

# The 2013 Pan-SIG Proceedings

## *From Many, One: Collaboration, Cooperation, and Community*

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After 2 years of employing head-held camcorders to explore and develop classroom interactional language in a variety of classroom activities, the author has begun the construction of a video archive, called the Database of English Learner Interaction (DELI). This practice-oriented paper provides a brief description of head-held camcorders and their introduction to and use with students. It also includes a selection of interactional language from the DELI used to create classroom activities focusing on pragmatic development which include: 1) understanding explanations in teacher-student interaction, 2) using strategies in pair work during collaborative dialogues, and 3) focusing on greeting, small talk, and leave-taking in role plays. The paper concludes with a discussion of some of the benefits and limitations of head-held video for increasing pragmatic skills.

頭部装着ビデオカメラを用いてさまざまな授業アクティビティにおいて対話言語の調査と開発を2年間実施し、Database of English Learner Interaction (DELI)という授業での対話言語のビデオ記録データを作り上げた。この実践志向型の研究論文では、頭部装着ビデオカメラに関する簡単な説明と概要、学生が使用する方法について述べられている。更に、1)教員・学生間相互の説明理解、2)協同して行う対話ペアワークでの手法の使用、3)挨拶、雑談、分かれ際の会話のロールプレイ、の3つを含む語用論的な発展に焦点をおいた、授業でのアクティビティを行うのに使用されたDELIの対話言語の選集も含まれる。論文は、語用論的な技術の向上に向けた頭部装着ビデオの利点と制限等についての議論にて総括される。

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## Introduction

The importance of interaction in the development of human communication and language skills is firmly established. Studies in the related fields of sociolinguistics (Hymes, 1972), pragmatics (Levinson, 1983), and interactional competence (Kramsch, 1986) show that these are “founded on innate universal skills” (Atkinson, 2013, p. 1), which can be targeted for development in instructional settings (Kasper & Rose, 2001). Building on the concept of sociolinguistic

competence introduced by Canale and Swain (1980), applied linguists and language educators have studied methods to effectively prepare students for L2 encounters either at home or abroad (see, for example, Carletta & Mellish, 1996; Taguchi, 2008).

My interest in targeting pragmatic skills in the classroom comes from a desire to increase students’ classroom interactional competence (CIC) (Walsh, 2011). From oral communication (OC) classroom observation, it was readily apparent that some students, as Swain (2000) notes, are more comfortable than others when interacting during collaborative dialogues (CDs). Walsh (2012) reports that while skills in CIC are “highly context specific,” there are certain features of CIC which can be encouraged and promoted in any setting (p. 12). Among the skills I had hoped to promote,

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at least initially, were purposeful and appropriate use of language to achieve certain outcomes in classroom dialogues in a variety of situations and for a variety of pragmatic purposes (Kindt, 2011).

Modern, compact camcorders are a popular tool for exploring aspects of classroom interaction including the effectiveness of teacher instruction (Nunan, 1990), learner's perceptions of interactional feedback (Mackey, 2002), and the evaluation of communicative language learning (Klapper, 1991). They have also been used in language classrooms to research, for example, student affect (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001), interaction in dyads (Nabei & Swain, 2002), and classroom dynamics (DuFon, 2002). Johnson, Sullivan, and Williams (2009), however, point out that a limitation in these studies is that stationary and hand-held camcorders provide only a static, non-participant view of classroom events (p. 35). Even when using several stationary or hand-held camcorders (Fitzgerald, Hackling, & Dawson, 2013), there is still an obtrusive, observer's distance (Gredler, 1995).

This situation changed in 2005, when reasonably priced head-held or point of view (POV) camcorders came on the market (Berra, 2010). The current interest in using these powerful, lightweight POV camcorders in educational settings (Hargis & Marotta, 2011; Rowell, 2009) is partially due to their ability to record a closer approximation of what the wearer actually sees and hears while participating in events. Considering these unique benefits, this paper presents a selection of classroom language captured with POV camcorders that were used to support student development of pragmatic competence.

