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To cite this article: Istvan Kecskes (2015): How does pragmatic competence develop in bilinguals?, International Journal of Multilingualism, DOI: [10.1080/14790718.2015.1071018](https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2015.1071018)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2015.1071018>



Published online: 19 Aug 2015.



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How does pragmatic competence develop in bilinguals?[†]

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(Received 10 October 2014; accepted 28 June 2015)

This paper aims to discuss how the emerging new language with its own developing socio-cultural foundation affects the existing L1-governed knowledge and pragmatic competence of *adult sequential bilinguals*. It is assumed that these bilinguals already have an L1-governed pragmatic competence at place, which will be adjusted to accommodate the socio-cultural requirements of the new language. So there is no separate L2 pragmatic competence. What happens is that the *existing L1-governed pragmatic competence becomes bilingual pragmatic competence* while changing dynamically under the influence of the new language and its socio-cultural requirements and behaviour patterns blending the emerging features and skills with the existing ones. I will argue that there is a basic difference between the development of pragmatic competence in L1 and the sequential development of bilingual pragmatic competence. While the former is controlled mainly by the socio-cultural environment the latter is mostly motivated by individual will and preference. In the L1 language development and social development go hand in hand as a mostly subconscious, automatic and instinctive process in which individual consciousness and willingness to acquire social skills and knowledge play a relatively limited role. The whole process depends mainly on exposure to and nature of socio-cultural environment. Bilingual pragmatic competence, however, develops differently. When the new language is added gradually the existing L1-governed pragmatic competence is affected (besides exposure to L2 and environment) and motivated by individual control, consciousness and willingness to modify existing skills and behaviour patterns and acquire particular social skills and ignore others. This is not to say that the socio-cultural exposure and environment is not important. It of course is. However, it appears that there is more individual control included in bilingual pragmatic development than is the case in L1 pragmatic development.

Keywords: Pragmatic competence; sequential bilingual development; language socialization; formulaic language; conceptual socialization; situation-bound utterances

1. Introduction

This paper discusses bi- and multilingual pragmatic competence that has been a somewhat neglected area in the field of bilingualism. There are, of course, many articles about bilingual language use but it has scarcely been discussed what role pragmatic

[†]Some of the ideas and claims in this paper were presented first in Kecskes, Istvan “Intercultural Pragmatics” (Oxford University Press, 2013).

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competence plays in the linguistic behaviour of bilinguals, and how existing pragmatic competence changes under the influence of the new language. It is important to emphasize that I am talking about bilingual pragmatic competence here because there is a large amount of literature on interlanguage pragmatics whose focus is on the development of pragmatic skills in the second language as if L2 pragmatic competence were a separate phenomenon. This paper emphasizes that there is no separate interlanguage or L2 pragmatic competence. People, no matter how many languages they speak have one pragmatic competence which is modified dynamically depending on the exposure to different languages and cultures and individual preferences.

Because of their monolingual focus, pragmatic competence has never been a primary issue in the agenda of linguistic/philosophical pragmatics or other subfields of pragmatics with the exception of interlanguage pragmatics that has researched pragmatic competence mainly from the perspective of speech act production and comprehension in L2, and L1 to L2 transfer. Gricean pragmatics has not paid much attention to the issue either. This lack of attention may also be explained by the fact that linguistics proper has never really dealt with pragmatics competence. Chomsky (1978, p. 224) introduced a distinction between 'grammatical competence', which is related to form and meaning, and 'pragmatic competence', which involves 'knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use, in conformity with various purposes'. Appropriateness of use is expressed in terms of the relations between intentions and purposes and between linguistic means, of certain forms and meanings, within linguistic institutional settings (Kasher, 1991). Chomsky, however, did not take any interest in this pragmatic competence and considered the separation of linguistic competence from pragmatic competence to be indispensable, for practical reasons, for the ability to explore and discover the pure, formal properties of the genetically preprogrammed linguistic system.

As mentioned above interlanguage pragmatics is the subfield that has focused on pragmatic development. It puts L2 pragmatic competence into the centre of attention through pragmatic transfer studies. Pragmatic transfer as summarized in Bou-Franch (1998) has been referred to as sociolinguistic transfer (Wolfson, 1981), transfer of L1 socio-cultural competence or cross-linguistic influence (Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990), transfer of conversational features or as discourse transfer (Odlin, 1989) reflecting the different ideas about pragmatics and about transfer. The most influential definition was given by Kasper (1992) who argued that pragmatic transfer refers to the influence that previous pragmatic knowledge has on the use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge. Kecskes and Papp (2000) gave a different and broader understanding of transfer. For them the word 'transfer' denotes any kind of movement and/or influence of concepts, knowledge, skills, linguistic elements (structures, forms), *in either direction* between the L1 and the subsequent language(s). Their understanding of the term is not restricted to L1→L2 influence but presupposes bidirectionality and includes not only structure and form transfer but knowledge and skill transfer.

