Understanding and promoting L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual development within the framework of dynamic assessment in Chinese learners of EFL

Submitted by Yanyan Yang to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Education
In July 2020

I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Acknowledgements

Writing this thesis has been a challenging but also joyful journey. The completion of this work would not have been possible without the support of several parties, including my supervisors, institution, and participants that contributed differently to this work. It is a great pleasure to express my appreciation and gratitude to them all here.

My gratitude goes, first and foremost, to my supervisor Dr Philip Durrant for his continued support, guidance and encouragement from the early stages of this work until the final form. The constructive feedback he provided and the productive discussions we had throughout the writing process of this thesis enabled me to more critically reconsider the various aspects of this thesis. Similar thanks go to my supervisor Dr Gabriela Meier for her encouragement throughout the journey.

My special thanks go to the staff of the University of Exeter for their patience and cooperation. Similar thanks are due to all the participants and senior administrators of the research university for their support and participation.

Abstract

This thesis reports on a study that sought to support intermediate-level Chinese university learners of English in developing advanced second language (L2) socio-pragmatic capability (i.e., the capability to apply cultural-historically developed conceptual knowledge to mediate social behaviours of the individual within novel social situations) through concept-based dynamic assessment (DA). Although several studies have explored the teaching of pragmatics among Chinese learners of English, knowledge of the social concepts and contexts from which utterances emerge, if provided, is usually as resultant by-product rather than orienting basis; and learners' socio-pragmatic capabilities are typically assessed through independent performances or finished L2 products. In the present study, dynamic assessment (an assessment approach which integrates instruction and assessment into one and the same process) is proposed to simultaneously understand and promote learners' capabilities as learning unfolds from social concepts to the use of language forms. Derived from the Vygotskyan notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), it emphasises that assessment and instruction constitute a dialectic unity and that instruction is only helpful to individuals' development when it is ZPD-oriented. Through a pre-test-enrichment-post-test design, the study focuses on promoting the internalisation of socio-pragmatic concepts (e.g., indexicality) in relation to requests within the framework of DA. Semi-structured interviews and mediator-learner interactions co-constructed around learning-teaching tasks were recorded and subject to micro-genetic analysis. Results show gains in socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capabilities. Moreover, learners' ZPDs demonstrated significant

development. However, regression, or the phenomenon of resorting to old knowledge, was observed among learners when situations became difficult. Nevertheless, ZPD becomes the drive of the emergence of learners' socio-pragmatic knowledge. It is also argued that the learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge provided a systemic orienting basis for choosing the pragmatic forms that fit their communicative needs. In addition, it is through mediator-learner interactions within ZPD activities that learners' capabilities are understood and that the transformation from other- to self-regulation is realised. A possible implication for L2 pedagogy likely would be that a proper understanding of L2 learners' capabilities should be achieved through an integrated process of assessing and teaching.

Contents

List of key concepts and definitions

1. *Actual performance*. Refers to concrete linguistic choices individual eventually deploy to accomplish social actions.

2. *Appropriateness*. Refers to individual's capability to construct simultaneously possible and feasible speech in culturally and social-contextually acceptable ways.

3. *Communicative competence*. Refers to the ability to use language properly.

4. *Concept-based instruction*. A teaching method derived from the Vygotskyan notion of the development of higher mental functions, the underlying assumption of which is that concept should be the minimal component of classroom teaching. In L2 contexts, it emphasises that teaching should be started with abstract concepts followed by patterns and/or forms of a specific language feature (i.e., meaning-to-form approach).

5. *Concept-based pragmatics instruction*. A teaching method of L2 pragmatics based on the framework of concept-based instruction. It emphasises that pragmatic teaching should be started with socio-pragmatic concepts, followed by patterns and/or conventions of a specific language feature (i.e., meaning-to-form approach).

6. *Continuous access*. A concept associated with Frawley and Lantolf (1984), which describes the phenomenon surfacing from the developmental processes of higher mental functions that an individual resorts to historically knowing knowledge to re-establish relation with the task at hand so that s/he can finish it.

7. *Dynamic assessment*. A concept derived from the Vygotskyan notion of the Zone of Proximal Development. It is an assessment as well as instruction approach that conceives of instruction and assessment as an integrated entity.

8. *Dialogic.* A concept associated with Bakhtin (1986). Dialogic interaction is defined as "inquiry and conversation" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 114) in which a speaking subject (i.e., speaker) shows respect to, accepts, engages with, and draws on other speaking subjects' perspectives or voices.

9. *Dialectic*. A concept associated with Hegel and Marx (see Kozulin, 1986, 1990). Mediator-learner dialectic interactions could be understood as communications during which the mediator constantly provides and reformulates mediations or supports by taking into consideration the learner's online needs with the aim to overcome the underlying causes of the learner's poor performances.

10. *Feasibility*. Refers to individual's capability to concretise language possibilities, which presumably is constrained by the individual's "memory limitation, perceptual device(s), [and the] effects of properties such as nesting, embedding, branching and the like" (Hymes, 1972, p. 285).

11. *Formal possibility*. Emphasises the extent to which language-in-use is grammatically acceptable.

12. *Form-focused pragmatic instruction*. A pragmatic teaching method that argues that language teaching should mere focus on such stable constructs as language forms and/or patterns.

13. *Interactionist approach to DA*. A teaching method within the framework of DA. It values natural flow of discussion and negotiation between mediator and

learner, from which fine-grained mediations attuned to learners' online needs emerge.

14. *Interventionist approach to DA*. A teaching method within the framework of DA. It utilises a prefabricated set of hierarchical prompts arranging from implicit to explicit to regulate students' learning processes.

15. *L2 Micro-genesis*. Refers to L2 developmental processes that unfold within a short period of time or even a few seconds.

16. *Meaning-to-form approach to L2 pragmatics*. A pragmatic teaching method. It proposes that meanings/concepts should be the minimal components of L2 classroom pragmatic teaching, following which patterns and/or forms of a specific language feature could be introduced to understand the ways these meanings can be mapped onto communicative activities.

17. *Other-regulation*. Associated with a developmental stage at which individuals can conduct social actions only with the help of social others.

18. *Pragma-linguistic capabilities*. Refers to the capabilities of conducting formally possible and feasible concretisations of utterance.

19. *Pragma-linguistic knowledge*. Refers to the knowledge of linguistic rules and the ability to use these rules to conduct social interactions.

20. *Pragma-linguistics*. A branch of the study of L2 pragmatics, which underscores understanding and usage of conventionalised linguistic patterns or grammar.

21. *Pragmatic competence*. The ability to know what, when, and how to deliver socially acceptable utterances within different communicative contexts.

22. *Regression*. A phenomenon in which individuals resume historically knowing knowledge to regain control over the ongoing task during the developmental processes of higher mental functions.

23. *Self-regulation*. Associated with a developmental stage at which individuals can conduct social actions independently.

24. *Semiotic mediation*. Associated with the use of symbolic mediators, including language, writings, signs, and paintings.

25. *Socio-pragmatic capabilities*. Refers to the abilities to apply cultural-historically developed schema and/or conceptual knowledge to self-regulate or control individual him/herself and novel social situations in and through linguistic conventions.

26. *Socio-pragmatic knowledge*. Refers to knowledge of sociocultural schema, concepts, and social relations.

27. *Socio-pragmatics*. A branch of the study of L2 pragmatics, which emphasises the people to whom utterance is delivered and the social contexts from which the utterance emerges.

28. *The Zone of Proximal Development*. The distance between what the individual can do independently and what can be achieved through cooperation with socially more experienced others such as teachers.

List of tables

List of figures

List of abbreviations

CBI   Concept-Based Instruction

CBPI   Concept-Based Pragmatics Instruction

DA   Dynamic Assessment

G-DA   Group-Dynamic Assessment

LAI   Language Awareness Interview

SA   Static Assessment

W-DCT   Written-Discourse Completion Task

ZPD   Zone of Proximal Development

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is about investigating how dynamic assessment (i.e., the dialectical unity of assessment and instruction) simultaneously diagnoses and promotes EFL learners' development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge[1] and performance capabilities in L2 micro-genesis (i.e., developmental processes unfolded in a short period of time or even a few seconds) in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86), using the speech act of requests as its pedagogical focus. Traditionally, in the literature of instructed L2 pragmatics (for a review, see Taguchi, 2015; Ellis et al., 2009), L2 learner's development of socio-pragmatic capabilities has been remarkably explored based on observation of the learner's independent performance (i.e., static assessment) during which results of any interventional instruction, or social interaction, have been treated as irrelevant to the learner's "real" capabilities. However, from a Vygotskyan perspective, an individual's full capabilities cannot be measured but only understood through the dialectical dynamic processes of expert and novice, or mediator and learner, working together within the novice/learner's ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Poehner, 2009;

---

[1] Socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge refers to the knowledge of sociocultural rules/schemas, concepts and social relations and contexts from which social utterances emerge (section 1.2.4).

Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). Against this backdrop, the present study provides an alternative assessment approach to socio-pragmatic capabilities from the Vygotskyan perspective.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the way L2 socio-pragmatic competence/ability has emerged and become a widespread concept within the field of education. Following this, the discussion will focus on the problem that this research tries to address. Afterwards, the chapter introduces the purpose this study intends to achieve, the reasons behind conducting this investigation, and the significant contributions the study can make. The chapter concludes with presenting the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Socio-pragmatics from the Vygotskyan perspective

Since socio-pragmatic competence or ability has been conceived of as an important component of communicative competence (i.e., the ability to use language properly) (Canale and Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Van Compernolle, 2012), promoting L2 learners' socio-pragmatic competence has become a pedagogical goal in the L2 context. Although socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge is somewhat available in the instructed L2 pragmatic classroom, it is introduced primarily as supplementary material to form-focused pragmatic instruction[2] (also see, Van Compernolle, 2012). As Van Compernolle (2012) points out, however, form-focused pragmatic instruction, instead of providing L2 learners with a conceptual foundation, which transforms L2 learners

---

[2] Form-focused pragmatic instruction is a pragmatic teaching method which argues that language teaching should be merely focusing on such stable constructs as language forms and/or patterns.

into proactive users of language, instead treats them as reactive recipients of the target language and language-in-use as a form-oriented a priori system. He goes further, pointing out that language-in-use cannot be understood in isolation from the social-cultural context from which it emerges. In this respect, Van Compernolle (2012) emphasises the notion of perceiving social-cultural concepts rather than forms as the focus of instructed L2 pragmatics and proposes a meaning-to-form approach to L2 pragmatics[3]. Indeed, as Vygotsky points out, "Meaning rather than a sign (e.g., *language forms which influence individual's behaviour from the outside*) is important" (1924, p. 54, cited in Kozulin, 1990, p. 201, italics added).

The present study takes the notion of concepts (i.e., the meaning categories behind social actions), rather than language forms, as the most fundamental and necessary component of the socio-pragmatic features of language, and therefore as the departing point of instructed L2 pragmatics. Thus, in this section I will discuss with the aim of elucidating some key concepts highly related to socio-pragmatics (which is a branch of the study of L2 pragmatics, focusing on the understanding of the people to whom utterances are delivered and of the social contexts from which utterances emerge), such as pragmatics, appropriateness, L2 socio-pragmatic capabilities, and pragma-linguistic/socio-pragmatic failure from the Vygotskyan perspective, and how these concepts might fit into a concept-based dynamic assessment approach. I begin with Hymes' (1964, 1972) important concept – communicative competence – from which pragmatics, or more

---

[3] Meaning-to-form approach to L2 pragmatics is a pragmatic teaching method. It proposes that meanings/concepts should be the minimal components of L2 classroom pragmatic teaching, following which patterns and/or forms of a specific language feature could be introduced to understand the ways these meanings could be mapped onto communicative activities.

precisely, constructs of pragma-linguistics and socio-pragmatics emerged. I will then turn to pragmatics and its relation to the Vygotskyan notion of development of higher forms of function, followed by explanations of pragma-linguistics and socio-pragmatics. After that, I will provide a reconceptualization of pragmatic appropriateness from the Vygotskyan notion of control shift. Finally, understandings of L2 socio-pragmatic competence and pragma-linguistic/socio-pragmatic failure will be discussed in relation to the framework of the Vygotskyan formation of development (i.e., continuous access).

1.2.1   Foundations of communicative competence

As a response to form-focused approaches to linguistics and language teaching and language learning, Hymes (1964, 1972) proposed a contextualised perception of language use, known as communicative competence, or the ability to use language properly (Van Compernolle, 2012). For scholars who advocate form-focused teaching, the basic assumption about language is that underlying the combinations of words and speech, there exist a priori structures or forms, independent from the social relations of people who use the language and the social context from which it emerges. Thus, following this idea, knowing the language is about learning these abstract structures or forms. Saussure and Chomsky are representatives of this somewhat object-subject, or language-individual/social, dualism (see also Van Compernolle, 2012). Specifically, Saussure (1959) distinguishes the abstract system of language (*langue*) from its concrete use (*parole*), arguing that the understanding of a language should focus on its *langue* rather than its *parole*. Similarly, Chomsky (1965) argues that abstract forms of language should be the focus of linguistics study. However, grounded in

sound ethnographic studies, Hymes (1964, 1972) argues that language-in-use is not only about correct forms (i.e., grammatical speech) but also about the social relations in and from which speech emerges. In other words, instead of being independent, the relationship between speech, people who construct it, and the social context from which it emerges are interdependent and dynamic. In this respect, the understanding of language-in-use should be pursued within this relationship.

In aiming to examine speech in relation to social relations, Hymes (1964, 1972) proposes four notions: formal possibility, feasibility, appropriateness, and actual performance. By formal possibility, Hymes means the extent to which language-in-use is grammatically acceptable. However, it is important to note that the term grammatically acceptable applies to formally *possible* utterance, which is not exclusively limited to grammatical speech; instead it entails the entire discourse of intersubjectivity – what can be understood and done between people who share somewhat the same semiotic mediational means, and which can also be understood as symbolic mediators, including language, writings, signs, and paintings (section 2.3.1) (Van Compernolle, 2012). In this respect, Hymes' formally possible speech goes beyond grammatical combinations of words and includes all contextualised instantiations of speech, entailing even unconventional speech or peculiarities of communicative discourse. This conception of language-in-use is important, because, as Van Compernolle (2012) points out, Hymes' notion of possibility essentially conceives of the language user as an active meaning constructor rather than a passive recipient and transmitter of abstract linguistic forms, realising the individual's active role in controlling signs, or semiotic

mediational means, to regulate social actions. In this sense, Hymes' formal possibility is well in line with Vygotsky's notion of sense over meaning (section 4.3). Feasibility refers to an individual's capability to concretise language possibilities, which presumably is constrained by the individual's "memory limitation, perceptual device(s), [and the] effects of properties such as nesting, embedding, branching and the like" (Hymes, 1972, p. 285). In other words, what is possible might not be feasible for the individual within the immediate communicative context (Hymes,1964, 1972). Appropriateness refers to an individual's capability to construct simultaneously possible and feasible speech in culturally, and social-contextually, acceptable ways. As with feasibility, what is possible and feasible language might not be appropriate in the immediate social context. Finally, actual performance refers to the concrete linguistic choices an individual eventually deploys to accomplish social actions. As Hymes (1964, 1972) points out, verbal thinking which is simultaneously possible, feasible, and appropriate might not be instantiated by individuals within a particular social context, probably because of a lack of semiotic mediational means including socio-pragmatic conceptual meanings that mediate the ongoing transformation to word from thought.

1.2.2 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a study of the ways individuals use to accomplish social actions through social-culturally developed mediational means, or psychological tools, mainly language (Van Compernolle, 2012). How these actions are concretised and the subsequent impacts they might cause to social others are simultaneously empowered and constrained by the mediational means available to individuals

(e.g., Mead, 2015; Vygotsky, 1986; Van Compernolle, 2012). This idea was originally emphasised in Crystal's (1997) definition of pragmatics as "the study of language from the perspective 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" (p. 301).

However, although insightfully putting the language user rather than abstract language forms at the centre of understanding social interaction, Crystal's (1997) definition fails to emphasise the language user's intention, or the social conceptual meanings underlying concrete linguistic choices within a given situation. In this respect, Van Compernolle and Henery (2016) propose the conception of pragmatics as "learning 'how-to-say-what-to-whom-when-for-creating-a-particular-meaning', that is, not as rules for 'proper' pragmatic behaviour but as motivated pragmatic meaning making" (p. 13–14). This notion of pragmatics is well in line with Vygotsky's claim that word meaning is the minimal component necessary in verbal thinking, and by extension, communication (Chapter 2).

The basic assumption underlying the Vygotskyan approach to pragmatics is that sociolinguistic constructs are not derivations of certain unchanging a priori forms or structures; rather, they are dialectical syntheses of social interaction (Van Compernolle, 2011, 2011a; Van Compernolle & Williams, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c). That is, context-specific social interaction simultaneously determines and restrains sociolinguistic constructs, or communicative moves in a broader sense, which are communicatively meaningful and thus "appropriate" within the concerned context (section 1.2.8). Importantly, however, the contextualised constructs reciprocally

reorganise the continuity and even reconstruct the direction of the ongoing social interaction (Negueruela and Lantolf, 2005; Negueruela, 2003; Van Compernolle, 2013).

Thus, expanding the language-use-and-social-interaction dialect to Hymes' framework, constructs constitute formally possible, feasible, and social-contextually appropriate word/speech, or mediational means. Accordingly, knowing how to voluntarily regulate these mediational means to get social actions done is the study of pragmatics, which branched into pragma-linguistics and socio-pragmatics (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983), which I turn to now.

1.2.3   Pragma-linguistics

The study of pragma-linguistics underscores the understanding and usage of conventionalised linguistic patterns, or grammar (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983; Van Compernolle, 2011). Knowledge of pragma-linguistics refers to linguistic rules and the ability to use those rules to conduct social interactions (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983; Van Compernolle, 2011). In this respect, pragma-linguistic capability echoes the ability to construct, to use Hymes' (1964, 1972) term, formally possible and feasible concretisations of utterance, which is also referred to as grammatical competence (Canale and Swain, 1980) or linguistic competence (Celce-Murcia *et al.*, 1995).

As mentioned in section 1.2.1, linguistic competence alone is not enough for an individual to conduct social-culturally appropriate communication. Communication is not about well-coded information, in the sense of strictly following linguistic

structures and grammar rules, being transmitted from a speaker to an interlocutor who subsequently decodes the information and then responds with further well-coded information (Leont'ev, 1969; Vygotsky, 1986; Wertsch, 1979; Frawley and Lantolf, 1984). Instead, the ability to construct social-culturally appropriate language requires socio-pragmatic knowledge.

1.2.4   Socio-pragmatics

As mentioned in section 1.2.2, socio-pragmatics is a branch of the study of L2 pragmatics, which emphasises the people to whom utterances are delivered and the social contexts from which utterances emerge. Knowledge of socio-pragmatics refers to that of "sociocultural schema, concepts, and social relations" (Van Compernolle, 2012, p. 20). Socio-pragmatic capability entails the ability to apply cultural and historically developed conceptual knowledge so that individuals can self-regulate themselves and novel social situations in and through pragma-linguistic signs. In this respect, it echoes Hymes' (1964, 1972) notion of constructing social-culturally appropriate utterance.

In sum, pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic knowledge interdependently coexist with each other to concretise meanings within varying communicative contexts. Van Compernolle's (2012) use of the metaphor of artefacts to explicate the relation between pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic knowledge is of interest. Specifically, the author suggests that if pragma-linguistic knowledge is perceived as a collection of material artefacts entailing concrete linguistic patterns from which L2 users can choose over the course of a situated speech event, then socio-pragmatic knowledge comprises a collection of symbolic artefacts consisting

of socio-culturally developed concepts which mediate the choice of concrete

linguistic patterns.

1.2.5 Concept as the minimal component of socio-pragmatics

As discussed in section 1.2.2, sociolinguistic constructs are dialectical syntheses

of social interaction. This notion in turn requires the understanding of linguistic

choices in and through the cultural context. In this respect, Van Compernolle

(2012) argues that socio-pragmatic knowledge is "not simply about language in its

cultural context – where culture is external to language and impacts upon it from

the outside – but, instead, implies the union of the two, where language-in-use is

simultaneously an expression of culture and a resource for the reification and

transformation of culture" (p. 26).

For use in L2 contexts, the development of socio-pragmatic knowledge makes the

internalisation of sociocultural schema, concepts, and social relations the focus of

socio-pragmatics study. In other words, sociocultural conceptual meaning is and

should be the minimal necessary pedagogical component of socio-pragmatics,

consequently constituting an orientation base to which individuals can resort while

regulating construction-of-social-meanings in concrete social contexts (Van

Compernolle, 2011; 2012). In this respect, socio-pragmatic instruction is well in

line with Vygotsky's claim that word meaning, or concept, is the minimal semiotic

mediational means (Chapter 2).

Taken together, pragmatic capability is the synthesis of pragma-linguistic

knowledge and socio-pragmatic knowledge. Knowing formal possible and feasible

concretisations of speech and ways of using them, or to use Canale and Swain's (1980) term, grammatical competence, is insufficient to construct social-culturally appropriate speech. Instead, socio-pragmatic knowledge, or the knowledge of sociocultural schema and concepts, is of significance to the construction of appropriate concretisations of speech in a particular context (section 1.2.4).

1.2.6 Hymes' appropriateness

As already mentioned, within Hymes' (1972, 1964) communicative competence model, the notion of appropriateness essentially emphasises the dynamics of such factors as interactants, sociocultural concepts, and social context, which give birth to conventional and even unconventional linguistic patterns during communicative interaction. Accordingly, understanding pragmatic appropriateness should be based on the dialectical synthesis of these factors rather than de-contextually considering linguistic patterns constructed in the immediate context. One example of understanding communicative interaction de-contextually is Tarone's (1980) investigation of non-native speakers' communication strategies, which was critiqued in Frawley and Lantolf (1984) (section 2.3.5).

Hymes (1972, 1964) proposed the idea of speech event as the minimal unit of understanding appropriateness. Extended to practice, he sorted a speech event into eight subcomponents, known as the SPEAKING model (Table 1.1). As Levinson (1992) and Van Compernolle (2011) comment, Hymes' SPEAKING model rejects the idea that there exist certain underlying rules language users are expected to follow to construct conventionally "proper" and "acceptable" utterances. Rather, it emphasises the dynamic and creative role of language users

in simultaneously shaping and reflecting ongoing social interaction. In this respect,

Van Compernolle (2012) suggests that "speech events are in large part

determined by the qualities of the elements described in the SPEAKING model,

which in turn come to be associated with what is recognised as appropriate

language in the context of a particular type of speech event" (p. 7).

Table 1.1: Hymes' (1974) SPEAKING model

Element		Description
S	Setting and Scene	The setting is the time, place, and physical environment of a speech event; the scene describes the psychological or cultural definition of the setting, including formality, sense of seriousness or playfulness, and so on.
P	Participants	Who is involved in a given speech event, including the speaker(s) and audience.
E	Ends	The purpose or goal of a speech event and its outcomes.
A	Act sequence	The form and order of actions that comprise the speech event.
K	Key	The cues that point to the overall tone and manner of the speech event.
I	Instrumentalities	Linguistic forms and speech styles used in the speech event.
N	Norms	The social rules governing what forms of action and interaction are recognised as acceptable/appropriate during the speech event.
G	Genre	The type of speech event taking place.

Equally important, the model also indicates that appropriateness comprises an

ongoing dynamic process (Hymes, 1972; Van Compernolle, 2012); thus, looking

only abstractly at linguistic forms somewhat overlooks the functions speech plays

during communicative interaction (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984, 1985). In this

respect, Van Compernolle (2012) claims, "appropriateness is interactional – a

particular instance of language cannot be judged without reference to what is

going on, what other participants are doing, how language is being interpreted,

and so forth" (p. 17).

1.2.7 L2 discourse peculiarity as control shift

In this sense, Hymes' SPEAKING model is well in line with Vygotsky's stand on communication, as summarised by his colleague Leont'ev in the following:

> ... it would be totally incorrect to reduce communication to the transfer of a coded message from one individual to another. We would be likely to renounce such a simple approach if we subscribe to a notion of communication which corresponds more closely with our contemporary level of knowledge about the nature and concrete facts of the speech process. Such an idea is the *activity-oriented* conception of speech. This conception treats speech as a particular *kind of activity* (*deyatel'nost*), namely, as *speech activity* (*rechavaya deyatel'nosf*). This treatment was first proposed in Soviet (and worldwide) science by Lev Semenovich Vygotsky. (Leont'ev, 1969, p. 25, cited in Wertsch, 1979, p. 4, italics in original).

It is not difficult to appreciate the similarity between Vygotsky's speech activity and Hymes' speech event. Although a historical review of these two concepts is beyond the interest of the present study, nonetheless both concepts seemingly agree on a dialectical perspective towards dialogical interaction and linguistic concretisations, suggesting that the understanding of language-in-use goes beyond analysing rule-oriented linguistic patterns.

Following these lines of discussion, Hymes' speech event model essentially leaves open the possibility for individuals to construct un-conventionalised linguistic patterns or conventionally "inappropriate" speeches to convey meanings to interlocutors (Van Compernolle, 2011, 2012). In this respect, Dewaeles (2008) suggests that the understanding of appropriateness should incorporate not only

conventionalised linguistic rules and patterns but, more importantly, L2 interactants' own perspectives emerging from the immediate social context.

Despite the similarities, the difference between Hymes' speech event model and Vygotsky's notion of speech activity is of significance. Specifically, unlike Hymes' speech event model which somewhat prioritises a descriptive approach to language-in-use, a Vygotskyan approach to dialogical interaction provides an explanation. A Vygotskyan notion conceives of communication as a signs-game wherein an interactant struggles to obtain self-regulation or control over her/himself and the ongoing interaction. L2 discourse peculiarities are the inherent characteristics of development within the ZPD (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984, 1985). Although they appear to constitute a form of negative functions when looked at from the outside (e.g., interrupting the ongoing communication or causing misunderstanding), they essentially entail a positive function – attempting to re-establish relation with the ongoing task and to resume self-regulation or control over the communicative situation. In this respect, nothing emerging from the communication processes is essentially an anomaly, but rather always has a function to play while the locus of control shifts between object-regulation, other-regulation, and self-regulation (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984, 1985). I will further elaborate this idea in section 2.3.5.

Thus, despite similarities between Hymes' speech event model and the Vygotskyan notion of control, or continuous access (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984, 1985), I would argue that nothing would be missed if the perspective of understanding language-in-use appropriate, and by extension, inappropriate language use, were replaced by the perspective of shift of control, that is,

transformation between object-regulation, other-regulation, and self-regulation.

Importantly, the explanatory power of the latter in turn will expand the former

beyond a simple description of language-in-use to entailing an explanatory

function.

1.2.8   Reconceptualization of L2 socio-pragmatic competence

At the end of the present section, I wish to clarify the notion of competence as

applied in the constructs of L2 pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic competence.

Specifically, the Vygotskyan formulation of development within the ZPD and the

Vygotskyan notion of continuous access (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984) will be

discussed in order to offer a way to understand the concept of competence from a

Vygotskyan perspective.

Van Compernolle (2012), drawing on the Vygotskyan notion of the ZPD,

distinguishes competence from capability. In aiming to explicate this idea, it is

helpful to mention the past-to-present and present-to-future models discussed in

Valsiner (2001). Briefly, the basic assumption of the former is that the future of an

individual's socio-pragmatic ability is a reflection or reproduction of her/his past.

The construct of L2 pragmatic competence is a manifestation of this model

because more than usual it is defined by an individual's independent performance

(see Taguchi, 2015). By contrast, the conception of L2 pragmatic capability

emphasises the notion that the future of an individual's pragmatic ability is in-the-

process-of-making (Van Compernolle, 2012), because the factual existence of the

ZPD as a result of learning-leading-development suggests that an individual's

abilities are constantly in the process of realisation. In this sense, the notion of

capability conceives of development as ongoing dynamic processes whose essence has not yet been achieved; thus capability distinguishes itself from the notion of competence, which lacks a developmental aspect.

Importantly, by subscribing to the notion of capability, Van Compernolle (2012) understands that the development of L2 learner's socio-pragmatic knowledge could be instructed while mediator and student dialectically and dialogically interact with one another in the latter's ZPD. Thus, the author re-indexes the conception of the development of L2 socio-pragmatics in favour of the term capability or capacity. And in this sense, the re-conception appears more consistent with the Vygotskyan understanding of development, which conceives of the individual's future as making-in-the-process rather than as her/his past. It also applies to the Vygotskyan notion of control (i.e., the mechanism of development within the ZPD) and continuous access (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984), which I turn to now.

1.2.9 Continuous access

Regarding the ZPD, the basic assumption underlying the Vygotskyan notion of continuous access in relation to L2 communication discourse is that communication is about control; consequently, L2 peculiarities or "incompetence" are essentially manifestations of L2 learners resorting to historically known or old knowledge in order to eventually resume control over the ongoing communicative interactions (i.e., continuous access) (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984). Expanding this notion to the conception of L2 pragmatic capability, manifestations of incapability or "incompetence" within L2 communicative discourse indicate the fundamentally

positive functions of the learner struggling to resume control or self-regulation. In short, understanding L2 pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic competence in relation to L2 peculiarities should be framed within a concrete context in relation to regulative functions materialised through pragmatic constructs, rather than focusing on manifested L2 discourse peculiarities purely in the abstract. This way of understanding L2 peculiarity is of significance because it is through this way that developmental processes within the ZPD can finally be rendered full and transparent.

For the present dissertation, the terms of competence and capability, in the L2 socio-pragmatic context, will be interchangeably used. However, it is important to mention that the adoption of the term L2 socio-pragmatic competence here does not mean that I am holding a perspective against the one elaborated in Van Compernolle (2012) regarding the understanding of L2 users' development of socio-pragmatics. Nevertheless, I see the dynamic mediator-student interaction in relation to L2 socio-pragmatic knowledge as the focus (i.e., the dialectical locus of control) rather than the terms in themselves. That is, no matter which term is adopted under any circumstance in the present dissertation, the standing point on the future of L2 users' socio-pragmatic ability held by both terms will be congruent with each other, namely, the future is making-in-the-process.

1.3 Problem statement

The problem of how to fairly assess L2 learner's cognitive capabilities and their relationship to instruction as well as development is still with us today. Static assessment (SA) has been widely applied in the field of L2 testing by researchers

and teachers to make predictions about an individual's future (for a review, see

Taguchi, 2015). This lens of seeing an individual's future through his/her history is

rooted in the past-to-present models of developmental theory (Valsiner, 2001). An

individual's developmental process under this model is conceived as a continuum

or "sequence of stages" that s/he is expected to smoothly move through from one

stable stage to the next (Valsiner, 2001, p.86). As Valsiner (2001) points out, "the

underlying assumption that is axiomatically accepted here is that the dynamic

changes of the past that led to the present can also explain any future. History (of

the past) is here utilised to eliminate history (of new development) for the future.

The future is assumed to be similar to the past" (Valsiner, 2001, p.86). However,

whether SA can diagnose individual's potentials, or the future, has been called into

question (e.g, Lantolf and Poehner, 2013; Poehner and Lantolf, 2003, 2005;

Poehner, 2011). More importantly, Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) called the notion of

seeing an individual's developmental process as an entity consisting of a smooth

sequence of stages an illusion (see also Frawley & Lantolf, 1985). In this respect,

the problem of how to diagnose individuals' potentials/future need to be explored.

The account of the nature of instructions as well as their relation to development

also requires attention. In the literature of second language acquisition (SLA), the

question of which pedagogical instruction, explicit or implicit, is more effective

when judged by changes of L2 learners' independent performances (e.g., a

decrease in the number of false test-items) has been omnipresent (see Taguchi,

2015; Ellis, 2008; Ellis et al., 2009; Lantolf and Poehner, 2010). This dualist

viewpoint of instruction in relation to development focuses not so much on

individuals' maturing capabilities as on a particular curriculum agenda of the given

educational institution (Dunn and Lantolf, 1998). Krashen's (1985) i+1 is a manifestation of instruction-development dualism in L2 classrooms (Dunn and Lantolf, 1998). However, empirical studies in the field of L2 learning/instruction-development have demonstrated the interdependent, or dialectical dynamic, relationship between instruction and individuals' development of higher mental functions (e.g., analysing, organising, and reasoning) (Vygotsky, 1986; Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995; Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Poehner, 2009). Nevertheless, the treatment of instruction and development as a linear process still enjoys popularity in L2 classrooms. In this respect, the relationship between instruction and development in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD deserves more attention.

1.4 Purpose statement

This thesis has three purposes. Firstly, this study attempts to explore how the ZPD-oriented dynamic assessment refines mediational support and learner responsiveness over a nine-week programme within an L2 context. Another purpose of this research is to understand and demonstrate the realities and complexities of developmental processes of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to pragmatic performances within the ZPD. In particular, the study attempts to explore what evolutionary and revolutionary developmental processes of progress and regression, as conceptualised by Vygotsky (1981), look like. and what role regression plays within the functional system of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge (i.e., how regression gives rise to a new functional system within the ZPD). Lastly, a further purpose of this study is to understand L2 socio-

pragmatic concept formation and its relation to performance. As the development of higher mental functioning has often been conceived as a complex process, this research draws on the role mediator-student dialectic interaction in the ZPD has regarding internalisation and the way its role facilitates the awakening of students' maturing capabilities. More specifically, the present study focuses on addressing the following research questions:

1. In what ways does ZPD-based dynamic assessment refine mediational moves and learner reciprocity over the course of a nine-week programme?
2. Can ZPD-based dynamic assessment and concept-based pragmatics instruction improve the development of learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge? If so, how?
3. Can ZPD-based dynamic assessment and concept-based pragmatics instruction improve the development of learners' performance abilities? If so, how?
4. What is the relation between the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD?
5. What does regression in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity look like and what is its relation to the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance abilities?

1.5 Rationale of the study

In L2 dynamic assessment literature, one characteristic feature of pedagogical instruction is the incorporation of concept-based instruction (e.g., see Poehner, 2005; Ableeva, 2010; Charles, 2011). Concept-based instruction (CBI) is a

teaching method derived from the Vygotskyan notion of the development of higher mental functions, the underlying assumption of which is that concepts should be the minimal component necessary in classroom teaching. In L2 contexts, CBI emphasises that teaching should start with abstract concepts followed by patterns and/or forms of a specific language feature (i.e., meaning-to-form approach). While CBI was not the focus of these studies in which conceptual instruction was implemented merely as a complement, this pedagogical design possibly made the implementation of a concept-based dynamic assessment pedagogical approach seem less complicated than is the case. Indeed, an intentional and systematic implementation of a dynamic assessment pedagogical approach in L2 settings comprises much more complex processes than simply providing from-implicit-to-explicit mediational remediation would suggest (Ableeva, 2010). In this respect, more investigation into the integration of ZPD-based dynamic assessment and concept-based instruction is necessary.

Studies of L2 instructed pragmatics have been tremendously rich (for review, see Taguchi, 2015). However, assessment measures applied in most of these studies have been product-focused, leaving L2 learners' developmental processes barely touched. Questions regarding what happened between the instructor/mediator and learners during learning/instruction processes as well as how learning/instruction eventually gave birth to the finished L2 product deserve further investigation. Importantly, L2 pragmatic studies have been enormously focused on which instructional approach – explicit or implicit – is more effective, consequently leaving the roles of L2 learners in the learning/instruction processes barely explored.

Moreover, empirical studies implementing concept-based pragmatics instruction (CBPI) have intensively privileged the second pronoun system of either French or Spanish as a second or foreign language (e.g., Van Compernolle, 2012; 2015; Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; 2015; Van Compernolle and Kinginger, 2013; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, and Weber, 2016). However, studies focusing on investigating other sociolinguistic features of language within the framework of CBPI are rare (e.g., speech act of requests). Further, the applicability of CBPI in classroom contexts of other second languages is also in its infant stage, and requires more investigation.

Interest in implementing CBPI in classroom settings to date have overwhelmingly privileged the L2 research contexts of Western countries (Van Compernolle, 2012; 2014; Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; 2015; Van Compernolle and Kinginger, 2013; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011; Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, and Weber, 2016). However, as a Chinese interested in education and development, I am concerned about the applicability of CBPI in Chinese university-level classroom contexts as well as the effectiveness of CBPI within a dynamic assessment framework in promoting EFL learners' development of L2 socio-pragmatic knowledge.

Finally, L2 CBPI studies to date have strongly suggested the role of DA in facilitating the internalisation of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance abilities (Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; Van Compernolle, 2012; 2014; Van Compernolle and Henery, 2015; Van Compernolle, 2015). However, what socio-pragmatic development in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD looks like has not been fully investigated. As can be seen from CBPI literature, it has not

been investigated in a Chinese context. As Taguchi (2015) suggests, more investigations into the relationship between the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual understanding and performance abilities would have further justified concept-based instruction (Taguchi, 2015). Thus, it is my personal interest to investigate what socio-pragmatic development in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD looks like in a Chinese context.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of this research can be associated with the contributions this study could make to the practical situation of the development of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts in this context. Since the development of L2 socio-pragmatic concept formation in relation to performance capability has been approached from multiple tasks, this study may provide a broad and multidimensional view of critical conditions and areas related to how to diagnose and co-create ZPD activity through dynamic assessment. Importantly, this study may offer some important insights about the way semiotic mediation helps learners co-construct situation definition (Wertsch, 1984) while co-constructing ZPD activity.

More importantly, given the Vygotskyan notion of development believes that the future of an individual is in the process of making rather than her/his historical past, the findings of this study could also make an important contribution to the field of instruction and assessment. Specifically, they expand the empirical basis that a fair and sound assessment of learners' capabilities can be materialised only through mediator-learner dialogic dynamic interaction/instruction.

Lastly, given the fact that no studies have attempted to explore the subject of what the process of regression, or backsliding, looks like within university L2 contexts in China, the present research is an effort to concretise the study of regression among university-level Chinese learners of L2 pragmatics. Moreover, since empirical studies of concept-based pragmatics instruction (CBPI) have extensively privileged second-person pronoun systems of either French or Spanish as a second language, the present research is an effort, for the first time, to investigate L2 learners' another sociolinguistic realisation (i.e., requests) within the framework of CBPI.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured around eight chapters as follows:

The present chapter begins with a brief background of the topic of L2 socio-pragmatics, presents the problem and purpose of the study, and explains the rationale and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 consists of two major parts. The first part reviews the experimental works of concept formation and Vygotsky's three phases of concept development, namely, syncretism; complex thinking entailing association, collections, chain complex, diffuse complex and pseudo-concepts; and pre-concepts. The second part provides the theoretical foundation of dynamic assessment, in which three main concepts – mediation, the ZPD, and internalisation – are discussed.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature of dynamic assessment within L2 contexts. This chapter consists of two major parts. The first part provides conceptual

explanations pertinent to dynamic assessment. Here, non-dynamic assessment (i.e., static assessment) and dynamic assessment are distinguished. Next, two approaches to dynamic assessment – interventionist and interactionist – are discussed, followed by discussion of principles of interactionist dynamic assessment. The second part discusses L2 development within the dynamic assessment framework. Here, several studies related to my research, which have been carried out across different cultural and educational contexts, are presented.

Chapter 4 reviews the literature of concept-based pragmatics instruction (CBPI) within L2 contexts. Here, an empirical framework of CBPI within which this study can be positioned is established. After that, studies of CBPI in L2 contexts related to my research are examined.

Chapter 5 introduces a detailed account of the research design. Following this, methods of data collection and analysis are presented. This chapter also describes the research participants.

