

Pragmatics for Language Educators (3 cr.)
Graduate School for Language Sciences
Kanda University of International Studies
Fall 2015

Instructor Contact Information

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Course Dates (Sundays 10 am – 5 pm)

December 21, January 4, January 11, January 25, February 22 + online discussion (4 hours)

Course Description

Second/foreign language (L2) learners need not only knowledge of grammar and vocabulary but also ability to understand and use culturally appropriate language according to the given social context (*pragmatic* or *sociolinguistic competence*). However, pragmatic aspects of the L2 have generally received little attention in the L2 curriculum and teacher development.

This course focuses on the learning and teaching of L2 pragmatics. The aim of the course is for you to develop or enhance your understanding of what pragmatics is, how L2 pragmatics has progressed as a subfield of second language acquisition, and ways that learners can become better versed in how to be pragmatically appropriate in an L2. The course will start by exploring theoretical concepts related to politeness, face, implicature, speech acts, and discourse, and examine past research in cross-cultural, interlanguage, and acquisitional pragmatics. The course will then introduce various research instruments, methods, and theoretical frameworks, which we will critically evaluate in relation to our view of language learning as a cognitive, psychological, and social activity. Finally, due to the special focus placed on the pedagogical considerations in this course, we will take a close look at effective instructional practices and investigates issues related to classroom assessment of learners' pragmatic competence. You are encouraged to practice reflective teaching and conduct action research while you engage in pragmatics-focused instruction you design for your own classrooms.

Course Requirements

Your Responsibilities:

- To attend all class meetings and participate in activities and discussions at all levels.
- To complete readings before class and engage in reflection on your current teaching practice.
- To gather resources and information from existing literature and the CARLA pragmatics database related to topics to be explored independently.
- To engage class and online discussions actively to reflect, synthesize, and learn from colleagues.

Assignments:

Reading response (2 postings)

The purpose of this assignment is primarily to provide you with an opportunity to explore the publications on L2 pragmatics that is available in the field and to familiarize yourself with the range of topics these publications address. The response papers also offer a chance to enter the *discourse community* constituted by applied linguists focusing on L2 pragmatics.

You may choose articles from optional readings, or identify articles relevant to acquisitional pragmatics in refereed journals that are 10 pages or more in length and published within the last 10 years in the area of interlanguage or cross-cultural pragmatics. Each response should briefly summarize what the article is about, but its main focus should be on your response to it. Your review should be critical in the sense of “analytical” but not necessarily destructive. In building your arguments, you are strongly

encouraged to relate other readings as much as possible and incorporate your own experience. Each response should be about 1-2 pages long (approximately 400-500 words). You should post two reading responses in the “Reading Response Forum” of our course website, **one by January 15th** and **the other by February 15th**. Plan to spend at least an hour online reading and responding to other participants’ reading responses.

Pragmatics-focused lesson plan (Paper and course website posting due: 1/25/2015)

In a small group or individually, you are asked to choose a component of pragmatic competence and develop a lesson plan that aims to improve learners’ pragmatic language use. This will be the basis of your instructional intervention that you will be providing later on during the course.

You will receive suggestions and feedback from the instructor and other course participants as you discuss your planned instruction at mid-semester. You will be invited to post your lesson plans on the course website to share them with the rest of the group. After January 25th, spend at least an hour reading and giving feedback on your colleagues’ lesson plans. (If you prefer to write a more formal research paper, please discuss your ideas with me by **January 11th**.) See the handout to be distributed in class for the details of this assignment.

Final paper on your classroom research (Paper and course website posting due: 2/22/2015)

In order to promote reflective teaching and systematic incorporation of pragmatics, you will be asked to plan and implement small-scale classroom research in your teaching context. You can utilize (the revised version of) your lesson plan you developed earlier as an instructional intervention in this exploration. For the details and format of these reports and research, see the handout to be distributed in class.

