Helping instructors activate learners' oral pragmatic competence in the L2 classroom

Èrika Marcet i Torrijos
B.A.

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Dublin City University

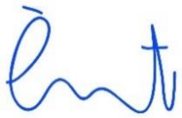
Supervisors:
Dr Ryoko Sasamoto
Dr Lucía Pintado Gutiérrez

March 2022

Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed:



ID No.: 17212838

Date: 21/03/22

Acknowledgements

I would first like to express my gratitude to my primary supervisor Dr Ryoko Sasamoto, without whom this thesis would not exist. Thanks for believing in me and my potential since day one, and thank you for your continued support and guidance throughout this journey. You have been a great mentor and I have learned a lot from you.

I would also like to express my thanks to Dr Lucía Pintado Gutiérrez, who bravely took the role of my secondary supervisor halfway through this journey (most definitely the rockiest phase!). Thank you very much for your academic and moral support. It has been a pleasure to work with you.

I also wish to thank Dr Anette Simon for acting as my secondary supervisor during the first two years of my research. Thank you for your kindness and encouragement.

I am very grateful to all the students from Dublin City University and the University of Limerick who kindly gave up their free time to be part of this research project. Thank you for allowing me to listen to your stories. This thesis would not have existed without your contributions.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies at Dublin City University for funding the first two years of my research and providing me with opportunities to grow academically and professionally. I also owe wish to express my sincere thanks to the Irish Research Council for funding the last two years of my research.

I am very grateful to Dr Elly Ifantidou and to Dr Patrick Cadwell for agreeing to examine this thesis and for their invaluable feedback.

To my support network, for helping me overcome these challenging times.

To Paul, for putting up with me over the last few years. Thank you for always being there for me and loving me.

To my family, for putting my education first and encouraging me to pursue my dreams. Mama, Papa i Guillem, moltes gràcies pel vostre suport i amor incondicional. Sou la raó per la qual he arribat fins aquí. Us estimo moltíssim.

Dedico aquesta tesi a la iaia Rosa i a la iaia Maria. Sé que estríeu orgulloses de mi.

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

L1: First language

L2: Second, third or foreign language

ILP: Interlanguage pragmatics

SLA: Second language acquisition

SA: Study abroad

FG: Focus group

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

Helping instructors activate learners' oral pragmatic competence in the L2 classroom

Èrika Marcet

In this thesis, I address the lack of focus on what are the most common challenges that learners of Japanese experience in their oral interaction and the link between these challenges and their cause. I explore a number of pragmatic challenges that learners of Japanese as L2 encountered during their study abroad programmes or work placements in Japan. Following McKenney and Reeve's (2012) model for conducting design-based research, the data draws on open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 57 learners of Japanese at two higher education institutions in Ireland to determine the challenges they encountered in their oral interaction with L1 speakers.

The challenges which present themselves in the data are examined through Relevance Theory, a cognitive-pragmatic approach that is somewhat unexplored in interlanguage pragmatics research. I demonstrate that challenges at the production and interpretation level arise due to difficulties in decoding and inference of implicit and explicit aspects of communication. These challenges are the result of current instructional practices in the L2 classroom, where there is an excessive focus on linguistic input, an unawareness of learners' own pragmatic competence and a lack of inferential processes being taught.

The findings lend support to the need to enhance pragmatic competence among L2 learners through domain-specific cognitive processes. I argue that ideas developed in Relevance Theory can be particularly beneficial to the teaching and learning of pragmatics in the L2 classroom, in particular for oral interaction. I present a four-process pedagogical framework to help instructors activate learners' pragmatic competence. This pedagogical framework is based on Ifantidou's (2014) definition of pragmatic competence. I also outline general guidelines and concrete activities for L2 instructors to help narrow the gap between linguistic form and proposition expressed as well as enhance learners' production and interpretation of both explicit and implicit meaning

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

As a fourth-year undergraduate student, I lived in Japan as part of a one-year study abroad (SA) programme. While in Japan, I soon realised that real-life Japanese was far from what I learned in my university classroom. This made me realise that there was a huge gap between what I had learned and what I truly needed to learn to be able to communicate effectively. In addition, as a teacher of Japanese, I have observed that current instructional practices often do not reflect real-life interaction in the L2 context and therefore are not preparing learners to communicate effectively in their L2.

In this thesis, I make the case that the ability to effectively communicate lies in pragmatic competence. There are several ways in which communication can be made effective. Throughout this study, communicating effectively means being able to successfully process linguistic and non-linguistic information in real-time. That is, knowing which stimulus or stimuli are the most suitable in a given interaction, being able to disambiguate encoded meaning, recovering elliptical material, knowing the stylistic effects of certain linguistic forms, recovering indirectly communicated implications and being able to interpret/respond to others' thoughts/intentions and put one's thoughts/intentions across with the least possible effort. In sum, communicating effectively is used as a synonym of learners being able to apply their already existing pragmatic competence in L2 communication.As I explain, pragmatic competence is concerned with the ability to process linguistic and non-linguistic information based on recovering linguistic representations, attributing intentions/mental states and activating general world knowledge. In this study, I draw on Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995)—an inferential approach to pragmatics that explains what happens when we communicate in our L1—to explain what impedes learners from achieving successful communication in the L2. In interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) research, a field that examines how pragmatics interacts with L2 teaching and learning, most studies address pragmatics through isolated features rather than global cognitive processes. In this study, I use Relevance Theory to offer a cognitively-grounded theoretical foundation of pragmatics that helps understand the (global) mental representations used in oral interaction. In this thesis, pragmatics does not simply equate to "language use" as is the case in most studies that examine pragmatics in the L2. Based on Sperber and Wilson's (2005: 468) definition, I define pragmatics as the study of how contextual factors interact with linguistic and non-linguistic meaning in the production and interpretation of utterances. I use the term pragmatic competence within the context of Relevance Theory to describe a "type of cognitive performance" (Ifantidou 2014: 1) that triggers inferential mechanisms to help process ostensive meaning. Particularly, I examine how learners of Japanese as L2 can activate their pragmatic competence in oral interaction with L1 speakers.[1] Even in L1 oral interaction, hearers may misunderstand what speakers say or may not be able to recover the speaker's intention. In turn, speakers may not interact in the most successful and effective way possible, creating confusion and even offending their interlocutors. Understandably, instances of communication breakdown and interpersonal issues can be exacerbated in oral interaction between L1 and L2 speakers.

The primary motivation for this study is to assist instructors in helping learners communicate successfully in their L2. This motivation arises not only from my own experience as a learner or an academic interest in the field of ILP, but also from the perspective of a language teacher. With this study, I hope to gain a better understanding of how pragmatic competence in the L2 can be activated and enhanced in the L2 classroom, and contribute to filling in the gaps mentioned before through a framework and applicable tasks that will help L2 instructors to address current issues in teaching L2 pragmatics.

1.2 Research Questions

ILP is a branch of pragmatics and second language acquisition (SLA) that examines L2 "learners' knowledge, use and development in performing sociocultural functions" (Taguchi 2017: 153). ILP owes its origin to cross-cultural pragmatics and the work conducted by the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989). As a result, since its inception, research in ILP focuses mainly on the production, acquisition, teaching and assessment of learners' speech acts. In the case of Japanese as L2, in addition to speech acts, studies are mostly concerned with interactional particles and the use of language forms to convey formality. As such, little research has been conducted outside the scope of these features of the language. The overemphasis on speech acts in the literature means that other pragmatic aspects are either neglected or researched from narrow approaches to ILP.

Additionally, most studies focus on the production side of communication and the reception side remains under-researched. This study examines both sides of communication. One of the overarching aims of the present study is to fill the gap in the research through empirically

[1] Unless I specify otherwise, "L1" refers to native speakers of Japanese and "L2" refers to individuals whose primary language is not Japanese and who are learning Japanese as a second, third or foreign language.

determining the pragmatic challenges learners of Japanese as L2 face in oral interaction rather than relying on anecdotal evidence, or focusing only on speech act or another limited range of features. This research originates from the need for a clearer understanding of non-speech act related challenges that learners are likely to encounter.

Furthermore, research in ILP is predominantly based on the assumption that language is used to establish/maintain social relationships and construct/negotiate social identities. Indeed, as a result of such a sociocultural approach, most studies in the field draw from theoretical models of L2 communicative competence that define pragmatic competence as the ability to perform culturally and socially appropriate language functions. Consequently, there is a lack of studies, particularly on Japanese as L2, that examine pragmatics/pragmatic competence from a cognitive approach to human communication.

Moreover, despite the large volume of research that supports the need for pragmatics instruction and materials, the development of pragmatic competence in L2 contexts remains largely ignored. This thesis explores one particular way in which pragmatic competence among L2 learners in general and learners of Japanese as L2 specifically can be activated. Using notions from Relevance Theory, I adopt a cognitive-pragmatic approach to help instructors teach explicit and implicit aspects of communication. The objective is to contribute to the field of ILP by investigating a unique approach to the activation of L2 pragmatic competence. This novel approach consists of a pedagogical framework for teachers, a training course for instructors of L2 and a set of original pedagogical materials grounded in a well-established pragmatics theory.

To meet the research aims and objectives, I address the following three research questions:

1. What pragmatic challenges did learners of Japanese as L2 face in oral interaction with L1 speakers in the SA context?
2. How can Relevance Theory help instructors of L2 activate pragmatic competence among learners?
3. What materials can be created to address the challenges identified under question one?

In answering the above questions, I hope to add to the existing body of literature by advancing both pragmatics theory and instructional practices.

1.3 Thesis Structure

This thesis is organised into eight chapters. The breakdown of chapters is summarised below.

In Chapter 2, I provide a review of the literature concerning ILP research. I define the concept of pragmatic competence and pragmatic awareness from both communicative and cognitive perspectives. I also explain advancements in the field essential to the contextualisation and understanding of this research and I discuss the current state of affairs in Japanese as L2 within ILP research. I end the chapter by describing seven features of the Japanese language that participants in this study were most challenged by.

In Chapter 3, I present relevant notions from Relevance Theory. I review studies that use Relevance Theory to explain pragmatic development in the L2 and provide the link between Relevance Theory and ILP. I conclude the chapter by providing a justification for integrating Relevance Theory into the study of ILP.

In Chapter 4, I address the paradigmatic and methodological frameworks employed in this study and provide a rationale for the choice of context and participants. I describe the research design and offer a critical reflection on the use of open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group (FG) discussions as methods of data collection. I also outline the method of data analysis and explain some ethical considerations.

In Chapter 5, I present the findings. I describe the features of the Japanese language that learners had most difficulties with in oral interaction with L1 speakers during their SA programmes and work placements in Japan.

In Chapter 6, I present the major themes to emerge from the thematic data analysis. I discuss issues with processing linguistic representations as well as purely inferential challenges. I analyse the findings through the lens of Relevance Theory. In doing so, I address the first research question. I conclude the chapter by explaining the causes and consequences of the challenges learners experienced.

In Chapter 7, I answer the second and third research questions. I discuss how researchers and instructors can bridge the gap between theory and practice and contribute to addressing some of the instructional challenges identified by Sykes (2013) and Bardovi-Harlig (2017). First, I present my original contribution by expanding on Ifantidou's (2014) definition of pragmatic competence to create a pedagogical framework that can help teachers of L2 develop learners' pragmatic competence. Second, I discuss the need for and present an outline of an online teacher training that makes Relevance Theory accessible to L2 instructors through a number of tasks I created to address the existing pedagogical gap. Finally, I share original pedagogical materials to help instructors reduce the challenges described in this thesis.

In Chapter 8, I conclude this thesis by synthesising the research findings and providing some final remarks and conclusions. I also address the limitations of this study and I consider potential areas for further research.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The introductory chapter served to contextualise the topic of this investigation, ascertain the aims and objectives and establish the research questions. In this chapter, I provide an overview of the relevant literature on pragmatics key to my research. This includes definitions of "pragmatics", "interlanguage pragmatics", "pragmatic competence" and "pragmatic awareness" and the relationship between these four concepts. I also provide an understanding of the importance of teaching and learning pragmatics among L2 learners and explore the main theories and models adopted in the field of pragmatics teaching. I conclude the chapter with a revision of studies in Japanese as L2 pragmatics research.

2.2 Pragmatics

It is generally understood that Morris (1938: 6) first introduced the term "pragmatics" as part of semiotics, namely the study of signs and symbols as elements of communication. In the study of language, the term originally described one of the three major areas of inquiry in semiotics: syntax, semantics and pragmatics. In this view, syntax and semantics focus on the description and meaning of sentences, while pragmatics is concerned with what speakers mean by an utterance and how hearers interpret said utterance. The term pragmatics is framed as the study of meaning in context; however, the notion of pragmatics has various meanings depending on the context, it is broad in its application and serves as a general category for several theories and methodologies (Ishihara and Cohen 2010; O'Keeffe *et al.* 2011; Tsutagawa 2013). Indeed, as Wharton (2012: 97) observes, "pragmatics is clearly many things to many people". Consequently, there is still no clear consensus of the definition of pragmatics, and many pragmatics theories and frameworks address it from different dimensions and include multiple phenomena (see Chapman (2011) and Archer and Grundy (2011) for a fuller discussion on different approaches to pragmatics).

Many scholars in the field of pragmatics are influenced by Grice (1957, 1975), Austin (1962) and Searle (1969, 1975, 1979), who discuss fundamental principles of pragmatics and covered aspects of the nature of communication from a philosophical perspective. From their influential discussions emerge important ideas, including:

- Utterances can contain underlying intentions, that is, what is said and what is implicated may differ (Grice 1957; Searle 1979).
- Communication is a cooperative action that is socially constructed (Grice 1957).

- Language is a complex system in which speakers, hearers and context are situational variables that determine meaning (Austin 1962).
- Language is used both to say things and to do/accomplish things (Austin 1962; Searle 1969).
- Utterance understanding is a rational activity in which hearers make inferences about the speakers' intentions, that is, hearers infer what speakers implicate (Grice 1975).

These ideas have served as a basis for other pragmatics theorists to expand on rules and principles in communication. Based on these notions, several perspectives that examine pragmatics have emerged, such as cognitive (see Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995), sociolinguistic (see Leech 1983; Thomas 1983) and educational (Alcón Soler and Safont Jordà 2008). Traditionally, sociolinguistic, sociocultural and educational aspects of pragmatics have attracted broad scholarly attention, giving rise to applied research in L2 pragmatics (Ifantidou 2014; Bardovi-Harlig 2020).

In the field of L2 language teaching and learning, pragmatics is viewed as the study of all aspects of communicative behaviour. Pragmatics bridges the gap between linguistic forms and their uses in social contexts, and it connects them both at the same time (Bardovi-Harlig 2010). According to Kasper and Rose (2002) and Martínez Flor and Usó Juan (2010), the most influential definition of pragmatics in educational settings is the one postulated by Crystal (1997: 301), who defines pragmatics as "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication". This definition describes the ability of interlocutors to adapt their utterances to appropriate social contexts. LoCastro (2003) expands on Crystal's definition to include non-linguistic factors within an interaction, as well as prioritising speaker-hearer interaction in sociocultural contexts. That is, speakers must know how to convey their intentions with the level of formality, politeness and directness required in a given interaction, or not to speak at all and communicate intentions through nonverbal cues (Taguchi and Roever 2017).

Ifantidou (2014) criticises that, to date, most L2 pragmatics research has been pursued independently of current developments in cognitive pragmatics. In addition to knowledge of social norms, hearers must know how to interpret what is explicitly or implicitly expressed in a speaker's utterance by making inferences based on background assumptions in the context of a given interaction. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, a speaker's intended meaning cannot be derived from syntax and semantics alone. Therefore, knowledge of the linguistic meaning of an utterance must be supplemented with the ability to comprehend semantically incomplete expressions (Carston 2002). In this respect, Relevance Theory offers a better foundation for theoretical pragmatics from a cognitive approach (Ifantidou 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2019; González Lloret 2013).

Relevance Theory defines pragmatics as "the study of how contextual factors interact with linguistic meaning in the interpretation of utterances" (Sperber and Wilson 2005: 468). Instead of relying solely on sociolinguistic and sociocultural *knowledge*, Relevance Theory views social norms and speech acts as part of background assumptions that facilitate the interpretation process and not as the only method to facilitate socially appropriate oral interactions. Relevance theorists explain the psychological mechanisms involved in interpreting utterances and discuss how the mind is an information-processing system that interprets human ostensive behaviour. This way, Relevance Theory provides a pioneering approach in facilitating a relationship between cognitive and social approaches to pragmatics (Foster-Cohen 2004b). In this study, I adopt Relevance Theory as a theoretical framework and discuss fundamental notions of Relevance Theory in Chapter 3. Before I turn to Relevance Theory, the remainder of this chapter focuses on important advancements of pragmatics in the L2.

2.3 Interlanguage Pragmatics

The term ILP was introduced in the 1990s and has now established itself as one of the main areas of investigation in L2 teaching and learning (Taguchi and Roever 2017).[2] As a subfield within general pragmatics, ILP is an action-theoretical interdisciplinary field informed by SLA research (Kasper 1998; Cohen 2017). Kasper and Dahl (1991: 216) first defined ILP as "a branch of SLA that studies 'nonnative speakers' (NNSs') comprehension and production of speech acts, and how their L2-related speech act knowledge is acquired". This definition has evolved to reflect a wider concept of pragmatics that is not limited to the interpretation and production of speech acts. ILP also examines the use, perception, acquisition and development of L2 learners' pragmatic competence (Kasper and Rose 2002; Alcón Soler and Martínez Flor 2008; Bardovi-Harlig 2010; Culpeper *et al.* 2018). However, most research in this area still focuses on performance and use of communicative behaviour rather than on the development of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig 1999; De Paiva 2003; Cai and Wang 2013).

[2] Interlanguage pragmatics is also known as "second language pragmatics" and "L2 pragmatics" (Bardovi-Harlig 2020).

ILP studies encompass several domains, including L2 pragmatic learning, instruction and assessment and cross-cultural pragmatic variation. Within these domains, the pragmatic phenomena studied are manifold, from speech acts and functions to implicatures, routine formulae, register, politeness, lexis, deixis and genre (Tzanne *et al.* 2009). However, the focus of ILP research remains the production—and to a lesser extent the interpretation—of speech acts (Rose 2005; Taguchi 2015a; Cohen 2017; Yates 2017; Lee 2018; Barron 2019a).[3] ILP researchers mainly focus on whether speech acts can be/are taught and learned and how (see section 2.8), how learners transfer speech acts from their L1 to their L2 (see section 2.6), what happens when learners do not use speech acts appropriately (see section 2.7), and how does the SA context impact learners' ability to produce and interpret speech acts (see section 2.10).[4] This overfocus on speech acts results in several other pragmatic features being neglected in ILP research.

Cohen (2012a) states that the popularity of speech acts as a research focus is because these social acts are readily identifiable and therefore easily researchable. Taguchi (2018a) adds that speech acts also present a seemingly clear connection among form, function and context. Tzanne *et al.* (2009) and Ifantidou and Tzanne (2012) criticise the overemphasis on speech act production, and Bardovi-Harlig (2010) acknowledges that the greatest weakness of ILP is that the construct of pragmatics is too narrow. As Grabowski (2009: 45-46) emphasises "reducing pragmatics to speech acts (…) limits a domain of language knowledge that is much more comprehensive and dynamic". Pragmatic phenomena other than speech acts must be explored in ILP, including "conversational structure, conversational implicature, conversational management, discourse organization, and sociolinguistic aspects of language use" (Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor 2003: 37). Ifantidou (2013, 2014), Cohen (2016, 2017) and Youn and Bogorevich (2019) also emphasise the need to include other pragmatic phenomena along the literal/figurative continuum (e.g. humour, irony and understatement), underspecified linguistic meanings (e.g. approximation and narrowing), shades of attitudes, deixis, discourse markers, backchanneling, gestures and prosody.

[3] The most studied speech acts are **requests** (Takahashi 2001; Fukuya and Zhang 2002; Iwasaki 2008a; Halenko and Jones 2011; Al-Gahtani and Roever 2014). **Apologies** (Chang 2010; Kondo 2010; Liu and Ren 2016; Barron 2019b), **compliments** (Rose and Ng 2001; Shimizu 2009; Chen 2010a; Jin 2012; Hasler-Barker 2016) and **refusals** (Kwon 2004; Kondo 2008; Taguchi 2009a; Lee 2013) are also widely investigated.

[4] The assessment of pragmatic competence in the L2 classroom has also been brought to the spotlight in recent years. Research suggests that pragmatics should be formally and/or informally assessed. However, a discussion on pragmatics assessment is beyond the scope of this study (for a review on pragmatics assessment see Taguchi and Roever (2017); for a study on how Relevance Theory can inform the assessment of L2 pragmatic competence see Ifantidou (2014)).

Several theories are adopted in the field of ILP, including the Cooperative Principle (Grice 1975), Speech Act Theory (Searle 1975), Politeness Model (Brown and Levinson 1978, 1987), Communicative Competence (Canale and Swain 1980, Canale 1983), Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995) and Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt 1993, 1995, 2001). Nonetheless, Foster-Cohen (2002) and Ifantidou (2013, 2014) argue that studies in ILP tend to be single-moment and overly descriptive, lacking an explanatory level. Still, regardless of the theoretical, analytical and methodological perspectives used in ILP studies, their principal participants are always learners or speakers of second and foreign languages and those who teach and assess them (Ohta 2008; Bardovi-Harlig 2010). Consequently, ILP is commonly known as the "pragmatics of language learners" (Bardovi-Harlig 1999: 678).

Another facet that scholars are still debating is whether ILP is socially constructed or cognitively conceived. ILP research has been traditionally framed as either a social or cognitive oriented activity, albeit some researchers view the learning of pragmatics as both a cognitive process and a social phenomenon (Alcón Soler and Martínez Flor 2008; Ishihara and Cohen 2010). As discussed further in Chapter 3, this study adopts Relevance Theory as a theoretical framework that views sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge (including speech acts) as part of background assumptions and experiences largely shared across cultures that facilitate interpretation processes (Ifantidou 2014). The majority of ILP studies evolve from the central assumption that language and communication are two sides of a single coin, where the main function of language in oral interaction is to perform social actions (Purpura 2004; Ifantidou 2014). However, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) argue that the link between language and communication is not necessary since communication can take place in the absence of a language or code. Therefore, "languages are indispensable not for communication, but for information processing; this is their essential function" (*ibid.*: 172). That is not to say that language and communication are not linked. Instead, it means that the use of language is not simply communicative but also cognitive, as linguistic encodings are only a part of the information humans wish to communicate (see section 3.2). As I will explain in Chapter 3, coded communication relies on semantic representations determined by grammar; however, these semantic representations are schematic and, hence, provide incomplete meanings. As a result, speakers' thoughts must be inferentially enriched before they can be interpreted. Hearers rely on pragmatic inference to be able to retrieve specific, intended interpretations that convey the speakers' attitudes and intentions (Wilson and Sperber 1993). In this respect, for communication to succeed in the L2, learners must be explicitly taught how to employ their inferential abilities to effectively process and produce information (Ifantidou 2014).

2.4 Pragmatic Competence

It has been long established that to communicate accurately, appropriately and successfully, knowledge of syntax and semantics alone is not enough. To be competent interactors, L2 learners must also acquire a good command of the pragmatic features in the target language (Eslami and Eslami 2008; Ishihara and Cohen 2010; Ifantidou 2014; Taguchi 2018a). As Childs (2005: 23) argues, "pragmatics is not an optional add-on. It is a necessary facet of language and of language learning" as it makes conversation effective and natural for learners (see also Yamashita 2008).[5] However, despite its importance, there is a lack of a clear, accepted, unifying definition of pragmatic competence in the literature (Eslami 2005; Ifantidou and Tzanne 2012; Timpe-Laughlin *et al.* 2015) and this has important/serious consequences in L2 language teaching and learning. The following sub-sections explore the concept of pragmatic competence from two perspectives. The first is from the perspective of communicative competence and the second from a cognitive, relevance-theoretic approach.

2.4.1 Communicative Competence

ILP in general, and pragmatic competence specifically, have traditionally been identified as a fundamental component of communicative competence (Council of Europe 2001; Taguchi and Roever 2017). Communicative competence was developed as there was a need to account not only linguistic competence but also notions of sociolinguistic competence in language acquisition (Celce-Murcia 2007). Many applied linguists adopted communicative competence as part of a theoretical justification to implement a new way of teaching L2 languages that viewed communication as central to this practice. The emergence of communicative competence changed the perception of how learners acquire L2 languages, from mastery of grammatical forms alone to the acquisition of functional usage of forms in social contexts (Taguchi 2013). That is, if learners want to develop communicative competence in another language, they must learn not only the grammar of that language but also how to produce utterances with the appropriate level of formality, politeness, and directness required in a situation, and know when to communicate intentions nonverbally (Cohen 2012b; Taguchi

[5] As I will argue throughout this thesis, pragmatics makes not only conversation effective and natural, but possible. Without pragmatics (i.e. inference), there is no communication.

2018b). Learners must also learn how to interpret the speaker's intention conveyed through implicit, explicit, verbal and nonverbal utterances (Taguchi 2005).

In models of communicative competence, pragmatic competence has either fallen under the umbrella of different components or been presented as a component within various elements and classifications:

- Hyme's (1972) sociolinguistic competence
- Canale and Swain's (1980) sociolinguistic competence
- Canale's (1983) discourse competence
- Bachman's (1990) pragmatic competence
- Celce-Murcia *et al.*'s (1995) actional competence
- Council of Europe's (2001, 2020) pragmatic competence
- Usó Juan and Martínez Flor's (2006) pragmatic competence
- Japan Foundation's (2010) pragmatic competence

These models share the assumption that miscommunication falls on pragmatic competence if learners do not understand social conventions and rules of communication (Taguchi and Roever 2017). In this framework, language is defined as a tool to perform social functions. Hence, the assumption underscoring most ILP studies is that pragmatic competence is the ability to use language in socially and culturally appropriate ways. As Flores-Salgado states:

> In order to interact effectively and appropriately in a situation, each speaker needs to know the linguistic forms, the functions of these forms, and the social rules that allow him/her to interpret and perform a message in a specific language. This knowledge is known as pragmatic competence.
>
> (Flores Salgado 2016: 13-14)

Within models of communicative competence, ILP researchers tend to divide linguistic knowledge from social knowledge (Alcón Soler and Martínez Flor 2008). Pragmatic competence has traditionally been divided into two distinct but interrelated subcomponents: pragmalinguistic competence and sociopragmatic competence (Leech 1983; Thomas 1983; see Figure 2.1). Pragmalinguistic competence refers to the linguistic resources that learners use to perform pragmatic functions. Bardovi-Harlig (2013) argues that most aspects of language are pragmalinguistic resources, including but not limited to modals and honorific systems, verbal morphology, nominal morphology, lexis and phonology. In contrast, sociopragmatic competence refers to the understanding of socially appropriate rules that guide linguistic resources in a given cultural context. Cohen (2016) and Taguchi (2018b) note that basic parameters of sociopragmatics include the culture involved, setting, topics, roles, social class, occupation, identity, age, gender, speakers' relationship, shared assumptions, and the perceived impact of language use on the hearer. Kasper and Roever (2005: 318) assert that becoming a pragmatically component language user means "to understand and produce sociopragmatic meanings with pragmalinguistic conventions". Both knowledge types must be mapped onto each other so learners can select appropriate linguistic forms and understand layers of contextual information (Taguchi and Roever 2017). González Lloret (2019) adds that equipping learners with both competences in the classroom is essential for them to be able to socially interact in specific linguistic communities, maintain rapport, and avoid stereotyping.

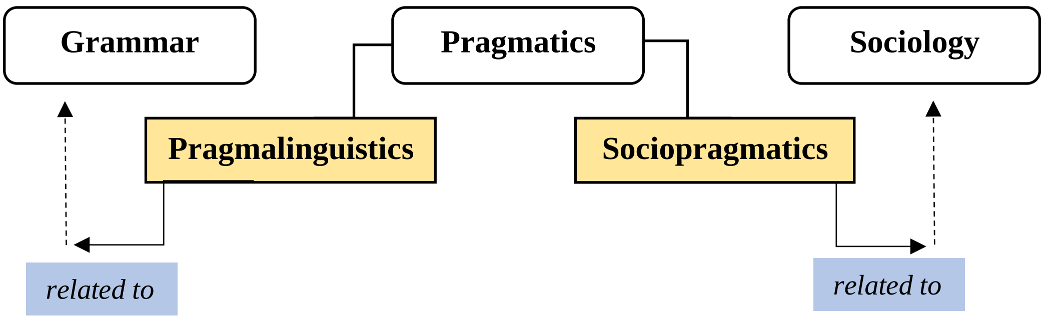


Figure 2.1: Pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, adapted from Leech (1983: 11).

From this view, L2 learners must have both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatics knowledge to attain communicative goals in context. That is, to interact effectively and appropriately in a situation, learners need to know the linguistic forms, the functions of these forms, and the social rules that allow them to appropriately function in the L2 context. For example, the Japanese language has polite or formal forms and plain or casual forms that, among other functions, may index social meanings (see section 2.12.1). According to a communicative approach to pragmatics, learners of Japanese must know specific copulas and conjugations associated with each speech style form (i.e. pragmalinguistic competence) as well as the ability to determine which style to use in a particular social situation (i.e. sociopragmatic competence) (Taguchi and Roever 2017).

The distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence suggests that the only function of pragmatics is to bridge the gap between linguistic forms and their uses in social contexts, often disregarding cognitive aspects of utterance production and interpretation (Ifantidou 2014, 2017). Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competences are not the end goal of pragmatic competence, but resources that may contribute to the development of L2 learners' inferential abilities. In this sense, I follow Ifantidou's (2014) view of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics as the natural result of a developing cognitive ability to process natural language, and as competences that help unpack L2 learners' advanced mind-reading abilities. That is, sociopragmatic assumptions can be used as contextualising factors in aiding pragmalinguistic processing. Tzanne *et al*. (2009) argue:

> In any instance of successful interaction, the former domain (pragmalinguistics) presupposes the latter (sociopragmatics), and examining them as two distinct research domains may misleadingly suggest that two distinct processes are involved in spontaneous on-line interpretation.
>
> (Tzanne *et al.* 2009: 298)

A communicative approach to pragmatic competence ascertains that acquiring the skills involved in a comprehensive L2 pragmatic system is rather complex as form-function-context mappings are intricate, variable and do not obey systematic, one-to-one correspondences (Taguchi 2015a). Being aware of the several contextual factors that influence actual language use makes pragmatic competence difficult to acquire (Purpura 2004; Ishihara and Cohen 2010). In addition, although some pragmatic phenomena are universal, the means of encoding and decoding pragmatic functions may be culturally bound and exhibit considerable cross-cultural variation (Taguchi 2010). Thus, mastery of pragmatic competence is typically considered a slow-developing, long-term process and an aspect of advanced L2 competence as it requires a "complex interplay of language, language users, and context of language use" (Taguchi 2018a: 505).

An added difficulty for learners is that they must address pre-existing pragmatic representations and acquire new ones in the L2 (Mey 2001; Kasper and Rose 2002). In this regard, there is inconclusive evidence as to whether pragmatic competence develops concurrently with linguistic competence or whether one develops independently of the other (Ifantidou 2014). Many researchers agree that pragmatic competence progresses in line with language proficiency, namely, learners with greater proficiency are more successful in interpreting speech acts and implicatures (see Taguchi and Roever 2017 for a review). Ishihara and Cohen (2010) suggest that it might be easier for learners to produce and comprehend pragmatic meaning if the grammar used is within their grammatical control. The influence of proficiency in pragmatic competence is due to learners' increased ability and greater automatization in accessing contextual cues and linguistic ability, as opposed to lower-level learners whose L2 processing abilities are less automatised and require more effort (Taguchi and Roever 2017). Therefore, it is often considered that pragmatics can only be taught from intermediate level learners (Kasper and Rose 2002). However, some ILP studies demonstrate that high grammatical competence does not necessarily lead to a high level of pragmatic competence (Garcia 2004; Liu 2006; Taguchi 2009a, 2011; Rafieyan and Rozycki 2019). Some learners can be highly successful with strategic use of little vocabulary, restricted grammar and intonation, while others can perform rather poorly with a full repertoire of knowledge (Bardovi-Harlig 2013). Given this, some studies suggest that pragmatics can and should be taught from beginning levels of instruction (Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor 2003; Alcón Soler and Safont Jordà 2008; Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen 2012).

2.4.2 Relevance-Theoretic View on Communicative Competence

Pragmatics is concerned with information processing and not just with social and cultural interaction (see section 2.2). It is undeniable that some instances of miscommunication originate due to learners' inability to operate according to L2 social and cultural norms; however, many misunderstandings arise as a result of learners' incorrect or deficient processing of utterances in the L2 (Garcés Conejos and Bou Franch 2004). Therefore, the definition of pragmatic competence from a communicative perspective is rather general and loose (Ifantidou 2014). Pragmatic competence is both a sociolinguistic and a cognitive ability that is acquired progressively and to varying degrees (Ifantidou and Tzanne 2012). It is therefore essential to examine how pragmatic competence interacts with language and cognition, and how mind abilities such as meta-representing others' beliefs are deeply rooted in language (Zufferey 2010). Like L1 speakers, learners need pragmatic inference (e.g. attributing communicative intentions, adapting to interlocutors) and linguistic competence to successfully infer the meanings implied in speakers' utterances (Ifantidou 2014).

The previous section showed that ILP views pragmatic and linguistic competences as two separate components that, when combined, contribute to overall communicative competence. Based on the cognitively-grounded Relevance Theory, I work with a theoretical model that views pragmatic and linguistic competences as processes that develop concurrently. Linguistic competence is included under pragmatic competence, which in turn becomes a tool that allows learners to activate their inferential abilities to process utterances in real time. In addition, Relevance Theory views pragmatic competence as a cognitive mechanism dedicated to comprehension that is relevance-driven and exploited for online processing of overt acts of communication or ostension (Carston 2002; see section 3.2).

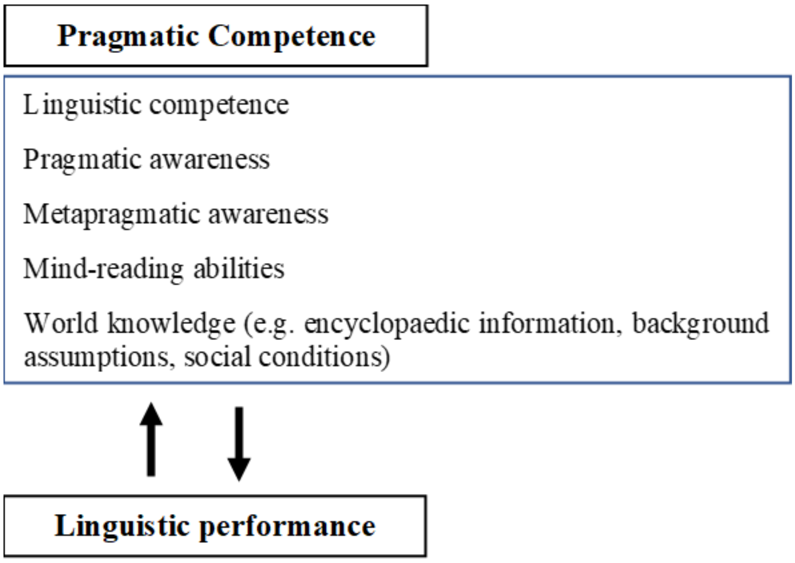


Figure 2.2: Pragmatic competence in an L2, adapted from Ifantidou (2014: 5).

Indeed, Ifantidou (2013, 2014, 2016, 2017) investigates how notions in Relevance Theory can inform the teaching and assessment of L2 pragmatic competence in Greek readers and writers of English as L2. Although my study diverges from Ifantidou's work as I focus on oral interaction and both verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication (see section 7.3), I apply Ifantidou's definition of pragmatic competence:

> A type of cognitive performance which interfaces with other human cognitive systems such as knowledge of logical rules, mind-reading of others' intentions or beliefs, interpreting of each other's behaviour, and other kinds of background knowledge, including knowledge of social conditions.
>
> (Ifantidou 2014: 1)

In this view, pragmatic competence is not described by mere identification and production of isolated pragmatic features such as speech acts, but by cognitive adjustment of effort and effects in the search of a relevant overall interpretation (see Figure 2.2). Ifantidou (2014) observes a tendency to enhance pragmatic competence by addressing isolated competences. Therefore, there is a need to approach pragmatic competence more comprehensively and with clearer boundaries. Contrary to what communicative approaches to ILP research suggests, Ifantidou advocates for three theoretically and practically distinct but interrelated itemised manifestations that constitute pragmatic competence, namely linguistic awareness, pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness. In this respect, pragmatically competent learners can to varying degrees:

a. identify relevant linguistic indexes (Linguistic Awareness/LA)
b. retrieve relevant pragmatic effects (Pragmatic Awareness/PA)
c. explicate the link between lexical indexes and pragmatic effects retrieved (Metapragmatic Awareness/MA)

(Ifantidou 2014: 130)

Ifantidou suggests that to foster both pragmatic competence and linguistic proficiency, learners need to develop their ability to infer meaning and be able to explain such pragmatic meaning. These cognitive processes manifest a different level of acquisition, thus affecting learners' level of pragmatic competence as a whole (Ifantidou and Tzanne 2012). Ifantidou (2014) emphasises that the order of the items above is not normative but rather descriptive, and it does not make a claim for in which order these cognitive processes develop. Notice that this definition of pragmatic competence does not include a separate ability for sociopragmatic competence. That is because the ability to use social information for information processing is viewed as part of background assumptions that must be activated together with other assumptions in every process of pragmatic competence.

To further understand the three-stage process that makes up pragmatic competence according to Ifantidou (2014), the following section defines "pragmatic awareness" from a communicative and cognitive perspective and delves into the importance of fostering "metapragmatic awareness" among learners.

2.5 Pragmatic Awareness

Awareness-oriented models—models that encourage learners to consciously notice a (new) feature of the language—have a prominent role in SLA (Takimoto 2012). Hence, it is unsurprising that ILP researchers advocate for awareness-raising instruction to promote the development of pragmatic competence in language learners (see Ishihara 2007; Martínez Flor and Alcón Soler 2007; Kondo 2008; Narita 2012; Hosseinpur and Nevisi 2020; Timpe-Laughlin *et al.* 2021). However, pragmatic awareness is frequently represented as a mere step toward pragmatic competence without differentiating the two terms or determining the relationship between the two (Ifantidou and Tzanne 2012). Timpe-Laughlin (2021: 2) argues that despite the prevalence of the term "pragmatic awareness" in the field of L2 pragmatics research, "what pragmatic awareness entails and how it is acquired is by no means clearly defined".

Furthermore, pragmatic awareness is often used interchangeably to refer to pragmatic competence, pragmatic ability, pragmatic knowledge and/or metapragmatic awareness (see e.g. Safont Jordà 2003; Martínez Flor and Alcón Soler 2007; see Purpura 2004 for a discussion). Pragmatic awareness tends to be broadly defined as "the conscious, reflective, explicit knowledge about pragmatics" (Alcón Soler and Safont Jordà 2008: 193). As in the case of pragmatic competence, the focus remains on learners' ability to notice, comprehend, analyse and reflect on pragmatic features and their functions in social contexts. Similar to pragmatic competence, pragmatic awareness is frequently divided into pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic awareness, and researchers claim that both types of awareness are needed to develop pragmatic competence. Ishihara (2007) argues that pragmatic awareness consists of having a repertoire of linguistic strategies (particularly speech acts), knowing the impact of contextual factors on these linguistic strategies and understanding the cultural reasoning behind the choice of these strategies. In these communicative approaches, pragmatic awareness broadly refers to the conscious recognition and understanding of speech acts. Ifantidou (2014: 128) categorises this approach to pragmatic awareness as a "truism" and advocates for deeper insights into the definition. The definition of pragmatic awareness employed in this study goes beyond recognition and understanding. I adopt Ifantidou's definition whereby pragmatic competence assumes pragmatic awareness, which is defined as the ability to retrieve relevant positive cognitive effects (see section 7.3).

Communicative approaches to ILP define metapragmatic awareness as the learners' ability to identify that something is pragmatically "off" or to acknowledge that certain linguistic forms are appropriate in certain contexts (see e.g. Safont Jordà 2003). This definition suggests that pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness are overlapping competences as both refer to the ability to notice/identify and reflect/acknowledge the handling of public communicative acts (Ifantidou 2014). However, as demonstrated in section 2.4.3, pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness are distinct cognitive processes that must be treated separately. Ifantidou (2011: 327) defines metapragmatic awareness as a cognitive process that develops in stages of gradually more complex sophistication that allow learners "to retrace and explicate interpretative routes employed" in the retrieval of meaning pragmatically inferred via utterance interpretation and production. As metapragmatic awareness is the ability to explain the relationship between evidence and intention, learners are metapragmatically aware when they can verbalise (even if to varying degrees) the link between the linguistic and non-linguistic forms interpreted and produced and the pragmatic effects/pragmatic phenomena retrieved. Metapragmatically aware learners must be able to justify the link between language choices and the pragmatic meanings inferred. Pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness should not be treated with dichotomous outcomes (i.e. appropriate/inappropriate). Utterances may have more than one meaning and, as such, learners may retrieve different relevant pragmatic effects based on their background knowledge, needs and interests. In this direction, Garcés Conejos and Bou Franch (2004) advocate for awareness-raising activities that activate learners' metapragmatic knowledge that draws from L1 pragmatic development.

2.6 Pragmatic Transfer

Generally, adults who learn a new language already know at least another language (L1) and carry abundant world experience and information that influences the acquisition and use of that new language (Kasper and Rose 2002; Bou Franch 2013; Ifantidou 2017). The use of existing pragmatic information in the L1 to understand the learning and use of new pragmatic knowledge in the L2 is commonly referred to as pragmatic transfer (Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993). As learners are, to various degrees, pragmatically competent in their L1, they are already able to infer indirectly conveyed information, realise linguistic action indirectly and choose their language according to contextual constraints; all of these abilities are extensible to similar contexts in the target language (Padilla Cruz 2012). According to Ifantidou (2017):

> This is knowledge which draws on our in-built abilities for inferential communication and on cognitive procedures which are independently activated in L1 when engaging in pragmatic inference. The idea rests on the relevance-theoretic assumption that humans (…) do not have to learn how to engage in ostensive-inferential communication but start with considerable inborn disposition.
>
> (Ifantidou 2017: 85)

Pragmatic transfer is a complex process and one that needs further research (Cai and Wang 2013). However, Kasper (1992) argues that pragmatic competence is pre-eminently affected by pragmatic transfer. Therefore, making learners aware of their L1 pragmatic competence through instruction is considered crucial in the acquisition of L2 pragmatic competence (Bou Franch 2013).

Similar to other areas of pragmatic competence, most research on pragmatic transfer is viewed through the lens of communicative competence and mostly focuses on speech act production (for an exception, see Ifantidou 2017). Even though pragmatic transfer may have positive results (see e.g. Hassall 1997), most studies have focused on pragmatic transfer "as a source of pragmatic failure caused by interference of the first language with L2 linguistic norms and communicative practices which resemble L1" (Ifantidou 2017: 83). For example, Ishida (2006) found that, due to negative pragmatic transfer from English, English learners of Japanese employ considerably less overt hearsay in Japanese than Japanese speakers. Liu (2013) also demonstrated that Mandarin Chinese learners of English transferred their use of discourse markers and backchanneling into the L2. As pragmatic transfer occurs below the level of consciousness, the misuse of L1 pragmatics in the L2 may be less visible than syntactic or semantic mistakes (Yates 2010; see next section). For example, learners can produce an utterance with correct grammar but still be perceived as rude due to a lack of pragmatic competence (Yates 2017). The inability to infer meaning may cause pragmatic failure, which is the focus of the next section.

2.7 Pragmatic Failure

L2 pragmatic competence has been traditionally examined by comparing L2 learners and L1 speakers in the target language. The literature suggests that learners are often unsuccessful in achieving efficient communication that conforms to L1 standards, resulting in instances of "awkward, problematic" interactions that may lead to pragmatic failure (Ishihara and Tarone 2009). Thomas (1983: 91) defines pragmatic failure as "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said". This definition often equates pragmatic failure as a violation of sociolinguistic and sociocultural rules which results in misinterpretation (Padilla Cruz 2014; Ifantidou 2017).

Padilla Cruz (2013) and Cohen (2017) agree that the most investigated source of pragmatic failure is the inadequate knowledge of how to perform speech acts. However, the causes of pragmatic failure are varied. Ishihara and Cohen (2010) identify five non-mutually exclusive reasons why learners deviate from commonly accepted L2 pragmatic norms (see Figure 2.3). Pragmatic failure can be the result of limited exposure to L2 pragmatics, negative transfer of L1 pragmatic features, use of inadequate prosody, under-representation of particular pragmatic phenomena in textbooks, excessive and restrictive usage of textbook language, and the lack of attention to pragmatics in educational settings.

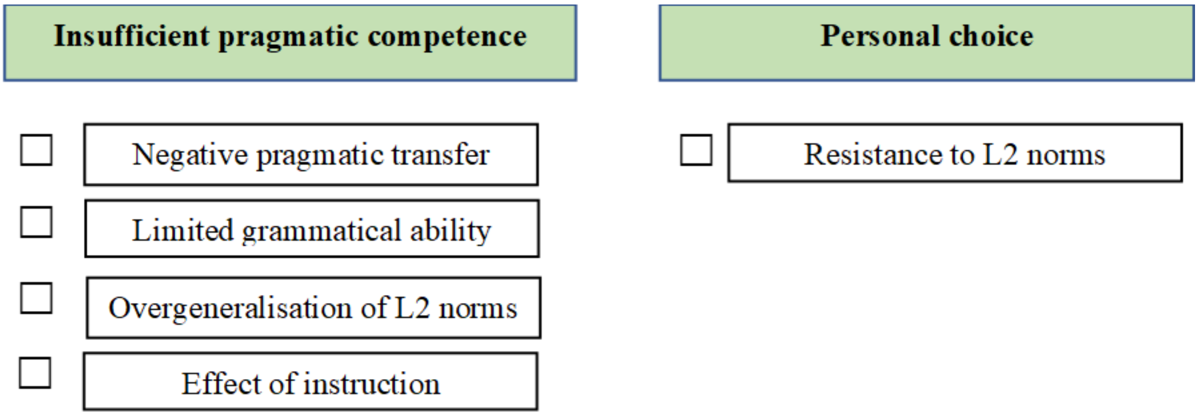


Figure 2.3: Reasons of pragmatic divergence according to Ishihara and Cohen (2010).

Pragmatic failure is further divided into pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure (Thomas 1983). Pragmalinguistic failure concerns inadequate L1 linguistic transfer as well as misuse, generalisation and altering of linguistic strategies to perform communicative acts in the L2 (see e.g. Mirzaei *et al.* 2012). Sociopragmatic failure arises when learners produce inappropriate expressions that do not comply with the social and cultural norms to perform communicative acts in the L2 (Crandall and Basturkmen 2004; Bouchard 2011). This sociolinguistic/sociocultural approach to pragmatic failure focuses on misunderstandings that take place due to learners' weak understanding of the cultural knowledge and knowledge of social norms in the target language (see Beebe and Takahashi 1989; Gesuato 2016). As Blum-Kulka and Olhstain (1986: 169) argue, "pragmatic failure might carry serious social implications", such as cultural friction, communication breakdown, stereotyping, discrimination and conflict. For example, learners may believe that speakers of Asian languages tend to be more indirect in their use of language than speakers of English, and they may apply this stereotypical notion to oral interactions where L1 speakers would have liked to be spoken to more directly (Ishihara and Cohen 2010). In this respect, researchers indicate that pragmatic competence remains primarily first-culture based, especially in contexts where exposure to the L2 culture is limited (Hinkel 2001; House 2003).

Research also explains that a lack of either pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic competence may lead to ill-fated consequences for both short-term communicative success and longer-term relationships (Yates 2010). Unlike grammatical errors, a lack of pragmatic competence may result in learners appearing inconsiderate, inappropriate, ignorant, impolite, offensive, too outspoken or even being excluded from interactions (Thomas 1983; Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor 2003; Brock and Nagasaka 2005). In real interactions, grammatical errors may be overlooked as innocent and as unintended mistakes (Ishihara 2010a). However, pragmatic errors may be more detrimental to interaction than lexical and grammatical errors, and such mistakes can lead to frustration, embarrassment, and both communication and interpersonal relationship breakdowns (Thomas 1983; McNamara and Roever 2006; Cohen 2017).

However, unlike linguistic errors, pragmatic failure can be deliberate (Bouchard 2011). Learners may be fully aware of the understanding and use of pragmatic norms in the L2 and intentionally resist or reject the (full) adoption of such norms (Kubota 1996; LoCastro 1998; Ishihara 2006, 2010b; Davis 2007; Ishihara and Tarone 2009; Kim 2014). Siegal (1996) reports a case of a Hungarian learner of Japanese who chose not to conform to certain uses of higher-level honorifics due to her negative views on social and gender expectations that she did not want to adhere to.[6] Research thus indicates that learners' decision not to conform to L2 pragmatic norms might be guided by their attitudes to the target community, their subjectivity, their beliefs and experiences, their social position, their motivation for learning the L2 and their own identity within the L2 community. In this respect, scholars agree that pragmatic instruction should be sensitive to learners' individuality. Instructors should enhance learners' pragmatic competence so learners can make informed pragmatic choices, but never impose the use and assimilation of L2 pragmatic norms (Kasper and Rose 2002; LoCastro 2001, 2003; Ishihara 2006, 2010b; Ishihara and Tarone 2009; Cohen 2017).

The definition of pragmatic failure proposed by Thomas (1983) brings a great deal of attention to the learner's role as producers of utterances. Most ILP studies explore pragmatic failure with this definition at the core; as a result, researchers have neglected the importance of learners as interpreters of utterances (Garcés Conejos and Bou Franch 2004). In addition to pragmatic failure among learners as speakers in the target language and culture, pragmatic failure also takes place when learners process utterances incorrectly both at the explicit and implicit levels (Padilla Cruz 2013). Relevance Theory, as a theory with the primary aim of explaining the utterance interpretation process, proves useful in understanding L2 pragmatic failure by providing theoretical tools to account for causes of such pragmatic failure (see Padilla Cruz 2014; Tsao 2017; Luo 2020).

Successful pragmatic interactions may indeed depend on the speaker's success in activating hearers' assumptions; however, pragmatic failure largely occurs when hearers cannot activate their cognitive context (Tsao 2017). As Padilla Cruz (2013) mentions, understanding the

[6] There are similar remarks emerging from the data in this study, some regarding to gendered language (which for reasons of scope have not been included in this thesis) and other related to the use of honorific language (see section 5.2.1).

sources of pragmatic failure involves an awareness of how hearers in general, and learners specifically, process utterances and which processing strategy they employ to reach particular interpretations. Tsao (2017: 11) also argues that to avoid pragmatic failure, learners need to examine the cognitive environment of both speaker and hearer, "choose the proper way of manifesting ostension and pin down the optimal relevance in terms of a criterion of contextual best fit, and finally work out the communicative intention, or contextual implications, with abductive inference". Learners must possess a series of cognitive strategies that help them interpret communicative intentions with the least processing effort to support them in reaching the most optimal interpretation produced by L1 speakers (Padilla Cruz 2013, 2014). Whether pragmatic failure is defined from a communicative or cognitive perspective, it may have high-stake consequences for learners, even if the syntactic and semantic forms employed in their utterance production are accurate (Brock and Nagasaka 2005; Timpe-Laughlin *et al.* 2015; Gesuato 2016). Bouchard (2011) adds that pragmatic failure is not always apparent and that a straightforward solution is not always available to learners. Indeed, Cohen (2017: 429) argues that it is the pragmatic failures, not the pragmatic successes, that signalled the need for the explicit instruction of pragmatics as "learners cannot be left on their own devices in the hope that they will somehow acquire pragmatic competence". Given this, ILP scholars advocate that instruction of L2 pragmatics is essential to help learners cultivate successful interactions with L1 speakers and avoid pragmatic failure (Ishihara and Cohen 2010; Padilla Cruz 2012; see section 2.8).

2.8 Teaching Pragmatic Competence

Regardless of the lens through which pragmatic competence is examined, the literature has well established that the teaching of pragmatics in the L2 language classroom is not only possible but necessary to facilitate the development of pragmatic competence among learners (see Rose and Kasper 2001; Kasper and Rose 2002; Jeon and Kaya 2006; Martínez Flor and Alcón Soler 2008; Rose 2005; Barron 2012; Taguchi 2015a, 2019). However, the teaching of pragmatics remains largely excluded from L2 teaching practices, teaching materials and textbooks (see Crandall and Basturkmen 2004; Vellenga 2004; Gilmore 2007; Nguyen 2011; Diepenbroeck and Derwing 2013; Bardovi-Harlig 2020). Moreover, the majority of studies concerning L2 pragmatics instruction focus on the teaching of isolated speech acts, despite the call for the emphasis on other pragmatic features such as implicatures, nonverbal behaviour, dialect and language variation, discourse markers, phatic expressions and prosodic features

(Bouchard 2011). Furthermore, as I will discuss in Chapters 3 and 7, L2 pragmatic instruction should focus on attention to not only linguistic forms of utterances, but also the ability to read speakers' intentions via inferential processing. This raises a question as to why the teaching of pragmatics is yet to be fully implemented in the L2 classroom. Timpe-Laughlin *et al.* (2015) suggest it might be due to the lack of knowledge regarding what constitutes a pragmatically competent L2 learner as well as the lack of a general definition of the term pragmatic competence (see section 2.4). There is also a need to investigate what type of pragmatic knowledge should be incorporated in the classroom so teachers can facilitate such knowledge to learners in the hope of enhancing pragmatic competence in the L2 (Tateyama and Kasper 2008; Cai and Wang 2013). Sykes (2013) further identifies eight common challenges to pragmatic instruction and Bardovi-Harlig (2017) adds a ninth issue to the list, as demonstrated in Figure 2.4 (see Chapter 7 for a discussion of how to address some of these challenges; see also Bardovi-Harlig 2020).

Nine challenges to pragmatics instruction

①Limited theoretical support for curricular development

②Lack of authentic input in instructional materials

③Lack of instructor knowledge

④Lack of reference books and resources

⑤Perceived time limitations in the classroom

⑥Dominant focus on micro-features of language

⑦Individual differences and learner subjectivity

⑧Challenges in providing feedback and assessing

⑨Dialectal variations influencing pragmatic norms

Figure 2.4: Nine reasons why L2 pragmatics instruction is lacking, based on Sykes (2013: 73) and Bardovi-Harlig (2017: 232-233).

There is a notable gap between what studies have found and how language is generally taught, which results in language teachers' reluctance to include pragmatics in their L2 classroom (Liu 2010; Cohen 2012a). Researchers concur that there is a lack of theoretical support in course design, a lack of pragmatics expertise among instructors, limited attention given to pragmatics in the classroom, assessment and feedback challenges and ample dialectal, social and individual variation (see Bardovi-Harlig 2017, 2020; Sykes 2017; Cohen 2019). Taguchi and Roever (2017: 280) also argue that the reluctance to teach pragmatics in the classroom might originate from "teachers', curriculum writers', and material designers' unfamiliarity with pragmatics and to the negative washback from the lack of formal assessment".

Indeed, it is generally agreed that textbooks lack sufficient input for L2 learners to develop their pragmatic competence, and if they do, materials include unauthentic language samples, pragmatic information that is anecdotal and resources that are mere additions to morphosyntactic information (see McGroarty and Taguchi 2005; Eisenchlas 2011; McConachy and Hata 2013; Ren and Han 2016). Cohen and Ishihara (2013: 116) argue that "the actual dialogues may sound awkward or stilted, and are inauthentic in that they do not represent spontaneous pragmatic language as used in natural conversation". Similarly, Matsumoto and Okamoto (2003) examined the representations of indirect expressions, speech styles and dialects in five Japanese textbooks widely used in the USA and found that the textbooks simplify complex features associated with naturally occurring discourse. Jones and Ono (2005) reported an increase of more authentic use of subject ellipsis, contracted forms and sentence-final particles in Japanese as L2 textbooks dialogues, but criticised that textbooks still fail to reflect how Japanese is actually used. Consequently, pragmatics materials should be "research-informed, readily applicable to classroom instruction, and easily integrated into the language curriculum" (Gironzetti and Koike 2016: 91). This is especially true as the existence of L2 pragmatics resources encourages pragmatics instruction, and the lack thereof discourages it (Bardovi-Harlig 2020). There are indeed some resource books, ready-made lesson plans, websites and teachers' guides published in the last two decades that aim to bridge the gap between theoretical principles and practical applications in the L2 classroom (see e.g. Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor 2003; Usó Juan and Martínez Flor 2006; Martínez Flor and Usó Juan 2006; Ishihara and Cohen 2010; Houck and Tatsuki 2011; Cohen 2016). However, most of these resources focus on the teaching of speech acts, originate from a communicative approach to pragmatics and do not take inference and other cognitive processes into account.

Furthermore, there are very few training courses for instructors who want to incorporate the teaching of L2 pragmatics in their L2 classroom except for several (optional) courses about pragmatics in teacher training master programmes, particularly for those who are learning to teach English as an L2. However, many of these programmes focus on politeness and speech act theories, and the application of pragmatic theories to classroom practices still lags behind (see e.g. Vásquez and Sharpless 2009; Denny and Basturkmen 2011; Ishihara 2011; Povolná 2012). Outside teacher preparation programmes, there are few courses for instructors interested in learning how to teach pragmatics. The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota offers a course about pragmatics to teachers. The course, developed and delivered by Professor Noriko Ishihara, was launched in 2006 and was held in-person yearly until 2011 and then again in 2014. The course was then adapted online and was held in 2018, 2019 and 2021.[7] Like other courses, this course offered by CARLA focuses mostly on communicative approaches to pragmatics based on how speech acts relate to linguistic politeness, intercultural communication and sociocultural awareness. ILP is commonly examined as a sociologically- and socioculturally-driven theory, with factors such as politeness, status and power relations being at the core (see section 2.4.1). Therefore, this study bridges the gap between theory and practice by addressing pragmatic features other than speech acts and from an inferential approach to pragmatics teaching and learning (see Chapter 7).

2.8.1 Instructional Interventions

Despite "the complexity of pragmatics" (Bardovi-Harlig 2020: 47), some researchers have proposed different pedagogical models, techniques, approaches and activities for the instruction of pragmatic competence in the L2 classroom to minimise some of the challenges outlined above (see e.g. Félix-Brasdefer 2006; Sykes and Cohen 2008; Koike 2008; Ishihara and Cohen 2010; Houck and Tatsuki 2011; see section 2.11 for some Japanese as L2 resources). For example, Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003) created the first research-informed resource book for teaching pragmatics in the context of English as L2. Their book includes thirty lesson plans with several pragmatic phenomena, including speech acts, conversational management, politeness, terms of address and pragmatic variation. Another proposal is that of Brock and Nagasaka (2005), who suggest the adoption of the acronym S.U.R.E. (see, use, review and experience) as guidance to develop the interpretation and production of speech acts among EFL learners. Similarly, Martínez Flor and Usó Juan (2006) outline a six-step pedagogical framework for teaching speech acts in the EFL classroom based on researching, reflecting, receiving, reasoning, rehearsing and revising.

[7] I attended the course *Language and Culture in Sync: Teaching Linguistic Politeness and Intercultural Awareness* led by Noriko Ishihara in summer 2021. The course provides evidence-based information about teaching and assessing speech acts in the L2 from a communicative/sociocultural perspective. It also gives some advice on how speech acts can be taught in the classroom (e.g. through narrative approaches).

Furthermore, there is an increase of both synchronous and asynchronous computer-assisted instruction, social networking sites, online gaming and mobile-based learning that promote L2 pragmatics teaching and learning (Holden and Sykes 2011; Ajabshir 2019; for a review see Taguchi and Sykes 2013; González Lloret 2019). Although computer-assisted language learning allows learners to access contextualised, authentic and meaningful pragmatic materials (Sykes 2005; Belz 2007), not many researchers have examined the advantages of technological tools to enhance pragmatic competence (for exceptions see Cohen and Ishihara 2005; Eslami and Liu 2013; Eslami *et al.* 2014; Mirzaei *et al.* 2016). However, there have been some successful applications of technology to the teaching and learning of L2 pragmatics. For example, Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen (2012) designed a four-step approach to learning speech acts for intermediate-learners of Spanish at Indiana University. The materials are designed for self-access, with no interaction from an instructor, to develop strategies for learning and performing speech acts among L2 learners. Another major contribution to computer-based pragmatics instruction is that of CARLA, which designed and developed three sets of websites: (1) a general website introducing pragmatics in general and speech acts specifically in 2001; (2) a website dealing with speech acts in Japanese in 2003; and (3) a website concerned with speech acts in Spanish in 2006 (Cohen 2016).[8] However, as happens with CARLA's pragmatics course for instructors, the focus has been mainly on teaching speech acts and the teaching of other pragmatic phenomena is largely overlooked.

2.8.2 Implicit and Explicit Instruction

In this section, I review studies on methods used to teach pragmatics. Several methods have been employed to teach L2 pragmatic competence. However, two main approaches have been adopted in research on L2 pragmatics teaching, namely explicit and implicit teaching approaches (Taguchi and Roever 2017; Lee 2018). In SLA, the terms explicit and implicit are used to describe different types of cognitive processes and different methods of acquiring knowledge (Ifantidou 2013). In ILP, explicit instruction traditionally refers to the provision of metapragmatic information (i.e. direct presentation of L2 pragmatic norms), while implicit instruction concerns exposure to contextualised input (Ishihara 2010a; Takahashi 2010; Taguchi and Roever 2017). Explicit instruction involves direct explanations of target pragmatic features and focused practice through a wide array of teaching techniques, including discourse completion tasks, multiple-choice tasks, role-plays and metapragmatic discussions (Kasper

[8] Available at: https://carla.umn.edu/speechacts/index.html [accessed 06 Feb 2022].

2001; Alcón Soler and Martínez Flor 2008; Nguyen *et al.* 2012). In implicit instruction, teachers draw learners' attention to the target pragmatic features at hand so the information can enter working memory and be processed by implicit learning mechanisms (Taguchi and Roever 2017). Implicit instruction does not provide explicit explanations of target pragmatic features, but rather encourages L2 learners to deduce and reflect on their own (Kasper 2001).

Scholars strongly demonstrate that any type of instruction is essential, effective and relevant for learners, as several aspects of pragmatics may otherwise be acquired slowly or never acquired at all (Rose and Kasper 2001; Alcón Soler and Martínez Flor 2008; Ishihara and Cohen 2010; Taguchi and Sykes 2013). However, a great deal of classroom-based research in ILP addresses the issue of whether implicit or explicit instruction facilitates the development and acquisition of pragmatic competence among L2 learners. Research supports the notion that explicit instruction seems to be the most effective approach to develop pragmatic competence in L2 (especially speech acts, discourse organisation and implicature recognition) as learners who receive explicit instruction tend to outperform those who do not (Bouton 1994; Rose and Ng 2001; Takahashi 2001, 2010; Eslami *et al.* 2004; Jeon and Kaya 2006; Ishida 2009; Kakegawa 2009; Ishihara and Cohen 2010; Halenko and Jones 2011). However, Taguchi (2015a) reviewed fifty-eight studies about pragmatics instruction over the past three decades and found that, although explicit pragmatic instruction was generally more effective, implicit instruction was equally effective if it involved noticing and processing activities. Some studies also demonstrate the effectiveness of implicit pragmatic instruction (Fukuya and Zhang 2002; Li 2012; Narita 2012; Sykes 2013), while other accounts report little to no difference between implicit and explicit instruction (see e.g. Takimoto 2009). For example, Tateyama (2001) revealed that the explicit teaching of pragmatic routines to learners of Japanese as L2 was more effective in terms of acquisition and frequency. However, results of those who received implicit instruction provided no statistical significance and their responses entailed content that received higher scores than in the explicit group. Yoshimi (2001) reported that learners of Japanese as L2 benefited from explicit instruction of interactional markers in telling personal stories, but was not effective for discourse handling and processing of inferred meaning. This seems to suggest that the success of instructional interventions depends on several factors, including how well instructors raise learners' awareness of L2 pragmatic norms, proficiency level, idiosyncratic learning styles, motivation and attitudes, age, gender, personality, cognitive level, degree of exposure to the L2, goal of instruction, type of assessment measures, and level of complexity of the pragmatic feature (Ishihara 2010a). In addition, the long-term effects of explicit and implicit instruction need further investigation, for which delayed post-tests could be beneficial to understand the advantages of either method of instruction (Takahashi 2010; Ifantidou and Tzanne 2012). Results on the effects of implicit and explicit instruction remain relatively inconclusive. Nonetheless, based on current research and the findings of this study, I advocate for the explicit teaching of pragmatics to better support learners in their development of pragmatic competence in their L2 (see Chapter 7).

2.9 Study Abroad Context

In recent years, the SA context has proven to be effective for developing pragmatic competence among L2 learners. Hence, in this section, I turn to a review of the SA context and its role in the development of pragmatic competence among L2 learners. An SA programme is a pre-scheduled, educational, limited-time frame stay in the country where the target language is spoken (Taguchi and Roever 2017). SA students may also travel to the target country to do an internship, work placement or voluntary work as part of their studies (Barron 2019a). SA programmes are a cornerstone of many academic programmes (Hassall 2013) and in recent years, it has become a popular context for conducting L2 pragmatics research (Cohen 2017; Barron 2019a). Despite being a recent occurrence, studies in the SA context have yielded promising findings that are key to research in the area of ILP (for an overview see Pérez Vidal and Shively 2019; Barron 2020). Taguchi (2018c: 127) summarises the features of SA contexts that may be beneficial for L2 pragmatic development:

- recurrent opportunities to observe pragmatic phenomena,
- situated pragmatic practice and instant implicit or explicit feedback,
- real-life consequences of pragmatic behaviour,
- and exposure to a variety of communicative styles and situations.

SA contexts provide ample opportunities for learners to use their target language outside the formal classroom (Flores-Salgado 2016). Pragmatic development during SA has been observed in several communicative features, such as speech acts, conventional expressions, pronouns of address, humour and listener responses (Barron 2006, 2007; Ishida 2009; Bataller 2010; Masuda 2011; Shively 2014, 2020; Alcón Soler 2015; Hassall 2015, 2018; Ren 2015; Taguchi 2015b; Magliacane and Howard 2019). For instance, Iwasaki (2008b) reported that, upon return from their SA in Japan, five American learners gained a better understanding and command of speech styles, as they were able to make active choices as to which style to use in different contexts. Similarly, Taguchi (2014) found that, after twelve weeks at a university in Tokyo, learners of Japanese as L2 demonstrated a noticeable increase in the production of incomplete utterances to co-construct meaning in oral interaction with L1 speakers.

However, the benefits of SA are not straightforward due to several variables, including proficiency, length of residence and intensity of interaction (Taguchi and Roever 2017). Early studies such as Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) report a positive relationship between the length of stay and pragmatic development. Yet, most studies suggest it is not the length of residence that guarantees pragmatic development, but the intensity of interaction that contributes to the acquisition of L2 pragmatic competence in SA environments (Bardovi-Harlig and Bastos 2011; Bella 2011; Sánchez Hernández and Alcón Soler 2019). Given this, consistent, close and stable social relationships in the SA context are vital to pragmatic development (Jin 2012; Taguchi 2015b). For example, due to "massive amount of exposure to Japanese [and] large amounts of comprehensible input and interaction" (Marriott 1995: 220), Australian learners of Japanese used the plain speech style acquired in their SA context at appropriate times rather than using the polite speech style acquired pre-departure. Kinginger and Blattner (2008) and Barron (2020) therefore suggest that whether or not the SA context benefits the development of pragmatic competence among L2 learners greatly depends on the amount and type of input and the interactional opportunities available. Taguchi and Roever (2017) add that individual differences and the affordances that the context provides affect the acquisition of pragmatic competence.

The above sections presented an overview of the current state of ILP in a broader context. The following section turns to the role of Japanese as L2 in ILP.

2.10 Interlanguage Pragmatics in Japanese

Over the past nearly four decades, the number of countries and regions implementing the teaching of Japanese overseas has doubled, the number of institutions offering the language has increased 16.3 times, the number of teachers of Japanese as L2 has increased 18.9 times, and the number of learners of Japanese as L2 has increased 30.3 times (Japan Foundation 2020). In 2018, Ireland positioned itself at the top of the ranking of Western European countries with the greatest number of learners per 100,000 population (*ibid.*: 57). The steady increase in learners of Japanese worldwide and the notable growth of higher education and non-academic institutions that offer Japanese as a second/foreign language made practitioners interested in pragmatic competence in Japanese (Taguchi 2009b). As a result, Japanese has established itself as one of the most commonly studied target languages in ILP research (Kasper 2009; Chen 2010b).

In the 1970s and 1980s, based on anecdotal observations and L1 speaker intuitions, scholars in linguistics explored several linguistic features that provided the groundwork for the teaching and learning of pragmatics in Japanese as L2 (see e.g. Kuno 1973; Hinds 1976; Ide 1982, 1989; Coulmas 1986; Matsumoto 1988). Maynard (1989) published the first book about some aspects of the pragmatics of Japanese oral interaction, and Mizutani and Mizutani (1987) produced a manual with daily language use for learners of Japanese as L2 that included some pragmatic phenomena. In the 1990s, researchers focused on the study of joint actions (Ono and Yoshida 1996; Hayashi and Mori 1998), floor management and turn-taking (Hayashi 1996; Mori 1999; Tanaka 1999), politeness (Niyekawa 1991; Marriot 1995), speech acts (Mizuno 1996; Jones 1998) and the use of discourse connectives (Maynard 1993). Several of these exploratory studies served as the foundation upon which scholars of pragmatics in Japanese as L2 established their emerging field. (see e.g. Kamada 1990; Maynard 1991; Sawyer 1992; Siegal 1996; Saito and Beecken 1997; Yoshimi 1999). In the last two decades, pragmatics in Japanese as L2 has blossomed and it constitutes "a rich and fruitful area for research (…) and a potentially fruitful site for research on effective JFL instruction" (Yoshimi 2009: 21).[9] The abundant studies are proof of such development (see e.g. Cook 2001, 2016; Miyaoka and Tamaoka 2001; Tateyama 2007, 2009; Takenoya 2003; Ishida 2006; Ishida 2007; Iwasaki 2011; Ishihara 2013; Iwai 2007, 2013; Taguchi and Yoshimi 2019; see also Taguchi 2009c for an edited book with ten studies exploring several pragmatic features in Japanese as L2). The increasing amount of research in the field has contributed to a greater understanding of the relationship between the classroom, the instructional materials employed therein and the pragmatic development of learners of Japanese as L2. However, as is the case in the broader ILP field, most of the literature focuses on the teaching, learning, assessing and development of speech acts, politeness features such as honorific speech styles, and discourse management features such as interactional particles from a communicative or interactional perspective (Taguchi 2008; Kasper 2009).

With regard to the teaching of Japanese, as with any other language, it is insufficient to teach grammatical structures in a decontextualised manner, as seen in traditional teaching methods. Rather, appropriate use of language in context should be emphasised (see Chapter 7). Indeed,

[9] JFL refers to Japanese as a foreign language.

some studies demonstrate the need to teach pragmatics within context. For example, Ishida (2001) examined beginning-level learners' awareness and production of the *masu* and plain forms for three semesters. Learners journaled their observations on Japanese L1 speakers' style shifts outside the classroom and Ishida collected production data from video-recorded role-play tasks. Learners became gradually aware of pragmatic functions in oral interaction and better users of speech style forms in their oral production. The study demonstrates that conscious noticing contributes to the acquisition of *masu* and plain forms. The studies conducted by Iwai (2007) and Yoshimi (2008) also targeted beginner learners who received explicit pragmatics instruction about appropriate participation in casual oral interaction. These studies reported that the enhancement of pragmatic competence in Japanese as L2 is a tenable goal for beginning learners if:

- learners are provided with a range of resources to attain a given pragmatic feature,
- learners receive explicit pragmatic instruction,
- learners avail of plenty of opportunities to practice,
- learners are provided with feedback over an extended time.

Narita (2012) employed consciousness-raising tasks to measure the learning of hearsay evidential markers in Japanese among learners with two knowledge tests and one oral production test. Instruction focused on either noticing or understanding evidential markers. The findings showed no significant differences between learners who demonstrated noticing and learners who showed understanding of the forms. The study also reported that learning pragmatics can be achieved without explicit metapragmatic explanations.

Scholars have advocated for instructional materials to reflect the state-of-the-art of pragmatic competence in oral interaction in Japanese as L2 (Yoshimi 2009). To reduce the gap between theory and practice, Ishihara and Maeda (2010) published a textbook focusing on the teaching and learning of speech acts to intermediate and advanced students of Japanese as L2. The textbook includes authentic sample conversations from L1 Japanese speakers to demonstrate how listening and speaking occurs in real-life environments, and it offers information about how to be more sensitive towards social status, level of formality and content of speech. Similarly, Utashiro and Kawai (2009) designed and developed a blended learning course to teach backchanneling to learners of Japanese as L2. The course had three learning phases, two in the classroom and one self-paced online learning experience. Learners could view backchanneling experiences in context through verbal and nonverbal information conveyed through audio-visual media. The instruction was effective in enhancing learners' ability to recognise and produce backchanneling appropriately in naturalistic conversations. However, not all learners gained an equal understanding of backchanneling. The authors claim that more explanations other than text-based information during independent learning should have been provided, as well as more emphasis on practice throughout the course of instruction. Finally, as mentioned in Section 2.8.1, the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota created a website with strategies for learning speech acts in Japanese. The course includes an introductory module and five main modules dedicated to the learning of speech acts (apologies, compliments, requests, refusals and gratitude). Each module contains audio clips of L1 speaker conversations accompanied by activities that assist in the development of speech act competence. The online experience is self-paced and is intended to be used either as a stand-alone course or as an ancillary to an intermediate course in Japanese (Cohen and Ishihara 2005; Ishihara 2007).

As we have seen, there is a substantial body of studies that support the teaching of pragmatics in Japanese as L2. However, despite the research and materials available, teachers do not seem to incorporate pragmatics in their Japanese as L2 classrooms as they continue to rely on traditional grammar-based approaches to teaching and learning (Yamashita *et al.* 2016). Furthermore, as is the case for the broader ILP context, the focus is still on speech acts and other pragmatic phenomena are largely overlooked. This study, therefore, aims to address this gap in research and practice.

2.11 Features of Japanese Language and Communication

The previous section demonstrates that research in the pragmatics of Japanese remains based on the idea that pragmatic competence is a sub-component of communicative competence or interactional competence. This is evident in the Japan's Foundation's publication, *JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education*, which discusses the skills required to be a competent Japanese language user. Following the Council of Europe's (2001) guidelines, the Japan Foundation (2010) incorporates pragmatic competence as a sub-competence of communicative competence. The Japan Foundation (*ibid.*: 9) defines pragmatic competence as being "concerned with the learner's ability to combine words and understand their roles and objectives". Similar to the Council of Europe's CEFR (2001, 2020), pragmatic competence is further divided into two sub-competences namely discourse competence (i.e. flexibility, turn-taking, thematic development and coherence and cohesion) and functional competence (i.e.

spoken fluency and propositional precision). However, no further definitions, explanations or clarifications are provided for each of the sub-competences.

Due to the limited scope in which pragmatic competence has been defined generally and in Japanese as L2 specifically, several pragmatic features have been either neglected or researched from narrow approaches to ILP. As Yamura-Takei and Fujiwara (2004) point out, effective instruction should originate from a clear understanding of specific challenges that learners are likely to encounter. Mirroring the findings outlined in Chapter 5, the following sections describe the features of Japanese pragmatic competence that participants in this study had the most difficulties with in their oral interaction with Japanese L1 speakers.

2.11.1 Speech Styles

All languages have stylistic variations such as registers and regional or social dialects; therefore, no speaker of a language routinely speaks in a single speech style (Cook 2008a). The Japanese language is no different, as it has a variety of speech styles available to speakers, including regional dialects and various types of honorifics (Jones and Ono 2008).

