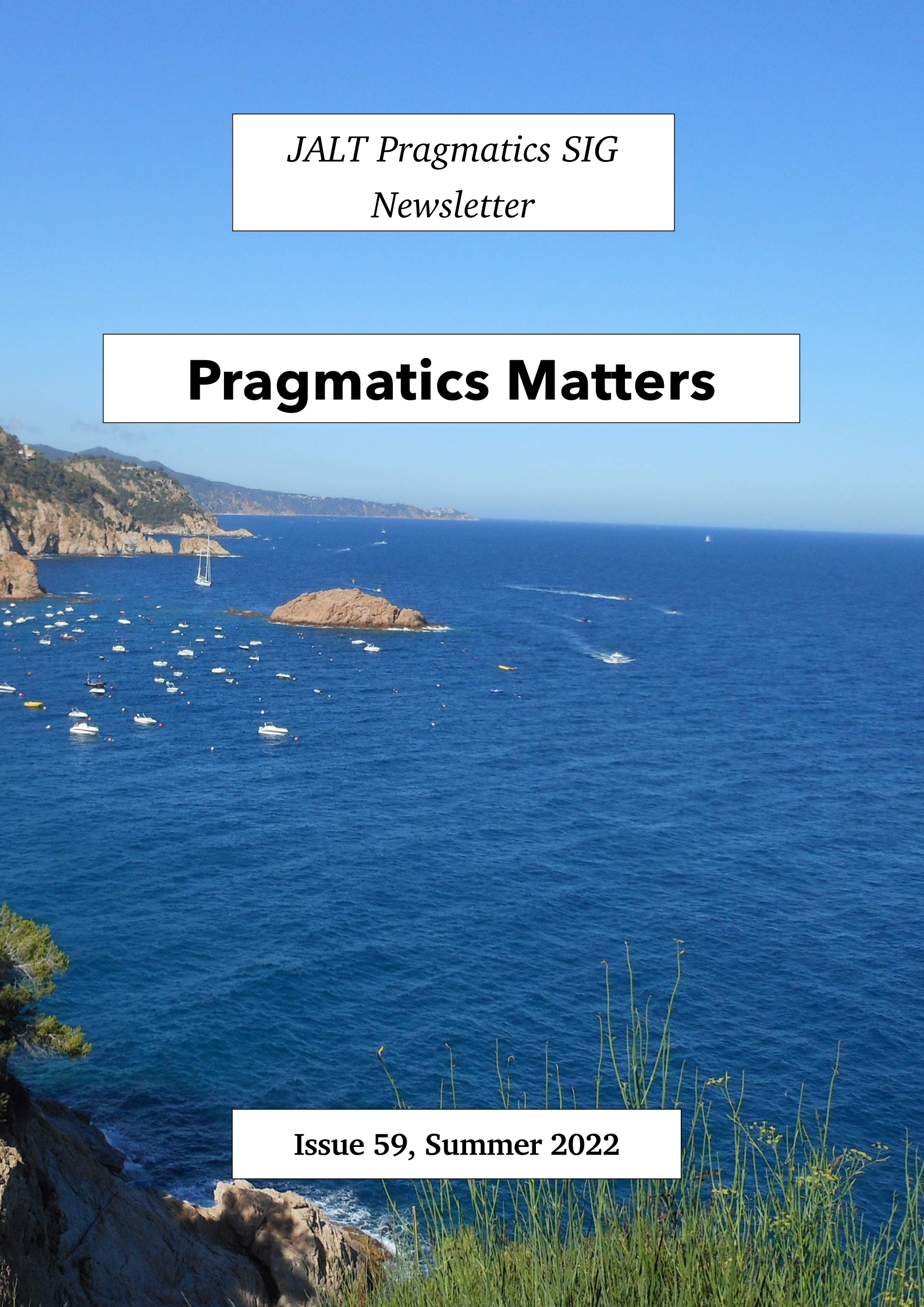
JALT Pragmatics SIG Newsletter

Pragmatics Matters



Issue 59, Summer 2022

From the Editor

Greetings to all members of the Pragmatics SIG. I hope your summer break has gotten off to a good start.

First of all, thank you to our contributors, who, in spite of their busy schedules, submitted contributions to this newsletter.

We have three articles in this issue. Michael Walker contributed an article using Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the film *Whiplash*, looking at expressions of power. Paul Richards' contribution is an article about the role of feedback in teaching pragmatics, looking at issues and examples related to both English and Japanese. Troy Russell has followed up on his article in the last issue about backchanneling with an article specifically about backchannelling continuers, including a lesson plan.

In addition, we have reports on presentations from JALT's International Conference on Teaching and Learning in November 2021. The conference had a good number of excellent presentations related to pragmatics, and we will have summaries in this issue and in the following issue. First of all, we have summaries of their presentations contributed by the speakers at the Pragmatics Forum. They are "Managing Topics in Peer Interaction: Some Pedagogical Implications" by Benio Suzuki, "Translanguaging Interactions in a Hard-CLIL Classroom" by Corey Fagan, and "What Does a Multimodal Approach Tell us about Classroom Interaction?: From a Language Socialization Perspective" by Masaru Yamamoto. In addition, Robert Olson contributed summaries of a presentation by Vahid Rafieyan on how pragmatic knowledge influences the translation process and one by Jeffrey Martin on conversational analysis of a dialogue involving an English-speaking learner of Japanese. Kathleen Kitao summarized a presentation by Steve Coyne and Yoko Kita on teaching small talk to elementary school students of English.

For the next issue of the newsletter, we are accepting contributions related to ideas for teaching elements of pragmatics, aspects of pragmatics, a pragmatics-related presentation you'd be interested in reporting on, etc. If you would like to contribute, please email me at kkitao217@yahoo.com.

Kathleen Kitao

Editor

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Research Article

Examining the Film Whiplash through Critical Discourse Analysis

MICHAEL WALKER

Asia University, Email: michael@asia-u.ac.jp

The term 'discourse analysis' from which Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) derives is not a singular approach but includes a variety of methods, ranging from simple linguistic analysis, where the focus is purely on language, to ethnomethodological analysis where it is assumed language plays a key role in constructing social reality (Hammersley, 1997, p.237). The emergence of CDA as a branch of discourse analysis came about in no small part because of studies headed by key figures such as Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak, who sought to extend the concept of discourse analysis beyond a descriptive approach into something more critical. According to Fairclough (1985) "adopting critical goals means aiming to elucidate naturalizations, and more generally to make clear social determinations and effects of discourse which are characteristically opaque to participants" (p. 739). Wodak offers similar terminology when she explains the purpose of CDA is to analyse "opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language" (Wodak, 2011).

A key issue here, as highlighted by Wodak is the establishment and maintenance of power. Within the field of CDA, an interchangeable label for power is hegemony, a term pioneered by Antonio Gramsci which he explains as "supremacy of one group or class over other classes or groups; it is established by means other than reliance on violence or coercion" (Gramsci, cited in Haugaard & Lentner, 2006, p. 27).

Archer, Ajimer and Wichmann (2012, p.31) expanded Gramsci's definition of hegemony by claiming it involves a dominant group persuading subordinate groups to accept the *naturalness* of their ideologies and values (authors' italics). These were the same 'naturalisations' Fairclough referred to as 'background knowledge' (BKG for short) so integrated it is now accepted as 'common sense' (Fairclough, 1985, p. 739). The role of CDA, therefore, is to simultaneously raise awareness about these assumed ideologies and to expose any hidden meanings embedded within discourse that have ceased to be questioned.

How this relates to pragmatics, and language in general, is the enforcement of power relies as equally on the manipulation of discursive form as it does on brute force. Wodak (2011, p. 40) uses the phrase 'discursive practices' and states such use of language can have significant ideological effects and contribute to producing and reproducing unequal

power relations. What Wodak is referring to is not just the language of direct speech but also the indirect or implied utterances that are context-dependent and have the ability to influence power. This falls firmly into the field of pragmatics, and models such as implicature, speech acts and politeness theory can all be incorporated into CDA.

In attempting to theorise CDA, Fairclough (1992, p. 73) established a three-dimensional framework that consists of text, discursive practice and social practice. The first dimension, discourse-as-text is concerned with how vocabulary, grammar and text structure are arranged (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 448). Discursive practice involves the process by which text is produced, distributed and consumed (Fairclough, 1992, p. 78). The final area, discourse-as-social-practice relates directly to "the ideological effects and hegemonic processes in which discourse is a feature" (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 449). It is this social manipulation of power that will be the central focus of my analysis.

Let us now examine the 2014 *Whiplash* through the lens of CDA. The film centres around the relationship between Andrew, a promising jazz drummer, and Fletcher, the instructor who oversees the school's elite orchestra. Already within this context are a number of factors that cater toward Fletcher's position of power. French and Raven (cited in Archer et al, 2012, p. 131) identify different scenarios in which control can be exerted by one group or individual over another. These include 'reward power', which involve the controlling of an outcome; 'referent power' where the powerless want to become like the powerful; 'expert power', the desire to acquire expertise; and 'legitimate power', where there is a legitimate right to make demands over another (Archer et al, 2012, p. 131). Following this explanation, the authors go on to add:

> All four of these (power) scenarios could happen in an institutional context and, whilst it's easy to imagine that some of these might lead to an abuse of power in such settings, we should at least allow for the possibility that participants might also use the power they possess in an appropriate (i.e. a legitimate and not merely *legitimized*) way, given their role (Archer et al, 2012, p. 131)

Certainly, each of these are applicable to Andrew's relationship with Fletcher and later I will refer to this notion of abuse of power as opposed to legitimate power.

The context of scene one in the three-scene sequence is Andrew has just been accepted into Fletcher's elite orchestra. It is his first day and the following is a transcript of what takes place upon Fletcher's arrival:

1. FLETCHER: We got a squeaker today, people. Neiman. Nineteen years old. Isn't he
2. cute?
3. BAND MEMBERS: Nee-man.
4. FLETCHER: Alright gang. "Whiplash".

