

2011

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Recommended Citation

Sachtleben, Annette and Denny, Heather (2011) "The Teaching of Pragmatics as Interpreter Training," *International Journal of Interpreter Education*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 1 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/ijie/vol3/iss1/3>

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The Teaching of Pragmatics as Interpreter Training

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Abstract

Research undertaken in 2010 with an interpreting class at a New Zealand university showed that explicit teaching of pragmatic features of New Zealand English discourse helped develop the students' awareness of the differences between the semantic meaning and the pragmatic purpose of an utterance.

In this research project, the authors intended to test whether explicit classroom instruction of pragmatic features and these features' impact on meaning through the use of recorded discourse samples would be effective, considering that explicit language instruction to language learners has been researched and was found to assist success (Kasper & Roever, 2004). In the classroom, teachers used samples of spontaneous New Zealand English discourse to identify and discuss the use of pragmatic features.

In the project, the researchers also aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of classroom practice in teaching and learning pragmatics. The data for this research came from the interpreting students' reflective blogs, 2 participant surveys, and the researcher–teacher's weekly log.

Keywords: interpreter training; teaching pragmatic awareness; semi-authentic discourse samples

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The Teaching of Pragmatics as Interpreter Training

1. Introduction

For interpreters, the principle of *equivalence of sense* is vital. To follow this principle, the interpreter needs to understand the Speaker or Signer's (S) intention in order to provide an *equivalence of effect* for the Hearer (H) (Pöchhacker, 2004 p. 144). Thus understanding the pragmatic force of an utterance is just as important as understanding the lexical meaning, and interpreters need to develop pragmatic competence as part of their skill set. Crystal (1985) defines pragmatics as "the study of a language from the point of view of users, especially in the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (p. 240).

As Yates (2007) clarifies, "Because in different languages and cultures, equivalent words may have different impact, there is a danger that we may innocently transfer a construction from our first language into the use of our second although it may not have the same effect" (p. 22). Thomas (1983) puts it more bluntly: "While grammatical error may reveal a speaker to be a less than proficient language user, pragmatic failure reflects badly on him/her as a person" (p. 97). Therefore, it follows that the interpreter—in his or her incorrectly interpreting a message—who is not proficient in passing on the pragmatic message of S may cause H to infer something quite different from that which S intended.

However, the best method of raising pragmatic awareness remains unclear when training interpreters in the classroom. Excellent texts describing pragmatics (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Grundy, 2008; Yule, 1996) sometimes are too theoretical for interpreters in training. Student interpreters need practical examples linking theory to the interpreting tasks that await them. Wadensjö (1998), although not using the term *pragmatics*, refers to the contextual effect on meaning while discussing interpreting practice in a way that every interpreting student can understand. Lecercle (1999) writes in great detail using complex examples that, perhaps, are better suited to those practicing interpreters who have an academic education than to novice interpreters.

Pragmatic competence can be divided into two areas: illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. *Illocutionary competence* is the awareness of a variety of language functions and intentional ways of expressing them, such as the choice of softening words such as "just" and "perhaps" in a request. *Sociolinguistic competence* can be further subdivided into sensitivity toward dialectal variety, register and naturalness as well as the ability to understand and use cultural references and figures of speech (Bachman, 1990). *Pragmalinguistics*—that is, the study of the relationship between language items and the purpose and effect they have in a specific context (Leech, 1983) also needs to be part of the interpreting classroom.

Thus, although sociolinguistic competence and pragmalinguistics are of great importance to interpreters, interpreting educators typically find that these areas often are very difficult to teach explicitly when dealing with interpreting students' second (B) language. For the effective teaching of pragmatics, actual authentic discourse samples are needed for classroom analysis in order for interpreters to (a) initially recognize pragmatic effect and (b) identify the actual pragmatic features used (Napier, 2006; Denny, 2008).

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2. Methodology, research questions, and data collection

This qualitative teaching-research project uses the *Action Research (AR) paradigm* (Jennings & Graham, 1996; Winter, 1989), which allows for insider perspectives and potentially makes possible the adjustment of aims during the investigation. Thus, the research was co-conducted by Sachtleben as a teacher–practitioner and by Denny as a researcher–practitioner. As Dick (2000) states, “Action research provides enough flexibility to allow fuzzy beginnings while progressing towards appropriate endings”. This research study was a pilot for further work on the teaching of pragmatics, and AR allows for the development of a new hypothesis or the retesting of results arrived at in a pilot study. Researchers have successfully used AR for the evaluation of educational programmes (Jennings & Graham, 1996; Winter, 1989). In recommending AR, Dick also claims that the interpretation of data is often richer in instances where there is researcher involvement. He advises that to avoid any perception of conflict of interest, collaborative research is advisable; this allows for moderation of data analysis and critique of research methodology.

