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pragsig.org/index.html

From the editor:

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2013 and a **Happy New Year** to all of you. I hope you have enjoyed a good festive break and are ready for the final part of the academic year.

Much of this issue casts a look back at our presence at the JALT national conference in Hamamatsu in October, but it also gives pointers for possible work in the future. 2012 was an especially active one for our SIG, as we not only co-sponsored one of the plenary speakers at JALT, but we also published our third special volume in our **Pragmatic Resource** series. I hope you all got your copy. As one of the editors I have probably had more time to look through more of the articles than most of you, but I hope you soon feel, as I do, excited about the prospect of using many of the activities in classes. The all-important appendices with photocopiable materials are freely available at the **Pragmatics** section of our **SIG's website here**. You can also find out how to order further copies of the book at the **same place**.

In this newsletter, as well as reviewing some of the JALT conference from the Pragmatics point of view, we have two features arising from presentations at the conference. One is an article, adapted from his poster presentation, by Walter Kasmer, on the problems of implicature faced by students, as shown in their blog work; the other is a tremendously useful feature by Tim Greer on how to collect and transcribe data when conducting Conversational Analysis. This is the first article in a series of four by the presenters of a CA panel presentation at Hamamatsu. They will all describe a different aspect of doing CA work.

Two of the events at which our SIG's presence was clear in the first half of 2012 were the annual Temple University Japan

編集者より :

みなさま2013年の最初のニュースレターにようこそ。新年明けましておめでとうございます。みなさまが良い祝祭休暇を楽しみ、学年の残りの準備が整っていると願っています。

今号の多くの部分では10月に浜松で行われたJALT全国学会での私たちの活動を振り返りますが、また将来の可能な活動について指針を示しています。2012年は、全国語学教育学会における基調講演の共催だけでなく、また語用論参考文献シリーズの第3特別巻を発刊し、私たち語用論部会にとっては特に活発な一年となりました。みなさまがもうすでに一部を受け取っていますように。私は編集者の一人として、おそらくみなさまのほとんど誰よりも記事に目を通す多くの時間がありましたが、私がクラスでそれらのアクティビティの多くを使う期待に胸を躍らせたように、みなさまも同じように感じて欲しいと願っています。コピー可能な教材のすべての重要な付録は、私たちの部会のウェブサイトのこの [\(SIG's website here\)](#) Pragmaticsセクションから自由にご利用いただけます。またここでは第3特別巻を追加注文したい場合の注文方法についてもご案内しています。

このニュースレターでは、語用論の観点からJALT全国学会を見直すと同様に、学会の発表に関連する2つの特集を扱っています。1つは、学生のブログに見られる、彼らが直面している含意の問題について、ウォルター・カスマー氏が行ったポスター発表を脚色した記事を紹介しています。もう1つは会話分析を行う際のデータの収集と転写の仕方に関するティム・グリア氏による特集です。これは浜松での会話分析パネルプレゼンテーションの発表者による会話分析の作業について異なった視点を述べる4回シリーズの最初の記事です。

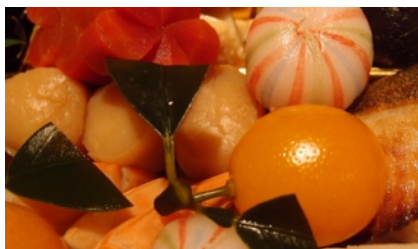
たちの部会の存在は2012年前半に行われたテンプレ大学日本校コロキウムとPan-SIG学会の二つの学会で顕在でした。2013年も同じ学会に関連する重要な日が近づいてきています。まず、第15回テンプレ大学応用言語学コロキウムは2月3日に、今年東京で再び開催されます。詳細はここTUJのウェブ

From the editor: Knight

colloquium and the Pan-SIG conference. Two important dates related to the 2013 equivalents are coming up. First, the 15th annual **Temple University Applied Linguistics Colloquium** will be held again in Tokyo this year, on February 3rd. Details about that can be found at the **TUJ website here**. Second, the deadline for proposals for the **Pan-SIG conference** (which we co-sponsor) is February 15. The main idea this year is to see how the various SIGs can collaborate and cooperate in their studies and research. The **Call for Papers** can be found at **this page of the conference website**.

I hope to see some of you at forthcoming events in 2013. In the meantime, best wishes and may you have a healthy and Pragtivity-full year.

Tim Knight



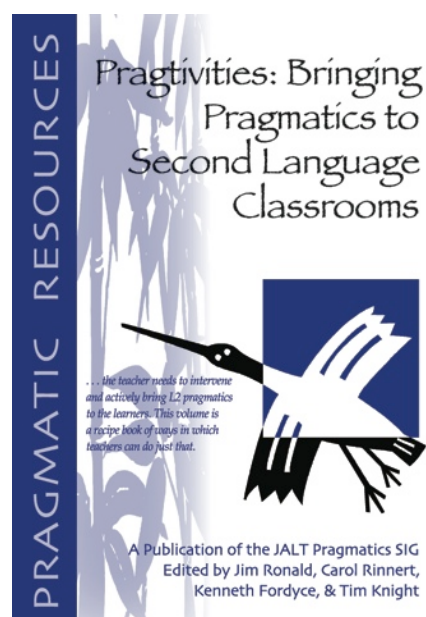
Have you got your copy?

サイト ([TUJ website here](#)) で見つけることができます。に私たちが協賛のPan-SIG学会の発表の提案の締め切りが2月15日です。今年的主要なアイデアは様々な部会がどのようにして学問と研究にお互いに協力し合うことができるかを確認することです。発表論文募集に関しては学会のウェブサイトのこのページで ([this page of the conference website](#)) 見つけることができます。

2013年に来るイベントでみなさまにお会いできることを願っています。それまででご多幸をお祈りしつつ、みなさまにとって健康でPragtivityで充実した年になりますように。

ティム・ナイト

(Thanks to Japanese co-editors Yukie Saito and Naoko Osuka)



Conversation Analysis: The Multilingual Challenge

JALT 2012 Conference Report

Mark Holst

In this article Mark Holst reports on **Alan Firth's Saturday talk at JALT**, in which he addressed the multilingual challenge for CA, and the challenges that CA holds for SLA.

