation 1, NSs tended to be more physically expressive. Of the seven respondents who said they would kick or punch the vending machine, five were NSs. Little difference was observed between male and female physical reactions. Physical expression was always accompanied by verbal expression. NSs also tended to be more verbal in their expression of anger. Six out of the nine respondents who would explicitly express anger using a curse word were NSs. Four male respondents (one NS, three NNSs) reported that they would experience no anger because getting angry would not achieve anything, while two NS respondents (one male, one female) felt no anger because the problem with the vending machine was so common in their daily lives that they no longer reacted to it.

Table 1: Response Results [Situation 1: Vending machine]

Reactions	NS (M, F)	NNS (M, F)	Total (M, F)
kick, punch, or shake the machine	5 (2, 3)	2 (1, 1)	7 (3, 4)
explicitly expressing anger, saying something	6 (3, 3)	3 (1, 2)	9 (4, 5)
"God damn!"	1 (1, 0)	0 (0, 0)	1 (1, 0)
"Shit!"	4 (2, 2)	1 (1, 0)	5 (3, 2)
"Shoot!"	0 (0, 0)	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)
"Stupid machine!"	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)	2 (0, 2)
not angry because no use	1 (1, 0)	3 (3, 0)	4 (4, 0)
not angry because common problem	1 (0, 1)	1 (1, 0)	2 (1, 1)

[NS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); NNS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); Total:  $n=20$  (10M, 10F)]

Situation 2, the birthday dinner fiasco, evoked the widest range of emotions of any of the situations and also the highest rate of subjects, 17, feeling some anger. Three reported they would not feel angry but would feel disappointed. There was a hierarchy of negative emotions: "upset" < "irritated" < "angry" < "furious"/"pissed off." These were sometimes qualified by "very" and "extremely." Other emotions such as disappointment, hurt, anxiety, and sadness were stages subjects passed through before or after getting angry or concomitant to the anger. Not all subjects had these feelings, however, and there was no indication that having them in any way increased the degree of anger felt. Two NS females opted for remaining silent and wait for an explanation while 17 responded that they would ask for an explanation, with 10 implicitly

expressing anger by requesting testily "What happened?" Little difference between NSs and NNSs was observed. The responses indicated that the more intimate the relationship (e.g. "I would be more hurt if this were someone special.") or more habitual the behavior (e.g. "How could you do this again on my birthday?"), the more anger was felt. It was originally hypothesized that Japanese subjects would try to control their emotions to preserve an intimate relationship. This was not validated by the data as NSs and NNSs reacted similarly.

Table 2: Response Results [Situation 2: Birthday]

Reactions	NS (M, F)	NNS (M, F)	Total (M, F)
feel angry	9 (5, 4)	8 (5, 3)	17 (10, 7)
feel disappointed	1 (0, 1)	2 (0, 2)	3 (0, 3)
ask for explanation	7 (5, 2)	10 (5, 5)	17 (10, 7)
ask for the reason, showing their anger:	5 (3, 2)	5 (3, 2)	10 (6, 4)
"What happened?" "What's wrong?"			
"What's going on!?"			
"Why the <i>hell</i> didn't you call?"	1 (1, 0)	0	1 (1, 0)
accuse "You didn't call!"	1 (0, 1)	2 (1, 1)	3 (1, 2)
show the distrust (if forgotten)	2 (1, 1)	0	1 (1, 1)
"I can't believe this!"			
use sarcasm: "We missed a <i>nice</i> birthday."			
" <i>You</i> decided not to call me!"	2 (0, 2)	0	2 (0, 2)
hide the true feeling and ask laughingly: "What's wrong with you?"	0	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)
remain silent for an explanation	2 (0, 2)	0	2 (0, 2)
expect a word of apology	0	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)
anger subsided	1 (0, 1)	0	1 (0, 1)
disappointed but forgive	0	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)

[NS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); NNS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); Total:  $n=20$  (10M, 10F)]

Situation 3, waiting in a restaurant for 30 minutes, gave some of the most unusual data in that NNS females were the most likely to express anger explicitly and NS females the most likely to feel no anger at all. Eight subjects, five NNSs (1 male, 4 female), would be verbally explicit about their anger. In contrast, four female NSs reported no anger. NNS

male respondents generally reacted calmly; asking to check the name list (one) or asking the reason politely (two). Other males reacted with impatience. Five males (2 NS and 3 NNS) said they would not wait 30 minutes and would either approach the waiter after 15 minutes or just leave. Only one female, a NNS, mentioned that she would not wait. Although they did not report they would feel and/or show much frustration, NSs seemed less hesitant than NNS counterparts in making contact with the waiter. Half of the NSs (3 males and 2 females) said they would mention the length of wait, compared to two NNS females. Three NSs reported that they would peremptorily request to be seated.