Chapter 6 analyses and reports the research findings of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual development and development of performance capability.

Chapter 7 presents a detailed discussion of the processes of students' micro-genetic development through socio-pragmatic concepts and performances over a nine-week period of a dynamic assessment programme with reference to the existing literature.

Chapter 8 offers answers to the research questions and concludes the thesis by outlining the major conclusions, implications, and contributions of the study to the

research of dynamic assessment and concept-based pragmatics instruction in L2

contexts. The chapter also highlights some limitations of the study as well as some

recommendations for future research.

Chapter Two: Theoretical framework of dynamic assessment

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain and discuss the theoretical foundations of dynamic assessment, which consists of three core concepts, namely, mediation, the ZPD, and internalisation. In sections 2.3 to 2.5, I will discuss these concepts in succession.

As frequently mentioned in the literature of DA (e.g., Lantolf and Thorne, 2006), Vygotsky himself never explicitly used the term dynamic assessment in his available writings. Dynamic assessment was developed first in clinical and educational psychology by several other scholars, including Luria (Haywood & Lidz, 2007; Lantolf, Poehner & Swain, 2018). Scholars, among them Lantolf and Poehner, later extended the concept to the L2 classroom. First, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the concepts linked to DA. However, before discussing these concepts individually, I intend to have a look on how they fit into the big picture of Vygotsky's career. In the pages that follow I will focus on the timeline of these concepts' emergence and how they eventually gave birth to dynamic assessment.

Although interest in education was a later development, Vygotsky had explicitly laid out his stand on development by the early 1920s. He conceived of the emergence of novel or higher mental functions (the future) as the synthesis of individual's experience (the past) and social relations (the now) (Van der Veer and

Valsiner, 1991; Kozulin, 1986, 1990; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). This was also his

basic argument regarding the future debate (section 3.2.1). Here, Vygotsky's

account of the social origins of development starts to emerge, and it eventually

leads to his major claims that development is a mediated process and "all higher

mental functions are internalised social relations" (Vygotsky, 1981, cited in

Wertsch, 1980, p. 161) (section 2.3). As pointed out by Kozulin (1986), this

account appears to reflect Hegel's famous dialectic model (i.e., thesis-antithesis-

synthesis) of individuals achieving self-consciousness in relationship to social

others (i.e., the sociogenesis of human consciousness and higher mental

functions; see also Vygotsky, 1981; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991) (section

2.3).

Importantly, it is also during this period that Vygotsky developed his critiques of the

traditional approach of assessing and understanding children, namely, through IQ

tests (section 2.4.1). It is within this context, Vygotsky for the first time introduced

the concept of the ZPD, which argues for a dialectical relationship between

instruction and development (Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991; Chaiklin, 2003)

(section 2.4). Moreover, theoretical as well as experimental works on concept

formation further confirmed this assumption (section 2.2). These works also

provided Vygotsky with a solid foundation of critiques against such contemporary

hypotheses on learning-development relationship as dualism and parallelism

(section 2.2.4).

Alongside the ZPD, Vygotsky introduced the notions of object-regulation, other-

regulation, self-regulation, and internalisation, arguing that transformation from

object-regulation to other-regulation, and finally, to self-regulation is linked to

control and internalisation, and thus development (sections 2.3; 2.5). Moreover, he emphasised the role played by other-regulatory mediation in this transformation. This is reflected in his definition of internalisation: any higher mental function in individuals' development is instantiated on two planes, initially, on "the inter-psychological plane", where individuals dialectically as well as dialogically interact with each other – dialogic here is defined as "inquiry and conversation" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 114) – in which a speaking subject shows respect to, accepts, engages with, and draws on other speaking subjects' perspectives or voices (see Wegerif, 2008, 2011; Mercer, 2000; Wells, 1999); and then "on the intra-psychological plane", where individuals deliberately use psychological tools to mediate their own behaviours (Vygotsky, 1978, P.57). This dialectical process of simultaneously diagnosing and instantiating student's potential capabilities through other-regulatory mediations within her/his ZPD is the original version of dynamic assessment.

As indicated by Vygotsky (1986), the main conclusions regarding the dialectical relationship between learning and development were made based on the empirical results of a series of concept-formation investigations. Therefore, I will review these investigations (section 2.2), focusing on main findings and corresponding explanations relevant to the present study. After that, I will turn to mediation, the ZPD, and internalisation.

2.2 Concept-formation

2.2.1 Traditional methods and limitations

Traditional methods of the investigation of concept-formation can be sorted into two groups, namely, definition of concept and abstraction (Vygotsky, 1986; 1987). For the former, learners were required to independently provide either spoken or written definitions to assigned concepts. By contrast, under the method of abstraction, participants were asked to abstract similarities among a set of objects and subsume them into one category (example see, Luria, 1976).

Several shortcomings can be recognised in these two methods. One shortcoming, as manifested through definition of concept, is its direct contradiction with the very meaning of development (Vygotsky, 1987; see also, Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). As pointed out by Vygotsky (1986), through pure verbalisation of the definition of a particular concept, what could be diagnosed in and understood about an individual's thinking is merely its matured status at that moment. In other words, it fails to represent the development of the individual's understanding of the concept. Development is a process (Vygotsky, 1978), with progress and regression occurring hand in hand (Vygotsky, 1981; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995). In short, what could be assessed about an individual's thinking through the definition of concept method is a final product rather than the process of the development of the concept.

Moreover, given the objective existence of "functional equivalent" (i.e., the final objective referent that merely coincides with abstract/conceptual meaning in a concrete situation) (Uznadze, 1966, cited in Vygotsky, 1986, p. 101), it is likely that

one eventually obtains not so much abstract/conceptual meaning, as perceived by adults, as a functional referent (Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). That is to say, essentially different things might be meant by individuals for an externally identical verbalised definition of the same concept.

Finally, a third shortcoming of definition of concept is its anti-reality nature. Specifically, in reality, an individual's representation of a particular concept at a particular moment is the result of historically dialectical interactions between the individual and her/his social milieu, given the words applied to explain the concept are not self-created but givens from the social milieu. Equating these dialectical interactions with a finished point in time, therefore, simply means ignorance of the dynamics of its history (Vygotsky, 1986, 1987; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). For this reason, seeing an individual's developmental process from a static point is incomplete. In other words, how the concept was applied by the individual in problem-solving situations, which are triggers for the emergence of conceptual thinking in real life, vanished.

Concerning the method of abstraction, its failure in fully unfolding the processes of concept-formation is reflected in its ignorance of the mediational role played by words or signs throughout the formation processes (Vygotsky, 1986, 1987; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). As noted by Vygotsky (1986), it is through and within communication with social others that an individual's understanding of words is transformed, gradually and even without notice, from the level of purely functional equivalence to the level of real concepts (see Vygotsky, 1986).

2.2.2   Method of double stimuli

Vygotsky's solution to the problems of traditional methods is the synthesis of the unfolding of developmental processes and the regulatory role of word/language. Word/language (i.e., the human mediator) and symbolic mediators (i.e., signs used to elicit individuals' thinking) are known as double stimuli, applied in Vygotsky and his colleagues' investigation of concept formation (see Vygotsky, 1978).

A researcher named Ach, according to Van der Veer and Valsiner (1991) and Vygotsky (1986), incorporated double stimuli into his own research design. Briefly, in order to fully unfold the entire processes of the emergence of concept-formation, the researcher purposefully designed several artificial words or concepts. These words were attached to the bottom of a set of wooden blocks. During the first part of the experiment, participants were trained to familiarise themselves with these words and associated conceptual meanings. Then during the next part, attached words were removed from the blocks and participants were asked to group these blocks based on their understandings of the newly instructed concepts. Data collection started from the second part.

However, Vygotsky and his collaborator, Sakharov, were unsatisfied with a certain technique incorporated in this experimental design and quickly pointed out its limitation. The handling of the words was problematic. Words were not functioning as signs at the very beginning (section 2.3), as argued by Vygotsky and Sakharov (Vygotsky, 1986; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). In short, to Vygotsky and Sakharov, the way words were introduced in this experiment diverted processes of concept-formation in real life. Vygotsky and Sakharov's solution to this problem

was to reverse the way the words were introduced to participants. Specifically,

participants were not allowed to check the words attached to the set of wooden

blocks beforehand, but were led to understand them stepwise. Firstly, the mediator

picked up one block and disclosed the attached word to participants who were

then asked to group blocks based on their understandings of the word. Each time

participants picked up a wrong block, the instructor asked them to undo the whole

process and redo it again from the very beginning. Accordingly, participants

refined their understandings of the word. This entire process was analysed, and

eventually three major phases constituting concept-formation processes, namely,

syncretism, thinking in complexes, and pre-conceptual thinking were identified, to

which I will now turn.

2.2.3   Three phases of concept-formation

2.2.3.1 Syncretism

Syncretism refers to incoherent behaviours and associated thinking (Vygotsky,

1987, 1986). Concerning its characteristics manifest in the processes of the

emergence of concept-formation, syncretism refers to the phenomenon that

individuals make decisions based on their sense perceptions rather than self-

consciousness or conscious perception. As explained by Vygotsky, sense

perception is active and thus unstable. Extended to the task of block grouping, the

standard/principle that individuals applied to solve the problem was constantly

changing. For example, a yellow triangle led to a blue triangle, then a blue square

and finally a purple square. The visual sense criteria applied to group the blocks

consisted of shape (triangle), colour (blue), and then shape again (square). As

pointed out by Vygotsky, when individuals were guided by syncretism, the last

object chosen shared no common trait with the first one picked up by the same individual. These random associations established alongside decision-making processes feature the elementary stage in the development of concept-formation (Vygotsky, 1987).

2.2.3.2 Thinking in complexes

Thinking in complexes is a higher stage in the development of concept-formation. Vygotsky (1986) defines a complex as a phenomenon through which "individual objects are united in the child's mind not only by his subjective impressions but also by *bonds actually existing between these objects*" (p. 112, italics in original). He describes five variations of thinking in complexes, of which pseudo-concepts is relevant to the present study (for information regarding these five types of complexes, see Vygotsky, 1986 and Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). Pseudo-concept is the most common variation of thinking in complexes. When pseudo-concepts dominate, individuals conceive of objects and/or words through the lens of concrete situations or functional contexts. Thus, their understandings of and relations to surroundings are simultaneously based on and constrained by direct experiences, which fundamentally distinguishes pseudo-concepts from other stages of the development of concept-formation.

As argued by Vygotsky (1986), from without, pseudo-concepts are functional equivalents of real conceptual thinking; however, from within, they are essentially direct or non-mediated results of externally existing stimuli. In other terms, pseudo-conceptual thinking is directly regulated by stimuli existing practically in the external environment rather than being indirectly controlled by internalised signs, which, to use Van der Veer and Valsiner's (1991) term, are not "givens in

perceptually concrete context". In this sense, the characteristic distinguishing thinking in pseudo-concepts from real conceptual thinking is the nature of mediate encompassed. In short, pseudo-conceptual thinking is object-regulated and real conceptual thinking self-regulated.

Using the grouping task discussed, Luria (1976) offers an example to illustrate the difference between pseudo-conceptual and real conceptual thinking. When invited to explain reasons for grouping three triangles together, a twenty-five-year-old woman responded with "those are tumars[4]" (Luria, 1976, p. 38). As remarked by Luria, instead of applying the concept of triangle as the mediator of classification, this individual immediately referenced a concrete function of triangles found in her daily life. Externally, the final product of this grouping appears indistinguishable from the one mediated by the geometrical concept – triangle; however, the cognitive approach to materialising the former is essentially different from that of the latter.

Pseudo-concepts are also widely documented in the literature of concept-based pragmatics instruction (e.g., Van Compernolle, 2011, 2012; Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; Van Compernolle, Weber and Gomez-Laich, 2016) (section 4.6). As remarked by Vygotsky, the objective existence of pseudo-concepts makes expert-novice communication possible. This notion is important because it also provides an explanation for mediator-student dialectic interactions within the ZPD (section 2.4). However, it is noteworthy that the practical existence of this communicative possibility should not give rise to the illusion that meanings hidden behind identical

---

[4] Tumars are handmade crafts from Central Asia, whose outlines sometimes resemble triangles.

words are the same to both novice and expert. In short, although the word-meanings of a child and an adult might coincide in the final products, the cognitive approaches applied are essentially different, with the former rooted in concrete life experiences and the latter in abstract concepts.

2.2.3.3 Preconceptual thinking

As Van der Veer and Valsiner (1991) suggest, Vygotsky did not manage to provide a full analysis of the characteristics of pre-conceptual thinking. While Vygotsky himself indeed notes that it is practically difficult to capture the transformation from pseudo-conceptual to pre-conceptual thinking, he remarks that during the phase of pre-conceptual thinking, bonds or relationships established between individuals and word-meanings are instable. In other words, these relationships appear at one time to be mediated by concrete experiences and at the other signs or concepts (Vygotsky, 1986). Additionally, he suggested that these bonds are in the processes of continuous reorganisation because at this very phase theoretical instructions are poured in from without. Thus, two dynamic forces, concrete life experiences and systematic instructions, characterise and constantly shape word-meanings at the phase of pre-conceptual thinking.

Verbalism, as remarked by Vygotsky, is typical among individuals during the transformation from thinking in pre-concepts to real conceptual thinking (1986). It refers to the phenomenon that individuals are capable of deliberately expressing abstracted meanings of real concepts; however, these abstract meanings are "in their excessive abstractness and detachment from reality" (Vygotsky, 1986. 148–9). In other words, individuals are essentially constrained in the sense of freely

using concepts to regulate their behaviour or solve problems in real life. Consequently, it is difficult to voluntarily map conceptual knowledge onto concrete actions and change the latter. Vygotsky explicitly remarked that verbalism is a noticeable obstacle for individuals to overcome during the processes of internalisation. To be capable of voluntarily mastering abstract concepts to mediate thinking and control behaviour as well as social settings, that is, internalising the abstract-to-concrete transition (i.e., overcome verbalism), is contingent on mediator-student dialectic interaction within ZPDs (Vygotsky, 1986, 1987; Aljafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995; Lantolf and Poehner, 2010).

Abstracting, or materialising the concrete-to-abstract transition, is another difficulty to overcome during the preconceptual-to-conceptual-thinking transformation. As remarked by Vygotsky, being able to subsume concrete traits of objects or objective contexts to higher categories requires the mediation of concepts or signs; the practical instantiation of the concrete-to-abstract transition is the very result of internalisation of theoretical knowledge or mediating instructions provided from without (section 2.2.4) (Vygotsky, 1987; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991).

In sum, the third phase of concept-formation preconceptual thinking, is full of dynamics, dialectic, and complexity. The dynamics of the transitions of abstract-to-concrete and concrete-to-abstract, the dialectic of old and new knowledge or concrete life-experiences and theoretical instructions, and the complexity of continuingly reorganising and being reorganised between concrete-oriented and concept-mediated thinking characterise the entire transformational phase from preconceptual thinking to thinking mediated by concepts. It is noteworthy that, as

explicitly remarked by Vygotsky, preconceptual thinking does not exclusively

manifest itself at the final phase of the development of concept-formation

(Vygotsky, 1987). Instead, its emergence might be traceable in the stage of

thinking in pseudo-concepts. Similarly, complex thinking can also be traced while

preconceptual or even conceptual thinking is dominant (Kozulin, 1984). Indeed,

this phenomenon subsequently gives birth to the idea that ancient types of

knowledge, instead of dying out or being superseded by the new as proposed by

Piaget, go underground (section 2.3.5) (Vygotsky, 1981; 1986).

2.2.4   Vygotsky and Shif's study of concept-formation

The necessity of verifying experimental results of concept-formation in a real-life

context finally gave birth to Vygotsky and Shif's (Vygotsky, 1986) empirical study

on the development of spontaneous and scientific/theoretical concepts among

second- and fourth-grade elementary school children aged roughly between seven

and eleven. As remarked by Vygotskay (1986; see also Van der Veer and

Valsiner, 1991), this study was primarily intended to investigate the developmental

relation between spontaneous and theoretical conceptual thinking on the one hand

and systematic instruction, or education in a broad sense, and development on the

other.

During the study, student-participants were first shown a series of pictures; then

they were asked to make stories out of them and complete designed causal and

adversative relation sentences in the form of both verbal and written speech

(Vygotsky, 1986). Table 2.1 displays the empirical results. Vertically, regarding

second graders, correct answers of causal relations, incorporating both

spontaneous and scientific conceptual contexts, massively outnumbered these of

adversative relations. Meanwhile, responses in scientific contexts significantly

outperformed these in spontaneous situations of both causal and adversative

relations, indicating development of scientific concepts precedes that of

spontaneous or everyday concepts. Additionally, when dealing with scientific

conceptual contexts in both causal and adversative relations, second graders

overall demonstrated the phenomenon of verbalism (Van der Veer and Valsiner,

1991). That is, applied scientific concepts were used in the fashion not so much of

real life (i.e., authentic and practical) but rather of those programmed in the course

book.

Table 2.1 Correct completions of sentence fragments (adopted in Vygotsky, 1986, p. 147)

	Second grade (%)	Fourth grade (%)
Fragments ending in *because*		
Scientific concepts	79.7	81.8
Spontaneous concepts	59.0	81.3
Fragments ending in *although*		
Scientific concepts	21.3	79.5
Spontaneous concepts	16.2	65.5

Similar results were found among fourth graders but to a smaller degree.

Specifically, the performance gap between spontaneous and scientific conceptual

contexts with respect to both causal and adversative relation sentences was

significantly diminished. Additionally, performances in spontaneous contexts of

both causal and adversative relations were remarkably improved, demonstrating

almost the same correctness percentage as those in scientific situations.

Importantly, in both causal and adversative relations, students' use of scientific

concepts demonstrated a firm connectedness to real life (i.e., verbalism was weakened) (Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991).

Several questions about these empirical results need to be answered, however, I will address those relevant to the present study. First, why did correct answers in scientific contexts outnumber those in spontaneous situations, regardless of causal and adversative relations? Second, why were performances in spontaneous contexts dramatically improved almost to the level of those in scientific situations? And third, why were the overall performances in causal relation sentences superior to those in adversative sentences? In the few paragraphs to come, I will discuss Vygotsky and Shif's explanations to these questions in succession.

Vygotsky (1986) argues that the faster development of scientific concepts over that of spontaneous concepts benefits directly and extensively from systematic instructions provided in the educational institution. It is the mediator-student dialectic interactions that assist students in achieving consciousness, which subsequently were reflected in the sentence completion tasks (Vygotsky, 1986; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). As Vygotsky remarked, students from the very beginning are directly exposed to systematic verbal explanations and elaborations of scientific concepts. As both the genesis and drive, these systematic verbal communications continuously facilitate the processes of concept-formation and of the emergence of consciousness (Vygosky, 1986; Wertsch, 1985, 1998; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). In other words, experiences of students towards scientific concepts are initially mediated and conscious-oriented (Vygotsky, 1986), which, however, is not the case with spontaneous concepts. Specifically, direct

interactions between student and spontaneous concepts render the relationship between them unmediated. These direct experiences towards spontaneous concepts (e.g., brother, as frequently mentioned in Piaget's study) consequently result in a phenomenon, as observed by Piaget (1952), that when invited, individuals simply start to describe and/or enumerate referents when analysis is expected. Vygotsky conceives of such behaviour as lack of "consciousness of being conscious" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 170). In short, it is systematic mediational instructions and the resultant consciousness that account for the higher rate of correctness in scientific conceptual contexts in comparison to that in spontaneous situations, especially among second graders.

Regarding the enormous improvement from the second to the fourth graders of spontaneous concepts in both causal and adversative contexts, Vygotsky and Shif (Vygotsky, 1986; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991) argue that it benefits directly from the growth of scientific conceptual knowledge. Specifically, the development of scientific conceptual understanding facilitates the transformation of spontaneous knowledge from referent-oriented to abstract-oriented mode (i.e., the concrete-to-abstract transition). However, this relation is not one-way beneficial. In fact, as suggested by Vygotsky (1986), the very fact of the existence of adequate spontaneous concepts (the knowledge of causal relation in this case) renders a higher performance possible in the scientific conceptual contexts. Vygotsky thus concluded that the development of scientific conceptual knowledge interdependently exists with that of spontaneous knowledge and that the development of either one would, dialectically and reciprocally, favourably influence the development of the other.

Vygotsky continues, remarking that the fact that an adversative relation emerges

practically later than a causal relation in students' lives accounts for the

comparatively lower instances of correctness in adversative relation sentences

entailing both scientific and spontaneous conceptual contexts among second

graders. However, with the systematic instruction on adversative relation provided

in educational settings, performances of scientific concepts within this type of

relation sentence are extensively improved, which in turn favourably influences

performances of spontaneous concepts (Vygotsky, 1986; Van der Veer and

Valsiner, 1991) as manifested among the fourth graders. In short, spontaneous

knowledge develops interdependently with scientific knowledge provided from

without. The former provides a foundation for the development of the latter and the

growth of the latter in turn favourably influences the development of the former, or

the weakness of one is the strength of the other (Vygotsky, 1986).

This interdependent relationship that Vygotsky and Shif saw between scientific

and spontaneous knowledge finally called Piaget's instruction-development

dualism as well as behaviourism into question (for more critiques, see Vygotsky,

1978; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Chaklin, 2003; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991).

The former conceives of nonspontaneous (i.e., Piaget's version of scientific

concepts) and spontaneous thinking as two independent processes coexisting with

each other, and, in a broader sense, learning and development as two isolated

activities unfolding within their own peculiar developmental courses. Behaviourism,

on the other hand, conceives of these two processes as one and the same. In

other terms, development is simply quantitative growth of control over externally

existing stimuli, which as a result essentially adds on to and/or permanently

negates previously established forms of behaviours. Here both instruction-development dualism and behaviourism find themselves unexplainable to the fact that the development of scientific concepts precedes that of spontaneous concepts, or learning precedes development (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986).

2.2.5 Summary

In this section, I have discussed the Vygotskyan conceptualisation of the process of concept-formation. To recall, three major phases – syncretism, thinking in complexes, and pre-conceptual thinking – constitute, though not necessarily in a strictly successive fashion, this entire process. As we have seen, this process is dynamic and dialectical. Moreover, a hierarchical characteristic is embodied in the emergence of the process of concept-formation. Specifically, from syncretism to pseudo-concepts and pre-concepts, and finally to conceptual thinking, individuals' relationships to and/or regulation of social milieu are gradually emancipated from concrete or situational contexts, or to use Wertsch's (1985) notion, individuals' mental functions have been transformed from a lower to a higher degree of decontextualization. One theme that has repetitively emerged in this section but has not been paid adequate attention concerns the driving or synthetic force embodied in the process of concept-formation, namely, mediational instruction. In section 2.3, I will discuss this topic and elaborate on its link and implications to the present thesis.

2.3 Mediation and mediated mind

In this section, I will first discuss the main arguments concerning the concepts of mediation and mediated mind. The discussion will then focus on language as one

of the primary mediational tools. Specifically, the regulatory function of language/words in relation to control shift from object to other and, ultimately, to a self-oriented form of behaviour will be exemplified and discussed. Finally, the notion of continuous access and its relation to L2 contexts will be discussed.

2.3.1 Mediated mind

Vygotsky's argument for the social origin of higher mental functions emerged at the time when ideal-material, or internal-external dualism, and behaviourism dominated the debate over the relationship between thinking (i.e., internal psychological process) and behaviour (e.g., speech/word and other external expressions). Rooted in Cartesianism, ideal-material dualists believed that human beings' higher mental functions are the results of subjective idealism or manifestations of high spirit, functioning independently, uninfluenced by the surrounding social environment (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Cole, 1996). Meanwhile, behaviourists appeared to reduce human beings' higher mental functions into a sum of series of independent individual acts, consequently fully ignoring the regulatory function of language/word on the emergence of individuals' volitional behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Cole, 1996). These two schools based their assumptions on an anti-historical perspective, consequently failing to render a developmental viewpoint regarding the relationship between thinking and external behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1981).

As a solution to internal-external dualism and behaviourism, Vygotsky proposes the concept of mediation, or dialectical ideal-material unity, synthesising internal

and external processes into one and the same entity which finds its expression in word meaning. Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) basic argument of mediation is that individuals, instead of directly coping with the external world and/or their own behaviours, go through a mediating stage, indirectly interacting with the external environment through material tools and controlling their own behaviours through psychological tools. This process is schematically portrayed in Figure. 2.1[5] (adapted from Lantolf and Thorne, 2006, p. 62).

```
                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │  symbolic tools  │
                    └──────────────────┘
                       ↗            ↖
                     ↙                ↘
  ┌───────────────┐                    ┌───────────────┐
  │    subject    │ ←- - - - - - - - → │    object     │
  └───────────────┘                    └───────────────┘
```
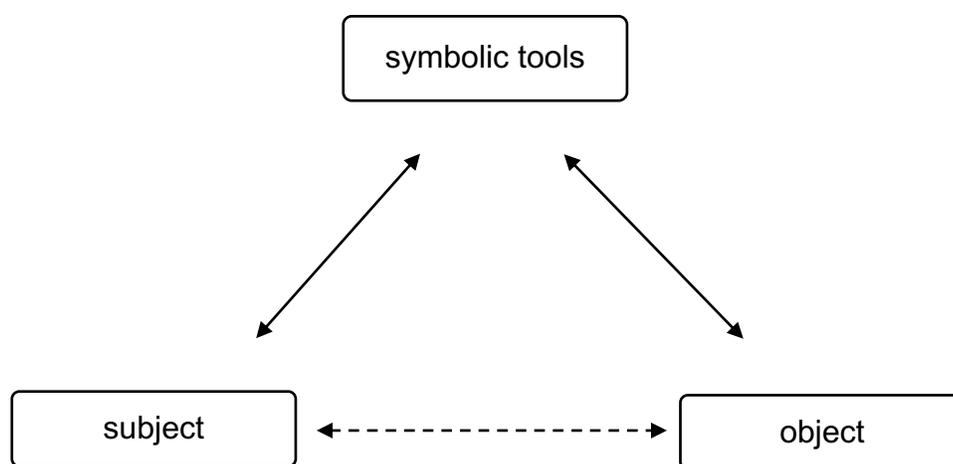
Figure. 2.1 The mediate nature of human/world relationship

Figure 2.1 represents the idea that the mediating stage involved in processes of higher mental functioning is realised through symbolic tools. Unlike physical tools such as hammer and knife, symbolic tools when internalised manifest themselves as psychological tools consisting of signs, concepts, writings, symbols, formulae, and language (Kozulin, 2003, 1998). Physical and symbolic tools together are also referred to as mediational means (see Vygotsky, 1978). I will discuss the physical-symbolic relation in section 2.3.2. However, it is important to note here that

---

[5] The solid arrows represent mediated processes and the dotted unmediated.

subsuming artefacts into two categories does not mean that the Vygotskyan formulation conceives of the world as two isolated and independent parts, which is what material-ideal dualism is about; to the contrary, any activity is the synthesis of material and ideal qualities.

An example frequently referenced in the literature to exemplify the mediated nature of human activity is the operation of complex multiplication (see Wertsch, 2007; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). Although it appears material mediational means are involved in this process when calculations are done with paper and pencil, these calculations are carried out based on multiplication tables which are internalised abstract concepts. In this sense, material-ideal dialectical unity is characteristic of human activity. Indeed, as Vygotsky (1986) remarks, our thoughts, ideas or concepts achieve their existence not only in but also through external expressions (e.g., words and/or physical actions); external expressions are meaningless if not motivated by thoughts or ideas. In short, the internal-psychological quality and external-material quality of human activity are two interdependent aspects of one and the same phenomenon, achieving existence in and through each other. However, it is important to note that the very existence of physical tools does not mean that human beings are passive participants; on the contrary, symbolic tools and human beings as a whole play a creative, dynamic, and proactive role (represented by the bidirectional arrows in Figure 2.1) (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006) (section 2.4.3).

2.3.2 Mediational means as a dialectic unity

The basic argument of Vygotsky (1978) on the relationship between physical tools and psychological tools is that the former is not the latter. They are divergent in their ways of mediating human activity. As Vygotsky (1978) remarks, physical tools are essentially external-oriented, aiming to change and control the outside material world; psychological tools, however, are essentially internal-oriented, aiming to control the inside psychological world of oneself (i.e., to self-regulate higher forms of behaviour). In this sense, physical tools are not psychological tools. Vygotsky (1978) claims that only psychological tools can be internalised. This is the basic argument that Vygotskyan followers used against Wersch's (1993; 1998) proposal to replace the Vygotskyan notion of internalisation with mastery (section 2.5).

However, this divergence does not mean that physical and symbolic tools exist social-culturally independently from each other. Ideal-material dualists conceive of the material or outside world as dominated by material artefacts and a human being's mind or internal world as controlled by symbolic artefacts (Vygotsky, 1978; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991; Wertsch, 1985). Consequently, material and symbolic artefacts exist independently alongside each other. This thesis has been heavily criticised by Cole (1996). Cole's basic argument is that artefacts, instead of being perceived as either-or regarding their ideal and material quality, should be reconceptualised as a dialectical unity embracing both qualities (also see, White, 1959). That is, an artefact is simultaneously ideal and material. Here, Cole's dialectical perspective on object-subject relation is in line with Vygotsky's (1978, p.55) account of outside-inside relation: "the mastering of nature and the

mastering of behaviour are mutually linked, just as man's alteration of nature alters man's own nature".

The following uses Cole's (1996) own examples to clarify this notion. The existence of a tool-table begins practically with the concept – table. This is the ideal aspect of being a table. Its existence eventually is externalised in and through objective materials such as the wood used to make this table. This is the material aspect of being a table. Similarly, a sign, such as the word table, is ideal in that it cannot be directly utilised to change the externally existing environment; meanwhile, it is simultaneously material in that it can be directly deployed to mediate intersubjective communication or "material activity" (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006, p. 63). Another example frequently mentioned in the literature of mediation to illustrate the dialectical ideal-material quality of artefacts is the blueprint of an architect (see Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). The design of a house is ideal in that it is an abstract idea evolved in the architect's mind. However, once the idea is externalised as a symbolic blueprint on a piece of paper, it immediately takes on a material quality in that it can be objectively modified by the architect before a contractor practically builds the house, providing another material manifestation of the design.

2.3.3   Word/sign as mediation

Investigations on the regulatory function of speech are rich in the literature of the Vygotskyan formulation of higher forms of behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1981; Luria, 1982, 1976; Wertsch, 1979, 1980; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). In the present section, I will examine experimental works relevant to my analysis.

Vygotsky (1978) required children to press the correspondent key among several on a keyboard when seeing a stimulus. As Vygotsky pointed out, the task was slightly beyond the children's zone of actual development. Consequently, remarkable vacillation was manifest among these children because they were at the stage of object-regulation. However, significant improvement was demonstrated after signs were introduced and attached to all the keys. In other words, with the regulation of signs, children manifested a successful transformation to coherent self-regulatory behaviour from their previous syncretic or unmediated response. Vygotsky argues that the presence of signs not only changed the children's thinking structure but altered the structure of the relationship between individuals' psychological function and the external environment. Finally, he concludes that a regulatory function (e.g., attention-focusing, behaviour-organising, and solution-planning in this case) is the inherent characteristic of signs or symbolic tools, and that the presence of symbolic tools is the drive behind the transformation to self-regulatory behaviour from vacillatory or unmediated responses (i.e., object-regulation).

Vygotsky's collaborator R. E. Levina (Vygotsky, 1978) found that the incorporation of private speech into an activity emancipated individuals from the constraints of the immediate visual field and time in the sense that speech eventually synthesised past, now, and future possibilities (Vygotsky, 1978). As Vygotsky stated, apart from familiarising oneself with and understanding the new situation through verbalising the situation, private speech assisted the individual in analysing the problem-solving situation, searching for solutions, and pre-organising would-be behaviour (1978). In other words, the "self-regulatory

mechanism" (Frawley and Lantolf, 1985, p.20) or "strategic activity" (Wertsch, 1980, p.155) of private speech allowed the individual to regain control over the task. A similar phenomenon is observed in my analysis (Chapters 6 and 7).

So far in this section, I have demonstrated the regulatory functions played by language/sign in facilitating individuals' performances during problem-solving situations. One theme that has been mentioned in this section but not given adequate attention is object-regulation, other-regulation, and self-regulation. In section 2.3.4, I will discuss this topic.

2.3.4 Object-, other-, and self-regulation

Three main phases constitute the developmental process of human volitional behaviours (Vygotsky, 1978; 1986; Luria, 1982). During the first phase, an individual demonstrates no particular response to speech directed toward him/her. As suggested, speech at this moment is undistinguishable from other objective materials presenting in the physical environment (Vygotsky, 1978; 1986; Luria, 1982). That is, speech and objective materials are essentially the same and the individual's attention is evenly distributed among them. In short, at this phase, the individual's attention is controlled by objects externally existing in the environment, or, to use Frawley and Lantolf's (1984) term, the individual's "locus of control" (p. 149) resides in the objects. This phase is generally described as object-regulation (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Frawley and Lantolf, 1984, 1985; Wertsch, 1979, 1980; Luria, 1982).

The second phase qualitatively distinguishes itself from the preceding one in that the individual can subordinate his/her behaviour to speech/words directed from

social others (Vygotsky, 1978; 1986; Luria, 1982). In other words, s/he is capable

of separating speech from other concrete objects externally existing in the

environment. As Luria (1982) points out, speech at this stage successfully grasps

the individual's attention. And during this phase, the individual's behaviour is

regulated by social others. Accordingly, his/her locus of attention/control has been

transferred to social others from concrete surroundings. This phase is referred to

as other-regulation (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Frawley and Lantolf, 1984; Wertsch,

1979, 1980; Luria, 1982).

Finally, apart from being capable of subordinating her/his behaviour to social

other's directive, the individual at the third phase can manipulate her/his own

behaviour according to her/his own inner or private speech. In other words, the

locus of control resides within the individual. This phase is self-regulation

(Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Frawley and Lantolf, 1984; Wertsch, 1979, 1980; Luria,

1982). Importantly, different from the other-regulatory phase in which the

individual's attention is reactively turned to social other's speech and responses

are but only subsequently executed, the individual in the self-regulatory phase is

proactively planning his/her would-be-response in and through speech before its

externalisation. To use Vygotsky's (1978) notion, s/he "can act in the present from

the viewpoint of the future" (p. 36); accordingly, his/her speech takes on a

"synthesising function" (p. 32), uniting past, now, and future.

Vygotsky concludes that initially functioning to control the child's attention from

external objects and later to control the child's volitional behaviour from internal

self, which Vygotsky calls the "reverse action" of speech (1978, p. 39), is the

inherent characteristic of the development of human speech. Accordingly, the shift

in the locus of control, from initially object-regulation to other-regulation and finally to self-regulation, is an inherent characteristic of the development of higher psychological functions (Vygotsky, 1986). Importantly, like speech, individuals' actions at each phase of this developmental process acquire structural thus positive functions (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Frawley and Lantolf, 1984; Luria, 1982), which I turn to now.

2.3.5 Control shift and continuous access

To understand functions of speech in communicative discourse, Frawley and Lantolf (1984) reconsidered the study of Tomlin (1984). During the study, Tomlin asked participants (both native (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs)) to talk about a visually presented narrative unfolding in front of them. Through line-by-line analysis of participants' oral products, Frawley and Lantolf (1984) found that at the beginning of the task, both NSs and NNSs purely recorded information on the pictures in the present progressive. However, a few minutes later, almost all participants started to talk *about* the pictures via past tense. Importantly, they also demonstrated that both NSs and NNSs occasionally resumed the present progressive throughout the task especially when information on the pictures appeared somewhat complicated. In short, patterns of shifting back and forth between present progressive and past tenses were observable across all participants regardless of whether they were NSs or NNSs.

Frawley and Lantolf (1984) argue that participants' recordings of picture information at the beginning of the task indicate their locus of control resided in the objective information in front of them (i.e., object-regulation) and that starting to

talk about rather than recording existing information is an indication of self-regulation or control over the task. These phenomena are reasonable because all participants at the very beginning had no knowledge about the concerned task and therefore verbalising picture information was the very way of knowing the task (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984). However, once familiarised with the task, they started to talk about the pictures, demonstrating self-regulation or control over the task. Resorting to present progressive (i.e., re-emergence of once going-underground functioning) is the means that participants deployed to re-establish a relationship with the ongoing task in order to get it done when encountering difficulties. Frawley and Lantolf (1984) concluded that there is fundamentally no difference between NSs and NNSs; the only difference appears to be the comparatively higher frequency of the latter resorting to present progressive throughout the task (i.e., object-regulation).

In this context, Frawley and Lantolf (1984, 1985) defined resorting to old functioning and/or the re-emergence of once going-underground functions as continuous access. They argued that continuous access is a function of development within the ZPD, and that communication is all about control shifting between object-, other- and self-regulation, rather than about abstractly exchanging communication strategies. Moreover, they went on further, criticising the conception of so-called L2 incompetence or interlanguage failure judged against prefabricated communication strategies (section 2.3.7).

A phenomenon that could be used to demonstrate the notion that communication is all about control, and thus continuous access is the function of development within the ZPD, is private speech. As already demonstrated by Vygotsky himself

and other researchers (e.g., Wertsch, 1979, 1980; McCafferty, 1992; Frawley and Lantolf, 1985) and will be further demonstrated by my analysis, private speech is a self-regulatory mechanism adopted by individuals to regain control over tasks at hand, especially under complex circumstances. Indeed, this position is readily reflected in and explainable by the Vygotskyan dialectic, new (self-control) through old (the utilization of earlier knowledge), which I turn to now.

2.3.6   On unlearning earlier knowing knowledge

Going back to "ancient type of functioning" or subordinate knowledge in order to finish the immediate communication task, hence regain control over the situation, is what Vygotsky claims "a rule of behaviour" (1981, p. 35; 1986, p. 140). Within the Vygotskyan framework, ancient type of functioning is "not negated by but dialectically coexists" with the emerging new type of functioning (Vygotsky, 1981, p.35; 1986). By dialectical, Vygotsky truly means that the emerging new and the ancient type of functioning achieve their concrete realisations in real life in and through each other, rather than the former thoroughly overriding or cancelling the latter, or vice versa. That is to say, the old and the new are each other's foundation. In this way, without the old, there is no concrete realisation of the emerging new type of mental functioning, or vice versa. Consequently, in the process of dialectical negation or contradiction, the emerging new and the ancient type of functioning are continuously shaping and reshaped by each other. To use Vygotsky's own term, the emerging new and the old "reorganise into" each other (1986, p. 172). That is, through the old grows out the new type of functioning. This is the phenomenon of development in the ZPD.

In the context of L2 concept-based socio-pragmatics, one typical manifestation of this notion would be that the old thinking structure, spontaneous concepts, and the new conceptual system, theoretical concepts, interdependently coexist with and are reorganised into each other. That is, the emerging new socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge continues existing interdependently rather than independently with the spontaneous or everyday knowledge of L2 learners; consequently, the latter, though sometimes going underground, can become active again (i.e., re-emerge) as a means for individuals to obtain control over especially difficult surroundings or L2 communication tasks (Wertsch, 1980).

Van Compernolle (2012; 2014) observed this phenomenon during his studies of L2 Spanish concept-oriented socio-pragmatic development. As documented by the author, some participants, instead of voluntarily applying newly learned conceptual knowledge, frequently resorted to their old knowledge, or rules of thumb, as orienting principles of pragma-linguistic use. However, when explaining this phenomenon, Van Compernolle blamed the "unlearning" rules-of-thumb struggles or difficulties on the part of the students. By saying that, he appears to suggest that concretisations or internalisations of new conceptual knowledge pre-request the negation of ancient knowledge (rules of thumb, in this case). That is, unless the negation of rules of thumb by L2 learners themselves, there might be no internalisations and no deliberate or conscious mastering of the new conceptual knowledge and, accordingly, no changes of performance.

