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PRAGMATICS AND SLA

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INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics has two roles in SLA: It acts as a constraint on linguistic forms and their acquisition, and it represents a type of communicative knowledge and object of L2 learning in its own right. The first role of pragmatics is evident in functionalist (Tomlin 1990) and interactionist (Long 1996) views of SLA. The second role puts pragmatics on a par with morphosyntax, lexis, and phonology in that inquiry focuses on learners' knowledge, use, and acquisition of L2 pragmatics. It is the latter sense of 'pragmatics and SLA' that is the focus of this paper. In analogy with other areas of specialization within SLA—interlanguage syntax, interlanguage lexis, and so forth—the study of nonnative speakers' use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge is referred to as interlanguage pragmatics.

A substantial body of research on interlanguage pragmatics now exists (see Ellis 1994, Kasper 1998), but the great majority of studies focuses on L2 use rather than development. Topics investigated in these studies include the following:

1. The perception and comprehension of illocutionary force and politeness;
2. The production of linguistic action;
3. The impact of context variables on choices of conventions of means (semantic formulae or realization strategies) and form (linguistic material *used to implement strategic options);*
4. Discourse sequencing and conversational management;
5. Pragmatic success and failure;
6. The joint negotiation of illocutionary, referential, and relational goals in interpersonal encounters and institutional settings.

These topics have been borrowed from studies of native speakers' linguistic actions and interactions, conducted mostly in the disciplinary traditions of empirical

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pragmatics, especially studies of speech acts, crosscultural pragmatics, and interactional sociolinguistics, none of which has an immediate link to SLA. The one single SLA issue that has consistently been addressed in interlanguage pragmatic research is pragmatic transfer.

Because interlanguage pragmatics has been sociolinguistic rather than psycholinguistic in its orientation, processing issues have not received much attention. The topic that has been examined most from a processing perspective is pragmatic comprehension, where theory and methodology have been inspired by work in psycholinguistics rather than descriptive pragmatics. (See Takahashi and Roitblat 1994 for review and a key study.) Very little is known about the planning and monitoring processes involved in nonnative speakers' production of linguistic action; the few available studies are reviewed by Cohen (1996).

This paper will review interlanguage pragmatics studies with a focus on learning in a somewhat liberal sense: In addition to studies with an explicit focus on development, we will also consider investigations that examine the effect of proficiency as an independent variable on pragmatic performance. The broader scope is indicated since a good number of studies fall into the latter category. Studies will be classified and discussed according to a major design feature, whether a study is cross-sectional versus longitudinal. We will then consider the relationship between pragmatic transfer and development on the one hand and instructed learning of L2 pragmatics on the other.

CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDIES

Developmental studies using pseudo-longitudinal designs are a common form of cross-sectional studies and they are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Cross-sectional interlanguage pragmatic studies

Study	Focus	L1/L2	Subjects (n)	Data
Scarcella 1979	invitation request	Arabic / English	beginning (10) advanced (10) NS Engl. (6)	roleplay
Olshtain & Blum-Kulka 1985	appropriateness of request & apology strategies	various/ Hebrew	LOR: >2 yrs (36) <2>10 yrs (44) <10 yrs (44) NS Hebrew (160)	rating scale
Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1986	request	English/ Hebrew	low interm. (80) high interm. (80) adv. (80) NS Hebrew (172)	DCT

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Takahashi & Beebe 1987	refusal	Japanese/ English	undergrad. (20) grad. (20) NS Japan. (20) NS Engl. (20)	DCT
Trosborg 1987	apology	Danish/ English	high beginn. (NR) intermed. (NR) adv. (NR) NS Danish (NR) NS Engl. (NR)	roleplay
Takahashi & DuFon 1989	request	Japanese/ English	intermed. (8) adv. (8)	roleplay
Omar 1991	greeting	English/ Kiswahili	beginning (16) int.-adv. (16)	DCT
Svanes 1992	request	various/ Norwegian	beginning intermed. adv.	DCT
Kerekes 1992	assessment of assertiveness	various/ English	low (28) intermed. (59) high (19) NS Engl. (34)	rating scale
Robinson 1992	refusal	Japanese/ English	intermed. (6) adv. (6)	DCT verbal protocol
Trosborg 1995	apology request complaint	Danish/ English	high beginn. (NR) intermed. (NR) adv. (NR) NS Danish (NR) NS Engl. (NR)	roleplay
Houck & Gass 1996	refusal	Japanese/ English	lower (4) higher (4)	roleplay
Koike 1996	comprehension of illocutionary force	English/ Spanish	year 1 (46) year 2 (34) adv. (34)	video-prompted response rating scale
Maeshiba et al. 1996	apology	Japanese/ English	interm. (30) adv. (30) NS Japan. (30) NS Engl. (30)	DCT rating scale
Takahashi 1996	transferability of request strategies	Japanese/ English	low (65) high (77)	rating scale

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Hill 1997	request	Japanese/ English	low (20) intermed. (20) advanced (20) NS Engl. (20)	DCT
Hassall 1997	request	English/ Bahasa Indonesia	low (6) middle (15) high (2) NS BI (18)	roleplay rating scale
Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998	pragmatic vs. grammatical awareness	diverse (15 lgs.)/ESL (173) Hungarian/ EFL (370) Italian/EFL (112) Hungarian EFL teachers (25) NS Am. Engl. ESL teachers (28)	low intermediate - low advanced high beginners - intermediate near-native	judgment task
Rose 1998	request apology compliment response	Cantonese/ English	P2 (20) P4 (14) P6 (19) NS Cantonese (15 per grade)	cartoon oral production task

DCT = Discourse Completion Task

The great majority of these cross-sectional studies have examined the use of speech act realization strategies by learners at different proficiency levels. One exception is Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985), who traced learners' approximation of target pragmatic norms (in a study whose overall focus was not developmental) by comparing learners who had resided in Israel for different lengths of time. While the studied learner populations are most commonly adults, Rose (1998) compared the speech act realization strategies of pre-adolescent students (age 7, 9, and 11) at different grade levels.

