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AUTHOR   Rose, Kenneth R.
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ABSTRACT
        Research has underscored the need to develop
pragmatic competence in learners of English as a Second Language
(ESL). Learners have a target community (native speakers) to both
model themselves after and practice with. However, in
English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) settings, this is not the case.
Most learners will not use pragmatic competence at all, and those who
do will use it primarily with other non-native speakers (NNSs), so it
is not clear just whose pragmatic system is to serve as a model. Most
EFL teachers are NNSs and so do not have the native-speaker (NS)
intuitions needed to use the approaches and materials common to ESL
settings. It seems most feasible to adopt a pragmatic
consciousness-raising approach, which has as its aims the sensitizing
of learners to context-based variation in language use and the role
of variables that help determine that variation. Such an approach can
be adopted by both NS and NNS teachers and has the advantage of
providing learners with a foundation in some of the central aspects
of pragmatics, which they can then apply in whatever setting they may
encounter as their English proficiency develops. Contains 36
references. (MSE)

PRAGMATIC CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING IN AN EFL CONTEXT

Kenneth R. Rose
Hong Kong Baptist College

ABSTRACT

While the need for teaching pragmatic competence in ESL contexts seems to be taken for granted, there are a number of issues to address in considering the teaching of pragmatic competence in an EFL setting. Among these are that most learners of English in an EFL setting will use English primarily with other nonnative speakers (NNS) of English, which raises the issue of just whose pragmatic system is to be taught, and that most EFL teachers are not native speakers (NS) of English, which precludes an approach that requires the teacher to draw on his/her NS intuitions. However, being central to language use, and thus language learning, pragmatic issues must be addressed in language classrooms. This paper discusses one option for incorporating pragmatics into EFL teaching using pragmatic consciousness-raising. Such an approach can be adopted by both NS and NNS teachers and has the distinct advantage of providing learners with a foundation in some of the central aspects of the role of pragmatics which they can then apply in whatever setting they may encounter as their proficiency in English develops.

INTRODUCTION

The need for teaching pragmatic competence[1] in ESL contexts[2] seems to be taken for granted since ESL learners have both an immediate need for pragmatic competence, as well as a speech community in which to acquire and use that competence. This may explain why the majority of materials written with the intention of teaching language use are aimed at learners in ESL contexts. But what about learners in EFL contexts, who comprise the majority of learners of English? EFL contexts represent unique challenges for the teaching of pragmatic competence, and too little attention has been paid to this area. This paper discusses pragmatic consciousness-raising, one approach to developing pragmatic competence in EFL settings. First, though, I will briefly summarize the relationship between pragmatics and language teaching, and outline some of the difficulties in attempting to deal with pragmatic competence in an EFL context.

PRAGMATICS AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

Since the early 1970's, two key theoretical concepts have dominated efforts to teach language learners how to use language in social contexts: communicative competence and speech act theory. Shortly after Hymes' (1971) brought to the forefront the fact that speaking a language involves a great deal more than possessing the ability to distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical sentences, both Paulston (1974) and Long (1976) outlined the important implications this observation had for language teaching. By the time Canale and Swain (1980) wrote their influential account proposing a theoretical basis for communicative approaches to language teaching, as evidenced by Brumfit and Johnson (1979), the communicative approach had already taken hold. Although the theoretical and empirical bases for communicative competence were not well established then, and remain sketchy to this day, this has not deterred the continued production of materials developed to teach it.

Likewise with speech act theory, it did not take long for the work of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) to be taken up by those involved with language teaching. Among the first proponents of the application of speech act theory to language teaching were Van Ek (1975) and Wilkins (1976). Their early work can be credited in large part with the proliferation of notional/functional textbooks, an attempt to apply some of the basic concepts of speech act theory to the classroom. And the interest in applying speech act theory in the classroom persists to this day, as evidenced by Flowerdew's (1988) state-of-the-art survey on speech acts and language teaching, and Hurley's (1992) similar outline of issues in the teaching of pragmatics: both see a central role for speech act theory and both advocate application to language teaching of findings from speech act research.

