

Transfer in Interlanguage Pragmatics: New Research Agenda

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Transfer in Interlanguage Pragmatics: New Research Agenda ¹

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Introduction

Within the framework of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), Thomas (1983) proposed two kinds of “pragmatic failure”: *sociopragmatic failure*, which arises from “cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour” (p.99); and *pragmalinguistic failure*, which is observed when the “pragmatic force mapped on to a linguistic token or structure is systematically different from that normally assigned to it by native speakers” (p.101). One of the major objectives of ILP has been to present *evidence for L1 transfer* as one of the potential sources of both the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic failures (see Kasper, 1992).

In order to investigate whether or where transfer occurs, ILP researchers usually compare the following three data sources by adopting the design originally developed by Selinker (1966, 1969): (1) the L1 baseline data from native speakers of the learners’ native language (NL); (2) the IL data from the learners; and (3) the target language baseline data from native speakers of the learners’ target language (TL) (see Kasper, 1992). Similarity in terms of response frequencies in NL, IL, and TL leads us to claim positive transfer; and similar response frequencies in NL and IL with different response frequencies between NL and TL and between IL and TL evidences the fact of negative transfer. In this study, the product-oriented research following the above design will be called the studies on “pragmatic transfer.” They ought to be distinguished from the studies on “pragmatic transferability,” which shed light on the *conditions for pragmatic transfer to occur*. By reviewing the ILP transfer literature, I will attempt to clarify the essential differences between pragmatic transfer and pragmatic transferability in terms of their research objectives and designs. This review will then be able to provide new perspectives for research into the role of L1 in acquiring and performing L2 pragmatic strategies.

In the sections below, first, the literature on “pragmatic transfer” will be reviewed by following the distinction between sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic transfer. Then, I will examine how and to what extent the aspect of “pragmatic transferability” has been dealt with by the ILP researchers. Furthermore, the nonstructural factors of pragmatic transfer will be explored. Finally, I will make some suggestions for future studies on cross-linguistic influence in the area of ILP.

¹ This paper is based on Chapters Two and Eight of my doctoral dissertation (Takahashi, 1995).

Studies on Pragmatic Transfer

Sociopragmatic Transfer

Sociopragmatic transfer is operative in “learners’ perceptions of contextual factors, of whether carrying out a particular linguistic action is appropriate, and of the overall politeness style adopted in an encounter” (Kasper, 1992, p.213). By focusing on the speech act of correction performed by Japanese learners of ESL, Takahashi and Beebe (1993) evidenced the case of negative transfer at the sociopragmatic level. The data elicited from the 12-item discourse completion test (DCT) revealed the following: the Japanese ESL learners transferred Japanese style-shifting patterns into English by selecting different strategies according to the speaker’s higher or lower status vis-à-vis the hearer. The same tendency was also identified in Japanese ESL learners’ performance of refusals in the order, frequency, and content of semantic formulas (Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990). Takahashi and Beebe attributed the distinctive style-shifting patterns observed between the Japanese and the American groups to the differential conceptualization of linguistic politeness between these two groups: Japanese consider it polite to emphasize the status difference when there actually exist such differences, whereas, from the American perspective, being polite is conveyed by denying that status differences do exist.

Takahashi and Beebe (1993) also found the two cases of L1 influence attributable to the different “politeness orientation” (Brown & Levinson, 1987)² between Japanese and Americans. According to Takahashi and Beebe, the Americans favored the use of positive remarks, such as “That was a great account,” before saying “but” in correcting the lower-status interlocutor’s statement. Both the Japanese L1 speakers and Japanese ESL learners, however, showed their reluctance to use such positive remarks in the same situations. This demonstrated the Japanese L1 influence of a “less positive” politeness orientation as compared to the American politeness orientation.

Takahashi and Beebe further pointed out the tendency that the Japanese L1 speakers and Japanese ESL learners more often used formulaic expressions than the Americans did. The use of correct socially conventionalized formula is the prescribed norm as what Ide (1989) called “discernment politeness.” Takahashi and Beebe thus extrapolated that the above tendency was a result of L1 transfer of “a belief in the efficacy of choosing the appropriate expression according to relative status” (p.146).

Related to the issue of transfer of L1 politeness style, García (1989) reported similar findings. García investigated the English IL apologies performed by Venezuelan Spanish speakers in a role play situation. She found that the L2 learners transferred their L1 positive politeness strategies (i.e., friendly, but not contrite, expressing themselves in terms of solidarity with the interlocutor) to the L2 contexts. Since the target language speakers

² Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed two types of politeness: positive politeness, which is redressive action directed to the addressee’s positive face (i.e., the want to be approved); and negative politeness, which is redressive action to maintain the addressee’s negative face (i.e., the want to be unimpeded).

employed negative politeness strategies (i.e., deferential, self-effacing toward the interlocutor) in the same situation, the observed transfer was characterized as “negative” transfer.

