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Interlanguage Pragmatics: What Can it Offer to Language Teachers?

■ Although the necessity and importance of teaching pragmatics have been recognized, language teachers may hesitate to teach pragmatics in their classrooms for two reasons. First, teaching pragmatics is a difficult and sensitive issue due to the high degree of "face threat" it often involves and, second, the number of available pedagogical resources is limited. In this critical review of empirical studies in interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), the author argues that ILP research is a useful source of information for language teachers to make informed decisions about teaching pragmatics. First, she discusses the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 speakers' pragmatics and explanations for such differences. Secondly, she considers how L2 learners develop pragmatic competence, both in and outside classrooms. Finally, she examines the issues of teachability and the teaching of pragmatics in language classrooms.

ESL classrooms are full of intercultural interactions, which are often accompanied by surprises. For example, you may have Japanese students who are "apologetic"—when you help them during the office hours or write a letter of recommendation for them, they apologize by saying "I'm sorry" rather than thanking you for help. At the same time, you may be shocked to see how direct these students can be when they disagree with their classmates. While Americans may mitigate their disagreements by starting with such compliments as "I think that's a very interesting idea, but…," these Japanese students seem to have no problem explicitly stating "I disagree with you." Socially, they may be regarded as too apologetic or impolite; linguistically, they lack pragmatic competence.[1]

Pragmatic failure, the communication breakdown caused by lack of pragmatic competence, can interfere with social, academic, and professional opportunities for L2 speakers (Tanaka, 1997). Native speakers tend, in fact, to be less tolerant of pragmatic failure than of grammatical errors (Ervin-Tripp, 1972; Wolfson, 1983). In extreme cases, individuals (whether L1 or L2 speakers) may experience difficulty in establishing social relationships with members of the community and may even be denied valuable academic and professional opportunities. These potentially devastating consequences of the lack of pragmatic competence argue strongly for the teaching of pragmatics.

A language teacher may hesitate to teach pragmatics, however, because to do so can be a difficult and sensitive endeavor. The use of language in social contexts involves a speaker's world knowledge, which is filtered by his or her value system (Thomas, 1983). This may make the correction of pragmatic errors (e.g., "It is not appropriate to ask such a question at a party") much more face-threatening than, say, the correction of pronunciation errors (e.g., "It's *thórough,* not *thoróugh*").

The study of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) is one field of inquiry that can help language teachers make informed decisions about teaching pragmatics in their classrooms. ILP, the study of how second language speakers[2] use language, started in the late 70s. These cross-linguistic comparative studies were pedagogically motivated and sought to discover why linguistically competent students still lacked pragmatic competency. Attention to this topic since that time has been slowly but steadily increasing. In this article, I will illustrate how language teachers can benefit by keeping up with findings in ILP.

Description of Interlanguage Pragmatics

Because many ILP studies, especially early ones, focused on the description of L2 speakers' pragmatics, a significant amount of information is available on the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 speakers' use of language. One similarity between the pragmatics of L1 and L2 speakers is the range of semantic formulae. *Semantic formulae* are the subset of acts that speakers perform within a given speech act. For example, an apology could be broken down to the head act of the actual apology (e.g., "I'm sorry for being late") and adjunct acts such as giving an excuse or promising to compensate (e.g., "I couldn't find my keys. It won't happen again. I'll stay after to finish up"). Studies indicate that L2 speakers use semantic formulae in both similar and different ways compared to L1 speakers.

In their studies on disagreement and on disseminating embarrassing information, Beebe and Takahashi (1989a, 1989b) found that both native speakers[3] of American English and Japanese ESL speakers used the following five semantic formulae in disagreement:

1. Criticism (e.g., "I don't think this works")
2. Suggestion (e.g., "Let's set time aside to go though this")
3. Positive remark (e.g., "This is interesting")
4. Gratitude (e.g., "Thank you for your effort to streamline things")
5. Token agreement (e.g., "Don't you think this is great?" "Yes").

