

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Pragmatic Transfer in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to the process of learning another language after the native language has been learned. The important aspect is that SLA refers to the learning of a nonnative language *after* the learning of the native language. The second language or commonly known as L2 can refer to any language learned *after* learning the L1, regardless of whether it is the second, third, fourth, or fifth language. While the word *acquisition* is used broadly in the sense that we talk about language use, this term refers to anything dealing with using or acquiring a second/foreign language. SLA generally refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment in which that language is spoken. The important point is that learning in a second language environment takes place with considerable access to speakers of the language being learned, whereas learning in a foreign language environment usually does not (Gass and Selinker, 2008, p. 7). Moreover, in learning L2, the speaker should be understand and carry out linguistic action in a target language and how they acquire L2 pragmatic knowledge. Thus, interlanguage pragmatics will carry out a transfer in process of understanding the target language.

According to Odlin (1989, cited in Kasper, 1992, p. 205), transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired. This transfer may call pragmatic transfer by Beebe *et al.* (1990) who define pragmatic transfer as ‘transfer of L1 sociocultural competence in performing L2 speech acts or any other aspects of L2 conversation, where the speaker is trying to achieve a particular function of language. Hence, based on Kasper (1992), pragmatic transfer in interlanguage pragmatics shall refer to the influence exerted by learners’ pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information.

Furthermore, Leech (1983) distinguishes between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics to identify two major types of pragmatic failure. He defines pragmalinguistics as the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions. Thus, pragmalinguistic transfer will occur when illocutionary force in some particular linguistic materials L1 give effect to learners’ mindset and the production of form-function mappings in L2. Next, Leech defined sociopragmatics as the sociological interface of pragmatics, where the participants’ performance and interpretation of linguistic action were influenced by their social perceptions. Moreover, when learners use L1 pragmatic knowledge equally with an L2 target, according to Kasper (1992), it called positive transfer. The use of the first language in a second language context when the resulting second language form is correct (Gass and Selinker, 2008). However, positive transfer will cause in miscommunication if native speakers pragmatic

behavior is considered inappropriate for non-native speakers. This failure will cause negative transfer where learners' sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic L1 knowledge being transformed in L2 contexts are different from the pragmatic perception and behaviors of the target community. The use of the first language in a second language context resulting in a nontarget-like second language form (Gass and Selinker, 2008).

2.1.2 Speech Acts

All linguistic communication involves linguistic acts, and the unit of it is the production of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of the speech act (Searle, 1975, p.16). He explains more that the production of a sentence token under certain conditions is a speech act, and speech acts are the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication. The speech act or acts performed in the utterance of a sentence are as a function of the sentence meaning. A speaker may mean exactly the same like what he says, but the meaning can be also more than that just what he says.

Furthermore, Austin (1962, p. 94) states in which to say something *is* to do something, or *in* saying something we do something, and even *by* saying something we do something. He says that the act of 'saying something' in literary meaning is called a locutionary act. A locutionary act is equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference, which again is roughly equivalent to 'meaning' in the traditional sense. When 'saying something', a

speaker must have a purpose in a particular occasion why he says something. Thus the speaker does an illocutionary act while performing a locutionary act, for example informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, etc. From 'saying something', it may give effect to a hearer's feelings, thoughts, or action which is called perlocutionary act. Austin gives an example of three acts above, "Shoot her!". The locutionary act is the speaker said to me "Shoot her!" meaning by 'shoot' shoot and referring by 'her' to *her*. The second, the illocutionary act is the speaker urged or ordered me to shoot her. The last, the perlocutionary act is the speaker persuaded or got me to shoot her.

Yule (1996, p. 49) claims that, of these types of speech acts, the most distinctive one is illocutionary force: "Indeed, the term speech act is generally interpreted quite narrowly to mean only the illocutionary force of an utterance". Moreover, in order to complete more about Austin's classification of illocutionary acts, Searle (1979, p. 12-20) proposes five classifications of illocutionary acts, which include:

- Representatives or assertives: these speech acts constitute assertions carrying true or false values (e.g. statements);
- Directives: in these speech acts, there is an effort on the part of the speaker to have the hearer do something (e.g. request, advice);
- Commissives: speech acts of this kind create an obligation on the part of the speaker; that is, they commit the speaker to doing something (e.g. promises);

- Expressive: these speech acts express an attitude or an inner state of the speaker which says nothing about the world (e.g. apologies, congratulations, compliments);
- Declarations: speech acts in which declarative statements are successfully performed and no psychological state is expressed (e.g. an excommunication).

2.1.3 Face-threatening Act (FTA)

According to Gass and Selinker (2008, p. 61), all competent adult members of a society have face and rational capacities. 'Face', which means the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself, consists in two related aspects:

- a. Negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction, such as to freedom of action and freedom from imposition.
- b. Positive face: the positive consistent self-image or personality (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants.

