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From the editor

Greetings once again to all Prag-SIG members out there. I hope that all of you had a productive year and are looking forward to a well-earned end of year break. A lot has been happening since the last edition and this issue will have reviews of several events that have taken place in Japan and elsewhere. The Pan-SIG conference was held in Akita in May and Chie Kawashima reviews the pragmatics presence at the conference, detailing the approaches taken by teachers to bring their knowledge of pragmatics to the language classroom and bridging the gap between knowledge and application.

May was a busy time for the pragmatics community in Japan as the CAN-Asia (Conversation Analysis Network Asia) held its 1st Symposium on L2 interaction At Otsuma Women's University Campus on 27th and 28th of May. The editor was fortunate enough to be able to attend and reviews the conference below. Due to the success of the event the second symposium is now well forward in planning and the call for papers is now out. See the review for more details.

As if this was not sufficient, July saw the holding of the 15th International Pragmatic Association (IPrA) Conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The conference, which was also attended by the editor, is reviewed below. As usual, if any Pragmatics SIG members out there attend any conferences, workshops, symposia or other events that are of interest to the Prag-SIG membership, please consider writing up a report for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter and let members who were not able to attend know what is going on. Contact the editor at the address below.

Pragmatics and Materials Writers Work Together at the 2017 Pan SIG

Chie Kawashima

Macquarie University / Tochigi Technical High School

The Pragmatics SIG was joined by the Materials Writers SIG for the Forum at the 2017 Pan SIG Conference held on May 21, 2017 at Akita International University. The theme was "Materials Writing with a Pragmatic Focus" and the three presenters were Simon Capper, from Japan Red Cross University, Yosuke Ishii, from Tokai University, and Chie Kawashima from Macquarie University / Tochigi Technical High School.

The first presenter was Chie Kawashima presenting on "How do ELT textbooks present pragmatic markers?" In her study, textbook dialogues in instructional materials used in Japanese senior high schools were investigated to see how pragmatic markers were presented in pedagogical situations. Her investigation was conducted based on Brinton's (1996) macro classification of pragmatic markers utilizing: a) interpersonal functions and b) textual functions.

The results of her study revealed that there was a big difference in the amount of pragmatic markers presented across the six textbooks selected for investigation. At the same time, as a whole, far more pragmatic markers with interpersonal functions than those with textual functions were identified in the textbook dialogues, though only one of the materials was an exception. In addition, an uneven distribution of individual markers such as *oh*, *really*, *ok*, etc. across the textbooks was found. There was a very limited amount of explanation provided and no opportunity for learners to practice using pragmatic markers.



Pragmatics and materials writing forum presenters at the Pan-SIG conference in Akita

Finally, Kawashima discussed the difference between textbooks and authentic conversations in terms of the use of pragmatic markers, noting that no marker frequently found in informal conversations, such as *you know*, and *like*, was presented in the textbooks, while single elements, such as *oh*, *ok*, *well*, etc. frequently occurred. At the end of her presentation, she suggested a fusion of listening and speaking activities which may raise learner awareness of response markers.

The second presenter was Yosuke Ishii, and the title of his presentation was "The production of pragmatically appropriate TOEIC Materials." In his presentation, he talked mainly about how to write pragmatically sound materials as a material writer. His presentation started with three research questions: 1) How are pragmatic markers used on the TOEIC Listening and Reading Test? 2) How are the use of pragmatic markers related to questions? and 3) What are the implications for teaching and material writing?

He identified 82 pragmatic markers in the scripts in the Official TOEIC Listening & Reading Workbook, Vol.2 (ETS), and he looked at how they were used in conversations. For example, *well*, is used after a question, a request, an invitation, or a comment. *Oh* is often used right after a request or question with *yes* or *no*. *So* shows cause and effect. Backchannels such as *umm*, *um* or *uh* are used before a statement or a question. He also found how all these pragmatic markers were related to the questions: 1) The answer choices that start with a pragmatic marker are the correct ones, and 2) Right after a pragmatic marker, the hints for answers to questions can be found.

Finally, Ishii concluded his presentation with the following implications: 1) Pragmatic markers, such as *so*, *well*, *oh*, *ok*, *um* or *uh*, should be included when writing TOEIC listening items. 2) Students should be taught that some important information comes after some pragmatic markers, such as, *like*, *in fact*, *however*, *so*, etc.

