A Study of Head Acts and Perspectives on Request in CSAT*

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I. Introduction

There are many researches on the strategies of requests, of which the request has three patterns of sequence: alerter, supportive move, and head act (Blum-Kulka, 1982; Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Ellis, 1994; Yang, 2006). An alerter usually precedes in the utterance of requests and has a function of getting hearer’s attention to ensure speech act. In other words, an alerter plays a role of attention-getters. Supportive moves are used to mitigate or aggravate impositive force of a request. So, supportive moves are located outside a head act and occur either before or after a head act. Supportive moves are divided into two main categories: mitigating and aggravating. (Blum-Kulka, 1982; Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Ellis, 1994; Suh, 1999). A head act is the core of a request sequence since it realizes a request independently of other parts. That is, a head act is a request strategy chosen by a speaker in a specific context to perform a request (Blum-Kulka, 1982; Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Ellis, 1994; Suh, 1999). While a speaker intends to mitigate or aggravate with supportive moves, a head act can be analyzed for two aspects: strategy types and perspectives.

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The strategy types are categorized according to the degree of directness. The directness constructs a classification of request in various cross-cultural backgrounds: direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Ellis, 1994). A speaker can choose the option in terms of the level of "directness." There are nine types of strategies spoken by a speaker: mood derivable, performative, hedged performative, obligation statement, want statements, suggestory formulae, query preparatory, strong hints, and mild hints (Ellis, 1994).

According to Ellis (1994), perspective presents an important source of variation in requests. In her view, request realizations include reference to the speaker ("I"), and the hearer ("you") in performing request activity. Thus, a speaker can choose different perspective that she or he wishes to take on a request. Apart from strategies types, another dimension observed for request goal is the variation in the perspective of requests. The perspectives in the present data were coded according to the schema used by Blum-Kulka (1982) and Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), who divided request perspectives into the following four categories according to their role:

1. Speaker dominance in which the role of the speaker as the recipient is emphasized (e.g. Can I have some more chocolate?).
2. Hearer dominance in which the role of agent is emphasized (e.g. Could you please help me?).
3. Both speaker and hearer dominance, where the inclusive ‘we’ is emphasized (e.g. Shall we play with doll-dollies?).
4. The impersonal in which explicit mentioning of the recipient and the agent is avoided (e.g. Is there any more white?). (Achiba, 2003).

The present study examines various head acts and dominant perspectives on request in Korean college entrance examination (College Scholastic Ability Test: CSAT). The scripts of listening and speaking items for five years of CSAT(2005-2009) were collected and analyzed by the principle of speech act of request. The item analysis of head acts and

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