

Developing a task-based assessment of EAP pragmatics

Soo Jung Youn

SLS 730 Assessment, Accountability, Accreditation

Professor John M. Norris

Spring 2009

Developing a task-based assessment of EAP pragmatics

Interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) research investigates how second language (L2) learners acquire L2 pragmatic competence and how it develops (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). During the last three decades, L2 pragmatic studies have been conceptualized from ontologically different theoretical and methodological frameworks, including cognitive-psychological theories, sociocultural theory, language socialization, and conversation analysis (Kasper, in press). Deriving strongly from cognitivist perspectives, there have been particular interests among ILP researchers on comparisons of first language (L1) and L2 pragmatic knowledge and use, effects of L2 pragmatic instruction, and pragmatic transfer from existing pragmatic knowledge to ILP (Kasper, 1992; Takahashi, 1996). Among these, one of the central issues in ILP research is a relationship between L2 pragmatic development and pedagogical intervention (Kasper & Rose, 2001), and previous research repeatedly showed that L2 grammatical knowledge and exposure to L2 pragmatics in the L2 target environment don't naturally entail L2 pragmatic development, which emphasize great importance of pedagogical L2 pragmatic instruction even for advanced L2 learners (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999, 2001; Kasper & Rose, 2002).

Aside from interests in contexts of L2 and foreign language teaching and learning at large, L2 learners' pragmatic demands in institutional settings and more specifically an English for academic purpose (EAP) setting, such as advising sessions, emails to professors, or writing tutorials, have also long been recognized as an area in need of research (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1996, 2005; Kasper & Rose, 2002). Studies on ILP in institutional settings (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2006; Chen, 2006; Davies & Tyler, 2005; González-Bueno, 1998) with various foci have reported that L2 learners struggle with L2 pragmatic uses in institutional settings mainly due to insufficient L2 pragmatic knowledge, and a lack of knowledge about institutional settings and the target language culture. Despite a productive line of L2 pragmatic

studies in institutional settings, previous studies primarily examined L2 learners' pragmatic comprehension and production, and comparatively little attention has been paid to the systematic investigation of pragmatic learning needs of diverse L2 learners, nor to the development of pedagogic or pragmatic assessment tasks based on such pragmatic learning needs in university-level EAP settings. However, there are few comprehensive pragmatic assessment studies (e.g., Hudson, Detmer, & Brown, 1992, 1995; Roever, 2006), but contexts of such previous studies are foreign and second language contexts in general, and the studies mainly focused on a development of reliable and valid pragmatic test battery, which do not necessarily serve as systematic assessment tools of what learners are able to do in real situations nor make an explicit link to L2 pragmatic instruction with a focus on specific pragmatic learning outcomes in an EAP context.

In an attempt to address this gap in the field of EAP pragmatic instruction and assessment, in this project, following a task-based language teaching (TBLT) framework (Long & Norris, 2000), EAP pragmatic assessment tasks and rating criteria that can help to fulfill diverse pragmatic instructional and assessment needs are developed, based on needs of students and their academic interlocutors in a U.S. university EAP program. In the following, I will discuss previous research on EAP pragmatics, L2 pragmatic assessment, and how the task-based language teaching and assessment framework can systematically address pragmatic learning needs with development of pragmatic assessment tasks in an EAP context. Finally, the study will describe detailed steps of identifying pragmatic needs, developing pragmatic assessment tasks and rating criteria in the context of an existing university-level EAP program.

Previous research on EAP pragmatics and L2 pragmatic assessment

A growing body of research has investigated L2 learners' EAP pragmatic production and development. The earliest studies were done by Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990, 1993, 1996a, 1996b) with various foci on international students' language uses in academic advising

sessions, and request e-mails. They showed that in academic advising sessions international students use less effective speech acts, that are more vague, indecisive, and inflexible, than American students (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1996a). Also, based on comparisons between negative and positive feedback on e-mails received from the faculty members, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1996b) reported that L2 speakers showed the following patterns in their request emails compared to native speakers: (a) fewer mitigating forms which caused negative reactions by professors, (b) less frequent institutional explanations, (c) frequent explanations of personal needs and time frames, and (d) few acknowledgement of request imposition.

Since the studies done by Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford have appeared, especially greater attention has been paid to L2 learners' e-mail communications in an EAP settings focusing on analyses of L2 learners' e-mail practices and development from an emic and critical perspective (Chen, 2006), and a conversation analytic approach (Iimuro, 2006) among others. Chen (2006) conducted a longitudinal case study of e-mail literacy development of a Taiwanese graduate student who had advanced language proficiency. Findings from Chen's study show the participant's numerous pragmatic problems which are congruent with what previous literature found, such as unclear and delayed purpose statements with irrelevant details, requests with a strong help-needed tone, inappropriate politeness, and ineffective use of explanations (Chen, 2006, p. 50). In addition, she called for pragmatic instruction of appropriate e-mail communications in L2 classroom. As Chen (2006) exactly pointed out the importance of instruction of appropriate language uses in e-mails and previous ILP research has shown, L2 learners, even with high language proficiency, are in great need of L2 pragmatic instructions especially in an EAP context which involves context-specific sociopragmatic knowledge in addition to L2 pragmalinguistic knowledge. However, little attention has been paid to a systematic development of pedagogical tasks based on learners' needs of pragmatic learning and use in an EAP context.

The assessment of L2 pragmatics is still relatively new in the field of language testing;

there has been a growing body of research on assessment of pragmatic competence since Hudson, Detmer, and Brown (1992, 1995) developed a framework for assessing cross-cultural pragmatics. In Hudson et al.'s framework, six prototype measures for assessing pragmatic competence were carefully developed: multiple-choice discourse completion test (DCT), open-ended written DCT, oral DCT, role-play, self-assessment for the DCT, and self-assessment for the role-play. Also, five analytical rating criteria were developed for raters: ability to use the correct speech act; formulaic expression, amount of speech in a given situation, formality level, directness level, and overall politeness level. Since then, some studies have investigated the reliability and validity of Hudson et al.'s framework in different L2 language teaching contexts such as L2 English, L2 Japanese, and L2 Korean (Ahn, 2005; Brown, 2001; Hudson, 2001; Yamashita, 1996; Yoshitake, 1997). In these previous studies, it was consistently found that the test instruments developed in Hudson et al.'s projects were reasonably reliable and valid, except for the multiple-choice DCT. Other researchers have developed their own test instruments to assess pragmatic competence of L2 English learners (Roever, 2005; Roever, 2006; Liu, 2007; Tada, 2005).

These pioneering studies have greatly contributed to focusing on assessment of L2 pragmatic competence in its own right, and to raising awareness within second and foreign language teaching contexts, especially given the prevalent emphasis on L2 learners' pragmatic production and comprehension in previous L2 pragmatic studies rather than assessment of L2 pragmatic competence. Yet, there are remaining concerns about previous L2 pragmatic test batteries mainly in terms of how the test batteries are being used and their pedagogical values. First of all, despite a reliable and valid test battery, it is limited to use the test batteries in diverse contexts, for example an EAP context, because, first of all, the tests don't fully align with pragmatic needs of a specific context, and secondly uses of tests are limited due to types of pragmatic test instrument. Previous test instruments included spoken and written discourse completion task (DCT), multiple choice, and role-play, which can definitely be used for some

assessment purposes, but limited to use them for instructional purposes. Above all, such test instrument types are limited to tap into pragmatic performance in real situations that are closely related with tangible and concrete learners' pragmatic needs. To address issues within both L2 pragmatic instruction and assessment, it will be very crucial to employ an approach that leads to make a constructive connection between pragmatic instruction and assessment of learner's pragmatic competence. In the next section, I will discuss how the TBLT framework can address these concerns.

Task-based language teaching and assessment

Regarding a definition of TBLT, Norris (forthcoming) argues that:

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is an approach to second or foreign language education that integrates theoretical and empirical foundations for good pedagogy with a focus on tangible learning outcomes in the form of 'tasks' – that is, what learners are able to do with the language.

This definition emphasizes comprehensive theoretical foundations and important roles of task in the TBLT framework. Strongly influenced by philosophy of education and second language acquisition theories, TBLT has been developed since the early 1980s (Long & Crookes, 1992; Skehan, 1998) out of critiques of traditional syllabi, including structural and functional approach to language teaching, limitations of focus on forms, and communicative language teaching (CLT). Emphasizing the importance of using task as the unit of analysis in curriculum design, central to TBLT is the notion of linking task to curriculum, instruction, and learning (Long & Norris, 2000) which entails at least six main elements in a TBLT program: (a) a needs analysis; (b) identification of target task-types; (c) developing pedagogic tasks; (d) sequencing pedagogic tasks to a task syllabus; (e) implementing task syllabus in the classroom; (f) assessment of student achievement. Extending the TBLT framework even further, Norris (forthcoming) emphasizes roles of detailed and structural TBLT instructional phases and cycle that will assist

challenges of actual implementation of language learning within the task-based teaching.

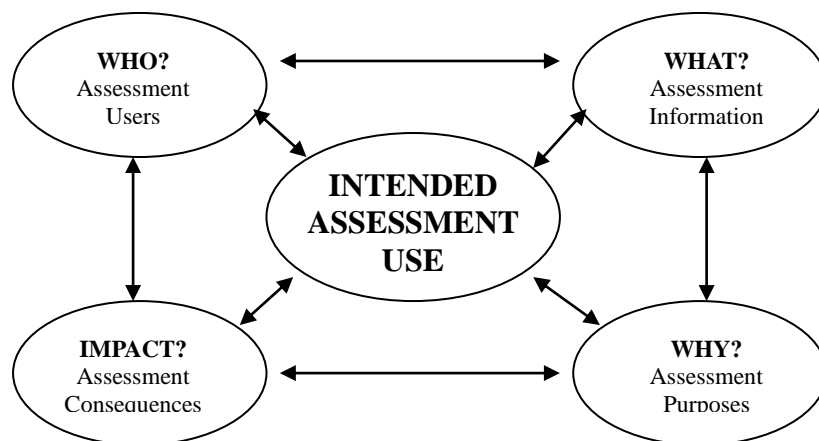
Among the elements in the TBLT framework, task-based needs analysis plays a central role in TBLT in terms of determining coherent syllabus design and kinds of learning outcomes that learners should be able to accomplish upon completion of the program (Long, 2005). However, there have been mis-understanding and mis-interpretation of task-based needs analysis including claims such as learners cannot expect and know their language learning needs and uses. Regarding this challenge, Norris (forthcoming) calls for a comprehensive and critical understanding of task-based needs analysis within the language education community. He emphasizes that needs analysis does not solely target language learners' perceptions of needs, but equally importantly include the values that language educators, language programs, and societal demands hold for language education. Also, he further points out an inseparable relationship between task-based needs analysis and justifiable and defensible goals for language education, which implicates a fundamental and vital function of needs analysis not only in TBLT but also in language programs at large.

Following such critical values and functions of needs analysis in TBLT, there have been varying scopes of needs analysis conducted depending on particular teaching and learning contexts. A needs analysis study done by Chaudron, Doughty, Kim, Kong, Lee, Lee, Long, Rivers, and Urano (2005) focused on a relatively small scale needs analysis to identify a small number of tasks and to develop prototype task-based instruction for a tertiary Korean as a foreign language program rather than to reform an entire curriculum. Using semi-structured interviews and task-based L2 use questionnaire, they identified a target task "following street directions", and detailed elements of target tasks were further developed through analysis of authentic target discourse samples. On the other hand, Van Avermaet and Gysen (2006) conducted a national-level needs analysis to transform an entire curriculum of Dutch as a second language (DSL) program in Belgium. In their study, based on results of the needs analysis, they provided detailed procedures starting from determining particular domains and situations of

language use, and then deriving tasks from identified situations using various methods as a basic unit for curriculum design. Van Avermaet and Gysen's needs analysis in the TBLT project in DSL context in Belgium has played a central role to following steps. The results of needs analysis have influenced to develop target and pedagogical tasks (Van Gorp & Bogaert, 2006), and task-based language assessment (Gysen & Van Avermaet, 2005). Although the impacts of the needs analysis to a curriculum level were different in these two studies, regardless of the scope of needs analysis both studies presented empirical findings of needs analysis in relation to other elements in TBLT, and demonstrated the influential functions and importance of needs analysis as a basis for developing TBLT.