This line of explanation fundamentally contradicts the Vygotskyan principle of control and continuous access within the ZPD (see section 2.4). Indeed, as Vygotsky explicitly argued, "systematicity and consciousness do not come from

outside, displacing the *individual*'s spontaneous concepts, but that, on the contrary, they presuppose the existence of rich and relatively mature representations *of spontaneous knowledge*. Without the latter, the *individual* would have nothing to systematize" (1986, p. 172, italics added). In this argument, Vygotsky lays out the necessary condition of becoming conscious of new conceptual knowledge, that is, being *in* the system, rather than being *isolated from* the system. Because "if we accept the idea that the formation of generalization gives birth to a superordinate [*theoretical concepts*] thinking; then, we spontaneously accept the hierarchy thinking and the existence of subordinate [*spontaneous concepts*] thinking as an element of the whole system" (1986, p. 172, italics added). Follow this line of argument, spontaneous knowledge being in the system, rather than being cancelled out or negated by the emerging new, is the necessary condition for individuals to internalise conceptual knowledge. In this sense, Van Compernolle's claim about the difficulties of unlearning such old system habits as rules of thumb loses its explanatory power.

Following the arguments developed so far in this chapter, the reason for student-participants' non-use of newly instructed pedagogical content knowledge and/or L2 socio-pragmatic concepts is clear. That is, students' internalisations of these two types of knowledge were still in process (i.e., students' self-regulatory control over these two types of knowledge had not fully matured). Consequently, they resorted to old functioning as the self-regulatory mediation to regain control over communicative settings and hence finish the tasks. Again, it is not because their old knowledge had not yet been unlearned, given that factual concretisation of unlearning means removing ancient elements which are the resources for

individuals to internalise conceptual knowledge. The paradox is that when you remove the old, there is no "dialectical negation" with the new, no thesis and antithesis.

2.3.7   On peculiarities of L2 discourse

Following the lines of discussions about transformation between object-, other- and self-regulation (section 2.3.5), Frawley and Lantolf (1984; 1985) argue that communication incompetence or failure is not a property of NNSs, but rather a function of behaviour happening to all individuals regardless of language background and origin. Therefore, they propose the reconceptualization of so-called L2 incompetence or failure. Specifically, they argue that in the process of communication discourses, nothing is anomalous and simultaneously takes on either-or negative features. In other words, utterances triggered within communication discourses always have instrumental functions to play, which in turn favourably influence ongoing communication. Expanding the notion of continuous access to externalised L2 peculiarities, they should be seen otherwise as means applied by the speakers to self-regulate relations with the ongoing tasks. In short, they have nothing to do with language incompetence, but everything to do with control. Thus, utterances which might be perceived as failures or anomalous from without are basically approaches applied by utterers to regain control over communicative discourses.

At this point, socio-pragmatic failure as described in Thomas (1983) deserves attention. Despite Thomas' interesting observations, what I find problematic is the way that socio-pragmatic failure is conceptualised. As is evident in the term failure,

the author appears to view socio-pragmatic failure in a purely negative way and ignores its positive aspects, that is to say, the functions they play in developmental processes. However, as discussed in section 2.3.5, failure moves emerging from L2 discourses embody essentially positive functioning. Instead of L2 incompetence, L2 peculiarities should be dialectically conceived of as regulative means applied by the speakers to re-establish relations with the ongoing communication in order to regain self-regulation or control over it. In this regard, utterances that appear as failure or anomalies from without are essentially "self-regulatory mechanisms" from within (Frawley and Lantolf, 1985, p. 20). Calling such phenomena socio-pragmatic failure from without does not reveal this dialectic truth.

2.3.8   Summary

In this section, I have discussed Vygotsky's main concept – mediation proposed as a solution to ideal-material dualism. Vygotsky (1978) argues that higher mental functions of individuals are internalised social relations. While physical tools are used to modify and/or change the physical world, symbolic tools consisting of signs, concepts, writings, formulae, and language are applied to regulate/control the internal psychological world of oneself. Language as a major form of symbolic tool, was also discussed, focusing on its regulatory function. Moreover, Vygotsky's conceptualisation of the internalisation process from object-regulation, to other-regulation, and finally to self-regulation mediated by symbolic tools was explained. As discussed, this transitional process is a characteristic feature of internalisation; however, it is not an absolute in terms of individuals resorting to ancient knowledge. The Vygotskyan notion of continuous access was discussed as the

conceptualisation of this transitional process. Instead of interpreting the individual's resorting to ancient knowledge as negative, continuous access understands its positive function as the means of re-establishing relationship with and thus regain control over an ongoing communicative activity. The application of this notion in L2 contexts was also discussed. Specifically, an explanation of the principle of unlearning earlier knowing strategies and the notion of socio-pragmatic failure were reconsidered and reconceptualised. As discussed, both notions contradict the view of progress-regression as the phenomenon of development of higher mental functions within the ZPD, a basic concept associated with DA.

2.4 The Zone of Proximal Development

In this section, I will discuss the concept of ZPD and its application in L2 contexts. I start with a discussion of the theoretical background that eventually gave birth to the concept of ZPD. Then, I will turn to a complex but unavoidable topic widely discussed in the literature of ZPD, that is, how to diagnose the ZPD. Specifically, imitation, the primary path to the creation of a *subjective* ZPD (Chaiklin, 2003) will be discussed. Finally, I will discuss how to engage students with imitation to materialise their subjective ZPDs.

2.4.1 ZPD: diagnosing maturing capability

Vygotsky (1981; 1986) claims that what tests (e.g., IQ tests) essentially diagnose is independent or already matured psychological functions, that is, individuals' Zone of Actual Development (henceforth ZAD). He argues that "a true diagnosis must provide an explanation, prediction, and scientific basis for practical prescription" (Vygotsky 1998b, p. 205, cited in Chaiklin, 2003, p. 51). That is, a

sound diagnosis should not focus on description to reveal the level of development, but on analysis to explain how to help it become what it is not yet (Vygotsky, 1978). Regarding individuals' mental development, a true diagnosis reveals not only cognitive functions that have already matured or been achieved, but also identifies those still in the process of maturing (Vygotsky, 1978; 1986), given the fact that these maturing functions are essentially integrative components of the individual even though they may not yet function independently (Chaiklin, 2003).

Following this argument, diagnosis that exclusively focuses on the ZAD is incomplete and thus loses its explanatory power. Vygotsky therefore proposes a complementary diagnosis that principally concerns maturing psychological functions within individuals, that is, the ZPD. The ZPD "allows us to penetrate into the internal causal-dynamic and genetic connections that determine the process itself of mental development" (Vygotsky, 1998b, p. 203, cited in Chaiklin, 2003, p. 51).

The notion of diagnosing maturing capabilities is directly linked to that of the dialectical relation between learning/instruction and development. Instruction precedes, or leads to, development (Vygotsky, 1986, 1978) (section 2.2.4). In this sense, "learning is not development" (1978, p. 90); and it is this very sequence that "creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are about to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement." (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90).

It is noteworthy that the meaning of the word precede as used in Vygotsky's argument: "instruction/learning precedes development" concerns not so much a temporal sequence as a dialectical synthesis. Indeed, as Newman and Holzman (1993) suggest, the meaning that Vygotsky intended to deliver through this particular word parallels the meaning of the word *through* as used in the notion: "Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 218), or the word *completed* in "Thought is not expressed but completed in the word" (Newman and Holzmen, 1993, p. 147), in the sense that thought exists interdependently rather than independently with word. This is because "the relation between thought and word is a living process; thought is born through words. A word devoid of thought is a dead thing" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 255).

Newman and Holzman (1993) thus propose the idea: "learning completes development" (p. 148), because "one is not the cause but historical 'bi-condition' for the other; learning cannot exist without development in the sense that certain biological matureness is legitimately required for *the operation of learning* and development cannot exist without learning *in the sense that other-regulative mediation is the origin of self-regulation or control*" (p. 147, italics added). Thus, by instruction-precedes-development, Vygotsky emphasises that development is a dialectic synthesis of instruction and learning.

2.4.2   Interpretations of the Zone of Proximal Development

Wertsch (1984) points out, Vygotsky, in his available writings, never specifically explicated what he meant by "adult guidance" and/or "collaboration" as mentioned

in the definition of the ZPD (section 1.1). Wertsch thus suggests that if these two constructs could be objectively measured, the concretisation of subjective ZPD is possible. I will discuss this topic in sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4. For now, I briefly discuss two popular interpretations of the ZPD, namely, scaffolding and i+1. The point I intend to make here is that the concept of ZPD is fundamentally different from these two constructs and thus it is simply wrong to interchangeably use them.

Scaffolding appears to be originally introduced in a paper by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) (Stone, 1993, 1998; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Griffin and Cole, 1984). Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) defines scaffolding as a process in which there is an "adult 'controlling' those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence. The task thus proceeds to a successful conclusion" (p. 90). Bruner (1985) argues that during this process the more experienced (mainly mothers and/or tutors) function as "a vicarious form of consciousness" in the sense that the more experienced person knows relatively more about the nature of the task and/or the proper sequence of steps required to accomplish this task than the less experienced, until a point that the less experienced is capable of consciously regulating/controlling his/her own behaviours. To instantiate the ways that adult supports were projected during the adult-learner interaction, Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) identify six types of scaffolding functions: recruitment of the child's interest or task engagement, reduction in degrees of freedom, direction/goal maintenance, marking critical features of task, controlling frustration, and demonstrating correct solution approaches.

The definition of the scaffolding metaphor explicates the responsibility of the learner as concentrating upon and completing only those parts of the task within his/her own range of capability (i.e., operating within the ZAD). Additionally, in their original discussion, Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) remarked that part of the responsibility of the adult is to transfer the responsibility of carrying out actions at hand when the learner is ready so that s/he can resume self-regulation or control over the immediate task through reducing degrees of freedom and establishing a vicarious consciousness. Thus, it appears that successfully accomplishing the immediate task rather than awakening those capabilities that are in the process of maturation but cannot function independently would be the problem with the scaffolding process. Indeed, as Engestrom puts it, "the idea of scaffolding is restricted to the acquisition of the given *which has already been deliberately controlled by the learner*" (as cited in Cazden, 1988, p. 108, italics added). In this sense, scaffolding is disparate from the concept of ZPD.

As argued by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976), what was scaffolded was not only the immediate task, but also the learner's understanding of the task; however, the exact details concerning how this understanding was achieved requires specific clarification. Moreover, although Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) used "scaffolding functions" as an analytic device to emphasise the significance and dynamics of the role of adult assistance, nonetheless the dynamics of the emergence of learner's scaffolded understanding of the nature of the task and/or reconceptualization of the relations to the task in relation to these dynamics of the emergence of adult assistance were not paid adequate attention under the original conception of the scaffolding metaphor (Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff et al., 1984). As Wertsch (1979, 1984,

1985) points out, the reconceptualization/reorganisation of learner's situation definition of the immediate task is the aim and the main issue of assisting the development of the learner through interactions. In this sense, scaffolding does not employ a developmental method as the ZPD does (also see Lantolf and Thorne, 2006).

Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) emphasised that the main role of the adult is to reduce the difficulty level of the immediate task to a level compatible with learner's ZAD so that occurrences of frustration can be controlled and instances of failure minimised. However, as discussed in section 2.2, L2 failure (i.e., peculiarities of L2 discourse), expanded to failure in any problem-solving situation, is the means or function of regaining self-regulation or control over learning tasks. As will be shown in Chapters 6 and 7, failure (i.e., regression to intense support) encountered while adult and learner re-negotiate understandings of the task is the inherent characteristic of developmental process. Thus, by minimising instances of failure on the part of the learner, scaffolding appears to ignore the structural function of regression. In this sense, it cannot be equated with the concept of the ZPD.

Although acknowledging the critical role of online diagnosis applied in the study of Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) in actively adjusting adult support to meet the learner's tailored needs, Griffin and Cole (1984) critiqued the original conception of the scaffolding metaphor in encouraging a focus on the quantitative changes brought about by this process, as it merely emphasised the quantitative modification of the directiveness of assistance through the standpoint of the tutor. However, qualitative modifications of adult assistance appear to be an inherent

feature of adult-learner dialectic interactions (Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff et al., 1984).

Similar issues were also raised by other authors. For example, by pointing out that

the notion of graduated assistance appears to include qualitative changes of

mediational techniques co-negotiated between adult and learner while working

together, Stone (1998, also see Lantolf and Thorne, 2006), although not explicitly

stating that we should invalidate scaffolding when conceptualising adult-learner

interactions, criticises the term for failing to adequately capture qualitative changes

manifest in mediational techniques. Rather, notions such as graduated assistance

(Cazden, 1988), assisted performance (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988), guided

participation (Rogoff, 1990), and mediated development (Poehner and Infante,

2017, 2019) should be appreciated (see Stone, 1998).

However, it is important to note that although Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) in

their original discussion did not reference the concept of the ZPD, Bruner (1985,

1986) and Wood (1988) explicitly linked scaffolding to the Vygotskyan theory of

higher mental development within the ZPD. By doing so, these authors

constructed an analytic link between adult-child interactions under the metaphor

and Vygotsky's notion of development through mediator-learner dialectic

interactions within the ZPD (also see Stone, 1998), thus empowering the transfer

mechanism[6] of scaffolding. In short, although the meaning of the scaffolding

---

[6] Regarding the transfer mechanism underlying the scaffolding metaphor, Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) proposed the idea that, to make scaffolding succeed, learner's "comprehension" of the task and its solution must precede "production" (p. 90). However, concrete detail concerning how comprehension was transferred into production was unclear.

metaphor has been expanded by linking it to the ZPD, the original conception of scaffolding was independent from the latter.

Regarding the construct of i+1, as Dunn and Lantolf (1998) point out, the fact that the basic interest of i+1 has nothing to do with students' maturing capabilities distinguishes it from ZPD. The Cartesian learning-development dualism in which i+1 was grounded and the Hegelian learning-development dialectic from which the ZPD was derived renders these two constructs theoretically incommensurable (Dunn and Lantolf, 1998). In short, attempts to superficially parallel the ZPD to the construct of either scaffolding or i+1 are fundamentally mistaken in terms of ways of treating students' maturing capabilities or understanding students' proactive roles in creating novel situation definitions.

2.4.3   Mechanism of ZPD-oriented L2 mediation

Studies of corrective or negative feedback (i.e., other-regulative instruction or semiotic mediation) are remarkable in the field of SLA (e.g., Ellis, 2008; Ellis et al., 2009; Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995). Empirical findings and conclusions drawn accordingly are diverse and thus worth discussing. However, a full review of all these studies goes beyond the concern of the present study. In the following section, I will thus only focus on characteristics of effective, or, to use Vygotsky's (1986) term, "the only good kind" (p. 188), other-regulatory instruction, given its high relevance to my analysis.

2.4.3.1 Explicit-implicit dualism

Ellis et al. (2009) argued that explicit L2 instructions (e.g., metalinguistic explanations) are more effective than implicit ones (e.g., recast) in terms of helping students independently solve L2 related problems. Lantolf and Poehner (2010) responded that if students' capabilities are perceived as static and fixed properties and if "effectiveness" is evaluated purely against students' independent L2 performances, Ellis et al.'s argument is valuable. Lantolf and Poehner continued, pointing out that the mixed empirical findings[7] reviewed in Ellis (2008), although unsurprisingly predicable[8], stand firmly against Ellis et al.'s (2009) conclusion. Moreover, they also called into question the principles, if there are any, applied to distinguish explicit from implicit instructions.

Lantolf and Poehner's (2010) point is clear. That the conception of capability and parameter applied to judge effectiveness is the source of trouble in L2 instruction evaluation. They argued that individuals' abilities are "buds" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) that are in the process of constant change and emergence rather than fixed assets that can be measured through paper-and-pencil tests or other forms of independent performances. Accordingly, a full evaluation of these abilities should be subject to process model or micro-genesis method (Wertsch, 1985). Thus, Lantolf and Poehner (2010) suggest that individual's capabilities and development should not be judged by performance only, but by "where responsibility and control

---

[7] Some vigorously indicated that explicit corrective feedback is more effective than implicit, while others either demonstrated the opposite or manifested insignificant differences between explicit and implicit instructions.

[8] Lantolf and Poehner (2010) point out this is related to the fact that varying research designs, data collection, and analysis methods were adopted in the reviewed experimental works.

for the performance resides" (p. 17). This notion parallels Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) reconceptualization of the evaluative principles of development. As the authors propose, apart from "product-oriented criterion" which concerns quantitative change in students' independent performances (i.e., reductions of errors), qualitative change in semiotic mediations (i.e., other-regulation) is another, if not more important, criterion (p. 470). Although independent successful attempts of the immediate task might suggest development, nonetheless the emergence of the reconceptualization of the task (i.e., situation redefinition), the resumption of the responsibility of continuing the task performance, and the relinquishing of other-regulatory mediations are also indications of learning autonomy.

This reconceptualization of the evaluative criteria of development immediately requires an understanding that L2 instruction should also be subject to a micro-genesis method, given the dialectic relation between instruction and development (section 2.2). The effectiveness of semiotic mediation should be considered through structural functions emerged or co-regulated during mediator-student dialectic interactions, rather than through an abstract and simple either-or (either explicit or implicit) dualistic perspective. This means that "the only good kind" of mediation has nothing to do with explicit or implicit characteristics, but rather whether it can assist the learner in reconceptualising his/her situation definition and subsequently resume self-regulation or control over an immediate and similar situation. Indeed, as Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) state, "all types of feedback, implicit or explicit, are potentially relevant for learning, but their relevance depends on *the impact that its application brings to student's transitional process to self-regulation from other-regulation*" (p. 480, italics added).

Having negated the explicit-implicit dualistic perspective, Aljaafreh and Lantolf

(1994) argue that graduation, contingency, and dialogue should be the

mechanism's semiotic mediations when aiming to promote students' transition

toward self-regulation. These three mechanisms, to use Aljaafreh and Lantolf's

(1994) phrase, "work in tandem" (p. 468), as learners struggle to figure out what to

do and how to do it, on the one hand, and the mediator simultaneously attempts to

determine if other-regulatory mediation is needed and how to deliver it, on the

other hand.

To explicate these three principles, I will draw on Wertsch's (1984) concepts of

situation definition which I have already mentioned in the present chapter,

intersubjectivity and semiotic mediation. This is relevant because, first, as

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) point out, mechanisms of graduation, contingency,

and dialogue were developed based on Wertsch's (1984; also, Rogoff and

Wertsch, 1984) three concepts; second, as suggested by Wertsch (1984), these

three concepts are key to the understanding of Vygotsky's "adult guidance" and

"collaboration", mentioned at the outset of section 2.4.2.

2.4.3.2 Graduation

Situation definition, as defined by Wertsch (1984), is "the way in which a setting or

context is represented – that is, defined – by those who are operating in that

setting" (p. 8). This definition immediately points to the proactivity or creativity of

operators engaged in the context. Indeed, as Wertsch states, the very term

definition is purposefully adopted to suggest that individuals are not passive

recipients of the externally existing environment. I have discussed this notion in

section 2.1, so I will not repeat it here. Importantly, this definition implies that different and constantly changing situation definitions are possible. Indeed, as Wertsch (1984) argues, the fact that adults and children connect differently to external objects or, to use Wertsch's term, "object representation" (p. 16), leads to different intra-psychological situation definitions for adults and children.

Wertsch exemplified his study on mother-child cooperatively constructing a copy structure based on a model to explicate this idea (Wertsch, 1979). As Wertsch analyses, the concerned child sees the task of constructing the copy irrelevant to the factual existence of the model in the setting, as evidenced by her/his un-consultative action towards the model before approaching pieces in the pile of objects used to construct the copy. By contrast, the mother approaches the task through her understanding of two concepts – model and copy – and the relationship between them. Wertsch's point here parallels Vygotsky's notions on complex thinking as demonstrated among children and conceptual thinking as manifest in adults (section 2.2). This factual difference eventually gives birth to the notion of different understandings of the task situation on the intra-psychological plane. It also suggests that the move to a conceptual understanding of the task situation is gradual (section 2.2).

2.4.3.3 Dialogue

Regarding the notion of constantly changing situation definitions, Wertsch's (1984) clarification gets more complex. It is easy to understand his idea if it is linked to Vygotsky's model of concept development (section 2.2). As children engage with externally existing artefacts (i.e., mother/mediator's speech and/or signs), their

understandings of the task at hand gradually demonstrate transitions from thinking in complexes to pre-conceptual and, ultimately, to conceptual thinking, though these transitions are not absolute (Vygotsky, 1986; Luria, 1976). As Wersch points out, in order to render adult-child mutual understanding (i.e., intersubjectivity) possible, the adult practically and necessarily adjusts downward her intra-psychological situation definition through verbal interactions (I shall further discuss the meaning of verbal interaction in section 2.4.3.6), although not to the level of but always slightly above the child's intra-psychological situation definition, until the child reaches the adult's intra-psychological situation definition (i.e., conceptual thinking). Specifically, the adult verbally elicits the child's conceptualization of any present symbolic tool and accordingly reorganises relations between them to achieve intersubjectivity. Thus, across the processes of adult-child communication, constantly changing understandings of the adult's speech on the part of the child on the inter-psychological plane fully unfolds.

Taken together, the factual existence of thinking in complexes among children practically necessitates the adjustment of adult intra-psychological situation definitions in order to achieve intersubjectivity through semiotic mediations at the inter-psychological plane. As already discussed in section 2.2, developmental processes of concept formation consist of complexity and dynamics. This fact practically requires adults and/or experts to gradually diagnose through symbolic mediation where children or novices' intra-psychological situation definitions are and what semiotic means are needed to achieve intersubjectivity, eventually assisting novices in achieving situation redefinitions (Wertsch, 1984, p. 11). This is what developmental transition from other- to self-regulation is about.

2.4.3.4 Contingency

The factual existence of different intra-psychological situation definitions not only

necessitates gradual adjustment of mediational means at the inter-psychological

plane on the part of adults (Wertsch, 1984), but also necessitates their proactively

taking on the responsibility, thus fully engaging in the process of creating a new

situation definition on the part of the novices (Wertsch, 1979). As Wertsch argues,

to the novice, a new intra-psychological situation definition is created through

dialogically interacting with the expert rather than being assumed or given

beforehand by the latter. This necessitates the novice's active engagement, and

subsequently, possible struggles. Meanwhile, this practical fact simultaneously

requires the mediator to maximally provide opportunities for the novice to redefine

his/her situation definition. As explicitly suggested by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994),

this maximum can be materialised by mediators relinquishing intervention or other-

regulatory mediation when the novice starts to manifest signs of self-regulation or

control. Indeed, as Lantolf and Poehner (2010) argue, "the ultimate goal of the

interaction was not for *novices* to produce the required form but rather for *them* to

struggle through the process of determining which forms to produce and how to do

so" (p. 29, italics added). The characteristic reflected by the mediational means

applied in this process is called contingency by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994).

2.4.3.5 Contradiction

As Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) powerfully argue, graduation, contingency and

dialogue are three core characteristics mediators should follow to facilitate

students to complete transitions from other- to self-regulation or, to use Wertsch's

term, to achieve desirable situation redefinitions. However, Aljaafreh and Lantolf's

(1994) being gradual and contingent regarding the delivery of mediational means indicates that an essentially even and peaceful process would lead to students' emergences of self-regulation or control over features of L2. Nevertheless, this is not the case. Indeed, as Vygotsky (1978, 1986, 1981) argues, the process of the emergence of self-control is more like a revolution, being full of uneven "wave-like curves" (Vygotsky, 1935, cited in Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991, p. 309) with both progress and regression featuring during this entire process (section 2.2).

The point I make here is that graduation and contingency are unarguably necessary but insufficient in assisting students to achieve the other-to-self-regulation transition. This idea is firmly supported by the present study's analysis (Chapters 6 and 7). Moreover, it is also suggested by Lantolf and Poehner (2010) when examining the empirical findings of an elementary teacher's application of other-regulatory instructions in her L2 Spanish classroom (for other examples see, Poehner, 2008, 2010; Van Compernolle, 2015). As Lantolf and Poehner observed, the teacher, more than once, either uncritically accepted students' responses despite the latter's explicit manifestation of uncertainty toward the L2 problem at hand or resorted to other students' contributions when the nominated student might simply have needed more time to respond. Lantolf and Poehner (2010) suggest, at these moments, "it is important to first probe the student's ripening knowledge before providing explicit information" such as directly acknowledging her/his attempt and/or soliciting contributions from the class (p. 24). Importantly, Lantolf and Poehner (2010) argue, it is the very process of students constantly struggling with L2 problems that allows the emergence of enormous opportunities with which students can engage throughout the process of the internalisation of L2

knowledge. Therefore, in this sense, it might be reasonable to conceive of critical probing and/or propelling through contradiction as another essential characteristic that mediational means should have in order to provide students with "a rich opportunity to internalise the information" (Lantolf and Poehner, 2010, p. 23). Indeed, antithesis or contradiction is the driving force of the Vygotskyan thesis-antithesis-synthesis dialectical notion of development (Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995; Vygotsky, 1986, 1981).

It should be noted that by contradiction, I do not mean that a contradictory position initiated on part of the mediator against that of student is true; instead, it simply means that in the process of dialectical interactions with student, the mediator should constantly function as an opposing force or antithesis to the student-thesis. Only in this way is synthesis – other-regulation to students' problems – insightful and helpful. Indeed, as suggested in Lantolf and Poehner (2010), merely accepting students' "correct" responses rather than digging into their thinking processes might hide the fact that these "correct" responses are essentially random guesses from students. This idea was firmly confirmed by my analysis (Chapters 6 and 7).

2.4.3.6 Dialogic interaction

As mentioned in section 2.4.3.3, to diagnose an individual's situation definitions of the task at hand and subsequently assisting her/him in reconceptualising them, a mediator would proactively deliver a series of verbal interactions with the individual. Within this context, the meaning of the word verbal pertains to dialogue embodied in the Vygotskyan notion of dialectic interaction. As critiqued by

Wegerif's (2008), such terms as dialectic and dialogic have been mistakenly used interchangeably in the literature pertaining to the Vygotskyan socio-cultural theory. Wegerif (2008) argues that these two concepts are fundamentally different, therefore it is wrong to use them without distinction. However, he continues to argue that the instantiation of dialectic interaction presupposes a dialogic condition necessary for the emergence of mediator-learner intersubjectivity. Against this backdrop, I will briefly explicate Wegerif's (2011, 2008) dialogic conceptualization of mediator-learner/peer-peer dynamic interactions. Crucially, this explication will concurrently expand and complement the meaning of the word verbal as used in the present study and, more importantly, it will open a new perspective on implementing the Vygotskyan concept of the ZPD in L2 classrooms.

The notion of dialogic was originally proposed by Bakhtin (1981,1986) to understand utterance. Bakhtin (1986) defines dialogic as an idea in which the meaning of an utterance can only be properly understood by considering the previous utterances to which it responds and the future utterances it anticipates[9]. As read by Wegerif (2011, 2008), Bakhtin's notion of dialogic conceives individual's voices (as remarked by Bakhtin (1981,1986), words are voiced, therefore possessing traces of multiple voices) not so much as *means* but as *ends* in themselves. Specifically, an individual's voice/perspective should not be seen solely as a tool to mediate other individual's internalization of social-cultural symbolic tools, but as the inherent element of authentic otherness. Consequently,

---

[9] The present study subscribes to Bakhtin's (1986) idea about how to understand the meaning of an utterance and subsequently maps it onto mediator-learner role play performances (section 5.4.2.7).

his/her voice is not synthesised or overcome by another voice (i.e., dialectic progress), but listened to, respected, and engaged with (i.e., dialogic progress) (Wegerif, 2011, 2008). Indeed, as Bakhtin (1986) remarks, "If an answer does not give rise to a new question from itself, it falls out of the dialogue and enters systemic cognition, which is essentially impersonal" (p. 168).

Expanding Bakhtin's notion of dialogic to mediator-learner dynamic interactions, Wegerif (2011, 2008) recognizes that both dialogic and dialectic perspectives acknowledge the significant role of adult assistance in helping learners' development of higher mental functions; however, to bridge the gaps of different levels of understanding between mediator and learners at least during the first stage (i.e., to achieve different levels of intersubjectivity) initially requires individuals taking in and incorporating each other's different voices/perspectives and adjusting their own perspectives. Expressed differently, a dialogic progress is an essential precursor to the co-construction of intersubjectivity and thus mediator-learner dialectic interactions within the ZPD. Mercer (2000) conceptualises activities co-created during this dialogic progress as an inter-mental development zone (IDZ).

As argued by Wegerif (2011, 2008, 2013, 2015, 2018) and Mercer (2000), quality of discussion is essential to the creation of IDZ activity. As both maintain, it is exploratory talk that renders IDZ activity possible, which is defined as follows:

> *Exploratory talk* is that in which partners engage critically but constructively with each other's ideas. Relative information is offered for joint consideration. Proposals may be challenged and counter-challenged, but if

so reasons are given and alternatives are offered. Agreement is sought as

a basis for joint progress. Knowledge is made publicly accountable, and

reasoning is visible in the talk (Mercer, 2000, p. 153).

Mercer (2000) identified three main characteristic features of exploratory talk (for

demonstrations of exploratory talk, see Mercer (2000)). Primarily, question-and-

answer sequences that emerge during mediator-learner dynamic interactions are

not so much about testing learners' knowledge but about co-negotiating

understanding, or co-constructing situation redefinitions of the task. Additionally,

the content taught during class should not be merely pedagogical content

knowledge, but procedures for figuring out what to do, how to complete it, and

understanding the learning experience. Finally, instruction-learning activity extends

as a dialogic as well as dialectic dynamic process. Wegerif (2005, 2008, 2018)

discusses such ground rules of exploratory talk as asking each other open

questions and listening with respect.

2.4.4   Diagnose and co-create ZPD activity

Upon realising the significant role played by ZPD activity to development, how to

diagnose and maximally co-construct ZPD activity becomes a practically

meaningful question. Vygotsky (1978, 1986) suggests that the answer is in the

process, or activity, of imitation (see also Chaiklin, 2003; Newman and Holzman,

1993; Valsiner and Van der Veer, 1993). Similarly, Holzman (2018), interpreting

the ZPD as an activity, suggests that the unseparated unit of learning and

development consists of in-the-process-of-making performance stages co-created

by all participants, including mediator and learners, collectively working together.

To explicate this notion, I will first discuss the notion that imitation is the instrument of human learning. Then I will discuss Vygotsky's definition of imitation. Finally, I will address the question of imitation.

2.4.4.1 Imitation as the mechanism of learning

Individuals' appropriation of adult meaning or conceptual thinking is the result of internalisations of symbolic mediations projected towards them over the course of mediator-student dialogical interactions (section 2.2). As Vygotsky (1986) pointed out, these symbolic mediations (e.g., signs, speech) are givens from social others operating in the environment rather than creations of the individuals themselves (see also Wertsch, 1979, 1985). This means that individuals' higher forms of behaviour are imitations of social intelligence, and that imitation is the mechanism of human learning (Newman and Holzman, 1993; Chaiklin, 2003; Valsiner and Van der Veer, 1993). A study by Luria (1982) demonstrated that subjects started to obtain control over their own behaviour through their own speech after long and complex processes, moving away from reliance on the experimenter's directive. This finding confirms that imitation is the "moving force" (Valsiner and Van der Veer, 1993, p. 45) of the developmental transition to self-regulation from reliance on other-regulatory mediations (Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). Indeed, as Bruner (1986) observed, for the transition from other- to self-regulation to occur, the "aspirant speaker must 'borrow' the knowledge and consciousness of the tutor to enter a language" (p. 78, cited in Dunn and Lantolf, 1998, p. 420). In short, imitation is how learning emerges, or to use Dunn and Lantolf's (1998) term, "the fundamentally human process of meaning-making" (p. 420), while expert and novice dynamically co-regulate each other toward the goal of achieving situation

redefinition (Wertsch, 1984, p. 11) of the latter. That is, it is the phenomenon of development.

Importantly, concept-formation processes demonstrate that imitations are "active and interactive" (Newman and Holzman, 1993, p. 150), insightful and meaningful, rather than unlimited "unintelligent aping of observed behaviour" (Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991, p. 344) or meaningless reproduction of adult thinking (Vygotsky, 1978). In fact, unlimited reproduction of adult thinking is impossible because an individual can only imitate "that which is within her developmental level", that is, in-the-process-of-becoming-mature functions (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 88, 1998b, 1987). In addition, the fact that different situation definitions objectively exist between novice and expert also renders reproduction of adult thinking impossible. Otherwise, constant adjustments of situation definition on the part of the expert would appear superfluous and delusive.

2.4.4.2 Imitation as an activity

Following these lines of discussion, it is presumably not difficult to recognise the difference between Vygotsky's conception of imitation and the traditional approach, as in Lightbown and Spada (1993), who conceive of imitation as "word for word repetition of all or part of someone else's utterance" (p. 2). Lantolf and Thorne (2006) criticise this conceptualisation of imitation as the precise reproduction of a model as being too limited because it appears to ignore the factual proactive role played by individuals during developmental processes.

Indeed, Vygotsky cautioned about the traditional approach to imitation, emphasising a broader sense of imitation as dialogic and dialectical processes of

mediator-student working together within the latter's ZPD that are necessary to development, rather than as finished unintelligent exact copies of observed operations at any static moment (Chaiklin, 2003). Thus, he proposes that imitations are "situations in which a child is able to engage in interaction with more competent others around specific tasks that the child would otherwise not be able to perform alone, because of the presence of maturing psychological functions" (Chaiklin, 2003, p. 52).

Valsiner and Van der Veer (1993) also emphasise this point. Specifically, they parallel Vygotsky's notion of imitation to that of Baldwin's (1892) "persistent imitation" (p. 286) which "equals constructive experimentation with the given model (i.e., *externally existing mediational means*) and its transformation into a novel form (i.e., *situation redefinition*) both in actions directed toward the model and in the resulting internalization of understanding of the model" (Valsiner and Van der Veer, 1993, p. 45, italics added). In sum, the Vygotskyan framework conceives of imitation as dialectical, interactive, and proactive processes, which not only give birth to the ZPD but also make internalisations of maturing functions possible.

2.4.4.3 Co-construct imitation within ZPD activity

While arguing that good instructions are those focusing on the maturing capabilities of individuals, Vygotsky also stated, "instruction is possible only where there is a potential for imitation" (1987, p. 211). Consequently, the necessary questions are how to tell the emergence of these potentials and how to maximise them so that attuned instructions can be achieved. Chaiklin (2003) suggests that this emergence is indicated by individuals starting to incorporate the mediator's

mediation, or the "movement away from reliance on the tutor, or *other-regulation*, and towards reliance on the self, or *self-regulation*" (Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994, p. 470, italics original).

Practically, incorporations might manifest themselves through, for example, self-noticing the problem, self-recognising the trouble source of the problem, self-correction, using the mediator as knowledge resource, rejecting the mediator's offer with reasons and alternative solutions, resuming the responsibility of problem-solving and continuing with the immediate task, and/or finishing the task independently. The emergence of any incorporation in turn indicates the student's understanding of the significance or the meaning of the mediator's semiotic mediations, or to use Wertsch's (1979, 1984) notion, the student's situation definition of that moment successfully relates to the mediator's situation definition, intersubjectivity emerging (according to Wertsch (1984), the chance of the student's situation definition completely coinciding with the mediator's is rare. Certainly, this fact also explains the factual existence of the ZPD).

It is however noteworthy that manifestations of incorporation at any moment do not mean instructions provided before that moment are meaningless. Nevertheless, these instructions are efforts and indications of the mediator dynamically adjusting a higher level of situation definition toward a lower one so that students' maturing capabilities can be recognised. All this points to the significance of applying Wertsch's (1984) three main concepts while diagnosing students' ZPDs, namely, situation definition, intersubjectivity, and semiotic mediation (section 2.4). However, to make instructions more attuned, mechanisms of mediation are

necessary, namely, graduation, contingency, dialogue, and contradiction (section 2.4).

2.4.5 Summary

In this section I have discussed the function of the ZPD and its interpretations available in the ZPD literature, that is, scaffolding and i +1. Moreover, five principles of mediational instructions, – graduation, contingency, dialogue, contradiction, and dialogic interaction – that a mediator should follow when attempting to unearth the underlying problem sources of poor performances and to provide support as to how problems could be overcome were also explained. Wertsch's (1984) notions of situation definition, intersubjectivity, and semiotic mediation were also introduced to help explicate the rationale underlying the first three principles. The notion of contradiction, which was developed based on empirical studies and theoretical notions concerning other-regulatory mediations (e.g., Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995), is of necessity for supporting learners to realise what problem sources are and how to overcome them. This idea is further supported by the data of the present study (Chapter 7). Furthermore, the importance of dialogic interaction between mediator and learner while co-creating ZPD activity was examined. The notion of dialogic, instead of being incompatible with that of dialectic, appears to be the prerequisite of successful mediator-learner dialectic interaction within ZPD activity. Such ground rules as respecting others' voices, accepting, engaging with, and drawing on each other's perspectives are of importance for mediator and learner co-creating the inter-mental development zone (IDZ). Lastly, the Vygotskyan perception of imitation as the mechanism of learning in ZPD activity was discussed. Instead of

conceiving of imitation as a mechanical and meaningless copy of another's acts and/or utterances, it should be reconceptualised as a practice in which learners can engage with more experienced others around tasks of concern that the learners cannot complete independently.

2.5 Internalisation

In this section, a discussion of the historical context from which the concept of internalisation emerged and its links to the ZPD will be provided. I will first draw a big picture where internalisation fits. Then, I will discuss the links between development, mediation, the ZPD, and internalisation. Afterwards, interpretations of internalisation will be exemplified. Finally, studies intended to concretise this notion will be discussed.

2.5.1 Internalisation as dialectical synthesis

The notion of internalisation emerged during the debate about the relationship between individuals' internal psychological development and the external social environment (including social others and variant social relations) (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf, 2000; Lawrence and Valsiner, 1993; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991; Wertsch and Stone, 1985). Two major schools were dominant at the time, namely, separatism and parallelism (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). As with material-ideal dualism (section 2.3.2), separatists argue that internal mental development and the external social milieu are isolated and independent from each other, with one having no influence on the course of the other. Piaget's account of egocentric speech reflects this idea (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986) and Krashen's notion of i+1 is a remarkable manifestation of this idea in the

L2 context (Dunn and Lantolf, 1998). Regarding parallelism, the basic assumption

is that processes of the emergence of higher mental functions are processes of

living in and coping with the external environment. That is, they are one and the

same thing. This thinking makes the discussion of mind-social relations

unnecessary because individuals' development of higher forms of behaviour are

conceived of as quantitative accumulations of direct experiences with the external

environment (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky adopted Marx's thesis of social-level consciousness as the dialectical

synthesis of tool (historical artefact) and labour and subsequently applied it to the

account of individual-level consciousness (Wertsch and Stone, 1985). Specifically,

as in the case of social-level consciousness growing out of historical

developmental processes, individual-level consciousness emerges through social

milieu. This dialectical account of mind-social relations argues that individuals'

development of higher mental functions is the result of constant dynamic

interactions in and with the external social milieu. Moreover, a constantly changing

external social environment is effectively because of human beings' creative

engagement and production. That is, one's existence is interdependent with the

other. Thus, rather than unintelligent precise copies of the external social milieu,

processes of the emergence of higher forms of behaviour reflect individuals'

creative and proactive engagement (sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4).