The study of IL apology conducted by House (1988) revealed the transfer of L1 communicative style, rather than that of L1 politeness orientation. Using an 8-item DCT as the data-eliciting instrument, House examined the English apology performed by German learners of British English. House found that both the German speakers and German learners of British English exhibited less routinized, specific, situation-bound excuses. The native British English speakers, on the other hand, more frequently used their routinized apology “sorry.” Thus, she claimed evidence of the transfer of the German preference for less routinized apology expressions to the L2 contexts. House further demonstrated another case of transfer of L1 communicative style to L2 contexts. According to House, the German learners of British English transferred their L1-based *self-oriented* strategies (e.g., expressing lack of intent), in comparison with the British English speakers’ preference for the use of *other-oriented* apology strategies (e.g., showing concern for the hearer).

Scarcella (1983) also reported the case of transfer of L1 communicative style by Spanish-speaking English learners. Specifically, she investigated the “discourse accent,” which was defined as the use of conversational features in L2 in the same way in which they are used in L1. Scarcella obtained 15 dyads of spontaneous conversation data which consisted of Spanish/Spanish (L1), English/English (L1), and English (L1)/English (IL) dyads. Despite the Spanish learners’ high proficiency in English, L1 transfer was evident in the following manner: more frequent verbal exchanged backchannel cues and more frequent pause fillers were observed in Spanish L1 and English IL, as compared to native English speakers.

Some other studies yielded the findings that the degree of appropriateness in realizing a given L1 speech act influenced the realization of the same act in L2. Olshtain (1983) was among them. Olshtain examined the extent and type of transfer in the speech act of apology performed by English- and Russian-speaking learners of Hebrew as L2. The data were elicited by asking the subjects to respond in Hebrew to the verbal cue issued by the investigator for eight situations. By comparing the average frequency of all apology semantic formulas in L1, except “offer of repair,” Olshtain found the following: the highest degree of apology overall was in English, somewhat lower in Russian, and the lowest in Hebrew. A similar trend was observed in the Hebrew IL of Russian-speaking learners, somewhat less strongly in the Hebrew IL of English-speaking learners, thereby displaying the negative transfer from L1 sociopragmatic knowledge (see below for the analysis based on the learners’ language-specificity perception). Similar findings were obtained for the Hebrew speakers learning English as L2 (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981). Namely, the nonnative use of apology semantic formulas was overall considerably less than that of the native English speakers and more closely reflected the use of the formulas by the native Hebrew speakers.

In Robinson (1992) as well, findings similar to Olshtain’s were reported, but for the speech act of refusal attempted by Japanese learners of English. Robinson investigated the

underlying process of making IL refusals in the performance on a DCT. She analyzed the data obtained from the learners' concurrent verbal reports and the retrospective interviews with them. According to Robinson, one of her subjects apparently transferred the Japanese preference for not saying "no" to a request to her IL English discourse. Robinson observed that "sociopragmatic transfer prompted at least part of this subject's confusion over what to say" (p.57) in a less familiar, American cultural context ("You are asked to function as a secretary of your department's student association").

Pragmalinguistic Transfer

Pragmalinguistic transfer is the "process whereby the illocutionary force or politeness value assigned to particular linguistic material in L1 influences learners' perception and production of form-function mappings in L2" (Kasper, 1992, p. 209). Pragmalinguistic transfer was substantially evidenced by Blum-Kulka (1982, 1983) in her study on request realization by English learners of Hebrew as L2. As a case of positive transfer, Blum-Kulka found that the English learners of Hebrew successfully transferred the following cross-linguistically shared strategies: imperatives, ability questions, 'why not' questions, and 'Do you mind if...?' forms. However, negative transfer was also found to be operative in their IL. The learners tended to inappropriately use the Hebrew ability ("can you") questions, resulting in forms which did not carry the pragmatic force of a request. Blum-Kulka described this observed tendency as a case in which the apparent similarity in form and function across the two languages does not hold for all contexts. Negative pragmalinguistic transfer was also noted in the choice of directness levels in request realization: the English learners of Hebrew preferred less direct strategies in L2 than the native Hebrew speakers, thereby conforming more to their L1 indirect strategies.³

Deviations in the choice of directness levels in request realization have been substantially evident in the studies conducted in the framework of CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns) project. By using the DCT eliciting technique, House and Kasper (1987) examined the request realizations of German learners of British English and Danish learners of British English in five request situations. One of their major findings was that both German and Danish learners of English deviated from the British English norm and followed their L1 norms in their choice of the directness of the request in two of the five situations. For instance, those L2 learners favored the use of direct imperatives, while the native speakers preferred to use more indirect preparatory questions. The data were also analyzed along the dimension of internal and external modifications. Negative pragmalinguistic transfer was observed in fewer syntactic downgraders for both learner groups. Transfer was also operative differentially between these two learner groups: the

³ Blum-Kulka (1982) pointed out that the English learners of Hebrew overall followed their L1 preference for more indirectness. Blum-Kulka interpreted this as evidence for *transfer of social norms*. In this sense, then, the obtained tendency here can be considered as a case of "sociopragmatic transfer" (see also Kasper, 1992).