Typically, the cross-sectional research has been rather narrowly focused on one or more speech acts, investigated by means of elicited data. While most studies investigated development in (or proficiency effects on) L2 speech act production, some studies examined learners' metapragmatic assessment and comprehension of speech acts. An early effort to consider nonnative speakers' assessment of pragmatic appropriacy from a developmental perspective was Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985). Rating-scale assessments of request and apology realizations indicated that learners of Hebrew were more likely to accept L2

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pragmatic norms the longer they had resided in the target community. While these nonnative speakers initially based their appropriateness assessments on their L1, they became more tolerant of directness and positive politeness as they had spent more time in Israel.

There have been a number of more recent studies of the development of pragmatic awareness. In her study of assertiveness and supportiveness in troubles talk, Kerekes (1992) found that, with increasing proficiency, ESL learners' perceptions of qualifiers (e.g., I think, sort of) became more native-like. Proficiency interacted with gender, however: As a group, female, but not male, subjects perceived qualifiers in the same way as native speakers and high-proficiency learners. In Kerekes' study, the material to be rated were audiotaped native speaker dialogues. Koike (1996) used videotaped dialogue prompts produced by native speakers of different varieties of Spanish and investigated the listening comprehension of, and responses to suggestions by, Anglo learners of Spanish and bilingual Spanish-English Chicano students. After watching each of the seven prompts, students had to compose a response to the Spanish speaker, identify the illocutionary act, write down what they remembered the speaker's last utterance to be (the speech act under study), and rate the speaker for various personal attributes on a five point scale (a blend of a Likert scale and semantic differential). There was no statistical difference between the low comprehension and response scores of the first and second year students, whereas the advanced students performed significantly better on both accounts. One of the successful comprehension strategies employed by the advanced students seemed to be their attention to routine formulae such as *¿Por qué no?*, which they correctly identified as illocutionary-force-indicating devices. Curiously, the second year students performed worse than the first year students on most items; unfortunately, Koike does not comment on this rather surprising pattern. The advanced students and the lower proficiency students also rated the Spanish speakers differently, an interesting finding which seems to indicate, as Koike surmises, "that people's opinions of a speaker change when they understand the linguistic intent of the speaker's message" (1996:271).

Another study using videotaped scenarios is Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study of pragmatic and grammatical awareness in different EFL and ESL populations. Each of the scenarios, featuring a female and a male student engaged in typical interactions at the university, ended with a request, suggestion, apology, or refusal. Because this study probed into learners' abilities to distinguish appropriate-inappropriate and correct-incorrect utterances, the students in the scenarios were highly proficient Hungarian nonnative speakers of English. The target utterance (the second pair part in each dialogue) was marked on the screen and appeared on the answer sheet. Respondents were asked to first assess whether the target utterance was appropriate/correct. If the judgment was negative, they were further asked to estimate the severity of the problem. There were clear effects for learning context (EFL/ESL), proficiency, and learner versus teacher status. The ESL learners scored significantly higher on pragmatic appropriateness

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judgments than did the two groups of EFL learners, students in Hungary and Italian primary-school teachers in Hungary. Conversely, the EFL groups rated grammatical errors significantly higher than did the ESL learners. In addition, the low-proficiency Hungarian students gave lower ratings to both grammatical and pragmatic errors in comparison with the high-proficiency group; however, the high-proficiency students demonstrated a much greater increase in grammatical awareness than in pragmatic awareness. While the high-proficiency ESL group also noticed more pragmatic inappropriacies when compared with their low-proficiency colleagues, the recognition of grammatical errors deteriorated with increased proficiency in the ESL group. Both EFL and ESL teachers recognized more grammatical errors than pragmatic problems. (In fact, each of the nonnative EFL teachers spotted one hundred percent of the grammatical errors whereas the native English speaking ESL teachers, as a group, missed 2.4 percent of the grammar errors.) However, the ESL teachers (as well as the ESL students) assessed the pragmatic errors as more serious. The relationship of pragmalinguistic[1] and grammatical awareness, its development, and the impact of the learning environment on both clearly merits further attention. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) exemplary pioneering study has opened a venue for much future research on these important issues.