Table 3: Response Results [Situation 3: Restaurant]

Reactions	NS (M, F)	NNS (M, F)	Total (M, F)
explicitly express anger, frustration	3 (2, 1)	5 (1, 4)	8 (3, 5)
feel no anger	4 (0, 4)	1 (1, 0)	5 (1, 4)
be firm, assertive	3 (2, 1)	3 (1, 2)	6 (3, 3)
mention the waiting time directly to the waiter	5 (3, 2)	2 (0, 2)	7 (3, 4)
request to be seated	3 (2, 1)	0	3 (2, 1)
ask why not seated	1 (0, 1)	2 (1, 1)	3 (1, 2)
ask to check the list	0 (0, 0)	2 (1, 1)	2 (1, 1)
ask how much longer the wait would be	2 (1, 1)	1 (1, 0)	3 (2, 1)
complain among themselves	0 (0, 0)	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)
ask politely	2 (0, 2)	2 (2, 0)	4 (2, 2)
wait less than 30 minutes	2 (2, 0)	3 (2, 1)	5 (4, 1)
just leave	2 (0, 2)	0	2 (0, 2)
not waiter's fault	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)	2 (0, 2)
waiter's fault	0	2 (0, 2)	2 (0, 2)

[NS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); NNS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); Total:  $n=20$  (10M, 10F)]

A trend emerges for situation 3, highlighting differences between NS and NNS females. The NNSs were more likely to feel angry and to express themselves. A possible explanation for this is the different expectations in Japanese and American contexts. One NS female respondent mentioned that it was not the waiter's fault in spite of her frustration at having to wait. Two NSs said that they might just leave. In contrast, two NNS females justified their anger, mentioning that it was the waiter's fault. One said that

the waiter's attitude sounded "unprofessional." The Japanese respondents, except for one, seemed comfortable expressing anger because of the status difference between customers and waiters in Japan.

During the interviews, situation 4 produced the highest usage of curses. For the first part of the situation, four of the five subjects who would say something outloud were NSs. Yet only a male NNS in this category chose to express his anger by using strong curses. The NSs varied in their verbal expressions, as shown in Table 4. Seven respondents (4 NSs, 3 NNSs) fell into the category of feeling extremely angry but controlling it by swearing under their breath or silently. Six subjects said they would ignore the car because either they would not want trouble (1 NS-M, 1 NNS-M) or they would be too scared (1 NS-F, 3 NNS-F). One female NS said she would empathize with the driver because of her past experience as a driver.

Table 4: Response Results [Situation 4: Car and Bicycle (1)]

Reactions	NS (M, F)	NNS (M, F)	Total (M, F)
say something out loud (curse, yell, scream, shout)	4 (2, 2)	1 (1, 0)	5 (3, 2)
"Fuck you!"	0	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)
"Son of a bitch!"	1 (0, 1)	0	1 (0, 1)
"You idiot! You jerk!"	1 (0, 1)	0	1 (0, 1)
"What's your problem!?"	1 (1, 0)	0	1 (1, 0)
"Hey! You should drive better (more carefully)!"	1 (1, 0)	0	1 (1, 0)
physical reactions: chase the car, shake a fist, remember the license number	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)	2 (2, 0)
extremely angry but do not swear out loud	4 (2, 2)	3 (2, 1)	7 (4, 3)
"Shit!"	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)	2 (2, 0)
"(You) idiot!"	2 (1, 1)	1 (0, 1)	3 (2, 1)
"Shoot!"	0	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)
"Shucks!"	0	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)
no mentioning on words to use	2 (1, 1)	0	2 (1, 1)
ignore (feel fear/dangerous)	2 (1, 1)	4 (1, 3)	6 (2, 4)
feel empathy	1 (0, 1)	0	1 (0, 1)
no reaction because no use	0	3 (2, 1)	3 (2, 1)