German learners of English used consultative devices just as infrequently as the native German speakers; and the Danish learners of English employed more supportive moves as the native Danish speakers did.

Transfer of internal and external modifications in request realization was more exclusively investigated by Faerch and Kasper (1989). Within the framework of CCSARP, they followed the research design of House and Kasper (1987), but focusing on the Danish learners of English and of German. Faerch and Kasper traced three cases of pragmalinguistic transfer. First, the Danish learners of German transferred the formally similar Danish modal verbs to L2 contexts, resulting in “a distorting effect on the illocution or politeness” (p. 228). Second, the Danish “consultative device” was negatively transferred to IL German. Third, the learners followed the Danish negation rule in realizing requests in German.

Outside the framework of CCSARP, the transfer of L1 request strategies was substantiated by Takahashi and DuFon (1989). We examined whether or not Japanese learners of English transferred L1 indirect request strategies to L2 communicative settings. The data elicited through the role play technique revealed the following bimodal distribution in their IL request performance: (1) in their attempt to make an explicit reference to a desired action, the learners favored a more direct English request than the American counterparts; and (2) when they decided to refer implicitly to an action, they relied on hinting strategies, showing preference for a more indirect approach than the Americans. The obtained distribution was also detected in L1 Japanese request performance, but not in L1 English request performance. Hence, we claimed the transfer of the L1-based pattern of distribution of indirectness to the L2 request realization.

Transfer of the choice of directness levels in L1 was demonstrated by DeCapua (1989) as well. Instead of requests, however, DeCapua investigated the speech act of complaints produced by German learners of English on a DCT in five service-counter situations. She considerably modified House and Kasper’s (1981) directness scale and established eight major areas on the directness continuum for complaints. In both L1 German and IL English, the German speakers were found to use more instances of the second most face-threatening degree of directness (Area 7: Escalated direct confrontation - *The speaker asserts the hearer’s action is bad*). That level of directness was rarely employed by the American-English native speakers. Hence, DeCapua showed that the German learners of English definitely transferred the German preference for the high degree of directness in complaining to the same situations in L2.

Pragmalinguistic transfer is also evident in IL performance of speech acts other than request and complaint. Several researchers found L1-based preferences for frequencies of particular apology semantic formulas. Olshtain (1983), for example, demonstrated that English learners of Hebrew negatively transferred L1 preference for the semantic formulas “express apology” and “offer of repair” in certain situations. By contrast, those two apology semantic formulas were dispreferred equally by the Hebrew learners of English and the Hebrew native speakers in the same situations (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; see also Olshtain

& Cohen, 1989). This then represented another case of negative transfer from L1 (Hebrew) to L2 (English).

Bergman and Kasper (1993) also reported negative transfer of an L1-based preference for given semantic formulas of apology. They examined the IL apologies performed by Thai learners of English in 20 DCT situations. Their statistical analysis showed that fifty-five percent of the differences in the use of apology strategies could be attributed to pragmatic transfer. In particular, the semantic formula of “verbal redress” in L1 was found to be negatively transferred to L2 for six situations (see Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper, & Ross, 1995, for similar findings for their Japanese ESL learners). With only one semantic formula, “offer of repair,” Bergman and Kasper indicated the case of positive transfer in some contexts.

In Trosborg’s (1987) study of IL apologies performed by Danish learners of English, a clear case of negative L1 transfer was not confirmed. However, Trosborg found some evidence toward that direction in the frequency of apology semantic formulas employed by the learners and the native Danish speakers. The data elicited through the role play technique revealed that the native Danish speakers used more rejections (i.e., failure to take on any responsibility) than the native English speakers. The Danish learners of English more closely followed their L1 native speakers for this particular strategy, suggesting a potential negative transfer of *rejection to use any apology semantic formulas*.⁴

While the “frequency counts” of L1-based semantic formula in IL performance could be a base for determining the occurrence of negative transfer, some ILP researchers attempted to identify the case of pragmatic transfer by establishing similar “content” of the L1 and IL semantic formula. According to Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), the Japanese L1 and Japanese ESL “excuses” in their refusals were less specific than American “excuses” with respect to place, time, or parties concerned. Furthermore, they pointed out that both Japanese natives and Japanese ESL learners tended to state their philosophy in their refusals to offers (e.g., “Things break anyway”), while the Americans did not. The “content” of semantic formula admittedly affects the politeness value assigned to that formula. However, such a content analysis itself does not present clear evidence of pragmatic transfer unless a significant trend in the “frequency” of the semantic formulas exemplifying those particular contents is confirmed (see below for more on the methodological issue).

