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The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics

Edited by Naoko Taguchi

The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics

The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics is a comprehensive critical survey of the field of L2 pragmatics, collecting a number of chapters that highlight the key theories, methods, pedagogies, and research findings throughout its development over the last four decades.

Demonstrating the ways in which pragmatics has long served as a lens through which to examine L2 development, the volume is divided into six parts which reflect the field's structure and evolution:

- Constructs and units of analysis
- Theoretical approaches
- Methodological approaches
- Pedagogical approaches
- Contextual and individual considerations
- L2 pragmatics in the global era

The handbook has a particular focus on covering not only traditional topics in the field, such as constructs of pragmatic competence (e.g., speech acts, implicature), teaching and assessment, and pragmatics learning in a study abroad program, but also emerging areas of study, including interactional pragmatics, intercultural pragmatics, usage-based approaches, corpus linguistics, and psycholinguistic experimentation.

Each chapter introduces the topic and follows with a description of its theoretical underpinnings, an overview of existing literature, appraisal of current practice, concluding with a discussion of future directions for research and key readings.

The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics is an essential resource for those with an interest in second language acquisition, pragmatics, and applied linguistics.

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Edited by Naoko Taguchi

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With 44 authors contributing to this volume, I am excited to present this comprehensive and wide-ranging portrait of pragmatics research in second language acquisition.

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I hope that the scholarship presented in this handbook will cultivate new research agendas, methods, and theories of second language pragmatics as this important field moves to its fifth decade.

Naoko Taguchi
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Pittsburgh, PA

1

Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics

An Overview

Naoko Taguchi

Both experts and lay people would agree that learning a second language (L2)[1] involves more than learning grammar and vocabulary. Learning sociocultural conventions and norms of language use—what to say or not to say in a certain situation, how to convey intentions in a contextually fitting manner, and how to achieve a communicative goal collaboratively with others—is a crucial part of becoming a competent speaker in L2. The field of L2 pragmatics addresses this fundamental yet often neglected area of L2 learning and teaching. L2 pragmatics encompasses two broader disciplines—pragmatics and second language acquisition (SLA)—which are complementary in defining the objectives and substances of the field. Pragmatics serves as a goal for L2 acquisition, and SLA provides frameworks and empirical methods to examine the process and impetus of the acquisition.

Pragmatics studies the connection between a linguistic form and a context, where that form is used, and how this connection is perceived and realized in a social interaction. Our linguistic choices (as it pertains to the use of form) are bound by several factors. Certainly, contextual factors such as settings, speakers' relationships and their roles, and topics of conversation affect our way of speaking, but our linguistic choices are also shaped by agency and consequentiality. We choose to speak in a certain way depending on the type of 'self' that we want to project (Duff, 2012; LoCastro, 2003). We are also mindful of the consequences of our linguistic behavior—how it impacts others' perceptions and reactions. These elements of pragmatics are reiterated in Crystal (1997), who defines pragmatics as 'the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication' (p. 301).

Given the intricacy involved in pragmatics, one can easily imagine that it can take a village to achieve full competency in pragmatics in L2—if it is ever possible. The challenge comes from many sources. One source is the influence coming from the first language (L1) (or any additional language in the system). Adult learners already have a foundation of pragmatic knowledge in L1 when they come to learn L2. Hence, they need to develop processing control over pre-existing pragmatic representations while re-learning new connections between linguistic forms and the social contexts in which they occur in L2 (Bialystok, 1993). Knowledge of how to express social and interpersonal concepts like politeness, formality, or solidarity in L1 does not directly transfer to L2 because linguistic expressions and strategies required in L2 are different. These concepts also vary in degrees across cultures.

Another challenge for L2 pragmatics acquisition is the sociocultural nature of pragmatics as a learning object. Because social norms and conventions of communication are not salient, it is often difficult for learners to notice what linguistic means are used to project appropriate levels of politeness or formality in a situation, or how meaning is conveyed indirectly with specific linguistic and non-linguistic means (Wolfson, 1989). Those means, and social conventions behind the means, also exhibit considerable variation even in a single community. This variable and tacit nature of forms and conventions further challenges pragmatics learning.

Finally, pragmatics involves wide-ranging dimensions that encompass linguistic and sociocultural language use, which makes learning pragmatics a challenging task. Thomas (1983) defined these dimensions in a distinction between *pragmalinguistics* and *sociopragmatics*. The former refers to linguistic resources for performing a communicative act, while the latter involves knowledge of sociocultural norms and conventions associated with the act. To become pragmatically competent, L2 learners need a range of linguistic resources, as well as the ability to evaluate contextual information, select appropriate resources, and use them efficiently in a real-time interaction. For instance, when learners want to ask someone a favor, they need to know what linguistic forms are available to convey such illocution. They also need to assess the nature and size of the favor and to whom it is directed in what occasion, as well as its likely outcomes. Learning pragmatics is taxing because of this combination of linguistic knowledge and sociocultural sensitivity required for a pragmatic act. The combination also indicates that grammar and pragmatics are distinct yet interdependent in L2 learning (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Kasper & Rose, 2002). Knowledge of formal aspects of language (e.g., grammar, lexis) does not automatically lead to better pragmatic performance, but pragmatics learning does not occur without it. Threshold linguistic knowledge is pre-requisite and serves as a means for pragmatic performance.

These observations suggest that acquisition of L2 pragmatics is a long-term process shaped by multiple interweaving factors: L1 pragmatics, L2 proficiency, knowledge of social conventions and norms, context of language use, and experience in the target community. These factors involved in pragmatics learning also inform a larger field of SLA. SLA is a multi-faceted and interdisciplinary field in which numerous factors—linguistic, psychological, and sociological—need to be examined together all at once to understand the process of L2 development and influences on the process (Gass & Mackey, 2012). As a branch of SLA, L2 pragmatics is a field that investigates the construct of pragmatics and process of acquiring the construct.

The Routledge Handbook of SLA and Pragmatics illustrates the long-standing relationship between L2 pragmatics and SLA research. The starting point of the relationship goes back to the term *interlanguage pragmatics*, which was originally coined by Kasper in the 1980s and later defined in Kasper and Dahl (1991) as L2 learners' pragmatic systems. Since this term debuted, L2 pragmatics has accumulated a critical mass of empirical findings that have enhanced our understanding of SLA from a pragmatics perspective. This handbook surveys this body of literature in six distinct areas: (1) constructs of pragmatic competence, (2) theoretical foundations, (3) research methods, (4) instruction and assessment of pragmatics, (5) contexts of learning and individual differences, and (6) L2 pragmatics in the global era. The handbook provides a critical review of the L2 pragmatics field by evaluating the existing literature, problematizing the current state, and identifying future directions.

As an introduction to the handbook, this chapter presents a historical background of the field in response to critical questions that have guided L2 pragmatics research thus far. My goal is to present an introductory overview of the field and encourage readers to leap into subsequent chapters so they can read further on the issues raised in this chapter. I will address questions in three major areas of L2 pragmatics research: construct, development, and instruction.

- *Construct*: What does it mean to be pragmatically competent? What elements are involved in the construct of pragmatic competence?

- *Development*: How does pragmatic competence develop over time? How do individual learner characteristics and contextual resources shape pragmatic development?
- *Instruction*: What is the role of instruction in pragmatic development?

In the following, I will present representative literature addressing these questions.

Background

Construct: What does it mean to be pragmatically competent? What elements are involved in the construct of pragmatic competence?

The definition of pragmatic competence has evolved over time corresponding to the changing view of L2 ability and to epistemology of the field of SLA. The early definition goes back to the theoretical models of communicative competence, which situated pragmatic competence as a fundamental component of L2 ability, distinct from grammatical, discourse, and strategic competences (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale & Swain, 1980). These models view pragmatic competence as involving two dimensions: functional and sociolinguistic knowledge. The former involves the use of proper linguistic forms for achieving a communicative function (e.g., what to say when greeting a colleague), while the latter involves understanding contextual characteristics and selecting appropriate forms to use in that context (e.g., how to greet a colleague in a business meeting vs. a roommate at a party). In these early models, pragmatic competence is postulated as the knowledge of form–function–context mappings—which forms to use for what communicative functions in what social contexts.

With a surge of discursive pragmatics (Kasper, 2006) and interactional competence (Young, 2011), the view of pragmatic competence has moved away from the one-to-one correspondence among a form, function, and context of use. It is now well accepted that the form–function–context associations are not stable or pre-existing within individuals. Rather, they are contingent upon an unfolding course of interaction and are jointly constructed among participants in discourse. The form–function–context associations also shift constantly, corresponding to changing contextual dynamics such as the speakers' attitudes, affect, and directions of discourse. Hence, ability to adapt to dynamic interaction and achieve a communicative act collaboratively with others is a fundamental aspect of pragmatic competence. Critically, with interaction as part of the construct, *pragmatic knowledge* is now understood as *interactional resources*. As Young (2011) claims, participants draw on numerous interactional resources during interaction, including register-specific linguistic forms, speech acts, topic management, turn taking, and repair. These resources are shared among participants as they co-construct a communicative act.

More recently, the field of intercultural pragmatics has expanded our understanding of pragmatics-in-interaction. Intercultural pragmatics studies how people from different cultures communicate using a common language (Kecskes, 2014, 2016). Kecskes proposed the socio-cognitive approach as a theoretical foundation. This approach combines the cognitive–philosophical perspective, which views intention as pre-existing in the speaker's mind before it is uttered, and the sociocultural-interactional perspective, which views intention as emergent and jointly constructed among participants in discourse. People draw on their own norms and expectations, but these L1 norms are negotiated and re-defined as they seek common ground during interaction. Hence, individuals' prior norms eventually develop into new, hybrid norms, creating a 'third culture that combines elements of each of the speakers' L1 cultures in novel ways' (Kecskes 2014, p. 13). These tenets of intercultural pragmatics are directly applicable to L2 pragmatics. Learners draw on their own knowledge of form–function–context associations from their L1 (or other prior experiences), but their individual-level knowledge transforms to shared knowledge with new standards of politeness, directness, and conventions emerging from interaction.

Hence, learners' willingness to suspend their own standards and seek mutual standards is a critical aspect of pragmatic competence. Also important is the skilled use of communication strategies, which directly affect the process of mutual understanding.

While interactional competence (Young, 2011) and the socio-cognitive approach (Kecskes, 2014, 2016) both capitalize on the concept of interaction to explain pragmatic competence, another concept that has recently expanded our understanding of pragmatic competence is learner agency. LoCastro (2003) defines agency as a self-defining capacity that works with volition to bring about a certain effect on or change to one's behavior. In this definition, learners are viewed as social beings with their own values, beliefs, and perceptions of the world. Following their personal principles, learners make their own linguistic choices to create social positions for themselves, even when their choices do not conform to the norms widely practiced in the local community (Ishihara & Tarone, 2009). Hence, when examining L2 pragmatic competence, it is critical to consider learners' desired social identity and how it impacts their pragmatic choices. Knowledge of the normative form–function–context associations is one thing, but deciding whether or not to actually use the knowledge with others can be a totally different matter.

In summary, the concept of pragmatic competence has evolved over time, shaping our understanding of what it means to be pragmatically competent. Given this evolving conceptualization, pragmatic competence in the current era is best understood as a multi-dimensional and multi-layered construct that involves several knowledge and skill areas: (1) linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of what forms to use in what context; (2) interactional abilities to use the knowledge in a flexible, adaptive manner corresponding to changing context; and (3) agency to make an informed decision on whether or not to implement the knowledge in the community. In the current transcultural society, pragmatic competence is often at stake in intercultural encounters where learners from different L1 backgrounds communicate using a common L2. In such a context, pragmatic competence goes beyond the traditional focus of how learners perform a pragmatic act in L2. It extends to how learners co-construct pragmatic norms with others and how they appropriate the norms.