この記事では、マーク・ホルスト氏が土曜日のJALTでアラン・ファース氏が語った会話分析への多言語的チャレンジについて、会話分析が第2言語習得論に関して抱えるチャレンジについて報告します。

In this engaging presentation **Firth argued that CA has its own underlying monolingual and monocultural foundations**. He addressed the challenges that CA for SLA presents and explored the development of a “more multilingually sensitive CA.”

Right, **Alan Firth** gives his talk on *Conversational Analysis: The Multilingual Challenge* (on Saturday, October 13) at JALT 2012.



Firth began by setting forth the standard view of L2 talk, which he called the “deficit perspective of language learning”, drawing on studies by Corson (1997) and Leung (2005). Underlying this perspective is the assumption that learner identities are pre-formed and therefore in some sense permanent. He identified three features of the deficit perspective:

1. Learners are deficient speakers of the language
2. There is no issue in evaluating NNSs against NSs
3. The target language and culture frames what happens in classrooms

Firth noted that applied linguistics' conceptions of language learning have been shaped solely by the view that the language class is the only place to study language. Yet, he argued, this is based on a narrow view of language learning that seems to dismiss L2 interactions that take place between learners outside the formal setting of the language classroom and without the control or intervention of the teacher.

Conference report: Holst

Regarding such interactions Leung (2005) argues for a recontextualization of communicative competence, arguing that ELT practitioners need to take notice of real-world social, cultural and language developments when making professional judgements and evaluation about learners' language use. She cites three 'essential qualities' that are needed:

- **Epistemological relativity** – recognizing one's own assumptions about knowledge, and how it is legitimised in one's own society, so as to be able to view the knowledge of other societies with a more open mind;
- **Reflexivity** – the ability to reflect critically on the way in which one's own cultural background and standpoint influence one's view of other cultures;
- **Critical consciousness** – ethnography is not simply a convenient tool for studying and research but it is itself a product of particular dominant societies at a particular period.

Firth also referred to Corson (1997), who maintained that non-standard varieties should be valued and form the basis of a more realistic assessment of communicative proficiency. **Proficiency should be assessed by participant-observation of learners' language use in familiar, naturalistic settings where they are most comfortable.**

Firth argued that (i) the recontextualization of communicative competence (Leung) and (ii) the recognition that assessment needs to take account of non-standard varieties (Corson) means that CA needs to change the way it analyses learners' language. During the 2000s CA started to be used in SLA, ESL and ELT, but Firth pointed to a number of problems with this:

- L2-focused CA researchers adopted a servile position vis-à-vis CA. CA has a monolingual foundation, so we may be becoming blind to "multilingual competence".
- Multilingual competence resides between speakers, not in individual speakers.
- CA is interested in competence but competence is implicitly defined as stable and established – there is no concept of 'developmental' competence.

Examples of Multilingual Competence

Firth illustrated the idea of multilingual competence with (audio) data he collected from Skypecasts between L2 English speakers from different L1 backgrounds. He noted that it was rare for learners to use 'I don't know what you mean.' – i.e. explicitly ask for repairs. Instead adept learners are able to judge when to make reformulations to help their fellow L2 interlocutor. A formulation–pause–reformulation sequence does not indicate incompetence but to the contrary, it is an 'artful display of competence' showing sensitivity to, and solidarity with, the interlocutor as a fellow

Conference report: Holst

learner. This was illustrated as follows in lines 22, 23 and 24 of Firth's data set (2) between a Chinese learner (S1) and a Japanese learner (S2):

19 S2: mmhm (0.5) ok China (0.5) so=
 20 S1: =yea[h]
 21 S2: [wh]at are you doing uh:: (0.5) what do you do
 22 **for living**
 23 **(0.7)**
 24 **student or worker?**
 25 (3.0)
 26 S1: ok I'm uh:: (0.4) uh- international <treeduh>

S2 reformulates 'for living' to 'student or worker?' because he knows from his own experience that it is a tricky phrase for a learner, and S1 may not understand it. Recognising each other as fellow learners shows their multilingual competence, and this is something to which Firth thinks CA analysts should be sensitive.

In another example, Firth's data set (3), learner S uses a word that he knows is a direct transfer from his L1 (Greek).

1 S: the problem in Greece is we cannot (.) do a †swift
 2 (0.5)
 3 M: no
 4 S: we we we can open only: a letter of †credit↓
 5 (0.48)
 6 M: †yes
 7 S: because uh u:::h (0.3) you know
 8 **uh (.) <our (.) currencies (.) are not (.) free>**
 9 **(0.4)**
 10 **S: you understand?**
 11 **M: yes (.) I fully understand**

As we can see in line 8, learner S indicates the transferred phrase (**currencies are not free**) to learner M by slowing down his utterance and highlighting it using micropauses before and after. So when S asks 'you understand?' M knows, as a fellow learner, that S is referring to this potentially unorthodox usage of **free**. Therefore S wants the utterance to be interpreted in a multilingual way by signaling "*Get ready for this!*".