PROBLEMS WITH TEACHING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Although considerable energy has been spent developing materials for teaching pragmatic competence, a number of problems still plague such efforts. Perhaps the most serious stem from the research side: because the research conducted to date has been limited both in scope and design, we still know little about language use, in English or any other language. Wierzbicka (1985) argues that "from the outset, studies in speech acts have suffered from an astonishing ethnocentrism and, to a considerable degree, they continue to do so" (p. 145). And as Kasper and Dahl (1992) point out, interlanguage speech act studies have relied primarily on elicited data, a trend which is found in first-language speech act studies as well. This practice is unfortunate because there are serious questions concerning the validity of such data (see, e.g., Wolfson, Marmor and Jones 1989, and Rose 1993a, in press). We cannot assume that elicitation yields useful data and conduct business as usual until evidence is presented which suggests otherwise. The burden of proof is on researchers who rely on elicited data in speech act studies: it is incumbent on them to demonstrate its validity. While there seems to be a general consensus that elicited data represents only one aspect of a comprehensive pragmatics research program, for some reason elicited data has been favored in most speech act research conducted so far. The situation is not much different in the area of communicative compe-

tence. Although some important theoretical work has been carried out (see, e.g., Canale and Swain 1980, Scarcella et al. 1990), it has yet to yield substantial empirical results.

This is not to say, though, that there have been no good studies of language use, or that we should wait for complete analyses to emerge, if they ever do. The demands of the classroom are pressing, and the classroom teacher cannot afford to wait for researchers to provide all the answers. Fortunately, there is a small but growing body of knowledge on which to draw. For example, Holmes and Brown (1987) offer guidelines for the teaching of compliments, one of the few speech acts to have been studied using more than questionnaires or role plays. Likewise, Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991) have applied research on closing conversations to the analysis of existing teaching materials and found most wanting.[3] They also make the excellent suggestion of engaging learners in the data collection process. And Dornyei and Thurrell (1991) provide practical applications of work on strategic competence to language teaching. Such efforts are surely on the right track and represent a departure from reliance on NS intuition alone. The bottom line, though, is this: the sheer volume of materials produced which attempt to teach communicative competence, notions/functions, or any of the pragmatic aspects of language imply that we have a sufficient empirical base on which to develop such materials. The fact is that we do not.

Another set of problems with teaching pragmatics in an EFL setting has to do with the context itself and the uses (or non-uses) to which English is put. Take the case of Japan. As B. Kachru (1989) would say, Japan is situated in the expanding circle, where English is not an indigenized variety, unlike, say, in India or Nigeria.[4] Japanese do not learn English to speak it with other Japanese. Quite the contrary—there are strong social constraints against speaking English well in the presence of other Japanese. On more than one occasion I have witnessed fluent Japanese speakers of English who have lived in English-speaking countries intentionally alter their native-like English pronunciation in favor of a Japanese pronunciation (sometimes called *katakana* English) when using English with other Japanese in the classroom. When approached about it afterwards, they have informed me of the stigma attached to speaking English well in the presence of other Japanese. The revealing Japanese proverb *the nail that sticks up gets hammered down* certainly applies here.

Most Japanese who are learning English will probably never use it, except perhaps for reading, and those who do use English for communication will do so primarily with other NNSs, most notably for business or diplomacy. But these are important tasks which certainly require pragmatic competence, and the Japanese are well aware of the need for increased proficiency in English to cope with them. This point is brought home in a recent article in *The Japan Times* (14 June 1992) which noted that Japanese nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were experiencing difficulty at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro due to lack of English skills. In fact, a coalition of fifty Japanese environmental NGOs was "unable to supply adequate input into decisions made at the Earth Summit . . . [because they were] handicapped by a lack of members who [could] speak English well enough to take part in Global Forum debates or lobby Earth Summit delegates" (p. 2). This is a serious problem, especially considering the fact that the Japanese government had announced at the Earth Summit their commitment to contribute more funds than any other nation to global environmental projects in developing countries.

