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Introducing Conversation Analysis (CA) for SLA

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Abstract

This paper introduces CA for SLA as the edge-cutting approach toward empirical studies in the field of SLA. Since CA for SLA is a specific cross cutting branch of Interlanguage Pragmatics and SLA, a chronological account of its birth should be preceded by an overview of both wider disciplines. The overview breaks down the strengths and shortages of those approaches in the study of language acquisition. A comprehensive review of empirical studies on each fields is also presented as a general research road map. Through this overview, the emergence of CA for SLA can be fully integrated and future research orientation can be suggested.

Keywords: Second Language Acquisition (SLA); Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP); Conversation Analysis (CA); CA for SLA

Introduction

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) literature is enriched by a wide range of methods and approaches that are epistemically chronological to each other. In fact, the development of one current approach, commonly claimed to be a 'modern' one, owes its birth to the previous one, usually depreciated in the title 'obsolete' or 'traditional'. However, each approach has its strengths and limitations which

therefore must be addressed properly. Likewise, holding on exclusively to one and only one approach will surely blind a researcher from engaging with the dynamics of academic inquiry. SLA is in no difference when dealing with the dynamics of such competing paradigms. The earliest traditional behaviouristic view of language acquisition (see Watson, 1924; Bloomfield, 1933; Skinner, 1957) is then challenged by the cognitive paradigm (Chomsky, 1965; Corder, 1967; Selinker, 1972). In turn, Pragmatic SLA (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993) emerged and gained a momentum in response to the domination of cognitive SLA. Nowadays, Pragmatic approach also faces a challenge from a paradigmatic newcomer, i.e. discursive SLA (Kasper, 2006b) or CA for SLA.

To understand CA for SLA as the currently trending approach in SLA literature, an overview of the wider disciplines encompassing Pragmatics, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), and their cross-cutting discipline,

namely Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP), is firstly required. ILP's significant contribution in enriching the literature of SLA studies is reviewed. Subsequently, ILP's methodological shortcomings and theoretical implications in the area of language acquisition are also identified. From this point, contributions from Conversation Analysis (CA) to fill in the identified gaps are put forward and described. In the end, a list of topics for future research in CA for SLA is suggested allowing researchers to explore as well as to test this new approach in the future SLA research.

An Overview of Pragmatics

Pragmatic studies take into account speakers' viewpoints and associate them with meaning making. The inclusion of other aspects such as culture and social context in the observation of human behaviour in their communicative action (Levinson, 1983, p. 10; Leech, 1983, pp. 6-7) has also been crucial in order to fill in a gap left by more restrictive semantic

studies (Levinson, 1983, p. 12). To understand how language is used in interaction is to closely look at the relationship between language form, speaker beliefs and intentions (Green, 1996, p.3), and social context/rules. What a speaker intends to say may influence the form of the language chosen which may also be motivated by the social convention for message delivery as desired by the community whose language is being used. Failing to follow such social conventions when delivering a message may also result in misunderstanding or failure of the message's delivery. Similarly, the interlocutor's understanding of the speaker's intention as realized by his/her message delivery provides the interlocutor with possible alternative responses to the speaker. These interactional processes co-construct and are co-constructed in the speakers' discourse of communication. In short, pragmatic studies allow a language to be investigated not only based on its formal point of view but also on the user's perspective and the context of utterance. Unlike Chomsky's (1965) abstract concept of language 'competence', pragmatic research produces analyses of meaning making by treating the dynamic communicative context of interaction as an important aspect. This type of empirical analysis substantially differentiates pragmatics from any description presented by any structural linguistic or formal semantic analysis.

Furthermore, many other linguists and philosophers (e.g. Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1979, 1976; Grice, 1975; Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983) had developed theoretical grounds on which pragmatic studies can be established. On these grounds, pragmatic studies on linguistics should take into account two primary aspects, namely language usage (action with language) and language users (actors). Austin (1962) introduced a formulation of Speech Act theory which was refined by Searle (1969). The concept of speech acts has become one of the theoretical foundations of pragmatics ever since. According to this theory, a speaker can produce verbal expressions functioning not

only as a declaration of the world's truth-conditional proposition, but also as a performance of action through speech which is produced in order to ask other speakers to also do other things (Mey, 1993). As pointed out by Searle (1979), even an utterance in the form of a declarative proposition can carry dual, or more (p.18), speech act functions relevant to its occurrence in different contexts.