2. The nature of pragmatic competence

There is no doubt about the fact that human beings have pragmatic competence. It allows us to use language appropriately in concrete situations, utter relevant arguments, act properly and be considered a competent communicator. Pragmatic competence is something like what Descartes (1637, p. 6) called 'le Bon Sens': 'Good sense is,

of all things among men, the most equally distributed.’ Yes, this sense is equally distributed but differently manifested in different languages. Gumperz and Gumperz (2005) confirmed this with saying that monolingual people and multilingual people do not differ in what they do with language, but in how they do what they do.

Discussing the nature of pragmatic competence we should start with communicative competence, a term coined by Dell Hymes in 1966 in reaction to Chomsky’s (1965) notion of ‘linguistic competence’. For Hymes communicative competence included intuitive functional knowledge (linguistic competence) and control of the principles of language usage (pragmatic competence). Hymes (1972, p. 281) argued that a person who acquires communicative competence acquires knowledge and ability for language use with respect to whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible; feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available; appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated; and is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails.

Grammatical competence is about correctness while pragmatic competence is more about appropriateness. Grammar contains facts and rules about the given language system that must be followed (at least to some extent) otherwise the language is unrecognizable. This is something that can systematically be acquired by the language learner. Pragmatic rules (language use rules), however, are different: not following them may cause misinterpretation of linguistic behaviour and many different reactions from the hearers. If grammar is bad, the utterance may not convey the right message or any message while if pragmatics is bad, the utterance will usually convey the wrong message. This is how Crystal (1997, p. 240) defined pragmatic ability:

The study of language from the point of view of users, especially of 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.

Yorio’s (1980) example of a North-American shop-attendant’s saying ‘What can I do for you’ versus ‘What do you want’, the former being a routine formula while the latter is a grammatically and semantically accurate question, highlights how the latter could be inappropriate and even impolite at the pragmatic and sociolinguistic levels due to the preferences of the given speech community. Pragmatic rules of language use function like suggestions and/or recommendations by the members of a speech community, which are based on norms, behavioural patterns, conventions and standards of that community. So the language user has more leverage there than in the case of grammatical rules.

3. Change of pragmatic competence affected by another language

Pragmatic competence in the L1 is the result of language socialization. As said above language and social development in the L1 go hand in hand, and are inseparable. However, this is not exactly the case in L2 and subsequent languages. Pragmatic skills in L2 appear like modifications, adjustments and additions to the existing L1-based pragmatic competence. Socio-pragmatic norms and conventions concerning appropriateness developed through L1 are very influential and difficult to change. Exposure to and immersing into the new language and culture are not enough to change them. Sometimes L2 norms and patterns need conscious acts by the language

learner to accept and/or acquire them. Bilinguals may see things in L2 through their L1 socio-cultural mind set. Thomas (1983) indicated that if we should try to force non-native speakers (NNSs) to conform to a native speaker (NS) norm, it would be nearly the same as NS' ideological control over NNSs or cultural imposition on NNSs by NS' socially hegemonic strata. Some recent studies have pointed out that NNSs may have some kind of resistance towards the use of NS norms and speech conventions to maintain their own identity, and so they may commit pragmatic negative transfer 'on purpose' (e.g. Al-Issa, 2003; Siegal, 1996). Siegal (1996) discussed the case of a female western learner of Japanese who felt affective resistance to a Japanese norm, because Japanese female language appeared too humble to her. According to Siegal (1996) these findings mean real difficulty for researchers because frequently it is impossible to establish whether some inappropriate or misleading language use results from the NNS affective resistance to the NS practice or it is just a lack of native-like pragmatic competence.

