Pragmatics and its Pedagogical Application

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This paper makes a report of a colloquium, which focuses on pragmatics and its pedagogical application. The present report consists of three studies and one discussant part. The first study seeks the most effective way of teaching pragmatics. That is, it introduces consciousness-raising inductive tasks that provide learners with explicit knowledge of pragmatics of their target language as the most effective way of teaching pragmatics. The second study examines scaffolding observed in NS-NNS interaction in a JFL classroom. It was found that scaffolding is a useful technique to help the acquisition of Japanese pragmatic formulaic expressions, at least on the level of uptake. Result from this study leads to further questions on grouping issues in pair work activity. The third study investigates the effect of interactional tasks provided with explicit explanations of metapragmatics. Two groups of learners are given different tasks: raising-awareness activities for one group and several types of role-play activities for the other. The main data analyzed are the role-play performances of four complaint situations in EFL. The discussant part provides summary and evaluative comments on the papers presented in the colloquium, addressing the issue how to effectively teach pragmatics in a second language classroom by examining relevant current research.

本稿では、「Pragmatics and its pedagogical application」と題されたコロキアムで発表された3本の論文と、そこで行われたディスカッションについての報告を行う。本稿

は3本の論文の要旨とディスカッションのパートから構成される。最初の研究では、語用論的能力の有効な教授法について考察を行った。著者の見解では、最も効果的な語用論的能力の教授法とは、「Consciousness-raising」を引き起こすタスクを行って、明示的に語用論的な知識を与えることだと報告されている。二つ目の報告は、JFLの教室で観察されたロールプレイのデータをもとに「Scaffolding」は語用論的能力の一部である、「日本語での礼儀正しい形式表現」を習得するのに有益であると結論づけられている。また、この結果から、「教室内でのペアワークをどのように行うか」という更なる課題についても問題提議されている。三本目の研究では、異なるタイプの教授方法が、英語の「断り」のストラテジー習得に関してどのような影響を持っているか、についてロールプレイで選られたデータをもとに報告をしている。ディスカッサントの個所では、それぞれの研究から得られた結果をまとめ、それに基づいてどのように「効果的に語用論的能力を教授できるか」というトピックについて関連する研究分野からの報告も交えて議論を行う。

Colloquium: Pragmatics and its pedagogical application

Participants:
- Sayoko Yamashita, (Moderator) Tokyo Medical and Dental Universtiy
- Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska, Temple University Japan
- Akemi Fu, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Kobe University
- Keiko Sato, Nagoya Women's University
- Donna Tatsuki, (Discussant) Kobe University of Commerce

The present paper reports on a colloquium, "Pragmatics and its Pedagogical Application," which was held at JALT 2001. Through reports from experimental/observational studies with different perspectives, it brought forward a number of key issues of how language teachers implement pragmatic aspects in classrooms. Yamashita began the session by introducing three presenters and one discussant: (1) Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska, (2) Akemi Fu, (3) Keiko Sato, and (4) Donna Tatsuki. Then each speaker presented her study which shed light on various aspects of pragmatic competence and the way to improve that competence through explicit/implicit instruction. After these presentations, the discussant provided a summary and evaluative comments on the papers presented in the colloquium, addressing the issue how to effectively teach pragmatics in a second language classroom by examining relevant current research. It involved very active participation from the floor, as well as from the presenters, and many interesting ideas and practical suggestions were exchanged among the participants.

Kawate-Mierzejewska
Teaching Pragmatics through Consciousness-Raising Tasks
This paper explored the most effective way of teaching pragmatics. It introduced pragmatic consciousness-raising (CR) tasks to show how to provide learners with

explicit knowledge of pragmatics of their target language (TL) effectively.

There are some questions in teaching pragmatics when we consider acquisition of pragmatics: (a) is it possible to teach pragmatics, and (b) is it possible to acquire pragmatics of a target language? This is because pragmatics is firmly connected with the use of learners' first language (L1) developed throughout their life on the basis of a system of values in their native language speaking community. As a result, the learners may employ their L1 pragmatics when using their TL. It, however, does not hurt for the learners to have explicit knowledge about pragmatics of the TL. Whether to use appropriate pragmatics in the TL or not is all up to the learners; however, it is necessary to provide them with appropriate knowledge about pragmatics of the TL.

Then, what should we teach? Since the purpose of teaching pragmatics is to provide learners with explicit knowledge of pragmatics, this paper focused on teaching sociocultural and pragmalinguistic routines through an inductive CR task.