## **The GoPro Hero 2 and Its Introduction to Students**

I selected the GoPro Hero 2 (GoPro®, 2012) for classroom trials due, in large part, to its central, head-held position, the best among POV camcorders for capturing participant interaction. Furthermore, the Hero 2 records in 1080p high-definition (HD) with a wide, 170° field-of-capture in mp4 format. It uses a memory card up to 32GB that provides approximately four hours of video. A fully charged battery records for

up to 2.5 hours. I should note here that as of December 2012, the next generation, the GoPro Hero 3 doubles the capability of the Hero 2 but has half its size and weight. An upgrade, the Hero 3+, was released in October 2013.

I introduced the GoPro camcorder to students at the beginning of the second semester of a yearlong OC course. Preparing to talk about summer events, we brainstormed some activities that might be interesting to do while wearing a head-held camcorder. Suggestions were "climbing a mountain," "cooking something," "riding a roller coaster," and the like. Then, I suggested "language learning," and showed students the camcorder, explaining that "I would like to be able to see the class through their eyes," (Kindt, 2011). Finally, I asked for permission to use the camcorder—emphasizing that the recordings would be for the class or research purposes and anyone could ask not to participate at any time either verbally or via email. Once general permission was given, I asked for a volunteer. In all four classes in the trials, the first volunteer came quickly.

## **Capturing and Using Head-Held Video for Pragmatic Development**

Capturing classroom language, however, has many challenges (Fitzgerald et al., 2013). When first using POV camcorders, I soon realized that the natural noise of an interactive classroom can diminish the intelligibility of the POV dyad's conversation (Kindt, 2013c). To minimize this problem, wireless transmitters and receivers have been employed, the receiver attached to the camcorder and a lavalier microphone for the cameraperson and the transmitter attached to a second lavalier microphone for the partner (Kindt, 2013a). Unfortunately, this solution was not found until halfway through the second year of trials.

From these recordings, I choose two- to three-minute clips to use in creating materials for use with the same students, predominantly, in subsequent class meetings. I had targeted POV footage I believed would provide a rich source of data that focused on particular pragmatic goals. Here, I present 3 examples of POV-

derived materials focused on: 1) understanding explanations in teacher-student interactions, 2) reviewing strategies for effective pair work, and 3) greeting, small talk, and leave-taking in role plays. For each of the 3 examples mentioned above, and following Nguyen, Pham and Pham (2012), I first focused on building students' pragmatic awareness by pointing out instances that are likely to afford opportunities for improvement. To achieve this, I chose clips that showed evidence of not only students' successful use of the focus of the materials but also examples where interactions could be improved.

### **1) Understanding Explanations**

One important area of classroom pragmatic development is appropriately asking for and understanding explanations. In the first example (Appendix A), two students are working on a task in their textbook, Impact Issues 2 (Day & Yamanaka, 2009), designed to generate discussion by exploring opinions about the nature of happiness (p. 72). During their discussion, the students come across the word "worthy." Unsure of its meaning, they asked me for explanation. Later, when viewing the video, I found that both students and I used a number of useful expressions for understanding explanations, but there were also a number of instances where the exchange of meaning could have been enhanced. Thus, I transcribed the section and created a worksheet to return to students in the following class.

When presenting the POV clip and materials to students in the following class, I first had them view the clip, watching for "useful expressions," "alternative expressions," and "improvements." After the first viewing, I gave students the handout and asked them to listen again. Then students worked together to fill in the blanks representing useful expressions. After listening a third time, students again collaborated in clarifying the useful expressions and also trying to brainstorm possible alternatives. We finished using the handout by discussing alternatives and improvements. I offered suggestions for those expressions that presented difficulties, such as "Okay, so you're saying people won't be happy until they go to heaven?" Following this procedure, students were able to not

only understand the situation and what needed to be communicated, but also came up with alternative responses, which I clarified, improved, or suggested.

### **2) Pair Work**

According to Swain (2000), it is reasonable to assume that students skilled in participating in effective pair work can also increase the likelihood of acquisition. In the second example, students talk in pairs about free time (see Kenny & Woo, 2012, unit 6). In the conversation, a higher-ability student takes the lead in helping her partner to describe what he does in his free time (Appendix B). Though of lower-ability, the partner also uses a number of effective strategies to make appropriate contributions to the negotiation of meaning. Because of this, and because students were preparing for a final group conversation evaluation with a strategic competence component, I decided to make a handout reviewing strategies.