5. DRUMMER: Page. Page!
6. FLETCHER: Barker. That is not your boyfriend's dick. Do not come early. Bar 93.
7. Five-six-and-
8. FLETCHER: Stop. Now this one really upsets me. We have an out of tune player
9. here. Before I continue, would that player care to identify himself? No? Okay, maybe
10. a bug flew in my ear. One fifteen. Five-six-and-
11. FLETCHER: No. My ears are fine. We definitely have an out of tune player.
12. Whoever it is, this is your last chance. And there it went. Now either you are
13. deliberately playing out of tune and sabotaging my band, or you don't know you're
14. out of tune which I'm afraid is even worse. Reeds. Five-six-and-
15. FLETCHER: Bones. Five-six-and-
16. FLETCHER: He's here. Tell me it's not you, Elmer Fudd. It's okay. Play. Do you
17. think you're out of tune? What are you… There's no fucking Mars bar down there.
18. What are you looking at? Look up here, look at me. Do you think you're out of tune?
19. PLAYER: Um. Yes.
20. FLETCHER: Then why the fuck didn't you say so? I've carried your fat ass for too
21. long, Matts. I'm not going to have you cost us a competition because your mind's on a
22. fucking happy meal instead of on pitch. Jackson, congratulations, you're fourth chair.
23. Matts, why are you still sitting there, get the fuck out!
24. FLETCHER: For the record Matts wasn't out of tune, you were, Erikson. But he
25. didn't know and that's bad enough. Alright, take ten. When we get back the
26. squeaker's on.

What this shows is Andrew's first glimpse of the dominant 'ideological-discursive formation' (IDF) implemented by Fletcher. According to Fairclough, within an institution, there is a clearly dominant IDF "with its own discourse norms but also, embedded within and symbolized by the latter, its own 'ideological norms'" (Fairclough, 1985, p. 739). The abusive nature of Fletcher is Andrew's introduction to the manner in which interactions occur between instructor and students, beginning with Fletcher's degradation of Barker's sexuality (line 6). Initially, it is not clear whether Barker is gay but when, in the following scene, we see how Fletcher garners personal information from Andrew, it appears likely his slur on Barker's sexual orientation is accurate. One of Fletcher's strategies for asserting control is to gather background knowledge and then use that against the band member in a public forum.

How he achieves this through language, beyond the obvious effect of humiliation, involves the use of 'discursive formations' (Fairclough, 1992, p. 40). The theory, although presented by Fairclough, was in fact established

by Foucault who had a number of rules of formation, one of which concerned the formation of 'objects', or more specifically objects of knowledge (Fairclough, 1992, p. 41). The underlying assertion was that discourse doesn't just describe knowledge but is constitutive, meaning it contributes to the "production, transformation and reproduction of the objects (and, as we shall see shortly, the subjects) of human life (author's parenthesis) (Fairclough, 1992, p. 41).

Relating this back to Fletcher, his insult toward Barker is creating an object of knowledge (namely that Barker comes early) which, through his use of discursive formation, has now influenced reality. Likewise, when he goes on to insult Matts (line 17), it is obvious the trombone player is not looking down at the floor for a Mars bar, nor would he be thinking about a "happy meal" in the middle of a competition. But Fletcher constructs it as such and thereby determines an object of knowledge around Matts. The acceptance of this newly constructed reality is evident at the beginning of the following scene where Andrew is in the corridor, preparing to play.

1. PLAYERS: You know if Fudd spent half the effort into playing the trombone as he'd
2. done into demolishing cheeseburgers…

This opening line takes place as the other group members discuss Matts. They have adopted both Fletcher's nickname for him and the object of knowledge that he "demolishes cheeseburgers". It is a perfect example of how language is used to manipulate the way a group thinks and subsequently enforces the IDF. Blommaert and Bulcaen, when referring to Fairclough's discourse-as-social-practice claim "hegemony concerns power that is achieved through constructing alliances and integrating classes and groups through consent" (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 449). This is perfectly exemplified at the beginning of the scene. As it continues, the players leave, whereby Andrew is approached by Fletcher:

3. FLETCHER: Andrew. Parents musicians?
4. ANDREW: No.
5. FLETCHER: What do they do?
6. ANDREW: My, ah, Dad's a writer.
7. FLETCHER: Oh, what's he written?
8. ANDREW: Um, I guess he's more of a teacher, really.
9. FLETCHER: Oh. College?
10. ANDREW: Pennington High School.
11. FLETCHER: What about your mother, what does she do?
12. ANDREW: I dunno. She left when I was a baby.
13. FLETCHER: So, no musicians in the family. Well, you just gotta listen to the greats

14. then. Buddy Rich. Jo Jones. You know Charlie Parker became “Bird” because Jones
15. threw a cymbal at his head. See what I’m saying? Listen, the key is just to relax. Don’t
16. worry about the numbers, don’t worry about what the other guys are thinking. You’re
17. here for a reason. You believe that, right?
18. ANDREW: Yeah.
19. FLETCHER: Say it.
20. ANDREW: I’m here for a reason.
21. FLETCHER: Cool. Alright man. Have fun.

The importance of this discourse is that, unbeknownst to Andrew, Fletcher is already asserting his power over him. The question of how he is doing this can be elucidated by van Dijk (1993) who explains:

> One element of such complex access patterns is more or less controlled or active access to the very communicative event as such, that is, to the situation: some (elite) participants may control the occasion, time, place, setting and the presence or absence of participants in such events. In other words, one way of enacting power is to control context. (p. 259-260).

Fletcher has isolated Andrew from the rest of the group, extracted personal information from him and ordered Andrew to repeat his words. He has given an impression of support and encouragement to promote Andrew’s impression of himself. From a discourse perspective, he has also defined the parameters in which an interaction occurs, namely that Fletcher asks the questions, Andrew (or any other band member) answers and when instructed, repeats what Fletcher says. All of this will come into play in the following scene and perfectly highlights point five of Fairclough and Wodak’s eight principles of CDA, namely that discourse cannot be separated from what has preceded it nor what follows (Paltridge, cited in Murray, 2015, p. 1). It is for this specific reason I chose to present a sequence of scenes rather than just one in isolation.

Continuing with the analysis, we can now move to the third scene where Andrew plays with the band for the first time. The opening is as follows:

1. FLETCHER: Alright gang, “Whiplash”, a little under tempo. Neiman, just do
2. your best. Five-six-and-
3. FLETCHER: Let’s hear some fills. We got Buddy Rich here.

Fletcher is again maintaining an attitude of encouragement toward Andrew but now in front of the band. Interestingly, in my research for this essay, I found no mention of what I believe Fletcher is doing here by adopting this initial position of support so I will put forward my own hypothesis.

Fletcher has clearly implemented a dominant IDF which has become "naturalized". Fairclough (1985, p. 751) summarises this as "ways of talking and ways of seeing". Once this behaviour becomes so established as to no longer be challenged, the IDF is now considered fully naturalized, that is to say it has become non-ideological 'common sense' (Fairclough, 1985, p. 739). Even more powerfully, the IDF comes to be viewed not just as a representation of the individual (in this case, Fletcher) but of the entire institution (Shaffer). Fairclough explains it as:

> … these forms will tend to be perceived first as norms of the institution itself, and second as merely skills or techniques which must be mastered in order for the status of competent institutional subjects to be achieved. These are the origins of naturalization and opacity. (Fairclough, 1985, p. 752).

At this stage, Andrew has not been fully exposed to, nor does he accept the IDF Fletcher has implemented within the band environment. This was evident in his reaction to the sacking of the overweight trombone player, which was in stark contrast to not only the acceptance by but the implicit cooperation of the other members. What I suggest Fletcher is doing in these initial lines of the scene is playing to Andrew's expectation or 'background knowledge' so as to highlight the vast difference between his representation and the one Fletcher will be shortly instilling. This is essentially a strategy of ensuring maximum emotional impact by exposing a diametrically opposed perspective. Within the context of introducing a subject to an unfamiliar IDF, it would seem a powerful method of initiation and I suggest accounts for Fletcher's initial attitude.

After these opening lines, the first shift in tone takes place as Fletcher stops Andrew when he detects an error.

4. FLETCHER: A little trouble there. Let's pick it up at 17. Ready? Five-six-and-
5. FLETCHER: Not… not quite my tempo. Here we go. Five-six-and-
6. FLETCHER: Downbeat on 18. Okay. Here we go. Five-six-and-
7. FLETCHER: Bar 17, the "and" of 4. Got it? Five-six-seven-
8. FLETCHER: Not quite my tempo. It's all good. No worries. Here we go.
9. FLETCHER: You're rushing. Here we go. Ah- ready? Okay, five-six-and-
10. FLETCHER: Dragging just a hair. Wait for my cue. Five-six-seven-
11. FLETCHER: Rushing.
12. FLETCHER: Dragging.

Fletcher maintains an encouraging tone and his level of politeness has the effect of softening his dissatisfaction. As previously mentioned, CDA incorporates several pragmatic models into its analysis and although an exploration of politeness theory is outside the scope of this particular paper, here we can see that referring to Leech's Politeness Principle (1983) for example, would provide an even greater understanding of Fletcher's tactics in this exchange. Through the use of qualifiers like "little" and "not quite" and "just a hair", Fletcher is minimising disagreement so that Andrew doesn't lose positive face. Confusingly, while these politeness strategies are being employed, simultaneously Fletcher refuses to let Andrew move forward. What is happening, though Andrew is still yet to realise it, is he is now being personally introduced to the first stage of Fletcher's IDF; namely that Fletcher alone determines quality of performance and will not progress until he is fully satisfied. Fletcher's use of musical jargon and contrasting criticisms see Andrew become quickly flustered, not just by his instructor's scrutiny but also by the rest of the band that a few moments before he believed he was impressing.

The next action that takes place, which is not in the transcript but is necessary to understanding the context, is Fletcher stops interrupting and allows Andrew to play. As he does so, Fletcher walks across to a chair, picks it up and flings it at Andrew's head. Everyone stops playing whereby the following exchange occurs:

13. FLETCHER: Why do you suppose I just hurled a chair at your head, Neiman?
14. ANDREW: I… I don't know.
15. FLETCHER: Sure you do.
16. ANDREW: The tempo?
17. FLETCHER: Were you rushing or were you dragging?
18. ANDREW: I… I don't know.
19. FLETCHER: Start counting.
20. ANDREW: Five-six-seven-
21. FLETCHER: In four, dammit! Look at me.
22. ANDREW: One-two-three-four. One-two-three-four. One-two-three-four.
23. FLETCHER: Now, was I rushing or was I dragging?
24. ANDREW: I don't know.
25. FLETCHER: Count again.
26. ANDREW: One-two-three-four. One-two-three-four. One-two-three-four.
27. FLETCHER: Rushing or dragging?
28. ANDREW: Rushing.
29. FLETCHER: So you do know the difference? If you deliberately sabotage my
30. band, I will fuck you like a pig. Now are you a rusher or are you a dragger, or

31. are you going to be on my fucking time.
32. ANDREW: I'm going to be on your time.