The chapters in this handbook collectively illustrate this multiplicity of pragmatic competence. Chapters on constructs and units of analysis in L2 pragmatics present a diverse scope, including traditional constructs of speech acts, conversational implicatures, and routines, as well as more recent areas of prosody, humor, and interactional competence (Part I). Chapters on theoretical foundations also show diverse representations, ranging from cognitive theories that view pragmatic knowledge as individuals' mental representations, to socially oriented theories that situate pragmatic knowledge in an interpersonal interaction (Part II). Finally, uniform standards of pragmatic language use, as seen in the form–function–context associations, are critically discussed in chapters in the section on pragmatics in the global era, including variational pragmatics, intercultural communication, and multilingual pragmatics (Part VI).

Development: How does pragmatic competence develop over time? How do individual learner characteristics and contextual resources shape developmental trajectories?

Despite the explicit longitudinal orientation in the mainstream SLA research (Ortega & Byrnes, 2008), L2 pragmatics, particularly in its early years, has fallen short of this trend. This is because of the dominance of cross-linguistic and cross-sectional studies in the 1980s and 1990s, which focused on describing pragmatic language use rather than its development (e.g., Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). Many studies in these periods used a questionnaire-based instrument to elicit speech acts (e.g., a discourse completion test or DCT) and examined how many different speech act strategies exist in a language, whether these are direct or indirect strategies, and how they differ across languages, situations, and participant groups (e.g., L2 learners vs. native speakers). Cross-sectional studies that emerged in this trend generated insights into development by comparing learners' speech acts across different proficiency levels. The early cross-sectional practice still remains today with new target languages (e.g., Greek in Bella, 2014; Arabic in Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2014) and new constructs (e.g., argumentative discourse in Dippold, 2011; interactional competence in Galaczi, 2014).

Longitudinal studies, although still outnumbered by cross-sectional studies, started to show more prominence in the 2000s. This shift is largely owed to a series of seminal publications that underscored the paucity of longitudinal practice and encouraged researchers to explore issues in *acquisitional pragmatics* (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999, 2000; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Taguchi, 2010). According to Bardovi-Harlig (1999), acquisitional pragmatics addresses two fundamental issues: changes within the L2 pragmatics systems and influences on those systems. Longitudinal research can address both issues: It can document changes in pragmatic competence and explain those changes by examining influences—both contextual and individual—that may be related to these changes.

Several longitudinal studies have documented changes in pragmatic language use and uncovered distinct stages of development. A classic study is Ellis's (1992) investigation into two young ESL learners' classroom requests. Changes in request forms found in classroom interaction data were interpreted as belonging to one of three developmental stages: (1) A pre-basic stage where learners conveyed a request intention in a context-dependent manner; (2) A formulaic stage where learners performed requests with chunks (e.g., 'Give me that.'); and (3) An unpacking stage where formulae turned into productive language use with conventional request forms (e.g., 'Can you' + verb). Kasper and Rose (2002) later expanded these three stages into five stages of pragmatic development: (1) pre-basic, (2) formulaic, (3) unpacking, (4) expansion (entry of new forms), and (5) fine-tuning (understanding of associations among form, participants, goals, and context).

Ohta (2001), on the other hand, analyzed naturalistic interactions in Japanese classes and identified a six-stage development of Japanese acknowledgment and alignment expressions (i.e., feedback signals used to show listenership and empathy). She found that acknowledgment expressions emerged first in learners' production, followed by alignment expressions, and each expression expanded in lexical variety. In another study, Shively (2013) documented stages of humor production by analyzing an L2 Spanish learner's conversations in a study abroad program over a semester. Data revealed three changes: (1) decrease in failed humor; (2) decrease in deadpan humor (humor without contextualization); and (3) increase in humorous revoicing.

Studies using Conversation Analysis also revealed developmental stages, but unlike other studies focusing on linguistic strategies, these stages were presented from the standpoint of growing repertoire of interactional resources to create meaning. For instance, Al-Gahtani and Roever (2012) analyzed semi-naturalistic role play data to trace development of request-making in L2 Arabic over a semester. Participants increased their use of pre-expansion (explaining the reason for request), which occurred in sequence with the interlocutor's acknowledgment token. Pakarek Doehler and Berger (2017), on the other hand, examined story-openings by an L2 French learner in a home stay setting. Analysis of 20 conversations recorded over a period of eight months showed that the learner gradually expanded her interactional resources for a story launching: preparing the listener for the upcoming story; relating the story to the prior talk; and projecting the nature of the story (e.g., funny, serious).

These studies documenting distinct stages of development are rather under-represented in the longitudinal practice because most existing studies have primarily focused on documenting changes using a pre–post design, rather than revealing a staged progression over multiple datapoints. Hence, the studies described above, albeit the minority, have generated valuable insights into patterns and stages of development, which in turn shed light on SLA issues like developmental order and time scale, ultimate attainment, and variation in developmental patterns.

Although changes in pragmatic systems have been documented widely in the literature, when it comes to the other dimension of acquisitional pragmatics, i.e., influences on pragmatic systems, findings are rather limited. Existing studies are largely descriptive, and do not explain how and why certain changes occurred. When considering 'how' and 'why,' the most obvious sources of influence are individual learner characteristics and contexts of learning.

Individual characteristics have been the paramount area of SLA research (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Clément, 2016). Because learners often exhibit variation in their degrees of success in L2 acquisition, studies have strived to identify individual factors that can explain the variations and predict success in L2 learning. L2 pragmatics has followed this trend, as seen in a large body of studies that examined proficiency impact on pragmatic competence, and a smaller body of studies looking at other factors (e.g., gender, age, motivation, cognitive abilities, personality, and identity) (for a review, see Taguchi & Roever, 2017).

Given the recent surge in the social turn (Block, 2003; Firth & Wagner, 1997) and in the dynamic, complex systems approaches (e.g., de Bot, 2008; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008), it is more current to situate individual characteristics within a context where learning occurs. Indeed, the recent trend has been that, instead of treating individual characteristics as fixed and discrete variables independent from context, researchers view individual factors as interacting with each other and changing dynamically in context (Dörnyei, 2009). Hence, it is not individual characteristics *per se* that affect learning; it is a constellation of characteristics mediated by context and time that shapes learning. The interdependence between context and individuals is also seen in L2 pragmatics research. Recent studies have taken a qualitative, case study approach or mixed methods design in longitudinal investigations. These studies have documented learners' changes over time, with a conjoined analysis of individual characteristics and resources available in a learning context affecting the changes (Brown, 2013; Cook, 2008; D. Li, 2000; Diao, 2016; DuFon, 2010; Hassall, 2006; Ohta, 2001; Shively, 2011; Taguchi, 2012).

Many of these studies took place in a study abroad program or sojourn. This trend indicates that the target language community has served as a prolific environment to observe individual and contextual influences on pragmatics learning. Given the sociocultural nature of pragmatic competence, researchers consider that pragmatic development can be best observed in a target language community where learners have opportunities to observe local norms of interaction and experience real-life consequences of their pragmatic behavior. Study abroad settings involve unique participant memberships, activities, and organizations of interactions that could facilitate pragmatics learning to a greater extent than formal classroom settings.

Another common feature among these studies is their application of language socialization theory as a guiding framework (e.g., Cook, 2008; Diao, 2016; Li, 2000; DuFon, 2010; Ohta, 2001; Shively, 2011). The language socialization approach contends that linguistic knowledge and sociocultural understanding of the knowledge develop together as learners participate in routine activities (Duff & Talmy, 2011; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Socialization is characterized as a process of novices becoming competent members of a community through interaction with expert members in the community. Using observations, field notes, and analyses of interaction data, researchers have uncovered instances of explicit and implicit socialization leading to pragmatics learning. Ohta (2001), for example, showed how L2 Japanese learners were socialized into the role of empathetic listener through exposure to teacher talk demonstrating acknowledgment and alignment expressions. DuFon (2010) revealed how feedback and modeling coming from local members socialized learners into Indonesian leave-taking routines and cultural values associated with those routines. Diao (2016) analyzed conversations between L2 Chinese learners and their Chinese roommates to reveal socialization into gendered language use. These studies demonstrate a clear connection among learners, contexts, and pragmatic development. By looking at the data, we understand what kind of pragmatics learning opportunities occurred, how they occurred, and what learning outcomes were produced.

To summarize, various issues related to pragmatic development can be paraphrased in a single question: What mechanisms drive development, moving learners from their current stage to a higher stage of pragmatic competence? This question has been addressed by a line of longitudinal studies, particularly by qualitative research conducted in a naturalistic context. A number of qualitative studies performed a holistic analysis of all the elements involved in a context, revealing a reciprocal relationship between contextual affordances and learners' characteristics shaping development in a dynamic manner.

This handbook will help us evaluate the current practice of acquisitional pragmatics based on two sources of influences on changing pragmatic systems: individual learner characteristics and contexts of learning (i.e., study abroad programs, classrooms, workplaces, and technology-enhanced environments) (Part V). The theoretical foundations section reviews a range of SLA theories from the standpoint of the mechanisms driving pragmatic development (Part II). The research methods section discusses methodological options for examining pragmatic development from a variety of perspectives, including discourse analysis, conversation analysis, corpus linguistics, psycholinguistic approaches, and mixed methods approach (Part III).

Instruction: What is the role of instruction for pragmatic development?

Instructed SLA (ISLA) is a growing sub-field of SLA as it has rigorously explored how systematic manipulations of learning mechanisms and conditions can lead to the development of an additional language (Loewen & Sato, 2017). L2 pragmatics has followed this trend. Researchers have proposed theoretically grounded hypotheses and tested them systematically using empirical data (for a review, see Takahashi, 2010; Taguchi, 2015). The contribution that pragmatics has made to ISLA is in the target area of instruction. While formal aspects of linguistics (e.g., grammar and lexis) have been the primary interests in ISLA, pragmatics has offered an opportunity to examine instructional effects beyond morpho-syntax, extending to sociocultural aspects of language use. Correspondingly, instructional materials have been designed to incorporate socially oriented communicative goals—whether learners can produce intended communicative effects on others or whether they can convey interpersonal meanings such as politeness, formality, and affect.

Early studies in the 1980s and 1990s reached a consensus that pragmatics is teachable, given that instructed groups often outperformed their non-instructed counterparts (for a review, see Kasper & Rose, 1999). Studies in the next decade addressed the question of effective instruction by comparing different teaching methods for learning outcomes. By far, the comparison between explicit and implicit teaching method has dominated the field. Motivated by Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis that capitalizes on the role of consciousness and attention in learning, studies generally revealed that explicit metapragmatic explanation (e.g., information about which linguistic strategies to use when refusing someone's invitation) is more instrumental than an implicit condition that promotes learning through input exposure and consciousness-raising (e.g., identifying refusal strategies in input). More recent literature suggests that effective teaching is closely related to depth of processing (Taguchi, 2015). Studies showed that implicit teaching can be equally effective when learners are strategically guided to notice pragmatic features and process those features at a deeper level (e.g., deducing why certain refusal strategies are used in a particular situation).

In the same period, tips and guidelines for practitioners have also emerged, informing instructors how to design materials that can package key elements of pragmatics—contextual understanding, language use for communicative functions, cultural knowledge, and social interaction (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010; Tatsuki & Houck, 2010). The general consensus emerging in this literature is three-fold: instructional tasks should be designed to enhance learners' awareness and reflection of pragmatic language use, have learners engage in pragmatic-focused interaction activities, and guide learners' discovery and understanding of pragmatics-related conventions and rules (Cohen & Ishihara, 2013).

Parallel to the development in pedagogy, assessment practice has also been fortified. Traditional practices of testing—construct definition and operationalization, measurement design, validity argument, and reliability estimates—have been incorporated to develop a valid, reliable assessment battery of pragmatic competence. Hudson, Detmer, and Brown's (1995) book was the forerunner of this trend, attempting the multi-trait, multi-method approach to the assessment of pragmatic competence. The study showed how different measures (e.g., written and spoken DCTs, role plays, and multiple-choice questions) can be used to evaluate speech acts of requests, apologies, and refusals. Roever (2005) advanced the practice with technology by developing a web-based test assessing speech acts, implicature, and routines. More recently, in line with the popularity of interactional competence (Young 2011), test developers have addressed learners' ability to participate in extended discourse as an area of assessment in L2 pragmatics (Roever, Fraser & Elder, 2014; Youn, 2013; for a review, see Ross & Kasper, 2013).