Willingness, motivation and ability of adult bilinguals to assume L2 (or subsequent language) socio-cultural beliefs, conventions and norms seem to play a decisive role in bi- and multilingual development and language use. An advanced L2 speaker cannot be expected 'simply to abandon his/her own cultural world' (Barro, Byram, Grimm, Morgan, & Roberts, 1993, p. 56). Adamson (1988) pointed out that NNSs are often reluctant to accept and share the values, beliefs and presuppositions of an L2 community even if they have been living there for a long period of time and can speak the language quite well. The influence of culture on communication patterns is so strong that even if the conceptual socialization process in L2 is very advanced and the individual has high proficiency and excellent skills in the L2 her/his interaction with NSs is severely blocked by the limits imposed by cultural factors. According to Lu (2001) the influence of the traditional Chinese culture is so far-reaching a persistent that even second- or third-generation Americans of Chinese descendants are unable to fully ignore it although their English proficiency is on a par with that of native English speakers. Many of these people do not speak Chinese and totally depend on English as the tool of thinking and communication. 'Nevertheless, their speech acts are still in the shadow of culturally governed modes of thinking, talking and behaving' (Lu, 2001, p. 216).

The literature discussed above all shows the decisive role of individual willingness and motivation in modifying existing L1-base pragmatic norms and conventions and making room for the pragmatic requirements of the new language.

4. Pragmatic competence in interlanguage pragmatics

As mentioned in the introduction research in pragmatic competence has been a very important part of interlanguage pragmatics. Although I do not quite agree with how interlanguage pragmatics handles pragmatic competence it is important to review some of their major tenets in order to demonstrate where the differences are between the interlanguage pragmatics approach and the socio-cognitive approach proposed here.

In interlanguage pragmatics pragmatic competence is usually defined as the ability to produce and comprehend utterances (discourse) that is adequate to the socio-cultural context in which interaction takes place (e.g. Alcón, 2012; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Thomas, 1983). According to Barron's definition (2003, p.12), who has researched study abroad programmes in L2,

[P]ragmatic competence . . . is understood as the knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for realising particular illocutions, knowledge of the sequential aspects of speech acts, and finally, knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular language's linguistic resources.

Based on the research of Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) two aspects of pragmatic competence have been distinguished. The pragma-linguistic aspect refers to the resources for conveying communicative acts and relational or interpersonal meanings. These resources include pragmatic strategies such as directness and indirectness, routines, and a great variety of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts. For one example, compare these two versions of request:

- (1) Waiter to the customer;
- Come with me, please. I'll show you your table.
- (2) Mary to her husband:
- Why don't you come with me? I'll show you something.

In both cases, the speaker chooses from among a great variety of available pragma-linguistic resources of the English language which can function as a request. However, each of these two expressions indexes a very different attitude and social relationship. This is where the socio-pragmatic aspect comes in and becomes important in bilingual speech analysis. It is not enough, for instance, to know that 'you bet' can be a response to 'thank you'. The speaker also needs to know when it is an appropriate response. For instance:

- (1) At the end of the plenary talk the chair of the session turns to the plenary speaker and says:
- Professor Green, thank you for this thought-provoking presentation.
- You bet/ No problem / Thanks / My pleasure / Not at all.

Definitely 'you bet' is not the right response in this situation. Neither is 'no problem'.

Leech (1983, p. 10) defined socio-pragmatics as 'the sociological interface of pragmatics'. He referred to the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretation and performance of their communicative action. Speech communities differ in their assessment of speakers' and hearers' social distance and social power, their rights and obligations, and the degree of imposition involved in particular communicative acts (Rose & Kasper, 2001). According to Thomas (1983), while pragma-linguistics is, in a sense, akin to grammar in that it consists of linguistic forms and their respective functions, socio-pragmatics is about appropriate social behaviour. In many cases adult bilinguals with at least an intermediate proficiency in their L2 appear to have less problems with pragma-linguistics than with socio-pragmatics. For instance, Barron (2003) examined the development of Irish learners of German in producing the three speech acts of request, refusal and offer. It was found that the learners achieved great improvement in their pragma-linguistic competence, but little socio-pragmatic development. There may be two reasons for this. First, classroom instruction usually focuses more on pragma-linguistics (see, for instance, Jeon & Kaya, 2006) than on socio-pragmatics. Second, pragma-linguistics is about linguistic means expressing social functions. In a study abroad situation learners are exposed to those social

situations all the time. So they can pick up the expressions relatively easily. What they have trouble with is socio-pragmatics: which of the available form(s) is/are appropriate in a given situation? (see example 3). Bilingual speakers need to be aware of the consequences of making pragmatic choices. Using an expression like ‘Why don’t we have lunch some time?’ may mean different things for an American and a Russian L2 learner. An American will take it as a casual utterance meaning almost nothing except expressing that the speaker wants to be nice. A Russian hearing this utterance in English may take it at face value and ask: ‘When? When do you want to have lunch with me?’