The last presenter was Simon Capper, and his presentation title was "Principled pragmatics in materials development." He started by claiming that he could not promise to exemplify best practice, but that he wanted to share some of the ways in which he has tried to raise awareness of pragmatics features of communication in his work. He talked about his background in writing and explained why he was so drawn to materials development, involving as it does, so many aspects of language learning: SLA, pragmatics, content, learner style, methodology, class management, evaluation, layout and visual presentation, vocabulary, and testing.

He introduced the work of Tomlinson and the importance of principled materials development, particularly with regard to maintaining authenticity. He mentioned that few students transfer their L1 pragmatic skills to L2, so there is a serious need to make learners more aware of the important role that pragmatics plays in communication.

Materials developers have to balance the practical constraints of the course with the need to maintain and promote authenticity, and this involves compromise. There are varying degrees as to how much we can accommodate pragmatics. He introduced three ways in which he has tried to do this. The first used textual 'triggers' embedded within the dialogues to encourage learners to mimic 'natural' back-channeling behaviors. Learners became more active participants in the conversations, having to think for themselves about how to use pragmatic markers in communication. He added footnotes explaining some of the nuances that learners might otherwise have missed. The second example was from a course book that contained no dialogues. It took a more explicit approach to pragmatics awareness raising by adding specific communication tips to be used in subsequent communicative activities. The third example came from his most recent work in a nursing course in English. The course aims to improve the communicative competence of nursing students in a variety of clinical scenarios in which pragmatic competence is, of course, vital.

Lastly, Capper introduced a book that profoundly changed his way of thinking about language learning and teaching. It was *Communicating with Americans--Functions in English* by Kitao and Kitao (1991, Eichosha). It used dialogues to clearly demonstrate good pragmatic

practices, enabling learners to clearly see the dangers of failing to attend to pragmatic features of communication. He also underlined the importance of teaching pragmatic features in tandem with nonverbal and paralinguistic features.

1st CAN-Asia Symposium on L2 Interaction

John Campbell-Larsen

Kyoto Women's University

The Conversation Analysis Network Asia is a research group based in Asia that seeks to use conversation analysis (CA) methodology to examine instances of mundane interactions, whether social, educational or institutional in nature, and uncover the ways in which participants in those interactions conduct the business in hand, establish intersubjectivity and co-construct meaning. At its heart, CA methodology views language and interaction from the perspective of social action rather than from the perspective of theoretical linguistics. CAN Asia holds regular data sessions in Osaka and Tokyo. To further the goals of researchers into interaction and to facilitate professional contacts the inaugural CAN-Asia Symposium on L2 Interaction was held at Otsuma Women's University on 27th and 28th of May 2017. The symposium focused on analysis of spoken interactions where at least one of the interactants was speaking in a language other than their L1. All sessions were consecutive, not parallel, so that all the conference remained focused and ideas and issues that were common or particular to L2 interaction in a variety of settings could emerge over the course of the symposium.

The presentations on offer covered an extremely wide range of topics, from student to student interaction in an informal lunch setting (the engagingly titled 'A Mouth for Eating and Talking in L2 Interaction' by Yosuke Ogawa) to the processes by which participants in the institutional activity of an oral test use a variety of resources to enter and exit the test activity ('Framing Oral Test Performance as a Collaborative Accomplishment', by Eric Hauser). Moving away from student interactions, Tim Greer examined how Japanese and Non-Japanese team



Participants at the CAN-Asia L2 symposium

teachers conducted pre-lesson planning sessions and arrived at an agreed name for classroom activities. Yumiko Tateyama also focused on the talk of an L2 speaker in a teaching role. Presentations by John Campbell-Larsen, Duane Kindt, Jeffrie Butterfield, Zachary Nambu, Yusuke Arano and Junichi Yagi all examined various interactional events between adults in various institutional and non-institutional settings. In addition to observations of adult L2 speakers, Aya Watanabe and Younhee Kim looked at the language of young speakers, with Watanabe looking at elementary students in classroom

interactions with their teacher and Kim examining the interaction between two

bilingual (Korean/English) children with no adults present. Quite a different area of interaction was the focus of the presentation by Toshiaki Furukawa who investigated US congresspersons attempts to utilize Japanese language in congressional hearings with Japanese executives from Toyota Motor Corporation.