For this handout (Appendix B), I underlined some conversation strategies, and noted the errors. I began by asking students to watch the clip, this time listening for strategies. Then referring to the handout, they watched again, this time trying to fill in the blanks with names of strategies used in the double-underlined dialogue. After allowing students time to compare with partners, I wrote the strategies on the board in alphabetical order. Students watched a final time before trying to fill them in and compare their responses. It may appear that there are too many strategies for a single lesson, but since this was for a strategies review, students had already been shown and practiced these strategies in previous classes. After filling in the blanks with the appropriate strategies, I asked students to try speaking again about the topic, putting a mark by the strategies whenever they used one. In this case, I was able to hear instances of strategy use, indicating that students are likely familiarizing themselves with their use.

### **3) Role Play**

Since classrooms can only simulate the outside world, role plays are often employed to support pragmatic skills development (Bray, 2010). To help students to be better able to communicate effectively in this situations, a role play was developed in which students

were given the chance to talk in front of the class in a simulated chance meeting, imagining they had just met after the summer break and had only a couple of minutes to chat before taking leave.

Relying on the few minutes captured by the volunteer cameraperson during her role-play, I was able to pinpoint a number of pragmatic points related to greeting, small talk, and leave-taking (Appendix C). In this case, students watched the scene simply to see if the actors are effective in these pragmatic points. Once I had elicited some reactions, I distributed the handout and showed the clip again, asking students to correct the grammar points. Then we looked more closely at the blanks, indicating a place for writing improvements, such as “Did I miss something?” rather than “Mm?” and “Well, I better let you go,” rather than the ubiquitous “See ya.”

In this case, some students were able to collaborate to correct grammatical forms and indicate improvements. For instances that required pragmatic skills beyond the ability of any students in the class, however, I offered suggestions. I believe this was an effective procedure for allowing students to tap into their linguistic knowledge but also allow for new pragmatic structures that were taught within a clear interactional context.

## **Benefits and Limitations of Head-Held Camcorders**

Though analysis of events captured with established tools like stationary or hand-held camcorders can increase our understandings of language classrooms, head-held camcorders can provide a more accurate representation of the participant experience. The clear benefit is that they capture what students actually say and do (Kindt, 2013c). While it is true that head-held camcorders are intrusive, participants not only become more spontaneous with time, but it appears they are more playful and carefree with POV devices than traditional video.

When comparing head-held camcorders to stationary laboratory webcams, some limitations were apparent: 1) the audio was inferior, 2) there were numerous interruptions and distractions, 3) there was

relatively less focus on interactive tasks, and 4) only a single dyad could be recorded. POV recordings are, however, less constrained as, being in a language classroom, there were: 1) more artifact affordances, “[properties] of the environment that [are] relevant... to an active, perceiving organism in that environment” (van Lier, 2000, p. 252), 2) markedly different learning alignments, the “processes through which human beings effect coordinated interaction” (Atkinson, Churchill, Nishino, & Okada, 2007, p. 169), and 3) variance of nonverbal aspects, such as gesture, facial expression and body positioning (Barraja-Rohan, 2011, p. 9). Furthermore, in laboratory-style video conversations, students were well-aware that their partners and teacher will subsequently view the recording and would be required to complete a follow-up transcription (Kindt, 2013b), possibly limiting the naturalness of their production.

Even though POV camcorders are intrusive, students appeared to use them more playfully, like an entertainment tool rather than a study tool. In fact, in preliminary feedback from volunteers, some noted that they had “seen the camera used by comedians in stunts, and they find it interesting and unique” (Kindt, 2011, p. 185). The novelty of the camcorder gradually diminishes, but because the majority of volunteers over the course of a semester are using the camcorder for the first time, a sense of lightheartedness and uniqueness remained.

## **Discussion and future directions**

Though it impossible at this stage to confidently claim that the use of POV clips in creating materials for classes is effective for helping students to develop pragmatic competence, looking at the clips I have collected indicates a number of promising outcomes: 1) in all the footage, students appeared quite comfortable and often playful, 2) they were increasingly at ease offering suggestions, corrections, and brainstorming improvements on handouts, and 3) some of the suggestions have, indeed, appeared in subsequent practice conversations and language lab recordings.