Bialystok (1993, p. 54) argued that bilingual ‘adults make pragmatic errors, not only because they do not understand forms and structures, or because they do not have sufficient vocabulary to express their intentions, but because they choose incorrectly’. Although Bialystok identified the cause of ‘incorrect choices’ in adult learners’ lacking ability to control attentional resources, another explanation may be that learners’ socio-pragmatic knowledge is not yet developed enough for them to make contextually appropriate choices of strategies and linguistic forms.

Another important issue that L2 pragmatics has raised is about how pragmatic competence correlates with grammatical competence. The studies that focused on this issue have often presented different findings (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper & Ross, 1996). It has been argued that learners of high grammatical proficiency will not necessarily show concomitant pragmatic skills. Bardovi-Harlig (1999) argued that grammatical competence and pragmatic competence are independent of one another though a lack of grammatical competence in a particular area may cause a particular utterance to be less effective. According to another view (e. g. Barron, 2003) grammatical competence is the pre-requisite of pragmatic competence, but Barron argued that these two aspects are interrelated, and the way they correlate with each other is not linear, but rather complex. More research is needed to investigate this complicated issue because the impact of low level pragmatic competence modified by L2 may lead to serious consequences especially in NS – NNS communication. Platt (1989) pointed out that when somebody speaks very little of the target language, s/he is usually considered to be an ‘outsider’, so pragmatic mistakes do not generate any problem. However, when a NNS speaks English fluently, NSs tend to consider the person to be part of the speech community and interpret his/her behaviour according to the socio-cultural rules of that community. So the tendency is to consider an inappropriately used utterance to have been deliberate rather than just an error. In lingua franca communication this issue is even more complex as we will see later.

5. How does pragmatic competence of bilinguals develop and change?

In the pragma-linguistic versus socio-pragmatic debate there is one issue missed. It is not enough to ask ‘does the English language learner have the linguistic means/resources to act properly?’ (pragma-linguistics) and ‘does the English language learner have the socio-cultural knowledge tied to L2 to act appropriately?’ (socio-pragmatics). We should also ask the question: if the English language learner (or learner of any other language) has the linguistic means and the socio-cultural knowledge to act in a way that is considered appropriate by the norms of the given speech community, why is it that s/he still does not do so? This question opens up for us the real nature and uniqueness of bilingual pragmatics competence. The key is what House’s (1996)

German subjects said about small talk in English. They considered it ‘superficial’ and ‘typically American’. So even if bilingual adults knew the required expressions and were aware of when those are appropriate to be used they still rejected them. Pragmatic awareness is the conscious, reflective, explicit knowledge about pragmatics. But that is not enough. In order for us to understand this we need to return to a more detailed discussion about the differences in how pragmatic development happens in L1 and L2.

In L1 linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge are constructed through each other. This interplay between language acquisition and socialization was described by Ochs (1986, p. 407) as follows:

... the acquisition of language and the acquisition of social and cultural competence are not developmentally independent processes, nor is one process a developmental prerequisite of the other. Rather, the two processes are intertwined from the moment a human being enters society.

Leung (2001, p. 2) emphasized that language socialization basically deals with how novices ‘become competent members of their community by taking on the appropriate beliefs, feelings and behaviours, and the role of language in this process’.

Language socialization relies on two processes: (a) socialization through the use of language, referring to ‘interactional sequences in which novices are directed to use language in specific ways’ and (b) socialization to use the language, referring to ‘the use of language to encode and create cultural meaning’ (Poole, 1994, p. 594). This view emphasizes the importance of language use to develop socio-cultural behaviour (appropriateness), and on the other hand it underlines the role of social processes in developing individual language skills (correctness). The appropriate use of language within a speech community depends on conventions, norms, beliefs, expectations, and knowing the preferred ways of saying things and preferred ways of organizing thoughts (cf. Kecskes, 2007). People are able to learn all these only if they go through the socialization process with the other members of the speech community. This is a life-long process (e.g. Duff, 2003; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986) as people enter new socio-cultural contexts and take up new roles in society. How does this relate to bilingual pragmatic development?