2.5.2   Indications of internalisation

I would argue that the transitional movements from object-regulation to other-

regulation, and finally, to self-regulation (section 2.3.4) are simultaneously

reflections and indications of dynamic development within individuals' ZPDs, and thus, the emergence of internalisation. Indeed, Wertsch (1979) proposed a four-level transitional process of development within the ZPD measured by the trajectory of this triad. At the first level, individuals' performance is extensively manipulated by objects objectively existing in external settings. This notion is well in line with Vygotsky's account of the complex-thinking phase over the course of concept-formation (section 2.2). At the second level, individuals start to show signs of cooperation with the mediator, reflected in active subscriptions of their behaviours to the latter's directives. Performances at this level parallel those demonstrated between complex thinking and pre-conceptual thinking phases over the course of concept-formation. At the third level, signs of individuals resuming the responsibility of problem-solving become obvious, or to use Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) notion, individuals' reliance on a mediator, or other-regulatory mediations, is less than reliance on the self, or self-regulation. Finally, at the fourth level, individuals start to independently regulate their performances, as reflected for example in the use of private dialogue.

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), based on Wertsch's (1979) four-level classifications, developed a five-level template of developmental processes also measured by the trajectory of an object-other-self-regulation triad within ZPDs. Different from the latter, however, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) incorporated two specific indications, namely, noticing and correcting, to render assessing processes more concrete and manageable. For the present study, I will follow Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) five-level developmental parameters.

2.5.3 On other-regulatory mediation inventory

So far, we know that the processes of the emergence of internalisation are essentially the processes of transition from other- to self-regulation. Expanded to the L2 context, mediator-student dialectical interactions within the ZPD are about assisting student in completing this transition. This notion is well in line with the argument I developed in section 2.4 regarding the mechanism of semiotic mediation. To recall, the point of semiotic mediation is not about whether it should be explicit or implicit, but rather about whether it can help students complete the transition from other- to self-regulation. The notion directly calls into question the value of developing a concrete implicit-to-explicit other-regulative mediation inventory, either as pre-fabrication or as post-product (e.g., Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Poehner, 2005). By saying this, I do not mean that this inventory is meaningless. It indeed captures, though in an abstract way, the dynamics of mediator-student dialectical interactions within the latter's ZPD (Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995); however, they are reflections of the dynamics between a particular mediator and a particular student or a group of students within a particular L2 context. In other words, the same mediator is likely to develop a different inventory with a different student or group of students; a different mediator will likewise construct a different inventory with this group (see also Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995).

Thus, my argument is that it is better if we do not have concrete regulative mediation inventories. This in turn makes discussion about the significance of engaging with regulative mechanisms – graduation, contingency, dialogue, and contradiction – meaningful and necessary. Otherwise, a concrete regulative

mediation inventory would sufficiently make possible learning within the ZPD. Moreover, the necessity of engaging with these mechanisms renders the interventionist approach, which utilises prefabricated set of hierarchical prompts arranged from the most implicit to the most explicit to regulate students' learning processes to teaching/learning within the ZPD very much inconsistent with Vygotsky's notion of the ZPD (Chapter 3).

2.5.4   Wertsch's critique of the notion of internalisation

Wertsch (1993) questions the usefulness of the notion of internalisation. His major points can be sorted generally into three topics, first, that internalisation embraces internal-external, or mind-environment, dualism; second, that externalisation, or external expressions, are overlooked under the notion of internalisation; and third, that individuals as passive recipients of their external surroundings. However, external-internal dualism is the problem that Vygotsky intended to resolve through the notion of internalisation (section 2.5.1). It is in and through social interactions on the inter-personal plane that functions on the intra-personal plane emerge, grow, and come to existence. In this sense, the notion of internalisation is the dialectic synthesis of the external and the internal, rather than a kind of dualism (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Lawrence and Valsiner, 1993; Wertsch and Stone, 1985).

Regarding the second point, Wertsch (1993) praises and agrees with Lawrence and Valsiner's (1993) interpretation of individuals' roles as dynamic, creative, and proactive in the construction of novel functions or the reorganisation of ancient functions on both the inter-personal and intra-personal planes. However, by saying

"internal copies of external reality" (Wertsch, 1993, p. 171), Wetsch seemingly

mischaracterises Vygotsky's notion of imitation. Vygotsky's notion of imitation goes

far beyond unintelligent, meaningless reproduction of external objects (section

2.4); it embraces the entire expert-novice communicative discourse wherein the

two dialectically and dialogically co-negotiate qualitatively novel situation

definitions towards the goal of the latter eventually obtaining self-regulation or

control over external social settings. In this sense, Vygotsky's notion of imitation is

not so much about resultant copies as about processes of the emergence of novel

situation definitions. Expanded, the notion of internalisation commits not only to

internal essences, but to the entire processes of the emergence of these

essences.

Additionally, Wertsch (1998) calls into question the ideal or internal nature of

higher forms of behaviour. He suggests that, given externalisations/concretisations

of some higher mental functions are achieved through relying solely on material

tools, then conceiving of these processes as ideal is simply wrong. Wertsch used

the example of individuals operating on multiplication problems with such material

tools as paper and pencil to explicate his idea. Given only material tools are

involved throughout this process, it is likely higher mental functions are not

relevantly engaged. According to Werstsch (1998), the use of material mediational

means, a process happening *without* rather than *within* individuals, stands firmly

against the Vygotskyan account of the psychological nature of functioning on the

intra-personal plane (see also Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). As a response, Gal'perin

(1992) points out that although the Vygotskyan notion of internalisation

emphasises the social origin of higher mental functions, nonetheless, it never

implies that higher mental functions exclusively occur psychologically within individuals. Furthermore, and importantly, an individual resorting to paper and pencil to solve a multiplication problem is possible only because s/he has already internalised the complex principles of multiplication and knows that relying on these tools would simplify the problem-solving process that s/he originally experienced on the inter-personal plane by dialectically co-working with social others (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006).

Wertsch (1993, 1998) proposes the notions of mastery and appropriation, claiming that nothing but unnecessary problems would be lost if the notion of internalisation were replaced by these two concepts. Wertsch (1998) conceives of mastery as "knowing how to use a mediational means with facility" (p. 50). Lantolf and Thorne (2006), by heavily referencing Salomon (1991), prove that the modified meaning of the concept of internalisation goes beyond what Vygotsky originally meant if concept-mastery is applied.

Salomon (1991) investigated the notion of mastery and concluded that some mediational means could be mastered but not internalised. Specifically, mastery applies to both "internalisable" (e.g., "an abacus") and "uninternalisable" (e.g., "Morse code, calculators") mediational means (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006, p. 163–4). The latter are uninternalisable because "much of what they accomplish is carried out 'implicitly' for the users but not with them" (Salomon, 1991, p. 196, cited in Lantolf and Thorne, 2006, p. 163). In other words, the users are outsiders in the sense that they can not observe the procedure of what has been accomplished and therefore can not "emulate the procedure and reconstruct it in his or her mind" (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006, p. 164). Wertsch's notion of mastery,

according to Lantolf and Thorne (2006), fails to distinguish internalisable and uninternalisable artefacts, thus loses its explanatory power.

As for appropriation, Wertsch (1998) conceives of it as a process that entails "taking something that belongs to others and making it one's own" (p. 53). Lantolf and Thorne (2006) agree with Wertsch on the equivalence between this notion and internalisation, emphasising that processes in the emergence of the latter are about making cultural artefacts psychologically available for deliberate use by individuals to self-regulate their own behaviours. To render the making-it-one's-own process visible, I will discuss the emergence of private speech over the course of problem-solving tasks in section 2.5.5.

2.5.5 Private speech

2.5.5.1 Social origin

Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) works on egocentric speech demonstrate that there is a direct correlation between the quantity of egocentric speech and the need for social communication[10]. Specifically, steady decreases in egocentric speech were manifest when social communication environments were purposefully removed from participants' surroundings. With further mental development, egocentric speech started to gradually decrease and once internalised became inner speech. However, instances of egocentric speech resurfacing were widely evident among participants especially in difficult situations, for instance, when the goal of the

---

[10]It is noteworthy that, as pointed out by Frawley and Lantolf (1986), Vygotsky's major interest in egocentric speech is not as much about the course of its quantitative developmental as about its qualitative trajectory in relation to children's higher mental development. Vygotsky's focus on the quantitative characteristic of egocentric speech during these series of experimental works is driven by the pragmatic need to verify Piaget's own results collected from his experimental studies on egocentric speech.

immediate task went beyond being "directly suggested by the environment" (Wertsch, 1979b, p. 89). Vygotsky thus concluded that inner speech has a social origin and is gradually made their own by individuals.

Wertsch's (1979) study on the mother-child collaboratively constructing a copy puzzle structure by following a model puzzle renders processes of the internalisation of social speech (mother's other-regulative speech in this case) visible. Through analysing mother-child dialogical interactions, Wertsch demonstrates that the private speech to which the child later resorted is both syntactically and semantically equivalent to the mother's speech unfolded earlier. As Wertsch (1980) points out, the child's utterances could be fully understood only if conceived of as imitations of the mother's speech, given the syntactic and semantic resemblances and similar regulatory function of the two. Wertsch's (1980) study proves that private speech is essentially internalised social speech, simultaneously reflecting and inheriting the dialogic characteristics of the latter.

2.5.5.2 Strategic function in self-regulation

Vygotsky (1986) argues that egocentric speech instead of dying out "goes underground" (p33) as inner speech cast in "elliptical form" (Frawley and Lantolf, 1985, p. 21); it might be resumed by individuals in the form of private speech, especially when situations become difficult. Fundamentally different from Piaget (1959) who argues for the useless role of egocentric speech over the course of children's development, Vygotsky argues for its strategic function in self-regulation (section 2.3.3), or what Frawley and Lantolf (1985) called, "self-regulatory

mechanisms" (p. 20). I will continue discussing this phenomenon alongside my analysis in Chapter 7.

2.5.5.3 Characteristics

Private speech syntactically manifests abbreviation or simplicity, featuring mainly predicates (i.e., new information) (Vygotsky, 1986; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Wertsch and Stone, 1985; Frawley and Lantolf, 1985). Vygotsky (1986) reasons that, given private speech is a form of communication with oneself, it is unnecessary to instantiate it as syntactically complete as written speech, whose priority is to communicate with others. That is, using predicates only is an inherent characteristic of private speech.

Meanings indexed through private speech can only be understood against the immediate context and fully by the initiator her/himself (Vygotsky, 1986). This phenomenon was conceived of by Vygotsky (1986) as preponderance, a feature of private speech wherein only new information is available. For this reason, all psychological events revolving around this new information (i.e., the sense of the information) are more important to the initiator than the syntactic meaning the information would otherwise construct (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky (1986) defines sense as a matter of social constructs; it is a subjective, dynamic, and perception-oriented word game created for others. By contrast, meaning is an objective and comparatively stable construct existing independently from sense (Vygotsky, 1986). These factual phenomena explain the non-comprehensibility of private speech from outsiders' viewpoints and therefore could only be understood in the immediate context.

2.5.5.4 Expansion

The private speech discussed so far in this section might fit well into what McCafferty described as "self-talk or meta-comments" (1992, p. 183), or "self-directed speech" (1994, p. 425). However, Frawley and Lantolf (1985), concerned about the restrictive nature of this traditional conception of private speech, expanded it to include such peculiarities of L2 discourse as odd hesitations (see also McCafferty, 1992). To explicate this idea, it is helpful to recall Frawley and Lantolf's notion of control (section 2.3). As argued by Frawley and Lantolf (1984), object-regulated forms are essentially intrapersonal or private, and when verbally externalised are shaped in private speech.

It is noteworthy that object-regulation does not exclusively occur when task-takers lack knowledge of decontextualized goals; on the contrary, it might be pervasive throughout the course of task-undertaking, or even the processes of the emergence of internalisation. This is because of continuous access (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984, 1985), or the Vygotskyan notion of learning within the ZPD, which I respectively discussed in sections 2.3 and 2.4.

2.5.5.5 Categories

Frawley and Lantolf (1985) assign three phasic classifications of transformation (section 2.3.4) to account for private speech. Regarding object-regulation, meta-comments concerning the task itself and/or the task-taker's performance belong to this category. Moreover, meta-comments such as "probably", "I think", "I suppose", "should" and "presumably" (Ahmed, 1988, p. 296-330) are also classified as object-regulatory private speech. Furthermore, affective markers such as sighs,

laughter, and exclamations are also manifestations of object-regulation, indicating the task-taker's struggles to reach a proper definition of the task situation.

Other-regulatory private speech, according to McCafferty's (1992) classifications, entail questions launched towards the mediator and those clearly directed to task-takers themselves. As pointed out by McCafferty (1992), rising intonation usually accompanies these two types of questions, although eye contact is quite common with the former and a low voice with the latter.

Self-regulatory private speech incorporates all meta-comments that index the task-taker's "sense of having mastered a particular source of confusion" (McCafferty, 1992, p.184). For example, the self-rejecting marker "no" and the cognitive status changing marker "Oh! Now I see" are expressions of self-regulation (McCafferty, 1992, p.184), because they indicate task-taker's awareness of the trouble source and the locus of control being shifted back from task to task-taker.

As with peculiarities of L2 discourse (section 2.3.7), private speech to which an individual resorts is an attempt by the individual to re-establish relations with the ongoing task so that s/he can regain self-regulation or control over the latter. Before closing this section, I wish to look at one of Tarone's (1978, 1980) categories of communicative strategies – language switch – given its relevance to my analysis in Chapters 6 and 7.

2.5.6 On Tarone's language switch

Tarone categorised L1 uses against L2 communicative discourses as language switch. In his research, Tarone counted uses of mother tongue that constitute

parts of the ongoing L2 communication; thus, what he really refers to by language

switch is L1 use as inter-psychological dialogue. By doing this, he avoids

distinguishing L1 use as inter-psychological dialogue from L1 use as intra-

psychological speech (i.e., private dialogue), which is applied when the speaker is

interested in simply communicating with her/himself rather than a hearer.

Consequently, inter-psychological L1 and intra-psychological L1 are blurred under

the category of language switch, which in turn renders the author's category

language switch purely abstract.

It is obvious from without that these two types of L1 uses are one and the same.

However, they are essentially different from within. That is, the one functioning as

other-regulatory speech occurs on the inter-psychological plane and the other

functioning as self-regulatory speech emerges on the intra-psychological plane. In

this way, language switch L1 use under Tarone's (1978, 1980) category confuses

other-regulatory with self-regulatory speech. Again, the category – language

switch – is superficial and misleading. Category for category's sake, it is more

accurate to divide language switch into intra-psychological language switch and

inter-psychological language switch, although it might be better off if we do not

have these categories at all, as argued by Frawley and Lantolf (1984; 1985).

Quantitatively adding more categories, however, is not the point. Of particular

interest here is Tarone's perception of language switch as a type of

communication strategy, consequently looking at this language phenomenon in a

purely abstract way and simultaneously ignoring the structural functions it plays in

ongoing inter-psychological dialogue (i.e., L2 communication). Indeed, as claimed

by Vygotsky, it is the structural function played by speeches rather than a

collection of speech strategies that leads to ongoing communication (Leontev, 1969; Wertsch, 1979). Importantly, as argued by Frawley and Lantolf (1984; 1985), characterising speech as an entirety consisting of a series of distinct categories of communication strategies does not render these categories explicable. That is, these categories describe only that speech *is* rather than *what* speech is, consequently leaving their essences untouched. Thus, Frawley and Lantolf (1984; 1985) proposed a reconceptualization of Tarone's categories of communication strategies-object-regulation, other-regulation and self-regulation, focusing on communicative components' internal functions instead of external appearances.

To reconsider Tarone's category: during language switch, when speech switches from L2 to L1 inter-psychological use, the individual's locus of control accordingly shifts from other-regulation (i.e., speeches responded to or demanding the interlocutor) to object-regulation (i.e., spontaneous L1 use; as Tarone noted, L1 speakers in this situation do not even bother to translate their L1 remarks), indicating the individual lost control over the L2. By contrast, when speech switches from L2 to L1 intra-psychological use (i.e., private dialogue), the individual's locus of control shifts from other- to self-regulation so that re-establishing a relationship with the ongoing communication can be achieved.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the theoretical foundations of DA. Key concepts including mediation, the ZPD, and internalisation were discussed. Moreover, given the present study also embedded concept-based instruction, research methods

investigating concept formation, and Vygotsky's three stages of concept formation,

namely, random association, thinking in complexes, and pre-conceptual thinking,

were discussed. Furthermore, concepts of situation definition, intersubjectivity and

semiotic mediation, which are important for the understanding of the concept of

the ZPD, were also examined. The notion of dialogic, which appears to be the

prerequisite to successful and meaningful mediator-learner dialectic interactions in

L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activities, was also introduced. This concept is of

importance in facilitating the creation of ZPD activity in terms of emphasising the

significance of respecting each other's voice and of taking in each other's

perspective during interactions. Lastly, the matter of L2 discourse peculiarities was

reconceptualised. Instead of indicators of L2 failure and/or incompetence, the

Vygotskyan notion of continuous access conceives L2 discourse peculiarities as

inherent characteristics of the developmental processes of higher mental

functions. They function as means resumed by L2 learners to re-establish relations

with tasks of concern so they can finish them.

Chapter Three: Dynamic assessment in L2 contexts

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, I discussed the theoretical foundations of dynamic assessment, including core concepts – mediation, the ZPD, and internalisation – that give birth to DA as a dialectic unity of assessment and instruction. In this chapter, I intend to develop primarily an understanding of the difference between DA and static assessment (SA) in the L2 context. After this, approaches to L2 DA will be discussed, where the rationale of the DA approach of the present study (i.e., interactionist L2 DA that emphasises the natural flow of mediations gradually negotiated between mediator and learner while the two are co-creating ZPD activity, rather than step by step delivering prefabricated mediations which are arranged from the most implicit to the most explicit) will be provided. Additionally, principles of interactionist L2 DA will be examined. Moreover, components and implementing stages of concept-based instruction integrated into the DA framework will be introduced. Lastly, empirical studies of DA and L2 development will be reviewed.

3.2 Dynamic assessment and static assessment

It is reasonably natural to raise the question of what makes DA appealingly different from SA. In the DA literature, broader discussions of this issue are available (e.g., Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004; Poehner, 2008; Haywood and Lidz, 2007; Feuerstein, et al., 1988; Lidz, 1991; Haywood et al., 1990). However, I will focus on the four elements relevant to my analysis. That is, assessment target (section 3.2.1), administration approach

(section 3.2.2), dynamics of responsibility between mediator and learner (section 3.2.3), and types of outcome measures (e.g., one-size-for-all or personalized assessment tasks) (section 3.2.4).

3.2.1 Product-focused versus process-focused

The assessment target presumably would be the fundamental element differentiating SA from DA. While the former focuses on learning products, the latter prioritises students' learning-developmental processes (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004). For practitioners of SA, learning products are solely manifestations of learners' capabilities and their future (i.e., the past-to-present model, Valsiner, 2001). These manifestations are then utilised as replacement parameters to hierarchically divide learners into different groups. DA, on the contrary, understands the individual's future as a making-in-process rather than as images of the past (i.e., the present-to-future model, Valsiner, 2001). Accordingly, DA consists of process-focused assessment, targeting learner's maturing capabilities.

3.2.2 Independence versus interdependence

The administration approach is another striking aspect distinguishing SA from DA. For SA, the process involves examinees silently and independently accomplishing problem-solving tasks (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002; Jenson and Feuerstein, 1987; Feuerstein, 1987). Finished products of these tasks are collected and then marked by examiners/teachers in accordance with pre-programmed evaluating criteria. Finally, examiners/teachers characteristically provide pedagogical instruction for problems manifested by a majority of students during the tests. It is

noteworthy that the examinee-examiner relationship, as manifest over the course of this standard process, is somewhat isolated and neutral (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002). Extended to the notion of the ZPD, this means that the source of development (i.e., social interactions) vanishes. In addition, pedagogical instructions, if there are any, are reactions to students' problems rather than the outcome of examinee-examiner dialogical negotiations. In other words, they are somewhat unattuned to examinees' maturing capabilities.

DA processes, on the contrary, involve assessor-mediators constantly and dialogically interacting with students over the course of assessment-instruction (Haywood and Lidz, 2007; Poehner, 2008, 2009; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004; Poehner and Lantolf, 2005). The assessor-mediators dialectically provide symbolic mediational means to students in accordance with the latter's responsiveness, or to use Wertsch's (1979, 1984) notion, the emerging definition of the immediate task situation. In short, instead of unfolding assessment and instruction somewhat in isolation, DA simultaneously integrates pedagogical instruction and assessment into one inseparable activity (Poehner, 2008, 2009; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004, 2013; Haywood and Lidz, 2007; Poehner and Lantolf, 2005). The examinee-examiner, or more precisely, the mediator-student relationship emerges from DA processes as interdependent and dialectical (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002). Expanded to the notion of the ZPD, this means the field for the possibilities of imitation is prosperous.

3.2.3 Dynamics of responsibility

The mediator's responsibility is also different between that of SA and DA. While SA appreciates a neutral or outsider role for the examiner during the process of assessment administration, DA requires the assessor-mediator's active and extensive engagement (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004, 2013; Poehner, 2008; Poehner and Lantolf, 2003). Over the course of SA, the examiner-teacher mainly functions as an authority to prevent examinees from cheating on the tests; assessor-mediators during DA processes, however, are more like facilitators of internalisation (Schnerder and Ganschow, 2000; Poehner, 2008; Haywood and Lidz, 2007).

Importantly, as internalisation facilitators, mediators in ZPD activity basically do not intentionally transfer their own knowledge to learners, but rather, regulate the latter's learning processes by asking awareness-arousing questions (Schnerder and Ganschow, 2000), or to use Wertsch's (1980) notion, situation-definition-reconstructing questions and aids such as "Where does it go on this other one? Look at the other truck and then you can tell" (p. 156). In short, far from being an outsider, the assessor-mediator in DA processes is an internalisation facilitator and a reconstructor of situation definition.

Regarding students' responsibility, students in ZPD activity and the mediator reciprocally become the locus of control over the immediate task because of the existence of situation definition gaps between them (Frawley and Lantolf, 1985; Wertsch, 1979, 1980, 1984). In other words, the mediator in a ZPD activity is responsible for the problem-solving of the immediate task when the

responsiveness of the student indicates unreadiness; the student becomes the locus of control over responsibility when s/he starts to show capability for continuing the same task independently. That is, the responsibility for continuing the task is part of the process of negotiation between mediator and student.

However, the case is different with SA. As explained, the circumstance of the examiner being an outsider casts the responsibility of coping with the task exclusively on student. Consequently, expanded to Wertsch's (1984) notion of situation redefinition, the student does not have the chance to co-construct a novel situation redefinition with the examiner. Although the examiner presumably gives feedback on the examinee's performance, this form of responsibility represents not so much intentionality as passive reaction.

3.2.4   One-size-for-all versus ZPD-oriented tasks

Measurement instruments are another element distinguishing SA from DA. The former's are comprised of pre-programmed sets of identical tasks administered to all learners (see Lantolf and Poehner, 2013). However, as Lantolf and Poehner (2013) point out, this format of "unfairness of equal treatment" (p. 141) fails to allow a wide range of learners' capabilities given it solely targets a particular group's ZPD or shared issues in a collective ZPD. Tasks implemented over the course of DA processes however are purposefully designed to be sensitive to learners' ZPDs. Furthermore, transcendental tasks can be intentionally incorporated to evaluate and promote individuals' ZPDs. For example, the DA programme designed by Ableeva (2010) gradually incorporated very near, near, far, and very far transcendental tasks (for other examples, see Poehner, 2005,

2008; Feuerstein, 1987; Poehner and Zhang, 2015; Poehner and Lantolf, 2013).

As Haywood and Lidz (2007) reason, gradually increasing task difficulty largely

avoids exposing learners to learning activities unmanageably beyond their ZPDs,

thus minimising learning desperation and depression.

In sum, mental functions of individuals are dynamically social constructed; they are

thus flexible and vulnerable to interventional instructions. These characteristics of

mental functions collectively require assessment processes of any targeted

cognitive functions to reflect on these features by being subjected to dynamically

organised social activities with experienced others (Talyzina, 1986; Lantolf, 2006,

as cited in Ableeva, 2010; Poehner and Lantolf, 2003). However, such

characteristics of mental functions have deteriorated and finally been evaluated

through an isolated diagnostic approach or static assessment. In other words,

static assessment unavoidably fails to assess individuals' cognitive development,

which is continuously undergoing changes. DA, on the other hand, considers

individuals' cognitive development as process-in-the-making (Valsiner, 2001;

Poehner and Lantolf, 2003) and then integrates transcendental assessment tasks

into the evaluation processes gradually.

3.3 Approaches to L2 DA

In this section, I will discuss approaches to L2 DA. It is noteworthy that DA

approaches in educational settings can manifest a wide variation (e.g., Haywood

and Lidz, 2007; Brown and Ferrara, 1985; Feuerstein, 1987), I will however

primarily focus on DA approaches in L2 classroom settings. In DA literature,

approaches to L2 DA can be sorted into two general categories, namely,

interventionist and interactionist (Lantolf and Poehner, 2004). In relation to the notion of the ZPD, interventionist DA seems more closely connected to quantitative interpretation, and interactionist DA to qualitative understanding (Poehner and Lantolf, 2005; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004).

To understand this, it is helpful to briefly recall the two historical contexts from which the notion of the ZPD emerged (see section 2.1 of the preceding chapter). As explained above, the first context is related to the diagnosis of individual's IQ, in which Vygotsky quantitatively compared two children's mental ages. The second relates to the learning-leading-development theoretical argument. In the sections to come, I will briefly explain interventionist DA, followed by criticism against this approach. After that, I will turn to interactionist DA, the approach adopted by the present study.

3.3.1 Interventionist DA

Interventionist DA utilises a prefabricated set of hierarchical prompts arranged from implicit to explicit as a way to regulate students' learning processes (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004). With these prompts in hand, a mediator might begin the interaction by providing a learner with the most implicit hint. After provisional interpretation of the learner's response, the mediator adjusts the prompt to a less implicit one. The overall principle underlying this process is that the mediator gradually changes prompts along a scale of implicit/explicit if preceding remedial intervention fails to elicit any appropriate response from the learner (Lantolf and Poehner, 2004; Poehner and Lantolf, 2010).

For example, a mediator might commence a DA session in a typical L2 writing

class by asking a learner: *"Do you notice an ungrammatical fragment in the first paragraph?"* (the most implicit prompt); if the learner fails to notice any ungrammatical fragment, then the mediator will continue, asking the learner: *"Could you read the first sentence please?"*; if the learner fails to interpret the mediator's intention and, consequently, reads the sentence, the mediator will continue by saying: *"There are some ungrammatical fragments in the sentence. Could you please find them?"*; the learner should respond by verbalising or pointing to the incorrect fragment in the sentence; if s/he fails, the mediator will continue the conversation by saying: *"That's not correct. Please think about it once again"*. If the learner fails again, the mediator will respond: *"That's not correct either. Think about the verb tense this time."*; if the learner fails again, the mediator will offer the correct form with an explanation (the most explicit prompt), and if required, the mediator will offer more examples (italics adapted from Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994).

Sandwich and Layer Cake are two popular formats of interventionist DA. The former typically unfolds in the fashion of pretest-intervention-posttest (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004); the latter, however, is more integrated into the entire DA process. It is important to note that, regardless of the external manifestations of these two formats, semiotic mediational means instantiated throughout mediator-student dialogical interactions are pre-programmed. Equally important, compared with Layer Cake, Sandwich is more interested in quantitatively measuring the impact of prefabricated prompts on students' learning, but presumably not development, by comparing post-test independent products with those of pre-test ones (Sternberg and Grigorenko,

2002; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004). With Layer Cake, however, although prioritising processes of mediator-student dialogical interactions, understandings of students' learning are achieved primarily through quantitatively comparing assistances or other-regulations required across DA sessions (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004).

3.3.2 Criticism of interventionist DA

Minick (1987) points out that quantitatively measuring and understanding the ZPD are contradictory to Vygotsky's intention. He reasons that for Vygotsky, the notion of the ZPD is "a means of gaining insight into the kinds of psychological processes that the child might be capable of in the next or proximal phase of development and a means of identifying the kinds of instruction, or assistance that are required if the child is to realize these potentials" (Minick, 1987, p. 127). Minick's emphasis on psychological processes and the quality of instruction is remarkably consistent with Vygotsky's argument for a developmental method for understanding individuals' mental development, of which principal presumption is "any psychological process, whether the development of thought or voluntary behaviour, is a process undergoing changes right before one's eyes" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 61). In this sense, quantitatively measuring mediator-student interactions within the ZPD seemingly misses these undergoing changes. Indeed, Vygotsky (1998) cautions "we must not measure the child, we must interpret the child' (p. 204). That is, only through qualitatively unfolding these undergoing changes can psychological process be fully understood (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). This is where interactionist DA comes into the picture. I will return to this topic in later section 3.3.

Poehner and Lantolf (2010) criticise prefabricated set of prompts applied by interventionist DA, explicitly stating that they fail to awaken individuals' still-in-the-process-of-maturation capabilities. To understand this idea, it is helpful to recall Wertsch's (1984) conceptual clarifications of the ZPD discussed in section 2.2. As explained, the factual existence of different situation definitions between the expert and the novice presumably renders the two's dialectic interactions unsmooth and uneven. Thus, in order to help the novice to co-construct a novel situation definition, it is necessary for the expert to commit to constant negotiations to figure out what mediational means are attuned to the novice's online needs. In short, only through constant negotiations, intersubjectivity (i.e., mutual understanding between the expert and the novice achieved when the former's resultantly adjusted situation definition finally connects, even though partially, with the latter's maturing capabilities), and ultimately situation redefinition on part of the novice can be materialised. To reconsider prefabricated sets of prompts implemented throughout the interventionist DA, given they factually have nothing to do with expert-novice dynamic negotiation, intersubjectivity and situation redefinition become irrelevant here. In this sense, one might argue that interventionist DA has nothing to do with awakening individuals' still-in-the-process-of-maturation capabilities.

3.3.3 Interactionist L2 DA

Interactionist DA, which avoids interventionist DA's shortcomings, values a mediator-learner natural flow of discussion and negotiation from which fine-grained mediations attuned to learners' online needs emerge (see Feuerstein et al., 2002; Poehner, 2008; Kozulin, 2018; Shrestha, 2012, 2020; Lantolf & Poehner, 2004,

2013; Poehner and Lantolf, 2005, 2010). Importantly, these fine-grained mediations simultaneously reshape the ongoing dialectical dynamic interactions in the sense that co-construction of the learners' transfer capabilities (see Brown and Ferrara, 1985; Poehner and Lantolf, 2010) can be integrated, or to use Wertsch's (1984) notion, higher situation definitions can be co-constructed for the learners (Wertsch, 1979, 1980, 1984).

The above phrase "natural flow of discussion and negotiation" does not mean that mediator- learner dialogical and dialectical dynamic interactions are unfolded in an unsystematic, unintentional, and purposeless way (section 3.4 on principles of DA interactions within ZPD activity); instead, it indicates that learners' active and creative thoughts are considered throughout DA processes. In other words, the mediator does not impose her/his definition of the task situation onto learners or simply self-construct one for them; rather, learners gradually and actively create higher situation definitions through their personalised approaches because of intersubjectivity (section 2.2). In short, by involving learners in the process of knowledge construction, interactionist DA adheres to the idea that "active collaboration with individuals simultaneously reveals the full range of their abilities and promotes their development. In educational contexts, this means that assessment – understanding learners' abilities – and instruction – supporting learner development – are a dialectically integrated activity" (Poehner, 2008, p. 2).

Thus, to avoid the discussed disadvantages of interventionist DA, an interactionist approach to DA was followed in the current study. Before turning to the parameters to which mediators should commit throughout interactionist DA processes (e.g., intentionality, reciprocity, transcendence, graduation,

contingency, and dialogue), I wish to discuss certain basic procedures that interactionist DA practitioners should follow when dynamically creating ZPD activity.

3.3.4   Procedures of interactionist DA

As discussed in DA literature, there are certain basic procedures that interactionist DA practitioners should follow when co-constructing ZPD activity with learners (see Haywood and Lidz, 2007; Shrestha, 2017). These consist of: (1) designing tasks (i.e., symbolic tools such as open-ended questions) which can be applied to provisionally diagnose learners' zone of actual development; (2) identifying learners' problem source and challenges by implementing these designed tasks; (3) designing interventions by referencing relevant literature (e.g., theoretical concepts); (4) dialogically engaging with learners throughout the course of intervention programme and, when necessary, reformulating previously designed interventions to meet learners' developmental level; (5) synthesising learners' problem source and challenges (this stage might be integrated into and unfolded together with stage 4); (6) assessing learners' transcendence capability. These procedures were followed in the current study (see section 5.4.2.3).

If the above are perceived as the macro-level procedures that interactionist DA practitioners should follow, the micro-level procedures are of equal importance to the validity of interactionist DA (see Poehner, 2011). These include: (1) mediator tentatively initiating topic that learner might respond to with action or inaction; (2) mediator provisionally assessing learner's developmental significance on the basis of his/her previous response; (3) mediator probing further to diagnose learner's

trouble source and challenges by, for example, reformulating previously initiated questions to which learner might project modified response; (4) mediator simultaneously refining previous assessment of the concerned learner and providing modified assistance/instruction, so that the learner might modify his/her previous response; (5) mediator continuously refining his/her assessment of the learner and projects further tailored support until the concerned trouble source is overcome. These micro-level procedures were also followed in the current study (see section 5.4.2.3).

3.4 Principles of interactionist DA

Regarding L2 DA methodological principles, several components have been discussed in the DA literature (e.g., see Feuerstein, Rand and Hoffman, 1979; Feuerstein et al. 1988; Tzuriel, 2011; Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Poehner, 2008), of which the most relevant to my analysis entails intentionality, reciprocity, transcendence, graduation, contingency, dialogue, and contradiction. I have discussed the last four notions in section 2.6, thus, in the sections to come, I will discuss the first three.

3.4.1 Intentionality

Intentionality underscores deliberate other-regulative mediations or efforts on the part of the mediator throughout DA processes (Feuerstein, Rand and Hoffman, 1979; Feuerstein et al. 1988; Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). As Feuerstein, Rand and Hoffman (1979) point out, it is intentionality that distinguishes interactionist DA from haphazard instructional approaches. Regarding the relation with the ZPD, the notion of intentionality is closely connected with the concept of situation definition

originally proposed by Wertsch (1984). As mentioned in the present chapter, the factual existence of unparalleled situation definitions between mediator and student (i.e., their understandings of the immediate task and/or programme are basically different) renders necessary the mediator voluntarily lowering or constantly adjusting her/his situation definition so that intersubjectivity can be successfully instantiated between the two (i.e., the student finally grasps the mediator's meaning). In this sense, intentionality is the prerequisite of mediator-student dialogical interactions or intersubjectivity within the ZPD.

Following these lines of explanation, one might argue that materialisation of intentionality apparently requires the mediator to have a fairly well organised knowledge about the target language and concerned learning programme (see Feuerstein, Rand and Hoffman, 1979; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004). This knowledge would allow for systematic and purposeful rather than hit-and-miss other-regulation (e.g., Rea-Dickins, 2006) throughout dialogical mediator-student interactions (Lantolf and Poehner, 2004; Poehner and Lantolf, 2005). This is where the notion of transcendence becomes significant, which I will explain in section 3.4.3. Equally important, however, intentionality makes the interactionist DA extensively challenging because it requires in-depth knowledge of the ZPD, plus sensitivities and insightfulness on part of the mediator (Poehner, 2009).

3.4.2 Reciprocity

Reciprocity appreciates the interdependent relationship between mediator and student in ZPD activity. It conceives of the student as active co-constructor rather than passive recipient of learning possibilities emerging from mediator-student

interactions (Feuerstein et al., 1988; Feuerstein, Rand and Hoffman, 1979; Poehner and Lantolf, 2005). As discussed in section 2.4.3, the construction of novel situation redefinitions in ZPD activities requires the student to actively engage with semiotic mediational means emerging from mediator-student dialogical interactions, which is the prerequisite of permanent imitation and development. Consequently, the mediator needs to provide the student with multiple opportunities to engage with ZPD activity. Indeed, as Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) argue, over the course of dialogical interactions within the ZPD, it is the mediator's responsibility to relinquish all control over the situation to the student as the latter starts to manifest capability of independently continuing the immediate task (see also Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Poehner, 2009).

3.4.3 Transcendence

In the DA literature, transcendence concerns the goal of mediator-student dialogical interactions within the ZPD. As Poehner and Lantolf (2010) argue, development in the ZPD essentially means assisting students in "applying newly formed abilities to novel problems" (p. 316). To recall, the Vygotskyan notion of development within the ZPD entails regulating students to achieve a successful transition from other- to self-regulation. From a developmental perspective, self-regulative abilities are re-contextualizable, thus transcendent, (Poehner and Lantolf, 2010). As Poehner and Lantolf (2010) caution, the notion of transcendence, from a DA perspective, is not so much about helping the student successfully complete a particular task or tasks at hand, which is what scaffolding does (section 2.4.2), as about assisting them in resuming control over her/himself

and the situation so that the student can self-regulate similar situations on their own in the future.

Regarding transcendence tasks, Brown and Ferrara (1985) propose three hierarchical categories based on the degree of psychological demand that the transcendence tasks project on task takers, namely, near, far, and very far transcendence. Empirical studies have explored the emergence of transcendence abilities among students while conducting this range of transcendence tasks in the interactionist DA context (e.g., Poehner, 2007; Poehner and Lantolf, 2010; Ableeva, 2010) (section 3.6).

It is important to note that, as argued by Poehner and Lantolf (2010), the notion of transcendence and the integration of transcendence tasks into DA processes expand the evidential basis of understanding students developmental abilities, or their ZPDs, in the sense that not only independent performance and changes in the quality of other-regulation negotiated during mediator-student dialogical interactions but moves instantiated towards transcendence tasks are indications of students' capabilities. Indeed, as Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) point out, "not only is actual development an inadequate measure of learner progress or lack of progress, but even within the domain of potential development, performance resulting from implicit and/or less frequent forms of assistance reflects a process that is closer to maturation, in the sense that the learner is about to assume independent control over a particular feature of the L2, than is performance arising from more frequent and/or more explicit forms of regulation" (p. 620).

Taken together, as firmly manifest by experimental studies, for example Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) and Lantolf and Poehner (2010), mediator-student interactions within the ZPD are of complexities, progression, and regression because of development in the ZPD or dynamically different mediator-student situation definitions. In this sense, principles of mediator-student interaction within the ZPD are far from exhausted by intentionality, reciprocity, and transcendence. Other principles incorporating graduation, contingency, and dialogue, as discussed in section 2.4.3, are of tremendous significance.

Equally important, as argued in section 2.4.3, contradiction in the sense of constantly propelling students to go through the struggling process of figuring out themselves what the issue is and how to solve it, or to use Wertsch's (1979, 1984) notion of noticing the gap on part of students between their and the mediator's situation definition and then redefining it in accordance with that of the latter, is the driving force of development in the ZPD. In the remainder of the present chapter, I will review empirical studies of interactionist DA. However, before any detailed discussion, I will first briefly explain concept-based instruction, a construct typically embedded in interactionist DA.