Whilst Andrew is counting, Fletcher is slapping him on every 'four' count. The particularly confronting issue for Andrew is the timing of Fletcher's slaps are so precise, it is impossible to answer the rushing or dragging question. Once again, the key point of exposure for Andrew is the realisation his only point of accountability is in the meeting of Fletcher's expectation. However, what Andrew is also quickly realising is that this expectation is unattainable and so comes a further expansion of the IDF, namely that every player is at the whim of Fletcher's judgement. When Andrew finally answers the question (line 28), Fletcher subjects Andrew to his first torrent of abuse. He uses the metaphor "fuck you like a pig" to completely debase Andrew's standing, not just in front of the others, but within himself. It is worth noting that just a few minutes prior Fletcher had Andrew claiming, "he was there for a reason", and now he is being compared to an animal associated with filth. Not only that, but there is also the added sexual component of Fletcher degrading him even further. Andrew is of course stunned by this turn around of attitude and Van Dijk (1993, p. 257) uses the term "mind management" when describing the exercising of power. This is certainly an apt assessment of what is taking place. The scene continues as follows:

33. FLETCHER: What does that say?
34. ANDREW: Quarter note equals two fifteen.
35. FLETCHER: Count me a two fifteen.
36. ANDREW: One-two-three-four. One-two-three-four. One-two-three-four.
37. FLETCHER: Jesus fucking Christ. I didn't know they allowed retards into
38. Shaffer. Am I to understand you cannot read tempo. Can you even fucking
39. read music? What is that?
40. ANDREW: Eighth note.
41. FLETCHER: Yes. What is that?
42. ANDREW: Dotted sixteenth note.
43. FLETCHER: Sight read measure one-o-one.
44. ANDREW: Bababababababa.
45. FLETCHER: What are you, in a fucking acapella group? Play the goddamn
46. kit.
47. FLETCHER: Stop. Now answer my question. Were you rushing rushing or were you
48. dragging? Answer!
49. ANDREW: Rushing.

Fletcher now adopts a different tact by questioning Andrew's competence. This imposes the presupposition that Andrew cannot read tempo and is by extension, a retard. Once again, the use of a pejorative label further strips Andrew of any empowerment in standing up to Fletcher. Interestingly, Fletcher adopts another tactic here and that is in the manipulation of context. Every question he has asked required a spoken reply by Andrew but when he does so at line 44, Fletcher twists the situation to make Andrew look stupid for not knowing the correct response was to play the drums. Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000, p. 458) claim "Power depends not only on access to resources but also on access to contexts in which resources can be used" and this manipulation of context is a good example of yet another strategy Fletcher uses repeatedly. Brown and Yule speak about "co-text" and state that "any sentence other than the first in a fragment of discourse, will have the whole of its interpretation forcibly constrained by the preceding text" (1983, p. 46). They later elaborate on this with the term "principle of local interpretation" which they explain as "the initial setting of the co-text determines the extent of the context within which the hearer will understand what is said next" (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 59). By manipulating this process so that context changes without warning, Fletcher is constantly undermining the way in which a player can respond to his attacks.

The final interaction of the scene provides one, last shift that completes Andrew's understanding of the IDF.

50. FLETCHER: Oh my dear God. Are you one of those single tear people? Do I
51. look like a double fucking rainbow to you? You must be upset. Are you upset?
52. ANDREW: No.
53. FLETCHER: No? So you don't give a shit about any of this.
54. ANDREW: I do give a shit about this.
55. FLETCHER: So, are you upset? Yes or fucking no?
56. FLETCHER: Yes, you are upset.
57. ANDREW: Yeah.
58. FLETCHER: Say it.
59. ANDREW: I'm upset.
60. FLETCHER: Say it so the whole band can hear you.
61. ANDREW: I'm upset.
62. FLETCHER: Louder.
63. ANDREW: I'm upset.
64. FLETCHER: Louder!
65. ANDREW: I'm upset.
66. FLETCHER: You are a worthless, friendless, faggot-lipped piece of shit whose

67. Mommy left Daddy when she figured out he wasn't Eugene O'Neil and who's
68. now weeping and slobbering all over my drum set like a fucking nine year old
69. girl. So for the final, father fucking time, say it louder.
70. ANDREW: I'M UPSET.
71. FLETCHER: Carl. Start practising harder, Neiman. "Whiplash", bar one twenty
72. five. Big boy tempo. Five-six-and-

Along with further use of metaphor (line 50) and a continued manipulation of context (line 52), Fletcher implements his two most potent weapons. Firstly, he has Andrew confess numerous times he is upset, and this mirrors the pattern established in scene two, where Andrew is forced to use exactly the same words as Fletcher. Only now, rather than a statement of encouragement, it is a confession of weakness. Fletcher follows up this public shaming by unleashing a final barrage of degradation before exploiting the knowledge Andrew provided on his parents. By homing in on this point of extreme sensitivity, the complete disassembling of Andrew is complete. This twin strategy is framed in such a way as to ensure there is absolutely no confusion surrounding Fletcher's IDF, which can be summed up as, regardless of how good a player might think he is, he will never be brilliant enough to earn Fletcher's respect. This mirrors the story Fletcher shared with Andrew in scene 2 (line 14) when he shares how Jo Jones threw a cymbal at Charlie Parker's head, and it was this that transformed him into one of the greats. At last, we get to the heart of Fletcher and his IDF and it is this final element I would like to conclude with.

Earlier I quoted Archer et al (2012) who referred to the difference between abuse of power and legitimate power. It is clear, when looking at the scenes presented in this essay, Fletcher blatantly abuses his power. That it is not endorsed by Shaffer becomes apparent later in the film when Fletcher is fired after Andrew and other students put forward complaints about his conduct. Fairclough (1985) references this when he states "institutions do indeed give the appearance of having these properties - but only in cases where one IDF is unambiguously dominant. I suggest that these properties are properly attributed to the IDF, not the social institution" (p. 751).

But what of Fletcher's intention? Andrew's stated objective was to become "one of the greats". Likewise, it is reasonable to assume the other students at Shaffer shared a similar desire. To attain this level of excellence undoubtedly required a degree of commitment none of them initially understood and so behind Fletcher's IDF, is yet another ideology; his players must come to realise what is necessary to achieve their goals. His words and actions therefore become not counter to but aligned with the desire of the group he dominates. Does this still mean he is abusing his power or is it now viewed within a more legitimate principle for anyone seeking success of pushing beyond what is comfortable? At the very end of scene 3 (line 70), Fletcher says to Andrew "start practising harder", which he in fact does and propels him on an entirely new trajectory of improvement. Would this have been the case without the stripping bare of Andrew's much more sedate belief in what he had to do?

I pose these questions because the persecution of Fletcher throughout my analysis was easy to correlate with much of the theory put forward by Fairclough and others. However, there was also a sense that I was negating what is one of the core principles of CDA, namely, that a discourse must be examined within the context of what has preceded it and what follows it. This however cannot just be defined by the confines of a single exchange but must spread across a much broader series of influences that could date weeks, months or ever years beforehand. How this translates into a viable research process I do not have an answer for, but given the vast scope of what power entails, any genuinely effective CDA examination must include a detailed account of how those being dominated fit into the equation. Their position in relationship to the IDF is as crucial to its understanding as those that enforce it and must incorporate a wider span of consideration than what I have presented within the limited scope of this essay or risk being a misrepresentation of the very scenario it is analysing.

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Michael Walker

Michael Walker has over 20 years of experience as an ESL educator in both Australia and Japan. He has taught general English at language schools, oral communication as an ALT on the JET program, and academic skills at tertiary level. He is currently based in Tokyo and teaches academic reading and writing skills to university students. His other interests include theatre and filmmaking which he incorporates into the classroom when applicable. His research areas include adopting creativity into curriculums and the impact of culture on learning attitudes.

Research Article

Thoughts on pragmatic feedback: Examples from English and Japanese

PAUL RICHARDS

Miyazaki International College

In this article, I reflect on my own thoughts and practices related to providing pragmatic feedback to language learners, while addressing concerns surrounding the role of corrective feedback in pragmatics instruction. Throughout this article I assume Crystal's (1995) influential definition of pragmatics as

> the study of language from the point of view of the *users*, especially of the *choices* they make, the *constraints* they encounter in using language in *social interactions* and the *effects* their use of language has on *other participants* in the *act of communication*" (as is cited in Kasper & Rose, 2002, p.2).

The potential for feedback to be face threatening to learners has been acknowledged since the earliest stages of interlanguage/L2 pragmatics research. Thomas (1983), for instance, proposed that teachers should be particularly careful when giving feedback on sociopragmatics (i.e., the social values that inform language use) as opposed to feedback on pragmalinguistics (i.e., the linguistic forms that encode social meaning), as learners may view this as more akin to feedback on grammar.

> correcting pragmatic failure stemming from sociopragmatic miscalculation is a far more delicate matter for the language teacher than correcting pragmalinguistic failure. Sociopragmatic decisions are *social* before they are linguistic, and while foreign learners are fairly amenable to corrections which they regard as linguistic, they are justifiably sensitive about having their social (or even political, religious, or moral) judgement called into question. (p. 104).

More recently, however, the very notion of *correction* has been identified as potentially problematic. For instance, Bardovi-Harlig and Yilmaz (2021) note that

> [i]nstructional pragmatics and CF are not natural allies. In fact, a disinclination to correction may be built into the DNA of L2 pragmatics because correction implies a right way to do things, whereas in pragmatics, the key concept is choice. (p. 431).

The contention between pragmatics and correction is evidenced by the limited number of studies that have investigated feedback (Bardovi-Harlig and Yilmaz identify only nine studies with research questions related to feedback). This illustrates a stark contrast between mainstream areas of second language acquisition research (e.g., vocabulary and grammar) where feedback plays a prevalent role in instruction, the operationalization of feedback types is theoretically scrutinized, and a great deal of experimental rigor is used to understand how features of feedback lead to differential learning outcomes. (e.g., Is the feedback implicit or explicit? Is it input providing/output promoting? Does it provide positive versus negative evidence? Does timing make a difference?)