In a final example between learner N (French L1) and M (Danish L1), data set (5), Firth showed how learners display their multilingualism by drawing on other competences to remind each other that they are not native speakers. In this case it is the ability to claim solidarity through using a particular tone of voice. In the exchange N is asking M to confirm a hotel booking by sending a fax:

Conference report: Holst

- 1 N: you- you fax u:h zer broo- the:- (.) =the-
 2 M: the reservation, ye:[s
 3 N: [yes
 4 M: I can uh send it by fax, to the
 5 [hotel
 6 [a- an' then I can u::::h(h)(h)m= (1.0 sound stretch)
 7 M: o:↓kay↓ I'll send a f[ax to you Natalie
 8 N: [okay you understand m(h)[(he)e?]
 9 ((smile voice))
 10 M: yes=I'm sending the fax to you ((smile voice))
 11 N: thank you
 12 M: thank you ((smile voice))
 13 N: bye
 14 M: bye bye

((smile voice)) refers to a kind of frivolous tone or slight laughter used by N in line 9 to indicate that she knows her utterance in line 1 has a strong French accent, which identifies her as a non-native speaker and she seems to be bidding for solidarity with M. M immediately plays along by mimicking N's **smile voice** (lines 10 and 12), thereby accepting the bid for solidarity as a fellow non-native speaker.

This presentation gave the audience much food for thought, and provoked a number of comments and questions from the audience. Not only did Firth draw our attention to the importance of multilingual competence among language learners, but also that SLA researchers using CA would do well to incorporate multilingual competence as an important feature of their analysis of learner interactions.



References

- Corson, D. (1997) 'Non-Standard Varieties and Educational Policy.' In D. Corson, & R. Wodak, *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (Vol. 1, pp. 99-112). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Leung, C. (2005). Convivial communication: recontextualizing communicative competence. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15 (2), 119-144.

Doing CA: Collecting and transcribing data

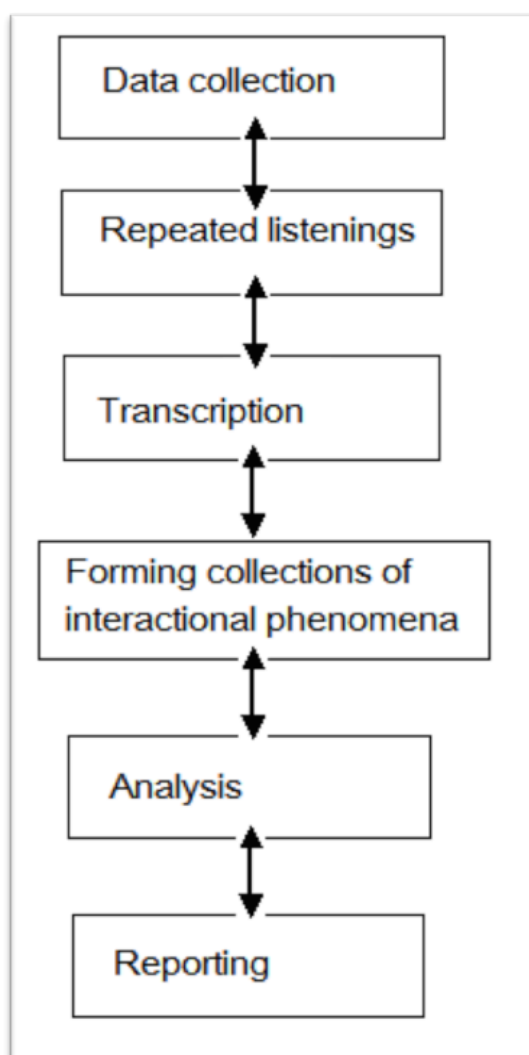
Tim Greer

In the first of a series of four articles explaining 'how to do CA', Tim Greer guides potential CA analysts through the ways in which all-important data can be collected and described.

‘会話分析の仕方’について4つの記事のシリーズの第1弾で、ティム・グリーア氏は未来の会話分析者にどのようにしてすべての重要なデータを収集し、記述するかを指導しています。

To kick off this series, I would like to focus on some of the first and most fundamental steps in the CA research process, those of collecting and transcribing data. Since in a sense **CA is the science of people-watching**, this involves a careful process of recording natural interaction and transforming that interaction into detailed transcripts.

Figure 1: The CA research process (based on Tanaka, 2004)



Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

As shown in Figure 1 (above), we begin by collecting data, usually in video form these days, but depending on the context audio alone is also sometimes used. After careful repeated listening and viewing of the interaction, we transcribe it in detail and begin to form collections of similar interactional phenomena. We then work this up into an analysis that consists of an empirically descriptive account of the interaction, which we report on via presentations and publications. It is **important to note that the arrows between these steps are double-ended, meaning that we are always going back and forth between the steps to refine and expand our work.** In this article I am going to focus just on the early steps of data collection and transcription.

What counts as CA data?

As an initial starting point it is worth considering the sort of data that CA looks at. Put simply **we are interested in naturally occurring talk**, the sort of thing that would have happened even if the camera was not on. That might be mundane interaction like dinner time conversation or social telephone calls, or it might be institutional talk such as a lawyer questioning a witness or a teacher giving an EFL student an oral proficiency interview. The point is that the talk is not pre-planned or post-edited. It is not delivered in a vacuum and it usually holds repercussions for the real world.

In my own research for example, I have collected video-recorded everyday talk such as students eating lunch together and talk between a hairdresser and his clients. I have also looked at oral proficiency tests and classroom talk, where the details of the talk may be influenced by the institutional setting and by the task the participants are taking part in. Whatever you collect, **if you are just starting out, begin with data where only two people are talking**—it will be easier to transcribe. Make sure to use video; if your participants don't agree to that, thank them and find some that will. You will be glad you did that later on when you realize there is so much that goes on that gets missed by audio recording alone. Finally, set the video recorder up high, like a security camera, so you can see all the faces in the shot. Lately I use **a flexible tripod called a Gorilla** (right) that allows me to set the camera in all sorts of places by bending the tripod legs.