Within the grammatical system of honorifics, speakers demonstrate various levels of respect towards the interlocutor as well as towards whom or what is referred to in a given utterance (Okamoto 2002; see Table 2.1).

Speech Style	Type	Example	Translation
Referent Honorific or *Keigo*	*sonkeigo* (humble form)	*oide ni naru* *ikareru* *irassharu*	to go
	kenjogo (respect form)	*mairu*	to go
Addressee Honorific or *Teineigo* (formal/polite form)	*masu*	*ikimasu*	to go
	desu	*gakusei desu*	is a student / are students
Casual/Plain Form	-	*iku* *gakusei da*	to go is a student / are students

Table 2.1: Speech styles in Japanese.

There are two major categories of honorifics: referent honorifics and addressee honorifics. Referent honorifics regard the speech situation and are divided into two categories: *sonkeigo* (exalted or respect forms that show the speaker's or third-party members' deference/exaltation of the addressee) and *kenjogo* (humble forms that show speaker's deference by lowering the speaker's actions) (Shibatani 1990; Ikeda 2009; Cook 2011). In everyday interactions, referent honorifics are commonly referred to as *keigo* (Okamoto and Shibamoto-Smith 2016). Referent honorifics are morphologically complex as there are three distinct ways to create respect forms and two to construct humble forms (Cook 2011). Addressee honorifics or *teineigo* regard the referent of linguistic expressions (Shibatani 1990). If a speaker chooses to employ addressee honorifics, speech is marked in the polite speech style or *desu/masu* form; otherwise, the speech is in the plain speech style or plain form (Ide 1989; Enyo 2015). These two forms:

- occur at clause-final positions,
- are accomplished through verbal morphology, and
- index social meanings of formality, affect and attitudes (Okamoto 1999; Ikuta 2008; Taguchi 2016).

In oral interaction, interlocutors must constantly choose whether to employ a plain, formal, honorific humble or honorific respect form, unless the speaker chooses to leave utterances incomplete (Iwasaki 2011; Taguchi and Yoshimi 2019). Therefore, learners must master these four forms early in their study of Japanese as L2 (Cook 2008b). To test how learners of Japanese as L2 cope with such forms, Moody (2014) conducted an instructional intervention with L2 beginner students of Japanese as L2 where he provided extended pragmatic information regarding the plain and polite forms through naturally-occurring data. The findings reveal that learners access their L1 pragmatic competence to understand the content of the explicit pragmatic instruction, resulting in an improved understanding of the target pragmatic features.

Traditionally, the literature has examined speech styles through sociolinguistics, linking the polite form to formality, politeness and *soto* (outside) relationships; while the plain form has been regarded as indexing informality, non-politeness, and *uchi* (inside) relationships (Mizutani and Mizutani 1987; Ide 1989; Niyekawa 1991). As Cook (2008a: 16) observes, scholars, teachers and students of Japanese largely associate the *masu* form with formality or politeness "partly because the masu form is called the polite or formal style". In this vein, one of the most prevailing ideas is that honorifics merely encode politeness, social status and various levels of social identity. As such, some scholars believe that honorifics are firmly attached to the notion of *wakimae* (discernment); that is, the speaker's choice of polite form and plain form is strictly based on social rules such as hierarchy, power, age and formality (Ide 1982, 2006; Hill *et al.* 1986; Ide and Yoshida 1999). A speaker must employ the polite form when interacting with someone of higher status, someone who is older, someone who is more powerful, and when interacting in a formal setting. A speaker must employ the plain form when the interlocutor is of equal or lower status and when interlocutors are familiar with one another (Okamoto 2002).

Most recently, however, scholars have found that there is no one-to-one mapping between contextual features and speech style; rather, Japanese speakers shift between these forms in a single conversation by attending not only to static contextual features but also to dynamic ones. A large volume of empirical studies demonstrates that the use of plain and polite forms is not strictly informed by social norms and does not only reflect social ideology. The choice of speech style is creative, diverse and its pragmatic role must be understood within different contexts (Makino 2002; Yoshida and Sakurai 2005; Cook 2008b; Ikuta 2008; Jones and Ono 2008). The following quote illustrates this:

> Using Japanese speech styles as an example, two people meeting for the first time at a party may start out using the polite form exclusively as an index of distance, but as the conversation progresses and more common background and interests are found, the speakers may switch to the plain form as their primary style, or they may use a mixture of polite and plain forms to express solidarity and closeness. On parting, however, they may switch back to the polite form to add formality and ritualistic tone to the closure of conversation.
>
> (Taguchi and Roever 2017: 7)

The above excerpt shows that L1 Japanese speakers shift between plain and polite forms within a single interaction based on both static and dynamic contextual features. Contextual features include purpose of communication, interpersonal relationships, psychological distance, empathy and closeness, speaker subjectivity and addressee's attitudes and beliefs (Okamoto 1999; Makino 2002; Fukushima 2007; Cook 2008b; Ikuta 2008; Ikeda 2009; Walker 2011).

Given its dynamic and complex nature, teachers and textbooks tend to disregard style-shifting in the L2 classroom. Instead, the desu/masu forms are the focus of instruction, with the plain form being introduced at a much later stage (Ikeda 1009; Tsurutani and Shi 2018). As a result, learners tend to default to the desu/masu form in any type of interaction, often disregarding other speech styles and style-shifting (McMeekin 2014; Taguchi and Yoshimi 2019). In addition, Japanese as L2 textbooks have been criticised for purporting the idea that there is one correct version of Japanese, for not reflecting actual uses of the language and for neglecting explanations about the use of casual forms and ellipsis (see e.g. Matsumoto and Okamoto 2003; Ando 2005; Cook 2008a; Kinoshita Thomson 2010; McCraw 2011).

Research also suggests that there is a lack of dialectal diversity in the L2 classroom as the focus is on the teaching of standard Japanese (Matsumoto and Okamoto 2003; Iino 2006; Chang 2012). Regional dialects show pragmatic constraints (Schneider and Barron 2008). Regional identity in Japan is manifested through dialectal variation, to the extent that some dialects are even difficult for L1 speakers from other regions to understand (Samovar *et al.* 2017). Cook (2008a) suggests that the same utterance in standard and dialect may contain the same propositional content but not have the same communicative intention. There are several dialects spoken in Japan with distinct prosodic, lexical and syntactic variations (Shibatani 1990; Ball 2004; Igarashi 2012).

2.11.2 Ellipsis

Listeners must often fill the gap if they want to recover and interpret the intended meaning of the proposition expressed (Carston 2002). The ability to recover the implicit constituents of an utterance is particularly important in highly contextualised languages such as Japanese, where it is the responsibility of hearers to understand what it is that speakers have intended to say (Kameda 2001; Minami 2007). Indeed, the Japanese are frequently described as being ambiguous and not saying things clearly (Shibatani 1990; Nariyama 2003; Hagiwara 2009; Pizziconi 2009; Taguchi 2014).

The use of syntactically incomplete sentences can be problematic as they are pragmatically complete in the eyes of the speaker but appear incomplete according to the hearer (Hayashi and Yoon 2009). Nariyama (2003) suggests that the indirectness perceived in the mechanisms employed in Japanese is by no means ambiguous, but rather different to those familiar to non-L1 speakers. Pizziconi (2009: 249) argues that indirectness is not a fixed characteristic of Japanese nor of Japanese speakers, but that language "can be exploited to convey ambiguity when this is the very meaning that speakers wish to express". The degree of indirectness is closely related to the amount of effort that the hearers must put in to interpret the message, which is affected by the number of contextual cues that must be processed (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). The degree and use of indirectness are also dependent on personal variation, the relationship among interlocutors, genre and setting, among other situational factors (Matsumoto and Okamoto 2003; Pizziconi 2009).

Japanese oral interaction contains a great and frequent range of syntactic and lexical devices that contribute to indirect communication, the most prevalent one being ellipsis (Kuno 1973; Shibatani 1990; Maynard 1997; Nariyama 2003, 2009; Yamaguchi 2003). Okazaki (2003: 80) defines ellipsis as "the non-presence of entities in surface forms of utterances which the speaker assumes that the hearer can fill in from linguistic and/or extralinguistic contexts". In other words, ellipsis broadly refers to unexpressed syntactic elements, otherwise normally obligatory, understood by speech participants (Fry 2003; McShane 2005). Ellipsis is widely employed in colloquial interactions in Japanese and is closely related to casual speech style use (Maynard 1989; Tanaka 2004; Nariyama 2009; McCraw 2010). For example, the utterance below involves several unexpressed constituents, such as the subject, the object and particles for which, depending on the context, could be understood in several ways, including "Shall we eat?" "Do you want to eat?" "Are you eating?" and "Eat!":

(1) *Taberu* (to eat)

Individuals tend to avoid unnecessary repetition and leave unsaid what is believed to be inferable from context (Nariyama 2003; Yamura-Takei and Fujiwara 2004). Speakers may use ellipsis to achieve rapid, effective communication with minimal explicitly uttered information (Fry 2003; Nariyama 2003). As the linguistic gap can be filled by reference to shared knowledge, ellipsis may also serve to establish rapport, politeness and closeness among interlocutors (Okamoto 1985; Obana 2000; Okazaki 2003; Toyada and Ishihara 2003). In some instances, utterances may sound either unusual or be completely unacceptable if ellipted constituents are supplied (McCraw 2010).

The linguistic processes that achieve ellipsis differ markedly between English and Japanese (Yamamoto 1999; Yamura-Takei and Fujiwara 2004; McCraw 2010). Even though the Japanese language is often described as an elliptic language (Obana 2000), thinking of ellipsis as omission is problematic as in Japanese nothing is omitted. As Japanese allows for more syntactic flexibility, constructions that would look ill-formed in other languages such as English are grammatically complete in Japanese (Ono and Thompson 1997; Thompson and Hopper 2001; Shirakawa 2009). In this respect, ellipsis may be a source of miscommunication among learners of Japanese as L2 (Nariyama 2009; Muratova and Akhapov 2020). Non-L1 speakers of Japanese may find the Japanese language vague or illogical and conduct ellipsis when unnecessary or vice versa because they are unaware of the concrete linguistic and pragmatic mechanisms used among L1 speakers (Nariyama 2003; Tateyama 2009).

2.11.2.1 Types of Ellipsis

In Japanese, postpositional particles indicate the case relations between predicates and noun phrases (Yasutake 2012). Particles are similar to prepositions and discourse markers in English (Otsuki 2009). Particles attach mainly to nominals, indicating their semantic, syntactic and pragmatic properties (Sato and Tam 2012). However, particle ellipsis or zero particles is a commonly employed phenomenon to encode subjects and objects in oral interaction (Shimojo 2006; Yasutake 2012; Nakagawa 2016; Heffernan *et al.* 2018). While particle inclusion functions to signal necessary information, particle ellipsis is employed when the speaker does not wish to emphasise any of the noun phrases within an utterance or when the speaker wants to avoid ambiguities (Yasutake 2012). Fuji and Ono (2000: 28) add that particle inclusion facilitates "the processing of information that may require some cognitive effort on the part of the listener". Even though particle ellipsis carries the same propositional content as particle inclusion, there is often a linguistic gap to be filled in to be able to identify the relevant ellipted content (Shimojo 2006; Jodłowiec 2015). In Japanese, particle ellipsis is also affected by word order, contrast, narrow focus, types of predicates, types of nouns and other pragmatic factors (Yatabe 1999; Minashima 2001; Fuji and Ono 2000; Shimojo 2006; Kurumada and Jaeger 2015).

Another prevalent type of ellipsis is that of grammatical subjects and objects. The subject and the object are not grammatically required to be overt in Japanese. Japanese utterances rarely express all the arguments of a verb such as a subject (or topic) and an object noun phrase (Shibatani and Kageyama 2015). According to Fry (2003), eighty-one per cent of indirect objects, sixty-nine per cent of subjects and fifty-two per cent of direct objects are ellipted in Japanese. Therefore, a prevalent type of ellipsis in Japanese oral interaction is subject ellipsis, also known as argument ellipsis or null/zero anaphora (Nariyama 2003; Yamura-Takei and Fujiwara 2004; Shimojo 2006; Muratova and Akhapov 2020). Particle ellipsis and subject ellipsis frequently occur concurrently in the same utterance (Minami 2007). Similar to particle ellipsis, the content of ellipted noun phrases is retrieved from linguistic and non-linguistic contexts (Otsuki 2009; McCraw 2010). Subject ellipsis is often due to the relatively limited use of personal pronouns and other pronouns to identify referents in Japanese oral interaction (Kuno 1973; Shibatani 1990; Iwasaki 2002). As Nariyama (2003: 262-263) states, "the higher an argument is in terms of the person/animacy hierarchy and discourse salience, the more prone it is to be ellipted". Subject ellipsis may also occur in situations where a linguistic antecedent has not been explicitly provided in the discourse (Shibatani 1990).

Leaving sentences incomplete is also accomplished with hedges and other features of the language that convey politeness and soften imposition (Tanaka 2004; Haugh 2008; Hotta and Horie 2018). Hedges and softening expressions diminish a speaker's degree of commitment towards the proposition expressed (Miyazaki *et al.* 2002; Pizziconi and Kizu 2009). Japanese speakers tend to mark opinions with epistemic sentence-ending markers. These markers function as hedges and are employed to avoid explicit remarks (Taguchi 2009a). For example, epistemic sentence-ending markers such as *kana* [wonder], *kamo(shirenai)* [might], *kedo* [but] and *ga* [but], quantifiers and adverbs such as *chotto* [a little], *tabun* [perhaps] and *amari* [not very] and verbs such as *to omoimasu* [think/believe] can be employed to convey negative opinions, to express disagreement, to avoid explicit remarks, to sound less pretentious, to downplay the speaker's previous statement, to allow the hearer to make assumptions as to what might follow without appearing too direct and to stress the point in a non-aggressive manner, among other pragmatic functions (Maynard 1993; Lauwereyns 2002; Tanaka 2004, 2010; Matsugu 2005; Masuoka 2007; Kizu *et al.* 2013). Hotta and Horie (2018) found that even advanced learners of Japanese tend to use the marker *to omoimasu* to encode their subjective stance towards the proposition but not as a hedging expression to mitigate the proposition expressed.

2.11.3 Prosody

Prosody is a general term for the metrical features of speech, such as morae, syllables, prosodic words, stress, accent, rhythm, phonological phrases, intonational phrases and utterances (Pierrehumbert and Beckman 1988; Wheeldon 2000). There is some ambiguity in the literature in the use of the terms "prosody" and "intonation" (Kjeldgaard 2016). Here, I use these two terms interchangeably to refer to prosodic features at the utterance level, which is the focus of this study.

As Scott (2017: 323) argues, "prosody conveys meaning". The same utterance can vary in meaning depending on the pitch, loudness, tempo or voice quality that is used (House 2006). Prosody might be used to dissociate speakers from the proposition expressed, that is, "to mean the opposite of what we are saying" (Wharton 2020: 177). Through prosody, speakers deliberately or accidentally convey attitudes, emotions and physical states (Scott 2017). For example, one form of aizuchi can have more than one meaning, and a slight change in intonation may greatly differ the speaker's communicative intention (Angles *et al.* 2000; Tanaka 2004, 2010). Therefore, "intonation is crucial to distinguish not only the function of an aizuchi but more basically if it constitutes an aizuchi at all" (Tanaka 2004: 154). However, analysing prosody is not always straightforward, as intonation carries both paralinguistic and linguistic information in one acoustic channel and different pragmatic effects can be generated. For example, "a single phonological choice (e.g. a falling or rising contour) in a given context can turn a declarative utterance into a question, or a question into a command, or can indicate whether or not a speaker wishes to continue speaking" (Wichmann *et al.* 2009: 2). This suggests that intonation does not carry independent linguistic meaning, but rather enhances the linguistic content of utterances and assists in utterance interpretation (House 2006; Wilson and Wharton 2006). In this regard, prosody involves different degrees of encoding that interact with general pragmatic principles (Scott 2017). Wilson and Wharton (2006: 1559-1560) summarise the most important effects of prosody on comprehension:

1. Prosodic signals can be naturally coded (e.g. angry or friendly tone of voice) or linguistically coded (e.g. lexical stress or lexical tone). Some prosodic variations may not be natural or linguistic, but cultural (see also Sperber 2007).
2. Prosody interacts with information from several other sources, such as gestures (Loehr 2014). Therefore, prosodic effects are highly context-dependent (see also Scott 2017; Wharton 2020).
3. Prosody conveys information and impressions about emotions and attitudes such as surprise, depression, politeness, amusement, anxiety and even drunkenness (see e,g., House 2006; Tsurutani and Shi 2018). Prosody also conveys sentence type. For example, the rising intonation associated with interrogative sentences and the falling intonation associated with assertions in Japanese manifests itself at the utterance level (Shibata and Hurtig 2008; Tsujimura 2014; Igarashi 2015).
4. Prosody communicates a wide range of weak implicatures rather than complete, determinate propositions or messages (including possible disambiguations, reference solutions, contextual assumptions and implicatures).
5. Prosodic effects may be either accidental or intentional, and if intentional, either covertly or overtly.

Although knowledge of prosodic features can be helpful for learners to guide them towards the intention speakers aim to convey, the pragmatic functions of intonation in ILP have been under-researched (Barron 2012; Romero-Trillo 2012). As Selting (2010: 6) highlights, “there is no spoken language without prosody, and disregarding prosody in the study of spoken language means disregarding an integral part of language itself”. Mastery of L2 prosodic features is crucial if learners want to be understood by L1 speakers (Shibata and Hurtig 2008; Yates 2017). To avoid pragmatic failure, hearers must be able to interpret the pragmatic meaning conveyed through prosody, such as whether an interlocutor is being straightforward or sarcastic (Cohen 2019). This is particularly true for L1 English speakers who, contrary to L1 Japanese speakers, tend to focus on verbal content rather than intonation (Kitayama and Ishii 2002). For instance, Tsurutani (2011) reported that Australian English learners of Japanese had difficulties producing the correct intonation at the utterance level as they transferred L1 prosodic strategies to the L2. Time constraints in the L2 classroom and limited opportunity for exposure also hinder the acquisition of intonation among learners of Japanese as L2 (Moore 1997). Therefore, several scholars advocate for consistent input in intonation through focused and systematic instruction in the classroom (see e.g. Nakazawa 2012; Norouzi 2018).

2.11.4 Bodily Expressions

Humans communicate not only using language but by exchanging stimuli that are intended to attract the addressee’s attention and to convey meaning (Wilson and Sperber 2012). Bodily expressions such as hand waves, headshakes, facial expressions, head nods and eye movements do not code anything but can mean as much as, or even more than, verbal utterances (Yamashita 2008; Wharton 2009; Wilson and Sperber 2012). Gestures, a type of bodily expression, are visible “actions that have the features of manifest deliberate expressiveness” (Kendon 2004: 15). Gestures convey attitudes, intentions, interests, ideas, emotions and feelings, as they are “the embodiment of our attitudes and our negotiated assumptions and expectations of our social contexts and cognitive environments” (Schandorf 2012: 336). Gestures may be linked semantically, prosodically and pragmatically to spoken utterances or may entirely replace words and convey meaning on their own (Wharton 2003; Kendon 2004; McNeill 2005; Miller 2018). Gestures and other bodily expressions are pragmatic features associated with language which can be manifest and ostensive (Payrató and Clemente 2020). For speakers, gestures can reduce cognitive burden. Speakers may choose to draw the hearer’s attention to their intention through a gesture that is relevant enough to attract attention and be easily interpreted (Wharton

2009). For hearers, gestures can facilitate comprehension of verbal utterances (Sueyoshi and Hardison 2005).

Aqui (2004) demonstrates that the Japanese employ a wide array of culturally-specific gestures. For example, as shown in Figure 2.5 below, the gesture of waving your hand with your palm down and fingers toward the body is a beckoning "come here" and not a "go away" gesture as used in many other countries (Ting-Toomey 1999). The go-away gesture in Japan is "with the back of the hand facing upward" while shaking "your hand as if trying to shake something off" (Aqui 2004: 7).

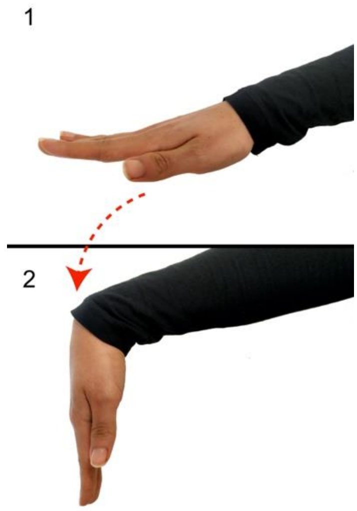


Figure 2.5: Beckoning gesture.[10]

Furthermore, in Japan, gestures and facial expressions may serve social functions such as showing politeness, respect and formality (Sueyoshi and Hardison 2005). For example, bowing or looking slightly downward is a symbol of respect towards the interlocutor (Kagawa 2001). The uses of bowing are varied, including (but not limited to) greeting, welcoming, asking for something, showing respect, apologising, congratulating, acknowledging someone else, admitting a mistake, expressing anger and fear, and departing (Ikeguchi 2002).

Cultural-dependent gestures or emblems are often conventionalised and have fixed meanings that are generally understood within a particular culture or community and can often be substituted by a verbal utterance (Akiyama 1991; McNeill 2005; Stam and Ishino 2011; Matsumoto and Hwang 2013). These types of gestures are considered language-like as they occur at particular points in the utterance and contribute to the interpretation of the linguistic string as a whole (Wharton 2009). This is the case of the money emblem in Japanese oral

[10] I have modelled and taken all photographs that appear in this thesis.

interaction, which is often accompanied by the word *okane* [money]. As illustrated in Figure 2.6, this gesture is performed by making a circle with the thumb and index finger, holding the hand flat and horizontally (very similar to the "OK" gesture in many countries) (Akiyama 1991; Aqui 2004).

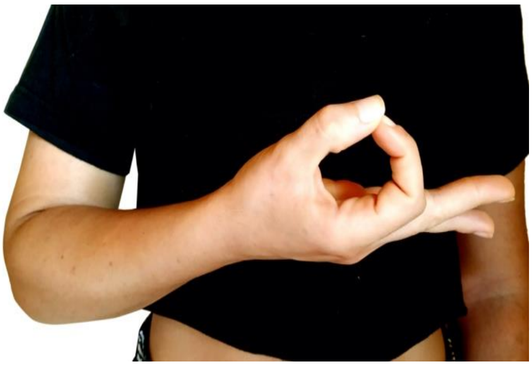


Figure 2.6: Money gesture.

Miller (2018) notes that emblems are particularly important for L2 learners to acquire. For example, learners should be aware of pointing at one's nose to indicate themselves as the recipient of information (Aqui 2004). Miller (2018) asserts that, if unaware, learners may become confused or bemused by the use of this particular emblem, or even think that the interlocutor is not taking the conversation seriously.

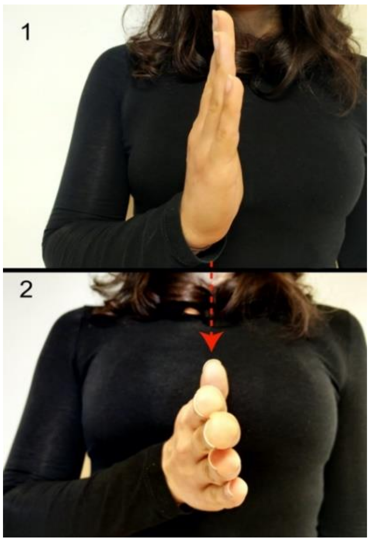


Figure 2.7: Gesture of apology.

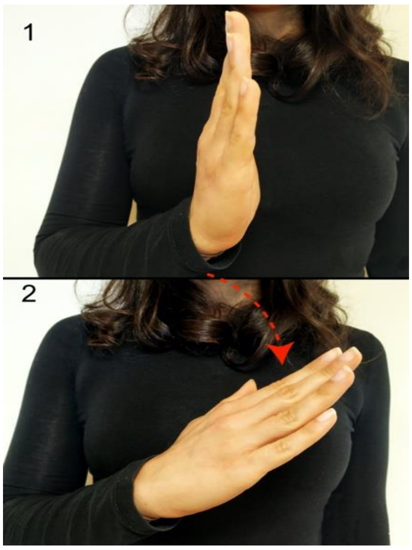


Figure 2.8: Gesture of refusal.

Another example that may lead to confusion is the gesture used to pass in front of someone (see Figure 2.7). The person who performs the gesture must "round the back slightly, place one hand up with your fingers together and the thumb up, then gently move your hand up and down" and it functions as an apology (Aqui 2004: 21). A final gesture is the "hand wave" or "hand fan” (Morris 1994; Gass and Houck 1999). This emblem expresses negation and refusal (see Figure 2.8). It is performed with “the open right hand, with palm to the left, [which] is moved back and forth in front of the face, as in fanning a flame” (Morris 1994: 10). Jungheim (2006) demonstrates how learners of Japanese could not interpret the refusal gesture of the hand fan as L1 speakers do.

2.11.5 Humour

According to Relevance Theory, human cognition is geared towards the maximisation of relevance (see Chapter 3). When a person tells a joke, hearers expect the joke to be relevant. Listening to an instance of humour should be worth the attention and the mental effort involved, such as making sense of ambiguities, alternative referents and punning configurations, in exchange for amusement and entertainment (Yus 2017). This is not the case in many L2 interactions. Interpreting and producing humour in an L2 are daunting tasks that may result in non-L1 speakers “being laughed at more than being laughed with” (Cohen 2017: 439). The ability to interpret and produce humour can assist learners in expressing their thoughts in the L2 more effectively and playfully, and may allow them to participate in L1 interactions in a more casual and relaxed manner (Bell and Pomerantz 2017; Yamada *et al.* 2019).

Clark (2013) notes that misunderstanding humour may occur when the first interpretation that the hearer arrives at is not the one envisaged by the speaker or the content of the humorous utterance is not manifest to the hearer. Hay (2001) adds that understanding humour entails recognition of an utterance as an attempt to amuse, understanding the content of the joke, and appreciating whether the joke is amusing. However, the process is not always straightforward, and appreciation may occur without full comprehension (Bell 2007). Bell and Attardo (2010) identify seven instances where non-L1 speakers may fail to successfully engage in humorous exchanges, including failure to understand the pragmatic force of utterances, failure to understand the meaning of words and their connotations, experiencing false negatives (i.e. missing a joke) and experiencing false positives (i.e. seeing a joke where none was intended).

Humour is ubiquitous, but cultures may express and/or appreciate humour differently (Guidi 2017). The Japanese are often stereotyped as being humourless and as having uncommon, eccentric, incomprehensible and impenetrable humour (Davis 2006; Weingärtner 2010; Neff and Rucynski 2017). However, humour plays a significant role in Japanese culture and is frequent and well-signalled (Davis 2006; Oshima 2013; De Laat 2017). In Japan, humour shows solidarity. Therefore, rather than ready-made jokes, sharing jokes about personal or close-to-personal experiences is a popular form of humour (Davis 2006; Oshima 2013, 2018). Running jokes and humour based on past comments are also popular in oral interaction (Takekuro 2006; de Laat 2017). Jokes tend to be limited to situations where participants are familiar with one another and the degree of formality is low (Takekuro 2006). The Japanese also deliberately establish and exaggerate their personality traits, dialectal variation and intonation to produce humorous effects (de Laat 2017; Oshima 2018).

The phonemic poverty of Japanese makes puns or *dajare* the preferred form of humour among L1 speakers (Nagashima 2006; Maynard 2007; Otake 2010). A pun is "a form of wordplay in which some feature of linguistic structure simultaneously combines two unrelated meanings" (Simpson 2003: 20). Puns combine two similar-sounding or identical words or phrases that result in intentional ambiguity of meaning from which the humour originates (Kawahara and Shinohara 2009; Otake 2010; Scherling 2016). Scherling (2016: 282) argues that the multitude of homonyms "is evidence to the high degree of creativity and wordplay in which Japanese engages in order to exploit multiple layers of meaning for comical and pragmatic effects". Many puns are sophisticated and rely on lexical relations, ambiguity, multi-layered meanings and even a combination of homophones between Japanese and English words and phrases (Maynard 2007; Inagawa 2015; Scherling 2016). In addition to the lexical puns based on homophones, there are morphological puns, syntactic puns, pragmatic puns and textual puns (Maynard 2007). To understand a pun, the hearer must interpret at least two different, frequently opposed explicit interpretations based on the incongruity of the ambiguous sound sequence involved (Yus 2012).

Sarcasm is a form of humour that communicates implicit criticism about the hearer or a situation to provoke a negative effect; irony is a form of humour used to indirectly communicate contradictory feelings (Colston 2017). In Japanese, the term *hiniku* refers to a large range of utterances that are categorised as ironic or sarcastic in English but are too nuanced in Japanese to fall into either category (Okamoto 2006, 2007). However, *hiniku* often alludes to criticism (Akimoto and Miyazawa 2017). Although some researchers assert that sarcasm and irony are not popular forms of humour in Japan, humorous exchanges in the form of *hiniku* are indeed part of Japanese oral interaction (Okamoto 2007; Hagiwara 2009).

2.11.6 Silence

Silence is a multifaceted, complex phenomenon for which interpretation can be ambiguous if its meaning is not understood (Tannen and Saville-Troike 1985; Nakane 2007). Silence may be the result of a breakdown in communication, such as a lull that occurs when interlocutors do not have anything left to say (Goffman 1967). Here I discuss silence that involves an extra layer of intention and that has multiple communicative and informative meanings and functions (Johannesen 1974; Jaworski 1992; Wong 2010; Sasamoto 2012). Spencer-Oatey and Xing (2005) argue that when hearers perceive silence, they usually first try to figure out if silence has a communicative intention. If perceived as relevant, hearers then try to work out the intention behind the silence. Hearers are expected to interpret the meaning of silence, which can create uncertainty if they are unable to reach a relevant interpretation. Such uncertainty may be aggravated when the pragmatic functions of silence are lost in oral interaction between L2 and L1 speakers (Cohen 2012b). Japanese employ silence to communicate meaning and make decisions based on them (Akiyama 2017). Although being able to interpret silence is particularly important in Japan, Carpi (2020) notes that silence as a communicative act is usually not mentioned in Japanese language courses.

Many scholars agree that the Japanese attach strong values to and utilise more instances of silence than other cultures and societies (Doi 1974; Clancy 1986; Lebra 1987; Ishii and Bruneau 1994; Davies and Ikeno 2002). For example, Murata (1994) reports more interruptions as a sign of commitment in English conversations than in Japanese oral interactions. Akiyama (2017) also describes how in an interaction between a Japanese and an American, the Japanese interactor frequently resorts to silence as a rapport management strategy while the American interactor uses high-involvement strategies due to his discomfort with silence. Given this, the literature suggests significant differences in the level of tolerance for silence between Japanese speakers and speakers of other languages such as English (see e.g. Yamada 1997; Nakane 2006, 2007; Roberts *et al.* 2011) and Italian (see e.g. Carpi 2019). Nonetheless, Jones (2011) cautions against stereotyping the preference for silence in Japanese oral interactions because, as King and Aono (2017) add, the use of silence depends on several contextual factors and personal attitudes that shape the interpretation of an individual’s silent behaviour.

The meaning of silence and its range of interpretations vary according to contextual and cultural factors (Jaworski 1992). In Japanese, silence is a communicative device that may express several intentions and feelings, such as politeness, pensiveness, alertness, sensitivity, resistance, subordination, reflection, acceptance, credibility, disagreement, refusal, rejection, rebuke, avoidance of conflict, avoidance of embarrassment, saving face, saving reputation, intense concentration, careful work and attention (Clancy 1986; Lebra 1987; Yoneyama 1999; Nakane 2006, 2007; Maynard 1997; Ohtaki *et al.* 2003; Kidd 2016). According to Yamada (1997), silence may also be employed as a contextualisation cue for anticipatory guesswork, where hearers utilise the little information available to fill out the communicative intention. Silence in Japan is usually used in combination with or as a replacement for backchanneling, facial expressions, eye contact and other nonverbal cues (Maynard 1987; Kita and Ide 2007; Kogure 2007; Akiyama 2017).

2.11.7 Aizuchi (Backchannelling)

Japanese is considered a hyper-phatic language, whereby a high variety of verbal and nonverbal listenership forms occur during oral interaction to connect with interlocutors and establish rapport (Mizutani 1985; Kita and Ide 2007; Kogure 2007; Kennett 2017). In addition to silence, the Japanese are also known for using backchanneling strategies to communicate meaning (Akiyama 2017). Although backchanneling is ubiquitous (Utashiro and Kawai 2009), it is one of the most effective tools to achieve listenership in Japanese oral interaction (Nakayama 2013). Indeed, Kennett (2017: 98) describes Japanese backchannels as “the glue that holds Japanese conversation together”.

Generally, there is great variation with the term, definition, scope and forms of backchanneling from one research to another due to the myriad of conceptual approaches employed to analyse this communicative act (see e.g. Fujimoto 2007). In Japanese, the term aizuchi is frequently used to indicate the unique aspects of backchanneling in the Japanese language (Yamashita 2008). However, according to Allen (2019), many studies use the terms backchannel, aizuchi and reactive or response tokens interchangeably to refer to the same phenomenon. In this thesis, I use the term “aizuchi” and “backchanneling” to describe backchannel signals in Japanese (unless I specify otherwise).

Definitions of aizuchi have some common premises: aizuchi are verbal and nonverbal signals produced by listeners and used during a speaker’s turn (see e.g. Hanzawa 2012). Japanese oral interactions contain a higher frequency of backchannel signals than other languages (White 1989; Maynard 1997; Yamada 1992; Clancy *et al.* 1996; Kidd 2016). For example, Ike (2010) demonstrates that, for the same amount of information, Japanese speakers use almost twice as many backchannels as Australian English speakers. In addition, scholars report several particularities and cross-cultural differences in the use, timing, prosodic features and forms of aizuchi (Maynard 1993; LoCastro 1987; Ward and Tsukahara 200; Tajima 2001; Hanzawa 2012). L1 Japanese speakers also demonstrate higher meta-awareness of aizuchi because the term is part of everyday vocabulary in Japanese, rather than its technical use in English (Kita and Ide 2007; Miyata and Nisisawa 2007). Furthermore, the uses of backchanneling in Japanese seem to be wider in application than that of other languages, including turn management, coordination among interlocutors, attentive listening, filler, continuer, reaction, understanding, lack of understanding, support towards the speaker's judgement, self-contextualisation, amazement, surprise, agreement, disagreement, strong emotional response, consideration towards the speaker, addition, correction and request for information (Maynard 1986, 1989; Tanaka 2004; Ohama 2006; Kita and Ide 2007; Saft 2007; Hanzawa 2012; Kidd 2016).

Due to its complexity and unique characteristics, L2 speakers of Japanese tend to misinterpret aizuchi as interruptions rather than supportive listening behaviour (Maynard 1993). Such misinterpretations result in a lack of trust in L1 Japanese speakers, negative perceptions and judgements, stereotyping and frustration (Yamada 1997; Kawate-Mierzejewska 1999; Cutrone 2005, 2014; Kidd 2016; Akiyama 2017; Carpi 2020). Ishida (2006) reports that L2 learners respond critically to the use of aizuchi and prefer specific verbal utterances to signal attentiveness. Hatasa (2007) also found that even advanced L2 learners used aizuchi in a restricted manner. Given this, Utashiro and Yanagisawa (2009) report that L2 learners who receive aizuchi-focused conversation classes show significant improvement to those who only focus on vocabulary and grammar structures.

2.12 Summary

In this chapter, I described the importance of cultivating pragmatic competence in the L2. The learnability, teachability and assessment of pragmatics must become an integral part of the L2 classroom if learners want to be effective interlocutors. If learners do not develop pragmatic competence in their L2, negative pragmatic transfer and pragmatic failure are likely to occur. However, there is a shortage of pedagogical materials that explicitly enhance pragmatic competence in learners. This is an issue that I seek to address in this study.

ILP in Japanese is a strong field of research. However, it has been narrowly examined through the lens of sociolinguistic and interactional competences with a particular focus on speech acts, interactional particles and politeness. By describing some of the main verbal and nonverbal pragmatic features of Japanese, it was obvious that speech acts are not the only communicative acts that learners must acquire to become pragmatically competent. As I will present in Chapter 5, learners of Japanese as L2 may be challenged by aspects of pragmatics other than speech acts, including speech styles, ellipsis and indirect meaning, prosody, bodily expressions and gestures, humour, silence and aizuchi.

Furthermore, pragmatic competence must not be merely considered as a component of communicative competence. Throughout this chapter, I discussed the importance of examining pragmatic competence as a cognitive performance that taps into learners' inferential abilities to help them process and produce utterances in oral interaction. The following chapter delves deeper into the notion of pragmatic competence as a cognitive performance that interacts with linguistic meaning in the interpretation and production of utterances.

CHAPTER 3:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described key notions in the field of ILP from both a communicative and cognitive perspective as well as reviewed current research in ILP. The chapter concluded with a description of the pragmatic competence features in Japanese that participants in this research found most challenging (see Chapters 5 and 6).

The focus now turns to the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis. In this chapter, I introduce Relevance Theory, a theory of human communication and cognition. The theory was proposed and developed by anthropologist Dan Sperber and linguist Deirdre Wilson in 1986 (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995) and has become one of the most influential theories in pragmatics since. I explain fundamental concepts underlying the framework, including principles of relevance, comprehension heuristics, the definition of context and implicit/explicit aspects of communication. Relevance Theory provides a cognitively grounded explanation of communicative behaviour; therefore, as a process of performance with its principles, concepts and procedures, it can be applied in any given language and culture (Ifantidou 2014). Considering this, I discuss how Relevance Theory can be used together with key advancements in ILP to account for L2 pragmatic competence. The final section examines what ideas in ILP are accounted for in the context of this thesis and in relation to Relevance Theory.

3.2 Relevance Theory

Sperber and Wilson's (1986/1995) framework for understanding utterance interpretation emerged from Grice's (1957) philosophical approach to language and mind, which served as a "starting point for exploration of poorly mapped or unmapped territories" (Sperber 2019: 14). Relevance Theory accepts and maintains some common theoretical premises with Grice's work, such as viewing utterance interpretation as recognising intentions (Clark 2013). However, Sperber and Wilson argue that interpretation is governed by one single cognitive and communicative principle, the Principle of Relevance, rather than four maxims of conversation as originally proposed by Grice. Furthermore, Relevance Theory was developed to create fine-grained analyses of pragmatic phenomena that focused on the interconnection between meaning and context and between language and mind from a cognitive perspective. In this sense, Relevance Theory contributes to a scientific understanding of the cognitive mechanisms that produce pragmatic interpretations (Sperber 2019: 14).

3.2.1 Relevance and Optimal Relevance

As the name suggests, the notion of relevance is at the core of Relevance Theory. Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) explain that the only notion that governs communication is that of relevance. Relevance is defined as a balance between the contextual effects produced by a stimulus and the processing effort needed to interpret that given stimulus. According to Wilson and Sperber (2012: 6), "an input is relevant when it connects with available contextual assumptions to yield cognitive effects". Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 270) define *relevance* as follows:

a) an ostensive stimulus is relevant enough to be worth the hearer's effort to process it;

b) an ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the speaker's abilities and preferences.

In any given act of ostensive communication, the speaker does not "merely intend to convey certain information, but must intend her audience to recognise that she has this intention" (Wilson 2005: 1137). As Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) argue, when a newly acquired piece of information interacts with a person's assumptions and makes some adjustment to their cognitive environment, this information is relevant both technically and intuitively. Every utterance produced by a speaker is expected to be relevant to the hearer, as it updates and modifies the hearer's cognitive environment by generating and evaluating hypotheses about the speaker's intended meaning (Wilson and Sperber 2006). That is, a hearer is entitled to assume that any stimulus addressed to his attention will be optimally relevant (i.e. relevant enough to be worth processing) as well as be the most relevant stimulus that a speaker is willing and able to produce at a given time. This concept is known as the *presumption of optimal relevance*, which Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 270) define as:

a) The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.

b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences.

The presumption of optimal relevance guides hearers in recovering what is being communicated. The first clause of the presumption of optimal relevance suggests that the interpretation a speaker intends will be worth the hearer's expenditure of processing effort in accessing that particular interpretation. Thus, the hearer will not be satisfied with an interpretation that does not meet this first principle. Suppose I say to my thesis supervisors:

I am a student

This utterance is informing my supervisors of something they already know. Therefore, they might want to expend more effort and consider possible interpretations so that the processing of this utterance is worthwhile. Perhaps I am reminding them to treat me as someone who is still learning and that it would be inappropriate to expect that I know everything about Relevance Theory. The notion that a stimulus must be sufficiently relevant to justify the processing effort involved accounts for why humans search beyond initial, obvious interpretations.

The second part of the presumption of optimal relevance asserts that if speakers have different ways of communicating one single idea, they should choose the most accessible stimulus and the easiest for hearers to process. Imagine I say:

I don't drink

The verb drink is ambiguous, as it could refer to drinking any kind of beverage. My utterance could indicate that I do not drink (certain or any) alcoholic, caffeinated or carbonated beverage, among other options. Imagine that the above utterance is produced at a pub. Relevance Theory predicts that a speaker in that particular situation would choose the most accessible and easiest to process interpretation of the verb drink (in this example, alcoholic beverage). According to the presumption of relevance, if speakers produce the most relevant stimulus that is consistent with their abilities and preferences, they should also choose the way of communicating that is more accessible and easier for the hearer to process. Therefore, if I wanted to communicate that I do not like to drink coffee in the morning, I would have selected a different, more efficient way of communicating such a thought.

The presumption of optimal relevance guides the *relevance-guided comprehension heuristic*. This comprehension procedure predicts that, in the search for an interpretation, hearers stop as soon as they find an interpretation that satisfies their expectations of relevance. As Sperber and Wilson (2002: 18) define it:

a) Follow a path of least effort in deriving cognitive effects: test interpretations (e.g. disambiguations, reference resolutions, implicatures, etc.) in order of accessibility.

b) Stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied.

The relevance-guided comprehension procedure is automatically employed in interpreting any ostensive stimulus. To this comprehension process, hearers may bring several concrete expectations about how the utterance will be relevant to them (i.e. what implicated conclusions they are expected to derive). In turn, these expectations may contribute, via inference, to the identification of explicatures and implicated premises (Wilson and Sperber 2012). Hearers do not stop searching until they find an appropriate interpretation that satisfies relevance (i.e. an interpretation that provides enough cognitive effects to justify the processing effort involved in utterance interpretation). Therefore, hearers should consider interpretations in order of accessibility and stop searching for relevance when they find an interpretation that meets this expectation (Sperber and Wilson 2005).

3.2.2 Principle of Relevance

Building upon the notion of relevance, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) propose two main principles that are fundamental to human communication: the cognitive principle of relevance and the communicative principle of relevance.

The cognitive principle of relevance is based on general claims about how human cognition works, and "it is against this cognitive background that inferential communication takes place" (Wilson and Sperber 2006: 610). Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 60) explain that human cognition is designed to maximise relevance:

(1) Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximisation of relevance.

Hearers need to process a wide range of verbal and nonverbal stimuli at a given time to understand a message. Imagine my friend wants to buy an apartment and she shows me some of the options she has seen. The days following our conversation, I notice many "for sale" signs in town. The outside world has not changed, but as my cognition is geared towards relevance, these signs have been brought to the fore of my attention. However, not all stimuli are relevant enough to deserve the hearer's attention. Therefore, human cognition tends to disregard irrelevant stimuli and focus on the most potentially relevant stimuli to use as evidence towards the correct interpretation of a speaker's stimulus (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson and Sperber 2006). Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 260) describe how this cognitive tendency leads to the Communicative Principle of Relevance, which explains how and why communication succeeds:

(2) Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.

As human cognition is relevance-oriented and the recovery of meaning requires the hearer to expend processing effort, hearers expect that the first sufficiently relevant interpretation they reach is guaranteed to be the interpretation intended by the speaker (Wilson and Sperber 2012). This process allows hearers to follow a path of least processing effort in looking for a plausible interpretation that satisfies their expectations of relevance. If speakers want to be understood, it is their responsibility, within their capabilities and preferences, to ensure that the ostensive stimulus is as easy and relevant as possible for hearers to understand (Wharton 2003; Wilson and Sperber 2012). Suppose I am working late and a colleague offers a lift home:

Colleague: Where do you live?

Me: Well, when I first moved to Dublin I lived in a quiet house in Whitehall, but it was inconvenient because there were no big shops around and the rent was quite high. Then I found an apartment in Ballymun but it was too small so after a few months I decided to move out and looked for a place closer to the city centre.

The answer above may make the hearer expend unnecessary effort. In addition, my colleague may think that I am not conveying anything worth communicating. Perhaps I am not communicating to the best of my abilities (I could answer more concisely and efficiently), but I am communicating according to my preferences in that particular situation (imagine I do not want to disclose my address to my colleague). “Faced with a range of stimuli, our minds are so organised that we automatically tend to pick out the one that is likely to yield the most cognitive effects for the least processing effort” (Clark 2013: 35). Therefore, the hearer will focus on the most relevant stimuli to interpret my utterances and come up with the most relevant interpretation possible. The cognitive principle of relevance and the communicative principle of relevance explain how humans minimise mental or processing effort and only select from context the quantity and quality of information that helps them to derive relevant conclusions. This way, the principle of relevance is not a conversational norm that speakers and hearers must follow to successfully interact with one another. The principle describes a fact about human cognition and, as such, interlocutors cannot violate or exploit it (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995).

Relevance Theory acknowledges that hearers select the interpretation that produces the greatest cognitive effects possible for the smallest processing effort possible (Sperber and Wilson

1986/1995; Blakemore 2002). *Processing effort* reflects the number and scope of contextual cues that hearers must interpret, including background knowledge, contextual information and linguistic complexity. An input is relevant to an individual when its processing yields conclusions that matter to the hearer and results in positive cognitive effects (e.g. by answering a question, improving knowledge, reassuring). Wilson and Sperber (2012) explain this as follows:

> a) Everything else being equal, the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved in an individual by processing an input at a given time, the greater the relevance of the input to that individual at that time.
>
> b) Everything else being equal, the smaller the processing effort expended by the individual in achieving those effects, the greater the relevance of the input to that individual at that time.
>
> (Wilson and Sperber 2012: 63)

Therefore, a positive cognitive effect is a contextual effect that is worth developing. The more positive cognitive effects, the more relevant it is. The more effort involved, the less relevant the stimulus is (Clark 2013).

Cognitive effects refer to the interaction of new and existing knowledge in the context of a particular interaction, the strengthening of existing assumptions by providing further evidence about them and the elimination of assumptions in light of the new evidence (Carston 2002; Clark 2013). Cognitive effects may be derived from any ostensive stimulus, including decoded linguistic messages, facial expressions, gestures, silence and other sensory inputs and paralinguistic information (Blakemore 2002; Wharton 2009).

3.2.3 Ostensive-Inferential Communication

In this section, I explain the type of communication Relevance Theory has within its scope. According to Relevance Theory, the first phase in comprehension is often that of decoding, which is the identification of a grammatical string of words or logical form (Wilson and Sperber 2012). A logical form is a skeleton on which the hearer constructs a conceptual representation, that is, a representation with logical properties but with gaps that need to be filled with other conceptual representations to be fully propositional (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). In other words, human communication goes beyond the mere recovery of coded information (see Figure 3.1). In addition to decoding systems, there are a series of synergetic mental capacities, processing devices and representations at the fore of the relevance-theoretic view on communication, such as language faculty, inferential systems, accessibility systems, deductive devices and contextual assumptions. Relevance Theory also accounts for several sub-personal systems, such as background knowledge, intentions, desires and beliefs (Carston 2002; Ifantidou 2014). In this regard, human communication is about humans' capability to attribute mental states to the interlocutor to interpret what the speaker wants to communicate. As Sperber and Wilson (2002: 3) state, "pragmatic interpretation is ultimately an exercise in mindreading, involving the inferential attribution of intentions".

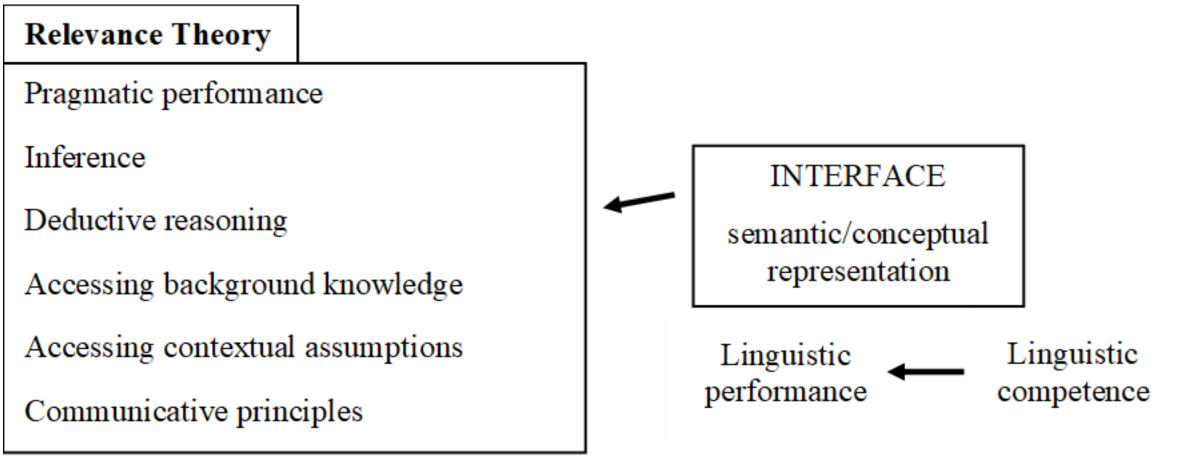


Figure 3.1: Relevance Theory according to Ifantidou (2014: 5).

Communication, both linguistic and non-linguistic, primarily involves inferential processes that reduce the gap between the semantic representations of utterances and the communicators' true intentions. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 174), "the fact is that human external languages do not encode the kind of information that humans are interested in communicating. Linguistically encoded semantic representations are abstract mental structures which must be inferentially enriched before they can be taken to represent anything of interest". Relevance Theory recognises two sides to a single communication process: ostension and inference. *Ostensive-inferential communication* reflects the idea that speakers "communicate ostensively (openly showing an intention to communicate) and the audiences make inferences about the intentions of communicators" (Clark 2013: 90). Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 63) define ostensive-inferential communication as follows: "The communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of this stimulus, to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions". As soon as the hearer recognises that a particular stimulus is ostensive, the presumption of optimal relevance guides the hearer in the interpretation of that given stimulus (see next section). That is, ostensive-inferential communication involves the speaker's intention to make manifest a basic layer of information. Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) analyse ostensive-inferential communication in two layers of intention:

a) the informative intention, which serves to inform or make a certain set of assumptions more manifest to the audience;

b) the communicative intention, which serves to inform the audience of one's informative intention or make the informative intention mutually manifest.

The first layer in ostensive-inferential communication is the information that is being pointed out, while the second layer is the intention that informs the audience about the first layer. An informative intention must be first recognised for a communicative intention to be satisfied. In successful communication, both the informative and communicative intentions are fulfilled. Speakers use coded and non-coded stimuli to make their informative intention manifest to hearers. This intentional nature of communication defines the process of ostension. However, there is a significant gap between what speakers say and what they intend to communicate (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995; Carston 2002). As a result, hearers must infer a range of assumptions to fill this gap and recover the speaker's informative intention. In this respect, Relevance Theory holds an inferential approach to pragmatics, as its objective is to describe how hearers infer speakers' meaning based on the evidence provided (Wilson and Sperber 2006). As Carston (2006: 633) notes, "the pragmatics system is in the business of inferring the intended interpretation or ("what is meant")".

Another key notion is that of context in which the hearer processes the given ostensive stimulus. Unlike traditional static views of context, Relevance Theory offers a dynamic view of context, which is defined in the next section.

3.3 Context

The notion of context is key to the understanding of Relevance Theory. If a communicator intends a stimulus to be interpreted in a particular manner, the speaker must also expect the hearer to successfully supply a context that allows that particular interpretation to be recovered (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). Linguistically encoded information is a blueprint that requires contextual knowledge, which in turn generates a whole range of thoughts and impressions that are used toward the correct inferencing of speaker intentions (Blakemore 1992).

3.3.1 Cognitive Environment

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995), context is a psychological construct established and developed during a given interaction. Context does not merely account for external factors such as situational circumstances, cultural factors and interlocutor relationships. Rather, context is understood as a set of all the physical and cognitive assumptions that are, and could be, salient to the hearer at any given time. Assumptions include information about "the immediate physical environment or the immediately preceding utterance: expectations about the future, scientific hypothesis or religious beliefs, anecdotal memories, general cultural assumptions, beliefs about the mental state of the speaker, [which] may all play a role in interpretation" (*ibid.*: 15). All the assumptions that are, and could be, manifest to a hearer at a given time constitute his or her cognitive environment (Carston 2002; Clark 2013). Hearers utilise all the conceptual information available in their cognitive environment to select a small subset of assumptions of the content of a given interaction (Carston 2002). In this regard, communication needs speakers' ability to assess what is, or could become, accessible to the hearer as contextual assumptions. The selection of different sets of assumptions is not arbitrary; it is constrained by memory, attention, perceptions and other mental activities the hearer is engaged in during a given interaction. From this dynamic view, context is not given but selected by the hearer and the selection of a particular context is guided by the presumption of relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995).

3.3.2 Manifestness

Another important notion to consider in relation to context is manifestness, which accounts for all the assumptions that speakers and hearers can perceive or infer. Manifestness is a less rigid notion that includes the stronger notions of what is *known* or *assumed* (Wilson and Sperber 2012). Manifestness is about the salience of assumptions in one's context. That is:

> (1) A fact is *manifest* to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true.
>
> (2) A *cognitive environment* of an individual is a set of facts that are manifest to him.
>
> (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 39)

Cognitive effects and processing effort exist even if individuals do not consciously assess them, or even if they are not conceptually represented. In other words, “people have not only the knowledge that they actually entertain, but also the knowledge that they are capable of deducing from the knowledge that they entertain” (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 40). According to Relevance Theory, interlocutors do not construct identical or similar representations due to differences in their cognitive environment. As assumptions can be manifest to an individual without actually being entertained, many of the assumptions that individuals hold allow for varying degrees of manifestness (Clark 2013). Accordingly, assumptions that are manifest to both the speaker and the hearer are the only requirement for guaranteeing a successful interpretation process (Ifantidou 2014). In this regard, “what makes this possible is that utterances encode logical forms (conceptual representations, however fragmentary or incomplete) which the speaker has manifestly chosen to provide as input to the inferential comprehension process” (Wilson and Sperber 2006: 614). Therefore, for ostensive-inferential communication to be truly manifest, the speaker’s informative intention must become manifest to the hearer but also manifest to both interlocutors (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). If individuals in a given interaction can form similar representations of a physical and cognitive environment, these individuals then share a mutual cognitive environment.

3.3.3 Affective Effects

De Saussure and Wharton (2020) note that communication of propositional content is only one aspect of human communication, and that other aspects such as emotions and feelings must be captured in a theory of human communication. Indeed, in recent years, there has been considerable debate among relevance-theoretic scholars about affective meaning and non-propositional effects (see e.g. Wharton 2009; Sperber and Wilson 2015; Kolaiti 2019; Sasamoto 2019; Wilson and Carston 2019), with a particular interest on how non-verbal aspects (e.g. facial/bodily expressions and prosody) and semi-verbal aspects of communication (e.g. interjections and onomatopoeia) connect to emotions.

Sperber and Wilson (2015: 20) explain that communication can be achieved by conveying an impression, defined as “a change in the manifestness of an array of propositions” or indeterminate description of propositions that do not involve step-by-step derivations of explicit conclusions. The meaning of non-verbal ostensive stimuli (e.g. prosody, gestures and bodily expressions, silence and backchanneling) may give rise to an array of nebulous effects, rather than propositional effects, which lead the hearer to recover a layer of impressions rather than a strongly-evidenced proposition.

Emotions elicited through facial expressions, prosody and other non-verbal stimuli lead to positive cognitive effects in the form of strong or weak implicatures. However, in recent studies on emotion, scholars such as de Saussure and Wharton (2020) and Wharton *et al.* (2021) started to argue that, in addition to positive cognitive effects, such stimuli also elicit an emotional state that gives rise to affective effects (e.g. frustration, anger, discomfort, excitement). Thus, as is the case in verbal communication, an input must be relevant to the interlocutor to elicit an emotional response (Wharton *et al.* 2021).

3.4 Explicit and Implicit Communication

In Relevance Theory, it is acknowledged that pragmatic processes govern both semantic and pragmatic aspects of communication. This divide lies within the underdeterminacy thesis. That is, both implicit and explicit aspects of communication need inference (Carston 2002, 2006). The decoded linguistic meaning of an utterance is an important clue to the speaker's intention. However, the meaning encoded in a linguistic expression is only a blueprint to the extra-linguistic thought process as it underdetermines the proposition explicitly expressed by the speaker (Carston 2002). In other words, the encoded content of an utterance does not fully unravel the proposition expressed by an utterance. In this regard, utterances underdetermine (i.e. are less informative than) the interpretation that is obtained from them. Therefore, Relevance Theory views utterance interpretation as involving two interdependent processes: decoding and inference. Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 254) explain that "the properties of the ostensive stimulus [utterance] should set the inferential process on the right track; to do this they need not represent or encode the communicator's informative intention in any great detail". According to Relevance Theory, thoughts can be explained in terms of truth-conditional interpretations as thoughts represent actual or possible states of affairs that make them true (Wilson and Sperber 2012). The decoding process is dedicated to the mapping of a linguistic stimulus onto semantic representations for a particular stimulus, which generates an incomplete semantic representation with no definite truth conditions. The inferential process integrates the output of the decoding process with contextual information to deliver a hypothesis about the speaker's informative intention (Blakemore 2002).

Mainly distinguished by how they are derived, assumptions can be communicated as either explicatures or as implicatures (Carston 2002). Explicatures are the product of both linguistic encoding and inference built on the blueprint provided by linguistic input, while implicatures are the product of inferential processing alone (Blakemore 2002). In Relevance Theory, both explicatures and implicatures involve inference (see Figure 3.2).

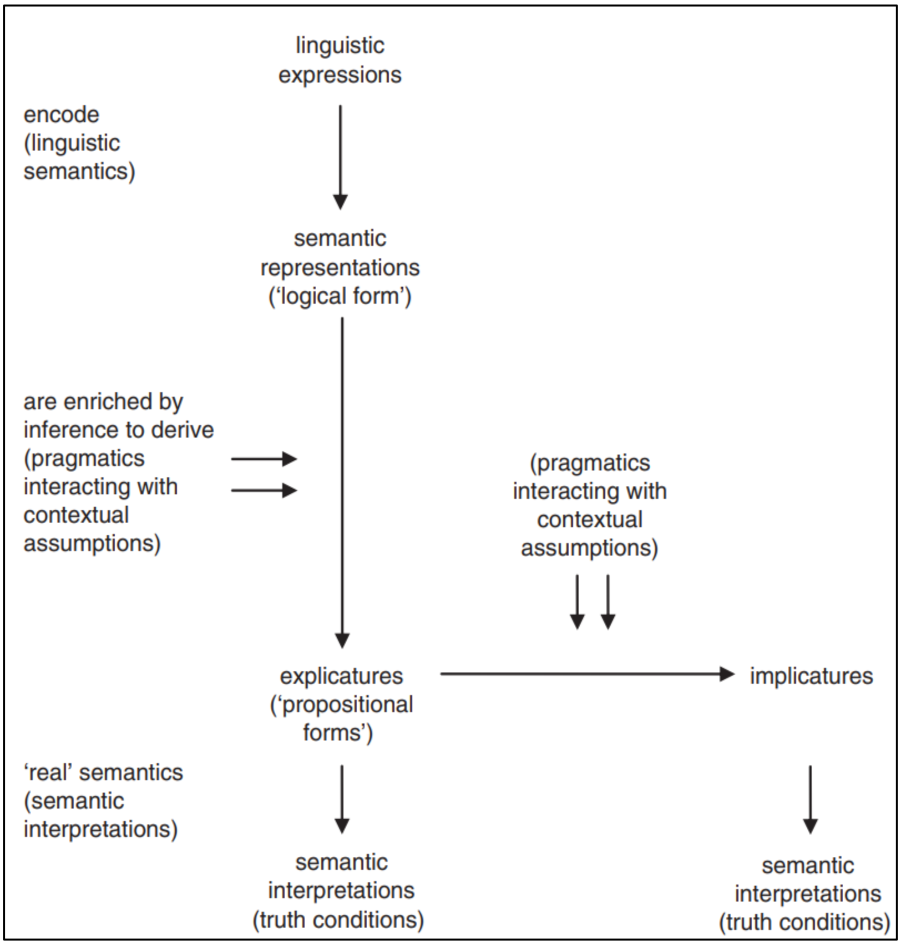


Figure 3.2: Summary of the relevance-theoretic semantics-pragmatics distinction (Clark 2013: 299, fig 11.3).

To interpret a speaker's meaning that satisfies the presumption of relevance conveyed by a given utterance, hearers must undertake a series of nonsequential sub-tasks. These are:

a. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about explicit content (EXPLICATURES) via decoding, disambiguation, reference resolution, and other pragmatic enrichment processes.

b. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual assumptions (IMPLICATED PREMISES).

c. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual implications (IMPLICATED CONCLUSIONS).

(Wilson and Sperber 2006: 615)

Hearers must supply implicated premises to derive an interpretation that satisfies the presumption of optimal relevance (or simply, that achieves relevance). Implicated conclusions are derived from a combination of contextual assumptions and what is explicitly communicated. Therefore, if implicated premises cannot be derived, then hearers cannot derive the implicated conclusion (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). Together, the explicatures and implicatures of an utterance constitute the speaker's meaning or communicated content (Carston 2002). Imagine that after a phone call with my brother, my mother asks:

Is your brother enjoying his time in Poland?

Me: He has lost his passport and wallet.

The decoded logical form of my utterance works as the skeleton for the development of a propositional form. Therefore, it is relatively easy for my mother to fill in all of the gaps in the logical form of my utterance, as the logical form is still rather visible.[11]

Explicature: He [my brother] has lost his passport and wallet [in Poland].

The representation in the explicature is more specific and elaborated than the encoded meaning of my utterance, which could be developed differently depending on the context. The combination of decoding and inference processes provide a premise for the derivation of contextual implications and other cognitive effects. In this regard, explicatures derived from a single utterance in one context may yield completely different explicatures in another context, as distinct proportions of decoding and inference are involved in the interpretation process (Wilson and Sperber 2012). Each of the explicatures may nonetheless contribute to relevance and ensure the derivation of further inferences or implicatures (Wilson and Sperber 2006). In conjunction with linguistic decoding, propositional forms are developed through several local inferential processes, namely disambiguation of ambiguous expressions, enrichment of logical forms and assigning a reference to referring expressions (Carston 2002; Wilson and Sperber 2012).

In the above utterance, there are some underlying assumptions that I did not specifically communicate. These are independent assumptions that follow my utterance given appropriate contextual support. For example:

[11] The example here concerns linguistic communication. However, as I will discuss in Chapter 6, explicatures and implicatures can also be produced via non-linguistic elements such as prosody, gestures and silence.

Implicated premise: Losing one's passport and wallet is troublesome.

Implicated conclusion: My brother is not enjoying his time in Poland.

Inferring implicatures is not about modifying a subpart of the linguistically encoded meaning. In contrast to explicatures, implicatures are global processes as they operate on fully propositional forms (Carston and Hall 2012; Ifantidou 2014). Moreover, implicatures must be understood by the hearer as intended. Therefore, implicatures are entirely context-dependent (Carston and Hall 2012). Implicatures are also contextual because they entirely depend on the specific context of interaction. My utterance implies that my brother is probably not enjoying his time in Poland. This implication is strong since my utterance would otherwise not satisfy my mother's expectations of relevance without the conclusion that my brother is not enjoying his time in Poland.[12] In combining the explicatures and implicatures, my mother can construct a further premise concerning the relation between my brother's misfortune and his inability to enjoy Poland. As comprehension is an organic process, hypotheses about explicatures, implicated premises and implicated conclusions develop concurrently against a background of expectations that may be adjusted as the utterance unravels.

In Relevance Theory, conceptual representations or logical forms become inferentially completed and enriched to derive the full content communicated by the utterance that is being interpreted (Carston 2002). Linguistic logical forms, which originate from the semantic component of the linguistic input system, must be converted into a proposition. The process of taking an incomplete logical form to create a proposition involves assigning reference, disambiguation and enrichment of the logical form. These are not mechanical, but context-dependent processes that allow the resulting proposition to be consistent with the principle of relevance. Throughout the interpretation process, the results are tentative and can be undone and redone if necessary; that is, pragmatic inferencing does not wait for an utterance to be over before it starts the interpretive process. In this regard, the underdeterminacy thesis applies to both explicit and implicit content, as both types of information are equally inferential and equally guided by the presumption of optimal relevance (Wilson and Sperber 2006). However, the truth-conditional content of an explicature may transcend the minimal proposition attained

[12] Occasionally, implicatures are more efficient at transmitting relevant information than explicatures. In this sense, implicatures allow speakers to convey a meaning that is different from the proposition expressed but that provides access to more relevant contextual assumptions for hearers (Jucker *et al.* 2013).

via decoding, disambiguation and reference assignment. That is, explicatures can be truth conditions (Carston 2002; Wilson and Sperber 2012). For example:

> It is raining in Dublin today.

The above utterance becomes a truth-conditional explicature if and only if it is raining in the city of Dublin on 18 May 2021 (at the time of writing).

In addition to the basic-level explicature, Relevance Theory distinguishes another type of explicature. Explicatures can be embedded within other explicatures, which in turn become an extension of the pragmatic development of the logical form of an utterance. These complex communicated propositions that are not part of the proposition expressed are called *higher-level explicatures* (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995; Clark 2013). The content of higher-level explicatures remains representational. However, they have a separate truth condition to the main truth-condition of the utterance (Matsui 2002). For example:

> William will have the steak.

- The speaker <u>believes</u> William will have the steak.
- The speaker <u>says</u> that William will have the steak.
- The speaker <u>guarantees</u> William will have the steak.
- The speaker <u>orders</u> William to have the steak.

In other words, higher-level explicatures convey “a higher level description such as a speech-act description, a propositional attitude description, or some other comment on the embedded proposition” (Carston 2002: 377). In this regard, speech acts such as promising or thanking and propositional attitudes such as hoping and regretting are all viewed as higher-level explicatures within Relevance Theory (see sections 2.3 and 3.7).

3.5 Degree of Communication

So far, I have shown cases where recovery of intended interpretation, whether it is an explicature or implicature, is inevitable as these assumptions are strongly communicated and the hearer cannot but recover them successfully. However, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1996) argue that communication is a matter of degree. The degree of communication is dependent on the evidence to support a particular assumption as well as the speakers’ ability to make their informative intention more or less manifest (Wilson and Sperber 2006). As Sperber and Wilson

(1986/1995: 60) explain: “in the case of strong communication, the communicator can have fairly precise expectations about some of the thoughts that the audience will actually entertain. With weaker forms of communication, the communicator can merely expect to steer the thoughts of the audience in a certain direction”.

There is no clear distinction between assumptions that speakers intend to communicate implicitly and assumptions that hearers must recover at their own risk. Implicatures may have varying degrees of strength for which a given intention is communicated (Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995). For example, nonverbal cues such as intonation and gestures may provide evidence for strongly or weakly communicated implicatures (Wilson and Wharton 2006). That is, the strength of an implicature depends on the number of contextual cues that hearers must process for comprehension. Implicatures may be stronger or weaker “depending on the degree of indeterminacy introduced by the inferential element of comprehension” (Wilson and Sperber 2012: 15). A strong implicature is indispensable for the recovery of the communicative intention; an assumption the speaker intends and expects the hearer to arrive at with the utmost expectations of optimal relevance. As Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 197) put it, a strong implicature is an assumption that is “made so strongly manifest that the hearer can hardly avoid recovering”. In contrast, weak implicatures are made less strongly manifest. Thus, the weaker the implicature, the more responsibility falls back on the hearer (*ibid.*: 237). Wilson and Sperber (2012) note that much of human communication is weak as an utterance may have a great range of weak implicatures, none of which are required for the hearer to achieve relevance in a given context. The strong/weak implicature distinction elucidates how relevance can be achieved. Some utterances achieve relevance by communicating a few strong implicatures, while others achieve relevance by conveying a broad range of possible implications (Wilson and Sperber 2006). Similarly, even if a single utterance conveys several distinct explicatures, its degree of explicitness will vary “depending on how far pragmatic processing has removed them from the literal content” (Chapman 2011: 110). For example:

A: The exam has been cancelled.

B: Phew!

Some of the explicatures that could be recovered from B’s response are:

a. B is happy that the exam has been cancelled.

b. B is relieved that the exam has been cancelled.

c. B finds it difficult to express her emotions.

d. B finds it difficult to comment on A’s statement.

The relative proportions of decoding and inference involved in an explicature will influence their degree of explicitness. That is, “the greater the relative contribution of decoding, and the smaller the relative contribution of pragmatic inference, the more explicit an explicature will be (and inversely)” (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 182). That is, the weaker the explicature, the more responsibility the hearer must take to interpret a given utterance.

So far, I have reviewed notions within Relevance Theory that are relevant in this study. Next, I argue how Relevance Theory could work alongside ILP.

3.6 Relevance Theory and Interlanguage Pragmatics

In Chapter 2, I discussed how ILP studies have been mostly descriptive and have examined communicative phenomena through the lens of sociolinguistic and sociocultural perspectives, especially speech act production. However, many researchers agree that L2 teaching and learning must be framed within a theory that explores the mental representations in linguistic performance (see e.g. Doughty and Long 2003; Ellis and Larsen-Freeman 2006; Hall *et al.* 2006). As a cognitive approach to human communication, Relevance Theory can shed light on how learners use inferential abilities to develop an L2 language (see e.g. Carroll 1995; Wolf 1999; Foster-Cohen 2002, 2004a, 2004b; De Paiva 2003, 2007; Liszka 2004, 2015; Rosales Sequeiros 2004, Ifantidou 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2019; Padilla Cruz 2012, 2013, 2014; Ifantidou and Hatzidaki 2019; Taguchi and Yamaguchi 2019; Madella 2020; Taguchi and Bell 2020). For example, in her book, Niżegorodcew (2007) explored authentic L2 English classroom discourse from several Polish secondary schools. She argued that teachers can facilitate learning by shifting learners’ attention from meaning to form and vice versa, thereby introducing changes in the expected optimal relevance of classroom communication. She also discusses the importance of explicitly presenting communicative and informative intentions through classroom input to facilitate L2 learning. Ifantidou (2017) investigated L1 pragmatic transfer into the L2 of proficient learners of English as a cognitive procedure rather than a sociolinguistic skill. She found that learners’ L1 and interventions enhance the search for relevance when using procedural markers as a guide to implicatures. However, it was difficult for learners to explicate the processes of how lexical markers guide them in retrieving specific cognitive effects.

Despite the growing interest in L2 research adopting a relevance-theoretic approach, some researchers critique the theory as it is often misunderstood as disregarding sociolinguistic and sociocultural dimensions of language use (see e.g. Mey 1993). One such criticism lies in the relevance-theoretic assumption that speech acts should not be classified, but rather treated as peripheral acts in human communication (Foster-Cohen 2004b). However, as I discussed in section 3.4, Relevance Theory does not dismiss speech acts, but rather demonstrates how speech acts are recovered by hearers through different foci and show further insights into the pragmatic processes that go into speech act interpretation. In Relevance Theory, speech acts are treated as any other inferential processes, often as part of higher-level explicatures, without the need for creating arbitrary terminologies and classifications for every speech act (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). Nonetheless, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) acknowledge that Relevance Theory has not traditionally focused on the complex sociological factors of human communication, and explain that notions such as mutual manifestness and ostensive communication have social implications and are fundamental to social aspects of communications. More recently, Sperber (2019: 15-16) assures that Relevance Theory has increasingly shed light on several sociolinguistic phenomena but admits that "much more could and should be done". Indeed, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: 279) recognise that "the cognitive processes at work in the communicator, and the social character and context of communication are, of course, essential to the wider picture, to the study of which we hope relevance theory can contribute, and from which it stands greatly to benefit". Foster-Cohen (2004b) also argues:

> Speakers and hearers notice and store any and all relevant information about others as they interact with them. Over time, this will mean they come to recognize features of social class, ethnic identity, power, solidarity, politeness, etc. in individuals through their behaviour: way of talking, moving, being. This sort of information is simply stored in the accessible mental context like any other.
>
> (Foster-Cohen 2004b: 300)

In this regard, incorporating social and cultural assumptions into inference processes is an intrinsic part of utterance interpretation. Furthermore, De Paiva and Foster-Cohen (2004: 287) advocate for "an integration of useful information-processing concepts and relevance-theoretic insights as part of a complex theoretical architecture capable of capturing the rich diversity of pragmatic development in second language acquisition". Therefore, as Foster-Cohen (2000) suggests, I take into consideration the findings ILP research has yielded in the past decades, such as the teachability of pragmatics, pragmatic failure and pragmatic transfer (see Chapter 2). Furthermore, I assume that social aspects of human communication can also be part of the relevance-theoretic explanatory architecture of human communication and that both cognitively and sociologically motivated aspects of language use in oral interaction must account for ILP teaching and learning. Finally, as we will see in Chapter 6, I argue that notions in Relevance Theory are not just beneficial to explain comprehension of meaning in the L2 (i.e. the role of learners as hearers) but can also be applied to how learners produce meaning (i.e. the role of learners as speakers).

3.7 Pragmatic Competence and Relevance

In section 2.4.2, I explained the need to define pragmatic competence as a relevance-driven cognitive performance. The application of relevance-theoretic principles in understanding L2 pragmatic processing suggests that L1 and L2 comprehension mechanisms are nearly identical. As Foster-Cohen (2004: 189) states, "second language learners are not some unusual breed of speaker/hearer". That is, although a retrieved interpretation may differ between an L1 and a non-L1 speaker, both language users employ mind-reading abilities to attribute communicative intentions while adapting to their interlocutors. The employment of inferential abilities is based on learners' knowledge, abilities, preferences and beliefs in both the L1 and the L2. Abilities may include linguistic and pragmatic abilities, while preferences may refer to levels of directness/indirectness and differing attitudes among cultures in giving/receiving information (Foster-Cohen 2000). Furthermore, as in L1 interaction, when a learner fails to attend to an L1 speaker's ostensive stimulus, the learner may fail to notice relevant input and will not be able to recover the intended meaning (Madella and Romero-Trillo 2019). In this regard, as a cognitive theory of language comprehension, Relevance Theory can account for the mechanisms involved in L2 pragmatic processing (Foster-Cohen 2000). Relevance Theory offers important analytical tools crucial to the understanding of the pragmatic processes involved in L2 comprehension and production (De Paiva 2003). Ifantidou (2014) notes at least two Relevance Theory hypotheses that contribute to ILP:

- Pragmatic competence is about information processing rather than communicative interaction.

- Learners must interpret meaning via pragmatic inference, as utterances are a mere blueprint of the communicator's meanings.