Recently, teachers and researchers have also stressed the need for pragmatics instruction to reflect the global status of English. In the thought-provoking volume *Pragmatics pedagogy in English as an international language* (Tajeddin & Alemi, 2021), leading scholars grapple with the difficult tasks of defining, teaching, and assessing the pragmatics of English as a global language. Although many points of discussion go beyond the scope of this brief article, one area of consensus was on the need for teachers and researchers to recognize the variability of Englishes around the globe and to pushback against a de facto standard of appropriateness and politeness based on idealized, inner-circle, monolingual native speakers. The challenge here, however, is that if myriad versions of English are recognized as appropriate, the decision of when, why, and how to give feedback becomes more challenging for the instructor.

Resistance towards *correcting* features of pragmatics, however, is not unique to the case of English language pedagogy. Takenoya (2003), for instance, voiced the same concerns from Japanese language teachers in the United States:

> correction may make the instructors feel as if they are forcing the American learners to behave like Japanese, and sometimes, instructors feel as though they are acting like mothers who are teaching their young children the manners of society. To teach manners to a young child is acceptable because that is a mother's responsibility if the child is her own. To do the same, however, to college-age learners may not be easy. First of all, the learners are adults and usually adults are supposed to be done with the education of 'manner', and secondly, the learners are not the instructor's children (p. 196-197).

As a learner of Japanese, I (and I assume many other Japanese learners in the JALT Pragmatics SIG) can relate to wanting to develop my own Japanese language abilities while still not wanting to adopt all the linguistic conventions and social practices of the target language culture. Siegal (1996) and Ishihara and Tarone (2009) demonstrated this subjective component of pragmatics through interviews with Westerners living in Japan who expressed an attempt to maintain their own identity when speaking Japanese.

Given the discussion above, there may not appear to be much room for feedback in pragmatics instruction. The limited number of studies in this area, however, suggest that feedback

can be effective. Further, while research shows that parents and caregivers rarely correct the grammatical errors of children, the same is not the case for pragmatics (Blum-Kulka, 1990; Snow, Pearlman, Gleason, and Hooshyar, 1990). Indeed, feedback appears to be an integral component of how children are socialized into language communities.

Previous proposals regarding the provision of feedback in pragmatics instruction have emphasized the need to distinguish between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic targets (Thomas, 1983). Bardovi-Harlig and Yilmaz (2021) also recommend that instructors/researchers give impersonal feedback or that they provide delayed feedback. In the following sections I attempt to expand on this discussion through reflection on my own feedback practices.

1. Is this feature task-essential?

In a task-based approach, pragmatic features are worked into the curriculum when they interfere with the successful completion of a task. Task, here, refers to the real-world activities that learners need to do with language. These target tasks are then generally broken down to their component parts and are then presented to learners in increasing complexity until learners can fully simulate the real-world action (see Long, 2014). One benefit of the task-based approach is that it allows the instructor to give feedback according to each learner's needs. For instance, students who are capable of completing the basic objective of a task can be given feedback related to features of language that will help them achieve greater levels of success, and it is here that pragmatic feedback will often come into play.

I think it is important to emphasize that, in many instances, features of pragmatics/(im)politeness will be secondary to other components of language, and when evaluating whether a task has been completed successfully, it is important to resist attaching a "linguistic caboose" that requires learners to use a specific pragmatic form (Long, 2014, p. 333). For instance, although the English bi-clausal request forms (e.g., *I was wondering if x*, *Would it be possible to x*) have received considerable attention from teachers and researchers, we should not assume that the use of these forms are necessary for completing a task without some type of evidence indicating this to be the case. In many instances, simpler forms, such as c*ould you* or *would you*, will be acceptable.

Pragmatics, however, need not always play second fiddle to other features of language, as many activities do require a certain degree of pragmatic ability. For instance, the use of polite language may play a primary role in determining whether an exchange is successful in a job interview or in service encounters. Further, the need for learners to follow certain conventions of politeness may be more important for more advanced students, as an interlocutor's expectations of adherence to those conventions may increase in relation to the learner's proficiency.

In addition to considerations of task-essentialness, I also try to determine whether the student's use of language represents a viable option in the target language.

2. Does the learner's language represent a viable choice in the second language?

I feel that if we take seriously the view of pragmatics as *choice*, it is generally fair for the language teacher to provide *correction* of language use that does not represent a viable choice for competent speakers of the target language. Clear cases such as this can be difficult to identify, but they do exist. For instance, cross-linguistically, the use of titles and address terms clearly represents a complex matter of choice. In Japanese, however, *-san* is not used after one's own name. There is no facework accomplished by adding *-san* after one's name (with the possible exception of humor). It does not indicate that the speaker is proud or boastful (both of which are things learners should have the right to do if they so choose). This is simply something that is not done in Japanese, and therefore, I believe this can be treated as a lexical or grammatical error. If the student were indeed attempting to convey a sense of professionalism by this use of -san (e.g., Hi, I am Mr./Ms.), however, I would try work to provide examples of how the student could achieve this goal in a way that would be recognized by speakers in the target language. My decision of when to address this use of *-san*, however, would still be determined by the student's ability to accomplish the target task at hand.

3. Inform rather than correct

In cases where the student's use of language is a viable option in the target language, I aim to *inform* rather than correct learners. I believe this approach is consistent with Thomas' (1983) learner/learning centric approach to pragmatics instruction.

> it is the teacher's job to equip the student to express her/himself in exactly the way s/he chooses to do so—rudely, tactfully, or in an elaborately polite manner. What we want to prevent is her/his being unintentionally rude or subservient. It may, of course, behove the teacher to point out the likely consequences of certain types of linguistic behaviour.

To provide an example, when a student's language is more (im)polite than I would deem standard for the context – but still a viable option in the target language – I consider providing additional information to students to contextualize their language use. I believe that *informative feedback* can be contrasted with corrective feedback, as the purpose here is not to enforce the specific use or nonuse of a form on a learner, but to ensure they understand the language they are using and to provide them with options. To give an example, the sentence final particles *-yo* and *-ne* in Japanese can be used when casually accepting an invitation. Although both responses are possible, *ii-ne* (*sounds nice*) conveys a sense of enthusiasm, whereas *ii-yo (alright*) suggests the granting of permission and can indicate reluctance. If a student were to use *ii-yo* in this context, I may explain this difference and ask them to come up with their own situations for using *ii-yo* and *ii-ne*, as learners may desire to express such reluctance to an invitation. I believe the worst-case outcome in this scenario would be for a teacher to attempt to *correct* a student's use of *ii-yo* by telling the student it is

impolite, and for the student to conclude that *ii-yo* or just *-yo* itself is somehow impolite in all contexts. This would be a real problem because *ii-ne* would be equally, if not more, inappropriate, in response to a request such as the following: A: *pen-wo karite ii*? 'Can I borrow a pen?'

To date, little work has been published on teaching learners how to be impolite or direct, but as both polite and (im)polite language make up different sides to the same coin, it is reasonable to assume that learning when and how to be direct/impolite is essential for learning when and how to be indirect/polite. Therefore, it may prove helpful to explain when and where someone may use more direct language than to treat that language as a nonviable option. In the case where a learner refuses with [No], for instance, I may explain that this is how someone might refuse when ordering at a fast-food drive through: A: *Would you like to try our new crispy chicken sandwich*? B: *No.* (*Thanks.*) *Can I get a cheeseburger*? This practice also helps to move us away from teaching learners to avoid language that is natural and common due to wanting them to be hyper polite in classroom settings.

4. Continued reflexivity

In addition to task essentialness and whether or not the utterance produced by the learner is viable choice in the target language, I also try to consider the unique contexts of the school and classroom environments. For instance, Wang (2015) expressed disappointment at the finding that Chinese teachers and students preferred native speaker standards of appropriacy to those of *Chinese English.* Reflecting on students' and teachers' appraisals of the appropriacy of *Teacher + Name* (e.g., *Teacher Zhang*), Wang (2015) noted:

> These comments on Teacher Zhang again revealed a native speaker-oriented view of English. It seemed to say that whether certain practices of speaking English were proper needed to be gauged against native English cultures and conventions, but not the appropriateness of them to the actual communicating situations. Furthermore, these comments also implied that the participants did not sense the need to present the Chinese reality in English. It seemed that the participants knew Teacher Zhang was a conventional way to address teachers in Chinese, but to speak English, one needed to do as those English speakers did and forgot their native culture of being a Chinese. (p. 67).

It is important to recognize that Wang's point here is that the use of *Teacher Zhang* could be acceptable in this Chinese context, not that it should be appropriate in all contexts. As teachers, we must make informed decisions regarding the unique contexts of our learners, rather than simply deciding whether or not to give feedback on specific forms across all instances. In the case of students using Teacher + Name, the utterance is comprehensible, and it seems unlikely to interfere with the completion of any particular task, so depending on the goals of the learners, a teacher could be justified in not providing feedback. In my own experiences, however, I do give feedback to

students on the use of *Teacher* + *Name* because many students have shown confusion about my name and the names of other non-Japanese faculty at my institution. Particularly, students often seem unsure of which name is my first name and which is my last name, and some even vary between calling me *Paul*, *Richards*, and *Richard*. I believe this confusion is due to the fact that Japanese names are typically written with the family name first and because *Richard* is a well-known first name in Japan. This may not seem like much of a problem, but students have sent e-mails intended for me to other faculty/students because of this. For this reason, I generally go over my preferred terms of address and remind students that we do not use titles with first names in English when they call me *Teacher* or Mr. Paul. I do, however, recognize that some students may feel uncomfortable calling me by only my first name, so I do tell them they can use *Richards-sensei* if they choose. In this way, I make a conscious attempt to provide information related to language that I believe is due to confusion or that may lead to miscommunication (such as a misaddressed e-mail). I do, however, encourage learners to reflect their own identity in the classroom (in this case a desire to use a local address term with an instructor), even if this means the use of their first language.