Aside from the transfer of semantic formulas, House (1988) showed a case in which the use of formal L2 equivalent to L1 entailed the lack of apologetic illocutionary force in L2, thereby inducing negative transfer. According to House, her German learners of English used “excuse me” a lot. This was because the German formal equivalent is acceptable as an apologizing expression. The high degree of appropriateness of the German expression

⁴ Trosborg (1987) overall concluded that *sociopragmatic* strategies of apology were transferred from L1 (Danish) to L2 (English). She ascribed this tendency to the fact that the two speech communities share similar cultures. Trosborg in fact assumed that, basically, negative transfer from L1 is not likely to occur from Danish to English at the sociopragmatic level.

“Entschuldigen” (= excuse me) further encouraged the transfer of German “bitte” (= please) to L2 contexts due to the collocation of these two lexical items (“Entschuldigen Sie bitte” => excuse me, please).

Critical Issues in Studies of Pragmatic Transfer

The previous review of literature on sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic transfer led us to conclude that no one casts doubt on the “existence” of transfer at the pragmatic level. However, it ought to be noted here that some of the studies referred to above also presented the case of “non-transfer” (e.g., Bergman & Kasper, 1993; House, 1988; House & Kasper, 1987; Maeshiba et al., 1995; Trosborg, 1987). There are also some other studies which were intended to investigate the occurrence of transfer but failed to detect the phenomenon (e.g., Fraser, Rintell, & Walters, 1980; Rintell, 1979, 1981; Walters, 1979). The point at issue here is that performance data alone do not allow us to explore the causal factors of “non-transfer.”

It is now obvious that the occurrence of pragmatic transfer is greatly context-dependent. Then, a question arises here as to when and how the context-external factors (e.g., interlocutors’ familiarity, relative status) and context-internal factors (e.g., degree of requestive imposition, obligation to apologize) are interacting with L1 transfer. Namely, what conditions/factors do or do not make the L2 learners rely on their L1 pragmatic strategies, resulting in the occurrence of transfer and non-occurrence of transfer?

The literature of pragmatic transfer above also indicated that emphasis has not been placed on the examination of positive transfer. As Kasper (1992) pointed out, one of the reasons for this tendency is that it is hard to distinguish positive transfer from the learners’ activating their general/universal pragmatic knowledge, or from their generalizing their prior IL pragmatic knowledge. The surface-level investigation does not tell us whether or not the learners actually rely on their L1 or how they perceive the role of their L1 in realizing given speech acts.

There are also some methodological problems in the pragmatic transfer studies reviewed above. Among them, the following is most critical: except Bergman and Kasper (1993), the great majority of the pragmatic transfer studies failed to set up a rigorous criterion for the occurrence of transfer (Kasper, 1992). The occurrence of transfer is usually determined by similarity in terms of response frequencies (or percentages) in NL, IL, and TL. However, most ILP researchers rely on their own *rough estimation* of similarity in “frequency” (and even in “content” and “order”) of strategies/semantic formulas (e.g., Beebe et al., 1990; Takahashi & Beebe, 1993). As Kasper (1992) points out, some statistical procedures ought to be employed for a *definite estimation* of similarity. Only by doing this, can we claim the occurrence or non-occurrence of pragmatic transfer conclusively and confidently.

To sum up, the points raised above indeed encourage us to seriously consider the issue of pragmatic transferability. But at the same time, we have to duly consider a relevant and rigorous methodology in identifying the phenomenon in question.

Studies on Pragmatic Transferability

Some ILP researchers investigating pragmatic transfer made some brief reference to the “transferability” or the “conditions for transfer” in order to satisfactorily interpret and discuss their findings. Surprisingly, of the three transferability dimensions dealt with earlier for SLA research, all of the ILP researchers showed their concern with transferability on the *psycholinguistic* dimension. They in fact attempted to interpret their results on the basis of the learners’ perception of language-specificity or universality.

In her 1983 study, Olshtain carried out an interview with each of the subjects after eliciting the primary data (see above). The purpose of the interview was to establish the learners’ overall perception of apology as language-specific or language-universal. There was found to be a distinct difference between the English learners and the Russian learners of Hebrew in this respect. English speakers had a language-specific perception concerning the apology speech act in general. They tended to perceive spoken Hebrew as requiring fewer apologies due to Hebrew-specific conventions in performing this particular speech act. In contrast, the Russian learners of Hebrew were found to have a more universal perception of the apology act. They were more likely to assume that people need to apologize according to their feelings of responsibility, regardless of language and culture (see also Olshtain & Cohen, 1983, 1989). True to their language-universal perception, the Russian learners of Hebrew apologized far more often than did the native Hebrew speakers and thus showed negative transfer. With regard to the English learners of Hebrew, they followed their language-specific perception and thus produced fewer apologies than the native English speakers. Nevertheless, they performed a larger number of apologies than the native Hebrew speakers, thereby demonstrating the orientation of L1-transfer.