Choosing equipment

Before you record anything, the first thing you need to decide on is the equipment you will use. You can go for a complicated video camera with an external microphone for the highest quality, or buy a simple video camera and voice recorder. Many digital cameras these days have a video recording function as well and they are light and portable. Don't forget also to purchase sufficient SD memory cards and batteries. If you are recording for a long period of

Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

time, such as a series of oral tests, then you may need to change the batteries halfway through or else make sure the camera is plugged into a power socket.

Whatever equipment you choose, your decision is going to inevitably come down to a trade-off between the ease with which you can collect data and the eventual quality of the data you obtain. You should of course familiarize yourself with the equipment before you begin data collection, but **the more complex your camera, the greater the possibility there is that something will go wrong while shooting.** If you decide not to be present while the conversation is happening, it is possible that you won't know you left the lens cap on or the battery ran out until later when you go back to watch the video.

It is also **possible to use a number of different cameras to collect multiple shots.** For example when I collected my hairdresser data, I usually had three cameras and an audio recording device in the room. This allowed for different angles to my shots and made sure I had nearly complete coverage of the room. It also guaranteed that I didn't completely lose the data if one of the cameras malfunctioned for whatever reason. Another hint when using multiple data collection sources is to **clap your hands once all the cameras are up and rolling.** This will work like a Hollywood movie clapper so that later you will be able to align the camera and audio at the same point.

Figure 2: Recording natural data from multiple angles

Sidecam

Backcam



Sinkcam



Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

As shown in Figure 2 (above), I **set up three cameras and a recording device** in the hairdresser before the customer came in. After turning them on, I left the salon so that I captured all of the interaction from *irrashaimase* without overly impacting on it by my presence. The **sidecam** gave me a shot of the whole salon and the **backcam** allowed me to look at how the hairdresser and the client use the mirror as an important means of communication. There was also a good deal of the haircut that took place at the sink, so I had a **small digital camera positioned above the sink** on a flexible tripod. It might seem like all these cameras might compromise the naturalness of the talk, and indeed **the observer's paradox** is something of which researchers must be aware. However, in CA any time the participants orient to the camera through their talk this becomes potentially part of the analysis. Where they do not do so, we are justified in not entering into the analysis, because the participants themselves do not treat it as relevant in their interaction. Such is the radically emic nature of CA.

Storing data

Once you have collected the data you need to decide how and where you will keep it. Bigger projects might call for a server that can be accessed by multiple researchers, but in my case I **secure the original files on a secure portable hard disk and place secondary versions on my laptop in password protected files**. Name the files systematically so that you can access them easily. You might want to include the collection site, date and participants, for example. One good idea is to designate the original files as ‘gold’ and any subsequent versions as ‘silver’. Silver versions might, for example, have the audio data from the voice recorder dubbed over the video with Quicktime pro, or have the participant identities masked with mosaics.

Public domain

Of course, these days it is also possible to forgo a lot of the data collection process by making use of data that is already in the public domain. Such data might include talkback radio, television news interviews, or youtube videos. It is still going to take you a lot of time to come up with a database of appropriate recordings and in addition you face the problem of not really knowing as much about the background to the recordings. But **the basic CA tenet of prioritizing natural interaction should remain a priority** in the choices you make. An episode of the sitcom *Friends*, for example, would be inappropriate for a CA study since it is scripted interaction, and therefore reflects a writer's impression of how talk goes rather than talk itself. **Another means of gathering data is through an online database such as talkbank.org**. There you will find a number of crowdsourced recordings of natural interaction, some of which already have transcripts as well. This is often a good way to find additional examples of a phenomenon you have noticed in your own data.

Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

Transcribing data

Once you have the data, **the next job is to watch it carefully and transcribe it in as much detail as possible**. Let's use the following example of talk taken from a public domain clip I found on youtube. In it Koh and Ami are filming Rin as she does a bungee jump. I was interested in the interjections that they used, words like "oh" and "yay". To get at those interjections I had to transcribe the talk and that looked something like this.

Excerpt 1: Bungee

```
01 Koh:   Yo:h   San ni: ichi
          Ready   3     2     1
02       ((Rin jumps off the bridge))
03 Koh:   [GO:::::..
04       [((Rin descends))
05       (2.5)
06       ((Rin rebounds and is propelled upwards))
07 Ami:   YA:::::y
08       ((Rin reaches zenith, close to the bridge))
09 Koh:→  uo!::gh chika!i::
          wow     close
          Wow, that's close.
10       >heh heh heh heh heh ha<
11       (3.5)
12 Ami:   sugo::::i. ( [ )
          incredible
13 Koh:   [wa  suge:      na aitsu
          wow incredible IP she
          Wow, this girl's incredible!
```

Every transcription is going to involve some transcriber decisions which might have the potential to influence the way the reader sees the data. For example, **I chose to give the speakers pseudonyms**. In this case I really didn't know their names, but I gave them Japanese names. It could have been that one of them was a non-Japanese speaker. I might have chosen instead to call them A and B, but to me that somehow dehumanizes them and makes it difficult to distinguish between them in terms of gender, a category that some argue is omnirelevant (Speer & Stokoe, 2011). I could also have called them by their roles, such as commentator and bystander, but that would be placing too much predetermined transcriber interpretation on the data. **I also need to make analytical decisions** about what constitutes a turn and how much text to put on each line.

Let's look at some segments from that transcript to **illustrate some of the detail** that needs to go into a **CA transcript**. First we put in line numbers. These are rather arbitrary

Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

and simply help us to discuss segments of the talk with others, whether in a data session or in a publication. You will notice that we transcribe many paralinguistic features of the talk. For example, the colon represents an extended vowel sound. It's not yay but YA:::::y. Here the vowel elongation is quite long. The period denotes falling intonation and the question mark shows rising intonation. Empty parenthesis record unintelligible talk and square brackets show the onset of overlapped talk. CA transcripts can be a little daunting at first, but once you are used to reading them you will find that transcripts without this much detail seem impoverished indeed. For a full list of the **Jeffersonian transcript conventions**, see Schegloff (2007) or Wong and Waring (2010).