Nevertheless, not all people's acts are able to satisfy the face of speaker and hearer. Face-threatening act (FTA) is the act that threatens either negative or positive face of the hearer. Refusals, on the other hand, may threaten the hearer's positive face because they may imply that what he/she says is not favored by the

speaker. In an attempt to avoid FTAs, interlocutors use specific politeness strategies to minimize the threat according to a rational assessment of the face risk to participants.

2.1.4 Social Status

There are some factors that considered in the study of speech acts, such as social status, social distance, and gender. Thereby, this study is more concerned with social status of respondents. The role of social status in communication involves the ability to recognize each other's social position (Leech 1983; Brown and Levinson 1987; Holmes 1995). Holmes (1995) claimed that people with high social status are more prone to receive deferential behavior, including linguistic deference and negative politeness. Thus, those with lower social status are inclined to avoid offending those with higher status and show more respect to them.

2.1.5 Classification of Refusal Strategies

In order to investigate the classification of refusal strategies used by the respondents, this classification is based on Beebe *et al.* (1990).

1. Direct:

A. Performative (e.g., "I refuse")

B. Nonperformative statement

1. "No"

2. Negative willingness/ability (“I can’t.” “I won’t.” “I don’t think so.”)

2. Indirect

- A. Statement of regret (e.g., “I’m sorry...”, “I feel terrible...”)
- B. Wish (e.g., “I wish I could help you...”)
- C. Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., “My children will be home that night.”; “I have a headache.”)
- D. Statement of alternative
 - 1. I can do X instead of Y (e.g., “I’d rather...” “I’d prefer...”)
 - 2. Why don’t you do X instead of Y (e.g., “Why don’t you ask someone else?”)
- E. Set condition for future or past acceptance (e.g., “If you had asked me earlier, I would have...”)
- F. Promise of future acceptance (e.g., “I’ll do it next time”; “I promise I’ll...” or “Next time I’ll...” – using “will” of promise or “promise”)
- G. Statement of principle (e.g., “I never do business with friends.”)
- H. Statement of philosophy (e.g., “One can’t be too careful.”)
- I. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor
 - 1. Threat/statement of negative consequences to the requester (e.g., “I won’t be any fun tonight” to refuse an invitation)
 - 2. Guilt trip (e.g., waitress to customers who want to sit a while: “I can’t make a living off people who just order coffee.”)

3. Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion); insult/attack (e.g., “Who do you think you are?”; “That’s a terrible idea!”)
 4. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
 5. Let interlocutor off the hook (e.g., “Don’t worry about it.”; “That’s okay.” “You don’t have to.”)
 6. Self-defense (e.g., “I’m trying my best.” “I’m doing all I can do.” “I no do nutting wrong.”)
- J. Acceptance that functions as a refusal
1. Unspecific or indefinite reply
 2. Lack of enthusiasm
- K. Avoidance
1. Nonverbal
 - a. Silence
 - b. Hesitation
 - c. Do nothing
 - d. Physical departure
 2. Verbal
 - a. Topic switch
 - b. Joke
 - c. Repetition of part of request, etc. (e.g., “Monday?”)
 - d. Postponement (e.g., “I’ll think about it.”)
 - e. Hedging (e.g., “Gee, I don’t know.” “I’m not sure.”)

Adjuncts to Refusals

1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement (That's a good idea..."; "I'd love to...")
2. Statement of empathy (e.g., "I realize you are in a difficult situation.")
3. Pause filler (e.g., "uhh"; "well"; "oh"; "uhm")
4. Gratitude/appreciation

The additional according Nguyen's formulae (2006) are :

1. Rhetorical question
2. Restatement
3. Unwillingness/insistance

These are the explanations of the formulae for analyzing the gathered refusal strategies (Nguyen, 2006, p. 34-37):

a. Direct

A. Performative

According to Leech (1983, p.215), performatives are "self-naming utterances, in which the performative verb usually refers to the act in which the speaker is involved at the moment of speech".

For example: I refuse to cancel the class.

B. Non-performative statement

1. "No"

In this strategy, refusals are performed by a flat "no" with no internal modification. The word "No" is a direct way of refusal. Saying "No" to someone

is an FTA. It is usually followed by language softeners, except in a few cases, when people are extremely direct.

For example: No, I don't want to.

2. Negative willingness ability

This category includes some expressions which contain negations. Negation can be expressed by the negative particle "Not", or by using any word that semantically negates a proposition.

For example: I can't lend you my car.

II. Indirect

The indirect continuum consists of the following strategies:

A. Statement of regret

The words "sorry", "regret" mean that someone has made a mistake, and feels bad about that. Statements that contain these words are classified as regret/apology.