For example, a student who shivers in a cold-air-conditioned class may make his/her next chair classmate walk up and turn off the air conditioner by saying "it's cold in here". In this example, the declaration of true 'cold' condition justifies the student's verbal action containing an intention of indirectly requesting the classmate to do something about the situation, i.e. to make it less cold. Accordingly, three components of speech act (namely locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary forces) work together to form what Austin previously called a 'performative utterance'. The student's action of producing the utterance in a way that is comprehensible to the

classmates is called locutionary force. This locution is produced to carry out the student's intention of requesting the classmate to turn off the AC, which constitutes an illocutionary act. It is this illocutionary force (the speaker's intention) which becomes the central part of speech act theory. This intention manifests in a wide range of action forms such as request, apology, advice, etc. Based on shared understanding of the illocutionary force or by believing that the speaker has requested an action to be taken to change the cold condition, the classmate performs the physical action of turning off the AC. This responsive action completes the students' performance of the speech act by having its intention responded with the appropriate perlocutionary force. Among the three components, illocutionary forms of speech acts have been the primary focus in many studies (e.g. Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Beebe, & Cumming, 1985) of general pragmatics.

Since Austin's formulation, early studies on this pragmatic field were

projected on responding to Austin's theoretical proposition of "how to do things with words". Searle refines this proposition by further developing Speech Act theory (1969; 1975, 1976). Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) suggested a re-categorization of pragmatic studies from "general pragmatics" into 'pragmalinguistics' and 'sociopragmatics'. Levinson (1983) also provided a critical discussion of pragmatics showing that in order for pragmatics' theory of speech acts to open the way to future empirical studies, it should interact with other disciplines such as Conversation Analysis, language acquisition, and other fields in applied linguistics (pp.283-283). These early studies approach pragmatics from theoretical and philosophical points of view. More theoretical studies also suggest that other pragmatic aspects such as the concept of Face Threatening Acts, Politeness Strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987), Cooperative Principles (Grice, 1975) can be further explored more empirically. These philosophical foundations of pragmatic studies criticize earlier structural language analyses which treat language simply as a set of linguistic rules and norms which are isolated from their communicative context of occurrence, exclusively owned by native speakers, and produced by the underlying abstract concept of 'competence' (Chomsky, 1965). In response to this new paradigm in language studies, linguists and applied linguists have moved further to explore the area of how particular pragmatic aspects of a language acquired by learners. Thus, this new direction of inquiry marks the beginning of pragmatics' cross-section with some branches of applied linguistics, primarily Second Language Acquisition.

An Overview of SLA studies

As the umbrella for any studies of "...how second languages are learned" (Gass & Selinker, 2008), SLA has become a broad research area interconnected with other disciplines such as language teaching, Linguistics, Psychology, Sociology, etc. Before

1960s, SLA had been strongly influenced by the behaviourist view which considered learners as static subjects who build a set of linguistic habits (see Watson, 1924; Bloomfield, 1933; Skinner, 1957). In this view, subjects' erroneous productions became a sign of incorrect habit formation, which consequently needed to be followed by a remedial action. In response to this view, Corder (1967) highlights that learner's errors are not simply incorrect habit formation. Instead, their errors are considered to be meaningful indicators of the ongoing development of their second language learning system. Following Corder's theories, learners' ability to hypothesize, test their hypotheses, make use of cognitive strategies, and learn second language rules have become primary objects of investigation in SLA afterwards. In this new direction, language learners started to be treated as innovative and dynamic agents in the process of language acquisition.

Corder's idea of such meaningful errors also influenced an American applied linguist, Larry Selinker, who adopted and developed the term 'Interlanguage' (IL), which was coined earlier by Reinecke (1969), in his paper on 'Interlanguage' published in RELC Journal (Selinker, 1972). According to Selinker, IL constitutes "...a separate linguistic system based on observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a target language norm" (p.27). IL is also formulated to be the learners' continuum of knowledge being acquired which is dynamically built up on and progressing from zero to approach L2 native speaker-like knowledge and performance (Ellis, 1997). This theory's basic assumption is that when learning a second language, a learner will create a linguistic system different from their first or previously owned and second / learned languages. The learner dynamically updates this new system to resemble the second language's linguistic system through various learning and acquisitional processes.

Based on Corder's and Selinker's papers, SLA studies started

to identify various concepts of dynamic cognitive learning strategies and processes related with external aspects, such as environment and the role of interlocutor. Second language learning theories such as input and intake (Corder, 1967; Krashen, 1985), noticing (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994), negative and positive feedback (e.g. Oliver, 1995; Ayoun, 2001) were investigated. These investigations concentrate on understanding how the mind acquires the new language and then relates the acquisitional development with such external stimulations as interlocutors and social environment.

Additionally, investigations in second language acquisition were also enriched by the emergence of sociocultural theory which holds a different epistemological stance in SLA compared to the cognitivist paradigm. Inspired by the Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, Lantolf (1994) and Lantolf and Apple (1994) formulate the sociocultural theory in language acquisition. The theory sees that mind and sociocultural settings are inseparable dimensions for the acquisitional process (Vygotsky, 1986). Human mind can only internalize inputs and develop in learning a new language with the availability of sociocultural agents who mediate the transfer of knowledge through social interaction. Since sociocultural theory views language as a tool for thought, social processes of learning activity, such as self / other-regulation, scaffolding, activity, and appropriation, play important role in facilitating internalization of the newly learnt language by the learner. In other words, sociocultural theorist believes that the process of acquisition starts from the introduction of the new knowledge by external social agents which is gradually adopted and actively internalized by the learner in their mind (Ortega, 2011).