So, the question is, in a setting like Japan where it is clear that the primary purpose for

learning English is not to communicate with NSs, if pragmatic competence is to be taught, whose pragmatic system should serve as the model? In university ESL programs, the answer to this question is simple: there is an immediate need, and thus rationale, for the learning/ teaching of the host community's pragmatic system. In the outer circle, where an indigenized variety of English has developed and is used among members of the community, there is ample justification for learning/teaching the pragmatic system of that variety. But this question is not so easily answered in an EFL context. There are any number of possible target communities, not all of which are NS communities, and if instruction is to be determined by learner needs, as it should be, this question will have to be given serious consideration. Competing varieties would no doubt make this a thorny question, which I will not attempt to answer here.

Another issue which must be dealt with in addressing pragmatic competence in an EFL setting is the fact that the majority of the teachers are themselves not NSs of English.[5] While it should be recognized that NNS teachers have certain advantages over NS teachers (see, e.g., Widdowson 1992, and Medgyes 1992), when it comes to teaching pragmatic competence, the current state of affairs seems to favor the NS teacher. That is, with the prevalent approach to communicative language teaching and its emphasis on ESL settings, the assumption is that teachers will be able to draw on their NS intuitions when dealing with the difficult questions which naturally arise in addressing issues of language use. But NNS teachers do not have NS intuitions to draw on. This seriously limits an approach which aims to teach the details of language use without first spelling out those details. Such an approach would be impractical in an EFL setting, to say the least. This is surely among the factors which have inhibited the spread of communicative language teaching in EFL contexts. If pragmatic competence is to be dealt with successfully in EFL settings, methods and materials must be developed which do not assume or depend on the NS intuitions of the teacher.

In addition to the problems mentioned so far, another rather obvious and quite practical question needs to be addressed: Is the teaching of pragmatic competence effective? After all, when it comes to committing energy and resources to language education, administrators have the right to expect results. Unfortunately, only a few studies have addressed this question. In a follow-up study on NNS ability to interpret implicature in English, Bouton (1992) found that after living and studying four-and-a-half years in the United States but receiving no instruction on interpreting implicature, 30 NNS subjects from his earlier study had significantly higher scores on a test for interpreting implicature. He concludes that this seems to indicate living in the United States was sufficient for these NNSs to develop the ability to interpret implicatures as NSs did. However, the small proportion of subjects from the original study who participated in the second study (30 of 436, or about 6.8%) weakens the results, and Bouton himself points out the need for further research concerning the types of implicature which are difficult for NNSs and the amount of time required for NNSs to develop the ability to interpret implicature correctly. It should also be noted that there is a qualitative difference between correctly inter- preting implicature on a written test and using language appropriately in social contexts. It cannot be assumed that NNSs who correctly interpret implicature on a written test (or even in face-to-face interaction) are able to use such implicatures in their own speech, let alone engage in other socially appropriate language use. Further, even assuming that Bouton's findings are valid, they have little or no relevance in an EFL setting, where learners do not have access to NS community that seems to have been sufficient cause in Bouton's study.

Ellis (1992) reports the results a two-year longitudinal study of classroom requests produced by two boys, aged 10 and 11, in an ESL program in England designed to mainstream NNS children into local secondary schools. One of his main objectives was to investigate what opportunities the classroom afforded for performing requests. He found that while the classroom setting provided ample opportunity for making requests, the requests produced were constrained by the narrow range of purposes and addressees. There were also a number of limitations on the learners' ability to perform requests, for example, direct requests were by far the most frequent, there was little use of modification (either internal or external), and requests were not varied according to addressee. In short, Ellis notes that his subjects did not develop target-like sociolinguistic competence, concluding that the classroom may have been "insufficient to guarantee the development of full target language norms, possibly because the kind of 'communicative need' that the learners experienced was insufficient to ensure development of the full range of request types and strategies" (p. 20). That is, face-saving measures such as conventional indirectness and (internal or external) modification were not required in classroom interaction, so there was no opportunity or need for the learners to acquire or use them. However, Ellis points out that this conclusion needs to be treated with caution because no data were collected to show either how NS children performed in a similar setting or how his subjects performed in a naturalistic setting.