Where the talk is in a language other than English, **we often need to provide a translation**. We usually do this **on two tiers**. The first tier is a word-by-word gloss and the second is a more vernacular translation. The reason we do this is so that readers who do not understand the original can get a sense of what the recipients know at a particular point in the turn. For example, in Japanese the verb doesn't come until the end of the sentence, and therefore things like tense and whether it is positive or negative are not available to the listener until that point. This might not be apparent from the English translation alone.

You'll also notice that a good deal of this transcript was also taken up with **descriptions of the physical action**. We do this in double parentheses, such as in line 4, ((Rin descends)) and again in line 6 ((Rin rebounds and is propelled upwards)). The time each action takes may also be recorded. We **try to be as neutral as possible** in these descriptions so as not to unduly influence the way the reader views the data. For instance we would avoid making a description like ((Rin flies back and is thrown wildly upwards)). That would have the potential to introduce the transcriber's point of view into the data.

Of course such descriptions can never be a complete substitute for the video itself, and wherever possible we should be watching the video rather than relying only on the transcripts. However, when the analysis goes to publication it is often impossible to provide readers with the video. An alternative is to **incorporate a series of screenshots into the data**. We can accentuate these by highlighting features of the embodied talk that we want to discuss, such as the gaze direction or the direction in which a hand is moving. It is also a good idea to indicate in the transcript the exact moment in the talk when the framegrab was taken. This allows readers to see the changes in the embodied talk as the turn progresses.

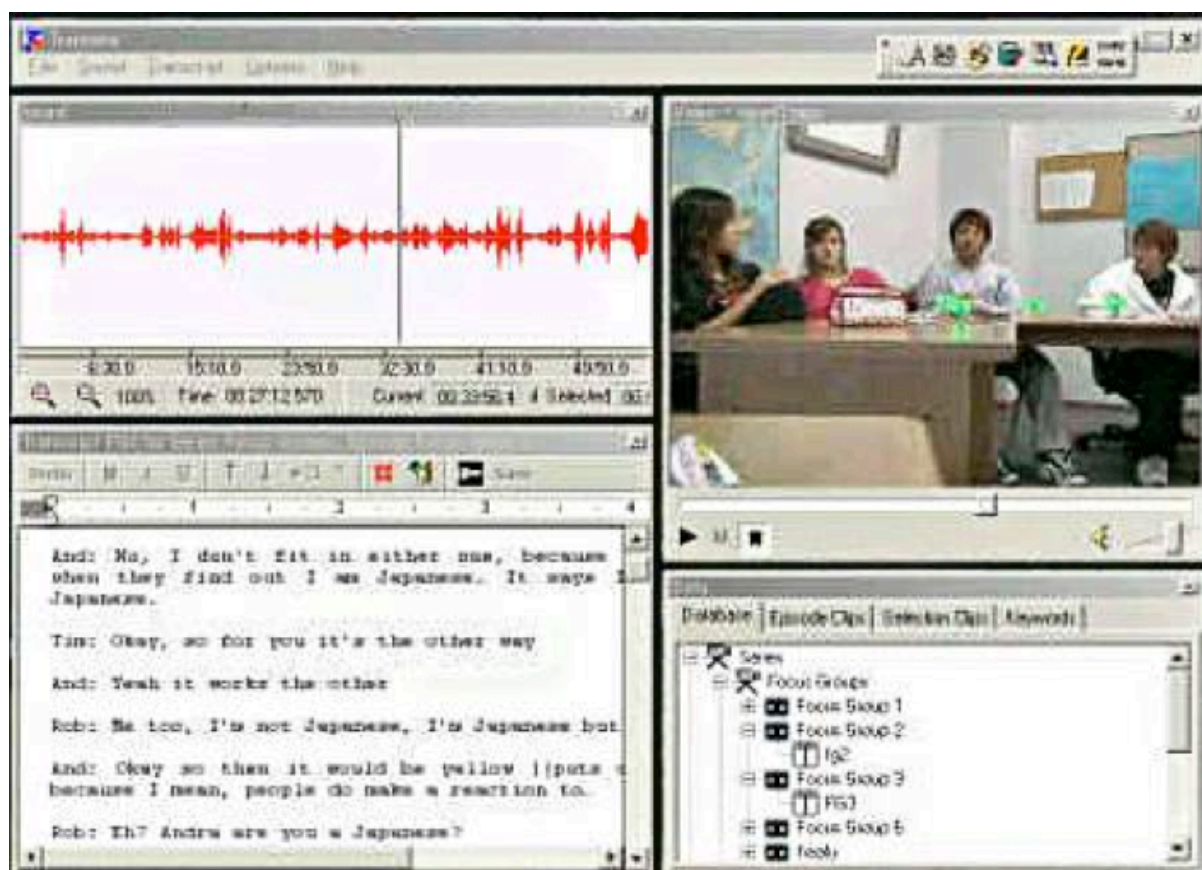
Linking software

To work up a transcript, the simplest thing you need to do is press play and start typing into a Word document. But that's inconvenient and there is a danger that once the transcript is done you will use it in isolation from the recording. Eventually as you get more transcripts you will want to compare them easily with each other. That is where linking software comes

Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

in. Programs like these will allow you to link the written word to the point in the video and audio where it was said. Once you have done that it is easy to create smaller segments of talk from the transcript and sort them into collections. You can also keep notes and observations and code sections so they become searchable. Some well-known linking software programs include Elan, Clan and Transana.

Figure 3: A screenshot of the Transana software



I use Transana, but basically they all work in a similar way. **One warning: these programs will not transcribe your data for you.** You still have to do that. What they will do is link the words in your transcript to the sound bar and the video. And that's a powerful thing, because then all you need to do is drag sections of the transcripts into the folders in the lower right box to build up collections for your analysis. When you go to look at your collection again, the video and transcript will appear with one click. You can also add codes and search your collections.