VanPatten (1996) found that learners prefer content words and that non-L1 speakers tend to only process non-meaningful grammatical items if it requires low processing effort to assign attention to them. Foster-Cohen (2000) notes that focus on content is a synonym of focus on conceptual meaning, and predicts that such a focus may result in an impoverished logical form that lacks the procedural meaning needed to complete the interpretation process as intended by L1 speakers. When interpreting an utterance in the L2, learners use frequently accessed assumptions, particularly in their L1. Learners use existing knowledge to solve problems in the L2 by drawing "on cognitive procedures and pragmatic inference which are relocated to facilitate communicative behaviour" (Ifantidou 2017: 84). Accessed assumptions become easily and quickly manifest in their cognitive environment, thus providing partial interpretations of a given utterance (Liszka 2004). If learners cannot reach a satisfactory interpretation, they will expend more processing effort in the search for a sufficiently relevant interpretation or they will make inferences from the context of the utterance driven by the desire for strong communication (Skehan 1998; De Paiva and Foster-Cohen 2004). That is, L2 learners may (deliberately) weakly interpret both weakly and strongly communicated utterances to favour pragmatic appropriateness in place of linguistic precision. In this respect:

> A non-native speaker might prioritize the quest for maximum effect and minimum effort by violating discoursal norms and undermining pragmatic conventions. Alternatively, he or she may prioritize certain pragmatic conventions, such as being explicit, thus losing effect and increasing effort. The result would be that there is more information to be processed and much of it would be pragmatically unnecessary from a native-speaker point of view.
>
> (De Paiva and Foster-Cohen 2004: 287)

As context consists of not only all the assumptions interlocutors are aware of, but also all the assumptions that they are capable of becoming aware of, the relevance-theoretic notions of context and manifestness have implications and allow for new insights into L2 pragmatics teaching and learning. If L1 and L2 speakers do not share the same or similar assumptions, communication breakdown is likely to happen. The notion of manifestness may explain how information may be part of learners' context and may be brought into the comprehension process as and when necessary or possible (*ibid.*: 80). Pragmatic competence is concerned with selecting relevant information among several stimuli, and manifestness elucidates certain constraints on particular interactions (De Paiva and Foster-Cohen 2004). The cognitive environment is dynamic and idiosyncratic as it is constructed through personal experiences with languages and cultures. The ability of an L2 learner to interpret a stimulus produced by an L1 speaker is most likely to be affected by the organisation of the learner's memory. In L2 interaction, Foster-Cohen (2000) asserts that faced with the same explicature, L1 and non-L1 speakers may make different assumptions and arrive at different conclusions due to discrepancies in disambiguation, reference assignment and enrichment processes. Similarly, even though a proposition is manifest to an L1 speaker, non-L1 speakers may assume (due to faulty background assumptions) that a given assumption is not manifest, resulting in the production of redundant and irrelevant propositions. In this sense, the predisposition among language users to search for relevance and retrieve speakers' intentions is not language-specific (Zufferey 2015). According to Foster-Cohen (2000: 89), "this all assumes that the pragmatics of the comprehension process in L2 learners works in exactly the same way as for native speakers".

Learners may select different contexts. However, this selection is not a synonym for employing deductive devices or contexts different from those of L1 speakers. Learners' cognitive environment and their manifestness can be a factor in explaining the differences in interpretation when learners are faced with the same stimulus under the same circumstances (Wolf 1999; Jodłowiec 2010). If L1 speakers and learners do not share the same context, communication breakdown is likely to occur. Furthermore, learners retrieve different levels of relevance based on their relative developmental level and degree of sophisticated expectations (Žegarac 2004; Niżegorodcew 2007; Jodłowiec 2010; Ifantidou 2014). For example, Taguchi (2002) analysed the ability of eight mixed-proficient Japanese learners to infer implicatures in L2 English. The results demonstrate that, regardless of their L2 proficiency level, learners employ inferential mechanisms to find optimal relevance to the speaker's implied meaning. However, more proficient learners could better explain the link between the implicature and its function as they make greater use of their background knowledge to recover the intended interpretation. De Paiva (2007) and Padilla Cruz (2012) also suggest that lower-level learners focus excessively on the linguistic form of utterances, thus tending not to process information after a hypothesis about the explicit content of the utterance has been derived. In this sense, "the target language input that L2 learners are exposed to will be processed for relevance, and the level of relevance that will meet the individual's expectations will vitally influence the mental representations to be generated (Jodlowiec 2010: 62). Foster-Cohen (2000) adds that there is information that might be less than known but that learners might be able to re-examine, reinforce and strengthen into a representation with a guarantee of truth. As utterances are the information that learners must infer to represent the communicator's meaning, instead of focusing on noticing and understanding as Schmidt (1993) suggests, Ifantidou (2014) advocates for raising awareness of manifest assumptions to enhance learners' pragmatic competence. However, where noticing takes place along the manifest continuum is a notion that must be further explored (Foster-Cohen 2000).

3.8 Towards an Integrative Analytical Framework

In a recent publication, Sperber (2019) claimed that Relevance Theory must take advantage of other disciplines and traditions to answer emerging questions. In this study, I draw from Relevance Theory to provide insights into aspects of L2 pragmatics that have not been previously discussed in ILP in the context of Japanese as L2. However, as this thesis is concerned with developing pragmatic competence in Japanese as L2, I also draw on studies in ILP that address some aspects of pragmatic development and teaching. As discussed in Chapter 2, ILP sheds light on several factors involved in pragmatic development, including pragmatic transfer, pragmatic failure, type and amount of intervention required and effects of SA programmes. I suggest that these notions can be integrated into a relevance-theoretic architecture to add to current research on pragmatic development in the L2 (see Chapters 6 and 7). In this study, I present the challenges that emerge from this study against the wider ILP context and specifically examine them through the lens of a fully inferential approach to pragmatics. I draw from the notion of relevance as well as the relevance-theoretic distinctions of explicature/implicature presented in this chapter to explain why learners cannot activate their pragmatic competence in the L2 as they do in their L1. With Relevance Theory as the theoretical framework, I hope to explore arenas of pragmatic competence that have been neglected from both a cognitive and sociolinguistic perspective or have been only examined as part of communicative competence.

3.9 Summary

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the core notions in Relevance Theory, the theoretical framework employed to analyse the challenges learners of Japanese as L2 faced in oral interaction with L1 speakers in Japan. Before unravelling these challenges, the next chapter provides the methodological foundations of this research. In Chapter 4, I describe the research paradigm that guides the process of data collection and analysis and explain the methodological approach that supports this research. I outline the research design, context and participants and methods of data collection and analysis. I also discuss ethical considerations.

CHAPTER 4:

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the main challenges learners of Japanese as L2 face in oral interaction with L1 speakers, examine these challenges through the lens of Relevance Theory and describe how these challenges can be overcome in the L2 classroom (see section 1.2). In the previous chapter, I presented the theoretical framework and conceptual underpinnings that form the context of this study. The purpose of this chapter is to describe and provide methodological justification for the decisions made during the research process.

First, I outline the research paradigm that guides the overall investigation process. Then, I explain the rationale for using elements of design-based research to inform the methodology. Third, I provide insights into the research design, the educational settings in which research was conducted and information about the participants in this study. I also describe the methods of data collection and the processes of data analysis. I conclude the chapter with a discussion on the fundamental ethical considerations intrinsic to this study.

4.2 Pragmatism

A methodology is determined by the paradigm within which research is most suitably conducted (Grix 2004; Willis 2007). Morgan (2007: 29) describes paradigms “as systems of beliefs and practices that influence how researchers select both the questions they study and methods that they use to study them”. Pragmatism is considered one of the major paradigms suitable for research methodologies in educational settings as it is a theoretical and procedural approach to research that solves practical, real-world problems through examining empirical findings (Dewey 1929; Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Seale *et al.* 2004). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 86) identify “the search for practical answers to questions that intrigue the researcher” as one of the major characteristics of pragmatism.

The main objective of pragmatism is to gain knowledge that establishes valuable points of connection between the research answers and the research questions thereby producing immediate and practical results (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Hanson 2008; Mertens 2010). With this study, I aim to provide solutions that result in positive outcomes (i.e. help teachers activate learners’ pragmatic competence). To achieve this, I maintain a pluralistic approach to both my understanding of the problem at hand and the research methods employed while placing great importance on the ethical values shared between myself and the research participants (see Table 4.1). I also integrate both exploratory and explanatory insights by converting observations into theories, and theories into action (see Riazi 2016; Morgan 2007).

Pragmatic Paradigm		
Philosophy	**Type**	**Description**
Epistemology	Relational	Researchers study what is valuable and seek solutions that may result in positive outcomes (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). The appropriateness of methods is determined by the relationship between researcher and participants (Maxcy 2003).
Ontology	Plural reality	As all individuals hold different interpretations of reality, the value of research is evaluated by its effectiveness (Maxcy 2003; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009).
Methodology	Pluralistic	Researchers choose (combinations of) methods that best answer the research questions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2005; Feilzer 2010).
Axiology	Value-laden	The ethical goal of the research is to benefit people (Morgan 2007).

Table 4.1: Elements of the pragmatic paradigm adopted in this research.

I maintain a flexible approach to data collection through complementary investigative techniques, iteration and triangulation of data (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2005; Robson and McCartan 2016; Creswell and Plano Clark 2018). A pluralistic, flexible approach is not synonymous with a careless selection of data collection methods (Denscombe 2008). Indeed, pragmatism is systematic and rigorous since it requires researchers to be aware of the nature of the research methods and their selection in a particular study. Pragmatism strives to produce transparent and replicable results (Seale *et al*. 2014). That is, I reflect on which knowledge can be transferred to other contexts and make it explicit in the results (see Morgan 2007).

4.3 Design-Based Research

The methodological approach adopted in this study is inspired by design-based research (DBR). DBR originates from the works of Brown (1992) and Collins (1992) as a reaction to educational experiments conducted in laboratory settings instead of real educational environments. DBR emerged from the lack of synergy between theory and practice as a means of advancing meaningful knowledge that guides educational practice (DBRC 2003). DBR is defined as:

> a systematic but flexible methodology aimed to improve educational practices through iterative analysis, design, development, and implementation, based on collaboration among researchers and practitioners in real-world settings, and leading to contextually-sensitive design principles and theories.
>
> Wang and Hannafin (2005: 6)

DBR finds its rationale in the pragmatic position that knowledge is consequential and guides the actions and reflections of researchers to develop continuous innovation in education (Barab and Squire 2004; Wang and Hannafin 2005; McKenney and Reeves 2013). Pragmatism supports DBR in the exploration of complex phenomena in real-life contexts to address particular problems. DBR is rooted in Dewey's (1938) pragmatist approach to inquiry, which Morgan (2014: 1047) summarises in five steps:

1. Recognising a problem.
2. Considering the best approach to tackle the problem.
3. Developing a line of action.
4. Evaluating potential actions and their possible consequences.
5. Taking the most appropriate action to solve the problem.

In this study, I adopt some elements of DBR as it is a multi-faceted methodology concerned with educational improvement. DBR develops a theory that guides the design of new curricula, learning contexts, pedagogical materials and/or practical tools for the classroom (Edelson 2002; Cobb *et al.* 2003; Anderson and Shattuck 2012; McKenney and Reeves 2012). The outcome is to establish new design principles that guide researchers and instructors in the development of solutions in similar learning environments. DBR aligns with the goal of this study, which is the advancement of both theory and practice.

DBR can be employed within and across various theoretical perspectives and research traditions (Bell 2004). However, there is a dearth of researchers using DBR in the field of L2 teaching and learning (Pardo-Ballester and Rodríguez 2009; Reeves and McKenney 2013). I use aspects of DBR to showcase the potential of this methodology in the field of ILP. The following are elements of DBR I have adopted in this study:[13]

[13] For more on the characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of DBR, see Cobb *et al*. 2003; DBRC 2003; Barab and Squire 2004; Bell 2004; Collins *et al*. 2004; Dede 2004; O'Donnell 2004; Wang and Hannafin 2005; van den Akker *et al.* 2006; McKenney and Reeves 2012.

- My study is pragmatic, theoretically-oriented and empirically grounded. DBR enables me to connect theory, pedagogy and design.
- My study is utility-oriented. I develop local, practical knowledge that aims to support and enhance learning opportunities and instructional practices.
- My study is integrative. Richness and variety are found in the application of theory, methods and procedures that represent the research needs. This synergy provides a systematic way of operationalising high-level theories that lead to positive problem-solving in a multimethodological manner.
- My study is contextual. Learning cannot be isolated from its context. Contextual variables are viewed as a core aspect of this research as they assist in further understanding the connection between theory and practice. Data generated from the context is not eliminated nor controlled (e.g. learning backgrounds, level of proficiency and setting), but rather welcomed and embraced due to their informational nature.

Finally, the collaboration between researchers and practitioners is most often seen as a key characteristic of DBR. As Reeves (2006: 59) states, DBR "is not an activity that an individual researcher can conduct in isolation from practice". However, in this thesis, I am both the researcher and the practitioner (see e.g. Joseph 2004; Kolmos 2015). In this regard, following Kennedy-Clark's (2015) advice, I use multiple forms of data collection methods and ask for continuous feedback from senior academics to enhance the validity of this research. I also create solutions in tandem with robust theoretical underpinnings and pedagogical principles (see chapters 6 and 7).

4.4 Research Design

The research design of this thesis is based on the work by McKenney and Reeves (2012). The generic model for conducting DBR has three distinct but interrelated phases: investigation/analysis of the problem at hand, design/prototyping of a solution and evaluation of the theoretical and practical outcomes (see Figure 4.1). These three phases are iterative, flexible, contextually responsive and use-inspired and have a dual focus on theory and practice. The model is in line with the pragmatic paradigm, which advocates for an inquiry that is constant, cyclical and that emphasises change (see section 4.3). Each phase "involves interaction with practice and contributes, directly or indirectly, to the production of theoretical understanding and the development of an intervention, which matures over time" (*ibid.*: 77).

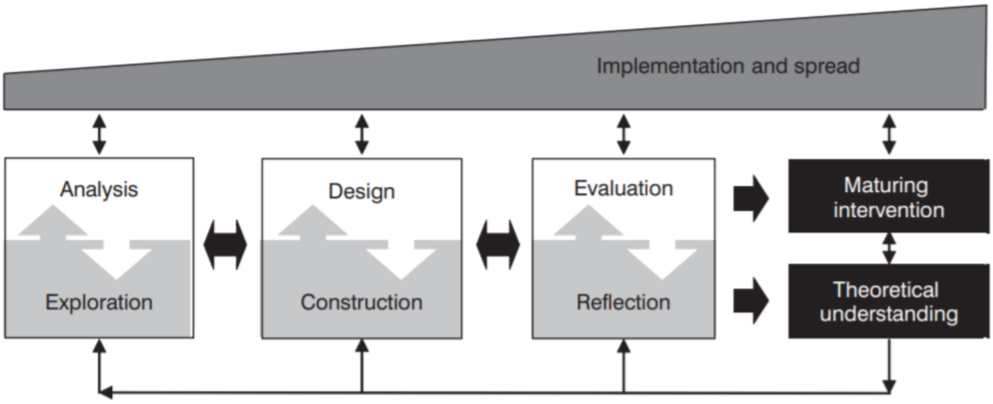


Figure 4.1: Model for conducting DBR (McKenney and Reeves 2012: 77, fig 3.3).

DBR has two main outcomes, namely an intervention and theoretical understanding. My study differs from McKenney and Reeve's model in that there is no intervention. In what follows I describe the research design of this study.

Analysis/Exploration

The literature review is key in "developing a scientifically relevant angle for the study" (McKenney and Reeves 2012: 78). I conducted a literature review to gain the theoretical understanding that shaped the identification of the problem (see Chapter 2). The problem identified is threefold. First, there is an excessive focus on the development of speech acts in the literature (see section 2.3). Second, pragmatic competence is mostly researched from communicative/sociocultural perspectives (see section 2.4). Third, researchers are yet to determine the main limiting factors learners of Japanese as L2 have in using their pragmatic competence in oral interaction with L1 speakers (see section 2.10). Through iterative cycles of data collection, I determine what these challenges entail. From a theoretical perspective, I describe the challenges (see section 6.2) and from a practical perspective, this phase generates an analytical understanding of the problems at hand and their origin (see sections 6.4 and 7.2).

Design and Construction

In this phase, "a coherent process is followed and documented to arrive at a (tentative) solution to the problem" (*ibid.*: 79). I explore, consider and create potential solutions to the problem at hand. I articulate the core theoretical and practical ideas that underpin the solution (i.e. pedagogical materials), which enable the design framework to be replicated and/or critiqued. I also provide clear guidelines for building the pedagogical materials in other educational/research contexts. From a theoretical perspective, I detail the theoretical and pedagogical frameworks underpinning instructional practices. From a practical perspective, I conceive an intervention (i.e. pedagogical model, teacher training course and instructional materials) (see Chapter 7).

Evaluation and Reflection

This phase is concerned with the empirical testing of the solution or a constructed intervention. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I could not implement the pedagogical materials developed in the design/construction phase. Originally, I intended to create an online course to help develop learners' pragmatic competence before moving to the SA context. The course was aimed at an average B1-B2 level on the CEFR scale and I had already recruited some students. However, as learners of Japanese as L2 could not go to Japan for their SA programmes, the intervention (which was due to take place in July 2020) was deemed unsuitable.[14] Nonetheless, the main objective of DBR is not to implement the solution created in phase two, but rather generate theory in every phase of the research conducted. All phases in DBR are equally important, and therefore the evaluation/reflection phase should not be viewed as the end goal of this thesis. There is a lot of value in having the theoretical understanding of challenging features in Japanese as reported by learners (see Chapter 5), the types of pragmatic and linguistic challenges learners face in oral interaction (see Chapter 6) as well as the conceptual understanding of what constitutes pragmatic competence and guidelines about how it can be used/embedded within current instructional practices (see Chapter 7). In this regard, this thesis should be examined as the foundation for further research that needs to be empirically tested.

4.5 Context and Participants

I conducted data collection at two higher education institutions in Ireland, namely Dublin City University (DCU) and the University of Limerick (UL). I selected these two higher education institutions as they have the longest and most well-established tradition of teaching Japanese as part of a degree programme.[15] Thus, I deemed them likely to yield the richest data for answering the research questions and fulfilling the aims and objectives of this thesis.

In 1987, DCU (then known as the National Institute for Higher Education) was the first Irish university to establish an official Japanese degree programme, and since then it has become

[14] I hope that this phase can be conducted at a later stage in my career.

[15] There are three other higher education institutions that offer Japanese in Ireland, namely University College Dublin (UCD), Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and University College Cork (UCC). The former two offer Japanese extracurricular credit-bearing elective modules to students across a wide range of disciplines. The latter institution provides Japanese modules for students of the BA in Asian Studies. However, this is a recent incorporation into their curriculum.

the main university for Japanese studies in Ireland. The School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS) is the only faculty in Dublin that offers Japanese as part of a four-year degree course. According to the Japan Foundation (2016), DCU has the highest number of students of all the universities teaching Japanese in Ireland. In the academic year 2017/18 (when the first set of data was collected) a total of 82 students were formally enrolled in the Japanese modules offered by SALIS (see Figure 4.2). As part of their BA in Applied Language and Translation Studies and the BA in Business Studies International, SALIS offers an SA programme (Year Abroad) that allows students to be exposed to and become immersed in the target language and culture for a full academic year.

UL first established the teaching of Japanese in 1990 as part of its BA in Business Studies. Later in the decade, Japanese was also included as part of its BA in Applied Languages. Since then and until 2017, the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics in UL was the only faculty that offered Japanese as an elective module or as part of a degree programme outside Dublin. At present, Japanese can be selected as part of the BA in Applied Languages and Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS). A total of 64 students of Japanese were registered formally in the Japanese modules offered by the university in the 2017/18 academic year. Students in UL who are enrolled in a Japanese module are offered the possibility of participating in an external academic placement (Cooperative Education programme or CoOp) in Japan that lasts between six and eight months. Alternatively, there are increasing opportunities for students in UL to go to Japan as part of an SA programme.

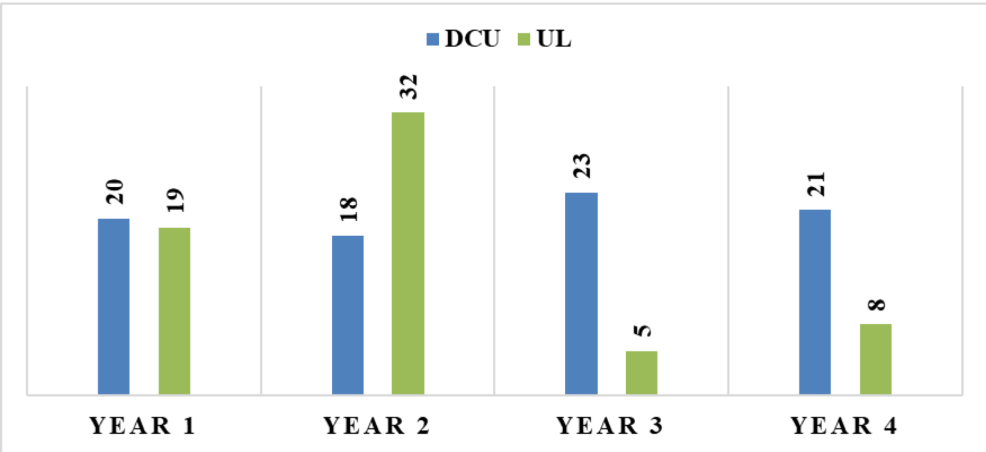


Figure 4.2: Number of learners of Japanese as L2 enrolled in DCU and UL in 2017/18.

The following section describes the selection criteria for the participants involved in this study.

Following DBR principles, participants in this study are not regarded as subjects, but instead are treated as co-participants (see e.g. Barab and Squire 2004). Participants were third-year, fourth-year or former students who were or had been officially enrolled in an undergraduate degree with Japanese at DCU or UL and who were either in Japan or had returned from the country after completing their SA or work placement programmes.

Recruitment of students took place after permission from the Research Ethics Committees at DCU and at the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at UL had been granted. Firstly, I contacted the relevant Japanese module coordinators at both institutions and the International Exchange Coordinator for Japan at DCU, to whom I introduced the research aims and objectives as well as the data collection procedures. After this initial interaction, the gatekeepers agreed to relay the information to all relevant students. In turn, I was put in contact with the students who had expressed an interest in participating in this study. Participants were provided with a plain language statement in which the aims and objectives of the investigation, benefits, potential risks, procedures, rights and confidentiality were outlined.

4.6 Data Collection

In this section, I describe the rationale for the data collection methods employed, the data collection procedures and the participants involved in each micro-cycle. The data was collected at DCU and UL between February 2018 and January 2019. The data enabled me to answer the first research question of this study, which sought to identify the main pragmatic challenges faced by learners in Japanese oral interaction with L1 speakers (see Chapter 6).

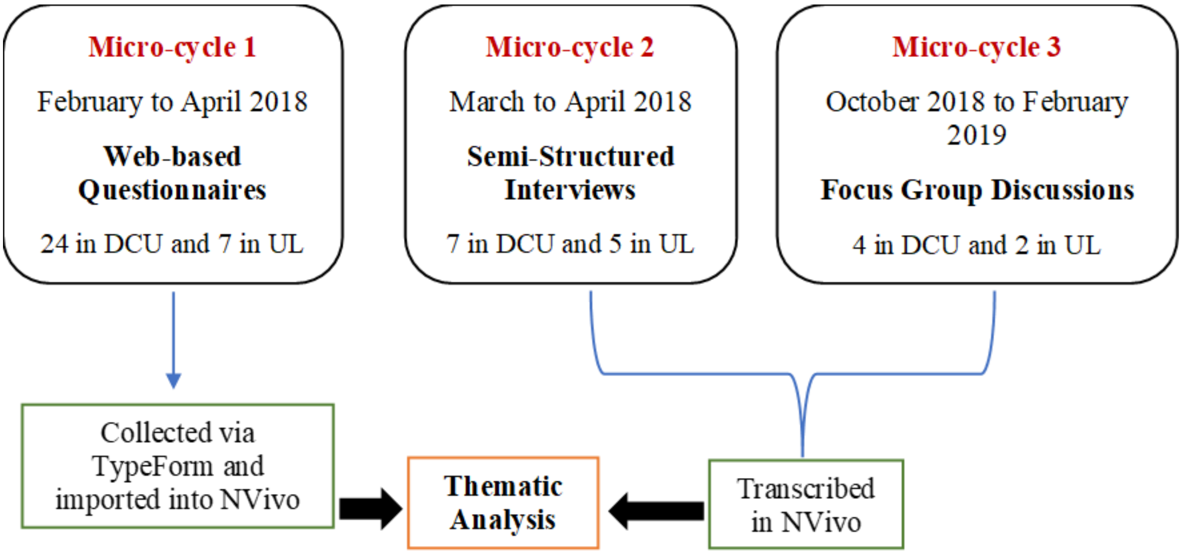


Figure 4.3: Visual representation of the data collection procedures.

As shown in Figure 4.3 above, data collection methods included open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions. The apparent overlap of questionnaires and interviews is due to learners in DCU being surveyed and subsequently interviewed first (February to March) and students in UL being surveyed and subsequently interviewed at a slightly later stage (April). I first describe the initial cycle of data collection.

4.6.1 Open-Ended Questionnaires

Questionnaires are one of the most used methods of data collection in applied linguistics (Dörnyei 2007; Riazi 2016). Questionnaires were the first method of data collection employed in this study. A web-based questionnaire was devised and administered to ascertain the major challenges faced by learners of Japanese as L2 in oral interaction with L1 speakers. The questionnaires were administered through Typeform, [16] an online platform where questionnaires can be easily created and disseminated. The format of the questionnaire was versatile and engaging.

Web-based questionnaires are usually administered by contacting potential participants until a sufficient sample has been reached. This was not the case in this study. Participants were targeted beforehand and selected due to their suitability in answering the research question (see e.g. Denscombe 2014). Although students were self-selected through a volunteering process, all respondents contained specific characteristics to guarantee high-quality information (see section 4.6).

Students at DCU who were in Japan were recruited through the international exchange coordinator for Japan, with whom I shared detailed information about the nature of the study, the data collection procedures, and the research aims and objectives. The exchange coordinator sent an email to the students with a plain language statement, an informed consent form and a link to the questionnaire. Former students at DCU were contacted following the same procedure through a member of the Japanese Department. The remaining students were recruited following a different process. Firstly, I conducted an informal meeting with their module coordinators about the research aims and objectives and data collection procedures. Then, the module coordinators at both institutions informed fourth-year students. Third, I held a brief information meeting with potential participants during classroom hours to describe the questionnaire, explain the benefits and potential risks, clarify issues of confidentiality and

[16] https://www.typeform.com/ [accessed 01 Sep 2021]

anonymity and administer the plain language statement and the informed consent form (see Appendix A; see section 4.9). I also allocated time to ask questions. After the meetings, which took place in computer labs, I provided students with the link to the questionnaire, and only those who wished to complete it did so.

Group-administering the questionnaires proved most beneficial in collecting data. 17 out of 21 potential respondents in DCU and 8 out of 12 potential students in UL completed the questionnaire. Contrarily, the completion rate among those students who were in Japan at the time of data collection was extremely low. Only 3 out of 20 potential DCU respondents completed the questionnaire.

The major disadvantage of web-based questionnaires is that some respondents may experience technical issues or may not have access to an internet connection. I narrowed the technical problems by administering the questionnaires on-site, using the technology available at each higher education. As regards off-campus students, according to the Central Intelligence Agency (2019), in 2016, 92 percent of the Japanese population had access to the internet. Thus, students who were in Japan at the time of data collection were expected to have access to an internet connection either at home, at work or their place of study. Furthermore, I piloted the final draft of the questionnaire with two members of the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies at DCU. I modified the questionnaire accordingly by removing and rearranging some of the questions and I also adjusted the technical issues flagged.

The questionnaire consisted of 26 items, of which 9 were background questions. The content of the questionnaire was informed by key concepts from pragmatics research in general and Japanese linguistics specifically (see section 2.11). The questionnaire was comprised of four distinct sections (see Appendix A). In the first section, I collected general demographic information about the respondents, such as gender, nationality and mother tongue.[17] It also gathered personal information, including respondents' year of study, amount of time spent in Japan, their language learning history, perceived Japanese proficiency, and their accredited level of Japanese.

A total of 31 students (24 from DCU and 7 from UL) responded to the questionnaires between February and April 2018. All respondents had been studying Japanese as L2 for three to five years, except six students who had been studying Japanese for more than five years. All

[17] In spite of gathering demographic data, it was found that gender-, nationality- and L1-related data had no implications in the findings and will therefore not be discussed.

questionnaire respondents had lived in Japan for at least a semester (mostly UL students who worked abroad) and up to one year, except for one UL student who had lived in Japan for two years. Learners had been exposed, to varying lengths and degrees, to the Japanese language both in the L2 classroom and in the SA context.

At the time of data collection, 61 percent of respondents considered themselves to have achieved a B1 in line with the CEFR level,29 percent reported having a B2 level, 7 percent reported having a level below B1 and only one learner reported having a C2 proficiency level (see Figure 4.4). Interestingly, only nine learners had taken or passed the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT): three learners had received the N4 (second-lowest level), three participants had received the N3, two learners were awarded the N2 and one participant had obtained the N1 (highest level).[18]

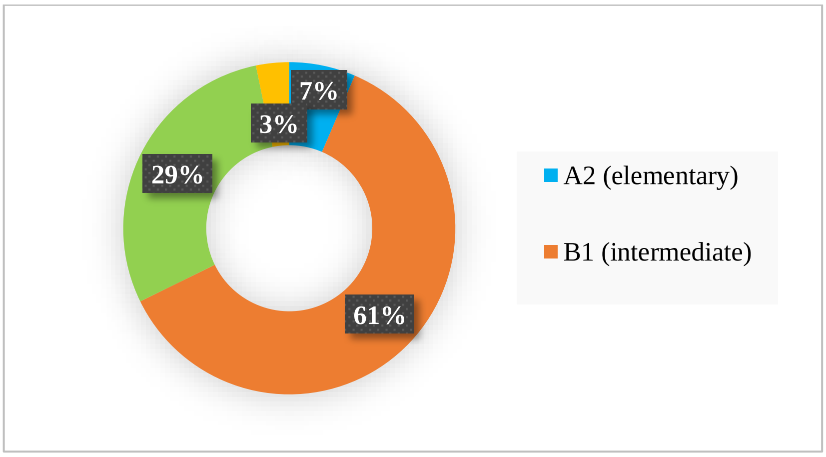


Figure 4.4: Perceived Japanese proficiency on the CEFR scale.

Respondents' perceived language and cultural skills varied greatly from the overall perceived proficiency level. For example, the DCU learner who had been awarded the N1 JLPT reported only being a 5 out of 10 confident in her ability to speak Japanese appropriately, while one of the learners who passed the N4 JLPT reported being a 7 out of 10 confident in her speaking skills. Similarly, responses of those who reported having a B2 (upper-intermediate) proficiency level differed markedly, as some learners reported feeling as low as a 3 out of 10 confident in their speaking skills while others reported feeling as high as 8 out of 10 comfortable in their ability to speak Japanese appropriately. In general, as demonstrated in Figure 4.5 below, the skill that students were less confident in was speaking (average 5.06), followed by writing

[18] The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test is not congruent with the CEFR standards and is designed to test reading and listening (receptive) skills but not written and oral (productive) skills. There are five levels, N5 being the lowest level and N1 the highest (see https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/levelsummary.html [accessed 29 Sep 2021]).

(5.77), reading (6.25) and listening (6.38). Respondents felt the most confident in their cultural knowledge about Japan (7.9).

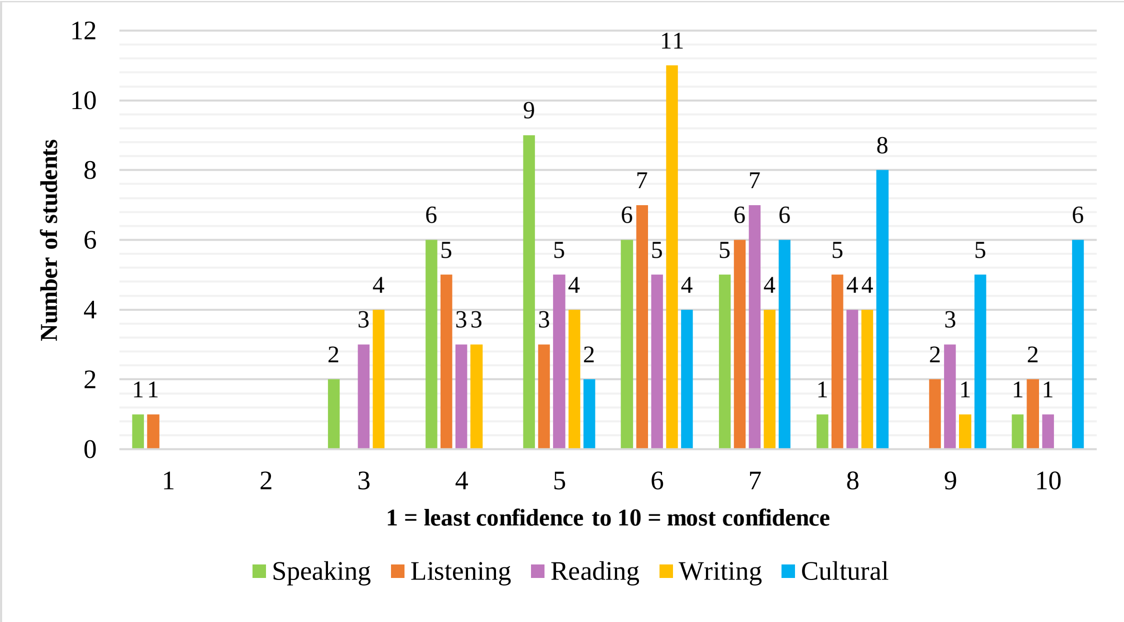


Figure 4.5: Perceived level of confidence in receptive, productive and cultural skills.

The second section of the questionnaire focused on yielding information about the oral comprehension challenges faced by respondents in Japan, in addition to two double-barrelled questions in section two (as well as one double-barrelled question in section three) that were concerned with the limitations in learners' oral performance in Japanese. The questions consisted of polarised yes-no items (Dörnyei 2007). The yes-no items were followed by open-ended clarification questions in which students were asked to elaborate on the challenges they encountered in Japan. The open-ended questions were employed to collect further qualitative data based on the data collected through closed-ended questions (Riazi 2016). Dörnyei (2007) argues that open-ended questions are suitable for generating qualitative and exploratory data as long as the researcher is not expecting deep engagement with the topic and detailed personal accounts. The aim of administering questionnaires was to gain a general insight into the experiences and challenges faced by learners during their time in Japan.

In the third section, I asked respondents to provide information about the challenges they faced in regard to oral production. This section followed the same structure as the previous section. Closed-ended yes-no questions were followed by open-ended clarification questions where students could elaborate on their experiences. Two of the polarised questions included a neutral position in the scale, namely "it depends" (Dörnyei 2007). Additionally, one of the items included in this section was a numeric question (Dörnyei 2003). Respondents were asked to rate on a scale from 1 to 10 their perceived level of difficulty producing polite speech appropriately.

The last section was concerned with respondents' beliefs about the teaching methods employed in Japanese language classes at their respective institutions in Ireland. The first question was a specific open question about students' opportunities to speak Japanese in the classroom. The remaining questions followed the structure mentioned previously, with yes-no questions followed by open-ended clarification questions.

The data collected from the questionnaires proved extremely useful and yielded valuable information. In this exploratory cycle, I identified the general features of the language that learners were challenged by in their oral interaction with speakers of Japanese as L1. In the questionnaires, learners discussed features other than the ones included in the questions and therefore questions about their perceived challenging features in Japanese as L2 were included in the two subsequent data collection methods. Many respondents provided general anecdotes and experiences about the challenges they encountered, resulting in more qualitative data than I had anticipated.

4.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Upon completion of the questionnaires, I reminded students of the opportunity to participate in a follow-up individual interview. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to gather further self-reported data from the cohort who completed the questionnaires (e.g. experiences and linguistic data). The questions included in the questionnaires were exploratory in nature and therefore rather general. In this regard, learners discussed issues with certain features of the Japanese language that did not feature the questionnaire specifically (e.g. prosody). As a result, these features were included as part of the interviews (and focus group discussions) to elicit further data.

Due to time constraints, students at UL took part in the semi-structured interviews on the same day they completed the questionnaires. Of the 8 students who completed the questionnaire, 5 agreed to participate in the interview. DCU students were approached a month later to allow them sufficient time to reflect on whether they wanted to continue participating in the study. Both DCU and UL interviewees had previously completed the questionnaire.

In the case of DCU, I first obtained permission from the module coordinator of the fourth-year Japanese language course to recruit volunteers. After receiving approval, I held an informal meeting with all fourth-year students at the beginning of a Japanese language class. I administered a signup form for those who wished to be interviewed (see Appendix B). In the recruitment form, students provided their name, email address and a date and time that suited them best. Thus, as with questionnaire respondents, interviewees were self-selected (see section 4.6.1). Out of the 17 fourth-year students who responded to the questionnaire, 8 agreed to be interviewed (see Table 4.2). Students were contacted via email to determine the date, time and location of the interview.

Participant	University	Type of stay	Length of stay	Region
01	DCU	Study Abroad	1 year	Chūbu
02	DCU	Study Abroad	1 year	Kantō
03	DCU	Study Abroad	1 year	Kansai
04	DCU	Study Abroad	1 year	Chūbu
05	DCU	Study Abroad	1 year	Kansai
06	DCU	Study Abroad	1 year	Kansai
07	DCU	Study Abroad	1 year	Kantō
08	UL	Study Abroad	6 months	Kantō
09	UL	Work Placement	6 months	Kantō
10	UL	Work Placement	6 months	Kantō
11	UL	Work Placement	6 months	Kantō
12	UL	Work Placement	6 months	Kantō

Table 4.2: Profiles of interviewees.[19]

The semi-structured interviews took place between March and April 2018, and all were performed on the respective campus. The locations, which included classrooms, computer labs, common rooms and cafés, were selected due to convenience and ease of access for participants. Care was taken to conduct the interviews in spaces where students could feel comfortable, while at the same time ensuring privacy and minimising interruptions for the participants. The interviews lasted on average between twenty and forty minutes.

Before the interviews, the interviewees and I engaged in small talk to gain trust and establish rapport. Then, I reminded participants of the nature of the study, the aims and objectives, potential benefits, potential risks, their rights, issues of confidentiality, and the duration and procedure of the interview. This information was also provided in the plain language statement,

[19] Throughout this research, I employ either pseudonyms or an identification code (see section 4.8).

which students read carefully before each interview (see Appendix B). I also obtained participants' consent before the interview took place (see Appendix B; see section 4.8). All participants agreed to be audio recorded.

I first conducted a pilot interview to test the interview design and schedule as well as my interviewing skills other practical aspects of this method of data collection (see Dörnyei 2007; Seidman 2013). The pilot interview also served to assess its usefulness and practicability as well as refine the content, the interview guide/probes and the overall time required. Revisions included a slight alteration to the order of the questions and a reduction of the number of questions to be asked (see Appendix B for the final version).

Dörnyei (2007) notes that the beginning of an interview is crucial in setting the tone and creating rapport. All interviews began with a general discussion about the major challenges faced by students in everyday interaction in Japan with L1speakers. Then, respondents were asked to discuss some issues arising from the overall responses in the questionnaire. Those questions were more concrete and focused on the awareness, production and interpretation of certain features of the Japanese language. I usually concluded the discussions with a general evaluation of the type of oral and aural activities in the Japanese language classroom of the students' respective institutions in Ireland. Students were also allowed to add any information that they considered necessary. I also allocated time to thank interviewees for their insights and personal experiences. Finally, I turned the audio recorder off. I concluded by talking about the future of the study and, if interested, some of the findings to date.

Since responses were varied, a degree of improvisation was required during the interactions. If the students raised issues relevant to the research questions that were not included in the guide, I pursued the topic by encouraging them to explore it further. I provided sufficient time for interviewees to detail their narratives, eliciting additional and more specific information, anecdotes, clarifications and examples about their experiences in Japan. Although it is important that researchers actively listen and allow respondents to speak freely (Robson 2002), students sporadically deviated from the points under discussion, and I had to guide them back to the topic.

4.6.3 Focus Group Discussions

The third micro-cycle of data collection consisted of six FG discussions with a new cohort of students. Researchers suggest that a purposive sampling strategy is adopted when conducting

FGs (see e.g. Liamputtong 2011). I selected participants based on their suitability to answer the first research question. FGs took place at DCU in October 2018 and at UL in February 2019, soon after a new cohort of students had returned to their respective institutions after completing their stay in Japan. Conducting the FG discussions immediately after their return was essential, as students' experiences were still fresh, and participants could talk about their challenges in great detail. I conducted six discussions, four in DCU and two in UL. A total of 26 students participated, all of whom were fourth-year students of Japanese as L2 (see Table 4.3).[20] All participants were Irish except three participants. All participants had been learning Japanese at their Irish institutions for at least five full semesters.

Focus Group	Profile
FG1	Two students at DCU who studied in Japan for a year.
FG2	Four students at DCU. Three of them spent a year abroad while one studied at a university for six months.
FG3	Six students at DCU. They all studied in Japan for a year.
FG4	Five students at DCU. They all studied in Japan for a year.
FG5	Six students at UL. Five students spent six months in Japan as part of their work placements and one studied for a semester in a university.
FG6	Three students at UL who spent a semester in Japan. Two did their work placements while one studied for a semester at a university.

Table 4.3: Profiles of FG participants.

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews was invaluable, as it corroborated and expanded on the challenges elicited in the questionnaires through examples and anecdotes. However, FG allowed me to further triangulate the data collected in the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews and to explore the issues that arose during the analysis of the previous two cycles (see Morgan 1997). Conducting FG discussions was beneficial for gathering comprehensive first-hand information about and gaining even deeper insights into the challenges faced by learners. FG discussions allowed students to recall concrete, personal experiences and anecdotes (see Krueger and Casey 2015). FG participants confirmed the issues described in the questionnaires and interviews, providing detailed examples about the difficulties they experienced in Japanese oral interaction. Interestingly, the types of issues

[20] Throughout this research, I employ either pseudonyms or an identification code (see section 4.9).

discussed, and the self-reported data provided were very similar to the ones collected in the previous two phases. In this sense, the findings generated from the FGs allowed me to further triangulate the data.

Liamputtong (2011) notes that grouping together individuals with similar experiences is key to gaining insight into the thoughts and experiences about a specific topic. I needed to ensure that the dynamic of each discussion was natural, and that the participants felt comfortable, respected and free to give their opinions, and share their experiences (Krueger and Casey 2015). At DCU, participants were recruited at the end of their Japanese language class, and those who wanted to volunteer were asked to sign up on a sheet by writing down the time and date that suited them best (see Appendix C). I encouraged students to sign up with whom they wanted to conduct the FG. Students put themselves into groups where they felt comfortable and more likely to share their opinions and personal experiences. This level of comfort and trust was evident throughout all the discussions. This is also applicable for students at UL, who were contacted via their module coordinator and voluntarily organised themselves into two groups.

There is little agreement in the literature on the ideal number of participants in a FG (see e.g. Ho 2012; Creswell and Creswell 2018; Morgan and Hoffman 2018). I followed Krueger and Casey's (2015: 6) recommendation, insofar as "the group must be small enough for everyone to have opportunity to share insights and yet large enough to provide diversity of perceptions". Thus, all FGs were comprised of between three and six students, except the pilot discussion.

Breen (2006), Ho (2012) and Barbour (2010) stress the importance of piloting the questioning route to ensure that the procedures employed in the FG are trustworthy and rigorous. I conducted a pilot FG to test the effectiveness of the questions as well as my skills as a moderator (see Breen 2006). Initially, the pilot FG was scheduled with four participants. However, two of the students could not attend the discussion. The pilot could be considered what Morgan (2015) refers to as a "dyadic interview". I decided to proceed with the pilot as dyadic interviews have the same characteristics as FGs, the only difference being that they are limited to two participants. Therefore, I used the data from the pilot discussion as part of the main study (see Breen 2006). The pilot discussion led to minor amendments in the organisational structure of the questioning route. The pilot also worked to reassure me that participants felt engaged with the conversation and were willing to share personal experiences and anecdotes about their language use in Japan.

The location of the sessions is a critical consideration when conducting FGs (Barbour 2014). Hennink (2007) highlights that the venue should provide a comfortable, relaxed environment to facilitate a productive discussion. I conducted all FG discussions on-site. I arranged the venue half an hour before the FGs commenced. FGs were scheduled to last no more than 45 minutes due to students' academic and personal commitments. However, participants were highly engaged with the discussions, which resulted in FGs lasting for between 55 and 70 minutes.

Before the FGs, I engaged in small talk with participants about various general topics related to the Japanese language and culture. These short conversations facilitated rapport and enhanced trust between myself and the participants. Once students were seated around the table, I reminded them of the nature of the study, the aims and objectives, potential benefits and risks, their rights, issues of confidentiality, and the duration and procedure of the discussion. Additionally, I provided students with an information sheet and a consent form, which was signed before the FG commenced (see Appendix C; see section 4.8). With participants' consent, the FGs were audio recorded.

To successfully direct the FG discussions, researchers must devise a question guide or questioning route (Barbour 2010; Liamputtong 2011; Creswell and Creswell 2018; Morgan and Hoffman 2018). I carefully planned the questioning route based on the data from the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C). Based on Morgan's (1988) "funnel approach" and Krueger and Casey's (2015) guidelines, I began the discussions with general questions that were easy for everyone to answer and continued with more specific questions strictly related to the challenges at hand. The questioning route followed a five-category approach, namely an opening question, introductory questions, transition questions, key questions and an ending question. The opening question included information such as name, nationality, degree and university/workplace in Japan. The introductory questions were concerned with general challenges in producing and interpreting verbal and nonverbal meaning. Both the transition and key questions were focused on specific challenges that had emerged in the data gathered from the questionnaires and interviews. For example:

- Did you pay attention to the way intonation was used?
- Was humour ever used in conversations?

The ending question was an opportunity for students to add any information they thought was relevant to the study. Students used that time to provide further insights into the Japanese courses at their respective Irish universities and some suggestions for improvement. Before turning the audio recorder off, I thanked all students for their participation and active engagement in the discussion.

Throughout the discussion, I encouraged all students to share their perceptions and experiences even if they differed from one another. I also monitored dominant individuals and encouraged quieter students to talk. To facilitate data analysis (see section 4.7), I noted the names of the participants in the order they were talking to facilitate the identification of individuals. I also took notes about the body language of the participants and their reactions to questions.

4.7 Data Analysis

To analyse the data, I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method for analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning or themes, and it "can be applied across a range of theoretical frameworks and indeed research paradigms" (Clarke and Braun 2017: 297). I adopted Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases to data analysis in a recursive, iterative and reflexive manner. In what follows I provide a step-by-step explanation of how I analysed the data collected through open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions.

Step 1: Familiarising myself with the data

Wang and Hannafin (2005) recommend that, in a DBR, data is analysed immediately, continuously and retrospectively. I began analysis during the first cycle of data collection to identify emergent patterns and guide further exploration. I used NVivo as a tool for examining the data, transcribing and recording notes. The software was easy to use and proved useful for managing my data. To transcribe the data, I used the Jefferson Transcription system.[21] This system includes not only what has been said but also how it has been said, including pauses, intonation, interruptions and annotations about face/bodily expressions, all of which are essential for the analysis of challenging features of the Japanese language as reported by learners.

The familiarisation process assisted me in searching for patterns, as well as identifying data that was relevant to answer the first research question. I read and re-read the data several times

[21] https://www.universitytranscriptions.co.uk/jefferson-transcription-system-a-guideto-the-symbols/ [accessed 16 May 2022]

to gain an understanding of the challenges at hand (c.f. Wellington 2000). I took theoretical and reflective notes and I recorded early impressions of the data.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

Saldaña (2013:3) defines a code as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data”. To assign units of meaning to the data, I first examined each dataset in isolation (see Bryman 2012). Following a chronological order, I first coded the questionnaires, followed by the interviews and finally the FG discussions. I employed an inductive or “in vivo” approach to thematic analysis to develop initial codes (see Boyatzis 1998). I coded every line drawing from participants’ language and organised the data into meaningful groups (Saldaña 2013). For example:

- Not knowing casual language
- Using more formal language than casual language
- Using dialects

Step 3: Searching for themes

Once I developed the initial codes for each data collection method, I collated several codes to reflect wider challenges to emerge from each data method. For example, the three codes above were merged to “having difficulties producing speech styles”. This was an analytical phase as I identified similarities between codes, established patterns and relationships in the data and made interpretations to later form overarching themes (c.f. Gibson and Brown 2009). Since the content was similar for all data collection methods, I merged the codes from all datasets together to start creating themes. Some codes did not belong to any particular category or felt outside the scope of this research and were therefore put under a “miscellaneous” theme (e.g. learning Japanese through media).

Step 4: Reviewing themes

I revised the data associated with each code to assess whether the content was relevant and strongly supported the theme itself and the first research question. This process facilitated more in-depth analysis of the data. I further merged, divided and discarded codes to create a list of themes and sub-themes that were coherent within themselves and the entire dataset. At the end of this phase, the data gathered from the questionnaires, the semi-structured interviews and the FGs were relevant and meaningful to each theme while remaining truthful to the research question and the theoretical framework employed in this study. Visual tools in NVivo, such as diagrams and concept maps, assisted me in making sense of theme connections and the development of theoretical concepts.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

I defined and refined the themes and revised the data within each theme. The names of the themes and sub-themes were concise, informative and relevant to the theoretical framework. The resulting themes were simple and expressed the common thread of the study to provide a clear impression of what each theme represented (c.f. Auerbach and Silverstein 2003).

Step 6: Producing the report

The final themes and sub-themes shaped the overall analytic description and interpretation of the data collected. This narrative was coherent and contextualised the findings in relation to the existing literature and the theoretical framework employed in this study. By adopting a methodological approach with iterative micro-cycles of data collection, I provide a greater range of insight and corroboration of the challenges experienced by the participants. Although the nature of each data collection tool is different (i.e. questionnaires were used for exploratory purposes, interviews were for elaboration and FGs were for verification) and the questions differed, participants at both institutions expressed similar experiences and reported related challenges throughout all data collection methods. The final themes and the interpretation of the themes, which correspond to the sub-section headings in section 6.2, are presented in Chapter 6 (see also Figure 6.1 for an overview).

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns are inherent in all research involving human participants and therefore need to be examined at the outset of the study (Cohen *et al.* 2018). Stutchbury and Fox (2009) assert that ethics is a key aspect of research in educational settings. In this section, I address the ethical elements of this thesis based on axiological principles shared between myself and the research participants (see section 4.2).

On 6th February 2018, I was granted permission from the Research Ethics Committees (REC) at DCU to administer questionnaires and conduct semi-structured interviews at DCU (DCUREC/2018/013). On 8^{th} and 10^{th} March 2018, respectively, I obtained permission from the REC and from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at UL to administer questionnaires and conduct semi-structured interviews at UL. On 8^{th} October 2018, the REC at

DCU approved the final amendment of the ethics application form, for which I obtained permission to conduct FG discussions at both DCU and UL. On 2nd September 2019, I also obtained permission to implement an online course for third-year students of Japanese as L2 at DCU (DCUREC/2019_130). Following ethical approval, I recruited participants who wished to take the course. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the course was never implemented (see section 4.4).

A fundamental aspect of ethical research involving human participants is the principle of informed consent (Punch 1998; Thomas and Pettitt 2017). Informed consent is defined as the process whereby participants possess adequate information about the purpose of the study and their voluntary contribution to the research (Christians 2000; Cohen *et al*. 2018). I obtained informed consent from all students who participated in this study before the beginning of the research process and at every stage throughout data collection (see Miller and Bell 2012). I provided participants with a plain language statement that included all the required information about the nature of the study, the benefits they might obtain from the research, the potential risks, the data collection procedure, and their rights and issues surrounding confidentiality and anonymity (see Appendices A, B and C). I encouraged participants to keep the information sheets for future reference. Before data collection, I reassured students that they were under no obligation to participate in the study and that they were free to withdraw from the research at any stage, during or after data collection. I also invited participants to ask questions and request clarification of any concerns they had about the study and their participation in it. Once clarifications had been provided, students signed a sheet acknowledging their roles and voluntarily consenting their participation in the study (see Appendices A, B and C).

A further ethical concern is ensuring the privacy of the participants with anonymity and confidentiality (see Christians 2000; Cohen *et al*. 2018). Throughout the study, I reminded students that they might divulge sensitive information (e.g. challenges with the Japanese language, personal experiences, anecdotes) about themselves during data collection. Thus, I assured all participants that their contributions would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and that only the researcher would have access to the data. The consent form clearly stated that all data would be anonymised and pseudonyms would be given to participants. I also explained to participants how information is stored and destroyed. The questionnaires were immediately anonymised and deleted from the web-based software in which they were stored. The original recordings from the semi-structured interviews and FG discussions were transcribed and anonymised. Both the recordings and the transcripts were encrypted and stored under a password-protected computer. Before I commenced data analysis, all personal information had been removed from the dataset. I have also ensured confidentiality and anonymity in the dissemination of the findings.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter, I first discussed the paradigmatic and methodological underpinnings of the present study. I explained how the pragmatic paradigm is the most appropriate to support this research as the fundamental goal is to solve a real-life educational problem (i.e. the need to activate pragmatic competence among learners and the need to equip teachers with a suitable pedagogical framework). To achieve this goal, DBR was the most suitable methodology to base this research on as it aims to help advance theory and practice while bridging the gap between the two. Informed by the methodological considerations, I described the research design, based on McKeeney and Reeves' (2012) three-phase model for conducting DBR. I explained how, due to the pandemic, I had to adapt the model to the situation at the time. I also described the research context and the research participants before justifying the choice of data collections methods. Data collection methods were qualitative and consisted of web-based questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions. Following the work of Braun and Clarke (2006), the analysis of the data was guided by thematic analysis. I concluded the chapter with some ethical considerations intrinsic to this study and the measures taken to address them.

Having reflected on the methodology of this thesis, in the next chapter I present the empirical findings. I explain which features of the Japanese language learners had most difficulties with in oral interaction with L1 speakers in the SA context. In Chapter 6, I analyse the data within the context of Relevance Theory.

CHAPTER 5:

FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I report the findings from questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions on the most common challenges that learners of Japanese as L2 experienced during their SA programmes and work placements in Japan. Each section includes the challenges learners reported, the causes of such challenges as reported by students and their attitude towards the use of certain features. All challenges are discussed from both the interpretation and production side.

A total of 57 participants from DCU and UL participated in this study. The majority were fourth-year students, although some third-year and former students also participated. All participants had either recently returned from Japan or were in Japan at the time of data collection. The findings described in this chapter are sensitive to learners' idiosyncratic perspectives, contextual assumptions and unique experiences with oral interaction in Japanese as L2. However, participants also had a common learning background in Ireland and were exposed to similar pragmatic, linguistic, social and cultural contexts in Japan.

The three data methods of data collection were complimentary (i.e. qualitative responses in the questionnaire were informed by quantitative data, interview data validated both the qualitative and quantitative responses from the questionnaire and the focus group data corroborated and expanded on the issues discussed in the previous two phases). Thus, the results that emerged in the data from both DCU and UL throughout the three phases were very similar in content. Hence, to avoid repetition, rather than presenting the findings separately by method of data collection, the data from the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions have been merged according to broader issues with Japanese as L2 that learners discussed. I consider that by conflating the three datasets there is a minimum risk of affecting the homogeneity and reliability of results.

Due to time constraints in the interviews, some of the features were only discussed in the questionnaires and then in the FG discussions (e.g. silence, backchannels, bodily expressions and humour), while other phenomena were alluded to throughout all cycles (e.g. ellipsis, speech styles and prosody). However, interviewees had already discussed the challenges in the questionnaire as questionnaires and interviews were conducted with the same cohort of students (see section 4.6).

For clarity, I developed a coding scheme for the collected data (see Table 5.1). For the questionnaires and interviews, the scheme is organised as follows: data collection method–university–participant number. For the FG discussions, the scheme is organised as follows: data collection method–FG number–university–participant number.

Abbreviations	Descriptions	Examples
Q	questionnaire	
I	interview	
FG	focus group	Q DCU 24
1, 2, 3, 4, 5	focus group number	I UL 11
DCU	Dublin City University	FG 3 DCU 08
UL	University of Limerick	FG 5 UL 20
01, 02, 03, 04…	participant number	

Table 5.1: Coding scheme for questionnaire, interview and FG data.

In what follows, I report the eight main features of the Japanese language that learners discussed in data collected from the open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions.

5.2 Findings

The challenges are presented in the following order to mirror the theoretical explanations described in section 2.11, which in turn are presented in descending order of frequency as reported by learners: speech styles, ellipsis, prosody, bodily expressions, humour, silence and backchanneling expressions.

For a better understanding, "learners" refers to all students who participated in the study. "Respondents" are those students who completed the questionnaires, "interviewees" is used for students who were interviewed, and "participants" is used to describe FG participants. To describe the findings, every effort has been made to include the vocabulary and expressions used by learners. Therefore, the quotes used to illustrate the challenges may contain errors and oral features that reflect the spoken language students used in the data collection.

5.2.1 Speech Styles

As explained in section 2.11.1, there are three main complex grammatical systems in Japanese: casual (or plain), formal (or *masu/desu*) and referent honorifics (or *keigo*) forms of verbs. The most frequently discussed feature concerned the interpretation and production of speech styles. Indeed, interviewees indicated that using speech styles appropriately was a synonym of communicating appropriately in Japanese oral interaction:

> Communicating appropriately would be knowing what register to use at what time. Like, when do you use dictionary form, when do you use *masu* form, when would you use *keigo* and what type of *keigo* would you use. (I DCU 07)

Unsurprisingly, 77 percent of respondents expressed that they had experienced misusing speech styles in a variety of situations (see Figure 5.1). Interviewees and participants added that they knew about the existence of different speech styles, but they did not know how to use them in real-life interactions such as at restaurants, banks, stores and classrooms, and with friends, co-workers, strangers, authority figures, public workers and the elderly. That is, while learners made a conscious effort to use speech styles appropriately, they admitted to having been inappropriate in their choice of speech styles, thus appearing involuntarily rude and/or overly formal. For example, learners reported using casual speech styles with strangers, teachers and employers as well as using formal forms with close friends and classmates. Adhering to a speech style was difficult to do consistently and confidently as learners did not know how to use speech styles appropriately.

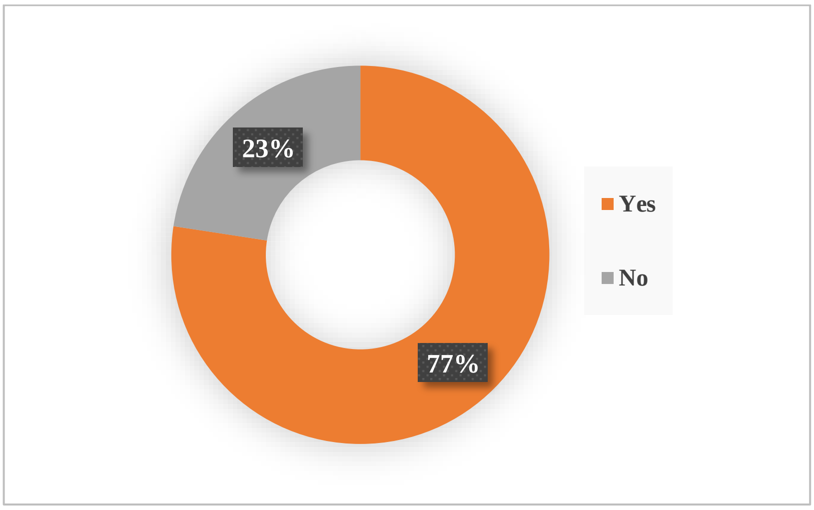


Figure 5.1: 24 out of 31 questionnaire respondents used speech styles incorrectly.

Learners argued that not being able to ascertain which speech styles to use and how to use them originated in the L2 classroom, before moving to the SA context. Participants mentioned that what they were taught in the classroom was not how L1 speakers truly used language in Japan. Interestingly, only one respondent reported not having noticed any differences between how language was used in the L2 classroom and how language is used in real-life oral interactions in Japan. Learners explained that L1 speakers use words and phrases that are not used in the L2 classroom. For example:

> The language that they'd use it'd be kind of different to the one which you learn in class. They wouldn't use formal Japanese that's quite as structured. (I DCU 07)

The discrepancy was such that one learner felt she "was re-learning Japanese" when she arrived in Japan (FG 4 DCU 16).

5.2.1.1 Casual Forms

The area learners felt least prepared for was casual oral interactions. Learners went to Japan with the assumption that *desu/masu* was the standard speech style. Thus, learners were surprised about how frequent casual speech styles were, as casual forms were employed more often than they had originally anticipated:

> I was a bit surprised at first, cause we'd been led to believe that everyone uses *masu*/*desu* all the time. But when I went to university [in Japan], people my age, even the first time meeting them, they were straight into plain form. (FG 1 DCU 01)

Learners felt they had limited knowledge about casual speech styles and did not know how to use them effectively in oral interaction. On many occasions, the lack of knowledge about speech styles resulted in a lack of confidence among learners as they struggled to express themselves in the casual form. This is illustrated below:

> I thought I tried to use the plain form [but] I'd always have to stop and think about how I am using it and what I have to say next. (FG 6 UL 26)

The findings also show that learners associate the casual form with being rude and therefore avoided using it. One participant noted:

> I was in shops and I was using plain form. And some bit later on I realised it was incredibly disrespectful, even though it's just an employee. (FG 3 DCU 08)

Learners used formal speech styles to avoid being rude and not to offend L1 speakers. However, this tendency had an adverse effect as they felt that their oral production was too polite due to using the formal form in all interactional contexts. As learners themselves acknowledge, the overuse of the formal speech style had consequences for both participants and L1 speakers. Learners often came across as distant, which made L1 speakers uncomfortable:

> In college it was a little bit difficult for me to make friends because I was using the *masu* form with a lot of people that I'd never met before, and I kinda feel like that made me seem a little bit standoffish to a lot of people. (I DCU 04)

> A friend of mine said to me, 'Why do you speak so formally to me? You don't need to speak like this.'(…) I didn't know, but she actually explained that I was almost disrespectful because she was like, 'You bring distance between me and you'. It never clicked to my mind that I was being inappropriate. (FG 3 DCU 08)

Despite the difficulties with the production of casual speech styles, most learners became accustomed to using the plain form due to exposure to this style of language in their daily interactions. Thus, participants started using the casual form in all situations, regardless of the context of interaction. The following remarks explain this:

> I have caught myself repeatedly slipping accidentally into more casual language when speaking with superiors, though I try my best to avoid doing so. (Q DCU 02)

Within casual forms, learners were also challenged by dialectal variation. Many learners were unaware of dialects in general or only knew one dialectal variation: that of the Kansai area. As a result, L1 speakers tended to employ standard, formal forms when interacting with learners. One participant noted:

> Japanese people would consciously change and use the Tokyo dialect instead of their own one to make it easier for you. (FG 1 DCU 01)

Since learners did not know many verbs and unique vocabulary associated with dialects, they did not know what constituted standard Japanese and what forms were dialectal. As a result, learners used dialects without being aware of it:

> There're some words I'd use instead of the standard ones. Instead of *totemo* [a lot] I said *meccha* [a lot], *akan* [wrong] instead of *dame* [wrong]. I didn't know the difference. I was like, 'Oh, that must be standard Japanese'. (I DCU 07)

Learners also had issues with mixing, or not being able to identify appropriate speech styles. The findings show that learners tended to use speech styles according to social norms such as status and age. Hence, most participants felt like they had to adhere to one speech style to avoid being rude or offending their interlocutor. As one interviewee explained:

> Sometimes people would use casual [form] with me, and I'm like 'I don't think I can do it back.' Especially with my co-worker because she was much older than me.

> I wanted to be respectful but at the same time she was really, really friendly to me. And I was like, well, we're very good friends so, you know, is it appropriate then? So, I think that was kind of difficult there. (I UL 09)

The more speech styles they learned, the more learners had to make a conscious effort to choose which speech style was most appropriate. This choice was one of the most difficult aspects of oral interaction as they had to quickly think of the conjugations and vocabulary they wanted to use. As a result, learners acknowledged that they sometimes unconsciously mixed speech styles, particularly casual and formal forms such as "being casual and then ending with *desu/masu*, which is completely wrong" (FG 5 UL 21).

One way for learners to avoid issues with speech styles was to completely ignore them altogether. That is, learners used what they called the "foreigner pass", "*gaijin* pass" or "*gaijin* card". This means that they pretended to have less proficiency than they actually did because L1 speakers would forgive their mistakes due to their status as non-L1 Japanese speakers. Learners explained this choice by stating that L1 speakers did not mind mistakes regarding the inappropriate and/or mixed-use of speech styles, and thus learners thought that they had *carte blanche* to use whichever speech style came naturally to them. For example:

> When you can speak any level of Japanese, they [L1 speakers] don't care, really, if you're not being polite enough because you are not held to the same standards as a normal Japanese would be. (FG 5 UL 23)

On the reception side, learners also struggled in interpreting casual forms. Many participants reported their inability to interpret what was being talked about in informal conversations, and this hindered their ability to converse in daily interactions. Additionally, casual forms were often used in combination with ellipsis (see section 5.2.2). As one participant explained:

> Sometimes you missed an awful lot of what was happening in a conversation because you were still fixated on trying to figure out what it was in a full and polite and proper grammatical form. (FG 2 DCU 03)

Next, there is the issue of *keigo* (or honorifics).

5.2.1.2 Honorific Forms

Participants agreed that honorific speech styles were one of the most challenging aspects of Japanese oral interaction as "it's like a different language" (FG 4 DCU 13). Indeed, several respondents regarded formal speech styles, including honorifics, to be difficult to use appropriately (see Figure 5.2). Hence, they often avoided using honorifics:

> I didn't really ever use *keigo* to such a high degree mainly because I wasn't 100% sure what the hell I was doing. (I DCU 06)

As learners were unsure of how to use *keigo*, some prepared vocabulary and certain conjugations in advance to be better prepared for their oral interactions in formal service encounters, although not always successfully:

> Sometimes, if I had to go to the bank or the post office, I pre-prepared some words and some sentences in my head. Like, 'OK, this is what I have to do, this is this specific vocab that I need.' But then, sometimes, out of nowhere, something might pop up and you were just like, 'I know what you are asking me, but I just don't have the vocab to answer you.' I think this is one of the biggest problems. Sometimes your vocabulary isn't there for the everyday interactions. (I DCU 02)

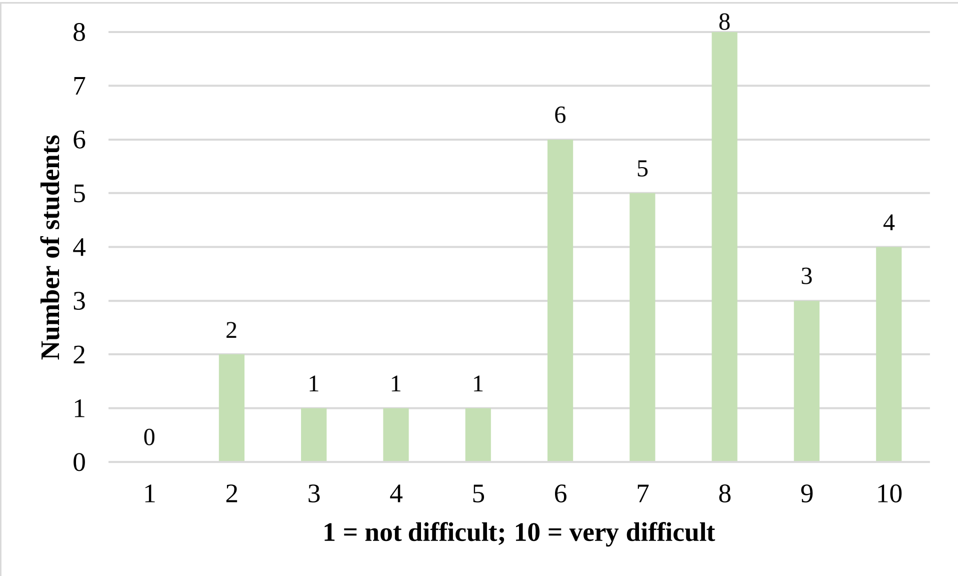


Figure 5.2: Learners reported how difficult it was to use formal speech styles.

In addition to difficulties using honorifics in their production, participants reported challenges associated with interpreting honorifics. Interpreting honorifics was particularly challenging in everyday interactions such as stores and restaurants as well as at the doctor, pharmacies, banks, post offices and city halls. The interactions learners had in these situations were often described as a terrible experience as learners constantly faced communication breakdowns. As with casual forms, learners explained that honorific forms greatly differed from the *desu/masu* forms participants were most accustomed to:

> I had no idea what they meant [with] *atatamemasuka* [do you want your food heated?]. Part of why it was difficult for me to understand it was just because it was so polite. (I DCU 04)

> When they asked me, 'Do you want a bag?', it really confused me at the start because I could never figure out, are you asking, 'Do you want a bag?' or like, 'Do you not want a bag?' (FG 6 UL 26)

The above excerpts suggest that learners struggled with set phrases and formulaic expressions that employees commonly use in service encounters. Learners agreed that, from context, they were generally able to understand what was being said or whether L1 speakers expected a reply or not. However, this was not always the case:

> I knew that *irasshaimase* meant 'welcome', but I wasn't sure. Am I meant to say something back or do I just ignore it? And then I'm like, 'But what do I say back to it?' (I DCU 01)

Participants attributed such confusion to the lack of awareness of the real-life use of honorifics before moving to the SA context. This is an excerpt of a FG discussion:

> [In the L2 classroom in Ireland] we definitely learn how to be polite to someone. (FG 2 DCU 04)

> Like, humble towards lecturers and stuff like that. But we never learn people being humble towards us. (FG 2 DCU 05)

> Yeah. You don't learn how to actually be a consumer. (FG 2 DCU 04)

As a result, participants stated that L1 speakers had to adapt their speech style to a less formal one to accommodate learners and make information easier to interpret. Learners explained that, if they asked L1 speakers to rephrase their utterances, they would often slow down and use simpler grammar structures and vocabulary.

5.2.2 Ellipsis

Ellipsis was the second most discussed phenomenon (see section 2.11.2). Learners mentioned, either directly or indirectly, three types of ellipsis. To illustrate this complex phenomenon, I divided this section into three sub-sections to describe the three types of ellipsis-related challenges mentioned by learners. First, I present the findings in relation to subject ellipsis (5.2.2.1). Then, I outline challenges learners experienced with particle ellipsis (5.2.2.2). Finally, I describe challenges learners had with syntactically incomplete sentences in the form of hedging expressions (5.2.2.3).

5.2.2.1 Subject Ellipsis

As stated by 58 percent of respondents, the lack of personal pronouns in oral interaction did not pose a challenge for them. Even if learners found ellipsis to be confusing, contextual cues frequently provided enough information to interpret elliptical subjects. For example:

> If you understand the vocab around it, like the nouns and the verbs and stuff, I would understand the general meaning, and then I could try and figure out the context afterwards. You could kinda guess from the context surrounding it anyway what they were talking about. (I UL 09)

If the subject was made explicit at the beginning of the conversation/utterance, it was easier for them to comprehend who was being talked about. This awareness of the role of context seemed to increase their understanding:

> With personal pronouns sometimes you kinda got [it] from context, who they were talking about or what person they were referring to. But it did take a bit of practice to figure it out. (I DCU 02)

However, remembering the subject from the beginning of the interaction or guessing the subject was a difficult task for learners as participants were more focused on other elements of the utterance such as understanding the vocabulary or the verb conjugation. One learner explained that trying to figure out what the omitted grammatical element referred to "takes a lot more mental gymnastics" than if there is no ellipsis. That is, learners needed greater effort to understand who was doing the action or who was being talked about. For example:

> The subject is gone. He was saying something like, 'tired' or 'seems tired'. And I was like, 'You?' And he was like, 'No, you!' And I was like, 'How would I know?' I thought you were saying you are tired, not me! I'd have to reaffirm like, 'Are you talking about me?' He was like, 'Yes, of course!' (FG 4 DCU 14)

Given the above, learners maintained that interpreting utterances with subject ellipsis was confusing to the point that one learner even avoided interacting with her friends in Japanese as a result. Many interviewees and participants later explained that not having personal pronouns and other subjects in an utterance was an impediment to interpreting meaning. Learners often did not know who the conversation was about or if speakers were referring to themselves or someone else. Below is an example:

> Let's say you're talking about that your brother is entering high school, and you keep talking and you omit the subjects: you don't use 'brother' anymore. If you hadn't used that in the beginning, you'd be thinking, 'Oh! You're entering high school? You're a bit old!' or 'Who?' It is necessary, for me. The way we were taught, I'd follow the structure. (I DCU 06)

Furthermore, some respondents were unaware that L1 speakers use proper names, family names and titles "a lot more than we would in Ireland to possibly substitute for the lack of pronouns" (Q DCU 11). This phenomenon was described as a "minefield" as in English, the L1 of most participants, ellipsis of personal pronouns is extremely rare. Learners found it difficult to address/refer to someone without using personal pronouns as learners often wondered "what names should I use to call Japanese people?" (I DCU 01). As two FG participants further explained:

> Say I wanted to ask what age he is. I would have to say like, '*Yusuke-san wa nansai desuka*' [How old is Yusuke?] But then, if I don't know that name, I can never ask that question unless he is staring directly at me. (FG 2 DCU 05)

Adding to this, there was an issue with L1 speakers' self-reference. L1 speakers used first names rather than personal pronouns such as *watashi* (I) and *anata* (you). Learners found this bewildering as it can come across as rude in English. One participant explained it as follows:

> Sometimes, they'd use my name when talking to me, which in English would be kind of rude if I was like, 'Emma is whatever.'[22] That'd be rude to talk about you in the third person while you are there. But, for them, that's more polite than using pronouns. (FG 5 UL 18)

Learners felt that not knowing how to refer to themselves, their interlocutor or to a third person without using a personal pronoun resulted in not being able to ask questions or start conversations.

In terms of production, even if learners knew that subject ellipsis was a common practice, some participants felt it was grammatically wrong to omit subjects, were not confident enough to do it and/or felt that such practice hindered their learning of the Japanese language. Indeed,

[22] Emma is a pseudonym.

explicitly stating the subject helped some learners keep in control of their utterances. Learners felt uncomfortable practising ellipsis in their own speech due to L1 transfer. As one respondent added:

> It somehow feels almost wrong to leave them [subjects, personal pronouns] out sometimes, even when I know it is right to. Perhaps this is a result of a sort of 'language learning conditioning' after growing up with English? (Q DCU 03)

Furthermore, learners did not know when exactly the subject should be specified and when it was clear enough from the context. As shown in Figure 5.3, seven respondents stated that subjects should always be included while nineteen were convinced that subjects should not always be included. Only five respondents mentioned that it depended on the context of interaction.