Course Website

Go to the course website from your portal and enter your username and password to sign in. (Regarding the course website, you will be informed of more details later.)

Assessment

Below is a synopsis of how assignments will be reflected in the final course grade:

Participation (Attendance/participation in class and online)	20%
Assignment A: Reading responses	30%
Assignment C: Pragmatics-focused lesson plan	20%
Assignment D: Action research write-up and presentation	30%

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings/Assignments
12/21/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction to the course ➤ Terms, concepts, and definitions ➤ Background in L2 pragmatics ➤ Teacher development and instructional pragmatics ➤ Introduction to action research 	Thomas, Vásquez & Sharpless (Optional readings: IC (Ishihara& Cohen) Ch.1, LoCastro)
1/4/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Overview of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics ➤ Data collection instruments and research methods in cross-cultural/interlanguage pragmatics ➤ Instructional pragmatics: pragmatics-focused instruction 	Yule Ch 5-8, IC Ch.3, Beebe <i>et al</i> , Nelson <i>et al</i> (optional: IC Ch. 4, Takimoto, Taguchi, Houck & Fujimori)
1/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Instructional pragmatics: pragmatics-focused instruction ➤ Textbook analysis and adaptation 	IC Ch 5, Petraki & Bayes, Fordyce, Knight

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Causes of learners' pragmatic failure/choice ➤ Pragmatics and English as an International Language ➤ Lesson plan presentations/discussions 	(Optional: IC Ch 7-8, Murray, Jiang, Nguyen, Taguchi, Eslami-Rasekh) Pragmatics-focused lesson plan and course website posting due Jan.11th. Also, finish the first reading response post by Jan. 15th.
1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cognitive theories related to the learning of L2 pragmatics ➤ Psychological, social, and post-structuralist views of language learning and acquisition of pragmatics ➤ Linking theory and practice in acquisitional pragmatics ➤ Pragmatic tone 	IC Ch6, Zuengler & Cole, Morita (Optional: Siegal, Ohta, Kasper) Finish the second reading response post by Feb. 15th.
2/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessment of learners' pragmatic competence ➤ Conversation analysis, discourse analysis, language corpora and L2 pragmatics ➤ Pragmatic vs. grammatical competence ➤ Action research presentation ➤ Wrap-up reflection 	IC Ch 14-15; Ishihara (Optional: McNamara & Roever, Lee & McChesney, IC Ch.9, van Compernelle) Action research paper and course website posting due Feb. 22nd.

Required/Optional Course Readings

Textbooks

- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. (required readings: chapters 5-8)
- Ishihara, N., & Cohen, A. D. (2010). *Teaching and learning pragmatics: Where language and culture meet*. Harlow, UK: Pearson/Education.

Online Course Packet (assorted articles in cross-cultural/interlanguage pragmatics)

For course meeting #1

- Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 91-109.
- Vásquez, C., & Sharpless, D. (2009). The role of pragmatics in the master's TESOL curriculum: Findings from a nationwide survey. *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(1), 5-28.
- LoCastro, V. (2012). Defining the territory. In V. LoCastro, *Pragmatics for language educators: A sociolinguistic perspective* (pp. 3-17). London: Routledge.

For course meeting #2

- Beebe, L. M., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. Scarcella, E. Andersen, & S. D. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 55-73). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Nelson, G. L., Carson, J., Al-Batal, M., & El-Bakary, W. (2002). Cross-cultural pragmatics: Strategy use in Egyptian Arabic and American English refusals. *Applied Linguistics*, 23(2), 163-189.
- Takimoto, M. (2008). The effects of deductive and inductive instruction on the development of language learners' pragmatic competence. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92(3), 369-386.
- Taguchi, N. (2012). Refusals in L2 English: Proficiency effects on appropriateness and fluency. In P. Salazar & O.A. Marti (eds.), *Refusals in instructional contexts and beyond*. Spain: Rodopi.
- Houck, N., & Fujimori, J. (2010). "Teacher, you should lose some weight": Advice-giving in English. In D. Tatsuki & N. Houck (Eds.), *Pragmatics: Teaching speech acts* (pp. 89-103). Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

For course meeting #3

- Petraki, E., & Bayes, S. (2013). Teaching oral requests: An evaluation of five English as a second language coursebooks. *Pragmatics*, 23(3), 499-517.