However, they also found that, although these two groups of speakers have access to the same inventory of semantic formulae for disagreement, their selections are quite different. When asked what they would say in the following scenario, the two groups demonstrated different patterns.

> You are a corporate executive. Your assistant submits a proposal for reassignment of secretarial duties in your division. Your assistant describes the benefits of this new plan, but you believe it will not work. (1989a, p. 109)

While 87% of the Americans used positive remarks, no Japanese used this formula. Criticism, on the other hand, was used by 87% of the Japanese, sometimes very explicitly (e.g., "I don't agree with you. I don't think your plan will work well"). Conversely, only 50% of the Americans used such explicit formulation and none of them used the word *disagree.*

These studies suggest that L1 and L2 speakers have access to the same range of semantic formulae but differ in their utilization. The way L2 speakers deviate is not always predictable because it is influenced by multiple factors such as the complexity of speech acts, a speaker's familiarity with the situation (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993), a speaker's language proficiency level, the distance between a speaker's L1 and L2, and the degree of cultural disorientation. However, the differences in the use of semantic formulae can be assumed to come from the planning and selecting process rather than from having a different inventory.

Explanation of Interlanguage Pragmatics

As more studies revealed differences between L1 and L2 pragmatic performance, researchers started to investigate the origins of those differences.[4]

Pragmatic Transfer

One possible cause for L2 speakers' pragmatic differences is *pragmatic transfer*. Pragmatic transfer is "the influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of language and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information" (Kasper, 1992, p. 207). This type of transfer occurs at several levels.

Pragmatic transfer occurs at the formal level, including the selection of lexicon, modality, and syntactic styles. For example, Japanese speakers of English may say "I'm sorry" when native English speakers would say "Thank you" or "I appreciate your help" to express gratitude. This occurs because Japanese use the expression *sumimasen* (which is equivalent to "I'm sorry" in English) when they thank people in certain contexts. The utterance "I'm sorry" seems to be the result of literal translation and therefore to represent L1 transfer at the formal level (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993; House, 1989).

Another level where pragmatic transfer occurs is the selection of semantic formulae and strategies. Takahashi and Beebe (1987, 1993) compared the semantic formulae used by three groups of speakers: native English speakers (NES), Japanese ESL/EFL speakers, and Japanese speakers speaking in Japanese. When the frequency of each formula was compared, use by Japanese speakers of English always measured between that of the other two groups. For example, in a correction situation, positive remarks were used much more often by NES than by Japanese speakers. When the three groups (NES, Japanese speaking in English and Japanese speaking in Japanese) were compared, the percentage of utterances that included positive remarks produced by each group were 79%, 23% and 13% respectively, suggesting that the way Japanese speakers select formulae in English may be influenced by what they would select in Japanese.[5]

In addition, L1 transfer takes place at the level of the speaker's perception of contextual factors that influence the planning of utterances. While certain contextual factors, such as relative power status (social "distance" between the interlocutors) and the perceived degree of imposition of a speech act (e.g., how demanding a request is), seem to influence the selection of politeness strategies universally (Bergman & Kasper, 1993; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1987, 1993; Tyler, 1995; Weizman, 1993; Zuengler, 1993), the most influential contextual factors and the degree to which they are influential differ from one culture to another.

Lipson (1994) conducted a study in which Italian learners of English translated American sitcom episodes into Italian and edited the script to make it more appropriate in Italian culture. When the two were compared, several situations that originally contained an act of apology no longer had one in Italian, suggesting that the obligation for apology differed in the two cultures. As Beebe and Takahashi (1989a) state:

> The picture becomes clearer when we realize that the situations in which both Japanese and Americans choose to be direct or indirect depend to a great extent on the relative social status of the interlocutors. Japanese, however, attend to factors that Americans do not hold to be particularly important. And Americans simply are not sensitized to all of these social nuances that, for Japanese, are involved in the decision to speak directly or indirectly. (p. 104)

In other words, understanding the differences in "social nuances" facilitates the better understanding of ILP. Teachers who understand these differences can address students' needs more effectively.