Participant consent

Another important task when recording natural interaction is getting permission from the speakers. I usually do this in **two steps**. First I get general verbal consent before the recording takes place. This usually involves a brief explanation of what the project is about.

Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

After the recording has taken place I then confirm with the participants that it is okay to use the data and have them sign a simple consent form that includes a checkbox like the one below. Actually I usually only need them to check the first three boxes, but most people check all six. **I give them the option of deleting** any part of the data they don't want to have made public. I find that some people are reluctant to sign before they know what the conversation will be about, but the sorts of conversations we analyze are fairly banal so they are usually happy for me to use the data after the conversation is done.

Figure 4: A simple checkbox for obtaining participant consent

<i>How can I use this video? Please check as many boxes as you like.</i>	
The videos can be studied by the researcher for use in the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transcripts of the recordings can be used in academic journals.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The videos can be shown to other researchers at academic conferences.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The videos can appear on secure professional websites, such as those of academic journals.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The transcripts and/or recordings can be used by other researchers.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The records can be shown in public presentations to non-specialist groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The recordings can be used on television or radio.	<input type="checkbox"/>

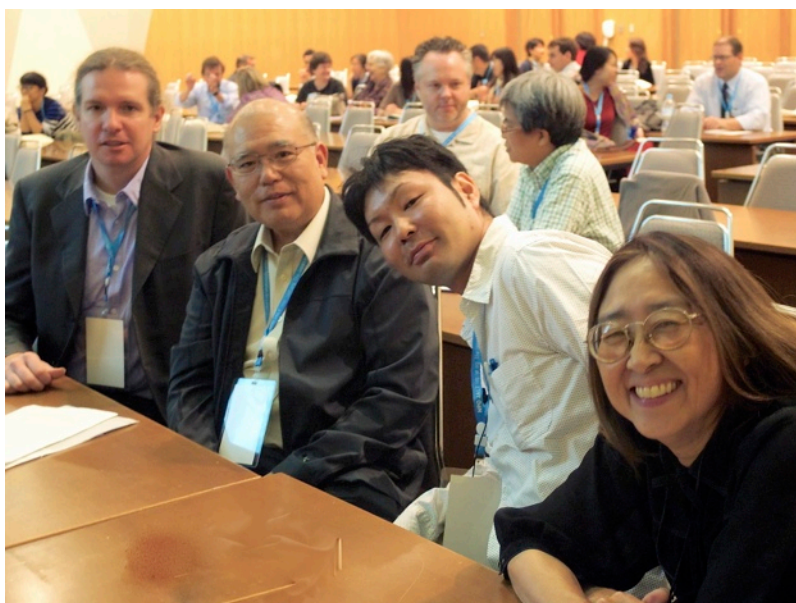
Conclusion

This brief overview does not do full justice to the complex task of data collection and transcription, but I hope these practical tips and advice are of some use to beginning CA researchers as well as those working in similar fields. As is so often the way, **the best way to do it is to do it**—go out and collect some video data. You'll make some mistakes, but you'll learn from them. And you'll probably discover, like I did, that **the hard part comes in analyzing all the talk that you have collected**.

Collecting and transcribing CA data: Greer

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Tim Greer, the author, is on the left of the photo. This was the first in a series of four articles by the four presenters at the *pecha kucha* style panel on CA at JALT 2012. In our next issue Ian Nakamura (sitting next to Greer) will explain how to organize and participate in data sessions. In future issues Yosuke Ogawa and Donna Fujimoto will explain other aspects of 'doing CA.'

Useful websites for *doing CA*:

Charles Antaki's online tutorial on transcription
homepages.lboro.ac.uk/~ssca1/sitemenu.htm

Talk Bank
talkbank.org

Transana
transana.org

Clan
childes.psy.cmu.edu/clan

Elan
tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan

Also at JALT 2012

Some other Pragmatics SIG-related presentations and activities were:



Alan Firth's pre-conference data session breaking up after a lively 90 minutes. About 20 people discussed a dialogue between two non-native speakers of English on a Skypecast.

Scott Gardner shows how he uses Monty Python for teaching pragmatic awareness. His informative handout was a good example of a handout that usefully complements, rather than duplicates, a presentation.



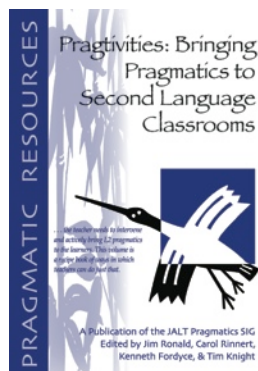
Making her debut at JALT, **Tsui-Ping Cheng** talked about using authentic materials for pragmatic assessment.

Seth Cervantes, who co-presented with Robert Olson and often manned the SIG desk, chatting with **Reiko Takeda**, who gave a presentation about pragmatics lessons for English language learners.



Also at JALT 2012

Jim Ronald and **Carol Rinnert** introducing the *Pragtivities* book at the Pragmatics Forum. They were joined by one of the other editors, **Tim Knight**, and two other contributors, **Susanne Balogh** and **Yoko Nogami** (team line up pictured below).



Pragtivities	
Bringing Pragmatics to Second Language Classrooms	
1:10	<i>I was wondering if...</i> ...you could make that request more politely Tim Knight
1:30	Cross-cultural diversity of English (EIL/ELF) speech acts Yoko Nogami
2:40	Pragtivities: Why & How Jim Ronald Carol Rinnert
1:50	How to be not <i>too</i> humble in English Jim Ronald (& Midori Kanmei)
1:50	Introducing Yourself Susanne Balogh

Also at JALT 2012

Reiko **Takeda** reviews a presentation by Nobuko Trent.