Despite their fundamental difference in approaching the developmental process of language acquisition, these two mainstream movements in SLA, namely cognitive and sociocultural theories, seem to agree that social and cultural settings

also plays an inevitable role in language learning. However, they hold different views on the degree that these external influences have in the developmental process. They are also in the same course of understanding that the human mind is a progressive and dynamic learning tool which language helps develop to accelerate its capacity in acquiring communicative skill. The inclusion of dynamic communicative aspects as well as the actors of the acquisitional process has eventually created a particular domain where Interlanguage Pragmatics is specified and presented as an interconnecting branch of SLA and Interlanguage studies.

Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP)

As the pragmatics part of the broad study of IL, Interlanguage Pragmatics is dedicated primarily to "...the study of non-native speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language (L2)" (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993, p.3). Based on this definition, studies in ILP aim at exploring and elaborating stages

of development an SL or FL learner takes to acquire Pragmatic Competence (PC) appropriate to the target language(s). Barron (2003) defines pragmatic competence to be based on three types of knowledge:

1. knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for realising particular illocutions,
2. knowledge of the sequential aspects of speech acts, and finally
3. knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular languages' linguistic resources."

(p.29)

In order for ILP studies to address empirical subjects of inquiry, the term 'pragmatic competence' is more technically elaborated in 'pragmalinguistic' and 'sociopragmatic' dimensions (Leech, 1983). The first dimension, i.e. 'pragmalinguistics', refers to the language sets, structures, and composition which are conventionally used to deliver speakers' intention in their act of communication. Through this perspective, ILP's focus of

investigation is to identify and elaborate the extent of the learners' acquisition of formal pragmatic forms and linguistic strategies to deliver their communicative intents via conversation.

Then, the second dimension, 'sociopragmatics', is defined to account for the social interface of communicative use of language. Through sociopragmatic studies, identification of sociocultural factors that come into play in speakers' pragmatic performance can help explain how an identical pragmalinguistic form stimulates different responses from an interlocutor. A speaker's solid grasp of pragmalinguistic knowledge may not necessarily be a guarantee for them to be an acceptably good speaker in the target community if their linguistic strategies do not abide the social rules of language use. Similarly, lack of pragmalinguistic competence may inhibit a person from becoming a good communicant even if they fully understand the community's social acceptance to their linguistic strategy

in delivering their intention. However, to determine which pragmatic aspect accounts for such situations of cross-cultural 'pragmatic failure' (Thomas: 1983) is definitely not easy.

ILP: Contributions

ILP has distinctively contributed a whole new approach to the investigation of language acquisition by identifying learners' stages of development in acquiring the pragmatic competence when performing their communicative action in L2. Through ILP, investigations explore the area of how a speaker uses language to achieve his/her intention by concentrating the analysis on the core of communicative action, i.e. a speaker's action through speech. On one hand, ILP heads on toward identifying clearly how these particular speech acts are performed or supposed to be performed by native speakers so that the native-like pattern of use can be explained. Consequently, these findings must have considerable implications on various fields of language application, primarily

language teaching and learning. On the other hand, ILP studies also have a robust methodology to identify a learner's stages of acquisition of an L2's pragmatics. The level of which a learner acquires the knowledge or even the real-time use of particular speech acts can be effectively identified, assessed, and measured. As the result, other applied linguistic fields such as language testing can get valuable input from results of ILP studies. This is due to the specificity of ILP's coverage in language investigation and its plausibility for empirical exploration.

In doing so, empirical studies in ILP concentrate on particular topics of speech acts such as request (e.g. Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; House & Kasper, 1987; Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989a; Blum-Klulka House, & Kasper, 1989b; Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Hassal, 1997), refusal (e.g. Beebe & Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Gass & Houck, 1999; Félix, 2004;), advice (e.g. Hinkel, 1997; Vasquez, 2004), apologies (e.g. Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983), compliments (e.g. Billmeyer, 1990;

Rose, 2000; Rose & Kwai-fun, 2001), complaints (e.g. Kasper, 1981; House & Kasper, 1981; Cohen & Olshtain, 1993; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993; Ellwood, 2008), and conversational implicature (e.g. Bouton 1988, 1994). From a different perspective, Barron (2003) also categorizes developmental research of ILP into longitudinal (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993a; Dufon, 1999) and cross-sectional (e.g. Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Hassal, 1997, 2001, 2003; Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Rose, 2000) studies by excluding ILP researches that observe the effect of classroom intervention (pp.29-34).