3.5 Concept-based instruction within DA framework

3.5.1 Rooted in Vygotskyan formation of development

Concept-based instruction, as mentioned in section 1.5, is a pedagogical approach grounded in the Vygotskyan sociocultural theory of mind. The basic assumption underlying this approach is that a concept or word meaning is the minimal necessary component of language or speech; thus, theoretical knowledge

presented in schooled settings should be systematically unfolded from essential concepts, that is, the scientific concepts (Vygotsky, 1986) or theoretical concepts (Negueruela & Lantolf, 2005) underlying a given domain towards their dynamic applications in varying social contexts (Vygotsky, 1986, 1991; Kozulin, 1990; Poehner, 2008; Negueruela, 2003; Negueruela & Lantolf, 2005; Van Compernolle, 2012).

This concept-unit-of-instruction principle was proposed originally by Vygotsky and later widely popularised by Galperin and Davydov (see Galperin, 1989, 1992; Negueruela, 2003; Negueruela & Lantolf, 2005; Van Compernolle, 2012). Galperin systematically constructed systemic-theoretical instruction, which could be understood as a concretised pedagogical framework informed by Vygotsky's theoretical argument of concept-based instruction (CBI). CBI has witnessed broad investigations and flourishing momentum in the field of general as well as L2 education during the past twenty years. For the interest of the present study, I will focus on the latter.

In the domain of L2 teaching-learning, the methodological principle underlying CBI is that learning-development relation is not so much about quantity of knowledge received as about re-contextualization or having transcendence capability for manipulating knowledge to establish control over novel problems in different contexts (Galperin, 1989, 1992; Negueruela, 2003). In this sense, a CBI approach is remarkably compatible with interactionist L2 DA within the ZPD.

3.5.2 Components of concept-based instruction

The concretisation of CBI in L2 settings consists of three major components – orientation, execution, and evaluation (Negueruela, 2003; Negueruela and Lantolf, 2005). Orientation essentially aims at promoting and enhancing learners' conceptual understanding of the variables of a target language, for example, orders of indexicality of socio-pragmatics (Negueruela, 2003; Negueruela and Lantolf, 2005; Van Compernolle, 2014; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011). Instructed concepts when internalised presumably provide learners with increased self-regulation or control over novel situations (Negueruela, 2003; Negueruela and Lantolf, 2005). That is, transformed situation definitions for learners would be available when adopting these concepts to solve language-related problems at successive stages of action.

Execution consists of processes of applying previously learned conceptual knowledge to problem-solving activities (Negueruela & Lantolf, 2005). These processes likely could be concretised through varying performances (Negueruela & Lantolf, 2005), for example, mediator-learner verbalisation or what Van Compernolle (2012) called verbalised reflection, or role-play and strategic interaction scenarios (i.e., a type of role-play wherein role-players lack the knowledge of each other's moves beforehand) (for examples, see Van Compernolle, 2012; Van Compernolle & Henery, 2014).

Finally, evaluation incorporates L2 learners' verbalisations on both their understanding and performances of the targeted content knowledge. These verbalisations can be assessed through interviews (see example, Van

Compernolle, 2012), questionnaire (see example, Negueruela, 2003), or learner reflective journaling (see example, Charles, 2011).

3.5.3   Implementing stages of concept-based instruction in L2 classrooms

According to Galperin's model, applications of CBI in L2 contexts comprise six step-by-step stages, namely, motivational stage (focusing on increasing learners' motivation for learning), orienting stage (aiming to regulate learners' attention), material(ised) stage (implementing tasks or classroom activities), overt and covert stage (implicitly and/or explicitly delivering content knowledge), and finally mental stage (prioritising the control or remediation of learners' negative feelings, anxieties and/or de-motivations surfacing over the course of learning) (Galperin, 1989, 1992; Negueruela, 2003; Negueruela and Lantolf, 2005; Van Compernolle, 2012). This teaching-learning process was harshly criticised for lacking the flexibility to cope with dynamically complex classroom-teaching environment in general (e.g., see Van Compernolle, 2012). Consequently, later versions of CBI developed to better integrate interactionist L2 DA into processes promoting development or internalisation processes within students' ZPDs (e.g., see Van Compernolle, 2012; Pollizi, 2013).

I will review empirical studies relevant to the present study in section 3.6, including Poehner (2009), Poehner and Lantolf (2010), Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995), Shrestha (2012, 2017), and Ebadi and Rahimi (2019). As far as instructional approaches, most of them combine CBI and interactionist L2 DA. Another two highly relevant studies are Van Compernolle, Weber, and Gomez-Laich (2016), and Van Compernolle and Henery (2014). Although CBI and interventionist L2 DA

were adopted in these two research projects because they specifically focused on the domain of L2 socio-pragmatics, I will review them in Chapter 4 where socio-pragmatics is the topic.

3.6 DA and L2 development

Notably, the studies reviewed in this current section were selected based on the availability of their application of evaluative principles of development[11], although approaches towards, and subsequent representations of, the concretisation of DA vary across these studies. Moreover, methodology similar to the one adopted in the current thesis became a further determinant in the selection of the reviewed studies. Finally, topic focus was similarly taken into consideration. Specifically, the reviewed studies were chosen because they included broad topic focuses, ranging from grammar features, such as verbal aspects, tense, articles, and the third person singular –s in speaking, to genre features of academic writing (e.g., Shrestha, 2012, 2017, 2020). Importantly, in view of the continually developing nature of DA research in applied linguistics (section 4.6), these studies examining similar methodologies to the current thesis have the potential to demonstrate insights into interactionist L2 DA, even when the topic focus differs.

---

[11] Poehner (2009) proposed three evaluative principles of development over the course of ZPD activity; namely, quality of independent performance (i.e., final product of concerned L2 feature/s), quantitative and qualitative changes of other-regulatory mediations negotiated between mediator and learner, and the nature of learner moves manifest over transcendence tasks. Notably, Poehner (2009) argued that these three evaluative parameters should work in tandem rather than independently from each other.

Poehner (2009), as part of an extracurricular DA project, examined a university-level American learner's development of L2 French. The study uncovered that despite the learner failing for a second time to independently solve the concerned language problem and resorting to other-regulatory mediations[12], s/he resumed the responsibility of completing the task the second time [13]. Poehner (2009) argued that this was development, considering how changes made by the learner moved towards emerging self-regulation or control over the task, although the language problem was eventually surmounted with aid. Moreover, the research findings underscored that a learner's capability should be judged not only by her/his independent performance, but also by her/his online contributions to the problem-solving process throughout ZPD activity. Poehner (2009) cautioned, however, that considering only learner independent performance would overlook other critical features of development (e.g., the learner moving closer towards emerging control over the linguistic feature) while mediator-learner co-construct ZPD activity, to which the present study subscribes.

After Poehner (2009), Poehner and Lantolf (2010) examined two American learners' development of L2 French in micro-genesis in the ZPD while undertaking a more demanding task (a transfer). Aside from findings similar to Poehner (2009), Poehner and Lantolf (2010) revealed that although both learners independently

---

[12] In the case study analysed in Poehner (2009), specific techniques of mediation (e.g., confirmation checks and reminding the learner) applied in two chronological episodes wherein the same language problem was reencountered are essentially the same.

[13] Instead of leaving the task to the mediator to complete as she did in the immediately previous episode wherein the same language problem was encountered, the learner firstly successfully reformulated the language problem and then continued the task.

and unsuccessfully attempted the L2-related problem during the transfer, one learner's online responses demonstrated a shift towards self-control, simultaneously resuming primary responsibility for the problem-solving process and requiring insignificant support from the mediator; contrastingly, the other learner regressed to a previous level of understanding and thus to extensive mediations[14]. Differing from Poehner (2009), the micro-geneses of the learners' online performances throughout ZPD activity discussed in Poehner and Lantolf (2010) demonstrated that regression to extensive mediations became a means to ultimately regain self-regulation or control over the language target. In this way, Poehner and Lantolf (2010) firmly supports Vygotsky's (1991) argument that regression is a form of development. This notion is also supported by my analyses in Chapters 6 and 7.

Poehner and Lantolf (2010) thus concluded that it is fundamentally incorrect to conclude that L2 learners reside at the same level of mental development by solely judging their independent L2 performances. Moreover, corroborating Lantolf and Thorne (2006), they suggest that it is problematic to abstractly understand the nature of other-regulative instructions in relation to L2 learners' independent performances, de-contextually associating successful independent responses with effectiveness of human mediations and unsuccessful responses with lack of effectiveness. Furthermore, in line with Frawley and Lantolf (1985), they

---

[14] The analyses of both learners' micro-genetic development over the enrichment programme revealed that they both demonstrated the ability to self-regulate the concerned pedagogical content knowledge.

demonstrated that the transformation from other- to self-regulation is not absolute. This finding was strongly confirmed by my analyses in Chapters 6 and 7.

As with Poehner and Lantolf (2010), Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) also investigated the function of regression or backsliding (Selinker, 1972, 1992) in the process of L2 learners' development in micro-genesis in the ZPD. The study observed that mediator-learner dialectic interactions created significant thesis-antithesis learning opportunities, concurrently utilised to excavate further into learners' underlying trouble sources and to promote reconstructions of their old functional system. Moreover, in line with the findings of Poehner and Lantolf (2010), those of Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) revealed that regression to extensive other-regulative instructions led to micro-genetic growth of learners' L2 knowledge. Thus, corroborating Newman, Griffin and Cole (1989), Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) concluded that the emergence of new understanding/knowledge is the function of regression; regression gives rise to development. Furthermore, as with Poehner and Lantolf (2010), Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) suggest that mechanisms of mediation such as graduation, contingence, and dialogue are necessary but not sufficient for the transformation from other- to self-regulation and that prodding the learner to struggle to ascertain what to do and how to complete it her/himself becomes the foundation of DA and the drive of development in ZPD activity. This notion is supported by my analyses in Chapters 6 and 7.

To explore the value of DA in the context of academic writing development among undergraduates, Shrestha and Coffin (2012) was conducted as a pilot study of a wider research project. The study concluded that DA aids learners in identifying learning problems and provides tailored other-regulative mediations. These

research findings align with conclusions found in Poehner (2008), Ableeva (2010) and Ableeva and Lantolf (2011), thus further confirming the educative value of combining L2 assessment and instruction as an integrated entity. Moreover, since the analysis focused on changes of tutor mediations (specifically the types and amounts of tutor mediations), Shrestha and Coffin (2012) holds great importance, drawing a dynamic qualitative picture of mediator-learner interactions in micro-genesis in ZPD activity. However, the study did not include transfer tasks. It appears the exact relations between changes of tutor mediations and changes of learner reciprocal responses, therefore development, as functions of tutor mediations in micro-genesis in ZPD activity were not addressed with specific clarifications; my analyses in Chapters 6 and 7 will bridge these gaps.

After Shrestha and Coffin (2012), Shrestha (2017) extended the research to incorporate far transfer tasks. The study concluded that DA aids learners in transferring newly learned knowledge to more challenging contexts. This finding corroborates Davin's (2011) enhanced performance in far transfer tasks and Poehner's (2007) continued performance in postponed transfer tasks. However, it contradicts findings in the studies of Poehner (2009) and Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995). Nonetheless, all these findings collectively support the conclusion of Lantolf and Frawley (1985) that transfer from other- to self-regulation in micro-genesis in ZPD activity is not an absolute, which was further confirmed by my analyses in Chapters 6 and 7.

As with Shrestha and Coffin (2012), Ebadi and Rahimi (2019) also examined the potential of DA in the transfer of pedagogical content knowledge in the context of IELTS academic writing among EFL learners. However, differing from the former,

the latter addressed the issue of transfer task. The study concluded that DA develops learners' academic writing ability, aligning with the results of Shrestha and Coffin (2012) and Shrestha (2017). Additionally, as with Shrestha and Coffin (2012), Ebadi and Rahimi (2019) revealed that DA sessions aid in uncovering learners' trouble sources and projecting tailored mediations in accordance with learners' online needs. However, the authors failed to discuss the exact details of how the dynamics of human mediation are transformed as a function of the developmental status of learners. Moreover, Ebadi and Rahimi (2019) found that learners regressed to extensive human mediations during transfer tasks. This evidence aligns with the findings reported in Shrestha and Coffin (2012), Poehner (2009) and Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995). Ebadi and Rahimi (2019) were accurate in their claim that learners' regression did not represent language failure but development. Nevertheless, the authors did not address specific details on how the dynamics of regression were synthesized and consequently a new functional system co-constructed. My analyses in Chapters 6 and 7 will bridge this gap.

To summarise, in this section I have reviewed several studies conducted within the framework of interactionist DA. Overall, the findings of these studies support the idea that DA assists learners in developing concerned pedagogical content knowledge, which was further confirmed by the analysis of the present study in Chapters 6 and 7. However, although most of these studies managed to sketch a somewhat dynamic qualitative picture of mediator-learner interactions in micro-genesis in ZPD activity, nevertheless, exact details on how the dynamics of human mediations were transformed as a function of the developmental status of learners

were not addressed properly in some studies. Therefore, my analyses in Chapters 6 and 7 aim to contribute to this issue.

3.7 Summary

Across this chapter, the differences between DA and SA were discussed. The product-focused nature of SA distinguishes it from process-focused DA. Moreover, two approaches to DA in L2 contexts, namely, interventionist and interactionist, were further discussed and differentiated. The interventionist approach to DA, given its treatment of other-regulatory mediations as prefabricated scripts existing independently from learners' online needs, is unlikely to meet learners' personalised needs which undergo continuous change during mediator-learner interactions. Contrastingly, interactionist DA appreciates learners' personalised needs emerging from dialectic dynamic mediator-learn interactions and, as a result, simultaneously provides and reformulates mediations based on learners' online reciprocal responses. Additionally, principles of interactionist DA including intentionality, reciprocity and transcendence were examined. Briefly, among others, intentionally designed systematic instructions focused on awakening learners' maturing capabilities hold importance in aiding learners to independently achieve matters tomorrow they could not achieve in the present. Furthermore, concept-based instruction, which appears to be an inherent component of DA framework, was summarized; it prioritises scientific concepts or meanings as the minimal psychological tools that L2 classroom teaching should commence with. Lastly, studies of interactionist DA in L2 contexts, in relation to L2 development, were reviewed. Ultimately, the evidence shows conclusively that DA can improve

L2 learners' development, providing attuned other-regulatory mediations based on online diagnoses of learners' needs.

Chapter Four: Concept-based pragmatics instruction

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, I mentioned that concept-based instruction (CBI) has been widely adopted within the framework of DA (e.g., Poehner, 2008, 2009; Ableeva, 2010; Poehner and Lantolf; 2010; Shrestha, 2017, 2020). In the literature of instructed L2 pragmatics, CBI has been fruitfully explored in L2 classrooms to understand and promote L2 learners' pragmatic capability (e.g., Negueruela, 2003; Van Compernolle, 2011, 2012; Van Compernolle and Whilims, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, and Weber, 2016). In this chapter, I introduce CBI in pragmatics, or CBPI, as an instrument facilitating DA approach to the development of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge in ZPD activity. I will start with a discussion of the key theoretical concepts from which CBPI has been developed. After that, the discussion will focus on the interpretation of CBPI to which the present study subscribes. Then, I will explicate the primary pedagogical characteristics of CBPI manifested in L2 contexts, followed by the introduction of the leading socio-pragmatic concept-orders of indexicality and relevant concepts intentionally designed for the present study. Finally, two highly relevant studies of CBPI in L2 classroom settings will be examined and discussed.

4.2 ZPD-oriented concept-based pragmatics instruction

4.2.1 Key concepts

Van Compernolle and Henery (2014) describe concept-based pragmatics instruction as "an approach to promoting the artificial (i.e., intentional)

development of second language (L2) pragmatics through instruction that cent[re]s on the appropriation of semiotic concepts, or categories of meaning (e.g., self-presentation, social distance, power), as psychological tools that mediate language choices" (p. 549). One core concept of the pedagogical approach of CBPI is mediation (see Chapter 2). Briefly, human beings' development of higher forms of behaviour (e.g., abstract thinking or thinking in concepts) is the result of mediation for which the most prevalent form is speech, word, or sign (Vygotsky, 1978). As Vygotsky (1986) genetically demonstrates, individuals do not think in concepts from the very beginning; in fact, for individuals to reach this stage, they must go through three major stages, namely, syncretism, thinking in complexes, and pre-conceptual thinking. Another fundamental concept underlying CBPI is the ZPD (Chapter 2). Briefly, concept-based instruction should target individuals' maturing (i.e., the ZPD) rather than matured capabilities (i.e., the ZAD). Internalisation is a further central concept underlying CBPI (Chapter 2). Briefly, individuals' higher forms of behaviour are internalised social relations (e.g., mediator-student interactions). That is, they manifest themselves first in the form of intra-personal interactions, and only later appear in the form of inter-personal regulation (Vygotsky, 1978). This notion more or less constitutes the foundation for the execution of other-regulatory mediation over the course of mediator-student interactions.

Finally, I wish to recall the notion of verbalism, which I have also discussed in Chapter 2, because of its high relevance to the idea of concept as the minimal content of pedagogical instruction. As Vygotsky (1986) states, knowing theoretical concepts but without knowing how to enact them in social interactions results in

"verbalism"; while knowing how to map theoretical concepts onto social-context-specific settings without knowing how to resituate these theoretical concepts results in restrained or underdeveloped individual agency. Extending this notion to concept-based (pragmatic) instruction, therefore, as Van Compernolle (2012) points out,

> the goal of concept-based pedagogy is to provide students with an orienting basis for action such that both mental and material activities are guided by coherent, systematic explanations of how to plan and execute actions, while at the same time enabling students to control and evaluate those actions in relation to their understanding of the activity's goals. This approach has the potential to develop students' agency, defined as the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act and to assign meaning and significance to one's actions given the constraints and affordances arising from one's relationship with the environment (p. 44, see also, Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Van Lier, 2008).

4.2.2 From meaning categories to language patterns

In a sense, concept-based pragmatics instruction (CBPI) can be understood as a reversed version of an explicit form-focused pedagogical approach which conceives of linguistic structures of a given language and even sociolinguistic conventions as fixed constructs existing independently from social relations (e.g., communication); consequently, L2 users are likely to follow these a priori structures and conventions and, as a result, meaning potentials would be linguistic-accurately transited among interactants. In contrast, CBPI ascribes to centring on mediating L2 learners' internalisation of conceptual meanings as its principle. As Van Compernolle and Henery (2014) state, the basic assumption underlying this principle is that concepts are "not context dependent, because they

are agentive and meaning based and, therefore, are more flexible and portable from one context to another" (p. 575). Accordingly, "rather than teaching pragma-linguistics forms in relation to social conventions of use…. CBPI aims to guide learners to think through holistic concepts (socio-pragmatic meanings) first and then to consider which patterns of language are appropriate for accomplishing one's intended social meaning" (Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014, p. 549–550). That is, this meaning-to-form pedagogical model prioritises constructing a conceptual orienting base from which L2 learners can intentionally choose mediational means to self-regulate their own behaviour.

Empirical studies have firmly demonstrated that L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual understanding mediates and develops learner performance abilities within varying communicative settings (see Van Compernolle, 2011; Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011; Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, and Weber, 2016). Furthermore, studies also found that conceptual understanding is successfully transformed into transcendence performances within novel communicative settings (e.g., Poehner and Lantolf, 2010; Shrestha, 2017, 2020). I have discussed the studies of Poehner and Lantolf (2010) and Shrestha (2017) in section 3.6 and I will discuss the experimental works of Van Compernolle and Henery (2014) and Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, and Weber (2016) in section 4.6.

4.2.3 Pedagogical characteristics of concept-based pragmatics instruction

Following concept-based instruction, CBPI also consists of three major stages, namely, orientation, execution, and evaluation (section 3.5). For the present, I will

solely emphasise one element that distinguishes CBPI from other instructed L2 pragmatic approaches – explicit form-focused instruction: that is, the role of word meaning in instructed L2 pragmatics. However, it is important to note that there are other elements, at both theoretical and practical levels, fundamentally differentiating CBPI from other approaches. Learning-development dualism, ZAD-ZPD dualism, mastery-internalisation dualism at the theoretical level are discussed in Chapter 2, and L2 learner as passive-recipient-or-active-situation-re-definer dualism at the practical level are discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. Understanding these elements is of importance because only through them can CBPI be properly implemented in L2 contexts.

Explicit form-focused instruction typically exposes L2 learners to explicit linguistic forms and/or structures. Consequently, manifested content knowledge is likely to be context-dependent, thus unsystematic and not re-contextualizable (Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; Negueruela and Lantolf, 2005). This instructional approach, which purely centres on sociolinguistic conventions of the target language, is conceived as one that appreciates that meaning is derived merely from decoding the linguistic structure of speech (Van Compernolle, 2011; 2012; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011). This approach could also be called form-to-meaning approach. However, sociolinguistic constructs, as discussed in section 1.2, dialectically interact with interactants and thus constantly undergo changes in both linguistic forms (which are sometimes even grammatically incorrect, for example, Alexander Pushkin's lines as exemplified in Vygotsky, 1986, p. 221) and intended meaning (for example, Dostoevsky's novel as exemplified in Vygotsky, 1986, p. 241-2). In short, throughout communication, socio-culturally embedded

meanings appear to be dynamically constructed and attached to sociolinguistic constructs. In this way, social meanings, instead of existing as the by-products of fixed language patterns and/or forms, are instead the agent that simultaneously determines and constrains the latter. These meanings are conceived as second- and third-order indexical meanings of utterances (Silverstein, 2003; Van Compernolle, 2012). In this way, explicit form-focused inputs of sociolinguistic variations are "certainly beneficial for raising learners' awareness of variation in language, [however], alone they are limited to narrowly empirical representations of the first order indexical meanings and typically ignore the meaning-making possibilities offered by various patterns and conventions of meaning and their associations with second- and third-order indexicalities" (Van Compernolle, 2012, p. 53).

In sum, traditional instructed L2 pragmatic approaches collectively overemphasise idealised and/or generalised linguistic patterns and conventions as the language tools that learners should acquire in L2 classrooms, consequently treating social meanings attached to these linguistic patterns and conventions as secondary entities (Cook, 1999; Leung, 2005; Widdowson, 2007; Van Compernolle, 2012). Thus, they put L2 users in an isolated language teaching-learning environment and ignore the fact that L2 users play an agentive/proactive role regarding socio-pragmatic creativity and intentionality in relation to sociolinguistic choices and creations of meaning potentials (Cook, 1999; Leung, 2005; Widdowson, 2007; Van Compernolle, 2012). Consequently, "pedagogical interventions that rely exclusively on conventional patterns and meanings of language as the basis for promoting learners' use of socio-pragmatic features of discourse may miss a great

deal of the local, contextualised, and discourse-sensitive aspects of language"
(Van Compernolle, 2012, p. 22).

Against this backdrop, Van Compernolle (2010, 2011, 2011a, 2012, 2013) proposes an alternative approach to instructed L2 pragmatics, that is, meaning-to-form (also see Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014, 2015; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2012a, 2012b). In practice, beginning at the stage of orientation, the leading socio-pragmatic concept, orders of indexicality (section 4.3), should be systematically introduced, followed by other subordinate concepts such as power hierarchy, social distance, degree of imposition, and face (section 4.4). The instruction of these socio-pragmatic conceptual variants is aimed to help learners establish a decontextualised base of psychological tools that learners can deliberately deploy to mediate social actions. Additionally, along with socio-pragmatic concepts, other symbolic mediators including L2 materials can also be used to assist learners in understanding socio-pragmatics in relation to social actions (section 4.5.1). At the execution stage, such symbolic mediators as appropriateness judgment tasks, discourse completion tasks, and role plays can be implemented to assist learners in connecting socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge with linguistic patterns and conventions (section 4.5.2). Finally, at the stage of evaluation, mediator-learner verbalisation can be implemented as an approach to learners' self-evaluation of their understanding of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capabilities (section 4.5.3). It is important to note that symbolic mediators should be iteratively and flexibly, rather than chronologically and fixedly, implemented to meet learners' online developmental needs.

4.3 Orders of indexicality

Orders of indexicality refer to hierarchical social-context-specific meanings

manifest in and through concretised sociolinguistic choices (Silverstein, 2003). If

compared to Vygotsky's (1986) notion of concept formation discussed in Chapter

3, the same social-context-specific sociolinguistic choices can refer to experience-

oriented local/everyday meaning (i.e., first-order indexicality) or higher abstract

meaning (i.e., n-th order of indexicality) or any meanings in between, depending

on users' situation definitions (Wertsch, 1984) as well as intentions and

simultaneously the interlocutors' definitions of the immediate situation. When the

speaker's situation definition mismatches her/his interlocutor's it is likely to

generate misunderstandings. However, it is important to note that variant orders of

indexical meanings do not exist independently by themselves; rather they

dialectically interact with each other because interactants' situation definitions are

constantly interacting with one another (Wertsch, 1979, 1984). This explains the

fact that more than one order of indexical meanings can be simultaneously

manifest in and through the same social-context-specific sociolinguistic choices,

and different orders of indexical meanings can be reciprocally and dynamically

transformed into each other. Equally important, these dynamic interactions explain

the social phenomenon that misunderstandings between interactants usually can

be solved through further explanations and clarifications (i.e., both interactants

accordingly adjust or redefine situation definitions).

Silverstein (2003, p. 193) defines orders of indexicality as follows:

> Such indexical order comes in integral, ordinal degrees, that is, first-
> order indexicality, second-order indexicality, etc., in the following

general schema of dialectic: any *n*-th order indexical presupposes
that the context in which it is normatively used has a schematization
of some particular sort, relative to which we can model the
''appropriateness'' of its usage in that context. At the same time,
there will tend to be a contextual entailment—a ''creative'' effect or
''effectiveness'' in context—regularly produced by the use of the *n*-th
order indexical token as a direct (causal) consequence of the degree
of (institutionalized) ideological engagement users manifest in
respect of the *n*-th order indexical meaningfulness.

Here, Silverstein's dialectical synthesis of presuppositions (first-order indexical meanings) and contextual entailment or the "creative" effect of the immediate speech (n-th order indexical meanings) appears close to and explainable by Vygotsky's (1986) notion of the interdependence of meaning in relation to sense dialectically constructed over the course of ongoing social interactions, which I have discussed in section 2.5. To recall, as Vygotsky (1986) points out, the sense of a word consists of hierarchical zones which embrace "all the psychological events aroused in our consciousness by the word" (p. 244); however, the meaning of the word merely constitutes "the most stable and precise zone" (p.245). In other words, different senses can be intentionally created by activating different zones in different social contexts, even through the same words. This notion appears parallel to Silverstein's idea that different orders of indexical meanings are dialectically interdependent with basic or local meanings (i.e., first-order indexical meanings).

These lines of discussion have been confirmed by Silverstein (2003). Specifically, as the author points out, apart from basically manifesting first-order indexical meanings, which are observable, modellable, and recognisable especially within a

certain geographical area, occupation, and community, social conventions are additionally likely to take on different levels of "ideological engagement" or "ethno-metapragmatically driven native interpretation" (p. 212) which are somewhat unobservable but accessible through instructed systematic and abstract regulations (i.e., concept-based instruction) (Silverstein, 2003; Van Compernolle, 2012; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011). In short, orders of indexicality are phenomena of social communication and their understanding is thus important to L2 pragmatic capability. In sections 4.3.1–4.3.3, I will further explicate this concept in relation to socio-pragmatics.

4.3.1 First-order indexicality

The concept of orders of indexicality can be depicted as in Figure 4.1. First-order indexicality refers to a typical form of language use within a specific community and/or specific geographic area. For example, parents use caretaker speech comprising shortened sentences, simplified grammar, restricted vocabulary, slow speech with many repetitions, diminutive and reduplicative words, raised pitch and exaggerated pitch variation, and many utterances ending in questions with a rising tone while talking to infants or children (Harley, 2017). Academics in the domain of philosophy, however, often use numerous technical or theoretical terms and concepts including positivism, interpretivism, realism, idealism, constructionism, and hermeneutics etc. to concretise specialised knowledge.

First-order indexicality

Conventions of language use are observable based on:

1. Geographic location
2. Formality of context
3. Age of speaker
4. Level of education
5. Social class
6. Other groups of people

Second-order indexicality

People can use conventions and stereotypes to:

1. Sound local or not
2. Sound formal or not
3. Sound younger or not
4. Sound more educated or less
5. Sound more high class or less
6. Sound like any other group

Third-order indexicality

Stereotypes are formed as judgements are made about noticeable speech traits:

1. Regional accents/expressions
2. Proper vs. improper/slang language
3. Stereotypes about age group, social class, level of educaiton, etc. and language use

Figure 4.1 Orders of indexicality (adopted in Van Compernolle, 2012, p. 157)

4.3.2 Second-order indexicality

Second-order indexical meanings refer to an intentionally constructed sense attached to sociolinguistic realisations based on the situation definition noticed by speakers (Silverstein, 2003; Negueruela, 2003; Van Compternolle, 2014). For example, in the context of a request, when you need a very close friend to pass the salt at the dinner table, the linguistic construct *PASS THE SALT* would be understood as transmitting a close, equal, and intimate intention (Brown, 1987). However, when comments on an article are sought from a professor, the sense of social distance and power hierarchy would increase. It is important to note,

however, that not all speakers will be able to link sociolinguistic constructs to the same set of intended second-order indexical meanings because of the difference between interactants' situation definitions.

4.3.3   Third-order indexicality

Third-order indexicality refers to meta-discourse interpretation or judgment of other's linguistic constructs based on one's own ideological schemata or definition of the immediate situation (Silverstein, 2003; Negueruela, 2003; Van Comptroller, 2014). To take an example from L2 pragmatic literature (e.g., van Comptroller, 2012), using an order (i.e., on-record fact-threatening acts) – imperatives – towards a socially distant individual might be considered by a certain group of people as rude; however, another group could also view the order as the right thing to do in the immediate context. Similarly, referring to a third party by her/his first name might be considered, from an older generation's perspective, impolite or perhaps ignorant; however, from a younger generation's perspective, it might be seen as an expression of social closeness or solid friendship. In short, meta-discourse interpretations or judgments of communicative constructs are manifestations of individuals' political or ideological conceptions. These examples in turn further support Vygotsky' account of communication as "speech activity" (Leont'ev, 1969, p.25, cited in Wertsch, 1979, p.4) or meaning-mediated signs-game (Vygotsky, 1986), which I have discussed in section 1.2.4.

While instructions that privilege exposing language learners to intensive input of stable meanings of a given sociolinguistic feature certainly would enhance the possibilities of learners' noticing the "appropriateness" of ethno-metapragmatic

usage in specific contexts, this intensive input would be insufficient for the learners to successfully transform their learned sociolinguistic knowledge to more complex social contexts (Van Compernolle, 2012; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011; 2012c). By contrast, CBPI emphasising systematic instruction of pragmatic concepts provides learners with conceptual knowledge that is likely to be more flexible and re-contextualizable in a wider range of social contexts (Van Compernolle, 2012; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011; 2012c).

4.4 Other socio-pragmatic concepts

In the literature of L2 pragmatics, subordinate concepts of orders of indexicality, including social distance, power hierarchy, face-protecting or threatening, and degrees of imposition, have been perceived as social-pragmatic factors essentially mediating (i.e., regulating, determining, negating) pragma-linguistic choices in varying communicative situations (see Thomas, 1983; Brown and Levinson, 1987; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989b; Blum-Kulka et al., 1984; Van Compernolle, 2011, 2012; Van Compernolle and Henry, 2014; Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich and Weber 2016). Importantly, empirical studies have found that these concepts help construct a solid orienting basis for pragma-linguistic performances (see Van Compernolle, 2011, 2012; Van Compernolle and Henry, 2014; Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich and Weber 2016). Against this backdrop, the present study also attempts to investigate the roles of these social-pragmatic conceptual variants in developing L2 learners' conceptual knowledge and pragmatic performance. From section 4.4.1 to 4.4.4, I will explain these concepts in detail.

4.4.1 Power hierarchy

Power hierarchy is defined as "an asymmetric social dimension of relative power" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 77). As Brown and Levinson (1987) point out, the factual existence of relative power between interlocutors may determine the degree to which a speaker can impose her/his own desires or positive wants at the cost of her/his interlocutor's. In the context of the speech act of requests, this means that even direct requesting strategies such as imperative and want statements (Zhang, 1995; Wen, 2014) might not be considered impolite or socially unacceptable if the requester occupies a relatively higher power position; whereas direct semantic formulae initiated by requesters with relative lower power position might be conceived as impolite or aggravated face-threatening acts (FTAs). Importantly, the interpretation of this concept may be subject to individuals' ideological schemata and/or their definitions of the concerned situation (e.g., Van Compernoller, 2012), to which the present study subscribes.

4.4.2 Social distance

Social distance refers to the relationship between the speaker and the hearer (Brown and Levinson,1987). Its value ranges from distance, or unfamiliarity, to closeness, or intimacy (Brown and Levinson,1987). However, it is important to note that as with the notion of power hierarchy, the concept of social distance might be conceived as either a reciprocal or nonreciprocal construct (e.g., Van Compernoller, 2012). In this regard, the speaking subject might deliberately manipulate this concept to create and deliver a personalised social meaning intention suitable to his/her communicative purpose in a particular situation. For example, the findings of the study of Van Compernoller (2012) demonstrate that to

transmit a social meaning of friendliness and closeness, university-level English learners of L2 French sometimes use French second person pronoun – *tu*, even at their first meetings with interlocutors.

4.4.3 Degree of imposition

Degree of imposition is defined as "the degree to which *pragma-linguistic choices* are considered to interfere with an agent's want of self-determination or approval (his negative – and positive – wants)" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 77, italics added). As Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest, the face-threatening degree of a given social act/utterance can be roughly calculated by adding the values of power hierarchy, social distance, and degree of imposition. In the context of speech act of requests, for example, the face-threatening degree of a direct requesting strategy, imperative towards a power equal and close friend, is much lower than towards a distant professor with a higher social status. However, variant modifications can be applied to either soften or aggravate the degree of imposition (see Chapter 6).

4.4.4 Face

Mianzi (face) is the public image of oneself; *bao quan mian zi* or *gei zu mian zi* (maximally protect face) can be understood as a communication prerequisite for cooperative meaning-making between speaker and hearer (Brown and Levinson, 1987). This practical understanding of face has been elaborated from a dialectical perspective, that is, positive and negative face (e.g., Goffman, 1967; Brown and Levinson, 1987). Positive face is defined as "the want of every member that his[/her] wants be desirable to at least some other executors" and negative face as

"the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 62). In this respect, positive face entails a desire to establish relations with social others, while negative face needs involve a desire for freedom or independence (Penelope and Sally, 2013). In the contexts of requests, Blum-Kulka et al. (1989b) enumerate variant modifications to save the hearer's negative face needs while the speaker intends to achieve his/her own positive face needs (see Chapter 6).

4.5 Other symbolic mediators

In the literature of instructed L2 pragmatics, other symbolic mediators have been applied to aid learners' knowledge of pragma-linguistics and/or socio-pragmatics and pragmatic performances. Generally, these symbolic mediators can be sorted into three categories. The first includes input-oriented mediators/materials which typically consist of, first, written L2 materials, such as dialogue (Takimoto, 2009; Alcon-Soler, 2007) and native and non-native speakers' role-play transcripts (Takahashi, 2001) and second, spoken L2 materials, such as video excerpts (Alcon-Soler, 2007; Takimoto, 2009) and role-play recordings (Takahashi, 2001). The second category consists of production-oriented mediators, such as discourse completion tasks (Alcon-Soler, 2007; Takahashi, 2001) and role plays (Van Compernolle, 2011, 2012). The third category is a usually written metapragmatic explanation of two types of knowledge – pragma-linguistics (e.g., forms and/or strategies of pragmatic use) and socio-pragmatics (social factors/conditions simultaneously regulating and constraining the forms of pragma-linguistic use) – and the connection between these two types of knowledge (Takahashi, 2001; Takimoto, 2009; Alcon-Soler, 2007; Van Compernolle, 2011, 2012). Empirical

studies have found these symbolic mediators or tasks aid in creating interactions between mediator and learners, thereby engaging learners in learning activities. The current study also investigates the role of these symbolic mediators in diagnosing and promoting learners' pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performances. In sections 4.5.1 to 4.5.3, I will explain and exemplify these three types of symbolic mediators.

4.5.1 Input-oriented symbolic mediators

Across the literature of form-focused approach[15] to pragmatics, teaching-learning tasks conducted around input-oriented mediators are prevalent (for a review, see Taguchi, 2015). Alcon-Soler (2007) employed both video excerpts and scripted versions of these excerpts to develop ESL learners' knowledge of pragma-linguistics (using direct, conventionally indirect, and unconventionally indirect request expressions) and knowledge of socio-pragmatics (social factors such as power hierarchy and social distance, which mediate the choice of request forms and strategies). Takahashi (2001) employed native speaker vs native speaker role play transcripts and non-native speaker vs native speaker role play transcripts to familiarise learners with English request forms and raise their consciousness of such forms. Takimoto (2009) deployed L2 authentic materials to improve learners' request capability, first, instructing learners to isolate specific pragma-linguistic

---

[15] The form-focused approach to pragmatics emphasises the role of linguistic forms throughout the acquisition of a language, in which the appropriation of the language typically unfolds from linguistic forms to possible social meanings indexed by these linguistic forms within context (Taguchi, 2015). It is important to note that any social meanings discussed are not perceived as the pedagogical goal, instead they are treated as by-products of linguistic forms appropriated thus not prioritised (Van Compernolle, 2012).

features, then providing information for the target pragmatic features, encouraging

learners to use their matured knowledge to comprehend target features, and finally

provoking learners to verbalise their hypotheses of the rules regarding the

pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic features of the target constructs. The

findings of these studies revealed that input-based tasks, notably when

accompanied by metapragmatic explanation/discussion, are effective in improving

learners' request competence.

As with form-focused approaches to pragmatics, input-oriented mediators are

similarly employed by CBPI which, as discussed, uses an essentially reversed

conceptualisation regarding the roles of linguistic forms and conceptual meanings,

during the development of pragmatic capability. Van Compernolle (2010, 2012)

additionally implemented L2 authentic materials to familiarise students with

instructed socio-pragmatic concepts and associated applications in communicative

situations. As Van Compernolle emphasised, analysing situated authentic

materials mostly creates enormous opportunities for learners to map conceptual

knowledge onto language/discourse forms and simultaneously reflect on abstract

concepts, bidirectionally concretising two transitions (abstract-to-concrete and

concrete-to-abstract) integrated in the process of concept formation. This may

generate opportunities for students to critically formulate or reorganise existing

hypotheses of sociolinguistic forms in relation to meaning categories (Van

Compernolle, 2010, 2012).

The concretisation of input-oriented mediators in L2 settings, or how these

symbolic mediators eventually operate and/or engage with learners through

mediations, varies across studies. Within Alcon-Soler's (2007) study, learners

initially listened to video excerpts, then were provided scripted versions of the excerpts. Subsequently, metapragmatic explanation/instruction, concerning request forms and associated social factors embedded in the excerpts, was conducted. In the group using implicit instruction, metapragmatic explanation/instruction was unavailable; instead, request forms and associated social factors were highlighted in bold. The Takahashi (2001) study employed fundamentally the same procedures to the group using explicit instruction, while metapragmatic explanation/instruction was not conducted among implicit instruction groups. Takimoto (2009), drawing on the procedures of problem-solving tasks elaborated in Ellis (2003), sketches sequential steps to raise learners' awareness of pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic knowledge. These sequential steps consist of (1) recruiting learners' attention to request features by instructing them to locate such features, (2) providing learners with information on the request features, (3) encouraging learners to make sense of the request features in relation to functions and contexts embedded, and (4) asking learners to verbalise hypotheses of the rules concerning the pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic features of the requests. Throughout the studies of Van Compernolle (2011, 2012) and Van Compernolle and Henrey (2014), two further steps were conducted: (1) encouraging learners to re-understand and verbalise form-function-context relations embedded in the request utterances by referencing newly learned socio-pragmatic concepts and (2) co-negotiating meanings of the form-function-context relation with learners. These procedures assist learners in mapping socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge onto pragmatic expressions and resituating this conceptual knowledge in different communicative contexts (Van Compernolle,

2011, 2012). For this reason, the current study followed these procedures (section 5.4.2.3).