We cannot conclude from these two studies that attempts to develop pragmatic competence in the classroom are doomed to failure: much more research is needed to determine the effect of instruction in language use, both in ESL and EFL settings. However, these two studies do not provide much cause for optimism. Bouton's study seems to indicate that any gains in ability to interpret implicature are attributable to living (and studying) in an ESL environment, while Ellis' study may indicate that even living in an ESL environment is insufficient for developing productive pragmatic competence through classroom instruction.

Adding this to the problems discussed above leads to the inevitable question of why any attempt should be made to address pragmatic competence in an EFL context. The answer to that question is fairly simple, but not necessarily helpful: in teaching language, issues of language use simply cannot be avoided. While there may have been a day when form (phonological or syntactic) was supreme and function was ignored, the contributions of people like Hymes, Austin and Searle have created an awareness that language is more than a rule-governed formal system, and learning a language involves more than mastery of that formal system. There is ample evidence that accounting for even phonological and syntactic phenomena is at times impossible without appealing to issues of language use, such as Labov's (1972) work on postvocalic [r] and Duranti and Ochs' (1979) work on left-dislocation in Italian. How much more, then, is it necessary to discuss pragmatic issues when it comes to the question of learning how to *use* a language? But, again, this answer is not very helpful because we still do not know enough about the details of language use to give them adequate treatment in teaching materials. All of this leads to one quite feasible solution: pragmatic consciousness-raising.[6]

PRAGMATIC CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

Pragmatic consciousness-raising has as its aim developing learners' pragmatic aware-

FIGURE 1. Request analysis worksheet

PARTICIPANTS

Speaker	M/F	AGE:	
Hearer	M/F	AGE:	
Dominance	S > H	S = H	S < H
Distance	+	-	

SITUATION

REQUEST

LEVEL OF DIRECTNESS

Direct   Conventionally indirect   Hint

ness through classroom application of available descriptive frameworks and research results. It does not attempt to teach specific means of, say, performing a given speech act, but rather attempts to sensitize learners to context-based variation in language use and the variables that help determine that variation. As such, then, it is an approach which can be employed by both NS and NNS teachers. Of particular interest here is the use of video, which represents an ideal

medium for introducing pragmatic issues in the classroom. I am not making the claim that
video represents authentic speech at any or every level. Most video is scripted, and thus is not
authentic speech. However, this does not disqualify it from use in EFL settings, where it is
most likely the closest learners will come to authentic language. The fact is that video provides
ample opportunities to address virtually all aspects of language use because it provides lan-
guage used in rich, recoverable contexts which can be exploited in consciousness-raising ac-
tivities. I'll give one example which focuses on Japan.

    To introduce pragmatics into the classroom in Japan, it's not a bad idea to start with
something in Japanese. This takes advantage of one of the characteristics of many EFL set-
tings: homogeneity among learners. Rooting the discussion of language use in the learners' L1
provides a foundation which can serve as a basis for application to any number of situations
learners may eventually encounter. Juzo Itami's film *Tampopo* (an account of, among other
things, one woman's quest for the ultimate *ramen* recipe) provides an excellent sequence for
initiating a discussion about language use. It is a fight scene involving Goro (a truck driver)
and Pishkin (a contractor), the two central male characters in the film. After they have nearly
beaten each other to death and determined (falsely, of course) that Goro has no romantic
interest in Tampopo (the *ramen*-cooking heroine), the two proceed to introduce themselves to
one another. Pishkin takes the lead with *Ore Pishkin da*, and Goro replies in kind with *Goro da*.
Ore, used only by men, is the first-person singular pronoun lowest on the scale of formality/
politeness for first-person singular pronouns (which include *watakushi*, *watashi*, *boku*, and
ore) and is used only by men. *Da* is likewise the least formal/polite of the various forms of the
copula (which include *degozaimasu*, *desu*, and *da*). Some rough language for some rough
men, but no doubt appropriate for the context.