In a TBLT framework, task-based language assessment (TBLA) addresses quite different issues from traditional approaches in language assessment mainly in terms of its starting concern, primary focus to be assessed, and processes involved in a developing test instruments among others (Norris, 2002, 2008). While traditional language assessment is concerned with the construct to be measured first, TBLA addresses a more fundamental question of "why and how task-based assessment are being used in contexts?" first (Norris, 2002), and thus the focus of assessment is task performance itself rather than measurement of theoretical constructs (Norris, Brown, Hudson, & Yoshioka, 1998; Brown, Hudson, Norris, & Bonk, 2002; Norris, 2002). The fundamental question of why and how task-based assessments are being can be conceptualized and operationalized through a specification of "intended uses of assessment" as seen in Figure 1 (Norris, 2000, 2008). Norris emphasizes the purposeful nature of language assessment, and discusses that the intended test use is defined as the interrelationship between at least four components of the language assessment process: (a) who uses the test; (b) what information the test should provide; (c) why, or for what purpose, the test is being used; and (d) what consequences the test should have (2000).

Figure 1. Specification of intended assessment use (Norris, 2000)



There has been considerable debate among language testers (e.g., Shohamy, 1995; McNamara, 1996; Bachman, 2002) over whether TBLA can lead to warranted inferences on actual language competence beyond particular tasks or test contexts. While these concerns cannot be avoidable and can be shortcomings of TBLA depending on the intended uses of assessment tasks, there are more tangible, inferential and equally important needs among language educators and in language programs, that are needs of complex, integrative, and task-specific tests, that TBLA can suitably offer (Norris, Brown, Hudson, & Bonk, 2002). Despite such tension in the field of language assessment, there has been a growing body of TBLA studies in response to various needs of learner, local institutions, and society (Robinson & Ross, 1996; Norris, Brown, Hudson, & Yoshioka, 1998; Brown, Hudson, Norris, & Bonk, 2002; Byrnes, 2002; Norris, 2002; Gysen & Van Avermaet, 2005). Robinson and Ross's (1995) study was one of the early TBLA studies that addressed evaluation of the effect of task-based instruction in an EAP setting. Norris et al. (1998) and Brown et al. (2002) embarked on a pioneering university-level second and foreign language TBLA study by developing carefully-designed prototype task-based performance tests along with task-specific, and holistic rating scales and criteria. Since then, depending on intended uses of TBLA, some studies (e.g., Gysen & Van Avermaet, 2005) developed specific target tasks and task types that can extrapolate task performance to often make high-stakes decisions with summative uses for assessment, based on

a national-scale needs analysis in a DSL setting in Belgium. Other studies (e.g., Byrnes, 2002) reformed an entire collegiate foreign language curriculum by implementing tasks into the curriculum and each lesson with both pedagogical and assessment purposes. By doing so, the study indicates how TBLA with formative uses is beneficial and facilitative in providing opportunities not only for learners to acquire and use language and content, but also for teachers and curriculum developers to observe, reflect, and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented tasks and instructed language learning. Specifically with formative uses of assessment, Norris (forthcoming) calls for further research on classroom diagnostic and feedback frameworks in TBLA that can be used by teachers to evaluate effectiveness of implemented tasks and learner development.

As discussed above, when it comes to L2 pragmatics in general and EAP pragmatics specifically, relatively little attention has been made to a systematic investigation of task-based EAP pragmatic instruction and assessment as they are operationalized within language programs, including needs analysis, development of task-based pedagogical activities, and evaluation of educational effectiveness through assessment tasks. The current study attempts to fill this gap in a step-by-step approach, and thus the purpose of the present study is to identify L2 speakers' pragmatic needs in a university EAP program. Based on the needs analysis, target tasks and pragmatic assessment tasks are identified with a specification of intended use of assessment tasks and pragmatic learning outcomes. The following research questions will be addressed in this paper:

- (a) What are EAP pragmatic needs of students, instructors, and the program?
- (b) What are the intended uses of EAP pragmatic assessment tasks?
- (c) What are pragmatic learning outcomes in an EAP program?
- (d) What kinds of assessment tasks can be developed based on EAP pragmatic needs and intended uses in the target program?

For a systematic investigation of task-based EAP pragmatic instruction and assessment,

following steps were pursued in the present study: (a) needs analysis of EAP pragmatic needs; (b) a specification of intended uses of EAP pragmatic assessment; (c) development of learning outcomes; (d) development of pragmatic target tasks; (e) development of EAP pragmatic assessment tasks and task-dependent rating scales. I will discuss methods, procedures, and results of each of the steps in an order of needs analysis, specification of intended uses, development of learning outcomes, and development of assessment tasks and rating scale.

Needs analysis

Assessment context

The English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (UHM) was selected to pursue the goals of the study. The ELI provides English instruction for non-native speakers of English who have been admitted to the university to help them succeed in their academic pursuits. The curriculum of the ELI is academic skill-based, and it consists of listening & speaking, reading, and writing instruction with two levels of courses. Regarding assessment practices in the ELI, all students are required to take the ELI Placement Test (ELIPT) before the start of the semester of their enrollment into the university. Depending on their ELIPT results, the students are placed into intermediate or advanced levels of each ELI curriculum area, or exempted. The students' TOEFL scores range from 21 to 98, based on the TOEFL iBT. Also, there has been a prolific and diverse line of research within the program including language policy, needs analysis of each curriculum content, development of teaching materials, and development of valid placement test items among others. However, comparatively little research has been done on analyses of EAP pragmatic needs, development of instructional and assessment tasks with valid and useful rating criteria.

Participants

The needs analysis involved two stages: semi-structured interviews and a survey

questionnaire. There were two main reasons for conducting a semi-structured interview before the survey questionnaire. First, the needs analysis of the current study is not only designed for students but also to include programs' needs at large. So, before conducting a survey questionnaire, input from various stakeholders including program administrators, instructors, and students was important to consider. Second, it was crucially necessary to solicit valid and broad perspectives from various sources through qualitative interviews to develop valid items to be included in the survey questionnaire. As such, for semi-structured interviews, 3 ELI administrators, 7 ELI instructors, and 12 ELI students participated. The 3 ELI administrators included the ELI director, executive director, and program curriculum coordinator. ELI teachers from each curriculum area, listening & speaking, reading, and writing participated. The 12 ELI students were recruited from two intermediate ELI reading classes. Based on input from semi-structured interviews of these various participants, 102 students enrolled in the ELI at the time of data collection then participated in a survey questionnaire. The ELI students who completed the questionnaire are composed of graduate ($n = 44$, 43.1%) and undergraduate ($n = 58$, 56.9%) students with diverse majors and L1s.

Materials

For the stage of needs analysis, semi-structured interview questions were developed (see Appendix A) by the researcher to gather information from different sources, and the contents of the questions were based on existing literature on L2 pragmatics. Different sets of questions were designed depending on whether they were for ELI faculty members or ELI students. Questions for the ELI faculty members focused on possible EAP pragmatic-related tasks that are closely related with current curriculum's objectives and syllabi. Also, they were asked to share pragmatically-inappropriate situations that they experienced with students, expectations from students, and their own perceptions on necessity of pragmatic instruction in the target program.

On the other hand, questions for ELI students were designed to help informants to think about their previous experiences with challenges of appropriate language use with classmates, professors, and administrators in campus. The question items targeted students' opinions on pragmatic difference awareness, their own perception on needs of pragmatic instruction in the target language program, their experience with three different speech acts (request, apology, refusal) and implied meaning when it comes to communicating professor, classmates, and administrators in an academic setting. Based on input from the semi-structured interviews, a survey questionnaire that lists 20 specific EAP situations that involve L2 pragmatic competence was developed for ELI students to answer (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was composed of four sub sections: (a) communications between peers in class, (b) communication with professors, (c) communication in general on campus, and (e) cross-cultural communication knowledge. Each item in the survey questionnaire represented a real life EAP situation, and ELI students were asked to express the extent of their needs for each task with a four-point scale from 1 (not at all necessary) to 4 (very necessary).

Procedure

For the semi-structured interviews, an individual face-to-face interview with each ELI administrator and teacher was conducted while focus groups of three or four ELI students were set up for the interviews with the students. Each interview took about 40 minutes on average. Although the interviews were not audio-recorded, the researcher took field notes of contents of the interview. Based on the interview results, 20 EAP pragmatics-related situations were selected that repeatedly appeared in the interviews, and that seemed to be closely related with program objectives of the ELI as well. To administer the questionnaire, the researcher individually visited nine ELI classes, distributed, and collected the questionnaires upon agreements with the ELI instructors and students when approximately 1/3 of a program semester passed. The nine visited ELI classes evenly included all curriculum areas, listening, reading, and

writing, with different levels.

Results of needs analysis

For the needs analysis, the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire were used. In this section, results from the needs analysis focusing on results from the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire in relation to identification of target tasks will be reported.

Semi-structured interviews 3 ELI administrators, 7 ELI instructors, and 12 ELI students participated in the semi-structured interviews, and Table 1 lists EAP pragmatic-related tasks identified from each of the three groups of informants. There were three tasks that were repeatedly mentioned by most of the informants in all three groups which represent very important tasks that all informants think very important. First, a task of *write various e-mails in terms of appropriate language use, organization, and etiquettes depending on various audiences* was the most commonly mentioned among all informants. Many ELI student informants mentioned that writing an e-mail has been a very challenging task as there was no feedback on students' e-mails nor explicit instruction on writing appropriate e-mails in an EAP setting. Not surprisingly, the ELI administrators and instructors reported in the interviews about frequently noticed inappropriateness in terms of language uses, organization, and e-mail correspondence etiquettes in students' e-mails. Second, a task of *know appropriately disagree with classmates' opinions during class discussion* was identified among the informants. As a group discussion is one of the main activities in the ELI curriculum, interactions among students occur on a daily basis in the ELI classes. The ELI administrators and instructors reported that they sometimes noticed unintentionally strong and harsh expressions of disagreements among students' interaction. Also, the ELI students shared their personal experiences of uneasy feeling regarding inappropriate ways of disagreement. Third, a task of *know appropriate usages of various formulaic expressions* was identified. This task involves the ability of using different formulaic expressions depending on diverse pragmatic actions in certain contexts. There are various

formulaic expressions and English grammar available that can be used to deliver various pragmatic actions such as different degrees of pragmatic meanings between request expressions *can you* and *could you*. The informants regardless of the group identified this task was crucial for appropriate language use in an EAP setting.

Aside from the commonly identified three tasks described above, as shown in Table 1, there are differences among the identified tasks depending on the group of informants. In the group of the ELI administrators, they not only identified tasks based on appropriate language use, but also tasks that can raise students' awareness of academic cultures in a university setting, such as *to know appropriate etiquettes for office hours* and *to get familiar with various administrative environments and resources* which none of other informants in the other groups mentioned. Although these tasks are not directly related with language use-based EAP pragmatic tasks, they are very crucial tasks for raising students' awareness of different university academic cultures and deserve full attentions in teaching EAP pragmatics at the ELI. In the group of the ELI instructors, the identified tasks were closely related with each curriculum's goal and activities. Regarding a task of *know how to give constructive feedback on students' homework or in-class work* (B.4 in Table 1), which was also brought up among the ELI students group, peer-feedback was a frequently-used class activity in all ELI curricula (listening, reading, and writing). In peer-feedback, the ELI students were requested to give short comments on other classmates' various performance of class activities or assignments, and they mentioned that the comments tend to sound harsh unintentionally due to inappropriate language use. Also, the ELI writing curriculum instructors mentioned repeatedly *academically appropriate writing conventions, style, and language use* (B.5 in Table 1). The instructors noticed that some students often used colloquial English expressions in their academic writings without being aware of appropriate academic writing conventions. This task also related with to a task *writing academically appropriate e-mails* since students wrote an e-mail as if they send a cell phone text message without proper e-mail organizations and academically-appropriate language use.