While I recognize that I have barely touched the surface of the complexities of the decisions related to providing pragmatic feedback, I believe that the use of task-essentialness can be helpful to inform when to give feedback in the classroom. I also find the use of informative feedback to be more consistent with the goals of pragmatics instruction than corrective feedback. Certainly, practices will and should vary according to the goals of students, institutional constraints, and the unique classroom contexts created by the teacher and learners. Although making the decisions of when and how to provide feedback to learners may appear daunting, I believe the following statement from Ishihara and Cohen (2014) captures the necessary frame of mind we should take when giving feedback on pragmatics:

> teachers and learners can make it a joint goal to support the learners in avoiding pragmatic divergence when they do not want it and to deal with it gracefully when they do. (p. 95).

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Paul Richards

Paul Richards is an associate professor at Miyazaki International College. He recently (2021) finished a joint PhD in Second Language Studies and Linguistics at Indiana University, Bloomington. His dissertation, Computer simulations in pragmatics instruction: Experimentally investigating the effects of feedback on pragmatics, examines the effectiveness of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic feedback in a task-based, computer simulation of an academic advising session. You can read about his article "Pragmatic feedback on refusals in a computer simulated advising session", forthcoming in *Language Learning and Technology*.

Lesson Plan

Pragmatics-focused lesson plan – backchanneling continuers

TROY RUSSELL

Kanda University of International Studies, MA TESOL

Introduction & Rationale

The topic of this lesson plan is the instruction of "continuers", a type of English language backchanneling behavior, to Japanese EFL learners. Backchanneling is an aspect of pragmatic ability in spoken communication that allows conversation partners to "adhere to one another's speaking turns" (Cutrone, 2014). Olsher (2011b) defines continuers as "short listener responses produced during extended talk in progress such as storytelling or various kinds of explaining" that "display the speaker's awareness that the prior speaker has not finished what he or she intended to say" (p.171).

Backchannels are believed to be present in all languages, but backchanneling behaviors in English and Japanese have notable differences. For example, Maynard observed that American English speakers tend to use continuers, but Japanese speakers tend to favor the "support" function (Maynard, 1986; Wolf, 2008). Additionally, Japanese speakers tend to use backchanneling (or "aizuchi") more frequently than in English (Cutrone, 2005; Ike, 2010; Kita & Ide, 2007; White, 1989). Maynard (1986) states that Japanese speakers use 2.6 times more backchannels/aizuchi per unit of time than American English speakers.

Due to the importance and high frequency of continuers in English communication, along with differences in how speakers use continuers in English and Japanese, teaching continuers – including awareness raising and production practice – is important for Japanese EFL learners. Opitz (2016) states that backchanneling "is of high importance for native Japanese speakers learning to communicate in English because it is done differently in English and Japanese" (p 200). Cutrone (2005, 2016) also observed that inappropriate use and frequency of English backchannels by Japanese EFL learners resulted in L1 English speaking partners viewing them as impatient and inclined to interrupt.

In my context, pragmatics are, for the most part, addressed implicitly through role-play and conversation. However, the curriculum does feature activities that require learners to attend to pragmatic aspects as well as perform functions appropriate for different contexts. Most of this is done inductively. Many students express

difficulty understanding and producing various pragmatic features. This is perhaps due to the current curriculum's mostly implicit approach to teaching pragmatics. As research has shown "explicit teaching of pragmatics [...] seems to be more effective by and large than an implicit approach" (Ishihara & Cohen, 2014, p. 101). Continuers are a good candidate for a dedicated pragmatics lesson due to their high frequency of use in spoken English and differences in how they're realized in Japanese. As noted in Ishihara and Cohen (2014), it's necessary for teachers to adapt and create their own materials for teaching pragmatics and this is true in my context as well. Creating a lesson dedicated to pragmatics, with a focus on backchanneling, is a good next step in growing and improving the current curriculum.

Regarding the instruction of backchanneling, it is important for instructors to be aware that backchanneling behaviors (including the use of continuers) are tendencies, not rules. The ways in which backchannels are realized are "highly dependent on the speakers' personalities and the functions that they desire their backchannel utterances to convey" (Cutrone, 2010, p. 30). Furthermore, instructors should allow learners to demonstrate awareness and capability of performing any pragmatic feature without forcing them to adopt those pragmatic features in their own language use. A learner's "sense of identity is intertwined with how they use the language" and normative pragmatic behavior for any given language community may not be their goal (Ishihara & Cohen, 2014, p. 74). Instructors should note that it may take learners a long time to develop appropriate backchanneling behaviors. As Cutrone (2005) states, "teachers would be ill-advised to expect students to produce native-like backchannels soon after they are taught" (p. 270).

Background

Context: This lesson plan is designed for a one-to-one lesson in an English language school in Japan. The lesson makes use of the school's online home study platform for pre- and post-activities. The school's curriculum follows the communicative approach with a functional-notional syllabus. The curriculum's model language is American English. The school's curriculum gives opportunities for students to (mostly implicitly) gain pragmatic ability through engaging in conversations, role-plays, and other activities that involve interpreting intended meaning and adapting language to different social situations. However, this lesson would be the school's first to include explicit, empirically based instruction in pragmatics.

Students: Most students are 25–54 years old. Students range from beginner to advanced, but the majority are Intermediate level (roughly equivalent to CEFR B1, though the school's leveling system doesn't track with the CEFR). Students have a wide range of exposure to American-English-speaking language communities. However, the average student has not spent much time living in an English-speaking country, but may have limited interaction with English-speaking coworkers, clients, friends, or acquaintances.

Needs and expectations: The students have a variety of needs (travel, business, hobby, for formal study) and are in various fields (finance, IT, medical, science, students), but a common goal is to improve communicative competence. Students expect to learn communication strategies for real situations they will encounter in their lives.

Time frame: The lesson is 1 hour, consisting of a 5-minute online home study (pre-task), 40-minute lesson (in-class), and then another 5-minute online home study (post-task).

part one – audio or video – answer comprehension questions

Level: This lesson is intended for the school's High Intermediate students.

Goals: Students will be able to notice common forms of English continuers, build knowledge about their purposes and appropriate usage, and begin to produce them in spontaneous conversation.

Materials needed: shared PC, scripted dialogue audio and transcript, internet access (YouTube and podcast), lesson space (booth), dialogues and worksheets, pens/pencils and papers for notes

Description of Lesson

STAGE	AIMS	INTERACTIONAL STRUCTURE
[5 minutes] Home Study Pre-task – Awareness raising 1) Before the in-class lesson, student accesses the online home study and listens to a dialogue that illustrates use of continuers. 2) The home study then shows an optional transcript for the student to read by clicking to reveal it. 3) Then, the student is asked 2 simple, multiple choice content comprehension questions, 1 multiple choice speculative question (with no single definitive answer), and 1 short answer question	➢ To introduce the student to the lesson's target language through a scripted dialogue that showcases common forms of English continuers ➢ To encourage noticing and inductive rule making regarding the use of continuers with the last quiz question	Student (solo)
[5 minutes] Role-play, awareness raising continued	➢ To clarify comprehension questions from pre-task dialogue	Teacher-student

1) Warm-up, instructor and student clarify any dialogue comprehension questions 2) Instructor and student may role-play dialogue and switch roles, where the instructor can model correct usage and intonation for continuers	➢ To allow the student to practice using target language while the instructor models normative usage and intonation	
[10 minutes] Guided discovery of pragmatic norms > explicit instruction 1) Instructor asks student about use of continuers in dialogue (e.g. "Why do you think Louis says 'uh-huh', etc.?") 2) Instructor and student write ideas, rough rules on lesson paper 3) Instructor provides explicit instruction in what continuers are: short responses that show the other speaker that you understand and that they can continue to talk 4) Student listens to podcast audio clip while paying attention to continuers 5) Instructor asks how many continuers were heard, what were they, when did they happen? 6) The "rough rules" about continuers are revised	➢ To encourage inductive learning: pattern-discovery and rule-making through the student's analysis of the dialogue ➢ After inductive approach, use of explicit instruction is used to clarify misconceptions, fill in any gaps – research supports explicit instruction of pragmatics ➢ The learner will then listen to new audio after having created rough rules and while being primed to notice continuers ➢ Through further discussion with the instructor, the rules are revised to strengthen them	Teacher-student
[10 minutes] Identifying and practicing forms and functions of continuers through short dialogues 1) Students role play short dialogues that illustrate the use	➢ To get more structured exposure to continuers in various contexts	

of various continuers in different contexts – instructor models correct use and intonation of continuers 2) Students use the worksheet to select the function/context for each dialogue 3) Student may discuss answers, reasoning with instructor 4) Student and instructor swap roles so that the student can have controlled practice using continuers; for capable students, instructors are encouraged to continue conversations beyond what is on the page so students can begin using language with less scaffolding	➢ To get continued practice using continuers in order to practice normative usage and intonation	
[10 minutes] Introducing and discussing possible differences between usage of continuers in English and Japanese 1) Instructor plays 2 video clips that showcase usage of continuers in American English and Japanese 2) The instructor and student discuss possible differences between usage of continuers in Japanese and English 3) Instructor introduces observed differences between Japanese and English 4) The clips are played again and discussed	➢ To gain awareness of differences in the usage of continuers in Japanese and English ➢ To discuss these differences ➢ This is also a time to potentially highlight individual differences in usage of continuers and to point out that these differences are tendencies through additional English video	Teacher-student

[10 minutes] Unscripted conversation / role-play using continuers 1) Teacher and student practice conversation with encouraged use of continuers 2) Teacher should offer feedback on timing and intonation 3) Student and teacher can also use map directions activity to practice continuers	➢ To gain exposure to and experience using continuers in unscaffolded conversation ➢ To clarify any continuing questions or gaps in learner's understanding ➢ To begin to use continuers accurately in regards to an American English speaking model ➢ Students who prefer more support can use the map task to get more exposure to the use of continuers as well as using them – receiving directions lends itself to use of continuers to show understanding and to let the other speaker know they can continue with the directions	Teacher-student
[5 minutes] Home Study Post-task – guided listening and independent study 1) Student listens to audio from the UC Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English in online home study 2) Student is encouraged to listen to or watch media of their choice (interview, sitcom, film, etc.) and pay attention to the use of continuers	➢ To get final individual practice listening to and identifying continuers in natural speech ➢ To encourage independent and enjoyable learning	Student (solo)

Assessment

The best way to assess students' performance in this lesson would be through self-reporting. Instructor perception of the student's understanding and production of continuers could be one method of assessment, but this is highly subjective. This is even more pronounced when one considers individual variation in English speakers' use of backchanneling. Furthermore, we shouldn't expect learners to be able to produce accurate backchanneling behaviors

without years of practice. As stated by Olsher (2011a), "It may not be possible for students to master all the variations in form and function easily, but it is possible for them to become familiar with key patterns and learn particular functions that they can recognize, understand, and eventually use with more confidence in spontaneous discourse" (p. 160). Instructors should provide verbal feedback to students regarding their use of continuers in terms of frequency, timing/placement, and variety (use of "uh-huh", "right", etc.).