- Fordyce, K. (2012). What's in the name? In J. Ronald, K. Fordyce, C. Rinnert & T. Knight (Eds.), *Pragmatics: Bringing pragmatics to second language classrooms* (pp. 9-11). Tokyo: The Japan Association for Language Teaching Pragmatics Special Interest Group.
- Knight, T. (2012). I was wondering if... you could make that request more politely. In J. Ronald, K. Fordyce, C. Rinnert & T. Knight (Eds.), *Pragmatics: Bringing pragmatics to second language classrooms* (pp. 105-108). Tokyo: The Japan Association for Language Teaching Pragmatics Special Interest Group.
- Murray, N. (2012). English as a lingua franca and the development of pragmatic competence. *ELT Journal*, 66(3), 318-326.
- Jiang, X. (2006). Suggestions: What should ESL students know? *System*, 34(1), 36-54.
- Nguyen, T. T. M. (2011). Learning to communicate in a globalized world: To what extent do school textbooks facilitate the development of intercultural pragmatic competence? *RELC Journal*, 42(1), 1-14.
- Taguchi, N. (2011). Teaching pragmatics: Trends and issues. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31, 289-310.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2005). Raising the pragmatic awareness of language learners. *ELT Journal*, 59(3), 199-208.

For course meeting #4

- Zuengler, J., & Cole, K. (2005). Language socialization and second language learning. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 301-316). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Morita, N. (2004). Negotiating participation and identity in second language academic communities. *TESOL Quarterly* 38(4), 573-604.
- Siegal, M. (1996). The role of learner subjectivity in second language sociolinguistic competency: Western women learning Japanese. *Applied Linguistics*, 17, 356-382.
- Ohta, A. S. (2005). Interlanguage pragmatics in the zone of proximal development. *System*, 33(3), 503-517.
- Kasper, G. (2001). Four perspectives on L2 pragmatic development. *Applied Linguistics*, 22(4), 502-530.

For course meeting #5

- Ishihara, N. (2009). Teacher-based assessment for foreign language pragmatics. *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(3), 445-470.
- McNamara, T. F., & Roever, C. (2006). The social dimension of proficiency: How testable is it? In *Language testing: The social dimension* (pp. 43-79). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Lee, J. S., & McChesney, B. (2000). Discourse rating tasks: A teaching tool for developing sociocultural competence. *ELT Journal*, 54(2), 161-168.
- Rémi A. van Compernelle (2013). Interactional competence and the dynamic assessment of L2 pragmatic abilities. In S. J. Ross & G. Kasper (Eds), *Assessing second language pragmatics* (pp. 327-353). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Useful Online Resources

Plan to spend at least 2 hours taking advantage of these resources.

Office of English Programs, U.S. Department of State. (2003). *Teaching pragmatics* (Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Mahan-Taylor, R., eds.) Teachers' resource book for teaching pragmatics:

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/pragmatics.htm> (or google "Teaching Pragmatics Department of State")

Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. *CARLA Speech Act Databases*.

- *Description of speech acts*: <http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/descriptions.html>
- *Speech acts bibliography*: <http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/bibliography/index.html>
- *Learning speech acts in Japanese*. Self-access learner modules for learning five speech acts: <http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/japanese/introtospeechacts/index.htm>
- *Dancing with words: Strategies of learning pragmatics in Spanish*. Self-access learner modules for learning eight speech acts: http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/sp_pragmatics/home.html

Indiana University. *Discourse pragmatics*. Language and culture resources for instructors, students, and researchers of Spanish (and English) linguistics: <http://www.indiana.edu/~discprag/index.html>