In the current decade, instructed pragmatics has grown further in two distinct directions. One is the increasing diversity in the theoretical epistemology underpinning the studies. The field has moved away from the dominance of noticing hypothesis and the comparison between explicit and implicit teaching. Researchers have started to adopt different SLA theories that represent both cognitive and social camps, including input processing (VanPatten, 2015; see Takimoto, 2009 for an example study), skill acquisition theories (Anderson, 1993; see S. Li, 2012), sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; see van Compernolle, 2014), Cognition Hypothesis (Robinson, 2011; see Kim & Taguchi, 2015), and collaborative dialogue (Swain & Lapkin, 1998; see Taguchi & Kim, 2016). These theories differ in terms of how they view the mechanisms and conditions that drive learning. Studies guided by skill acquisition theories focus on the knowledge of form–function–context associations, which require initial noticing and a large amount of practice to develop. Likewise, studies under sociocultural theory and collaborative dialogue capitalize on the role of interaction assisting co-construction and emergence of pragmatic knowledge. Cognition Hypothesis, on the other hand, informs the nature of an instructional task, focusing on how task features impact learners' attention and processing of pragmatics and subsequent learning. This growing theoretical diversity has presented an array of conditions to consider when teaching pragmatics.

Another recent trend in instructed pragmatics is the increasing popularity of technology application (for a review, see Taguchi & Sykes, 2013 and Taguchi & Roever, 2017). Technology has firmly established its position in SLA research and teaching, as seen in the wide-spread use of digital media for collecting data and delivering instruction, as well as examining technology-mediated contexts (e.g., computer mediated communication or CMC, social media, and multiuser virtual environments) for L2 language use and interaction (Chapelle & Sauro, 2017; Chun, Kern, & Smith, 2016). In their seminal paper, Chun et al. (2016) contend that 'the use of technology should not be seen as panacea, or a goal in and of itself, but rather as one means to support specific learning goals' (p. 77). When considering this statement, it is apparent that technology plays a beneficial role in supporting learning goals specifically in pragmatics. The most obvious benefit is the contextualization of learning made available via technology. As Harris (2000; also cited in Chun et al.) argues, the computer is 'the most powerful contextualization device ever known because it not only integrates language with images and sound in variously manipulable configurations, but also because it links information across languages and cultures' (p. 242).

This contextualization effect of technology is most beneficial for pragmatics learning because pragmatics fundamentally draws on the context of language use. A variety of CMC tools (e.g., chat, blogs, online discussion, and video/web conferencing) can provide a platform for learners to directly interact with other language users across time and physical space (e.g., Cunningham, 2016). Digital games and virtual environments can provide an interactive, input-rich, and self-guided space where learners simulate different participant roles in diverse social settings (Sykes, 2013). In such environments, learners can directly participate in an interactional situation, rather than observing the situation as a third person. They can also experience the direct consequences of their pragmatic behavior—what impact their language use has on others and how it shapes subsequent linguistic actions. Only recently these characteristics of technology-enhanced learning, i.e., contextualized language use, interaction with consequences, autonomous learning, and experience-based learning, have been integrated into an instructional study in L2 pragmatics. Research is currently underway to examine whether these characteristics actually lead to increased pragmatic knowledge.

In summary, pedagogical issues in L2 pragmatics have diversified over time. Early investigation into the teachability of pragmatics has shifted into methods debates over effective instructional approaches and materials. This shift has been characterized by the explicit integration of mainstream SLA theories in designing instructional materials, along with a growth of the theoretical paradigms in guiding the investigation. The question of effective teaching methods has taken a new direction recently with technology as a potential for expanding traditional options of instruction.

In this handbook, the chapters on pedagogical approaches address these various recent developments in teaching pragmatics (Part IV). A meta-analysis of instructional studies presents the current landscape of methods, approaches, and findings of pragmatics teaching. An emerging trend on the application of task-based language teaching (TBLT) to instructed pragmatics is highlighted in a chapter advocating this connection (see also Taguchi & Kim, 2018). Principles and guidelines for material design and development are presented through a systematic evaluation of textbooks and pedagogical practices. Also included in this section is the chapter on pragmatics assessment, which reviews various test types (e.g., DCTs, role plays, multiple-choice items, and performance-based tasks) for reliability and validity. Chapters in the contexts of learning also discuss pedagogical issues by highlighting learning resources and opportunities available in different contexts (e.g., CMC, virtual games, classrooms, workplaces, and study abroad programs) (Part V).

Structure and Features of This Handbook

A range of research developments described above indicates that L2 pragmatics has firmly established its position as a branch of SLA. L2 pragmatics has constantly offered a window through which core issues of SLA—patterns of L2 development, and individual characteristics and contexts shaping the development—can be observed and understood. This handbook further illustrates the SLA–pragmatics interface. By presenting a critical survey of the existing literature, this handbook intends to exemplify how L2 pragmatics as a field has contributed to the accumulation of knowledge in SLA and identified areas to be taken further in future research. The handbook has several unique features as outlined below.

Depth and Scope in Coverage

This handbook strives for both scope and depth in its survey of L2 pragmatics research by reviewing literature in the following six sections:

1 Constructs and units of analysis
2 Theoretical approaches
3 Methodological approaches
4 Pedagogical approaches
5 Contextual and individual considerations
6 L2 pragmatics in the global era

These sections together represent the essential structure of the L2 pragmatics field in its entirety, and collectively define both the fundamentals and new directions of the field.

Chapters in the section on constructs (Part I) illustrate what it means to become pragmatically competent in L2 by surveying typical constructs and units of analysis in pragmatic competence. Those constructs include traditional areas of speech acts, conversational implicatures, and routines, as well as recent areas of interactional competence, humor, and prosody. The section on theoretical approaches (Part II) showcases diverse theoretical assumptions underlying pragmatic development, ranging from cognitive to social epistemologies (e.g., noticing hypothesis, skill acquisition, usage-based approaches, language socialization, sociocultural theory, and identity/agency). The section on methodology (Part III) presents an overview of data collection methods and specific research designs (e.g., mixed methods). This section also features data analysis frameworks that are relatively under-represented in L2 pragmatics research, such as corpus linguistics, systemic functional linguistics, and psycholinguistics approaches. The section on pedagogy (Part IV) includes classic areas of instructional studies, material development, and assessment, as well as more recent topics of TBLT and classroom socialization. The section on contexts and individuals (Part V) presents chapters on individual factors and contexts of learning, including typical areas of study abroad and classroom, extending to more recent areas of workplaces and technology-enhanced contexts (e.g., CMC, digital games, virtual environments). The final section on L2 pragmatics in the global era (Part VI) features recent trends by situating L2 pragmatics within the discourse of multilingualism, heritage language learning, lingua franca communication, and intercultural competence.

Across sections and chapters, this handbook aims at problematizing the current state and identifying future directions of L2 pragmatics. To achieve this goal, each chapter presents a critical survey of the existing literature and concrete suggestions on how to advance the current practice.

Theoretical, Empirical, and Practical Considerations

This handbook incorporates theoretical, empirical, and practical considerations together into the survey of L2 pragmatics research. These three dimensions are made explicit in separate sections dedicated to theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical approaches to L2 pragmatics (Parts II, III, and IV). The theoretical section addresses conceptualization of pragmatic competence and common frameworks used to investigate pragmatics learning and development. The methodological section addresses research designs, data collection measures, and data analysis methods used to investigate pragmatic competence and development. The section on pedagogy surveys instructional intervention studies and their major findings, instructional materials and tasks, and assessment practice. By presenting these three areas separately, the handbook intends to achieve a comprehensive review that appeals to both researchers and practitioners. The theory–research–pedagogy link will also help underscore the 'applied' orientation of SLA as a field.

Conceptual Diversity

This handbook promotes diversity and an interdisciplinary stance toward the field. Conceptual diversity is achieved by incorporating both orthodox L2 pragmatics topics (e.g., speech acts, implicatures, instruction, assessment, and learning pragmatics while abroad), as well as rather under-represented, emerging topics. For example, theoretical frameworks such as cognitive approaches (e.g., noticing hypothesis), language socialization, and sociocultural theory appear often in the pragmatics literature. An overview of data collection methods and Conversation Analysis are also common topics in the methods of L2 pragmatics research. In order to go beyond these revisited topics, this handbook presents other theories and methods, such as usage-based approaches, corpus linguistics, systemic functional linguistics, and psycholinguistic methods. Although existing findings in these under-represented topics are still small, inclusion of these topics will generate new interests and directions in future research.

As another attempt to increase conceptual diversity, I have incorporated new perspectives into long-standing, revisited topics. For example, instructed pragmatics has been a common topic for decades, but this handbook addresses this topic with a recent perspective of meta-analysis. New instructional paradigms are presented through chapters on classroom pragmatics socialization and TBLT. Classic topics such as speech acts and implicatures incorporate more recent orientation of interaction as centrality of pragmatic performance.

Finally, conceptual diversity is achieved by dedicating an entire section to globalization in L2 pragmatics with regard to current issues such as native speaker norms and variation, heritage learner pragmatics, intercultural competence, and multilingual pragmatics.

By covering both classic topics and recent trends, this handbook aims to appeal to a wider audience including those who are new to the field and want to have a general outlook, as well as those who are already active in the field and want to explore new agendas in L2 pragmatics research. It is my hope that this handbook cultivates interests among students, researchers, and teachers who can take a critical look at L2 pragmatics from their own terrain of activity, and identify gaps and areas to be taken further. I believe that the collective insights coming from a number of stakeholders are impetus to strengthening the field of L2 pragmatics within SLA, as both fields continue to grow in the next decade.

Note

1 In this volume, L2 refers to any additional language(s) that learners acquire including a foreign language (FL) in a formal classroom setting and target language in the context where the language is spoken. As the reviewer of this volume pointed out, I am aware that the distinction between L2 and FL is important for pragmatics learning. I opted for using ‘L2’ as a cover term in this handbook for several reasons. First, the purpose of the handbook is to illustrate the connection between pragmatics and the larger field of SLA in which ‘second language (L2)’ is used as a cover term for ‘foreign language,’ ‘target language,’ and ‘additional language.’ Second, in the current era of globalization, the distinction between L2 and FL has become blurry. Even in a traditional FL context where the target language is not an official language, people have plenty opportunities to interact with target language speakers in both face-to-face and technology-supported mediums.

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Part I

Constructs and Units of Analysis

2

Speech Acts in Interaction

Negotiating Joint Action in a Second Language

J. César Félix-Brasdefer

Introduction

Learning to communicate appropriately and effectively in a second language (L2) is part of learners' pragmatic competence, that is, the ability to comprehend and produce a variety of communicative acts in context (e.g., greeting, complimenting, and expressing agreement). From an interactional perspective, pragmatic competence concerns the dynamic and dialogic aspects of communication, with a focus on language use in social interaction (Taguchi, 2017). Pragmatic competence also involves the ability to co-construct a social action with interlocutors during interaction. This ability is part of learners' interactional competence, which involves the skillful use of linguistic and non-linguistic resources to enact a variety of social actions (for an overview of interactional competence, see Hall, Hellerman, & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; see also Chapter 7 in this volume). Drawing on the discursive pragmatics perspective (Kasper, 2006), this chapter presents key concepts of joint actions (Clark, 1996) and Conversation Analysis (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974), which can reveal the learners' ability to co-construct a social action with their interlocutors.

The chapter first describes the main tenets of speech act theory and explains how this theory can be extended to examine speech acts in extended discourse. The chapter then describes the discursive pragmatics perspective for examining speech acts in interaction and surveys the existing findings. The chapter ends with conclusions and directions for future research.

Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory was first presented in 1955 by the British philosopher John Austin at the William James Lectures at Harvard University. This theory was later published posthumously in Austin's influential book *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). Austin's ideas were further developed by the American philosopher John Searle in his seminal work *Speech Acts* (1969) and in his later works (1976, 2010). Both philosophers were concerned with the structure of utterances with respect to their meaning, use, and the action they perform. Austin proposed a three-way taxonomy of speech acts, namely locution, illocution, and perlocution. A locutionary act refers to the act of saying something meaningful, that is, the act of producing a sentence in the literal sense (referring and predicating). An illocutionary act is the act performed by saying something that has a conventional force, such as requesting, refusing, warning, and complaining.

Finally, a perlocutionary act refers to what we achieve 'by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say, surprising or misleading' (Austin, 1962, p. 109). Austin (1962) focused on the purpose of performative utterances, indicating that a speech act produced by the speaker has effects on the hearer. Searle (1969), on the other hand, focused on the intentional and conventional aspects of illocutionary acts by the speaker.

Searle (1969) further proposed a set of felicity conditions that must be met before an utterance is considered successful as a speech act. Felicity conditions involve propositional, preparatory, sincerity, and essential conditions, each highlighting a different aspect of an utterance. The propositional condition involves the meaning or textual content, such as the reference and predication of an act (e.g., the act of promising has a future reference). The preparatory condition refers to the prerequisites that must be met prior to the realization of the speech act (i.e., knowing that the person is capable of performing the requested action before making the request). The sincerity condition reflects the speaker's psychological state (i.e., being sincere about the speech act performed). Finally, the essential condition centers on the illocutionary force of an utterance (i.e., how an utterance is understood, such as classifying a request as an attempt to get the hearer to perform an action).

Searle (1976) proposed five categories of speech acts: representatives (or assertives), directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Representatives constitute assertions that carry truth value and commit the speaker to the expressed proposition (e.g., asserting, claiming, and reporting). Directives involve an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to perform an action (e.g., requesting or giving commands). Commissives create an obligation on the part of the speaker, that is, committing the speaker to performing (or not performing) a future action (e.g., promising or refusing an invitation). Expressives convey an attitude or a psychological state of the speaker (e.g., apologizing or praising). Finally, declarations are speech acts that immediately change the current state of affairs (i.e., institutionalized performatives, such as the act of declaring a marriage official).

Austin (1962) noted that the successful performance of an illocutionary act involves three conditions: securing the hearer's uptake, causing a change in the given situation, and inviting a response from the hearer. These conditions indicate that, although speech act theory primarily focuses on individual utterances rather than discourse, it provides the foundation for analyzing a speech act as a co-constructed act between the speaker and hearer (e.g., invitation–response and compliment–response sequences). First, in order to secure an uptake, the speaker must ensure that the interlocutor understands the force of an utterance. This concept serves as the basis for the analysis of speech acts in interaction because it considers both the speaker's utterance and the interlocutor's response to the utterance (e.g., A: I love your glasses; B: Thank you, I love this brand!). Second, illocutionary acts take effect by causing a change in the normal course of events. For example, after President Obama took the Oath of Office on January 20, 2009, he was no longer addressed as Senator Obama. Third, illocutionary acts typically 'invite by convention a response or a sequel' (Austin, 1962, p. 117). The response can be realized verbally and non-verbally through gestures and prosodic features (e.g., intonation). The concept of the illocutionary act suggests that speech acts are produced and interpreted in a specific manner between interlocutors.

As described above, Austin's initial conceptualization of speech acts as 'doing things with words' provides the foundation for the analysis of speech acts in interaction. Speech act theory contributes to our understanding of social actions in discourse because notions such as hearer uptake, illocutionary force, conventionality, and felicity conditions are part of social actions. These notions have been adapted to examine a wide range of speech act sequences across different languages (e.g., Barron & Schneider, 2009; Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008, 2015; Márquez-Reiter, 2000; Wierzbicka, 2003). As demonstrated in these studies, analyzing the hearer's uptake of the speaker's illocutionary force is crucial for understanding how speakers jointly construct a speech act.

A Discursive Perspective to Speech Acts

Streeck (1980) and Edmonson (1981) were the first researchers to observe that speech acts are not the result of a single utterance; instead, they are the result of a negotiation, a cooperative achievement, and a conversational outcome among speakers. Streeck focused on the speaker's use of sequential resources to express illocutionary force. The author noted that '[t]he performance of speech acts is an activity by which participants in interaction construct a social context within which they exchange verbal messages' (p. 134). In order to examine speech acts in interaction, one must go beyond the analysis of individual utterances alone and consider their placement and sequential order in conversation, as well as their communicative functions and their uptake by the hearer. The term 'speech act sequence' was introduced by van Dijk (1979, 1980) as an extension of Austin and Searle's speech act theory to account for the function of speech acts in interaction. It is used as an umbrella term to refer to speech acts performed by one speaker or negotiated among speakers across turns (Félix-Brasdefer, 2014).

In the following section I review fundamental concepts and methods for examining speech acts in interaction. Those concepts and methods come from Conversation Analysis (CA) (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 2007) and the concept of language use in social action (Clark, 1996).

Conversation Analysis: A Micro-analytic Talk-in-Interaction Perspective

Conversation Analysis (CA) offers a rigorous methodological framework for analyzing the sequential organization of discourse (e.g., conversation openings and closings) (Sacks et al., 1974) (see Chapter 15 in this volume for an in-depth discussion of CA). CA concerns how participants co-construct communicative actions (e.g., request–response, invitation–refusal, compliment–response) sequentially turn-by-turn, and how they design their turns to jointly construct actions with their interlocutor. In conversation analytic research, the adjacency pair (e.g., compliment–compliment response) serves as a basic unit of sequential and action organization in conversation. Turns are comprised of turn-constructional units (TCUs) that perform a specific action such as agreeing, disagreeing, or offering an opinion. Transition to a next speaker may typically occur at a transition-relevance place (TRP). A TRP represents a possible completion of a turn (e.g., where a next speaker may take a turn at talk) and indicates the place where the current speaker signals impending completion of the TCU-in-progress to a next speaker (Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 2007).

Although the use of authentic data is one of the central assumptions of CA, CA has been extended to L2 pragmatics research that often uses elicited interactional data (e.g., see Taleghani-Nikazm & Huth, 2010, for elicited conversations; for role-plays, see Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2012, and Félix-Brasdefer, 2006). Kasper and Wagner (2014) emphasize the value of 'applied CA,' which involves 'the application of basic CA's principles, methods, and findings to the study of social domains and practices that are interactionally constituted' (p. 171). Unlike basic CA, which analyzes naturalistic conversations to uncover the tacit principles enacted by participants to co-construct actions turn-by-turn, applied CA does not require a conversation to be naturally-occurring. Applied CA allows the use of CA analytic tools to examine interactional data in controlled settings. For example, CA has been used to examine different aspects of interaction in role-plays conducted as part of an oral proficiency interview (cf. Ross & Kasper, 2013). The aspects analyzed using CA include repair sequences, sequence construction, the organization of turn-taking, and topic selection (Kasper, 2013; Seedhouse, 2013; Tominaga, 2013). Kasper and Wagner (2014) argue that 'applied linguistics offers a corrective to classic CA's entrenched monolingualism, a limitation that CA shares with most social sciences outside of linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics' (p. 200).

Thus, applied linguists researching L2 pragmatics have adapted CA principles and methods to analyze the sequential organization of social action using elicited interactional data in a variety of L2 contexts.

Joint Actions and Language Use

Adopting a conversation as the basic unit of analysis, Clark (1996) offers a discursive approach to the analysis of language use in social interaction. Clark's approach emphasizes two concepts: joint activities and joint actions. Following Levinson's (1992) notion of 'activity type,' Clark employs the concept of 'joint activity' to refer to a social action that is coordinated among participants (e.g., calling a friend to plan a party, asking a professor to write a letter of recommendation, or buying something at a supermarket). The joint activity includes the entire interaction, that is, initiating, carrying out, and ending the social action. Clark proposes three criteria that determine a joint activity: the setting (e.g., an information center, a professor's office, or the supermarket), the participants' roles (e.g., clerk–customer, student–professor, or service-provider–service-seeker), and the participants' contributions to each activity (e.g., the rights and obligations of the interlocutors during the interaction). For example, at the supermarket, the vendor can initiate the transaction (e.g., 'Hello, can I help you?'), the customer has the right to request service, and the vendor has the responsibility to provide the service. A joint activity involves joint actions, which Clark defines as an action 'carried out by an ensemble of people acting in coordination with each other' (p. 3). Joint actions include those that are coordinated sequentially across turns. A joint action is a sequence that comprises two actions organized as an adjacency pair (e.g., invitation–response). Joint actions require participants to coordinate their respective actions, which essentially form speech act sequences. The coordination of joint actions and goals among participants is part of a joint activity. Hence, Clark adopts an extended version of speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) and key methodological concepts of CA (Sacks et al*.,* 1974) to examine communicative acts performed by participants engaging in joint action.

The discursive-pragmatics perspective focuses on language use in social interaction to illustrate how speech acts are negotiated at the discourse level. It adopts key concepts of CA (e.g., adjacency pairs, turn taking, topic change, repair, and preference organization), as well as the notions of joint action (e.g., a greeting exchange and invitation–response sequence) and joint activity (e.g., scheduling a meeting with an advisor). The pragmatic-discursive perspective helps us analyze speech acts in interaction in a range of interactional settings, including face-to-face and online communication (e.g., González-Lloret, 2016; Kim & Brown, 2014).

Speech Acts in Interaction: Survey of Empirical Findings

Drawing on the discursive-pragmatics perspective, this section surveys existing studies to illustrate how speech acts can be analyzed in L2 interaction. I will focus on two areas of speech acts where findings are currently concentrated: directives (requests and direction-giving) and dispreferred responses (disagreements and refusals).

Collaborative Construction of the Directive Speech Act

According to Searle (1976), directives are defined as 'speech acts that are attempts of the speaker to get the hearer to do something' (p. 11). Requests and locative directives (giving directions) belong to this category. In a request, the speaker makes an attempt to get the hearer to do something (e.g., 'Can you pass me the salt?'). In a locative directive, the direction-giver makes an attempt to get the direction-seeker to follow certain directions to arrive at a destination (e.g., 'First, walk two blocks, then turn left at the traffic light.').

Request Sequences

Request is the most examined speech act in L2 pragmatics research. A number of studies have examined this speech act, ranging from single-moment studies using a cross-sectional design to developmental studies using a longitudinal design. Although the majority of studies have focused on the analysis of the request head act (i.e., the core utterance that conveys the illocutionary force of request), recent studies have analyzed how learners and native speakers negotiate request sequences at the discourse level. This is illustrated in Example (1) from the author's own data. This is a conversation between a 12-year-old American boy (Gabriel) and a shop assistant at a grocery store in Spain. Gabriel went to the store with his parents and interacted with a female vendor. (↑ indicates final rising intonation; two or more colons [:::] signal elongation of the syllable; V = 'you-formal'; T = 'you-informal')

(1)

1	Gabriel:	*Buenas tardes* (Good afternoon.)
2	Vendor:	*buenas tardes, guapetón* (Good afternoon, handsome.)
3	Gabriel:	*¿tiene leche?* (Do you^{V} have milk?)
4	Vendor:	*leche semi↑, entera↑* (Low-fat, whole.)
5	Gabriel:	*ah, semi* (Um, low-fat.)
6	Vendor:	*semi↑* (Low-fat.)
7		((delivers product))
8	Vendor:	*mira los donus, tengo de oferta los donus,*
9		*dos en un euro, ¿te doy donu*? (Look^{T} at the donuts. I have donuts on sale, two for one euro, do you want donuts?)
10	Gabriel:	((points to a different pastry))
11	Vendor:	*o:::h, ese, está buenísimo ese, con chocolate* (o:::h, that one, that one's really good, with chocolate.)
12	Father:	*¿quieres ese? Pídelo* (Do you^{T} want that one? Ask^{T} for it.)
13	Mother:	*¿cuál quieres, hijo?* (Which one do you^{T} want, son?)
14	Vendor:	*¿de almendrita o de chocolate?* (Almond or chocolate?)
15	Gabriel:	*uno y uno* (one of each.)
16	Vendor:	*uno y uno↑* (one of each.)
17	Gabriel:	*no, quiero este* ((points to a different pastry)) (No, I want this one.)
18	Gabriel:	*vale, gracias* (okay, thanks.) ((receives product))
19		((payment))
20	Vendor:	*de nada, cariño* (You're welcome, dear.)