Materials and information by activity

1. [5 minutes] Home Study Pre-task – Awareness raising

Caveat: If a teacher wants to try a similar lesson, access to the company's online home study is not necessary – quizzes can be made with Google Forms. Videos from YouTube can be added, and audio can be exported to video for upload to YouTube, then linked in Google Forms.

Google Forms "home study" example (I've uploaded the audio here):

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1R86dVMpapJqtEyNLuvARGRAm8UpZtNuU7iP64DD-owM/

2. [5 minutes] Role-play, awareness raising continued

Dialogue transcript:

Mary: I'm back!

Louis: Hey! Was the supermarket crowded?

Mary: Oh my gosh, it was so busy... OK, so, as I was getting groceries, I could see the lines were getting longer and longer...

Louis: Right.

Mary: So I tried to get the rest of the groceries as fast as I could. It was really crowded though, so that took a lot of time.

Louis: Yeah.

Mary: So finally, I get everything, I get in line, and I'm waiting for about five minutes...

Louis: Uh-huh.

Mary: And then I realized I forgot the milk, so I had to get out of line to get it…

Louis: Oh, no. How long did that take?

3. [10 minutes] Guided discovery of pragmatic norms > explicit instruction

Potential rules for continuers:

Podcast link: https://bit.ly/2ZDu6OU (Robinson & Williams, hosts)

Podcast transcript:

Obama: But I had to go from pushups to, like, playing soccer with kids...

Host 1:	Yeah.
Host 2:	Mm-hm.
Obama:	... to going to meet some first lady. So you have to think about what is your hair doing.
Host 1:	Mm-hm.
Obama:	Are you sweating? Are you going to pin it up? Is it raining that day? You know, it's like, does the jacket allow you to do pushups? Well take it off if it doesn't.

Some additional information to help form "rules" about continuers:

- Continuers indicate that the other speaker should continue talking
- The most common continuers in English are "uh-huh" (45%) and "yeah" (27%) – 28% are other tokens (From Rivero, (2019); based on Jurafsky, Shriberg, Fox & Curl, 1998).
- Regions of low pitch late in an utterance seem to act as a cue for backchannel feedback (Ward & Tsukuhara, (2000) as cited in Cutrone, (2016))
- "uh-huh" can be considered the prototypical continuer to show understanding and to allow the other speaker to keep the floor; it usually occurs at the end of a sentence or phrase that can be heard as a complete idea with rising or falling intonation (Olsher, 2011b)
- A variety of different continuers may be expected when the other speaker is engaged in extended storytelling (Olsher, 2011b)
- The same continuer repeated with flat intonation may be perceived as a signal to the other speaker to end the speaking turn (Olsher, 2011b)
- "yeah", "uh-huh", "mm-hm" can be used as a continuer with flat, falling, or slightly rising intonation (Olsher, 2011b)

4. [10 minutes] Identifying and practicing forms and functions of continuers through short dialogues (adapted from Olsher, 2011b)

Dialogue 1: A and B are talking about their son's travels. (A is correct)

A: I took him to the airport, but he couldn't buy a ticket. He could only get on standby.

B: Uh-huh.

A: And I left him there at about noon.

What is A doing? A – telling a story; B – giving reasons; C – giving directions

Dialogue 2: A is explaining to B why Jo is low on cash. (B is correct)

A: Jo has to pay for it...

B: Mm-hm.

A: But the bank is closed today, so he can't get it.

What is A doing? A – telling a story; B – giving reasons; C – giving directions

Dialogue 3: A is telling be where to go. (C is correct)

A: So when you turn...

B: Uh-huh

A: On State Avenue...

B: Yeah...

A: You'll see a tall building with round windows.

B: All right.

A: From there, turn left.

What is A doing? A – telling a story; B – giving reasons; C – giving directions

5. [10 minutes] Introducing and discussing possible differences between usage of continuers in English and Japanese

English video: https://youtu.be/ibPkLdbG4VU?t=356

Japanese video: https://youtu.be/IgvJT3Xil20?t=94

Observed differences between English and Japanese:

- Backchanneling is more frequent in Japanese in terms of quantity but utilizes less variety (Cutrone, 2010).
- American English speakers tend to favor the continuer function, whereas Japanese speakers tend to favor the support function (Hanzawa, 2012, Maynard, 1986; Wolf, 2008). (Support function = showing support to an evaluative statement, empathy).
    - Counter: Japanese discourse tends to rely heavily on continuer tokens (O'Keefe & Adolphs, 2008).
- In Japanese, backchanneling or "aizuchi" are used much more frequently than in English (Cutrone, 2005; Ike, 2010; Kita & Ide, 2007; White, 1989). Furthermore, both the speaker and the listener use aizuchi during a conversation.
- Japanese speakers of English produce backchannels once every 2.5 seconds and every 6.5 words, compared with 3.1 seconds and 12.7 words for Australian English speakers (Ike 2010).

- Maynard (1986) reported that, Japanese speakers use 2.6 times more aizuchi per unit of time than American English speakers.
- Aizuchi appear at different locations than English backchannels – often being provided by speakers in the middle of the turn-holder's utterance (Kita & Ide, 2007).
- English backchannels tend to appear toward the end of utterances at what are called transition relevant places (TRP) (Clancy et al., 1996).
- Note that differences in setting and formality between the English and Japanese video examples may also contribute to differences in backchanneling behaviors. The videos should only be used to illustrate potential tendencies.

Extra videos:

https://youtu.be/xI-nAElOtmM?t=1124

https://youtu.be/RYChnSQmH38?t=953

The above videos illustrate backchanneling by English speakers that is more frequent than in the previous examples. Instructors can use these examples to illustrate individual differences in backchannel behavior.

6. [10 minutes] Unscripted conversation / role-play using continuers

Potential dialogues (role-play, then switch roles and role-play again for each dialogue):

Talk about your last vacation.

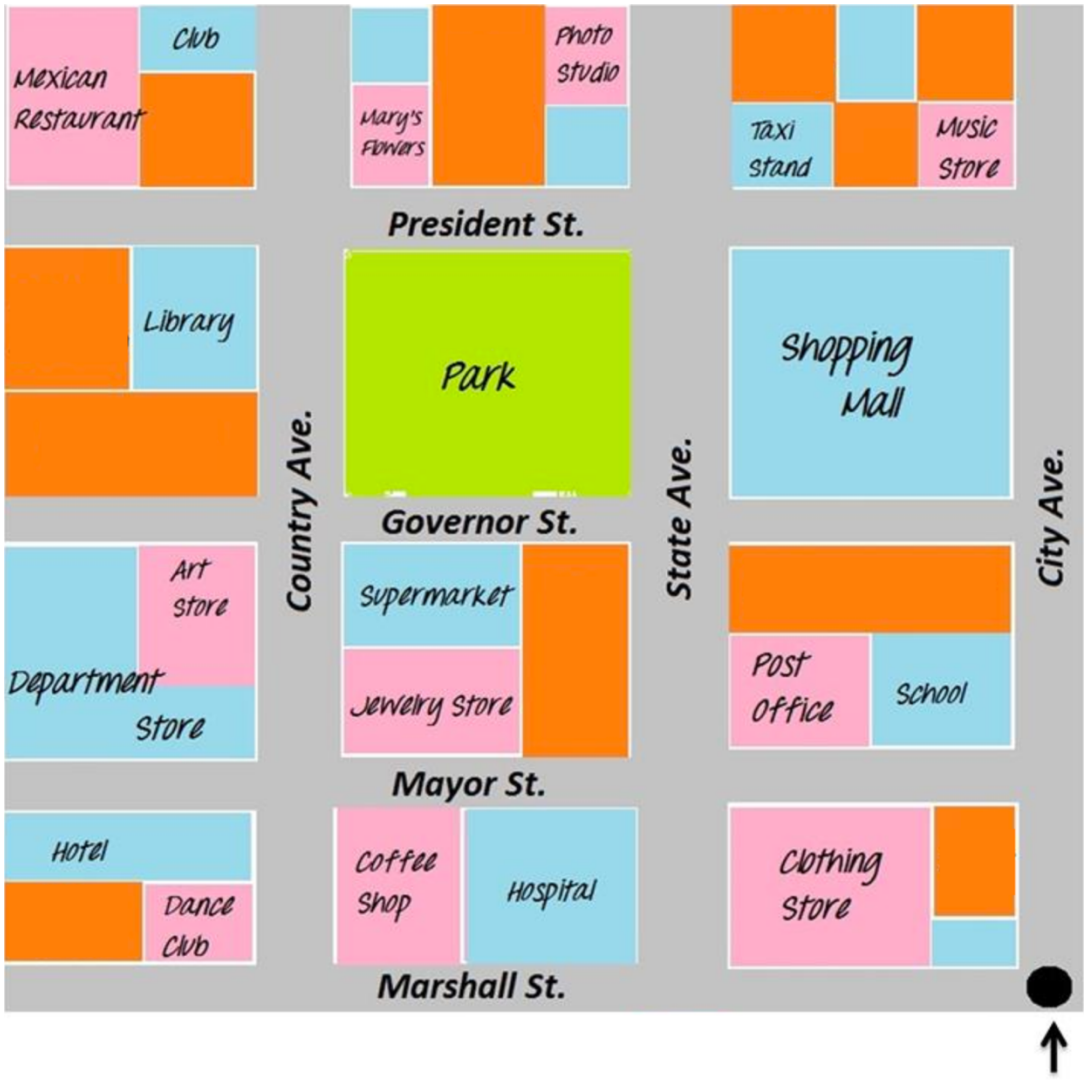
Tell a happy or funny story from your childhood.

Talk about your commute from your home to work.

