Facilitating Japanese Honorifics on Three Planes: Apprenticeship, Guided Participation, and Participatory Appropriation

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要旨

　面接試験をシミュレイトした敬語表現のパフォーマンス・テストにおいて、発話を促す三相の心的過程を社会文化理論の視点から考察するものである。特に本稿では、日本語の敬語の発話を記号（言語）によって媒介された行為としてとらえ、徒弟、誘導的参加、参加的充当という心理的過程と社会文化的状況との本質的関連性を説明している。また、心的過程の三相は個々に独立したものではなく、相互補完の関係にあり、テスト中に行われる発話を誘導するための教育学上の操作は、媒介された行為の包括的な枠組みを構成するだけのものであって、実際の発話は、個人が異種混交的に選択するものであると論及するものである。

【キーワード】記号的媒介、内化、間主観性、道具箱アナロジー

1.　Introduction

　　It is often claimed that students in second language Japanese classes (JSL) are less successful in speech production compared with their writing, reading, and listening competence, when they advance to the intermediate levels of the courses. For successful second language (L2) speech production, formal grammarians have been investigating the surface structure of language with phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic levels of analysis. However, it has been suggested that only the linguistic analysis of surface structure does not provide proper explanations of the difficulty in verbal communication (Clancy, 1990; Hakuta & Cancino, 1991; Gass, 2002; Scarcella, 1990). Encountering frequent misunderstandings in conversation between L2 learners and native language (L1) speakers, the analysis of language structure has been considered inappropriate and insufficient to address the underlying causes of the difficulty in L2 speech production.

　　Second language acquisition (SLA) researchers have been investigating the relationship between acquired linguistic knowledge of target language and the application of the knowledge in real-life situations. Saussure (1996 [1959]), a Swiss linguist and founder of

structuralist linguistic theory, developed the binary concepts of *langue* (language system) and *parole* (speech act or utterance). The Saussurian concept of "inner duality" (Holquist, 1994, p. 44) suggests that there are coexisting characteristics juxtaposed in the process of language use: ahistorical unified linguistic features shared by speakers (*langue*) and idiosyncratic features possessed by individual speakers (*parole*). Concerning the concept of *parole*, Saussure considered idiosyncratic variations in individual speech performance chaotic and virtually unanalyzable because there are infinite numbers of unknown factors to comprise the complex nature of individual inner realities.

The binary approach to speech communication is reiterated as individual-society antimony in the so-called sociocultural theory. Fundamental to sociocultural studies of human mind is understanding the relationship between human mental functioning, on the one hand, and cultural, historical, and institutional setting, on the other. The proponents of sociocultural theory suggested that an account of human action is not properly constructed from the study of mental functioning or sociocultural setting in isolation (Bronckart, 1995; Cole, 1995; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Rogoff, 1991, 1995; Wertsch, 1991a, 1991b, 1995, 1998; Wertsch, del Rio & Alvarez, 1995; Wertsch & Toma, 1995; Zinchenko, 1995). They tried to construct new theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding of the relationship between mental functioning and sociocultural setting, seeking an interfunctional ground on which those two entities are not self-independent but rather they are mutually dependent and interanimating with each other. Central to their discussion is the role of mediational signs and the notion of mediated human action, about which theoretical constructs are often developed based on the work of a Russian literary critic and semiotician, Mikhail Bakhtin (1981, 1986, 1994), and Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1981, 1986).

In association with the sociocultural orientations, the purpose of this paper is to try to explicate the process of speech development in an effort to facilitate Japanese honorific expressions involved in *task-based language teaching* (Ohta, 2001; 村野井, 2004) in a third-semester JSL class at a university. Guided by Rogoff's analysis of the mental functioning situated in a particular cultural activity (Girl Scout cookie sales), this paper tries to illustrate the three different planes of mental functioning for speech production observed in student-teacher dyadic interviews situated in an imaginary setting of job hunting at a Seattle's Best Coffee.