In comparison with the task identified from the ELI administrators and instructors, the ELI students informed different types of task which represented different academic cultures and their challenges with communicating with professors and classmates in an EAP setting. They shared various personal episodes including being unfamiliar with communicating with professors and classmates mainly via e-mails rather than telephones or walk-in office visits without appointments. Some of the students mentioned that they hardly used an e-mail as a main communication medium in their home countries, and thus appropriate e-mail organizations, language use, and etiquettes of e-mails were challenges for them. Especially, to communicate with professors appropriately either via e-mails and face-to-face meetings was identified as a big challenge among the ELI student, and numerous tasks of communications with professors were mentioned, including understanding cultural jokes and implied meaning, know how to apologize, refuse, and request to professors.

In sum, three common tasks identified in all three groups of informants include (a) Write academically-appropriate e-mails to various audiences; (b) Know how to disagree appropriately with classmates' opinions; (c) Know appropriate usages of various formulaic expressions, as seen in Table 1 with an asterisk (*) symbol. In addition to the common tasks, other tasks mentioned in each of the groups were also included as questionnaire items as the main purpose of semi-structured interviews was not only to find common needs but also to gather diverse needs from all stakeholders. Additionally, some other possible pragmatic tasks were also included although they were not mentioned in semi-structured interviews, such as *write a cover letter* and *write a thank you note*. Also, most of the informants in the semi-structured interviews indicated that the program, curricula, and students' pragmatic learning can be positively strengthened by implementing EAP pragmatics tasks in the ELI curriculum.

Table 1

Identified EAP Pragmatic Tasks through Semi-structured Interviews

Identified tasks from different groups of informants

A. ELI Administrators

- *1. Write various e-mails in terms of appropriate language use, organization, and etiquettes depending on various audiences
- *2. Know how to disagree appropriately with classmates' opinions
- *3. Know appropriate usages of various formulaic expressions
- 4. Know appropriate office hour visit etiquettes
- 5. Raise awareness of different levels of university office assistance
- 6. Be familiar with available university resources

B. ELI Instructors

- *1. Write various e-mails in terms of appropriate language use, organization, and etiquettes depending on various audiences
- *2. Know how to disagree appropriately with classmates' opinions
- *3. Know appropriate usages of various formulaic expressions
- 4. Know how to give constructive feedback to classmates' homework or in-class work
- 5. Know academically appropriate writing conventions, style, and language use

C. ELI Students

- *1. Write various e-mails in terms of appropriate language use, organization, and etiquettes depending on various audiences
- *2. Know how to disagree appropriately with classmates' opinions
- *3. Know appropriate usages of various formulaic expressions
- 4. Know how to give constructive feedback to classmates' homework or in-class work
- 5. Be familiar with appropriate communication means with professors
- 6. Know appropriate phone call language use and etiquettes
- 7. Know how to appropriately apologize, refuse, and request to professors
- 8. Understand professors' cultural jokes
- 9. Manage conversations well with classmates and professors
- 10. Understand implied meanings during conversations

Note. * indicate common tasks identified across all groups

Questionnaire Based on a synthesis of the semi-structured interviews results, four sections that represent generic situations that include specific EAP pragmatic tasks were included in a questionnaire: (a) communication with peers in class; (b) communication with professors; (c) communication in general; (d) cultural knowledge in academic situation. Descriptive statistics and an internal-consistency reliability measure (Cronbach alpha) were used for analysis of questionnaire items. Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for each task item of the questionnaire. The means for all items range from a low of 2.9 for *C.16 Know how to apologize*

appropriately to a high of 3.48 for *B.6 Refuse politely to professors' request* with a very slight difference with other items with high means (*B.8 Recommendation letter request* and *C.17 Write a cover letter*). Looking closely at the descriptive statistics, the standard deviations (SD), as well as the minimum and maximum scores, indicate that the dispersion of scores around the mean is relatively reasonable. When it comes to the distributions of the score, the skewness statistics for all items are negative ranging from -1.25 (*C.17 Write a cover letter*) to -0.24 (*C.16 Know apologize appropriately in general*), and the kurtosis statistics vary more or less away from 0.00. Among the items, especially items *B.8 Recommendation letter request*, *B.13 Ask clarification questions to professors* and *C.17 Write a cover letter* show quite negatively skewed distribution with relatively high mean scores.

To examine the consistency of the answers to the questions, an internal-consistency reliability measure (Cronbach alpha) was used. Cronbach alpha (α) for the all items in a survey questionnaire is .901, and the reliability measures for sections A, B, C, and D is 0.84, 0.8, 0.67, and 0.26 consecutively as shown in Table 2. While the reliability estimates of sections A, and B are reasonably high, sections C and D show low reliability measures. Such low reliability measures might be due to somewhat incoherent features of items in Section C as the items in section C list pragmatic needs in general on campus, which is not coherent as much as in other sections A and B, and small number of items ($k = 2$) in section D. However, overall reliability estimate of all items is relatively high ($\alpha = 0.901$).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
A. Communication with peers in class (<i>k</i> = 5)							
1. Disagreement	102	3.02	0.84	1	4	-0.74	0.21
2. Manage conversation	102	3.14	0.81	1	4	-0.60	-0.30
3. Comment or compliment	102	2.93	0.84	1	4	-0.39	-0.44
4. Ask relevant questions	102	3.01	0.75	1	4	-0.44	0.00
5. Give feedback on peers' work	102	3.11	0.72	1	4	-0.33	-0.44
Cronbach alpha (α) = 0.84							
B. Communication with professors (<i>k</i> = 8)							
6. Refuse politely to request	102	3.48	0.70	2	4	-0.99	-0.30
7. Make an appointment by email	102	3.18	0.84	1	4	-0.86	0.24
8. Recommendation letter request	102	3.47	0.70	1	4	-1.13	0.67
9. Write a thank you note	102	3.01	0.97	1	4	-0.62	-0.65
10. Write an email	102	3.31	0.76	1	4	-0.88	0.23
11. Suggest new ideas on class	102	3.18	0.71	1	4	-0.61	0.38
12. Understand cultural jokes	102	2.93	0.95	1	4	-0.58	-0.54
13. Ask clarifying questions	102	3.29	0.86	1	4	-1.18	0.78
Cronbach alpha (α) = 0.8							
C. Communication in general (<i>k</i> = 5)							
14. Refuse to peers' request	102	2.92	0.93	1	4	-0.37	-0.85
15. Explain situations effectively	102	2.99	0.92	1	4	-0.55	-0.58
16. Know how to apologize appropriately	102	2.90	0.83	1	4	-0.24	-0.65
17. Write a cover letter	102	3.45	0.78	1	4	-1.25	0.68
18. Understand implied meaning	102	2.97	0.83	1	4	-0.48	-0.26
Cronbach alpha (α) = 0.67							
D. Cultural knowledge in academic situation (<i>k</i> = 2)							
19. Cross-cultural communication	102	2.93	0.97	1	4	-0.46	-0.85
20. Discuss speaking and writing rules	102	3.14	0.78	1	4	-0.63	-0.05
Cronbach alpha (α) = 0.26							

Note. Cronbach alpha of all items = 0.9

To identify which tasks are considered to be the most needed by the ELI students among a total of 20 tasks in the questionnaire, following five tasks are identified which have high means:

- (a) B.6: Refuse politely to professor's request (M = 3.58, SD = 0.7)
- (b) B.8: Recommendation letter request (M = 3.47, SD = 0.7)
- (c) C.17: Write a cover letter to apply for a job (M = 3.45, SD = 0.78)
- (d) B.10: Write an e-mail to professors appropriately (M = 3.31, SD = 0.76)

(e) B.13: Ask clarifying questions to professors (M = 3.29, SD = 0.86)

Among the tasks above, four tasks except for a task of (d) *write a cover letter* are under the category of communication with professors which represent students' great needs of communication with professors compared to communications with classmates. Interestingly, a task of *writing a cover letter to apply for a job* is identified as a one of the most needed task, although this task was not mentioned none of informant groups at the stage of semi-structured interview. In the current ELI curriculum, especially in the writing curriculum, teaching how to write a cover letter is not one of the objectives in the curriculum nor has been taught. Also, the task of *writing an e-mail to professors* is not only identified as one of the most needed task but also frequently mentioned in the semi-structured interviews with the ELI administrators and instructors, which indicate high needs of all parties in the ELI. On the other hands, the following five tasks are identified as the least needed with slight differences:

(a) C.16: Know how to apologize appropriately (M = 2.9, SD = 0.83)

(b) C. 14: Refuse to peers' request (M = 2.92, SD = 0.93)

(c) D.19: Know cross-cultural communication in general (M = 2.93, SD = 0.97)

(d) B.12: Understand professor's cultural jokes (M = 2.93, SD = 0.95)

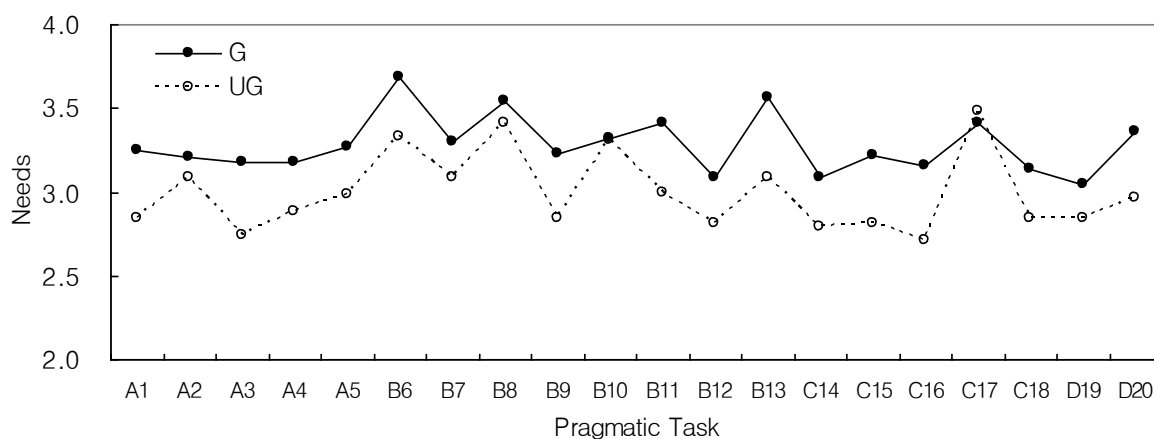
(e) A.3: Know how to appropriately comment or compliment on classmates' in class work (M = 2.93, SD = 0.84)

Among the least needed tasks, the task of *knowing how to appropriately comment or compliment on classmates' in class work* revealed interesting results. This task was brought up during the semi-structured interviews with the two groups of participants including the ELI instructors, and students. Especially, the ELI writing instructors emphasized how important for students to learn how to give appropriate constructive comments classmates' in class work. As such, even though the students identified this task as one of the least needed in the questionnaire results, this task needs much attention among the students and instructors. These more or less incongruous results indicate the importance of collecting information from various groups of

informants with various steps of method to gather valid information of stakeholders.