Nobuko Trent (Aoyama Gakuin University) gave a thought-provoking presentation called **Information Territory and EFL Politeness Education**. This linguistic politeness study is about the use of direct and indirect evidentials by three groups: Japanese conversation by Japanese native speakers; English conversation by Japanese learners of English; and, English conversation by English native speakers. First, Nobuko gave examples of evidentials, or what Willet (1988) calls “the linguistic means of indicating how the speaker obtained information” (p. 55), with examples of English evidentials such as modal auxiliaries (e.g., may, might), adverbs (e.g., probably, certainly), and other hedging devices. As a theory of Japanese evidentiality, Nobuko introduced Kamio’s theories (1979~1990), which state that Japanese speakers have the concept of speaker’s and his hearer’s information territories and their shared information territory, and use different sentence-ending forms (evidentiality) to express that he acknowledges and respects his hearer’s territory of information. In her previous study, Nobuko created a model of Japanese evidential forms analyzing around 7,000 evidentiality data based on six territories (speaker’s territory; hearer’s territory; speaker’s territory but possibly shared by his hearer; hearer’s territory but partly shared by the speaker; and the third party’s information territory) and found Japanese speakers tend to be indirect in most territories using the sentence ending modals such as *~ne*, *~nda*, *~desho*, *~datte*, *~sooda*, *~kamosirenai*, and *~yoda*. In this study, Nobuko further compared new data on English evidentials from conversation by native speakers of English (about 800 evidentials) and conversation by Japanese native speakers (about 600 evidentials) with her Japanese model.

In her corpus study, **Nobuko found that Japanese learners of English use far more direct forms compared to native English speakers** and that no sign of language transfer was found from their native language, which is extremely indirect. She assumed that this was probably caused by their lack of skills with the appropriate indirect evidentials. While the presentation did not cover the implications of this study to actual English education, it was nevertheless thought-provoking as the findings should be useful for English language pedagogy. After Nobuko’s presentation, I was reminded of the need to explore ways to raise the awareness of our Japanese English language learners on English politeness strategies as well as ways to demystify their assumption that the English language is more direct than Japanese.

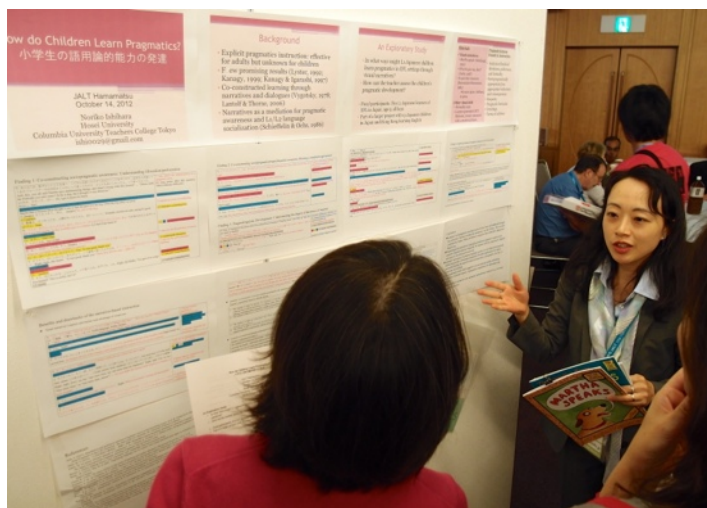
Reference

Willet, T. (1988). A cross-linguistic survey of evidentiality. *Studies in Language* 12, 51-97.



Reiko Takeda

Also at JALT 2012



At the poster presentation session, **Noriko Ishihara** discusses her case study which described Japanese children's pragmatic development during two hours of instruction.

Yukie Saito explains her study in which she analyzed conversational closings in the sitcom *Friends*.



And **Yosuke Ogawa** casts his critical eye over the data.

After his plenary, Alan Firth spends time at the SIG desk to chat to committee members **Fuyuko Ruetenik** (left) and **Linamaria Valdivia**.



Misuse of pragmatic implicatures: failing to communicate in blog work

Walter Kasmer

Based on his poster presentation at JALT 2012, Walter Kasmer **analyses pragmatic errors** made by his students in their writing blogs.

JALT2012でウォルター・カシミール氏のポスター発表をもとに、彼の学生達がライティングブログでした語用論的誤りを分析します。

I started using **class blogs** in 2005, initially with the idea of expanding class discussions and displaying some essays from other classes as well as my own. Much later I started examining student writing from a pragmatic point of view. To my surprise, students were committing pragmatic errors even when they were given sufficient time to write responses on the blogs. Mey (1993) states that pragmatics encompasses speech act theory, conversational implicature, interactive speech, and other approaches to language behavior in philosophy, sociology, and linguistics.

Current pragmatic literature seems to focus primarily on oral communication, largely to the exclusion of addressing writing as pragmatic research. When it does address writing, the research mostly examines academic writing, specifically the forms of essay writing, (introduction, body and conclusion) - see Wishnoff (2011), and problems with non-native speakers not supporting their assertions or opinions in Hinkel (1997). Ironically, some pragmatic research uses writing examples to examine oral tendencies of non-native speakers (Beebe & Cummings, 1996).

Puschmann (2003) states we infer the 'total meaning' of a text based on all the information we have available in the moment we hear or read it. One aspect that perhaps teachers need to look into more is student value systems and the knowledge that is transferred in an educational system. Often cultural knowledge is imbibed and sometimes not critically examined nor compared or contrasted with knowledge presented within other national educational systems.

I decided to look at the area of implicatures, **specifically implicature errors**. Implicature refers to what is suggested in a statement, even though it is neither expressed nor *strictly implied* by the statement (Blackburn, 1996). Implicature errors are a type of linguistic transference error in that students inadvertently assume that statements or questions commonly used in their L1 have the same meaning and/or impact in their chosen L2, in this case, English.