[NS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); NNS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); Total:  $n=20$  (10M, 10F)]

All subjects' reactions changed for the second part of the situation, where the car driver cursed the cyclist before driving away. Generally, feelings escalated. Respondents who before did not express anger now became expressive. NS males tended to be explicit and use strong curse words. Four NNSs (2 males, 2 females) did not use swear words but opted for yelling expressions such as "Be careful!" "Are you crazy?" or "Watch out!" One subject said she would sarcastically yell, "Thank you!" For those who were already expressive, they continued in the same vein and perhaps added a physical reaction such as shaking their fist or said they would take action and report the license plate number to the police. Three male subjects (2 NSs, 1 NNS) were expressive at first, but when confronted with overt anger said that they would now say nothing because it was too dangerous. The three female subjects who said they would not react because of fear in the first part kept the same response. This situation elicited an interesting contrast between the degree of anger felt and the reason given for why anger was controlled.

Table 5: Response Results [Situation 4: Car and Bicycle (2)]

Reactions	NS (M, F)	NNS (M, F)	Total (M, F)
say something outloudly (curse, yell, scream, shout)	4 (3, 1)	4 (2, 2)	8 (5, 3)
curse: "God damn!" "Ass-hole!" "Shit!" "Fuck you"	3 (3, 0)	0	3 (3, 0)
curse back: "Hell!" "Fuck you!"			
yell: "Be careful!" "Are you crazy?" "Who do you think you are?" "Watch around!" "Drive more carefully!"	0 (0, 0)	3 (2, 1)	3 (2, 1)
sarcastically yell: "Thank you!"	0	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)
shake fist, chase the car	1 (1, 0)	0	1 (1, 0)
report to the police	1 (0, 1)	1 (1, 0)	2 (1, 1)
shake fist after the danger is gone	1 (0, 1)	0	1 (0, 1)
become less expressive because of fear/danger	2 (2, 0)	1 (1, 0)	3 (3, 0)
remain inexpressive	1 (0, 1)	2 (0, 2)	3 (0, 3)
no reaction because no use	0	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)
try to forget it	1 (1, 0)	0	1 (1, 0)

[NS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); NNS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); Total:  $n=20$  (10M, 10F)]

Of all of the situations, Situation 5 provoked the least anger, with subjects more likely to feel uncomfortable. There was a tendency to respond that they would not say anything to the man on the bus. NS females were the most likely to express themselves when two criteria were fulfilled: physical proximity and age. That is, they had to be in close proximity to the man and he had to be considerably younger before they would say anything. In addition, they said the lady who did not have a seat also had to be extremely old or having problems standing. Seven subjects would tell the man to give up his seat if these conditions were met (4 NS-F, 2 NNS-M, 1 NS-M). The NNS females all reported they would say nothing. Two NNSs felt it was inappropriate to say anything because that would have been imposing their moral standards. Two NSs (1 male, 1 female) chose to express themselves physically by giving the man a dirty look or glancing at him meaningfully.

There were common factors in all of the situations that the subjects felt influenced anger control which had to do with the circumstances

Table 6: Response Results [Situation 5: Bus]