In this excerpt, Gabriel opens the transaction with a greeting followed by the vendor's response (lines 1–2). He then issues the request for service in the form of an interrogative, which is interpreted as a request for action, followed by the vendor's response asking what kind of milk he wants, low-fat or whole (lines 3–4). Gabriel responds, and the transaction is completed successfully (lines 5–7). Then, the vendor initiates another speech act sequence by offering donuts (lines 8–9). Gabriel refuses the offer by pointing to a different pastry, which is followed by the vendor's acknowledgment (lines 10–11). After Gabriel's parents ask him to choose one (lines 12–13), the vendor issues another question with two options (line 14), which is followed by Gabriel's response ('one of each') (line 15). Upon the vendor's confirmation with final rising intonation (↑, line 16), Gabriel responds by pointing to a different pastry (*No, quiero este* 'No, I want this one', line 17). The transaction ends successfully with a closing sequence. This example shows the learner's ability to negotiate a request for service in the target culture by means of verbal and non-verbal resources to get his message across during the sales transaction.

This type of request negotiation sequence has been documented in existing studies. Using data from telephone calls to an airline company in South Korea, Lee (2009) showed that extended request sequences between a service-provider and a service-seeker (native speakers of Korean) were frequent during the negotiation of service; that is, the action of requesting was extended over several sequences and co-constructed over turns. Hence, the content of the requests was the result of a joint construction between the speakers. Shively (2011), on the other hand, analyzed L2 Spanish learners' service encounter interactions in a local community in Spain. She found that, by the end of their semester abroad, the learners developed the ability to use appropriate greeting and closing sequences in their service-encounter requests. They also became able to negotiate requests for service with their service providers over extended discourse using insert-expansions (embedding an adjacency pair within an adjacency pair).

Unlike these studies using naturalistic data, Al-Gahtani and Roever's (2012) cross-sectional study used elicited data (via role-play) to examine request sequences in L2 English. The study demonstrated the usefulness of applied CA in revealing L2 learners' speech act development in extended discourse. A notable difference across proficiency levels was found in the learners' use of pre-expansions, which include 'preliminaries' or sequences preceding the request (e.g., 'Could you do me a favor?') (Schegloff, 2007). Lower-proficiency learners (beginners) did not use pre-expansions to preface the request, whereas upper-proficiency counterparts (upper-intermediate and advanced) were able to open the interaction with a greeting sequence and used other forms of pre-expansion such as accounts and justifications for request.

The same pattern was observed in the use of post-expansions. Post-expansions are sequences that follow an adjacency pair (e.g., request–acceptance/refusal). When the second pair part is a dispreferred action (e.g., a refusal after a request), post-expansions often occur (e.g., asking for a reason for refusal). Upper-proficiency learners showed a tendency of using longer post-expansions in requests. They frequently used a combination of two insert-expansions that promoted elaboration of the initial request (i.e., two question–response sequences following the initial request). In contrast, lower-proficiency learners accepted the request without adding a complication that could trigger post-expansions.

Another study using applied CA with role-play data is Su and Ren's (2017) study that examined requests among L2 Chinese learners of different proficiency levels. They found that higher-level learners delayed the provision of the request head act and sequenced their requests across turns using both insert- and post-expansions. In contrast, lower-level learners delayed their requests within the head act and barely used insert- and post-expansions. Hence, learners' ability to sequence their requests with insert- and post-expansions increased with proficiency.

Direction-Giving Interactions

Using a face-to-face direction-giving task, Lee (2014, 2017) examined the sequential structure of direction-giving interactions. Participants were learners of L2 English and L2 Korean of different proficiency levels in a U.S. university. Direction-giving interactions include four phases: initiation, route description, securing, and closing. Lee analyzed the direction-giving exchanges for the sequential organization of turns (pre-direction-giving, insert- and post-expansion sequences) and semantic formulas (directives, descriptions, and adjuncts). She found that the beginning-level learners relied on bare imperatives and repetition when giving directions. In contrast, the higher-level learners elaborated route descriptions in three ways: They established common ground with the interlocutor through pre-direction-giving utterances in the form of preliminaries (e.g., ‘Do you know the campus?’); they used a greater number of descriptions (e.g., ‘The Medical School will be on your right.’); and they organized direction sequences within and across turns by using a wide range of pragmalinguistic resources.

Example (2) taken from Lee’s (2014) study shows how a higher-proficiency L2 English learner (Anyu, pseudonym) co-constructed direction-giving sequences with a native speaker of English (Nora, pseudonym) in a role-play task (pp. 229–230).

(2)

1 Nora: Excuse me. I’m from out of town. And I’m not sure how to go from this room.
2 I’m trying to get to the Health Center. Can you give me some directions?
3 Anyu: Ah: now we’re in the Goodbody Hall.
4 Nora: Okay. Goodbody Hall.
5 Anyu: Yeah uh: so (2.0) Health Center is in the cross in the cross.
6 Nora: the intersection?
7 Anyu: Yeah
8 Nora: Okay
9 Anyu: And it’s behind is the main library.
10 Nora: Okay
11 Anyu: It’s a big library.
12 Nora: Okay
13 Anyu: Many students in the college.
14 Uh:Now you you’ll take out the door. And the door and turn right.

This exchange illustrates how speech acts (i.e., asking for and giving directions) are co-constructed between the learner and the native speaker interlocutor. After Nora asks for directions (lines 1–2), Anyu states the current location (pre-direction-giving), which is followed by agreement from the interlocutor (lines 3–4). In the next turn, he does not give directions immediately, but inserts multiple parenthetical comments that describe the destination location (pre-direction-giving sequences) and features of the destination in line 5 (‘Health Center is in the cross in the cross.’), line 9 (‘And it’s behind is the main library.’), line 11 (‘It’s a big library.’), and line 13 (‘Many students in the college.’). Nora acknowledges the pre-direction-giving utterances with the agreement marker ‘okay’ in lines 4, 8, 10, and 12. After multiple pre-direction-giving utterances, Anyu initiates the second pair part of a direction-giving sequence (route descriptions) in line 14. Lee (2014) found that, as proficiency increased, learners produced a greater number of pre-direction-giving sequences. For example, upper-level learners produced destination repeats and orientation checks as part of pre-direction-giving sequences, which resulted in an extended pre-direction-giving interaction. They also produced more elaborate pre-direction-giving turns prior to the route description phase. In contrast, lower-level learners relied on simple imperatives and one-turn sequences.

Dispreferred Responses: Disagreement and Refusal Sequences

Several studies analyzed the sequential structure of dispreferred responses in L2. Some actions are designed as preferred (e.g., agreement and acceptance), whereas others are designed as dispreferred (e.g., disagreement and refusal) (see, e.g., Schegloff, 2007). A dispreferred response is generally signaled by hesitations, delays, mitigations, and various preliminary moves to preface the dispreferred social act. Previous studies revealed how L2 learners use various interactional resources to organize dispreferred social actions.

Disagreement Sequences

Bardovi-Harlig and Salsbury (2004) examined disagreement sequences that were realized across multiple turns in native and nonnative speakers' (L2 English learners) discussions over controversial topics. Over time, the learners' disagreement changed from a one-turn sequence (i.e., strong disagreement), to a more complex disagreement sequence (i.e., postponement of disagreement across multiple turns, inclusion of agreement components in disagreement, and postponement of disagreement components within a turn).

Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger's (2011) study also revealed disagreement sequences in L2. Using videotaped classroom interaction data, disagreements were analyzed among L2 French learners at two proficiency levels: lower-intermediate students in a secondary school (13–14 years old) and advanced-level students in a high school (17–18 years old). Lower-intermediate learners showed exclusive use of turn-initial immediate disagreement and did not use linguistic hedges to soften the disagreement (e.g., 'I think'). They relied on one-turn disagreements and did not produce sequential elaborations of disagreements; that is, their disagreements were not preceded by accounts, explanations, or other elements that could reinforce the stance taken by the speaker. In contrast, advanced-level learners employed diverse strategies to negotiate the disagreement. For example, they used turn-initial disagreements and delayed disagreements with a token agreement (e.g., 'Yes, but …') and avoided the initial-turn disagreement. They also organized a refusal in a conversational sequence by using hedges and syntactically complex disagreement sentences.

Refusal Sequences

Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford's (1993) classic study revealed how L2 English learners in a U.S. university developed their ability to appropriately refuse an advisor's suggestion for course selections during academic consultation. Over time, the learners became familiar with the rules of academic advising sessions by offering fewer rejections, more suggestions, and more justifications to appropriately preface the rejection without offending the advisor. The learners also asked questions and provided appropriate reasons to reject the advisor's suggestion (e.g., having already taken equivalent courses), which led to the advisor's acceptance of the rejection.

Analyzing role-play interactions, Al-Gahtani and Roever (2018) illustrated the sequential structure of L2 English refusals. The study involved L2 English groups in three proficiency levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. The beginning-level group showed emerging interactional competence, as seen in their infrequent use of the agreement marker 'OK' followed by 'but' ('OK, but …') and frequent use of direct and unmitigated refusals. In contrast, the intermediate-level group used a conventional agreement marker followed by 'but' ('yes, but …'). They also used preliminaries (e.g., pre-accounts) and insert-expansions to further delay the refusal. Advanced-level learners were more recipient-focused and used a greater combination of various resources to organize the dispreferred nature of the refusal.

Using Gass and Houck's (1999) interactional model of refusal trajectories, Su's (2017) dissertation work analyzed the sequential structure of refusals among L2 learners of Chinese in a U.S. university. Learners at different proficiency levels (determined via test and institutional status) completed role-plays involving refusal scenarios, and then participated in retrospective verbal interviews. Results showed that lower-level learners focused on understanding the content of the scenarios in order to complete the refusal, while advanced-level learners attended to contextual variables in the scenarios more closely (e.g., cost of the refusal or interlocutors' power relationship). The advanced-level learners also produced longer refusal sequences over multiple turns. Particularly notable among the advanced-level learners was their use of a combination of various semantic formulas placed across turns.

Example (3) illustrates an invitation–refusal interaction between a native speaker of Chinese (I: Instructor) and a low-intermediate learner of Chinese (Jenna, pseudonym) (Su, 2017, pp. 114–115). The interaction involves three sequences: invitation–refusal response (lines 1–7); request for justification–response (lines 8–10); insistence–response (lines 11–13); and closing (lines 14–17).

(3)

01 I: *Xiao Hu, kuai guo zhongqiu jie le*
‘Xiao Hu, the Mid-Autumn Festival is coming soon.’
02 *Wo qing ban shang de tongxue xingqiwu de wanshang*
‘I invite the students this Friday evening’
03 *dao wo jia lai wan-er*
‘to my house for a party’
04 *Ni keyi lai ma?*
‘Can you come?’
05 Jenna: *Duibuqi, laoshi*
‘I’m sorry, professor.’
06 *Wo bu keyi lai.*
‘I won’t be able to come (go)’
07 I: (.3)
08 *Wei shenme?*
‘Why?’
09 Jenna: *Yinwei zhe ge xingqiwu, wo you gongzuo*
‘Because I need to work this Friday’
10 *Wo you hen duo gongzuo*
‘I have a lot of work to do’
11 I: *A::, ni you hen duo gongzuo, yao jiaban-er ma?*
‘Ah, you have a lot of work. Are you gonna work extra hours?’
12 Jenna: *En, suoyi wo yao zuowan wo de gongzuo*
‘Yes, so I need to finish my work’
13 I: *A::, na hao ba, na hao ba*
‘OK, then’
14 *Yihou ban limian ruguo you huodong dehua,*
‘If there are other activities in our class in the future’
15 *xiwang ni neng lai canjia*
‘I hope you can come and participate’
16 *Xia ci xiwang ni neng lai canjia.*
‘I hope you can come next time’
17 Jenna: *Wo juede xia ci wo keyi, canjia ni de wanhui.*
‘I think I can come to your party next time.’