    As a first step, students could view this segment and complete any of numerous active-
viewing tasks. For example, after watching with the sound turned off, students could describe
the characters, places, and actions that they see, write a few lines of dialogue to guess what the
characters have said, then watch the segment again with the sound on to check their predic-
tions. Alternatively, students could listen only to the soundtrack and complete the same kind of
basic description of people, places, and actions. (For more ideas of video tasks, see Stempleski
and Tomalin 1990, or Cooper, Lavery and Rinvolucri 1991). After students have become fa-
miliar with the segment, they could be asked this question: what if Goro had responded to
Pishkin with *Watakushi no namae wa Goro degozaimasu*? The answer is immediately obvious
to anyone familiar with Japanese: the language would be totally inappropriate for the context
because it is much too formal/polite. Truck drivers and contractors are not expected to talk to
each other this way. In fact, just considering this option usually produces a round of laughs
from Japanese students, which is evidence of the fact that this is not the kind of language they
expect to hear from people like Goro. This leads into a discussion of why people talk the way
they do in any context, and learners are quick to realize that all of us vary our speech according
to (among other things) whom we are talking with, and where and when the interaction takes
place.

    After having engaged in a discussion of the role of context in language use, learners
could carry out guided descriptive analyses of video segments chosen to present any number of
features of language use. One good place to begin would be with analysis of some of the more
tudied speech acts. Figure 1, a request analysis worksheet based on the CCSARP descriptive

framework and coding scheme, could be used for this purpose. Prior to using the worksheet, students would have to be told what constitutes social dominance and social distance, that age and sex often affect how people speak, and that there are (at least) three possible levels of directness in requests: direct (e.g., *Give me your notes*), conventionally indirect (e.g., *Can I borrow your notes*), and hint (e.g., *I missed class yesterday*). They could then view video segments which contain requests, complete the worksheet for each request, and then speculate as to why the requests were made that way. All of this would lead to an increased awareness of how language use is shaped by social context. Of course, to carry out these activities, learners would be required to master some of the pragmatic metalanguage used in speech act analysis, but this is no problem: they are already required to master extensive metalanguage for learning grammar, so it is a practice they are familiar with.

Carrying out this kind of analysis of requests also presents a good opportunity to explore some of the prevalent perceptions of English speakers as more direct than Japanese speakers. I will provide one example. The following excerpt from the American sitcom *Seinfeld* offers some excellent material for discussion of requests, as well as comic relief. In this scene, Seinfeld's friend George is at the airport to pick him up, but George is having trouble locating the right gate. Staring up at a TV monitor announcing departures, George is flanked on his right side by an older woman, and on his left by an older man, both also looking up at the monitor.

George:	It's all departures. I see nothing but departures!
	[To woman on right] Do you know where the arrivals are?
Woman:	[Looks at George, turns, and walks off.]
George:	[To man on left] Excuse me, sir, do you have the time?
Man:	There's a clock over there [pointing].
George:	Where?
Man:	[Pointing again] There.
George:	[Looking at man's wrist] But you have a watch on.
Man:	Right by the escalator.
George:	Why don't you just look at your watch?
Man:	I told you—it's right over there [points again].
George:	[Grabbing man's arm] Let me see the watch!
Man:	Hey! What are you, some kind of nut? [Walks off]
George:	You know, we're living in a society!