Learning Effect

In addition to pragmatic transfer, *learning effects* may cause a deviation of L2 speakers' pragmatics from the L1 norm. Such learning effects may be of a formal nature (i.e., the result of classroom instruction) or of an informal nature (i.e., perceptions formed outside of a classroom setting).

An example of an informal learning effect is L2 speakers' perceptions of the target language and culture developed from their past experience. A Japanese learner of English may underuse "softeners" because of a common stereotype held by Japanese that Americans are direct and do not require mitigation (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989a). Similarly, Olshtain (1983) found that American students of Hebrew, who perceived Hebrew speakers to require less apology, actually apologized much less than Russian students, who felt Hebrew culture required more apologies than Russian.

Other types of learning effects include overgeneralization, hypercorrection, or simply a response to having been taught something that does not reflect reality. In a study by Kitao (1990), Japanese EFL students rated the expression "Will you…?" to be much more polite than NES did, and they also used the expression more often than NES did. Kitao concluded that this was "probably because they were taught in their English classes that this form was polite" (p. 197). This study suggests that speakers' perceptions about the target culture and language, both general and specific, influence these speakers' pragmatic patterns.

However, deviation from the L1 pragmatic pattern is not necessarily a problem (Kasper, 1992; White, 1989). Some deviations do not cause pragmatic failure, and some even bring positive outcomes. Yet, investigation of the cause and patterns of L2 speakers' pragmatic deviation is useful and necessary because identifying where differences come from helps language teachers understand how students develop pragmatic competence.

Development of Interlanguage Pragmatics

At this point, few empirical studies are available, especially longitudinal ones, on the acquisition of pragmatics. Studies focusing on very beginning students are especially scarce because of difficulty in collecting data. However, available studies do provide some insights into how language learners develop pragmatic competence.

Developmental Patterns

ILP studies suggest that L2 learners go through the following three stages as they learn to perform a speech act successfully: (1) they learn to identify the speech act that is called for in a particular situation; (2) they learn to perform the speech act with or without an appropriate expression (e.g., the speaker performs the intended act, although he or she may unintentionally offend their interlocutor); and (3) they learn to select an expression appropriate to the speech act.

The studies also suggest that the third stage develops last because the ability to select an appropriate expression takes more time to develop than do the preceding two abilities.

Ellis (1992) conducted a longitudinal study of two beginning ESL children and found that these children failed to develop pragmatic competence even after they had made considerable development in making requests. He concluded that in children's acquisition of the speech act of "making a request," *discrimination of social appropriateness* is acquired much later than is the rote learning of formulaic expressions of request.

Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) also conducted a longitudinal study in which they investigated how graduate students learn to make suggestions and rejections in academic advising sessions. Their findings suggested that L2 speakers changed over time toward L1 norms in their selection of speech acts (i.e., including more suggestions and fewer rejections) and as a result became more successful negotiators; however, their ability to employ the appropriate forms of speech acts did not improve significantly.

Although the developmental patterns for other speech acts as well as for overall pragmatic competence are still to be investigated, these and other developmental studies (e.g., Weizman, 1993) suggest that some aspects of pragmatic competence develop from exposure to an L2 speaking environment while other aspects do not. Appropriateness seems to be one aspect that is particularly difficult to acquire. More studies, especially longitudinal ones, may help us understand how long it takes to develop pragmatic competence, which areas seem to be difficult to acquire, and what can be done to help L2 speakers overcome these difficulties.

Input and Feedback

Both Ellis (1992) and Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) mention limited input and feedback as possible reasons for unsuccessful pragmatic development. Studies on the quality and amount of input (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1996; Kasper, 1988) seem to support these speculations. Kasper (1988) conducted a role-play based study in which NES and German speakers of English participated. The researcher examined the impact of textbooks and classroom specific discourse on the learners' interlanguage discourse. She found that L2 speakers' utterances included such characteristics as rising intonation with a non-interrogative function, inappropriate explicitness in speech acts, complete-sentence responses, and a lack of speech act modality (e.g., the use of tag questions for intensifying or downtoning the directness of an utterance)—all of which could be traced to classroom specific discourse. She further claims that inappropriate and limited input in foreign language classrooms could be an additional possible factor in approximately one third of the pragmatic errors observed among EFL learners.