In contrast to the above assessment studies, most of the cross-sectional studies have examined learners' production of speech acts. An impressively stable result of these studies is that learners have access to the same range of speech act realization strategies, or conventions of means (Clark 1979), as native speakers, irrespective of proficiency level. On the other hand, learners differ from native speakers in the way they implement strategies linguistically by choosing conventions of form (Clark 1979) and by selecting conventions of means and form according to social and discourse context. Thus, studies on apologizing by Danish EFL learners (Trosborg 1987; 1995), Japanese ESL learners (Maeshiba, *et al.* 1996) and Cantonese-speaking EFL learners (Rose 1998) found that learners, irrespective of proficiency level, can use the full range of Blum-Kulka, *et al.*'s (1989) taxonomy of apology strategies:

1. Offering an illocutionary force indicator, or apologetic formula (I'm sorry);
2. Assuming responsibility for the offense (I deleted your file);
3. Downgrading responsibility (there must be a virus in your software) or the severity of the offense (fortunately you have a hard copy);
4. Offering repair (I'll ask Tom to retrieve it for you);
5. Offering redress such as expressing concern for the offended party (I hope the file wasn't important);
6. Appeasing the offended party (I'll install your new software for you);
7. Promising forbearance (I'll be more careful the next time).

Likewise, nonnative speakers at all proficiency levels use the super strategies of requesting, including direct requests (check your email), conventionally indirect

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requests (could you check your email?), and nonconventionally indirect requests (did you get my email?), as well as most of the substrategies within these categories. (See Blum-Kulka, *et al.* 1989 for a taxonomy of request strategies.) This range is documented in studies of request strategies by Japanese ESL learners and EFL learners (Hill 1997, Takahashi 1996, Takahashi and DuFon 1989), second language learners of Norwegian with a variety of L1 backgrounds (Svanes 1992), Danish learners of English (Trosborg 1995), speakers of Australian English learning Bahasa Indonesia as a foreign language (Hassall 1997), and Cantonese-speaking EFL students (Rose 1998). In similar ways, Japanese learners of English had access to the same types of refusal strategies as do native speakers (Houck and Gass 1996, Robinson 1992, Takahashi and Beebe 1987)[2] and Cantonese EFL students offered the same types of compliment responses as do English native speakers, regardless of proficiency (Rose 1998).

The accessibility of conventions of means, irrespective of learners' stage of L2 development, ethnolinguistic background, and learning context (second versus foreign language; e.g., Takahashi and Beebe 1987) documented in the cross-sectional studies, is corroborated by the much larger number of single-moment investigations, that is, studies with a focus on second language use rather than learning. (See Rose [1998] for the distinction between cross-sectional and single-moment studies in interlanguage pragmatics.) The single-moment studies demonstrate that the realization strategies for the major speech acts examined to date are stable across learners, as they are across native-speaker populations (Kasper 1998, Kasper and Schmidt 1996). An in-depth explanation of speech act realization strategies as candidate universals is beyond the scope of this paper; however, we briefly want to suggest the following hypothesis: The conceptual properties ('rules,' 'conditions')[3] (e.g., Leech 1983, Searle 1969) are the main socio-cognitive resources for realization strategies that speakers can draw on. Consequently, speakers engaging in the 'same' communicative action will rely on the same strategies to perform such action.[4] Adult L2 learners (or even pre-adolescent children, as Rose [1998] has demonstrated) possess such universal pragmatic knowledge and will use it in second language contexts, their linguistic proficiency permitting. Apparently, the learners in the cross-sectional studies were beyond the threshold of L2 grammatical knowledge required for implementing the full range of speech act realization strategies. Two facts suggest that this was indeed the case. One is that the majority of cross-sectional studies compared intermediate and advanced learners to the exclusion of beginners; another is that, since all studies used as their method of data collection some form of elicitation, participants even in the lowest proficiency groups must have had a command of the target language good enough to fill in a discourse completion or rating questionnaire or engage in a roleplay. Thus, if beginning learners do not use certain speech act realization strategies because they are still below the required threshold of linguistic competence, the methods of data collection employed in the cross-sectional studies did not allow this proficiency effect to show up.

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In contrast to the conventions of means, learners at different proficiency levels use qualitatively and quantitatively different conventions of form to implement speech act strategies and select different strategies in comparable contexts. Scarcella (1979) designed three role-play situations to investigate the politeness strategies of beginning and advanced ESL learners, comparing them to native speakers of English. She found (among other things) that her subjects appeared to acquire politeness forms before acquiring the rules for their appropriate use. Trosborg (1987) used role-plays to compare the apologies of native speakers of English, native speakers of Danish, and three levels of Danish EFL learners. She found that the use of modality markers (e.g., downtoners, hedges, intensifiers) increased with proficiency across learner groups to a level closer to that of native speakers. Since the use of modality markers for native speakers of Danish was more than double that of native speakers of English, these results seem to indicate a clear developmental pattern (as opposed to pragmatic transfer). Both Scarcella (1979) and Trosborg (1987) noted that learners' repertoires of pragmatic routines and other linguistic means of speech act realization expand as their proficiencies increase. However, it is not clear from their studies whether the greater variety of linguistic material is simply a reflection of expanded vocabulary and syntactic structures, or whether the more advanced learners have developed a better command of the pragmalinguistic potential of lexical and syntactic devices. Detailed form-function and function-form analyses that could throw light on this problem are unfortunately in short supply in interlanguage pragmatics.