In addition to the questionnaire results from all ELI students, an investigation of whether there are any differences across students' different academic status, graduate ($n = 45$) and undergraduate ($n = 57$), different curriculum area and different course levels was conducted as seen in Figures 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Although there are not significant differences across different curriculum area as seen in Figure 3, there are some differences across students' different academic status and different course levels. In Figure 1, overall, graduate students indicated higher pragmatic needs for most of the questionnaire items, except for the task of *C.17 Write a cover letter*. For this task, undergraduate students showed slightly higher needs (mean = 3.48) than graduate students (mean = 3.41). Also, two other tasks, *B.8. Recommendation letter request* and *B.10. Write an e-mail*, indicated high means among undergraduate students with small differences from graduate students.

Figure 1. Comparison of mean scores between graduate and undergraduate students



Regarding differences across different course levels (70, 80, 100 levels), students enrolled in 100 level, which is the highest level and only applies to writing curriculum, indicated relatively low needs for most of the questionnaire items, compared to other levels, as seen in Figure 2. Also, such difference is more noticeable than differences between 70 and 80 level students. However, again the task of *C.17 Write a cover letter* was identified as the most needed task among 100 level students with very small differences from other levels. Students enrolled

in 70 levels showed high needs in general for most of the questionnaire items, and note that some tasks showed higher means despite quite low means in 80 and 100 levels, for example *B.12 Understand cultural jokes*. Especially, this task has one of the lowest means in descriptive statistics for all groups with a mean of 2.93, but this task had relatively high means among low level students.

Figure 2. Comparison of mean scores between different course levels

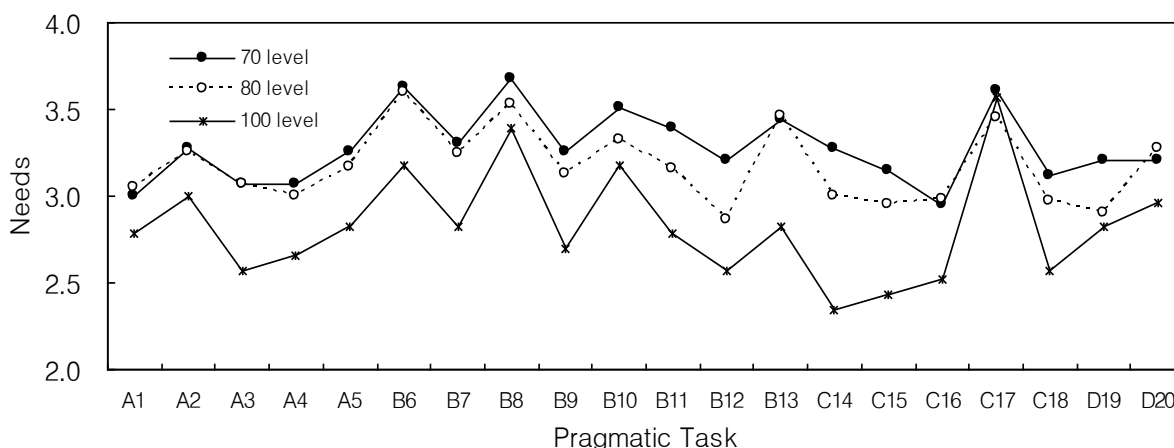
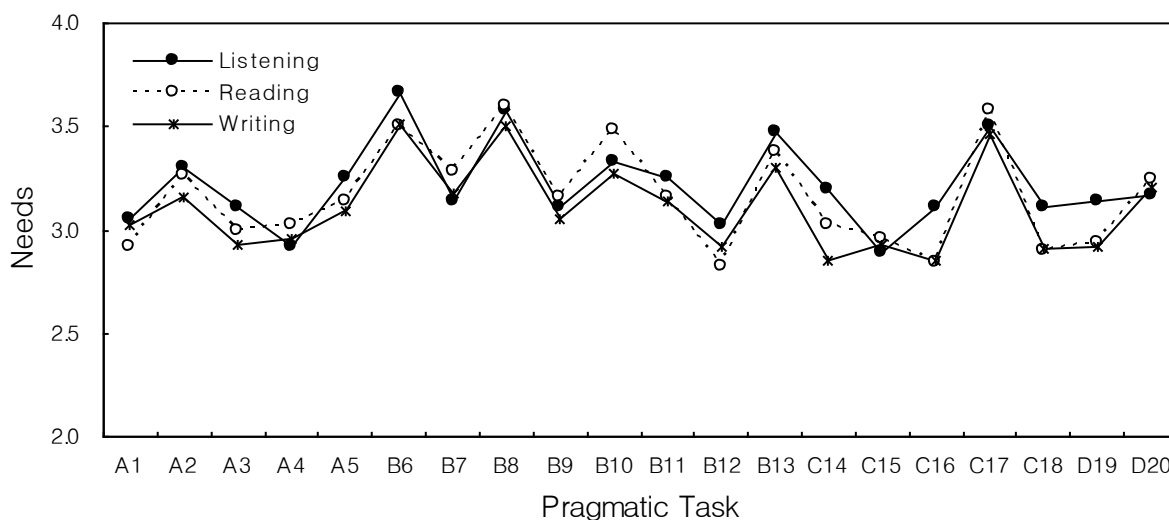


Figure 3. Comparison of mean scores across different skills



Specification of intended uses of assessment tasks

Following Norris' (2000) specification of intended assessment uses, at least four following

essential questions are addressed.

(a) Who are the assessment users? Main users of the assessment tasks are stakeholders in the program including ELI students, instructors, language testing graduate assistants, and administrators. Additional users would be prospective instructors and students, other EAP institutions that want to employ EAP pragmatic components in their existing curriculum.

(b) What is being assessed? Developed EAP pragmatic assessment tasks represent real-world tasks that non-native English students in a U.S. university would likely face in an EAP setting with various interlocutors, such as professors, classmates, and potential employers, and the tasks specifically involves L2 pragmatic use in an institutional setting. Task-dependent rating criteria of each of pragmatic tasks represent task-specific pragmatic competence, such as L2 pragmalinguistic knowledge to carry out various speech acts, sociopragmatic knowledge of office visit to professor, content knowledge of writing cover letter, and various pragmatic knowledge of writing academically appropriate e-mails to various audiences. As such, test-takers will be able to know task-specific pragmatic knowledge based on the detailed information in the rating criteria.

(c) Who/what is being impacted? A variety of possible consequences of implementing EAP pragmatic assessment tasks into the current curriculum can be identified. The development of EAP pragmatic assessment tasks are not intended to reform an entire ELI curriculum, but are intended to strengthen the current ELI curriculum by adding a crucial but neglected component that students want and need to learn to succeed in their academic pursuits. Also, the assessment tasks will not only be used solely for assessment purposes, but also for instructional or self-assessment purposes in classes with room for being further adapted and developed by instructors and students. Thus, for students, intended positive consequences include satisfaction of their needs, diagnosis of pragmatic knowledge, raising awareness, lessening pressure of appropriate interactions with peers and professors, and accomplishment of becoming a proficient and

appropriate interlocutor in real situations. Also for instructors and administrators, positive consequences include strengthen current ELI curriculum, satisfy students' pragmatic needs, evaluate effectiveness of classroom activities and assessment tasks, and professional development.

(d) Why? The ELI program provides English instruction for non-native speakers of English who have been admitted to the university to help them succeed in their academic pursuits. Despite a prolific and productive line of research conducted within the ELI program, relatively less attention has been made to instruction and assessment of EAP pragmatic competence in its own rights within the ELI curriculum. Importantly, as shown in the results of needs analysis in this study, the ELI students expressed their relatively high needs on various academic situations which involve EAP pragmatic competence. Furthermore, the ELI instructors and administrators also expressed their needs that the students need to have in terms of pragmatic competence. As such, implementation of EAP pragmatic assessment tasks into the current ELI curriculum would be significantly beneficial both for the ELI students and the ELI program.

With these justifications of implementing L2 pragmatic competence in the existing curriculum, the pragmatic assessment tasks and rating criteria can be used in the following areas for students: (a) use them to diagnose students' pragmatic knowledge either in classroom; (b) distribute them to students for their self-assessment purposes; (c) use them as pedagogical tasks to teach various EAP pragmatic knowledge in relation with commonly-used ELI activities, such as peer-feedback or e-mails to classmates or instructors; (d) use them to measure students' pragmatic learning progress and achievement. In addition to main purposes for the students, the assessment tasks and rating criteria can be used to provide rich information to current instructors in the ELI who might not necessarily be familiar with teaching EAP pragmatics. Especially, since rating criteria will include specific sets of pragmatic knowledge that students need to know to complete pragmatic tasks successfully, task-dependent rating criteria can be informative

material to instructors. In sum, the pragmatic assessment tasks and rating criteria can be flexibly used both for teachers and instructors for both instructional and assessment purposes.

Development of pragmatic assessment tasks and rating criteria

The intended uses of assessment provided rather general information that would have to be met by the ELI instructors and the ELI program to accomplish what it was intended to accomplish. With these intended uses of pragmatic assessment, target pragmatic tasks and learning outcomes were identified before developing prototype pragmatic assessment tasks and rating criteria.

Identification of target tasks

According to the result of the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire, the identified tasks by the ELI administrators and instructors and the most needed tasks by the ELI students served as a baseline of developing target tasks. Along with the identified tasks in the needs analysis stage, the current ELI curriculum was importantly considered to develop target EAP pragmatic tasks that can be practically implemented. Table 3 lists the identified target tasks. The target tasks A, B, and C represented situations with diverse interlocutors, professors, classmates, and potential employers. Especially, since a task of *write a cover letter* was identified as one of the highest needs among all students, a separate target task of communication with a potential employer was specified. The target task D, *write an e-mail to various audiences*, might overlap with the other three target tasks, however, since this task was mentioned across all stakeholders, ELI instructors, administrators, and students with high needs in the questionnaire, separate attention to this task was given.

Table 3

*The Three Target EAP Pragmatic Assessment Tasks***A. Communication with professors**

This target task covers how to appropriately communicate with professors. Possible situations include face-to-face office hour visits to request something or ask questions or communication via e-mails or letters.

B. Communication with classmates

This target task covers how to appropriately give constructive comments on peers' work at an academic level. The constructive comments include appropriately agreeing, disagreeing, suggesting, complimenting, and criticizing peers' class work or opinion.

C. Communication with potential employers

This target task covers how to write an appropriate cover letter to apply for a job or contact potential employers with various inquiries via e-mail or letter.

D. Write various academically-appropriate e-mails to various audiences

This target task covers how to write academically-appropriate e-mails to professors or classmates. Possible situations include e-mails that involve various speech acts, such as request, refusal, and apology, and addresses to various audiences including professors, classmates, or someone who you haven't met.

Development of expected learning outcomes

Based on the four target tasks, expected learning outcomes were developed which included statements that specified what students will know or be able to do with the developed assessment tasks as seen in Table 4.

Table 4

*Expected Learning Outcomes for Each Target Task***A. Communication with professors**

The students will be able to:

- a) deliver messages clearly either in face-to-face or e-mail interaction
- b) know appropriate linguistic expressions to carry out various speech acts (e.g., request, refusal, suggestion)
- c) respond appropriately while communicating professors
- d) know appropriate sociopragmatic knowledge of office hour visits (e.g., such as making an appointment in advance, provide flexible time slots for a meeting)
- e) keep respectful and polite tones while communicating

B. Communication with classmates

The students will be able to:

- a) deliver messages clearly
- b) know appropriate linguistic expressions to carry out various speech acts
- c) know how to give constructive criticism and comments
- e) keep respectful and polite tones while communicating

C. Communication with potential employers

The students will be able to:

- a) deliver messages clearly
- b) know appropriate content knowledge of writing a cover letter
- c) know appropriate linguistic expressions

D. Write various academically-appropriate e-mails to various audiences

The students will be able to:

- a) know academically appropriate e-mail format
- b) know appropriate ways of delivering messages in e-mail (e.g., concise rather than wordy)
- c) know appropriate linguistic expressions to be used in e-mail
- d) keep professional and polite tone in e-mail

Development of pragmatic assessment tasks and rating criteria

Based on the four target tasks, seven prototype pragmatic tasks were developed (see Appendix C), composed of four written and three spoken tasks. Table 5 lists brief descriptions of the assessment tasks with time limit for each of the tasks. All tasks were developed based on combinations of elements from each of the target tasks. For example, in the case of task 4, the task was to write constructive comments on cover letter written by a classmate, which was designed to assess examinees' knowledge of writing a cover letter and of giving appropriate comments to classmate's work.