Likewise, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1996), in their analysis of 94 advising sessions of NES and ESL graduate students, found that advisors explicitly and implicitly taught students that suggestions from students are expected. Further, they indicated what acceptable suggestions are (e.g., which classes students can register for), and taught that making a counter-suggestion is more appropriate than rejecting an advisor's suggestion. However, almost no feedback was given on the form such suggestions should take.

The researchers also found that no input was available for students to model because academic advising is private, depriving ESL students of opportunities to adopt and adapt the ways that NES students talk. Finally, Bardovi-Harligand Hartford. observed status differences between advisors and students, noting that one possible pragmatic implication of this meant students might find it presumptuous to adopt forms used by their advisors. This seems to explain why students in the 1993 study improved in their selection of speech acts but not in their selection of appropriate forms (see also Bouton, 1992; and Omar, 1992).

Although none of these claims support a direct causal relationship between the kind and amount of input available and students' pragmatic errors, they suggest that the amount of input influences ILP development and that the exposure to the L2 environment facilitates the development of some aspects of ILP.

Teaching of Interlanguage Pragmatics

The study of the pedagogy of pragmatics is a more recent phenomenon than the study of other aspects of ILP. However, increasingly the significance of the topic is being recognized, and more studies are appearing that address this issue. It is the most relevant aspect of ILP for language teachers because the findings in this area have direct implications for language teaching.

Teachability of Pragmatics

A fundamental question in teaching pragmatics is whether or not it is possible to teach pragmatics at all. The answer seems to be "yes." Studies examining the teachability of pragmatics all suggest that it can be done (Kasper, 1997); however, some aspects of pragmatics seem easier to teach than others. Conversational routines, for example, have been effectively taught in various studies.

Billmyer (1990) conducted an experimental study with 18 Japanese ESL students to examine the effectiveness of tutoring on complimenting and replying to compliments. The experimental group received 6 hours of explicit instruction on compliment rules in addition to their regular ESL instruction. After the experiment, the result of compliment-inducing tasks were analyzed in terms of frequency, level of spontaneity, appropriateness, forms and adjectival repertoire of the compliment, and type and length of reply. The findings showed that tutored L2 students were more native-like in their complimenting behavior and their replies than untutored students in terms their frequency, spontaneity, and adjective repertoire. However, they showed no significant difference from the untutored students in their appropriateness of pragmatic choice.

Another study on the effectiveness of explicit instruction involved advanced German speakers of English (House, 1996). Students received 14 weeks of implicit instruction through rich input of various speech act routines, along with opportunities to practice. In addition, the experimental group received some explicit metapragmatic information about making requests. Analyses of role-play and authentic interaction at the end of the term showed that, while both groups improved, the experimental group was better in using a variety of expressions and strategies to make requests. However, both groups lacked effectiveness in uptaking and responding to the requests of others, speech acts that are less formulaic than the simple act of making a request.

As these studies show, explicit instruction is possible and useful in helping learners acquire pragmatic competence, at least in conversational routines.[6] At the same time, most of the studies point out aspects of pragmatics that seem more difficult to teach than others, of which appropriateness is one example.