Takahashi and DuFon (1989) report that with increasing proficiency, the Japanese learners of English in their study moved from a preference for more indirect requestive strategies to more direct, target-like conventions. A similar development is reported by Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985), who looked at the perception of directness and positive politeness by NNS of Hebrew. In this study, however, learners' increasingly target-like perceptions of directness and positive politeness was associated with their length of residence in the target community rather than their L2 proficiency. In a study using production questionnaires, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) noted that learners' use of supportive moves in request performance followed a bell-shaped developmental curve, starting out with an under-use of supportive moves, followed by over-suppliance, and finally approximating a target-like distribution. This pattern reflected increasing L2 proficiency. In a role-play study based on the same data as her earlier apology study, Trosborg (1995) examined the requests, complaints, and apologies of three groups of Danish learners of English: secondary school grade nine, high school and commercial school, and university students. No proficiency tests were administered, but it was assumed that the three education levels also represented proficiency levels. Among the findings were a closer approximation of native-like request strategies with increased proficiency, which included higher frequencies of adjuncts to main strategies (e.g., upgraders, downgraders, supportive moves). Only slight differences were obtained across groups for main apology and

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complaint strategies, with a higher incidence of opting out among the lower proficiency groups.

Several recent studies have charted developmental patterns in L2 learners' speech act strategies that move in the direction of native speaker use or that resist convergence to target norms. Hill (1997) examined the request strategies used by Japanese EFL learners at three proficiency levels. He found that learners at all proficiency levels overused direct requests and underused nonconventionally-indirect requests (hints). With increasing proficiency, they decreased the direct strategies—mainly their use of imperatives—and showed little change in the hinting strategies. At the same time, they increased the use of conventionally-indirect requests almost up to native speaker level. However, the global trend towards native speaker use of conventionally-indirect requests concealed a number of microstrategic patterns that did not converge towards native speaker norms. 'Want' strategies (I want to/I would like to), hardly ever used by the British English native speaker controls, were overused from the beginning and remained on the increase as proficiency improved. The increase of ability strategies (can/could you) seen from low to intermediate did not continue at the advanced level; permission strategies (may I), though slightly on the rise, remained greatly underused; but willingness strategies (would you), while stable from low to intermediate, sharply increased at advanced level. The approximation of native speaker use of conventionally-indirect requests was thus an effect of overuse of the want and willingness strategies, a movement away from native speaker norms with increasing proficiency. One important lesson to be learned from Hill's study is that conflating individual strategies into macrocategories may be deceiving unless the pattern displayed at macro level reproduces the patterns of the subsumed strategies.

Hassall (1997) examined Australian English speakers' requests in Bahasa Indonesia as a foreign language, elicited through interactive roleplays. Although the primary goal of the study was to contrast native and nonnative speakers of Bahasa Indonesia, comparison of the learners at different proficiency levels resulted in several observations about pragmatic development. In the same vein as Hill (1997), Hassall found very different patterns of microstrategies hidden under learners' target-like use of macro strategies. Elided imperatives (*menu makannannya itu* 'the menu'), for example, were consistently used direct requests in the native speaker performance; yet only the high proficiency learners used this strategy. Hassall suspects a U-shaped learning pattern at work because, due to its syntactic simplicity, elided imperatives are available to beginning learners (as demonstrated by Ellis 1992) even though they did not show up in Hassall's own sample. Consistent with some previous studies (e.g., Trosborg 1995) but at odds with others (e.g., Hill 1997), Hassall found that 'want' statements (*saya mau* 'I want') emerged early and declined in the use of higher proficiency learners, consistent with target language use. The same pattern emerged for statement hints (e.g., *saya tidak ada pena* 'I don't have a pen'), suggesting that lower proficiency learners may opt for nonconventional indirectness because they lack convention-

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alized requesting routines rather than because of a strategic preference for indirectness. Hassall interprets the general results of his study—that learners have access to the same request strategies as native speakers but implement and distribute them differently—as lending support to Bialystok's (1993) two-dimensional model of pragmatic learning. According to Bialystok, adult learners can rely on already existing pragmatic representations but need to achieve control over appropriate L2 form-function matches. But Hassall also contends that acquiring new pragmatic knowledge is a major task for L2 learners, including, in the case of his study, 1) the appropriate contextual distribution of several direct request strategies, 2) the main L2 forms of internal modification, and 3) the selection of prefacing moves prior to direct questions.

As data collection procedures, Hill (1997) used a written production task while Hassall (1997) employed interactive roleplay. A compromise method of sorts, featuring oral but noninteractive discourse, was used by Rose (1998). In this study, he charted the development of EFL and Cantonese requests, apologies, and compliment responses by Cantonese-speaking primary school students at three grade levels using a cartoon oral-production task. In order to tease out maturational effects from pragmatic development, Rose elicited data from students at all three grade levels in their native Cantonese and in English as a foreign language by dividing intact classes into L1 and L2 respondents. There was a distinct movement from direct to conventionally indirect strategies, a progressive decline in opting out of requesting, and a higher frequency of supportive moves, apology adjuncts, and compliment-response adjuncts in the performance of the oldest group. However, there was little evidence of situational variation, indicating that students had more control over pragmalinguistic than sociopragmatic aspects of speech act performance.

Compared to the earlier work, one great plus of the cross-sectional speech act studies conducted within the last few years is their considerably improved methodology. It is now standard procedure to develop the instrument for the main investigation on the basis of preliminary studies in order to choose relevant contexts, control and vary context variables, and select appropriate linguistic material in the case of comprehension and assessment studies (e.g., Takahashi 1995 for one example). While much needs to be done in order to further develop valid and reliable research methods in interlanguage pragmatics, the general direction towards more sophisticated designs and procedures promises well for future cross-sectional studies based on elicited data.