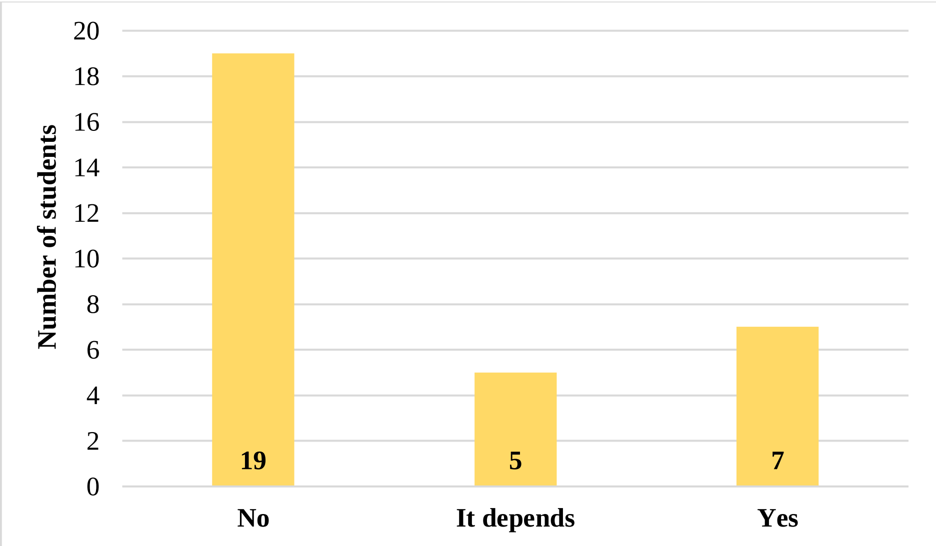


Figure 5.3: 61% of respondents stated that it is not natural to always include subjects

Throughout the findings, learners seemed generally aware of subject ellipsis as a feature of the Japanese language, but unaware of why and when it happens. Several learners thought that subjects should only be included when there is a high chance of confusion or when there is a change of subject. Other learners completely stopped using any first-person pronouns to refer to themselves because it did not feel natural and it "feels too much how a beginner speaks" (Q UL 26). Other learners had made up their own rules such as mentioning the subject once and not mentioning it again or mirrored what L1 speakers seemed to do. As one participant put it:

> That's one thing that I guess people studying Japanese should be taught more: the fact that personal pronouns aren't that important. And they're only used once, when a new subject is being introduced, and then never again. The automatic assumption

> is someone's talking about themselves until they specify otherwise […] I don't say *boku wa* [I] or *ore wa* [I] or whatever. (FG 6 UL 24)

Lack of knowledge about how to use ellipsis resulted in learners misusing subject ellipsis. Participants mentioned that one of the most common mistakes was to omit subjects when not enough contextual cues were provided, as the quote below exemplifies:

> I left them [subjects] out a lot. Sometimes too much and people didn't know what I was talking about. Like, the *watashi wa* [I], *kare wa* [he]. I'd just say something, and they'd be like, '*Dare?*' [Who?] Like, who did it? (FG 1 DCU 01).

This resulted in L1 speakers not knowing who was being talked about or taking longer to understand who the subject of a given utterance was. Contrarily, some participants explained that they often included subjects when there were enough contextual cues to derive meaning:

> I was like, 'Oh, *watashi wa airurandojin desu*.' [I am Irish] And they'd be like, 'Why would you say *watashi wa* [I]*?* We know you're talking about yourself. Just say *airurandojin* [Irish]'. (FG 2 DCU 05)

At times, including subjects made learners' utterances sound "clunky" and made interaction with L1 speakers less efficient.

5.2.2.2 Particle Ellipsis

Next is an issue of participle ellipsis. Particles, which indicate the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic relationship among constituents, are often unexpressed in oral interaction (see section 2.11.2). This was challenging for learners as many participants were completely unaware of particle ellipsis before going to Japan and even admitted that in Japan it was the first time they were exposed to particle ellipsis. The fact that most participants knew about particle ellipsis as a feature of Japanese oral interaction *after* the SA shows how prevalent particle ellipsis is.

Nonetheless, learners stated that particle ellipsis was easier to interpret than other forms of ellipsis, including subject ellipsis. 21 out of 31 respondents claimed that particle ellipsis was not a problem for them (see Figure 5.4). Learners argued that, in most situations, particles were not necessary to derive meaning. They explained that not having particles did not change the meaning of the utterance, as there were enough clues within the linguistic context (i.e. other components of a given utterance). For example:

It is generally only basic particles that are omitted, like [the topic marker] *wa*, [the locative] *ni* and [the subject marker] *ga*. The nouns and verbs are always included, so a bit of outside thinking in a sense is needed to understand the intention in the sentence. (Q DCU 09)

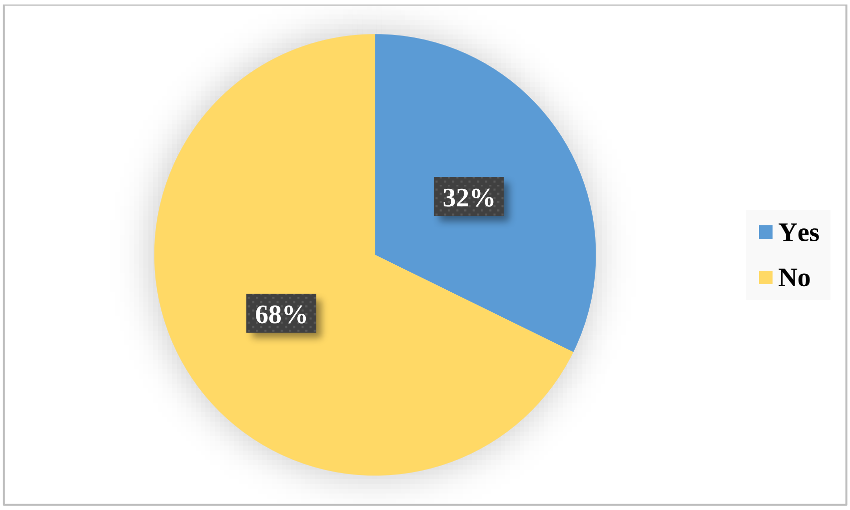


Figure 5.4: 68% of respondents did not have difficulties with particle ellipsis.

Learners considered other aspects of the language to be more difficult than particle ellipsis and as such, one interviewee mentioned that "particles was the least of my worries, really" (I UL 09). Most learners found that what was meant was clear with or without particles as they could still understand the general idea of the utterance. That is because, like subject ellipsis, learners agreed that context usually provided enough cues to help them understand the meaning of an utterance without particles. If there was a case where it was impossible to guess the meaning, L1 speakers would usually not omit particles. As two participants explained:

Because [Japanese] is all context. […] So, if you don't get the context, then you can't understand. (FG 2 DCU 06)

It's all context, yeah. They drop everything. (FG 2 DCU 03)

Although utterances generally made sense without particles, particle ellipsis caused many difficulties, especially when combined with other types of ellipsis. Participants found it difficult to follow conversations when L1 speakers dropped particles, subjects and verbs in a given utterance. The more elliptic meaning there was, the more learners had to "fill in the blanks", and the more challenging it became for learners to interpret utterances, especially if learners did not know the vocabulary used in a given utterance. The remark below illustrates this clearly:

> If you know what the other words are in the sentence, you could be like, 'Ah, yeah! I know what you mean'. […] But if it's words you don't know, that's a bit difficult because you're like, 'What are you trying to say to me exactly?' (FG 2 DCU 06)

This issue is also linked to the emphasis given to particles in the Japanese language classroom before going to Japan, which led learners to think that particles were an essential aspect of the language. As a result, they developed a tendency to rely on particles to interpret meaning:

> The particles went out the window, you know? All the apparently incredibly important grammar rules we learned in class, gone.' I was like, 'I don't know what's happening now.' (FG 6 UL 24)

Learners found that understanding a sentence with all grammatical elements was challenging enough without having to fill in the gaps. To fill those gaps, they attempted to mentally substitute the missing particles with the particles they perceived would have been explicitly uttered. For example:

> I'd think of all the words I knew in the sentence and try to put it together in my head, and substitute what particles may have worked. (I DCU 01)

Contrarily, some learners tended to focus on other elements of the utterance to interpret the overall meaning rather than trying to guess what the omitted particle might have been.

Interestingly, the ease of handling particle ellipsis seems to be in contrast to the challenges associated with particles. Many learners explained that particles were difficult to produce appropriately, so it was easier for them to speak without particles than make a conscious effort to use the correct particles. They felt that leaving particles out made learners sound more natural and made conversations "less nerve-racking". For example:

> Particles can be quite confusing and I think the overall meaning can still be understood without them. (Q UL 30)

In regard to the production of particle ellipsis, several learners reported they started leaving particles out in the SA context. At the beginning of their stay, most learners felt that particles were too important to be omitted. However, learners soon realised that always including particles came with certain consequences:

> I'd nearly be laughed at by my Japanese friends because I was using proper grammar and particles. They'd be like, 'Why are you so stiff? Speak like a normal person'. (FG 2 DCU 05)

A few learners incorporated particle ellipsis early on, while others did not venture into particle ellipsis until the end of their stay in Japan, once they had gained more confidence with the language. Learners explained that the more experience they gained with how the language worked in real-life interaction, the less need they found to include particles and subjects. For example:

> As soon as I learned that you can drop literally anything and it'll still make sense, literally my whole sentence was gone. I was like, getting rid of particles and getting rid of subjects. (FG 4 DCU 14)

Contrarily, several learners stated that omitting particles was not always a conscious process. Learners had a vague idea of which particles were commonly unexpressed, but when asked about which specific particles they left out and why, not many participants could explain it. One interviewee reported:

> I think it's like when you're saying something like, 'That is amazing!' You could leave out the [topic marker] *wa*: '*Sore wa subarashii*' to '*Sore subarashii*'. You definitely wouldn't always do it. I think it's okay to sometimes leave in the particles because they're still gonna understand you. But I don't know, I never really thought about particularly leaving out certain particles. And if they don't understand you at first, then you add in the particles. (I DCU 03)

Even if particle ellipsis became a habit for many participants, most learners admitted that they did not know which particles were appropriate to omit and in which situations. As a result of unconsciously leaving particles out, learners found it challenging to consciously shift between particle inclusion and particle ellipsis. As one participant noted:

> [My teacher in Ireland] was like, 'Stop dropping particles.' Cause I had been used not to including all my particles [in Japan]. I didn't think I was doing anything wrong. In my head I was like, 'This makes perfect sense!' So, you have to reverse back to using classroom Japanese after. (FG 4 DCU 15)

Several learners who had incorporated particle ellipsis during their time in Japan reported forgetting how to use particles. Therefore, participants commented that it was "dangerous" to become used to particle ellipsis.

5.2.2.3 Incomplete Sentences

This section focuses on challenges with hedging expressions. In section 2.11.2, I explained that L1 speakers often leave sentences syntactically incomplete, thereby contributing to the notion that Japanese is an indirect language. In this regard, learners reported that in Japanese there is more implied than stated outright and thus do not always say what they truly mean. 16 out of 31 respondents found that misunderstandings occurred due to L1 speakers not saying what they truly meant (see Figure 5.5).

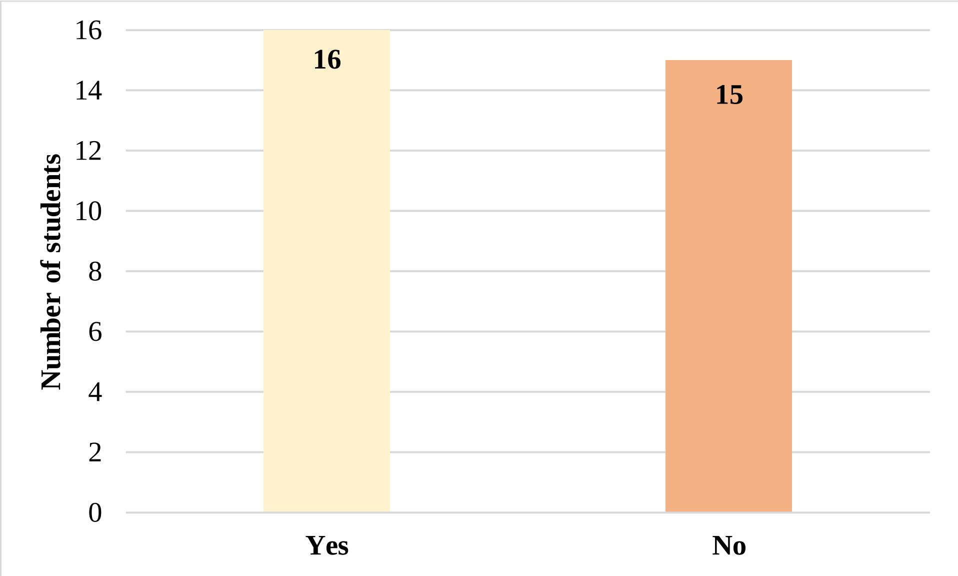


Figure 5.5: 16 out of 31 respondents felt that L1 speakers do not say what they mean.

Learners added that it was difficult to become accustomed to indirectness and ambiguity, which they felt were two characteristics of the Japanese language. Although some participants noted that indirect communication is also used in interactions in Ireland, learners noted that in Japan the use of ambiguity "may be even a step further" (FG 1 DCU 02). In this regard, learners agreed that the Irish convey their thoughts more directly than the Japanese:

> They [the Japanese] are less forward about their opinions. If they didn't know you very well, it was very much like, 'I am not gonna tell you my opinion in case it causes a fight.' And we're like, 'No! Go on, go on!' (FG 2 DCU 03)

However, some participants expected to find more indirectness than what they encountered. As one participant commented, "I didn't see nearly as much [indirectness] as we were taught" (FG 3 DCU 08).

It is worth noting that some learners attributed the indirectness of L1 speakers to interpersonal strategies and stated that an indirect strategy that L1 speakers used was the softening of their utterances to avoid negative reactions. Indeed, one of the mechanisms that contributed to the so-called indirectness was that of hedging, which diminishes a speaker's degree of commitment to the proposition expressed (see section 2.11.2). In particular, the use of hedges and incomplete sentences at the workplace and classroom surprised learners, as they found it was "very hard to distinguish actual meaning from literal meaning" (Q UL 27). Several participants reasoned that, in these situations, L1 speakers used indirect language strategies on purpose to teach learners how to understand Japanese people better. In contrast, others observed that the use of indirect language was not arbitrary and that L1 speakers could also be clear and straightforward if they had wanted. Regardless, learners found that teachers and employers should have made direct requests and provided clear guidelines. For example:

> [My boss] was like, 'Maybe you could do this? I wonder if this?' I was like, 'Do you want me to change it or not?' But really what she was saying was, 'You have to change this right now'. (FG 1 DCU 01)

The use of hedges and other softening expressions often led to difficulties in recovering L1 speakers' intended meaning. Examples of hedges that created confusion were concerned with utterances composed of adverbs, adjectives, epistemic sentence-final markers and negative questioning (see section 2.11.2). For instance:

> 'Do you like this?', and they'd be like '*Maamaa*' [more or less] or '*Chotto muzukashii*' [a bit difficult]. And that doesn't actually mean, you know, 'little difficult'. It's like 'no'. But you have to pick these things up. (I DCU 06)

> Somebody said to her [my friend], '*Arigatai kamoshirenai*' [I might be thankful] and she couldn't figure it out (…). If somebody came up to me and said, 'I am thankful, probably,' I'd consider it a little insulting. To an Irish person to add that 'maybe', that aspect of doubt over whether or not they may be thankful, would seem kind of a little bit insulting. Like, sarcastic in a way. (I DCU 04)

The excerpts above suggest that learners could not appropriately, or took longer to, interpret the intentions communicated via hedges. Even if learners could eventually interpret utterances with hedges, the use of hedges generated several negative reactions among learners, including confusion, anger and frustration. Some learners even interpreted hedges as sarcastic, offensive and rude. This was further explained by a participant who wanted to get a prescription in the pharmacy one day late:

> And instead of yes or no, it was just, '*A, muzukashii desu*' [Oh, this is difficult]. And I am like, 'All you're saying is that it's difficult to do it, that doesn't mean it's impossible.' [The pharmacist] was being too ambiguous, and it took her about a good 10-15 minutes to be like, 'No, we can't give it to you.' And I was like, 'OK, you could have said that from the start and I'd have gone.' After a rigamarole of questions. My God, 'You could have just said no!' So, in those situations, obviously, directness is preferred. (I DCU 01)

The above examples demonstrate that some learners did not know how to interpret hedges and were offended when L1 speakers used such a strategy. Others were aware that hedges were used to save face and appear less straightforward.

In regard to production, only a few participants reported having "learned the mannerisms you need to have to be vague" (I DCU 07). Together with prosody and facial expressions (see sections 5.2.3 and 5.2.4), some learners incorporated hedges to help them appear as better interlocutors. However, learners expressed that it was too much effort "to find a long way around" expressing their thoughts and preferred communicating more directly. As a result, they often came across as too direct due to their inability or unwillingness to soften their utterances.

5.2.3 Prosody

A few respondents mentioned intonation as a feature that provided cues to speakers' attitudes and emotions. Therefore, a question about prosody at the utterance level was included in the follow-up interviews and FG discussions.

As I explained in section 5.2.2.3, L1 speakers are not always direct with their thoughts and opinions. In this regard, learners explained that prosody in Japanese was used to show L1 speakers' full intentions without being rude. Learners felt that L1 speakers often relied on intonation to convey emotions such as urgency and surprise more than speakers of other languages. Thus, intonation helped learners understand certain emotions:

> Certain intonation does help you understand people better, because from the intonation you can kinda understand how they're feeling, generally. And it's like you know the true meaning behind what they're saying. (FG 4 DCU 16)

Interestingly, prosody was mentioned often with other features. For example, when discussing nonverbal cues (see section 5.2.4), learners observed that L1 speakers employ a combination of prosodic features and facial/bodily expressions to convey discomfort and disagreement:

> You can tell they're annoyed. You're not sure what they're annoyed about, but it's something you've done. Just based on the head tilt and yes, the slowly speaking and the lowered kind of [voice]. It's hard to describe it, but when it happens, you're like, 'Oh. Uh, oh [realising she has done something bad]' (I DCU 01)

However, when discussing humour (see section 5.2.5), one respondent noted that learners could not rely on intonation to interpret humour:

> Due to how the Japanese people present their jokes, it was hard to distinguish it from the overall intention of the sentence as there were rarely any changes in tone. (Q DCU 08).

Indeed, a few participants explained that they never noticed how people speak as prosody is not a feature they paid attention to or were aware of during their time in Japan, despite its importance in communication. As one interviewee reported:

> It's difficult to realise that it [intonation] is there and how important it is until somebody guides you (…). I've no doubt that I've confused a few people in Japan or maybe made it difficult to talk with me or understand what I'm talking about, possibly even offended them. Just because I subconsciously used the way I speak here as the basis of how I'd speak Japanese as well. (I DCU 04)

Learners also discussed several challenges in relation to their lack of understanding about prosody and how it was used to convey meaning. Learners struggled with interpreting sentence type, particularly questions. Most learners expected to hear the sentence-final particle *ka* at the end of the utterance to mark interrogation, but L1 speakers frequently dropped the particle or they substituted the question particle *ka* for the casual sentence-final particle *no,* which also marks interrogation (see section 5.2.2.2). Thus, learners could not understand that a question was being asked and whether they had to reply or not. For example:

> I noticed sometimes they asked me a question, but I didn't pick up that it was a question that they were asking because they'd dropped the [question particle] *ka*, and they just raised their voice. And then, by them looking at me, I was like, 'I'm sorry. Can you please repeat that again?' And then they'd usually slow down and make it more obvious that they were actually asking me a question. (I DCU 02)

Using intonation appropriately imposed a further set of challenges for learners. As participants were not very familiar with how prosody is used in Japanese, many transferred, either consciously or unconsciously, L1 prosodic features to the L2. As a result, the use of prosody among learners was pointed out as inappropriate and even incorrect on several occasions. Inappropriate employment of prosody resulted in learners sounding flirtatious, humorous or lacking emotion when that was not their communicative intention. This was described as a significant issue for learners.

Earlier, I discussed challenges with interpreting utterance types, which L1 speakers mark with the use of certain prosodic contours. This also has an implication for production. For example, although learners attempted to omit the question particle *ka* and use prosody instead to mark sentence type just like L1 speakers do, these attempts were not always successful as they did not have sufficient practice with prosody as a means to mark sentence type. This often resulted in L1 speakers not being able to interpret the sentence type intended by learners:

> In fact, quite a lot of the time I'd try to ask someone else a question in that way, and half the time they'd get it, but half the time they would kind of be like, 'Are you saying you did that or are you asking.' I don't know what went wrong half the time.
> (FG 3 DCU 11)

Further to difficulties in the use of appropriate prosodic features, learners also reported discomfort with incorporating certain intonational patterns into their oral production since how L1 speakers used prosodic features was different from what learners expected or were used to. One participant even explained that he felt "forced" and "disingenuous" attempting to use intonation the way L2 speakers did it.

Both at the production and interpretation level, learners discussed challenges associated with using words with multiple meanings which can only be distinguished by prosodic features such as backchannel expressions. The quote below illustrates this with the expression *heee* [surprise, understanding]:

> The three differences between saying *he*. One is like, *heeee*↑ [elongates the 'e' and rises her intonation up, in surprise or shock], and then *heeee*↓ [elongates the 'e' but keeps the tone down], and then *hee* [shorter but with higher pitch]. There's three different meanings from those three different sounds, and it's the same syllable. It takes you a little while to kind of catch on. You have to hear it maybe three times for someone to be using it and be like, 'Ah, okay. I think I got it now.' And then use

> the wrong one. And then they're like, 'Why? What's wrong with you?' And you're like, '[inhales] Oh no! I made a mistake!' (FG 2 DCU 03)

> And you're just like, 'I thought I was agreeing. Apparently, I'm disagreeing.' But they're like, 'What?' [with surprise] And you're, 'Ugh, Sorry.' (FG 2 DCU 04)

However, learners reported their unawareness of the differences in intonation and various intricate meanings of these multi-function words. Not knowing the differences in intonation confused learners as they misinterpreted the meaning or could not interpret it at all. It was confusing for participants to know which intonation was used in which situation, both when interpreting and producing utterances. As a result, learners conveyed a different meaning or attitude than the one they intended, resulting in misunderstanding and miscommunication.

5.2.4 Bodily Expressions

Learners noted that oral interaction in Japanese relies heavily on nonverbal features of the language, perhaps more so than in other languages and cultures they were familiar with (see also sections 5.2.6 and 5.2.7). A few learners noted that the Japanese language is emotive and that many interactions could be conducted without uttering any linguistic meaning. For example:

> I was taken aback by, or I found it odd, when they were not outwardly denying something, but I could still tell from their faces. Like, they were like, 'Yeah' [tilts his head slightly], kinda making an awkward face. So, even though maybe the way they responded was different, the way their faces went, or the kind of nonverbal reaction, I understood it straight away. (FG 3 DCU 11)

In the words of 90 percent of respondents, L1 speakers used nonverbal communicative cues such as silence, backchannels, gestures and bodily expressions (smiles, nods, head tilts and bows), differently than what they expected before moving to Japan. This was later confirmed by FG participants. Learners also noted how L1 speakers used several nonverbal cues concurrently to convey meaning and how challenging that was for them to interpret. This is illustrated in the conversation below:

> They like a good neck crick. Have you ever seen men just being like, [inhales in and tilts her head to one side]. It would mean like, 'You are wrong.' Like, 'Whatever you are saying, you're wrong.' '[inhales deeply again, tilts her head] *Sounandesuyone*…' [Is that so?] And you are like, 'Oh my God! What did I just

say?’ I just remember when someone said it to me and I was like, ‘Uh, gosh. I’ve done something wrong...’ (FG 4 DCU 14)

Or the neck bend. (FG 4 DCU 17)

It means ‘I don’t understand it’ Like, ‘[tilts her head] *Are*?’ [Huh?] ‘[tilts her head] *Are*?’ [tilts her head again] *Un*?’ [Eh?] (FG 4 DCU 16)

They will close their eyes as well. (FG 4 DCU 13)

Some learners soon realised that paying attention to body language and gestures was key to interpreting meaning that was not verbally conveyed, and that facial and bodily expressions were clues to speakers’ meaning. One respondent admitted that:

We need to learn not only the language itself but also the body language that comes along with it in order to appear as a better user of the language. (Q UL 31).

Learners explained that some nonverbal cues were easier for them to understand than others. For example, gestures that were accompanied by linguistic output were less challenging since, according to learners, they were a mere illustration of the verbal output. If they could understand the linguistic expression, they could also understand the gesture that accompanied it, and vice versa. Nonetheless, a few participants found these gestures to be unnecessary as the linguistic expression was sufficient to interpret meaning. For example:

I had some friends who, for example, every time, every single time they said *okane* [money], they had to do this gesture [touches her thumb and index finger in a circle].[23] Every single time. I thought it was so weird, like you don’t have to illustrate what you’re saying. I understand the word *okane* [money]. But even when they were talking to other Japanese speakers, they were doing it. It’s like, you can’t say *arigatō* [thanks] without bowing your head a bit. (FG 1 DCU 02)

However, some bodily expressions used by L1 speakers were not very conventionalised and learners found them more difficult to interpret. Learners did not know what many of those expressions meant, leaving them with having to do some guesswork to correctly interpret what L1 speakers meant. For example:

Why does holding your hand sideways in front of your nose means sorry? [and why] when referring to themselves, Japanese people would point at their nose? (Q UL 31)

[23] See section 2.11.4 for an illustration of this gesture.

Pointing at one's nose was described as a strange gesture that resulted in confusion and misunderstanding since learners did not know it was a gesture to confirm oneself as the recipient of information. Some learners thought that they had something on their nose or that speakers' were drawing learners' attention to their nose. In regard to production, one learner explained how, when she pointed at her chest to refer to herself:

> One of the elderly ladies who lived in the building was like, 'Oh, that's a bit sexy! And I was like, 'That's just how we gesture to ourselves.' But she was like, 'No, no, no! Your nose, not your chest'. (FG 2 DCU 04)

Most participants learned what pointing at one's nose meant, although many felt childish when performing such a gesture.

Other gestures that learners found different to that in Ireland were the hand fan and the up and down hand movement, two gestures performed either in front of the face or the chest (see section 2.11.4). According to participants, the hand fan conveyed negation and the up and down hand movement was performed when someone was walking through a crowded space. Learners were confused by these gestures as they looked like gestures that have a different meaning in Ireland, although some learners had an inkling of what they meant. For example:

> I used to just be looking at them going, 'What are they doing while they are shaking their hand?' (FG 2 DCU 05)

The gesture that created the most confusion and communication breakdown among learners was that of beckoning. Learners observed that L1 speakers beckoned with their palm facing down, towards themselves, which looked more like a gesturing away than a gesturing towards motion. Participants felt that the beckoning gesture appeared rude to them because they mistook it as a 'go away' gesture. This is clearly illustrated in the quote below:

> At my first day at work, the Japanese sign for 'to follow' is the Irish sign for 'to stay where you are', and I stayed and was later scolded for not following my manager immediately. (Q UL 27)

One final bodily expression learners had difficulties with was bowing. One respondent noted that "bowing was very unfamiliar to me until I went to Japan" (Q UL 26). Learners knew about bowing before moving to the SA context, but many considered it a strange gesture. They noted that bowing is not used in interactions in Ireland. Thus, some learners even felt sorry for L1 speakers when they bowed to them:

> I found it strange when you go visit some places and they continuously bow until you leave. I thought that was so strange and I feel bad that they have to keep bowing until you leave. (FG 5 UL 20)

Interestingly, participants identified some of the main functions a bow may hold, even though they seemed unaware of their knowledge about such functions. According to learners, situations where bowing is conducted, include:

- As an apology when bumping into someone;
- As a farewell when finishing work;
- As a farewell when leaving a public or private space;
- As a form of gratitude.

Nonetheless, after their return to Ireland, most learners still seemed confused about the several meanings a bow may convey. In terms of production, some participants explained that bowing was a gesture that they eventually became so accustomed to that they continued to bow upon their return to Ireland:

> I found that it kinda rubbed off on me [everyone agrees]. So, like, even in the shop, they say like, '*Irashaimase*' [Welcome] or something, I feel like I am like [bows]. I don't wave or whatever, but you just end up leaning [slightly bows]. And even I still do it here [in Ireland] and I feel weird. (FG 4 DCU 15)

That is because, in the SA context, several participants observed and mirrored how L1 speakers employed bodily expressions in daily interactions. Exposure assisted participants in gaining knowledge about what types of expressions are used as well as when to use them. One interviewee explained it as follows:

> A lot of the time, I just looked at what other Japanese people were doing. So, if they didn't say anything or they just bowed their head, I did the same cause I would then know what was kinda expected in that situation. (I DCU 02).

The above quote illustrates how, either consciously or unconsciously, participants adopted some bodily expressions common in Japanese oral interaction even if they did not feel comfortable with them.

5.2.5 Humour

In the questionnaires and FG discussions, learners stated that interpreting and producing utterances aimed at creating humorous effects were challenging. Some learners even noted that humour is one of the hardest features to master in any language. As demonstrated in Figure 5.6 below, 71 percent of respondents stated that understanding utterances aimed at creating humour was difficult. However, a few learners were aware that understanding humorous effects depends on several idiosyncratic factors such as "the person, their type of humour and their relationship with them" (Q DCU 06).

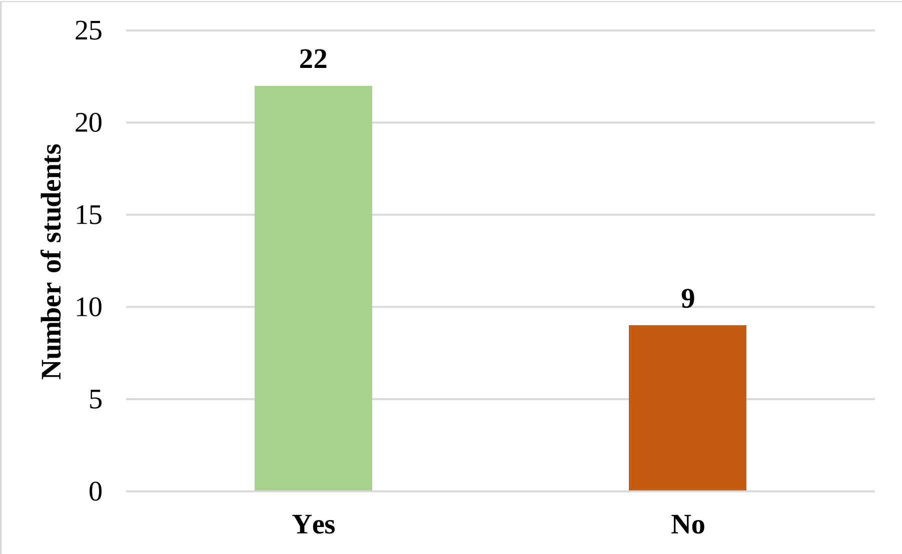


Figure 5.6: 22 out of 31 learners found it difficult to interpret utterances with humorous effects.

At the interpretation level, learners observed that L1 speakers used puns as their main source of creating humour. Puns were difficult for learners to interpret because felt they needed more linguistic and phonetic knowledge to understand the at least two meanings of the pun (see section 2.11.5). As one respondent observed:

> Depending on how you pronounce the noun, you could have a completely different meaning, hence the joke. As a non-native speaker, understanding the difference is a big challenge, as we are obliged to learn various new compounds with varying pronunciations. (Q DCU 09)

Some learners appreciated the humorous effects conveyed in puns, while others wanted to appreciate puns but could not due to their lack of linguistic knowledge. As a result, a number of participants "felt bad that [they] could never laugh or appreciate" puns (FG 3 DCU 10). However, there was one type of wordplay that was easier to interpret, that was when L1 speakers combined words in English and Japanese to create a new word, such as "arigathanks".[24]

Lack of linguistic knowledge was not just a limitation to interpreting puns. Respondents acknowledged that limited linguistic and sociocultural knowledge hindered their ability to recognise and/or understand instances of humour. For example:

> I think it is a mixture of needing a higher proficiency in the Japanese language but also that they are just completely different to Ireland's jokes or sense of humour. (Q DCU 11)

Another source of humour that learners reported as being challenging to understand was the use of language that goes against the expected sociocultural and sociolinguistic norms. Learners observed that the use of dialects, a foreign pronunciation and the use of certain speech styles could become a source of humour among L1 speakers. As one participant explains:

> It's odd for me to think that a dialect or a group of people are funny and they have to use that dialect to be funny. I just noticed that people, whenever they are doing comedy, they use that Kansai-ben a lot because Osakans are funny and stuff like that. I don't get it. (FG 4 DCU 14)

Additionally, learners observed that L1 speakers often relied on facial and bodily expressions to be humorous. For example:

> I think people in Japan who are considered funny it's usually down to their actions rather than what they say. It's like how they act or them being silly or putting things on their head rather than verbal jokes. (FG 1 DCU 01)

These "goofy little silly things" that the Japanese did to be humorous were easier for learners to interpret, although they would not always find them amusing.

An added difficulty was the different types of humour available in Japan. Learners observed that humour in Japan greatly differs from humour in Ireland and other English-speaking countries. As a result of this divergence, at times learners and L1 speakers alike did not recognise an attempt at humour by the speaker or did not find humour amusing. This was a concern for learners, who felt they may have offended some L1 speakers due to not laughing at their jokes. For example:

[24] This is a combination of the Japanese word *arigatō* [thanks] and the English word "thanks". It means "thanks".

> I feel that Japanese humour is quite different from what I am used to. I had troubles translating jokes from my country, not because of the language level, but simply because they could not understand. And I had trouble just joking in Japanese. At the same time I don't really find Japanese verbal humour funny. I think this situation was mutual. (Q UL 25)

According to participants, there was a lack of humour in Japanese oral interactions as they did not hear many humorous exchanges. They also felt that the Japanese have a different sense of humour to the Irish, and argued that humour in Japan tends to be slapstick and based on wackiness. Additionally, what learners found funny was completely different to what L1 speakers found humorous. The quotes below illustrate this clearly:

> It was odd because you could understand literally what they were saying, but you were like 'This makes absolutely no sense'. (FG 4 DCU 14)

> I think their humour is a lot more to the point than humour in Ireland and England or the UK, where it is a lot more sarcastic and dry. (FG 6 UL 22)

Learners also noted the importance of contextual awareness in understanding utterances aimed at creating humour. They stated that in Japan humour was often based on previous experiences and anecdotes shared between interlocutors and repeated a few times until it became a running joke that was brought up in different situations. As one informant noted:

> A lot of the humour I experienced was very much like, almost you had to be there kind of thing. (FG 4 DCU 15)

This links to the rapport between interlocutors. Being able to establish rapport was important if learners wanted to joke with L1 speakers, as the more learners established rapport, the more they felt they could joke around.

At the level of production, L1 speakers did not always understand that learners were communicating an extra layer of intention when using humour. As a result, L1 speakers failed to understand that learners were joking or took longer to process it:

> If I had said something to one of my Japanese friends and I meant it as a joke, they wouldn't understand immediately that it was a joke. (FG 2 DCU 06)

Not being able to identify a humorous intention was particularly common when participants used sarcasm, a form of humour that, according to learners, caused several misunderstandings. Learners felt "as if sarcasm doesn't exist in Japan" and agreed that the Japanese do sarcasm quite “poorly” and that it was generally not well-received nor understood by L1 speakers. Learners stated that sarcasm was difficult to get across as L1 speakers did not understand it as intended.

To strengthen bonds with their interlocutors, participants used sarcasm as a natural way for them to convey humour. However, learners found that L1 speakers did not understand the humorous intention and therefore took the meaning of the sarcastic utterance literally. The result of the discrepancy between intended and literal meaning caused communication breakdown and interpersonal issues. For instance:

> They don’t get sarcasm. They thought I was being mean. I made a cake once and I brought it in [to work], and they were all like, ‘Oh, why?’ And I was like, ‘Oh, because everyone is so mean to me,’ or like, ‘I hate all of you.’ I was just being funny! I said it with a smile. And then they were like, ‘Oh, so sorry. Oh my God! No, we don’t hate you!’ And I was like, ‘It’s a joke, and I really like everybody. Everybody is nice, that’s why I made a cake.’ (FG 5 UL 18)

As learners’ intention to convey humour was not understood by L1 speakers, learners felt that they had to exaggerate their intonation and their use of facial and bodily expressions to be funny. They also explained that, at times, they were laughed at when they used certain pronunciations, used slang/dialects, misused speech styles or adopted gendered speech, even if their intention was not to be humorous. For example:

> In order to be funny in Japan, I had to either speak Japanese badly, speak Japanese like a boy, or be very over the top with the things that were funny, so you definitely knew it was a joke. I had to do loads of intonation to be like, ‘Hahaha. We are having a funny joke. I am telegraphing that this is a joke’ [rising her intonation up and down]. (FG 2 DCU 04)

With experience, learners understood that going against what was expected and exaggerating certain linguistic and paralinguistic features of the language may be funny for L1 speakers and used such knowledge to their advantage.

5.2.6 Silence

Silence was reported in the questionnaires and discussed in FGs but, due to time constraints, was not alluded to in the semi-structured interviews.

Silence carries an extra layer of intention that, if not understood, can result in difficulties in interpreting its meaning (see section 2.11.6). 20 out of 31 respondents were challenged by the use of silence in the SA context. Learners seemed to be challenged by both ostensive and non-ostensive silences, although participants did not demonstrate an awareness of the difference between the two. About ostensive silence, only two respondents stated that silence is used to communicate and only one provided an example of a situation where L1 speakers used silence to create meaning. As she explained:

> When we had finished our meal, she [my friend] and her parents started speaking less and less. They used silence to indicate that the evening was over. I didn't understand straight away. (Q DCU 06)

Another informant observed that, generally, the Irish say what they mean where L1 speakers might become silent, such as when expressing strong opinions. Respondents especially reported experiencing challenges with silence in first-time interactions, self-introductions and small talk. They also noted that silence was often the result of shortages in conversation and a lack of understanding among interlocutors. The two quotes below illustrate this:

> Many times when trying to communicate with a Japanese person in Japan there were very long awkward silences and this made trying to speak to them very hard. Sometimes in work, I would try to have a conversation in Japanese with my co-workers but they would not understand and just be very silent (Q UL 27)

Similarly, a few participants discussed ostensive silence and stated that silence may carry meaning and, if unable to understand its meaning, silence became ambiguous. In turn, such ambiguity resulted in learners' anxious struggle to interpret what the L1 speaker intended to communicate with silence. Adding to this, learners observed that silence was often accompanied by facial and bodily expressions such as smiling, nodding and some verbal aizuchi, which made silence even more awkward for learners. For example:

> I think someone was trying to push for a refund and instead of being like, 'Well, you can fix it by doing this.' They clearly weren't going to do it, so they were listening. And then they just nod and not say anything. Maybe, again, the whole thing of, cause it's a business or something, they don't want to outwardly deny a costumer. But they were just kind of ghost silent as a way of saying [it's over]. (FG 3 DCU 11)

Learners noted that L1 speakers seemed to use silence to politely communicate disagreement, disapproval and rebuke. In particular, a few learners agreed that there was a general preference among L1 speakers for using silence rather than explicit verbal forms to express disagreement without seeking confrontation.

When L1 speakers did not understand learners, instead of attempting to correct them or asking to rephrase, they would become silent, "the kind of which is awkward in Ireland" (Q DCU 19). Participants observed that it is more common to have periods of silence in Japanese conversation that are not considered uncomfortable for L1 speakers, but can be for learners. As two FG participants added:

> Silence was their answer. Like, 'Oh, I get what you said. I am letting it settle.' And you're sitting there like, [inhaling sharply, with a panicky voice] 'What have I done?' (FG 2 DCU 03)
>
> Yeah. Because it just brings up the ambiguity, again. Because you don't know [what that silence means]. (FG 2 DCU 06)

Learners generally found silence to be ambiguous, which led to feelings of discomfort among them. Some participants even described silence as one of the most disconcerting aspects of Japanese oral interaction. Learners highlighted that the main reason for feeling discomfort with silence was due to it being more present and frequent in Japan than in their home countries. Participants felt that the Japanese do not consider it necessary to speak all the time, whereas they felt English speakers from Ireland and the UK tend to fill in and avoid silences or gaps in conversations. This is further explained in the excerpt below:

> There's definitely a cultural difference, though. Because even when we're speaking English, we hate silence. We just talk about nothing. (FG 4 DCU 17)
>
> Yeah, you just fill it with something. Even if it's nothing. (FG 4 DCU 16)
>
> (…) I didn't change in Japan. I still didn't like being silent, but I had to remind myself that because it's silent, it doesn't mean they [the Japanese] don't like you or they wanna go home. They're more comfortable in silence. (FG 4 DCU 15)

Learners also reported feeling responsible if there were instances of silence in conversations, and frequently wondered if they had said or done something wrong as L1 speakers opted for silence instead of verbal communication:

> They are not looking at you, and they're silent. And you're like, [inhaling loudly] 'What have I done wrong?' (FG 2 DCU 03)

In regard to production, participants expressed a degree of anxiety when faced with silence in oral interaction due to the differences in the use of silence between their L1 and the L2. As learners expressed a degree of discomfort with silence, they tried to rectify the situation by filling the gaps. For example:

> I think at the beginning I wasn't used to silence, cause I was just like, 'What's your favourite Disney movie? Where have you been? What's your favourite colour?' Maybe I was annoying, but they got used to me pretty quickly. (FG 5 UL 18)

As a response to silence, some learners made jokes or felt the need to fill the silence by adopting and even intensifying how they used their L1 in the L2, which in turn resulted in L1 speakers feeling uncomfortable.

5.2.7 Aizuchi (Backchanneling)

Japanese backchannels or aizuchi are verbal and nonverbal signals, sometimes produced concurrently, that listeners use during a speaker's turn to convey a wide range of meanings (see section 2.11.7). Since some learners described aizuchi as a problematic feature of Japanese oral interaction in the questionnaires and interviews, a question about Japanese backchannel expressions was incorporated in the FG discussions. Four out of six FG participants discussed issues with aizuchi, one FG did not know what aizuchi were and in one aizuchi was not brought up.

Participants noted the little to no exposure they had to aizuchi before going to Japan, and therefore did not know much about aizuchi before travelling to the SA context. For example:

> [aizuchi] is not something that you learn in school, but it's something that you pick up really quickly once you're actually there [in Japan]. (FG 1 DCU 01)

Discussions about aizuchi showed a degree of unawareness about how and why Japanese backchannels are employed, since they did not know what aizuchi actually entailed even after their return from Japan. Although participants mentioned some functions of aizuchi (e.g. agreement, disagreement, clarification and acknowledgement, expressing emotion, listenership), they noted that their meaning was frequently unclear as one form of aizuchi can have multiple meanings depending on the context of the interaction and the prosody used to convey them.[25] For instance:

[25] The aizuchi featured in this thesis are used to convey a wide range of thoughts/feelings/intentions, and there is therefore no one-to-one correspondence between aizuchi and meaning.

> The pitch of their *uns* [sure, hum, well]. Like, *un*↓ [quick and monotonous] or *uun*↑ or *unnn* [elongating the final letter]? (FG 2 DCU 04)

> Sometimes, because it [aizuchi] is not an actual word, you don't know if it's meant in a positive or negative. (FG 2 DCU 06)

Learners also highlighted the differences between the frequency of Japanese and Irish backchannels and observed that, in Japanese, there are more instances of backchanneling than in English. One respondent commented:

> The use of *aizuchi* is much more evident in Japan than in Ireland. It is sometimes hard to remember that you can just nod your head to indicate that you are listening. (Q DCU 02)

Participants described aizuchi as random noises, sounds, short phrases, a nonverbal behaviour, and reactions that are not actually words. In regard to forms of aizuchi, learners only mentioned head nods as nonverbal backchannels, but noticed more short verbal expressions such as *naruhodo* [understanding], *ooo* [surprise] and the sentence-final particles *ne* [acknowledgement of shared information] and *yo* [provision of new information]. For instance:

> And so many of, like, *heee*↑ [surprise], and *neee*↓ [acknowledgement], and *soou*↓ [understanding], and [the sentence-final particle] *saaa* [assertion] (FG 2 DCU 05)

> *Sou sou sou sou sou sou sou* [I see]. They are literally forever saying *sou sou sou sou sou* [I see]. (FG 4 DCU 13)

Other forms of Japanese backchannels such as repetition, laughter, anticipatory expressions and reformulations were not mentioned in the findings. A few learners also mentioned the difference between the location/timing of aizuchi in Japanese and backchannel expressions in English. For example:

> Usually, if you're speaking in English, someone will finish a sentence or make a pause and someone will be like, 'Hmm, hmm'. But, in Japanese, they'll do it mid-sentence. Like, every few words. (FG 3 DCU 11)

As a result of these differences, participants viewed certain forms of aizuchi as amusing and comical. Adding to this, learners considered aizuchi, both verbal and nonverbal, to be bewildering, distracting and even slightly irritating. For instance:

> People use lots of nodding and noises to communicate that they are listening to what you are saying. There are lots of surprised sounds like "ahhhh" or "ehhhhh" when

> Japanese natives converse which I think if we did that here in Ireland people would assume that we are joking or messing with them or not taking what they are saying seriously. (Q DCU 11)

> Like, people do answer *nn, nn* [uh-huh]. And I was like, 'Use words! Answer me! Don't just be like *nn* [uh-huh].' Cause it just feels really rude, but it's not rude. (FG 2 DCU 04)

Just like silence, L1 speakers' frequent use of aizuchi made learners feel uncomfortable as they thought they had said or done something wrong. This is particularly true in instances where aizuchi was used in combination with silence and bodily expressions. As one participant explained:

> It would mean like, 'You are wrong.' Like, 'Whatever you are saying, you're wrong.' '[inhales deeply, tilts her head] *Sounandesuyone*… [Is that so?]' And you are like, 'Oh my God! What did I just say??' I just remember when someone said it to me and I was like, 'Uh, gosh. I've done something wrong.' (FG 4 DCU 14)

These findings suggest that some of their understanding aizuchi was incorrect. For instance, some participants believed that aizuchi can only be used in casual settings or that aizuchi are employed in place of direct verbal communication, which is not entirely accurate. Although these assumptions demonstrate a degree of awareness about aizuchi, it still shows the need to better equip learners with more information about these features of the language. Unfamiliarity with aizuchi and unawareness of their functions also had consequences at the production level. Learners were not accustomed to expressing listenership using certain forms of aizuchi or in certain positions within an interaction. Not using aizuchi to communicate meaning impacted how L1 speakers and L2 learners interacted. For example:

> I'm just not used to being like, '[continuously nods] *Un un un un*' [yes, yes, yes, yes] to tell them that I am listening. Because I am listening. I am doing it. And I remember people would seem to get a little bit like, 'Are you still listening to me? Should I shut up? Am I boring you?'. (FG 4 DCU 14)

> Yeah, yeah! That's it! They kinda check halfway through and then you're like, 'No, no, no. It's fine.' (FG 4 DCU 15)

As a result, aizuchi was a feature of the language that learners became used to, but not many incorporated it in their oral production.

5.3 Summary

In this chapter, I presented the main features of the Japanese language that learners were challenged by in oral interaction with L1 speakers during their SA programmes or work placements in Japan. In all three cycles of data collection, challenges with the Japanese language provoked much passionate debate through personal anecdotes and concrete examples of language use in Japan. The findings revealed the coexistence and articulation of different, and sometimes concurrent, challenging features of the Japanese language. The findings also described how informants engaged and dealt with the challenges presented.

Understanding the complexity of the challenges outlined above and their role in L2 interaction is not straightforward. Rather, the challenges faced by participants were complex, multifaceted and sensible to learners' experiences, exposure to the language, proficiency level and idiosyncratic perceptions and behaviours. However, the findings also demonstrate that the challenges learners encountered were rather homogenous despite their unique experiences in the SA context. Given this, the results allowed for a detailed analysis regarding the pragmatic challenges L2 learners faced in oral interaction with L1 speakers in Japan. In the next chapter, I discuss the findings within the framework of Relevance Theory.

CHAPTER 6:

DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

In previous studies, many of the issues learners of Japanese as L2 encountered were presented as either anecdotal/based on researchers' intuition or focused on production and linked to speech acts. Furthermore, many of these studies did not have a solid theoretical basis that explained the causes of such challenges (see Chapter 2). The findings described in the previous chapter encompass a wide range of features of the Japanese language that were problematic for learners. These included speech styles, ellipsis, utterance-level prosody, bodily expressions, humour, silence and aizuchi.

In this chapter, I provide theoretical underpinnings of these challenges following a cognitive approach to human communication. Examining the challenges through the lens of Relevance Theory enables me to identify where the inference process lies within the challenges faced by learners. Such a perspective offers insights into a wider view of the pragmatic challenges and cognitive processing rather than merely describing linguistic and non-linguistic features. Through this perspective, I address the first research question:

- What are the main pragmatic challenges learners faced in oral interaction with L1 speakers in the SA context?

The findings presented in Chapter 5 demonstrate that learners had difficulties with both linguistic encoding and with phenomena that involve inference, which is what section 6.2 focuses on (see Figure 6.1 below).

Challenges with Verbal Features

- Challenges with Linguistic Underdeterminacy (ellipsis)
- Challenges with Linguistic Forms and their Stylistic Effects (speech styles)

Challenges with Non-Verbal Features

- Challenges with Higher-Level Explicatures (prosody, aizuchi, hedges)
- Challenges with Implicatures (silence, bodily expressions/gestures)

Challenges with Humorous Effects (puns, sarcasm)

Figure 6.1: Overview of the themes (i.e. challenges) to emerge from the data.

In section 6.3, I explain the consequences of learners' inability to use their pragmatic competence in L2 communication, and in section 6.4 I explain the causes of such challenges. I conclude the chapter with the main highlights that need to be considered before turning to possible solutions that may help instructors of L2 mitigate the pragmatic challenges learners encountered in oral interaction with L1 speakers.

6.2 Pragmatic Challenges

An important aspect of pragmatic competence is the ability to comprehend meaning beyond what is linguistically coded. The processing of linguistically encoded input and output is always conducted in reference to speakers' intentions. I explain the challenges learners faced against what Sperber and Wilson (2002) call the basic feature of communication: expressing and recognising intention. In this section, I use Relevance Theory to explain the pragmatic challenges learners faced based on the issues they had with linguistic and non-linguistic features they experienced in oral interaction with L1 speakers, as presented in Chapter 5.

In section 6.2.1, I examine challenges that involve both linguistic and inferential processes. I discuss how learners relied on linguistic representations determined by grammar to interpret meaning and why learners reached pragmatic failure as a result. In section 6.2.2, I explore challenges related to inference alone. I focus on difficulties concerned with the recovery of higher-level explicatures (i.e. propositional attitudes and speech acts) and implicatures.

To better illustrate and support the discussion, I provide examples of the challenges. Some examples are taken from the data and are marked as such using the coding scheme provided in section 5.1. Where data-driven examples are unavailable, I illustrate the challenges with constructed examples based on the quotes provided by participants or based on the literature.

6.2.1 Recovery of Verbal Features

In what follows, I present an overview of the challenges related to the decoding of linguistic forms as well as the inability to access the logical forms that underdetermine L1 speakers' meaning. These challenges are associated with the recovery of the proposition expressed by the L1 speaker. This process involved both coding and inferential aspects of communication.

6.2.1.1 Challenges with Linguistic Underdeterminacy

During their time in Japan, learners were often faced with utterances with a considerable gap between their linguistic structure and the meaning L1 speakers aimed to convey. The inability to recover utterances with ellipsis demonstrates that learners were challenged by utterances that included loose syntax. Challenges with loose syntax fall under the explicit dimension of utterance interpretation and production. According to the linguistic underdeterminacy thesis, there is a gap between the linguistic expressions speakers use and the meaning they intend to communicate when they use these expressions (Carston 2002). For learners, the gap between linguistically encoded sentence meaning and the L1 speaker's meaning poses a huge challenge. For instance:

(1) *Suki* (I DCU 05)
Like

Learners found utterances such as (1) to be ambiguous as there are many syntactic elements left unexpressed, including the subject, the object and several case markers. The decoded logical form of (1) is a bare skeleton for the development of a propositional form. To interpret (1), learners must not only enrich the decoded sentence meaning but also make several assumptions to find an interpretation that satisfies the presumption of optimal relevance (e.g. who/what is the subject of the utterance, who/what is the object of the utterance). The less explicit the meaning/content of the utterance, the stronger the degree of indeterminacy and the more responsibility learners must take for the interpretation they construct.

Depending on the assumptions learners make, the above utterance may be understood in a number of ways. Imagine the speaker is at a café with his girlfriend and they are both drinking coffee. Learners might then recover several explicatures, including:

- *(Watashi wa) (kono kohi ga) suki (desu)* (I like this coffee)
  (I) (this coffee) like (formal copula)
- *(Anata wa) (anata no) (kohi ga) suki (desu) (ka)* (Do you like your coffee?)
  (You) (your) (coffee) like (formal copula) (interrogative particle)
- *(Watashi wa) (anata ga) suki (desu)* (I like/love you)
  (I) (you) like/love (formal copula)

(1) is an example of an utterance that is far removed from the proposition expressed, but that is commonly used (and often preferred) to communicate L1 speakers' thoughts. Learners found

it challenging to recover the proposition expressed when L1 speakers uttered (1) as they had to not only work out what L1 speakers were implicating, but also what proposition they were directly expressing.

When L1 speakers choose to utter one linguistic form such as in (1), what is meant by the speaker is propositional and probably obvious in the context of interaction. As every utterance carries with it a presumption of its own optimal relevance, when an utterance with an ellipted element is uttered, hearers assume that the use of loose syntax contributes to optimal relevance. In some situations, L1 speakers may employ loose syntax to achieve more effective communication with minimal explicitly uttered information so that the hearer derives different cognitive effects from the utterance than would have been otherwise derivable. In this process, hearers decode the information conveyed by the use of ellipsis and then undertake an inferential enrichment process to derive the communicative intention, until relevance is satisfied.

6.2.1.2 Challenges with Linguistic Forms and their Stylistic Effects

As is the case with particle/subject inclusion and particle/subject ellipsis, casual, formal and honorific speech styles carry the same propositional content. Speech styles do not change the content of the utterance nor add any new information to the propositional content. However, the associated attitude towards the propositional content (e.g. politeness, register, affective stance, geographical region, social context and gender) is manifested in speech styles through a specific choice of words or a particular selection of syntactic constructions. In other words, a specific choice of one speech style over another encodes information about the context in which a particular linguistic form should be employed. Here I present an example based on the data:

(2) *irasshaimasu* [referent honorific – respect form]
mairimasu [referent honorific – humble form]
ikimasu [addressee honorific – formal form]
iku [casual or plain form]

The example above demonstrates how four different speech style forms encode the same concept, the verbal form {TO GO}. These forms are identical with respect to their propositional meaning, but their lexical construction greatly differs from one verbal form to the other. Learners therefore must first be able to quickly access their linguistic knowledge to decode (or choose the appropriate) verbal forms in real-time oral interaction. Once learners have decoded the verbal form, they must activate several inferential mechanisms such as the ability to read their interlocutors' mind to know why one choice of speech style is more appropriate in a given utterance. However, many learners could not decode certain verbal forms due to the changes in verbal morphology and change in vocabulary. The two following examples illustrate such challenge:

(3) a. *Dochira ni irasshaimasu ka* [referent honorific – respect form] (Where are you going?)

Where to go ?

b. *Doko ni ikimasu ka* [addressee honorific – formal form] (Where are you going?)

Where to go ?

c. *Doko ni iku no* [casual or plain form] (Where are you going?)

Where to go ?

Learners were most familiar with formal lexis and verbal morphology such as in example (3b). However, changes in vocabulary, sentence-final particles and syntactic structures to either honorific or casual forms were challenging for learners. These results are consistent with previous studies, which suggest that honorifics are difficult for L2 learners to master (see e.g. Ikeda 2009). As learners rely on familiar (i.e. easily accessible) linguistic cues to derive meaning, learners could not understand that L1 speakers were asking a question when they used a particle that learners had not been exposed to before such as in (3c).

Learners also lacked specific vocabulary particular to service encounters to engage with clerks, cashiers and shop assistants. This is unsurprising, as Shively (2011) observes that learners frequently engage in these types of interactions in the SA context. To decrease such a challenge, some learners looked up and jotted down vocabulary and expressions before going to places such as banks, hospitals and city halls to prepare linguistic forms they might have needed to produce and interpret (see section 5.3.1). This shows that learners lacked the linguistic competence to interpret and respond to formulaic expressions in everyday interaction particular to service encounters. The following are examples from the data:

(4) *Atatamemasu ka* (Would you like your drink/food heated?)

Irasshaimase! (Welcome)

*O-mochi kaeri (*Takeaway*)*

Learners were unsure of how to interpret, produce and respond to expressions such as in (4). Learners perceived utterances in this context to be relevant enough to be worth their attention, but could not decode formulaic expressions due to the limited linguistic knowledge available in their cognitive environment.

During their time in Japan, learners experienced several dialects that greatly differed from the language they were used to and expected to encounter. Learners had not acquired dialectal forms and therefore lacked linguistic knowledge about dialects. As a result, learners had difficulties differentiating between standard Japanese and dialectal variation both at the interpretation and production level (see section 5.3.1). This is in line with other studies, which suggest that dialects in Japan represent a challenge for L2 users (Takeuchi 2020). Differences among regional dialects can be due to (a combination of) phonetic, accentual, lexical, morphophonological and morphosyntactic changes (see Tsujimura 2014 for more). Lexical and morphological formation made it practically impossible for learners to recover information uttered in dialectal variation as the forms completely differed from the ones they knew or were most familiar with (see Table 6.1).

Learners considered dialects to be an added difficulty to other linguistic and pragmatic challenges they were experiencing. Nonetheless, learners showed curiosity about dialects and wanted to learn more about them. In this regard, learners agreed that dialects would have been extremely useful to have learned in the L2 classroom.

Standard	Dialect	English
*wakara**nai***	*wakara**hen*** [Osaka]	**don't** understand
*kamoshire**nai***	*kamoshire**nu***	may, might, possibly
suru	*shiharu* [Kyoto]	to do
totemo	*meccha* [Osaka]	a lot
arigatō	*yoshitai* [Shiramine]	thanks

Table 6.1: Examples of dialectal changes in vocabulary and grammar based on the data.

Since learners found it challenging to grasp dialectal variations, L1 speakers were frequently inclined to change to standard Japanese to make interaction easier. Even if humans communicate following a path of least effort, L1 speakers changed the linguistic structures until the resulting logical form and interpretation met learners' expectations of relevance. Given this, L1 speakers adapted how they spoke based on learners' knowledge of the language and dialectal proficiency.

The need for inference in the recovery of linguistic representations is particularly evident in speech style mixing. L1 speakers mix multiple speech styles as they dynamically shift from one form to another in a single interaction and with the same interlocutor. The following example illustrates speech style shifting (*ibid.*: 412):

(5) Student: *Ashita no kaigi ni irasshaimasu ka* (referent honorific – respect form)
tomorrow's conference to go ?
Professor: *Ee, ikimasu*. *Tanaka-kun wa?* (addressee honorific)
Yes, go Tanaka Mr topic marker
Student: *Hai, watashi mo mairimasu.* (referent honorific – humble form)
Yes, I too go

Student: Are you going to the conference tomorrow?
Professor: Yes, I will. How about you, Mr Tanaka?
Student: Yes, I will go too.

In the above interaction, the student uses two types of referent honorific while the professor uses the addressee honorific or formal form. There are several linguistic forms to choose from—such as changes in verbal morphology, sentence-final particles and personal pronouns—as well as lack thereof—such as ellipsis.

Speech style mixing is a feature of the Japanese language that learners did not mention and seemed unaware of. This is unsurprising, as most learners of Japanese as L2 are not conscious of style shifts (Cook 2016). This shows that learners' overreliance on social norms rather than cognitive processes—such as the recovery of elliptical material and general enrichment processes—hindered the development of learners' pragmatic competence in the SA context. As a result of limited pragmatic competence, learners found it difficult "to feel" when and how they should use one speech style over the other as there was no moment during the interaction where interlocutors outwardly decided on or agreed upon which speech style to use. This indicates that choosing the most appropriate speech style in a given situation is a cognitively demanding task.

Although linguistic forms can vary greatly from one speech style to another, the referential content of the utterance remains intact. Therefore, the relationship between linguistic forms and social indexicalities is adjusted through inferential processes. Learners must read their interlocutors' minds and attribute intentions to be able to adjust their selection of speech style in real-time processing within a given interaction. Therefore, learners must be equipped with strategies to not only use one particular speech style appropriately, but also change speech styles fluidly and consciously (see section 7.5.1). Learners must constantly make decisions about the choice of speech styles not based on social factors, but based on inference. I argue that inferential processes can help learners attribute L1 speakers' intentions, preferences and expectations as well as activate their world knowledge (including knowledge about social norms) to produce speech styles effectively. I will return to this point in the next chapter.

6.2.2 Recovery of Non-verbal Features

As is widely acknowledged in Relevance Theory, communication goes beyond coding and involves recovering informative and communicative intentions via inference. Unsurprisingly, learners not only struggled with challenges that involve recovering the proposition expressed (i.e. challenges built on linguistic representations), but also experienced difficulties in recovering the intended meaning by inference alone. The inability to make inferences becomes problematic in several ostensive stimuli such as intonation, bodily expressions and gestures, silence and humour. These findings further demonstrate that learners could not recover information about the mental states and intentions of L1 speakers. Even if L1 speakers were making an array of propositions manifest to learners, they were often unable to entertain and accept those propositions as (probably) true. In the next sections, I discuss purely inferential challenges.

6.2.2.1 Challenges with Higher-Level Explicatures

As Carston (2002: 129) notes, verbal utterances must be interpreted together with ostensive nonverbal features if the hearer "is to correctly infer what is being communicated". This is particularly true in the Japanese language, where the information conveyed through verbal content is considerably lower than in other languages such as English (see section 6.2.1.1). Therefore, nonverbal cues such as prosody play a greater role (see Kitayama and Ishii 2002).

The findings concerning prosodic features of the Japanese language were contradictory. Some learners knew that intonation provided clues to L1 speakers' emotions and attitudes about the proposition they were expressing. That is, L1 speakers' use of prosody was relevant enough to be picked out by learners through the relevance-theoretic comprehension heuristics. This indicates that learners were guided by their inferential construction of higher-level explicatures to recover meaning conveyed through prosody. However, unlike L1 speakers, most learners did not use prosody to retrieve the intended meaning and propositional attitude or speech act of their interlocutors.

Issues with prosody suggest that learners are often challenged by the interpretation and production of higher-level explicatures. As I explained in section 3.4, the content of higher-level explicatures remains representational, but there is a separate truth-condition that conveys a higher-level description such as a propositional attitude or speech act. As learners focused on processing linguistic input alone, they could not read in real-time L1 speakers' contextual cues available via features such as prosody, aizuchi and softening expressions. Hence, even if learners could enrich the language forms and basic explicatures, oftentimes they could not recover higher-level explicatures.

Learners reported difficulties with interpreting interrogative utterances. Shibatani and Kageyama (2015: xxvii) note that non-declarative Japanese sentences "frequently suppress auxiliary verbs, the copula, and the question particle especially in casual speech, where intonation and tone of voice provide clues in guessing the intended speech act". The following illustrates this based on an example provided by a questionnaire respondent (Q DCU 14):

(6) *Pātī iku?* (casual form, no interrogative particle)[26]
party go? (Are you going to the party?)

The decoded semantic representation of the utterance above is not fully propositional, but a schematic representation of L1 speakers' thoughts. Thus, learners require pragmatic inference to develop the above utterance into the proposition the speaker intended to express via reference assignment, disambiguation and enrichment of logical forms (see section 6.2.1). In addition, to be able to fully interpret the above utterance, learners must recover a range of higher-level explicatures (explicatures constructed by the development of encoded schematic sentence meanings) that contribute to overall relevance. For instance:

- The L1 speaker is <u>stating</u> that s/he is going to the party.
- The L1 speaker is <u>admitting</u> that s/he is going to the party.
- The L1 speaker is <u>confirming</u> that s/he is going to the party.
- The L1 speaker is <u>asking</u> the learner if s/he is coming to the party.

In Japanese, higher-level explicatures could be conveyed more explicitly, such as with case marker particles as in examples (6a) and (6b), or less explicitly, such as through L1 speakers' tone of voice as in example (6).

(6a) *Pātī iku no* (casual form, nominalisation marker *no* as an interrogative particle)

[26] In Japanese, interrogatives bear a rising intonation, which is marked in the example by the question mark.

party go NM(?)

(6b) *Pātī ikimasu ka* (formal form, interrogative particle *ka*)

party go ?

Example (6a) is more explicit than (6) as it could be interpreted as a question, admission, insistence or assertion among other speech acts, but less explicit than (6b) as it only conveys a question or an invite.

Furthermore, learners did not know how to infer the possible range of interpretations of aizuchi and hedges via prosody as certain linguistic forms change in meaning depending on the type of prosody employed to convey them. This is an illustrative example based on the findings:

(7) *Sou desu ka* ↑

(rising intonation = surprise, confirmation, gratitude)

(8) *Sou desu ka* ↓

(falling intonation = regret, understanding, acknowledgement of new information)

Similar to interjections, aizuchi are often tied to the emotions, mental states and attitudes of the speakers, and are often used in conjunction with prosody and bodily expressions. Together, these paralinguistic features help hearers retrieve the implicatures and higher-level explicatures containing the communicative act or propositional attitude that L1 speakers expect them to infer. Prosody and other contextual cues alter the salience of linguistically possible interpretations. However, this is not always the case for learners, who could not infer the meaning intended by L1 speakers due to their perceived lack of available contextual assumptions on higher-level explicatures in the interpretation process. Learners were unable to retrieve the most relevant interpretation of a given linguistic form and therefore recovered an undesired higher-level explicature (e.g. surprise instead of understanding). As a result, learners were unable to identify the speaker's propositional attitude or degree of commitment towards the proposition expressed. Even if learners reached a relevant interpretation, the interpretation process was effortful and frustrating for learners who preferred a more direct (i.e. explicit) answer.

Intonation constrains the possible interpretation of an utterance as it modifies the hearer's cognitive environment and constructs the context in which an utterance is to be interpreted (House 2006). Thus, through prosody, L1 speakers were making strongly manifest the speech act they intended to communicate, thereby reducing the search space to a single plausible candidate (interrogative speech act). However, for a successful interpretation process to occur, assumptions must be manifest to both the L1 speaker and the learner as a hearer. Learners had difficulties interpreting higher-level explicatures and therefore could not understand that L1 speakers were asking a question (see section 5.3.6).

Syntactically incomplete sentences,[27] hedges and aizuchi may also be used to convey an extra layer of intention. L1 speakers' intentions can be linguistically coded or embedded within (predictable) logical forms. These linguistic and inferential mechanisms help hearers recover the propositional attitude expressed by speakers toward the propositional content of utterances (Wharton 2009). This is an example based on an anecdote from an interviewee (I DCU 01):

(9) Yesterday was a bank holiday, so a learner goes to a pharmacy today to collect her medication. However, the prescription expired the day before. The learner asks the pharmacist if she can collect her medication nonetheless.

Pharmacist: *Muzukashii desu*.
Difficult is (It is difficult)

In (9), learners understood *muzukashii* literally as "difficult", which is how one would interpret it based on what learners were taught in the L2 classroom, and therefore thought that there was still some possibility to solve the issue raised (c.f. Taguchi 2009). With utterances such as in (9), learners found L1 speakers to be vague, reticent to give clear answers and to frequently beat around the bush rather than express what they think directly (see section 5.3.2.3), which leaves an impression that the Japanese speak in a roundabout manner and prefer leaving it to the hearer to figure out the intended meaning (c.f. Kameda 2001). It is clear to L1 speakers that utterances such as (9) are conventionalised and denote impossibility or refusal. However, learners often do not know the conventionalised meanings of such expressions and therefore are unable to adjust their lexical concept. Furthermore, learners perceived utterances such as in (9) to be incomplete, which resulted in learners' frustration with the lack of directness among L1 speakers (c.f. Okazaki 2003).

Contrary to what learners thought, the mechanisms employed in Japanese to convey communicative intentions were by no means ambiguous to L1 speakers, but appeared vague and indirect to L2 learners who were unfamiliar with these strategies or could not activate relevant inferencing processes. L1 speakers were not indirect but perhaps unaware of the need

[27] Although incomplete sentences are a case of loose syntax that embed basic-level explicatures, certain expressions used with incomplete sentences also convey higher-level explicatures such as propositional attitude and speech acts.

to provide information explicitly at that given time and formulate their thoughts in what they thought to be the least effort-demanding way. As learners could not recover the speech acts/propositional attitudes which incomplete sentences, hedges and aizuchi were supposed to convey, it gave them the impression that L1 speakers were rude and inconsiderate, which was often the opposite communicative intention of L1 speakers. This suggests that the ability to recover higher-level explicatures in a way that yields positive cognitive effects depends on how learners adjust the meaning of the specific expressions used in a given context.

Thus, aizuchi, utterance-final particles, adverbs, adjectives, quantifiers and epistemic modals should guide learners through a particular inferential comprehension process via eliminating contextual assumptions, saving processing effort among learners and increasing the search for a relevant interpretation. If learners are not aware that certain uses of these expressions are expected to lead the hearer to recover certain meaning, learners may interpret linguistic forms only as concepts that affect the truth condition of utterances. To recover higher-level explicatures, learners must activate the cognitive abilities that guide the comprehension process toward the explicit content of the utterance (i.e. mitigation/degree of commitment towards the proposition expressed). If learners are not aware that certain uses of prosody contribute to the communication of speech acts and propositional attitudes the explicit content of the utterances that contain them, learners may not recover the assumptions embedded under a propositional attitude or speech act description. The inferential processes that guide the comprehension towards a relevant higher-level explicature must be triggered. Having such awareness may avoid perpetuating the perception of Japanese as a vague language. Instead, learners could see it as a language that prompts higher-level explicatures that give rise to a range of cognitive effects such as degrees of speaker's relative certainty towards the assertion made. I will return to this point in Chapter 7.

At the production level, participants agreed that their use of prosody at the utterance level was sometimes pointed out as inappropriate, foreign and/or incorrect. Instances of prosodic misproduction included sounding flirtatious when learners did not intend to or sounding as if they were joking when they were not. Moreover, some participants noted that learners tended to be more monotone or not as emotive as L1 speakers. For example, learners felt like they had to exaggerate their intonation to convey a humorous intention. The failure to convey a propositional attitude/communicative intention via the use of prosody often resulted in unfulfilled speaking objectives. Due to their inability to produce an utterance that gives rise to higher-level explicatures appropriate to the context, undesired higher-level explicatures were sometimes recovered. In turn, at times, learners had to backtrack and exaggerate their use of prosody to facilitate the inferring process among L1 speakers. In other situations, the inability to recover the higher-level explicature among L1 speakers resulted in communication breakdown and interpersonal issues.

6.2.2.2 Challenges with Implicatures

Nonverbal features can be used to communicate non-propositional information about the speakers' mental state, attitudes and speech acts. Wharton (2009) states that facial and bodily expressions, prosody and gestures are closely linked to each other. Here, I add silence to the list of nonverbal features that contribute to the attribution of intentions. L1 speakers use silence and gestures to communicate, leaving it up to the learner to recover any strong or weak implicatures that are part of the communicative intention of the speaker. Issues with interpreting silence and bodily/facial expressions indicate that learners had difficulties recovering assumptions communicated via implicatures. Such a challenge belongs to the implicit dimension of oral interaction.

As shown in Chapter 5, L1 speakers used ostensive silence and bodily expressions to provide cues to their attitude towards the proposition expressed. However, most learners were surprised by the use of such nonverbal features and even frustrated and angry when L1 speakers used nonverbal ostensive stimuli in place of explicit, verbal utterances. Relevance Theory predicts that learners would know that the clues L1 speakers use to communicate, either verbally or nonverbally, are relevant to them. However, learners did not always understand that nonverbal communicative acts were used ostensively as much as explicit linguistic forms or fully propositional utterances. Indeed, learners made clear that they preferred explicit linguistic forms over implicatures (see section 6.2.1.1).

Although a few learners demonstrated a degree of awareness about silence as an ostensive tool to assume less responsibility and maintain credibility, silence was not always relevant enough for learners. This is an example constructed based on the findings:

> (10) A learner says something but his Japanese friend does not understand him/her.
> L2 speaker: *Wakaru?* ([Do you] understand?)
> L1 speaker: (…)

In the above example, instead of a linguistic form, the L1 speaker chooses to use silence to communicate ostension. Silence gives rise to a range of weak implicatures (see section 5.2.4).

Silence may be strongly manifest among L1 speakers as they share common background assumptions, including socio-cultural assumptions. However, the ostension behind the use of silence was not clear to learners. The weaker the implicature was for learners, the greater range of possible assumptions/implications learners recovered, and the more difficult it became to recover the intended meaning. Learners felt unprepared to interpret implicatures in the form of silence and bodily expressions, which caused them to be uncomfortable or even feel anxious. Learners were not guided by expectations of relevance raised by silence as an ostensive communicative act. That is, learners could not bring to the comprehension process specific expectations about how silence was relevant to them or could not recognise the first and second layers of intention, and therefore decided to ignore silence as an ostensive communicative act or did not allow for silence to occur in oral interaction. This is a form of pragmatic divergence. Learners could not construct an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual assumptions, thus reaching inadequate implicated conclusions (e.g. silence is their fault, silence is uncomfortable, silence must be filled). Learners' pragmatic divergence also had consequences for L1 speakers, who in turn felt uncomfortable with learners filling the silences with linguistic forms.

The SA context also allowed learners to experience several gestures and bodily expressions that differed from the ones familiar to them. Some learners mentioned gestures that accompany verbal utterances (see section 5.3.3). This is an example based on the findings:

(11) *Dame da yo* (This is wrong!)

Figure 6.2: Gesture for incorrect/not allowed.

In the above example, the speaker utters the word *dame* (wrong, not allowed) while using her arms to make a big X across her chest. This gesture is highly conventionalised and is used almost language-like in Japanese. Wharton (2009) argues that "language-like" gestures are similar to coded meaning and therefore may contribute to the recovery of explicit information. Learners found some of these language-like gestures easier to understand when accompanied by their linguistic form, which helped them retrieve the meaning intended by L1 speakers.

However, learners found highly conventionalised gestures such as the one represented in Figure 6.2 to be unnecessary, as the language form provided sufficient cues for learners to interpret meaning and the gesture was therefore deemed irrelevant.

Contrarily, certain other highly conventionalised gestures were difficult for learners to recover. That is, learners could not derive meaning or took longer to interpret meaning because they were left imagining a wide array of possibilities of what the gestures might have meant in several contexts. The following is an example based on one of the gestures mentioned in the data:

> (12) Niamh's manager uses the following gesture to ask her to follow her. However, Niamh has never seen this gesture before and does not move. The manager scolds Niamh for not following her immediately.

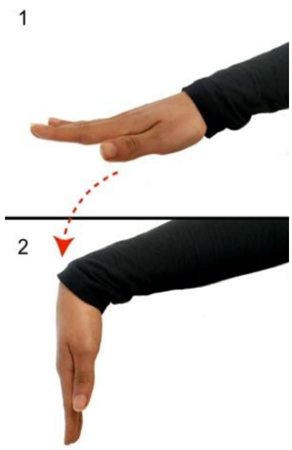


Figure 6.3: Gesture for beckoning.

Imagine that, in (12), the speaker does not wish to explicitly utter a command via a verbal utterance to save face and soften her attitude towards the proposition expressed. Instead, the speaker chooses a nonverbal ostensive stimulus as an implicature. The gesture in Figure 6.3 is considered an emblem (i.e. a culture-specific gesture) in Japan. Emblems are conventionally used to convey a specific communicative act (e.g. bow to greet or apologise, pointing at one's nose for self-reference). Due to their conventionalised use, the meaning of emblems such as in (12) is shared among L1 speakers, for which they can easily recover the intended meaning of the gesture. This was not the case for learners. Although most gestures and bodily expressions manifestly intended by speakers could attract learners' attention as pieces of evidence to convey some sort of content, they could not interpret the meaning of the implicatures conveyed by bodily expressions or retrieved an implicature far from the one originally intended by the

L1 speaker. For example, due to its similarity with the gesture in Ireland, learners understood (12) as in 'stay here' rather than a beckoning gesture.

6.2.3 Recovery of Humorous Effects (Verbal and Non-verbal Features)

Learners could not decode certain puns as interpreting a pun requires the comprehension of at least two interpretations of a word or a string of words that create ambiguity often based on homophones to create a play on words. This is an issue concerning the use of ambiguous logical forms to create humorous effects. The following example illustrates the linguistic complexity of puns (FG2 DCU 05).

(13) *Arigatō*
thanks

The above pun, which is based on homophony, has two possible interpretations: "thanks" and "there are ten ants". Many learners are likely to understand the meaning of *arigatō* as "thank you" as this expression is one of the first words they learn in Japanese. However, learners are likely to be less familiar with the second meaning (e.g. they may be less familiar with the word for "ant" or they may not know that another way of saying the number "ten" is *tō*).