Table 5

Seven Prototype Pragmatic Assessment Tasks

Task	Description of task	Time limit
1	Write a recommendation letter request e-mail to professor	10 min
2	Write an e-mail to potential employer to send your application packet	5 min
3	Write an e-mail to refuse professor's request of helping your classmate's class project	5 min
4	Write constructive comments on cover letter Written by your classmate	15 min
5	Give oral constructive peer-feedback to your classmate's e-mail that is written to request for a meeting with a professor	10 min
6	Role-play with a classmate in situations of making suggestions and disagreement	10 min
7	Role-play with a professor in situations of making requests and refusal	10 min

Descriptive rating criteria for each pragmatic task were developed that describe elements in each of the pragmatic assessment tasks that considered being essential for students to learn. For the development of rating criteria that are objective and relevant to stakeholders, a wide range of sources were collected to develop task-dependent rating criteria (see Appendix D). The sources included a list of e-mail advice in an EAP setting, which was developed in a graduate course in the department of Second Language Studies, interview with an experienced ESL teacher who is also a potential employer, and interviews with raters participated in the present study. Based on extensive discussions with especially raters, each rating criteria is decided to be scored with a 3-point scale, 3 (good), 2 (able), and 1 (inadequate).

Pilot assessment tasks and rating criteria

To investigate whether the developed assessment tasks and task-dependent rating criteria are reliable and valid to be implemented in the ELI, they were piloted with forty ESL

students and three raters. Detailed steps will be described in the following.

Participants

Forty ESL students voluntarily participated as examinees in completing pragmatic assessment tasks, and they can be categorized into three different proficiency groups: (a) low-intermediate proficiency learners studying in the University of Hawai'i English Language Program (HELP) ($n = 9$); (b) intermediate and intermediate-high proficiency learners classified international undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in the ELI to fulfill university English language requirements ($n = 19$); and (c) high proficiency L2 learners of English who are studying at the U.S. university ($n = 12$). Among the students in the university EAP program, students taking only an expository writing 100-level class ($n = 6$) were considered to have advanced English proficiency, so they were regrouped into the high proficiency learner group. Of the forty participants, 12 were male and 28 were female.

Three raters participated to score forty ESL students' pragmatic performance, and they were composed of one English native speaker and two advanced L2 users of English who all had at least 2 years of ESL/EFL teaching experience with MA in ESL degrees.

Procedure

All examinee participants completed seven pragmatic assessment performance-based tasks, and they were asked to provide their L1, years of studying in the USA, currently taking courses, academic status, and TOEFL score. Examinees' pragmatic performance data were collected by the researcher in individual sessions with each examinee. Each session took approximately 1 hour to 1 hour 15 minutes, and each task had a time limit to complete. The examinees became familiar with the task procedures and instructions before completing the tasks, and the researcher was present while completing the tasks. Also, they were asked to fill out self-rating sheets, which is adapted from Brown, Hudson, Norris, and Bonk (2002), to investigate examinees' perceptions on task difficulty and their performance. They were told to

choose to either type their answers with computers or handwrite answers in paper for written tasks, and all audio data from spoken tasks were audio-recorded.

For the rating part, three raters had three consecutive separate training sessions (pre, while, post-rating interviews), which took about 1 hour for each session, and all ratings were completed within two weeks from a starting date. In the rating sessions, the researcher explained each rating criteria for each assessment task with examinees' examples performance data, and they were asked to keep monitoring what they rated while rating for consistent ratings. Also, to gather raters' perceptions on the rating criteria, they were told to document any difficulties, thoughts, and reasoning of giving specific rating in rating sheets while rating. Lastly, any identifiable personal information about the examinees was deleted in the assessment data, such as participants' written name and major, before the assessment data was handed into the raters.

Results

In this section, I will report preliminary results, including descriptive statistics for the assessment tasks across three raters and Multi-faceted Rasch model FACETS (Linacre, 1996) analyses to investigate raters' performance with task-dependent rating criteria and examinees' overall performance.

Table 6 shows descriptive statistics for each rater across all examinees and all tasks. Comparing means and standard deviations across all tasks, task 3 and task 7 had more or less highest means with small variations among all tasks, and task 1 and task 4 had more or less lowest means with large variations, which indicated that task 1 and task 4 were more difficult tasks compared with others. Consistent negative skew statistics from all three raters were shown in task 2, task 3, task 5 and task 7.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Seven Tasks across Three Raters

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Skewness	Range	N
Task1							
Rater 1	1.99	0.47	1.00	3.00	0.20	2.00	40
Rater 2	2.15	0.57	1.00	3.00	-0.34	2.00	40
Rater 3	2.14	0.52	1.00	3.00	-0.26	2.00	40
Task2							
Rater 1	2.09	0.50	1.00	3.00	-0.47	2.00	40
Rater 2	2.30	0.49	1.00	3.00	-0.69	2.00	40
Rater 3	2.24	0.42	1.00	3.00	-1.21	2.00	40
Task 3							
Rater 1	2.54	0.40	1.25	3.00	-1.08	1.75	40
Rater 2	2.53	0.35	1.50	3.00	-0.85	1.50	40
Rater 3	2.44	0.32	1.50	3.00	-0.62	1.50	40
Task 4							
Rater 1	1.83	0.52	1.00	2.75	0.22	1.75	40
Rater 2	2.10	0.56	1.00	3.00	-0.33	2.00	40
Rater 3	1.95	0.58	1.00	3.00	0.01	2.00	40
Task 5							
Rater 1	2.14	0.46	1.00	3.00	-0.63	2.00	40
Rater 2	2.24	0.47	1.25	3.00	-0.28	1.75	40
Rater 3	2.11	0.54	1.00	3.00	-0.33	2.00	40
Task 6							
Rater 1	2.41	0.39	1.25	3.00	-0.86	1.75	40
Rater 2	2.51	0.43	1.25	3.00	-0.99	1.75	40
Rater 3	2.36	0.41	1.50	3.00	0.03	1.50	40
Task 7							
Rater 1	2.43	0.30	1.75	3.00	-0.07	1.25	40
Rater 2	2.51	0.36	1.50	3.00	-0.62	1.50	40
Rater 3	2.58	0.30	1.50	3.00	-1.26	1.50	40

Examinees' data were further analyzed using multi-faceted Rasch analysis using the FACETS computer program (Linacre, 1996) with three facets (examinee, rater, task) which enables us to examine raters' behavior, overall examinees' performance, relative difficulty across different tasks, and relationships among different rating scales used for each different task. To investigate how the task-dependent rating criteria were used in each task, the Partial Credit Model was used. Table 7 shows overall descriptive statistics expressed in logit values for three facets used, examinee, rater, and task. All three facets showed good reliability estimates that indicated elements in each facet were reliably different, and the task facet showed the largest differences with a largest separation index of 8.63 among the three facets. Among the examinee

facet, only one examinee among the forty examinees had a misfit (infit mean square value = 1.5) in the model. However, no misfitting elements were found among the three raters and the seven tasks, and they were within a range of acceptable fit values, which indicated all raters showed internal consistency in the scoring process.

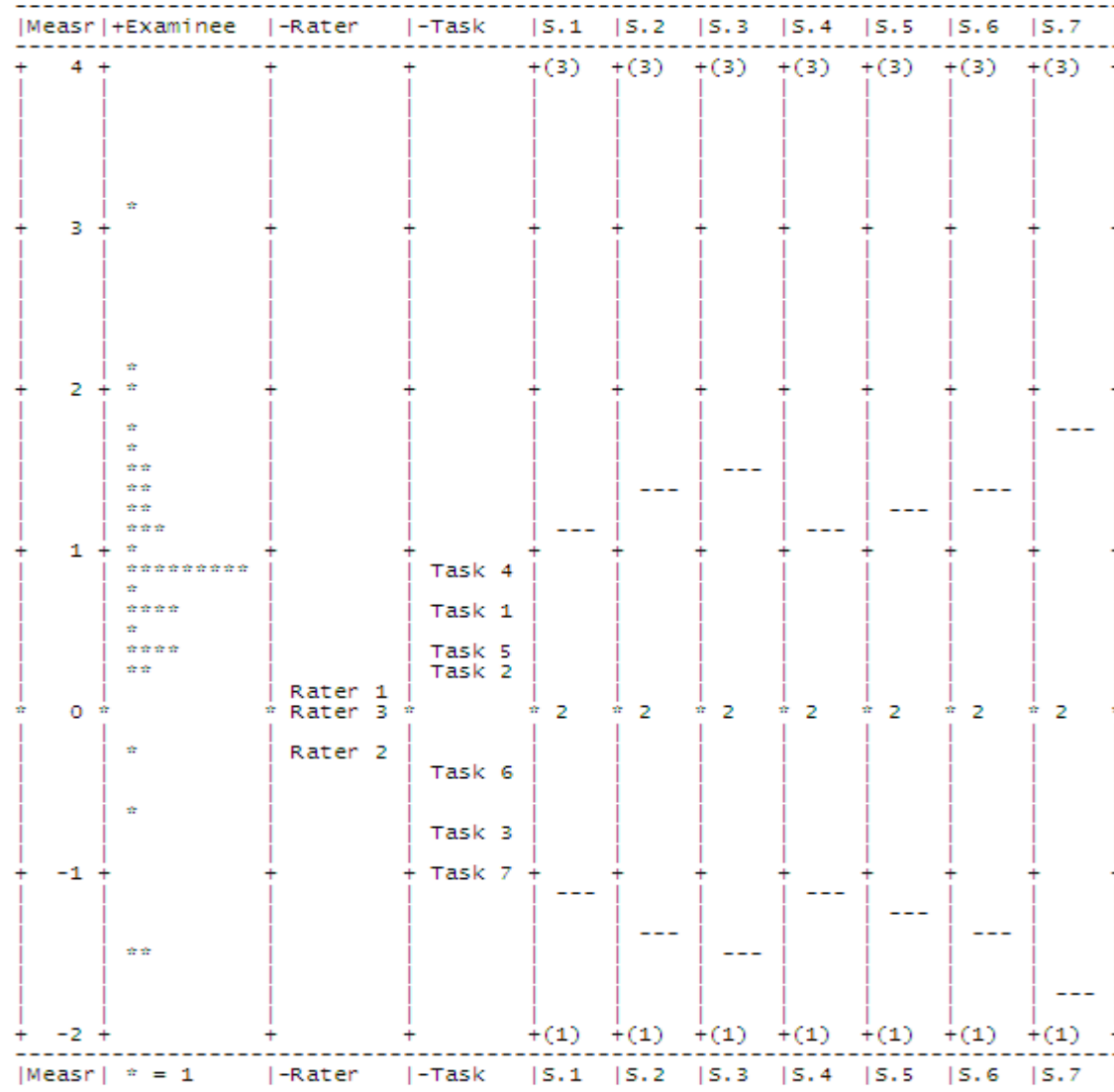
Table 7

FACETS Descriptive Statistics

Measure	N	M	SD	Min	Max	Separation index	Reliability	mean infit Zstd	mean outfit Zstd
Examinee	40	0.82	0.84	-1.54	3.14	4.32	0.95	-0.20	-0.10
Rater	3	0.00	0.15	-0.20	0.18	2.88	0.89	-0.30	-0.10
Task	7	0.00	0.69	-1.05	0.93	8.63	0.99	-0.00	-0.00

In addition to the measurement report for each facet, the FACETS program also provides a summary that displays the relative status of all facets (examinee, rater, task) in a single set of relationships. The FACETS summary of three facets is represented in Figure 4. The logit value in each column indicates the following different information depending on the facet: the relative abilities of the examinees, the relative harshness of raters, and the relative difficulties of tasks. In the examinees' ability estimates, it is shown that all examinees except for four examinees are above a zero logit which indicates most of them had at least a 50 percent chance of succeeding on an average difficult task. Among the three raters, rater 1 was shown to be the harshest, and rater 3 was the most lenient rater. In the case of tasks which also showed a large difference among the elements, task 4 (give constructive written comments on a cover letter written by a classmate) was shown to be the most difficult task, and task 7 (role-play with a professor) was the easiest task among the seven tasks. The rest of the columns showed how each rating scale for each task was used, and interestingly, they showed variations across each task.