LONGITUDINAL STUDIES

Compared to the cross-sectional studies, longitudinal interlanguage pragmatic research spans a much wider range. First, the pragmatic features that are examined include not only speech acts but also pragmatic routines, discourse markers, pragmatic fluency, and conversational ability—features which require study in a full discourse context. Second, most studies examine learners at the

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beginning stages of pragmatic development. Third, the settings of data collection include second language classrooms; in fact, there are now more within-classroom than outside-classroom studies. Fourth, an increasing number of the classroom studies are interventionist, investigating the effect of instruction on pragmatic learning. Methodologically, all of the above are reflected in a larger variety of research approaches and data types. In this section, we will review investigations examining pragmatic learning outside and inside of classrooms, leaving interventionist research for later discussion. Table 2 summarizes the non-interventionist longitudinal studies on pragmatic development.

Table 2: Longitudinal interlanguage pragmatic studies

Study	Focus	L1/L2 (n)	Proficiency	Data
Schmidt 1983	request	Japanese/ESL (1)	beginning	authentic discourse
Schmidt & Frota 1986	conversational ability	English/ Portuguese (1)	beginning	diary, conversations
Bouton 1992, 1994	implicature comprehension	various/ ESL (30)	advanced	multiple choice
Ellis 1992, 1997	request	Portuguese (1) Punjabi (1)/ ESL	beginning	authentic classroom discourse
Sawyer 1992	pragmatic particle *ne*	various/ JSL (11)	beginning	socioling. interview
Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford 1993	suggestion rejection	various/ ESL (16)	advanced	authentic discourse
Siegal 1994	communicative competence	English (3) Hungarian (1)/ JSL	intermediate-advanced	multiple
Kanagy & Igarashi 1997	routines	Am.English/ JFL (19)	beginning	authentic classroom discourse
Cohen 1997	pragmatic competence	Am. English/JFL (1)	beginning	diary

Schmidt's (1983) three-year longitudinal study of the acquisition of English by Wes, a Japanese adult who relocated to Hawai'i, is among the earliest studies of pragmatic development in a second language. Wes' early directives relied on a limited range of unanalyzed request formulas, frequent use of requestive markers such as *please*, the association of the verb morpheme *-ing* with requestive force (*sitting* for 'let's sit'), and an apparent transfer of Japanese sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic norms. At the end of the observation period,

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some of the request formula had been reanalyzed and were used productively by Wes—his use of imperatives had increased and his requests were more elaborated. However, some non-native features remained, such as the overextension of *can I* in *can I brought cigarettes* (for 'can you bring me cigarettes'). In another study, Schmidt and Frota (1986) followed Schmidt's acquisition of Brazilian Portuguese during a five-month stay in Brazil, relying on Schmidt's own language-learning journal as well as tape-recordings of four unstructured conversations in Portuguese between the two co-authors, recorded at approximately one-month intervals. The focus of the study is the various effects of instruction, interaction, and correction in SLA (and ultimately an argument for noticing), with the emphasis on the acquisition of grammatical morphemes. There is, however, some discussion of Schmidt's conversational abilities, which evidenced less use of repetition over time and a failure to acquire the pragmalinguistic abilities to answer Portuguese questions in the affirmative, due partly to the inappropriacy of a simple *sim* (yes) and the fact that affirmative responses often require correct marking of verbs for person and number. Both Wes's and Schmidt's data suggest that early pragmatic and morphosyntactic development interact, an issue that requires considerable further study.

Based on a two-year study examining the requests of two beginning ESL learners (aged 10 and 11) in a classroom setting, Ellis (1992; 1997) proposed three stages through which learners' ability to produce requests evolves. Early learners' utterances conveyed requestive intent through highly context-dependent, minimalist realizations, expressing the intended reference and illocution but showing no relational or social goals. For example, learners used statements such as *me no blue* for 'I don't have a blue crayon,' or direct formulaic requests such as *leave it, give me*. In the next stage, requests were mainly performed by means of unanalyzed routines (*can I have*, *have you got*) and illocutionary force was indicated by lexical cues (*please*, *maybe*). Towards the end of the observation period, the prepackaged routines were gradually unpacked and became increasingly available for productive use. For instance, ability questions as requests were now used as flexible sentence frames, shifting in perspective between speaker (*can I take book with me)* and hearer focus (*can you pass me my pencil).* Relational goals (politeness) were beginning to be overtly marked, albeit with a restricted range of strategies, such as modifying requests externally by giving reasons and internally by the lexical downgrader *please*. These three tentative stages of pragmatic development are congruent with early grammatical development and the important role of formulaic speech in beginners' interlanguage (cf. Ellis 1994). Over time, the two learners' use of direct requests decreased, while conventionally-indirect requests increased, a pattern also found in L1 pragmatic development and cross-sectional interlanguage pragmatic studies (Hassall 1997, Hill 1997). Ellis also comments that the learners' range of request strategies achieved at the end of the observation period remained considerably more restricted than that of adult native speakers', suggesting, among other possible reasons, more limited input opportunities in the classroom setting.