In this project, having two people working together enabled the coding of items to be moderated, thus ensuring consistency and accuracy. In AR, the use of multiple sources of evidence ensures its trustworthiness (Dick, 2000). Triangulation was achieved by drawing on data from student blogs, a journal written weekly by the teacher–practitioner, and two participant surveys that were administered at two time points: during Week 8 of the 12-week semester and 6 months after the end of the semester.

In this study, the authors sought to answer the following three research questions:

1. What evidence is there of development in the learners’ awareness of the pragmatic norms targeted in instruction?
2. What evidence is there that this awareness extends to cross-cultural awareness of pragmatic differences?
3. What evidence is there that the learners make use of this awareness of the pragmatic features targeted in instruction in their own interactions, both inside and outside the classroom?

Fourteen of the 29 interpreting students at Auckland University of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand, agreed to participate in the research. There were three main sources of the data, one of which was the students’ blogs, which were reflective and explorative in nature. These data were collated, coded for any pragmatic features noticed, and matched to the weekly lesson input to note changes and development in the participants’ understanding of pragmatic awareness. Additional data came from the two surveys, which explicitly asked the participants for comment on their perceived changes in their understanding of pragmatics in New Zealand English conversation. The final and triangulating data source was the teacher’s weekly log, in which she commented on class content and dynamics, individual student comments, technical matters, classroom management, and teaching methodology. The teacher knew the students quite well by the end of the semester and could identify who had been in New Zealand for only a short time and who was in employment where English was spoken. The teacher could then suggest reasons to contextualize and complement the participant data. Dick (2000) confirms that “Differences between data sources, used critically, can then lead the researchers and the participants towards a deeper and more accurate understanding”.

The researchers analyzed the four blogs that each learner wrote by coding for evidence of learners’ noticing language and paralinguistic features used for pragmatic effect. It is interesting to note that once students became aware of pragmatic features, they were able to notice and include others in their reflections. Although initially, the authors coded only for those pragmatic features that were introduced in the classroom, as more pragmatic features were noted in the blogs, these were added to the coding. For example, classroom-introduced features included hesitators, softeners, exaggeration, and repeated words, whereas additional themes that emerged from the learner’s blogs included silence, in-group language, and humour. Example 1 illustrates an example from a blog, with coding noted in parentheses.

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Example 1: Example from blog

Lecturer: "Should I tell?"

Student: "Yes, please. It's Friday. And it's already 3 o'clock. So, please..."

I have been in New Zealand for almost 5 years, so I now know why this student mentioned Friday afternoon: Most Kiwis are laid back and start drinking on Friday afternoon. (Analysis of cultural difference). However, if I am new to here, I will not know why he mentioned it, because it does not matter if it is Friday or not in Japan. This student perhaps understood the lecturer's implication and wanted to indicate his understanding by giving a straightforward opinion without silence. (Silence or lack of silence). He might expect the other students would laugh so he could put them in a good mood. In addition, the tone of his voice was cheeky, and it made us laugh too. (Use of humor).

The content of individual blogs differed considerably. Sometimes, the learner showed clearly explicit understanding, whereas at other times, a pragmatic feature was simply noticed. For example, an unexpected reaction to what had been said was reflected on, and a reason was posited. The reflective comments in the blogs very often referred to cross-cultural or cross-language differences. Oftentimes, a parallel situation would be explained in the context of the first-language culture to highlight a difference.

The first reflective blog posted by the students set the baseline for measuring further development of pragmatic and cultural awareness. The baseline consisted of the number of students showing awareness of these features in Blog 1. This number was compared to the number of students who noticed the same features in the second, third, and fourth set of blogs.

Example 2 lists the features used for pragmatic effect, which were identified and coded for, having been noticed and referred to in the interpreting students' reflective blogs.