Futhermore, teachability varies within the same pragmatic phenomenon. For example, Bouton (1994a, 1994b, and 1996) found that interpretation of certain types of implicatures (i.e., meanings implied by violating one or more conversational maxims[7]) are easier to teach than others. In one study, an experimental group received instruction in interpreting implicatures. Various implicatures were described and their possible uses were discussed. A control group, on the other hand, received instructinstruction on non-pragmatic aspects of language. Students in the experimental group were encouraged to compare implicatures in their L1, to find similar authentic examples inside and outside the classroom, and to make up their own examples. Test results after 6 weeks showed that both groups improved equally in interpreting easier implicatures, such as the deployment of Grice's relevance maxim:

A: "How about going for a walk?"
B: "*Isn't it raining out?*"
(Bouton, 1996, p. 7)

However, the experimental group showed a significant improvement compared to the control group in interpreting more difficult implicatures, such as the implicatures shown below:

1) The "Pope Question" implicature:

A: "Does Dr. Walker always give a test the day before vacation?"
B: "*Does the sun come up in the east?*"

2) Irony:

Bill and Peter work together in the same office. They sometimes are sent on business trips together and are becoming good friends. They often have lunch together and Peter has even invited Bill to have dinner with him and his wife at their home several times. Now Peter's friends have told him that they saw Bill out dancing with Peter's wife recently while Peter was out of town on a business trip. On hearing this, Peter's comment was: "*Bill knows how to be a really good friend, doesn't he?*" (Bouton, 1996, p. 8)

Although further study is necessary in order to understand what makes some implicatures more difficult than others, Bouton's findings suggest that some aspects of pragmatics are easier to learn than others. By focusing on difficult aspects, teachers can help learners develop competence in those areas.

How to Teach Pragmatics

Several ILP studies have been conducted on the question of how to teach pragmatics, which is what the majority of language teachers are interested in. Awareness-raising, as suggested by both empirical and theoretical studies, is one effective approach to the teaching of pragmatics. This approach aims at:

> developing learners' pragmatic awareness through classroom application of available descriptive frameworks and research results. It does not attempt to teach specific means of, say, performing a given speech act, but rather attempts to sensitize learners to context-based variation in language use and the variables that help determine that variation. (Rose, 1994, p. 37)

Drawing from research that suggests the importance of noticing in language acquisition and L1 pragmatics development, Schmidt (1993) argues awareness of pragmatic input is important for the acquisition of pragmatic competence. "Consciously paying attention to the relevant features of input and attempting to analyze their significance in terms of deeper generalization are both highly facilitative," he suggests, in the development of L2 pragmatics (p. 35). Therefore, tasks that focus the learner's attention on pragmatic forms, functions, and co-occurring features of social context are helpful in developing adult language learners' ILP.

Empirical studies in ILP and contrastive pragmatics also suggest that awareness-raising assists students in utilizing the pragmatic knowledge they already possess. Kasper (1997) found that L1 and L2 speakers have access to similar inventories of semantic formulae and other pragmatic resources, but language learners underuse universal or L1 pragmatic knowledge. Therefore, awareness-raising activities are useful in making language learners aware of their existing pragmatic competence and encouraging them to utilize the pragmatic resources they already possess.

Specific ideas for awareness-raising have been introduced in publications for language teachers, such as *TESOL Journal*, as well as at regional and national TESOL conferences. Tanaka (1997) suggests that students examine and discuss their L1 sociocultural rules and either observe and analyze target language discourse or develop a survey to explore similar rules in a target community. For example, one of Tanaka's students, after seeing the U.S. political debates on video, wrote:

> We have many different ways to say *no.* Before class, I thought that Americans just say *NO.* But I find out that it is not true. My favorite hobby is watching movies. So now, I'm going to start watching more carefully to learn different ways of saying *no* and many other things. (p. 16)

This student has noticed that there are various ways of expressing refusal, a starting point for exploring the complex relationship between pragmatics and contexts. Furthermore, the student has realized that his/her view of the target culture and language did not reflect reality. Since misconceived notions of the target language and culture are one cause for L2 speakers' pragmatic deviation, this activity is helpful in addressing one of the potential catalysts for pragmatic failure as well.[8]

One difficulty for anyone who tries to teach pragmatics is that it is so highly context dependent. No "magic line" will be appropriate for all contexts, and it is equally unrealistic to attempt to cover all contexts that students could possibly encounter. By being taught to be aware of pragmatics in various contexts, however, learners will develop the ability to figure out pragmatic patterns in new, previously unencountered contexts. In that sense also, raising learners' awareness is more useful than simply teaching selectively pragmatic patterns for limited, specific contexts.