Jenna (the learner) prefaced the direct refusal (‘I won’t be able to come.’) with an apology (‘I’m sorry, professor’) (lines 5–6). However, she did not provide an explanation for her refusal until she was asked why (line 8). Jenna restated her explanation (line 12), which prompted her interlocutor to accept the refusal (lines 13). As this example illustrates, according to Su, low-intermediate learners’ refusals are characterized by a lack of post-sequences, elaboration of the refusal sequences, and mitigating devices to soften the refusal. In contrast, advanced learners employed a greater number of downgraders and upgraders than lower-level learners in all role-play scenarios, and they also delayed the refusal of the invitation over multiple turns.

These findings highlight advanced-level learners' ability to deploy their interactional resources to negotiate a refusal response in extended discourse and organize a refusal sequence, which is co-constructed with their interlocutors over multiple turns.

Conclusion and Future Directions

This chapter demonstrated how speech acts are accomplished through actions that learners co-construct with their interlocutors during interaction. Speech acts in interaction represent a collaborative effort among interlocutors who use their interactional resources to construct a social action in extended discourse. The discursive-pragmatics approach can reveal L2 learners' use of interactional resources in various aspects of discourse, including sequential organization, turn-taking, projection of dispreferred responses, and the use of repair. Studies surveyed in this chapter demonstrate that L2 speech act development can be observed through learners' use of these interactional resources in a variety of contexts, including formal classrooms and study abroad settings (for a review, see Félix-Brasdefer, 2017; Félix-Brasdefer & Koike, 2014; Taguchi, 2017). Negotiation of speech acts occurs when learners engage in social interaction, which, in turn, leads to the development of their pragmatic skills over time.

One tendency found in the literature is that learners' abilities to co-construct speech acts in interaction are influenced by their general proficiency. Existing cross-sectional studies compared learners across different proficiency levels in the negotiation of requests (Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2012), direction-giving interactions (Lee, 2017), and dispreferred responses such as refusals (Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2018; Su, 2017; Su & Ren, 2017) and disagreements (Pekarek Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2011). These studies found that lower-proficiency leaners often rely on simple and direct requests through minimal use of request–response adjacency pairs and tend to overuse unmitigated and direct refusals. Lower-proficiency learners' speech acts also tend to lack preliminaries (e.g., pre-requests, pre-refusals) and post-expansions (e.g., requests for additional information, other-initiated repair sequences). In contrast, higher-proficiency learners tend to use a combination of preliminaries and post-expansions, and exhibit more sophisticated abilities to use turn-taking mechanisms and a broader range of speech act formats across turns (Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2012; Su, 2017). These findings indicate that, as proficiency increases, learners become able to monitor the unfolding course of discourse and respond to the interlocutor's contributions in appropriate timing turn-by-turn. With proficiency, learners become able to use a variety of linguistic and interactional resources skillfully to jointly construct a speech act with their interlocutors.

These findings point to the importance of analyzing interactional data to reveal speech act development and the need to further explore methodological options for such analysis. As demonstrated in this chapter 'applied CA' is one methodological option. Applied CA permits the use of elicited data to analyze the realization of speech acts in interaction. Although using naturalistic data adds to ecology validity, using data-elicitation tasks with an interactional focus can serve as a practical method to examine speech acts in interaction. Role-plays are particularly useful in this regard. Al-Gahtani and Roever (2012) contend that 'role-plays allow a decent degree of standardization while eliciting extended interactive data' (p. 44). Félix-Brasdefer (2018a) offers a comprehensive account of the role-play method for the analysis of spoken interaction. The author presents five main role-play varieties that can be used to examine speech acts in interaction: (1) the archetypal role-play (participants take on social roles based on their previous experience); (2) the role-enactment approach (participants perform a role that is part of their real life); (3) the naturalized role-play (participants encounter a distracting task when performing a role-play); (4) the simulated role-play task (participants take on roles that are familiar to them); and (5) the OPI role-play (a component of the oral proficiency interview). These different types of role-play can be useful for eliciting extended discourse around speech acts.

Another future direction relates to longitudinal investigation of speech acts in interaction. Except for a few studies (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & Salsbury, 2004; Shively, 2011), most studies surveyed in this chapter used cross-sectional design by comparing learners' interactions across different proficiency levels (e.g., Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2012, 2018; Sue & Ren, 2017). In these studies, any group-level differences found in learners' performance are attributed to changes that learners exhibit at different stages of their development. However, claims about development are most meaningfully interpreted in a longitudinal design by tracing changes in the same participants over time. More longitudinal studies are necessary in the future to test the generalizability of the findings found in cross-sectional studies. For example, studies showed that more advanced learners' requests were characterized by greater use of pre-/post-expansions and a prolonged turn-taking with insert-expansions. Future longitudinal research can examine whether these patterns emerge at a later point of development in L2 learners (for a sample longitudinal study, see Al-Ghatani & Roever, 2015).

Finally, the discursive-pragmatics approach can be incorporated into instructional materials so that we can teach learners how to sequence speech acts in extended discourse. Research has shown that explicit instruction is effective in promoting learners' pragmatic competence (cf. Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman, & Vellenga, 2015; Taguchi, 2015). Instructors can design materials that can direct learners' attention to various conversational moves and sequences, such as openings and closings, pre- and post-expansions, and insertion sequences. Using authentic conversations as input, instructors can show learners how head acts (e.g., request-making forms) and external modification devices co-occur and are sequenced over turns. Instructors can also use awareness-raising activities (e.g., analysis of how speech acts are realized), explicit metapragmatic information, and communicative practice (e.g., role-play). For example, Hasler-Barker (2016) showed that learners who received explicit metapragmatic instruction and communicative practice became able to produce expanded compliment responses in Spanish. Similarly, Huth (2010) presented materials for teaching the sequential structure of German requests in extended discourse (e.g., explicit information on request pre-sequences, discussion, role-play, and conversational tasks).

Instructors can also provide learners with opportunities to use their interactional resources to negotiate meaning with others. Félix-Brasdefer's (2018b) website provides a variety of role-play tasks that can supply those opportunities (https://pragmatics.indiana.edu/teaching/refusals-english.html). Other tasks are found in online intercultural communication on Reddit (Glide, 2015), in elicited conversations (Félix-Brasdefer & Lavin, 2007) and open role-plays (Félix-Brasdefer, 2018a). These tasks can generate opportunities for L2 learners to negotiate meaning, which could lead to skillful co-construction of speech acts in extended discourse.

Further reading

Al-Gahtani, S., & Roever, C. (2018). Proficiency and preference organization in second language refusals. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *129*, 140–153.

Using a role-play task, this study examined the development of L2 English learners' interactional competence to sequence their refusals at three proficiency levels (i.e., beginner, intermediate, and advanced). L2 refusal performance was compared to that of native speakers in comparable role-play situations. Differences were observed with regard to how each learner group deployed interactional resources to produce a refusal, specifically presence or absence of preliminaries (e.g., pre-announcements, pauses), delays, or insert-expansions in a refusal sequence. This study underscores the effect of language proficiency on learners' ability to employ interactional resources to mark a refusal as a dispreferred action.

Hasler-Barker, M. (2016). Effects of metapragmatic instruction on the production of compliments and compliment responses: Learner-learner role play in the foreign language classroom. In K. Bardovi-Harlig & J. C. Félix-Brasdefer (Eds.), *Pragmatics and language learning*, *Vol. 14* (pp. 125–152). Manoa, HI: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, University of Hawai'i.

This study examined the effects of instruction on the development of L2 Spanish compliment–compliment responses. Three treatment conditions were involved (explicit instruction, implicit instruction, and control), and the development was assessed with a role-play task. The instructional treatment included awareness raising activities, cross-cultural comparisons, form-focused instruction, and analysis of authentic language samples. Role-play data were analyzed for pragmalinguistic strategies for compliments and compliment responses (frequency and distribution of the strategies) and sequential organization of these speech acts. The sequential analysis revealed that learners who received explicit metapragmatic instruction produced expanded compliment responses in both the immediate and delayed post-tests. The study concludes with the pedagogical implications of teaching these speech acts in interaction.

Kasper, G. (2006). Speech acts in interaction: Towards discursive pragmatics. In K. Bardovi-Harlig, C. Félix-Brasdefer, & A. Omar (Eds.), *Pragmatics and language learning*, *Vol. 11* (pp. 281–314). Manoa, HI: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, University of Hawai‘i.

This article takes a discursive approach to examining speech acts in social action. In particular, it presents how CA can be applied to analyze speech acts. The author provides a critical appraisal of central notions in pragmatics—action, meaning, and context—for the analysis of language use in interaction. Each concept is reviewed from different perspectives and theoretical backgrounds, including Searle's (1969) speech act theory and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. The author offers an incisive review of existing models of meaning and the notion of context (and contexts) for the analysis of social action from a CA perspective.

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3

Implicature Comprehension in L2 Pragmatics Research

Naoko Taguchi and Shota Yamaguchi

Introduction

Grice (1975) coined the term *conversational implicature*, referring to non-literal meanings that people infer based on the assumption of relevance and contextual information. Since then, implicature has been the critical concept of pragmatics theories that explain principles and mechanisms of human communication. As Morris (1938) originally claimed, syntax and semantics are concerned about the formal structure of an utterance and utterance-level meaning, whereas pragmatics is concerned about what the speaker means by the utterance. Implicature clearly illustrates the connection among syntax, semantics, and pragmatics because it represents a relationship between utterance meaning, or the literal sense of an utterance, and force, or the speaker's intention behind the utterance (Thomas, 1995).

Theories in the field of pragmatics situate the recognition of the speaker's intention as the primary goal of communication. This chapter reviews three pragmatics theories that explain the mechanisms behind the recognition of intention: Grice's (1975) maxims of conversation, Sperber and Wilson's (1995) Relevance Theory, and Kecskes's (2014) socio-cognitive approach. The chapter first discusses these theories focusing on their assumptions about how speaker intention is recognized and understood. Then, we illustrate how these theories have informed SLA research as we investigate the development of implicature comprehension. Empirical findings are reviewed in terms of common patterns and generalizations that emerge from the existing findings. The findings are also discussed critically in terms of how research foci and methods are essentially shaped by the theoretical frameworks. Based on the limitations identified in the literature, the chapter concludes with directions for future research.

Grice's Conversational Maxims in L2 Comprehension of Implicature

Maxims of Conversation

Grice (1975) claimed that a conversation is built upon four maxims that participants follow: quantity, quality, manner, and relevance. The maxim of quantity tells us not to say too much or too little, while the quality maxim tells us to be truthful and not to lie. The manner maxim is about being orderly and avoiding ambiguity, while the relevance maxim means making a relevant contribution to the conversation in progress. These maxims function as a set of rules for communication, guiding how we understand meaning. When the speaker produces an utterance, the listener understands that the message is relevant to the ongoing discourse and draws the most plausible interpretation of the utterance. For example, when someone is late for a meeting, the utterance 'You're always on time' flouts the maxim of quality because it contradicts with the reality. Still, the listener understands the speaker's underlying intention and interprets the utterance as sarcasm, which purposefully disregards the maxim to produce humorous effects.