Example 2: List of features

- i. Exaggeration or understatement for effect
- ii. Hesitators
- iii. Softeners
- iv. Repeated words
- v. Irony or sarcasm
- vi. Reference to the use of intonation or stress
- vii. Register between participants/use of in-group terms
- viii. Paralinguistic features/nonverbal language
- ix. Identification of a speech act
- x. Reference to politeness norms
- xi. Use of discourse makers
- xii. Silence or lack of silence
- xiii. Use of humor

The two participant surveys specifically asked about the students' perceptions of their pragmatic understanding. One of these survey questions was explicitly related to interpreter training (see Appendix).

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3. Teaching pragmatics*3.1. Resources: Semi-authentic discourse samples*

In this study, the authors trialled the use of a new resource to provide recorded naturalistic discourse samples for classroom analysis so that students could explicitly recognize pragmatic features in context. It was anticipated that a resource such as this, which can provide repeated listening, would be an effective basis for pragmalinguistic study. Authentic language samples can be analyzed and discussed. However, fully authentic samples—which include the many irregularities and imperfections of actual spoken discourse—can be difficult to record. Permission needs to be sought, the appropriate recording equipment needs to be on hand, and there may be interference from background noise, which interferes with recognition of subtle features. Thus, the authors used semi-authentic language samples to meet that need. For semi-authentic recordings, native speakers or expert speakers are told the context of a conversation and are asked to simulate the conversation in a role play. Thus, spontaneously generated language occurs, containing all the nuances of interpersonal discourse, and it can be recorded under studio conditions.

Three semi-authentic recordings of different face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987) were made: (a) a complaint about a late report, (b) an offer of help that was misunderstood and then repaired, and (c) criticism in a meeting that required steps for conflict avoidance. University colleagues familiar with the aims of teaching pragmatics as part of language learning were used as actors for the recordings. First, each actor received a description of the part to play a few days before the recording session and was entrusted to deliver it appropriately. No actor saw what part the other interlocutor had to play, nor were there any rehearsals or discussion prior to the recording being made, in order to retain the sense of spontaneous interaction. The final outcome of the actors' interaction was not known in advance but was left to resolve itself. An example of such a role-play description can be seen in Example 3.

Example 3: Example of role-play description

A. Role: Colleague (male). Scenario: Clarification and Repair.

You see [that] your colleague has a problem with her computer, and is getting behind with her work and [seems] rather stressed. You ask, "Shall I ring the IT Helpdesk to see if a techie can come over and sort your computer out?"

A. Role: Colleague (male). Scenario: Clarification and Repair.

You see [that] your colleague has a problem with her computer and is getting behind with her work and [seems] rather stressed. You ask, "Shall I ring the IT Helpdesk to see if a techie can come over and sort your computer out?"

B. Role: Colleague (female). Scenario: Clarification and Repair.

You are a highly experienced and competent computer software designer who knows how to fix computers by yourself. Your computer has crashed twice today, but you need to finish the current job before you can actually take the time to fix it. Your colleague says, "Shall I ring the IT Helpdesk to see if a techie can come over and sort your computer out?" You feel really quite insulted that your skills are simply not recognized.

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The three recordings that resulted were between 5 and 6.5 minutes in length. Because one actor did not know what another would say, the ensuing dialogues were spontaneous and had the authentic qualities of stopping and restarting as well as using pauses, repeated words, and a number of filler words (e.g., “well”). In addition, because the exchanges were problematic, the actors used the appropriate pragmatic devices naturally to convey the underlying meaning. This was found to be helpful at the initial teaching stage. More subtle nuances of intonation combined with stressed words became clear with repeated listening.

The recordings were in digital format, meaning that they could be loaded onto the online platform used at the university for student self study as well as played in class through the computer and ceiling speakers. This digital format ensured that each student could hear equally well regardless of where he or she was seated. The computer program that was used allowed the teacher total control of stopping, starting, and replaying single phrases. This was especially efficient when particular phrases were being discussed and analyzed by the class.

3.2. *The interpreting class: Students, content, and parameters*

The class for this research project consisted of 29 students (27 female, two male), of whom only one had been born in New Zealand and had English as her mother tongue. Many of the students had come to New Zealand as children, whereas others had come within recent years. Three students had been in New Zealand for only 3 weeks when the class began. There were 12 mother tongues: Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Japanese, Hungarian, Russian, Macedonian, French, Urdu, Hindi, Tongan, and English. Three of the students were already working as interpreters, including in the courts. Most of the students had been employed in various jobs, and some continued to work part time while they studied part time. Only the three recent arrivals from Mainland China had never been employed at all. This rich diversity led to productive classroom discussions and deep intercultural awareness.