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Turning from beginning to advanced ESL learners, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) conducted a longitudinal study of the development of suggestions and rejections by sixteen adult nonnative speakers of English in academic advising sessions. Even though the NNS students were increasingly successful in their interaction with their advisers over time, they did not learn how to mitigate their suggestions and rejections appropriately. The differential control that students achieved over sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic ability appeared to reflect their opportunities for feedback and input. Advisers provided feedback on the appropriateness of speech acts but not on that of realization strategies and forms (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1993). In a later study, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1996) proposed that the persisting inappropriacy of conventions of form may be due to a lack of input by peers in the same institutional roles.

The only longitudinal investigation addressing pragmatic comprehension rather than production is Bouton's (1992; 1994) work on advanced nonnative speakers' abilities to interpret implicature in English. He found that over a four-and-a-half year period, 30 nonnative-speaking subjects from his earlier study (of an original 436, Bouton 1988) had significantly higher scores on a test for interpreting implicature. Although this shows that learners can develop the ability to interpret implicature, it does not—nor did it intend to—address the process of that development.

There is now a steadily increasing body of literature on pragmatic development in Japanese as a second or foreign language, most of it focusing on beginning learners. The earliest work, Sawyer's (1992) one-year study of the acquisition of the affective particle *ne* by adult JSL learners, revealed late emergence of *ne* relative to grammatical particles and a progression from use in formulaic utterances with high saliency and input frequency (*soo desu ne*) to limited more productive use. Ohta (1994) showed that teachers in an JFL setting used fewer types of affective particles with a lower frequency than native speakers in non-classroom conversation. To the extent that the teachers instructing Sawyers' JSL students displayed similar patterns, the late emergence of *ne* may be related to paucity of input in the classroom.

Kanagy and Igarashi (1997) examined English-speaking children's acquisition of pragmatic routines in a JFL immersion kindergarten, noting "a reduction in initial reliance on routine, elicited patterns at week four in favor of an increase over time in spontaneous, original L2 productions...by week eleven" (1997:256ff). This pattern is congruous with the ones observed in the studies of early pragmatic development by ESL learners (Ellis 1992; 1997, Schmidt 1983). A very different JFL study is reported by Cohen (1997), who kept a diary during his participation in a semester long course of first year accelerated Japanese. While Cohen did acquire some ability to perform such speech acts as requests, expressions of gratitude, and apologies, his pragmatic ability by the end of the course lagged far behind his expectations and prior language learning experience. Considering the teacher's structural, rote memorization approach, and the very

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limited learning opportunities outside the classroom, it comes as no surprise that although Cohen's classroom performance according to the syllabus was very successful, his ability to use the target language effectively in communication remained low.

One of the many interesting insights reported by Cohen is his resistance to certain target sociolinguistic practices, such as using honorifics when speaking about a higher status person to an equal or lower status interlocutor. The issue of resistance is more fully explored in the most comprehensive study of pragmatic and sociolinguistic development in L2 Japanese to date. Siegal (1994; 1996) followed the pragmatic development over an eighteen-month period of four "white western upper-middle-class women between the ages of 21 and 45 of intermediate to advanced Japanese language proficiency studying Japanese" (1996:359) in Japan. Siegal draws on subjectivity theory and a wide range of qualitative data, including language learning journals, learner interviews, and audio-taped interactions. Among the most significant findings of this study are the mutual influences of language attitudes and proficiency: As learners gained the necessary proficiency in Japanese to understand and potentially make use of the normative Japanese female style, they consciously chose to resist what was to them a socially unacceptable self-image. Siegal's extensive data base and thick description provide important insights into the role of learner subjectivity in pragmatic development. More such work needs to be carried out to further our understanding of this important dimension of L2 pragmatic learning.

Because most of the longitudinal studies rely on data collected in authentic settings of language use, they have the potential to shed light on the relationship between social and institutional contexts and pragmatic development, and many of the studies reviewed here adopt this perspective. While the interaction of pragmatic and grammatical learning can be examined through different kinds of research approaches, longitudinal studies of socially-situated authentic data provide privileged access to the interaction of social contexts and L2 pragmatic learning.

TRANSFER AND PRAGMATIC DEVELOPMENT

Pragmatic transfer has been attested in many of the nondevelopmental studies comparing interlanguage performance with corresponding L1 and L2 data (Maeshiba, *et al.* 1996, Takahashi 1996 for review). Here, we will consider research addressing the relationship of pragmatic transfer and development. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) advanced the hypothesis that L2 proficiency is positively correlated with pragmatic transfer. While their own study on refusals performed by Japanese learners of English at two different proficiency levels did not demonstrate the predicted proficiency effect, several studies found that learners' limited L2 knowledge prevented them from transferring complex L1 conventions of means and form (Blum-Kulka 1982; 1991, Olshtain and Cohen 1989). Cohen (1997) reported that he intended to adhere to implementations of the Quantity and Manner maxims common in mainstream North American culture,

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which would have amounted to talking more and being more specific than appropriate in Japanese. But since his low degree of L2 knowledge and control prevented the plan from being implemented, Japanese conversational norms were involuntarily observed. None of the cited studies, however, examined the performance of learners at different proficiency levels; therefore, they do not provide conclusive evidence for the positive correlation hypothesis.