The examples of language-specific perception in Olshtain’s sense were abundantly presented in Robinson’s (1992) verbal protocol study of IL refusals. On the whole, her female Japanese learners of ESL perceived that refusing offers and requests as much more acceptable in American society than in Japanese society. Several of her subjects commented in the retrospective interviews as follows: verbal explicitness is important in American society and thus showing one’s “true feeling” in refusing, say, the request for borrowing money, is acceptable in the U.S., while this is not applicable to Japanese verbal behavior. This kind of sociopragmatic language-specific perception was actually reflected in the Japanese students’ relatively direct refusals in English. At the same time, such perception relevantly accounts for some cases of “non-transfer” of the Japanese refusal patterns into L2 contexts.

The learners’ perception of language-specificity was also noted at the pragmalinguistic level. House and Kasper (1987), for example, took a “nonuniversalistic” approach by claiming that the learners’ decision on transfer is based primarily on L1 language-specificity. The Danish negative marker “ikke” functions as a mitigating device and does not carry a presupposition of non-compliance, as its formal equivalents in English and German often do.

According to House and Kasper, their Danish learners at a high intermediate proficiency level seemed to perceive the function of “ikke” as L1 language-specific; and thus they avoided inappropriate transfer of it into their IL.

In Kasper (1981, cited in Kasper, 1992), her German learners of English avoided using the English equivalent of German “ich mein(e)” (= I mean) in the role play conversations with native speakers of English. In the informal interviews with some of the L2 learners, Kasper found that they perceived this mitigating routine as German language-specific.

L1-specific perception at the pragmalinguistic level was also demonstrated by Bodman and Eisenstein's (1988) gratitude study. Bodman and Eisenstein first asked bilingual speakers of English and another language to write dialogues displaying gratitude expressions in their L1s. They then asked them to translate those dialogues into English. The data obtained from the Lebanese-Arabic, Egyptian-Arabic, and Punjabi informants exhibited many of their L1 ritualized gratitude expressions, such as “May God increase your bounty” and “You are a blessing to us from God.” However, there were few instances of those expressions in spontaneous role plays performed by the advanced Arabic-, Farsi- and Punjabi-speaking learners of English. According to Bodman and Eisenstein, the learners evinced considerable awkwardness, with many hesitations and pauses, in the face-to-face communicative contexts. The learners seemed to regard those ritualized expressions of gratitude as L1-specific and thus avoided transferring them literally from their L1s. Such awareness on the part of the learners induced hesitations in their role play performance.

Blum-Kulka (1982, 1983) also illustrated the case of pragmalinguistic language-specific perception; but her “specificity” was attributed to L2, not L1. The Hebrew request “Ef sar leqabel et hatafrit?” (=Is it possible to get the menu?) is functionally equivalent to the English request “Could we see the menu?” According to Blum-Kulka, however, the English learners of Hebrew tended to avoid the use of “ef sar” in their IL Hebrew and used it mainly in the contexts where the question containing “ef sar” could be interpreted literally. Instead, in the context for asking for a menu, the learners reverted to a more transparent, shared strategy “Tavi et hatafrit, bvakasa” (=Bring the menu, please). Blum-Kulka interpreted this as a case of Hebrew (L2)-language-specific perception on the part of the learners.

In contrast to the studies reviewed above, Faerch and Kasper (1989) presented the case of L1-L2 psychotypological distance affecting L1 transfer. In the previous section on pragmalinguistic transfer, Faerch and Kasper identified the three cases of negative transfer by Danish learners of German in performing IL requests. Those were the transfer of Danish modal verbs, consultative device, and negation rule into IL German. Recall here that those formal properties in Danish were not transferred to English as L2. This tendency could be understood as the learners' perceiving German as closer to Danish, as compared to English; this low degree of psychotypological distance between Danish and German might lead to the above negative transfer into German as L2.

Unlike the above ILP studies, Takahashi (1992, 1993) explicitly addressed the issue

of pragmatic transferability by developing the design specifically for that purpose. Following Kellerman's (1977, 1978, 1986) line of research on the psycholinguistic dimension, I explored the nature of transferability of L1 Japanese indirect request strategies when Japanese learners of English encounter L2 request situations. Since this is the only study which directly focused on the transferability of pragmatic knowledge, a more elaborate review of it will be attempted below.

Based on the indirect request taxonomy developed in my 1987 study, I selected five Japanese conventional indirect request strategies and the corresponding English conventional indirect request strategies. Those requests were all realized by "conventions of usage." The term "conventions of usage" refers to the language-related conventions that govern the use of sentences with their literal meanings (Searle, 1975; Morgan, 1978). A particular request, for example, can be realized with the following convention: "Sentences stating S's wish or want that H will do A (S=speaker, H=hearer, A=act/action)" (e.g., I would like you to open the window).