The course titled “Oral Discourse for Interpreting” was compulsory for first-year students in the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Interpreting program. The content that was covered included pragmatics, English phonology and pronunciation, and some basic interpreting techniques such as shadowing, as well as idioms and common text types. The course length was 12 instruction weeks, with a 2-hour class each week and a 1-hour computer laboratory practice session. Further practice materials were available online for self study.

3.3. *The teaching methodology*

The use of the semi-authentic discourse samples was the backbone of the teaching of pragmatics. Because each discourse sample lasted approximately 5 minutes, not one was analyzed in its entirety in a single class. Before playing the recording, the teacher explained the context. Then, she played the sample three times without comment. Specific questions to students about general content elicited details about meaning. At the next stage, more detailed questions about the pragmatic impact were asked. Confident students usually responded first. In addition to the listening and aural analyses of the discourse samples, there followed focused written tasks associated with the text; these tasks required identification of certain features—for example, the pragmatic purpose of repeating a word, or the use of a softener. These written tasks could be done individually, with a peer, or in a small group.

In addition to this work, there was explicit teaching of a range of pragmatic features, which were identified in the listening and analysis class work. Each student was referred to an online glossary of pragmatic terms and features. In the class content, the instructor aimed to introduce the most common pragmatic features first, such as intonation and stress, hesitators, or softeners. Only three pragmatic features were taught per class, although more features were often referred to as they were embedded in the discourse sample. The reason for this was in part because, according to Scarino (2009), pragmatic awareness is a developmental process that needs time. She also referred to the fact that students need to capture their own “participation in communication, understood as the interchange of meaning, and their reflective analysis of what is at play, in particular instances of communication across cultures” (Scarino, 2009, p. 68).

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While the metalanguage for class discussion was being learned, easier samples were discussed. When students used their own terminology, this was accepted, and then the typical pragmatic term was introduced and clarified. Sometimes, there was disagreement among the students regarding the pragmatic meaning of an utterance. The disputed phrase would be discussed, thus clarifying the context, exploring the relationship between S and H, and trying some variation in the intonation and prominence or stress. However, the instructor pointed out that sometimes, a speaker may actually demonstrate ambivalence because, as Leech (1997) reminds us, “It is often in the speaker’s interest, and in the interests of politeness, to allow the precise force of a speech act to remain unclear” (p. 99).

All of the discourse samples had been listened to and analyzed within 8 weeks. Every 2 weeks, the students wrote a reflective blog—four blogs in all. First, they transcribed a short conversation or part of a conversation in which they had participated or observed. Then, they were asked to analyze it for any pragmatic meaning and pinpoint the various pragmatic features that were present. Next, they were asked to compare the words used with their first-language lexical equivalent, and then with the sense equivalent. Finally, they were asked how the differences would affect interpreting the conversation into their mother tongue. The task guidelines were as follows:

- How was the pragmatic meaning shown? (Sarcasm/ exaggeration/ softeners/ hedging/ understatement/ sentence stress & intonation/ other)
- Would the equivalent words when interpreted into your LOTE carry the same pragmatic meaning? What does this mean to you as an interpreter?

4. Results and discussion

Critical reflection of the results of the teaching activities and cross-referencing of the different data sets lead us to make conclusions about the effectiveness of this teaching approach. Analysis of the data from the reflective blogs showed an increase in the number of students showing awareness of all the pragmatic features. The survey data provided evidence that the learners did make use of their awareness of the pragmatic features targeted in instruction in their own interactions both inside and outside the classroom. Although there may have been an element of “pleasing the teacher” in these survey responses, earlier data from the blogs detailing the development of awareness could not have been contrived because identification of features was not possible without awareness. The blog data are shown in Figure 1, and the development of awareness that was extrapolated from the blog data is detailed in section 4.1.

4.1. Blog Data Analysis

The most noticeable increase in student awareness of pragmatic meaning during the period of instruction was in the area of stress and intonation. This was due to the classroom input, as this area was referred to in the first class and consistently thereafter. It was a new concept for many of the interpreting students who had learned English as a Second Language, and thus, it had added impact. Additionally, in this class, some time was also spent on developing clear and fluent English pronunciation, so stress and intonation carried a double learning load.