5.1. Question for bilingual pragmatic development

The language socialization paradigm built mainly on the works of Ochs and Schieffelin has had a strong ethnographic orientation, and paid close attention to contextual dynamics of language behaviour and human agency in L1. Following the traditions of language socialization research interlanguage pragmatics has aimed to identify deviations from NS’ norms (Kasper, 2001) and emphasized the dynamism and everlasting change of pragmatics competence. This paper attempts to take into account the results of language socialization research both in L1 and L2. However, its concerns are slightly different from those of interlanguage pragmatics. The main issue concerning bilingual pragmatic socialization can be summarized as follows: *How will the existing, L1-based pragmatic competence change under the influence of the newly emerging language, and how will the new strategies, behaviour patterns and socio-cultural knowledge blend and/or interact with the existing ones?* These questions presuppose that

- the change primarily means the modification of an existing system,
- the process is dynamic with its ups and downs,

- there is a bidirectional influence between languages and cultures and
- subjectivity plays a leading role in what new elements are accepted and incorporated into the existing system.

In order to describe how language socialization takes place in L2 and subsequent languages Kecskes and Papp (2000) and Kecskes (2003) proposed the term ‘conceptual socialization’, which was defined as ‘the transformation of the conceptual system which undergoes characteristic changes to fit the functional needs of the new language and culture’. *During the process of conceptual socialization the L1-dominated conceptual base of a bilingual is being gradually restructured, making space for and engaging with the new knowledge and information coming through the second language channel* (e.g. Kecskes, 2003; Ortactepe, 2012). This leads to the development of a conscious awareness of how another culture is different from one’s own culture, the ability to reflect upon this difference in language production, and the development of an identity that is the reflection of the dual culture.

5.2. Differences between conceptual socialization and language socialization

The term ‘conceptual socialization’ has been used to distinguish the process of socialization in L2 or L_x from ‘language socialization’ (cf. Ochs, 1988; Willett, 1995; Mitchell & Myles, 1998) which has its roots in anthropological linguistics. With the term I wanted to underline that *changes in pragmatic competence are primarily conceptual rather than linguistic* that are reflected in the functioning of the dual language system.

Ochs’ and Schieffelin’ work has focused on L1 development. They did not pay much attention to L2 socialization. There are only a restricted number of studies that extend their paradigm to second language acquisition (e.g. Blum-Kulka, 1997; Cook, 2008; Li, 2008; Platt, 1989; Willett, 1995) and focused on a long-term development of socialization in L2. Willett (1995), for instance, conducted a longitudinal study with young classroom learners of English as a second language (ESL) in an elementary school with an international intake. Based on her results she argued that language socialization is a complex process in which participants construct and evaluate shared understandings through negotiation. This process leads to changes not only in their identity but also in social practices. Ortactepe (2012) conducted a longitudinal, mixed-method study that relied on the assumption that international students as newcomers to the American culture experience bilingual development through conceptual socialization which enables them to gain pragmatic competence in the target language through exposure to the target language and culture. By collecting qualitative and quantitative data three times over a year, the study examined the linguistic and social development of Turkish bilingual students as a result of their conceptual socialization in the USA. Socio-cultural and linguistic features of the language socialization process were analysed together to emphasize the interplay between them in shaping the social and linguistic behaviour of the subjects. Ortactepe provided evidence that L2 learners’ conceptual socialization relies predominantly – contrary to what previous research says – on learners’ investment in language rather than only on extended social networks.

Conceptual socialization broadens the scope of the paradigm of language socialization which has its main focus on language developmental issues. Conceptual socialization has a multilingual perspective and differs from language socialization in that it emphasizes the primacy of mental processes in the symbiosis of language and culture, and aims at explaining the bidirectional influence of the two or more

languages. The process of conceptual socialization is strongly tied to the emergence of the common underlying conceptual base that is responsible for the operation of two or more language channels (see in Kecskes & Papp, 2000; Kecskes, 2010). The child acquiring his/her first language lives in the culture that is responsible for the development of the encyclopedic knowledge base, social skills, image system and concepts which give meaning to all linguistic signs that are used in the given language. This is not exactly the case if the target language is acquired as a second or foreign language. The main differences between L1 language socialization and conceptual socialization can be summarized as follows (Kecskes, 2013):

- Partial consciousness of the process.