Thus, CR tasks are considered appropriate to focus on the differences between the learners' L1 and TL because (a) it can raise learners' awareness about specific sociocultural and pragmalinguistic routines that should be focused, and as a result, (b) it can provide the learners with explicit sociocultural and pragmalinguistic knowledge about those routines focused on. Rutherford

and Sharwood-Smith (1985) state "CR is considered as a potential facilitator for the acquisition of linguistic competence and has nothing to do with the use of that competence for the achievement of specific communicative objects, or with the achievement of fluency" (cited in Ellis, 1992a, p. 5). Learners first realize the pragmatic differences between their L1 and TL through learning, and compare their L1 knowledge with TL routines. Then, they integrate their new knowledge into their prior knowledge and save it in their mental lexicon (see also Ellis, 1992b).

This paper ended with an example of inductive CR task dealing with a speech act of refusing in Japanese (see Kawate-Mierzejewska, 1995). The purposes of the CR task were: (a) raising learners' awareness concerning the differences of sociocultural knowledge between learners' L1 and TL, and (b) raising learners' awareness concerning pragmalinguistic knowledge in the use of refusal realization strategies of three different situations in terms of social dominance. The lesson consisted of five steps: (1) an assessment questionnaire; (2) providing data illustrating different types of invitation-refusal interactions in terms of social dominance; (3) going back to the assessment questionnaire to check previous answers and carrying on conversation with an instructor; (4) role-play activities, and (5) feedback and discussion. Step two was a core of the task. In step 2, learners were asked: (a) to listen to each conversation, focusing on

refusal realization strategies used by the hearer, (b) to find the relationship between the speaker and the hearer, and to classify refusal realization strategies used in each conversation, and (c) to answer questions to discover different patterns of refusal interactions, focusing on pragmalinguistic features of the use of refusal realization strategies. Those questions were designed to enable learners to discover the differences in the use of refusal realization strategies in different social situations.

In conclusion, this paper attempted to show how an inductive CR task could successfully provide learners with explicit sociocultural and pragmalinguistic knowledge. The effectiveness of the CR tasks in teaching pragmatics should be considered by language teachers interested in preparing their students to obtain appropriate knowledge about different speech acts and by researchers interested in conducting studies on teaching pragmatics.

Fu
The effect of scaffolding on Japanese pragmatic acquisition

The main purpose of the present study is to compare role-play interactions between NS-NNS with interactions between NNSs in order to see whether scaffolding is observed in both interactional patterns. This study was motivated by Vygotsky's theory of zone of proximate development (ZPD) and the effect of scaffolding on Japanese pragmatic acquisition reported in previous studies (Ohta 1995, 1996a). The primary research question is how scaffoldings from NSs help NNSs acquire pragmalinguistic competence in Japanese. The target Japanese pragmatic formulaic expressions include *tumaranai mono desuga* (this is a small gift) and *honnno kimochi desu* (it is just a token of my appreciation).

Recorded and transcribed role-play data in a JFL classroom showed various examples of scaffolding, which seems to be helpful for pragmatic acquisition. In addition, NSs perceived some problems with NNS's cues such as long pauses and non-target like morphemes. It was found that the scaffoldings from a NS were helpful for the NNS at least on at the uptake level. During interaction with a NS, the NNS's *vertical construction* became *horizontal construction* (Scollon, 1976). *Horizontal construction* refers to the meaningful production within a single turn. More specifically, verbal exchange between the NS and the NNS might seem to indicate that NNS was just repeating the previous lexical items produced by the NS piece by piece. This learner finally succeeded, however, in producing the target-like utterance, *tsumaranai mono desuga minasan de doozo* and *honno kimochi desu kara*. Furthermore, role-plays between NNSs did not reveal any examples of scaffolding; this finding is different from Ohta (1995, 1996a). Ohta suggests that less competent learners,

as well as more competent learners, achieve higher levels of development in L2 within the ZPD through collaborative discourse.

The different findings in the present study led to an important question for further studies: should role-play activities be designed to match learners with different proficient levels, or with similar levels? Another pedagogical issue is a participation pattern and its effect on pragmatic acquisition. Regarding the relationship between the type and amount of scaffolding and the activity type, one argument might arise that the observed examples of scaffoldings were obtained because of the nature of the small group activity in which NNSs enjoyed very minute aids from the NS side. Lave and Wenger (1991) and Ohta (2001) report interesting findings that peripheral participation is also helpful for second language acquisition. Comparison of different activity types, such as teacher-fronted lecture or small group activities among NNSs, is a possible way of further investigation. The present study found that scaffolding has a facilitative effect on SLA, at least at the uptake level. If we carried out more longitudinal observation and acquired a larger data pool, we might be able to find other types of scaffolding as well as other types of cues from the learners' side which would lead the NS to provide appropriate scaffolding. Further studies will be able to examine whether or not the uptaking-level target structure results in later acquisition.