Cross-cultural awareness was a matter of high interest to all of the students, and an increase in conscious awareness of cross-cultural differences was the next most notable change in their reflective notes. We also noted a considerable rise in student awareness of pragmatic impact in the area of hesitators. This feature was introduced early in the curriculum and was prominent in the discourse samples being analyzed. Hesitators, although common in English interpersonal communication, are often not “noticed” by interpreters, who may focus on the message rather than on an interruption in the smooth delivery of the message. As it became clear that hesitators also carried sociopragmatic meaning, these interpreters in training were able to adjust to the pragmatic meaning of an utterance.

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The pragmatic meaning of softeners and silence (or its lack) in English also featured strongly in students' changing awareness of pragmatic features. Softeners are a noticeable feature of New Zealand (NZ) English interpersonal communication. They are often used in the workplace environment to provide a more egalitarian discourse, as equal status is a cultural ideal if not a reality. Silence, on the other hand, is seen as socially inappropriate in NZ English; thus, it is typically avoided. To ensure that a speaker's turn is not interrupted, hesitators or repeated words are often used (Holmes, 2001).

Awareness of in-group language also had 30% growth. It had limited occurrence in the discourse samples used but occurred often in the language samples chosen by the students for their blog analyses. In-group language is commonly a feature of informal language or of closed groups, both of which are reflected in student conversation. This feature was introduced later in the class curriculum but had high interest for the students.

Politeness strategies of NZ English became easier to recognize when the purpose of softeners and the aim of egalitarianism in workplace requests became familiar. In their later blogs, students recognized and reflected on politeness strategies, particularly in a cross-cultural context, as they came to understand the use of stress to highlight desired lack of imposition or to define a task.