The sessions each concluded with a round table discussion which raised interesting points and opened up avenues for further research into L2 interactions. The conversation continued on Saturday evening at a reception held on-site. Over drinks and a buffet dinner, participants shared insights and perspectives at length and it was a real pleasure to be able to revisit some of the issues raised during the day.

The event was judged a success by all participants I talked to and a big thank you is due to the organizing committee of Tim Greer, Toshiaki Furukawa and Eric Hauser for putting together such a great event. Such was the feedback that almost immediately planning got underway to hold a follow up symposium in 2018. The planning is well advanced and the call for submissions is now out. The 2nd symposium on L2 interaction will be held at Kyoto Women's University, in Kyoto City on the weekend of May 27 and 28 2018. The deadline for submissions is January 15 2018 and notifications for acceptance will be sent out by the end of February 2018. See the following link for more details and hope to see you in Kyoto next spring!
<http://tim792.wixsite.com/can-asia/call-for-papers>

15th International Pragmatics Conference

John Campbell-Larsen

Kyoto Women's University

For all pragmatics teachers and researchers, the flagship event of the academic calendar must be the International Pragmatics Conference, held by the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA) sponsored by John Benjamins Publishing. The biennial conference was held this year in Belfast, Northern Ireland from 16 to 21 July 2017 and I was lucky enough to a) be accepted to give a talk on a panel b) be allowed to cancel a full week of classes in the run up to the end of the first semester in the Japanese university calendar. Even though I had to schedule a full week of make-up classes and get them done before I departed for Belfast, it was more than worth it. This was my first time at IPrA and I was duly excited and apprehensive. Excited to see some of the biggest names in the field detailing the latest research and results. Apprehensive as to whether my own contribution would make the grade in front of a specialist audience of pragmatics practitioners.

The excitement was well warranted. The list of names appearing at the conference was a who's who of the best and brightest in our field. It is impossible to mention all of the presentations that I attended in the space provided here, so I'll mention a few that stood out. A panel on Interactional Competence with reference to L2 learners was hosted by Simona Pekarek Doehler and Evelyn Berger and featured interesting presentations by the hosts as well as Tim Greer and Midori Ishida. A Panel hosted by Kobin Kendrick and Pau Drew dealt with microanalysis of recruitment of assistance in interaction. A panel that stretched out over three slots from 1:30 to 6:45 on the Tuesday held my particular attention. Hosted by Rebecca Clift and Elizabeth Holt, whose work will be familiar to anyone interested in reported speech, the panel featured talks on a wide variety of topic concerned with interaction, narrative and reported speech. A great way to spend an afternoon. Other notable presentations were on such topics as evidentiality, pragmatics in literature, and a fascinating poster dealing with the pragmatics of 'coming out of the closet' by Jeffrey Aguinaldo. Plenary lectures by Elizabeth Stokoe, Peter Auer and Coleen Cotter John Heritage were all interesting and informative. Overall, the quality of the presentations was exceptional and, a point often overlooked, the quality of audience participation during Q&A sessions was equally high.

The conference was more than just the presentations, and the opportunities for professional networking were extensive, from the opening drinks reception at the sumptuous Belfast city hall to the inter-session coffee breaks to the discussions that carried on in local pubs after hours (and Belfast has no shortage of pubs!) the discussions just continued.

The next IPrA international conference will be held in Hong Kong from 9 – 14 June 2019. The call for submissions will be appearing in March 2018, as it is such a huge undertaking and requires a massive amount of organization. For those of you considering attending, but are not members, there are some things to bear in mind. IPrA membership runs from January to December and you have to be a member to submit a proposal. So, if you want to present in Hong Kong in 2019, you will have to be a member in 2018. To get your money's worth, you should become a member in January 2018. (If you become a member between now and December 31, you will only get membership to the end of this year!) The call for submissions has two aspects. Firstly, a call for panel proposals and subsequently a call for submissions to those panels that have been accepted or to submit as a stand-alone presenter.