Puns require a large vocabulary. If learners do not possess robust linguistic knowledge, it is near impossible to identify (let alone decode) the logical forms. However, as seen in section 5.3.7, puns did not raise expectations of relevance for learners as they could not decode or enrich some or any of the logical forms involved in the pun. Even if learners possessed the vocabulary and could decode the logical forms involved in a pun, they would also have to infer the meaning of the words involved as puns aim to give rise to richer effects through their ambiguity. Learners must entertain and process at least two logical forms simultaneously and decide whether both are equally relevant or one is more relevant than the other. In puns, L1 speakers usually opt for one of the senses of the word as the intended one. Interpretation processes involve making inferences about the meaning of words and the concepts they convey in particular contexts.

Another typical form of wordplay that learners encountered was the following:

(14) *Yametekudastop* (FG DCU 01)

This is a combination of the Japanese utterance *yamete kudasai* [please stop] with its English equivalent 'stop'.

In (14), a new utterance is created with the contraction of two words: a Japanese word and an English word. As the Japanese word has the same meaning as its English equivalent, the meaning of the utterance is more ready-available to learners. These types of wordplays were described as easier to interpret as learners could enrich and disambiguate at least one of the logical forms involved in the pun, and could make further inferences about the humorous intent behind the wordplay uttered by L1 speakers (although not necessarily found them amusing).

In L1 interaction, hearers usually realise that the first interpretation they arrive at is inadequate as it does not yield enough humorous effects in that particular context, and therefore continue to pursue their search for relevance (Yus 2017). This is the disambiguation process involved in working out the intended meaning of an ostensive act to create humorous effects. However, such processes are likely to require extra processing effort for learners, as drawing certain inferences in the L2 does not come as automatically as it would in their L1. Learners could not access the concepts encoded by the words nor assign them to linguistic representations to reflect the specific meanings intended by L1 speakers (e.g. in puns). To successfully interpret utterances and recover humorous effects, learners must recognise humour as intended, entertain the incongruity produced by L1 speakers and expect the possibility that the speaker is implicitly expressing an attitude of disassociation towards one of the assumptions.

Inferential processes such as learners' ability to decide that an utterance or a communicative act is intended as humorous are also key in humour interpretation. Notably, even if learners go through the inferential steps to reach a relevant interpretation, learners may not accept the ostensive act as humorous or may not cause the humorous effect desired (i.e. learners will not find humorous instances funny, entertaining or amusing). This is also true for L1 speakers. Learners produced utterances with a sarcastic intent to bond with L1 speakers. However, most L1 speakers could not interpret sarcasm or could not understand it was intended as a humorous form (c.f. De Laat 2017). Learners used sarcasm because they expected that certain inferences would likely be made in the interpretation process, as it usually happens when they use sarcasm in interactions with English as L1 speakers. Sarcasm is directly targeted at attribute thoughts and is usually indirectly targeted at the people who entertain such thoughts (Wilson and Sperber 2012). The following is an example based on the data.

> (15) An Irish girl brings a cake to work as an act of kindness towards her Japanese colleagues. Her colleagues ask her why she brought the cake and she answers: 'Because

> everyone is so mean to me [with a smile].' All colleagues proceed to apologise and tell her that this is not the case. (FG 5 UL 18)

In this example, L1 speakers could not entertain the assumptions made by learners, could not retrieve the most relevant interpretation and therefore took the attributed thoughts seriously. Additionally, L1 speakers could not understand facial cues as salient clues to the speaker's sarcastic intent (see Caucci and Kreuz 2012 for more). In most cases, the misunderstanding arose because the first interpretation L1 speakers found to satisfy their expectations of relevance was not the one envisaged by learners. The relevance of a sarcastic utterance depends on the information it conveys about the speaker's attitude to the opinion echoed. That is, learners used sarcasm to indicate that they believe the opposite of what they explicitly utter. Recognising sarcasm involves a relationship between the proposition expressed and another thought which is attributed to the speaker in another situation or someone else. However, L1 speakers could not recover the implicit expression of the range of attitudes conveyed by learners and, therefore, could not retrieve the contextual assumptions necessary to turn the logical form of the sarcastic utterance into a relevant interpretation. This is also a result of a mismatch between the learners' assumptions about which assumptions were accessible to L1 speakers and what L1 speakers accessed. Unsurprisingly, L1 speakers reached conclusions not intended by the learners and could not make sense of the sarcastic joke.

Thus far, I have demonstrated that learners experience linguistic and pragmatic challenges concerned with the recovery of linguistic representations, higher-level explicatures, implicatures and humorous effects. The remainder of this chapter focuses on explaining the consequences and causes of such challenges.

6.4 Consequences of Pragmatic Challenges

Having linguistic and inferential challenges in real-time oral interaction had consequences for both learners and L1 speakers. Learners reported, explicitly or implicitly, that they had experienced interpersonal issues, affective issues and communication breakdown/pragmatic failure.

In regard to interpersonal issues, learners often felt they offended their interlocutors by either (unconsciously) using linguistic forms that were considered too formal, too textbook-like or too casual for a given interaction. Learners also reported that L1 speakers laughed at them or became angry at them due to their inappropriate (i.e. not relevant) choice of linguistic and non-linguistic communicative features. At the same time, learners were said to be rude, distant and unfriendly due to the way they conveyed their thoughts and intentions. Learners' inability to recover the intended meaning of the proposition expressed hindered their ability to hold daily interactions. These interactions were often described as a terrible and frustrating experience for learners.

As I explained in section 2.7, non-L1 speakers may consciously or unconsciously deviate from expected communicative practices. As learners' existing assumptions sometimes did not match L1 speakers' expectations of relevance —and learners could not update their cognitive environment in support of new assumptions— some learners misrepresented their linguistic competence to lead to more basic interactions with L1 speakers. This is what participants called "having a gaijin pass" or "gaijin card" (what Moody (2014) calls "gaijin power"), which is the belief that L1 speakers are tolerant of mistakes that foreigners may make (Iino 2006). Although this was only discussed in the use of speech styles, I also argue that this phenomenon occurred while using other features of the Japanese language, such as silence. As learners could not understand silence as ostensive, learners filled silences with small talk or unrelated topics to avoid being silent. Learners were not used to employing silence to convey meaning in their L1, and transferred (and even accentuated) how they communicate in their L1 to L2 oral interaction. This indicates a degree of resistance towards the use of silence in L2 oral interaction. This is similar to when learners spoke predominantly in a less effective speech style, one that was least effort-demanding, as they felt as if they did not have to be "held to the same standards" as L1 speakers. This could indicate that, although they were able to recover the most relevant possible ostensive stimulus, learners decided not to conform to certain uses of communicative acts guided by subjective ideologies rooted in sociolinguistic and cultural beliefs (for similar results, see Ishihara and Tarone 2009).

Learners also experienced affective issues. Their limited linguistic competence and their inability to tap into their pragmatic competence resulted in anger, frustration and feelings of anxiety and worry. Even though the SA context made it easier for learners to communicate more comfortably and correctly, many found it disheartening to interact with L1 speakers as they lacked sufficient grammar and vocabulary. Inadequacies at the level of lexis and syntax caused issues for learners, so much so that some participants felt embarrassed about their language skills and even stopped attempting to communicate in Japanese. The fact that communicative acts were not always coded or that what was linguistically coded in speakers' utterances frequently did not match their communicative intention also caused several challenges. Not only learners considered L1 speakers to be indirect and vague, but were also confused and even intimidated by the use of some ostensive communicative acts such as bodily expressions, gestures and silence.

Recovering utterances that require more processing effort for L1 and L2 speakers or not being able to recover the proposition expressed comes with high-stake consequences. The final major consequence of the linguistic and pragmatic challenges learners experienced are in relation to communication breakdown and pragmatic failure. Pragmatic failure is the inability to recover the communicative intention of the speaker (see section 2.7). As learners were unable to infer the assumptions that L1 speakers wanted to convey through several linguistic and non-linguistic features, the interaction was unsuccessful. That is, learners could not recover basic explicatures (e.g. loose syntax), higher-level explicatures (e.g. speech acts and propositional attitude) and implicatures. As learners could not make assumptions quickly or could not recover the speaker's meaning, they expended extra processing effort that was not rewarded with increased cognitive effects. The use of certain ostensive stimuli did not lead to further implications, and therefore did not satisfy learners' expectations of relevance. To make their thoughts more accessible to learners, L1 speakers repeated the ostensive stimuli or utterance, conveyed their thoughts more slowly and/or added more explicit content, exaggerated their intonation and/or changed how they communicated their thoughts and intentions. That is, to decrease their effort to process the various ostensive stimuli in a given interaction, L1 speakers chose not to communicate according to their abilities and preferences.

This was also the case on the production side of oral interaction. In particular, the appropriate and effective production of speech styles and ellipsis required greater processing effort for learners, who felt it was difficult to turn on "that switch in their head" to quickly retrieve linguistic and pragmatic knowledge stored in their cognitive environment. Misemploying linguistic forms can be detrimental to building relationships with L1 speakers. Such consequence does not only occur when the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge is not available to them, but also when learners are unwilling to choose the most relevant possible linguistic form even if the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge was available to them.

6.5 Causes of Pragmatic Challenges

In the previous section, I discussed the three main consequences learners faced in oral interaction. This section discusses the causes of the linguistic and pragmatic challenges learners encountered. Learners reported, implicitly or explicitly, that challenges originate from their limited linguistic competence in the L2, the limited manner in which learners' pragmatic competence is applied to their inferential processes in L2 communication, such as attribution of intentions, recovery of elliptical meaning and restricted knowledge of syntax and semantics, and a gap between what they have learned in the L2 classroom and real-life communication in the L2.[28]

Limited linguistic knowledge hindered learners' ability to understand several ostensive acts manifested in logical forms. Learners struggled with processing several linguistically encoded phenomena particular to the Japanese language, such as speech styles, ellipsis and some forms of humour. As learners had difficulties decoding linguistic expressions, they could not always access the inferential phase. In the inferential phase, learners could not develop certain logical forms into fully propositional forms.

Learners reported that linguistic proficiency in general, and knowledge of vocabulary specifically, was everything they needed to understand the Japanese language. That is, if learners could not understand the logical forms, they could not recover much of the proposition expressed. Contrarily, if learners understood the vocabulary (e.g. for puns or around the syntactic gaps), it was easier for them to "figure out" the context and interpret the general meaning of a given utterance. This suggests that the higher the linguistic competence, the easier it may be to make inferences particular to the understanding of loose syntax and the recovery of linguistic representations. However, this also indicates an issue with overreliance on linguistic meaning and the need for learners to activate other mechanisms to interpret meaning. Due to learners' overreliance on linguistic input to derive meaning as well as lack of attention to other cues available in the context, learners experienced difficulties when recovering learners' thoughts and intentions. Learners seemed to rely on syntactic cues rather than pragmatic ones to retrieve the intended meaning of an utterance.

Furthermore, although learners improved, to varying degrees, their linguistic competence during their SA, data demonstrates that such development was short-term. That is because their linguistic (and inferential) choices are often an unconscious, involuntary process. This is exemplified in learners' arbitrary linguistic choices or choices below the level of consciousness, such as when (not) using ellipsis and speech styles. In this regard, learners' linguistic choices

[28] The data collected via questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions also indicate that factors such as L2 anxiety and lack of self-confidence conditioned learners' production and interpretation of ostensive stimuli. However, a discussion about affective variables that influence L2 acquisition and development is beyond the scope of this thesis.

must be brought into consciousness to develop an intentional and controlled process of meaningful production and interpretation of logical forms.

The second issue is that learners cannot access their inferential abilities in the L2. Due to their inability to decode, many learners could not access the inferential phase of meaning interpretation. This was evident in the recovery of all seven features mentioned in this study (see Chapter 5). Learners lacked the contextual information to access pragmatic effects. In oral interactions between L1 and L2 users, linguistic, social, cultural and encyclopaedic knowledge may not be shared among interlocutors, and it may not be mutually manifest that some form of thought is intended. This was particularly evident in the recovery of humorous effects and communicative intentions conveyed through silence, aizuchi and bodily expressions. With some features such as ellipsis and prosody, learners' linguistic and background knowledge was contradicted and they could not access a wider area of knowledge to entertain other assumptions that might have helped them derive positive cognitive effects. As assumptions are not made mutually manifest, learners cannot access information from context, cannot entertain assumptions made by L1 speakers and cannot construct an interpretation of the speakers' meaning. This results in learners not being aware that certain features contribute to the flow of interaction, thus not considering them as a sufficiently relevant stimulus. Consequently, learners do not pay attention to such stimuli as these do not modify their cognitive environment.

The extent to which one interpretation achieves relevance to learners will depend on their ability to decode the linguistic meaning of an utterance (in the case of linguistic forms), connect with L1 speakers' background assumptions as well as modify their cognitive environment. The more knowledge learners have about ostensive stimuli beyond lexical and grammatical items taught in the classroom that are used to convey meaning in Japanese oral interaction, the more they are likely to understand their communicative functions. In turn, the more likely learners are to process these ostensive stimuli for relevance and obtain relevant conclusions in the form of pragmatic effects. In turn, this may influence the mental representations that learners construct and may help them activate the inferential processes necessary to make assumptions mutually manifest.

I argue that the assumptions conveyed through some linguistic and particularly non-linguistic stimuli (e.g. silence and bodily expressions) may be strongly manifest to L1 speakers, but are only weakly manifest (if at all) to learners. Learners could not wholly recover the conceptual content of implicatures as they did not understand the extra layers of intention as intended. The weaker the implicature, the less confident learners were with the conclusion they arrived at. For example, learners perceived silence to be vague when, instead, it was their inability to derive contextual cues that created uncertainty and ambiguity. As learners do not have robust existing assumptions about these features and the pragmatic processes they embed, learners cannot resort to their knowledge and information stored in their cognitive environment to understand the information and communicative intention of L1 speakers. In turn, learners cannot recover a series of assumptions or select assumptions that do not contribute towards the fulfilment of the communicative intention. Reaching a conclusion different to the one intended by L1 speakers demonstrates that interpreting implicatures is a cognitively demanding task for learners.

Explicatures are context-sensitive (Carston 2002). Therefore, hearers must activate several inferential processes, including reference assignment and the recovery of elliptic material, to interpret the utterance as intended by the speaker. Beyond the recovery of linguistic elements, learners must also pay attention to nonverbal cues to help them reach a relevant interpretation. However, not all learners were aware of the mechanisms that L1 speakers possess to express the same thought. Most learners do not have practice in class with utterances that have been far removed from the proposition expressed and therefore must figure out how to understand what L1 speakers mean. Furthermore, the more loose syntax there was, the less visible the logical form of the utterance became, and the more difficult it was for learners to fill in the gaps to recover the proposition expressed. Learners' unawareness of the need for inferential processes to interpret fragmented speech results in learners requiring "mental gymnastics" or higher processing effort to interact effectively and appropriately with L1 speakers. I argue that the acceptability of loose syntax in Japanese makes it difficult for learners to know exactly which elements are unexpressed and retrievable from context. This was also evident when learners mentioned using arbitrary rules to produce particle and subject ellipsis. Learners did not know whether a full propositional form was preferred or a less fully-fledged linguistic form sufficed in a particular context of interaction. As a result, learners often misused ellipsis, confusing L1 speakers as they could not retrieve the missing syntactic elements. Some learners even opted not to omit case markers and others did it unconsciously and automatically. Given this, in the L2 classroom, learners must be equipped with the knowledge and awareness about loose syntax and how it can be achieved in oral interaction (see Chapter 7).

The final cause of the pragmatic challenges is the discrepancy between their previously acquired knowledge (their existing assumptions) and real-life interactions in the L2 context.

Before their time in the L2 context, learners had never been exposed to certain ostensive stimuli particular to the Japanese language, such as the use of culture-specific gestures and bodily expressions. Furthermore, learners did not expect prosody to play such a key role in interpreting meaning or for silence and aizuchi to be used as frequently as they experienced it.

The discrepancy between learners' previous knowledge/expectations and actual language use in the SA context has been well reported in the literature. Taguchi (2016) also found that learners of Japanese as L2 tend to use the formal form as their default speech style and feel awkward using casual forms even in instances where the plain form is required. However, lack of knowledge about certain linguistic forms, especially those concerning casual speech styles, is not the only source of pragmatic divergence/failure. Participants had the formal speech style so ingrained in their cognitive environment that they used a speech style that matched with their acquired assumptions and that took less processing effort to produce. Furthermore, linguistic forms change and these new forms differ from the types of utterances participants were accustomed to or learned in the classroom and from textbooks. Learners were likely to interpret an utterance because they had learned it in the L2 classroom, not because they were in tune with their inferential and linguistic processes (Cook 2012).

The findings demonstrate that learners made choices about speech styles based on social norms. Learners hold a more traditional understanding of speech styles and ellipsis based on static sociolinguistic factors such as age and social status (see section 2.11.1). For example, learners mentioned that the casual form is only used among individuals who are in close relationships such as family members and intimate friends of the same age. However, casual speech styles index a variety of information other than close social relationships and intimate attitudes toward a younger or same-status interlocutor (see e.g. Cook 2016). Although some learners realised during their time abroad that the choice of speech style and ellipsis is more complex than originally anticipated, most participants were still relying on static sociolinguistic contextual features rather than dynamic, cognitive contextual cues. It was a common assumption that ellipsis is only conducted in casual interactions or that unfamiliar interlocutors use the formal speech style and as they become more familiar, switch to casual speech styles. Learners also believed that speech styles mainly index formality and politeness. However, Okamoto and Shibamoto-Smith (2016) explain that deference, politeness, status, and social distance are only stereotypical possibilities of speech styles. The use of speech styles is more complex than social indexicalities associated with them, and can vary across contexts, in a single interaction and over time.

The above suggests that the simplistic view learners hold emerges from the emphasis on formulaic politeness in Japanese, which may create the illusion that Japanese is more polite than English. This is unsurprising as the assumption that honorifics and the *desu/masu* form are used to convey formality and politeness still prevails among scholars, teachers and students of Japanese (Cook 2008b, 2011). In this regard, similar to Ishihara and Tarone (2009) and Iwasaki (2011), learners developed their understanding of the social meanings that speech styles encode. According to Relevance Theory, however, interactions are not just socially defined, but also cognitively defined. The need for cognitive performance is manifested in the use of speech styles. Speech styles are not strictly informed by social, cultural and linguistic norms and do not only reflect social ideology (see section 6.2.1.2).

6.6 Summary

The present chapter answered the first research question, which aimed to identify the main pragmatic challenges learners of Japanese as L2 faced in oral interaction with L1 speakers during their time in Japan. Within the framework of Relevance Theory, I have presented empirically supported and theoretically underpinned pragmatic challenges that learners experienced. I have shown that challenges in oral interaction with L1 speakers arise due to an underdeveloped pragmatic competence, including limited linguistic competence. Learners are often unsuccessful in achieving relevance that conforms to L1 speaker standards, resulting in instances of uncomfortable and problematic interactions that often lead to interpersonal issues, affective issues and pragmatic failure. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that learners' pragmatic challenges are not merely concerned with their inability to recover speech acts, which is the main focus in ILP literature (see Chapter 2). Learners are challenged by several inferential processes concerning linguistic and non-linguistic meaning both at the explicit and implicit dimensions of language interpretation and production. Learners can use their inferential abilities to some extent, but are usually not brought forward consciously and effectively for L2 oral interaction. This lends support to the notion that pragmatic competence in the L2 follows the same cognitive processes as in the L1, and that the challenges can be framed in terms of larger experiences within wider language learning communities. This will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Learners show limited linguistic competence to communicate effectively with L1 speakers. However, linguistic competence alone is not sufficient for learners to adequately interact in the L2. Learners must also be able to infer meaning beyond what is linguistically coded, thereby activating their pragmatic competence. As I argued, based on findings presented in Chapter 5, linguistic competence is a tool for delivering pragmatic competence in real-time interaction, and one that needs to be enhanced in the L2 classroom. In turn, pragmatic competence becomes manifest in verbal and nonverbal aspects of oral interaction and provides insights into L2 learners' inferential abilities. However, as discussed, being pragmatically competent is often an unconscious and automatic process that needs to be brought to consciousness. Therefore, I argue that learners must also be made explicitly aware of how to activate their inferential abilities in the L2 classroom (see Chapter 7).

Despite limited linguistic competence and contextual assumptions available, learners communicated (to varying degrees) within their abilities and preferences. Learners (even those who consciously or unconsciously diverged from the expected norms) attempted to use ostensive stimuli in the most relevant manner they could with the knowledge available to them at the time of their SA experience. As findings show, and as I discussed throughout this chapter, even if communicative acts produced by learners were frequently costly for L1 speakers and/or inappropriate, and even if communicative acts produced by L1 speakers were costly for learners, learners interpreted and produced communicative acts following the Principles of Relevance. That is, the ostensive stimuli they produced were relevant enough to be worth the L1 speakers' effort to process them. However, ostensive stimuli produced by L1 speakers were not always relevant enough for learners. Even if L1 speakers made manifest a basic layer of intention, at times, learners could not attribute communicative intentions via inferential processing and could not reduce the gap between the logical form and the full proposition.

As demonstrated, there is still a huge gap between what learners need for real-life oral interaction and what learners expect or are being taught in the classroom. This shows the need for more opportunities to enhance pragmatic competence among learners so they can make the inference of what is appropriate in a particular interaction in the classroom before they can apply it to real-life situations. With enhanced pragmatic competence, learners would be made aware that there are other mechanisms through which relevance can be achieved. In this chapter, I demonstrated that a cognitive relevance-theoretic account of the mental processes at play in utterance interpretation and production is essential if researchers and teachers want to accurately explain the linguistic and inferential processes involved in oral interaction between L2 learners and L1 speakers.

In the next chapter, based on the findings, I discuss current issues in instructional practices. I explain how teachers can use Relevance Theory in the classroom to explain the challenging communicative acts discussed in this chapter. Expanding on Ifantidou's (2014) definition of pragmatic competence, I describe a pedagogical framework for teaching pragmatics. I also outline a training course for instructors to help learners overcome the pragmatic challenges presented in this chapter. Finally, using relevance-theoretic notions, I present several tasks that can be used as models to help students familiarise themselves with communicative situations in the L2 context.

CHAPTER 7:

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS:

BRIDGING THEORY&PRACTICE

7.1 Introduction

This study set out to answer the following research questions:

1. What pragmatic challenges did learners of Japanese as L2 face in oral interaction with L1 speakers in the SA context?
2. How can Relevance Theory help instructors of L2 develop pragmatic competence among learners?
3. What materials can be created to address the challenges identified under question one?

To this end, I conducted open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 57 learners of Japanese at two higher education institutions in Ireland. As I explained in Chapter 6, learners faced several challenges in oral interaction with L1 speakers due to limited pragmatic competence in Japanese as L2. Using ideas from Relevance Theory, I analysed the findings presented in Chapter 5 in terms of linguistic and inferential challenges. These challenges were concerned with both explicit and implicit aspects of communication and originated from the inability to infer meaning as well as from a lack of linguistic knowledge. As a result, interactions between L1 speakers and L2 learners were often costly for those involved in the interaction. The findings also revealed that, although exposure to the L2 may have benefited learners, the SA context had its limitations as mere exposure to real-life language was not sufficient in fully activating their overall pragmatic competence. This suggests that to make interactions more effective with L1 speakers in the SA context and beyond, learners' pragmatic competence must be activated in the L2 classroom. This activation would allow learners to use their pragmatic competence in the L2 communicative context just like would in their L1 interactions.

In this chapter, I argue how instructors can bridge the theoretical implications of the challenges outlined in Chapter 6 with their practical applications in the L2 classroom. In doing so, I contribute to ILP by addressing several of the challenges Sykes (2013) and Bardovi-Harlig (2017) identified in the teaching of pragmatics in the L2 (see section 2.8). Specifically, I address the limited theoretical support for curricular development, the lack of instructor knowledge, the lack of resources and the dominant focus on micro-features of the language.

In 7.2, I explain how the gap between the challenges discussed in the previous chapter and current instructional practices can be narrowed. In 7.3, I consider how the relevance-theoretic notion of pragmatic competence, developed by Ifantidou (2014), can be modified to create a pedagogical framework for teaching pragmatics in the L2. I also discuss how teachers can help learners reduce and/or overcome the pragmatic challenges presented in Chapter 6. In 7.4, I outline a teacher training resource that provides instructors with the theoretical support needed to teach L2 pragmatics. With sections 7.3 and 7.4, I address the second research question, which seeks to explain how teachers can benefit from Relevance Theory to address the challenges in the L2 classroom. Finally, in section 7.5, I present a model for teachers of Japanese as L2 to teach pragmatics in their classroom. With Relevance Theory as their theoretical framework, I describe a number of activities to help learners activate their inferential processes while familiarising themselves with situations in the L2 context. In doing so, I answer the third research question, which seeks to create materials that address the challenges identified in Chapter 6. In 7.6, I conclude the chapter with some final thoughts on the pedagogical implications of the pragmatic challenges learners experienced in the SA context.

7.2 Current Issues in Teaching L2 Pragmatics

In the previous two chapters, I discussed the findings from this study and showed how learners lacked the pragmatic competence to communicate effectively with L1 speakers in the SA context. In this section, I revisit the causes for which learners may lack the ability to fully activate pragmatic competence in their L2.

Despite having spent a considerable amount of time learning the Japanese language in the L2 classroom before moving to Japan, the findings show that learners did not know how to exercise their pragmatic competence crucial for both the production and interpretation of meaning in oral interaction with L1 speakers. In line with previous research, learners' multiple challenges demonstrate that pragmatic competence does not necessarily activate on its own and, if it does, it might be activated unconsciously, ineffectively and unsuccessfully. Thus, pragmatics needs to be taught as a fundamental aspect of the L2 (see section 2.8.2). This is particularly interesting, as Kasper and Rose (2002), Ishihara and Cohen (2010) and Ifantidou (2014) have expressed, learners do have pragmatic competence that facilitates successful and effective communication in their L1 interactions. The question is why learners cannot transfer their L1 pragmatic competence to their L2 interactions.

Current pedagogical practices often overlook pragmatic aspects of communication and hence fail to bring pragmatic awareness to learners. Learners already know how to use their L1 towards successful/effective communication but do not know how to use these same inferential abilities in the L2 or do it unsuccessfully (see section 2.6). That is, learners do not lack pragmatic competence, but rather an awareness of how to activate their inferential abilities. The findings from this study indicate that there are at least three factors in current instructional practices that contribute to this issue. These are:

1. There is an excessive focus on linguistic input.
2. Learners are unaware of their own pragmatic competence.
3. Learners are not taught about inferential processes.

The first issue is that certain features of the Japanese language are not taught due to time constraints and a grammar-driven curriculum. As the focus is mostly on grammatical forms and standard Japanese, certain linguistic and non-linguistic mechanisms that convey meaning in the L2 are neglected (see Chapter 5). The tendency is to focus on linguistic forms as the sole cue to recover meaning, and other ostensive stimuli that can be used as evidence towards speakers' meaning are generally not considered. Unlike in L1 oral interaction, learners do not know how to search for relevance outside linguistic inputs in the L2, or take higher processing effort to achieve relevance. Before going to Japan, learners are often exposed to one particular way of expressing their thoughts (usually based on linguistic forms), which results in the misassumption that this particular way is the only correct way of producing ostensive stimuli. Consequently, learners felt at a loss when faced with unfamiliar (i.e. not taught in the classroom) features of the Japanese language such as silence, gestures, aizuchi, humour, prosody, ellipsis and certain speech styles. Even if learners later became aware of the mismatch between their expectations/what they learned in the L2 classroom and how language is truly used in oral interaction in Japan, they did not know how to reduce the gap or how to make interactions with L1 speakers more efficient. This is because learners are not made aware that linguistic input is only a part of communicative stimuli, just like in any communicative situation in L1 settings. This suggests that instructors must bring to the fore the importance of pragmatic competence in oral interaction through features of the language such as the ones outlined above, and should provide some support particular to the Japanese language before learners can use their L2 in real-life contexts (including the SA context). As a result of a grammar/lexicon-driven pedagogy, learners are largely unaware of the importance of non-linguistic cues. Current instructional practices fail to make learners realise that communication also involves non-linguistic cues, and that these non-linguistic cues can be as or more relevant than linguistic cues.

Relevance Theory acknowledges that communication is about mind-reading and that linguistic forms are one minor aspect of communication/inference. Gaps need to be filled to recover full conceptual representations for utterances to be fully propositional. If learners know how to recover meaning based on linguistic and non-linguistic cues, they might be able to make inferences following the relevance-guided comprehension procedure and therefore interpret and produce ostensive stimuli more effectively. Thus, learners must be taught that utterances only provide a sketchy set of indications of a message, or a clue to recover the intended meaning, with much still to be filled in. In other words, instructors must teach students about relevance. In the current L2 classroom, linguistic knowledge is taught without taking into considerartion other factors involved in communication and, as a result, learners become too dependent on linguistic input as the main source to recover meaning in the SA context. In addition, learners tend not to search for relevance outside linguistic input and do not entertain other factors that are essential for successfully recovering intended interpretations, as they would in their L1.

The second issue is that learners are unaware that they are pragmatically competent at least in their L1. Learners expressed that the challenges they experienced were more prominent at the beginning of their stay, and that the more oral interactions they had in the SA context, the better they were able to interpret and use features previously unfamiliar to them. As a result, communication between L1 speakers and learners of Japanese as L2 became more successful. This suggests that learners (most likely unconsciously) realised that, through pragmatic transfer, they could apply the same inferential processes in the L2 as they would in their L1 and therefore used their existing pragmatic information to varying degrees in their oral interaction with Japanese speakers. This tendency indicates that learners indeed activate their pragmatic competence in the SA context without previous instruction. With exposure, learners' cognitive environment is constantly updating as new assumptions are introduced. Based on their recurrent experiences, during their SA, learners (unconsciously) tap into their cognitive ability to represent the same situations in different ways. This supports the notion that pragmatic transfer must occur above the level of consciousness to be able to adequately activate inferential abilities in the L2. Even if learners engage in inferential abilities during their time abroad, their pragmatic development in the SA context is shown to be implicit, processed without conscious awareness and with high-processing effort (see Chapters 5 and 6). Thus, what is needed is for instructors to bring learners' pragmatic competence to the surface so learners can think beyond linguistic forms and use other ostensive cues to process meaning. By bringing awareness to inferential processes and optimal relevance, learners may minimise the gap between how they think language is used and how it is truly used in authentic interactions. Instructors must provide learners with the cognitive mechanisms to help them activate their already existing inferential processes in the L2 and maximise the cognitive effects they can derive during oral interaction. With the provision of inferential mechanisms, learners can become aware of their already existing pragmatic competence both in the L1 and in the L2 and hence become more effective interactors in the L2, thereby decreasing communication breakdown and increasing overall relevance.

The third issue is that there is no explicit mention of pragmatic aspects in the L2 classroom, and when there is, the discussion is usually centred around speech acts (see section 2.3). Consequently, concepts such as inference, relevance, implicature and explicature are not part of the curriculum or part of instructional practices. The fact that interaction with L1 speakers differs from learners' expectations highlights the need to re-examine the types of interactions and experiences that L2 learners have both in the L2 classroom and Japan. Learners do not know the specific mechanisms that organise linguistic and non-linguistic operations in a way that retain their communicative function with minimum processing effort. At the same time, learners are often unaware of which stimuli are ostensive, to which degree ostension is provided or to what extent they need to provide information (see Chapters 5 and 6). This is a matter of inference. To decrease communication breakdown and enhance interpersonal relations, learners must tap into the abilities that constrain their inferencing processes and which contribute to the recovery of implicit, explicit and procedural meaning. Such knowledge may increase learners' ability to infer meaning with less processing effort, making interactions more efficient, relevant and effective for everyone involved (i.e. geared towards successful communication). As a result of grammar-driven instructional practices, instructors often ignore relevance and therefore do not help learners consciously activate their inferential abilities.[29] In this regard, instructors must make successful and effective communication a priority and make the L2 classroom a space where communication is taught, not just linguistic forms in a decontextualised manner.

In Chapter 6, I explained why only using linguistic forms to process communicative stimuli does not work for learners. Linguistic forms and their role in communication should be taught under overarching communicative aims such as attributing intentions, reading interlocutors'

[29] I am not blaming instructors for not incorporating pragmatic competence in the classroom or not making communication/inference a priority. I acknowledge and understand that there are many constraints in teaching an L2 language and that this issue is beyond the control of teachers and also affects material developers, curriculum designers and otherwise.

minds and achieving relevance. This would allow instructors to teach learners how to use the Japanese language towards successful/effective communication (i.e. to achieve relevance). However, before we instruct learners to process linguistic representations, teachers must be equipped with a better understanding of what pragmatic competence is and how it can be activated in the L2 classroom. Instructors must be trained to think about relevance when teaching Japanese as L2 and materials must be designed in a way that learners can activate their pragmatic competence in a conscious and voluntarily manner.

The remainder of this chapter focuses on providing solutions for instructors to be better prepared to teach pragmatics, including a pedagogical framework to activate pragmatic competence and examples of activities that can be incorporated in the Japanese as L2 classroom.

7.3 A Proposal for Training Teachers

In this section, I provide a framework and guidelines for teaching pragmatics that could offer recommendations on how the gap between schematic linguistic meanings and full thoughts can be bridged.

7.3.1 Relevance-Theoretic Pedagogical Framework

As a cognitive theory of human communication based on inferential processes, Relevance Theory can help instructors bridge this gap and make learners aware that they should go beyond linguistic input to recover the intended meaning and achieve relevance. Based on the preceding claims, I address the second research question:

- How can Relevance Theory help instructors of L2 develop pragmatic competence among learners?

In section 2.4.2, I explained how Ifantidou's (2014) definition of pragmatic competence is more comprehensive than communicative approaches to pragmatic competence as it takes into account inferential processes of human communication. Ifantidou defines pragmatic competence as the ability to:

> a. identify relevant linguistic indexes (Linguistic Awareness/LA)
> b. retrieve relevant pragmatic effects (Pragmatic Awareness/PA)
> c. explicate the link between lexical indexes and pragmatic effects retrieved (Metapragmatic Awareness/MA)
>
> (Ifantidou 2014: 130)

Ifantidou proposed the above definition as part of a framework for explicit instruction and assessment of pragmatics in written comprehension among Greek learners of English as L2. Ifantidou examined whether the sociocultural effects of specific uses of a wide range of linguistic markers and their pragmatic effects based on the author's attitude and intention triggered definite and salient interpretations among learners. Madella (2020) expanded on Ifantidou's framework to include the assessment and teaching of ostensive paralinguistic cues in oral comprehension among Chinese hearers of English as L2. Madella examined whether exposure to prosodic pointing allowed learners to focus their attention to speaker ostensive paralinguistic behaviour and arrive at an optimally relevant interpretation. Contrary to Ifantidou, who focused on linguistic awareness, Madella included non-linguistic input into her analysis and, as such, she concluded that ostensive-inferential competence encompasses not only inferential abilities, but also attentional abilities. As a result, Madella revised ability (a) in Ifantidou's original pragmatic competence framework. Instead of being able to identify linguistic indexes as Ifantidou proposed, Madella suggests that learners must instead be able to identify paralinguistic indexes. That is, learners should recognise paralinguistic cues as ostensive (i.e. identify an input as relevant) to help them acknowledge the speaker's intention and encourage them to read their interlocutor's intentions (Madella 2020: 102-104). In this regard, Madella suggested that linguistic and pragmatic awareness occur simultaneously:

a. identify relevant paralinguistic indexes, pointers to their pragmatic role (Pragmatic Awareness – Attentional Abilities)
b. retrieve relevant pragmatic effects (Pragmatic Awareness – Inferential Abilities)
c. explicate the link between paralinguistic indexes and pragmatic effects (Metapragmatic Awareness)

Like Madella, I agree that attention to the speaker's ostensive stimuli is key to being able to activate the hearer's inferential abilities to derive pragmatic effects. However, the fact that linguistic indexes have been completely removed from the definition suggests that Madella's definition does not capture the importance of identifying both relevant linguistic and non-linguistic stimuli as these stimuli are often used synchronously in oral interaction. As I have discussed in Chapter 6, learners are often unaware when presented with some ostensive stimuli which leads to communication breakdown. I, therefore, propose that ability (a) is revised as follows:

(a) Identify relevant linguistic and non-linguistic ostensive stimuli (Awareness of Ostensive Stimuli).

I also propose that the ability to become aware of pragmatics is added to the definition. As I explained in section 7.2, learners must be made aware of relevance as a means to achieving successful communication in their L2. Therefore, like Madella, I suggest that in addition to being able to identify ostension, learners must first be able to understand what pragmatics is/how it works. This is my proposed definition based on Ifantidou's original contribution of pragmatic competence and Madella's subsequent revision:

(a) Awareness of pragmatics (Familiarisation with Pragmatics)
(b) Identify relevant linguistic and non-linguistic ostensive stimuli (Awareness of Ostensive Stimuli)
(c) Retrieve relevant pragmatic effects (Pragmatic Awareness)
(d) Justify the link between the ostensive stimulus and the pragmatic effects retrieved (Metapragmatic Awareness)

Notice that the biggest differences between this definition and previous ones are (a) the inclusion of becoming aware of pragmatics as a key aspect of activating learners' pragmatic competence and (b) the inclusion of both linguistic and non-linguistic ostensive stimuli. This revised definition enables to capture a wider range of communicative phenomena and features, such as the ones identified as challenging for learners of Japanese as L2 (see Chapters 5 and 6). Furthermore, as this definition of pragmatic competence is based on abilities, it can also be used as a pedagogical framework for teaching pragmatics in the L2 classroom as well as serve as a basis upon which activities that help activate pragmatic competence can be created, which is the focus of the remainder of this chapter. I first explain what each ability of this definition means as part of a pedagogical framework.

Unlike in previous ILP models for pragmatics instruction, the definitions of pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness and clearly delineated and are not used interchangeably nor used as synonyms for pragmatic competence (see section 2.5). In this definition and the proposed framework, pragmatic awareness does not refer to the conscious recognition and understanding of a given feature of the Japanese language. Merely understanding or recognising a given feature of the Japanese language does not mean that learners have activated their pragmatic awareness. Here, pragmatic awareness is not concerned with features nor with recognising ostensive stimuli, but rather with retrieving relevant pragmatic effects produced by the ostensive stimuli previously recognised and understood as ostensive.

Moreover, my revision of pragmatic competence differs from Ifantidou's and Madella's definition in a number of ways. First, as discussed above, the focus of Ifantidou's work is on assessing the outcome of explicit instruction while Madella focuses on assessing the outcome of implicit instruction. In contrast, the focus of this version is concerned with unveiling the limitations learners of Japanese as L2 are typically faced with and explain them within the relevance-theoretic framework of analysis as well as describe how teachers can help enhance learners' pragmatic competence. Second, Ifantidou created her definition to teach and assess the interpretation of written texts while Madella adapted it to teach and assess nonverbal cues/paralinguistic indexes from the perspective of hearers. In this study, the framework is used to teach both linguistic (verbal) and non-linguistic (non-verbal) meaning in oral interaction from the perspective of both hearers and speakers. The proposed definition and subsequent framework are used to teach production and interpretation involving both verbal and non-verbal meaning, as opposed to interpretation only. Third, Ifantidou's work is concerned with linguistic markers (e.g. naming devices, lexical markers and modal and figurative expressions) as a way to facilitate pragmatic development, while Madella's focus is on visual and vocal cues. My definition includes a wider range of features of the language and pragmatic abilities including speech styles, ellipsis, prosody, gestures, silence, aizuchi and humour. Finally, Madella and Ifantidou applied their respective frameworks to learners of English as L2. The present framework is adapted to teach Japanese as L2, although I argue that it can be further applied to the teaching of any other second/foreign language (see Chapter 8).

Another crucial difference is the order of the cognitive processes involved. In her original definition, Ifantidou (2014) does not assume that linguistic awareness occurs before pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness, thus making no claims about the order in which these three cognitive processes take place. In my proposed framework, I recognise the value of teaching about pragmatics first before identifying ostension, retrieving relevant pragmatic effects and justifying the link between ostension and pragmatic effects. According to Relevance Theory, if an act of ostension is not understood as intentional, learners will not be able to recognise which pieces of evidence reveal the intention and thoughts of their interlocutor (see section 3.2.3). In turn, if learners cannot recognise whether a given act of communication has the intention to communicate, they will unlikely be able to infer its meaning. Understanding what ostension entails is key in understanding how human interaction works. In this sense, I recommend that teachers first bring awareness to pragmatics through meta-discourses on pragmatics and pragmatic competence and then encourage learners to engage with their pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness however better suits their instructional contexts and according to their learners' needs. Nonetheless, as abilities (a)-(d) concern four different aspects of teaching pragmatics, I do not prescribe that teachers go through these abilities in chronological order. These cognitive processes can be taught either concurrently, for example, simultaneously activating pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness, or in isolation, for example, focusing on awareness of linguistic ostensive stimuli or pragmatic awareness alone (see section 7.5 for examples of activities). In the next section, I will briefly discuss how this can be done before turning to the discussion on how to train language instructors to teach pragmatics.

7.3.2 Using Pragmatic Competence as a Pedagogical Framework

In this section, I will discuss how teachers could adopt each step of the revised pragmatic competence in their teaching.

In (a), Awareness of Pragmatics, teachers discuss the role of pragmatics and relevance as a means to achieving effective oral interaction in the L2. Learners must be made aware that L1 speakers communicate by openly showing their intention to communicate something to learners. Before being able to recognise acts of ostension, learners must be made aware that intentional communication not only provides evidence of their interlocutor's thoughts but also guarantees that learners' attention is turned to what is most relevant to the interlocutor. Learners must also become aware that communication involves more than linguistic input, and that other aspects of communication (contextual cues) must be tended to if one is to interact effectively in the L2.This is a phase for learners to become acquainted with some of the terminology in pragmatics (e.g. inference, ostension, relevance, implicature, explicature and intention) as well as make them aware of their pre-existing pragmatic competence in their L1.

In (b), Awareness of Ostensive Stimuli, teachers bring attention to a stimulus or stimuli (to increasing degrees) until learners understand it as ostensive. Once learners have understood what ostension is, they may proceed to recognise that a particular act is an ostensive one and activate the relevance-guided comprehension heuristic to interpret that act. [30] Thus, without

[30] Concepts such as ostension can be difficult to grasp for both learners and teachers who do not have a background in pragmatics theories. I therefore recommend that in the teacher training (see section 7.4) and in the L2 classroom, more accessible expressions are used, such as "intention to communicate something" or "when speakers openly and deliberately present evidence about their intentions".

understanding what ostension is, learners may have difficulties identifying input as relevant and therefore may not be able to make inferences about the intentions of L1 speakers (b) as easily. As soon as learners recognise that a particular stimulus is ostensive, the presumption of optimal relevance guides them in the interpretation of that given stimulus. If the feature at hand is linguistic, learners are asked to decode the linguistic form and identify it as ostensive (e.g. recognise speech style as ostensive). If the feature at hand is non-linguistic, learners are asked to recognise the stimulus as evidence of the speakers' intentions (e.g. recognise a gesture as ostensive). In both cases, instructors bring awareness to the feature of the language under study, prompt learners to identify whether it is a communicative act and ask learners to identify which linguistic/non-linguistic features achieve ostension.

In (c), Pragmatic Awareness, teachers help learners understand ostension by using evidence to infer speakers' meaning as cues to further pragmatic processing, particularly when linguistic input is limited or non-existent. This phase belongs to the inferential phase of communication and therefore falls under pragmatic awareness. Here, teachers can show interactions where a relevant interpretation is achieved as well as interactions where a relevant interpretation is not achieved. Then, instructors ask learners to analyse what went right or wrong. Additionally, teachers can provide information to strengthen existing beliefs or contradict and eliminate already held assumptions. Teachers can show a communicative act and prompt learners to work with plausible interpretations (i.e. what possible interpretations a given ostensive act may have in a given context?).

In (d), Metapragmatic Awareness, teachers encourage learners to justify the pragmatic effects retrieved by answering some questions such as the ones presented in Figure 7.1 below.[31]

- What features were cues to speakers' intentions?
- How do these features contribute to speakers' intentions?
- How did you/the hearer arrive at that conclusion?
- Why did you/the speaker make that linguistic/non-linguistic choice?
- Why is that given linguistic/non-linguistic form the most relevant act of ostension in that given context?

[31] The questions presented throughout this chapter are based on my revised definition of pragmatic competence as well as key concepts in Relevance Theory, such as Principle of Relevance, the notions of context and the relevance-guided comprehension procedure as explained in Chapter 3.

- Are there linguistic/non-linguistic alternatives to achieve ostension? Which ones? Would they have the same pragmatic effects?
- What are the hearers'/speakers' background knowledge, expectations, needs and preferences in that given context?
- Would the choice of that feature have had the same pragmatic effects in your L1? Why/Why not?

Figure 7.1: List of questions to help learners activate their metapragmatic awareness.

These questions will enable learners to become aware of the link between the pragmatic effects retrieved (e.g. implicatures, basic-level explicatures and higher-level explicatures) and the linguistic/non-linguistic features that triggered them.

7.4 Training L2 Instructors

In section 7.3, I discussed how the revised definition of pragmatic competence can be used as a teaching framework. However, before it can be used in the classroom, teachers must be trained. Ishihara and Cohen (2010: 100) state that "as language educators, we generally do not have access to what is going on inside our students' heads". While this is true, we do have a general understanding of how communication works at a cognitive level, and that how learners communicate is no different to L1 speakers (see section 3.8). Language processing in the L1 and the L2 is analogous, but learners and instructors alike do not view it this way because L2 instructional practices are concerned mostly with linguistic accuracies. As a result, learners become less capable of activating their inferential abilities in the L2 and/or are not aware that they can activate their inferential abilities in the L2 just as they do in their L1 (see section 7.2).

Instructors should encourage learners to use their pre-existing inferential abilities as a basis to develop their pragmatic competence in the L2. At the same time, instructors must teach learners how (and how much) of the linguistic and non-linguistic features of the L2 interact with pragmatic principles. However, before instructors help learners develop their pragmatic competence in the L2, instructors must be equipped with knowledge about what pragmatics is and how to teach it. Moving away from traditional communicative/sociocultural approaches to ILP, the instructional framework outlined above demonstrates the importance of taking into account global cognitive processes rather than specific features of the language such as speech acts. In this regard, Relevance Theory is a more comprehensive explanatory framework to teach pragmatics in the L2 as it offers an explicit account of the cognitive inferential processes involved in human communication. This shows the need for a training course that explains to instructors how to apply Relevance Theory in the L2 classroom.

In what follows, I describe how instructors can learn to teach L2 pragmatics. Although I have just presented a pedagogical framework based on the revised definition of pragmatic competence, teachers would need to be trained to be able to teach following this framework. To this end, I designed an online training course that equips teachers with knowledge and awareness about pragmatics through Relevance Theory. The training is intended for instructors to:

- Understand what pragmatic competence is and how to use it as part of a pedagogical framework.
- Emphasise the importance of a cognitive approach to L2 pragmatics teaching and learning through Relevance Theory.
- Identify potential problem areas for L2 learners.
- Develop activities that address potential problem areas for L2 learners.

As a theory of human communication anchored in cognitive capacities and universal pragmatic principles, Relevance Theory explains how inferential mechanisms can be tapped in the L2. Relevance Theory can be employed as a comprehensive analytical framework for a better understanding of how L1 and L2 users interact. The course serves as a space for instructors to understand the importance of teaching pragmatics, familiarise themselves with Relevance Theory, use relevance-theoretic notions to teach pragmatics and create activities that help overcome pragmatic challenges. These processes are one way of overcoming the shortcomings identified in section 7.2. As shown in Figure 7.2, by the end of the training, instructors will:

LO1: Be familiar with Relevance Theory as a cognitive-pragmatics theory of human communication and apply it to their pragmatics instruction. LO2: Enhance their ability to identify pragmatic challenges that learners may experience in their L2. LO3: Explore a pragmatic competence pedagogical framework and apply it to their teaching. LO4: Test, evaluate and create pedagogical materials and practices that focus on developing learners' pragmatic competence.

Figure 7.2: Learning outcomes of the teacher training.

A rationale for designing a training course for L2 instructors is to make Relevance Theory accessible to the field of second language teaching and learning. It is vital to make a cognitive theory of human communication easily available to instructors so that they can take it into account or introduce it in their current instructional practices. That is not to say that the proposed teacher training aims to prescribe the best approach to teaching pragmatics or the best theoretical support, but rather provides teachers with a theoretical framework that explains how L1 speakers and L2 learners can make interactions more effective.

The training is designed to be four weeks and has four main units of work, which correspond to each week of the course. The teacher training also has an introductory unit to help instructors settle in (see Table 7.1). The introductory unit helps participants familiarise themselves with the course site, the syllabus, the structure, the instructor(s) and with fellow participants. The first unit is dedicated to introducing Relevance Theory, where participants reflect on the need for a cognitive approach to pragmatics and its relevance in pragmatics teaching/learning in the L2. Participants learn concepts such as relevance, ostension, inference and context and discuss how these concepts can be applied to the teaching and learning of pragmatics in the L2. The second unit focuses on the concept of pragmatic competence. Upon reflecting on their understanding of pragmatic competence, participants are provided with Ifantidou's (2014) definition of pragmatic competence and the subsequent adaptation as outlined in this thesis. Then, participants are asked to reflect on how this pragmatics framework can be incorporated into their teaching practices. The third unit is concerned with exploring what is inhibiting L2 learners from achieving relevance. Through examples, such as the challenges outlined in Chapter 5, participants reflect on what aspects of oral interaction they think are challenging for learners of their L2 and discuss what causes such challenges. The final unit focuses on the development of pedagogical materials. Based on concepts in Relevance Theory and the pragmatics framework introduced in Unit 2, participants experience and analyse some activities designed to help them activate their pragmatic competence in the L2. Then, participants work towards creating two activities to help their learners develop their pragmatic competence.

Week	**Unit**	**Course Content**
Week 1	Unit 0	Meet the instructor(s) and your fellow classmates. Discuss the program goals and expectations. Describe your teaching context and students. Discover how ready you are to teach pragmatics.

	Unit 1	Share your pedagogical thoughts and reflections. Learn the main terms and concepts in Relevance Theory. Learn the main terms and concepts in Interlanguage Pragmatics. Explore the need for a cognitive approach to pragmatics. Discuss how Relevance Theory can be applied to the L2 classroom.
Week 2	Unit 2	Reflect on your understanding of pragmatic competence. Discuss what pragmatic competence is in relevance-theoretic terms. Familiarise yourself with a pedagogical framework for teaching pragmatics. Explore how the framework can be applied to the L2 classroom.
Week 3	Unit 3	Investigate and outline a variety of pragmatic challenges. Explore the causes of such pragmatic challenges. Analyse and explain evidence-based pragmatic challenges.
Week 4	Unit 4	Experience activities that enhance pragmatic competence. Analyse activities that enhance pragmatic competence. Plan and design your own activities.

Table 7.1: Summary of the teacher training course with a unit-by-unit description.

The proposed teacher training is designed to be implemented online (although it can be adapted to face-to-face delivery) to reach a wider audience (secondary and post-secondary instructors, student teachers, researchers, doctoral students, material designers, curriculum developers, policymakers, language advisors and anyone interested in applying Relevance Theory to language pedagogy/second language acquisition). Additionally, with the rise of teaching and learning online during the COVID-19 pandemic, an online format seems the most cautious mode of delivery. The idea is to create a platform to bring language instructors from all over the world together to think, reflect, discuss and experiment with pragmatics in the L2 from a cognitive relevance-theoretic approach (see Appendix D for the syllabus).

Throughout the training, instructors' awareness of (the importance of) pragmatic competence is activated through two main phases. These are (1) understanding what pragmatics is and (2) understanding how to teach pragmatics. Although these two phases teach instructors to think in order to develop learners' pragmatic competence, they should be viewed as sequential. That is, without understanding what pragmatics is, it might be more difficult for instructors to understand how to teach it. First, the proposed teacher training prepares instructors to think about relevance as a means to achieving successful and effective communication. Encouraging instructors to consider pragmatics to guide their already existing practices is a step towards incorporating pragmatics in general and Relevance Theory specifically in the curriculum. This, in turn, helps learners also think about pragmatics and consider it as an essential aspect of successful communication. In Figure 7.3, there are some questions that instructors may consider when teaching their L2. By reflecting on questions such as the ones below and trying to answer them, teachers are taking the first step to teach towards successful communication.

- What is the purpose of teaching a given ostensive stimulus?
- What is the pragmatic focus in a given lesson plan/activity (e.g. explicit or implicit communication, or both)?
- How can learners achieve successful communication when processing a given ostensive stimulus?
- What cognitive abilities do I want learners to tap into?
- What expectations of relevance do I want to raise?

Figure 7.3: List of questions to help instructors think about pragmatics.

The second phase is for instructors to go through the pragmatics framework (1) to (4) presented earlier in this chapter. This phase is particularly designed to develop instructors' ability to teach pragmatics. To be able to develop learners' pragmatic competence, instructors must bring their own pragmatic competence in the L2 to the surface in a conscious manner. In other words, teachers must know why they are bringing awareness to a particular act of ostension. Therefore, instructors must know whether the stimuli they teach are ostensive and how ostension is achieved. To do so, instructors may consider answering questions such as in Figure 7.4 below.[32]

- What inferences am I/is the hearer making to recover speaker intentions?
- What contextual knowledge do I need to recover meaning?
- Are intentions being conveyed linguistically, non-linguistically or both at the same time?
- What are the implicatures?
- What propositional attitude is conveyed and how?

[32] When teaching pragmatics in the L2 classroom, instructors may also use these questions to help learners reflect and activate their pragmatic competence.

- How is relevance achieved in this interaction and why is it relevant to interlocutors?
- What are the hearer's expectations? How are these expectations being raised?
- Why is this given interaction successful?

Figure 7.4: List of questions to help instructors teach pragmatics.

In this regard, allowing learners to think about and recognise ostension can contribute greatly to instructional practices, as ostension is the basis for recognising intentions. Instructors can use ostensive cues as pointers to meaning and help learners use these cues for making correct inferences about the communicative intention. That is, teachers can purposefully provide a clue (linguistic or non-linguistic) to learners as to what they wish to communicate (i.e. make their communicative act ostensive). By drawing learners' awareness to an ostensive communicative stimulus, teachers are demanding learners' cognitive effort (i.e. attention). When instructors choose to bring a given ostensive stimulus to learners' attention, following the relevance-guided comprehension heuristics, learners are automatically entitled to assume that whatever the teacher is trying to communicate must be worth their effort as, otherwise, instructors would not ask learners to pay conscious, voluntary attention to what they are communicating/showing.[33] That is, instructors raise learners' expectations that a given stimulus is important to achieve successful and effective communication. When learners perceive an act of communication as ostensive, it triggers the assumption that the communicative act is optimally relevant according to the teacher's goals and, by extension, to L1 speakers' goals, abilities and preferences.

Imagine that the instructor wants to bring awareness to silence as a means to communicate meaning through a short video clip of an authentic interaction in the L2. When listening to an oral interaction, learners must deal with several features at once, such as ostensive silence, intonation, hesitations, involuntary breaks, ellipses, redundancy, grammatical reconstruction, repetitions and corrections (Ableeva and Stranks 2012). As a result, learners may not understand silence as being ostensive or may be activating inferential mechanisms to interpret meaning achieved through other linguistic and non-linguistic communicative acts. Teachers

[33] Learners may assume that whatever the teacher communicates is worth picking up even if Relevance Theory is not taken into account. The key difference here is that instructors are aware of the importance of raising learners' expectations of relevance and deliberately use methods to trigger the most relevant assumptions.

can bring awareness to the particular pragmatic component or feature of the language under study.

In this regard, instructors can increase manifestness to help learners to notice a feature of the L2 language (linguistic or non-linguistic) and process it as evidence of speaker intention while encouraging learners to rely on cognitive processes rather than linguistic processes. De Paiva and Foster-Cohen (2004) suggest that the more manifest a feature of the language becomes, the more likely it is to be noticed, used as input to cognitive processes and acquired by learners. In this regard, teachers can guide learners in the inferential construction of meaning by narrowing the search space for relevance by increasing the salience of certain assumptions. Instructors can increase manifestness through ostension in the form of prosodic prominence (Madella 2020), repetition, exaggerated demonstration, role-playing (Heintz and Scott-Phillips 2022), comparing the L1 and the L2 (Rose 1999) using visual cues, pausing and demonstrating communication failures and successes. Instructors may choose one or more of the above means of teaching based on how they want to make a given informative intention manifest. For example, some representations may be more relevant to beginner students, while others may be more effective for intermediate or advanced students as they may need fewer cues. That is, instructors may choose different representations for learners while acting as mediators between the message conveyed by the original speaker and the learners, whose aim is to understand such a message.

Imagine that, by watching the video in the aforementioned example about silence, learners do not recognise silence as ostensive. Although instructors are overtly conveying an informative intention, they are not making this intention manifest and therefore learners may not be able to pick up on the expectations raised by instructors. To make the intention more manifest to learners, instructors may wish to provide further guidance by playing the video again (repetition) and/or pausing the video after silence is used. The aim is for teachers to use different teaching methods to make intentions manifest, to increasing degrees, until learners find relevance with the least possible effort. Contrarily, instructors may wish to make the intention of the communicator manifest from the outset, for example, by pausing the video, to highlight especially relevant ostensive stimuli which may have otherwise remained unnoticed by learners. Instructors may also introduce other recordings or as many videos/audios as needed to demonstrate other contexts where silence is used as a communicative act. Instructors may provide a transcript of the recording before, during or after and even use visual cues to draw learners' attention to silence. Teachers perform or show acts of ostension, making new assumptions manifest to learners. These assumptions may provide new information not previously available to learners or may strengthen or eliminate their old assumptions (i.e. assumptions that update learners' cognitive environment).

The degree of manifestness will be dictated by how much or little learners' expectations of relevance are raised. As learners activate inferential abilities in different degrees (i.e. develop pragmatic competence at different rhythms), it is important to scaffold activities to increase the cognitive load progressively according to learners' abilities and needs. The more pragmatic awareness learners develop, the less need for instructors to make the intentions of the speaker manifest as learners will already know how to activate their inferential mechanisms accordingly. Through successful pragmatic processing in the L2, learners internalise the set of assumptions learned in the classroom and these assumptions become readily available in their cognitive environment, brought to manifestness more automatically and with less need for teachers to use manifestness to raise pragmatic awareness. This is also an opportunity to eliminate existing assumptions that may be based on prejudice and misinformation. Through this process, learners become more familiar with situations that are likely to occur in the L2 and are therefore likely to experience less pragmatic resistance/divergence in the SA context. At this stage, instructors provide less and less support to learners by making informative intentions less manifest or not purposefully pointing to ostension. Instructors may even make activities timed to elicit rapid responses and ascertain whether pragmatic knowledge has been integrated within the learners' cognitive environment and therefore produced/interpreted automatically and with minimal processing effort.

A final notion that is key for instructors of L2 is that of *linguistic underdeterminacy*. The findings made evident that the underdeterminacy of language is ignored in the L2 classroom, thus creating a considerable discrepancy between the language learners acquire in the classroom and real-life language in the L2 context (see section 7.2). To minimise this mismatch, teachers must bring awareness to the gap between the linguistic forms L1 speakers use and the proposition they express. Teachers can guide learners through processes of pragmatic inference to recognise the gap between linguistic forms used by L1 speakers and the proposition they are expressing. Through concrete examples, instructors make learners aware that linguistically encoded meanings are mere clues to the intended overall interpretations. First, teachers help learners turn linguistic expressions into linguistic representations (decoding phase). Then, teachers demonstrate how the content of utterances is context-sensitive and that the speaker is likely communicating assumptions indirectly for which a considerable amount of inferential work is involved to derive the most relevant interpretation (inferential phase). Here, teachers can help learners fill the gaps and work with plausible interpretations to infer the propositional form. This process involves interaction with accessible contextual assumptions (e.g. silence, intonation, bodily expressions). Therefore, instructors must bring learners' attention to ostensive communicative acts via manifestness to be able to work out the overall interpretation of an utterance that has been far removed from the proposition expressed.

In this section, I addressed the second research question by explaining how Relevance Theory and Ifantidou's (2014) revised definition of pragmatic competence can help instructors of L2 understand and teach pragmatics. The next section focuses on the pedagogical materials that can help teachers who are trained to teach pragmatics to teach learners how to activate their pragmatic competence in the L2.

7.5 Pedagogical Materials: Teaching Pragmatics in the L2 Classroom

In section 7.2, I explained that pragmatics is rarely part of Japanese as L2 curricula and as a result, learners remain unaware of the importance of pragmatics for communication. To make learners aware of how their L2 interacts with pragmatic principles, teachers must provide learners with input that aims at developing their pragmatic competence. In this section, I address the third research question:

- What pedagogical materials can be created to address the pragmatic challenges identified in this thesis?

Huth and Taleghani-Nikazm (2006) explain that what learners acquire in the L2 and how they learn it is closely related to the quality and quantity of opportunities they are provided with to develop their pragmatic competence. In this thesis, the teaching materials that address the challenging areas discussed in Chapter 6 are an opportunity to develop learners' pragmatic competence. I adopt Ur's (2017) definition of "teaching materials" to describe digital and print resources that focus on the development of a particular skill, i.e. pragmatic competence, to facilitate the learning of Japanese as L2.

The activities are based on a relevance-theoretic approach to pragmatics. That is, the materials are theoretically underpinned by core ideas in Relevance Theory and have been developed following the pedagogical framework outlined in section 7.2. Therefore, the activities proposed in this study are designed towards maximising relevance in line with Relevance Theory, and suit the teaching of pragmatics by instructors who have undertaken the teacher training presented in 7.4. However, as this study is concerned with both pragmatics and teaching and learning, the activities must also be grounded on SLA principles that provide useful insights into the L2 pragmatics learning process. Combining Relevance Theory as the core pragmatics theory that informs the activities and teaching/learning principles grounded on SLA allows me to develop materials that address the main issue exposed throughout this thesis (i.e. how to overcome pragmatic challenges) through developing pedagogically sound materials that translate the pragmatics framework proposed in this study into actual teaching materials. The principles below help ground the activities in a way that the Japanese language can be effectively taught, such as encouraging learners to use their mental resources in the L1 to develop their L2, engage cognitively with the input provided, notice the salient assumptions in one's context and use language for communication purposes. Therefore, the principles are fully compatible with Relevance Theory (see Chapter 3). In this regard, the principles are adapted from Tomlinson's (2011: 7-23) general pedagogical principles. These principles are thought to be used as an informative base by materials developers who wish to create materials based on a compilation of key advancements and learning procedures in SLA research that have contributed to the successful teaching and learning of L2s. These principles are:

1. Learners are exposed to rich, meaningful and comprehensible input of ostensive stimuli (both linguistic and non-linguistic) in use. The pragmatic components are contextualised and are relevant for learners.
2. Learners are prompted to become affectively and cognitively engaged. The activities promote the use of high mental skills while promoting positive emotions such as confidence and a sense of achievement.
3. Learners are encouraged to use their L1 to activate their inferential skills in the L2. The activities are designed to raise positive cognitive effects among learners while strengthening, modifying or abandoning their assumptions as they progress.
4. Learners are provided with input that encourages them to notice "salient features" to discover how they are used.
5. Learners are presented with opportunities to use ostensive stimuli to achieve communicative purposes.
6. Learners are provided with modifications (i.e. progressions and regressions) as needed. The activities cater for different styles of learners as well as different abilities.

7. Learners are exposed, as much as possible, to authentic use of ostensive stimuli through unedited speech samples that offer real language that is contextually rich and culturally pertinent.

Unlike previous materials created within ILP research, which have focused on addressing a limited range of pragmatic features such as speech acts, I created activities that also address issues of wider pragmatic/inferential aspects. That is, the focus is not on the need to know the linguistic forms, the functions of these forms and the social rules that allow learners to interpret and perform a message. This is not how pragmatic competence is understood in this thesis. In contrast to existing pedagogical materials in ILP, the Japanese language is viewed as a tool for information (linguistic, non-linguistic, social and cultural) processing and not as mere coded communication that relies on semantic representations determined by grammar and social/cultural norms. In this regard, language, culture and social norms are not viewed as separate entities, but are rather intertwined, embedded within the activities and presented as background assumptions that facilitate the processing of implicit and explicit communication through inference. That is, unlike previous materials, the activities presented in this chapter do not target pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics separately. The activities focus on cognitive aspects of utterance production and interpretation and not on bridging the gap between linguistic forms and their uses in social/cultural contexts.

The activities presented in this thesis are designed to help learners understand ostension, understand an ostensive stimulus as sufficiently relevant to be worth the learners' effort to process it and use the most relevant ostensive stimuli according to their abilities and preferences, just as the definition of pragmatic competence predicts. The activities focus on consciously activating learners' inferential abilities so learners can progressively yield the most cognitive effects for the least processing effort. That is, the materials are designed to guide learners to go through the relevance-guided comprehension heuristic. The materials help learners activate their mindreading abilities such as attributing intentions, accessing logical forms that underdetermine L1 speakers' meaning and accessing background knowledge and contextual assumptions. Specifically, the activities focus on helping learners construct appropriate hypotheses about explicit content (process higher-level explicatures) and construct appropriate hypotheses about the intended contextual assumptions and implications (process implicatures).

The materials are based on meaningful pedagogical practices and include efficient, effective and careful instructions for instructors to become the facilitators of these activities. The activities have a clear purpose and meet the need for relevant oral interaction as the centre of learning (see section 7.2). With these activities, learners and instructors alike are expected to experience and think about the Japanese language from a perspective different to what they might be used to, focused on inferential abilities rather than purely linguistic and/or sociocultural abilities. Instructors guide learners through the (re)discovery of pragmatics in Japanese as L2 while encouraging learners to draw on (and add to) their own assumptions.

The activities are designed to cover challenging features of the Japanese language as seen in Chapter 5. That is not to say that they cannot be applied to develop inferential abilities using other verbal and non-verbal features of the Japanese language or cannot be used to address several features concurrently (e.g. silence and aizuchi or speech styles and ellipsis).[34] In Relevance Theory, communication is not fragmented nor compartmentalised into several linguistic and non-linguistic features. Communication is viewed as a process with several inputs that are processed globally rather than segmented. If learners present challenges other than the ones addressed in this section/thesis, instructors can (and should) adapt the model activities in this section to their learners' needs. The proposed activities include teacher-friendly guidelines so instructors can use the materials as templates to activate learners' inferential abilities while addressing features other than the ones discussed in the present thesis.

The pedagogical materials are designed with the needs of a specific group of learners in mind (i.e. pre-study/work abroad B1/B2 learners with mostly English as their L1 and who have limited time available within the L2 classroom), but can be adapted to other levels and contexts as needed. In other words, the materials have been designed thinking of learners as heterogeneous with differing aptitudes, stages of language learning, maturity levels, pedagogical contexts and L1 languages. Nonetheless, these activities are not conceived as a one-size-fits-all approach and should therefore be viewed as resource materials rather than course materials. The activities are thought to be employed as ancillary to currently existing language courses/curricula. That is, the activities are not designed for instructors and learners to go through step by step. Rather, the proposed materials work independently and should be viewed as a "mix and match" that can be incorporated in the classroom under wider themes

[34] Working on inferential abilities based on isolated features might work best for learners who are in their early stages of activating pragmatic competence. However, this is not empirically-proven and therefore needs further research.

and instructional practices. In this respect, it is the responsibility of the instructors to develop further materials to complement the activities below.

In the next sections, I highlight a selection of the activities I designed to help learners overcome the pragmatic challenges they faced in oral interaction with L1 speakers. These activities have been grouped into three sections, each of which addresses pragmatic abilities (b), (c) and (d) outlined in section 7.3—awareness of ostensive stimuli, pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness.[35] As discussed previously, instructors should bring awareness to ability (a), awareness of ostension, before attempting these activities. Although some tasks are designed to activate more than one ability concurrently (all the tasks presented here are metapragmatic as they involve the task of "explaining"), the activity has been placed under the section that better represents the ability at hand. Each task contains two boxes: the green box corresponds to the instructions of the activity and the yellow box provides further information for instructors. Underneath each task, there is a brief explanation with information about the pragmatic ability addressed as well as the pedagogical principles employed to develop that specific activity.

The full range of activities can be found in Appendix E, where activities are categorised according to the challenges discussed in this thesis rather than by inferential abilities. In Appendix F, I include several useful resources to conduct the activities presented in this thesis.

7.5.1 Activities for Raising Awareness of Ostensive Stimuli

Activity 1
Recognising silence as ostensive

Instructors play two short video clips, one where silence is used ostensively and another where silence is not ostensive. Learners watch both videos and discuss what features of Japanese communication these two videos have in common. Once students recognise that silence is the focus of this activity, the instructor asks them to pay attention to how silence is used in both interactions. These are some questions instructors may use for discussion:

- How are the speakers using silence?
- What is the relationship between interlocutors?
- Are they using silence to communicate something? If so, what do you think the speaker wants to communicate? If not, why is silence used?
- Where is silence placed in conversation?
- How do these silences make you feel?
- Would you use silence in these situations? Why? Why not?

[35] These activities could also be presented or introduced in the classroom as according to cognitive processes, such as activities for recovering linguistic representations, recovering higher-level explicatures and recovering implicatures.

Notes for instructors:

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to identify the differences between ostensive and non-ostensive silence.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli. Learners identify silence as a relevant non-linguistic feature of the Japanese language.

Instructors can introduce a third or fourth video to demonstrate other contexts where silence may be used as a communicative act. Instructors may provide a transcript of the videos before, during or after watching the videos.

Activity 1 brings attention to two types of stimuli, one that is ostensive and another that is not ostensive. This activity allows learners to recognise that silence may have a communicative intention (i.e. that silence can be used as an implicature). If perceived as relevant, learners work towards recognising the intention behind the silence (even if unable to reach a relevant interpretation) and its importance in communicating meaning. Through this activity, learners are exposed to contextualised non-linguistic input in use in a way that encourages them to notice relevant features through high-order thinking skills such as analysing and reasoning. This is an opportunity for learners to familiarise themselves with ostensive stimuli different to the ones they might be used to or expect in a language classroom.

Activity 2
Using speech styles to communicate intentions

Instructors show three short interactions, one in casual language, one in formal language and one in honorific language. Learners are asked to identify any differences between how language is used in the three interactions. Once learners have identified that speech styles are the focus of the activity at hand, learners discuss the role of speech styles. Instructors may use the following questions:

- What are speech styles? How many types of speech styles are there in the L2?
- How do you use speech styles?
- What are the differences and similarities between the use of speech styles in your L1 and the L2?
- What do you pay attention to when using speech styles?

Then, instructors may use a narrative approach by telling a story of an unsuccessful interaction in which someone used speech styles ineffectively, resulting in negative consequences. Based on the story, learners may share similar stories if they have any and reflect on:

- Why is it important to use speech styles appropriately?
- What may be some of the consequences of not using speech styles appropriately?
- What can we do to use speech styles more effectively?

Notes for instructors:

The focus of this activity is on receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to bring awareness to the role of speech styles as well as get learners thinking about how speech styles are used to communicate intentions.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli. Instructors bring awareness to speech styles as a means to communicate meaning/intentions.

Instructors may wish to provide the transcript during the first question of the first discussion to bring learners' awareness to the lexical and syntactical peculiarities of each speech style.

Activity 2 brings awareness to the gap between the linguistic forms of speech styles and the proposition they express (i.e. underdeterminacy thesis). Instructors bring attention to speech styles as a linguistic feature that may be used to convey meaning beyond social ideology. Through this task, learners recognise speech styles as ostensive stimuli that convey both semantic and pragmatic aspects of communication. This activity is designed to strengthen and modify learners' assumptions through meaningful and salient (familiar) linguistic input.

7.5.2 Activities for Raising Pragmatic Awareness

Activity 3

Identifying prosody as a cue to process meaning

Learners listen to a series of unsuccessful interactions in which one of the interlocutors uses intonation to convey a meaning different to the one intended. Learners:

- Identify the pattern of intonation.
- Explain what the speaker is communicating.
- Explain why the interaction is unsuccessful.
- Identify what the speaker wanted to communicate.
- Provide the intended prosodic pattern (either orally, visually or both).

Notes for instructors:

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to use prosody as a contextual cue to retrieve meaning.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness. Instructors show interactions where a relevant interpretation is not achieved and ask learners to analyse what went wrong.

To make it more challenging, instructors may provide some recordings where intonation is used effectively and some others where intonation is used ineffectively. Instructors ask learners to identify which ones are successful interactions and which ones are not and explain why.

Activity 3 helps learners recover higher-level explicatures through prosody. Instructors raise learners' pragmatic awareness by showing instances where a relevant interpretation is not achieved due to how prosody is used. Learners must work out which higher-level explicatures (e.g. speech acts and propositional attitudes) speakers want to convey and how they can achieve that. Through this activity, learners have an opportunity to experience the consequences of unsuccessful interactions as well as use their high-order thinking skills to analyse what went wrong and provide solutions. This activity provides progressions to make the task more challenging if needed as well as an option to make this activity suitable for auditory and visual learners.

Activity 4

Using inferential abilities in real-life interactions: working towards recovering underdeterminacy

Instructors invite L1 speakers to the classroom. Learners and L1 speakers pair up. Each pair interacts for about 20 minutes. During that time, learners video record the interaction. Then, on their own, learners analyse 5 minutes of the footage. Learners:

1. Explain which speech styles L1 speakers use and why.
2. Identify what constituents they made ellipted (if any) and why (or why not).
3. Transcribe the recording.
4. Identify where they could have used speech styles and ellipsis more effectively and how.

Notes for instructors:

The focus of this activity is on both receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to be able to use speech styles and ellipsis consciously and purposefully.

The focus is on pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness.

Instructors may provide learners with a list of topics to discuss (related to the course content). In addition to self-reflection, learners may exchange analyses with other peers so they can provide feedback to each other. In step 6, instructors may also ask learners to correct any grammatical mistakes they identify in their turns. To increase the complexity of this activity, instructors may also ask learners to identify other ostensive stimuli that underdetermine meaning or are a case of loose syntax and explain the pragmatic effects that the speaker intended to communicate.

Activity 4 raises learners' pragmatic awareness by helping learners use speech styles and ellipsis as cues to recover the proposition expressed and be able to infer speakers' meaning. This activity works on recovering utterances with loose syntax as well as recovering the stylistic effects conveyed through speech styles. Through this activity, learners become active participants in a real-life oral interaction where they can use ellipsis, speech styles and other ostensive stimuli to achieve communication purposes. The activity allows learners to become cognitively engaged by analysing their natural speech and looking for opportunities to strengthen their assumptions. Enabling learners to examine and reflect on their natural speech also promotes the use of high-order thinking skills.

7.5.3 Activities for Raising Metapragmatic Awareness

Activity 5

Understanding degrees of explicitness through gestures

Learners watch several short interactions where gestures and bodily expressions are used. Some of these expressions are accompanied with linguistic forms, while others are not. Learners first identify the difference between one use and the other and then discuss why some expressions are used in combination with language. Instructors may ask:

- Does the gesture/bodily expression contribute to speakers' intentions more, equally or less than the linguistic form?
- How does the linguistic form contribute to speakers' intentions?
- How could you interpret what the gestures/bodily expressions mean without them being accompanied by linguistic forms?
- Why at times speakers choose to say linguistic forms together with their gestures and sometimes they do not?
- (When) would you accompany your gestures/bodily expressions with linguistic forms in your L1? And in the L2? Why(not)?

Notes for instructors:

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to understand the meaning of bodily expressions and gestures.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness.

For struggling learners, before attempting this activity, it might be useful for instructors to prepare a quiz on possible linguistic forms that may accompany a given bodily expression/gesture first in isolation and then in context. Instructors may use videos, GIFs and other visual supports.

