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Interactional competence in Japanese as an additional language: An overview

Tim Greer, *Kobe University*
Midori Ishida, *San Jose State University*
Yumiko Tateyama, *University of Hawaii at Manoa*

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Tim Greer
Kobe University

Midori Ishida
San José State University

Yumiko Tateyama
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Introduction

Speaking a language involves more than just knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation: It also requires the abilities to interpret what your interlocutor is saying, to formulate a relevant response, and to deliver it in a timely manner. In addition, it entails skills such as dealing with trouble in talk when it arises and being able to identify an appropriate moment to start speaking. In short, it requires interactional competence (IC).

As this applies to speaking a language other than one's first, this volume of *Pragmatics & Interaction* examines specific interactional competences (ICs) that speakers of Japanese as an additional language display publically and how those competences develop over time. The volume consists of empirical studies of IC in situations where Japanese is an additional language, representatively a "second" language (L2), of one or more of the speakers.

IC has been drawing increasing attention in recent years, especially in relation to L2 talk and within the field of pragmatics. For the most part, studies that locate pragmatics in theories of communicative competence (e.g., Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972) consider L2 speakers' proficiencies primarily as reflecting each person's ability alone. However, the IC perspective holds that L2 speakers' competences should be examined not in isolation, but instead as co-constructed by everyone involved in the interaction, since utterances are a joint accomplishment (Kasper & Ross, 2013). As Young (2011) puts it, "IC is not what a person *knows*, it is what a person *does* together with others" (p. 430), and this is the reason IC studies examine language-mediated actions, embodied actions, and a range of other multimodal practices as they are publically displayed in interaction. Adopting such a stance toward L2 competence, the contributions in the present volume each employ conversation analysis (CA) to investigate the sequentially co-accomplished interactional practices that L2 speakers of Japanese use both inside and outside the classroom, as well as in oral proficiency assessment settings. In doing so, the collection explores issues of learning in social interaction and highlights development in terms of changes in ICs over time. Considering that IC was not specifically addressed in the handful of previous volumes that have targeted L2 Japanese pragmatics to date (Kasper, 1992; Ohta, 2001; Taguchi, 2009; Yamashita, 1996), this volume of *Pragmatics & Interaction* is the first of its kind to take up IC as its overarching theme.

It is not our intention to give a complete introduction to the field of CA here; plenty are currently available in the literature (e.g., Heritage & Clayman, 2010; Sidnell & Stivers, 2013). Nor is it our aim to review all that has been said about CA in relation to second language acquisition (SLA); for comprehensive summaries see Pallotti and Wagner (2011), and Kasper and Wagner (2011, 2014). Instead, the purpose of this introduction is to provide an overview of how IC has been studied in CA studies of Japanese, both in L1 (first-language) and L2 contexts, and to outline how the chapters in the current volume contribute to this work.

The primacy of interaction

Although increasingly mitigated in the literature, Japanese culture is still often juxtaposed against Anglo-American norms as a series of dichotomized perspectives, such as collectivism/individualism, hierarchy/egalitarianism, and indirect/direct communication (e.g., Brown, Hayashi, & Yamamoto, 2013). These sorts of cross-cultural comparisons can in many ways be better termed cross-cultural *contrasts* in that they focus more on the differences between two languages rather than on the similarities, which often times results in misleading claims to uniqueness. On the other hand, the CA approach highlights the

inherent universality of talk, shifting the focus from language and culture toward the social order of interaction itself.

While the current volume focuses on Japanese interaction, one of its fundamental underpinnings is that interaction is first and foremost concerned with *sociality*, not a particular variety of talk that is mediated in a given language. Although it is undoubtedly valid to consider the unique properties of a language or the variations that might exist between two languages, interaction itself is built on fundamental generic organizations, such as minimization, nextness, and progressivity (Schegloff, 2006). As Schegloff (2006) puts it, "the dimensions on which variability is observed and rendered consequential are framed by the dimensions of generality that render the comparison relevant to begin with" (p. 85). The default starting point for examining interactional organizations, therefore, must be their universalities, even though inevitable variations in their form will exist. Whether Japanese or English, or L1 or L2, the interactional practices of turn-taking, sequence, and repair have more commonalities than variances.

To date, the vast majority of CA research has been based on L1 English data, but the findings hold relevance to Japanese as well. By way of illustration, consider the following excerpt, adapted from Kushida (2011, p. 2721), in which M and S are eating pizza while watching TV.