Hong Kong is much more accessible to those of us based in Japan than Belfast and the timing, although still during term time, is much more convenient than the last week of the Spring semester. I will definitely be submitting, and I cannot recommend the IPrA conference experience too highly. See you in Hong Kong.

For information about IPrA, visit <https://ipra.uantwerpen.be/>

JALT Showcase

For many of us, writing up our presentations after a conference is all part and parcel of the academic round. From first sitting down to write a proposal to actually attending the conference and then writing the paper, submitting it, and then going through the peer review, editing and proofreading stages can take anything up to two years. By the time the paper is published we may have moved on in our research focus and the original study can seem like a very long time ago. In addition, we may attend a conference and see a great presentation, but the limits of memory and the time that elapses between the conference and the publication of the proceedings can lead us to forget to follow up and seek out the paper when it is published. And a guilty admission here- when the proceedings are published, there is a tendency for authors, well this author at least, to look for one's own paper to 'see how it looks' and not really have a good look at what else was written up. So little time, so many papers to read.

Maybe you didn't attend the conference or had to dash away for your last train (or a nomihoudai/happy hour!) and missed the 6PM sessions. It happens... It is also nice to read an interesting paper and then at the next conference to approach a presenter with a cheery greeting and say 'Hey, I read your paper on use of taboo words in oral exams' (or whatever it was...). With these points in mind I will showcase some of the papers published in recent JALT Proceedings publications that piqued my interest and may have passed you by.

JALT Postconference Publication - JALT2016

The Vicious Triangle: CLT, Native Speakers, and "English-Only" Classrooms

Rob McGregor

University of Birmingham

Abstract

The vicious triangle is a pervasive discourse structure within Japanese ELT, in which native English-speaking educators, immersive "English-only" classrooms, and newer, more student-centred teaching approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT) are conflated to form a single, unified triad. In this paper I define these elements as commonly understood and present a critical discourse analysis of key policy documents, media reports, and previously unpublished qualitative data to explore how the links along each side of the triangle are construed as axiomatic and the separate elements reified as a mutually dependent group. The

vicious triangle is shown to centre on and exacerbate widespread pedagogical misunderstanding of CLT and so limit educators and damage students' learning. These impacts are highlighted and suggestions for mitigation are offered.

Full paper available at

<http://jalt-publications.org/node/4/articles/6019-vicious-triangle-clt-native-speakers-and-%E2%80%9Cenglish-only%E2%80%9D-classrooms>

Discourse Markers in the Classroom

John Campbell-Larsen

Kyoto Women's University

Abstract

Discourse markers (DMs) such as well, you know, and I mean are extremely frequent in spoken interactions (McCarthy, 2010) and are key indicators of fluency (Hasselgreen, 2004). The ability to use common DMs in a naturalistic way is a basic skill for students. However, teachers and coursebooks often neglect DMs in favor of lexis that is more traditional and grammar-based lessons, and DMs may be frowned upon and stigmatized when seen as signals of disfluency. This paper discusses the meaning(s) and usages of DMs in spoken English and suggests that attention to DMs should be a constant feature of all speaking classes. The author details practical ways in which DMs can be taught to students, including analysis of short video clips, comparison with the L1, teacher monitoring, and intervention in spontaneous student conversations.

Full Paper available at

<http://jalt-publications.org/node/4/articles/6043-discourse-markers-classroom>

Evaluating a High School Discussion Test

Sam Berry

Aoyama Gakuin Senior High School

Abstract

This paper documents a validation of a group oral discussion test used as a classroom assessment in a high school in Japan. The test has been developed in response to Ministry of Education initiatives to promote the development of communicative abilities, including discussion skills, in compulsory high school English courses. A range of validity evidence suggests the test has promise, but has significant problems with both perceived and actual fairness. A case is made for the continued use of the discussion test, providing that further steps are taken to investigate and address the test's poor test-retest reliability.

Full paper available at

<http://jalt-publications.org/node/4/articles/6078-evaluating-high-school-discussion-test>

The 2016 PanSIG Journal: Innovations in education

Full text available at http://pansig.org/publications/2016/2016_PanSIG_Journal.pdf

Why Do My Bilingual Kids Never Bloody Swear?