Activity 5 raises learners' metapragmatic awareness through the use of bodily expressions and gestures as implicatures. Learners are asked to justify the link between bodily expressions/gestures, the linguistic forms that accompany them (if any) and the pragmatic effects retrieved. Learners are encouraged to reflect on and discuss what makes these acts of ostension the most relevant in a given interaction. Learners are asked to think about their L1 to explain what happens in the L2. This activity provides regressions to update learners' cognitive environment and facilitate their analysis of why/how the gestures/bodily expressions used in this task are relevant in achieving communicative purposes.

Activity 6
Justifying the choice of aizuchi

Instructors listen to several recordings where verbal aizuchi are not used successfully. Learners discuss why aizuchi is not used effectively and provide alternatives to make the interaction more effective. In pairs, they can act out their interaction and further discuss with their peers why their interactions are more effective. Finally, instructors play the recordings with successful use of aizuchi and learners compare it to their own interactions.

Notes for instructors:

The focus of this activity is on both receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to be able to use aizuchi as communicative acts.

The focus is on pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness. Learners must explain why the forms of aizuchi they choose (or others choose) are the most effective ones to achieve pragmatic effects.

To make it easier, instructors provide a list with forms of aizuchi before the activity or provide a list of five different types of aizuchi to choose from. To make it more challenging, instructors may also present learners with some successful interaction and ask them to ascertain which ones are successful and which ones are unsuccessful and why.

Activity 6 raises learners' metapragmatic awareness by helping them evaluate, compare and contrast why the pragmatic effects of aizuchi are not achieved successfully. Through short and contextualised interactions, learners must explain why the forms of aizuchi used in the interactions do not contribute to the recovery of higher-level explicatures. Learners are also presented with opportunities to use aizuchi effectively to convey a wide range of higher-level explicatures. The activity offers regressions and progressions to cater for both struggling and confident learners.

7.6 Summary

This chapter made evident that learners are capable to transfer their L1 pragmatic competence into their L2, but may do so unconsciously and ineffectively. Learners do not lack pragmatic competence itself as previous research in ILP mostly claims, but they lack the awareness of how to activate their inferential abilities in their L2. Consequently, there is a need for learners to activate their pragmatic competence before moving to the SA context so that they can consciously and effectively engage in inferential abilities during their time in Japan. To this end, I presented how teachers could be trained to teach pragmatics in the classroom, together with examples of teaching materials they can use or adapt upon completion of the teacher training. To tap into their pragmatic competence, instructors must engage learners in pragmatic aspects particular to the Japanese language in the L2 classroom. However, before helping learners activate their pragmatic competence in the L2, instructors must first become acquainted with important pragmatic notions such as ostension, inference and relevance.

In this regard, the second research question sought to ascertain how Relevance Theory can help instructors become aware of the importance of bringing pragmatics to the curriculum so learners can develop their pragmatic competence alongside other competences. To help learners use their pragmatic competence in L2 communication, learners can use notions in Relevance Theory such as the relevance-guided comprehension heuristics, context, manifestness and linguistic underdeterminacy. These notions allow instructors to teach their L2 while thinking about efficient oral interactions and not solely allowing learners to rely on linguistic input to recover meaning. In addition to explaining how Relevance Theory can be used as a pragmatics framework in the classroom for instructors of L2 to assist learners in achieving relevance more efficiently, I demonstrated the need for a pedagogical framework grounded in Relevance Theory that guides instructors in the development of learners' pragmatic competence. Following on from Ifantidou's (2014) pioneering work, I expanded on her definition of pragmatic competence to include the understanding of ostension as a first step towards activating learners' pragmatic competence. Therefore, the revised definition is based on four interrelated cognitive processes, rather than three processes originally proposed by Ifanitdou (2014) and subsequently revised by Madella (2020). These are awareness of pragmatics, awareness of ostensive stimuli (linguistic and non-linguistic), pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness. This definition also includes the production and interpretation of a wide range of implicit and explicit features in oral interaction. My proposed modification of the definition of pragmatic competence can also be used as a pedagogical framework for instructors to use when designing L2 pragmatics materials as well as for teaching pragmatics in the L2 classroom. In this sense, I provided some suggestions on how instructors can address each of these processes in the L2 classroom.

For instructors to be better equipped, I proposed the development of a teacher training course for L2 instructors who are interested in learning how to develop learners' pragmatic competence as part of their instructional practices. The training focuses on teaching instructors how to use Relevance Theory to tackle implicit and explicit aspects of communication via inferential processing. The training is designed to help teachers develop their own pedagogical materials or adapt the activities included in this thesis.

To answer the third and final research question, namely, what materials can be created to address the pragmatic challenges identified in this thesis, I presented several activities with Relevance Theory at the core to showcase how a cognitive theory of human communication can inform instructional practices. I applied the pedagogical framework developed in this thesis to inform the pedagogical materials. With the teacher training and the pedagogical materials, I seek to encourage instructors to develop learners' pragmatic competence in the L2 classroom. I also seek to demonstrate how Relevance Theory is an effective means to develop pragmatic competence in the L2 classroom to instructors who already advocate for the need for teaching pragmatics.

In the following and final chapter, I consider the various theoretical and practical implications of this study. I make some final suggestions for the implementation of the pedagogical materials in as well as of the teacher training. I also discuss the limitations of this research and propose areas for further investigation.

CHAPTER 8:

CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

This study set out to investigate the pragmatic challenges learners of Japanese as L2 face in oral interaction with L1 speakers and how these can be overcome in the L2 classroom. Based on the data collected through open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, I have identified three main issues that learners experience as a result of not having been made aware of their pragmatic competence in the L2 classroom. To help learners activate their pragmatic competence in L2 communication, I have designed a set of different tasks for instructors to apply in their teaching that addresses the shortcomings in current pedagogical practices. The purpose of this final chapter is to present the conclusions drawn from the study. I draw together the core findings and arguments presented in the previous chapters by way of synthesis in respect of the overarching research questions outlined in section 1.2. I interweave the various threads of this thesis to highlight the theoretical and practical contributions of this work to the broader field of ILP as well as Relevance Theory. I also consider the limitations of this study and provide a set of suggestions for future research.

8.2 Revisiting the Research Questions: Central Findings

The major findings of this study are presented in accordance with the three research questions.

RQ1: What are the main pragmatic challenges learners faced in oral interaction with L1 speakers in the SA context?

The first research question was about issues learners encounter in L2 communicative situations. Findings from questionnaires, interviews and focus groups show that issues are multi-faceted. First, learners are challenged by the recovery of linguistic representations. Challenges are particularly observed in understanding, recognising and processing linguistic underdeterminacy (e.g. speech styles), loose syntax (e.g. ellipsis) and ambiguous lexical forms that cause humorous effects (e.g. puns). Linguistically encoded phenomena guide learners towards the recovery of meaning. However, if not processed correctly, these pieces of evidence towards the speakers' intentions and thoughts can hinder the decoding process. As learners cannot or take longer to process linguistically encoded phenomena, they cannot or take longer to pragmatically infer meaning.

Second, learners are also challenged by the recovery of higher-level explicatures. There are some features of the Japanese language that are not part of the proposition expressed and that, instead, trigger higher-level explicatures (e.g. via prosody, hedges and aizuchi). Learners' overreliance on linguistic pieces of evidence hinders their ability to recover the explicit meaning embedded within more complex propositions, including speech acts and propositional attitude. Furthermore, learners are challenged by the recovery of implicatures. Learners cannot or take longer to understand, identify and process strong and weak implicatures communicated by L1 speakers. This is particularly true in implicatures embedded within non-linguistic phenomena (e.g. silence, bodily expressions and gestures). As implicatures are weakly manifest to learners, L1 speakers' intentions cannot or take longer to satisfy learners' expectations of relevance and, as a result, they cannot or take longer to activate their inferential abilities.

Finally, learners are challenged by the recovery of humorous effects. Humorous effects are conveyed through linguistic representations, higher-level explicatures and implicatures, and therefore the challenges faced are a combination of issues in recovering linguistic forms and making inferences . In addition, learners lack the social, cultural, lexical and encyclopaedic knowledge required to understand, recognise and process humour in the L2. As a result, learners cannot or take longer to access information from context and cannot entertain the assumptions made by L1 speakers, and vice-versa. Having identified the issues and challenges learners face, I explored the second research question, which is as follows.

RQ 2: How can Relevance Theory help instructors of L2 develop pragmatic competence among learners?

The second research question aimed to explore how a cognitively-grounded pragmatics theory could be successfully applied to shed the light on issues that have previously been approached only from a social perspective. Most research in the field of ILP has been conducted with the core notion that pragmatics is concerned with knowing how to use linguistic forms to be able to appropriately interact socially in a given cultural context. However, pragmatics is concerned with utterance interpretation and therefore research in the field of ILP falls short in accounting for how contextual factors (without excluding social and cultural assumptions) interact with processing intentions.

This suggests that notions in Relevance Theory can narrow the gap in existing research in the ILP field by explaining through a cognitive theory of human communication grounded on universal pragmatic principles what occurs when L1 and L2 speakers interact. Relevance Theory can help instructors understand how communication between L1 speakers and L2 learners works and what inhibits learners from achieving successful and effective communication in real-time processing. By having an understanding of how and to what extent pragmatic principles interact with linguistic and non-linguistic features particular to their L2 in real-life interaction, instructors can help learners achieve successful and effective communication.

To support instructors in quickly identifying what is needed to be pragmatically competent, I expanded on the relevance-theoretic definition of pragmatic competence devised by Ifantidou (2014) and subsequently revised by Madella (2020). The proposed definition is based on four distinct cognitive abilities rather than three as proposed by Ifantidou. These are become familiar with how pragmatics work, the ability to identify relevant linguistic and non-linguistic ostensive stimuli, the ability to retrieve relevant pragmatic effects and the ability to justify the link between the ostensive stimuli and the pragmatic effects retrieved. Understanding these cognitive abilities can help instructors better understand what constitutes pragmatic competence and how to activate it in the L2 classroom. In addition, these abilities can also be used as a framework for pedagogical practice.

Following this Relevance-Theoretic approach to pragmatic competence, instructors can follow the relevance-guided comprehension heuristics as well as draw from the notions of context, manifestness, ostension and linguistic underdeterminacy to teach pragmatics in the L2 classroom. Instructors raise learners' expectations of relevance to trigger the most relevant assumptions through a number of teaching techniques and methods, such as using visual cues, pausing and demonstrating communication failures and successes. Instructors can also bring learners' attention to ostensive communicative acts that help recover utterances far removed from the proposition expressed.

Finally, drawing on the Relevance-Theoretic notion of pragmatic competence and ILP's theoretical advancements in the field of teaching/learning L2 pragmatics, I developed a framework for developing pedagogical materials that bridges the theoretical discussion of this study and pedagogical practice, which addresses the third and final research question:

RQ 3: What pedagogical materials can be created to address the pragmatic challenges identified in RQ1?

As mentioned previously, the proposed definition of pragmatic competence can also be used as a framework to teach L2 pragmatics. As the definition is ability-based, instructors can use the framework to create activities that tackle each cognitive ability either independently or concurrently depending on the learners' awareness of pragmatic competence, how activated their inferential abilities are and their understanding of pragmatics. The activities are grounded on Relevance Theory and are therefore designed towards maximising successful and effective interaction between L1 speakers and L2 learners. The activities are also underpinned by key advancements in SLA research and widely established teaching and learning principles.

Unlike previous materials in the field of ILP, the activities created in this study do not focus on a particular feature of the language as learners are encouraged to rely on cognitive processes rather than linguistic processes. The activities are designed to address global pragmatic processes such as the recovery of linguistic representations, the recovery of higher-level explicatures and the recovery of implicatures.

8.3 Contributions

In line with a DBR-based project, this study has contributed to ILP research and Relevance Theory by advancing both theory and pedagogical practice. There are four major theoretical and conceptual contributions (section 8.3.1) and two practical solutions offered in my work (section 8.3.2). I also describe the main empirical and methodological contributions (section 8.3.3).

8.3.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Contributions

(1) Learners are challenged by a number of features of the Japanese language that are neglected in the L2 classroom.

Through iterative cycles of data collection via open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with four cohorts of students across two higher-level universities in Ireland, I have ascertained the features of the Japanese language that were problematic for learners. In oral interaction with L1 speakers in the SA context, learners expressed difficulties with interpreting and producing both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of the Japanese language, including speech styles, ellipsis, utterance-level prosody, bodily expressions, humour, silence and aizuchi. Such features are rarely taught explicitly in the L2 classroom due to time constraints and a focus on grammatical forms. Hence, these findings demonstrate the need to look beyond speech acts which are the main focus in existing ILP research. Furthermore, unlike previous research in ILP, I suggest that pragmatic challenges should not be viewed as something readily observable and easily identifiable, such as speech acts. This is because pragmatics does not merely look at language use in social and cultural contexts, as much of ILP research claims. In addition to linguistic, non-linguistic, social and cultural meaning, pragmatic competence is about cognitive abilities such as inferring the meanings implied in speakers' utterances. In this thesis, I have demonstrated how ILP research can benefit from notions in Relevance Theory to identify and explain the challenging pragmatic processes that take place in oral interaction between L1 speakers and L2 learners.

(2) Learners are challenged by the recovery of meaning both in the explicit and implicit dimensions of communication.

The second theoretical contribution of this thesis is the analytical understanding of the pragmatic challenges at hand. Following a cognitive approach to human communication, notions and concepts in Sperber and Wilson's (1986/1995) Relevance Theory have helped make sense of the pragmatic challenges learners faced in Japanese oral interaction with L1 speakers. Although there have been studies on L2 language teaching/learning using a relevance-theoretic framework, Relevance Theory has not been extensively used in an empirical study to explain and help overcome pragmatic challenges in Japanese as L2, and therefore this approach represents an original contribution to knowledge.

Learners experienced challenges in decoding and inferential aspects of communication. In particular, the pragmatic challenges learners face in oral interaction with L1 speakers are twofold: learners lacked linguistic knowledge and could not (or took longer to) activate their inferential abilities. This shows that learners face challenges in recovering explicit aspects of communication (processing of loose syntax, encoded linguistic forms, lexical ambiguity) and implicit aspects of communication (processing of higher-level explicatures and implicatures). These challenges are interrelated and therefore cannot be examined in isolation. Learners had difficulties recovering linguistic representations.

At times, learners could not decode the syntactic and semantic structures that were presented to them. This is due to a discrepancy between the linguistic competence learners acquired in the classroom —which in turn conditioned their expectations about the type of language used in the SA context —and actual language use in Japan. Learners lacked the background knowledge (encyclopaedic, linguistic, non-linguistic, social, cultural) to activate the information that constraints inferential computations and could therefore not enrich linguistic forms or could decode linguistic representations but could not recover the gap between linguistically encoded meaning and speaker meaning. That is because learners relied only on linguistic (e.g. lexical and syntactical) cues to retrieve the intended meaning of an utterance and did not use other contextual cues to recover and process meaning. As Relevance Theory explains, linguistic forms are only one cue towards interpreting meaning and that other information is needed to recover the speaker's intentions. As a result, learners had difficulties recovering both basic-level and higher-level explicatures. This was also the case in recovering assumptions communicated as implicatures. Learners were so fixated on recovering logical forms that other clues used by L1 speakers were not deemed as ostensive or were not picked up as relevant enough, turning the implicated premises into weak implicatures. Consequently, learners often ended up recovering an interpretation different to the one intended or took higher processing effort to derive the implicated conclusion.

(3) Learners do not know how to activate their pragmatic competence in the L2.

Most ILP research argues that learners lack the pragmatic competence to interact in the L2 context (see section 2.7). In this thesis, I have argued that, instead of lacking pragmatic competence, learners' pragmatic competence is not activated properly and must therefore be explicitly activated in the L2 classroom to efficiently recover explicit and implicit meaning. Indeed, learners already have pragmatic competence in at least their L1, and therefore are pragmatically competent. The problem instead is that they have yet to learn how to apply their pragmatic competence in the L2 just like they do in L1 communication. That is, learners must be taught how to consciously transfer their inferential abilities from their L1 to their L2. However, in ILP research, pragmatic transfer is often regarded as a source of failure not a success (see section 2.7). This is because most of these studies look at the transfer of features of the language such as specific linguistic forms that convey speech acts. As a result, inferring speech acts in L2 based on L1 knowledge is seen as a failure rather than a successful application of pragmatic competence. In this regard, this study has made evident that what learners need is to transfer cognitive processes such as the ability to metarepresent others' beliefs and read interlocutors' minds. This also demonstrates that pragmatics goes beyond speech acts, unlike what has been discussed in ILP.

(4) Instructors can help learners overcome pragmatic challenges by bringing awareness to the importance of pragmatics for communication.

In current instructional practices, there is an excessive focus on linguistic input. However, pragmatic competence goes beyond the recovery of encoded linguistic representations. To be able to activate learners' pragmatic competence in their L2 communicative context, instructors must also bring awareness to inferential abilities and optimal relevance. Although the decoded linguistic meaning of an utterance is an important clue to the speaker's intention, learners must be made aware that linguistically encoded meaning is only a small part of a given communicative stimulus, and that there is other information to be recovered to be able to process the meaning intended by the L1 speaker (e.g. basic-level and higher-level explicatures and implicatures). It is therefore imperative that instructors make communication, which goes beyond acquiring linguistic knowledge, the centre of the L2 classroom. By prioritising communication, learners can focus on achieving relevance via several linguistic, non-linguistic and inferential processes that help process and recover ostensive stimuli consciously and effectively.

One way of prioritising communication over linguistic knowledge in the L2 classroom is for instructors to become acquainted with the main cognitive abilities that constitute pragmatic competence. The final theoretical contribution is concerned with the transparent set of guidelines that have informed the pedagogical processes of materials and course design. The pragmatics pedagogical framework consists of four clear processes, which can be applied to other contexts, that contribute towards activating four distinct aspects of pragmatic competence. I have created a theoretical model for teaching pragmatics that is clear and easy to follow and that enables the study to be replicated in other educational and research contexts and for the materials to be used in a wide range of settings. Unlike much of ILP research, the pedagogical model is theoretically grounded by the pragmatics theory which is Relevance Theory. This thesis has proved that research in ILP can benefit from a relevance-theoretic approach to pragmatics.

8.3.2 Practical Contributions

This thesis has two practical contributions which aim to help learners overcome their pragmatic challenges and help them activate their pragmatic competence in the first place. Furthermore, the two practical pedagogical solutions help expand instructors' own knowledge about pragmatics and learn ways of applying this newly acquired knowledge to their existing pedagogical practices.

First, this thesis showed how instructors could bring and build on pragmatic competence in L2 learning. As discussed in Chapter 7, to help learners activate their pragmatic competence in L2 communication, instructors must be acquainted with pragmatic principles, understand what inhibits learners from achieving successful communication as well as be able to identify/understand the main cognitive processes involved in pragmatic competence. To equip instructors with this knowledge, I have created a teacher training resource, also presented in Chapter 7, for instructors who wish to learn more about pragmatics from a relevance-theoretic perspective. This is the only such teacher training course aimed at instructors of Japanese as L2 (or as far as I am aware, of any language) that focuses on learning about and teaching pragmatics from a cognitive relevance-theoretic approach to pragmatics. Most courses are concerned with overcoming challenges with speech acts in the L2 classroom rather than teaching how to activate inferential processes. Furthermore, these courses are informed by current research in the ILP field but are not informed by a specific pragmatics theory. The first two units of the teacher training course I designed are theoretically-oriented to allow instructors to understand what pragmatics/pragmatic competence is and how to think about relevance as a means to achieving successful communication in the L2. The last two units of the teacher training resource are practically-oriented, with a focus on helping instructors how to teach pragmatics in their educational contexts. Learners are presented with several examples about how Relevance Theory can be applied in the L2 classroom, such as helping learners follow the relevance-guided comprehension heuristics through increasing manifestness.

Second, this study showed types of pedagogical materials informed by pragmatics theory, which could be used in the L2 classroom. As presented in Chapter 7, I have designed various tasks that are based on the pedagogical pragmatics framework developed in this thesis. These activities are designed to help activate the several cognitive processes learners have difficulties with in oral interaction with L1 speakers, namely recovering linguistic representations, explicatures and implicatures. This is an original contribution to ILP research as much of the models and activities developed in the context of these studies merely focus on overcoming challenges with features of the language, and not with global pragmatic processes. Furthermore, previous materials often do not incorporate pragmatic knowledge, but rather a knowledge of pragmatic features such as speech acts. This thesis responds to the need to not only recognise the type of pragmatic knowledge that should be incorporated in the L2 classroom, but also to the need to facilitate such knowledge to learners through the activities created presented in Chapter 7.

The tasks presented here demonstrate how Relevance Theory can be applied to the teaching of foreign languages thereby contributing to the advancement of pedagogical practices. The activities correspond to explorations of different aspects related to pragmatic competence as a cognitive performance that draws from notions in Relevance Theory. The fact that these tasks have been presented for learning Japanese as L2 does not limit them to such a context. The activities are not language-specific and therefore can be transferred to other languages. The tasks modelled in this can be considered as a new theoretically informed methodology. That is, instructors can follow the set of guidelines presented in this thesis to create their own theoretically underpinned pedagogical materials in their language of instruction.

8.3.3 Empirical and Methodological Contributions

As discussed in Chapter 2, many studies in ILP, especially those concerning Japanese as L2, are based on anecdotal evidence of what might be problematic for learners or based on teachers' intuitions and/or observation of students. The challenges presented in this study are based on real self-reported data collected from learners of two higher education institutions in Ireland during and after their SA programmes in Japan. Hence, in line with DBR, this study has created and examined empirical findings that contribute to solving practical, real-world pedagogical challenges. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, this study is the first of its kind in the field of ILP to combine DBR as the methodological framework and Relevance Theory as the theoretical framework.

8.4 Limitations and Future Research

This investigation has generated potential lines of work suited for future research. However, as with all research endeavours, some limitations require consideration. This section presents the limitations of this study as well as several potential avenues of further academic exploration.

One limitation lies in the research methods employed. Due to time restrictions, some features of the Japanese language that were mentioned in the questionnaires were not further discussed or discussed to a much less extent in the interviews and FGs. Therefore, data is much more robust for some features —and therefore easier to generalise— than others. In future iterations of this study, I suggest that FG discussions are conducted twice, once with the first cohort of learners who respond to the questionnaires and the second time with the second cohort of learners to corroborate and/or disprove the pragmatic challenges elicited in the questionnaires. The structure and length of FG discussions proved most useful for gaining insights into learners' personal experiences and linguistic/non-linguistic examples

The findings of this investigation are also limited by the scope of research participants. The sample size is relatively small and its focus on two universities in the Irish context may limit the generalisability of the findings to other contexts. However, the sample size is linked to the overall number of students who take Japanese as part of their BA degrees in Ireland as, at the time of data collection, there were only two higher education institutions with a long and well-established tradition of teaching Japanese as part of their curriculum and who offered an SA programme. Considering this, although the findings about the pragmatic challenges presented in this thesis can be generalised empirically to the Japanese language, they are only a snapshot of the inferential and linguistic challenges learners of Japanese as L2 may experience. Thus, the findings may not be representative of individuals in other social, cultural and educational contexts. In line with this, it would be interesting to further research whether the individual contributions about the challenges presented in this chapter are part of a wider challenge in Japanese as L2 learning communities both in Ireland and further afield. As the findings about challenging features are specific to the Japanese language and may not be applicable to other languages, it would be interesting to see this research replicated in other educational, geographical and linguistic contexts to be able to determine what is challenging for learners of languages other than Japanese.

A final limitation is that, in this study, only L2 learners' perspectives are taken into account. As the data were based on self-reported experiences, the study does not have insights into L1 speakers' perspectives of the challenges experienced in oral interaction with L2 learners. Interaction is reciprocal. Therefore, this study presents a partial view of the successes and failures accounted for in oral interaction. The next step is to include L1 speakers' perspectives to ascertain the pragmatic challenges they face in oral interaction with L2 learners. In addition to L1 perspectives, it would be beneficial to include natural-occurring data of interactions between L1 and L2 speakers. This data would offer even more insight into how interactors process, recover and negotiate meaning to construct interpretations. At the same time, having natural linguistic and non-linguistic data would allow researchers to work with "real" examples rather than use constructed examples based on self-reported data, as is the case in this study.

In regard to the practical solution, the proposed framework and materials must be tested and applied to real educational contexts and teaching practices. A key phase in DBR is the implementation of the solution to empirically test it, evaluate and refine it as needed (see section 4.4). However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I could not implement the materials in a real-life pedagogical context. I created the activities to match the pedagogic situation within the context where this research is conducted and for which the materials are intended (i.e. lack of pragmatics in the curricula, overreliance on linguistic input). Although I have anticipated some of the needs and interests of learners/instructors of Japanese as L2 (e.g. lack of contact hours, focus on writing/reading over listening/speaking), the materials must be adapted to unique pedagogical situations. The teaching materials might need to be supplemented, adapted and modified according to the learning needs and profiles of learners in different countries, cultures, learning habits and styles and learning needs. The pragmatic challenges that learners face in oral interaction with L1 speakers are complex and varied. Therefore, the instructional materials and pedagogical framework resulting from this thesis are not prescriptive, but rather intended as guidelines for instructors and researchers who work in other contexts and who want to develop and enhance the pragmatic development of their students.

Similarly, teachers of other languages can apply the pedagogical model to their teaching practices and use the proposed activities as a starting point to create their materials based on the particular needs and demands of their students/respective L2 languages. As the pedagogical framework for teaching pragmatics as well as the steps taken to design the materials can be generalised theoretically to languages beyond Japanese, the pedagogical model and the subsequent activities developed in this thesis might benefit from being empirically tested in other contexts, languages and geographical/educational areas. Ideally, the pedagogical framework and materials outlined in this thesis are to be implemented in L2 classrooms across the globe and for the findings to be incorporated in future research. Applying this model and activities to the teaching of pragmatics and reporting their strengths and weaknesses could be another research direction.

The testing of the teacher training course is another potential line of research. Further research is required to test whether the teacher training course can act as a place for instructors to learn how to think about pragmatics and to help them apply their knowledge to the L2 classroom. In turn, more research is needed to determine whether instructors who have undergone the course can in turn help learners activate their already-existing pragmatic competence. Finally, there are opportunities to disseminate the findings and pedagogical outcomes through workshops and seminars aimed at instructors of Japanese as L2 and further afield.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ableeva, R. and Stranks, J. (2012) ‘Listening in another language – research and materials’, in Tomlinson, B., ed., *Applied Linguistics and Materials Development*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 199–212.

Ajabshir, Z.H. (2019) ‘The effect of synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC) on EFL learners' pragmatic competence’, *Computers in Human Behavior*, 92, 169–177, DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2018.11.015.

Akimoto, Y. and Miyazawa, S. (2017) ‘Individual differences in irony use depend on context’, *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 36(6), 675–693, DOI: 10.1177/0261927x17706937.

Akiyama, Y. (1991) ‘A comparative study of facial expressions and emblems between Japanese and Americans’, *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 1(1), 147–164, available: https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.508.69&rep=rep1&type=pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Akiyama, Y. (2017) ‘Vicious vs. virtuous cycles of turn negotiation in American-Japanese telecollaboration: is silence a virtue?’, *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 17(2), 190–209, DOI: 10.1080/14708477.2016.1277231.

Alcón Soler, E. (2015) ‘Pragmatic learning and study abroad: effects of instruction and length of stay’, *System*, 48, 62–74, DOI: 10.1016/j.system.2014.09.005.

Alcón Soler, E. and Martínez Flor, A., eds., (2008) *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Alcón Soler, E. and Safont Jordà, M.P. (2008) ‘Pragmatic awareness in second language acquisition’, in Cenoz, J. and Hornberger, N.H., eds., *Encyclopedia of Language and Education Volume 6*, 2nd ed., 193–204, DOI: 10.1007/978-0-387-30424-3_149.

Al-Gahtani, S. and Roever, C. (2015) ‘The development of requests by L2 Learners of Modern Standard Arabic: A longitudinal and cross-sectional study’, *Foreign Language Annals*, 48(4), 570–583, DOI: 10.1111/flan.12157.

Allen, J.T. (2019) ‘“It has the ability to make the other person feel comfortable”: L1 Japanese speakers’ folk descriptions of aizuchi’, *Lingua*, 230, 1–20, DOI: 10.1016/j.lingua.2019.102737.

Anderson, T. and Shattuck, J. (2012) ‘Design-based research: A decade of progress in education research?’, *Educational Researcher*, 41(1), 16–25, DOI: 10.3102/0013189X11428813.

Angles, J., Nagatomi, A. and Nakayama, M. (2000) ‘Japanese responses *hai, ee,* and *un*: yes, no, and beyond’, *Language and Communication*, 20, 55–86, DOI: 10.1016/S0271-5309(99)00018-X.

Aqui, H. (2004) *70 Japanese Gestures: No Language Communication*, translated by Chang, A., Berkley: Stone Bridge Press.

Archer, D. and Grundy, P., eds. (2011) *The Pragmatics Reader*, London: Routledge.

Auerbach, C.F. and Silverstein, L.B. (2003) *Qualitative studies in psychology. Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysis*, New York: New York University Press.

Austin, J.L. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Bachman, L.F. (1990) *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ball, C. (2004) ‘Repertoires of registers: dialect in Japanese discourse’, *Language and Communication*, 24(4), 355–380, DOI: 10.1016/j.langcom.2004.01.004.

Barab, S. and Squire, K. (2004) ‘Design-based research: Putting a stake in the ground’, *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 13(1), 1–14, DOI: 10.1207/s15327809jls1301_1.

Barbour, R.S. (2010) ‘Focus groups’, in Bourgeault, I., Dingwall, R. and De Vries, R., eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Methods in Health Research*, London: Sage, 327–352.

Barbour, R.S. (2014) ‘Analysing focus groups’, in Flick, U., ed., *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, London: Sage, 313–326.

Bardovi-Harlig, K. (1999) ‘Exploring the interlanguage of interlanguage pragmatics: a research agenda for acquisitional pragmatics’, *Language Learning*, 49(4), 677–713, DOI: 10.1111/0023-8333.00105.

Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2010) ‘Exploring the pragmatics of interlanguage pragmatics: definition by design’, in Trosborg, A., ed., *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 219–260, DOI: 10.1515/9783110214444.2.219.

Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2013) 'Developing L2 pragmatics', *Language Learning*, 63(1), 68–86, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2012.00738.x.

Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2017) 'Acquisition of L2 pragmatics', in Loewen, S. and Sato, M., eds., *The Routledge Handbook of instructed Second Language Acquisition*, London: Routledge, 224–245.

Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2020) 'Pedagogical linguistics: A view from L2 pragmatics', *Pedagogical Linguistics*, 1(1), 44–65, DOI: 10.1075/pl.19013.

Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Mahan-Taylor, R. (2003) *Teaching Pragmatics*. Washington: United States Department of State Office of English Language Programs, available at: http://americanenglish.state.gov/search/solr/pragmatics [accessed 29 Apr 2021].

Bardovi-Harlig, K. and M-T. Bastos (2011) 'Proficiency, length of stay, and intensity of interaction and acquisition of conventional expressions in L2 pragmatics', *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 8(3), 347–384, DOI: 10.1515/iprg.2011.017.

Barron, A. (2006) 'Learning to say "you" in German: the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a study abroad context', in DuFon, M.A. and Churchill, E., eds., *Language Learners in Study Abroad Contexts*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 59–88.

Barron, A. (2007) '"Ah no honestly we're okay": learning to upgrade in a study abroad context', *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 4(2), 129–166, DOI: 10.1515/IP.2007.009.

Barron, A. (2012) 'Interlanguage pragmatics: from use to acquisition to second language pedagogy', *Language Teaching*, 45(1), 44–63, DOI: 10.1017/S0261444811000462.

Barron, A. (2019a) 'Pragmatic development and stay abroad', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 146, 43–53, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2019.05.003.

Barron, A. (2019b) 'Using corpus-linguistic methods to track longitudinal development: routine apologies in the study abroad context', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 146, 87–105, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2018.08.015.

Barron, A. (2020) 'Developing pragmatic competence in a study abroad context', in Schneider, K.P. and Ifantidou, E., eds., *Developmental and Clinical Pragmatics*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 429–474.

Bataller, R. (2010) ‘Making a request for a service in Spanish: pragmatic development in the study abroad setting’, *Foreign Language Annals*, 43(1), 160–175, DOI: 10.1111/j.1944-9720.2010.01065.x.

Beebe, L. M. and Takahashi, T. (1989) ‘Sociolinguistic variation in face-threatening speech acts: chastisement and disagreement’, in Eisenstein, M.R., ed., *The Dynamic Interlanguage: Empirical Studies in Second Language Variation*, New York: Plenum, 199–218.

Bell, N. (2007) ‘Humor comprehension: lessons learned from cross-cultural communication’, *Humor*’, 20(4) 367–387, DOI: 10.1515/HUMOR.2007.018.

Bell, N. and Attardo, S. (2010) ‘Failed humor: issues in non-native speakers’ appreciation and understanding of humor’, *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 7(3), 423–447, DOI: 10.1515/iprg.2010.019.

Bell, N.D. and Pomerantz, A. (2017) ‘Reconsidering language teaching through a focus on humor’, *EuroAmerican Journal of Applied Linguistics and Languages*, 1(1), 31–47, DOI: 10.21283/2376905X.1.15.

Bell, P. (2004) ‘On the theoretical breadth of design-based research in education’, *Educational Psychologist*, 39(4), 243–253, DOI: 10.1207/s15326985ep3904_6.

Bella, S. (2011) ‘Mitigation and politeness in Greek invitation refusals: effects of length of residence in the target community and intensity of interaction on non-native speakers’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(6), 1718–1740, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2010.11.005.

Belz, J.A.(2007) ‘The role of computer mediation in the instruction and development of L2 pragmatic competence’, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 27, 45–75, DOI: 10.1017/S0267190508070037

Blakemore, D.L. (1992) *Understanding Utterances: An Introduction to Pragmatics*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Blakemore, D.L. (2002) *Relevance and Linguistic Meaning: The Semantics and Pragmatics of Discourse Markers*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blum-Kulka, S., House, J. and Kasper, G., eds. (1989) *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*, Norwood: Ablex Publishing.

Bou Franch, P. (2013) ‘Pragmatic transfer’, in Chapelle, C.A., ed., *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 4622–4626.

Bouchard, J. (2011) ‘Pragmatic failures and language ideologies: challenges in the Japanese EFL context’, *Studies in Culture*, 49, 69–141, available at: http://hokuga.hgu.jp/dspace/handle/123456789/1748 [accessed 03 May 2021].

Bouton, L. (1994) ‘Conversational implicature in the second language: learned slowly when not deliberately taught’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 22(2), 157–167, DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(94)90065-5.

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998) *Transforming qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Braun, V., Clarke, V. (2006) ‘Using thematic analysis in psychology’, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101, DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

Breen, R.L. (2006) ‘A practical guide to focus-group research’, *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 30(3), 463–475, DOI: 10.1080/03098260600927575.

Brock, M.N. and Nagasaka, Y. (2005) ‘Teaching pragmatics in the EFL classroom? SURE you can!’, *TESL Reporter*, 38(1), 17–26, available at: https://silo.tips/download/teaching-pragmatics-in-the-efl-classroom-sure-you-can#modals [accessed 01 May 2021].

Brown, A.L. (1992) ‘Design experiments: Theoretical and methodological challenges in creating complex interventions in classroom settings’, *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 2(2), 141–178, DOI: 10.1207/s15327809jls0202_2.

Brown, P. and Levinson, S.C. (1978) ‘Universals in language usage: politeness phenomena’, in Goody, E.N., ed., *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 56–289.

Brown, P. and Levinson, S.C. (1987) *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bryman, A. (2012) *Social research methods*, 4th ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cai, L. and Wang, Y. (2013) ‘Interlanguage pragmatics in SLA’, *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(1), 142–147, DOI: 10.4304/tpls.3.1.142-147.

Canale, M. (1983) 'From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy', in Richards, J.C. and Schmidt, R.W., eds., *Language and Communication*, London: Longman, 2–27.

Canale, M. and Swain, M. (1980) 'Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing', *Applied Linguistics* 1(1), 1–47, DOI: 10.1093/applin/I.1.1.

Carpi, T. (2019) 'A study on the use of "aizuchi" and "pause" by JFL learners in online intercultural communications', *Proceedings of the 23rd Japanese Language Symposium in Europe*, Belgrade 29-31 Aug, Moers: AJE, 593–607, available at: https://www.eaje.eu/en/symposium/46 [accessed 06 May 2021].

Carpi, T. (2020) '*Aizuchi* and *ma* (pause) in online interactions of distance learning classes of Japanese: an empirical study', *Kervan – International Journal of Afro-Asiatic Studies*, 24(1), 211–233, DOI: 10.13135/1825-263X/4426.

Carroll, S.E. (1995) 'The irrelevance of verbal feedback to language learning', in Eubank, L., Slinker, M. and Sharwood Smith, M., eds., *The Current State of Interlanguage: Studies in Honor of William E. Rutherford*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 73–88.

Carroll, S.E. (2001) *Input and Evidence*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Carston, R. (2002) *Thoughts and Utterances: The Pragmatics of Explicit Communication*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Carston, R. (2006) 'Relevance theory and the saying/implicating distinction', in Horn, L. and Ward, G., eds., *Handbook of Pragmatics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 633–656.

Carston, R. and Hall, A. (2012) 'Implicature and explicature', in Schmid, H-J., ed., *Cognitive Pragmatics*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 47–84.

Caucci, G.M. and Kreuz, R.J. (2012) 'Social and paralinguistic cues to sarcasm', *Humor*, 25(1), 1–22, DOI: 10.1515/humor-2012-0001.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2007) 'Rethinking the role of communicative competence in language teaching', in Alcón Soler, E. and Safont Jordà, M.P., eds., *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*, 41–57, London: Springer.

Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z. and Thurrell, S. (1995) 'Communicative competence: a pedagogically motivated model with content specifications', *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 6(2), 5-35, available at: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ542906 [accessed 03 May 2021].

Central Intelligence Agency CIA (2019) *The world factbook: East Asia/Southeast Asia – Japan*, available: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html [accessed 23 Apr 2019].

Chang, Y. F. (2011) 'Refusing in a foreign language: An investigation of problems encountered by Chinese learners of English', *Multilingua*, 30(1), 71–98, DOI: 10.1515/mult.2011.004.

Chapman, S. (2011) *Pragmatics*, London: Palgrave.

Chen, R. (2010a) 'Compliment and compliment response research: A cross-cultural survey', in Trosborg, A., ed., *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 79–101.

Chen, R. (2010b) 'Pragmatics East and West: similar or different?', in Trosborg, A., ed., *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 167–188.

Childs, M. R. (2005) 'The place of pragmatics in language learning', in Tatsuki, D., ed., *Pragmatics in Language Learning, Theory and Practice*, Tokyo: JALT Pragmatics SIG, 13–24.

Christians, C.G. (2000) *Ethics and politics in qualitative research*, in Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S., eds., *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage, 133–155.

Clancy, P.M. (1986) 'The acquisition of communicative style in Japanese', in Schieffelin, B and Ochs, E., eds., *Language Socialisation Across Cultures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 213–250.

Clancy, P.M., Thompson, S.A., Suzuki, R. and Tao, H (1996) 'The conversational use of reactive tokens in English, Japanese, and Mandarin', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 26(3), 355–387, DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(95)00036-4.

Clark, B. (2013) *Relevance Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clarke, V., Braun, V. (2017) 'Thematic analysis', *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(3), 297–298, DOI: 10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613.

Cobb, P., Confrey, J., diSessa, A., Lehrer, R. and Schauble, L. (2003) ‘Design experiments in educational research’, *Educational Researcher*, 32(1), 9–13, DOI: 10.3102/0013189X032001009.

Cohen, A.D. (2012a) ‘Teaching pragmatics in the second language classroom’, *European Journal of Applied Linguistics and TEFL*, 1(1), 33–49.

Cohen, A.D. (2012b) ‘Comprehensible pragmatics: where input and output come together’, in Pawlak, M., ed., *New Perspectives on Individual Differences in Language Learning and Teaching*, Berlin: Springer, 249–261.

Cohen, A.D. (2016) ‘The design and construction of websites to promote L2 pragmatics’, in Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Félix-Brasdefer, J.C., eds.), *Pragmatics Language Learning Vol. 14*, University of Hawaii at Manoa: National Foreign Language Resource Center, 341–356.

Cohen, A.D. (2017) ‘Teaching and learning second language pragmatics’, in Hinkel, E., ed., *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning, Vol. 3.*, New York: Routledge, 428–452.

Cohen, A.D. (2019) ‘Considerations in assessing pragmatic appropriateness in spoken language’, *Language Teaching*, 53(2), 1–20, DOI: 10.1017/S0261444819000156.

Cohen, A.D. and Ishihara, N. (2005) *A Web-Based Approach to Strategic Learning of Speech Acts*, Minneapolis: Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota, available at: https://carla.umn.edu/speechacts/Speech_Act_Project.pdf [accessed 05 May 2021].

Cohen, A.D. and Ishihara, N. (2013) ‘Pragmatics’, in Tomlinson, B., ed., *Applied linguistics and Materials Development*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 113–126.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, K. (2018) *Research methods in education*, 8th ed., New York: Routledge.

Collins, A. (1992) ‘Toward a design science of education’, in Scanlon, E. and O’Shea, T., eds., *New directions in educational technology*, Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 15–22.

Collins, A., Joseph, D. and Bielaczyz, K. (2004) ‘Design research: Theoretical and methodological issues’, *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 3(1), 15–42, DOI: 10.1207/s15327809jls1301_2.

Colston, H.L. (2017) ‘Irony and sarcasm’, in Attardo, S., ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor*, London: Routledge, 234–249.

Cook, H.M. (2001) ‘Why can’t learners of JFL distinguish polite from impolite speech styles?’, in Rose, K.R. and Kasper, G., eds., *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 80–102.

Cook, H.M. (2008a) ‘Style shifts in Japanese academic consultations’, in Jones, K. and Ono, T., eds., *Style Shifting in Japanese*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 9–38.

Cook, H.M. (2008b) *Socializing Identities through Speech Style: Learners of Japanese as a Foreign Language*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Cook, H.M. (2011) ‘Are honorifics polite? Uses of referent honorifics in a Japanese committee meeting’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(15), 3655–3672, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2011.08.008.

Cook, H.M. (2016) ‘Adult L2 learners’ acquisition of style shift: the masu and plain forms’, in Minami, M., ed., *Handbook of Japanese Applied Linguistics*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 151–173.

Cook, J. (2012) ‘Why do Korean listeners have difficulty recovering the meaning of casual speech in English? A study in pragmatics’, *Asian Social Science*, 8(6), DOI: 10.5539/ass.v8n6p40.

Coulmas, F. (1986) ‘Direct and indirect speech in Japanese’, in Coulmas, F., ed., *Direct and Indirect Speech*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 161–178.

Council of Europe (2001) *Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Council of Europe (2020) *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment - Companion Volume*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, available at www.coe.int/lang-cefr [accessed 03 May 2021].

Crandall, E. and Basturkmen, H. (2004) ‘Evaluating pragmatics-focused materials’, *ELT Journal*, 58(1), 38–49, DOI: 10.1093/elt/58.1.38.

Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2018) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods Approaches*, 5th ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2018) *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*, 3rd ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2018) *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*, 3rd ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Crystal, D. (1997). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Culpeper, J., Mackey, A. and Taguchi, N. (2018) *Second Language Pragmatics: From Theory to Research*, London: Routledge.

Cutrone, P. (2005) 'A case study examining backchannels in conversations between Japanese-British dyads', *Multilingua*, 24(3), 237–274, DOI: 10.1515/mult.2005.24.3.237.

Cutrone, P. (2014) 'A cross-cultural examination of the backchannel behavior of Japanese and Americans: considerations for Japanese EFL learners', *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 11(1), 83–120, DOI: 10.1515/ip-2014-0004.

Davies, R.J. and Ikeno, O., eds. (2002) *The Japanese Mind*, Boston: Tuttle Publishing.

Davis, J. (2007) 'Resistance to L2 pragmatics in the Australian ESL context', *Language Learning*, 57(4), 611–649, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2007.00430.x.

Davis, J.M., ed. (2006) *Understanding Humor in Japan*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

DBRC (2003) 'Design-based research: An emerging paradigm for educational inquiry', *Educational Researcher*, 32(1), 5–8, DOI: 10.3102/0013189X032001005.

De Laat, J. (2017) 'Doing humour in Japanese' in Kennett, B. and Nagata, Y., eds., *Learning Japanese: Voices of Experience*, Hong Kong: Candlin and Mynard, 138–150.

De Paiva, B.M.M. (2003) 'Pragmatic interactions in a second language', in Grant, C.B., ed., *Rethinking Communicative Interaction: New Interdisciplinary Horizons*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 187–206.

De Paiva, B.M.M. (2007) 'Integrating relevance: an evaluation of theoretical accounts for the acquisition of pragmatic abilities in a second language', in Kraft, B. Geluykens, R., eds., *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics and Interlanguage English*, München: Lincom, 91–104.

De Paiva, B.M.M. and Foster-Cohen, S.H. (2004) ‘Exploring the relationships between theories of second language acquisition and Relevance Theory’, *Second Language Research*, 20(3), 281–288, DOI: 10.1191/0267658304sr241oa.

De Saussure, L. and Wharton, T. (2020) ‘Relevance, effects and affect’, *International Review of Pragmatics*, 12(2), 183–205, DOI: 10.1163/18773109-01202001.

Dede, C. (2004) ‘If design-based research is the answer, what is the question?’, *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 13(1), 105–114, DOI: 10.2307/1466934.

Denny, H. and Basturkmen, H. (2011) ‘The role of teacher consultation in teacher education: A teacher development project focused on designing and evaluating pragmatics-focused instructional materials’, *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 17(1), 102–107, available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10292/1731 [accessed 03 May 2021].

Denscombe, M. (2008) ‘Communities of practice: A research paradigm for the mixed methods approach’, *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 2(3), 270–283, DOI: 10.1177/1558689808316807.

Denscombe, M. (2014) *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects*, 5th ed., Maidenhead: UK, Open University Press.

Dewey, J. (1929) *Experience and nature*, 2nd ed., London: George Allen and Unwin.

Dewey, J. (1938) *Logic: The theory of inquiry*, New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Diepenbroek, L. G. and Derwing, T. M. (2014) ‘To what extent do popular ESL textbooks incorporate oral fluency and pragmatic development’, *TESL Canada Journal*, 30(7), 1–20, DOI: 10.18806/tesl.v30i7.1149.

Doi, T. (1974) ‘Some psychological themes in Japanese human relationships’, in Condon, J.C. and Saito, M., eds., *Intercultural Encounters with Japan: Communication – Contact and Conflict*, Tokyo: Simul Press, 17–26.

Dörnyei, Z. (2003) *Questionnaires in second language: Construction, administration and processing*, Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007) *Research methods in applied linguistics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Doughty, C. and Long, M. (2003) ‘The scope of enquiry and goals of SLA’, in Doughty, C. and Long, M., eds., *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*, Oxford: Blackwell, 3–16.

Dybala, P., Rzepka, R., Araki, K. and Sayama, K. (2012) 'Japanese puns are not necessarily jokes', *AAAI Technical Report*, 7–13, available at: http://hdl.handle.net/2115/63625 [accessed 06 Sep 2021].

Economidou-Kogetsidis, M. (2011) '"Please answer me as soon as possible": pragmatic failure in non-native speakers' e-mail requests to faculty', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(13), 3193–3215, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2011.06.006.

Edelson, D.C. (2002) 'Design research: What we learn when we engage in design', *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 11(1), 105–121, DOI: 10.1207/S15327809JLS1101_4.

Eisenchlas, S.A. (2011) 'On-line interactions as a resource to raise pragmatic awareness', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(1), 51–61, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2010.08.013.

Ellis, N. C. and Larsen-Freeman, D. (2006) 'Language emergence: Implications for applied linguistics – introduction to the special issue', *Applied Linguistics*, 27(4), 558–589, DOI: 10.1093/applin/aml028.

Enyo, Y. (2015) 'Contexts and meanings of Japanese speech styles: a case of hierarchical identity construction among Japanese college students', *Pragmatics*, 25(3), 345–367, DOI: 10.1075/prag.25.3.02eny.

Eslami Z.R. (2005) 'Raising the pragmatic awareness of language learners', *ELT Journal*, 59(3), 199–208, DOI: 10.1093/elt/cci039.

Eslami Z.R. and Liu, C.N. (2013) 'Learning pragmatics through computer-mediated communication in Taiwan', *International Journal of Society, Culture, and Language*, 1(1), 52–73, available at: http://www.ijscl.net/article_2002.html [accessed 03 May 2021].

Eslami Z.R., Eslami-Rasekh, A. and Fatahi, A. (2004) 'The effect of explicit metapragmatic instruction on the speech act awareness of advanced EFL students', *Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 8(2), 1–12, available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1068089.pdf [accessed 03 May 2021].

Eslami Z.R., Mirzaei, A. and Dini, S. (2014) 'The role of asynchronous computer mediated communication in the instruction and development of EFL learners' pragmatic competence', *System*, 48, 99–111, DOI: 10.1016/j.system.2014.09.008.

Eslami, Z.R. and Eslami-Rasekh, A. (2008) 'Enhancing the pragmatic competence of non-native English-speaking teacher candidates (NNESTCs) in an EFL context', in Alcón Soler, E.

and Martínez Flor, A., eds., *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 178–200.

Feilzer, M.Y. (2010) 'Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: Implications for the rediscovery of pragmatism as a research paradigm', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 4(1), 6–16, DOI: 10.1177/1558689809349691.

Félix-Brasdefer, J.C. (2006) 'Teaching the negotiation of multi-turn speech acts: using conversation-analytic tools to teach pragmatics in the classroom', in Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Félix-Brasdefer, J.C. and Omar, A.S., eds., *Pragmatics and Language Learning, Volume 11*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center, 165–197.

Félix-Brasdefer, J.C. and Cohen, A.D. (2012) 'Teaching pragmatics in the foreign language classroom: grammar as a communicative resource', *Hispania*, 95(4), 650–669, DOI: 10.2307/41756418.

Flores-Salgado, E. (2016) 'Offering advice: length of residence or intensity of interaction?' in Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Félix-Brasdefer, J.C., eds., *Pragmatics and Language Learning Volume 14*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, National Foreign Language Resource Center, 13–36.

Foster-Cohen, S.H. (2000) 'Review article', Sperber, D. and Wilson, D. 1995: Relevance: communication and cognition. 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell, *Second Language Research*, 16(1), 77–92, DOI: 10.1191/026765800673158592.

Foster-Cohen, S.H. (2002) 'The relevance of relevance theory to first and second language acquisition', in Makri Tsilipakou, M., ed, *Selected Papers on Theoretical and Applied Linguistics from the 14th International Symposium*, Thessaloniki: Aristotle University, 9–23.

Foster-Cohen, S.H. (2004a) 'Relevance Theory and second language learning/behaviour', *Second Language Research*, 20(3), 189–192, DOI: 10.1191/0267658304sr236ed

Foster-Cohen, S.H. (2004b) 'Relevance Theory, Action Theory and second language communication strategies', *Second Language Research*, 20(3), 289–302, DOI: 10.1191/0267658304sr242oa.

Fry, J. (2003) *Ellipsis and Wa-Marking in Japanese Conversation*., London: Routledge.

Fujii, N. and Ono, T. (2000) 'The occurrence and non-occurrence of the Japanese direct object marker *o* in conversation', *Studies in Language*, 24(1), 1–39, DOI: 10.1075/sl.24.1.02fuj.

Fujimoto, D.T. (2007) ‘Listener responses in interaction: a case for abandoning the term, backchannel’, *Journal of Osaka Jogakuin College*, 37(1), 35–54, available at: http://www.wilmina.ac.jp/ojc/edu/kiyo_2007/kiyo_37_PDF/03.pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Fukushima, E. (2007) ‘On the topic of mixed style of *desu/masu* form and non-*desu/masu* form: *taigu* communication among Japanese business people’, Waseda University Study of Japanese Language Education, 138, 24–32.

Fukuya, Y. & Y. Zhang (2002) ‘Effects of recasts on EFL learners’ acquisition of pragmalinguistic conventions of request’, *Second Language Studies*, 21(1), 1–47, available at: http://www.hawaii.edu/sls/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/FukuyaZhang.pdf [accessed 01 May 2021].

Garcés Conejos, P. and Bou Franch, P. (2004) ‘A pragmatic account of listenership: implications for foreign/second language teaching’, *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, 15, 81–102, DOI: 10.14198/raei.2004.17.06.

Garcia, P. (2004) ‘Developmental differences in speech act recognition: a pragmatic awareness study’, *Language Awareness*, 13(2), 96–115, DOI: 10.1080/09658410408667089.

Gass, S. and Houck, N. (1999) *Interlanguage Refusals: A Cross Cultural Study of Japanese-English*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter

Gesuato, S. (2016) ‘A research-based teaching unit for ESL/EFL students: responses to Gratitude’, in Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Félix-Brasdefer, J.C., eds., *Pragmatics and Language Learning Volume 14*, University of Hawaii at Manoa: National Foreign Language Resource Center, 293–322.

Gibson, W.J. and Brown, A. (2009) *Working with qualitative data*, London: Sage.

Gilmore, A. (2007) ‘Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning’, *Language Teaching*, 40(02), 97–118, DOI: 10.1017/s0261444807004144.

Gironzetti, E. and Koike, D.A. (2016) ‘Bridging the gap in Spanish instructional pragmatics: From theory to practice’, *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching*, 3(2), 89–98, DOI: 10.1080/23247797.2016.1251781.

Goffman, E. (1967) *Interaction Ritual*, New York: Doubleday.

González Lloret, M. (2013) ‘Pragmatics: Overview’, in Chapelle, C.A., ed., *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 4588–4594.

González Lloret, M. (2019) ‘Technology and L2 pragmatics learning’, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 39, 113–127, DOI: 10.1017/S0267190519000047.

Grabowski, K.C. (2009) *Investigating the construct validity of a test designed to measure grammatical and pragmatic knowledge in the context of speaking*, unpublished thesis (PhD), Teachers College, Columbia University.

Grice, H.P. (1957) ‘Meaning’, *Philosophical Review*, 66(3), 377–388, DOI: 10.2307/2182440.

Grice, H.P. (1975) ‘Logic and conversation’, in Cole, P. and Morgan, J., eds., *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, New York: Academic Press, 41–58.

Grix, J. (2004) *The foundations of research*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Guidi, A. (2017) ‘Humor universals’, in Attardo, S., ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor*, London: Routledge, 17–33.

Hagiwara, A. (2009) ‘Comprehending utterances in Japanese as a foreign language: formulaicity and literality’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 227–248.

Halenko, N. and Jones, C. (2011) ‘Teaching pragmatic awareness of spoken requests to Chinese EAP students in the UK: Is explicit instruction effective?’, *System*, 39(2), 240–250, DOI: 10.1016/j.system.2011.05.003.

Hall, J.K., Cheng, A. and Carlson, M. (2006) ‘Reconceptualising multicompetence as a theory of language knowledge’, *Applied Linguistics*, 27(2), 220–240, DOI: 10.1093/applin/aml013.

Hanson, B. (2008) ‘Wither qualitative/quantitative? Grounds for methodological convergence’, *Quality and Quantity*, 42(1), 97–111.

Hanzawa, C. (2012) *Listening Behaviors in Japanese: Aizuchi and Head Nod Use by Native Speakers and Second Language Learners*, unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Iowa.

Hasler-Barker, M. (2016) ‘Effects of metapragmatic instruction on the production of compliments and compliment responses: learner–learner role-plays in the foreign language classroom’, in Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Félix-Brasdefer, J.C., eds., *Pragmatics and Language*

Learning Volume 14, Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, National Foreign Language Resource Center, 125–152.

Hassall, T. (1997) *Requests by Australian learners of Indonesian*, unpublished thesis (PhD), Australian National University.

Hassall, T. (2013) ‘Pragmatic development in study-abroad contexts’, in Chapelle, C.A., ed., *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 4516–4522.

Hassall, T. (2015) ‘Influence of fellow L2 learners on pragmatic development during study abroad’, *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 12(4), 415–442, DOI: 10.1515/ip-2015-0022.

Hassall, T. (2018) ‘Leave-taking in Indonesian during short-term study abroad’, *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education*, 3(1), 84–11, DOI: 10.1075/sar.16013.has.

Hatasa, Y.A. (2007) ‘Aizuchi responses in JFL classrooms: teacher input and learner use’, in Yoshida, D.R. and Wang, H., eds., *Selected Papers from Pragmatics in the CJK Classroom: The State of the Art*, Honolulu: National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 80–96.

Haugh, M. (2008) ‘Utterance-final conjunctive particles and implicature in Japanese conversation’, *Pragmatics*, 18(3), 425–451, DOI: 10.1075/prag.18.3.04hau.

Hay, J. (2001) ‘The pragmatics of humor support’, *Humor*, 14(1), 55–82, DOI: 10.1515/humr.14.1.55.

Hayashi, M. and Mori, J. (1998) ‘Co-construction in Japanese revisited: we *do* “finish each other’s sentences”’, in Akatsuka, N., Hoji, H., Iwasaki, S., Sohn, S-O. and Strauss, S., eds., *Japanese/Korean Linguistics Vol. 7*, Stanford: CSLI, 77–93.

Hayashi, M. and Yoon, K. (2009) ‘Negotiating boundaries in talk’, in Sidnell, J., ed., *Conversation Analysis: Comparative Perspectives*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 250–278.

Hayashi, R. (1996) *Cognition, Empathy, and Interaction: Floor Management of English and Japanese Conversation*, Norwood: Ablex.

Heffernan, K., Imanishi, Y., & Honda, M. (2018). Showcasing the interaction of generative and emergent linguistic knowledge with case marker omission in spoken Japanese. *Glossa: A Journal of General Linguistics*, 3(1), 1–24, DOI: 10.5334/gjgl.500.

Heintz, C. and Scott-Phillips, T. (2022) ‘Expression unleashed: The evolutionary and cognitive foundations of human communication’, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 1–46, DOI: 10.1017/S0140525X22000012.

Hennink, M.M. (2007) *International focus group research: A handbook for the health and social sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hill, B., Ide, S., Ikuta, S., Kawasaki, A. and Ogino, T. (1986) ‘Universals of linguistic politeness: quantitative evidence from Japanese and American English’, *Journal of Pragmatics* 10(3), 347–371, DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(86)90006-8.

Hinds, J. (1976) *Aspects of Japanese Discourse Structure*, Tokyo: Kaitakusha.

Hinkel, E. (2001) ‘Building awareness and practical skills to facilitate cross-cultural communication’, in Celce-Murcia, M., ed., *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*, 3rd ed., Boston: Heinle and Heinle, 443–458.

Ho, D.G.E. (2012) ‘Focus groups’, in Chapelle, C.A., ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Applied Linguistics*, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 1–7.

Holden, C.L. and Sykes, J.M. (2011) ‘Leveraging mobile games for place-based language learning’ *International Journal of Game-Based Learning*, 1(2), 1 − 18, DOI: 10.4018/ijgbl.2011040101.

Hosseinpur, R.M. and Nevisi, R.B. (2020) ‘The impact of pragmatic consciousness-raising tasks on EFL learners’ speech act strategy use’, *Pragmatics and Society*, 11(4), 570–590, DOI: 10.1075/ps.16066.hos.

Hotta, T. and Horie, K. (2018) ‘L2 acquisition of the Japanese verbal hedge *omou*: A prototype approach’, in Masuda, K., ed., *Cognitive Linguistics and Japanese Pedagogy*, Berlin: De Mouton Gruyter, 199–224.

Houck, N.R. and Tatsuki, D.H., eds. (2011) *Pragmatics: Teaching Natural Conversation*. New York: TESOL.

House, J. (2003) 'Teaching and learning pragmatic fluency in a foreign language: the case of English as a lingua franca', in Martínez Flor, A., Usó Juan, E. and Fernández Guerra, A., eds., *Pragmatic Competence and Foreign Language Teaching*, Castelló: Servei de publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I, 133–159.

House, J. (2006) 'Constructing a context with intonation', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(10), 1542–1558, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2005.07.005.

Huth, T. and Taleghani-Nikazm, C. (2006) 'How can insights from conversation analysis be directly applied to teaching L2 pragmatics?', *Language Teaching Research*, 10(1), 53–79, DOI:10.1191/1362168806lr184oa.

Hymes, D. (1972) 'On communicative competence', in Pride, J. and Holmes, J., eds., *Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 269–293.

Ide, S. (1982) 'Japanese sociolinguistics: politeness and women's language', *Lingua*, 57(2/4). 357–385, DOI: 10.1016/0024-3841(82)90009-2.

Ide, S. (1989) 'Formal forms and discernment: Two neglected aspects of universals of linguistic politeness', *Multilingua*, 8(2/3), 223–248, DOI: 10.1515/mult.1989.8.2-3.223.

Ide, S. (2006) *Wakimae no Goyoron* [*Pragmatics of Wakimae*], Tokyo: Taishukan.

Ide, S. and Yoshida, M. (1999) 'Sociolinguistics: honorifics and gender differences', in Tsujimura, N., ed., *The Handbook of Japanese Linguistics*, Balden: Blackwell, 444–480.

Ifantidou, E. (2011) 'Genres and pragmatic competence', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(1), 327–346, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.016.

Ifantidou, E. (2013) 'Pragmatic competence and explicit instruction', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 59(A), 93–116, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2012.12.008.

Ifantidou, E. (2014) *Pragmatic Competence and Relevance*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Ifantidou, E. (2016) 'Relevance Theory, epistemic vigilance and pragmatic competence', in Padilla Cruz, M., ed., *Relevance Theory. Recent Developments, Current Challenges and Future Directions*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 193–238.

Ifantidou, E. (2017) 'Pragmatic transfer, relevance and procedural meaning in L2', *International Review of Pragmatics*, 9(1), 82–133, DOI: 10.1163/18773109-00901003.

Ifantidou, E. (2019) ‘Relevance and metaphor understanding in a second language’, in Scott, K, Carston, R. and Clark, B., eds., *Relevance: Pragmatics and Interpretation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 218–230.

Ifantidou, E. and Hatzidaki, A. (2019) ‘Metaphor comprehension in L2: meaning, images and emotions’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 149, 78–90, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2019.06.005.

Ifantidou, E. and Tzanne, A. (2012) ‘Levels of pragmatic competence in an EFL academic context: a tool for assessment’, *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 9(1), 47–70, DOI: 10.1515/ip-2012-0003.

Igarashi, Y. (2012) ‘Prosodic typology in Japanese dialects from a cross-linguistic perspective’, *Lingua*, 122(13), 1441–1453, DOI: 10.1016/j.lingua.2012.04.002.

Igarashi, Y. (2015) ‘Intonation’, in Kubozono, H., ed., *Handbook of Japanese Phonetics and Phonology*, Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 525–568.

Ike, S. (2010) ‘Backchannel: a feature of Japanese English’, in Stoke A.M., ed., *JALT2009 Conference Proceedings*, Tokyo: JALT, 205–215.

Ikeda, K. (2009) ‘Advanced learners’ honorific styles in emails and telephone calls’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 69–100.

Ikeguchi, C.B. (2002) ‘Awareness of the non-verbal behaviour unique to Japanese culture: a key to successful communication’, *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 11(3), 121–131, available at: https://web.uri.edu/iaics/files/11-Cecilia-B-Ikeguchi.pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Ikuta, S. (2008) ‘Speech style shift as an interactional discourse strategy: the use and non-use of *desu/-masu* in Japanese conversational interviews’, in Jones, K. and Ono, T., eds., *Style Shifting in Japanese*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 71–89.

Inagawa, M. (2015) ‘Creative and innovative uses of English in contemporary Japan’, *English Today*, 31(3), 11–16, DOI: 10.1017/s026607841500019x.

Ishida, H. (2006) ‘Learners’ perception and interpretation of contextualization cues in spontaneous Japanese conversation: Back-channel cue *uun*’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(11), 1943–1981, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2005.08.004.

Ishida, K. (2001) ‘Learning the pragmatic functions of the Japanese “masu” and plain forms’, *Annual Meeting of the Pacific Second Language Research Forum*, Honolulu, 4–7 Oct, available at: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED469394 [accessed 04 May 2021].

Ishida, K. (2006) ‘How can you be so certain? The use of hearsay evidentials by English-speaking learners of Japanese’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(8), 1281–1304, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2005.10.006.

Ishida, K. (2007) ‘Developing understanding of how the desu/masu and plain forms express one's stance’, in Yoshimi, D.R. and Wang, H., eds., *Selected Papers from Pragmatics in the CJK Classroom: The State of the Art*, Honolulu: National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 97–120.

Ishida, M. (2009) ‘Development of interactional competence: changes in the use of *ne* in L2 Japanese during study abroad’, in Nguyen, H.T. and Kasper, G. (eds.), *Talk-in-Interaction: Multilingual Perspectives*, Honolulu: National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 351–385..

Ishihara, N. (2006) *Subjectivity, second/foreign language pragmatic use, and instruction: evidence of accommodation and resistance*, unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Minnesota.

Ishihara, N. (2007) ‘Web-based curriculum for pragmatics instruction in Japanese as a foreign language: an explicit awareness-raising approach’, *Language Awareness*, 16(1), 21–40, DOI: 10.2167/la398.0.

Ishihara, N. (2010a) ‘Instructional pragmatics: bridging teaching, research, and teacher education’, *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 4(10), 938–953, DOI: 10.1111/j.1749-818X.2010.00242.x.

Ishihara, N. (2010b) ‘Maintaining an optimal distance: nonnative speakers’ pragmatic choice’, in Mahboob, A., ed., *The NNEST Lens: Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL Volume 1*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 35–53.

Ishihara, N. (2011) ‘Co-constructing pragmatic awareness: Instructional pragmatics in EFL teacher development in Japan’, *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (TESL-EJ)*, 15(2), available at: http://tesl-ej.org/pdf/ej58/a2.pdf [accessed 03 May 2021].

Ishihara, N. (2013) ‘Teacher-based assessment of L2 Japanese pragmatics: classroom applications’, in Ross, S.J. and Kasper, G., eds., *Assessing Second Language Pragmatics*, New York: Palgrave, 124–148.

Ishihara, N. and Cohen, A.D. (2010) *Teaching and Learning Pragmatics: Where Language and Culture Meet*, Harlow: Longman Applied Linguistics.

Ishihara, N. and Maeda, M. (2010) *Advanced Japanese: Communication in Context*, London: Routledge.

Ishihara, N. and Tarone, E. (2009) ‘Subjectivity and pragmatic choice in L2 Japanese: emulating and resisting pragmatic norms’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 101–128.

Ishii, S. and Bruneau T. (1994) ‘Silence and silences in cross-cultural perspective: Japan and the United States’, in Samovar, L.A. and Porter, R.E., eds., *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, 7th ed., California: Wadsworth, 246–251.

Isihara, N. (2007) ‘Web-based curriculum for pragmatics instruction in Japanese as a foreign language: an explicit awareness-raising approach’, *Language Awareness*, 16(1), 21–40, DOI: 10.2167/la398.0.

Iwai, T. (2007) ‘Becoming a good conversationalist: pragmatic development of JFL learners’, in Yoshimi, D.R. and Wang, H., eds., *Selected Papers from Pragmatics in the CJK Classroom: The State of the Art*, Honolulu: National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 121–140.

Iwai, T. (2013) ‘Using *n desu* in small talk: JFL learners’ pragmatic development’, in Kondo-Brown, K., Saito-Abbott, Y., Satsutani, S., Tsutsui, M. and Wehmeyer, A., eds.), *New Perspectives on Japanese Language Learning, Linguistics, and Culture*, Honolulu: National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawaii, 27–47.

Iwasaki, N. (2008a) ‘L2 Japanese acquisition of the pragmatics of requests during a short-term study abroad’, *Japanese Language Education in Europe*, 12, 51–58, available at: https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/6443/1/Iwasaki_Euro_Sympo_2008.pdf [accessed 01 May 2021].

Iwasaki, N. (2008b) ‘Style shifts among Japanese learners before and after study abroad in Japan: becoming active social agents in Japanese’, *Applied Linguistics*, 31(1), 45–71, DOI: 10.1093/applin/amn047.

Iwasaki, N. (2011) 'Learning L2 Japanese "politeness" and "impoliteness": young American men's dilemmas during study abroad', *Japanese Language and Literature*, 45(1), 67–106, available at: https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/11678/ [accessed 02 May 2021].

Iwasaki, S. (2002) *Japanese*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Japan Foundation (2010) *JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education 2010*, 2nd ed., Saitama: The Japan Foundation.

Japan Foundation (2016) *Japan Foundation Japanese studies survey 2015: A survey of Japanese studies at university level in the UK*, London, available: http://www.jpf.org.uk/japanesestudies/survey.php [accessed 10 Apr 2019].

Japan Foundation (2020) *Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2018*, Tokyo: The Japan Foundation.

Jaworski, A. (1992) *The Power of Silence: Social and Pragmatic Perspectives*, Newbury Park: Sage.

Jeon, E.H. and Kaya, T. (2006) 'Effects of L2 instruction on interlanguage pragmatic development: a meta-analysis', in Norris, J.M. and Ortega, L., eds., *Synthesizing Research on Language Learning and Teaching*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 165–211.

Jin, L. (2012) 'When in China, do as the Chinese do? Learning compliment responding in a study abroad program', *Chinese as a Second Language Research*, 1(2), 211–240, DOI: 10.1515/caslar-2012-0013.

Jodłowiec, M. (2010) 'The role of Relevance Theory in SLA studies', in Pütz, M. and Sicola, L., eds., *Cognitive Processing in Second Language Acquisition: Inside the Learner's Mind*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 49–66.

Jodłowiec, M. (2015) *The Challenges of Explicit and Implicit Communication: A Relevance-Theoretic Approach*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Johannesen, R. L (1974) 'The function of silence: a plea for communication research', *Western Speech*, 38(1), 25–35, DOI: 10.1080/10570317409373806.

Johnson, R.B. and Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2004) 'Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come', *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14–26, DOI: 10.3102/0013189X033007014.

Jones, K. and Ono, T. (2005) ‘Discourse-centered approaches to Japanese language pedagogy’, *Japanese Language and Literature*, 39 (2), 237–254, DOI: 10.2307/30038901.

Jones, K. and Ono, T. (2008) *Style Shifting in Japanese*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Jones, R. (1998) ‘A comparative study of strategies used by native and non-native speakers of Japanese in responding to compliments’, *Studies in Japanese Language Teaching*, 5, 54–71

Jones, S. (2011) ‘Speech is silver, silence is golden: the cultural importance of silence in Japan’, *The ANU Undergraduate Research Journal*, 3, 17–27, DOI: 10.22459/AURJ.03.2011.02.

Joseph, D. (2004) ‘The practice of design-based research: Uncovering the interplay between design, research, and the real-world context’, *Educational Psychologist*, 39(4), 235–242, DOI: 10.1207/s15326985ep3904_5

Jucker, A.H., Smith, S.W. and Lüdge, T. (2013) ‘Interactive aspects of vagueness in conversation’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35(12), 1737–1769, DOI: 10.1016/S0378-2166(02)00188-1.

Jungheim, N.O. (2006) ‘Learner and native speaker perspectives on a culturally-specific Japanese refusal gesture’, *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 44(2), 125–143, DOI: 10.1515/IRAL.2006.005.

Kagawa, H. (2001) *Ambiguous Japanese*, Tokyo: Koudansha.

Kakegawa, T. (2009) ‘Development of the use of sentence-final particles through email correspondence’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 301–334.

Kamada, O. (1990) ‘Reporting messages in Japanese as a second language’, in Kamada, O. and Jacobsen, W., eds., *On Japanese and How to Teach It*. Tokyo: The Japan Times, 224–245.

Kameda, N. (2001) ‘The implication of language style in business communication: focus on English versus Japanese’, *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 6(3), 144–149, DOI: 10.1108/EUM0000000005738.

Kasper G. and Blum-Kulka, S., eds., (1993) *Interlanguage Pragmatics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kasper, G. (1992) ‘Pragmatic transfer’, *Second Language Research*, 8(3), 203–231, DOI: 10.1177/026765839200800303.

Kasper, G. (1996) ‘The development of pragmatic competence’, *EUROSLA 6: A Selection of Papers*, 55, 103–120, DOI: 10.1075/ttwia.55.09kas.

Kasper, G. (1998) ‘Interlanguage pragmatics’, in Byrnes, H., ed., *Learning Foreign and Second Languages: Perspectives in Research and Scholarship*, New York: Modern Language Association of America, 183–208.

Kasper, G. (2001) ‘Classroom research on interlanguage pragmatics’, in Rose, K.R. and Kasper, G., eds., *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 33–62.

Kasper, G. (2009) ‘(Instead of a) foreword’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, xiii-xxi.

Kasper, G. and Dahl, M. (1991) ‘Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics’, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13(2), 215–247, DOI: 10.1017/S0272263100009955.

Kasper, G. and Roever, C. (2005) ‘Pragmatics in second language learning’, in Hinkel, E., ed., *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning, Vol. 3*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 317–334.

Kasper, G. and Rose, K.R. (2002) *Pragmatic Development in a Second Language*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Kasper, G. and Schmidt, R. (1996) ‘Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics’, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18(2), 149–169, DOI: 10.1017/S0272263100014868.

Kawahara, S. and Shinohara, K. (2009) ‘The role of psychoacoustic similarity in Japanese puns: a corpus study’, *Journal of Linguistics*, 45(1), 111–138, DOI: 10.1017/S0022226708005537.

Kawate-Mierzejewska, M. (1999) ‘Back channel cues as sources for conversation breakdowns and misunderstandings’, in Jungheim, N.O. and Robinson, P., eds., *Pragmatics and Pedagogy: Proceedings of the 3rd Pacific Second Language Research Forum, Vol.2*, Tokyo: The Pacific Second Language Forum, 25–34.

Kendon A. (2004) *Gesture: Visible Action as Utterance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kennedy-Clark, S. (2015) ‘Reflection: Research by design: Design-based research and the higher degree research student’, *Journal of Learning Design*, 8(3), 106–122, available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1083858.pdf [accessed 06 Sep 2021].

Kennett, B. (2017) ‘Belinda's story: listen carefully’, in Kennett, B and Nagata, Y., eds., *Learning Japanese: Voices of Experience*, Honk Kong: Candlin and Maynard, 59–69.

Kidd, J.A. (2016) *Face and Enactment of Identities in the L2 Classroom*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Kim, H.Y. (2014) ‘Learner investment, identity, and resistance to second language pragmatic norms’, *System*, 45, 92–102, DOI: 10.1016/j.system.2014.05.002.

Kim, Y. and Taguchi, N. (2015) ‘Promoting task-based pragmatics instruction in EFL classroom contexts: the role of task complexity’, *Modern Language Journal*, 99(4), 656–677, DOI: 10.1111/modl.12273.

King, J. and Aono, A. (2017) ‘Talk, silence and anxiety during one-to-one tutorials: a cross-cultural comparative study of Japan and UK undergraduates’ tolerance of silence’, *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 18(4), 489–499, DOI: 10.1007/s12564-017-9503-8.

Kinginger, C. and Blattner, G. (2008) ‘Histories of engagement and sociolinguistic awareness in study abroad’, in Ortega, L. and Byrnes, H., eds., *The Longitudinal Study of Advanced L2 Capacities*, New York: Routledge, 223–246.

Kita, S. and Ide, S. (2007) ‘Nodding, aizuchi, and final particles in Japanese conversation: how conversation reflects the ideology of communication and social relationships’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39(7), 1242–1254, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2007.02.009.

Kitayama, S. and Ishii, K. (2002) ‘Word and voice: spontaneous attention to emotional utterances in two languages’, *Cognition and Emotion*, 16(1), 29–59, DOI: 10.1080/0269993943000121.

Kizu, M., Pizziconi, B. and Iwasaki, N. (2013) ‘Modal markers in Japanese: a study of learners’ use before and after study abroad’, *Japanese Language and Literature*, 47, 93–133, available at: https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/16933/ [accessed 06 May 2021].