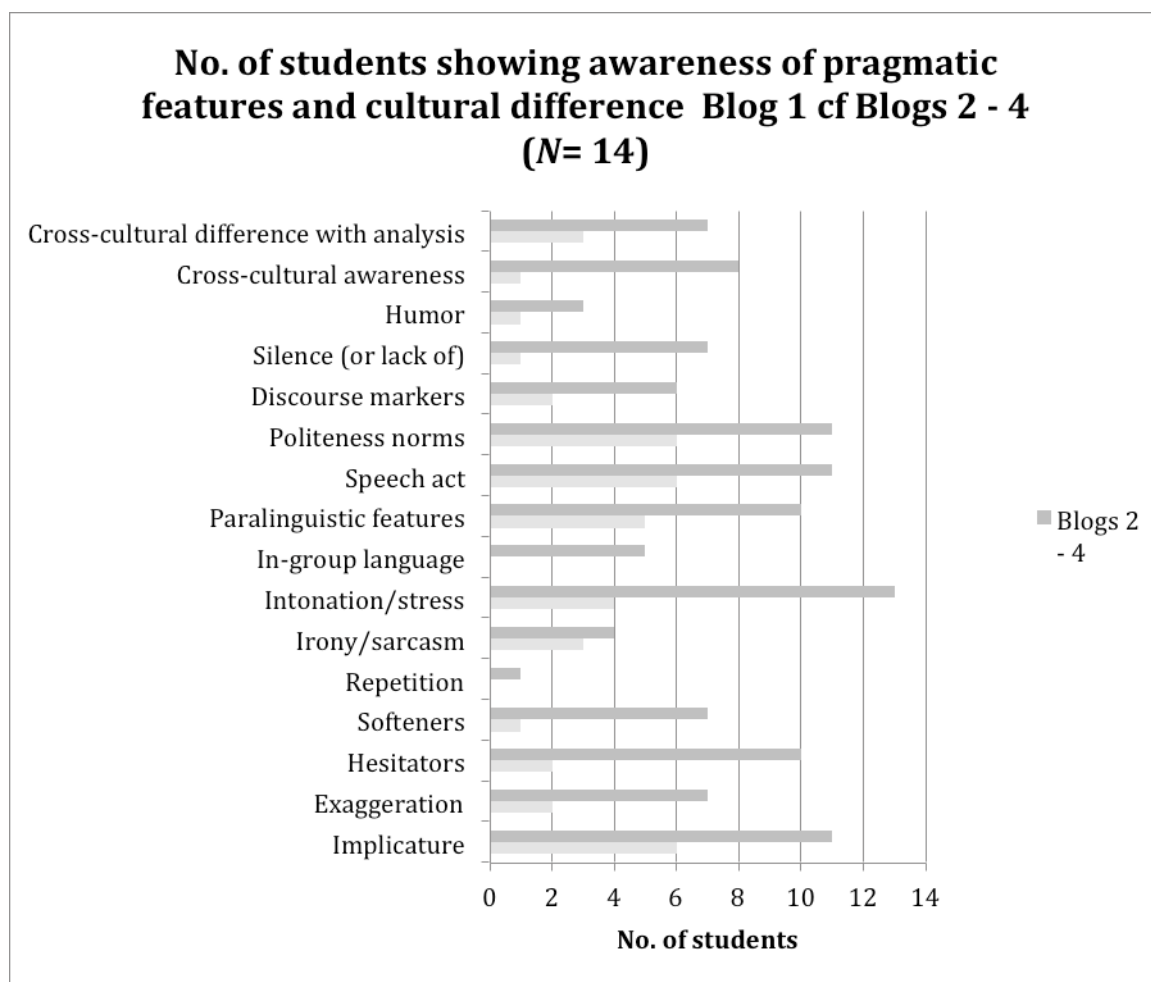


Figure 1: Growth of awareness of pragmatic features and cultural difference, using the first blog as the baseline

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Paralinguistic features—for example, a sigh, a short laugh, or an expressive “ahh” were specifically introduced in the classroom after the second blog posting was written. However, this area showed considerable growth, as it proved to be an area of salience in the discourse samples and of high interest to 30 percent of the students. Discourse markers and speech acts that were introduced halfway through the course were not noticed much by students and were, perhaps, too theoretical to engage the students’ interest. Occasionally, in the blogs, there were unsolicited comments about the class content that affirmed this approach to teaching pragmatics to interpreters. Two such comments can be seen in Example 4.

Example 4: Examples of students’ unsolicited blog comments

This tells me: as an interpreter, when we try to interpret something for people, we not only need to listen carefully what it has been pronounced, but should also be aware of cultural background of the speakers during the conversation. And it is very important for the interpreter to take the context of the conversation into account when we interpret for other people. (Mandarin 2, blog 2)

As an interpreter, especially legal interpreter, it has been very useful to learn about pragmatics because legal interpreter is the voice of the non-English speaker on courts and s/he should render a complete and accurate version of the Source Language message by conserving every single element of information including every pragmatic feature like sarcasm, exaggeration, softeners, hesitation, hedging, sentence stress and intonation. An equivalent message which keeps the same meaning, implied meaning, language level and register is critical to the outcome of the case. Any change from source language to target language can affect the credibility of [the] witness. (Mandarin 11, blog 4)

4.2. *Survey data analysis and student comments*

The survey questions (as seen in Appendix) focused on the students’ perception of their understanding and increased understanding of pragmatic features. Fourteen of the 29 interpreting students had agreed to participate in the research. All of their responses were positive and affirming. One student responded to the survey question by writing the following observation:

If I do not take this paper [subject], I will not think about the implied meaning or why a joke is funny . . . Now when I talk to someone in English I always think what this person is trying to tell me and what he/she wants from me.

Students gave examples of their interpreting into the target language to show the pragmatic purpose of an utterance since their learning about the impact of pragmatics on meaning. A Cantonese speaker commented that in English, among young teenagers, the phrase “I’ll call you later” meant an invitation refusal. Thus, she would interpret it into the equivalent “I’m not coming.” Conversely, the phrase “You have a dragon knife in your hand” would be interpreted into English as “How can I refuse your request?” as the source-language statement implied social powerlessness on the speaker’s part.

There were many comments from students on how much better the social expectations of New Zealanders were understood and how politeness was often shown using softeners in NZ English.

I believe, learning about pragmatics has been very useful in participating in English conversations, because, as I notice things I understand things better than before. As an interpreter I have also started to analyse whether the pragmatic feature would be used the same way in my LOTE [language other than English] and if not, then what would be the alternative, and the reflective

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journals have helped me develop the habit of noticing the pragmatic features in English as well as my LOTE which is Urdu. Overall, I believe learning about pragmatics is highly useful for interpreters, as it helps you understand things better, as pragmatics provides an in depth explanation of every word we use in our sentences and shows when to say what, why we have said it and how to say it. (Urdu 1, survey 1)

Only one respondent answered that she had not noticed growth in her awareness of pragmatics in NZ English, but she ascribed this to the fact she has lived in New Zealand since she was 4 years old and, thus, had grown up with the cultural understanding of NZ English pragmatic use.