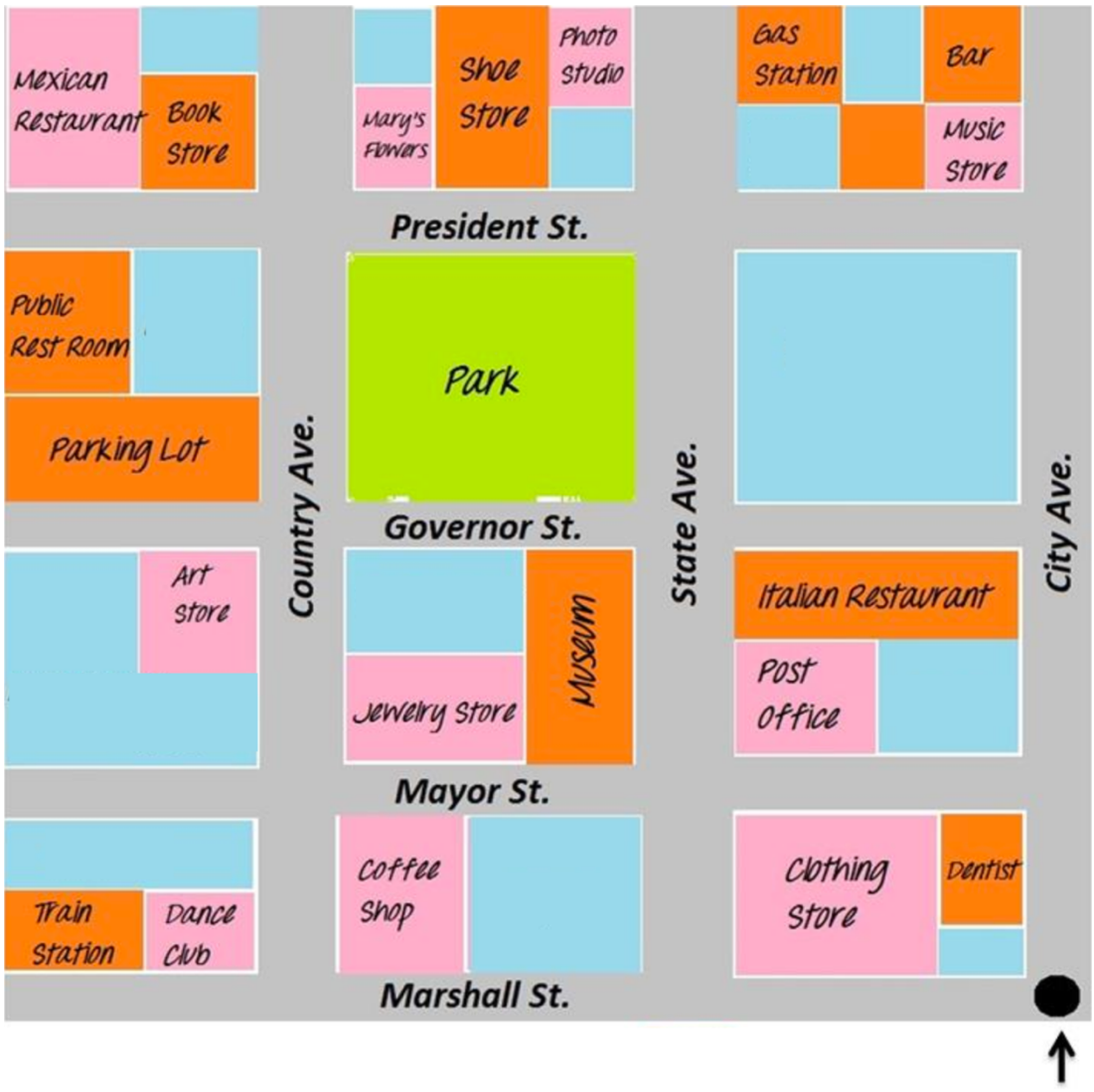
Talk about your hobby.

Alternative – use the maps to take turns giving each other directions

Map 1 – ask for directions to the train station, the museum, and the bookstore



Map 2 – ask for directions to the shopping mall, the department store, and the library



(Images adapted from eslcollective.com – the link is in the reference list)

[5 minutes] Home Study Post-task – guided listening and independent study

The audio file and transcript are available here (link also in references):

https://www.linguistics.ucsb.edu/research/santa-barbara-corpus#SBC043

Simplified transcript:

ALICE:	There... weren't a lot of people there.
ANNETTE:	Oh yeah... Probably --
ALICE:	... But that was seven o'clock, I don't know what time the game started.
ANNETTE:	Ah, just kind of -- Their games usually start at seven on Wednesdays but varsity...
ALICE:	Yeah, I don't know.
ANNETTE:	... varsity probably starts at seven.
ALICE:	Maybe it's an eight o'clock – Seven, seven thirty?
ANNETTE:	Yeah.
ALICE:	There weren't a whole lot of --
ANNETTE:	Yeah, might have been,
ALICE:	Mhm.
ANNETTE:	... They were probably may- maybe playing an out-of-town team too.

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Troy Russell

Troy Russell is a student in Kanda University of International Studies, MA TESOL Program and a curriculum developer at Gaba Corporation. His interests include the instruction and acquisition of pragmatics and pronunciation in EFL contexts. He is also interested in the application of digital technologies in language education.

Reports from

the 2021 JALT National Conference

The 2021 JALT National Conference Pragmatics SIG Forum Presentation #1

Managing Topics in Peer Interaction: Some Pedagogical Implications

BENIO SUZUKI

Utsunomiya University

Managing ongoing topics can be a difficult task for some people. However, it can be even more difficult for second language (L2) learners. During in-class communicative tasks such as a conversation task, learners are necessarily required to manage ongoing topics collaboratively with their peers. Interactional competence can be defined as a speaker's ability to interact and co-construct mutual understanding in interaction by deploying situationally available resources (Hall & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; Young, 2019). In this competence model, participants' competence to use the language is not limited to an individual's competence; it is shared with the participants in the interaction. As Kramsch (1986) calls for the necessity to focus on interactional competence in foreign language education rather than developing learners' proficiency alone, it is, indeed, important for learners to develop their interactional competence in learning second language. So far, several researchers have examined the potentials of instructing interactional competence (Barrajah-Rohan, 2011; Hall, 2018, Taguchi & Yoshimi, 2019; Wong & Waring, 2010). Based on this competence model, I presented on how research findings can be applied to actual teaching.

In the presentation, I discussed findings from three selected segments from a larger study that I have been conducting since the summer of 2019. I recruited ten first-year students at a Japanese university. The participants speak Japanese in their daily lives. They take English classes and learn English as a second or third language at their university. The ten participants were paired off. The five paired groups were invited for a conversation task and asked to converse in English for about twenty minutes in a quiet room without the researcher. These conversations were audio- and video-recorded for analysis. The findings show how participants utilize both linguistic and non-linguistic resources to initiate, shift and elaborate on the topics. In addition, there are some occasions when participants had difficulty and asked questions on the topics. Based on the findings, I discussed the potential for instruction in interactional competence by showing some of the research findings to make the learners aware of actual language use in their L2, as in Taguchi and Yoshimi (2019). In English language education in Japan, learners might benefit from these findings to make themselves

aware of the interactional nature of conversation and develop competence as well as their linguistic repertoire, agency as second language speakers, and adaptability to ongoing conversations.

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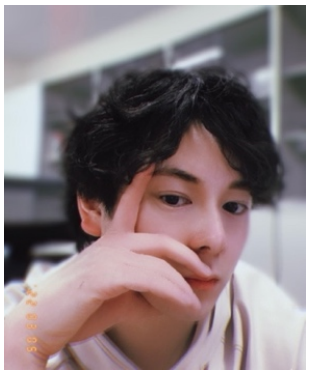
Benio Suzuki

Benio Suzuki currently works at Utsunomiya University as a full-time lecturer. Before joining the university, he has gained two master's degrees in Applied Linguistics from Universitat de Barcelona and Linguistics with TESOL focus from Sophia University. His primary research interest is the development of pragmatic and interactional competencies in an EFL context.



The 2021 JALT National Conference Pragmatics SIG Forum Presentation #2

Translanguaging Interactions in a Hard-CLIL Classroom

COREY FEGAN

Sophia University

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a teaching methodology making inroads within Japan (Ikeda, 2013; Tsuchiya & Murillo, 2019) that focuses on integrating both content and language teaching (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). Hard-CLIL (Ball, Kelly, & Clegg, 2016) is a type of CLIL classroom that focuses on integrating a language focus into a content led class. Within CLIL, the use of the students' first language has been noted (Nikula & Moore, 2019; Temirova & Westall Pixton, 2015) and suggestions for its use within class have been put forward (Lin, 2012; 2015; 2016; 2019; Lin & Lo, 2017; Vázquez & Ordóñez, 2019).

This fluid use of language for the purpose of meaning making by students who are drawing on their full linguistic resources can be described as translanguaging (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014). Many different ways of viewing how language systems operate within an individual have been put forward (Cummins, 1979; 2008; 2021; Garcia & Lin, 2017; Herdina & Jessner, 2002), but within the study presented, the view of *crosslinguistic translanguaging theory* (Cummins, 2021) is adopted; this view validates the practice of languages supporting and reinforcing one another, operating as a holistic resource for communication and understanding.

Within this study, the use of multiple languages for scaffolding understanding was examined. While many researchers have lauded translanguaging as a practice able to provide benefits to students (Garcia & Otheguy, 2020), examination of classroom interactions that either help or hinder understanding and use of critical academic vocabulary has been lacking. This study found that patterns of translanguaging interactions exist within CLIL and can be classified into scaffolding pattern groups. Further, it found that labeling translanguaging as strictly 'beneficial' is improper; as hard-CLIL classes are dealing with vocabulary and terms new not only in the L2, but in the L1, utilizing multiple language systems to help check word meanings can cause confusion for students as proper explanations are abandoned in

favor of quick ‘language switches.’ While use of the first language allowed for critical vocabulary to be learned in the first language, similar gains in vocabulary was not found in the second language, as time was not afforded to its use.

Scaffolding that utilized translanguaging was found to fall within patterns of use, and these scaffolding patterns had goal-oriented expectations for understanding. These expectations were not always met. Rather than assuming multiple language use is non-problematically aiding student understanding, more careful consideration must be given to how to structure multilingual interactions within the classroom.

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Corey Fegan

Corey Fegan is an applied linguist and PhD candidate at Sophia University. His interests are in CLIL, translanguaging, and the ways that multilingual speakers utilize their language systems to scaffold understanding of content and vocabulary in classrooms. Examining how students interact with teachers, materials, and each other in a dynamic system to achieve and demonstrate understanding is a primary research interest.