2. Mediated Action

Vygotsky claimed that higher mental functioning is mediated by tools ("technical tools")

and signs ("psychological tools") (Wertsch, 1991a). Such mediational tools do not shape social actions directly but change the process of higher mental functioning related to social actions (Wertsch, Hagstrom, & Kikas, 1995). For example, one of the Japanese traditional martial arts, *judo*, has become one of the sports events in the Olympics. Before *judo* was included in the Olympics, it still maintained the historical nature of a martial art to determine a winner. There were only two ways to determine a winner in a match, either by a sudden death (*ippon*) or by a crucial advantage (*wazaari*). However, with the introduction of a sportsmanship spirit, the judging methods were diversified into a point system using flags. The winning tricks have not been changed for *judo* players to win a match. However, *judo* players try to demonstrate minor tricks in order to earn points towards the win, as well as fighting for a sudden death or a crucial advantage. A new system of judging has changed *judo* players' psychological approach to their wins. In other words, the new system with flags, as a mediational tool, has changed players' mental process towards winning matches. The introduction of flags has changed players' mental attitudes to use minor tricks to gain points even though they were aware that such minor tricks would not win a sudden death. It is interesting to see that *judo* as a martial art has been reconstructed as a mediated action by the introduction of a point system with flags.

The point is that the human mental process is mediated by cultural tools and on the other hand, the mediational tools transform the human action. The nature of mediational tools is inherently embedded in sociocultural contexts. Human mental functioning emerges for the use of such mediational tools for the communication with others in a social group. By using the mediational tools, an individual comes to realize that he or she is a member of a social group. Applying such a Vygotskian concept of mediational tools in the discussion of facilitating Japanese honorific expressions, it becomes reasonable to assume that L2 learners go through the transformation of their mental functioning and action.

Although Vygotsky's notion of mediational tools to transform human action and thinking lies at the core of sociocultural studies, there is a need to explore the notion in more complex situations: its historical, cultural and institutional backgrounds. It seems oversimplified to assume that by the use of mediational tools, human action and thinking are transformed homogeneously, and that monolithically mediated action and thinking underlie the nature of social processes. Rather, mediational tools have been constructed by various kinds of needs and abilities which are engendered within sociocultural activities. In other words, mediational tools have been constructed by their unique situatedness in their historical, cultural and institutional backgrounds. Reflexively, human action and thinking are transformed variously

by the mediational tools by their unique situational needs and abilities.

There are various kinds of ways for individuals to use the same mediational tools with different purposes. For example, people use a baseball bat to hit a ball on the baseball field. The same baseball bat can be used for people to protect themselves from burglary in their houses. A baseball bat was constructed as a mediational tool to hit a ball as a part of the action in a baseball game. However, not every person shares the same goal in using the mediational tool. A baseball bat sitting on the baseball field is used to hit a ball, while a baseball bat sitting in the house can be used as a weapon to protect oneself. It is obvious that the same mediational tool is used differently according to its surrounding context. People use the mediational tool for their best way of making sense to themselves, through the interaction within the context. This leads to a notion of "tool kit" (Wertsch, 1991b) in which individuals internalize their best choice of using a tool to make sense to them ("appropriation," Rogoff, 1995). Using the term "appropriation," Rogoff explained the concept of internalization as "something external is imported and transformed to fit the purpose of the new owner" (p. 152). According to individuals' different ways of appropriating the mediational tools, their actions and thinking are transformed heterogeneously.

3.   Apprenticeship, Guided Participation, Participatory Appropriation

Rogoff (1995) examined the process of mental functioning situated in a particular cultural activity. In the setting of Girl Scout cookie sales, Rogoff examined various kinds of internalization processes of the members within the social interactions. She investigated the process of mental functioning in the cultural activities on three planes: apprenticeship, guided participation, and participatory appropriation. Rogoff said that "I conceive of planes of focus not as separate or as hierarchical, but as simply involving different grains of focus with the whole sociocultural activity" (p. 141). The three planes of investigation are interfunctional to constitute the study of mental functioning in the cultural activity.