Teaching Materials

There is urgent need for the development of teaching materials based on ILP empirical data. Teaching materials, especially textbooks, serve as important sources of input. What studies have illustrated about the treatment of pragmatics in textbooks, however, is rather discouraging. Bardovi-Harlig (1996) has shown that textbooks often do not present a particular speech act or language function at all. She also shows that such presentation, when it does occur, may not very accurately reflect reality.

Examining how the conversational function of "closing" was presented in 20 ESL textbooks, she found that only two textbooks attempted to present appropriate examples of closings. The dialogues in the remaining books either went only as far as preclosings or did not have closings at all, as in the following example:

Stanley: Hi, Dick.
Dick: Hi Stanley. Did you go to the football game yesterday?
Stanley: No, I went to the movies with my kids. Did our team win?
Dick: No, they didn't. They lost.
Stanley: Did they lose by much?
Dick: They lost by twelve points.
Stanley: Oh, that's awful. I'm glad I didn't go.
(Lado, 1989, cited in Bardovi-Harlig, 1996)

Conversational closing is an aspect of pragmatics about which language learners often express uneasiness. The difficulty language learners experience and the lack of examples in ESL teaching materials are perhaps not unrelated. Bouton (1990, 1996) also notes that no ESL textbooks make any direct attempt to develop students' abilities to understand and interpret implicatures. Although implicatures are used frequently in daily conversation, only a few examples of them are found in textbook dialogues.

EFL textbooks are also found to be inadequate as a source of input. LoCastro (1997) analyzed 34 EFL textbooks used in Japanese senior high schools to see how the formal linguistic markers of politeness are introduced. She found that they do not provide adequate resources necessary for students to control the politeness levels of their utterances. For example, there are no lessons or chapters devoted to a discussion of politeness, and examples of linguistic politeness markers are noticeably lacking. In some cases, dialogues lack necessary style shifting and politeness in particular contexts, as shown in the following example:

Student: For my generation, life is so difficult.
Teacher: Huh? Why?
Student: It's so difficult to be original. Lindberg [sic] crossed the Atlantic. Others have climbed Mount Everest and gone to the moon. What's new?
Teacher: How about a cure for cancer? Could you find one?
Student: *Who, me? You must be kidding*. But I'd like to be in the famous Book of Records.
(an example from *New Horizon II*, p. 94, cited in LoCastro, 1997, p. 252).

In this example, LoCastro argues that the response in italics is inappropriate given the power, status, and age differences between a teacher and a high school student. In other words, textbooks not only fail to provide enough input but they present inaccurate examples of how pragmatic context determines politeness levels in authentic communication. LoCastro also adds that teachers in Japan do not have many resources available to use in teaching politeness.

In teaching pragmatics, as in other aspects of L2 acquisition, it seems more realistic and desirable to aim for what Giles, Coupland, and Coupland (1991) call "optimal" rather than "total" convergence. In other words, rather than attempting to acquire native speaker competence in any and all aspects of L2 use (i.e., "total convergence"), a learner should aim at acquiring native-like language uses in those areas that are crucial for successful target language communication (i.e., "optimal convergence"). In order to develop a curriculum to achieve such optimal convergence, the differences between L1 and L2 speakers that influence communication need to be identified.

Conclusion

Understanding the nature of ILP and its developmental patterns helps teachers make an informed decision about the treatment of pragmatics in language classrooms. For example, the fact that L1 and L2 speakers have access to the same inventory of semantic formulae suggests that students do not need to be taught new formulae; rather, they need to learn how to make use of their inventory. Such findings from studies on teaching and learning have specific implications for classroom teaching. For example, analyses of teaching materials help teachers see what types of implicit messages textbooks send regarding what language is appropriate in what contexts. It also provides valuable guidance as to how teachers should compensate for shortcomings in their lesson plans and enrichment materials.