L1 language socialization is basically a subconscious, and partly automatic process through which the child gradually integrates into her/his environment and speech community both linguistically and socially. In the L2, however, much more consciousness is involved in the process in which age is a decisive factor (see below). Several researchers have noted that bilinguals make deliberate, conscious choices about pragmatic strategies and/or features of the target language. Taguchi (2011, p. 303) claimed that when learners' L1 and L2 cultures do not operate under the same values and norms, or when learners do not agree with L2 norms, linguistic forms that encode target norms are not easily acquired. As discussed above, research has indicated that not all language learners wish to behave pragmatically just like NSs of the target language (e.g. Li, 2008; Siegal, 1996). Li (2008) reported that Chinese immigrant women sometimes resisted more expert peers' pragmatic socialization based on their personal values and cultural beliefs. The important thing here is that bilinguals may know target language norms and expectations but do not wish to act accordingly. For instance, the frequent use of 'thank you', 'I am sorry', 'have a nice day' type of expressions may be annoying for NSSs of different cultural background.

- Age and attitude of bilinguals.

The later the L2 is introduced the more bilinguals rely on their L1-dominated conceptual system, and the more they are resistant to any pragmatic change that is not in line with their L1-related value system, conventions and norms. Ochs (1988, p. 14) claimed about L1 socialization that 'not only are language practices organized by the world views, they also create world views for the language users carrying out these practices'. For second/foreign language users the crucial question is whether those existing world views will be modified to any extent under the influence of the new language and culture, and how this new blend (if any) will affect language production in both languages. Gee (1999, p. 63) argued that the situated and local nature of meaning is largely invisible to us. It is easy for us to miss the specificity and localness of our own practices and think that we have general, abstract, even universal meanings. We come to think, when we have learned no other languages, that 'standing' is just standing, 'eating' is just eating, 'over there' is just over there. In fact, the situated, social and cultural nature of meaning often becomes visible to us only when we confront language-at-work in languages and cultures far distant from our own. This 'confrontation' often occurs at the level of fixed expressions as it will be discussed below.

- Direct or indirect access to the target culture and environment.

In L1 language and social development go intertwined because people have direct access to the socio-cultural environment that shapes their norms, values, conventions and beliefs. This is not exactly the case in L2. Bilinguals have usually limited and/or indirect access to the L2 culture and environment. Even if they live in the target language environment it is not for sure that they have full access to it because of personal or external reasons. *In the second language, pragmatic socialization is more about discourse practices as related to linguistic expressions than how these practices relate to cultural patterns, norms and beliefs.* Language learners may have direct access to the L2 linguistic materials they need but not always to the socio-cultural background knowledge that gives sense to the particular linguistic expressions in the L2. The following conversation between a Japanese student and an American student illustrates this point.

(4)

- Emiko: Melody, I have received the travel grant.
 M: Nooou, *get out of here!*
 E: You should not be rude. I did get it.
 M: OK, I was not rude, just happy for you.

It is clear that the expression '*get out of here*' does not mean the same thing to the two speakers. The Japanese student processes it literally. However, that meaning does not match the actual situational context.

5.3. *Dynamic move on the continuum of conceptual socialization in L2*

Conceptual socialization is presented here as a continuum in which there are moves up and down depending on several variables including exposure, environment and individual will. From the perspective of conceptual socialization it is important to mention Lave and Wenger's (1991) legitimate peripheral participation. Their approach is based on the assumption that cognition is built from experience through social interaction in communities of practice. It is a process of 'incorporation of learners into the activities of communities of practice, beginning as a legitimated (recognized) participant on the edges (periphery) of the activity, and moving through a series of increasingly expert roles as learners' skills develop' (Watson-Gegeo, 2004, p. 341). In activities in the language community while bilinguals adopt various communicative and social roles in temporarily and spatially situated activities/practices, they also develop grammatical, discourse, socio-cultural and general cognitive structures of knowledge. This is how the skill-side and content-side of conceptual socialization are ideally intertwined. Bilinguals, who begin peripherally in a new language, should be exposed to mutual engagement with the members of the community till they are granted enough legitimacy to be a potential member (Wenger, 1998). Moving through this dynamic continuum with its ups and downs second language users can get from the status of a beginner to advanced roles through gaining and/or being allowed access to social interaction in the dominant language community. However, as discussed above, dynamic move on this continuum depends both on individual and social factors. The socio-cognitive approach (cf. Kecskes, 2013) emphasizes that *exposure, quality and quantity of input can be effective only as much as the individual learner allows them to be.* As mentioned above, there can be much control here from the perspective of the bilingual individual.