Six months after the semester had ended, 86% of the survey respondents reported that they still consistently noticed the pragmatic content in NZ English conversation; the remaining 14% responded that this happened only when they were interpreting. Eighty-six percent also reported that their awareness of cross-cultural differences had increased as a result of the classroom work and that their cross-cultural awareness was continuing to develop. One respondent wrote "I've also started thinking about what [other] 2nd language English speakers might misconstrue." Generally, there was acceptance that pragmatic features were present in most NZ English conversations that they listened to or participated in. The responses affirmed the usefulness of the class content and the effectiveness of this teaching method for developing pragmatic awareness among interpreters.

4.3. Conclusion

The results illustrate that using the naturalistic semi-authentic discourse samples in the classroom led the students to an explicit awareness of pragmatic features being used in NZ English conversation. Of particular benefit was the classroom analysis which focussed on word stress and intonation. These features were then consciously analyzed by the students in their reflective blogs. The data from the blogs also showed how much the students had learned to listen for and identify implied meaning, politeness strategies, and the purpose of speech acts. Interpreters often disregard hesitators and repeated words because these individuals are listening for the actual message, which they then interpret. Thus, the growth in awareness of the pragmatic purpose of hesitators and repeated words in conversation may lead to a more sensitive message in the target language when these students begin to work as interpreters.

Generally, there was evidence of considerable growth of awareness of cross-cultural differences and their means of expression. Although teaching pragmatics may be difficult, it is of great importance to interpreters. A Mandarin speaker summed it up: "[P]ragmatics to understanding the source language is like water to fish."

As the number of participants in this single class is small, these results cannot be generalized. However, with the wealth of qualitative data, similar results may be obtained in other teaching contexts. In continuing research into teaching the pragmatics of NZ English to learners of English in New Zealand, it is hoped that these results will be confirmed. Other interpreter educators and researchers may consider implementing this approach in teaching interpreters of spoken and signed language about pragmatic features of spoken language. The authors are considering future research with colleagues in the Faculty of Health, into the teaching of awareness of the use of pragmatics in medical discourse between professionals and patients. Another area for future research into the teaching of pragmatics to student interpreters could focus specifically on legal discourse.

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6. Appendix

Oral Discourse for Interpreting: Assessment 1—Reflective Journal

Instructions: During the first 8 weeks of the semester, you will keep a fortnightly journal of your growing awareness and understanding of the pragmatic content of English conversations based on the conversations that we study in class and those that you participate in or listen to. You will also comment on the differences between the pragmatic content of equivalent situations in your Language Other Than English (LOTE). Each entry will be approximately 400 words and will include examples that you have analysed pragmatically.

To assist you with your journal writing for the first three entries, think of a conversation you recently heard or took part in and then try to answer the following questions:

- Who were the participants in the conversation? (friends or strangers or classmates)
- Where was the conversation taking place?
- What did the participants want from each other? (friendship/help/a good time/sympathy/other)
- How was the pragmatic meaning shown? (body language/ sarcasm/ exaggeration/ softeners/ hedging/ understatement/ sentence stress and intonation/ other)
- Would the equivalent words when interpreted into your LOTE carry the same pragmatic meaning? What does this mean to you as an interpreter?

Week 8: Final journal entry survey. Please answer these additional questions:

- Did the pragmatic features we study in class help your understanding of spoken interaction?
- How useful were the classroom examples and learning materials?
- Do you feel you understand more about pragmatics than at the beginning of semester? Please comment.
- Has learning about pragmatics been useful for you as a participant in English conversations, and as an interpreter?

Survey 6 months later—trigger questions:

- Do you still notice the pragmatic content in English conversation . . .
 a. All the time? b. Only when interpreting? c. Occasionally? d. Not at all?
- Do you think you can now understand and respond more automatically to pragmatic content when taking part in English conversations? If yes, please give examples.
- Have the features you studied in class been part of the everyday conversations you have heard or participated in during the last 6 months? If yes, please give examples.