There are a number of encouraging avenues for both pedagogy and research related to head-held camcorders, authentic classroom interaction, and

pragmatic competence. As various pragmatic aspects appear in POV footage, new ways of bringing these foci to students' attention and helping them to develop those skills will need to be designed. As classroom data become easier to capture, both practitioner and research databases, like the DELI, will emerge and contribute to our understanding of learner language and pragmatic development. Someday, we may be able to conduct studies that involve all participants simultaneously wired for video. Though not yet practical, we can begin to narrow the divide between what we think we know and what we can know about classroom interaction by using the POV camcorder.

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### Author's Biography:

**Duane Kindt's** doctoral work explored the complex, dynamic nature of student engagement propensities. He is currently interested in using innovative technologies to explore pragmatic competence.

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## Appendix A

### 1) Understanding explanations (*teacher-student interaction*)

*Prof. Kindt (PK) is trying to answer Ayana (wearing the GoPro camcorder) and Sayaka's questions about happiness. Listen and fill in the blanks with their useful expressions. Then we'll add alternatives (A) and improvements (I)*

1. Sayaka HOW ABOUT, "HUMAN BEINGS ARE NOT WORTHY OF BEING HAPPY?" <checks her dictionary> Hm?
2. Ayana <laughs>
3. Sayaka Human beings are not worthy of being happy." I DON'T...
4. Ayana I CAN'T UNDERSTAND. <laughs>
5. Sayaka ...UNDERSTAND. So I didn't check THAT ONE (I). <looks at book>
6. Ayana You are unsure.
7. Sayaka <raises hand> Prof. Kindt.
8. Ayana <raises hand> <points> WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF "HUMAN BEINGS ARE NOT WORTHY OF BEING HAPPY."
9. PK Yeah, that question is maybe about someone that believes in heaven...
10. Ayana Mm.
11. PK ...um, and thinking that life on earth is like a test, something that we have to work hard at to get to heaven, and that person might say that, you know, our purpose as humans is not to be happy, it's to work hard and, and make it to heaven.
12. Ayana Mm. OKAY, I SEE. (A)
13. PK So, then they'll say, "human beings are not worthy," that they haven't earned happiness. They haven't worked to become happy. They'll be happy if they go to heaven.
14. Ayana Ah.
15. Sayaka Sayaka <turns to Ayana> I'M SORRY, COULD YOU EXPLAIN THAT AGAIN? (A)
16. PK <gives more explanation> Do you know... "Worthy" means you've earned something. For example, um, your TOEFL score needs to be 450 or higher to graduate...
  
17. Ayana Mm. UH-HUH. / GO ON. (A)
18. PK ...so if you have a higher TOEFL score than 450, you're "worthy" to graduate. You've earned your graduation right...
19. Ayana Mm. OKAY, I SEE. / AH, I GET IT NOW. (A)
  
20. PK ...though some people believe human beings don't have a right to be happy
21. Ayana REALLY?
22. PK They have to suffer.
23. Ayana HA HA.
24. PK And be miserable. And because of those bad experiences you become able to enter heaven, "worthy" to enter heaven...
25. Ayana Mm. OKAY, SO YOU'RE SAYING PEOPLE WON'T BE HAPPY UNTIL THEY GO TO HEAVEN? (A)

26. PK So... That's just somebody's opinion that "human beings aren't worthy of being happy." I think, my opinion is, life *is* to be happy.
27. Ayana Oh.
28. Sayaka We're living so that we can enjoy our lives, I think. But that's just another personal opinion.
29. Ayana Mm. So, TWO DIFFERENT OPINIONS. / So, YOU DON'T AGREE. (A)
30. Sayaka DOES THAT MAKE SENSE ?
31. Ayana Mm. THANK YOU.