In her longitudinal study Ortactepe (2012) examined both the skill-side and content-side of conceptual socialization. In the qualitative analysis of the content-side that she connected to the dynamic changes of social identity she found evidence against the language myth according to which students learn by osmosis when in the target speech community. Learning through osmosis is the natural way to learn a language. To learn through osmosis means to learn by immersing oneself in a language and culture. Most of the literature in second language acquisition takes for granted that this is the best and most efficient way of acquiring another language. This way of thinking does not seem to take into account the decisive role of the individual learner in the process. An important element of Ortactepe's work is that analysing the conceptual socialization process of her subjects one by one in her longitudinal study she provided evidence that L2 learners' conceptual socialization relies predominantly – contrary to previous research – on learners' investment in language rather than on extended social networks. Her finding demonstrated that not only in language use but also in language development and socialization the role of individual cognition is as important as the role of the socio-cultural environment and social networking.

6. How is pragmatic competence reflected in language use?

Pragmatic competence can be manifested in language use in different ways such as lexical selection, small talk, formulaic language, just to mention a few. In this paper I will focus on formulaic language use only because that can be considered one of the main reflections of pragmatic competence. (I have no space here to focus on the other manifestations.) Kecskes (2007) argued that using a particular language and belonging to a particular speech community means having preferred ways of saying things and preferred ways of organizing thoughts. Preferred ways of saying things are generally reflected in the use of formulaic language and figurative language. Selecting the right words and expressions in communication is more important than syntax. Language socialization, to a great extent, depends on the acquisition of what is expected to be said in particular situations, and what kind of language behaviour is considered appropriate in the given speech community.

Formulaic language is the heart and soul of native-like language use. In fact, formulaic language use makes language use native-like. Hymes (1968, pp. 126–127) said that 'a vast proportion of verbal behaviour consists of recurrent patterns, ... [including] the full range of utterances that acquire conventional significance for an individual, group or whole culture'. Coulmas (1981, pp. 1–3) argued that much of what is actually said in everyday conversation is by no means unique. Rather, a great deal of communicative activity consists of enacting routines making use of prefabricated linguistic units in a well-known and generally accepted manner. Successful coordination of social interactions heavily depends on standardized ways of organizing interpersonal encounters because conventional ways of doing things with words and expressions are familiar to everyone in the speech community so speakers can be expected to be understood according to their communicative intentions and goals. Pragmatic competence is directly connected to and to some extent, develops through the use of formulaic expressions, mainly because use of formulas is group identifying. They reflect a community's shared language practices, and so they discriminate those who belong to the group from those who do not (Yorio, 1980). This is so because, as Wray and Namba (2003, p. 36) claimed '... speech communities develop and retain common ways of expressing key messages'.

Language socialization studies highlighted the importance of prefabricated chunks in the socialization process both in L1 and L2 development. Ochs and Schieffelin (1984) pointed out that there is much direct teaching of the interactional routines ('*elema*') among the Kaluli in Western Samoa. Willett (1995) argued that in the first months ESL students relied heavily on prefabricated chunks which they picked up from their fluent English-speaking peers or from adults during routine events. Coulmas (1981, pp. 256–260) gave a summary of difficulties L2 learners have when using routine formulae. He categorized pragmatic interferences according to the respective process or structural phenomenon giving rise to the mistake in question.

From the perspective of conceptual socialization and change in pragmatic competence of bilinguals, the development and use of situation-bound utterances (SBU) are especially important because they are reflections of socio-cultural patterns, cultural models and behavioural expectations in a speech community. I do not have space here to focus on other categories of formulaic language such as idioms, speech formulas, semantic units and so on. so I will restrict the discussion to SBUs.

SBU (Kecskes, 2000, 2003) are highly conventionalized, prefabricated pragmatic units whose occurrences are tied to standardized communicative situations (e.g. Coulmas, 1981; Kiefer, 1995; Kecskes, 2000). Many bilingual speakers have an excellent command of the language systems. Besides pronunciation there are only two things that can reveal that they are not NSs: word choice and use of SBUs. SBUs are direct reflections of what is considered appropriate language use in a speech community. Here is an example that was given to me by Roberts Sanders (personal communication).

(5)

He was ordering a pizza on the phone. The woman who answered was fluent in English but had an accent.

Sanders: I'd like to order a medium pizza.

Woman: Is that pickup or delivery.

Sanders: Pickup.

Woman: *Is that it?*

Sanders: What?

Woman: *Is that it?*

Sanders: Is that what?