I constructed four request situations in which the social distance (not so familiar) and the social status (from low to high) were held constant. The subjects were recruited to form two proficiency groups (Low/High ESL Groups). They were asked to undertake an acceptability judgment task for those five indirect request strategies in Japanese and English, respectively, for each of the four situations. Pragmatic transferability (in a narrow sense) was operationally defined as the transferability rate obtained by subtracting the acceptability rate of the English indirect request from the acceptability rate of the corresponding Japanese indirect request. By modifying Kellerman's notion of "psycholinguistic markedness," I considered the obtained transferability rate as representing the "psycholinguistic markedness" of each strategy. The interaction between the acceptability of an L1 request strategy and its obtained psycholinguistic markedness (transferability rate) further determined the language-specificity/neutrality (and thus the "pragmatic transferability" in a broad sense) of the L1 request strategy.

The situation-based data analysis revealed that the transferability of the Japanese indirect request strategies was highly context-dependent. For example, the transferability of the Japanese strategies "V-site itadaki tai no desu ga" (=I would like you to VP) and "V-site itadake masu (masen) ka" (=Would you VP?) was found to occur in the complementary distribution depending on the nature of the request situations. Furthermore, some proficiency effects on transferability were identified.

On the whole, however, it is hard to claim that conclusive evidence of pragmatic transferability was provided in my study due to some shortcomings of the design. Two problematic points could be raised in this regard. First, based on my taxonomy on "indirectness/conventions of usage" in request realization, I exclusively relied on the *theoretically-established conventional equivalence* between the Japanese and English indirect requests to be compared. I failed to initially verify that the conventional equivalence of the paired Japanese and English request strategies closely represents the learners'

perception of L1-L2 equivalence in terms of the conventions of usage.

The second problem is related to the operational definition of pragmatic transferability. With this definition, we cannot conclusively claim that the *learners' own perception* was reflected in the obtained psycholinguistic markedness (transferability rate) and thus pragmatic transferability. The "learners' own perception" is the key element for transferability research on the psycholinguistic dimension. Thus, it is not conceivable that my study yielded the findings in the psycholinguistic tradition.

Besides the above shortcomings of the design, there are two weaknesses which ought to be noted. First, it could be concluded that some contextual factors played a major role in determining transferabilities of L1 indirect request strategies. However, what kind of contextual factors specifically contributed to the transferability judgments were not fully investigated.

I extrapolated that a contextual factor of requestive imposition, in particular, may affect transferability at the pragmatic level. Koike (1989) found that Spanish learners of English produced the less polite IL request forms in both low and high imposition situations. Shimamura (1993), however, reported that the degree of imposition significantly affected the Japanese EFL learners' appropriateness judgments of English request strategies. Niki and Tajika (1994) also found that the degree of imposition determined the learners' choice of IL request forms: in the high imposition situations, their Japanese EFL learners tended to use the "requesting" strategy (e.g., *Would you...?*) and the "want statement" (e.g., *I would like to...*) more often than the "asking for permission" strategy (e.g., *Could I...?*); and this tendency formed a marked contrast to the native speakers' preference for request strategies. In light of these conflicting effects of imposition, the influence of this contextual factor on transferability would be worthwhile to pursue in the future research.

Second, my situation-based data analysis did not allow me to capture the whole picture of transferability of the five Japanese request strategies across the four situations. That is, I failed to find how and to what extent transferability was affected by the type of L1 request strategy, the learners' proficiency, the kind of request situation, and the interactions of those factors. Some improvement of the design thus should seriously be considered for future study.

Nonstructural Factors of Pragmatic Transfer and Transferability

In the area of pragmatic transfer, the following nonstructural factors have been explored in the interaction with transfer: sociopsychological factors, length-of-residence (LOR) factors, learning-context factors, and linguistic proficiency factors. With respect to the sociopsychological and LOR factors, however, no substantial findings have been yielded as to their effects on transfer. Blum-Kulka (1991), however, illustrated the case where the L2 learners' sociocultural motives induced IL-specific communication patterns, which were further transferred back to the native language. Although this study did not address the issue

of “L1” transfer, it might deserve attention here.

According to Blum-Kulka (1991), the speech act performance of American immigrants to Israel differ significantly from both American and Israeli speech act patterns. They in fact created IL-specific “intercultural” patterns of their own. The use of this intercultural style is induced by the immigrants’ sociopsychological motive to dissociate themselves both from the American and Israeli cultures and to keep their own “cultural identity.” Thus, those immigrants rely on their unique intercultural style even when speaking their native language (i.e., American English) (see also Blum-Kulka, 1990; Blum-Kulka & Sheffer, 1993; Clyne, 1979).

To my knowledge, no ILP researchers have specifically focused on the effect of LOR on pragmatic transfer. Several studies have shown that there exist some LOR effects on the learners’ development of pragmatic competence (e.g., Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1987; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). Those studies indicated that a process of approximation to the native level of use was definitely evident with an increase in the length of residence in the target-language community. However, whether or how transfer is interacting with this factor has not yet been substantiated.

In regard to the learning-context factors, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) presented a clear indication of its effect on transfer. Within the framework of the research done by Beebe et al. (1990), Takahashi and Beebe (1987) investigated which learning contexts, ESL or EFL, provided more evidence for transfer by focusing on IL refusals made by Japanese learners of ESL and EFL. They found that, while L1 transfer was observed in both learning contexts, it was far more evident in the context of EFL than ESL.