Maeshiba, *et al.* (1996) specifically examined the positive correlation hypothesis in two groups of Japanese ESL learners and found that the intermediate learners transferred more apology strategies from Japanese to English than the advanced group. However, Hill (1997) found evidence for negative pragmalinguistic transfer in his more advanced group with the syntactically complex *I would like you to VP* strategy; such transfer was absent in the lower proficiency learners. One possible explanation for the different findings by Hill (1997) and Maeshiba, *et al.* (1996) is that apology strategies in Japanese and English vary less in terms of syntactic complexity than request strategies do. How exactly the grammatical complexity of speech act strategies in L1 and L2 and pragmalinguistic transfer interrelate developmentally has not been studied thus far.

While the phenomenon of pragmatic transfer is well documented, the conditions of transfer and especially its interaction with other factors is less clearly understood. Reminiscent of Kellerman's psychotypology (1983), studies by Olshtain (1983) and Robinson (1992) suggest that learners may be more prone to transfer their pragmatic L1 knowledge when they hold a universalist view as opposed to a relativist perspective on pragmatic norms. To date, only one interlanguage pragmatic study has been carried out with an explicit focus on transferability. Takahashi (1995; 1996) reported that Japanese learners of English found several indirect request strategies differentially transferable and their transferability perceptions interacted with the degree of imposition implied by the requestive goal. While Takahashi had found a proficiency effect in her 1993 study with ESL learners in Honolulu, she found no main effect for proficiency in her 1996 study with EFL students in Japan, suggesting that the EFL classroom did not provide learners much opportunity for developing pragmalinguistic awareness in L2.

Some studies demonstrate that (negative) pragmatic transfer diminishes with length of residence in the target community rather than with proficiency (e.g., Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1986, Olshtain and Blum-Kulka 1985). Learners in an ESL context produced more target-like refusals (Takahashi and Beebe 1987) and assessed the politeness of request strategies more like L2 judges (Kitao 1990) than EFL learners. Kondo (1997), however, examining Japanese learners' apology performance before and after one year of homestay in the US, presents a more complex picture: While these learners approximated or even outperformed native *speakers of American English in their use of the apology strategies such as lack of intent, explanation, and repair offer, they also increased their use of admission of* fact and concern for hearer, following, and in fact overshooting, the native

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Japanese norm. Kondo cites the positive correlation hypothesis as an explanation of the increased negative transfer.

INSTRUCTED LEARNING OF L2 PRAGMATICS

Several studies have examined the input and interaction opportunities for pragmatic learning in language classrooms. Compared to language use outside the classroom, studies of teacher-fronted classroom discourse have demonstrated a narrower range of speech acts (Long, *et al.* 1976), a lack of politeness marking (Lörscher and Schulze 1988), shorter and less complex openings and closings (Kasper 1989, Lörscher 1986), monopolization of discourse organization and management by the teacher (Ellis 1990, Lörscher 1986), and consequently a limited range of discourse markers (Kasper 1989) and a much reduced use of affective particles in teacher talk (Ohta 1994). However, while in a more student-centered form of classroom organization students will perform more *types* of speech acts (Long, *et al.* 1976), they do not necessarily use more adequate conventions of means and form. In ESL classes, Porter (1986) observed that NNS-NNS interaction in small groups did not supply relevant input on socially appropriate expressions of opinions and (dis)agreement, a finding that points to possible restrictions of task-based language learning as far as the development of pragmatic competence goes. On the other hand, Poole (1992) and Lim (1996), adopting a language-socialization perspective, demonstrated how cultural information is conveyed implicitly through teacher-student interaction in second and foreign language classrooms.

A topic attracting increasing attention is the teachability of pragmatic information and the most effective approaches to instruction in L2 pragmatics. So far, studies have addressed such learning goals as the following:

- the comprehension of different types of implicature by advanced ESL learners (Bouton 1994) and high intermediate EFL students (Kubota 1995),
- complimenting and responding to compliments (by intermediate-advanced EFL/ESL, Billmyer 1990),
- apologizing (by advanced EFL, Olshtain and Cohen 1990),
- discourse management and a variety of initiating and responding speech acts (by high-intermediate EFL, House and Kasper 1981),
- pragmatic fluency (by advanced EFL, House 1996),
- routine formulae and conversational management (by intermediate EFL, Wildner-Bassett 1984, and by beginning GSL, Wildner-Bassett 1994),
- complaints and refusals (by advanced ESL, Morrow 1996),
- and pragmatic routines (by beginning JFL, Tateyama, *et al.* 1997).

Results are encouraging, suggesting that most pragmatic features are indeed teachable. Instruction in pragmatic information is generally facilitative and necessary when input is lacking or less salient (e.g., for some types of implicature, Bouton 1994). Explicit instruction yields better results than implicit teaching;

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however, while explicit teaching is helpful for consciousness raising, it may be less effective for some aspects of skill development. House (1996) found that conversational responses were the only component of pragmatic fluency that did not improve through consciousness raising and conversational practice. This limitation of instructed pragmatic learning can be explained in terms of Bialystok's (e.g., 1993) notion of control of processing. Fluent and appropriate conversational responses require high degrees of processing control in utterance comprehension and production, and such complex skills may be difficult to develop through the few occasions for practice available in foreign language classroom learning.

