

questing the participants to perform a burdensome activity at a time known to conflict with their schedules. The results of the study showed little effect on the discourse questionnaire, and no effect in performance on the telephone tests.

The reasons for the discrepancies of the results of these two studies are uncertain. However, these studies may reveal important questions for implementing the findings of empirically-based speech act studies. First, Billmyer had access to ample empirical findings for teaching compliment strategies of American English, and was able to incorporate these into the instruction, whereas due to time constraints, King and Silver were unable to obtain access to such studies. This caused them to create formulas for instruction, presumably relying on their native-speaker intuition. Although it cannot be concluded that the effectiveness of instruction depends on whether empirical data were incorporated into instruction or not, the incorporation of such information still needs to be examined. In addressing the problem of developing materials, researchers need to communicate with practitioners more to meet actual classroom needs. King and Silver (1993: 74) expressed their concerns as follows:

A more complete description of American English refusal strategies is required. Without this information, it is impossible to begin to design accurate lessons on American English refusals. In addition, information about the saliency of the constituents would be useful when considering what to teach. If we knew which elements of refusals were most salient to native-speakers, instruction might focus on those elements.

Second, the way King and Silver tested the students' production was quite different from Billmyer's study. In Billmyer's study, the students were tested during a session with their conversation partners. In this situation the students had already established relationships with their partners. In addition, the speech act patterns for compliments were practiced with the same partner. This may have created a comfortable situation for the students to try out what they had learned. In contrast, King and Silver called up the participants of the study suddenly, and the participants were asked to perform in a psychologically unprepared situation. This difference for testing may have played a role in causing different conclusions.

Finally, the number of hours of instruction on the speech acts, and the period for the instruction are quite different between these two studies. As Olshtain and Cohen (1990) indicated, acquiring native-like sociolinguistic competence is a long and arduous process. Learners usually take up to 10 years to acquire native-like competence, but still maintain features that are particular to their native language. Based on the research findings, it is

clear that learners acquire sociolinguistic competence by experiencing many different types of interactions with different people in different contexts over an extended time period. Thus, it may not be feasible to teach sociolinguistic competence as a skill in a microcosm classroom culture that does not necessarily match that of the outside world (Paulston 1974, as cited in Savignon 1983: 25; Hornberger 1989: 229; Saville-Troike 1996: 364).

Evaluation/feedback

Although speech act studies have contributed to the planning and teaching of appropriacy for ESL learners, there are, as discussed above, a number of problems identified in this process. In this section, the process of appropriacy planning will be reexamined by presenting some recent concerns for teaching appropriateness from researchers in sociolinguistics.

Even before speech act studies became available, and before the pedagogical implications of these studies were incorporated into instruction in a systematic way, Paulston (1974: 354 as cited in Saville-Troike 1996: 366) expressed concern about imposing prescribed expressions on language learners. In her opinion, teaching these prescribed expressions and requiring students to produce them are problematic because the process denotes eradication of social interactional rules of their first language in order to substitute another. The ideological struggle that learners experience in the process of learning a second or foreign language needs to be taken into consideration to provide a less painful learning experience (Chick 1996: 343).

In relation to the consideration of the learners' ideologies, some researchers are questioning whether target language norms are the only appropriate goals of second language learners. Saville-Troike (1996: 363) expresses the danger of teaching only target language norms, as these norms "in many cases constitute an inappropriate target for instruction." Even though learners live in the target language speech community, their attempts to imitate the norms of the language such as the use of polite expressions, may be perceived as inappropriate by native-speakers (Iino 1996). Kubota (1996) examined request patterns of American learners of Japanese. He studied five learners who had extensive experience living and working in a target language culture. These learners developed styles, which, although not native-like, allowed them to feel comfortable, while still not committing a violation of the rules. This research finding suggests that the major task of language teachers may be to assist learners to define a "third place" for themselves that is not only appropriate for the target language culture, but also preferable for the learner (Kramersch 1993: 257).

In addition to the concern for learners' psychological conflicts in learning and incorporating new cultural norms, Fairclough (1989: 8) states that imposing prescribed appropriate formulas might hinder healthy social mobility. Sociolinguistic studies have shown that there are systematic correlations between variations in linguistic form and social variables (p. 7).

However, if language teachers use these findings as models, and require their students to imitate them, the instruction would play a role in perpetuating the present societal characteristics. Language teachers need to be aware that they are playing a role in the underlying power relations of the society, and legitimizing the facts believed in the society through imposing the findings of sociolinguistic studies, which may or may not be appropriate (Fairclough 1989: 8).