These maxims of conversation can explain how we understand implicature. During conversation, we assume that each participant is making an appropriate contribution in a way that suits the direction of the conversation. Based on this assumption, we seek the most relevant interpretation of an utterance (the speaker's true intention), even when the utterance seemingly deviates from the preceding discourse or context of communication.

Maxims of Conversation in L2 Implicature Comprehension Research

Adapting Grice's paradigm, previous studies investigated L2 comprehension of implicature (see also Chapter 32 in this volume). Some studies made an explicit reference to Grice's maxims by comparing comprehension across different implicature types (e.g., relevance-based implicature, scalar implicature) (Bouton, 1992, 1994, 1999; Roever, 2005; Roever, Wang, & Brophy, 2014). Other studies focused on speech acts by comparing comprehension between direct and indirect speech act utterances (Carrell 1984; Cook & Liddicoat, 2002; Garcia, 2004; Koike, 1996; Yamanaka, 2003). Still others focused on irony, which often presents the greatest deviation from the literal meaning (saying the opposite of what is intended) (Shively, Menke, & Manzón-Omundson, 2008; Yamanaka, 2003). Most studies used a reading instrument, having L2 learners read a dialogue or a sentence and then respond to a multiple-choice question to assess comprehension. Exceptions are Garcia's (2004) study that used audio input in a listening test, and Yamanaka (2003) and Shively et al.'s (2008) studies using video clips.

One generalization that emerged from these studies is that general proficiency has a strong effect on comprehension. Cross-sectional studies found that higher-proficiency learners outperformed their lower-proficiency counterparts on comprehension of implicature and indirect speech acts (Cook & Liddicoat, 2002; Garcia, 2004). Similar results were found in comprehension of irony (Shively et al., 2008; Yamanaka, 2003). High-proficiency learners were able to detect a clear difference between the utterance meaning and the context, and recognize the ironic intention behind the utterance, while low-proficiency learners comprehended ironic comments literally (Shively et al., 2008; Yamanaka, 2003). Studies using regression analyses revealed a main effect of proficiency on implicature comprehension, overriding other factors such as gender and target language exposure (Roever et al., 2014). Longitudinal studies also found that learners' comprehension developed naturally as their proficiency matured over time (Bouton, 1992, 1999).

The proficiency impact found in these studies tells us that comprehension of implicature is built on threshold L2 knowledge and abilities. To infer non-literal meaning, learners draw on their linguistic resources (e.g., grammar and vocabulary), as well as general skills of reading and listening. Unless there are other salient cues that assist comprehension, understanding utterance-level meaning is prerequisite to implicature comprehension. Detecting maxim-flouting might be difficult for lower-proficiency learners because, due to their limited linguistic knowledge and skills, they have difficulty comprehending the utterance-level meaning. In contrast, advanced-level learners have sufficient linguistic resources, which help them comprehend utterance-level meaning and further explore meaning behind the utterance.

The proficiency impact is most evident in the wider range of indirectness that high-proficiency learners can handle, which, in turn, informs SLA issues such as developmental order and ultimate attainment in implicature comprehension (see also Taguchi, 2018). Using a cross-sectional design, Yamanaka (2003) assessed L2 English learners' comprehension of irony, negative evaluation, parody, and rhetorical question. Low-proficiency learners struggled with irony, but high-proficiency learners did not. Cook and Liddicoat (2002), on the other hand, assessed L2 English learners' comprehension of requests at three directness levels: direct (e.g., Pass me the salt.), conventional indirect (e.g., Can you pass me the salt?), and non-conventional indirect (e.g., The meat is a bit bland.). Both conventional and non-conventional indirect requests were difficult for low-proficiency learners, but high-proficiency learners were able to comprehend conventional indirect requests and struggled only with non-conventional indirect requests (hinting). Garcia (2004) examined comprehension of indirect speech acts (requests, suggestions, corrections, and offers). L2 learners of English with high TOEFL scores were more accurate with all speech act types than those with lower TOEFL scores, except for indirect requests, which revealed no significant proficiency effect. Longitudinal studies also revealed a relationship between proficiency and implicature type. Bouton (1992, 1994, 1999) compared L2 English learners' comprehension of relevance implicature, Pope questions (saying 'Is the Pope catholic?' to mean that something is obvious), irony, indirect criticisms, and sequence implicature. Relevance implicatures were relatively easy for learners, but Pope questions, irony, indirect criticism, and sequence implicature remained difficult even after spending 17 months in the U.S.A.

When we look at implicature types that advanced-level learners struggle with, we can understand the elements that make comprehension difficult. For one, comprehension difficulty often results from a larger distance between the utterance-level meaning and intended meaning. This is evident in Cook and Liddicoat's (2002) findings: Higher-proficiency learners had difficulty with non-conventional requests (i.e., hinting), which exhibited a larger mismatch between the surface form and the request intention than with conventional requests. Another source of support comes from studies on irony (Bouton, 1992, 1994, 1999; Yamanaka, 2003). Irony is a rhetorical device in which the propositional and intended meanings are opposite. The widespread deviation from the literal meaning in irony adds to comprehension difficulty, as found in Bouton's (1994, 1999) participants, who struggled with irony after spending more than a year in the target community.

The difficulty related to irony suggests that L2 learners may not be familiar with the convention of irony. Saying the opposite of what is intended is a common rhetorical device, and we use such irony purposefully with a goal of having the listener recognize the opposite intention. The fact that learners struggled with irony indicates that the rhetorical convention of irony is not easily accessible in the L2. It is also possible that irony is culture-specific. Irony may be practiced more in some cultures than in others; as a result, learners may lack experience with irony, adding to their comprehension difficulty. The difficulty coming from culture-specific convention was also found in Bouton's (1992, 1994) studies where Pope questions were difficult to acquire via exposure alone. Unlike relevance-based implicature that can be understood using L1-based maxims, Pope questions—asking something that has an obvious affirmative response—involve a convention specific to the L2. Without knowing this convention, it is nearly impossible to draw the speaker's intended meaning from bottom-up, sentence-level processing alone.

While a drastic deviation from the literal meaning (i.e., hinting and irony) and L2-specific conventions (e.g., Pope questions) can be the cause of comprehension difficulty, very few studies reviewed here have adapted theoretically informed criteria to operationalize implicature difficulty and design test items accordingly. As a result, the level of comprehension difficulty found in the data is rather incidental, generating *ad hoc* explanations about what makes implicature difficult. Additionally, previous studies used only a small number of items to reveal comprehension difficulty. Yamanaka's (2003) study had 12 items, of which only four were irony. Bouton (1994) used more items (28 total) but only three were Pope questions, and the rest were divided into six different implicature types. Garcia's (2004) test had 12 items assessing four different types of indirect speech acts. The small item pool makes comparison across item categories unreliable. To understand different natures of indirectness across implicature types, we need research using theoretically grounded principles to design items and compare learners' comprehension across item categories with a goal of clarifying a hierarchy of implicature types. We will review those studies in the next section.

Relevance Theory in L2 Comprehension of Implicature

Relevance Theory

Sperber and Wilson (1995) advanced Grice's (1975) theory in several important ways. First, they condensed Grice's four maxims into one, i.e., the maxim of relevance, claiming that the four maxims often overlap. For example, B's response below flouts the maxim of relevance (not providing the direct answer to A's question), but it also flouts the maxim of quantity and manner (not providing sufficient and useful information to A's inquiry):

(1) A: How was your job interview?
B: I don't know.

By condensing the four maxims into one, Sperber and Wilson underscored the central role of the principle of relevance in communication. When an utterance is presented, people automatically seek relevance of the utterance even when it is largely unrelated to the preceding information. This is illustrated in the following example adapted from Mey (1995):

(2) A: Let's go to the movie.
B: I will bring Kleenex.

B's utterance is not a typical second-pair response to A's invitation. Still, we can understand that B's response is an acceptance of the invitation. We also automatically maximize the relevance of B's response by actively comparing possible interpretations, such as 'The movie is a sad' or 'B has a cold.' Hence, relevance-seeking is part of human cognition and takes place automatically whenever information is presented (Sperber & Wilson, 1995).

Another contribution of Relevance Theory is the theory's solid grounding in cognitive psychology. Sperber and Wilson explained the process of meaning comprehension as an asymmetry between contextual effect and processing load. The contextual effect indicates saliency of meaning presented, while the processing load refers to the degree of effort required for comprehension. When the contextual effect is strong (or meaning is salient), we do not have to process many contextual cues to detect meaning; as a result, our processing load decreases.

When we comprehend meaning, many different assumptions come to our mind. Among those, we select the assumption that has the greatest contextual effect (or most relevance) for the smallest processing load. Several factors affect our processing load: linguistic complexity, number of contextual cues to be processed, and accessibility of the cues (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). When the utterance is linguistically complex and involves a number of contextual cues to process, we need to go through extensive inferencing, resulting in a greater processing load. In Example (2) above, the utterance 'I will bring Kleenex' is linguistically simple, but it requires a number of cues, for example, the meaning of Kleenex and its conventional usage, and the type of the movie. In contrast, B's intention in (3) can be understood almost immediately:

(3) A: Let's go to the movie.
B: I have to finish up this paper. It's due tomorrow.

Understanding B's refusal intention is relatively easy because B's response follows the conventional pattern of refusal. When someone invites us to do something, our response is either to accept or refuse the invitation. Because refusing an invitation is a dispreferred response (Pomerantz & Heritage, 2013), which might threaten the interlocutor's positive face (Brown & Levinson, 1987), we often avoid saying 'no' directly and instead use an indirect reply and explain why we cannot accept the invitation. Hence, giving an excuse is a common pattern of indirect refusal. Our knowledge of this convention, which is built upon our previous experiences, works as a contextual effect, making the speaker's intention salient and predictable.

To summarize, Sperber and Wilson explicated cognitive mechanisms behind the process of inferencing. Comprehension of implicature is driven by our relevance-seeking cognition. When someone says something, we automatically seek relevance of the information by maximizing the use of available contextual cues. The degree of indirectness in an utterance (or strength of implicature) is a function of the number of contextual cues to be processed. The distance between the propositional and intended meaning becomes smaller when meaning is readily accessible via convention and saliency, requiring fewer cues to process.

Relevance Theory in L2 Implicature Comprehension Research

The relationship among contextual cues, processing load, and conventionality has been explored in L2 studies (e.g., Taguchi, 2005, 2007, 2008a, 2011, 2012; Taguchi, Li, & Liu, 2013). A distinct feature of these studies is the use of an online listening test and response time data. Response times show how quickly one can respond to the stimuli. Shorter response times indicate relative ease in processing the stimuli, whereas longer response times signal processing effort coming from linguistic, cognitive, and affective demands (see Chapter 18 in this volume). In implicature comprehension, response time data can symbolize the distance between the propositional and intended meaning, and the degree of processing load coming from that distance. Comprehension is faster when the propositional meaning is immediate, but when the proposition is remote, we need to bridge the gap, resulting in longer response times (Hamblin & Gibbs, 2003).

Existing findings support the relationship between the degree of indirectness and the amount of processing load. Specifically, studies found that conventionality encoded in implicature facilitates comprehension, resulting in higher accuracy scores and shorter response times. Here, we will focus on two studies that compared comprehension of conventional and non-conventional implicature among L2 English learners across proficiency levels (Taguchi, 2011) and different time-points (Taguchi, 2012). These studies adapted naturally occurring implicature found in corpora of conversations. Conventional implicatures were operationalized as indirect refusals involving a common pattern of refusal (i.e., giving an excuse when refusing), while non-conventional implicatures were operationalized as indirect opinions that do not involve common discourse patterns. Examples of these implicature types are presented below (Taguchi, 2012, pp. 270 and 275). In (4), B's refusal (last utterance) is conventional (telling A why he can't go out to eat). In (5), B's last utterance is non-conventional and idiosyncratic because different utterances can express how B feels about New York.

(4) Conventional implicature: Indirect refusals

A: Hey Nancy, what are you doing? Do you wanna do something tonight?
B: I don't know. I was just gonna watch TV.