Woman: (No response. Silence)

Sanders: We want three toppings: pepperoni, mushroom, cheese

Woman: OK, you want pepperoni, mushroom and cheese

Sanders: Right.

Woman: Okay, about 20 minutes.

Although the woman at Pizza Hut was fluent in English, her inappropriate use of the SBU 'is that it' caused a slight breakdown in the interaction. Normally, 'is that it?' is a formula used to close this part of the transaction and move on to something new or closing. But for Sanders, the transaction should not have been moving on, because they were still in the middle of the ordering process. He had not yet told the assistant what toppings he wanted. The woman repeated, 'is that it?', and Sanders said 'is that what?'. This followed by silence from the woman who must have been confused. Then Sanders told her what toppings he wanted, she understood perfectly, and they closed

the transaction properly. The confusion was caused by the bilingual speaker's inappropriate use of SBU.

The use of SBUs is directly connected to small talk that reveals a lot about how bilinguals communicate in their L2. Small talk is a non-referential use of language to share feelings and sympathy, or establish social rapport rather than to communicate information. Malinowski defined phatic communication as '[...] language used in free, aimless, social intercourse' (1923, p. 476). Phatic communication is characterized by the use of routinized and ritualized formulas, mainly SBU. This term refers to all kinds of acts including greetings, welcomes, questions about work, health, well-being, family and other aspects of life, leave-takes, wish-wells, farewells, compliments about obvious achievements or personal traits of the interlocutors, complaints about things or events with which they are familiar, or those narrations or chit-chat about trivial facts or comments about topics that may seem obvious (Malinowski, 1923, pp. 476–479). Why is small talk important for bilingual pragmatic competence? Because it is part of what we referred to as preferred ways of saying things and preferred ways of organizing thoughts in a language. Bilinguals are supposed to have two sets of small talk: one for each of their language. However, as we discussed earlier they actually do not have two sets rather they have one that blends small talk from both languages. But in this blend a bilingual might be more comfortable with norms and conventions of one of his/her languages than with the other. Mugford (2011) demonstrated that his Mexican learners of English transferred local norms and practices and did not adhere to those of the L2 when engaging in phatic exchanges. For instance, unaware of the role of status and distance in the target community, on some occasions Mexican learners made overly personal comments to their instructors, as if assuming they were talking to very close subjects. On other occasions, their small talk displayed local practices, such as lack of expected greetings when entering classrooms, very extended greetings with a profusion of self-disclosure or the transfer of L1 idiomatic phatic expressions –for example, 'fresh as a salad' instead of 'fresh as a daisy' as a reply to a how-are-you question. An effective management of small talk in any language requires an awareness of subtle issues such as when and with whom to engage in it, the underlying reasons and purposes to do so, the topics that can be addressed or the effects achievable by means of it.

7. Conclusion

Discussing the pragmatic competence of adult sequential bilinguals the paper argued that these bilinguals already have an L1-governed pragmatic competence at place, which is adjusted to accommodate the socio-cultural requirements of the new language as much as the bilinguals allow that to happen. So no separate pragmatic competence develops for the L2. One pragmatic system handles all interactions. A unique feature of this kind of bilingual pragmatic competence is that bilinguals may control what they find acceptable from the norms and conventions of the L2 and occasionally L1. Having a system of pragmatic norms already at place adult sequential bilinguals may have some kind of resistance towards the use of certain pragmatic norms and speech conventions of (mainly) their L2. Consequently, the language socialization process in subsequent languages may not take place only through osmosis. Contrary to previous research bilingual conceptual socialization appears to rely predominantly on learners' investment in language rather than just on extended social networks.

This partial individual control of pragmatic socialization in L2 is most clearly demonstrated in the use of SBU because these formulaic expressions represent cultural models and ways of thinking of members of a particular speech community. Pragmatic competence is directly tied to and develops through the use of formulaic expressions, mainly because use of formulas is group identifying. These expressions reflect a speech community's shared language practices, and so they discriminate those who belong to the group from those who do not. This is so because speech communities develop and retain common ways of expressing key messages.

It was argued that bilingual pragmatic competence shows a unique symbiosis of pragmatic rules and expectations of both languages. Bilingual language use is the reflection of this symbiosis. Bilinguals may have preferences in the pragmatic rule systems of both languages and act accordingly in communicative encounters.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their useful comments. I am also obliged to Tomsk State University, Russia that supports my work in bilingual pragmatics as a visiting scholar.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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