CONCLUSION

The reviewed literature suggests two main lines of inquiry for future research. Research of a predominantly cognitive/linguistic orientation will address the relationship of grammatical and pragmatic development, including the question of how learners acquire the pragmatic meanings of grammatical and lexical material. Such issues call for more systematic and detailed linguistic and pragmalinguistic analysis than has been seen in most interlanguage pragmatics research to date. In order to understand the cognitive and interactional processes at work in pragmatic development, research has to examine how principles of second language learning and instruction apply to pragmatics. For instance, while the general requirement of 'noticing' (e.g., Schmidt 1993; 1995) is directly applicable (since it refers to a cognitive activity that is neutral vis-à-vis the noticed object), and a 'focus on form' (Doughty and Williams 1998) can be extended to conventions of means and form (the pragmalinguistic end of pragmatics), it is much less clear how a focus on form and such instructional techniques as recasting might be translated to sociopragmatic information.

Research with a mainly sociocultural focus will explore the relationships amoung cultural values, learner subjectivity, and pragmatic learning. There is mounting evidence that divergence from native norms does not always stem from pragmatic or linguistic incompetence but may be a more or less deliberate choice on the part of the learner not to participate in target practices. The interrelation between individual differences and pragmatic development is virtually uncharted territory except for some promising pointers in Schmidt's (1983) early study and recent work by Peirce (1995) and Siegal (1996). Whether investigated in the traditional context of attitude and motivation research or in contemporary theories of identity and subjectivity, there is a vast field to explore, not least in light of Schumann's (1997) recent proposal of a neurobiology of affect and its relationship to L2 learning. Importantly, in order to avoid simplistic generalizations of context-free 'attitudes' and pragmatic development, such studies should start out with an assumption that learners' communicative actions, much like anybody else's, are embedded in local contexts and that learners' willingness to converge to, or insistence on diverging from, target practices is subject to change across contexts of interaction. Particularly intriguing are the questions of whether and how acculturation and dis-identification processes change over time (in what types of

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encounters, with what variables contributing to either change) and how both processes interact with pragmatic development.

NOTES

1. The term *pragmalinguistic* refers to knowing that the linguistic form conveys the right pragmatic purpose. This term is usually complementary to *sociopragmatic*, which refers to knowing that a linguistic form has specific social conditions for appropriate use.

2. Houck and Gass (1996:53) note that, in addition to the refusal strategies commonly identified in the literature, their learners also used such strategies as confirmations, requests for clarification/information, and agreement. The first two strategies are speech act-independent repair strategies, particularly well-known in SLA from studies on interactional modification; the third strategy is by definition not a refusal. Houck and Gass thus do not provide evidence for hitherto uncovered learner-specific refusal strategies.

3. The category of speech act itself is contested among scholars (e.g., Levinson 1983 for a critique) and obviously this is not the place to enter into a debate about this fundamental issue in pragmatic theory. Let it suffice to point to the linguistic fact that every known language has illocutionary verbs or expressions denoting emic categories of communicative action. Consequently, at the very least, the metapragmatic practices of speech communities define an *explanandum* that pragmatic theory has to address.

4. It is important to distinguish the abstract, socio-cognitively constrained strategies of communicative action from the following performance issues: 1) their (linguistic or nonlinguistic) implementation, 2) speakers' rights and obligations in using such strategies as well as in performing the communicative act itself, 3) the contexts in which different strategies are seen as appropriate, and 4) the cultural meanings attributed to the communicative act and its realization strategies by community members. The latter issues are demonstrably ethnolinguistically specific whereas the former is not.

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Bouton, L. F. (ed.) 1997. *Pragmatics and language learning monograph series,* Volume 8. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The *Pragmatics and language learning monograph series* is the only series of publications (in the US and internationally) entirely devoted to cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. This volume includes selected papers from the 1996 Pragmatics and Language Learning conference. While all volumes in this series include contributions on various aspects of interlanguage pragmatics, most papers in the 1997 collection address issues of pragmatic development, instruction, and research methodology.

Gass, S. M. and J. Neu (eds.) 1996. *Speech acts across cultures*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

This book includes cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatic studies on speech act production and comprehension, some of which address developmental issues. Three chapters specifically discuss topics of research methodology, and the data-based studies illustrate a wide variety of approaches. As in many edited volumes, chapters are somewhat uneven in quality, but they will still be profitable for the critical reader.

Kasper, G. (ed.) 1996. *The development of pragmatic competence*. [Special issue of *Studies in Second Language Acquisition.* 18.2]

This Special Issue of *SSLA* includes two review articles, one on interlanguage pragmatics research with a focus on learning, the other on L2 learners' speech act production. It also features three important data-based studies on pragmatic development, examining input opportunities, transferability, and the possibilities and limitations of instruction. The three studies also exemplify different research approaches.

Kasper, G. and S. Blum-Kulka (eds.) 1993. *Interlanguage pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

This book includes two chapters discussing theoretical models that might account for pragmatic learning (or aspects of it), Bialystok's analysis/control model and Schmidt's noticing hypothesis. The reported data-based studies focus on L2 pragmatic knowledge and performance rather than learning. However, some of the addressed issues are also pertinent to L2 pragmatic development, such as pragmatic transfer, the function of indirectness in L2 discourse, the relationship between performance and assessment, and the emergence of intercultural styles. Studies illustrate a variety of data types and offer ample opportunity for research-methodological critique.

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