Needless to say, there are many ways this scene could be exploited in the classroom. After completing any number of active-viewing tasks such as those mentioned above, students could analyze the requests made by George and participate in a discussion on the use of hints (e.g., *Do you know where the arrivals are?*). Possible angles include why a particular request qualifies as a hint, exactly what George's intentions were in this scene, why he expected them to be obvious to his hearers, and why his requests failed to produce the desired effects. It might also be instructive to discuss how this scene would have played itself out at a Japanese airport. ϽϾould the requests have been made? Would they have been hints? Would the hearers have

understood and complied? There are no doubt other tasks and activities which could be constructed based on this segment, as well as many other segments which could be used in pragmatic consciousness-raising.

CONCLUSION

Although we still know little about the details of language use, because of the pioneering work of people like Hymes, Austin, and Searle, the need for developing pragmatic competence in ESL contexts is now taken for granted. Learners have a target community to both model themselves after and practice with. However, in EFL settings this is not the case. Most learners of English will not use it at all, and those who do will use it primarily with other NNSs, so it is not clear just whose pragmatic system is to serve as a model. Most teachers of EFL are NNSs and so do not have the NS intuitions needed to use the approaches and materials common to ESL settings. Also, we do not yet know whether instruction in language use will be effective in developing learners' pragmatic competence. Given these constraints, it seems most feasible to adopt a pragmatic consciousness-raising approach, which has as its aim the sensitizing of learners to context-based variation in language use and the role of variables that help determine that variation. Such an approach can be adopted by both NS and NNS teachers and has the distinct advantage of providing learners with a foundation in some of the central aspects of the role of pragmatics which they can then apply in whatever setting they may encounter as their proficiency in English develops.

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THE AUTHOR

Kenneth R. Rose is a lecturer at Hong Kong Baptist College where he coordinates an EAP program and teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in applied linguistics. His interests include cross-cultural pragmatics, pragmatics and language learning/teaching, and research methodology. He has taught in the US, Japan, and Hong Kong.

NOTES

[1] Defining the term *pragmatics* and thus delimiting the field is no easy task, as evidenced by Levinson's (1983) thirty-five page attempt to do so. *Pragmatics* here refers to anything iving to do with issues of language use in social contexts, while *pragmatic competence*

refers to an individual's knowledge of the pragmatic system of a given language.

[2] Following convention, the terms *ESL* and *EFL* refer here to the environment in which English is being learned. ESL settings are those in which the surrounding community is English speaking, while EFL settings are those in which the surrounding community is not. While the real world is more complex than this, this dichotomy will serve the purpose at hand.

[3] Other analyses of teaching materials have produced similar results, see, e.g., Myers Scotton and Bernstein (1988) and Williams (1988).

[4] This is not to say, though, that English isn't highly visible in Japan. It is. As Ono (1992) points out, English figures prominently in the style repertoire of much modern Japanese fiction. Also, a recent television show devotes half an hour each week to exposing "useless" English loan words in Japanese, such as *manshon* (for *apartment building*) and *baikingu* (from *viking*, for *buffet*), many of which have been introduced by Japanese businesses and advertising companies eager to cash in on the cosmopolitan appeal of English.

[5] Again, I am not referring here to countries in the outer circle, where a case can be made for NS status of an indigenized variety. I refer to the expanding circle, where the distinction between NSs and NNSs is still quite clear.

[6] Ellis (1991) reaches a similar conclusion in a discussion of communicative competence and Japanese learners of English. Note also that I am concerned primarily with EFL settings. In the case of ESL, the immediate need of learners often justifies instruction based on NS intuition.

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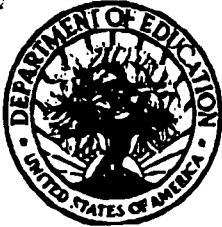
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Printed Name: LAWRENCE F BOUTON	Organization: DEIL, UIUC
Address: DEIL, UIUC, 3070 FLB 707 S. Mathews, Urbana, IL	Telephone Number: (717) 333-1507
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