4.5.2 Production-oriented symbolic mediators

Discourse completion tasks and role plays have been employed as production-oriented mediators in instructed L2 pragmatics (for a review, see Ellis, 2008; Taguchi, 2015). For example, Alcon-Soler (2007) and Takahashi (1995. 1996, 2001) all conducted discourse completion tasks as production practice of English requests to improve learners' knowledge of pragma-linguistics. Empirical studies have found a consistency in the advantage of metapragmatic explanation/instruction especially when supplemented by production practice, regardless of treatment lengths (Alcon-Soler, 2007; Takahashi, 2001; Li, 2012). In the literature of CBPI, Van Compernolle (2011, 2012) also employed discourse completion tasks and strategic cooperative scenarios[16]. The basic assumption underlying this type of task is that pragmatic capability entails not only socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge but performance ability (Negueruela and Lantolf 2006). Additionally, empirical findings of L2 instructed pragmatics strongly suggest that pure L2 pragmatic knowledge input exposure appears to be insufficient to improve learners' development of pragmatic knowledge and performance (Felix-Brasdefer, 2008; Ghobadi and Fahim, 2009; Takahashi, 2001). Thus, concretising abstract conceptual knowledge within novel communicative settings is of significance in promoting internalisation of conceptual knowledge and

---

[16] Different from scenarios of traditional role plays, scenarios of strategic cooperative scenarios include information gaps between two interactants' scripts (Van Compernolle, 2012).

transformation from other- to self-regulation (Poehner and Lantolf, 2005; Van Compernolle and Williams, 2012a; Poehner, 2009). Consequently, Van Compernolle and Williams (2012a) argue for a dialectical relationship between conceptual knowledge and production-oriented tasks.

Transfers of DCT and/or role plays were also attempted in studies of instructed L2 pragmatics (e.g., Van Compernolle, 2012). As discussed in section 3.4, transcendence capability provides a primary indication of development within the ZPD. Its incorporation not only extends the base of evaluating an individual's development of higher forms of behaviour, but also revolutionises the traditional diagnostic approach which focuses only on the ZAD and ignores the dynamics of the emergence of individuals' self-regulation or control over the immediate situation. Indeed, the Vygotskyan principle argues that learning "represents the ability to perform (e.g., to solve a problem or to carry out an instructional task)", however, development "is seen as the ability to perform in a different context when the mediation is modified as to become more implicit or removed entirely" (Ableeva, 2010, p. 131). Therefore, the incorporation of transfers is apt to reveal learners' changes in the quality and extent of development that a student can independently regulate and control within a new context when minimal mediation is available. Consequently, transfers were also implemented in the present study (section 5.4.2.7).

4.5.3 Meta-pragmatic information

Metapragmatic information on target pragmatic features has been perceived as a characteristic feature of explicit form-focused instruction approach (direct

explanation of pragma-linguistic forms followed by practice) to pragmatics (Taguchi, 2015). In the literature of instructed L2 pragmatics, studies designed to examine the effect of explicit teaching methods on pragmatic learning all embedded metapragmatic information into their treatment processes (Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh, 2008; Halenko and Jones, 2011; Safont, 2004; Tan and Farashaiyan, 2012; Alcon-Solar, 2007; Takahashi, 2001; Li, 2012; Takimoto, 2006, 2007, 2009). In the literature of CBPI, Van Compernolle (2011, 2012) constructed three types of activities to integrate metapragmatic information on target pragmatic features: concepts card-reading (emphasising socio-pragmatic factors and/or concepts), target pragmatic features card-reading (emphasising pragma-linguistic forms and strategies), and socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic connections card-reading (emphasising form-function-context relations and ways of form-function-context mappings). As the present study further examines CBPI in L2 micro-genesis, procedures regarding how metapragmatic information were unfolded followed those employed in Van Compernolle (2011, 2012). For this reason, I will further discuss these three types of activities.

Socio-pragmatic concept cards, on which information regarding social factors, such as power hierarchy and social distance, were initially administered to all student-participants along with prompting questions to raise learners' awareness of these social factors. After the concepts card-reading, target pragmatic features cards with specific pragma-linguistic forms were given to all participants and prompting questions were included to recruit learners' attention to target pragma-linguistic forms. Lastly, socio-pragmatic-pragma-linguistic connections cards with explanations and demonstrations of form-function-context mappings and

prompting questions were distributed amongst the learners. As Van Compernolle (2012) suggests, following the reading of socio-pragmatic concepts and/or pragma-linguistic forms by intentionally asking questions was liable to prompt learners to compare their knowledge of socio-pragmatic factors and pragma-linguistic forms of target pragmatic features with those available on the cards, therefore noticing the differences between them. Notably, in the experimental works of CBPI, student independent verbalisation of these cards was attempted (Negueruela, 2003; Van Compernolle, 2012). Specifically, learners in Negueruela (2003) were required to independently read the cards at home and in Van Compernolle (2012) in an arranged office in front of a camera. Nevertheless, empirical findings were not positively indicative regarding learner-participants' conceptual development (Van Compernolle, 2012). These findings are predictable because the condition for the emergence of ZPD does not exist in an environment of independent performance (for creation of the ZPD, see Chapter 2). Therefore, for the present study, I chose not to conduct independent verbalisations of these three types of cards.

Significantly, classroom activities pertaining to these symbolic mediators were iteratively, rather than sequentially and linearly, implemented throughout the enrichment (Negueruela, 2003; Van Compernolle, 2012). Since, as discussed in Chapter 2, the existence of different situation definitions between mediator and learner and regression while the two dialectically interact within ZPD activity renders necessary continuous mediator instructions and active student engagement. Additionally, internalising socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and developing control over performance requires repeated semantic mediation and

opportunities for use (Van Compernolle and Williams, 2011, 2012a; Negueruela, 2003).

4.6 Instructed L2 pragmatics and L2 development

Across this section, I review studies of instructed L2 pragmatics in relation to learners' development of pragmatic knowledge. Due to the ever-evolving nature of CBPI research in applied linguistics, the review will commence with studies conducted through either explicit or implicit teaching method, or both. Notably, only studies focused on English requests were included here, given their relevance to the present study which focused on English requests. Two studies conducted within the framework of CBPI will be examined.

4.6.1 Explicit or implicit instruction and effects

In the literature of instructed L2 pragmatics, instructional effectiveness has been discussed from multiple aspects including nature of assessment measures, processing depth of pragmatic target during enrichment, nature of the target of pragmatic feature, the availability of meta-pragmatic explanation/discussion, and the quantity of production practice. Besides proving that L2 pragmatics is teachable, most studies have reached a general conclusion that explicit form-focused instruction is more effective than no instruction or implicit teaching methods, regardless of treatment lengths (ranging from a few hours to around 30 hours) and outcome measures. Nevertheless, some studies reported otherwise and/or mixed results, which I will consider later.

Eslami-Rasekh et al. (2004) examined the effect of explicit teaching on the acquisition of English requests, apologies, and complaints among 66 Iranians. The findings of the study revealed that the treatment group outperformed the control group at post-test. Halenko and Jones (2011) examined the effect of explicit form-focused instruction on learning English requests among 26 Chinese. Like that of Eslami-Rasekh et al. (2004), this research uncovered significant gains achieved for the treatment group, yet not for the control group. Safont (2004) further investigated the effect of explicit teaching on the acquisition of English requests; however, this was conducted amongst 160 Spanish speakers. Safont's (2004) findings corroborate both Eslami-Rasekh et al.'s (2004) and Halenko and Jones' (2011) more successful performances in the treatment group during post-test. Furthermore, Safont (2004) revealed that explicit teaching is effective only on discourse completion tasks and not on role-plays. The author attributed this finding to the processing demand (i.e., difficulty) of outcome measures, claiming that the difficulty level of role-play tasks was higher than that of discourse completion tasks, and that learners were called upon to spontaneously deploy a wider range of skills and strategies. Tan and Farashaiyan (2012) similarly examined the effect of explicit teaching on the appropriation of English requests. However, they found an explicit method was effective in improving learner's post-test performances, regardless of the types of outcome measures. In summation, these studies generally confirm the argument that explicit teaching is effective in improving learners' request performance. Nonetheless, they fail to address implicit treatment.

Alcon-Soler (2007) included both explicit and implicit treatments into her research design, investigating the effect of both teaching methods on the acquisition of

English requests amongst Spanish learners. The evidence of the study revealed

the explicit group outperformed the implicit group during post-test. Takahashi

(2001) also investigated the effect of instruction on English requests performance.

Diverging from Alcon-Soler's (2007) research, one explicit group and three implicit

groups (consisting of form-comparison[17], form-search[18] and meaning-focusing

conditions groups[19]) were included. Aligning with Alcon-Soler's (2007) findings, the

explicit group outperformed all three implicit groups. Additionally, no statistical

difference was observed amongst the three implicit groups. The author attributed

these findings to the fact that metapragmatic explanation was unavailable for the

three implicit groups. Li (2012) examined the effect of instruction on Chinese

learners' acquisition of external modifications of English request. These elements

situate beyond the head act and facilitate the transmission of illocutionary power. I

will demonstrate external modifications in Chapter 6 while reporting the research

findings of the present study. One explicit group and two implicit groups (one

input-enhanced and one input-output group) were included. The conclusions of

this study revealed that the input-enhanced implicit group outperformed others in

post-test. These findings contradicted Alcon-Soler (2007) and Takahashi (2001).

The author attributed this evidence to the universal characteristic of some external

modifications, for example, grounder (i.e., reasons underlying the initiative of

request in a specific communicative context), claiming that metapragmatic

---

[17] Learners in this group were required to compare their own L2 products (e.g., discourse completion tasks) with those performed by native speakers on the same tasks.

[18] Learners in this group were required to search requests forms from transcripts of role-play performances conducted among native vs non-native speakers and native vs native speakers.

[19] Learners in this group were required to listen to the same role-play transcripts but only focus on their meanings.

explanation of these external modifications, instead of recruiting learners' attention to the target features, would presumably burden their cognitive effort.

Lack of difference between explicit and implicit instruction is confirmed across the literature. For instance, Takimoto (2006, 2007, 2009) examined the effect of explicit/implicit instruction on Japanese learners' acquisition of English requests. Diverging from beforementioned pragmatic studies, the author included a delay test. The studies found that explicit teaching is as effective as implicit teaching, with no difference evidenced amongst the treatment groups. Similarly, Eslami and Liu (2013) disclosed the same results. Ultimately, the studies and their results varied regarding whether explicit or implicit instruction was more effective. These diverse findings leave room for contention regarding the general assumption that explicit form-focused instruction is more effective than implicit instruction when improving L2 learners' pragmatic capabilities.

4.6.2 Concept-based pragmatics instruction and L2 development

The study by Van Compernolle (2012), integrating assessment and instruction into a singular activity, traced the unfolding of CBPI on university-level English learners' L2 French development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and pragmatic performance. The study focused on pragma-linguistic uses of French second-person pronoun system (i.e., tu or vous), in relation to socio-pragmatic conceptual variations (i.e., social distance, power hierarchy, and self-presentation); both quantitative and qualitative analyses were provided. The study revealed that CBPI develops learners' conceptual knowledge and performance capability in specific communicative contexts, as evidenced by their deliberate

employment of newly learned socio-pragmatic conceptual variations to mediate French second-person pronoun form-function-context relations in specific communicative contexts. Additionally, the study underlined that learners' improved performance was motivated by newly appropriated socio-pragmatic concepts. Furthermore, learner micro-geneses revealed a consistency in the benefit of conceptual instruction combined with DA throughout mediator-learner interactions.

Van Compernolle and Henery (2014) investigated the effect of CBPI on learners' development of pragmatic capability in a university-level French classroom context. The study also focused on pragma-linguistic use of the French second-person pronoun system (i.e., tu or vous) in relation to socio-pragmatic conceptual variation (i.e., social distance, power hierarchy, and self-presentation). Corroborating Van Compernolle (2012), Van Compernolle and Henery (2014) similarly concluded that CBPI aids learners in their improvement of conceptual knowledge and performance capability. Meanwhile, the study revealed that newly learned socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge improves learners' performance. However, the phenomenon of learners resorting to historically knowing knowledge to accomplish tasks was demonstrated during post-test. Although the authors highlighted such regression, they failed to address the specific details that emerged during this process of regression.

Although the authors neglected to explicitly address the application of DA, they emphasised the vital position interpersonal interactions serve in the transformation of the students' conceptual development from inter-psychological to intra-psychological. For instance, the authors underlined the importance of teacher-led in-class instructional conversations, conducted during the process of the learners'

conceptual internalisation. Nonetheless, data regarding how such conversations unfolded, considering changes in other-regulatory mediations provided, and learner responses were absent.

After the research of Van Compernolle and Henery (2014), Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, and Weber (2016) examined the effect of CBPI on learners' development of pragmatic capability within a beginning-level elementary Spanish course setting. The investigation focused on the pragma-linguistic use of Spanish second-person pronoun system (i.e., *tu* or *usted*) in relation to socio-pragmatic conceptual variations (i.e., social distance, power hierarchy, and self-presentation). Inferential statistics revealed that the learners made statistically significant improvement, with respect to L2 Spanish socio-pragmatic conceptual understanding and pragma-linguistic conventional performance, across the post-test. Nevertheless, as with Van Compernolle and Henry (2014), micro-genetic analysis of mediator-student dialectic interactions consisting of the processes of emerging internalisation of pragmatic conceptual knowledge was unavailable. Additionally, the study uncovered that the learners frequently resorted to old knowledge (e.g., concrete life experiences or spontaneous knowledge of tu or usted), instead of deliberately deploying newly learned socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge in order to reason pragma-linguistic use during the post-test. As the authors indicated, regression to old knowledge among student-participants factually exists. Nevertheless, its function with relation to the processes of concept formation was not addressed.

4.7 Summary

Throughout this chapter, I have examined the key concepts related to CBPI and its pedagogical characteristics in L2 classrooms. Vygotskyan notions of mediation and ZPD constitute the theoretical foundation of CBPI. Considering the pedagogical characteristics of CBPI in L2 classrooms, in contrast to explicit form-focused approaches to instructed L2 pragmatics, emphasising linguistic patterns and conventions as the priority of pedagogical content knowledge, CBPI takes socio-pragmatic concepts as its point of departure. Subsequently, linguistic patterns and conventions can be introduced as a method of understanding socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to social actions. Moreover, other symbolic mediators, namely, appropriateness judgment and discourse completion tasks, and role plays were also discussed. Importantly, these symbolic mediators help learners connect conceptual knowledge with concrete linguistic features. Finally, empirical studies of instructed L2 pragmatics, concerning development in L2 contexts, were reviewed. Studies of explicit or implicit teaching of pragmatics concluded with mixed results as to which approach, explicit or implicit, is comparatively more effective in promoting learners' pragmatic competence. Studies of CBPI focused on learners' developmental process, however, found that conceptual instructions can improve learners' knowledge of socio-pragmatics and performance capabilities.

Chapter Five: Research design and methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology applied in the present study. It begins with a brief description of the research questions that the study attempts to address and the relations among them. Methodology comprising epistemological and ontological perspectives is then explained. After that, a research design consisting of pre-enrichment, enrichment, and post-enrichment is discussed at some length in connection with the research questions. Following this, the research methods including semi-structured interviews, L2 performances, and mediator-learner dynamic interactions are explained and followed by descriptions of participants and the research context. Data analysis methods and quality of criteria are elucidated afterwards. Finally, ethical considerations in connection with the present study are discussed.

5.2 Research questions

The five research questions investigated in the present study are as follows:

1. In what ways does ZPD-based dynamic assessment refine mediational moves and learner reciprocity over the course of a nine-week programme?
2. Can ZPD-based dynamic assessment and concept-based pragmatics instruction improve the development of learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge? If so, how?

3. Can ZPD-based dynamic assessment and concept-based pragmatics instruction improve the development of learners' performance abilities? If so, how?

4. What is the relation between the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD?

5. What does regression in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD look like and what is its relation to the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance abilities?

The relations among these five research questions are displayed in Figure 5.1.
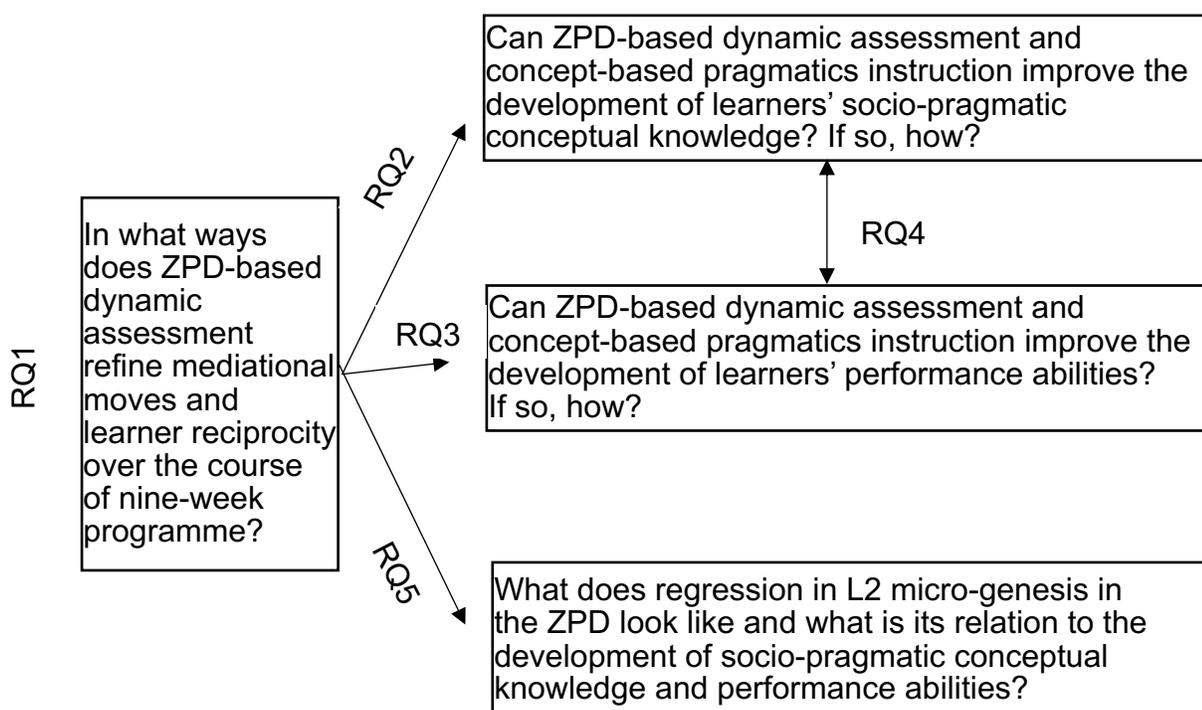
Figure 5.1 Relations among five research questions

As shown in Figure 5.1, question 1 functions as the overarching research question, the answer of which can be pursued through that of research questions 2, 3, 4, and 5. The parallel research questions 2 and 3 attempt to address the main interest of the present study, that is, the functions of DA and concept-based pragmatics instruction on the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and request-performance capability in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity. Additionally, research question 4 explores the relationship between research questions 2 and 3, that is, the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance ability. Furthermore, research question 5 investigates the phenomenon of regression: if there is any regression over the course of the development of higher forms of behaviour (i.e., using concepts to mediate the speech act of request in the present case), and what is regression's relation to socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capability.

5.3 Methodology

The role methodology plays in a research project is of significance. Methodology can be understood as the philosophical assumptions underpinning a research project (Crotty, 1998; Kagan, 2009; Howell, 2013; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, 2011; Cresswell, 2007). Perceptions regarding the nature of reality and how knowledge is intended to be pursued have significant implications for methodology (Howell, 2013; Crotty, 1998). Thus, methodology will determine, and even restrain, research methods of data collection alongside methods of data analysis (Howell, 2013; Crotty, 1998; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, 2011). Consequently, methodology may have a significant influence on the outcomes of a research project and correspondingly on the ways that knowledge should be pursued (Howell, 2013). In

brief, research questions, methodology, and research method work collaboratively to establish reliable grounds for an ongoing research project.

The methodological perspective of the Vygotskyan theory on the development of higher mental functions is influenced by Hegelian dialectic and Marxism, as the notion of thesis-antithesis-synthesis was incorporated in order to understand the interrelationship between inter-psychological interactions within the outside world and intra-psychological functions within individuals (Kozulin, 1986, 1990; Cole and Scribner, 1978; Wertsch, 1985; Wegerif, 2008). The dialectic method rejects the notion that reality exists independently from the social surroundings where reality is situated; instead, it proposes there exists an interdependent relationship between them (Westphal, 1998; Kozulin,1990). Regarding epistemology (i.e., how do we know things?), the dialectic method believes that knowledge is co-constructed with social others through various social relationtionships (Howell, 2013; Wegerif, 2008). And regarding ontology (i.e., what is the essence of being?), the dialectic method proposes that the world is in a process of change rather than composed of a collection of independent entities (Howell, 2013). Therefore, the essence of being is continuously in the process of becoming something new.

Therefore, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the essence of being, a process model is required. Extending this idea to instructed L2 pragmatics, learners' knowledge of socio-pragmatics and of pragma-linguistics is likewise continuously in the process of becoming internalised, and thus automatic; consequently, in order to understand the nature of learners' knowledge, tracing and unfolding its internalisation processes is an appropriate approach. Traditionally, the pragmatic knowledge and performance capabilities of Chinese

learners of English are assessed through product-oriented assessment (e.g.,

Halenko and Jones, 2011; Li, 2012. For a review see, section 4.6.1). This

assessment method, however, treats learners' capabilities as reflections of their

historical knowledge, thus perceiving the future knowledge of learners as

unchanging property. In contrast, the ZPD-based DA introduced in the present

study integrates the diagnosis and promotion of learners' capabilities into one and

the same process, centring on assisting learners in awakening those abilities

through a process of maturation using mediations tailored to learners' online

needs. From section 5.4 to 5.7, I will explain how this aim was achieved in the

present study.

5.4 Research design

A ten-week experimental programme was designed and then implemented in the

researched classroom, with pre-enrichment during the first week, an eight-week

enrichment programme (i.e., intervention), and post-enrichment in the final week.

Additionally, the programme was implemented as an extra-curricular course. The

rationale for this decision was threefold. Primarily, the class in which the seven

student-participants were originally placed had 40 students and applying

interactionist DA to this huge group was beyond the capacity of the research

project. Secondly, for whatever reason, the idea of implementing the programme

in the form of an intact class was not accepted when I sought permission from the

research institution before the commencement of the study. Lastly, in the DA

literature, DA sessions, conducted as an extracurricular project, are available (e.g.,

Poehner, 2005, 2008). The final form of the extracurricular course adopted was

one DA session per week lasting two to three hours conducted over the eight-

week enrichment programme, which paralleled a half term of the academic year so that students would have more flexible times. Importantly, following Siekmann and Charles (2011), the present study combined a group-DA (G-DA) and a one-on-one DA format, exploring the applicability of these two DA formats in Chinese university contexts. This decision was inspired by Lantolf and Poehner (2010) who raised an important question regarding the possibility of vicarious development which could be understood as a way of development wherein all learners could benefit, to different degrees, from any given mediator-learner dialectical interaction as a result of a shared/collective ZPD[20] co-constructed while the entire group working together (Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Poehner, 2009b) within a G-DA context. In sections 5.4.1 to 5.4.3, I will further explain the research design at some length.

5.4.1 Pre-enrichment

5.4.1.1 Language awareness interview

To assess learners' pre-enrichment awareness of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts, one-on-one semi-structured interviews (section 5.5.1) were conducted. However, importantly, to minimise the possible "low languager" phenomenon[21] (Swain et al., 2009, p.5; Swain and Watanabe, 2013; Van Compernolle, 2012), I introduced another symbolic mediator. Specifically, 24 cards with requesting or refusing concretisations attached (twelve cards for each form of concretisation) were used

---

[20] A shared, or collective, ZPD could be understood as a level of development at which essentially the same situation definition of the concerned task is negotiated among all participants including mediator and all learners (Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Poehner, 2009b).

[21] Low languagers, or low performers, refer to students who speak less and/or are less willingly to perform and/or verbalise their thoughts during classroom activities (Swain et al., 2009).

to facilitate learners' thinking processes. Samples of these cards can be found in Table 5.1. In the assessment, a student was required to pick up cards that could be subsumed into the same group in which the use of pragma-linguistic variations could be explained and/or reasoned by the same or similar factors, rules, or concepts (e.g., social distance), and to separate items which did not belong to any group when necessary[22]. After that, a semi-structured interview was conducted by referencing his/her categorical groups previously constructed. Specifically, two main open-ended questions were asked in Mandarin to further elicit student-participants' understandings of speech acts of request and refusal (for the English version, see Table 5.2; for the Mandarin version, see Appendix C).

Table 5.1 Sample of card requests (items 1–11, adapted in Ellis, 2008, p. 173)

Requirement: Please classify the following cards into different groups/categories; in the meantime, please think aloud the factors, rules, or concepts that you use to conduct the classification.
Card 1 You shut up.
Card 2 I am telling you to shut up.
Card 3 I would like to ask you to give me some comments on my assignment.
Card 4 I want you to give me some comments on my assignment.
Card 5 Let's play a game.
Card 6 I know you can't bear parties, but this one will really be good – do come!
Card 7 Can you draw a horse for me?
Card 8 This game is boring.
Card 9 We've been playing this game for over an hour.
Card 10 Got any Winstons?
Card 11 You must be hungry, it's a long time since breakfast. How about some lunch?

---

[22] It is noteworthy that learners were not informed about the pragmatic functions (e.g., request, refusal, and complaint) of these pragma-linguistic variations at the outset of the activity. This is important because the availability of any information pertaining to English requests might construct a form of intervention.

Card 12 Professor X, I am very sorry to bother you, but I was wondering if you could give a quick look at my formative assignment. I'd appreciate it.

Table 5.2: Semi-structured interview (adapted in Van Compernolle, 2012; Van Compernolle and Henery, 2014; Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich and Weber, 2016)

1. Are there any similarities and/or differences between these linguistic conventions? If yes, what are they? Can you describe the differences?
2. How do you decide which linguistic convention to use? Are there certain factors, rules, or concepts that guide your choice?

5.4.1.2 Written-Discourse Completion Tasks

After the interview, four written-discourse completion tasks (W-DCTs) featuring requests and refusals (two for each) were conducted to tentatively diagnose learners' matured performance capability as well as knowledge of socio-pragmatics (for descriptions of all W-DCTs, see Appendix D). The implementation process of each discourse completion task (DCT) consisted of three main stages, that is, preparation, performance, and mediator-learner verbalisation. For preparation, the learner read the script of the task, followed by mediator-learner verbalisation in which the mediator simply invited the learner to verbalise her understanding of the task; mediational instruction was not available at this stage. During performance, the learner independently completed the W-DCT. Finally, mediator-learner verbalisation was conducted, in which learner was invited to reason the linguistic conventions produced. As with preparation, no other-regulative mediation was provided at this stage.

5.4.1.3 Role plays

Following DCTs, four strategic cooperative scenarios featuring two requests and two refusals were also conducted to further diagnose learners' matured performance capability and knowledge of socio-pragmatics (for descriptions of all scenarios, see Appendix E). As with DCTs, stages of preparation, performance and mediator-learner verbalisation were implemented. For preparation, the learner independently prepared for the scenario. Meanwhile, she was encouraged to verbalise her understanding of the given situation and plans of action. During the performance stage, learner and mediator (i.e., the researcher) role-played the scenario. Lastly, mediator-learner verbalisation was conducted, in which the learner was invited to reason the linguistic conventions just produced. As with pre-DCTs, other-regulative mediation was unavailable throughout the implementation process.

5.4.2 Enrichment programme

An eight-week period of enrichment programme was implemented. Socio-pragmatic concepts including power hierarchy, social distance, degree of imposition, and face were adopted and instructed. Additionally, the concept of obligation was also instructed (section 5.4.2.1). Inspired by the symbolic mediators that so far have been widely employed in the literature of instructed L2 pragmatics (section 4.5), five types of symbolic mediators or tasks were also employed to facilitate mediator-learner interactions. That is, card-reading, L2 analysis material, appropriateness judgment tasks, written-discourse completion tasks, and role plays. These tasks were carefully implemented to concretise the components of concept-based instruction – orientation, execution, and evaluation (section 3.2). In

section 5.4.2.1, I will explain the design of the concept of obligation, following which, from section 5.4.2.2 to 5.4.2.7, I will explain and exemplify the five tasks.

5.4.2.1 Socio-pragmatic concepts design

Subordinate concepts of orders of indexicality consisting of social distance, power hierarchy, face-protecting/threatening, and degree of imposition were purposefully taught in the present study. Additionally, the concept of obligation was added before the commencement of the enrichment. Based on the analysis of the pre-enrichment data of the present study (see Chapter 6), an example of local-cultural understanding of the concept of obligation was observed among learners, that is, a teacher has absolute authority and absolute obligation to help any given student who seeks any support[23]. This notion that "*anything* required by society would amount to an obligation" arguably stands against the notion of "*rational state*, which is seeking to uphold the freedom of its individual citizens" (Hegel, cited in Stern, 2013, p. 8) which appears to be appreciated in Western cultures. Against this backdrop, it became necessary to distinguish these two accounts of the concept of obligation in the research class. In this sense, the inclusion of the concept of obligation reflects my personal interest. I believed these concepts collectively would construct a sound orienting basis for pragma-linguistic performances.

As Stern (2013) points out, the Hegelian interpretation of obligation considers the individual's will rather than conceives of individuals as subjects who are

---

[23] By any support, I mean the support usually sought in a typical university community, such as academic-related support, mental health, or campus life.

subordinated absolutely to the external laws and powers of the community. In this respect, "we should not think, therefore, that just because something is an obligation because it is required by the social group, that the motivating reason the individual has for complying with it comes from these external ends: rather, it can be based on the recognized authority of the ethical community over the individual, where at the same time the individual is part of this group, and so not subordinated to it as by an alien will" (Stern, 2013, p. 7). It is noteworthy that there is a long-standing debate regarding how the concept of obligation is to be understood in philosophy (see Stern, 2013); however, for the present study, I subscribe to the Hegelian interpretation of obligation because it is well in line with the Marxist theoretical framework of Vygotsky (for Vygotsky's philosophical perspective, see Kozulin, 1986, 1990; Van deer Veer and Valsiner, 1991; Cole & Scribner, 1978).

5.4.2.2 Card-reading: mediator-learner interactions

Socio-pragmatic concepts cards, pragma-linguistic forms/strategies cards, and socio-pragmatic/pragma-linguistic connections cards were also employed and discussed in the present study. Before the commencement of card-reading, socio-pragmatic concepts cards with definitions and prompting questions were handed out to all learners (for details of integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures, see section 5.4.2.3). A sample of socio-pragmatic concepts cards can be found in Appendix F.

After reading socio-pragmatic concepts, pragma-linguistic request forms/strategies cards were introduced; specifically, three types of request cards – address terms, adjuncts to head acts, and head acts (i.e., requesting strategies) – were designed

based on Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989b) categories of internal, including syntactic and lexical/phrasal mitigating devices, and external mitigating moves (also see Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Blum-Kulka, 1987; Blum-Kulka and Levenston, 1987). Key categories of internal vs. external mitigating moves and their definitions can be found in Appendix G. Regarding head acts, given that requesting is essentially a face-threatening act (FTA), requesting strategies typically have been sorted into three groups (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Ellis, 2008). That is, direct strategies, such as imperative/plain statements (Wen, 2014), explicit performatives/want statements (Wen, 2014), hedged performatives, and locution derivable strategies; conventional indirect strategies, such as suggestory formulae, and preparatory; and lastly, unconventional indirect strategies entailing strong hint and mild hint. Examples of these strategies will be discussed along with research findings and analyses in Chapters 6 and 7. A sample of a head act card can be found in Appendix H.

Modifications to head acts were also introduced and discussed with the class. Drawing on Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989b) categories, they were grouped into internal (both syntactic and lexical) and external modifications (i.e., adjuncts to head act). Importantly, internal modifications were also looked at from the aspect of impact. Signs that could be applied to either soften (i.e., downgraders) or aggravate (i.e., upgraders) the impact of face-threatening were separately elaborated and discussed with learners. Samples of the internal-modification card and adjuncts-to-head-act card can be found in Appendix I. Finally, socio-pragmatic-pragma-linguistic connections cards were discussed following integrated DA procedures

and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3). A sample of a connection card can be found in Appendix J.

Traditionally, pragmatic instructions in Chinese L2 classrooms privilege form-focused, or form-to-meaning, teaching (e.g., Halenko and Jones, 2011; Li, 2012. For a review see, section 4.6.1). Form-focused pragmatic instruction may raise L2 learners' awareness of variation in sociolinguistic features of requests, however, they constrain learners' understanding of requests to merely empirical representations of requesting forms and therefore a contextualised understanding of them (section 4.2.3). Learners are treated as reactive recipients of linguistic forms and conventions. Consequently, confusions are possible when learners encounter novel requesting forms and conventions that they have not had the chance to meet in previous classroom learning. By contrast, concept-based pragmatics instruction introduced in the present study centres on assisting learners in primarily establishing a conceptual basis of L2 pragmatics. Following that, language forms and conventions are discussed. This meaning-to-form approach reverses the traditional form-to-meaning teaching method. By appreciating the meaning-making possibilities offered by various linguistic patterns and conventions, this conceptual basis has the potential of transforming learners into proactive users of the target language.

5.4.2.3 Integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures

The union of dynamic assessment and instruction is the source and drive of development during ZPD activity, from which imitations and internalisations are likely to emerge (see Chapter 3). Thus, unifying human mediation and the varying

symbolic mediators available is of great importance. Symbolic mediators

themselves cannot generate any practical power until properly manipulated by the

human mediator (Kozulin, 2003). Thus, the present study incorporated the DA

procedures (section 3.3.4) and input-oriented symbolic mediator implementation

procedures (section 4.5.1) into a single mediator-learner interaction process,

consisting of both mediating instructions (i.e., mediator moves) and learner

reciprocal responses. A sketch of this mediator-learner interaction process is

displayed in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures

Mediator moves	*Learner responses*
1. Mediator hands out material (e.g., concept cards)	2. Learners familiarise themselves with the material
3. Mediator provides information about the concerned task	4. Learners raise questions concerning the task, if there are any
5. Mediator encourages learners to make an understanding of the material	6. Peer-peer discussion when condition allows
7. Mediator provokes learners to verbalise their understandings	8. Learners volunteer to share their understandings or keep silent
9. Mediator runs provisional analysis (and provokes learners to verbalise their understandings again if they keep silent)	10. Learners continue sharing their understandings or keep silent
11. Mediator queries learners further in order to diagnose their problem sources or challenges	12. Learners respond
13. Mediator provokes learners to resume the responsibility of carrying out the task	14. Learners respond
15. Mediator continuously modifies mediations until the problem source or challenges are overcome	16. Learners continuing to reciprocate until the problem source or challenges are overcome

As revealed in the table, the process of a mediator-learner interaction generally

consists of several moves, commencing with the mediator distributing task

material of concern and finishing with a learner overcoming problem sources and

challenges pertaining to a specific language feature. This process also constitutes

an episode repetitively underlined in the present thesis. Significantly, mediator

moves can stop at sequence seven if learners successfully manage to understand

the concerned task, therefore successfully completing the task. Otherwise,

mediating instructions persist until the underlying causes of poor performances of

a specific language feature are diagnosed and overcome. The exchanges

surfacing between mediator move 15 and learner reciprocal response 16 can be

long and complex, and examples of this type of mediator-learner interaction will be

provided along with tracing learner development processes in Chapter 7.

However, for the moment, I will briefly re-exhibit a sequence of mediator-learner

verbalisations from DA session one, where a group ZPD was targeted (details of

the unfolding and discussion of this verbalisation can be found in section 7.2.2).

This sequence of mediator-learner verbalisation surfaced after learners

independently read the concept card of stereotypes. I initiated the conversation,

inviting the class to address the first question attached to the concept card. Nina

took the floor, briefly attempting the question (line 1, E1S1). Instead of immediately

commenting on Nina's response, I asked the class to verbalise their

understandings of the question (line 2, E1S1). Xueli and Jingyu started to engage

in the conversation, exchanging their perspectives with Nina (lines 3–14, E1S1).

After a provisional analysis of learners' responses, I queried the class further in

order to diagnose their problem sources or challenges (lines 15–17, E2S1).

Xuanyu attempted the question after observing that her peer Nina failed to

address the same question (line 20, E2S1). Upon hearing my acknowledgement of

Xuanyu's response, Nina immediately imitated Xuanyu, restoring the responsibility

of continuing the conversation and successfully attempting the question (line 22, E2S1). After this, Loumei, Yiqiao, and Xuege engaged in the conversation, which continued until all learners expressed understanding of the concept of stereotypes (lines 23–34, E3S1).

As revealed across this sequence of mediator-learner verbalisation, Nina's understanding of the concept of stereotypes demonstrated noticeable change, which occurred after noticing her peer's successful attempt of the question originally posed toward Nina. This instance of imitation suggests that the negotiated sequence of mediator-learner verbalisation was unfolded within Nina's ZPD and therefore sensitive to her maturing capabilities. Regarding her ZPD, the emergence of the change in her understanding of the concept of stereotypes indicates development. Moreover, the gradual and at least visual engagement of all seven learners in the conversation indicates that they were actively participating in the teaching-learning process, even when they were not the addressed subjects. It could be argued that a shared situation definition about the concerned task of understanding the concept of stereotypes was negotiated between the learners and me; therefore, a group ZPD was targeted.

5.4.2.4 L2 material analysis

Approximately fifty corpus examples (Corpus of Contemporary American English) and nine YouTube clips[24] of requesting and refusing episodes[25] featuring variant pragma-linguistic forms/strategies were used. The aim was to familiarise learners with instructed socio-pragmatic concepts and corresponding pragma-linguistic forms in communicative situations. All these L2 materials were analysed following the integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3), focusing on knowing *about* and understanding possibilities of variant pragma-linguistic uses in relation to newly introduced socio-pragmatic concepts. It is noteworthy that when approaching mediator move 5 (mediator encourages learners to make an understanding of the material), learners were first instructed to locate all requests and refusals and then encouraged to make meanings based on requesters and refusers' perceived intentions and resultant interpretations by applying newly learned socio-pragmatic concepts. Given that listening comprehension is not the focus of the present study, scripts of the YouTube clips were available for learners' reference. Learners also were encouraged to critically negotiate, discuss, and exchange opinions with their peers and/or mediator, in order to test, refine, and retest any hypotheses of requests/refusals.

---

[24] Given YouTube is not available in mainland China, I video-recorded those clips for L2 learning purposes before the commencement of data collection.

[25] An episode here, in the case of a speech act of request, contains a complete speech event of requesting which consists of five parts, namely, opening, pre-request, request, negotiation, and closing (Nicholas, 2016). Manifestations of these five parts will be demonstrated alongside the analyses of developmental processes in Chapter 7.