Compared to the above three nonstructural factors, ILP researchers have put more emphasis on the investigation of the effect of proficiency on pragmatic transfer. Similar to the case for SLA research, however, the issue of linguistic proficiency with respect to pragmatic transfer has been relatively controversial. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) hypothesized that L2 proficiency is positively correlated with pragmatic transfer. Their assumption was that more highly proficient learners have enough control over L2 to express the L1 native speakers’ sentiments at the pragmatic level; and thus they are more likely to transfer their L1 sociocultural norms than low proficient learners (see also Takahashi & Beebe, 1993). Takahashi and Beebe’s hypothesis above was based on their own results showing that the high proficient Japanese ESL learners more often used typically Japanese formal tone in refusing in L2. On the whole, however, their study did not clearly demonstrate the predicted proficiency effect.

With the above hypothesis, it is obviously understood that the low proficient learners are less likely to transfer their L1 pragmatic knowledge, even when they want to do so, due to their limited L2 proficiency. Quite a number of ILP studies, in fact, identified that beginners’ poor IL performance arose from their inadequate L2 linguistic proficiency (e.g., Beebe & Takahashi, 1989a, 1989b; Blum-Kulka, 1982; Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Koike, 1989; Olshtain & Cohen, 1989; Scarcella & Brunak, 1981; Tanaka, 1988; Trosborg, 1987). The

findings obtained from those studies definitely make Takahashi and Beebe's hypothesis more plausible, thereby calling for a more in-depth study of proficiency effects on pragmatic transfer.

Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper, and Ross (1995) is the only study which directly addressed the issue of pragmatic transfer and proficiency. Their primary objective was to test Takahashi and Beebe's hypothesis above. With the DCT as the data-eliciting instrument, Maeshiba et al. examined the apology strategies used by Japanese learners of ESL at different proficiency levels (intermediate and advanced). Their major finding was that the lower proficient learners were more likely to transfer their L1 apology strategies than the high proficient learners: while in only two instances did the advanced learners rely on their L1 apology strategies, the intermediate learners did transfer their L1 strategies in six instances. In consequence, Maeshiba et al.'s study did not lend support to Takahashi and Beebe's hypothesis.

Results contradicting Takahashi and Beebe's view were also provided by Takahashi and DuFon (1989) and Robinson (1992). In our 1989 study, the beginning-level Japanese learners of ESL were most similar to the Japanese control group with an L1-based pattern of bimodal distribution of indirectness. Our advanced learners, on the other hand, were found not to transfer the Japanese hinting strategies and thus were more direct in their IL requests. Robinson (1992) indicated that her lower and higher proficient Japanese ESL learners were both aware of the differences in appropriate American and Japanese refusal behaviors. However, the lower proficient subjects were more influenced by their L1 refusal style, whereas the higher proficient learners applied only the rule of English refusal in their DCT task.

Lastly, related to the issue of the proficiency effect on pragmatic transfer, I extrapolated in my 1992/1993 study that there might be some other factors which can override the proficiency effect in pragmatic transfer/transferability. As one of the possible factors, I pointed out the "contextual familiarity" by surmising as follows: familiar sociocultural contexts, rather than linguistic proficiency, may be more likely to make the learners fall back on their L1 pragmatic knowledge (see also Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Bodman & Eisenstein, 1988, for a similar claim). Examination of this possibility thus ought to be encouraged in future research.

Conclusion

Unlike mainstream SLA (see Takahashi, 1995, 1999), the majority of ILP researchers has been engaged in identifying the occurrence of transfer at both the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic levels. They indeed showed their interest in what pragmatic features are transferred from L1 to L2. In contrast, the researchers who investigated pragmatic transferability explored the factors which encourage or discourage transfer; they put more emphasis on examining the conditions under which L1 transfer is more likely or less likely to

occur. In particular, following the studies on the psycholinguistic dimension in mainstream SLA (e.g., Kellerman, 1978, 1986), the researchers pursuing pragmatic transferability focused on learners' own perception as to whether the target pragmatic features can be transferred to L2 contexts without relying on the NS baseline data. The two research positions discussed here thus are clearly distinguishable in terms of their goals and designs. The present review, however, revealed that the number of studies on pragmatic transferability is substantially small as compared to that of studies on pragmatic transfer. In view of this, "pragmatic transferability" has been a neglected aspect of ILP research, and thus such studies ought to be conducted to a greater extent in future research to deepen our understanding of the nature of transfer at the pragmatic level.

At this stage of conclusion, more concrete suggestions for future research into pragmatic transfer/transferability are in order. The following seven points are to be explored systematically and substantially.