Excerpt 1. (From Kushida, 2011; format modified using the transcription conventions of the present volume)

```
01 M    |atashi mo   kogeteru no hoshii.
         I      also burned   N  want
        I want the burned one, too.
        |((pointing at a piece of pizza))

02      |(0.8)
        |((S turns her head and looks down at the pizza))

03 S    |kore?
         this
        This one?
        |((touching a piece of pizza with her hand))

04 M    nn

05      (0.3)

06 S    |ageru de:.
         give  IP ¹
        This is for you.
        |((handing the piece to M)
```

Without going into too much detail about this transcript, we can see that M initiates a request sequence in line 1 by asking for one of the pieces of pizza. In formulating this request as "I want the burnt one too," M indexes earlier talk (not shown) in two ways: (a) *mo* 'too' suggests that S has already taken a slice and that M's request is to be heard as relative to that action; and (b) the indefinite pronoun *no* 'the one' stands in place of a more specific word selection such as *slice* or *piece*, and therefore indexes one of those words. Similarly, in line 3 when S initiates an insertion sequence to clarify M's request, her use of *kore* 'this' is designed to be understood only in conjunction with her embodied action (touching one of the slices), and therefore M's confirmation token in line 4 signals that she has understood what S means by *kore* in this context.

These observations on indexicality, intersubjectivity, and sequentiality demonstrate the connections between turns and how participants display their moment-by-moment understanding of what they are doing, and thus point to the orderly nature of sociality in Japanese, just as they do in English and other languages. Likewise, cross-linguistic comparative CA studies have shown that the generic practices of repair are more similar in Japanese and English than they are different (Fox, Hayashi, & Jasperson, 1996; Fox et al., 2009). A range of CA scholarship on L1 Japanese also points to the overwhelming generic nature of social organization, including aspects such as turn-taking (Hayashi, 2002, 2005), sequence (Hayashi, 2009, 2010; Kushida & Yamakawa, 2015; Tanaka, 2000), repair (Hayashi & Hayano, 2013), epistemics (Hayano, 2011; Kushida, 2015; Tanaka, 2013), and multimodal interaction (Nishizaka, 2014; Nishizaka & Sunaga, 2015).

Moreover, it is not difficult to imagine that either one of the interactants in Excerpt 1 might be an L2 speaker of Japanese. The competence needed for initiating repair is no different for first- and second-language speakers, and thanks to the universality of IC as a procedural and transferable competence, even L2 speakers of Japanese who have very little linguistic knowledge can take part in interaction (Burch, 2014; Mori & Matsunaga, this volume).

Interactional Competence in L2 Japanese

There has been a steady rise in the number of studies examining the interactional practices in which L2 speakers engage and the development of L2 speakers' ICs in languages other than Japanese (e.g., Hall, Hellermann, & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; Hauser, 2013; Nguyen, 2012; Young & Miller, 2004). Micro-interactional changes in L2 interaction over time are beginning to be studied longitudinally and cross-sectionally through the use of CA, both in the classroom (Pekarek Doehler & Fasel Lauzon, 2015; Sert, 2015) and beyond (Pekarek Doehler & Berger, 2016; Pekarek Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2015).

Although English has dominated the focus of many of these studies, a few have targeted other languages, including Japanese, and together this body of research has been heading the field in promising directions. For instance, in their analysis of a conversation between L1 and L2 speakers of Japanese, Mori and Hayashi (2006) reveal how participants engage in embodied completion—a multimodal IC in which an iconic gesture is substituted for some element of a turn-in-progress—a finding which contributes to our understanding of language learning as occurring within socially situated practices. Tominaga's (2013) analysis of Japanese OPI practices highlights the importance of taking into account the sequential achievement of narratives in assessing L2 speakers' proficiency. Ishida (2009, 2011) investigates the development of L2 Japanese learners' IC in a study abroad setting, demonstrating long-term changes in the learners' use of the interactional particle *ne* and, as story recipients, their use of assessments as well. Ishida's (2006) study of a 10-minute discussion held between L1 and L2 speakers of Japanese reveals how the L2 speaker expands the range of action she makes in a series of decision-making activities, suggesting 'microgenesis' of competence. Greer (2013) examines the way that Japanese/English language alternation practices become interactionally established between strangers. By analyzing talk between a Japanese hair stylist and his non-Japanese client across a series of successive haircuts, Greer demonstrates changes in their code-switching practices as they become aware of each other's proficiency levels and preferred language choices.