One of the most influential studies in ILP literature is the research project carried out by Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1984). The project is named CCSARP which stands for the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project. According to Blum-Kulka et al (1989b), CCSARP is meant to "...investigate the similarities and differences in the realisation patterns of given speech acts between native and non-native speakers of a given

language, relative to the same social constraints" (p.13). In CCSARP, participants' utterances are encoded into three components (Address term, Head Act, and Adjunct to Head Act). Head Act is the utterance's core in which the illocutionary force rests. This part can also be independently existent in the absence of its supporting attributes. Adjuncts to Head Acts are modifiers for the strength of the Head Act in the anticipation to its perlocutionary force. These adjuncts actually include address terms as well. With these peripheral constituents (Al-Gahtani, 2010), the given speech act is interfaced with other pragmatic features (e.g. politeness strategies, deixis, routines formula).

When using CCSARP to analyse ILP data, NS and NNS speakers' frequency in using the predefined appropriate head act is then counted and the NNS's use of attributive parts in approximation to the NS's strategy is identified. Thus, a realization pattern in terms of direct and indirect use of the speech acts being observed can be identified and compared. Accordingly,

NS and NNS speakers' strategies in using the observed speech acts can be identified. Furthermore, in the developmental research, the result can also be explained in relation to the learners' different proficiency levels in order to measure their similarity of pragmalinguistic knowledge and compare it with NS (see Trosborg 1995; Félix-Brasdefer 2007a, 2007b, 2008a).

Through CCSARP, a typical research instrument called Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was invented by Blum-Kulka (1982) to collect data in ILP research. This instrument later on gains more popularity in many studies due to its effectiveness and practicality. In DCT, participants are required to complete unfinished dialogues in different simulated social situations, which are configured in relation to Social Distance, Power, and Imposition factors, adopted from Politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Through this instrument, research participants (whether native speakers or learners) will (or will not) supply researchers with the expected

speech act, that can be statistically processed and quantitatively analysed using the CCSARP coding scheme.

As the coding scheme in ILP studies, CCSARP seems to be effective in identifying the degree of learners' pragmalinguistic knowledge and sufficient in detecting the general pattern of use that both learners and native speakers apply when committing speech act. Furthermore, the greatest advantage of the CCSARP coding scheme appears to be its adjustability and flexibility with the empirical cross sectional approach in ILP studies which also allows reliable quantitative analysis and high degree of generalizability to be drawn (see also Hudson et al, 1995; Yamashita, 1996; Sasaki, 1998). In addition, the coding scheme also has contributed substantially to the development of interlanguage pragmatic testing instrument focusing on the production of speech acts (e.g. Hudson et al, 1995; Yamashita, 1996; Yoshitake, 1997; Ahn, 2005). Last but not least, this analytical tool also cooperates well with two popular data eliciting

instruments in this domain of SLA, i.e. DCT and role play (RP).

ILP: Shortcomings

Despite being applauded for its worldwide development and substantial contribution in SLA and IL literatures, ILP is also under scrutiny. At first, speech act theory as the driving force in ILP studies is criticized as being "primarily speaker-oriented" (Barron, 2003, p.13). Speech act theory only concerns how a speaker performs actions through his/her words and how the action meets the intended effect on the hearer. Accordingly, the hearer is treated as the passive player in the course of interaction and the recipient for the speech act in the speech event. Although such speaker-oriented emphasis is acceptable for meeting the purpose of ILP's research objective, neglecting the hearer's role in the process of committing a speech act limits an ILP's comprehensiveness of analysis since the hearer also shares a significant contribution to the action the speaker is performing. Moreover,

communication involves, at least, two parties who must be treated as equally important. Therefore, when a communicative event is investigated, analysis should be made not only on a specific part of the data but also on the whole picture and the contributing factors so that a comprehensive conclusion can be drawn as completely as possible.

Another criticism goes to ILP's methodological instruments, namely CCSARP and DCT. In its theoretical base, CCARP was designed to specifically identify the different realization patterns of speech acts through comparison and contrast. It essentially works well to elaborate data elicited from DCT or RP by focusing on the discovery of Head Act and describing the dispersion of its peripheral attributes in a single speech event. Through DCT, the acquisition of the speech act being investigated can be metapragmatically identified (Golato, 2003; Kasper, 2006a) and, by means of CCSARP, atomically described in isolation from its discursive episode (Al-Ghatani &

Roever, 2010). A speech act performed via DCT is not exposed to interactional factors because it is metapragmatically elicited and thus respondents only produce what they believe and expect to be said in the simulated situations without having a real time interactional experience. Therefore, the requirement for co-constructing interactional practices between learners and interlocutors is ignored in CCSARP analytical scheme and a description of the learner's interactional competence is out of the question.

With regard to the process of language acquisition, DCT's strength in eliciting metapragmatic data of acquisition has also become its weakness because it ignores the real time practice of interaction which accounts for the active involvement of the speaker as well as the listener. Pragmalinguistic or Sociopragmatic knowledge may never become empirical proofs of acquisition if they cannot help learners govern their interactional conducts in real time language operation. Language learning and acquisition requires immediate

practices on real time basis without which the learning process becomes a matter of memorization in the absence of interpersonal and social impression. Without the ability to capture this real time use of pragmatic knowledge, DCT can only detect language learning memory which can easily vanish and cannot reflect on the acquired interactional competence.