The 2021 JALT National Conference Pragmatics SIG Forum Presentation #3

What Does a Multimodal Approach Tell us about Classroom Interaction?: From a Language Socialization Perspective

MASARU YAMAMOTO

The University of British Columbia

Academic discourse socialization (ADS) provides a useful theoretical and methodological framework by which to interpret the complex processes, linguistic and sociocultural affordances, and a broad spectrum of potential challenges associated with students' participation in and engagement with academic discourses (i.e., norms, values, academic/disciplinary practices; see Duff, 2010; Duff & Anderson, 2015; Kobayashi et al., 2017). To date, language as a privileged mode of meaning-making plays a central role in theoretical, methodological, and empirical advances in ADS research. The presentation first called this logocentric assumption (and prevalent 'deficit' framing of multilingual students) into question in the context of disciplinary socialization, in light of emerging scholarship on international STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) scholars' communicative practices that were characterized by the dynamic and fluid use of diverse meaning-making resources such as speech, written texts, gestures, visuals, space, gaze, embodiment, to name but a few (e.g., Canagarajah, 2018; Kimura & Canagarajah, 2020). In other words, their disciplinary practices are inherently multimodal, and such so-called "non-verbal" modes are essential and legitimate tools to engage in disciplinary communicative practices (Grapin, 2019). Therefore, the argument put forth in the presentation is that it is necessary for ADS research to decentralize language and investigate the process of ADS as a multimodal endeavor.

In order to make a case for the significance and centrality of multimodality, this presentation reported on a multiple-case study of undergraduate students' multimodal ADS and poster presentation performance in a geoscience course at a Canadian university. Data were generated through semester-long classroom observations, interviews with the instructor and students and participant-produced documents (e.g., posters) and then thematically

analyzed (Miles et al., 2019). Two multilingual students from China were selected as focal cases of the presentation, whose poster presentation performance was video-recorded and analyzed using multimodal interaction analysis (Norris, 2019) to examine their moment-to-moment deployment of multiple meaning-making resources in poster presentations. It was reported that students were socialized into the valued disciplinary norms and practices through a recurrent multimodal activity called "observation-versus-interpretation." It also provided a fine-grained analysis of focal students' multimodal and embodied practices as manifestations of such norms in students' presentation performance (spoken and written language, visuals, iconic and deictic gestures). Multimodal enactments constituted a crucial dimension of disciplinary practices and values connected with learning to think, view, and represent knowledge "like geoscientists."

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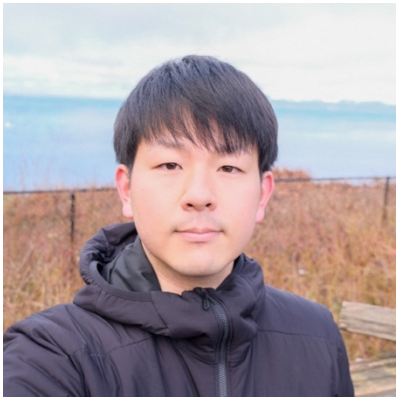
Masaru Yamamoto

Masaru Yamamoto is an emerging applied linguist and a PhD student at the University of British Columbia. His current scholarly interests and professional commitments focus on second language socialization, academic discourse socialization, multimodality, qualitative research methods in applied linguistics, and knowledge mobilization. Masaru is a recipient of the AAAL Graduate Student Award 2022.



The 2021 JALT National Conference Presentation Report #1

Role of Pragmatic Knowledge in Translation Process

Presented by **VAHID RAFIEYAN**

Reported by **ROBERT OLSON**

Hokkaido University of Science

What role does pragmatic knowledge play in the translation of cultural-bound texts? That is the area explored by Vahid Rafieyan at the 2021 JALT National Conference. His topic, *Role of Pragmatic Knowledge in Translation Process,* focused on the answering of two research questions:

(1) To what extent does the inclusion of pragmatic features in classroom instruction affect the translation quality of culture-bound texts?

(2) Which type of instruction---'Focus on forms' or 'Focus on form'--has the greater effect on the translation quality of culture-bound texts? 'Focus on forms' instruction is the traditional method of teaching linguistic elements in a planned sequence designed by a syllabus creator while 'Focus on form' is the technique of teaching linguistic elements as they spontaneously arise during the course of any given class.

The presentation began with Mr. Rafieyan explaining that translation is as much an act of cross-culture communication as it is a linguistic operation. The language and its culture are intertwined and cannot be easily separated. Rather the relationship between linguistic units and the context of the conversation must be considered for the linguistic unit to be understandable. This is possible only when the translator has the prerequisite background knowledge of the source language and its culture. In order for the target language and source language audiences to have communicative experience, translators need to be proficient in both the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of the source language.

To that end, Mr. Rafieyan participated in the following research project: Ninety-eight undergraduate students with proficient translation ability and uniformly high levels of language proficiency from a university in Iran were separated into three groups, each of which took part in two 90-minute sessions that included pragmatic instruction for a week for four weeks. Thirty-two students received 'Focus on forms' instruction while another group of 32 students received 'Focus on form' instruction and the remaining 34 students formed a control group. After

the sessions were completed, each student was required to translate a 300-word page of text taken from Voices of America. The translations were evaluated by two professors of translation based on House's functional-pragmatic model.

The findings were that the control group was outperformed by both the 'Focus on forms' and the 'Focus on form' groups. There was, however, no significant difference between the 'Focus on forms' group and the 'Focus on form' group. The study also concluded that including pragmatic features in classroom instruction can significantly improve the quality of translations of culture-bound texts.

The 2021 JALT National Conference Presentation Report #2

The Big Challenge of "Small Talk:" Supporting Elementary HRTs and Students

Presented by **STEVE COYNE and YOKO KITA**

Reported by **KATHLEEN KITAO**

Professor Emeritus, Doshisha Women's College

The presenters, Steve Coyne and Yoko Kita, began by talking about the changes that took place in English language teaching in Japan in 2020, when English became an official subject in 5th and 6th grades, including all four skills. In addition, MEXT encouraged teachers to include small-talk related activities in English classes. MEXT defined these activities as including activities that give students an opportunity to use previously learned expressions to talk about familiar topics such as favorite pastimes, memories, and interests.

Reasons for encouraging small-talk related activities included re-using previously learned expressions and consolidating them, having a chance to enjoy communicating (an especially important goal in elementary school English classes), and learning basic expressions (such as "Oh, really?") that will help move the dialogue along.

Teachers usually do small-talk activities at the beginning of the class, with students doing two or more short dialogues with different students. Often these are homeroom teachers (HRTs) who are not English specialists.

The presenters were not able to find much previous research about small talk. However, surveys show that HRTs are anxious about their own English level and their ability to carry out English activities.

The presenters reported on a small study they did, looking at whether teachers and students were able to conduct small-talk activities smoothly and what support/resources would help teachers do better. The procedure was to do a pre-survey of the current situation and the HRTs' needs, create resources for the 5th and 6th grade teachers, and do a post-survey and revise the materials and guidelines.

The pre-survey was conducted with 14 elementary school teachers. The results indicated that all of the teachers were aware of small talk communication activity. However, more than 70% of them did not feel prepared to conduct the activities in the classroom, and half of the teachers indicated that they rarely used small talk activities, even though all but one of the participants felt that learning small talk was useful. The criticism teachers have of using small talk activities is that student struggle with it, which will make a good topic of research in the future. As for what kind of resources the teachers would like to have, they would like a list of topics related to the curriculum, training sessions, and scripts or audio files with examples of small talk.

Based on these responses, the presenters made a series of small talk resources, including skits for introducing key sentences, example sentences between the HRT and an ALT, suggestions for topics related to the lessons, and audio and video files accessed via QR codes. The teachers who had been surveyed were given the resources to use.

In the future, the presenters would like to conduct the post-survey to get feedback on the resources and revise them They also plan to distribute the resources to more participants to get feedback from a wider variety of teachers.

The presenters are obviously fulfilling a need that elementary teachers have and making resources that are useful to both teachers and students.

The 2021 JALT National Conference Presentation Report #3

Trading places: When the English speaker is the student

Presented by **JEFFREY MARTIN**

Reported by **ROBERT OLSON**

Hokkaido University of Science

When one hears the terms “conversation analysis,” “interactional features” and “learning outcomes,” it might be assumed that an English teacher is conducting a research activity with English language learners. In this case, however, Jeffrey Martin flipped the script and explored what conclusions would arise from using conversation analysis (CA) to inspect two conversations between a foreign learner of Japanese language and two native Japanese speakers.

The setting was a small classroom in a language school in Tokyo. The participants were Joseph (a Western European who recently passed the JPLT N3 test), Shuuta (a Japanese language teacher and freelance reporter) and Kazami (another Japanese language teacher who is highly proficient in English). The trio conversed about a variety of topics and the conversations were transcribed according to Jeffersonian CA conventions.

The questions that were used to analyze both conversations were:

1.) Will any speaker notice when an interlocutor’s response appears to diverge from what is intended?

2.) Will the JSL speaker notice any sequential effects of these instances of divergences?

3.) What will the JSL identify as potential trouble sources of such divergences?

4.) How might the JSL speaker’s retrospective reflection on such instances facilitate opportunities for language learning?

The results were as follows:

1.) All three speakers noticed misunderstandings related to what was being talked about.

2.) All three speakers noted that none of the misunderstandings impeded communication and that the conversation continued naturally.

3.) All three speakers noted that difference in the marking of subjects and objects in English and Japanese is a potential trouble source. Pronoun dropping and the lack of possessive determiners in Japanese were particularly problematic. An example of the former would be “If he doesn’t leave right now, he’ll miss the train.” 今すぐ出かけないよ、間に合わないよ． An example of the latter would be “I grabbed my phone and texted my mom.” 私はスマホをとって、お母さんにメールした。

4.) The NNS (Joseph) reported wanting to better clarify reference markers in L2 interactions in Japanese and also becoming more mindful of the differences between reference marking in English and Japanese.

There are a variety of applications for this research, but the most obvious may be the need to focus on the differences of the use of reference markers between Japanese and English. A lesson on those distinctions as well as instruction on how to ask for clarification would likely be beneficial to any language learning classroom.

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