The field of ILP, in fact, is still in its developmental stage, and there are many issues to be studied within its scope of research. A review of studies to date suggests that ILP research has much to contribute to language pedagogy. As focus on the teaching and learning of pragmatics increases, ILP seems to be one field in second language studies from which language teachers can benefit greatly.

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Endnotes

[1] See Bachman (1987), Canale and Swain (1980), Savignon (1983) and Thomas (1983) for further discussion of pragmatic competence in relation to communicative competence.

[2] The term *speaker* is used to refer to the language user because almost all ILP studies to date have exclusively studied spoken language. Whether or not findings from ILP studies on spoken language are applicable to written language is yet to be investigated.

[3] The notion of *native speakers* as providers of standard, normative language has been challenged as variability exists in what they know about the language, what they can do with the language, and what they consider to be the

standard. In this paper, the term *native speakers* in used to refer broadly to people who speak the language as their first language, and *non-native speakers* to people who do not speak the language as their first language. The term *native speakers*, therefore, implies neither authority nor homogeneity.

[4] The most obvious reason for L2 speakers' pragmatic deviation is linguistic limitation. If speakers do not have adequate linguistic resources to say what they want to say, they cannot conform to the pragmatic rules in a speech community even if they are aware of the rules (e.g., Cohen & Olshtain, 1981). However, only a few ILP studies (e.g., Blum-Kulka, 1983) even mention linguistic limitation as a cause of pragmatic failure because linguistic proficiency is usually considered as a related but separate entity from pragmatic competence. Because of this lack of discussion in ILP studies, and also because resources to improve linguistic competence are more readily available outside of ILP studies, this paper does not discuss linguistic limitation as a cause of L2 pragmatic deviation.

[5] See also Beebe and Takahashi (1989a, 1989b) and Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990).

[6] See also Edmondson and House (1991), Jaworski (1994) and Wilder-Basset (1984, 1986, 1994).

[7] Grice (1975) proposed that all humans, when they are being rational, are cooperative in communication, unconsciously observing the cooperative principle: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (p. 45).

Although what is "required" varies cross-culturally, the fact that humans are cooperative in constructing conversation, Grice argues, is a universal principle. He also proposed four special cases of this Cooperative Principle (CP), which he calls *maxims* (pp. 26-27):

Maxim of Quantity:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Maxim of Quality:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Maxim of Relation:

Be relevant.

Maxim of Manner:

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief.
4. Be orderly.

The principle and four maxims are not prescriptive rules speakers are required to follow; rather, these are descriptions of what speakers naturally do. In actual conversations, however, these maxims are often seemingly violated as in the following example (Grice, 1975):

A: "Smith doesn't seem to have a girlfriend these days."
B: *"He's been driving to New York every weekend."*

B's response seems to violate the maxim of relation. However, this is not likely to result in an immediate communication breakdown; instead, A will try to figure out what B implied. Grice argues that the interpretation of such implication is possible because the cooperative principle is observed. When the speaker seems to have violated the maxim, we assume that there is a reason for it, rather than that the person is saying something totally irrelevant, for example, because we assume that the speaker is observing the CP.

In this case, B may be trying to convey that Smith has a girlfriend in New York, has too much work to do in New York that he doesn't have time to have girlfriend, or something else; either way, A will try to figure out the *implicature* (i.e., implied meaning) because he or she assumes that B observes the CP. In other words, the "violation" of the relevance maxim was actually only apparent; the observance of the CP allows B to convey *something more than what was actually said* and A to comprehend an *implicature.*

Implicature, which can be explained using the conversational maxims and CP, is used extensively in our everyday conversation and has been a focus of ILP studies as well (e.g., Bouton, 1992, 1994a, 1994b).

[8] Also see Bardovi-Harlig (1996), Cohen (1997) and Ebsworth and Ebsworth (1997) for more suggestions on awareness raising activities in language classrooms.

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