In anticipation to DCT's shortcomings, CCSARP can also be employed to analyze data from Role Play. RP is capable of capturing speech act pragmatic events from the opening to their closing in the entire discursive sequence. By having more extended data of real time conversation, realizations of speech acts in pursuit can be comprehensively analysed in their interactional discourse. The internal modification of Head Acts can be identified in the presence of interlocutor's previous interactional sequence. Conclusions about learner's sociopragmatic knowledge as realized on their speech acts can also be drawn more convincingly. Unfortunately,

CCSARP's methodological designed to detect only the participant's 'imagined perceptions of interaction' (Golato, 2003 in Huth, 2010) as realized in the speech act of interest still plagues data generated from RP. Data analysis using CCSARP coding scheme still focuses on illocutionary force that the speaker holds through the locution of speech act in question. What participants really do in interaction remain disregarded and the entirety of interaction as the actual proof of real pragmatic competence and, even further, interactional competence is still dismissed. In short, CCSARP coding scheme appears to waste such interactionally-rich raw data that RP has provided.

With all these criticisms in mind, efforts have been made to deal with ILP's weaknesses. A new methodological instrument for ILP study is required so that observation of the entire progress of an interactional event can generate not only analysis of speakers' knowledge of particular speech acts in action but also analysis of how interaction is holistically and

meaningfully performed by the participants. The expected instrument should be able to code and elaborate not only the speaker performing his/her pragmalinguistic knowledge in a segregated course of the discourse but, most of all, his/her full control of performing both dimensions of pragmatic competence in the entirety of the interaction. From this point of view, Conversation Analysis (CA) is seen to offer the complimentary role.

CA as an alternative analytical instrument for CCSARP replacement

To respond to ILP's methodological shortcomings, the latest development of inquiries in ILP seems to demand more than the socially isolated or metapragmatically produced pragmatic knowledge that DCT can elicit and the atomic analysis of speech acts that CCSRAP can elaborate. Some fundamental reviews (Kasper, 2006a, 2006b) have shown that, as a methodological consequence of the current critical assessment of the theoretical ground of the speech act theory-based research, a more

elaborate analytical instrument needs to be devised to enable the description of pragmatic competence acquired by learners in a more interactional dimension. A comprehensive description of how a native speaker uses speech acts and the extent a learner has acquired them in order to participate in interaction needs to account for the entire context of the conversation and all aspects of the interaction. Since the primary aim of language learning is to enable learners to gain interactional competence, analysing their production only in partial terms may not help understand their current progression in the process of acquisition. Speech act pragmatics is efficient in performing analysis in this particular area but also restricted in their reach of research outcome (Kasper 2006). Therefore, the more appropriate methodological tools should be able to capture speakers' ability in enacting their interactional force and co-constructing a socially meaningful conversational discourse with their cross-cultural interlocutors. For that purpose, speech acts need to

be investigated as a whole pack by considering their overall context of occurrence. This definitely requires revision of the methodological instruments used for their analysis. In this part, CA can be a proper methodological alternative.

By applying CA, shortcomings of the speech act theory approach such as illocutionary ambiguity (as demonstrated in Kasper, 2006a) or the role of various forms delayed dispreferred responses (Pomerantz, 1984) can be dealt with. CA treats all forms of speakers' interactional conduct that take place during a conversation as essential demonstration of interactional competence. Unlike pragmatic competence, interactional competence constitutes a broader and more situational capability to perform real time interaction. Through CA, a speech act like request can be described more comprehensively in its multiple turns in the structure of the conversation both as a means to deliver the speaker's social action and as an indicative sign in orienting the

interlocutor for the coming sequence (Kasper, 2006a; Al-Gahtani, 2010). Request is therefore not treated in its predefined solitary confinement as an individual intention reflecting the speaker's obedience to the convention of social norm, but it is regarded as a demonstration of interactional competence (further discussed in the later part of the next section on CA) corresponding to the interlocutor's role. This competence also reflects the speaker's ability to make use of all interactional resources (e.g. linguistic, prosodic, semiotic, etc) in co-constructing discursive and social identities through sequence organization of the conversation. The necessity to situate speech acts in such a larger context as discursive practice can be fulfilled more satisfactorily with CA than CCSARP. It is not because CSSARP is an incorrect or wrong method, but due to its specific design to sufficiently deal with speech acts within speech act theory alone.