Figure 4. FACETS summary



Note. S.1 = task 1, S.2 = task 2, S.3 = task 3, S.4 = task 4, S.5 = task 5, S.6 = task 6, S.7 = task 7

Remaining Issues

The current study reported a step-by-step approach of developing a task-based pragmatic assessment in an EAP setting. According to the preliminary findings, the developed tasks showed a wide range of difficulties with the task-dependent rating criteria. Also, all three raters were shown to be internally consistent in their ratings. However, more detailed both qualitative and quantitative data analyses will be crucial to inform stakeholders who will use the developed assessment tasks and rating criteria. Especially, results from the post-rating interviews with the three raters and information provided from the three raters while rating need to be further investigated.

References

- Ahn, R. C. (2005). *Five measures of interlanguage pragmatics in KFL (Korean as foreign language) learners*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Hawai'i.
- Bachman, L. (2002). Some reflections on task-based language performance assessment. *Language Testing, 19*, 453-476.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (1999). Exploring the interlanguage of interlanguage pragmatics: A research agenda for acquisitional pragmatics. *Language Learning, 49*, 677-713.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2001). Empirical evidence of the need for instruction in pragmatics. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 13-32). Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Hartford, B. S. (1990). Congruence in native and nonnative conversations: Status balance in the academic advising session, *Language Learning, 40*, 467-501.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Hartford, B. S. (1993). Learning the rules of academic talk: A longitudinal study of pragmatic development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 15*, 279-304.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Hartford, B. S. (1996a). Input in an institutional setting, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 18*, 171-188.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Hartford, B. S. (1996b). Pragmatics and language teaching: Bridging pragmatics and pedagogy together. In L. F. Bouton (Ed.), *Pragmatics and language learning, Volume 7* (pp. 21-39). University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign: Division of English as an International Language.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Hartford, B. S. (Eds.) (2005). *Interlanguage pragmatics: Exploring institutional talk*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Biesenbach-Lucas, S. (2006). Making requests in e-mail: Do cyber-consultations entail

- directness? Toward conventions in a new medium. In K. Bardovi-Harlig, C. Félix-Brasdefer, & A. S. Omar (Eds.), *Pragmatics and language learning, Volume 11* (pp. 82-107). Honolulu, HI: National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawai'i at Manoa.
- Brown, J. D., Hudson, T., Norris, J., & Bonk, W. J. (2002). An investigation of second language task-based performance assessments. Honolulu, HI: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Byrnes, H. (2002). The role of task and task-based assessment in a content-oriented collegiate foreign language curriculum. *Language Testing, 19*, 419-437.
- Chaudron, C., Doughty, C., Kim, Y., Kong, D., Lee, J., Lee, Y., Long, M., Rivers, R., & Urano, K. (2005). A task-based needs analysis of a tertiary Korean as a foreign language program. In M. H. Long (Ed.), *Second language needs analysis* (pp. 225-261). Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Chen, C.-F. E. (2006) The development of e-mail literacy: From writing to peers to writing to authority figures. *Language Learning & Technology, 10*(2), 35-55.
- Davies, C. E., & Tyler, A. E. (2005). Discourse strategies in the context of crosscultural institutional talk: Uncovering interlanguage pragmatics in the university classroom. In K. Bardovi-Harlig & B. S. Hartford (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics: Exploring institutional talk* (pp. 133-156). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Firth, A., & Wagner, J. (1997). On discourse, communication, and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research. *The Modern Language Journal, 81*, 285-300.
- González-Bueno, M. (1998). The effects of electronic mail on Spanish L2 discourse. *Language Learning & Technology, 1*(2), 55-70.
- Gysen, S., & Van Avermaet, P. (2005). Issues in functional language performance assessment: The case of the certificate Dutch as a foreign language, *Language Assessment Quarterly, 2*, 51-68.

- Iimuro, A. (2006). Conversation analysis of e-mail requests by second language speakers. *Second Language Studies*, 24(2), 65-113.
- Hudson, T., Detmer, E., & Brown, J. D. (1992). A framework for testing cross-cultural pragmatics (Technical Report #2). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Hudson, T., Detmer, E., & Brown, J. D. (1995). Developing prototypic measures of cross-cultural pragmatics (Technical Report #7). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Jean, E. H., & Kaya, T. (2006). Effects of L2 instruction on interlanguage pragmatic development: A meta-analysis. In J. M. Norris & L. Ortega (Eds.), *Synthesizing research on language learning and teaching* (pp. 165-211). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Kasper, G. (1992). Pragmatic transfer. *Second Language Research*, 8, 203-231.
- Kasper, G. (2001). Classroom research on interlanguage pragmatics. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 33-60). Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Kasper, G. (in press). L2 pragmatic development. In W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.), *New handbook of second language acquisition*. Leeds, UK: Emerald.
- Kasper, G., & Blum-Kulka, S. (1993). Interlanguage pragmatics: An introduction. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 3-17). New York: Oxford University.
- Kasper, G., & Rose, K. R. (2001). Pragmatics in language teaching. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 1-9). Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Kasper, G., & Rose, K. R. (2002). *Pragmatic development in a second language*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.
- Linacre, J. M. (1996). *Facets, version no. 3.0*. Chicago: MESA.
- Liu, J. (2007). Developing a pragmatic test for Chinese EFL learners. *Language Testing*, 24, 391-415.

- Long, M. H., & Crookes, G. (1992). Three approaches to task-based syllabus design. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26, 27-56.
- Long, M. H., & Norris, J. M. (2000). Task-based teaching and assessment. In M. Byram (Ed.), *Routledge encyclopedia of language teaching and learning* (pp. 597-603). London: Routledge.
- McNamara, T. (1996). *Measuring second language performance*. New York: Longman.
- Norris, J. M. (2000). Purposeful language assessment. *English Teaching Forum*, 38(1), 18-23.
- Norris, J. M. (2002). Interpretations, intended uses and designs in task-based language assessment, *Language Testing*, 19, 337-346.
- Norris, J. M. (2008). *Validity evaluation in language assessment*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Norris, J. M. (forthcoming). Task-based teaching and testing. In M. H. Long & C. Doughty (Eds.), *Handbook of second and foreign language teaching*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Norris, J. M., Brown, J. D., Hudson, T., & Yoshioka, J. (1998). *Designing second language performance assessments*. Technical Report #18. Honolulu, HI: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Norris, J. M., & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning*, 50, 417-528.
- Norris, J. M., Brown, J. D., Hudson, T., & Bonk, W. (2002). Examinee abilities and task difficulty in task-based second language performance assessment. *Language Testing*, 19, 395-418.
- Robinson, P., & Ross, S. (1994). The development of task-based testing in English for academic purposes. *Applied Linguistics*, 17, 455-476.
- Roever, C. (2006). Validation of a web-based test of ESL pragmalinguistics. *Language Testing*, 23, 229-256.
- Skehan, P. (1996). A framework for the implementation of task-based instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 17, 38-62.

- Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Shohamy, E. (1995). Performance assessment in language testing. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 17, 38-62.
- Takahashi, S. (1996). Pragmatic transferability. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 189-223.
- Van Avermaet, P., & Gysen, S. (2006). From needs to tasks: Language learning needs in a task-based approach. In K. Van den Branden (Ed.), *Task-based language teaching in practice* (pp. 17-46). Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Van Gorp, K., & Bogaert, N. (2006). Developing language tasks for primary and secondary education. In K. Van den Branden (Ed.), *Task-based language teaching in practice* (pp. 76-105). Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Yamashita, S. O. (1996). *Six measures of JSL pragmatics* (Technical Report #14). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Yoshitake, S. (1997). *Interlanguage competence of Japanese students of English: A multi-test framework evaluation*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia Pacific University, San Rafael, California.

Appendix A: Semi-structured questions

ELI faculty members:

1. In relation with the objectives and values of the ELI, what would be pragmatics-related tasks that ELI students are supposed or ideally to accomplish upon completion of the ELI courses?
2. In addition to the current objectives in each curriculum, do you think it is necessary to add more pragmatics-related tasks (or objectives) in each curriculum? If so, what are they? Why or why not?
3. When you're interacting with your students, have you experienced any situations in which your students were inappropriate especially when they make a request, apology, or refusal?
4. After completing the ELI courses, can you think of pragmatics-related tasks that students have to keep working on for their successes in academic pursuits?

Interview questions for students

A. General Questions for a focus group

1. Are you aware of differences between English and your native language in terms of ways of request, refusal, or apology? If so, what are they? Can you share your thoughts with group members?
2. Have you experienced any communication breakdowns because of any differences mentioned above? If so, what were they?
3. What were your strategies for dealing with the communication breakdown?
4. Have you experienced any difficulties to understand implied meanings conveyed in conversations between you and your classmate, professors, or administrators at campus? If so, what were they?
5. Besides the learning objectives covered in your ELI classes, have you felt you need extra tasks that will help you use English appropriately to succeed your academic pursuit in the ELI classes? If so, what are they?

B. Request

1. Have you made a request in English to your classmates during class or out of class? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?
2. Have you made a request in English to your professors or instructors during class or out of class? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?
3. Have you made a request in English to administrators in your department office or International Student Service? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?

C. Apology

4. Have you made an apology in English to your classmates during class or out of class? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?
5. Have you made an apology in English to your professors or instructors during class or out of class? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they

easy or difficult to do? Why?

6. Have you made an apology in English to administrators in your department office or International Student Service? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?

D. Refusal

7. Have you made a refusal in English to your classmates during class or out of class? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?
8. Have you made a refusal in English to your professors or instructors during class or out of class? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?
9. Have you made a refusal in English to administrators in your department office or International Student Service? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations. Were they easy or difficult to do? Why?

E. Implied Meaning

10. Have you ever experienced that you couldn't understand what your classmates implied when they say something to you? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations.
11. Have you ever experienced that you couldn't understand what your professors implied when they say something to you? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations.
12. Have you ever experienced that you couldn't understand what administrators in your department office or International Student Service implied when they say something to you? If so, what were the situations? Please describe the situations.

Appendix B: A survey questionnaire for EAP pragmatic needs**Language Use in English as Academic Purpose Setting**

Currently taking ELI courses: _____ Years of studying in USA: _____

Academic status (circle):

Undergraduate MA PhD Other: _____

Major: _____ First Language: _____

Please indicate extent of learning needs of following situations.