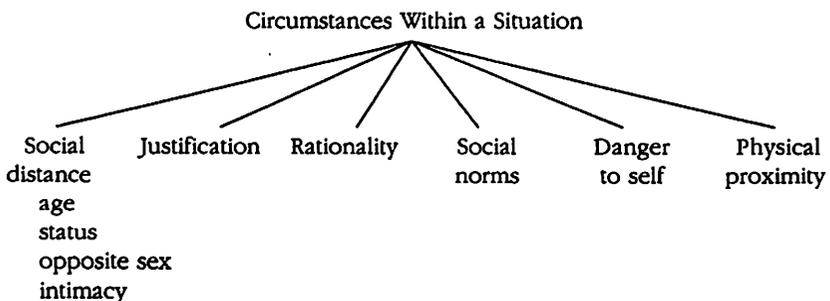
Reactions	NS (M, F)	NNS (M, F)	Total (M, F)
have negative feelings	5 (2, 3)	6 (2, 4)	11 (4, 7)
feel upset/angry	2 (1, 1)	2 (1, 1)	4 (2, 2)
feel frustrated	0	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)
feel irritated	1 (0, 1)	0	1 (0, 1)
feel uncomfortable/bad	0	3 (0, 3)	3 (0, 3)
feel disturbed	1 (1, 0)	0	1 (1, 0)
feel sad	0	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)
think the guy is rude	3 (0, 3)	3 (2, 1)	6 (2, 4)
think the guy is not well brought up	0	1 (1, 0)	1 (1, 0)
physical expression (glaring)	2 (1, 1)	0	2 (1, 1)
say nothing to the man	10 (5, 5)	10 (5, 5)	20 (10, 10)
because no reason to impose one's moral to others	0	2 (1, 1)	2 (1, 1)
because it's common	2 (2, 0)	1 (0, 1)	3 (2, 1)
tell the man to give up his seat when the physical proximity and age are fulfilled	5 (1, 4)	2 (2, 0)	7 (3, 4)
wish if one had courage	0	1 (0, 1)	1 (0, 1)

[NS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); NNS:  $n=10$  (5M, 5F); Total:  $n=20$  (10M, 10F)]

inherent in the situation: social distance, justification, rationality, social norms, danger to self, and physical proximity. Social distance includes: age, status, sex, and degree of intimacy (Figure 1).

For instance, in the birthday situation, subjects mentioned that they would be angrier if this were a close friend or somebody they were dating, while a few male subjects said they would feel no anger if it were a male friend who had stood them up. Age made a difference in the bus situation; subjects felt more comfortable telling someone younger than themselves to give up his seat. Physical proximity was also important, as the closer spatially the subjects were to the man, the more likely they were to express anger and the more justified they felt. Justification also explains the difference between NS and NNS responses in the restaurant. The Japanese felt more justified in expressing their anger and reported that they would take action. In Situation 2, if the excuse was reasonable (e.g. "There was a car accident." or "The car broke down."), anger abated. Yet, with excuses such as "I forgot" or "I missed the bus," the anger escalated and overt expression of anger was considered justified. In the bus situation, when subjects felt supported by social norms, i.e., signs in the bus that mark seats for the elderly, they were more likely to tell the man to give up his seat. However, if subjects felt that in American society people just do not respect the elderly, they were more likely to say nothing. In the restaurant situation, the effect of the lack of social support was evident when one subject said that he would never complain in such a situation even if he had to wait two hours because that was just not done in a local restaurant. The factors of rationality and danger to self tended to discourage expression of anger. Some subjects said it was useless getting angry at a machine or to yell at a car that was

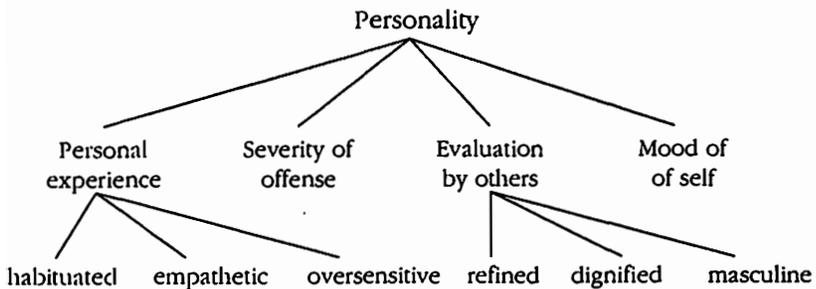
Figure 1: Factors Common to All Situations



driving away, and thus justified having no reaction. Anger, for these subjects, was not seen so much as a venting process but as a way to communicate. If danger to themselves was perceived in expressing anger, subjects opted to remain silent. As four male subjects (2 NSs, 2 NNSs) put it, "I would see how big the guy in the car was."

Personality factors also played a role in how expressive subjects were. By personality factors we mean the subjects' personal experience, severity of the offense, perceived evaluation by others, and mood (Figure 2). Personal experience had three effects. First, the subject may have become habituated to the situation so that less anger was felt. Additionally, personal experience could make the subject more empathetic. Those who recalled having been offenders in similar situations put themselves in the place of the waiter, the driver, or the man on the bus and were less likely to feel anger justified. The third effect

Figure 2: Factors Common to All Situations



occurred if subjects had experienced being similarly offended, subjects then were overtly sensitive and more likely to feel angry, reacting with instant anger on recognizing the situation.