Conversation Analysis (CA) for SLA

The methodological and theoretical shortcomings of speech act theory and CCSARP in elaborating the entirety of interactional process between conversationalists have eventually led not only to the call for replacing pragmatic analytical instruments such as CCSARP, but more substantially resulted in the invitation for reformulating the fundamental aspects of investigating spoken language discourse in SLA through CA (e.g. Kasper, 2006a, 2006b; Markee, 2000). In this section, CA's original stream is firstly and briefly introduced along with its historical account. Then, CA's empirical studies for SLA are generally reviewed and the latest research is elaborated. Consequently, the conflicting issues for adopting CA in SLA are addressed. From this discussion, the need for reformulating the sort of competence a learner acquires which is identified and observed through CA will emerge, and the adoption of CA into SLA will be justified.

An Overview of CA

As one of the most promising ways for explaining individuals' interactional behavior in relation to social relationships with each other through pair or group talks, Conversational Analysis is dedicated to the 'emic' discovery of patterns of social interaction in conversational data (Seedhouse, 2004, 2005, 2007). Formally established by the American sociologist Harvey Sacks (1974, 1975, 1978, 1992, Sack & Jefferson, 1995), CA emerged as the result of his dissatisfaction at the too-broad-scale approaches used in sociology and too-small-scale approaches employed in linguistics (Sack & Jefferson, 1995). Inspired by Harold Garfinkel's work (1964, 1967, 1988) in Ethnomethodology and Ervin Goffman's further refinements (1959, 1963, 1964, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1981) of Garfinkel's approach to social interaction, Sacks developed an emic-based analysis of social interaction that could fill in the gap left by the two previous disciplines in explaining

sequential organization of conversation.

Principally, CA is a way of seeing the structure of 'talk-in-interaction' (Psathas, 1995) in which social interaction realized in conversation is observed by identifying how speakers coordinate their conversational productions together in a sequential manner. In CA analysis, some basic assumptions serve as the basis for the inquiry of sequential organization of interaction in conversations. The assumptions cover the situatedness, orderliness and repeatability of a conversation's organisation; participants' self-orientation; and formalization of structures of social action into abstract terms (Psathas: 1995, pp.2-3; ten Have,1999, pp.41-42, 2007, p.39; Markee, 2000, p.23). As speakers always orient themselves to making orderly structure in their conversation related to the real time of situational and propositional contexts, a CA analyst, bearing these assumptions in mind, sets out to seek for this orderliness and not base their quest on any preconception or preformulation. As an emic approach to conversational data, CA provides the analyst with a means to discover, describe, and analyze such conversational orderliness and sequentiality by following participants' own orientations toward the conversation as realized in their sequence organization in interaction (Schegloff, 2007), not by referring to pre-formulated theories of conversation and interaction. This is what is called in CA as the 'unmotivated looking' (Sacks, 1970; Psathas, 1995, p. 3).

CA studies for SLA

Approaching its half century of anniversary, CA has grown larger from being an alternative approach in the field of sociology to becoming a transdisciplinary approach for many fields of social sciences (Kasper, 2006b), including for SLA. The adoption of CA as an alternative way of analyzing L2 learning and acquisition in the field of SLA actually started from early 1990s by two studies (Krafft & Daudsendschon-Gay,

1993, 1994) reported respectively in Bulletin CILA and Bulletin VALS/ASLA (in Kasper, 2006b). Also, in view of the debate on SLA due to a call made by SLA's well-known figures (i.e. Markee, 1994; Wagner, 1996; Firth, 1996; Firth & Wagner, 1997) for reorienting the traditional cognitive approach, a number of SLA studies promoting CA as the method of analysis have started to be incorporated in SLA research literature from journal articles (e.g. Golato, 2002; Mori, 2002, 2003; Lazaraton, 2002a, 2003; Markee, 2004; Félix-Brasdefer, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a, 2008b; Kasper 2006b), book section (e.g. Kasper, 2006a; Kasper & Wagner, 2011), and book publications (e.g. Markee, 2000; Lazaraton, 2002b; Gardner & Wagner, 2004; Seedhouse, 2004; Kasper, 2006b). In most of these studies, CA is used to identify the sequential structure of L2 speakers' social interaction in their ordinary conversation related to learning and acquisitional purposes (e.g. Markee, 2000; Mori, 2002; Seedhouse, 2004; Félix-Brasdefer, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a,

2008b). On one hand, these studies appear to pursue CA in its traditionally 'pure' course (Ten Have, 1999). On the other, some studies of SLA also use CA as a methodological means to observe the sequential organization of social interaction in institutional discourses (e.g. Drew & Herritage, 1992; Herritage, 2005). These studies seek either the 'applied' or institutionalized side of CA as an approach to language studies (Ten Have, 1999).