A: I wanna go out tonight. Maybe we can go to the Japanese restaurant. The new one just opened.
B: I don't have any money this week to pay the bills.

(5) Non-conventional implicature: Indirect opinions

A: So, Mary, you and your husband just moved from Florida to New York?
B: Yes, last year.

A: Do you like living in New York?
B: We looked around for two years. My husband and I went all over the United States, and we didn't find any place we liked better.

Taguchi's study found that, regardless of proficiency levels, indirect refusals (conventional implicatures) were easier and faster to comprehend than non-conventional indirect opinions. Comprehension of both implicature types developed over time, but the gain size was larger for refusals than for opinions. The facilitation effect of conventionality was found in other languages, including Japanese (Taguchi, 2008b) and Chinese (Taguchi, Li, & Liu, 2013), as well as in different learning contexts (study abroad programs, immersion settings, and formal classrooms) (Taguchi, 2008a, 2011, 2012), different source materials (corpus-based vs. artificially created dialogues) (Taguchi, 2005, 2011), and different response formats (yes-no vs. multiple-choice questions) (Taguchi, 2008a, 2011). The same results were also found in cross-sectional studies (Taguchi, 2011) and longitudinal studies (Taguchi, 2007, 2012).

These findings provide unquestionable evidence of conventionality effect. Critically, the conventionality effect is a property of a shared convention between L1 and L2. Unlike Pope questions that involve culture-specific conventions (Bouton, 1994, 1999), learners are familiar with the indirect refusal convention in L1 and thus can transfer the L1-based convention to L2 comprehension. However, when conventionality is not shared or present, learners need to rely on both linguistic knowledge (bottom-up processing) and contextual information (top-down processing) to derive meaning. As a result, the degree of inferencing becomes extensive, leading to a greater comprehension difficulty and slower-paced progress over time.

The conventionality effect helps us operationalize different types of indirectness, which can be used to explore SLA issues such as the construct of comprehension, developmental order, and L1 transfer. For instance, the order of development found in previous studies (comprehension of conventional implicature preceding that of non-conventional implicature) can be treated as stages of L2 development. These stages can be used to examine pace of development, along with individual factors that may affect the pace (e.g., proficiency, personality). In addition, conventionality can be operationalized from universal and language-specific standpoints so we can examine positive bi-directional transfer based on universal (and shared) conventions, as well as negative transfer or absence of transfer due to L1-specific conventions.

While the facilitative effect of conventionality in implicature comprehension is clear, this generalization is based on the studies that used an instrument with low contextual effect. Most studies used auditory input and did not incorporate visual cues. Hence, the conventionality effect is restricted to the area of linguistic conventionality, and other areas of contextual effect (e.g., visual input) have not been addressed systematically. Critically, previous studies did not compare contextual effects coming from different sources, limiting our understanding of the relationship between contextual cues and processing load.

Indeed, when different signals of contextual effect are compared, linguistic-level conventionality is not always advantageous, as found in Taguchi, Gomez-Laich, and Arufat-Marqués's (2016) study. They used a multimedia listening test with video-recorded conversations to assess comprehension. Because inferential processing involves a parallel processing of all available signals, both linguistic and non-linguistic (Sperber & Wilson, 1995), multimedia input combining multiple signals at once (e.g., sounds, images, videos, and texts) more closely reflects our real-life inferential processes than does audio input alone. By incorporating multiple sources of input, the study examined whether L2 Spanish learners' comprehension differed across items of different conventionality (indirect refusals, indirect opinions, and irony).

Contrary to other studies, the conventionality effect was not found in Taguchi et al.'s study: There was no difference between indirect refusals (conventional implicature) and indirect opinions (non-conventional implicature) in accuracy scores. Indirect opinions were even faster to comprehend than indirect refusals. Introspective interview data revealed the facilitative effect of verbal and non-verbal cues when comprehending indirect opinions. When people express negative opinions (dislike or disapproval), their emotions often appear in facial expressions, gestures, and tone. These visual cues in indirect opinion items reduced the processing load, leading to faster comprehension speed. Drawing on visual cues is economical in comprehension because visual information directly maps onto meaning and helps us bypass the bottom-up processing of an utterance. Notably, the contextual effect coming from visual cues can override that of linguistic conventionality (common indirect refusal patterns), as found in the study.

Other than Taguchi et al.'s study, very few studies have used audio-visual input to assess L2 comprehension of implied meaning. Using video clips from films and TV shows, Shively et al. (2008) examined comprehension of irony in L2 Spanish, and Yamanaka (2003) analyzed implicature comprehension in L2 English, but these studies did not address how learners used visual cues in input or how those cues facilitated their comprehension. Use of multimodal input is critical when studying comprehension because comprehension is not merely the decoding of linguistic input; rather, it is a global process that involves the use of all available cues, both linguistic and non-linguistic, to arrive at meaning (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). Multimedia input makes a greater number of cues available and thus presents a more realistic, theoretically grounded approach to understanding L2 implicature comprehension. The next section discusses a global process of implicature comprehension based on naturalistic data drawn from intercultural communication.

The Socio-cognitive Approach in L2 Comprehension of Implicature

The Socio-cognitive Approach

Grice's and Sperber and Wilson's theories situate the recognition of speaker intention as the central goal of communication. They consider that intention exists in the speaker's mind as a preplanned object, and the listener's job is to recognize the intention by using contextual cues and assumptions of relevance. Hence, these theories observe a clear separation between the speaker's intention and the listener's interpretation of the intention.

Quite differently, the socio-cognitive approach (Kecskes, 2014, 2016) combines the speaker's and listener's perspectives. Kecskes contends that intention is a 'cooperation-directed practice' (p. 47); that is, intention is an a priori state of the speaker's mind, but it is also emergent, as the speaker and listener jointly develop what is actually communicated. The emergent nature of intention is illustrated in the following example (Kecskes, 2014, p. 9):

(6) Sam: Coming for a drink?
Andy: Sorry, I can't. My doctor won't let me.
Sam: *What's wrong with you?*

Kecskes explains that the last utterance by Sam is ambiguous and generates implicature. It could be a sincere question about Andy's health, or it could be sarcastically asking Sam why he takes the doctor's advice seriously. The Gricean paradigm of logical inferencing does not help disambiguate this implicature. Similarly, the relevance-theoretic account of attending to salient cues (intonation, facial expressions) may not lead to a complete understanding. What is likely to happen in this situation is a follow-up negotiation sequence between Sam and Andy. Andy might ask a clarification question such as 'What do you mean?' Alternatively, Andy might comprehend the question literally and explain his health problems to Sam, or he might respond with laughter as a reaction to a sarcastic comment. Hence, the actual meaning of Sam's utterance is emergent and locally situated as Sam and Andy negotiate to reach joint understanding.

The socio-cognitive approach is a useful framework for understanding intercultural pragmatics (Kecskes, 2014). In intercultural communication, participants bring their own L1-based assumptions, norms, and expectations from their experience. However, these norms and assumptions are not fixed. They are negotiated and redefined as speakers strive to establish mutual understanding. Individuals' prior norms eventually develop into new hybrid norms reflecting the emergent situational characteristics. As Kecskes (2014) contends, 'interculture' involves participants' 'mutual transformation of knowledge and communicative behavior rather than transmission' (p. 44).

Participants from different cultures do not necessarily have a common background readily available to them. They need to actively seek and co-construct shared assumptions. Those assumptions are called *common ground* (Clark, 1996), *mutual cognitive environment* (Sperber & Wilson, 1995), or *presumed shared beliefs* (Zegarac & Spencer-Oatey, 2013). As Clark (1996) argues, participants must establish shared knowledge to understand others and to be understood by others. When speakers actively seek for common ground, negotiation of meaning—in the form of accommodation, interactional management, and problem solving—occurs frequently, characterizing the nature of intercultural communication.

In summary, unlike Grice's or Sperber and Wilson's theories, the socio-cognitive approach attends to two types of intention in synergy: prior intention and emergent intention. Intention is individual and pre-planned, but it is also emergent, reflecting situational experiences shared among speakers. The socio-cognitive approach features the 'privatization' of meaning, where the speaker 'blends his prior experience with the situational (current) experience, and makes an individual understanding of collective experience' (Kecskes, 2016, p. 50). The privatization of meaning often occurs in intercultural communication where speakers of different cultural backgrounds get together and communicate in search for common ground.

The Socio-cognitive Approach in L2 Implicature Comprehension Research

Given the paucity of available findings under the socio-cognitive approach in L2 implicature comprehension, we will present our original data in this section. By analyzing a conversation between two speakers of English as a lingua franca, we will illustrate how implicatures emerge from participants' different cultural assumptions and how participants try to achieve mutual understanding of implied meaning. Our data shows that implicature comprehension is not always an individual process, as in Grice's maxims or Relevance Theory. Rather, it is a collaborative process that is locally negotiated among participants.

Participants and Data

The participants were two female students (Japanese and Chinese) enrolled in the graduate program in an English-medium university in Japan. The Japanese participant was from Osaka and enrolled in the TESOL program. The Chinese participant was from Xian and enrolled in the Communication Studies program. The data was a 20-minute naturalistic conversation between the two participants, who had a free-flowing discussion based on topics provided by the researchers. The conversation was audio-recorded and transcribed using existing conventions (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 2007; Wong & Waring, 2010) (see Appendix). Adapting the socio-cognitive approach, we analyzed how two types of intention—a priori intention inherent in the speaker's mind and an emergent intention negotiated between the speakers (Kecskes, 2014, 2016)—co-occur in the process of common-ground seeking.

Findings: Collaborative Disambiguation of Implicature

In Excerpt 1, the Chinese speaker begins a discussion on pros and cons of early English education in elementary schools in Japan. Starting the discussion, she asks whether the Japanese speaker studied English when she was in elementary school (line 27). The Japanese speaker responds saying that she learned English in a cram school (line 31). This response is ambiguous and generates implicature. The fact that she learned English in a cram school essentially means that she did not study English in an elementary school; however, the Chinese speaker does not understand this meaning because cram schools have different meanings in China. In Japan, cram schools focus on materials that are either absent or limited in formal schooling, whereas in China cram schools primarily teach exam-taking techniques that are closely tied with school curriculums. Critically, misunderstanding occurs in both parties because the Japanese speaker also fails to recognize the intention behind the Chinese speaker's question. The question was about whether the Japanese speaker learned English as part of an elementary school curriculum, not about learning English elsewhere (e.g., extracurricular activities) when she was of her elementary school age. Hence, the Japanese speaker's response (learning English in a cram school) is not a relevant answer to the Chinese speaker's question.

In order to solve this miscommunication, the Chinese speaker repeats the same question in line 43. When the Chinese speaker mispronounces the word 'when' as 'one', both speakers try to clarify the meaning: The Chinese speaker provides self-repair (line 47), and the Japanese speaker provides a confirmation check (line 48). This effort, however, fails again, and the misunderstanding (or failure to recognize each other's intention) remains.

Excerpt 1

27 C: yeah, °but°How about, how about (.) one you're in your elementary school, did you=
28 C: =learn the (.)English? One you're in elementary school?
29 J: Me?
30 C: Yeah.
31 J: Ah::, actually I started, ah, to learn English (.) ah, with the:: in the:: cram school? from the=
32 J: =elementary [school, in elementary school, so I didn't have chance to learn English so=
33 C: [ah, yeah
34 J: =much but I learned alphabet?=
35 C: Yeah
36 J: =in six grade and fifth grade
37 C: $Oh::$
38 J: Only that so
39 C: So early.
40 J: Yeah, but I think it's good (.) thing to, for children to be familiar with (.) um
41 C: Like English
42 J: Yeah, English
43 C: Yeah so (.) [why, yeah, for one (.) you are (.) a:: elementary school student, did you learn=
44 J: [listening skill
45 C: =English? at that time, one your
46 J: Why?
47 C: ONE, WHEN
48 J: When?