Another factor was the severity of offense. Some subjects said that they did not care that much about celebrating their birthday, so they would not be too upset if someone was late. Perceived evaluation by others, i.e., how much subjects cared about how they appeared to the world, could prompt them to control or express anger. One woman said she would curse at the vending machine only if no one was around and one man said that he thought cursing undignified and would never do it. Yet, other men felt their masculinity was questioned when the driver of the car cursed at them, so they felt they had to retaliate with curses.

Mood also made a difference as to whether subjects would express anger. One subject specifically stated that if she had had a good day she would be more likely to say something to the man on the bus.

*Part 2: Pragmatic awareness of swear words*

The introspective portion of the interview revealed important considerations for L2 learners in using swear words. Most NNSs reported that they were knowledgeable about English swear words. Those having longer stays in English speaking countries mentioned more exposure to NSs' use of rude language, while those who had stays of less than 1.5 years claimed their input regarding swear words was limited to movies and TV programs. Some of the subjects referred to the fact that L2 learners, at least Japanese learners, do not get instructions in formal settings on the use of rude language. This validates the claims in Hoshino (1989) and Rintell (1984) that there has not been much instruction on expression of emotions, swear words, or insults in L2 classrooms. Three mentioned that they had picked up the words from exposure to their use in natural settings. Logically, people avoid being rude, thus this will result in little input of this kind. Moreover, the responses of one subject, who had had the shortest stay, revealed that without prior knowledge of swear words L2 learners did not even recognize them as "bad" words.

Second, there was a great tendency to avoid using swear words among the NNSs. Although a rationale such as "I do not want to be looked [at] as uneducated" may be also true for NSs, most of the psychological rationales for not employing swear words seemed unique to L2 learners. There appeared to be considerable gap between knowledge of the definition of swear words and the emotional load of such words. As some respondents put it, it is hard for them to feel the affective value of such words as they do not have emotional meaning for them (cf. Cross, 1979). Subjects reported that they knew the swear words were "dirty" but they had little idea regarding the degree or typical use. Female subjects expressed concern over what swear words were appropriate for women because Japanese rudeness heavily corresponds to male/female language (cf. Hoshino, 1989).

The lack of confidence in the appropriate use of swear words and fear of miscommunication resulted in infrequent use of rude language for NNSs. One female subject mentioned a personal experience of having shocked and consequently being corrected by a NS friend when she carelessly employed the phrase, "Jesus Christ." NNSs reported that it is difficult to master the use of L2 swear words and are aware that it is risky to practice them because, if they do, they are more likely to have trouble. Use may give NSs the wrong impression, though a NNS may feel nothing emotional towards the word employed. It should be

noted that these findings may not be applicable to all learners. One female subject claimed that she would have little hesitation in employing English swear words and that she was interested in learning them.

An interesting phenomenon was discovered during interviews. Four subjects answered that they would use English words such as "shoot" or "shucks" in order to show frustration or anger. Interestingly, four informants claimed that in situations where swear words would be used, English words come out more easily than Japanese. Subjects having longer stays, and consequently more exposure to input, seem to use swear words in English rather than Japanese. Three subjects claimed that they would not use swear words in Japanese and could not think of equivalent examples for the English swear words they knew. One male subject said that Japanese swear words were not as strong as those in English.

### Conclusion

In spite of the small number of the subjects, the study highlighted some interesting trends between NSs and NNSs regarding expression of anger. Since this is still a little investigated area, our findings may be beneficial for Japanese learners of English and their teachers. English NSs tended to be more expressive physically (Situation 1) and opted for using verbally stronger expressions (Situations 1, 2, and 4). In a tense situation (Situation 4) NSs reported that they would curse while NNSs tended to make less aggressive statements. Also, when social norms justify the anger (Situation 3), NNS females, who we had expected to be least expressive, had little hesitation in showing frustration. The bus situation, which we hoped would appeal more to Japanese subjects than to English NSs, revealed that the NS females would be most likely to take action.