In later developments, inquiries in CA for SLA studies have focused on elaborating the acquisitional process of features of interactional competence such as discourse markers (Kim, 2009; Ishida 2009) and disagreement action (Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2011). Kim (2009) reported to use of CA to analyze the acquisition of Korean discourse markers between NS and NNS of Korean. Despite a small number of participants, the research shows that CA helps identify the development L2 learners make in acquiring discourse markers to align themselves with their interlocutors. By

investigating the developmental progression of L2 of Japanese within a 9-month study abroad context, Ishida (2009) also used CA to analyse the sequential order of particle *ne* as a part of Japanese learner's development of interactional competence. Employing only one SL learner of Japanese for a longitudinal study, Ishida analysed a series of self-recorded conversations of the learner with his two American friends and seven other Japanese interlocutors. From the analysis, Ishida discovered that the learner's development of interactional competence in the use of particle *ne* can be identified in relation to its sequential order in the recorded conversation.

In a cross sectional study of French L2 disagreement, Doehler & Pochon-Berger (2011) reported how CA can be applied to elaborate the learners' situated learning method in acquiring the action of disagreeing in French L2. As proponents to the 'situated learning' perspective, the two researchers were looking for evidence for learners' development of learning

method as situated in the course of their interaction. Through their 40 hours of audio/video recorded French foreign language classroom interactions, Doehler & Pochon-Berger apply CA to identify sequences of turns in learner interaction that are used for interactional methods to disagree. These sequences are compared across learners' proficiencies. In their finding, lower to intermediate learners tend to be using similar method of expressing disagreement while a range of variety of methods are used by advanced learners which may serve as the evidence for L2 learners' development of interactional competence. The conclusion is also supported by the fact that these learners can use post disagreement explanation and manipulate the sequential positioning of the disagreement component.

Issues in CA for SLA

Integrating CA into the SLA enterprise has also brought in some conflicting issues concerning learning, cognition, natural data elicitation and

pre-existing categories. In SLA's cognitive mainstream, learning is seen as individually and internally processed by learners' minds so that evidence of learning progress is made observable through the presence or the absence of the targeted linguistic forms in learners' production in either elicited or natural situation. Failure to produce the expected form in response to the interlocutor's orientation affects the learner's qualification as a competent speaker. Thus, repetitive or longer delay in producing the form is categorized a sign of disfluency which may be asserted as a evidence of a lower degree of proficiency. By contrast, CA holds no presumption of such mental states as proficiency or assumption of cognitive qualification such as fluency because, in CA's perspective, all conversational actions display varying degrees of interactional competence (Kasper, 2006b, 2009) whose realization in conversation is co-constructed and context sensitive / relative.

In conversations, speakers share interactional practices to reinstate their membership of being competent interactants. Therefore, even highly recurrent disfluency displayed by a learner cannot be seen as evidence for qualifying the learner as an incompetent conversant. In fact, CA analysts should maintain the openness of unmotivated looking and seek the explanation of these interactional phenomena in their sequential organisation. In fact, there are occasions when even fluent speakers perform disfluent action as an interactional strategy, e.g. recycling TCU Overlap (Kasper, 2006b), not because of being conversationally incompetent. Accordingly, drawing evidence for the learning process is not an inherently conclusive force in CA analysis. This is the point where other mental and psychological concepts such as proficiency interface with CA and compromise its why-that-now policy.

Another unresolved issue between CA and SLA constitutes the notion of cognition. The CA approach has brought cognition from being an individually owned internal processing

instrument to becoming a socially shared apparatus for co-constructing orderliness in the interaction. In CA perspective, cognition is manifested in the intrinsic motivation for listening, evidence for which are made available once the listener resumes speaker' turn (Kasper & Wagner, 2011). These turn taking sequences are socially organized in mutual understanding to enable speakers to achieve what CA defines as the "procedural infrastructure of interaction" (Schegloff, 1992, p.1338) and to cooperatively build the "architecture of intersubjectivity". In these objectives, cognition is not situated in the human mind per se but interconnected with others in the social domain of conversation. By organizing actions-in-interaction by means of mutual understanding (including intrinsic listening motivation), speakers work together in an orderly manner to build a conversational enterprise which are constructed to demonstrate membership of a particular discursive community. All interactional sequences are organized in order to

reflect social values, social identities, interpersonal relations, and epistemic as well as affective stances of the speakers (Kasper, 2009). In this respect, the integration of CA into SLA requires a reformulation or readjustment to the concept of cognition.

In addition to the issues of learning and cognition, pre-existing categories such as proficiency and methodological matters like practicality, natural data elicitation, and sampling also contribute to the uneasy blending between CA and SLA. For CA, assuming pre-existing categories is a direct violation to its emic paradigm because it blocks the analytical method from seeing possible situational and/or interactional causes of a conversational action by drawing conclusions from epistemological / ideological instead of empirical stances (Kasper, 2006b). Driven by such find-it-while-seeing-it principle, the idea of getting data in controlled environments which allow deriving quantitative generalization to such speaker mental categories as

proficiency has been in true opposition to not only one but several CA basic assumptions (Psathas, 1995 in ten Have, 1999, p.41). CA requires data to be captured in natural situations so that empirical evidence for the procedural infrastructure of interaction event can be discovered. At the end, categorical quantification about a particular component of interactional infrastructure can only be drawn from a huge corpora of natural (empirical) data that have been analytically (as opposed to taxonomically) processed. Any possible action left unexplained by the existing analytical category demands categorical redefinition (Schegloff, 2007, p.252) instead of data modification. Simply put, CA moves from data to categories and pursues categorical flexibility to accommodate empirical findings from a variety of the natural data.