Kjeldgaard, M. (2016) ‘Prosodic features of Japanese and English’, *Aichi University: Language and Culture*, 61(34), 165–173, available at: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/268153192.pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Kogure, M. (2007) ‘Nodding and smiling in silence during the loop sequence of backchannels in Japanese conversation’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39(7), 1275–1289, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2007.02.011.

Koike, D.A. (2008) ‘A grammar of L2 pragmatics: issues in learning and teaching’, in Katz, S. and Watzinger-Tharp, J., eds., *Conceptions of L2 Grammar: Theoretical Approaches and their Application in the L2 Classroom*, Boston: Heinle, 35–52.

Kolaiti, P. (2019) *The Limits of Expression: Language, Literature, Mind*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kolmos, A. (2015) ‘Design-based research – Issues in connecting theory, research and practice’, in *6th Research in Engineering Education Symposium (REES 2015): Translating Research into Practice*, Dublin: Research in Engineering Education Network, 662–669.

Kondo, S. (2008) ‘Effects on pragmatic development through awareness-raising instruction: refusals by Japanese EFL learners’, in Alcón Soler, E. and Martínez Flor, A., eds., *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 153–177.

Kondo, S. (2010) ‘Apologies: raising learners’ cross-cultural awareness’, in Martínez Flor, A. Usó Juan, E., eds., *Speech Act Performance: Theoretical, Empirical and Methodological Issues*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 145–162.

Krueger, R.A. and Casey, M.A. (2015) *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*, 5th ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kubota, M. (1996) ‘Acquaintance or fiancee: pragmatic differences in requests between Japanese and Americans’, *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics*, 12(1), 23–38, available at: https://repository.upenn.edu/wpel/vol12/iss1/2 [accessed 03 May 2021].

Kuno, S. (1973) *The Structure of the Japanese Language*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kurumada, C. and Jaeger, T.F. (2015) ‘Communicative efficiency in language production: optional case-marking in Japanese’, *Journal of Memory and Language*, 83, 152– 178, DOI: 10.1016/j.jml.2015.03.003.

Kwon, J. (2004) ‘Expressing refusals in Korean and in American English’, *Multilingua*, 23(4), 339–364, DOI: 10.1515/mult.2004.23.4.339

Lauwereyns, S. (2002) ‘Hedges in Japanese conversation: age, sex, and formality’, *Language Variation and Change*, 14(2), 239–259, DOI: 10.1017/S0954394502142049.

Lebra, T.S. (1987) ‘The cultural significance of silence in Japanese communication’, *Multilingua*, 6(4), 343–358, DOI: 10.1515/mult.1987.6.4.343.

Lee, C. (2018) *Researching and Teaching Second Language Speech Acts in the Chinese Context*, Singapore: Springer.

Lee, H. (2013) ‘The influence of social situations on fluency difficulty in Korean EFL learners’ oral refusals’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 50(1), 168–186, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2013.01.002.

Leech, G.N. (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*, London: Longman.

Li, Q. (2012) ‘Effects of instruction on adolescent beginners’ acquisition of request modification’, *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(1), 30–55, DOI: 10.1002/tesq.2.

Liamputtong, P. (2011) *Focus group methodology: Principles and practice*, London: Sage.

Liszka, S.A. (2004) ‘Exploring the effects of first language influence on second language pragmatic processes from a syntactic deficit perspective’, *Second Language Research*, 20(3), 212–231, DOI: 10.1191/0267658304sr238oa.

Liszka, S.A. (2015) ‘The L2 acquisition of the English present simple-present progressive distinction: verb-raising revisited’, in Ayoun, D., ed., *The Acquisition of the Present*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 57–86.

Liu, B. (2013) ‘Effect of first language on the use of English discourse markers by L1 Chinese speakers of English’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 45(1), 149–172, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2012.11.002.

Liu, J. (2006) *Measuring Interlanguage Pragmatic Knowledge of EFL Learners*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Liu, J. (2010) ‘Testing interlanguage pragmatic knowledge’, in Trosborg, A., ed., *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 467–488.

Liu, J. and Ren, W. (2016) ‘Apologies in emails: interactions between Chinese EFL learners and their foreign peers’, in Chen, Y.S., Rau, D.H. and Rau, G., eds., *Email Discourse among Chinese Using English as a Lingua Franca*, Singapore: Springer, 205–228.

LoCastro, V. (1987) ‘Aizuchi: a Japanese conversational routine’, in Smith, L.E., ed., *Discourse across Cultures: Strategies in World Englishes*, New York: Prentice Hall, 101–113.

LoCastro, V. (1998) ‘Learner subjectivity and pragmatic competence development’, *Annual Conference of American Association for Applied Linguistics*, Seattle, 14-17 Mar, 3–16, available at: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED420201 [accessed 03 May 2021].

LoCastro, V. (2001) ‘Individual differences in second language acquisition: attitudes, learner subjectivity, and L2 pragmatic norms’, *System*, 29(1), 69–89, DOI: 10.1016/S0346-251X(00)00046-4.

LoCastro, V. (2003) *An Introduction to Pragmatics: Social Action for Language Teachers*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Loehr, D. (2014) ‘Gesture and prosody’, in Müller, C., Cienki, A., Fricke, E., Ladewig, S.H., McNeill, D. and Bressem, J., eds., *Body-Language-Communication: An International Handbook on Multimodality in Human Interaction Vol. 2*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 1381–1391.

Luo, Y. (2020) ‘Pragmatic failure and cognitive context’, *World Scientific Publisher*, 64–69, DOI: 10.47297/wspciWSP2516-252709.20200404

Madella, P. (2020) *Prosodic pointing: from pragmatic awareness to pragmatic competence in Chinese hearers of L2 English*, unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Brighton.

Madella, P. and Romero-Trillo, J. (2019) ‘Prosodic Pointing in inferential comprehension: the application of Relevance Theory to L2 listening instruction’, *Revista Digital do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras da PUCRS*, 12(4), 1–17, DOI: 10.15448/1984-4301.2019.4.34157.

Magliacane, A. and Howard, M. (2019) ‘The role of learner status in the acquisition of pragmatic markers during study abroad: the use of ‘like’ in L2 English’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 146, 72–86, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2019.01.026.

Makino (2002) ‘When does communication turn mentally inward? A case study of Japanese formal-to-informal switching’, in Akatsuka, N.M. and Strauss, S., eds., *Japanese/Korean Linguistics 10*, Stanford: CSLI Publications, 121–131.

Marriott, H. (1995) ‘The acquisition of politeness patterns by exchange students in Japan’, in Freed, B., ed., *Second Language Acquisition in a Study Abroad Context*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 197–224.

Martínez Flor, A. and Alcón Soler, E. (2007) ‘Developing pragmatic awareness of suggestions in the EFL classroom: a focus on instructional effects’, *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 10(1), 47–76, available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10234/174665 [accessed 03 May 2021].

Martínez Flor, A. and Usó Juan, E. (2006) ‘A comprehensive pedagogical framework to develop pragmatics in the foreign language classroom: the 6Rs approach’, *Applied Language Learning*, 16(2), 39–64.

Martínez Flor, A. and Usó Juan, E., eds. (2010) *Speech Act Performance. Theoretical, Empirical and Methodological Issues*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Masuda, K. (2011) ‘Acquiring interactional competence in a study abroad context: Japanese language learners’ use of the interactional particle *ne*’, *Modern Language Journal*, 95(4), 519–540, DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01256.x.

Masuoka, T., ed. (2007) *Nihongo Modriti Tankyū* [*Exploration of Japanese Modality*], Tokyo: Kuroshio.

Matsugu, Y. (2005) ‘Japanese epistemic sentence-final particle kana: its function as a ‘mitigation marker’ in discourse data’, *Pragmatics*, 15(4), 423–436, DOI: 10.1075/prag.15.4.02mat.

Matsui, T. (2002) ‘Semantics and pragmatics of a Japanese discourse marker *dakara* (so/in other words): a unitary account’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34(7), 867–891, DOI: 10.1016/S0378-2166(01)00066-2.

Matsumoto, D. and Hwang, H.C. (2013) ‘Cultural similarities and differences in emblematic gestures’, *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 37(1), 1–27, DOI: 10.1007/s10919-012-0143-8.

Matsumoto, Y. (1988) ‘Reexamination of the universality of face: politeness phenomena in Japanese’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 12(4), 403–426, DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(88)90003-3.

Matsumoto, Y. and Okamoto, S. (2003) ‘The construction of the Japanese language and culture in teaching Japanese as a foreign language’, *Japanese Language and Literature*, 37(1), 27–48, DOI: 10.2307/3594874.

Maxcy, S.J. (2003) ‘Pragmatic threads in mixed methods research in the social sciences: The search for multiple modes of inquiry and the end of the philosophy of formalism’, in

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C., eds., *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, 51–90.

Maynard, S. K. (1987) ‘Interactional functions of a nonverbal sign: head movements in Japanese dyadic casual conversation’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 11(5), 589–606, DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(87)90181-0.

Maynard, S. K. (1997) *Japanese Communication: Language and Thought in Context*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Maynard, S.K. (1986) ‘On back-channel behaviour in Japanese and English conversation’, *Linguistics*, 24(6), 1079–1108, DOI: 10.1515/ling.1986.24.6.1079.

Maynard, S.K. (1989) *Japanese Conversation: Self-contextualization through Structure and Interactional Management*, Norwood: Ablex.

Maynard, S.K. (1991) ‘Pragmatics of discourse modality: a case of da and *desu/masu* forms in Japanese’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 15(6), 551–582, DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(91)90111-a.

Maynard, S.K. (1993) *Discourse Modality: Subjectivity, Emotion and Voice in the Japanese Language*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Maynard, S.K. (1997) ‘Analyzing interactional management in native/non-native English conversation: a case of listener response’, *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 35(1), 37–60.

Maynard, S.K. (2007) *Linguistic Creativity in Japanese Discourse: Exploring the Multiplicity of Self, Perspective, and Voice*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

McConachy, T. and Hata, K. (2013) ‘Addressing textbook representations of pragmatics and culture’, *ELT Journal*, 67(7), 294–301, DOI: 10.1093/elt/cct017.

McCraw, M. (2010) *First-Person Singular Pronouns in Japanese: How Do They Work in Conversation?*, unpublished thesis (PhD), University of New Mexico.

McGroarty, M. and Taguchi, N. (2005) ‘Evaluating the communicativeness of EFL textbooks for Japanese secondary students’, in Frodesen, J. and Holten, C., eds., *The Power of Context in Language Teaching and Learning*, Boston: Heinle, 211–224.

McKenney and S. and Reeves, T.C. (2013) ‘Systematic review of design-based research progress’, *Educational Researcher*, 42(2), 97–100, DOI: 10.3102/0013189X12463781.

McKenney, S. and Reeves, T.C. (2012) *Conducting educational design research*, New York: Routledge.

McMeekin, A. (2014) 'Japanese learners' indexical uses of the *da* style in a study abroad setting', *Japanese Language and Literature*, 48(1), 1–38, DOI: 10.2307/24394371.

McNamara, T. and Roever, C. (2006) *Language Testing: The Social Dimension*, Malden: Blackwell.

McNeill, D. (2005) *Gesture and Thought*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McShane, M.J. (2005) *Theory of Ellipsis*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mertens, D.M. (2010) *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods*, 3rd ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mey, J.L. (1993) *Pragmatics: An Introduction*, 1st ed., Oxford: Blackwell.

Mey, J.L. (2001) *Pragmatics: An Introduction*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Blackwell.

Miller, B. (2018) 'Wrongful moves in unfamiliar meaning spaces: Gesture usage and implications for cross-cultural gestural-pragmatic failure', *Jissen Women's University CLEIP Journal*, 4, 39–55, DOI: 10.34388/1157.00001868.

Miller, T. and Bell, L. (2012) 'Consenting to what? Issues of access, gatekeeping and informed consent', in Miller, T., Birch, M., Mauthner, M. and Jessop, J., eds., 2nd ed., *Ethics in Qualitative Research*, London: Sage, 61–75.

Minami, M. (2007) *Applying Theory and Research to Learning Japanese as a Foreign Language*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Minashima, H. (2001) 'On the deletion of accusative case markers in Japanese', *Studia Linguistica*, 55(2), 175–190, DOI: 10.1111/1467-9582.00078.

Mirzaei, A., Hashemian, M. and Khoramshekouh, A. (2016) 'L2 learners' enhanced pragmatic comprehension of implicatures via computer-mediated communication and social media networks', *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(1), 141–180, DOI: 10.18869/acadpub.ijal.19.1.141.

Mirzaei, A., Roohani, A. and Esmaeili, M. (2012) 'Exploring pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic variability in speech act production of L2 learners and native speakers', *Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 4(3), 79–102, DOI: 10.22099/jtls.2012.622.

Miyaoka, Y. and Tamaoka, K. (2001) ‘Use of Japanese honorific expressions by native Chinese speakers’, *Psychologia*, 44(3), 209–222, DOI: 10.2117/psysoc.2001.209.

Miyata, S. and Nisisawa, H. (2007) ‘The acquisition of Japanese backchanneling behavior: Observing the emergence of aizuchi in a Japanese boy’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39(7), 1255–1274, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2007.02.012.

Miyazaki, K., Adachi, T., Noda, H. and Takanashi, S. (2002) *Modariti* [*Modality*], Tokyo: Kuroshio.

Mizuno, K. (1996) ‘Interlanguage pragmatics of requests: directness and perspectives’, *Papers on Language and Culture*, 18(1), 57–71.

Mizutani, N. (1985) *Hanashi Kotoba No Bunpou* [*Spoken Grammar*], Tokyo: Kuroshio.

Mizutani, O. and Mizutani, N. (1987) *How to be Polite in Japanese*, Tokyo: The Japan Times.

Moody, S.J. (2014) ‘Should we teach rules for pragmatics? Explicit instruction and emergent awareness of Japanese plain and polite forms’, *Japanese Language and Literature*, 48(1), 39–69, DOI: 10.2307/24394372.

Moore, H. (1997) ‘Learning pronunciation and intonation of Japanese through drama by beginning language students: a case for reflective journals’, *JALT Journal*, 19(2), available at: https://jalt-publications.org/jj/issues/1997-11_19.2 [accessed 06 May 2021].

Morgan, D.L. (1997) *Focus groups as qualitative research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Morgan, D.L. (2007) ‘Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained: Methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods’, *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), 48–76, DOI: 10.1177/2345678906292462.

Morgan, D.L. (2014) ‘Pragmatism as a paradigm for social research’, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(8), 1045–1053, DOI: 10.1177/1077800413513733.

Morgan, D.L. (2015) *Essentials of dyadic interviewing*, Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press.

Morgan, D.L. and Hoffman, K. (2018) ‘Focus groups’, in Flick, U., eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection*, London: Sage, 250–263.

Morgan. D.L. (1988) *Planning focus groups*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mori, J. (1999) *Negotiating Agreement and Disagreement in Japanese*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Morris, C. (1938) 'Foundations of the theory of signs', in Neurath, O., Carnap, R., Morris, C., eds., *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, 1(2), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1–59.

Morris, D. (1994) *Bodytalk: The Meaning of Human Gestures*, New York: Crown.

Murata, K. (1994) 'Intrusive or cooperative?: A cross-cultural study of interruption'. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 21(4), 385–400, DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(94)90011-6.

Muratova, K.E. and Akhapov, A.E. (2020) 'Features of the translation of elliptical utterances in the spoken Japanese language', *Journal of Oriental Studies*, 93(2), 132–139, DOI: 10.26577/JOS.2020.v93.i2.15.

Nagashima, H. (2006) 'Sha-re: a widely accepted form of Japanese wordplay', in Davis, J.M., ed., *Understanding Humor in Japan*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 75–84.

Nakagawa, N. (2016) *Information Structure in Spoken Japanese: Particles, Word Order, and Intonation*, unpublished thesis (PhD), Kyoto University.

Nakane, I. (2006) 'Silence and politeness in intercultural communication in university seminars', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(11), 1811–1835, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2006.01.005.

Nakane, I. (2007) *Silence in Intercultural Communication*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Nakayama, A. (2013) 'Student-initiated student-repair in classroom', *Journal of Nagoya Gakuin University: Language and Culture*, 24(2) 237–242, available at: http://www2.ngu.ac.jp/uri/gengo/pdf/genbun_vol2402_18.pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Nakazawa, K. (2012) 'The effectiveness of focused attention on pronunciation and intonation training in tertiary Japanese language education on learners' confidence: Preliminary report on training workshops and a supplementary computer program', *International Journal of Learning*, 18(4), 181-192, DOI: 10.18848/1447-9494/CGP/v18i04/47590.

Narita, R. (2012) 'The effects of pragmatic consciousness-raising activity on the development of pragmatic awareness and use of hearsay evidential markers for learners of Japanese as a foreign language', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44(1), 1–29, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2011.09.016.

Nariyama, S. (2003) *Ellipsis and Reference Tracking in Japanese*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Nariyama, S. (2009) *Nihongo no Shōryaku ga Wakaru Hon: Dare ga Dare ni Nani o?* [*How can we know who did what to whom in Japanese? The Grammar of Omission*], Tokyo: Meiji Shoin.

Neff, P. And Rucynski, J. (2017) 'Japanese perceptions of humor in the English language classroom', *Humor*, 30(3), 279–301, DOI: 10.1515/humor-2016-0066.

Nguyen, M.T.T. (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), 17–30, DOI: 10.1177/0033688210390265.

Nguyen, T.T.M., Pham, T.H. and Pham, M.T. (2012) 'The relative effects of explicit and implicit form-focused instruction on the development of L2 pragmatic competence', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44(4), 416–434, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2012.01.003.

Niyekawa, A.M. (1991) *Minimum Essential Politeness: A Guide to the Japanese Honorific Language*, Tokyo: Kodansha International.

Niżegorodcew, A. (2007) *Input for Instructed L2 Learners: The Relevance of Relevance*, London: Multilingual Matters.

Norouzi, T. (2018) 'The phonology and phonetics of second language intonation in case of "downstep"', *International Journal of Cognitive and Language Sciences*, 12(9), 1164–1170, DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.1474465.

O'Donnell, A.M. (2004) 'A commentary on design research', *Educational Psychologist*, 39(4), 255–250, DOI: 10.1207/s15326985ep3904_7.

O'Keeffe, A., Clancy, B. and Adolphs, S. (2011) *Introducing Pragmatics in Use*, London: Routledge.

Obana, Y. (2000) *Understanding Japanese*, Tokyo: Kuroshio.

Ohama, R. (2006) *Nihongo Kaiwa Ni Okeru Tān Kōtai To Aizuchi Ni Kansuru Kenkyū* [*Research on Turn-Taking and Aizuchi in Japanese Conversation*], Hiroshima: Keisuisha.

Ohta, A.S. (2008) ‘Preface’, in Alcón Soler, E. and Martínez Flor, A., eds., *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, xi-xii.

Ohtaki, S., Ohtaki, T. and Fetters, M.D. (2003) ‘Doctor–patient communication: a comparison of the USA and Japan’, *Family Practice*, 20(3), 276–282, DOI: 10.1093/fampra/cmg308.

Okamoto, S. (1985) *Ellipsis in Japanese Discourse*, unpublished thesis (PhD), University of California.

Okamoto, S. (1999) ‘Situated politeness: manipulating honorific and non-honorific expressions in Japanese conversations’, *Pragmatics*, 9(1), 51–74, available at: https://journals.linguisticsociety.org/elanguage/pragmatics/article/view/281/215.html [accessed 05 May 2021].

Okamoto, S. (2002) ‘Politeness and the perception of irony: honorifics in Japanese’, *Metaphor and Symbol*, 17(2), 119–139, DOI: 10.1207/S15327868MS1702_3.

Okamoto, S. (2006) ‘Perception of *hiniku* and *oseji*: How hyperbole and orthographically deviant styles influence irony-related perceptions in the Japanese language’, *Discourse Processes*, 41(1), 25–50, DOI: 10.1207/s15326950dp4101_3.

Okamoto, S. (2007) ‘An analysis of the usage of Japanese *hiniku*: Based on the communicative insincerity theory of irony’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39(6), 1143–1169, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2006.08.012.

Okamoto, S. and Shibamoto-Smith, J.S. (2016) *The Social Life of the Japanese Language: Cultural Discourse and Situated Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Okazaki, S. (2003) ‘Conversational styles and ellipsis in Japanese couples’ conversations’, in Thiesmeyer, L., ed., *Discourse and Silencing: Representation and the Language of Displacement*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 79–110.

Olshtain, E. and Blum-Kulka, S. (1985) ‘Crosscultural pragmatics and the testing of communicative competence’, *Language Testing*, 2(1), 16–30. DOI: 10.1177/026553228500200103.

Ono, T. and Thompson, S. (1997) ‘Deconstructing “zero anaphora” in Japanese’, *Berkeley Linguistics Society*, 23, 481–491, DOI: 10.3765/bls.v23i1.1259.

Ono, T. and Yoshida, E. (1996) ‘A study of co-construction in Japanese: we don’t finish each other’s sentences’, in Akatsuka, N., Iwasaki, S. and Strauss, S., eds., *Japanese/Korean Linguistics Vol. 5,* Stanford: CSLI, 115–130.

Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Leech, N.L. (2005) ‘On becoming a pragmatic researcher: The importance of combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies’, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(5), 375–387.

Oshima, K. (2013) ‘An examination for styles of Japanese humor: Japan’s funniest story project 2010 to 2011’, *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 22(2), 91–109, available at: https://web.uri.edu/iaics/files/Kimie-Oshima.pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Oshima, K. (2018) ‘Functions of humor in intercultural communication and educational environments’, in Curtis, A. and Sussex, R., eds., *Intercultural Communication in Asia: Education, Language and Values*, Cham: Springer, 205–222.

Otake, T (2010) ‘*Dajare* is more flexible than puns: evidence from word play in Japanese’, *Journal of the Phonetic Society of Japan*, 14(1), 76–85, available at: https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/onseikenkyu/14/1/14_KJ00007408536/_pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Otsuki, K. (2009) *Cross-Linguistic Study of Elliptical Utterances in Task-Oriented Dialogues with Classroom Implications*, unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Edinburgh.

Padilla Cruz, M. (2012) ‘Cautious optimism in second language learning, or how to make L2 learners more competent hearers’, in Walaszewska, E. and Piskorska, A., eds., *Relevance Theory: More than Understanding*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 279–306.

Padilla Cruz, M. (2013) ‘Understanding and overcoming pragmatic failure in intercultural communication: From focus on speakers to focus on hearers’, *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 51(1), 23–54, DOI: 10.1515/iral-2013-0002.

Padilla Cruz, M. (2014) ‘Pragmatic failure, epistemic injustice and epistemic vigilance’, *Language and Communication*, 39, 34–50, DOI: 10.1016/j.langcom.2014.08.002.

Pardo-Ballester, C. and Rodríguez, J.C. (2009) ‘Using design-based research to guide the development of online instructional materials’, in Chapelle, C.A., Jun, H. and Katz, I., eds., *Developing and Evaluating Language Learning Materials*, Ames: Iowa State University, 86–102.

Payrató, L. and Clemente, I. (2020) *Gestures We Live by: The Pragmatics of Emblematic Gestures*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Pérez Vidal, C. and Shively, R.L. (2019) 'L2 pragmatic development in study abroad settings', in Taguchi, N., ed., *Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics*, London: Routledge, 355–371.

Pierrehumbert, J. and Beckman, M.E. (1988) *Japanese Tone Structure*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Pizziconi, B. (2009) 'Stereotyping communicative styles in and out of the language and culture classroom: Japanese indirectness, ambiguity and vagueness'. in Gomez Moron R., Padilla Cruz, M., Fernandez Amaya, L. and Hernandez Lopez, M. De la O, eds., *Pragmatics Applied to Language Teaching and Learning*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 221–254.

Pizziconi, B. and Kizu, M. (2009) *Japanese Modality: Exploring Its Scope and Interpretation*, New York: Palgrave.

Povolná, R. (2012) 'Pragmatic awareness in teacher education', *Acta Academica Karviniensia*, 12(1), 148–158, available at: https://aak.slu.cz/pdfs/aak/2012/01/14.pdf [accessed 03 May 2021].

Punch, M. (1998) 'Politics and ethics in qualitative research', in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y., eds., *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, London: Sage, 156–184.

Purpura, J.E. (2004) *Assessing Grammar*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rafieyan, V. and Rozycki, W. (2019) 'Development of language proficiency and pragmatic competence in an immersive language program', *World Journal of English Language*, 9(1),10–21, DOI: 10.5430/wjel.v9n1p10.

Reeves, T.C. (2006) 'Design research from a technology perspective', in van den Akker, J., Gravemeijer, K., McKenney, S. and Nieveen N., eds., *Educational Design Research*, London: Routledge, 52–66.

Reeves, T.C. and McKenney, S. (2013) 'Computer-assisted language learning and design-based research: Increased complexity for sure, enhanced impact perhaps', in Rodríguez, J.C. and Pardo-Ballester, C., eds., *Design-based research in CALL*, CALICO Monograph Series: Texas, 9–21.

Ren, W. (2015) *L2 Pragmatic Development in Study Abroad Contexts*, Bern: Peter Lang.

Ren, W. and Han, Z. (2016) ‘The representation of pragmatic knowledge in recent ELT textbooks’, *ELT Journal*, 70(4), 424–434, DOI: 10.1093/elt/ccw010.

Riazi, A.M. (2016) *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, New York: Routledge.

Riazi, A.M. (2016) *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, New York: Routledge.

Roberts, F., Margutti, P. and Takano, S. (2011) ‘Judgments concerning the valence of inter-turn silence across speakers of American English, Italian, and Japanese’, *Discourse Processes: a Multidisciplinary Journal*, 48(5), 331–354, DOI: 10.1080/0163853X.2011.558002.

Robson, C. (2002) *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Blackwell.

Robson, C. and McCartan, K. (2016) *Real world research*, 4th ed., West Sussex, UK: Wiley.

Romero-Trillo, J., ed., (2012) *Pragmatics and Prosody in English Language Teaching*, London: Springer.

Rosales Sequeiros, X. (2004) ‘Interpretation of reflexive anaphora in second language VP-ellipsis: Relevance Theory and paradigms of explanation’, *Second Language Research*, 20(3), 256–280, DOI: 10.1191/0267658304sr240oa.

Rose, K. R. (1999) ‘Teachers and students learning about requests in Hong Kong’, in Hinkel, E., ed., *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 167–180.

Rose, K.R. (2005) ‘On the effects of instruction in second language pragmatics’, *System*, 33(3), 385–399, DOI: 10.1016/j.system.2005.06.003.

Rose, K.R. and Kasper, G., eds. (2001) *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Rose, K.R. and Ng, C. (2001) ‘Inductive and deductive teaching of compliments and compliment responses’, in Rose, K.R. and Kasper, G., eds., *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 145–170.

Safont Jordà, M.P. (2003) ‘Metapragmatic awareness and pragmatic production of third language learners of English: a focus on request acts realizations’, *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 7(1): 43–69, DOI: 10.1177/13670069030070010401.

Saft, S. (2007) ‘Exploring aizuchi as resources in Japanese social interaction: the case of a political discussion program’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39(7), 1290–1312, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2007.02.010.

Saito, H. and Beecken, M. (1997) ‘An approach to instruction of pragmatic aspects: implications of pragmatic transfer by American learners of Japanese’, *Modern Language Journal*, 81(3), 363–377, DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.1997.tb05497.x.

Saldaña, J. (2013) *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*, 2nd ed., London: Sage.

Samovar, L.A., Porter, R.E., McDaniel, E.R. and Roy, C.S. (2017) *Communication between Cultures*, 9th ed., Boston: CENGAGE Learning.

Sánchez Hernández, A. and Alcón Soler, E. (2019) ‘Pragmatic gains in the study abroad context: learners' experiences and recognition of pragmatic routines’, *Journal of Pragmatics,* 146, 54–71, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2018.08.006.

Sasamoto, R. (2012) 'Silence in ostensive communication', in Yoshimura, A., Suga, A. and Yamamoto, N., eds., *Observing Linguistic Phenomena*, Tokyo: Eihosha, 437–449.

Sasamoto, R. (2019) *Onomatopoeia and Relevance: Communication of Impressions via Sound,* Cham: Palgrave.

Sato Y. and Tam, W.L. (2012) ‘Ellipsis of case-markers and information structure in Japanese’, in Müller, S., ed., *Proceedings of the 19th International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar*, Chungnam National University Daejeon, Stanford: CSLI Publications, 443–453.

Sawyer, M. (1992) ‘The development of pragmatics in Japanese as a second language: the sentence final particle *ne*’, in Kasper, G., ed., *Pragmatics of Japanese as Native and Target language*, Honolulu: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, 83–125.

Schandorf, M. (2012) ‘Mediated gesture’, *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 19(3), 319–344, DOI: 10.1177/1354856512439501.

Scherling, J. (2016) ‘The creative use of English in Japanese punning’, *World Englishes*, 35(2), 276–292, DOI: 10.1111/weng.12195.

Schmidt, R. (1993) ‘Consciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics’, in Kasper, G. and Blum-Kulka S., eds., *Interlanguage Pragmatics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 21–42.

Schmidt, R. (1995) ‘Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness in learning’, in Schmidt, R., ed., *Attention and Awareness in Foreign Language Learning*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, National Foreign Language Resource Center, 1–63.

Schmidt, R. (2001) ‘Attention’, in Robinson, P., ed., *Cognition and Second Language Instruction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1–33.

Schneider, K. and A. Barron (2008) *Variational Pragmatics*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Scott, K. (2017) ‘Prosody, procedures and pragmatics’, in Depraetere, I. and Salkie, R., eds., *Semantics and Pragmatics: Drawing a Line*, Cham: Springer, 323–341.

Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J.F. and Silverman, D. (2004) *Qualitative research practice*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Searle, J.R. (1969) *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Searle, J.R. (1975) ‘Indirect speech acts’, in Cole, P. and Morgan, J., eds., *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, New York: Academic Press, 59–82.

Searle, J.R. (1979) *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Seidman, I. (2013) *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*, 4th ed., New York: Teachers College Press.

Selting, M. (2010) ‘Prosody in interaction: state of the art’, in Barth-Weingarten, D., Reber, E. and Selting, M., eds., *Prosody in Interaction*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 3–40.

Shibata, T. and Hurtig, R.R. (2008) ‘Prosody acquisition by Japanese learners’, in Han, Z., ed., *Understanding Second Language Process*, New York: Multilingual Matters, 176–204.

Shibatani, M. (1990) *The Languages of Japan*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shibatani, M. and Kageyama, T. (2015) 'Introduction to the handbook of Japanese language and linguistics', in Kubozono, H., ed., *Handbook of Japanese Phonetics and Phonology*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, vii–xxxiii.

Shimizu, T. (2009) 'Influence of learning context on L2 pragmatic realization: a comparison between JSL and JFL learners' compliment responses', in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 167–198.

Shimojo, M. (2006) 'Properties of particle "omission" revisited', *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics*, 26, 123–140, available at: https://twpl.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/twpl/article/view/6178/3167 [accessed 06 May 2021].

Shirakawa, H. (2009) *Iisashibun no Kenkyū* [*Studies on Suspended Sentences in Japanese*], Tokyo: Kuroshio.

Shively, R.L. (2011) 'L2 pragmatic development in study abroad: A longitudinal study of Spanish service encounters', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(6), 1818–1835, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2010.10.030.

Shively, R.L. (2020) *Learning and Using Conversational Humor in a Second Language During Study Abroad*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Siegal, M. (1996) 'The role of learner subjectivity in second language sociolinguistic competency: western women learning Japanese', *Applied Linguistics*, 17(3), 356–382, DOI: 10.1093/applin/17.3.356.

Simpson, P. (2003) *On the Discourse of Satire*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Skehan, P. (1998) *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spencer-Oatey, H. and Xing, J. (2005) 'Managing talk and non-talk in intercultural interactions: insights from two Chinese-British business meetings', *Multilingua*, 24(1/2), 55–74, DOI: 10.1515/mult.24.1-2.55.

Sperber, D. (2007) 'Seedless grapes: nature and culture', in Laurence, S. and Margolis, E., eds., *Creations of the Mind: Theories of Artifacts and their Representation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 124–37.

Sperber, D. (2019) ‘Personal notes on a shared trajectory’, in Scott, K., Clark, B. and Carston, R., eds., *Reflections on the Development of Relevance Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 13–20.

Sperber, D. and Wilson, D. (1986/1995) *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Blackwell.

Sperber, D. and Wilson, D. (2002) ‘Pragmatics, modularity and mind-reading’, *Mind and Language*, 17(1/2), 3–23, DOI: 10.1111/1468-0017.00186.

Sperber, D. and Wilson, D. (2005) ‘Pragmatics’, in Jackson, F. and Smith, M., eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 468–501.

Sperber, D. and Wilson, D. (2015) ‘Beyond speaker's meaning’, Croatian Journal of Philosophy, 15(44), 117–149, available at: http://www.dan.sperber.fr/wp-content/uploads/2015_wilson_beyond-speakers-meaning.pdf [accessed 25 May 2022]

Stam, G. and Ishino, M., eds. (2011) *Integrating Gestures: The interdisciplinary Nature of Gestures*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Stutchbury, K. and Fox, A. (2009) ‘Ethics in educational research: Introducing a methodological tool for effective ethical analysis’, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39(4), 489–504, DOI: 10.1080/03057640903354396.

Sueyoshi, A. and Hardison, D.M. (2005) ‘The role of gestures and facial cues in second language listening comprehension’, *Language Learning*, 55(4), 661–699, DOI: 10.1111/j.0023-8333.2005.00320.x.

Sydorenko, T. and Tuason, G.H. (2016) ‘Noticing of pragmatic features during spoken interaction’, in Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Félix-Brasdefer, J.C., eds., *Pragmatics and Language Learning Volume 14*, University of Hawaii at Manoa: National Foreign Language Resource Center, 233–264.

Sykes, J. M. (2005) ‘Synchronous CMC and pragmatic development: effects of oral and written chat’, *CALICO Journal*, 22(3), 399–431, available at: https://journals.equinoxpub.com/CALICO/article/view/23171/19176 [accessed 03 May 2021].

Sykes, J. M. (2013) ‘Multiuser virtual environments: apologies in Spanish’, in Taguchi, N. and Sykes, J.M., eds., *Technology in Interlanguage Pragmatics Research and Teaching*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 71–100.

Sykes, J.M. (2017) ‘Technologies for teaching and learning intercultural competence and interlanguage pragmatics’, in Chapelle, C.A. and Sauro, S., eds., *The Handbook of Technology and Second Language Teaching and Learning*, Oxford: Blackwell, 118–133.

Sykes, J.M. and Cohen, A.D. (2008) ‘L2 pragmatics: six principles for online materials development and implementation’, *Acquisition of Japanese as a Second Language*, 11, 81–100, available at: https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/andrewdcohen/publications/pragmatics [accessed 03 May 2021].

Taguchi, N. (2002) ‘An application of relevance theory to the analysis of L2 interpretation processes: the comprehension of indirect replies’, *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 40(2), 151–176, DOI: 10.1515/iral.2002.006.

Taguchi, N. (2005) ‘Comprehending implied meaning in English as a second language’, *Modern Language Journal*, 89(4), 543–562, DOI: 10.2307/3588625.

Taguchi, N. (2008) ‘Pragmatic comprehension in Japanese as a foreign language’, *Modern Language Journal*, 92(4), 558–576, DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00787.x.

Taguchi, N. (2009a) ‘Comprehension of indirect opinions and refusals in L2 Japanese’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 249–273.

Taguchi, N. (2009b) ‘Pragmatic competence in Japanese as a second language: An introduction’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1–18.

Taguchi, N. (2009c) *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Taguchi, N. (2010) ‘Longitudinal studies in interlanguage pragmatics’, in Trosborg, A., ed., *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 333–362.

Taguchi, N. (2011) ‘The effect of L2 proficiency and study-abroad experience on pragmatic comprehension’, *Language Learning*, 61(2), 904–939, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2011.00633.x.

Taguchi, N. (2013) ‘Teaching pragmatics’, in Chapelle, C.A., ed., *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 5643–5650.

Taguchi, N. (2014) 'Development of interactional competence in Japanese as a second language: use of incomplete sentences as interactional resources', *Modern Language Journal*, 98(2), 518–535, DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2014.12087.x.

Taguchi, N. (2015a) 'Instructed pragmatics at a glance: where instructional studies were, are, and should be going', *Language Teaching*, 48(1), 1–50, DOI: 10.1017/S0261444814000263.

Taguchi, N. (2015b) *Developing Interactional Competence in a Japanese Study Abroad Context*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Taguchi, N. (2016) 'Learning speech style in Japanese study abroad: learners' knowledge of normative use and actual use', in van Compernolle, R.A. and McGregor, J., eds., *Authenticity, Language and Interaction in Second Language Contexts*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 82–108.

Taguchi, N. (2017) 'Interlanguage pragmatics: A historical sketch and future directions', in Barron, A., Gu, Y. and Steen, G., eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Pragmatics*, London: Routledge, 153–167.

Taguchi, N. (2018a) 'Advanced second language pragmatic competence', in Malovrh, P.A. and Benati, A.G., eds., *The Handbook of Advanced Proficiency in Second Language Acquisition*, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 505–526.

Taguchi, N. (2018b) 'Pragmatic competence in foreign language education: cultivating learner autonomy and strategic learning of pragmatics', in Walker, I., Chan, D.K.G., Nagami, M. and Bourguignon, C., eds., *New Perspectives on the Development of Communicative and Related Competence in Foreign Language Education*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 53–69, DOI: 10.1515/9781501505034.

Taguchi, N. (2018c) 'Contexts and pragmatics learning: problems and opportunities of the study abroad research', *Language Teaching*, 51(1), 124–137, DOI: 10.1017/S0261444815000440.

Taguchi, N. and Bell, N.D. (2020) 'Comprehension of implicatures and humor in a second language', in Schneider, K.P. and Ifantidou, E., eds., *Developmental and Clinical Pragmatics*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 331–359.

Taguchi, N. and Roever, C. (2017) *Second Language Pragmatics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Taguchi, N. and Yamaguchi, S. (2019) ‘Implicature comprehension in L2 pragmatics research’, in Taguchi, N., ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics*, London: Routledge, 31–46.

Taguchi, N. and Yoshimi, D.R. (2019) ‘Developing and teaching interactional competence in Japanese style shifting’, in Salaberry, M.R. and Kunitz, S., eds., *Teaching and Testing L2 Interactional Competence*, New York: Routledge, 167–191.

Taguchi, N. and Sykes, J. M. (2013) *Technology in Interlanguage Pragmatics Research And Teaching*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Taguchi, N., ed., (2019) *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics*, London: Routledge.

Tajima, K. (2001) ‘Pragmatic use of aizuchi in Japanese discourse: a comparison with English backchannels’, *Academic Reports: Faculty of Engineering - Tokyo Polytechnic University*, 24(2), 54–60, available at: https://core.ac.uk/reader/234015820 [accessed 06 May 2021].

Takahashi, S. (2001) ‘The role of input enhancement in developing pragmatic competence’, in Rose, K.R. and Kasper, G., eds., *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 177–199.

Takahashi, S. (2010) ‘Assessing learnability in second language pragmatics’, in Trosborg, A., ed., *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 391–422.

Takahashi, S. (2013) ‘Pragmatic awareness in second language learning’, in Chapelle, C.A., ed., *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 4505–4510.

Takekuro, M. (2006) ‘Conversational jokes in Japanese and English’ in Davis, J.M., ed., *Understanding Humor in Japan*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 85–98.

Takenoya, M. (2003) *Terms of Address in Japanese: An Interlanguage Pragmatics Approach*, Sapporo: Hokkaido University Press.

Takeuchi, J.D. (2020) ‘Our language—Linguistic ideologies and Japanese dialect use in L1/L2 interaction’, *Japanese Language and Literature*, 54(2), 167–197, DOI: 10.5195/jll.2020.146.

Takimoto, M. (2009) ‘Exploring the effects of input-based treatment and test on the development of learners’ pragmatic proficiency’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41(5), 1029–1046, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2008.12.001.

Takimoto, M. (2012) ‘Metapragmatic discussion in interlanguage pragmatics’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44(10), 1240–1253, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2012.05.007.

Tanaka, H. (1999) *Turn-taking in Japanese. A Study in Grammar and Interaction*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Tanaka, H. (2010) ‘Multimodal expressivity of the Japanese response particle *huun*: Displaying involvement without topical engagement’, in Barth-Weingarten, D., Reber, E. and Selting, M., eds., *Prosody in Interaction*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 303–332.

Tanaka, L. (2004) *Gender, Language and Culture: A study of Japanese Television Interview Discourse,* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Tannen, D. and Saville-Troike, M., eds. (1985) *Perspectives on Silence*. Norwood: Ablex.

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (1998) ‘Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches’, *Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 46*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (2003) ‘Major issues and controversies in the use of mixed methods in the social and behavioral sciences’, in Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C., eds., *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, 3–50.

Tateyama Y. (2009) *Learning to Request in Japanese through Foreign Language Classroom Instruction*, unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Hawaii-Manoa.

Tateyama, Y. (2001) ‘Explicit and implicit teaching of routines’, in Rose, K.R. and Kasper, G., eds., *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 200–222.

Tateyama, Y. (2007) ‘JFL learners’ pragmatic development and classroom interaction examined from a language socialization perspective’, in Yoshimi, D.R. and Wang, H., eds., *Selected Papers from Pragmatics in the CJK Classroom: The State of the Art*, Honolulu: National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 181–202.

Tateyama, Y. and Kasper, G. (2008) ‘Talking with a classroom guest: opportunities for learning Japanese pragmatics’, in Alcón Soler, E. and Martínez Flor, A., eds., *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 45–71.

Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. (2009) *Foundations of mixed methods research,* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Thomas, J. (1983) 'Cross-cultural pragmatic failure', *Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 91–112, DOI: 10.1093/applin/4.2.91.

Thomas, M. and Pettitt, N. (2017) 'Informed consent in research on second language acquisition', *Second Language Research*, 33(2), 271–288, DOI: 10.1177/0267658316670206.

Thompson, S.A. and Hopper, P.J. (2001) 'Transitivity, clause structure, and argument structure: evidence from conversation', in Bybee, J. and Hopper, P.J., eds., *Frequency and the Emergence of Linguistic Structure*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 27–60.

Timpe-Laughlin, V., Greena, A. and Oh, S. (2021) 'Raising pragmatic awareness: a think-aloud study', *System*, 98, 1–15, DOI: 10.1016/j.system.2021.102470.

Timpe-Laughlin, V., Wain, J. and Schmidgall, J. (2015) 'Defining and operationalizing the construct of pragmatic competence: review and recommendations', *ETS Research Report Series*, RR–15-06, Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1999) *Communicating across Cultures*, New York: The Guilford Press.

Tomlinson, B. (2011) 'Introduction: Principles and procedures of materials development', in Tomlinson, B., ed., *Materials Development in Language Teaching*, 2nd ed, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1–34.

Toyada, M. and Ishihara, S. (2003) 'The teaching of Japanese culture', in Lo Bianco, J. and Crozet, C., eds., *Teaching Invisible Culture. Classroom Practice and Theory*. Melbourne: Language Australia.

Tsao, D. (2017) 'Pragmatic failure: a Relevance Theory perspective', *American Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2), 8–12, available at: http://www.openscienceonline.com/journal/archive2?journalId=728&paperId=3726 [accessed 04 May 2021].

Tsujimura, N. (2014) *An Introduction to Japanese Linguistics*, 3rd ed., Malden: Blackwell.

Tsurutani, C. and Shi, S. (2018) 'How native speakers of Japanese try to sound polite', *Journal of Japanese Linguistics*, 34(1), 127–155, DOI: 10.1515/jjl-2018-0007.

Tsurutani, C., (2011) 'L2 intonation: a study of L1 transfer in Japanese intonation by English-speaking learners', *Second Language*, 10, 79–102, available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10072/44879 [accessed 06 May 2021].

Tsutagawa, F.S. (2013) 'Pragmatic knowledge and ability in the applied linguistics and second language assessment literature: a review', *Teachers College Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL and Applied Linguistics*, 13(2), 1–20, DOI: 10.7916/D8BZ65NN.

Tzanne, A., Ifantidou, E. and Mitsikopoulou, B. (2009) 'Raising and assessing pragmatic awareness in L2 academic language learning', *International Journal of Learning*, 16(9), 297–309, DOI: 10.18848/1447-9494/CGP/v16i09/46549.

Ur, P. (2017) 'Application of research to materials design', in Hinkel, E., ed., Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning, Vol. 3., New York: Routledge, 132–143.

Usó Juan, E. and Martínez Flor, A. (2006) 'Approaches to language learning and teaching: towards acquiring communicative competence through the four skills', in Usó Juan, E. and Martínez Flor, A., eds., *Current Trends in the Development and Teaching of the Four Language Skills*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 3–26.

Utashiro, T. and Kawai, G. (2009) 'Blended learning for Japanese reactive tokens: effects of computer-led, instructor-led, and peer-based instruction', in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 275–299.

Utashiro, T. and Yanagisawa, M. (2009) 'The effects on Japanese as a second/foreign language learners in teaching listener's pragmatic skills: Cognitive alteration model of L2 learners in listener behavior through instruction of reactive tokens', *Japanese Journal of Language in Society*, 12(1), 93–107, DOI: 10.19024/jajls.12.1_93.

van den Akker, J., Gravemeijer, K., McKenney, S. and Nieeven, N. (2006) *Educational Design Research*, New York: Routledge.

VanPatten, B. (1996) *Input Processing and Grammar Instruction in Second Language Acquisition*, Norwood: Ablex.

Vásquez, C. and Sharpless, D. (2009) 'The role of pragmatics in the Master's TESOL curriculum: Findings from a nationwide survey', *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(1), 5–28.

Vellenga, H. (2004) 'Learning pragmatics from ESL & EFL textbooks: how likely?', *Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language (TESL-EJ)*, 8(2), 1–17, available at: https://eric.ed.gov/?q=vellenga&id=EJ1068091 [accessed 03 May 2021].

Walker, I. (2011) ‘Learners’ Noticing of Japanese speech styles: pedagogical issues and possibilities’, *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 8(1), 336–361, available at: https://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/v8s12011/walker.pdf [accessed 05 May 2021].

Wang, F. and Hannafin, M.J. (2005) ‘Design-based research and technology-enhanced learning environments’, *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 53(4), 5–23, DOI: 10.1007/BF02504682.

Ward, N. and Tsukahara, W. (2000) ‘Prosodic features which cue back-channel responses in English and Japanese’, Journal of Pragmatics, 32(8), 1177–1207, DOI: 10.1016/S0378-2166(99)00109-5.

Weingärtner, T. (2010) ‘Samurai smiles? Unique guiles? Reflections on Japanese smiles, laughter and humour’, in Kraushaar, F., ed., *Eastwards: Western Views on East Asian Culture*, Bern: Peter Lang, 229–240.

Wellington, J. (2000) *Educational research: contemporary issues and practical approaches*, London: Continuum.

Wharton, T. (2003) ‘Natural pragmatics and natural codes’, *Mind and Language*, Vol. 18(5), 447–477, DOI: 10.1111/1468-0017.00237.

Wharton, T. (2009) *Pragmatics and Non-verbal Communication*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wharton, T. (2012) ‘Prosody and meaning: Theory and practice’, in Romero-Trillo, J., ed., *Pragmatics and Prosody in English Language Teaching*, London: Springer, 97-116.

Wharton, T. (2020) ‘Acquiring prosody’, in Schneider, K.P. and Ifantidou, E., eds., *Developmental and Clinical Pragmatics*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 177–208.

Wharton, T., Bonard, C., Dukes, D., Sander, D. and Oswald, S. (2021) ‘Relevance and Emotion’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 259–269, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2021.06.001.

Wheeldon, L.R. (2000) ‘Generating prosodic structure’, in Wheeldon, L.R., ed. *Aspects of Language Production*, Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 249–274.

White, S. (1989) ‘Backchannels across cultures: a study of Americans and Japanese’, *Language in Society*, 18(1), 59–76, DOI: 10.1017/S0047404500013270.

Wichmann, A., Dehé, N. and Barth-Weingarten, D. (2009) ‘Where prosody meets pragmatics: research at the interface’, in Barth-Weingarten, D., Dehé, N. and Wichmann, A., eds., *Where Prosody Meets Pragmatics*, Bingley: Emerald, 1–22.

Willis, J.W. (2007) *Foundations of qualitative research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Wilson, D. (2005) ‘New directions for research on pragmatics and modularity’, *Lingua*, 115(8), 1129–1146, DOI: 10.1016/j.lingua.2004.02.005.

Wilson, D. and Carston, R. (2019) ‘Pragmatics and the challenge of 'non-propositional' effects’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 145, 31–38, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2019.01.005.

Wilson, D. and Sperber, D. (1993) ‘Linguistic form and relevance’, *Lingua*, 90(1/2), 1–25, DOI: 10.1016/0024-3841(93)90058-5.

Wilson, D. and Sperber, D. (2006) ‘Relevance theory’, in Ward, G. and Horn, L., eds., *Handbook of Pragmatics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 607–632.

Wilson, D. and Sperber, D. (2012) *Meaning and Relevance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson, D. and Wharton, T. (2006) ‘Relevance and prosody’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(10), 1559–1579, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2005.04.012.

Wolf, A.J.E. (1999) ''Context and relevance theory in language teaching: an exploratory approach’, *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 37(2), 95–110, DOI: 10.1515/iral.1999.37.2.95.

Wong, N.L. (2010) *Silent Communication of Japanese Society*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.

Yamada, H. (1992*) American and Japanese Business Discourse: A Comparison of Interactional Styles*, Norwood: Ablex.

Yamada, H. (1997) *Different Games, Different Rules: Why Americans and Japanese Misunderstand Each Other*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yamada, T., Sakai, T. and Bushnell, C. (2019) ‘*Rakugo* CALL program for Japanese language learning: its development and possibilities for implementation’, in Zimmerman, E. and McMeekin, A., eds., *Technology-Supported Learning In and Out of the Japanese Language*

Classroom: Advances in Pedagogy, Teaching and Research, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 268–304.

Yamaguchi, R, (2003) ‘Nihongo no shōryaku genshō to komyunikēshon niokeru mondai [Ellipsis in Japanese and issues in intercultural communication]’, *Tama University Journal of Management and Information Sciences*, (7), 83–87, available at: http://id.nii.ac.jp/1361/00000061/ [accessed 06 May 2021].

Yamamoto, M. (1999) *Animacy and Reference*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Yamashita, S. (2008) ‘Investigating interlanguage pragmatic ability: what are we testing?’, in Alcón Soler, E. and Martínez-Flor, A., eds., *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 201–223.

Yamashita, S., Ishihara, N. and Benati, A.G. (2016) ‘An integrated grammar-pragmatics approach: teaching style shifting in Japanese’, in Benati, A.G. and Yamashita, S., eds., *Theory, Research and Pedagogy in Learning and Teaching Japanese Grammar*, New York: Palgrave, 187–218.

Yamura-Takei, M. and Fujiwara, M. (2004) ‘Understanding zeros and coherence in Japanese’, *Proceedings of the 8th Conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics (PAAL2003)*, Okayama, 04-05 Aug, Tokyo: PAAL, 561–574, available at: https://paaljapan.org/resources/proceedings/PAAL8/pdf/pdf030.pdf [accessed 05 May 2021].

Yasutake, T. (2012) ‘Explicit vs. zero postpositional particles in modern colloquial Japanese’, *Bulletin of Aichi University of Education*, 61, 81–91, available at: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/147573561.pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Yatabe, S. (1999) ‘Particle ellipsis and focus projection in Japanese’, *Language, Information and Text*, 6, 79–104, available at: http://phiz.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~yatabe/particle.pdf [accessed 06 May 2021].

Yates, L. (2010) ‘Pragmatic challenges for second language learners’, in Trosborg, A., ed., *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 287–308.

Yates, L. (2017) ‘Learning how to speak: pronunciation, pragmatics and practicalities in the classroom and beyond’, *Language Teaching*, 50(2), 227–246, DOI: 10.1017/S0261444814000238.

Yoneyama, S. (1999) *The Japanese High School: Silence and Resistance*, London: Routledge.

Yoshida, M. and Sakurai, C. (2005) Japanese honorifics as a marker of sociocultural identity: a view from non-Western perspective', in Lakoff, R.T. and Ide, S., eds., *Broadening the Horizon of Linguistic Politeness*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 197–215.

Yoshimi, D.R. (1999) 'L1 language socialization as a variable in the linguistic expression of affect by L2 learners of Japanese', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 31(11), 1513–1525, DOI: 10.1016/S0378-2166(98)00111-8.

Yoshimi, D.R. (2001) 'Explicit instruction and JFL learners' use of interactional discourse markers', in Rose, K.R. and Kasper, G., eds., *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 223–244.

Yoshimi, D.R. (2008) 'Learner competence as a resource in the Japanese as a foreign language classroom: issues in oral assessment', in Mori, J. and Ohta, A., eds., *Japanese Applied Linguistics: Discourse and Social Perspectives*, London: Continuum, 301–326.

Yoshimi, D.R. (2009) 'From a! to zo: Japanese pragmatics and its contribution to JSL/JFL pedagogy', in Taguchi, N., ed., *Pragmatic Competence*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 19–40.

Youn, S.J. and Bogorevich, V. (2019) 'Assessment in L2 pragmatics', in Taguchi, N. (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics*, Abingdon: Routledge, 308–321.

Yus, F. (2012) 'Strategies and effects in humorous discourse: the case of jokes', in Eizaga Rebollar, B., ed., *Studies in Linguistics and Cognition*, Bern: Peter Lang, 271–296.

Yus, F. (2017) 'Relevance-Theoretic treatments of humor', in Attardo, S., ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor*, New York: Routledge, 189–203.

Žegarac, V. (2004) 'Relevance theory and *the* in second language acquisition', *Second Language Research*, 20(3), 193–211, DOI: 10.1191/0267658304sr237oa.

Zufferey, S. (2010) *Lexical Pragmatics and Theory of Mind: The Acquisition of Connectives*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Zufferey, S. (2015) *Acquiring Pragmatics: Social and Cognitive Perspectives*, London: Routledge.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES

A.1 Plain Language Statement

Dublin City University – School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)

My name is Èrika Marcet and I am a PhD researcher at Dublin City University (DCU). I would like to invite you to participate in the first stage of my research project, entitled 'Developing Pragmatic Competence in Japanese Oral Interaction'. This project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon (SALIS).

Aims and Objectives of the Investigation: This project aims to investigate how to develop pragmatic competence, which is the ability to learn the language in context, in Japanese oral interaction. This study seeks to:

1) Identify the pragmatic challenges students face when interacting orally in Japanese.
2) Create and implement a course addressing the issues identified under objective 1.

In order to identify the challenges students face when learning Japanese, the experiences and opinions of students who are or have been exposed to 'real language use' are crucial. For this reason, hearing from students who are currently on their year abroad and students who spent Year 3 in Japan is of particular relevance and interest since both cohorts have stepped outside the classroom learning environment. Therefore, the data collected will be used both as a data source to identify some pragmatic challenges and to later create teaching resources to overcome these challenges.

Possible Benefits: You will be able to reflect on the challenges you have encountered when using the Japanese language in context and to compare the language learned in the classroom with the language used in a 'real life' setting. You will also be able to share your own experiences of using the Japanese language. In addition, you will be able to critically reflect on the potential improvements to be made to the teaching and learning of Japanese in a classroom setting. Finally, you will be contributing to a specific area of study in which little work has been conducted to date.

Potential Risks: This project is completely independent of any Japanese modules you are (or will be) taking. Your experiences and opinions will not be shared with anyone in DCU, UL or otherwise. None of the information shared will affect your ongoing assessment/grades. Therefore, there are no risks involved in participating in this study.

Procedure: If you agree to participate in this stage of the study, you will be asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire with some multiple-choice questions, and some short and long answers about your experience when using the Japanese language with Japanese speakers. Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes. Fourth-year students at DCU will complete the questionnaire during classroom hours, as part of JA480, and in a computer lab. Third-year students at DCU who are currently in Japan will complete the questionnaire as part of LC305. Former students will complete the questionnaire independently. Third- and fourth-year students at UL will complete the questionnaire at an arranged time and location within the institution. In all cases, the questionnaires will be completed online via Typeform.

Once the researcher has gathered and analysed the data collected from the questionnaires, some interviews will be conducted to obtain more in-depth information. Participation in the interviews will be voluntary. After completing the questionnaire, my email will be provided for those who wish to be interviewed. If you wish to complete the questionnaire but you do not wish to participate in the interview, you are free to do so. If you do not wish to complete the questionnaire but you wish to participate in the interview, you are also free to do so. During the interview, some more in-depth questions about your experiences and your views on the teaching and learning of Japanese will be asked. You will be free to talk about anything you consider relevant to the matter under discussion. The interview will last about 30 minutes and it will take place on-site (in an empty classroom) at a time that is convenient to you. In the case of third-year students who are currently in Japan, the interviews will be conducted via Skype or a similar programme at a time that is convenient. All interviews will be anonymised, and interviewees will be given pseudonyms. With your permission, I will record the interview with an audio-recorder. The audio-recorder will help the researcher to record and remember everything that is being said during the interview. The recording will not be used for any purpose other than for this research. You can take a break during the interview or completely withdraw without consequence.

The results of the questionnaires and the interviews will be published upon completion of the PhD thesis, which will approximately take place in autumn 2021.

Your Rights

- Completing the questionnaire is entirely voluntary. You can withdraw at any time without any consequence.
- Participation in the interview is also entirely voluntary. You can choose not to answer certain questions or withdraw from the interview altogether at any time without any consequence.
- Involvement or non-involvement in this study will not affect your academic records nor will affect your relationship with DCU/UL.

Confidentiality

- All questionnaires will be anonymous. The researcher will never know the identity of the respondents.
- The email addresses of the volunteers who contact the researcher for the interview will remain secret and will not be revealed under any circumstances.
- All information and data gathered during this project will be treated in confidentiality.
- Pseudonyms for both the questionnaires and the interviews will be used (e.g. PQ001).
- All data gathered will be stored in a safe place at DCU and will be destroyed upon completion of the project.
- Only the researcher, Èrika Marcet, will have access to the information provided in the questionnaires and interviews. My supervisors, Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon, will only have access to the written reports.

The researcher, Èrika Marcet, will be in charge of administrating the questionnaires and conducting the interviews. If you have any queries or doubts about the nature of this project, please do not hesitate to contact me at erika.marcetitorrijos2@mail.dcu.ie. You may also contact my supervisors, Dr Ryoko Sasamoto at ryoko.sasamoto@dcu.ie and Dr Annette Simon at annette.simon@dcu.ie. If participants have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact: **The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel. 01-7008000. E-mail: rec@dcu.ie.**

A.2 Informed Consent Form

Dublin City University – School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)

I, ____, declare that I agree to complete the questionnaire as part of the project entitled 'Developing Pragmatic Competence in Japanese Oral Interaction', conducted by the SALIS PhD researcher Èrika Marcet under the supervision of Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon (SALIS).

Circle Yes or No for each question:

I have read the Plain Language Statement.	Yes/No
I understand the information provided and the nature of this study.	Yes/No
I understand my role in this study.	Yes/No
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study.	Yes/No
I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions.	Yes/No
I understand how the information gathered will be used and stored.	Yes/No
I understand that I am not obliged to participate in this study.	Yes/No
I understand that there will be no consequences whether I decide to participate or not.	Yes/No
I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time.	Yes/No
I understand that the questionnaire will be completely anonymous.	Yes/No
I agree for my anonymised data to be used in Èrika Marcet's thesis.	Yes/No
I agree for my anonymised data to be used in future presentations of the findings.	Yes/No
I understand that I should answer the questionnaire to the best of my abilities.	Yes/No

I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researcher, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project.

Participant Signature: ___________________________________

Name in Block Capitals: ____

Witness: ____

Date: _________________________________

A.3 Questionnaire

I would like to invite you to participate in the first stage of data collection of my study, entitled 'Developing Pragmatic Competence in Japanese Oral Interaction', which is being conducted in Dublin City University under the supervision of Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon (SALIS). This questionnaire will be used to identify some of the main pragmatic challenges faced by students when learning Japanese as a foreign language. All the questions are concerned with oral communication: your role as a speaker and hearer. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers: what is valued are your own experiences and opinions. Please complete this questionnaire as sincerely as possible, as only this will guarantee the success of this study. I remind you that this is an anonymous questionnaire, and that the content of this form is strictly confidential.

Section I: Background Information

1. Sex:

Male ☐ Other ☐

Female ☐ Prefer not to answer ☐

2. Nationality: ____________________________ **3. Mother Tongue(s):** ______________________

4. What year of study are you currently in?

Third Year ☐ Fourth Year ☐ Former Student ☐

5. For how many years have you studied Japanese?

Between three and five years ☐

Between five and ten years ☐

For over ten years ☐

6. Have you ever lived or studied in Japan?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, specify the length of your stay: _________________

7. What is the highest Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) you have?

JLPT 1 ☐ JLPT 4 ☐

JLPT 2 ☐ JLPT 5 ☐

JLPT 3 ☐ I have never taken/passed a JLPT ☐

8. What level of spoken Japanese do you feel you have?

A1 (beginner)	☐	B2 (upper-intermediate)	☐
A2 (elementary)	☐	C1 (advanced)	☐
B1 (intermediate)	☐	C2 (proficient)	☐

9. In which skills do you feel the most confident? Rate them from 1 to 10 according to your level of confidence/comfort when using these skills (1 is the least confident and 10 is the most confident):

Listening

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

Speaking

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

Reading

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

Writing

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

Using written language appropriately

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

Using spoken language appropriately

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

Cultural knowledge

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

10. Have you ever noticed any differences between the difficulties you encounter when you communicate with your teacher/classmates in Japanese and the difficulties you encounter when you communicate with Japanese speakers?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please give some examples:

____

____

Section II: Oral Comprehension

1. Have you ever noticed differences between how Japanese speakers talk in Japan and the language used in the classroom?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please provide examples:

____

____

2. Japanese speakers tend not to use particles in oral interaction. Do you feel this habit makes communication harder?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Why?

____

Why not?

____

3. Have you ever misunderstood a Japanese speaker because what he/she said was not what he/she meant?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, provide an example:

____

4. Do you feel Japanese use non-verbal communication (e.g. silence or gestures) differently from what you are familiar with?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please give some examples:

____

____

5. Have you ever had any problems with the lack of personal pronouns in Japanese?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, give some examples:

____

____

6. Is it difficult to understand jokes/sarcasm/irony when interacting with a Japanese speaker?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Why?

Why not?

Section III: Oral Production

1. Have you ever used certain expressions or talked in a certain way when speaking to a Japanese speaker and realised you were rude/impolite without meaning to be?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please provide an example:

---

2. If you have difficulties expressing yourself in Japanese, how do Japanese speakers usually react? Please provide personal examples:

---

3. Have you ever experienced any awkward and/or uncomfortable silence when speaking to a Japanese speaker which would have been considered inappropriate in Ireland?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please give some examples based on your experience:

---

4. On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being the easiest and 10 being the most difficult), how difficult is it to use polite speech appropriately when speaking in Japanese?

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

5. Have you ever used polite and/or impolite speech inappropriately?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please give examples based on your experience:

---

6. Based on your experience, is it difficult to answer a question by replying 'yes' or 'no'?

Yes ☐ No ☐ It depends ☐

Why?

Why not?

What does it depend on?

---

7. In Japanese, does it feel natural to always include the subject of a sentence?

Yes ☐ No ☐ It depends ☐

Why?

Why not?

What does it depend on?

Section IV: Japanese at DCU / Japanese at UL

1. What opportunities do you have to speak Japanese in the classroom? Please provide examples:

---

2. Do you think the activities conducted in the classroom help you learn the Japanese language in context?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Why?

Why not?

---

3. Do you believe that the classroom activities enable you to communicate with people and to use Japanese appropriately?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please provide examples:

____

____

4. Are there aspects of the Japanese language you have learnt when interacting with Japanese speakers that you would consider to be essential to learn in the classroom?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please name as many as you can:

____

____

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire!

誠にありがとうございました。

APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

B.1 Recruitment

VOLUNTEER LIST

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AT DCU

First name	Email	Availability (dates and time slot)

Thank you very much for volunteering to participate in the interview 😊

You will be soon contacted at the email address provided above to arrange a time and place to conduct the interview.

B.2 Plain Language Statement

Dublin City University – School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)

My name is Èrika Marcet and I am a PhD researcher at Dublin City University (DCU). I would like to invite you to participate in the first stage of my research project, entitled 'Developing Pragmatic Competence in Japanese Oral Interaction'. This project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon (SALIS).

Aims and Objectives of the Investigation: This project aims to investigate how to develop pragmatic competence, which is the ability to learn the language in context, in Japanese oral interaction. This study seeks to:

3) Identify the pragmatic challenges students face when interacting orally in Japanese.
4) Create and implement a course addressing the issues identified under objective 1.

In order to identify the main pragmatic challenges faced by students of Japanese as a foreign language, it is crucial that the researcher can delve into the experiences and opinions of students who have been exposed to 'real language use' in Japan. For this reason, hearing from students who studied or worked in Japan during their third year is of particular relevance and interest since both cohorts have stepped outside the classroom learning environment. The data collected will be used both as a data source to identify some of the main pragmatic challenges and to later create teaching resources to overcome these challenges.

Possible Benefits: You will be able to reflect on the challenges you have encountered when using the Japanese language in context and to compare the language learned in the classroom with the language used in a 'real life' setting. You will also be able to share your own experiences of using the Japanese language. In addition, you will be able to critically reflect on the potential improvements to be made to the teaching and learning of Japanese in a classroom setting. Finally, you will be contributing to a specific area of study in which little work has been conducted to date.

Potential Risks: This project is completely independent of any Japanese modules you are (or will be) taking. Your experiences and opinions will not be shared with anyone in DCU, UL or otherwise. None of the information shared will affect your ongoing assessment/grades. Therefore, there are no risks involved in participating in this study.

Procedure: If you agree to participate in this stage of the study, you will be asked to take part in an individual semi-structured interview. You will be invited to talk more in-depth about your experiences with both the language you used in Japan and the language you were taught in the classroom before going abroad. During the interview, you will be asked a few concrete questions that will require you to draw from your personal experiences and anecdotes. You will be free to talk about anything you consider relevant to the matter under discussion. The interviews will last about 20 minutes and will take place at a date and time that suits you. All interviews will take place on-site.

All interviews will be anonymised, and interviewees will be given pseudonyms. With your permission, I will record the interview with an audio-recorder. The audio-recorder will help the researcher to record and remember everything that is being said during the interview. The recording will not be used for any purpose other than for this research. You can take a break during the interview or completely withdraw without consequence.

The results of the questionnaires and the interviews will be published upon completion of the PhD thesis, which will approximately take place in autumn 2021.

Your Rights

- Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to answer certain questions or withdraw from the interview altogether at any time without any consequence.
- Involvement or non-involvement in this study will not affect your academic records nor will affect your relationship with DCU/UL.

Confidentiality

- All interviewees will remain anonymous. Pseudonyms will be used throughout to protect anonymity (e.g. PI001).
- The email addresses of those who volunteered will only be used for further communication about the interviews. The email addresses will remain secret and will not be revealed under any circumstances.
- All information and data gathered during this project will be treated in confidentiality.
- All data gathered will be stored in a safe place at DCU and will be destroyed upon completion of the project.
- Only the researcher, Èrika Marcet, will have access to the information provided in the interviews. My supervisors, Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon, will only have access to the written reports.

The researcher, Èrika Marcet, will be in charge of administrating the questionnaires and conducting the interviews. If you have any queries or doubts about the nature of this project, please do not hesitate to contact me at erika.marcetitorrijos2@mail.dcu.ie. You may also contact my supervisors, Dr Ryoko Sasamoto at ryoko.sasamoto@dcu.ie and Dr Annette Simon at annette.simon@dcu.ie. If participants have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact: **The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel. 01-7008000. E-mail: rec@dcu.ie.**

B.3 Informed Consent Form

Dublin City University – School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)

I, ______________________________________, declare that I agree to participate in the interview as part of the project entitled 'Developing Pragmatic Competence in Japanese Oral Interaction', conducted by the SALIS PhD researcher Èrika Marcet under the supervision of Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon (SALIS).

Circle Yes or No for each question:

I have read the Plain Language Statement.	Yes/No
I understand the information provided and the nature of this study.	Yes/No
I understand my role in this study.	Yes/No
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study.	Yes/No
I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions.	Yes/No
I understand that I am not obliged to participate in this study.	Yes/No
I understand that there will be no consequences whether I decide to participate or not.	Yes/No
I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time.	Yes/No
I am aware that the interview will be audio-recorded, and I agree to it.	Yes/No
I understand that I can ask to turn off the audio-recorder if I feel uncomfortable.	Yes/No
I understand how the information gathered will be used and stored.	Yes/No
I understand that all data and experiences gathered will remain anonymous.	Yes/No
I agree for my anonymised data to be used in Èrika Marcet's thesis.	Yes/No
I agree for my anonymised data to be used in future presentations of the findings.	Yes/No

I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researcher, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project.

Participant Signature: ________________________________

Name in Block Capitals: ______________________________________

Witness: ____

Date: ______________________________

B.4 Interview Guide

Good morning/afternoon.

First of all, thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this stage of the study.

I would like to ask you some further questions about your experiences and opinions when learning Japanese here in DCU, as well as some problems you encountered when using the Japanese language with Japanese speakers in Japan. Hearing your opinions and own experiences will be extremely useful to this research. It is my wish to improve how Japanese pragmatics in oral interaction are taught at third level in Ireland, and your voice is essential to achieve this goal.

The interview should not take longer than 30 minutes. Although I have some topics I would like to cover, you can think of this interview as more of a conversation. You can also ask questions related to the topics under discussion or bring up new ones. There are no right or wrong answers, and you can go into much (or little) detail as you like.

The interview will be audio-recorded, but only I will have access to the recording. If at any point during the interview you wish to take a break, feel free to do so. If at any point you feel uncomfortable or you would like to stop, let me know and we will end the interview without any consequence. All the information you provide will be anonymised and you will be given a pseudonym.

Do you have any further questions about the purpose, structure and content of the interview?

Let's get started.

[Turn the audio-recorder on]

Language use in Japan

- What were the main problems you had when you went to Japan and started interacting orally with Japanese speakers?
- Did you have any problems understanding the language used in everyday activities, such as going to the supermarket, the pharmacy or the bank?
- When you were in Japan, did you ever come across as being too direct when speaking to Japanese people?
- Did you ever misunderstand a situation because the Japanese speaker was being too ambiguous (when you asked a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ question, for example)?
- When you were in Japan, did you have any problems understanding Japanese speakers omitting particles, subjects, personal pronouns, verbs, etc.?
- Did you omit particles, subjects, personal pronouns, verbs, etc. when you were in Japan?
- In your opinion, do you think Japanese can be considered a vague language?

- In your opinion, do you think context plays an important role in the Japanese language?
- What were your experiences with intonation, pausing and non-verbal communication?
- What does it mean to you to 'speak Japanese appropriately'?

Classroom vs Real-life language

- In your experience, what are the main differences, if any, between the Japanese you learned in the classroom before going to Japan and the real-life Japanese used in the country?
- In your opinion, what kind of classroom oral/aural activities here in DCU/UL do you feel prepared you better to go to Japan?

***

Is there anything else you would like to add/talk about?

Thank you very much for your time.

[Turn the recorder off]

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

C.1 Recruitment

VOLUNTEER LIST

FOCUS GROUP OCTOBER SCHEDULE AT DCU

If you are interested in participating in a focus group discussion, please choose among the following the dates that suit you best. Then, write your name, email address and the preferred time slots. If none of these dates suits you but you still would like to participate, write an alternative date and time and the researcher will be in contact with you.

You may talk to your classmates to see if, in case they wish to volunteer, they are available at the same time and date to conduct the focus group together.

- Monday 22nd October 2019
- Tuesday 23rd October 2019
- Wednesday 24th October 2019
- Thursday 25th October 2019
- Friday 26th October 2019

• **First Name**	**Email**	**Availability (date and time slot)**

Thank you very much for volunteering to participate in the focus group discussion 😊

You will be soon contacted at the email address provided above to arrange a time and place to conduct the focus group.

C.2 Plain Language Statement

Dublin City University – School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)

My name is Èrika Marcet and I am a PhD researcher at Dublin City University (DCU). I would like to invite you to participate in the first stage of my research project, entitled 'Developing Pragmatic Competence in Japanese Oral Interaction'. This project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon (SALIS).

Aims and Objectives of the Investigation: This project aims to investigate how to develop pragmatic competence, which is the ability to learn the language in context, in Japanese oral interaction. This study seeks to:

1) Identify the pragmatic challenges students face when interacting orally in Japanese.
2) Create and implement a course addressing the issues identified under objective 1.

The pragmatic challenges faced by students when interacting orally with Japanese speakers were identified thanks to the questionnaires and interviews conducted with third- and fourth-year students of Japanese from two different institutions in Ireland during the academic year 2017/18. The experiences and opinions of students who were exposed to 'real language use' in Japan have been highly valuable and have served as a rich data source to identify some of the major pragmatic challenges. To provide teaching materials that seek to address those challenges, it is important that I continue listening to the voices of students who have just returned from Japan after their study abroad or work placement programmes in order to confirm the information gathered through the first stage of data collection.

Possible Benefits

You will be able to reflect on the challenges you have encountered when using the Japanese language in context and to compare the language learned in the classroom with the language used in a 'real life' setting. You will also be able to share your own experiences of using the Japanese language. In addition, you will be able to critically reflect on the potential improvements to be made to the teaching and learning of Japanese in a classroom setting. Finally, you will be contributing to a specific area of study in which little work has been conducted to date.

Potential Risks

This project is completely independent of any Japanese modules you are (or will be) taking. Your experiences and opinions will not be shared with anyone in DCU/UL or otherwise. None of the information shared will affect your grades. Therefore, there are no risks involved in participating in this study.

Procedure

If you agree to participate in this stage of the study, you will be asked to take part in a focus group with some of your peers. You will be invited to talk about your experience with both the language you used in Japan and the language you were taught in the classroom before going abroad. During the focus group, you will be asked a few concrete questions about the type of language you used in Japan and the challenges you faced, such as backchanneling, intonation, humour, silence, personal pronouns, registers and politeness levels. You will be free to talk about anything you consider relevant to the matter under discussion. The focus group will last about 45 minutes, and it will take place on-site (in an empty classroom) at a time that is convenient to everyone. All focus groups will be anonymised, and participants will be given pseudonyms.

With your permission, I will record the focus group with an audio-recorder. The audio-recorder will help the researcher to record and remember everything that is being said during the interview. The recording will not be used for any purpose other than for this research. You can take a break during the focus group or completely withdraw without consequence.

The results will be published upon completion of the PhD thesis, which will approximately take place in autumn 2021.

Your Rights

- Participation in the focus group is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to answer certain questions or withdraw from the focus group altogether at any time without any consequence.
- Involvement or non-involvement in this study will not affect your academic records nor will it affect your relationship with DCU/UL.

Confidentiality

- All participants in the focus groups will remain anonymous. Pseudonyms will be used throughout to protect anonymity (e.g. PFG001).
- The email addresses of those who want to volunteer and that will be provided during the recruitment stage for further communication with the students (e.g. location of the focus group) will remain secret and will not be revealed under any circumstances.
- All information and data gathered during this project will be treated in confidentiality.
- All data gathered will be stored in a safe place at DCU and will be destroyed upon completion of the project.
- Only the researcher, Èrika Marcet, will have access to the information provided in the focus groups and semi-structured interviews. My supervisors, Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon, will only have access to the written reports.

The researcher, Èrika Marcet, will be in charge of conducting the focus groups. If you have any queries or doubts about the nature of this project, please do not hesitate to contact me at erika.marcetitorrijos2@mail.dcu.ie. You may also contact my supervisors, Dr Ryoko Sasamoto at ryoko.sasamoto@dcu.ie and Dr Annette Simon at annette.simon@dcu.ie.