Important factors which affected the choice of responses were also clarified. The introspective interviews revealed that, in general, L2 learners avoid swear words and were having difficulty acquiring them. The acquisition of rude language appeared to be an extremely sensitive issue because of the possible danger and misunderstanding involved in using such expressions, of which NNSs were well aware.

Several directions are suggested for further research. First, in order to statistically validate these findings regarding NS-NNS differences, a controlled, large scale research project is needed and reaction by less proficient learners needs to be investigated. Meanwhile, terms such as "swear words" and "bad words" must be more carefully defined because, even among NSs, what people regard as swear words and/or bad words varies. In addition, an examination of the sources from which NNSs

learn rude expressions warrants investigation. The current study validated that rude language generally was not taught in L2 classrooms, with movies appearing to be the richest source. Therefore, a better understanding of L2 learners' rude language use may be obtained by investigating situations in movies using emotional, rude verbal expressions.

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## Appendix: Situations Used in Study

*Situation 1: Vending machine* (Accumulated anger toward an inanimate object)

It's lunch time and you're very hungry. Your schedule is tight today and your next class will start in ten minutes. You try to get sandwiches from the vending machine but it doesn't accept your dollar bill. You try again, and now, the machine has "eaten" your money! The machine simply doesn't work nor give back your money. You don't have small change nor any more dollar bills.

*Situation 2: Birthday* (Accumulated anger to a close person)

You're expecting a phone-call from someone very close to you (friend, someone you're dating, etc.). You two planned to go to see a movie and have dinner together since it's your birthday today. It's 5:30 p.m. and the movie is supposed to start at 6:00 p.m. No phone-call. It's 6:30 now. You try to catch him/her calling his/her office. No luck. You finally receive a call from this person after 8:00 p.m.

*Situation 3: Restaurant* (Accumulated anger to a stranger)

You and your friends are waiting to be seated in a popular (pretty casual) restaurant. It's dinner time and the place is very crowded. There are other people waiting beside your group. You've already signed your name on the waiting list. Before you signed, you asked a waiter how long it would take to get seats. He replied no longer than 5 minutes because he saw some people finishing their dishes. However, you realized that you've been waiting for more than 30 minutes now. You see the waiter coming closer to you but obviously, it's not for the seating.

*Situation 4: Car and Bicycle* (Sudden shock and anger to a stranger)

You're riding a bicycle on the road. You had to stop at the traffic lights and were waiting for the light to turn green. Then a car came from behind you. It also tried to stop, the car made a stop so close to you that it nearly hit you. You lost your balance and almost fell off the bike. When you recover your balance back, you see the car going off because the light has turned already.

The driver was so rude that he cursed you as he drove off.

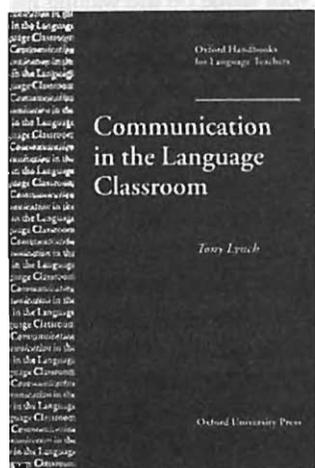
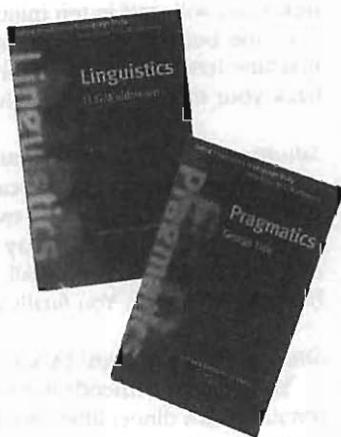
*Situation 5: Bus* (Anger toward the mistreatment of a stranger)

You're standing on the bus. The bus stopped at a bus stop and an old lady got on. You see her standing in front of a guy sitting and listening to music. It is obvious that he can see her standing, yet the guy remains seated. Unfortunately, people around the guy are old too, and there seems to be no way that anyone other than this guy will give a seat to the old woman. However, the guy still does not give up his seat until he finally gets off. The old lady does not get the seat, for she got off earlier than the guy.

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