5.4.2.5 Appropriateness Judgment Tasks

As a complement to L2 material analysis, a set of appropriateness judgment tasks (AJTs) were implemented for students to apply to newly instructed concepts to analyse, reason, and for the first time, reformulate, if needed, linguistic expressions of requests and refusals within varying communicative situations. Integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3) were followed. Importantly, for the present study, I decided to use the learners' pre-enrichment scenario performances for the appropriateness judgment materials. The reason behind this decision was twofold. First and most importantly, it was inspired by Vygotsky's (1986) insightful observation of processes of concept formation. Specifically, he points out that contrary to identifying differences between objects, which readily could be conducted through pseudo-concepts, abstracting similarities between them requires conceptual thinking. Thus, I believe that by comparing one's own performance with others and/or L2 materials, numerous opportunities for concept formation would be generated when conducted within DA framework. Second, given the fact that appropriateness judgment materials serving the immediate purpose were unavailable in the literature, learners' own pre-enrichment scenario performances were the natural resources.

5.4.2.6 Written-Discourse Completion Tasks

A set of written-discourse completion tasks were implemented to assist learners in concretising socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge in variant communication contexts. As with the activity of L2 material analysis, integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3) were followed.

5.4.2.7 Role plays

Strategic cooperative scenarios (section 4.5.2) were also implemented in my research class to promote both abstract-to-concrete and concrete-to-abstract transformations embedded in the processes of concept formation. Eventually, seven scenarios (including two for post-enrichment) were conducted over nine sessions (for scripts of seven scenarios, see Appendix K), some of which were adopted from the CBPI literature whilst others were newly designed transfer scenarios based on learners' university life and more importantly their ZPDs. Thus, the transfer scenarios implemented in the present study were only compatible with my research context and sensitive to learners' ZPDs. I will discuss these transfers while reporting and discussing research findings in Chapters 6 and 7. As with the activity of W-DCTs, the integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3) were followed at the first stage (i.e., mediator-learner cooperative preparation, section 7.6.1, for an instance) and the third stage of role plays (mediator-learner verbalisation of the performance, section 7.6.2 for an instance). At the second stage (i.e., performance), learner and mediator (i.e., the researcher) role-played scenarios during which the character of a university student was intentionally designed into each scenario; thus, participant-learners in the present study were assigned the role of student and the mediator played the other character (e.g., a lecturer or university staff).

Notably, only the first and third stage were subject to DA procedures (section 5.4.2.3); the second stage – mediator-learner performance – was unfolded with no intervention provided across the process. This decision was inspired by Bakhtin's (1986) idea of utterance. As previously discussed in section 2.4.3.6, Bakhtin

(1986) argues that an utterance can only be properly understood by considering the previous utterances to which it responds and the future utterances it anticipates. Therefore, my understanding of any intervention projected across the process of a mediator and learner role-playing dialogue at the time the present study was conducted was that it might cause a misunderstanding of the speaking subject's (i.e., the learner) utterance, because a proper understanding of this utterance was contingent on the mediator's response to this utterance. Consequently, intervention and mediation were unavailable during the second-stage mediator-learner performance. However, mediator-learner verbalisation about the performance was conducted by following DA procedures at the third stage while mediator and learner were listening to the audio recording of the immediately prior performance.

5.4.2.8 Mediator-learner verbalisation

Mediator-learner verbalisation was iteratively conducted over sessions. Specifically, during the last ten minutes of each DA session, students were encouraged to reflect on and inquire about anything relevant to the class or tasks covered. For example, during card-reading sessions, learners were encouraged to share thoughts and life experiences relevant to the instructed concepts. Similarities and differences regarding concept applications in L1 Mandarin and L2 English social settings were discussed. Additionally, comparisons between historically knowing use and newly instructed use of L2 requests and refusals in L2 communicative discourse were also examined and discussed. This is important. As we will see in later analysis in Chapter 7, some vital issues regarding socio-pragmatic conceptual understanding in relation to performance, which were

undiagnosed while conducting tasks, were captured during mediator-learner verbalisation. In short, the main purpose of mediator-student verbalisation was to co-create more opportunities for imitation and to raise learners' awareness of the instructed theoretical concepts.

Importantly, all tasks were iteratively, rather than sequentially and linearly, implemented throughout the enrichment. Furthermore, implementations were flexible in terms of administration sequence, time distribution, and administration types (e.g., very near transfer scenarios were repeatedly discussed and conducted with learners whose ZPDs were in line with the complexity level embedded). I will return to this topic in the student developmental processes discussed in Chapter 7.

5.4.3 Post-enrichment

Post-enrichment was conducted in the final week of the study. Transfer tasks of W-DCTs and role plays with different levels of ambiguity regarding social factors of social distance, power hierarchy, and formality embedded in the situations were implemented. For each type of task, two requesting and two refusing situations were employed. I will discuss these tasks in the research findings and analysis chapters. It is noteworthy that all transfers designed after the enrichment were based on learners' reciprocal responses manifest throughout mediator-learner interactions over the course of DA sessions. As with pre-enrichment W-DCTs and role plays, three implementation stages consisting of preparation, performance and mediator-learner verbalisation were followed. However, unlike pre-enrichment, preparation, and mediator-learner verbalisation during post-enrichment were conducted within the framework of an interactionist DA approach.

5.4.4 Timeline of the study

The timeline of the ten-week study implemented in 2018 is displayed in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Timeline of the study

Timeline	Main in-class activities	Format
1st week pre-enrichment	1: Language awareness interview 2: Written-DCTs 3: Role plays	Non-DA
2nd week S1	1: Card-reading	G-DA One-on-one DA
third week S2	1: Card-reading 2: L2 material analysis	G-DA One-on-one DA
4th week S3	1: Card-reading 2: L2 material analysis 3: AJTs 4: DCTs	G-DA One-on-one DA
5th week S4	1: Card-reading 2: L2 material analysis 3: AJTs 4: DCTs	G-DA One-on-one DA
6th week S5	1: Card-reading 2: L2 material analysis 3: AJTs 4: DCTs	G-DA One-on-one DA
7th week S6	1: Card-reading 2: L2 material analysis 3: DCTs 4: Role plays	G-DA One-on-one DA
8th week S7	1: Card-reading 2: Role plays	G-DA One-on-one DA
9th week S8	1: Card-reading 2: AJTs 3: Role plays	G-DA One-on-one DA
10th week S9 post-enrichment	1: Written-DCTs 2: Role plays	One-on-one DA

Note: S=session; G=group

5.5 Research methods

Research methods are perceived as tools of data collection, simultaneously

shaping and shaped by the specific research questions raised by researchers

(Kagan, 2009; Crotty, 1998). Arguably, a specific methodological approach underlying a particular research project requires specific research methods with the aim being the validation between methodology, research method, and research questions concerned being maximally guaranteed (Kagan, 2009; Crotty, 1998). In the literature of the Vygotskyan approach to development, an experimental-developmental method was proposed, which can therefore be compatible with the dialectic approach (section 5.3) applied to the understanding of the relationship between an individual's higher forms of behaviour and the social-cultural settings s/he lives in (Vygotsky, 1978; Kozulin, 1990; Wertsch, 1985).

The experimental-developmental method requires a developmental view of a study of a problem while conducted in experimental conditions (Vygotsky, 1978). It emphasises the disclosure of the genesis (i.e., a developmental view), or causal dynamics, of a specific problem (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) was unsatisfied with the approach to individual higher mental functions that solely prioritised the final product (i.e., the manifestation of a higher form of behaviour) led by a certain stimulus; he argued that this approach appears to mis-conceptualise the processes underlying the emergence of the product as fixed and stable. Analyses of human development have reinforced the notion that such processes consist of dynamic changes as the result of social interactions (Mead, 2015; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of a higher form of behaviour (i.e., the final product attributed to a certain stimulus), a disclosure or unfolding of the genesis of this behaviour is

essential. Thus, the experimental-developmental method is a process-oriented, rather than product-oriented, model.

Furthermore, the experimental-developmental method moves beyond mere descriptions of higher forms of behaviour, and instead pursues revealing its explanatory principle (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1986, 1978, 1987) argues that two types of activity that appear to be identical from the outside might be essentially different from the inside, and mere descriptions of those activities would fail to understand the fundamental differences between them. To demonstrate this notion, Vygotsky referenced the speech of a two-year-old child and that of an adult. Presumably, both share the same external manifestations (i.e., same semiotics), yet the meanings underlying these manifestations may differ fundamentally from one other as the former refers to pseudo-concepts and the latter to real concepts (section 2.2). Therefore, to understand the essence of higher forms of behaviour we must comprehend the causal-dynamic relations underlying them. Nonetheless, this does not mean that descriptions of higher forms of behaviour are superfluous; instead, they are subordinate to causal-dynamic relations, giving rise to higher forms of behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978).

Considering the present study with the aim of understanding learners' development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge, and performance capability, pre- and post-enrichment L2 products and mediator-learner interactions were collected as the main resources for analysis. Additionally, with the intention of gaining a better understanding of learners' already matured socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge, semi-structured interviews were also conducted before

enrichment began. In sections 5.5.1 to 5.5.3, I will provide further details of these three types of data sets.

5.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

As beforementioned (section 5.4), semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with all learners as a part of pre-enrichment in order to diagnose learners' matured socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge. As Wellington (2000, 2015) argues, semi-structured interviews provide researchers with access to interviewees' thoughts and perceptions, which cannot be observed from outside. This allows an interviewer to develop an in-depth understanding of an interviewee's position on specific concerned topics (Wellington, 2000, 2015; Kvale, 2007). Therefore, for the present study, semi-structured interviews were conducted to partially address research question 2.

In order to avoid potential ethical issues, the purpose and procedures of the interview, along with consent forms, were explained to the learners in Mandarin before the interviews commenced. As suggested by Kvale (2007), a comprehensive explanation of the purpose and procedures of the interview helps mitigate an interviewee's potential uncomfortable feelings and worries, possibly triggered by the interview. Additionally, information regarding the protection of learner identity, data storage, data safety and distribution were also explained to learners (section 5.9).

Moreover, in testing the quality of the interviewing questions, alongside my questioning skills and strategies, piloting interviews were conducted with my colleagues. Naturally, any lack of quality in the interviewing questions –

unsophisticated wording skills or questioning strategies – might unfavourably influence the effectiveness of the interview, consequently leading to unsatisfactory answers from interviewees (Kvale, 2007; Mason, 2002; Lichtman, 2014; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Further, in order to establish a relaxed interviewing environment, casual conversation was prompted at the beginning of an interview, minimising the learner's feelings of vulnerability or discomfort as well as engaging them with the interviewer (Lichtman, 2014). Across the interviews, my role was to listen to and facilitate learners to express their thoughts freely and naturally.

The interviewing locations were selected by learners in order to minimise the possibility of a power asymmetry between the learners and me. Indeed, a familiar and comfortable interviewing setting may help an interviewee to avoid anxiety (Kvale, 2007; Lichtman, 2014). Additionally, following the suggestion of Lichtman (2014), my own story was communicated to the learners during interviews, with the intention of establishing a dependable rapport while engaging learners in conversations when necessary.

5.5.2   L2 performances

Learners' L2 performances including written discourse completion tasks and audio recordings of role play performances conducted during both pre- and post-enrichment were collected to address research questions 2, 3, and 4. As I have mentioned, the aim of representing pre-/post-enrichment polarity results is not to imply a linear model of development in ZPD activity, because internalisation is a dialogic as well as a dialectical dynamic process; instead, it is to see them as complements to the developmental processes of socio-pragmatic conceptual

knowledge, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Thus, it does not contradict the Vygotskyan dialectical process model. As Poehner (2009) argues, as part of the developmental process, learners' final products undoubtedly contribute to the understanding of L2 development; however, should dialectical process be collectively taken into consideration, they would reflect aspects of internalisation.

5.5.3 Mediator-learner interactions

All mediator-learner interactions co-constructed over the course of the eight-week enrichment (about 27 t hours) and pre-/post-enrichment (about eight hours) were audio-recorded and transcribed. That is, about 35 hours of mediator-learner dialogues were collected. Tracing and unfolding learners' developmental processes of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capability during ZPD activities embodied in these mediator-learner interactions were intended to address all five research questions. In Table 5.5 below I provide a breakdown of the relations between the three types of data sets and five research questions.

5.5.4 Relations between data collection instruments, purposes, and research questions

The relations between data collection instruments, their purposes, and the five research questions are displayed in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Relations between data collection instruments, their purposes, and the research questions

Data collection instruments	Purposes	Research question/s
Pre-enrichment language awareness interviews	The primary purpose of interviews was to understand learner-participants' knowledge of socio-pragmatics before the commencement of the present study.	Research question 2
Pre-/post-enrichment L2 performances[26]	The primary purpose of the data of learners' pre-/post-enrichment L2 performances was to understand changes in learners' performance capabilities, if there are any, after the intervention. Additionally, the data sources of mediator-learner verbalisations surfacing at both the first and third stage of the performance processes were analysed to understand changes in learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and their relations to changes in learners' performance capabilities, if there are any, after the intervention.	Research questions 2, 3, 4 and 5
Mediator-learner interactions[27]	The primary purpose of tracing mediator-learner interactions across the nine-week DA sessions was to understand how interactionist DA modified both mediations of the mediator and learner reciprocal responses in my research context. Meanwhile, the nature of learners' developmental processes (i.e., progress and regression, if there are any) could also be revealed and understood.	Research questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

As mentioned in section 5.4.1.1, the language awareness interviews were designed to explore learners' already matured socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge before commencing enrichment (i.e., the ZAD). Subsequently, they provided a benchmark with which the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual

---

[26] The data set of pre-/post-enrichment L2 performances included two major parts, namely, (1) L2 products of W-DCTs and of spoken role plays and (2) mediator-learner verbalisations at both the first and third stage embedded in the performance processes (sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.3).

[27] The data set of mediator-learner interactions comprised all dynamic mediator-learner interactions surfacing during both the enrichment and the pre-/post-enrichment.

knowledge in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity could be assessed, thus partially addressing research question 2: Can ZPD-based DA and concept-based pragmatic instruction improve learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge? With the aim of exploring how ZPD-based DA and concept-based pragmatic instruction improved learners' performance capabilities alongside socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge (i.e., research questions 2 and 3), data sets of pre-/post-enrichment L2 performances were collected and analysed. Nonetheless, as previously mentioned (section 5.5.2), the Vygotskyan notion of the development of higher forms of behaviour appreciates the process model rather than the product model towards individuals' internalisation of mediating instruction (as a form of social relation); therefore, alongside L2 performances collected from pre-/post-enrichment, data sets of developmental processes surfacing over the course of mediator-learner dialectic interactions, during both enrichment and post-enrichment, further contributed to the understanding of research questions 2, 3, and 4. Furthermore, regarding the research question 5 – what did regression look like in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity? and what was its relation to socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capability? – the data sets of mediator-learner dialectic interactions, co-constructed during both enrichment and post-enrichment, were analysed, and simultaneously traced and explored to address the overarching research question 1.

5.6   Participants and research context

The participants were all second-year university students recruited from the same academic institution, located in Zhengzhou, China. This institution is categorised

as a basic public university in mainland China[28] (Zhao, Cai and Dang, 2017). All participants registered in the Department of International Economics & Trade. Main courses within this department consisted of Business English, Accounting, Foreign Trade Correspondence, International Finance, and History of Western Economics. Regarding English as a foreign language (EFL) courses, College English and English Language & Culture are offered for students of this department. College English is a compulsory course at public universities, aiming to improve students' EFL capability, particularly reading competence (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China). Meanwhile, English Language & Culture, by introducing such aspects as the history, philosophy, economics, and literature of British society, aims to help Chinese university students develop an understanding of British culture and therefore the evolution of the English phonetic system, vocabulary, and grammar that are influenced by these aspects of the culture (Wang, 2000).

The rationale for recruiting from among this population was threefold. First, although all participants have been exposed to English as a foreign language for several years starting from primary school, their experience with the language is mostly limited to what is taught within formal educational settings, aimed at the higher education entrance examination. As a result, their awareness of socio-pragmatic and pragmatic knowledge appears to be limited. Second, all participants

---

[28] Academic institutions in mainland China are hierarchically sorted into six main categories (Zhao, Cai and Dang, 2017). From top to the bottom, they are the 985 group of universities (39 in total), 211 group universities (115, including the 39 98' universities), top public universities (around 800), basic public universities (around 1,794), profit colleges (around 95), and other colleges.

had passed a CET 4[29] shortly before the study started and therefore further their

pursuit of EFL was likely related to personal interest, a plan for studying abroad,

and/or career-related expectations. This is relevant and important because a

pressure-free teaching-learning environment presumably would motivate

participants to complete the ten-week programme. Finally, the university that was

the setting for the study is one of the basic public universities that constitute a

major part of universities in mainland China (Footnote 28), therefore the

participants in the research study would be representative of their national

counterparts.

All participants were recruited from the same class of 40 students. At the

beginning, 14 students expressed interest in the study. However, only ten were

able to schedule times on the same day at the same time for a consecutive ten

weeks, three of which withdrew before the programme started for personal

reasons. Ultimately, seven students volunteered and completed the ten-week

programme. Table 5.6 summarises basic information about seven participants:

name, gender, previous studies in English – years in middle and high schools,

level of English proficiency, and experiences abroad including travelling and/or

studying in English-speaking countries. For ethical issues, pseudonyms were

used. All participants had similar English-learning backgrounds. None of them had

travelled and/or studied in English-speaking countries. Loumei reported that she

once had a short conversation with a foreigner during a social-cultural event

---

[29] CET refers to the College English Test. It is conducted nationally among Chinese undergraduate and postgraduate students in China to evaluate their EFL proficiency as required by the National College English Teaching Syllabuses (Syllabus for College English Test, 2006). CET 4 is the basic level and a requirement of graduation.

organised by a university, and Xuanyu reported that she sometimes watches

English videos on YouTube through a VPN[30] (virtual private network). None of the

rest reported having had more than little exposure to English outside formal

classroom learning settings.

Table 5.6: Information about participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Previous studies in English: years in middle school	Previous studies in English: years in high school	English level	Experience abroad (traveling or studying in English speaking countries)
Nina	Female	3	3	CET 4	NO
Loumei	Female	3	3	CET 4	NO
Xueli	Female	3	3	CET 4	NO
Xuanyu	Female	3	3	CET 4	NO
Jingyu	Female	3	3	CET 4	NO
Yiqiao	Female	3	3	CET 4	NO
Xuege	Female	3	3	CET 4	NO

5.7   Data analysis

All three types of data sets (section 5.5) were analysed. In sections 5.7.1 to 5.7.2, I

will delineate the methods and procedures of the data analysis in the present

study.

5.7.4   Stages of thematic data analysis

All seven learners' semi-structured language-awareness interviews were subject

to thematic analysis. First, audio recordings of their interviews were transcribed.

---

[30] A lot of websites and social networks including YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter are inaccessible in mainland China. Individuals can only obtain access through a free (though usually with a time limitation) or paid VPN.

Second, following Vygotsky's notions of random associations, pseudo-concepts, pre-concepts, and real concepts (section 2.4), all transcriptions were analysed (Chapter 6) and instantiations of these four notions were identified and then coded.

Considering L2 performances of DCTs, all audio recordings of pre-enrichment DCTs were transcribed. Second, transcriptions of DCTs were divided into two major stages – preparation and mediator-learner verbalisation[31] – and then analysed, adhering to Vygotsky's concepts of random associations, pseudo-concepts, pre-concepts, and real concepts. As with pre-enrichment DCTs, audio recordings of post-enrichment DCTs were transcribed and then divided into preparation and mediator-learner verbalisation[32]; however, unlike pre-enrichment, they were subsequently subject to micro-genetic analysis (section 5.7.2). Moreover, the written products of all learners' pre-/post-DCTs were coded by following Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989b) categories of internal vs. external mitigating moves (key socio-pragmatic functional labels coupled with definitions and examples can be found in Appendix G). Examples of coded written DCTs and micro-genesis analyses of preparation and mediator-learner verbalisation will be demonstrated along with analysis in Chapters 6 and 7.

---

[31] At this stage, the mediator merely invited learners to reason linguistic conventions written in the DCTs; however, this process was not conducted within the framework of an interactionist DA approach (section 5.4).

[32] Preparation and mediator-learner discussion during post-enrichment were both unfolded within the framework of an interactionist DA approach (section 5.4.3).

Regarding L2 performances of role plays, all audio recordings of pre-enrichment role plays were transcribed (for transcript conventions, see Appendix L). Next, each transcription was divided into three major parts – preparation, performance, and mediator-learner verbalisation[33]. Following this, performance was further divided into four stages by adapting the request model developed in Nicholas (2016): stage one, opening and pre-request; stage two, request; stage three, negotiation, and stage four, closing. The first three stages were then coded following Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989b) categories of internal (including syntactic and lexical/phrasal mitigating devices) and external mitigating moves. Notably, stage four, closing, moves beyond the interest of the present study; therefore, I will leave it for future exploration. Finally, the transcriptions of preparation and mediator-learner verbalisation were subject to Vygotsky's concepts of random associations, pseudo-concepts, pre-concepts, and real concepts. As with pre-enrichment role plays, all audio recordings of post-role plays undertook identical procedures. Nonetheless, diverging from the former, the transcriptions of preparation and mediator-learner verbalisation of all post-role plays were subject to micro-genetic analysis (section 5.7.2), tracing learners' development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capability in ZPD activity. Examples of coded performances and micro-genetic analysis will be exhibited analytically in Chapters 6 and 7.

---

[33] As mentioned in section 5.4, mediator-learner verbalisations of pre-role plays were not conducted within the framework of an interactionist DA approach. Rather, the mediator merely invited learners to verbalise the rules, principles, and/or concepts underlying linguistic conventions employed in the role plays; no mediating instruction was available at this stage.

5.7.5 Micro-genetic analysis

Audio recordings of all mediator-learner interactions co-constructed throughout DA sessions were first transcribed and then subject to micro-genetic analysis, capturing and tracing learners' development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capability over a nine-week period. Micro-genetic analysis is an analytic method which, by prioritising line-by-line sequential analyses of mediator other-regulative moves and learner reciprocal responses, gradually traces and unfolds the processes of the creation and use of several symbolic mediators of learners during ZPD activities (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). It aims to develop a deeper understanding of the changes of instruments/means (e.g., pseudo-concepts, pre-concepts, and/or real concepts) that learners employ to overcome impediments encountered in ZPD activities (Vygotsky, 1978). It emphasises the unfolding of causal-dynamic relations between learners' thoughts and correspondent acts in varying social-cultural communicative contexts. The basic assumption underlying micro-genesis is that an individual's development of higher forms of mental functions can be revealed over a short period of time, even a few seconds (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987; Wertsch, 1985, 1984).

The micro-genetic analysis applied in the present study used the learner-relevant perspective, observing mediator-learner communicative interactions co-constructed in ZPD activities in my research classroom (Van Compernolle, 2015). The analysis focused on developing an understanding of learner responses triggered by, or co-constructed through, certain prompts I projected spontaneously. This analysis method assisted in illustrating how the learners

oriented themselves to the next relevant response/s, via mediating prompts,

across dynamically administered learning instruments. Therefore, the analysis

made visible learners' micro-genetic, or small developmental processes, alongside

the root and drive of learners' higher cognitive development.

Practical procedures involved in the process of micro-genetic analysis are as

follows. Firstly, "what each line [turn] is doing" (Van Compernolle, 2015, p. 33) was

identified throughout an episode of mediator-learner interactions. Here, an episode

refers to exchanges co-negotiated between mediator and learner regarding a

specific topic, starting from the initiation of the topic and closing with successfully

overcoming the problem source or impediments associated with this topic.

Notably, the analytic focus was on the efficaciousness of interactions: whether

other-regulatory prompts led to the learners' next proper actions (e.g., realisation

of problem source and/or self-correction). Secondly, I located and traced all

sequentially surfacing new information (section 2.5) from learners throughout the

episode. Subsequently, the word meanings underlying this series of new

information were identified, based on Vygotsky's notion of the development of

concepts (section 2.5). Drawing this together, I attempted to develop an

understanding of learners' reciprocal responses from a developmental viewpoint

(section 5.5). Consequently, the causal-dynamic relations between mediation

moves and learner reciprocal responses, on the one hand, and changes of word

meaning and new information, on the other, were adequately displayed. The entire

process could be described as "a dynamic display of the main points making up

the processes' history" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 33). Learners' internalisation processes

of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge were made evident and mediational

moves (including how mediating prompts emerged, whether they worked or not, and if not, how they were refined to be efficacious) were captured and traced.

However, it would have been unrealistic to try to trace all seven students' micro-genetic developmental processes throughout the nine sessions and some 35-hours of classes in the present thesis. Nonetheless, all mediator-student dialogic interactions were transcribed and line-by-line sequentially analysed. Data reported in Chapter 7 were carefully selected to ensure that critical instances emerging during the nine sessions were maximally covered. In this way, the complexity of mediator-student dynamic assessment, as it was revealed in my research class, is clear. In other words, I have chosen the comparatively most difficult and challenging moments I encountered with students in the classroom. These moments are interesting and rich in terms of the mediational means provided and the student responses reciprocated. Importantly, I believe, it is in these moments that the dialectical essences of DA were sufficiently uncovered. Equally important, for each section, I chose certain students as illustrative cases to ensure the issues discussed were representative of the enrichment sessions.

5.8 Credibility of coding

In order to ensure the credibility of the coding used in the present study, I participated in several workshops focusing on thematic analysis before its commencement. Throughout these workshops, thematic analysis processes of other Ph.D. candidates were demonstrated and discussed. Additionally, I practiced on a selection of materials, familiarising myself with the thematic analysis process presented in these workshops. Specifically aiming to facilitate the coding process

of concept formation, I downloaded and then independently analysed a series of

excerpts from the literature illustrating concept formation or cognitive development.

More specifically, the excerpts demonstrated, analysed, and discussed in

publications included Luria (1976), Poehner (2005), Charles (2011), Ableeva

(2010), Van Compernolle (2012, 2013, 2014), Van Compernolle and Henery

(2014) and Van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich and Weber (2016), among others.

Subsequently, I continually compared the codes I constructed with those of these

researchers. Notes were recorded regarding the differences and similarities

between their codes and my own. Considering these differences, I exchanged

thoughts with my colleagues. Furthermore, I consulted my colleagues on a

concept-formation coding sample of the data of the present study. Similar steps

were also applied to the coding process of learners' L2 products, including written-

DCTs and role play performances. Specifically, after exchanging thoughts with my

colleagues regarding request products collected by previous studies (e.g., Safont,

2004; Li, 2012; Takahashi, 2001), a sample of learners' role-play performances

from the present study was independently coded by my colleagues and me,

followed by discussions. The codes were finalised when at least 85 percent

agreement was achieved amongst all of us.

5.9   Ethical considerations

The present study was conducted in a Chinese university located in Zhengzhou,

the capital city of Henan province, central China. Before I determining participants,

I first contacted and informed senior administrators of the university, and was

given permission to enter two Business English classes under the Finance and

Accounting department. While in the class, I gave information to potential

participant-candidates about the study, making it clear that student participation in the programme was voluntary and that participants could withdraw from the programme whenever they wanted. In addition, I put an advertisement describing and elaborating the aim and interest of the present study in front of each classroom. At the bottom of the advertisement, students interested in participating in the study were invited to contact the researcher through e-mail. To ensure the voluntary nature of participation, students were encouraged to provide the motives underlying their participation in the present study.

All participants were required to read and sign a consent form (Appendix B) for participation. The consent form explicitly stated that the enrichment programme developed for the research is suitable to the participants' curriculum and field. Moreover, it clarified that any step of the research, from implementation to data collection, would not cause any physical, social, and psychological harm. Additionally, participants were given information about the research, which divulged both the implementation steps of the research and the data collection process. All information was given in written English and spoken Chinese. Importantly, the consent form emphasised that all participants had the right to leave at any stage of the research. It also stated that research data would be used only for the present research and would never be shared with another person. It further stated that data would be deleted, if requested, after fulfilling the aim of the present study, and participants' private information would not be disclosed. After the present research report, results would be shared with all participants before any publication. All participants were over 18 years old and of full legal age and

with no disabilities, therefore, their written and signed permission was enough, ethically, for participation in the research.

The research data were collected through several different sources (classroom teaching and activity audio recordings, semi-structured interviews and one-on-one instructor-learner tutoring audio recordings, etc.). All electronic data of the research were backed-up to the University of Exeter U-drive. All written documents were kept in a locked cabinet. All data were integrated and re-organised via anonymous code, for example, interview (activity) – 001 (number) – M (sex) – 20 (age). All electronic and published data and analysis documents about the present research will be saved securely by the researcher for five years after the accomplishment of the present research process, and then will be destroyed using a shredder. All electronic devices and Windows directory used for saved data were password-protected. At the outset of the present research and data collection stages, all participants were informed about the data collecting, use, reporting and saving process (see Appendix A for the Certificate of Ethics Research Approval document).

5.10 Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the research design and methodological perspective applied in the present study. A pre-enrichment, enrichment, and post-enrichment approach was adopted to explore the function of DA in diagnosing and promoting Chinese university learners' development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capabilities. To achieve this aim, DA procedures were followed in the present study as discussed above. Research methods

including semi-structured interviews, L2 products, and mediator-learner

interactions were explained, following which, data analysis methods, namely,

thematic analysis and micro-genetic analysis, were explained in connection with

procedures followed during the analyses. Furthermore, information concerning the

participants as well as the context of the Chinese university in which the present

study was conducted were examined at some length. Finally, the ethical

considerations pertaining to the present study were discussed.

Chapter Six: Research findings: Concept development and L2 performance

6.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I will report research findings of the present study. By doing so, I will develop, partially, answers to research questions 2–5. The study began with pre-enrichment language awareness interviews (LAI), and I will first present the coded results of LAI in relation to conceptual knowledge – random association, pseudo-concepts, and pre-concepts. I will discuss these results by closely drawing on learners' responses to the LAI. Then, I will turn to pre-/post-enrichment L2 pragma-linguistic performances. However, it is important to point out that for the interest of space, I will only report findings concerning requests, which are the focus of the study. Findings of refusals will be explored in the future. Additionally, for request performances, I will only show the empirical results of role plays and will leave the exploration of findings of written discourse completion tasks (W-DCTs) for the future. However, this does not necessary mean that the research design of W-DCTs (section 5.4) was of no significance to the present study. On the contrary, as discussed in section 4.5.2, in comparison to role plays, the relatively lower level of cognitive requirement projected on learners during W-DCTs helps mediator and learners to co-create ZPD activity, thus paving the way for the implementation of more difficult tasks such as role plays. Furthermore, and more importantly, it is noteworthy that given role plays are essentially similar but more complex than W-DCTs, the exclusive attention to role-play performances arguably

would not miss learning problems revealed in W-DCTs. Finally, as Vygotsky (1978) argues, processes rather than products should be the focus of analysis, although finished products are likely indications of development (Poehner, 2009); therefore, I will dedicate more space to the tracing of learners' micro-genetic development in Chapter 7.

6.2   Language awareness interviews

The coded results of learners' language awareness interviews (LAI) are displayed in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Awareness of concepts (pre-enrichment)

Concepts	Types of awareness				
	Not mention	*Random Association*	*Pseudo-concepts*	*Pre-concepts*	*Real concepts*
Social Distance		Nina	Nina Loumei Jingyu Xuanyu Yiqiao Xueli	Nina Loumei JIngyu Xuanyu Xuege	
Power Hierarchy	Nina Yiqiao Xueli		Loumei Jingyu Xuanyu Xuege	Loumei Jingyu Xuanyu Xuege	
Self-presentation		Yiqiao Xueli	Nina Loumei Jingyu Xuanyu Xuege	Nina Loumei Jingyu Xuanyu Xuege	
Face	Nina Loumei Jingyu Xuanyu Yiqiao Xueli		Xuege	Xuege	
Obligation	Nina Loumei Jingyu Xuanyu Yiqiao Xueli				

	Xuege				

Overall, Xueli and Yiqiao's understandings of requests and refusals barely demonstrated links to L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual variations. By contrast, their peers, to varying degrees, demonstrated either pseudo-conceptual or pre-conceptual understanding or both. Given the factual similarities among learners regarding the already matured knowledge of socio-pragmatic concepts before the enrichment commenced, I chose to discuss as a group those learners who demonstrated similarities. Specifically, the seven learners were sorted into four groups, that is: Group 1, Nina; Group 2, Loumei, Xuanyu, Jingyu; Group 3, Xueli, Yiqiao; and Group 4, Xuege. From section 6.2.1 to 6.2.4, I will discuss LAI results in detail. It is important to note that all transcripts are verbatim with only minor modifications to make them readable.

Given that it is unrealistic to provide full transcripts of all seven learners' LAIs in this section, LAI transcripts for three learners only (i.e., Nina, Jingyu and Yiqiao, as representatives of their own groups) constitute Appendixes M, N, and O, respectively. However, it is important to note that although these three learners were sorted into three different groups, there similarities found among them regarding already matured L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge. Specifically, as we will see later in the present chapter, Nina, Jingyu, and Yiqiao appeared to be representatives of learners whose knowledge of socio-pragmatics was dominated essentially by either random association or pseudo-concepts or both before the enrichment commenced, and who demonstrated not only significant but constant improvement in both socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capabilities during the post-enrichment session. However, significant differences

were also demonstrated between them. For example, compared with Jingyu and Yiqiao, Nina's developmental processes in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity were more complex and challenging in terms of the amount and quality of other-regulative mediations required to overcome underlying causes of poor performances throughout the enrichment. Thus, a full disclosure of these three learners' LAIs are likely to provide a sound benchmark regarding their ZAD to which other learners' developmental processes in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activities can be compared.

6.2.1 Group1: Nina

Concerning *social distance*, the principles that Nina followed to regulate requests and refusals appeared to follow the formula – if close*,* direct forms; if distant*,* indirect conventions, as evidenced by the statement 看他跟我熟悉不熟悉 ("*Whether I'm close to her/him*"), indicating that familiarity was a determinant (Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, line 204). Additionally, concrete referents including classmates, friends and strangers that she encountered daily were also factors mediating which semantic formula of requests and refusals was to be applied within a given situation. For example, when asked what these factors, rules, or concepts were that guided her choice among various social conventions of requests and refusals, Nina responded as follows:

166. Nina: 我会 (5-second) 像这个 如果别人问我说你要是 uh 他邀请你帮忙 但是你确实是很想帮他的忙 ((points at "if you had asked me earlier…"))

   I think, like this one, if someone asks me, uh, asks you to do her/him a favour, but you indeed wanna help
167. Me: 那你会怎么用呢 会在什么样的场景下使用

How do you decide to use it? In what contexts you might use it?

168. Nina: 场景啊?

     Contexts?

169. Me: 嗯

     Right.

170. Nina: 会对同学

     My classmates.

171. Me: 同学

     Classmates –

172. Nina: 同学之间 还有朋友 还有 (10-second) 我觉得不相识的人应该也可以 不熟悉的

     Classmates, and friends. I think it's also okay to use with strangers, someone I'm not familiar with.

                 (Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, lines 166–172)

By using concrete referents such as classmates, friends, and strangers as the factors that regulate request and refusal conventions, Nina demonstrated pseudo-conceptual knowledge of social distance as she tried to establish relations with social milieu based on her concrete life experiences, or to use Kozulin's (1984) term, "subjective impressions" (p. 451). These kinds of relations are "concrete and factual" and not yet "abstract and logical" (Kozulin, 1984, p. 451). Another critical moment was also revealed during the interview with Nina, that is, she had historically established strong bonds with request and refusal linguistic conventions through the *meaning*, rather than *sense*. For example, when asked which convention signified refusal, Nina pointed at the card written with 'I'm not sure', verbalising:

122. Nina: 这个是表示不确定的 ((points at 'I'm not sure'))

This one is about uncertainty.

123. Me: 嗯

    Okay.

124. Nina: 或者别人向你问某件事的时候 你不太确定

    Or, when someone asks you about something, you're not quite sure.

125. Me: 嗯

    Okay.

126. Nina: 就会对别人说

    Then, you might respond with that.

127. Me: 嗯 哪有没有可能 比如说举个例子 我今天晚上想邀你出去玩 你说 'I'm not sure' 来拒绝我. 会不会这样说

    Okay, any chance, for example, I invite you to have some time out at a local hangout tonight, you might say "I'm not sure" as a way to refuse me. Does that make any sense?

128. Nina: 也许 但是一般情况下 如果说 像你刚说的是今晚吗

    Maybe, but normally, if you just said, it's tonight, right?

129. Me: 嗯

    Right.

130. Nina: 哪今晚的时间在昨天就已经会知道今天会发生 就是大概会发生哪些事 应该 如果真的是别人邀请你的话 让你去某个地方的话 那 那个时间感觉你已经知道了呀 要是去就失去 不去就是不去

    Well, if it's tonight, I already knew my schedule for today since yesterday. Then, if someone invited me to go to some places, I already knew my schedule, so, there is nothing to be unsure about. If I'm going, I'm going; if not, then not. There's nothing unsure about.

                    (Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, lines 122–130)

Here, Nina sticks to the meaning indexed by the pure linguistic signs of the convention, "I'm not sure". As discussed in section 4.3, this type of meaning is a stable manifestation of sense, possibly created by an utterance derived from as

well as bonded to a specific concrete context; this was further evidenced by Nina's reasoning in line 130 concerning the use of the convention. In this sense, Nina's understanding of requests and refusals was essentially regulated by concrete and factual referents (i.e., pseudo-concepts) at the time.

Furthermore, Nina also demonstrated changeable and sometimes even contradictory orienting principles especially when situations became complex. For example, when invited to comment on the use of a refusal convention (i.e., "if you had asked me earlier…") with socially close friends, Nina said she would not use it on close friends, followed with reasoning that emphasised the *meaning* rather than the *sense* of the convention. The exchanges are as follows:

163. Me: 好的 我们刚看了好多不同的方式 语言表达不一样的哦 假如说是你的好朋友关系好的朋友 你一般会用那种方式呢? 你会用这个吗 ((points at "if you have asked me earlier…"))

> *Okay, we've read several conventions, if it's your close friends, which convention you might use? Would you use this one?*

164. Nina: 不会 这个就是别人找你帮忙 你恰好没有时间 可能就会说如果你早点告诉我的话我我可能就会抽出来时间

> *Not really. This one is about when someone asked you, and you happened to have no time, then you might say "if you had asked me earlier, I would have made time for you".*

> (Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, lines 163–64)

However, a few minutes later when asked again about what forms of utterance would be used to refuse socially equal close friends, Nina immediately picked up

the card written with "if you had asked me earlier…". The exchanges are as follows:

187. Me: 嗯 哪如果说我们之间没有段位上的差异 是朋友的话 哪你会用哪个呢

   What if we are socially equal – for example, your friends – what will you say?

188. Nina: 这个 ((points at "if you had asked me earlier…")) 如果你要是早点告诉我的话 ((translates the line))

(Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, lines 187-88)

Additionally, when asked about the thinking process generated before or while making requests/refusals in terms of randomly picking a response that jumps to mind or thinking the reponse through thoroughly, Nina responded with 肯定要仔细考虑呀 *"Of course, I would think thoroughly"* (Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, line 184). However, at the stage of mediator-learner verbalisation, when invited to reason out the convention used in a pre-enrichment role play (section 6.3.1), Nina verbalised: 我也不知道我说的是啥当时就是想到什么说什么了 *"I don't know. I just said whatever jumped into my mind"* (Nina, pre-enrichment role play, mediator-learner verbalisation). At the time, Nina was establishing relations with a given requesting context by relying on random associations based on subjective impressions or imagination and the task object (i.e., finishing the role play). This phenomenon parallels with Vygotsky's notion of random association (section 2.2.3.1). In short, Nina's speech was directly controlled by sensory perceptions (i.e., random associations emerging in her mind), indicating a lack of control over her unmediated thinking process.