How novices develop ICs is a topic of particular interest for CA-SLA researchers (Kasper & Ross, 2013). L2 studies that employ CA have revealed novice speakers' competencies in the use of certain linguistic resources (e.g., *ne* in Ishida, 2009), sentential structures (e.g., Taguchi, 2014) and narrative structures (Tominaga, 2013), as well as social actions that enable specific methods of participation (e.g., Ishida, 2006, 2011). CA has also been used to reveal how L2 speakers manage knowledge, identities (Hazel, 2015; Lee, 2015), and emotion (Prior & Kasper, 2016). Moreover, by focusing on repair (e.g., Tateyama, 2012), word search sequences (Mori & Hasegawa, 2009), and embodied completion (Mori & Hayashi, 2006), CA studies of interactional architectures have revealed how participants, both L1 and L2 speakers, orient to learning as a social activity, and how this potentially leads to change, both microgenetically (Ishida, 2006) and over an extended period of time (e.g., Hauser, 2013).

IC development among novice professionals

In addition to IC development as an L2 speaker phenomenon, recent studies have also begun to examine development of ICs among novice professionals in work-related settings. Nguyen (2011, 2012), for example, documents how

pharmacy interns in the U.S. became more effective in their consultations with patients over time. As shown in Nguyen (2011), one intern (an L1 speaker of English) used technical terms in early consultations when explaining drugs, which did not generate alignment from his patient. Over the course of two months, the intern adapted his talk to meet the patient's needs and expectations by using less technical terms and providing more detailed explanations relevant to a layperson. Nguyen's study finds that presenting detailed expert knowledge about drugs is less effective, and that the way a novice pharmacist shifts toward a more simplified method of presentation can be considered evidence of development. IC in this case is not evaluated in terms of its complexity, as is often the gauge for L2 linguistic competence. Instead it is evidenced by how well the language is "recipient-designed" for the patient to ease understanding.

Designing one's turn in a manner that aligns with that of an interlocutor's contributes to generating further follow-up turns. This has been documented by Leyland, Greer, and Rettig-Miki (2016) in their investigation into the interactional practices of one novice tester (a highly proficient L2 speaker of English) during a series of group discussion tests among EFL students in Japan. The tester initially utilized a rhetorical discourse structure whereby she played the devil's advocate. It was found, however, that such strategies did not generate significant follow-up turns from the students who participated in the test. As the tester aligned her turn design with that of the EFL students, more follow-up turns from the students were observed.

In both the Nguyen and Leyland et al. studies, novice professionals remained in the same role (pharmacy intern; tester), the same task (counseling a patient about medication; generating responses from test-takers), and the same setting (pharmacy; classroom) throughout their successive engagement in the activity. What seems to play a key role in the development of professional competence when novices are involved in self-guided, independent engagement is the modification of previous performances and the incorporation of the modification into new performances of the same task in order to meet institutionally defined goals more effectively (Nguyen, 2012).

Studies on teacher training tend to focus on class observations and interviews rather than detailed analysis of actual classroom interactions. However, longitudinal CA studies such as Rine and Hall (2011) and Hosoda and Aline (2010) provide insight into the process of how teacher trainees develop their professional competencies in order to become effective teachers. Another point to be noted in these studies is that the pre-service teachers were L2 speakers of the language that they were being trained to teach. Few studies to date have investigated the development of L2 speakers' professional competence from a CA perspective, making this another fertile area for further research. In the current volume, Tateyama focuses on a novice Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) teacher, who is an L2 speaker of Japanese, in order to document the

development of his IC in the classroom. Such studies help underscore the idea that IC involves the competence of both expert and novice speakers, and that changes in their interaction over time provide evidence of their development.

The current volume

With all the above CA research in mind, the chapters in this volume investigate L2 Japanese speakers' ICs in a variety of settings, including JFL classrooms, language assessment contexts, and non-instructional situations. Three chapters are situated in L2 Japanese classrooms, each with a different focus: Atsushi Hasegawa looks at student-student interactions; Yumiko Tateyama focuses on the teacher who himself is an L2 speaker of Japanese; and Keiko Ikeda and Don Bysouth consider multimodal L2 interaction augmented with the use of IT tools. Two chapters examine interactions in educational contexts outside the classroom: Mari Yamamoto and Tomoharu Yanagimachi analyze an interview that was recorded as a classroom project and Junko Mori and Yumiko Matsunaga look at dinner table conversation in an international dormitory where the aim of the gathering is to practice spoken Japanese. Waka Tominaga's chapter on oral proficiency interviews is the only study that is set in a purely assessment context.