If participants have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact: **The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel. 01-7008000 E-mail: rec@dcu.ie.**

C.3 Informed Consent Form

Dublin City University – School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)

I, ____, declare that I agree to participate in the focus group discussion as part of the project entitled 'Developing Pragmatic Competence in Japanese Oral Interaction', conducted by the SALIS PhD researcher Èrika Marcet under the supervision of Dr Ryoko Sasamoto and Dr Annette Simon (SALIS).

Circle Yes or No for each question:

I have read the Plain Language Statement.	Yes/No
I understand the information provided and the nature of this study.	Yes/No
I understand my role in this study.	Yes/No
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study.	Yes/No
I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions.	Yes/No
I understand that I am not obliged to participate in this study.	Yes/No
I understand that there will be no consequences whether I decide to participate or not.	Yes/No
I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time.	Yes/No
I am aware that the interview will be audio-recorded, and I agree to it.	Yes/No
I understand that I can ask to turn off the audio-recorder if I feel uncomfortable.	Yes/No
I understand how the information gathered will be used and stored.	Yes/No
I understand that all data and experiences gathered will remain anonymous.	Yes/No
I agree for my anonymised data to be used in Èrika Marcet's thesis.	Yes/No
I agree for my anonymised data to be used in future presentations of the findings.	Yes/No

I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researcher, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project.

Participant Signature: ___________________________________

Name in Block Capitals: ____

Witness: ____

Date: ________________________________

C.4 Questioning Route

Good morning/afternoon, everyone.

First of all, I would like to thank you very much for agreeing to participate in the second round of data collection of the first phase of my study. As you are aware, in the first round of data collection I administered questionnaires and conducted interviews with third-, fourth- and former students of Japanese in DCU and UL. The results are very promising, as it seems like everyone faced similar challenges when they were in Japan.

You were all invited here today because you are all students of Japanese in DCU/UL and have been to Japan as part of your studies. You all have experienced the language first-hand and might share many stories about the challenges you faced when interacting orally with Japanese speakers.

Today I would like to ask you some further questions about your experiences and opinions of using the language during your study abroad or working placements in particular, and with Japanese speakers in general to, hopefully, confirm the challenges that have emerged from the data. I am especially interested in hearing your stories, anecdotes and personal experiences. Remember that your own experiences and opinions are extremely valuable to this research, as your voices will be the base from which new material will be created in order to improve the teaching and learning of Japanese as a foreign language.

The focus group discussion should not take longer than an hour. Remember this is a discussion. I would like to hear from everyone, and to make this into a conversation. The point of a focus group is to build on what others say, to present different experiences, to agree and disagree and to give examples. There are no right or wrong answers. Everyone's input is important, so if you are talking a lot, I may ask you to give others a chance to speak up. And if you aren't saying much, I may call on you. I just want to make sure that all of you have a chance to share your ideas.

I will be taking notes while moderating the discussion. This will help me remember everything that has been exposed throughout. At the end of the focus group, I will give you a brief oral summary of the relevant findings, and I will ask you whether the summary is complete or if anything has been missed.

The conversation will be audio-recorded to help capture everyone's comments, but only I will have access to the recording. If at any point during the discussion you wish to take a break, feel free to do so. If at any point you feel uncomfortable or you would like to stop, let me know. All the information you provide will be anonymised and you will be given a pseudonym.

Before I turn the audio recorder on, I would like to ask you to put your phone on silent. If you need to take a call, please step out to do so. Let's get started.

[Turn the audio-recorder on]

Opening (5 minutes)

Could you tell me your name, your nationality, what is your degree and which university did you go to in Japan? (5 minutes)

Introduction (10 minutes)

- Did you notice any differences in the way Japanese speakers communicate verbally compared to what you were used to? If so, what are the differences? (5 minutes)
- How about differences when you communicated non-verbally? If so, which ones? (5 minutes)

Transition (5 minutes)

- In the questionnaires and interviews, students pointed out that they had experienced some silences when interacting orally with Japanese speakers. Did you have the same experience? Can you remember any particular situations? How did you deal with silence? (5 minutes)

Key Questions (35 minutes)

- Did you pay attention to the way intonation was used? If so, did you find intonation helpful or not? Give examples. (5 minutes)
- Were there any situations where the use of registers and/or politeness levels posed a problem? What is *keigo*? (10 minutes)
- Were there situations in which you were too polite or too direct? If so, with whom and how? (5 minutes)
- Can you remember any particular situation in which you could not understand what was being said due to the lack of particles, verbs, subjects, pronouns, etc.? (10 minutes)
- Was humour ever used in conversations? Who used it – you and/or Japanese people? How was it used? What kind of conversations? (5 minutes)

Ending (5 minutes)

Is there anything else you would like to add/talk about? Thank you very much for your time.

[Turn the recorder off]

Give a brief oral summary.

C.5 Probes

- Has anyone had a different experience
- Did you all share this same experience?
- No one has mentioned it here, but in other groups, we heard X. What's your reaction to that?
- Could you explain this further?
- Could you give us an example?
- Would you say more on this topic?
- Tell us more.
- Please, describe what you mean.
- Is there anything else you can think of?
- Thank you, X. Are there others who want to comment on the question?
- X, you look like you want to say something.
- X, you haven't had a chance. What is your experience?
- X, I don't want to leave you out of the conversation. What do you think?

APPENDIX D: SYLLABUS

The following is a tentative syllabus for the online pragmatics teacher training course.[36]

Teacher Training Online Course

Developing Pragmatics in the L2 Classroom

D.1 Course Overview and Syllabus

Important Note*: This course syllabus is subject to change to best meet the needs of all course participants. In addition to making changes to this document, the instructor will notify of any changes to the syllabus in the* ***Announcements*** *section on the virtual learning environment. Please check the learning platform for regular updates.*

This syllabus was last revised on 08th September 2021.

D.2 General Information

Target Audience: This course is for anyone interested in learning about pragmatics from a cognitive perspective and applying pragmatics theory to their instructional practices. The course is suitable for secondary and tertiary instructors of a second/foreign language, material developers, curriculum developers/coordinators, teacher educators, teachers in training, policymakers postgraduate students and researchers.

Format: This 4-week course is asynchronous and available online only.[37] The course is not credited, but you can obtain a clock hour certificate at the end of the course.

Dates: TBA

Location: The course will take place online.

[36] In 2020, I participated in a 15-week winter semester intensive programme called *Transitioning to Teaching Language Online* offered by the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition at the University of Minnesota. I have drafted the syllabus based on my learnings from the course.

[37] The course can be modified to make it shorter or longer depending on the needs of the teachers and/or institutions implementing it. The course can also be redesigned as an independent workshop or series of workshops both online and onsite.

D.2 Contact Information

The developer/instructor of this course is Erika Marcet.[38] [insert bio-note]

For general queries about the course, contact me through the email address provided [inser email address] or via the learning platform message service. During the duration of the course, all queries and questions will be responded to as soon as possible and within 24 hours (may be longer on weekends). If needed, we can also organise Zoom calls.

D.3 Course Description

Teaching pragmatics goes beyond knowing how to teach speech acts. To make oral interaction more effective, students must learn how to interpret and produce communicative acts appropriately through cognitive processes such as making inferences. How can learners understand and respond to L1 speakers' intentions? How can learners know if a verbal form or a nonverbal cue is intended? What contextual cues should learners pay attention to? How can learners process implicit and explicit meaning? We will use Relevance Theory, a cognitive-pragmatics theory of human communication, to gain an insight into how human communication works and apply these principles to interactions in the L2. The course also addresses possible ways to minimise issues that learners are likely to encounter in oral interaction with L1 speakers.

The focus of this course is on oral production and interpretation.

The course is intended to:

- Understand what pragmatic competence is and how to use it as part of a pedagogical framework.
- Emphasise the importance of a cognitive approach to L2 pragmatics teaching and learning.
- Identify potential problem areas for learners of an L2.
- Develop activities that address potential problem areas for learners of an L2.

This course is designed for:

- in-service and pre-service secondary/vocational teachers of a second/foreign language,
- post-secondary teachers of a second/foreign language,

[38] The idea is for this course to be in collaboration with other researchers/instructors in the field. If this was the case, information about them and their contact hours would also be provided here.

- curriculum and material developers, policymakers, postgraduate students and researchers interested in learning more about developing L2 learners' pragmatic competence using research-based information and theoretically underpinned pedagogical practices.

D.4 Course Objectives

As a participant, you will gain theoretical and practical knowledge about pragmatics and its application in the L2 classroom/curriculum. You will also experience being a learner of pragmatics as you participate in example activities. You will apply and reflect on your newly acquired knowledge in a series of interactive activities and forum discussions.

At the end of this course, you will have completed several assignments that demonstrate your understanding of Relevance Theory and how to apply its notions in your instructional practice. You will be able to extend your knowledge to develop two pragmatics-focused activities in your target language.

By the end of this course, you will:

- Become familiar with Relevance Theory as a cognitive-pragmatics theory of human communication and be able to apply notions in Relevance Theory to your pragmatics instruction.
- Enhance your ability to identify challenges that learners may experience in their L2.
- Explore a pragmatic competence pedagogical framework and apply it to your teaching.
- Test, evaluate and create pedagogical materials and practices that focus on developing learners' pragmatic competence.
- Collaborate and network with fellow participants.

D.5 Course Site

This course takes place online through a virtual learning environment. You should regularly check in to access course materials, activities, readings, feedback and resources. On the learning platform, you can find detailed instructions about how to complete weekly activities. You will use the learning platform for discussion forums, quizzes and video/audio recordings as well as external web-based features and resources.

D.6 Course Materials

There are no required textbooks or materials for this course. All course materials, resources, links and readings are listed at the beginning of the content unit or within activity instructions. These resources are available on the learning platform or as external links.

D.7 Course Time Frame

This is a 4-week online course. [insert dates]. The course will be open a week before the official starting date to give you extra time to become familiar with the course page. The course consists of four main units of work with one extra introductory unit (Unit 0) that will also be available one week early. If you have not done so earlier, you will have to complete both the introductory unit and the first content unit in the first week.

Each week, you will have a number of activities that need to be completed. To make the course more manageable, deadlines are provided twice a week: Wednesday by 8 PM and Saturday by 8 PM. Materials, activities and instructions are released on Saturday at 9 PM and Wednesday at 9 PM. All dates and times are in GMT +1 (Dublin/London). Please be mindful of the due times and adjust your time zone accordingly.

D.8 Course Format

This course is offered completely online in an asynchronous, self-paced format. That means that you participate in the course when it is most convenient for you within a fixed time to meet the deadlines provided (see **Course Time Frame**). However, there is one synchronous activity (teacher demonstration) in small groups, which means that you will have to arrange a time to meet with your peers online at a time that best suits all.

There are several weekly assignments to help establish and maintain discussions among yourself and your peers. Each unit is made up of several activities. The number of activities varies from unit to unit. The activities follow a chronological order: you must complete a given task before moving on to the next one. Units of content are released twice a week, which means that you must complete Part I of the unit before moving on to Part II.

Each unit has the following components: an overview of the content and activities to be completed during the week, a self-reflection activity, an explanation of the topic at hand, examples and/or interactive activities, individual and group practice/reflective activities, peer-feedback, self-assessment and feedback to the unit.

D.9 Course Content and Schedule

Unit 0 (Week 0-1)

This is the introductory unit. It is available for you a week before the course officially starts and is open until the end of the first week. I encourage you to complete Unit 0 a few days before the course begins so you can familiarise yourself with the course site, the syllabus, the structure of the course, your instructor(s) and your peers. You will have the opportunity to introduce yourself and interact with your peers.

Unit 1 (Week 1)

This first unit is dedicated to introducing Relevance Theory as a cognitive pragmatics theory that explains human communication. You will reflect on the need for a cognitive approach to pragmatics and its relevance in pragmatics teaching/learning in the L2. In Part I, you will learn the notions of Relevance, Ostension, Inference, Principles of Relevance, Context, Implicit Communication, Explicit Communication, Conceptual/Procedural Meaning and Linguistic Underdeterminacy. You will also learn some important advancements in Interlanguage Pragmatics. In Part II, you will reflect on and discuss which notions can be applied to the teaching and learning of pragmatics in the L2.

Unit 2 (Week 2)

This unit focuses on the concept of pragmatic competence. In Part I, you will reflect on your understanding of pragmatic competence. You will be provided with a definition of pragmatic competence that draws from Relevance Theory and you will be asked to ascertain how you can incorporate it in your teaching. In Part II, you will be provided with a pedagogical framework based on the definition of pragmatic competence and you will experience how it can be used to create instructional materials.

Unit 3 (Week 3)

This unit is concerned with explaining what is inhibiting L2 learners from achieving relevance. In Part I, you will reflect on what aspects of oral interaction you think are challenging for your learners. You will discuss what causes such challenges and what are their possible consequences. In Part II, you will be provided with some examples in Japanese as L2 and will be asked to analyse and explain some pragmatic challenges.

Unit 4 (Week 4)

This final unit focuses on the development of pedagogical materials. In Part I, based on notions of Relevance Theory (Unit 1) and the pedagogical framework (Unit 3), you will experience some activities that are designed to help learners develop their pragmatic competence in the L2. You will analyse some of the materials and discuss how you could adapt them/improve them for your own practice. In Part II, you will work towards creating two activities that help your learners activate their pragmatic competence in the classroom.

Week	Unit	Course Content[39]
Week 1	Unit 0	Meet the online course, the instructor(s) and your fellow classmates. Discuss the program goals and expectations. Describe your teaching context and students. Discover how ready you are to teach pragmatics.
	Unit 1	Share your initial pragmatics-related thoughts and reflections. Learn the main terms and concepts in Relevance Theory. Learn the main terms and concepts in Interlanguage Pragmatics. Explore the need for a cognitive approach to pragmatics. Discuss how Relevance Theory can be applied to the L2 classroom.
Week 2	Unit 2	Reflect on your understanding of pragmatic competence. Discuss what pragmatic competence is in relevance-theoretic terms. Familiarise yourself with a pedagogical framework for teaching pragmatics. Explore how the framework can be applied to the L2 classroom.
Week 3	Unit 3	Investigate and outline a variety of pragmatic challenges. Explore the causes of pragmatic challenges. Analyse and explain evidence-based pragmatic challenges.
Week 4	Unit 4	Experience activities that enhance pragmatic competence. Analyse activities that enhance pragmatic competence. Plan and design your own activities.

[39] The exact schedule would be provided here together with a list of learning objectives for each unit and an indicative list of activities.

D.10 Assignments

There are two major assignments for this course and a weekly minor assignment.

A. Weekly Reflection/Quiz (due on XX)

At the end of each unit, you are asked to reflect on your learning. You may explain how beneficial the content was and how you may apply it to your target language/educational context. You may critically reflect on your current practice and identify how you may improve it. You may describe how your experiences are similar/different from what you have been learned during the week. You may add information, question some information, ask further questions or seek clarification. You are also asked to complete a short quiz to assess your learning.

B. Teacher Demonstration (due on XX)

At the end of Unit 2, you are asked to record yourself teaching your L2 using some concepts introduced throughout the course. The recording should be no longer than 5 minutes and should incorporate a reflective piece that explains the choices made. You will receive feedback from your peers and your instructor(s). You are also asked to provide feedback to peers in your small group.

C. Materials Development (due on XX)

Your final assignment is the development of two activities. You must choose one potential challenging aspect for your L2 learners and develop two activities to help them overcome such a challenge. You are encouraged to tie together notions in Relevance Theory and the pragmatic competence pedagogical framework. You will receive feedback from other course participants as well as from your instructor(s). You are also asked to provide feedback to your peers.

D.11 Course Communication

Please check the course **Announcements** regularly. All important information, clarifications changes and adjustments to the course will be posted on the Announcements section on Loop as well as sent in an email to all course participants. Make sure these emails are not going to your spam folder.

If you have any **general questions** about activity instructions, activities/course materials, content, structure and technical difficulties, post them on the **Q&A forum** on Loop. For example, use this space if you cannot find an activity, instructions are unclear or a link is broken. I encourage you to help each other and answer each other questions. This space is useful as many may share the same questions and concerns.

If you have any **personal questions**, concerns or feedback, please send me an email to [insert email address]. I will do my best to respond to both general and personal queries within 24 hours (may be longer on weekends).

D.12 Feedback and Task Completion

There are four main units divided into smaller lessons. Always start with the **Overview Page** to see the type of content, time commitment and tasks you need to complete. There are due dates and times written next to each activity to help you better manage your time.

The course is non-evaluative (you do not receive any grades). Instead, you are provided with plenty of opportunities to receive feedback from the instructor(s) and peers. Note that feedback from the instructor(s) is only provided if deadlines are met. Rubrics, checklists and other tools are provided to facilitate understanding of instructor feedback.

There are also weekly evaluative and reflective tasks (e.g. self-assessment, evaluation of course content and activities). Rubrics, checklists and other tools are provided to facilitate these tasks.

To monitor your participation in the course, you receive participation points for each activity you complete. You can view your participation points in the **Grades** section on the learning platform.

A clock hours **certificate of participation** will be offered at the end of the online course for those students who have been awarded all participation points.

D.13 Technical Requirements

To access this course, you need access to the Internet and a **supported browser**. Loop is best compatible with Chrome, so if you are using a web browser other than Chrome, you might not have full functionality on the platform.[40] The DCU Loop mobile app is not recommended. We highly recommend the full website version on your laptop or desktop for the best experience.

[40] Loop is the virtual learning environment at Dublin City University. If the course is developed or implemented elsewhere, the sections Technical Requirements, Technical Assistance and Policies must be modified.

You need to have a webcam, headphones or earplugs and a microphone for full participation in the course.

D.14 Technical Assistance

If you experience difficulties with Loop in general or any course activities in particular, try posting your problem to the **Q&A Forum** on our course homepage to see if an instructor or a fellow course participant can answer your question (see **Course Communication**).

If your query is not answered or persists, please contact the Information Systems Services (ISS) by **submitting a ticket** with detailed information about the issue. When other troubleshooting does not work, please **email** your instructor with detailed information.

In all cases, include:

- A detailed description of what you are trying to do and what is not working;
- Your operation system and browser;
- A screenshot or video of what is happening (if applicable).

D.15 Course Expectations

Open mind: This course is designed to explore pragmatics and its applications from a perspective different from what you might be used to.

Time management: This is an asynchronous course, which means that it allows you to budget your time as you see best. However, you are expected to dedicate about 15 hours a week to this course. It is recommended that you check the course site at least twice a day to continue the conversation going with your peers in the forums. Plan accordingly to make sure you meet the deadlines. Do not wait until the last minute to complete your tasks, as the course has been designed to be completed in small, sequenced units of work and constant collaboration with others.

Constructive learning: You are expected to be actively engaged in your learning through the course tasks and content, as well as share your reflections about your learning process. The more you engage with the course, the more detailed feedback you will be provided with.

Privacy: Please do not copy/paste any course information and send it to others or share any course materials with others outside the course without your instructor's or peers' prior consent.

Plagiarism: You are expected to submit work that is yours and yours alone. You are required to follow the institutional plagiarism guidelines.

Instructor: The instructor will be present in the course to help you and your learning process. You are free to ask the instructor any questions at any time.

D.16 Course Participant Roles

Engagement with the course content is key for the successful completion of this course. Please pay careful attention to what we expect of you and what you can expect from the instructor:

Roles for course participants

- Commit to the course.
- Spend approximately 15 hours a week on completing the activities/assignments.
- Complete all the assigned tasks on time and by deadline times.
- Engage actively in the assigned tasks.
- Share about your interest in L2 pragmatics teaching and learning.
- Ask questions, share knowledge, exchange ideas and provide feedback.
- Make this course a comfortable place to work in. Be respectful to others at all times.
- Communicate schedule conflicts with your instructor as needed.
- Be honest in your participation. It is not about how well you perform, but how much you learn in the process.

Roles for course instructor

- Design relevant tasks that are challenging but accessible and that allow course participants to deepen their knowledge of L2 pragmatics teaching and learning.
- Establish deadlines to help course participants keep on track.
- Provide feedback and support as needed, share ideas, suggestions and experiences through discussion forums.
- Be available for questions and/or concerns.
- Guide course participants while allowing them to construct their own learning.
- Provide clear expectations about activities to allow for personal and individualised exploration.
- Monitor participation daily.
- Communicate course adjustments as they come.

D.17 Policies

You should be aware of what constitutes plagiarism and a breach of standards of academic integrity. Please follow all relevant institutional policies and procedures as you would in any other modules. You can check the **DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy** **here.** The **SALIS FAQ for DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy** is available under the **general information** section on our Loop course page.

APPENDIX E: ACTIVITIES

In this section, I include more examples of activities for teachers to implement in or adapt to their L2 classrooms. The following activities have been designed following the same principles and practices as the activities showcased in Chapter 7 (see section 7.5). The activities have been divided in three sections to address the needs of the learners in this thesis: activities for the recovery of linguistic representations, activities for the recovery of higher-level explicatures and activities for the recovery of implicatures. Each section includes the pragmatic aspect at hand, the feature or features under study and the main learning objectives. For each activity, I too explain its primary goal, I identify whether the task focuses on receptive or productive oral skills and I describe the aspect of pragmatic competence the activity focuses on, namely awareness of ostensive stimuli, pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness. I too provide some guidelines to help instructors along the process.

Each activity can be taught independently from others and can therefore be arranged in any order or as a standalone practice. In this regard, instructors are responsible for sequencing the activities in a way that the activities represent an effective and efficient path of activation and development based on their own pedagogical contexts. For gradual progression and greater clarity, however, I have loosely organised the activities from more general to more concrete so one activity prepares for the following one.

E.1 Activities for Learning to Recover Linguistic Representations

Pragmatic component: Linguistic underdeterminacy

Features: Speech styles and ellipsis

Learning objectives:

LO1: Understand, recognise and identify linguistic underdeterminacy.

LO2: Be able to recover and use speech styles consciously and effectively.

LO3: Be able to recover elliptical meaning and use ellipsis consciously and effectively.

Honorific language

Learners watch several short interactions about daily activities or activities that learners are likely to encounter (e.g. at the convenience store, at the town hall, at the bank, at a restaurant). Learners:

1. Identify the honorific/formulaic expressions used.
2. Pay attention to the speech styles used by the customer.
3. Pay attention to contextual cues.
4. Use contextual cues to recover meaning.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to become familiar with daily interactions in the L2 as well as be able to interpret and respond to honorific language.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness. Instructors prompt learners to discuss how honorific language is a cue to speakers' intentions and what contextual cues to look out for to interpret such expressions.

Instructors should ensure that the situations shown are relevant to learners' future stays in Japan. Instructors may bring awareness to cultural and sociolinguistic differences in the types of encounters shown. This can also be an opportunity to create a list of useful expressions that learners may encounter as well as useful responses that learners can use (or learn when not to respond).

Three speech styles

Learners show three interactions. First, in formal speech styles, then in casual speech styles and finally in honorific speech styles. For each video, learners discuss:

- When do we use a given speech style?
- What role do social norms (e.g. age, status, gender) play in using speech styles?
- What role does intuition play in using speech styles?
- How can we know what speech style is the interlocutor expecting us to use?
- What contextual cues can we look out for? How can we "read the air"?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to bring awareness to the role of speech styles as well as understand how speech styles are used.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and metapragmatic awareness.

Learners are working with both phases of communication (decoding and inference). Although the focus is on inference, learners must understand the linguistic expressions and grammatical operations used in the videos. Instructors may want to spend some time working on decoding before/during the discussion.

Completing the turn with an effective speech style

Learners watch or listen to daily interactions in a number of situations (e.g. at the convenience store, at the pharmacy, at the restaurant, at the cinema). However, the interactions are incomplete (i.e. the customer's response is missing). Learners complete the turn. To do so, learners reflect on the following questions:

- Is the interlocutor expecting a response? If so, which one? If not, why not?
- What does the interlocutor mean?
- What do you want to convey? How do you want to convey it?
- What speech style is the interlocutor using? How does this given speech style contribute to his/her intentions?

The focus of this activity is on both receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to be able to interpret and respond to honorific language.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness. Learners explain the link between the speech styles used and the effects they have in the interaction.

This is a discourse completion task (DCT). As learners become more used to these types of interactions, instructors may wish to reduce the response time and/or prompt learners to respond and explain their choices afterwards instead of during the turn.

Identifying and understanding casual forms

Learners listen to three interactions using casual speech styles. Learners:

1. Identify grammatical and lexical operations typical of casual speech styles.
2. Identify abbreviations and unfinished utterances.
3. Interpret the meaning of utterances.

Then, instructors ask learners to explain when casual speech styles are used and what effects interlocutors may want to achieve through the use of speech styles.
For each question, learners provide examples from the videos.

The focus of this activity is on both receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to be able to identify and interpret casual speech styles.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness.

Identifying successful interactions: working towards recovering underdeterminacy

Learners watch four recordings, two with successful interactions and two with unsuccessful interactions. Learners:

1. Identify which interactions are successful and which ones are not.
2. Identify what went wrong/right.
3. Explain why it went wrong/right.
4. Explain the consequences of unsuccessful use of speech styles.
5. Make the interaction successful.

The focus of this activity is on <u>receptive oral skills</u>.

The main <u>objective</u> is to identify the pragmatic effects of speech styles.

The focus is on <u>pragmatic awareness</u>.

Learners with a low pragmatic competence might not be able to identify successful and unsuccessful interactions right away. If your learners are struggling, you may wish to present successful/unsuccessful interaction in their L1 first to activate their pragmatic competence and then encourage them to transfer their assumptions/experience onto the L2.

Becoming aware of dialects

Learners watch a video that presents several Japanese dialects. Learners discuss their assumptions about dialects.

1. Did you know Japan has dialects?
2. Do you know any dialects? Where are they used?
3. Do you know any dialectal lexical/grammatical forms? What do they mean?
4. How are dialects formed in your L1? And in the L2?
5. Who uses dialect? When are dialects used?

The main <u>objective</u> is to become aware of dialectal variation.

The focus is on <u>awareness of ostensive stimuli</u>.

Using dialectal variation for pragmatic effects.

Learners watch a short interaction in dialectal variation. Then, they watch the same interaction in standard language. Learners discuss:

- What are the main differences between the two interactions?
- Which one is easier to understand? Why?
- What information/knowledge do we need to be able to interpret and use dialects?
- Does the interaction have the same effect? Why/why not?
- What is the intention behind using dialects?

Then, learners watch two short interactions in which a dialectal variation is used. Learners:

1. Identify what is dialect.
2. Explain how dialectal variation is achieved (e.g. changes in lexical forms, changes in verbal morphology, changes in intonation).
3. Interpret the meaning of the forms and put them into standard language.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to be exposed to dialectal variations.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness.

As a pre-activity/warm-up, instructors may want to prepare a quiz with dialectal words and forms that will appear in the video. Instructors may provide multiple-choice options and learners decide what they mean. Instructors may also provide the transcript before or during the activity.

Using dialectal language

Learners are provided with a few expressions in a dialect of Japan. In pairs, learners use these expressions to create a short interaction. Learners pay attention to the intention behind using dialect. Learners role-play the interaction in front of their peers.

The focus of this activity is on productive oral skills.

The main objective is to be exposed to and be able to process dialectal variations.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness.

To make it more challenging, each group of learners is given a different dialect. First, they work towards identifying which dialect it is. Second, they decode the expressions. Third, they create the interaction. Fourth, they role-play the interaction in front of the other groups. Fifth, the other groups must identify the dialectal stimuli used, identify which dialect belongs to and recover the meaning conveyed during the interaction.

Understanding loose syntax through ellipsis.

Learners watch an interaction with some instances of ellipsis. Once learners identify ellipsis as the focus of this activity, instructors prompt them to discuss:

- What is ellipsis?
- When and why do use ellipsis in your L1? When and why is ellipsis used in the L2?
- What grammatical components are ellipted in the L2? Provide examples from the recording.
- How can we interpret the meaning that is ellipted?
- What speech style is mostly associated with the use of ellipsis? Why?
- Is it wrong to use ellipsis with other speech styles? Why? Why not?

The focus of this activity is on <u>receptive oral skills</u>.

The main <u>objective</u> is to understand the role and prominence of loose syntax in oral interaction.

The focus is on <u>awareness of ostensive stimuli</u>. Instructors bring learners' attention to ellipsis as an ostensive act.

To make it less challenging, instructors may wish to start with utterances in isolation or in written form to recover meaning before moving onto more complex, oral interactions.

Recovering ellipsis

Learners listen to a casual interaction (3-5 minutes). Learners pay conscious attention to how ellipsis is used. Learners:

1. Identify what L1 speakers have omitted.
2. Recover the ellipted constituent.
3. Explain why the constituent is ellipted.

Then, learners role-play the interaction making all the ellipted meaning explicit and discuss the effects this has in oral interaction.

The focus of this activity is on <u>receptive oral skills</u>.

The main <u>objective</u> is to be able to interpret elliptical meaning.

The focus is on both <u>awareness of ostensive stimuli, pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness</u>.

This task is very demanding as learners are asked to tap into three cognitive processes. It is recommended that instructors focus on the first two tasks before moving on to the third one. For advanced learners, instructors may ask to accomplish all three tasks at once.

Recognising puns as ostensive acts of communication

Learners listen to a short exchange that includes one or more puns. First, instructors ask learners to identify the humorous exchange. Once learners have identified the humorous exchange, instructors ask learners to think about what type of humour they think it is. When learners understand that the focus is on puns, they listen to a series of audio recordings that contain puns. In pairs, learners:

- Identify the pun.
- Decode the pun (identify each constituent).
- Work towards interpreting the meaning of the pun.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret ambiguous lexical forms through humour.

The focus is on both awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness. Instructors ask learners to identify the pun, decode it and retrieve relevant humorous effects.

To make it more accessible to learners, instructors may start the activity with a pun that includes familiar to learners and/or may introduce a pun that is based on a combination of learners' L1 and the L2. Instructors may also wish to provide learners with a series of cards with pictures that represent the pun and learners must link the pun to the picture. The activity may include all three variations for an increased cognitive load. Instructors may provide transcripts before, during or after the activity.

Identifying and recovering puns

Learners watch a video that includes a series of puns based on one specific onomatopoeia. In small groups, learners:

- Decode the pun (identify each constituent).
- Work towards interpreting the meaning of the pun.
- Decide whether the pun is funny and why

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to identify and recover humourous effects in the L2 based on ambiguous lexical forms.

The focus is on both pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness. Instructors ask learners to decode the puns, retrieve relevant humorous effects and justify why these pragmatic effects are retrieved.

The instructor may wish to provide an example of a pun with onomatopoeia either before watching the video or before they decode the puns. Instructors may provide the transcript before, during or after the activity. Instructors may also provide a list with vocabulary that learners might not be familiar with. Learners may also wish to rank the puns from most to least funny according to their criteria and discuss levels of amusement with their peers.

Recovering humorous effects

Instructors use the card games *Dajare Karuta* and/or *Oyaji Gyagu Karuta* for learners to play in the classroom.

The focus of this activity is on both receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret and produce humour in the L2.

The focus is on both pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness.

If these games are unavailable to instructors, they can create their own card games with puns, *oyaji gyagu* and other types of jokes for learners to play with. Alternatively, in small groups, learners can create their own set of cards to play with the other groups.

Recovering humorous effects

Instructors show a video with some young YouTubers briefly talking about their thoughts on *oyaji gyagu* or old man's joke (a type of pun). As a follow-up discussion, instructors may ask:

- Have you ever heard of *oyaji gyagu* before?
- What do you think these types of jokes are?
- How do these YouTubers feel about *oyaji gyagu*?
- Is there any type of humour in your L1 that is typical of a particular group?

Then, learners continue watching the video where these YouTubers play a card game about *oyaji gyagu*. The teacher pauses after the first joke and learners aim to retrieve relevant humorous effects. Instructors may also want learners to discuss:

- What makes this joke funny?
- What contextual cues contribute to creating amusement?
- Did you find this joke funny? Why/ why not?

Finally, learners watch a few more jokes and, as a whole class, work towards understanding what is funny about the jokes and why (or why not).

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to process humour in the L2.

The focus is on pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness.

Instructors may provide a transcript of the videos before, during or after watching the videos.

Using speech styles to convey humorous effects

Learners watch a short interaction where speech style is used to convey *hiniku* (sarcasm/irony). First, learners reflect on what makes this exchange sarcastic. Then, learners decode the utterances. Finally, learners rewrite the utterances in formal speech style.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret humour in the L2.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli.

E.2 Activities for Learning to Recover Higher-Level Explicatures

Pragmatic component: Higher-level explicatures

Features: Prosody, hedges and aizuchi

Learning objectives:

LO1: Understand, recognise and identify higher-level explicatures.

LO2: Be able to use higher-level explicatures to process meaning.

Understanding prosody as ostensive

Learners listen to several recordings in which prosody is used to convey speech acts. Learners:

1. Identify the prosodic pattern.
2. Retrieve the communicative intention (the speech act intended).

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to use prosody as a contextual cue to retrieve meaning.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness. Learners work towards retrieving possible interpretations a given ostensive act may have in a given context

Instructors may first provide learners with multiple-choice answers. As learners require less processing effort to retrieve meaning, instructors stop providing choices and allow learners to retrieve the communicative intention without any external assistance. Alternatively, instructors may first provide the script and learners work towards identifying the prosodic pattern interlocutors may use. Then, they listen to the recording and check if the prosodic pattern is the same. If needed, learners reflect on why the prosodic pattern differs from that of the recording.

Understanding the use of intonation as a communicative act

Learners listen to a recording in which three same utterances in different contexts are conveyed differently through prosody at the utterance level (e.g. question, statement, doubt, wonder). Once learners recognise that intonation is the focus of this activity, the instructor asks them to pay conscious attention to how prosody is used in all three interactions. These are some questions instructors may use for discussion:

- How is the speaker communicating their intentions? What are they communicating?
- How is intonation used in all three contexts?
- Why is intonation used differently?
- How does intonation help understand meaning?
- Why is important to know how to use intonation effectively?
- Would you have used intonation similarly in these situations?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to be able to understand the function of explicatures through prosody at the utterance level.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and metapragmatic awareness.

Instructors may introduce more examples of utterances with diverging intonations to demonstrate other contexts where prosody is used as a communicative act. Instructors may ask learners to transcribe the utterances and provide a visual pattern to the intonation used. To make it more challenging, instructors may ask learners to provide a visual pattern to the intonation used. Instructors can also ask learners to repeat the intonation out loud.

Recognising aizuchi as ostensive communicative acts

Learners watch a 3-5 minute interaction and, in small groups, identify the forms of aizuchi and their frequency/location in the utterance. Then, learners discuss:

- Is aizuchi used differently to backchannels in your L1? If so, how?
- Are the forms of aizuchi different from the backchannel expressions you use?
- Do you think aizuchi is more prevalent in Japan than in your country? Why? Why not? Give concrete examples.
- Where is aizuchi placed in the interaction?
- Would you use aizuchi in these situations? Why? Why not? If not, what would you use instead (if anything)?
- How does the use of aizuchi make you feel? Why?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to recognise aizuchi as ostensive communicative acts.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli.

If learners are familiar with ostensive silence in the L2, instructors may ask them to discuss the contrast between the prevalence of silence and the prevalence of aizuchi in oral interaction.

Recognising intentions through aizuchi

Instructors show a 3-5 minute interaction. Learners identify the forms of aizuchi, both verbal and nonverbal. Once identified, in small groups, learners discuss:

- What is the meaning/intention of a given aizuchi? How did you know?
- Why is this form of aizuchi used and not another?
- Could you use another form of aizuchi? If so, which one? Would it be as effective?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to retrieve relevant pragmatic effects of aizuchi.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness. Learners must explain why listeners choose one form of aizuchi over another (i.e. justify the pragmatic effects retrieved).

This activity may be challenging for learners as it requires them to pay attention to verbal and non-verbal aizuchi concurrently. For decreased cognitive load, instructors may ask learners to pay attention to either verbal or nonverbal aizuchi first. For increased cognitive load, instructors may ask learners to identify forms of aizuchi and retrieve their pragmatic effects in a single step. Instructors may also ask learners to categorise the forms of aizuchi according to their degree of explicitness (from weaker to stronger).

Choosing the most relevant explicature through aizuchi

Instructors give learners a transcript of a short interaction. The transcript does not contain any aizuchi. In pairs, learners:

1. Read the transcript.
2. Decide where interlocutors would use aizuchi and which forms could they use (both verbal and nonverbal).
3. Compare their transcript with other pairs and discuss their choices,
4. Act out the interaction in front of the class with their choice of aizuchi in.

The instructor plays the video and learners compare their answers with the ones used in the video.

The focus of this activity is on productive oral skills.

The main objective is to use aizuchi in context.

The focus is on pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness. Learners work with plausible forms/interpretations of aizuchi and explain why they choose one form over another.

Throughout the activity, instructors may guide learners through choosing the most effective forms of aizuchi based on contextual cues. If instructors do not wish to do this activity in written form, they can create a scripted short interaction without any aizuchi and work without a transcript (step 1: watch a short interaction). Alternatively, to work on comprehension, instructors may ask learners to write the transcript of the interaction before moving on to step 2.

Using prosody to convey aizuchi

Learners listen to several recordings with the same forms of aizuchi but conveyed using different intonation. Learners must think of a context where a given form of aizuchi with a particular intonation would be used. In pairs, learners role-play a short interaction. The other peers must discuss whether the learners have carried a successful interaction and why.

The focus of this activity is on productive oral skills.

The main objective is to use prosody to convey meaning.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness.

Recovering aizuchi through prosody

Learners watch several recordings in which prosody is used to convey aizuchi (same form, different meanings). Learners:

1. Identify the prosodic pattern.
2. Interpret the meaning/intention.

Then, learners discuss:

- How does intonation contribute to speakers' intentions?
- How did you retrieve the speakers' intentions?
- Why is this prosodic pattern the most relevant act of ostension in this context?
- Is there another intonation that would have achieved the same effect? If so, which one? If not, why not?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to use prosody as a contextual cue to interpret meaning.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness. Learners explain the link between the form of aizuchi and the pragmatic effects achieved via prosody.

Learners must be familiar with verbal forms of aizuchi before attempting this activity.

Understanding aizuchi as ostensive

The instructor shows a short video of an interaction in the L2 and asks learners to pay conscious attention to how interlocutors demonstrate listenership. Individually, learners jot down their reflections and observations with specific examples from the video. Then, in small groups, learner compare their lists and further discuss the following:

- What skills do you need to be an effective listener speaker in your L1?
- Do you need the same skills in the L2? Why/why not?
- How are interlocutors in the video showing listenership?
- Have you ever heard of aizuchi before? What is it?

In their small groups, learners brainstorm forms of aizuchi they might be familiar with. Instructors play the video again and learners add to the list with further examples from the video.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to become familiar with aizuchi and understand its role in oral interaction.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli. Learners identify aizuchi as a relevant linguistic and non-linguistic feature of the language.

Instructors may want to follow this activity with another video that discusses the role and functions of aizuchi as well as its prevalence in Japan. Instructors may provide a transcript of the videos before, during or after watching the videos.

Identifying the most effective form of aizuchi

Learners watch a conversation where aizuchi are missing. The instructor pauses the video and provides learners with a multiple-choice of aizuchi forms. Learners choose the most appropriate form based on what the speaker wants to convey and utter the expression with the most relevant intonational pattern.

The focus of this activity is on receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to use prosody as a contextual cue to interpret meaning based on other contextual cues in the interaction.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness.

To make it easier, instructors provide the response written on the screen. To make it more challenging, learners are not provided with any choices. Activities 5, 6 and 7 may be conducted as part of a lesson plan/unit of work dedicated to learning aizuchi to process implicatures (see section 7.4.4). This activity could also be conducted with other ostensive stimuli such as hedges.

Identifying forms and functions of aizuchi

Instructors show a 3-5 minute interaction. Learners are asked to pay conscious attention to the forms and functions of aizuchi. In pairs or small groups, instructors may use the following questions for discussion and reflection:

- What do you think interlocutors want to communicate?
- Other than listenership, what do interlocutors use aizuchi for?
- Why do interlocutors use aizuchi?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to identify aizuchi as an ostensive act as well as interpret their meaning in context.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness. Learners identify speakers' intentions and work with the functions (i.e. possible interpretations) a given aizuchi may have in a given context.

To do this activity, learners must be familiar with forms of aizuchi. Learners can also first work towards identifying aizuchi before moving onto the task at hand. Instructors may wish to discuss degrees of communication and/or differences between short/nonverbal utterances as aizuchi and as non-aizuchi.

Recovering implicatures through aizuchi

Instructors show a 3-5 minute interaction.

Part 1: Learners write down all the verbal forms of aizuchi they hear. Then, instructors play the video again and in small groups learners identify the meaning/function of the aizuchi they have identified in context. Instructors provide the transcript to the video. Learners check whether they have identified all the verbal forms of aizuchi.

Part 2: Learners watch the video again but this time they pay attention to nonverbal aizuchi only. Learners use the transcript to write down the form of nonverbal aizuchi. As before, in small groups, learners discuss the meaning, function and location of the aizuchi they have identified.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to recover meaning conveyed through aizuchi.

The focus is on both awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness. Instructors help learners identify linguistic and non-linguistic forms of aizuchi and retrieve their relevant pragmatic effects in context.

To make it more challenging, learners pay attention to and identify the prosodic patterns used to convey verbal aizuchi. For advanced learners, instructors may combine part 1 and part 2 under the same task.

Categorising types of aizuchi

Learners watch several short recordings with interactions that use several types of aizuchi (e.g. short utterances, repetition, paraphrasing and completion). Learners categorise the forms of aizuchi into several categories depending on their type. Then, learners reflect on the communicative intention behind each type of aizuchi.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to understand and identify the different types of aizuchi.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli.

Using aizuchi to convey meaning

Learners come up with a list of aizuchi. With the whole class, learners share their lists and add to it or modify it accordingly. In pairs, learenrs choose 5 aizuchi (verbal and nonverbal) and role-play one or more interactions using the aizuchi of their choice. Learners must write down why they used those particular forms in a given context. Then, learners act out the role-play in front of other peers. The other groups must interpret the interaction and explain why interlocutors use those forms of aizuchi over others.

The focus of this activity is on both productive oral skills.

The main objective is to be able use aizuchi to convey meaning.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness. Learners must explain why the forms of aizuchi they chose (or other pairs chose) are the most effective ones to achieve pragmatic effects.

To make it easier, instructors provide a list with forms of aizuchi before the activity. To make it more challenging, learners are asked to choose five different types of aizuchi.

Conveying implicatures

Learners are provided with several situations. In pairs, they think about a relevant interaction for a given situation using hedges, verbal aizuchi and any other linguistic forms they may consider appropriate. Paying conscious attention to intonation, learners role-play the interactions. Then, they record the two interactions and exchange them with the other pairs, who explain the relevance of the expressions chosen and the effects they intended to achieve.

The focus of this activity is on both receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret hedges.

The focus is on both pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness. Learners first come up with a successful interaction with relevant pragmatic effects. Then, they analyse two recordings focusing on the link between the ostensive stimuli used and the pragmatic effects retrieved.

Recovering higher-level explicatures in real-time oral interaction

Instructors invite L1 speakers to the classroom. Learners and L1 speakers pair up. Each pair interacts for about 15 minutes. During that time, learners video-record their interaction. Then, on their own, learners analyse 3-5 minutes of the footage. Learners:

1. Watch the recording paying conscious attention to how the L1 speaker uses aizuchi.
2. Watch the recording paying conscious attention to how they use aizuchi.
3. Transcribe the recording (including nonverbal aizuchi) and highlight them.
4. Explain the intention behind the aizuchi used.
5. Provide feedback to themselves (self-reflection).

For self-reflection, learners may use the following questions:

- What forms of aizuchi did I use?
- What intention did I want to achieve with that given aizuchi?
- Could have I used aizuchi differently? If so, how?

The focus of this activity is on both receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to be able to interpret and produce aizuchi.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness and metapragmatic awareness.

Instructors may provide learners with a list of topics to discuss (related to the course content). In addition to self-reflection, learners may exchange analyses with other peers so they can provide feedback to each other. Alternatively, learners may ask their L1 peers to provide feedback to them. This activity can also be done in combination with other features of the language that convey higher-level explicatures and-or other features that tackle other cognitive processes (e.g. recovery of linguistic representations).

Identifying hedges as higher-level explicatures

Learners watch several interactions in which hedges are used. Learners:

1. Identify the hedging expressions.
2. Identify how prosody is used to convey hedges.
3. Interpret their meaning/intention.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret hedges.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness.

Instructors may wish to draw learners' attention to other contextual cues such as bodily/facial expressions and gestures. To make it more challenging, instructors may wish to play audio recordings instead, so learners work on decoding the hedging expressions and inferring meaning via intonation only.

Recognising intentions through hedges

Learners listen to several interactions where interlocutors do not modify their degree of commitment to the proposition expressed. Learners:

1. Identify where in the interaction the speaker is expected to use hedges and why.
2. Identify the most suitable hedge in that given context.
3. Use the correct intonation to convey your intention.

The focus of this activity is on both receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret hedges.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness.

Instructors may provide the transcript before, during or after the activity.

Using hedges to communicate meaning

Learners watch an interaction where hedges are used to decrease the speakers' commitment to the proposition expressed. Once learners identify hedges as the focus of the activity, they are asked to pay conscious attention to how intonation is used to convey them. Instructors may use the following questions for discussion:

1. What are hedges? How are they used?
2. Do you know any hedges in the L2? If so, which ones? In which context are they used?
3. Do you use hedges in your L1? Do you use prosody to convey them?
4. How does the use of hedges make you feel?
5. How would you feel if L1 speakers used explicit language instead of hedges? Why?
6. What other contextual cues other than intonation can help us retrieve the intention behind hedges?
7. Would a hedge have the same effects in your L1? Why/Why not?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to identify hedges as acts of ostension.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli.

Instructors may show other interactions where hedges are used to communicate meaning and ask learners questions 4-6 to further activate their pragmatic competence. Instructors may also use a narrative approach by telling a story of an unsuccessful interaction in which someone interpreted the implied meaning of hedges ineffectively, resulting in negative consequences.

Processing hedging expressions

Learners watch several interactions where hedges are used and identify the hedging expressions used, interpret their meaning/intention and provide an explicit form.

Then, instructors show five interactions. In three of them, the listener does not interpret hedges correctly and in two of them, the listener does. Learners identify which interaction is successful and which one is unsuccessful and explain why.

Finally, learners discuss:

- Is an explicit form more, less or equally effective than the hedge? Why?
- How does hedging contribute to speakers' intentions?
- What background knowledge would you need in that context?
- Would a hedge have the same effects in your L1? Why/Why not?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret hedges.

The focus is on pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness.

To make it more challenging, instructors may ask learners to categorise the hedges used according to their degree of communication (based on the weak-strong continuum).

Using prosody to recover humorous effects

Learners listen to two recordings that contain the same interaction, one is intended to be sarcastic/ironic and the other is not. Learners pay conscious attention to the use of intonation to convey humorous effects and decide which exchange is intended to be humorous and which is not.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret humour in the L2.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness.

E.3 Activities for Learning to Recover Implicatures

Pragmatic component: Implicatures

Features: Bodily expressions, gestures, silence and humour

Learning objectives:

LO1: Understand, recognise and identify implicatures.

LO2: Be able to use implicatures to process meaning.

LO3: Be able to identify and process humorous effects.

Identifying bodily expressions as ostensive

Learners discuss their assumptions about bodily expressions and gestures in Japan. These are some questions instructors may use:

- Do you use gestures/bodily expressions to communicate meaning in the L1?
- Why do you use gestures/bodily expressions in the L1?
- Do the Japanese use gestures and bodily expressions? In which situations?
- Do you know any gestures/bodily expressions particular to the Japanese language? Which ones? What do they mean?
- Why are gestures/bodily expressions sometimes preferred over linguistic forms?
- In which situations may gestures/bodily expressions be preferred?

The main objective is to bring awareness to the use of bodily expressions and gestures to convey meaning.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli. Instructors bring awareness to gestures and bodily expressions in the L1 and L2 as cues to ostension and prompt learners to discuss how do these contribute to speakers' intentions.

Understanding the pragmatic effects of bodily expressions

Learners watch a video that shows differences between gestures/bodily expressions in Japan and learners' L1. Learners identify the ostensive acts, explain what they mean and discuss possible situations where these expressions may/may not be used. Then, in small groups, learners create a short role-play using some of these expressions in context. Learners justify how the gestures chosen contribute to expressing meaning in that particular context.

The focus of this activity is on receptive and productive oral skills.

The main objective is to compare the differences in meaning between L2 and L1 gestures and bodily expressions as well as produce these expressions in context.

The focus is on pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness. Learners first identify bodily expressions and gestures as acts of ostension in the L2 and explain how these achieve ostension.

After watching the video, instructors may prompt learners to discuss why the gestures shown are communicative acts. Learners may also be encouraged to discuss whether these gestures would have the same pragmatic effects (achieve the same intention) in their L1 and why/why not. After the role plays, the instructor may ask learners to explain what background knowledge and expectations are needed to interpret the use of a given gesture in that particular context. Instructors may also prompt learners to discuss how these gestures make them feel and whether they would feel comfortable using them in the L2 context.

Categorising bodily expressions as ostensive/not ostensive

Learners watch a 5-to-10-minute video provided by the instructor. Learners must:

1. Identify all facial and bodily expressions as well as gestures
2. Categorise the acts as ostensive and non-ostensive
3. If ostensive, learners interpret the meaning of the expressions and gestures used.

Alternatively, learners may collect their own data from online/media sources and analyse those interactions instead.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to identify bodily expressions and gestures as acts of ostension and understand their pragmatic effects.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness. Instructors bring awareness to gestures and bodily expressions in the L1 and L2 that are cues to ostension and prompt learners to discuss how do these contribute to speakers' intentions.

Instructors may ask learners to pay conscious attention to and discuss how facial/bodily expressions and gestures are used in combination with or as part of other features of the Japanese language such as aizuchi and silence.

Working with plausible interpretations of bodily expressions

Learners are shown GIFS with bodily expressions and gestures. In pairs, learners identify the possible interpretations these expressions may have.

Alternatively, learners may collect their own data from online/media sources and analyse those interactions.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to understand the possible meanings of bodily expressions and gestures.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness.

To make it increasingly challenging, instructors may first show the gestures/bodily expressions in isolation and then the same expressions in different contexts so learners become aware that one expression may have several pragmatic effects. Alternatively, learners may create contexts where these expressions and gestures may be used to communicate meaning.

Using bodily expressions and gestures to convey meaning

Learners listen to several short interactions and, in small groups, think about which bodily expressions and gestures would the interlocutors have used. Learners compare their answers with other groups and explain their choices.

The focus of this activity is on productive oral skills.

The main objective is to use bodily expressions and gestures.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness.

Instructors may provide the transcripts of the recordings before or during the activity. Learners justify why the gestures/bodily expressions they chose are the most relevant act of ostension in that given context. Instructors may also encourage learners to discuss what other gestures/bodily expressions would have achieved ostension and if they would have had the same pragmatic effects.

Recovering bows as implicatures

Learners watch several short interactions where bows are used. Learners must:

1. Interpret the meaning of the bows.
2. Identify which linguistic form, if any, conveys the meaning of the bow.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to interpret the meaning of bows in several contexts.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness.

Instructors may ask learners to pay close and conscious attention to other contextual cues that may help them derive the meaning of the bows. To make it more challenging, instructors may also include some interactions where bowing is misused. Learners must identify which interactions are successful and which ones are not and why.

Understanding silence as ostensive

In small groups, learners discuss what they know about silence in Japan. Instructors bring learners' awareness to how they use silence in their L1 and compare it to their assumptions about the L2. These are some questions instructors may use for discussion:

- Do you think silence is used differently in different languages/cultures?
- In what situations do speakers in your L1 use silence?
- In what situations do you think the Japanese use silence?
- Are there any situations where you prefer using silence?
- In which situations do you think the Japanese prefer to use silence?
- How does the use of silence in conversations make you feel? Think about any recent experience you may have had.
- How do you think the use of silence make the Japanese feel?
- Why sometimes silence in the L2 is used in place of verbal language?

The main objective is to compare the uses of silence in the L1 and the L2.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli and metapragmatic awareness. Learners expli-citly draw from their L1 to explain what happens in the L2.

This activity can be an opportunity to discuss any preconceptions or misconceptions learners may have about silence and its use in Japan. It is important that instructors highlight individual subjectivity.

Processing implicatures through silence

Learners are shown a series of short videos. In some, ostensive silence is used while in others a linguistic form is used. Instructors pause the video before the speaker's turn. In small groups, learners decide what the other interlocutor would prefer (silence or a linguistic form). Once they have decided, learners watch how the interaction unfolds. Learners share whether they guessed correctly or not. Learners discuss and justify their choices. Instructors may also want to learners to reflect on:

- Would you have made the same choice? Why? Why not?
- Would this choice have worked in your L1? Why? Why not?
- How does silence contribute to the speaker's intentions?
- Is this the only way or are there any alternatives to achieve the same meaning?
- Would these alternatives have the same effect?
- Do you think it would have been inappropriate or incorrect to replace silence with linguistic forms and vice versa? Why? Why not?

The focus of this activity is on productive oral skills.

The main objective is to produce silences in a variety of contexts.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness. Learners justify their choice between a linguistic form or silence as an ostensive communicative act and link it to the pragmatic effects they yield.

To make their decisions, learners can think about what interlocutors want to communicate and how they can best achieve their intentions while pay attention to contextual cues.

Identifying the pragmatic effects of silence

Learners are shown one videoclip where silence is used as an implicature. In small groups or pairs, learners:

1. Brainstorm possible interpretations of the silence(s) used in the video.
2. Identify what silence is used with (e.g. backchannel, bodily/facial expressions).
3. Identify what utterance would have worked well in place of silence.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to understand the meaning behind silences in a variety of contexts.

The focus is on pragmatic awareness. Instructors help learners understand ostension by analysing interactions where a relevant interpretation is achieved and working with plausible interpretations.

Instructors may show more videoclips where silence is used as an implicature (using different interlocutors, settings, intentions) and can go through the three-step process as many times as needed. To make it more challenging, instructors may skip the first step and/or may ask learners to work individually. To address metapragmatic competence, instructors may ask learners whether the hearer would have preferred a linguistic form over silence. Instructors may also encourage learners to reflect on whether they would have been comfortable with silence or preferred a verbal response.

Identifying pragmatic successes in using silence as implicatures

Instructors show a video between an L1 speaker and an L2 learner. The L1 speaker uses silence to communicate, while the learner constantly fills the silence. Learners discuss the interaction. Instructors may use the following questions:

- Why is the L1 speaker using silence? What do these instances of silence mean?
- How is the learner responding to silence?
- Is this an effective way of interacting? Why? Why not?
- How would you make the interaction more effective?
- How do you think the L1 speaker is feeling? How do you think the interlocutor is feeling?
- Would you have reacted the same way? Why?
- What consequences interactions such as this one may have for both interlocutors?

Then, learners watch the same interaction but, this time, the learner responds to silence effectively. Learners can then compare both interactions and discuss the same questions as above.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to justify the function of silence as an implicature.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness. Instructors bring learners' attention to the link between silence and the effects it yields as a pragmatic failure and a pragmatic success respectively.

Instructors may wish to explicitly discuss the role of pragmatic transfer and the negative effects it may have in interaction. Instructors may also want to emphasise the importance of learner subjectivity. As an exaggerated demonstration, instructors may show an instance of pragmatic failure with severe consequences to highlight the need to be able to adapt to their interlocutors.

Identifying humour as ostensive

Learners discuss what they know about humour in the L2. Instructors may ask:

- Is humour universal or does it change from language to language /culture to culture?
- What do you think makes the Japanese laugh?
- What features of the Japanese language do you think L2 speakers use to convey humour?
- Is humour popular in Japan?

The main objective is to identify humour as ostensive.

The focus is on awareness of ostensive stimuli. Instructors bring awareness to how linguistic and non-linguistic meaning are used in the L2 to convey humorous effects.

Learners may find it useful to draw a table comparing their assumptions about humour in the L1 and the L2 and add to it or modify it throughout instruction. Instructors should be mindful of subjectivity and personal preferences when discussing humour.

Understanding humorous effects

Learners reflect and discuss what makes humour in their L1 funny. Instructors may ask:

- Can you think of a joke or a situation that made you laugh? Why did it make you laugh?
- What are the different types of humour available in your L1?
- What are the sources of humour? What makes something funny?
- Is humour in your L1 verbal, nonverbal or a combination of both?
- Is humour universal or does it change from language to language and culture to culture?

Divided in small groups, learners think of an example of humour in their L1. Guided by the questions above, learners briefly analyse them. The small groups report back to the classroom and discuss their analyses.

The main objective is to understand how humour in their L1 works. This may provide the foundation for learners to understand how humour in the L2 works.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness. Learners must justify the link between ostensive stimuli and the humorous effects retrieved in their L1.

In the first part, if needed, instructors may show examples of humour in the L1 first before asking learners to come up with examples on their own. Once they have done it in their L1, instructors may wish to do the same activity in the L2.

Creating humorous effects

In small groups, learners create a humorous interaction in the L2. In the process, learners must justify the link between the ostensive stimuli used to create humour and the humorous effects intended. Then, learners act out their humorous exchange in front of the classroom. The other groups discuss whether they found the exchange funny and why/why not. If not, learners reflect on why their desired effect was not achieved and what alternatives could achieve their humorous effects.

The focus of this activity is on productive oral skills.

The main objective is to produce humour in the L2.

The focus is on metapragmatic awareness.

Instructors may invite L1 speakers to the classroom to watch the humorous exchanges and discuss them with learners

Identifying the contextual cues that create *hiniku*

Learners watch some instances of *hiniku* (sarcasm/irony). Learners first identify the style of humour. Then, they identify the linguistic and/or non-linguistic stimuli that achieve humorous effects. Learners discuss:

- What is the intention of the utterance?
- Which linguistic/non-linguistic features make it humorous?
- Does this exchange differ from sarcasm/irony in your L1? If so, how?

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to process humorous effects in the L2.

The focus is on both awareness of ostensive stimuli and pragmatic awareness.

Instructors may do the same activity in the L1 first to compare the differences and similarities of the features that create pragmatic effects in L2 humorous exchanges.

Identifying cues that create humorous effects

Learners watch a short video clip with humorous exchanges. Learners are asked to look out for:

- Contextual cues that are intended to be funny such as nonverbal contextual cues (e.g. silence, bodily and facial expressions, intonation).
- Linguistic cues (e.g. use of speech styles, lexical and grammatical forms).
- Type of knowledge needed to understand the humorous exchange.
- Implied meaning.

Learners discuss and share their findings with their peers before discussing them with the whole class.

The focus of this activity is on receptive oral skills.

The main objective is to process humorous effects in the L2.

The focus is on both pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness.

Instructors can pause the video after the audience laughs to bring learners' attention to the relevant features that create humorous effects (awareness of ostensive stimuli).

APPENDIX F: RESOURCES

The following are some resources that can be used to conduct the activities in section 7.3 and Appendix E. The interactions in the textbox correspond to original resources created for this thesis, while the rest are lists of external web-based resources.

F.1 Resources for Learning to Recover Linguistic Representations

In the following interaction, the two interlocutors use casual speech style and ellipsis:[41]

A	週末、そこ行った？ *Shūmatsu, soko itta?* Weekend, went there? (Did you go there at the weekend?)
B	何の話、これ？ *Nan no hanashi, kore?* What talk, this? (What are you walking about?)
A	前言ったじゃん？そこへ行く、って。 *Mae ittajan? Soko he iku, tte.* Before didn't say? There went, said. (You said it before! I will go there, you said.)
B	あー！あの居酒屋ね。行かなかった、結局。 *A! Ano izakaya ne. Ikanakatta, kekkyoku.* Ah! That Izakaya, right? (I) Didn't go, in the end.
A	何で？ *Nande?* Why?
B	忙しくて、さ。 *Isogashikute, sa.* Busy and… (I was busy).

[41] This interaction corresponds to Recording 3.

A	残念だね。 *Zannen da ne.* It’s a pity, isn’t it?

In the following interaction, the interlocutors mix two speech styles:[42]

A	準備ができたよ。じゃあ、今駅まで送っくれる？ *Junbi ga dekita yo. Jaa, ima eki made okutte kureru?* I am ready. So, are you taking me to the station?
B	それは無理だよ。今日はずっと仕事だから。 *Sore wa muri da yo. Kyō zutto shigoto dakara.* Can’t do. I am working all day today.
A	え？送ってあげると言ったのに！ *E? Okutte ageru to itta noni!* What? You told me you would take me!
B	そんなこと言っていませんよ。 *Sonna koto itteimasen yo.* I haven’t said such a thing.
A	言いましたよ。 *Iimashita yo.* You did say it.
B	絶対に言っていません。 *Zettai ni itteimasen.* I definitely didn’t say it.

[42] This interaction corresponds to Recording 4.

Ahr Japan School (2021) ‘[Nihongo kaiwa] Konbini no reji no kaiwa/Japanese conversation at convenience store’, available at: https://youtu.be/9-SnLHRKk8w [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Akane teki nihongo kyōshitsu (2019) ‘[Nihongo jōkyū] Nihonjin dōshi no kaiwa - kyūshū no hōgen ni tsuite -’, available at: https://youtu.be/gW85Bboon2A [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Akane teki nihongo kyōshitsu (2020) ‘[Nihongo kaiwa Makudonarudo de chūmon suru toki’, available at: https://youtu.be/FF4H55b_3Ic [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Akane teki nihongo kyōshitsu (2020) ‘[Nihongo/Kaiwa] Kansai-ben ni tsuite gengo gakushū no tatsujin ni kiite mita’, available at: https://youtu.be/2G_Mo1s9Gdo [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Akane teki nihongo kyōshitsu (2021) ‘Nihongo o benkyō shiteiru hito no tame no kansai-ben kōza / The Kansai dialect lesson for Japanese language learners’, available at: https://youtu.be/DchGZZdwtEM [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Japanese Language and Culture (2020) ‘Japanese casual ending particles | Particles used in casual Japanese’, available at: https://youtu.be/Z4u1bJFLIjI [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Konnichi What’s Up (2021) ‘Convenient phrases that you can use at Japanese convenience/grocery stores!!’, available at: https://youtu.be/nR_UuLKFXMc [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Moshi moshi Yūsuke (2021) ‘Addition to [File.11] - Convenience Store’, available at: https://youtu.be/oBbdUAYJWVk [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Nariyama, S. (2009) *Nihongo no shōryaku ga wakaru hon: Dare ga? Dare ni? Nani o? [How can we know who did what to whom in Japanese? The grammar of omission]*, Tokyo: Meiji Shoin.

Nihongo no mori (2021) ‘[Nihon no hōgen] Nihonjin demo wakarnai?! Hokkaidō vs Kansai vs Kantō’, available at: https://youtu.be/AK_4olQOO90 [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Sambon Juku (2020) ‘Keigotte nani? / What is Japanese keigo? [Keigo 1]’, available at: https://youtu.be/1iDoq9sGX1s [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Sambon Juku (2021) ‘Nihonjin no tomodachi to hanasu toki tte konna kanji /When you talk to your Japanese friends - Real conversation’, available at: https://youtu.be/tZXjzJaM7SI [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Shingu, I. (2020) *Kansai dialect: Self-study site for Japanese language learners*, available at: http://www.kansaiben.com [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Tokyo Metropolitan University (2009) *A hyper introduction to Japanese honorific language*, available at: http://www.nihonho.hum.tmu.ac.jp/mic-j/hyperkeigo/index.html [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Tokyo Metropolitan University (2009) *mic-J ko-pasu, nihonjin he no intabyu hen*, available at: http://www.nihongo.hum.tmu.ac.jp/mic-j_corpus_ji/index.html [accessed 20 Sel 2021].

F.2 Resources for Learning to Recover Explicatures

In the following interaction, the L1 speaker uses the same linguistic form (backchannel expressions) with differing prosody to convey two different meanings:[43]

A	明日東京に行ってきます。 *Ashita Tokyo ni itttekimasu.* I'm going to Tokyo tomorrow.
B	そうですか？ *Sō desu ka?* Is that so?
A	はい。急に出張が入りました。 *Hai. Kyū ni shutchō ga hairimashita.* Yes. I got an emergency business trip.
B	いつ戻りますか。 *Itsu modorimasuka.* When are you coming back?
A	日曜日に。 *Nichiyōbi ni.* On Sunday.

[43] This interaction corresponds to Recording 2.

B	そうですか。 *Sō desu ka.* OK.

In the following interaction, intonation is used to convey speech acts and propositional attitude:

A	ね、この記事を見て。この俳優さん知ってる？ *Ne, kono kiji wo mite. Kono haiyū-san shitteru?* *Hey, check this article. Do you know this actor?*
B	うん、知っているよ。 *Un, shitteiru yo.* *Yes, I do.*
A	何て名前？ *Nan te namae?* What's his name?
B	田中隆一 *Tanaka Ryūichi.* Ryuchi Tanaka.
A	有名な人？ *Yūmeina hito?* Is he famous?
B	うん、めっちゃ有名。 *Un, meccha yūmei.* Yes, very famous.
A	へえ。そうなんだ。 *He. Sōnanda.* Oh. Is that so?

In the following interaction, the interlocutors use hedges to diminish their degree of commitment to the proposition expressed:[44]

A	一つ聞いてもいいですか。 *Hitotsu kiite mo ii desuka.* Can I ask you something?
B	どうぞ。 *Dōzo.* Go ahead.
A	明日空いていますか。もしよかったら一緒にお茶でもしませんか。 *Ashita aiteimasuka. Moshi yokattara isshoni ocha de moshimasenka.* Are you free tomorrow? If you'd like, we could go for tea.
B	明日はちょっと難しいですね。 *Ashita wa chotto muzukashii desu ne.* Tomorrow is a little difficult.
A	そうですか。週末はいかがですか。 *Sō desuka. Shūmatsu wa ikaga desuka.* Is it? How about at the weekend?
B	すみません。週末も仕事があるので、それはちょっと。。。 *Sumimasen. Shūmatsu mo shigoto ga aru node, sore wa chotto…* Sorry, I have work at the weekend so it's a bit…
A	じゃあ、また今度ですね。 *Jaa, mata kondo desu ne.* Next time, then.

[44] This interaction belongs to Recording 6.

In the following interactions, the interlocutors use expressions that represent concepts but could be mistaken by hedges:[45]

A	今日晴れそうだけど、天気予報によると雨なんだ。 *Kyō hare sou dakedo, tenki yohō ni yoruto ame nanda.* The sky seems clear today, but the weather forecast says it will rain.
B	降らないと思うけど。 *Furanai to omou kedo.* But I don't think it'll.
A	でも、その天気予報はよく当たる。 *Demo, sono tenki yohō wa yoku ataru.* But, that weather forecast mostly gets it right.
B	じゃあ、降るかもね。 *Jaa, furu kamo ne.* Then it might rain.

In the following interaction, the L2 learner (A) uses aizuchi incorrectly.[46]

A	今日もデパートに行くんですか。 *Kyō mo depāto ni iku n desu ka.* Are you going to the shopping centre again today?
B	はい、今から出かけます。面白いお店がたくさんありますよ。 *Hai, ima kara dekakemasu. Omoshiroi omise ga takusan arimasu yo.* Yes, I'm leaving now. There're lots of interesting shops.
A	ええ。 *Ee.*

[45] This interaction belongs to Recording 7.
[46] This interaction corresponds to Recording 1.

	Yes.
B	そして、みどりさんも一緒に来ることになったんですよ。 *Soshite , midori-san mo issho ni kuru koto ni nattan desu yo.* And Midori is coming too.
A	はい。 *Hai.* Yes.

Abel, J., Allen, B., Bliss, H., Burton, S., Gick, B., Kazama, M., Kim, B., Tsuda, A. and Yamane, N. (2009) *Japanese Pronunciation Tutorial*, Department of Linguistics/Department of Asian Studies: University of British Columbia, available at: http://blogs.ubc.ca/enunciatejapanese/ [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Akane teki nihongo kyōshitsu (2020) '[Chōkai / Nihongo kaiwa] Daigaku no tomodachi to hanasu toki <nihongo jōkyūsha muke>', available at: https://youtu.be/shacAPbsc4U [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Atsueigo (2019) '[Aizuchi oo sugi!?] Neitibu ni watashi ga eigo o hanashiteiru toki no kuse nit suite kiitemimashita!', available at: https://youtu.be/CFW5P5EBGbc [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Japanese Language School - Coto Academy (2020) 'Japanese Conversational Interjections – Aizuchi (Aizuchi - How to Use Aizuchi)', available at: https://youtu.be/iiky8dqNq0o [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

JaruJaru Tower (2021) '[Intonēshon okashii yatsu ni nihongo o manande shimatta yakko] Jarujaru no neta no tane [jarujarutower]', available at: https://youtu.be/0C_FFKfj_ug [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Konnichi What's up (2020) '[Japanese Conversatiom] Is it true that Japanese people often give back-channel feedback?', available at: https://youtu.be/RvrHuSHSMik [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Konnichi What's up (2020) 'Japanese conversational interjections to help you sound like a native speaker', available at: https://youtu.be/Zq6H_xgseps [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Learn Japanese with Yas (2019) 'Intonation in Japanese "sentence-ending particles" 'yo' and 'ne'', available at: https://youtu.be/KpY9LAwGlKI [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Meiji Academy - Japanese Language and Culture (2021) 'The Japanese ART OF LISTENING AIZUCHI | How to use "Conversational Interjections"', available at: https://youtu.be/Vbv8eP787Fs [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Meshclass Japanese (2021) '[Japanese Conversation] Interjection: AIZUCHI "sa shi su se so"', available at: https://youtu.be/CP4MQ4-eaP8 [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Moshi moshi Yūsuke (2021) 'Japanese Conversation with Sayuri-san [4]', available at: https://youtu.be/8spxAyZQXn4 [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Nishigōri, H., Che, A. and Isono, E. (2009) *TMU mic-J ko-pasu, gaikokujin he no intabyu-hen*, Department of Japanese Language Education, Graduate School of Humanities: Tokyo Metropolitan University, available at: http://nihongo.hum.tmu.ac.jp/mic-j/mic-j_corpus_fi/CHFA.html [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Nishina, K., Yoshimura, Y., Saito, I. and Takai, Y (2003) *Aizuchi (back-channeling): A Key to smooth conversation*, Tohoku University, available at: http://www2.sal.tohoku.ac.jp/nik/aizuchi/ [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Shihao (2014) 'EA358: Terebi aizuchiSP', available at: https://youtu.be/ZNdcvSkXHzQ [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Shino sensei (2021) 'Japanese pronunciation (hatsuon): 3 akusento to intonēshon', available at: https://youtu.be/DCNwhlx7OmY?t=186 [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Speak Japanese Naturally (2021) 'Japanese Intonation | Intonēshon | What's the difference between intonation and pitch accent?', available at: https://youtu.be/U9uWAIiSrnM [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (2004) *TUFS Language Modules: Pronunciation*, available at: http://www.coelang.tufs.ac.jp/ja/en/pmod/practical/ [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Tsutaeru hatsuon (2016) 'Intonēshon 3 sō desuka', available at: https://youtu.be/NOGj6SqIVSo [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Tsutaeru hatsuon (2016) 'Intonēshon 4 iidesuyo', available at: https://youtu.be/-14U2nCiwsE [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

Tsutaeru hatsuon (2016) 'Intonēshon 5 kirei janai', available at: https://youtu.be/DgrBt2cI_UA [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

F.3 Resources for Learning to Recover Implicatures

Adachi, T. (1996) 'Sarcasm in Japanese', *Studies in Language*, 20(1), 1–36, DOI: 10.1075/sl.20.1.02ada.

Atsueigo (2019) '[Chō fukai!] Eigo no hiniku - Verbal Irony to Sarcasm no chigai to wa!?', available at: https://youtu.be/tMupWdVm2io [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

Baiand (2020) 'Komyu shou hikken. Kaiwa ga chinmoku shita toki ni oboete oku to tsukaeru hōhō itsutsu', available at: https://youtu.be/TDXSJuASnKs [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Dmqaerand (2014) '*Mecha-Mecha Iketeru - SNSD*', available at: https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x20nnup [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

EleLabo (2020) 'Kaiwa no naka ni umareru [chinmoku] aseranakute ii riyū', available at: https://youtu.be/qKn0mldt2hQ [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Emiten channeru #1 (2021) 'Emiten daigiri. Katakiyaku no watashi, ki hisa ōgi-san no daisukina chanbara', available at: https://youtu.be/pkxH8aHcsOo [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

Emiten channeru #1 (2021) 'Emiten daigiri. Kyo kara boku wa!! Yaru na! Jiisan!', available at: https://youtu.be/h7AinLnbkAU [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

Fischer's (2021) 'Hōsō jiko!? Shin oyaji gyagu karuta zenryoku de yattara dai bakushō ni kimattendaro!!', available at: https://youtu.be/F28_C0NKa98 [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

Frantor1 (2019) 'Japanese Comedy Duo Impulse: Job Interview [English Subtitles]', available at: https://youtu.be/z1NM3QKAQ_w [accessed 20 Sep 2021].

I Jethrobot (2011) 'The study of ah (Downtown)-Subtitled', available at: https://youtu.be/Jxt0ZC5tE64 [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

JLB Inbaundo TV (2020) '[Gaikoku-jin taiō] Nippon to kaigai de imi ga kotonaru jesuchā', available at: https://youtu.be/Gg0kdErluTQ [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Joshua English Station (2021) 'Japanese Quiz! Nihon no jesucha- kuizu! Eokaiwa suku-ru no seiseitachi wa nihon no jesucha- ga wakaru no ka!? Saigon i benkyou you no tango mo demasu!', available at: https://youtu.be/w54wyMeCraE [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Komyu jō kaizen nitaku @Vtuber (2021) ‘[Komyu jō no naoshi kata] Kaiwa no chinmoku wa hontōni kowai? [Chō komyu jō-muke komyu-ryoku kōjō]’, available at: https://youtu.be/k70BwzweOag [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Konnichi What's Up (2020) ‘[Daily conversation] How do Japanese people express "no" with a gesture?’, available at: https://youtu.be/QDPDt8fZxsM [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Kōshiki Gurēpu kanpanī channeru (2018) ‘Kōshiki sandōitchiman konto pasokon kyōshitsu 2015 nen’, available at: https://youtu.be/5cWZhw3rYM0 [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

Nihongo for You (2020) ‘8 gestures peculiar to JAPAN’, available at: https://youtu.be/xG0LSHp7CJE [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Ryo Tanaka (2018) ‘[Japanese Manzai] Football Hour: Stop smoking (English Subtitles)’, available at: https://youtu.be/Pfo0uWvKi8g [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

Son Jame (2019) ‘My most favorite GAKI talk. It makes me laugh to death. (edited & translated by me)’, available at: https://youtu.be/okZFy_2UYe8 [accessed 10 Sep 2021].

Sunakku Hokkori (2020) ‘[Kaiwa] Chinmoku o nakusu tekunikku! Aite o omō hanashikata! Dare to de mo tsudzukerareru kaiwa-jutsu!’, available at https://youtu.be/W20gfyuBWYA [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Tsutsui, S. (1989) ‘Hiniku no kanten kara’ [Japanese irony from the speaker’s perspective], *Aichi Kenritsu Daigaku Gaikokugo-gakubu Kiyo*, 25, 333–349.

Yukie·Style (2020) ‘[Chinmoku ga nigate] Minna ga nigatena chinmoku, jitsu wa chinmoku ga naze okiru no ka shiru dake de kaiwa ga kawaru’, available at: https://youtu.be/_3UIVgsPjVA [accessed 14 Sep 2021].

Zaijū gaikoku-jin no tame no kurashi jōhō saito Life in Tokyo (2021) ‘Manners Video 20. Jesuchā o yakushi te miyō’, available at: https://youtu.be/u5e-rii7xRg [accessed 14 Sep 2021].