There are also criticisms of the nature of the process of speech act studies that place too much emphasis on identifying and formulating surface structures of rules of speaking. It is inevitable for second language learners to pay close attention to surface structures that are internalized and unconscious to native speakers (Labov 1979: 229). However, problems arise in the process of formulating models of surface structures. Although sociolinguistic studies have shown the correlations between speakers' speech style and characteristics of speakers' distinct speech communities, such as ethnicity, social class, regional variety, gender, age, and occupational background (Fairclough 1989: 8), researchers of speech acts studies tend to overemphasize the characteristics. These researchers' attempts have resulted in the creation of model dialogues in ESL textbooks that are oftentimes stereotypical, even though they are formulated on empirical findings (Erickson 1996: 291-292). Erickson continues:

What may be intended by curriculum developers as "high-fidelity" simulation is in fact a "low-fidelity" simulation. People do not really learn to converse by memorizing written dialogues and speaking them aloud in practice sessions, even if the dialogue text comes from a detailed transcription of naturally occurring speech.

If language teachers attempt to push learners to understand deeper levels of communicative competence beyond surface linguistic structures, the considerations of psychological and sociolinguistic factors may influence the constitution of the norms of interaction (Saville-Troike 1996: 367). Once findings of speech act studies are formulated into model dialogues that we can see in ESL textbooks, the appropriateness introduced in the dialogues tends to be seen as static, and the factors that are specific to a context would be left out.

In response to the problems of formulating appropriate models, some researchers advocate views that look at the creation of appropriacy in face-to-face interaction as more fluid or dynamic (Erickson 1996: 292; Iino 1996). Erickson states that what is always at work creating the appropriacy in a particular situation is the mutual influence of interactants. After examining dinner table conversations between American students and Japanese host families, Iino (1996) found that appropriacy is always negotiated and

defined between interactants situationally and personally. This finding suggests that the models introduced in textbooks may not be appropriate in a different situation or when they are produced by a person with a different background.

Considering the criticism and problems in teaching sociolinguistic competence discussed above, I would like to present some suggestions made by researchers that the language teachers can incorporate into classroom instruction. Saville-Troike (1996) introduced the use of "ethnography of communication" in teaching the norms of a target language. Learners can benefit by using this technique to find the norms of the language culture by themselves. Learners are often required to go out and observe what native-speakers are really doing, interpreting the meaning specific to the context (Saville-Troike 1996: 376). This technique seems to be gaining popularity as a method for teaching rules of speaking. However, problems still arise because of its time-consuming nature, and inapplicability in the foreign language teaching context. To solve this problem, Erickson (1996:298-299) suggests the use of videotapes in classrooms. According to Erickson, videotaped materials of naturally occurring speech behaviors provide learners with deeper insights on the target language's norms of interaction.

Conclusion

Several problematic aspects of appropriacy planning have been identified. First, researchers in speech act studies tended to be negligent in defining the speech community that they were looking at. This resulted in material developers' difficulty in incorporating findings into their textbooks. Second, researchers may not have had sufficient communication with language teachers. Hence, the teachers still end up relying on their native-speakers' intuition in teaching appropriateness because of the lack of appropriate information. Finally, the appropriacy identified by researchers may not be applicable for all situations and all learners.

Needless to say, information in ESL textbooks, and classroom activities should reflect the reality that ESL learners will face in their lives, and empirically based findings may provide useful information that reflects reality. However, if the intention of researchers in speech act studies is really to contribute to materials development, researchers should communicate with textbook writers, and teachers in order to uncover what types of information are sought for textbook writing.

The focus of the TESOL field has shifted from prescribing and teaching appropriate formulas to building sensitivity toward appropriateness. Teachers are now required to make decisions on what to teach explicitly, and how to guide learners to identify and define appropriateness for themselves. I strongly feel the necessity for conducting research regarding developing learners' communicative competence in order to provide teachers with clearer guidance. First, the appropriateness of speech behavior for second language learners needs to be redefined. Second, the effect of

building the learners' sensitivity through introducing technique such as "ethnography of communication" on the development of sociolinguistic competence needs to be examined. Third, whether learners really experience an ideological struggle or not in incorporating new cultural norms needs to be investigated. Finally, what type of information and teaching technique make teachers feel more comfortable and empowered need to be examined. I believe that these types of studies will shed light on determining what needs to be done for development of ESL learners' sociolinguistic competence.

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Mitsuo Kubota is a PhD student in educational linguistics at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania. He currently teaches Japanese in the Language and Cultural Perspectives Program at the Joseph H. Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies. His research interests include issues regarding the teaching and learning of communicative competence in language educationl.



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