The remainder of the chapters examine L2 interactions "in the wild," beyond educational contexts: Cade Bushnell observes participants attending a *rakugo* performance; Midori Ishida takes up conversations between friends during study abroad; Alfred Rue Burch looks at a series of conversations between friends; Stephen Moody picks up on workplace interactions recorded during an internship; and Tim Greer explores service provider-client conversations in a Japanese hair salon. The volume has been organized into two sections: (a) interactional competence across social activities and (b) developing interactional competence.

Interactional competencies across social activities
In this first section, a range of ICs that L2 speakers of Japanese exhibit across social activities is examined throughout seven chapters. Focusing on self-deprecation or negative self-assessments, Burch's chapter examines mundane conversations between an L2 speaker of Japanese and her friend, an L1 speaker of Japanese. Through a meticulous multimodal analysis, Burch illustrates how the self-deprecation bears on the L2 speaker's IC as it arises out of the contingencies of the interaction. Burch demonstrates the L2 speaker's ability to achieve, maintain, and manage intersubjectivity through sequential, categorical, and interactional (linguistic and embodied) resources. Particularly noteworthy is the issue of the management of preference as a component of the L2 speaker's

IC: As issues of preference and dispreference are not clear-cut, the interactants must manage self-deprecations subtly and skillfully. Burch's chapter sheds light on this infrequently researched aspect of L2 IC.

Moody's chapter looks at interaction between L2 speakers and their L1-Japanese colleagues during internships in Japanese companies, focusing particularly on their repair practices when they come across unfamiliar technical terms. Moody treats the learning of new technical items as a socially co-constructed achievement, demonstrating how participants use word search practices to incorporate negotiation of unfamiliar lexical items into talk while embedding them into broader work-related objectives. Such specialized jargon is frequently job-specific and is therefore not generally taught in the classroom. Moody's analysis outlines the competences the interns need to acquire this knowledge on the job and also shows that these competences are therefore an essential part of their IC.

Through its intricate analysis of *rakugo* (a traditional Japanese comedic monologue), Bushnell's chapter documents the way audience members at a scripted performance reveal aspects of their IC through the well-timed production of laughter tokens. Although laughter appears to be a mere reflex, previous CA studies (e.g., Jefferson, Sacks, & Schegloff, 1977) have shown that a hearer can accomplish various actions through laughter. Through his analysis, Bushnell demonstrates that the L2 Japanese speakers exhibit their IC in claiming their understanding of what is going on in terms of the structural point of a laughter-relevant moment as well as the content of the enacted story. Bushnell's chapter opens up a new realm of research that CA-SLA researchers can explore further in the future.

The chapter by Yamamoto and Yanagimachi conducts a single-case analysis of an interview that an L2 speaker of Japanese conducted with a Japanese scientist as a part of an out-of-class project. The authors consider the L2 speaker's use of recipient responses and show how she used them: to invite the interviewee to elaborate on his answer to her question, to indicate understanding, and to demonstrate that understanding in a verifiable manner. The focused investigation of the interviewee's turn design, including its related prosody and embodied actions, reveals how the interviewer's competence in responding to the interviewee is co-constructed. This chapter highlights the importance of a multimodal analysis of all participants' actions.

In their chapter, Ikeda and Bysouth investigate IC in relation to the use of information technology (IT) in multiparty contexts. They consider how L1 and L2 speakers of Japanese accomplish small group interaction during classes that incorporate IT devices, and how these tools allow the participants to communicate with each other to complete group learning tasks. By examining intercultural communication interactions augmented through the use of devices like computers, tablets, and smart boards, the authors account for multimodal

aspects of L2 IC that are specific to such technology-mediated interactional environments and explore the IC required to integrate technology into face-to-face talk.

In his chapter, Hasegawa also examines how multimodal resources are used in classroom interaction. He analyzes the way L2 speakers search for what-to-say in highly controlled grammar-consolidating exercises in a JFL classroom at a U.S. university. Faced with the task of filling in the blanks in grammar exercises, students engage not only in an individual search for what-to-say but also jump in to help their peers to formulate a response. Hasegawa's fine-grained analyses of gaze direction, facial expressions, and laughter particles show how students orient to the need to come up with what-to-say, indicate appeals for assistance, and at times, abort their search entirely. By expanding CA scholarship on forward-oriented repair, this chapter demonstrates the ICs that L2 speakers exhibit during L2 classroom learning activities.