Sato
The effect of interactional tasks in pragmatics instruction in EFL

Recently, some studies address the need of teaching pragmatics in ESL and EFL (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Kasper, 1997), and results have indicated the effectiveness of explicit information of metapragmatics instruction on successful communication in a target language (Rose & Kasper, 2001; Takahashi, 2001). It is also reported that raising the awareness of context factors to differentiate linguistic forms of communication acts is important (Schmidt, 1993). Interactional activities for practice, however, are simply regarded as one of the tasks found useful in pragmatics instruction.

This pilot study is concerned with teaching pragmatics explicitly in the classroom. The study compared the effect of interactional activities, or different kinds of role-play, to awareness-raising activities for Japanese learners' development of appropriate performance of complaining in English.

Two intact classes of students majoring in English in a women's university were assigned to different teaching approach situations: one used instruction of awareness-raising activities (RAG), and the other, role-play practice (RPG). Both classes were led to notice, through tasks, the relation between social contexts and linguistic forms in realizing complaints. Data, such as 24 pairs of role-plays for each group and a student assessment

questionnaire, were analyzed to check the differences caused by the treatment. The role-play performances recorded on video were analyzed by examining the degree to which four aspects such as the number of turns, the choice of complaining act, complaint strategies used, and linguistic forms for making complaints were changed.

First, as for turns, both groups increased the number of turns after the treatment. This means that the students learn negotiational exchanges to some degree, but it cannot be said whether or not there is any significant difference in development between the two groups. Second, with the choice of complaint realization, both groups realized more complaints after the treatment, except for Situation A for RPG. However, RAG realized more complaints than RPG did. It is difficult to explain the difference in complaint realization rate between the two groups. Third, as for the analysis of strategies used, a simplified coding system was decided based on Morrow (1996). The analysis consists of seven strategies such as: 1) identification of the problem, 2) additional explanation, 3) blaming the hearer, 4) offering an alternative act, 5) requesting, 6) indirect suggestion, and 7) showing dissatisfaction.

The developmental differences after the treatment in strategy use in the three situations were almost the same for the both groups. It can be said that an effect of instruction was found, but there was little

or no difference between the two groups. Finally, the following four linguistic expressions were counted as analyzed complaint forms: 1) why (how come)…? 2) I'm wondering if…? 3) question sentences, and 4) would you…? Although only four students used "why" types of complaints and one student used "I'm wondering" and "question" in the pretest role-plays, in the posttest almost half of the students used some of the four forms. However, no difference between the two groups was found.

In conclusion, an effect of tasks in teaching pragmatics was clearly found, but a difference between the different task types in learning effect was not discovered. Probably both types are effective in pragmatics instruction.

Tatsuki
Pragmatics and Pedagogy: Discussant

These papers nicely captured three pedagogical foci that are relevant to the teaching of pragmatics. The first one is a focus on form in which metapragmatic explanations are implemented based on the assumption that explicit knowledge can later become implicit. The second was a focus on meaning in which scaffolding was implemented based on the assumption that through social interaction a learner can enlarge his/her repertoire of formulaic expressions. The final focus was on awareness. In this case, consciousness-raising tasks

were implemented on the assumption that pragmatic competence will improve if learners become more aware of mismatches between their L1 pragmatic norms and those of the L2.

There are a number of points to consider, however. In regards to pedagogical techniques that focus on form, the competence/performance distinction makes it difficult to decide what assessment in such circumstances might measure. Techniques that encourage scaffolding as a way to focus on form require one-on-one interactions in which one participant is an expert and the other a novice. One might wonder how this can be implemented in a classroom setting. This has serious ramifications at a structural and policy level regarding the ways that we sort and stream our learners. As for techniques that focus on awareness there is a need for concrete follow up activities once awareness has been raised.

Impacting all three of these are the issues of scope and sequence. How much of a focus on pragmatics is enough? How can these three pedagogical foci be combined and then integrated into a general language program? When we can answer these questions, pragmatics can truly have its rightful impact on language teaching and learning.

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