The first plane of mental functioning, apprenticeship, involves active individuals participating in a culturally organized activity (p. 142). An active participant engages in the action-oriented cultural activity, such as craft apprenticeship, and tries to become a mature member of the group. In apprenticeship, the nature of mental functioning is characterized as an individual endeavor to be a more responsible member of the group. For example, in a grammar-translation task (exclusive grammar explanation) for honorific expressions in Japanese class, each student is a passive recipient of the grammar information with minimum social interactions. Particularly in social interactions expected in a job interview at a Seattle's

Best Coffee, the honorific verbs were introduced beforehand in class, as well as the extra modest expressions and humble patterns. Through repetitious substitution drills and models, each student becomes able to understand and construct the honorific expressions. In terms of the verbal habit-formation in a grammar-translation task, each student's mental processing is triggered by her or his active participation in the activity. This personal mental development corresponds to Rogoff's description of craft apprenticeship.

The second plane, guided participation, involves collaborative effort among members through their social interactions within the cultural activities (p. 146). Unlike in apprenticeship, each member's mental functioning develops through his or her social interaction with other members in the group. Members try to communicate and coordinate efforts with other social partners in face-to-face interaction or side-by-side joint participation (p. 142). This interpersonal analysis of mental functioning includes an indirect collaborative effort in the absence of a joint action. For example, Rogoff pointed out that "A child who is working alone on a report is participating in a cultural activity with guidance involving interactions with the teacher, classmates, family members, librarian and authors, and the publishing industry, which help the child set the assignment and determine the materials and approach to be used" (p. 147). The nature of mental functioning in guided participating is, then, characterized as interpersonal development through guidance from other social partners in the cultural activity.

As an example of guided participation, there is a skit presentation task in a JSL class. In this task, students are required to construct their own scripts that they play out in pairs or groups in class. During the process of constructing scripts, students are encouraged to communicate with their presentation partners and collaborate with one another for the purpose of presenting coherent and meaningful skits. For a dyadic interview with their teacher trying to get a job at a Seattle's Best Coffee, students were highly encouraged to have their imaginary scripts with which they intended to execute their verbal communication with the teacher. This task corresponds to Rogoff's guided participation sharing the important component of communication (social interaction) and the existence of purposes in the activities (searching for a meaningful skit through collaboration). Collaborative work among members in groups is emphasized during the process of constructing scripts. In this process, the external information is transformed for the purpose of constructing their own scripts. The external information is not received as a sheer input rather processed as intake for their own use.

Based on Rogoff's concept of "appropriation" (something external is imported and converted to fit the purposes of the new "owner" as intake), the third plane of mental

functioning emphasizes individuals' appropriation process to become prepared to comprehend subsequent similar activities by engaging in an activity (p. 150). Through an active participation in a cultural activity, individuals' mental functioning develops to understand the meaning and sequence of the activity while participating in it. Since their mental functioning is situated in the activity itself, individuals attain competence to become a part of an activity as they participate. The nature of mental processing in participatory appropriation is, then, characterized as a dynamic and mutually constituting change within the cultural activity, not through internalization of some external information from the activity.

An improvisation task in a JSL class can be introduced as an example of participatory appropriation. An improvisation task is characterized as a skit presentation without prescripted planning. Students are required to react to unfamiliar situations that are not revealed beforehand and construct their own conversation that fits in the situation. There is no prescripted communication and no predetermined goals of the conversation. Students must participate in the improvisation process and through the participation, they construct their own conversation that becomes components of the skit. Students are not passive recipients of external information nor active transformers of external information for their own use, because they encounter previously unknown situations where external information does not preexist for them to internalize and transform. In other words, students cannot construct their next lines in conversation until their partners' lines are completed and make sense to them. Therefore, they must construct their lines in participation that triggers their creative construction line by line. Each student's mental processing changes line by line through involvement in improvisation. The changes, then, generated the construction of the entire skits. The mental processing is founded on its dynamic, time-bound, and mutually constituting relations to the improvisational activity.