Tominaga's chapter addresses storytelling competence during the assessment of spoken interaction in the Japanese *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview* (OPI), specifically focusing on the adequacy of the level descriptions within its text-type rating criterion. Tominaga presents analyses of two intermediate candidates' performances on the narration task as representative samples from her data set. She finds that the text-type rating criterion did not necessarily match the candidates' actual performances, and argues that candidates' ICs, which are co-constructed with the interviewer, should be adequately reflected in level descriptions. These ICs include a candidate's ability to produce sequentially appropriate actions (including extended turns), to organize turns in an orderly manner, to use available resources to achieve coherent and cohesive telling, and to accomplish intersubjectivity with the interviewer. Tominaga's study demonstrates the value of reconsidering established rating criteria in high-stakes testing in terms of IC and through the lens of CA.

Developing interactional competence
In the second section, each of the four chapters employ longitudinal CA to document how IC develops over an extended period of time. Rather than merely recording additions to participant vocabulary or changes in their grammar, these chapters focus on the developing methods the participants use to co-accomplish intersubjectivity through interaction.

The section begins with Ishida's chapter, which analyzes conversations between an L2 speaker and his Japanese friends during a yearlong study abroad experience. Ishida outlines the contingencies of interaction that facilitate and debilitate the L2 speaker's use of agreeing forms of receipt, showing that the function of a receipt form is made identifiable due to its sequential position and through accompanying embodied actions. Although corrective feedback was not provided on the L2 user's inapposite receipts, his interlocutors' next-

turn actions served as implicit feedback on his recipient action. Ishida's analysis explores the relationship between an L2 user's development and what is actually going on in social interaction during study abroad, shedding light on aspects of L2 talk that may help or hinder "development."

The chapter by Mori and Matsunaga, which likewise adopts a longitudinal CA perspective, examines mundane talk among L1 and L2 speakers in a foreign language housing context, documenting how one novice L2 speaker of Japanese changes the way he participates in dinner table conversations over the course of an academic year. Despite a relatively limited formal classroom study of Japanese, the L2 speaker demonstrated a high level of engagement, initiating and sustaining topical talk and generating opportunities for learning new vocabulary. This chapter considers what sort of IC is necessary in order to become an active participant in out-of-classroom, free-flowing, multi-party conversation.

In her chapter, Tateyama shifts the focus from the student to the teacher. She examines changes in the ways a novice L2 teacher of Japanese uses the formulaic expression *daijoobu desu ka* 'Are you all right?' throughout one semester of teaching a basic Japanese course. While the teacher used *daijoobu desu ka* throughout the semester to accomplish functions such as checking understanding and closing activities, as the semester progressed he increasingly incorporated other formulaic expressions, such as *ii desu ka* 'Are you okay?', that are more commonly deployed by L1 Japanese teachers, and became more adept at managing turns, demonstrating his growing sensitivity to both student responses and his own interactional repertoire. Through a sequential analysis of his use of formulaic expressions, the study focuses less on claiming that he has learned the expressions and more on how he adapts language that he already has to suit the task of managing the class. This chapter contributes to our understanding of how a novice L2 teacher develops ICs that are integral to directing classroom interaction.

Finally, Greer's chapter moves the spotlight away from the novice speaker to explore recipient design and turn construction among L1 and L2 speakers of Japanese in a series of service encounters. Focusing on greeting sequences at a hair salon in Japan, Greer investigates how the L1 Japanese-speaking hairdressers formulate their turns during these initial moments of contact with new clients and how they adapt and adjust their talk based on the clients' responses and their emerging familiarity. Greer's data allowed him to track changes in the interaction with the same speakers across time, as well as to compare the way the hairdressers interact in Japanese with clients of different levels of linguistic proficiency. This chapter provides novel insight into the development of IC from the perspective of the L1 speaker, specifically with respect to how the L1 speaker learns to design talk for L2 speakers with varying degrees of proficiency.

As this book is the first volume to gather together CA research on IC and its development in relation to L2 Japanese, it is anticipated that it will be of use to scholars and language educators alike, providing them with new ways to conceptualize the language learning they encounter in their classrooms and beyond. The shift from communicative competence to ICs is not just a matter of changing terminology: At its core lies an understanding that all parties at talk work together to achieve communication and that language *use* is central to language *acquisition.*

Notes

1   Kushida (2011) uses the abbreviation "FP" to denote a final particle.

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