For example: I'm sorry that I don't have enough money to lend you.

B. Statement of wish

In this category, the respondent indirectly refuses the request by indicating a wish.

For example: I wish I can do it for you.

C. Excuse/reason/explanation

The respondent indirectly refuses the request by indicating some reasons, which may be general or specific.

For example: I have an important meeting tonight.

D. Statement of alternative

While the respondent cannot adhere to the request, s/he suggests an alternative in which the request can be fulfilled.

For example: What about you asking Belinda to do it for you?

E. Set condition for future or past acceptance

By using a hypothetical condition as a reason for refusing, the speaker aims to direct the refusal to a situation when it is better if the requester has asked in advance.

For example: I would be happy to change it for you, if I were not too busy this weekend.

F. Promise of future acceptance

In some situations, the refusal may contain a promise that the requests will be accomplished at later time, when there are favorable conditions for its completion.

For example: I'll buy it for you on your next birthday.

G. Statement of principle

In this category, the respondent indicates a statement which s/he has followed for a long time. Thus if they comply with the request at that time, they might violate the principle.

For example: I never lend money to strangers.

H. Rhetorical question

Some people want to express what they think about a request by asking a rhetorical question.

For example: Why do you want to spend that much when you don't have it?

I. Threat/statement of negative consequences

The respondent attempts to dissuade the interlocutor by making some threats that may have a negative impact on the speakers if the respondent agrees to perform the task.

For example: If you don't see me then, you will miss out.

J. Restatement

The respondent wants to repeat part of the request in an attempt to ask the requester to do the task.

For example: I've scheduled the test for a particular day and you must be there.

K. Unwillingness/insistence

The person requested is unwilling to comply with the request, and he/she shows this unwillingness by a statement illustrated in the example below.

For example: I don't have that kind of money.

L. Postponement

The hearer wishes to postpone what is requested to a later time, but without giving a specific time. This can be considered as a phatic refusal.

For example: Not today.

Adjuncts to Refusals

These strategies include adjuncts which function as extra modifications to protect the speaker's positive face.

A. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement

For example: I'd love to help.

B. Statement of empathy

For example: I realize you are in a difficult situation.

C. Addressing terms

For example: Sir, Ma'am

2.2 Review of Related Studies

Among recent studies that have been investigating the refusal speech act, Beebe *et al.* (1990) found that Japanese refuse differently according to the status of interlocutors, while Americans are more affected by the degree of familiarity or the social distance between interlocutors. Japanese display a different frequency of semantic formulae between higher and lower status requesters, while Americans do not. These studies are cross-cultural rather than intercultural.

In 2001, Yamagashira conducted a study in investigating pragmatic transfer which occurred in Japanese ESL refusals. This study is comparing the language patterns used to make these refusals by both Japanese and Americans in different situations, and considering whether pragmatic transfer could be found or not. Also examined is whether or not the L2 proficiency, the time spent in the US, and explicit instruction on pragmatic knowledge affect the Japanese speakers. Indeed, the results show that pragmatic transfer does occur.

There is also a study held by Nguyen in 2006 about cross-cultural pragmatic in refusals. This study investigates similarities and differences in refusals of requests between Australian English native speakers (AEs), and Vietnamese English learners (VEs) using a modified version of the discourse completion task (DCT) developed by Beebe *et al.* (1990). It was found that the

frequency of use of speech acts of refusals (SARs) by AEs is different from that by VEs, though they do share some similarities. While AEs share the same number of SARs when they communicate with their interlocutors, VEs are more sensitive to the social status and the social distance of the requesters. In addition, and related to differences in culture, AEs and VEs also differ in the ways they say “NO” to their conversational partners. VEs are apt to express refusals more elaborately. They used more statements of regret, more statements of sympathy, more addressing terms and more reason/excuse/explanations in their refusals than AEs. The excuse/reason/explanations given by VEs reveal their reluctance to express their disinclination to comply, in contrast to the AEs.

Meanwhile, Wannaruk (2008) also has held a study about pragmatic transfer in Thai ESL refusals. This study investigates similarities and differences between refusals in American English and Thai and incidences of pragmatic transfer by Thai ESL learners when making refusals. The participants of the study include Thai and American native speakers and ESL learners. ESL data for refusals were compared with similar data elicited from native speakers of American English and Thai. Results indicate that overall all three groups share most of the refusal strategies and that pragmatic transfer exists in the choice and content of refusal strategies. Awareness of a person of a higher status and the characteristics of being modest in L1 culture motivate pragmatic transfer. Language proficiency is also an important factor in pragmatic transfer. In making refusals, EFL learners with lower English proficiency translate from L1 to L2 because of their lack of L2 pragmatic knowledge.