

BOOK NOTES

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J. CÉSAR FÉLIX-BRASDEFER & DALE A. KOIKE, *Pragmatic variation in first and second language contexts: Methodological issues*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2012. Pp. x, 338. Hb. \$149.

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This volume is an important contribution to scholarship on pragmatic variation, where the aim is to investigate systematic differences in how the same pragmatic phenomena are realized in different contexts, by different speakers, and in different languages. The phenomena addressed include speech acts, stance-taking, mitigation, politeness, and conventional expressions, which are examined in relation to speaker variables such as gender, age, status, and language variety. Two distinctive features of this volume are the insightful discussion of methodological issues in collecting and analysing data, and the inclusion of both first (L1) and second (L2) language studies.

The first eight chapters report empirical studies, with quantitative and qualitative approaches equally represented. Each chapter concludes with up to two pages discussing issues that arose in data collection and analysis. The theoretical frameworks adopted include variational pragmatics, variationist sociolinguistics, interactional sociolinguistics, and systemic functional linguistics. The first three studies explore L1 pragmatic variation in naturalistic interactions, with J. César Félix-Brasdefer reporting on market service encounters in Southern Mexican Spanish (Ch. 1), Carl Blyth reporting on stance-taking in online discussions by speakers of French and English (Ch. 2), and Nydia Flores-Ferrán reporting on the expression of mitigation in Spanish-language interactions between Dominican clients and a Cuban-American therapist (Ch. 3). Ch. 4, by Weihua Zhu and Diana Boxer, is unusual in that it examines the use of English as a lingua franca of practice in the context of “English corners” in China, where language learners met informally to practice their English.

Chs. 5 to 8 explore variation in relation to L2 speakers. Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig (Ch. 5) reports a study on the use of conventional expressions (e.g. *no problem*) by L1 and L2 English speakers, in data elicited through a computer-based task. In Ch. 6, Dale A. Koike explores L2 variation in relation to the resources used to orient to cognitive frames for conversations and interviews, and to signal a move from one frame to another. Helen Woodfield discusses in Ch. 7 a study using role-plays and retrospective verbal reports to examine issues in L2 speech acts of

request, including aspects of cognition and learner development. Ch. 8, by Rémi A. van Compernelle and Lawrence Williams, investigates factors influencing the selection of *tu* or *vous* by learners of French.

The final three chapters review methodological and theoretical issues in pragmatic variation. Andrew D. Cohen (Ch. 9) discusses planning decisions when designing a research project exploring intercultural pragmatics. The issues are illustrated in the context of researching doctor-patient interactions and relate to research questions, project design, types of data, data analysis, and potential pitfalls and problems. Ch. 10, by Marina Terkourafi, is a critical review of theoretical and methodological issues in researching pragmatic variation, identifying problems in both sociolinguistic and variational pragmatics frameworks. Terkourafi proposes a methodological direction in which pragmatic phenomena are identified through interlocutor up-take and a minimal context of locally relevant macrosocial factors. In the final chapter, the editors summarize and review the previous chapters and suggest areas for further research.

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ANN HEYLEN, *Japanese models, Chinese culture and the dilemma of Taiwanese language reform*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012. Pp. 241. Pb. \$84.

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Ann Heylen explains the multipronged origins of the present-day Taiwanese language and the historical and social interactional influences upon its development and reforms. Ch. 1 illustrates Taiwan's historical sociolinguistic setting starting from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) in China. Through the Ming dynasty to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), Chinese immigration increased and the government appointed bureaucrats and built educational institutions on the island, developing it into a province of China. In reading and writing, Classical Chinese, *wenyanwen* 文言文 (20), consequently became the official language and enjoyed the supreme status, like Latin in the premodern western world. In pronunciation, Southern Min was the major spoken language in Taiwan because of the dominant number of its speakers in the immigrant body. As a result, carried by language, Chinese cultural heritage and Confucian orthodoxy-based society were established and consolidated in Taiwan.

Ch. 2 reviews language standardization over the Japanese colonial period in Taiwan. After 1895, Taiwan was ceded to Japan as a colony for fifty years