## Appendix B

### 2) Pair work in collaborative dialogues (*strategies review*)

*Shota (wearing the Contour camcorder) and Yuki are talking about free time. What strategies do they use? Write the name of the strategy next to where it's used.*

1. Shota And I, how can I say <uses Japanese> the lyrics?
2. Yuki Ah, okay, okay.
3. Shota Yeah.
4. Yuki It's, like, kind of singing...
5. Shota Do you know wha, what I mean? CHECKING PARTNER'S UNDERSTANDING
6. Yuki What do you want to say? Just say it in Japanese. REQUESTING JAPANESE
7. Shota Ah, <uses Japanese>. USING JAPANESE
8. Yuki Ah, it is, like, humming. OFFERING A TRANSLATION
9. Shota Humming?
10. Yuki Humming. Humming. Hmm. I think that's what you mean.
11. Shota Yeah. GUESSING WHAT YOUR PARTNER MEANS
12. Yuki Humming.
13. Shota Humming spell...? How do you spell that ? asking for spelling
14. Yuki Uh, okay. I'll write it down. Uh, I think it's this. H-u-m-m... Yeah. Ca, do you have a dictionary? REQUESTING A DICTIONARY
15. Shota Yeah.
16. Yuki Oh, just, no, no, no. Use this one, use this one.
17. Shota Okay. USING A DICTIONARY
18. Yuki Thank you. How do you turn it on? Humming... Ah, wait. See? Hum.
19. Shota Yeah. Yes, that's right. CLARIFYING

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## Appendix C

### 3) Role Play (*greeting, small talk, and leave-taking*)

*Sakie (wearing the GoPro camcorder) and Izumi are role-playing a chance meeting after the summer break. Use the blanks to add corrections. Later, we'll think of some useful expressions (E).*

- 1 Prof. Kindt Okay? Go!
- 2 Sakie <laughter> Hi.
- 3 Izumi Hey!
- 4 Sakie Hey! Hi. How are you today?
- 5 Izumi I'm fine.
- 6 Sakie Oh, really?
- 7 Izumi What are you doing here? [ I'M SURPRISED TO SEE YOU HERE. (E) ]
- 8 Sakie Hm? Just walking. [ YEAH, I HAD TO COME INTO SCHOOL TO REGISTER. (E) ]
- 9 Both <laughter>
- 10 Sakie "Ah, so, what, what did you do last night?  
[ WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO LATELY? (E) ]"
- 11 Izumi Last night?
- 12 Sakie Yeah.
- 13 Izumi Uh, I drank with my boyfriend.
- 14 Sakie <laughter> Oh, really?
- 15 Izumi Yeah, I got a hangover.
- 16 Sakie Ah-ha. That's too bad.
- 17 Both <laughter>
- 18 Sakie Mm-mm. Mm? [ I'M SORRY. / DID I MISS SOMETHING? (E) ]
- 19 Izumi I made...
- 20 Sakie Mm.
- 21 Izumi ...dinner...
- 22 Sakie Ah, really?
- 23 Izumi ...with my boyfriend.
- 24 Sakie What kind of food did you cook?
- 25 Izumi Um, Italian food.
- 26 Sakie Oh, that sounds delicious. <laughter>
- 27 Izumi But THE taste was not so good.
- 28 Sakie Eh? [ WHAT? (E) ] Really? <laughter> Why?
- 29 Izumi Mm... Because my boyfriend cooked.
- 30 Sakie Uh, ah, really? <laughter> Mm.
- 31 Izumi What did you do last night?
- 32 Sakie Mm, last night? Mm, nothing special. Mm, yeah.
- 33 Izumi How's your boyfriend?

- 34 Sakie Mm, my boyfriend? <laughter> Ah, during summer vacation, uh, I went to watch THE SOME GAME GAMES because my boyfriend is rugby player and, and...
- 35 Izumi And he earns money?
- 36 Sakie Yeah. <laughter> And, mm, he... Oh, when I met him, I didn't know that but, so, mm, he, he is always, mm, funny, so, and SAY TELLS a lot of JOKE JOKES, so, I, I, IT'S unbelievable, for me, <laughter> uh, THAT HE PLAY PLAYS ...
- 37 Izumi He's different.
- 38 Sakie Mm?
- 39 Izumi (E) HOW HE IS ON AND OFF THE FIELD ARE different.
- 40 Sakie Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Ah...
- 41 Izumi Oh! A phone CALLING CALL! It's my boyfriend.
- 42 Sakie "Boyfriend? See you. <laughter> [ WELL, I BETTER LET YOU GO.  
/ WELL, TALK TO YOU LATER. (E)]