Unsurprisingly, when writing blog posts, students make socio-cultural errors based on misunderstandings of what their statements mean. In their first language, their statements may be fine, but when transferred into English, these same statements often take on unintended meanings. From my experience, Japanese students commonly make implicature errors on a regular basis, in both their oral and written communication.

The actual types of errors that ESL or EFL students will make vary as cultural knowledge backgrounds sometimes overlap in some aspects and of course differ in others from the

Misuse of pragmatic implicatures: Kasmer

target language. Liu (2009) comments that transmission of meaning includes not only linguistic knowledge of the speaker and listener, but also the context of the utterance, knowledge of the status of those involved, and the inferred intent of the speaker. **Examination of the student's cultural value systems and then contrasting that with usual cultural assumptions made by speakers of the target language will likely predict common implicature errors and related socio-cultural problems that may arise.**

Let's now examine three examples of blog entries by Japanese students, this first from the area of business:

“Japanese job hunting is not below the global standard.”

One question immediately arises: Is there really a global standard for job hunting? There seem to be rituals and techniques that are shared for job hunting worldwide, but there does not seem to be one global standard. Rather, the system of job hunting varies according to the geographic region that the job seeker is searching for a job in: the standard is specific to the local context. This can be clearly understood when we consider job interviews – they vary depending on where they are conducted, the industry the job is in, the language used, etc. It is clear that job hunting does not conform to one global standard.

Next we look at a cultural example:

“People say *itadakimasu* before they eat and say *gochisousamadeshita* after they finish eating in Japan, but people start and finish their meals naturally in other countries.”

First, we have to ask, what is natural behavior? The student here is talking about cultural customs, and these range vary widely depending on which country and specific region within that nation we are talking about. Pointing out to a student what they usually say in France or other countries before and after meals will help clarify the error. You could also expand to other types of ritualistic behavior, such as entering and leaving a store, and point out that there are a multitude of differences depending on the backgrounds of the speakers involved and of course, the geographic setting of where the speakers are situated.

Finally, an example from a discussion on eating utensils:

“I'm Japanese so I like chopsticks and I prefer to use chopsticks because I always use them.”

This is of course raises the question: If one always uses something, does that always mean he or she prefers it? I raised the following example with my students: I often use the subway to go to work, but not because I like it (too crowded, unable to sit, and sometimes too hot are three reasons for not liking it), but rather because it is quicker and less expensive than the available alternative means of transport (bicycle, bus or taxi). Just because we always use

Misuse of pragmatic implicatures: Kasmer

or do something, it doesn't mean we automatically like it.

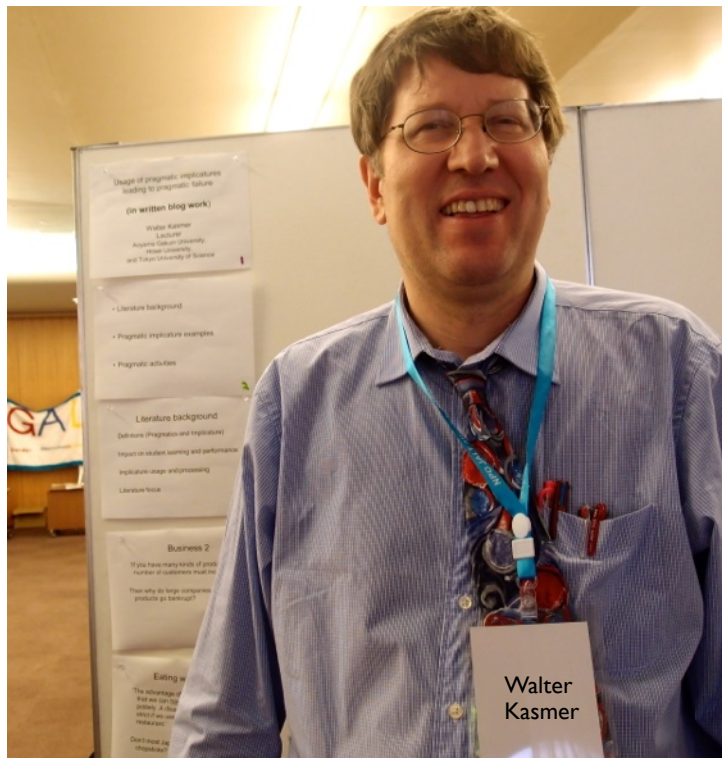
Furthermore, being a certain nationality doesn't imply that you will automatically like something either. For example, I may be American, but that doesn't mean that I will always prefer driving my car to go places. Returning to the student's point about the use of chopsticks, we can point out that many other nationalities use chopsticks. Malays, Cambodians, Singaporeans, Indonesians, Chinese, Koreans, Vietnamese, and Tibetans also use chopsticks regularly.

Overall therefore, a more pressing problem is, how do we help our students root out these misguided pragmatic-linguistic tendencies? The two most common techniques currently being used to help students acquire pragmatic knowledge seem to be implicit teaching and consciousness-raising (Rose, 1994). Of course, our students need regular exposure to correct pragmatic examples as well as commonly made errors to increase their awareness of pragmatic choices. In addition, regular practice with the correct forms might allow them to improve to the level where they can recognize that a communication breakdown is due to pragmatic failure rather than an error of pronunciation, grammar and structure, or idiomatic misusage.

In conclusion, pragmatic awareness is regarded as one of the most challenging aspects of language learning, and though it can be taught, it often seems to result only from experience. We as educators **need to try and increase our students' awareness of pragmatic choices** or in the cases under discussion specifically implicatures, **to help to ensure that our students can communicate more effectively.**

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Please contact the newsletter editor at tknight303@gmail.com to submit articles. Conference and presentation reports and book reviews, as well as longer features, are all welcome.

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“Ready Hamamatsu?”