1= Not at all necessary 2= Not necessary 3= Necessary 4= Very necessary

A. Communication with peers in class

1. During discussion, you want to know how to appropriately disagree with what classmates are saying. 1 2 3 4
2. During discussion, sometimes you don't know how to initiate, clarify, or close the conversation. You want to know how to do these during the conversation. 1 2 3 4
3. During discussion, you want to know how to comment on or compliment classmates' opinions. 1 2 3 4
4. During discussion, you want to know how to properly ask a clarification question or a relevant question to classmates' opinions. 1 2 3 4
5. When you give peer-feedback to your classmates' writing or speaking, you want to know how to give comments or suggestions nicely and appropriately. 1 2 3 4

B. Communication with professors

6. Imagine that you're working with a professor, you need to refuse some requests that you received from a professor. You want to know how to politely refuse. 1 2 3 4
7. You want to know how to appropriately make a meeting appointment with a professor either by email or in person. 1 2 3 4
8. You need a recommendation letter to apply for a scholarship. You want to know how to politely write an email to professor to request a recommendation letter. 1 2 3 4
9. When you want to thank someone such as professors or classmates, you want to know how to write a thank you email or card appropriately. 1 2 3 4
10. About writing an email to your professor or someone

who you haven't met, you want to know how to appropriately write an email and reply in general.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

11. Possibly you might want to suggest something new to your professor about class. So, you want to know how to politely express your opinion and suggest new ideas.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

12. Sometimes professors make cultural jokes that are related with your class contents during the class. You want to know how to understand cultural jokes.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

13. When you talk to your professor, you couldn't understand the implied meaning. You want to know how to politely ask your professor what exactly he/she meant.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

C. Communication in general on campus

14. Sometimes you need to nicely refuse your friend's requests such as to borrow class note or your laptop. You want to know how to nicely refuse.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

15. As an international student, sometimes you might have visa problems that school should help you with. You want to learn how to nicely and effectively explain your situation to receive help.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

N/A

16. Sometimes, you feel that you're overly apologizing to someone. So, you want to know how to appropriately apologize.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

17. You want to learn how to appropriately write a cover letter or resume that you might need in future to apply for a job.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

18. Sometimes, you don't understand when people say something indirectly. You want to know how to understand indirect meaning. For example, people indirectly say "I feel so cold in the classroom" to ask you to turn off an air conditioner.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

D. Cross-cultural communication knowledge

19. In the ELI reading class, you want to read articles about different cross-cultural communication styles to raise your awareness.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

20. You think you don't know much about culturally or academically appropriate English speaking and writing rules. So, you want to discuss this matter in classes.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Appendix C: Seven Pragmatic Assessment Tasks

Task 1: Write a recommendation letter request to professor

Situation: You found out there is a research award opportunity, and you're planning to apply for this award. To apply for this award, you need a recommendation letter from an academic advisor.

Task: Please read the information about the award below. Then, you will *write an e-mail to your academic advisor* (Professor Jack Brown, professor@hawaii.edu) to request for a recommendation letter.

Time: You have 10 minutes to complete the task.

Product: You will write a recommendation letter request e-mail to professor Jack Brown to apply for "Arts & Sciences Student Research Awards".

Information about the award:



Arts & Sciences Student Research Awards
 (formerly known as the Arts & Sciences Advisory Council Awards)
 2009 Spring Award Application Form

The Arts & Science Student Research Awards were established for undergraduate and graduate with a declared major to assist funds for their studies that are not available through regular coursework. You may apply for funds for a scholarly/research activity that you will carry out before completion of his/her intended degree

Application Procedure

To apply, students must submit a cover letter, an application form, and a recommendation letter from your academic advisor to: Office of Community and Alumni Relations, College of Arts & Science, University of Hawai'i, 2500 Campus Road, Hawai'i Hall 300, Honolulu, HI 96822, phone number (808) 956-1234.

**Application Deadline: application must be in the office
 by 4:00pm on April 25, 2009.**

Task 2: Write an e-mail to a potential employer to send your application packet

Situation: You've been preparing to apply for an interpreter job at Honolulu City Council. Your resume and cover letters are ready to send, and all application documents should be sent by an e-mail.

Task: You will send an e-mail to Human Resource Manager, Sarah Brown (honolulu@gmail.com) to send your job application documents including a cover letter and your resume.

Time: You have 5 minutes to complete the task.

Product: You will write an e-mail to Human Resource Manager, Sarah Brown as you send your application packet to apply for an interpreter job.




Task 3: Write an e-mail to refuse to professor's request of helping your classmate's class project.

Situation: You received an e-mail from a professor Jack Brown (see the e-mail below). But, you have a very busy schedule these days, so you cannot help your classmate. How would you reply to professor's e-mail?

Task: Write a reply e-mail to your professor to refuse the request.


Time: You have 5 minutes to complete the task.

Product: You will write an e-mail to professor Jack Brown to refuse his request.

 To	<input type="text" value="jessie@hawaii.edu"/>
 Cc	<input type="text"/>
 Bcc	<input type="text"/>
Attachments	
Subject	<input type="text" value="Helping your classmate's team project"/>

[Plain Text] Rich Text (HTML)

Format Font Size



Hi Jessie,

One of your classmates Peter is looking for a partner for a team project. As you know, this assignment should be done as a pair work. But, Peter's original partner dropped a class recently, so all of sudden Peter will do a team project by himself. I understand that you're doing already a team project with Sarah. But, can you help Peter as a team project partner for next week? Let me know how this works for you.

Many thanks in advance,
Jack

Task 4: Write constructive comments on a cover letter

Situation: You want to apply for a job sometime soon, so you need to know how to write a cover letter.

Task: Now, you have an example cover letter below that is written by your classmate for an internship job at Honolulu City Council to Human Resource Director, Harry Johnson. Your task is to *write constructive comments* on the cover letter to find out how this cover letter can be improved. Think about important criteria and elements of writing a cover letter, and how you would've done differently.

Time: You have 15 minutes to complete the task.

Product: You will write a comment on Jessie's cover letter that you will give to Jessie.

Example cover letter:

Dear Sir Johnson,

I'm writing this cover letter to apply for an internship job at Honolulu City Council. Please see the attached my resume. I have various work experience in campus. I worked at a University library as a front desk staff, and I also have volunteer experience in Honolulu Film Festival. They were really fun, and I really enjoyed. Also, I really work hard, and I have a good work ethic.

I'd like to have an interview with you sometime soon, so can I visit your office for an interview? Please contact me when you are available.

Thanks,
Jessie Brown

Task 5: Give constructive peer-feedback to your classmate's e-mail

Situation: In your ELI class, you're discussing how to write appropriate e-mails to your academic advisor in a University academic setting. The whole class was required to write an e-mail to a professor to request for a meeting. Now, your classmate sends you the e-mail that he has written. He wants your feedback on the e-mail. Now, you should give constructive comments to your classmate.

Task: The e-mail below is written by your classmate (his name is Tom). Read this e-mail and give appropriate feedback verbally to your classmate so that your classmate can revise the e-mail.

Time: You have 10 minutes to complete this task.

Product: *You will prepare a short comment verbally as if you're talking to your classmate face-to-face.*

Your classmate's e-mail:

New Message

Send Attach Save Draft Spell Check Dictionary English

To professor@hawaii.edu

Cc

Bcc

Attachments

Subject time

[Plain Text] Rich Text (HTML)

Format Font Size

✂ 📎 📧 **b** *i* u 🔗 🖨 ☰ ☰ ☰ ☰ ↔ ↔ 🌐

hi this is tom
i have some questions for you about the course.
can i meet up with you tomorrow at 3:00pm
Yet i do not know where is your office, so can you
e-mail back with office number?

Priority Normal Request receipt None

Check spelling before message is sent

Send Help

Task 6: Role-play with a classmate

(Your name: Jessie, Your classmate's name: Phoenix)

Situation: On campus, you run into your classmate who is doing a class project with you. Your classmate starts asking how your group members should meet to discuss the project.

Task 1: Your classmate suggests an online chatting to discuss the project rather than a face-to-face meeting because it can save people's time and you don't need to go to a meeting place. However, you disagree with your classmate's opinion because you think you can communicate better and clearer through a face-to-face meeting rather than an online chat.

Task 2: Since you and your classmate couldn't come to an agreement, you will make a suggestion of asking other group members' opinion.

Task 3: Your classmate asks you if it's okay to meet during the weekend for the meeting. However, you will tell your classmate that you're working during the weekend so you cannot have a meeting during the weekend. So you will suggest asking other group members' opinion.

Time: You have 7 minutes to prepare the task. Tell the researcher when you're ready.

Product: You will have a role-play with the researcher to complete three tasks in a row.

Task 7: Role-play with a professor

(Your name: Jessie, Your professor's name: Jamie Johnson)

Situation: You have an appointment with a professor Jamie Johnson of Economy class today. Now, you're about to visit your professor. You just enter to a professor's room.

Task 1: You've missed a couple of classes, so you will ask for a power point that the professor used when you missed the class. You need power point to prepare the mid-term exam.

Task 2: You want to borrow one of the reference books in the syllabus from the professor to prepare for the exam. So, ask the professor to borrow the book.

Task 3: A professor asks you whether you can do a class presentation a week earlier than you are originally scheduled. This means you have to present two weeks later, but you cannot do it because you will have an exam on that week. So, you need to refuse to professor's request.

Time: You have 7 minutes to prepare the task. Tell the researcher when you're ready.

Product: You will have a role-play with the researcher to complete three tasks in a row.

Appendix D: Rating Criteria

1. Write an e-mail to request a recommendation letter

	Tone of e-mail	Clear message delivery/ content knowledge	Formulaic linguistic expression	E-mail format
3 (Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a professional and polite tone consistently throughout the e-mail (e.g., not to deprecate yourself for lack of knowledge, not to hurry professor, not to sound pushy, aggressive, and begging for help desperately, not to assume that professor will write a letter for you) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include a clear/concise purpose and highlight main point (e.g., provide appropriate amount of background information, put main point in its own line/paragraph rather than in the bottom or last of the message) ▪ Show evidence of knowledge of a recommendation letter (e.g., a degree of imposition of asking for a letter to professor) and award application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use polite linguistic expressions for request (e.g., I was wondering if you can-, would it be possible for you to-) ▪ Use linguistic expressions that can reduce imposition of request (e.g., if you have time, if possible, I know that you're extremely busy) ▪ Use good/acceptable grammar in general, good spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use clear and informative subject that indicates a purpose of e-mail ▪ Use appropriate salutation and term of address (e.g., Dear, Hello, Dr., Professor) ▪ Briefly introduce yourself if professor doesn't know you well. ▪ Use appropriate and courteous closing
2 (Able)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconsistently maintain a professional tone throughout the e-mail ▪ Sound more or less polite in general, but an informal tone is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack clear/concise purpose of writing an e-mail (e.g., wordy/unnecessary explanation of why he/she is qualified for award) ▪ Show evidence of inconsistent knowledge of contents although the e-mail includes a clear purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use some and/or simple linguistic expressions for request and to reduce imposition, but they don't sound polite enough or appropriate. ▪ Use some unconventional linguistic expressions ▪ Occasional grammar errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some elements in e-mail format are present, but they are not used appropriately (e.g., use of "sir" to professor, unclear subject, "I'm waiting for your reply" as a closing)
1 (Inadequate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sound too casual and informal ▪ Lack a professional tone throughout the e-mail (e.g., impose importance of receiving a letter from professor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't have clear purpose of an e-mail ▪ Lack knowledge of application of award (e.g., don't know proper procedure of application, not sound to recognize imposition of recommendation letter request, take writing a letter for granted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use inappropriate linguistic expressions for request, and sound very direct or imposing (e.g., I need a recommendation letter) ▪ Frequent grammatical errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Either few elements of e-mail are present, or none/few of the elements are appropriately used.