Three planes of mental processing are not independent entities, but rather, they are mutually interacting to encompass the whole process of cognitive development. Rogoff's definition of the "appropriation" process occurs even on the planes of apprenticeship and guided participation. In the personal endeavor to become a more responsible member of the community, individuals appropriate to fit their own purposes. In guided participation, the interpersonal cognitive development is also underlaid by individuals' appropriation processes to fit their own purposes.

4. Intersubjectivity

The question is, however, how individuals with their own private worlds engage in the

common objectives that a cultural activity sets up. This leads to a discussion of "intersubjectivity" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Rommetveit, 1985, 2003; Smolka, et al., 1995). Intersubjectivity is the notion that separate individuals interactively share a common world in which they have potentials to know and act conjointly.

A state of intersubjectivity does not preexist in social interaction among individuals, but rather it is constructed at different levels in different moments of the interactive process (Smolka, et al., 1995). A state of intersubjectivity is time-bound and interpreted differently by individuals who participate in it. Therefore, a state of intersubjectivity does not always expect its members' harmonious actions. The participants may resist harmonious actions through providing their own opposing ideas or by simple ignoring them. A state of intersubjectivity is constructed among participants based on their different levels of "appropriation" (Rogoff's term) process which changes moment by moment.

In the setting of a job interview at a Seattle's Best Coffee, there were pedagogical manipulations to navigate students to "appropriate" somewhat harmoniously by providing cues in the task. For example, during their job interviews, students were encouraged to include specific responses to the questions which were given to them beforehand on the list. Those are the ones that (1) tell your previous work experience at a café or restaurant, (2) tell the manager how to treat customers when they make a complaint, (3) tell the manager why you are interested in the job.

It is plausible to point out that students in the task developed their mental functioning convergently toward the best result of the job interviews, but their individual mental processes were diversified moment by moment according to their interpersonal negotiations. For the overarching purpose of using honorific expressions, students went through different planes of mental processing according to their own "appropriation" processes. A cultural activity (to use Japanese honorific expressions in a job interview in Japan) sets up a common objective for the members, but each member constructs his or her own versions of intersubjectivity to interpret the common objective. The routes of individuals' appropriation processes are diversified and time-bound. A state of intersubjectivity, therefore, provides a cognitive framework for individuals to go through their unique mental processing (appropriation) heterogeneously.

5. Conclusion

Focusing upon the discussion of Japanese speech production as mediated action, sociogenetic study of mind has an important implication to delineate the process of how

individual mental processing operates within its social interaction. For example, provided with a specific goal in the task, getting a job at a Seattle's Best Coffee, a teacher-student dyadic interview illustrated three different planes of mental functioning for generating Japanese honorific expressions. Based on Rogoff's suggestion, these are (1) apprenticeship; a grammar-translation task of explaining Japanese honorific expressions, (2) guided participation; a skit presentation task of constructing honorific expressions interpersonally, and (3) participatory appropriation; an improvisation task of participating in the cultural activity in which participants try to get a job using adequate honorific expressions.

Although, mainly for pedagogical reasons, specific guidance of how to proceed in the interviews was set up for forming a state of intersubjectivity, individual mental functioning is diversified according to his or her appropriation process. During the appropriation process, mediational tools are heterogeneously interpreted by individuals to make the best sense to them ("tool-kit" analogy, Wertsch, 1998). A cultural activity sets up its specific common value in which participants are involved through social negotiation. The specific common value becomes a referential framework as a state of intersubjectivity. The state of intersubjectivity, however, does not preexist in the content of interactive processes, but rather it is constructed by individual participation on their different levels at different moments. Through the dynamic construction of intersubjectivity, individuals go through different mental processing, but convergently move toward the project of social construction as a whole.

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