Michael Bradley

Okinawa Christian Junior College

Abstract

This paper considers why the elder two of the author's four (bilingual Japanese/English) children almost never imitate their father's habitual bad language. This state of affairs may well

contradict Krashen's theory of comprehensible input. Drawing on transcripts of conversations he recorded with the children over the course of a year and a half, the author wonders whether there has been sufficient input of swear words for the children to pick up on. He also considers the limited opportunities the children have for English output generally, the relative absence of swearing in their dominant language, and their consciousness of taboo language, as other possible factors.

How Repair Becomes Noticeable

Jeffrie Butterfield

Kanagawa University

Abstract

Previous conversation analytic research (e.g., Butterfield, 2016) has demonstrated that repair Sequences may be one potential site in which learning occurs. However, learning may only occur if the trouble source speaker notices that their utterance has been repaired. Some researchers (e.g., Schmidt, 1990) argue that noticing is an essential condition for second language learning to occur. The present study investigates an interactional environment and linguistic resource that are conducive to making repair noticeable to the trouble source speaker. It explores the possible reasons repair does not go overlooked and also examines the ways that trouble source speakers demonstrate that they understand that their utterance has been repaired.

Investigating Young Learners' L2 Pragmatic Competence in Telling Uncomfortable Truths

Akiko Chiba

University of Hong Kong

Abstract

L2 pragmatics knowledge is regarded as a key factor in the development of language learners' Communicative competence. Despite abundant literature in interlanguage pragmatics worldwide, past studies have primarily addressed adults, leaving young learners underrepresented. As pragmatics, or knowledge of contextual language variation, is especially difficult to master in foreign language acquisition, the onset of L2 pragmatics instruction should be investigated. In response to this lack of research in younger learners' L2 pragmatics, this study investigated English pragmatic strategies for "telling uncomfortable truths" with three elementary-age learners. The results raise the question of the suitable age for incorporating pragmatics into language programs. Furthermore, while some pragmatological and sociopragmatic competence was observed, the learners failed to derive intended meanings from implicatures, suggesting an order of emergence in pragmatic development.

Upcoming events: Calls for papers

In addition to the forthcoming events mentioned above there are also some other current calls for papers.

JALT PanSIG Conference 2018

The JALT PanSIG annual conference will be held May 19-20 2018 at Toyo Gakuen University (Hongo), Tokyo. This conference always has a strong showing by the JALT Pragmatics SIG, so attendance is always worthwhile for professional development and some networking/ catching up with old friends/ meeting new people. Details of the conference can be found at:

<http://pansig.org/> The call for papers I open until January 15th 2018 so visit the site and get your submissions in.

4th International Conference of the American Pragmatics Association (AMPRA) 2018

The American Pragmatics Association will hold its 4th International Conference at the University at Albany, state University of New York, NY, USA from November 1st to 3rd, 2018. The call for papers is open until 15th February 2018. Notification of acceptance will be on March 15th, 2018. See the website at <http://www.albany.edu/ampra/call-for-papers.php> for details.

2nd CAN-Asia Symposium on L2 Interaction

The second CAN-Asia symposium on L2 interaction will be held at Kyoto Women's University, Kyoto, Japan on 26 and 27 May, 2018. The call for papers is open until January 15, 2018. Full details available at: <http://tim792.wixsite.com/can-asia/call-for-papers>

Conference Calendar

The call for papers for the following conferences is now closed, but for those of you with time and remaining budget the following conferences are upcoming.

38th Thailand TESOL International Conference, January 26, 2018 - January 27, 2018. Chiang Mai, Thailand. Full details at <http://www.thailandtesol.org/event/38th-thailand-tesol-international-conference/>

14th Annual CAMTESOL Conference on English Language Teaching, February 10 – February 11, 2018. Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Full details at <https://camtesol.org/>

American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Conference March 24 – March 27, 2018. Chicago Illinois, USA. Full details at <http://www.aal.org/page/Conference2018>

TESOL 2018 International Conversation and English Language Expo March 27 – March 30, 2018. Chicago, Illinois, USA. Full details at <http://www.tesol.org/convention-2018/register>

As always, anyone who attends these or any other events, please consider writing up a conference review. Similarly, anything else you feel may be of interest to our readership such as research results, book or article reviews, news of upcoming events in your area, opinion pieces or ideas for classroom activities please let me know at the address below.
That's all for now.

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