By a contrast, SLA adheres to the ideological tradition that empirical categories exist through the process of falsification and verification of the pre-defined theoretical grounds. To stratify a group of learners onto different (pre-

hypothesized) proficiency levels in a particular language, a preliminary categorization needs to be performed from the side of native speakers as the comparative baseline for proficiency. Even from this early step, one constant problem of 'native-likeness' as pointed out in many studies (e.g. Davies, 2004; Birdsong; 2005) plagues the categorical justification of proficiency stratification because even native speakers do not always agree in their linguistic, pragmatic (e.g. Hassall, 1999; Hanafi, 2006), or interactional performance. Nevertheless, let us cut short the debate on the native-likeness issue and save the dilemma of idiosyncrasy for the next paragraph. Now, by assuming that we have a homogenous group of NS by which the intergroup comparison may be done, learners can accordingly be dispersed into different proficiency levels based on their degree of 'obedience' to produce as similar as to what NS group can perform.

Through a sampling procedure, a generalization on proficiency level stratification can be drawn to all other

learners of the same language. On one hand, this process offers methodological practicality and benefits from epistemic standardization which is in favor of quantificational approach to studies in the sub field of Applied Linguistics requiring practicality and generalizability such as language testing (e.g. Rover, 2011). On the other, the drawback is that such an etic perspective fails to account for such idiosyncratic evidence in their own natural situatedness. For SLA, such deviational performance is dismissed by allocating it under the notion of 'individual variation' which can admissibly be explained in relation to other mental / affective aspects like motivation and emotion, or cognitive capacity like aptitude (Dornyei, 2005). From CA's point of view, this heavily-imposed etic explanation is hypothetically analytical rather than factually empirical and it simply ignores the interactional sequence and the role of speaking partners in co-constructing all (be it linguistic, pragmatic, pragmalinguistic, sociopragmatic, communicative, or interactional) competences a learner can perform through conversations.

By aiming at the discovery of empirical evidence for learners' effort in acquiring interactional competence, integrating CA into SLA study is inevitable. CA is undoubtedly comprehensive in its analytical coverage when thorough understanding of learner's development of interactional competence is pursued. When SLA studies adopt analytical methods from CA, the method appears to be integrative in its coverage. If seen from the interactionist perspective, CA-for-SLA analysts can provide particular evidence for the learner's acquisition of a specific part of a specific competence. Alternatively, analysts can also generate a rich empirical description of multiple competences (Markee, 2000, p.13) that a learner actually and more naturalistically employs in their interactional performance. Therefore, doing CA-for-SLA research on a single particular object may open up a number of

possible analyses to be produced due to the enormity of a discursive type of data.

Suggested topics for future research

As a newly growing approach in SLA, some recent CA-for-SLA studies have explored pragmatic SLA topics such as request (Al-Gahtani, 2010; Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2010), request sequence (Taleghani-Nikazm, 2005, 2006; Taleghani-Nikazm & Huth, 2010), dispreferred responses (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008), as well as discursive SLA such as Self Presentation Sequence (Svennevig, 1999, 2014; Hanafi, 2015), sequence of negotiation, and of reciprocity (Hanafi, 2015). To expand the literature of CA for SLA, future research can be directed to the following area of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics:

- The acquisition of Speech Acts as realised in peer or group talks
- The sequence of direct and indirect Speech Acts as evidences for acquiring L2 or FL pragmatics
- The differences between classroom talks and natural talks by L2 and FL learners
- The development of L2 and FL acquisition as evidenced in peer or group talks in a longitudinal and cross-sectional setting
- The sequence of politeness strategy in diverse communal meetings
- The sequence of ritual talks in cultural events

Conclusions and Suggestions

This review paper attempts to introduce CA for SLA as a currently alternative approach to studies in language acquisition. Its emic nature of analysis has given a new tool for applied linguists, especially but not exclusively, in SLA in order to contribute to understanding the process of language learning and acquisition. In turn, results from CA-for-SLA or Discursive SLA studies may present a different type of input, commonly fed by the mainstream cognitive or pragmatic SLAs, for language-related professionals working on the area of

language planning, teaching, and testing. Additionally, CA-for-SLA studies may also contribute to other linguistic fields, such as sociolinguistics and language preservation, as it provides a robust and detail method in identifying the sequential process of conversation or talks performed by human beings, which helps identify not only the linguistic structure of the talks but more importantly the detail sequence of social interaction and interactional strategies commonly employed by the speakers through conversations. May such far reaching results hopefully start from this humble paper.

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