2. Write an e-mail to send application packet

	Tone of e-mail	Clear message delivery/ content knowledge	Polite formulaic expression	E-mail format
3 (Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a professional tone consistently throughout the e-mail (e.g., not to deprecate yourself for lack of knowledge, not to hurry employer for reply, not to sound pushy, aggressive, and begging for job desperately, not to assume that employer will have an interview or work automatically) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include a clear/concise purpose and/or highlight main point (e.g., put main point in its own line/paragraph rather than in the bottom or last of the message) ▪ Show evidence of knowledge of writing an e-mail to apply for a job (e.g., highlight important background information, show interest, specify job category, briefly introduce yourself) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use polite/appropriate conventional linguistic expressions when requesting to look at attachments (e.g., Please find the attached files,) or statement of sending an application packet (e.g., I'm sending you-) ▪ Use good/acceptable grammar in general, good spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use clear and informative subject that indicates a purpose of e-mail ▪ Use appropriate salutation and term of address (e.g., Dear, Mr., Ms.) ▪ Briefly introduce yourself. ▪ Use appropriate and courteous closing
2 (Able)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconsistently maintain a professional tone throughout the e-mail ▪ Sound more or less polite in general, but an informal tone is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack clear/concise purpose of writing an e-mail (e.g., wordy/unnecessary explanation of background information, why he/she is qualified for a job) ▪ Show evidence of inconsistent knowledge of contents although the e-mail includes a clear purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use some and/or simple linguistic expressions for request/statement, but they don't sound polite enough or appropriate. ▪ Use some unconventional linguistic expressions (e.g., I will appreciate hearing from you) ▪ Occasional grammar errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some elements in e-mail format are present, but they are not used appropriately (e.g., absence of term of address, unclear subject, use of first name – “Sarah”, “I'm waiting for your reply” as a closing)
1 (Inadequate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sound too casual and informal ▪ Lack a professional tone throughout the e-mail (e.g., impose to give a work opportunity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't have clear purpose of an e-mail ▪ Show lack of knowledge of job application process (e.g., ask directly for an immediate/prompt reply) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use inappropriate linguistic expressions, and sound very direct or imposing (e.g., if you choose me, you will not regret) ▪ Frequent grammatical errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Either very few elements of e-mail are present, or none of the elements are appropriately used.

3. Write an e-mail to refuse professor's request

	Tone of e-mail	Clear message delivery/ content knowledge	Polite formulaic expression	E-mail format
3 (Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a professional and polite tone consistently throughout the e-mail (e.g., not to sound too apologetic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include a clear/concise message (i.e., refusal to professor's request) with appropriate amount of information ▪ Show evidence of knowledge of refusing professor's request (e.g., recognize it is a face-threatening situation, provide explanation, suggest alternative solutions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use polite/appropriate conventional linguistic expressions for apology (e.g., I'm afraid that I cannot help, I don't think I can help) or suggestions (e.g., What about-, Is that okay if I -) ▪ Use good/acceptable grammar in general, good spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use appropriate salutation and term of address (e.g., Dear, Professor, Dr., "Jack" can be acceptable since a relationship between professor and student is well established) ▪ Use appropriate and courteous closing
2 (Able)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconsistently maintain a professional and polite tone throughout the e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State unclear purpose of writing an e-mail (e.g., intention of refusal is not clear) ▪ Provide unclear accounts ▪ Use a wordy/unnecessary explanation of accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use some and/or simple linguistic expressions for apology / suggestions, but they don't sound polite enough or appropriate. ▪ Use some unconventional linguistic expressions ▪ Occasional grammar errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some elements in e-mail format are present, but they are not used appropriately
1 (Inadequate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sound too casual and informal ▪ Lack a professional and polite tone throughout the e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't have clear intention of refusal ▪ Show lack of knowledge of how to appropriately refuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use very simple (or none) linguistic expressions for apology that sound quite rude ▪ Frequent grammatical errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Either very few elements of e-mail are present, or none of the elements are appropriately used.

4. Give comments/suggestions on classmate's cover letter

	Tone of giving comments/suggestions	Clear message delivery	Formulaic linguistic expression	Knowledge of writing a cover letter
3 (Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a respectful and polite tone throughout giving comments to classmate (e.g., not to sound too opinionated, strong, reproachful, and pushy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver comments and suggestions clearly with an appropriate amount of explanation that more or less makes sense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use polite linguistic expressions for giving suggestions and comments (e.g., I think you can-, It would be a good idea-, If you do-, You can consider to-, You could) ▪ Use good/acceptable grammar in general, good spelling 	<p>Show knowledge of following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic format (e.g., term of address) ▪ Brief Introduction ▪ Emphasize important selling points that are relevant for the position concisely ▪ Don't assume to have an interview automatically, but ask for an interview politely ▪ Keep a professional and formal tone throughout the cover letter (e.g., not using thanks, not to sound desperate)
2 (Able)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconsistently maintain a respectful and polite tone throughout the e-mail ▪ Sound more or less polite in general, but an inappropriate tone is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver comments more or less clearly, but still not quite enough ▪ Lack enough explanations of comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use some, although not frequent, and/or simple linguistic expressions that sound rather strong for giving comments / suggestions. (e.g., you should-, you must-) ▪ Use some unconventional linguistic expressions ▪ Occasional grammar errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show knowledge of some elements of cover letter mentioned above, but they are not commented well and enough
1 (Inadequate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sound too strong and directive ▪ Lack a respectful and polite tone throughout the e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contents of the comments are not clear and not easily understandable ▪ Provide no/few explanation of comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use inappropriate linguistic expressions for giving comments / suggestions frequently that sound quite rude and strong (e.g., You should) ▪ Frequent grammatical errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show knowledge of either very few elements of cover letter are present, or none of the elements are appropriately mentioned.

5. Give comments/suggestions on classmate's e-mail

	Tone of giving comments/suggestions	Clear message delivery	Formulaic linguistic expression	Knowledge of writing an e-mail to make an appointment
3 (Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a respectful and polite tone throughout giving comments to classmate (e.g., not to sound too opinionated, strong, reproachful, and pushy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver comments and suggestions clearly with an appropriate amount of explanation that more or less makes sense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use polite linguistic expressions for giving comments / suggestions (e.g., I think you can-, It would be a good idea-, You can consider to-, You could) ▪ Use good/acceptable grammar in general, good spelling 	<p>Show knowledge of following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate e-mail format (subject, salutation, term of address, closing) ▪ Suggest several time slots rather than only one time ▪ Look for basic information about professor (e.g., office number) ▪ Maintain a formal/professional tone (e.g., casual expressions -“meet up with”, use capital letters)
2 (Able)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconsistently maintain a respectful and polite tone throughout the e-mail ▪ Sound more or less polite in general, but an inappropriate tone is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver comments more or less clearly, but still not quite enough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use some, although not frequent, and/or simple linguistic expressions that sound rather strong for giving comments / suggestions. (e.g., you should-, you must-) ▪ Use some unconventional linguistic expressions ▪ Occasional grammar errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show knowledge of some elements of e-mail for an appointment with professor mentioned above, but they are not commented well and enough
1 (Inadequate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sound too strong and directive ▪ Lack a respectful and polite tone throughout the e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver comments with a list of comments with no explanation ▪ Contents of the comments are not clear and not easily understandable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use inappropriate linguistic expressions for giving comments / suggestions frequently that sound quite rude and strong (e.g., You should) ▪ Frequent grammatical errors and misspelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show knowledge of either very few elements of e-mail for an appointment with professor, or none of the elements are appropriately mentioned.

6. Role-play with classmates (agreement/disagreement, suggestions)

	Respectful tone	Smooth interaction	Delivery of speech acts (disagreement, suggestion)	Formulaic linguistic expression (for disagreement, suggestions)
3 (Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain respectful and polite tone throughout expressing disagreement/agreement and giving suggestions to classmate (e.g., not to sound too opinionated, pushy, strong, reproachful, “why do you do this?”) <p>Note: Although tone and expressions are closely related, please also focus on some elements that are not necessarily related with linguistic expressions of disagreement/suggestion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show elements of being interactionally-fluent and smooth including small tokens of listening (e.g., uh huh, right, yeah, okay, really?, oh) Appropriate greeting and closing the conversation <p>Note: it’s okay to have pauses because examinee might think or situations might be dispreferred. Also, it’s okay to repeat some words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver disagreement and suggestions clearly with an appropriate amount of explanation that makes sense (e.g., provide reasons for disagreement, provide examples, <p>Note: both quality and quantity of accounts matter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use polite/conventional linguistic expressions for disagreement and suggestions (e.g., I think you can-, It would be a good idea-, You can consider to-, You could-, I would suggest, what don’t we-, what do you think?) Use of appropriate amount of hedging for suggestions (e.g., maybe, probably) Use good/acceptable grammar in general
2 (Able)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently maintain a respectful and polite tone that sound more or less polite throughout the conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show some elements of being interactionally more or less fluent, but doesn’t sound interactionally-smooth enough. (e.g., don’t respond appropriately, interrupt often) Some of greeting and closing are inconsistently appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although disagreement and suggestions are delivered, they are done either without any accounts or little accounts, and some accounts are too wordy and unnecessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use some and/or simple linguistic expressions that sound too strong or do not sound polite enough for disagreement / suggestions. (e.g., you should-, you must-) Occasional grammar errors
1 (Inadequate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound too strong, direct, and pushy. Lack a respectful and polite tone throughout the conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack being interactionally-fluent including greeting and closing. Show very few elements of interactional tokens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagreement and suggestions are not clearly delivered. Although disagreement and suggestions are more or less delivered, but done without appropriate accounts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use inappropriate/unconventional linguistic expressions for disagreement / suggestions frequently that sound quite rude and strong (e.g., I don’t like, I disagree, I don’t agree with you) Frequent grammatical errors that inhibit clear message delivery

7. Role-play with professor (request, refusal)

	Respectful tone	Smooth interaction	Delivery of speech acts (request, refusal)	Formulaic linguistic expression (for request, refusal)
3 (Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain respectful and polite tone throughout making requests and refusal (e.g., not to hurry professor, not to sound too desperate, not to sound too apologetic) <p>Note: Although tone and expressions are closely related, please also focus on some elements that are not necessarily related with linguistic expressions of request and refusal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show elements of being interactionally-fluent and smooth including small tokens of listening (e.g., uh huh, right, yeah, okay, really?, oh) Appropriate greeting and closing the conversation <p>Note: it's okay to have pauses because examinee might think or situations might be dispreferred. Also, it's okay to repeat some words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver request and refusal clearly with an appropriate amount of explanation that makes sense (e.g., state clear purpose of office hour visit, acknowledge imposition of request, face-threatening refusal, provide alternative for refusal) <p>Note: both quality and quantity of accounts matter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use polite/conventional linguistic expressions for request/refusal including term of address (e.g., I was wondering, is that possible, can you- , professor, Dr. or first name) <p>Note: since the requests are not highly imposing, simple linguistic expressions (e.g., can you-) can be acceptable as long as it sounds polite enough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use good/acceptable grammar in general
2 (Able)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently maintain a respectful and polite tone that sound more or less polite throughout the conversation (e.g., don't acknowledge gratitude of accepting request or being sorry of refusal enough) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show some elements of being interactionally more or less fluent, but doesn't sound interactionally-smooth enough. (e.g., don't respond appropriately, interrupt often) Some of greeting and closing are inconsistently appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although request and refusal are delivered, they are done either without any accounts or little accounts, and some accounts are too wordy and unnecessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use some and/or simple linguistic expressions that sound too strong or don't sound polite enough (e.g., I can't do it) Use of inappropriate terms of address (e.g., sir, ma'am) Occasional grammar errors.
1 (Inadequate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound too strong, direct, and pushy, casual. Lack a respectful and polite tone throughout the conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack being interactionally-fluent including greeting and closing. Show very few elements of interactional tokens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request and refusal are not clearly delivered. Although Request and refusal are more or less delivered, but done without appropriate accounts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use inappropriate/unconventional linguistic expressions for request/refusal frequently that sound quite rude and strong Frequent grammatical errors that inhibit clear message delivery