First, as in the case of mainstream SLA, nonstructural factors have not substantially been explored with respect to transfer/transferability in ILP as well. In particular, proficiency effects on transfer/transferability should be further examined. I extrapolate that the proficiency effect might be differentially operative in the following contrasts: perception vs. production vs. reception (processing modes); sociopragmatic knowledge vs. pragmalinguistic knowledge (pragmatic knowledge); semantic formula vs. directness levels/conventions of usage (unit of analysis); and request vs. refusal/apology, etc. (speech acts). Hence, more comprehensive studies are needed before a final claim is made on the proficiency effects on transfer/transferability.

Second, the examination of how the learners' "contextual familiarity" affects their reliance on L1 ought to be encouraged as it could be an effect overriding the proficiency effect. Furthermore, the effects of "exposure/LOR" and "learning-context (EFL vs. ESL)" on L1 transfer/transferability should also be examined as factors closely related to "contextual familiarity."

Third, in order to deepen our insights into the learners' subjective theory of L1 transfer, "on-line" investigation of transferability ought to be conducted, probably using the verbal protocol procedures (see Schmidt, 1993). As one of the possible techniques, we may ask the learners to engage in concurrent thinking-aloud tasks while carrying out the experimental tasks.

Furthermore, the examination of language(s) in which the learners planned their pragmatic strategies to be used in L2 contexts should also be explored. As Cohen and Olshtain (1993) theorized, if the learners plan and execute strategies exclusively in L2, the least amount of L1 transfer would be expected. On the other hand, planning in L1 with execution consisting of translation of L1 to L2 would entail the most transfer. Planning strategies in L1 and executing them in L2 would trigger L1 transfer which is characterized by a greater amount of transfer than the first case but a smaller amount of transfer than the second case above. Again, the most useful technique for this investigation would be

introspection (Cohen & Olshtain, 1993). The findings from such an examination will surely provide us with an insightful picture of L1 transferability from the processing-constraint perspective.

Fourth, how and to what extent instruction affects the learners' transferability perception of the L1 pragmatic strategies ought to be substantially investigated in order to capture the nature of IL pragmatic performance. Furthermore, whether instruction plays a role in "triggering" and "strengthening" the projection of L1 pragmatic convention onto L2 contexts should also be explored. As in the case of the third point above, a systematic verbal protocol analysis (both concurrent thinking-aloud tasks and retrospective interviews) would make it possible for us to attain those research objectives.

The issue of instructional effects is closely related to that of learning environment/ contexts. Hence, if a verbal protocol analysis is applied to "EFL learners versus ESL learners," more insightful findings could be obtained as to instructional effects on IL performance.

Fifth, the effects of the following three factors need to be investigated with respect to their influence on L1 transferability: the interlocutors' age, gender, status relationship, and their socio-psychological orientations. Insightful findings may be obtained from the examination of the effects of age (younger generation vs. older generation), gender (male vs. female), and status relationship (status-low vs. status-high vs. status-equal).

With regard to the effect of socio-psychological factors, Adjémian (1983) and Blum-Kulka (1991) stressed the potentially strong influence of the learners' affective factors (e.g., motivation, disidentification) on transfer (see also Beebe, 1985). In fact, transfer/transferability studies on the socio-psychological (nonstructural) criteria have been totally under-explored as compared to those on linguistic and psycholinguistic (structural) dimensions in both SLA and ILP. Hence, research in that direction ought to be encouraged.

Sixth, an effort will have to be invested in examining the effectiveness of explicit teaching. Needless to say, of special concern here is to what extent L1 transfer can be checked as a result of such a consciousness-raising approach.

Finally, more effort should be invested in examining whether negative transfer from L1 actually entails negative communicative effect, i.e., miscommunication between the learners and native speakers of their target language in real communicative settings. As Kasper (1992) pointed out, ILP researchers need to explore the "the conditions for different communicative effects of divergent ('negative') transfer" (p.221), as well as the conditions under which pragmatic transfer is likely to occur.

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中間言語語用論における母語転移研究

— 新しい研究課題へ —

高 橋 里 美

1970年代後半、第二言語習得における母語転移研究は新しい局面を迎え、それまでの母語転移の発生を確認することのみを目的とした研究（transfer study）に代わり、どのような条件の下で母語が第二言語コンテキストへ転移しうるのかを探る研究（transferability study）に焦点が当てられるようになった。しかし、第二言語習得の一領域としての中間言語語用論では、90年代前半まで、母語転移があるのかどうか、あるとすれば何が転移されているのかという研究が大半を占め、母語転移の可能性を探る研究にはほとんど関心が寄せられてこなかった。本研究では、中間言語語用論における母語転移の研究を概観し、これを基に今後の研究課題について考察する。

具体的には、母語転移の発生の有無に焦点を置いた研究を、社会語用的母語転移（sociopragmatic transfer）と語用言語的母語転移（pragmalinguistic transfer）の各視点から概観する。その後、語用論レベルでの母語転移の可能性を扱った研究を紹介し、その調査研究方法等を考察する。最後に、これまでの研究を踏まえ、中間言語語用論の領域において今後必要と思われる研究課題を具体的に提示する。