Concerning the concept of self-presentation, Nina slightly linked direct semantic formulas of requests/refusals to abstract social meanings about behaviour, such as self-centred, or disrespectful. For example, when invited to comment on the use of request variations, Nina verbalised:

96. Nina: 其它就是没有考虑别人的感受 就像这个 "You shut up" 闭嘴 ((translates the line)) 真的就是只考虑自己的 就是完全没考虑到别人的感受

The others don't consider other people's feelings, like this one: "You shut up". It's all about her/himself. S/he didn't consider other people's feelings at all.

(Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, line 96)

Here, Nina demonstrated some abstract knowledge of stereotypes and self-presentation (i.e., pre-concepts). That is, the decontextualization degree of these two concepts is comparatively higher than that of social distance. However, her abstract knowledge of these two concepts was practically bonded with concrete referents, instead of being associated with concepts of the same "measure of generality" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 200), such as intimacy/closeness and authority/inferiority, as evidenced by her verbalisation: "如果我不认识她的话 我就不能太强势了 我就要考虑一下她的感受 我就会用间接点的方式 要不然就有点不尊重对方了*If I don't know her, I shouldn't sound imposing and I need to think about her feelings; thus, I would use an indirect way, otherwise it's rude and disrespectful*" (Nina, pre-enrichment role play, mediator-learner verbalisation). Following Vygotsky's notion of measure of generality, the words "her" (i.e., a concrete referent), "rude" and "disrespectful" (i.e., abstract social meanings) apparently derive from a different

measure of generality. In this sense, Nina's understanding of self-presentation in relation to requests/refusals was still dominated by pseudo-concepts.

At the end of the interview Nina also mentioned factors, including her heart, interlocutors, things (i.e., what the requests are about), availability, the event, and situation, as the underlying stimuli that regulate which requesting/refusing conventions should be used. Our exchanges unfolded as follows:

197. Me: 好的 我想再问一下 就是你刚讲到请求是语气的区别 拒绝是直接和间接的区别 我想问的就是这么多种表达方式 到底是什么东西在指引你做出不同的选择的呢? 什么样的东西 什么样的概念 什么样的理念 我感知不到的 是什么东西诱导你做出不同的选择的

Okay, we've discussed all these conventions. You mentioned that the difference between requesting conventions is tone; and the difference between refusing conventions is directness or indirectness. How do you decide which linguistic convention to use? Are there certain factors, rules, or concepts that guide your choice?

198. Nina: 感觉就是自己的内心吗

I think it's my heart.

199. Me: 内心 你能细致一点吗 内心的什么 内心的阴暗面吗

Your heart? Can you be specific? What do you mean by your heart?

200. Nina: 不是阴暗面 就是 不同的人不同事

I mean different people, different things.

201. Me: 嗯人和事 人 你指的什么 这个人的外貌吗

It's people and things. By people, do you mean physical appearance?

202. Nina: 不是外貌

Not physical appearance

203. Me: 是什么

What is it then?

204. Nina: 看他跟我熟悉不熟悉

Like whether I'm close to her or him or not.

205. Me: Okay. 熟悉不熟悉 还有呢

Familiarity. What else?

206. Nina: 还有 (20 seconds)

And –

207. Me: 事 你指的什么

By things, you mean?

208. Nina: 麻烦不麻烦

Whether it is troublesome or not.

209. Me: 你的意思是 譬如 伤不了筋骨的事 是可以的

You mean, if it won't cause any psychological harm, you might not directly refuse it.

210. Nina: 嗯

Right.

211. Me: 哪还有什么呢

Anything else?

212. Nina: Uh 时间上吧

Um, time.

213. Me: 时间 能具体一点吗 我不知道你指的是什么意思

Time, can you be specific?

214. Nina: 时间就是 要是那个时候别人找你帮忙 那个时候你没有时间 你就直接拒绝了

I mean, if someone asks me to do something at the time and I've already got a plan, then I will have to refuse her/him directly.

215. Me: 哪还有什么吗

Anything else?

216. Nina: 还有 可能是环境啊 还有场合

And environment and event/situation.

217. Me: 场合 能再具体一点细致点说么

Situation, could you be a bit specific?

218. Nina: 那比如我某个人邀请我去某个地方 但是那个场合 比如夜总会什么的 我是真的 我也不愿意去 我就直接拒绝了

Like someone asks me to go to some events or some places, but the social surroundings there are quite… like nightclubs, I'm not willing to go to that kind of event, thus I'll refuse directly.

(Nina, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix M, lines 197-218)

While interlocutors were abstracted into two categories, that is, close and distant (line 204), other factors – things, availability, and event – were firmly bonded to concrete referents (lines 214, 218). This phenomenon also manifested from other learners, such as Yiqiao and Xueli (section 6.2.3). Summarised, although pre-conceptual knowledge of socio-pragmatic conceptual variations were traceable during Nina's LAI, nevertheless concrete and factual stimuli existing in the external surroundings regulated Nina's choice of which request/refusal convention should be applied.

Finally, information concerning power hierarchy, face (i.e., face-saving and face-threatening), and obligation was unavailable in Nina's verbalisations. Xuege was the only learner who slightly demonstrated a pseudo-conceptual knowledge of the concept of face during the LAI. I will return to Xuege in section 6.2.4. It is thus reasonable to argue that at the commencement of the DA sessions, even spontaneous knowledge of these three concepts – power hierarchy, face, and obligation – was barely available among the learners.

6.2.2   Group 2: Loumei, Jingyu, and Xuanyu

As with Nina, this group demonstrated the characteristics of a pseudo-conceptual understanding of social distance. The connections that they historically established between the concept of social distance and request/refusal conventions can be

described by the formula based on the degree of familiarity: if close, direct forms; and if distant, indirect forms. For example, when invited to verbalise the rules or concepts that she had to follow while making requests, Jingyu said:

46. Jingyu: 如果两个人的关系很好的话 可以直接一点 如果两个人的关系不是很好的话 可以委婉一点 好的话 大可以开门见山

If the two are quite close to each other, direct forms are alright; if distant, indirect forms are preferred. Like I said, if the two are close, it's okay to go straight to the point.

(Jingyu, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix N, line 46)

Moreover, consistency between thought and act was also demonstrated in this group as they tried to map underlying rules onto requests. For example, Jingyu provided an instance in which she showed how she managed requests toward close friends. Our exchanges unfolded as follows.

17. Me: 比如说你们是很好的朋友 你会怎么说呢 你会用你刚提到的句型吗 ((quotes Jingyu's line, "Can you leave some message?"))

For example, if we're close friends, how would you put requests? Will you use the form you just mentioned?

18. Jingyu: 应该不会吧 对两个关系特别好的人 直接看门见山 比如说 '你有钱吗 借我点钱'

Not really, I mean, if the two are quite close, the direct form is preferable. For example, "Got any money? Lend me some money".

19. Me: 嗯

Okay.

20. Jingyu: 如果两个人关系不是特别好的话 我就会说 '我最近手头有点紧' 先解释一下原因 然后说'你可以借我点钱吗'

If we are not close, I might say "I'm short of money recently". I mean first explain a bit, then you can say "Can you lend me some money?"

(Jingyu, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix N, lines 17–20)

Loumei also attempted to map her knowledge of socio-pragmatics onto the speech act of requests; however, she demonstrated some issues. For example, when asked about the ways that request conventions were used in her life, Loumei elaborated:

朋友的话 我就随意一点 比如用 "Could you; can you". 也可以直接祈使句 比如 "Lend me your pen", 就是没必要解释 要是老师的话 就是要先把 事情解释清楚再说 比如用 "Would you mind; I need to; I want to" 怎么怎么样.

if we're friends, I will use informal language, for example, Could you or can you. Imperative is fine as well, for example, "Lend me your pen". The point is you don't need to explain anything. However, if it's the teacher, you first need to explain your situation clearly and then you can say, Would you mind; I need to; or I want to such and such.

(Loumei, pre-enrichment LAI)

Here, as with Jingyu, Loumei also connected socially close friends with an imperative expression, such as "Lend me your pen", and socially distant or higher status teachers a query-preparatory phrase (e.g., 'Would you mind') and a grounder (i.e., explanation). However, importantly, given an imperative and the phrase "I want to" (want statement, Wen, 2014) are both basically direct-requesting strategies, the non-distinguished use of these two variations for both socially close and power-equal (e.g., friends) and socially distant and low-to-high (e.g., teachers) communicative situations indicates Loumei's unsystematic knowledge of requests. Also, this elaboration revealed that Loumei's L2 pragma-linguistic choices are essentially reactions to requestees (i.e., consequences of direct stimulation of

external stimuli factually existing in the environment) rather than proactive meaning-making intentions. In this respect, the locus of control was still situated with external objects (i.e., object-regulation). That is, it is externally existing stimuli rather than internal abstract concepts that directly mediate or control Loumei's social choices. Similar issue was also demonstrated in Xuanyu. For example, when invited to verbalise the underlying rules or concepts that mediated her use of requests, she said:

> 她要是我同学或者亲密朋友的话 我就可以随意一点 使用直接的请求或是直接的拒绝 但是她要是我老师领导同事的话 我就不能太直接了 那样就太生硬了 得委婉 一点 要不会让人很反感 亲密一点的人 就随便一点 周围其他的人 包括同事 老师 领导 就需要委婉一点 要不然就很不礼貌
>
> *If she were my classmate or very close friend, I could speak freely, I can directly request or refuse her; however, if she were my teacher, boss, and/or colleague, I shouldn't be too direct. It would sound imposing. I should take the roundabout way; otherwise, it would be annoying to others. So, for individuals with whom I am very close, I would request or refuse in a direct or casual way; but for others, like my colleagues, teachers and bossres, I need to do that indirectly. Otherwise, it's impolite.*
>
> (Xuanyu, pre-enrichment LAI)

Here concrete referents, including classmates, close friends, teachers, bosses and/or and colleagues that Xuanyu socialised daily, were factors that mediated which form of requests/refusals were applied within a given situation. As I have discussed in section 6.1.2, by regulating speech acts of request and refusal based on externally existing concrete referents, this group of learners demonstrated pseudo-conceptual knowledge of socio-pragmatic conceptual variations. This type of reactive rather than proactive behaviour suggests that the locus of control over

requests and refusals was situated with the external stimuli rather than with requesters themselves (the learners in this case).

However, it is noteworthy that unlike Nina, this group demonstrated pseudo-conceptual as well as pre-conceptual knowledge of the concept of power hierarchy. For example, as shown in the quotation of Xuanyu in this section, she referenced a general formula, – if classmates and friends, direct forms; if teachers and bosses, indirect forms – as the principal orientation of L2 pragma-linguistic choices in varying communicative situations. Here, referents of classmates and friends parallel to the pseudo-concepts of social equality and teachers and bosses to higher power position. Additionally, such pre-conceptual understanding of socio-pragmatic concepts as imposing, annoying, and unpolite suggests that Xuanyu is aware of social factor power hierarchy. In this sense, it could be argued that Xuanyu was much closer to independent control over the concept of power hierarchy and is thus presumably more sensitive to other-regulative mediation in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity when it is available than Nina is. This was later confirmed (Chapter 7). As with Xuanyu, Jingyu demonstrated pre-conceptual understanding of socio-pragmatic concepts as well, as evidenced by her comments on query-preparatory and external modifications of appreciation and apology.

> 然后这个吧 "Can you draw a horse for me?" 这个应该是一种请求吧 这个就有点像我刚刚说的那个 "What can I do for you?; Can I help you?" 这个就是表现出来尊重 就像我平时给学弟学妹们讲的 你多用 thank you 这样的词 I'm sorry, Can you 这样的词 首先你表现出来对对方的尊重 也体现你的个人素质

> *This one, "Can you draw a horse for me?", it's a request. It's like the one I discussed previously, "What can I do for you?; Can I help you?"*

It's respectful. Like what I usually told juniors when I tutored them, try to use words like "thank you". "I'm sorry", "Can you", it can show your respect to others as well your politeness.

(Jingyu, pre-enrichment LAI)

Here, Jingyu briefly mentioned abstract social meanings (e.g., politeness and respectfulness) as influencing factors on L2 pragma-linguistic choices. In this regard, as with Nina, this group demonstrated some abstract knowledge of self-presentation. Thus, it is reasonable to argue that they possess some self-regulation or control over L2 pragma-linguistic choices. However, like Nina, this group, instead of associating the concept with those with the same measure of generality such as intimacy and authority, bonded it practically with concrete referents (i.e., colleagues, supervisors and boss). In this regard, their understanding of self-presentation was still dominated by pseudo-concepts. In short, pseudo-conceptual and pre-conceptual knowledge of social distance, power hierarchy, and self-presentation characterised the relation between Jingyu, Xuanyu, and Loumei and L2 pragma-linguistic choices of requests/refusals before the DA programme. Finally, as with Nina, information regarding concepts of face and obligation was unavailable with this group.

6.2.3 Group 3: Yiqiao and Xueli

As with the first two groups, Yiqiao and Xueli also demonstrated pseudo-conceptual understandings of social distance in relation to pragma-linguistic conventions. For example, when asked about principles that mediate L2 pragma-linguistic conventions of requests and refusals, Xueli verbalised:

我会考虑到这个人本身 如果说就是说之前和这个人的交往过程中我不是特别的喜欢他 然后他来找我做这件事情 而且我也不是特别愿意做这件事情 那我肯定说一些理由呀 就是推诿他吗 关系好一点的人的话 如果我真的不想做这件事情的话 那我就直接给你 表达出来我的想法 或者我会说我不能做这个事情的理由 就是如果两个人的关系好的话 他应该是能接受的

Well, I will consider the character of the individual, if I personally don't like her/him, given the way s/he dealt with things or persons in our past contacts, now s/he asks me for a favour, and besides, I'm not interested in the thing that s/he asks for, then for sure, I will find some excuses, like to get rid of her/him. However, if we're close, and if I'm also not interested in the thing that s/he asks for, I will put it directly. Like share my thoughts on it, or the reason that I cannot help her/him. I mean, if we indeed see each other as close friends, s/he will understand and won't judge me.

(Xueli, pre-enrichment LAI)

Here Xueli demonstrated a general formula: if close friends, direct forms; if unfavourable individuals, indirect forms. Although in both cases, Xueli mentioned the use of external modifications, such as excuse and grounder, as the means to soften the illocutionary force of the face-threatening act of refusal, nonetheless, when considering the use of the external modification of an excuse, she resorted to historical experience, verbalising that such a strategy was the direct result of previous personal experiences with the interlocutor. In this way, Xueli demonstrated that her social acts are direct reactions to external stimuli rather than agency of proactive meaning-making intentions relevant to communication discourses. In other words, Xueli's linguistic choices of requests/refusals were externally controlled by factual objects (i.e., object-regulation) in the environment rather than internally controlled by her own intentions (i.e., self-regulation).

Similarly, Yiqiao also heavily commented on requests and refusals based on her lived experiences. For example, when invited to elaborate on the principles underlying her choices of social conventions, if there were any, Yiqiao enumerated a list of contextualised factors. Our exchanges are as follows:

31. Me: 好的 我想再问一下 就是这么多种表达方式到底是什么东西在指引你做出不同的选择的呢 什么样的概念 什么样的理念 我感知不到的 是什么东西诱导你做出不同的选择的

    Okay, we've discussed all these conventions. How do you decide which linguistic convention to use? Are there certain factors, rules, or concepts that guide your choice?

32. Yiqiao: 一方面是看他那个请求是什么

    It depends on what the request is about.

33. Me: 你能具体一点吗

    Could you be specific?

34. Yiqiao: 就是要看自己的能力 然后时间上啊 条件与不允许 有没有过分什么的

    I mean I need to consider my capability, then my schedule, if the situation allows, and if the request is socially acceptable.

35. Me: 嗯

    Okay.

36. Yiqiao: 比如说有的请求太过分了

    For example, some requests are socially unacceptable.

37. Me: 好的

    Okay.

38. Yiqiao: 然后其它的就是 考虑到关系 自己想不想 乐不乐意去帮你

    Then, there's our relationship, whether it's against my will, whether I'd like to do it or not.

39. Me: 嗯 乐不乐意去 你刚提到了关系 能再补充一些吗

    Okay, whether you like it or not. You just mentioned relationship, could you be specific?

40. Yiqiao: 就是看值不值得去帮助你

I mean I've got to think if it's worth my time and effort.

41. Me: 好的 还有什么因素吗

Alright, any other factors or rules?

42. Yiqiao: 就这两点吧 我感觉我会考虑这两个因素

I guess just these two. These two are the factors I've got to think about.

(Yiqiao, pre-enrichment LAI, Appendix O, lines 31-42)

Yiqiao here mentions her capability, schedule, the nature of the situation, social in/acceptance of the request, will, mood, and the worthiness of the time and effort required. Again, her social acts appear to be not so much about meaning making as about satisfying her personal needs. In this way, any instantiated request/refusal convention also is a direct reaction to external stimuli (i.e., object-regulation) rather than agency of proactive meaning-making intention (i.e., self-regulation). Expanded to Vygotsky's concept formation model, this phenomenon parallels random association discussed in Chapter 2.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that, unlike the first two groups, Yiqiao and Xueli barely attempted any abstract social meanings linked to L2 pragma-linguistic conventions. Moreover, information regarding power hierarchy, self-presentation, face, or obligation was unavailable with this group. Taken together, extended to the Vygotskyan formulation of higher forms of behaviour (Chapter 2), the locus of control over requests/refusals in the case of Yiqiao and Xueli is situated with object-regulation.

6.2.4 Group4: Xuege

Compared with her peers, Xuege demonstrated a wider understanding of requests and refusals in relation to L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual variations. For example, when asked about the principles underlying the use of request and refusal conventions, she says:

关系不是很好的话 这些委婉的请求和拒绝就会显得很礼貌 另外就是给对方找个台阶 不要让对方面子上挂不住 给对方个面子 不要让对方太难堪 我就会用比较间接的拒绝 方式 两个人之间是从属级关系的话 例如老师 我肯定不会说 "I refuse" 对学弟学妹的话 给对方面子 让她们心里舒服一点 也会很委婉 就是有事相求的话 也会委婉一点

If we are not close, indirect requests and refusals might sound polite. In addition, they are a means of face-saving. They make the interlocutor feels less embarrassed or face threatened. Regarding individuals who hold higher power positions, for example, teachers, I certainly won't use "I refuse". While, to juniors, I would also use an indirect way, especially if I need a favour from them. Because, in this way, I am protecting their face, which will make them very comfortable.

<div align="right">(Xuege, pre-enrichment LAI)</div>

Xuege here connects requests and refusals with wider meaning categories, such as social closeness, politeness, face-saving, face-threatening, and power hierarchy. In this respect, Xuege's L2 pragma-linguistic choices are mediated results of these meaning categories rather than direct responses to external stimuli factually existing in the social surroundings. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that the decontextualization degree of Xuege's mediational means is higher than that of her peers, indicating self-regulation or control over communication settings.

This argument was further evidenced by the L2 performances Xuege demonstrated during the pre-enrichment, which will be considered in detail in sections 6.3. Briefly, although Xuege demonstrated struggles with the use of locution-derivable strategies, like her peers, she nonetheless applied external modifications such as pre-pre-strategy, self-representation, apology, and appreciation to soften the illocutionary force of potential face-threatening so that she could protect the requestee's face, eventually making her the only learner who had voluntary control over mitigating devices. However, when invited to explicate further on the use of refusal conventions, Xuege verbalised that:

生气的场景 用这些强硬的 关系不是亲密的人 相对委婉 一点的 关系非常好的话 用最委婉的 如果我本人就是不喜欢这个人的话 我就会直接的拒绝 我干嘛要委屈我自己呀

If I'm angry, I will use direct forms. For distant individuals, I will use indirect forms. If we're quite close, I will use indirect forms that are the least imposing. If I personally don't like the person, I will refuse him/her directly. I mean, why do I have to compromise?

(Xuege, pre-enrichment LAI)

Here, as with Jingyu and Xueli, Xuege also talks about factors like bad mood as well as personal feelings as the stimuli for the resultant use of direct forms of refusal conventions. That emotions, or "subjective impressions" (Kozulin, 1984, p. 451), regulate choices among refusal conventions suggests that the locus of control over a refusing utterance was with anything but logical thinking. In this sense, Xuege demonstrated pseudo-conceptual knowledge. Furthermore, as with her peers, Xuege barely demonstrated knowledge of obligation. Indeed, although through the ZPD, Xuege demonstrated significant development; for example,

internalisations of other-regulative mediations provided during DA sessions were extensive, even though this concept turned out to be difficult not only for her but also her peers, which will be considered in Chapter 7. As we will see, they resorted to concrete live experience (i.e., the institutional level of understanding of right and obligation). That is, the individual, regardless of social distance, power hierarchy, position, and duty, should always be ready and willing to provide assistance to others belonging to the same institution in order to achieve prosperity for the institution as a social whole, even if it means that her/his needs and willingness will be negated by others.

6.2.5   Discussion

So far, I have discussed learners' pre-enrichment LAI results. My main findings could be summarised as follows. First, concerning L2 socio-pragmatic concepts-social distance, power hierarchy, and self-presentation, pseudo-conceptual and pre-conceptual understanding coexisted as the mediational meanings within students' ZADs, regulating L2 requesting and refusing pragma-linguistic choices in each situation. This finding is well in line with the experimental works on concept formation discussed in Chapter 2. To recall, complex thinking dominates before systematic instruction (Vygotsky, 1986). Moreover, this phenomenon is not uncommon in the literature of L2 instructed pragmatics. Extensive empirical results have shown that the coexistence of pseudo-conceptual and pre-conceptual thinking is not only omnipresent before pedagogical intervention, but also over the course of the interventions.

For example, Van Compernolle (2012) reported that researched American learners of French resumed historically knowing knowledge of rules-of-thumb (e.g., if friends, use tu; if teachers, use vous; if not clear, use vous) while choosing from French second-person pronouns during the enrichment programme. Similarly, Van Compernolle and Henery's (2014) study discussed in Chapter 4 found that advanced L2 French students deployed pseudo-concepts (e.g., rules of thumb) and pre-concepts (e.g., semantic knowledge of Spanish second-person pronouns) while justifying L2 pragmatic choices in AJTs and role plays even during post-enrichment. Furthermore, Van Compernolle, Weber and Gomez-Laich (2016) documented that intermediate L2 Spanish students also frequently resorted to pseudo-concepts and pre-concepts to regulate L2 pragmatic choices during both pre- and post-enrichment. Indeed, as Vygotsky (1986) observes, that pseudo-concepts and pre-concepts factually coexist with other is an inherent characteristic of thinking in complexes.

However, concerning concepts of face and obligation, the majority of the students in the present study barely demonstrated knowing about them. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that the encounter with spontaneous concepts of social distance, power hierarchy, and self-presentation was more frequent than with face and obligation in students' everyday life. In other words, the foundation of spontaneous knowledge is relatively more solid in the case of the former than in the latter. This finding is relevant and important. Because, as discussed in Chapter 2, the existence of spontaneous concepts provides the foundation for the establishment and reorganisation of scientific or theoretical concepts; without the former, it might take longer time for the latter to be internalised (Vygotsy, 1986;

Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991). As we will see, research findings of the present study indeed demonstrate that, across the students, development of the concepts of face and obligation somewhat lagged behind those of social distance, power hierarchy, and self-presentation. These findings were consistent with the students' L2 products, which I turn to now.

6.3   Role plays

In this section, I discuss the students' pre- and post-enrichment role-play performances. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, two strategic cooperative scenarios were implemented during the pre-enrichment (situation 1 and situation 2) and two transfer scenarios during post-enrichment (situation 3 and situation 4). As a reminder, all scenarios were conducted in three stages: stage 1, preparation; stage 2, performance; and stage 3, mediator-learner verbalisation. Unlike pre-enrichment, stages 1 and 3 were concretised within the DA framework during post-enrichment. Coded results of role plays are included in Appendix P.

6.3.1   Scenario 1
6.3.1.1   Stage 1: preparation

To briefly describe the situation, student A comes into professor B's office, asking to reschedule a meeting (for details of scenario 1, see Appendix E). The definition of the task concerning social distance and power hierarchy is subject to the student's interpretation. During independent preparation, the phenomenon of enumerating information was widely observed among students. Specifically, instead of talking about the scenario, they simply read and then translated the lines

into Chinese. For example, when invited to verbalise her understanding of the scenario, Yiqiao said:

学生明天上午和老师有个会 但是她牙很痛 牙医也没有其它空当了 所以她想和老师换开会的时间 因为他/她牙痛要看牙医 然后他也知道老师很忙 但是还是想让老师换个时间

The student has a meeting with the teacher tomorrow morning. However, her teeth are in pain. Also, the dentist has no other available slot but tomorrow morning. So, she wants to reschedule the appointment with the teacher, because his/her teeth are in pain and s/he wants to go to the dentist. Further, s/he knows the teacher is quite busy, however, s/he still wants the teacher to reschedule the meeting.

(Yiqiao, scenario 1, preparation, pre-enrichment)

Here, Yiqiao literally translates and retells the script. That is, she did not use any socio-pragmatic conceptual variations as a means to assist her in understanding the scenario or attempt to map relevant socio-pragmatic conceptual variations onto request conventions to be used in order to realise her intention. However, it is noteworthy that while retelling the script, Yiqiao switches the second-person pronoun to the third person to reference the requester. In the scenario transcript the second person was used to refer to the requester, however, when invited to talk about the scenario, Yiqiao used s/he instead of you. She thus switched to a position as an outsider. Although this change of perspective likely indicates the act of talking about the scenario, nonetheless the literal translation of the script suggests an enumeration of information shown within her visual field. A similar phenomenon was also observed in other learners although the resultant translation of the script varied slightly among learners. For example, Nina demonstrated

noticeable struggles to find the Chinese equivalents of some words in the script.

Her verbalisation of the script is as follows:

> 你有一个约会 约定 约好了有一个会议要开 然后这个导师 就是你现在上的课 约定的时间是在明天上午十点半 然后告诉他关于这个考试的纸的问题 考试试卷 (final-rising intonation) 但是你突然需要去 dentist 是啥 (final-falling intonation) 但是吧你在同一个时间吧你需要去看牙医 但是你跟这个牙医约定好的时间这个比较难以改变 上午十点半 你不能 就是说是在其它地方 在其它时间 因为他可能比较忙 然后 不然的话 而且你现在感觉到你的牙疼的特别厉害 所以你真的想在明天上午的时候先去看牙医 你知道这个教授 这个导师他非常 他也是一个非常忙的人 但是事实上吧你也很难跟他约 约好一个 就是在相同的时间 但是吧你还是要决定要 就是跟这个导师要改变一下那个 就是约定的时间

> *You have a date, a meeting, you have an appointment, then, the supervisor, of the course you are taking at the moment, the meeting is supposed to be 10:30 tomorrow morning, then, tell him about the quality of the paper, examination paper[34] (final rising intonation), however, you need to see, what is dentist[35] (final falling intonation), but at the same time, you need to see the dentist, however, the appointment you made with the dentist is difficult to change, 10:30 tomorrow morning, you cannot, like in another place, at another time, because he probably is busy, and then, otherwise, besides, now, you feel the pain in your teeth, so, you really want to see the dentist tomorrow morning, you know this professor, this supervisor, he's quite, he is a busy person, however, the fact is you have difficulty having a meeting with him, to make an appointment, like at the same time, however, you have decided to, like to change the time, made about the meeting.*

<div align="right">(Nina, scenario 1, preparation, pre-enrichment)</div>

---

[34] Private speech, Nina is implicitly seeking other-regulative mediation now.

[35] Private speech, Nina is explicitly seeking other-regulative support now.

Here, Nina first interprets the word appointment as 约会(*date*), then as 约定 (agreement) and finally negates these previous interpretations and finds its Chinese equivalent 会议 (appointment). Moreover, she either implicitly or explicitly seeks other-regulative mediation through private speech when encountering the words term paper and dentist, indicating that she had some difficulties understanding these two English words at the time. Nina continued translating the script although with numerous self-corrections and repetitions after these difficulties were overcome[36].

The phenomenon of an individual simply listing what is available in front of him/her was also observed in Vygotsky's (1976) experimental works of concept formation, Tomlin (1984) and McCafferty (1992). As Frawley and Lantolf (1984) point out, this phenomenon is an anomaly that occurs when the individual starts to understand the task situation. The locus of control of individual's speech at this moment is externally situated in the information in front of her/him, or object-regulation (see Frawley and Lantolf, 1984; McCafferty, 1992).

6.3.1.2   Stage 2: performance, opening

Extensive similarities with respect to L2 pragmatic moves and associated linguistic choices were observed across the students at step 1, opening and pre-request. Specifically, external modifications such as address terms (greetings) and preparator (declaration) are dominant. For example, Jingyu opens the conversation as follows:

---

[36] I offered the Chinese equivalents of these two words when noticing Nina's requests for support.

Student: Hello, Mr. White. ((*address term, greeting*))

Professor: Hi.

Student: <u>I want to</u> spend you ten minutes to talk with me. Because I have some difficulties. Because <u>I want to</u> tell you something ((*want statement*))

Professor: Sure, what is it?

(Jingyu, scenario 1, opening, pre-enrichment)

Similarly, Xueli unfolds her opening as:

Professor: Come in.

Student: Good morning Mr. White ((*address term, greeting*)).

Professor: Good morning.

Student: Today, <u>I want to</u> talk about a thing with you ((*want statement*))

Professor: Sure, what is it?

(Xueli, scenario 1, opening, pre-enrichment)

In these openings both Jingyu and Xueli apply modifications of pre-pre-strategy and preparator. Of interest here are the linguistic concretisations of the want statements. Specifically, they appear to be literal translations of L1 requesting variants applied by locals to open a conversation (see Zhang, 1995; Wen, 2014). In particular, sentences such as 我<u>想</u>和你说<u>点</u>事 (literally, *I <u>want</u> with you talk <u>a bit</u> thing*), 我有<u>点</u>事<u>想</u>和你<u>谈谈</u> (literally, *I have <u>a bit</u> thing <u>want</u> with you talk <u>a bit</u>*) and <u>能占你几分钟时间吗</u> (literally, *<u>Can</u> take you a few minutes?*) are typical openings of social communication between mainland Chinese (see Zhang, 1995; Wen, 2014). As Wen (2014) points out, want statements, when modified by downgraders, such as words implying understatements (e.g., *a bit*) and a modal verb (e.g., *can*) in a soft intonation, is considered polite in Chinese requesting situations, although it is conceived as impolite in some Western cultures (see Brown and Levinson, 1987; Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989b). Similar expressions were also observed

among other students. These social-culturally influenced expressions of L2 openings were confirmed afterward by the students when verbalising the underlying rules and/or concepts that mediated the want statement at stage 3, mediator-learner verbalisation. For example, Jingyu explains:

我想说的是'我想花你几分钟时间 因为我有点困难' 就是想和你说点事
I meant to say (literally *I want spend you a few minutes. Because I have a bit difficulties*). I just want to tell you something.
(Jingyu, scenario 1, mediator-learner verbalisation, pre-enrichment)

Apparently, the students' L2 opening reflects their L1 thinking, or in Vygotsky's (1986) term, spontaneous concepts. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that students' L2 pragma-linguistic choices for openings before the enrichment programme were externally regulated by factual lived experience or spontaneous knowledge. This finding is well in line with the results of language awareness interviews discussed in section 6.2. Indeed, the issue of literal translation of L1 continued to be a struggle for some learners throughout the programme. I will return to this topic in the following chapter on developmental processes.

6.3.1.3   Stage 2: performance, request

Similarities could also be observed among learners at step 2, request. Specifically, regarding requesting strategies, explicit performative want statements and plain statements are prevalent. Moreover, internal modifications, especially upgraders, such as adverbial intensifiers, are omnipresent. Furthermore, external modification, *grounder* is widely applied by learners, indicating awareness of this construct. For example, Yiqiao unfolds the request as follows:

Student: Hello, Mr. White ((*address term, greeting*)). I am sorry to break the appointment with you ((*apology*)).

Professor: What happened?

Student: You know my tooth is pain* in <u>a long time</u> ((*upgrader intensifier*). Before having* an appointment with you, I forget* that I have* had an appointment with a dentist ((*adjunct grounder*)). I think <u>I need to refuse to</u> have an appointment with you ((*plain statement*)).

(Yiqiao, scenario 1, request, pre-enrichment)

Similarly, Loumei performed the request as follows:

Student: I believe you remember our appointment* tomorrow morning. Now I have trouble. *The same time tomorrow morning, <u>I need to</u> go to a dentist. Because I now feel <u>a great deal</u> ((*upgrader intensifier*)) of pain. And the dentist no* have any* time ((*adjunct grounder*)). So, you could um <u>I want to change</u> the appointment with you ((*want statement*)).

(Loumei, scenario 1, request, pre-enrichment)

Of interest here is the manifested intention-act inconsistency revealed at the stage of mediator-learner verbalisation during which Loumei expressed that she did not mean to be rude. Specifically, Loumei applied a direct strategy, the want statement. Interestingly, no internal downgrader was used. These findings are consistent with Loumei's LAI results discussed in section 6.2, further indicating that the locus of control of speech for her requests is situated within object-regulation. Indeed, obtaining self-regulation or control over the use of want statement became a challenge for Loumei and Jingyu. As we will see in Chapter 7, Loumei resorted to want statements in a different communicative situation after demonstrating control over this construct in the immediately prior session. She explained that her use of a want statement is the result of direct stimulation of unconscious and spontaneous

knowledge of her life experience. Indeed, the issue of resuming historically knowing knowledge continued to be a struggle for Loumei throughout the programme. To overcome the problem, she eventually regressed to extensive other-regulation. I will discuss Loumei's developmental processes in detail in the following chapter.

6.3.1.4   Stage 2: performance, negotiation

Remarkable similarities were also observed at step 3, negotiation. Specifically, direct strategies entailing explicit performatives, hedged performatives, and plain statement continued to be the dominant requesting head act. Meanwhile, as with step 2 request, external modifications – grounder and internal upgrader, adverbial intensifier – were widely used. Interestingly, major negotiating approaches among learners consist of constructs entailing criticism and negation of proposition. For example, Loumei unfolds the negotiation as follows:

> Professor: Um I'm not sure. Can you change your appointment with your dentist?
> Student: No. If he have* time, I wouldn't make you change the appointment ((*criticism*)). Because the dentist is <u>very</u> ((*upgrader intensifier*)) busy, and I feel <u>a great deal</u> ((*upgrader intensifier*)) of pain ((*adjunct grounder*)). <u>I know you are very busy</u> ((*adjunct disarmer*)), but I think now I have your course, I think we are, after course, we <u>have</u> an appointment ((*direct-explicit performative*)).
> (Loumei, scenario 1, negotiation, pre-enrichment)

Loumei here applies criticism to negotiate the situation, which openly stands against her pre-designed meanings elaborated at the stage of mediator-learner verbalisation during which Loumei expressed that she did not mean to be impolite.

She clarified that criticising the interlocutor was not her intention at the time. Indeed, criticism turned out to be a very difficult construction for Loumei over the programme. With extensive supports provided during DA sessions, Loumei was the only student who once again attempted, unsuccessfully, the use of criticism during post-enrichment role plays. To overcome this problem, Loumei regressed to extensive other-regulation. However, that Loumei simultaneously resumed responsibility and contributed to the synthesis of the concerned problem indicates her approaching autonomous self-regulation or control over the construct, which will be considered further in Chapter 7. In addition to criticism, negation of proposition as a negotiation means was also observed. For example, Xuanyu unfolded the negotiation as follows:

> Professor: I am not sure. Is there any chance you can change the appointment with your dentist?
> Student: I am sorry ((*apology*)) I think I don't* have to change ((*negation of proposition*)), but I really really ((*upgrader intensifier*)) want to go* this dentist. Maybe we can find, you um, at your spare time to do it ((*hedged performative*)).
> (Xuanyu, scenario 1, negotiation, pre-enrichment)

Similarly, Nina concretised the negotiation as:

> Professor: Can you change the appointment with your dentist?
> Student: Sorry ((*apology*)), I think I cannot change it ((*negation of proposition*)). Because my tooth is very ((*upgrader intensifier*)) painful, and it makes me very hard* ((*adjunct grounder*)). So, I think I cannot. I should go to the dentist ((*plain statement*)).
> (Nina, scenario 1, negotiation, pre-enrichment)

Putting the odd linguistic expressions aside, both Xuanyu and Nina here use a direct refusing strategy – negation of proposition – which appears to be contradictory to their pre-designed intentions of being deferential. Indeed, at the mediator-learner verbalisation stage, when I sought confirmation about whether it was their intention to directly negate the interlocutor's positive-face in this low-to-high power situation where the professor is not obliged to hold a rescheduled appointment with the student, Xuanyu and Nina, as with Nina in the pre-enrichment LAI (section 6.2.1), explained that they simply verbalised whatever jumped into their mind at the time. In this respect, as I have argued, the locus of control of speech was externally situated in object-regulation (i.e., life experience or spontaneous knowledge).

Another thing worth mentioning is the mitigating devices (e.g., down-toner: maybe) Xuanyu applied in this negotiation context. She also applied mitigating devices at step 2: apology, for example. All these observations indicate that Xuanyu had some knowledge of requests and refusals, which is consistent with the pre-LAI findings. However, the unconscious or unintentional use of linguistic features to be considered in scenario 2 – negation of proposition and want statement – indicate that her knowledge of requests and refusals was unsystematic at the time.

Finally, odd linguistic features (e.g., "I think I don't have to change") are another problem revealed in Xuanyu's negotiation product. This phenomenon was not uncommon across other learners' spoken products of role plays. However, given linguistics is beyond the interest of the present study, I will leave it to future research.

Slightly different from her peers, Jingyu used an unconventional indirect strategy – strong hint – and direct strategy – explicit performative. Specifically, she unfolded the negotiation as follows:

> Professor: Can you email me? Then I can give you some feedback through email.
> Student: I will* it to your* tomorrow evening. <u>I am not sure if you have time tomorrow evening</u> ((*unconventional indirect: strong hint*)).
> Professor: So, you want to meet me tomorrow evening?
> Student: Yes, I am very sorry to disturb you ((*apology*)). And <u>I hope you can promise to</u> change our appointment <u>if you</u> have any time ((*direct-explicit performative*)).
> (Jingyu, scenario 1, negotiation, pre-enrichment)

As with Xuanyu and Nina, Jingyu here used the external modification, apology. However, different from the former, she directly imposed on the interlocutor through an explicit performative. When invited to explain this move, Jingyu referenced the local-cultural understanding of teacher-student relation advertised within the research institution. That is, teachers are obliged to help students. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, this local-cultural understanding of duty seems to negate individual's will, consequently allowing the individual to be perceived not as part of the institution but essentially subordinated to it as if by an alien will. Indeed, conceptual understanding of responsibility turned to be a big struggle not only for Jingyu but for other learners. This is the main reason why I will trace learners' micro-genetic development of this concept in Chapter 7. Apparently, the real trouble source was the unconscious use of ancient or spontaneous knowledge of this concept, which eventually negated their intentions. I will discuss this further while reporting the results of scenario 2.

6.3.2   Scenario 2

6.3.2.1   Stage 1: preparation

To recall the situation, student A comes into lecturer B's office for advice on a to-be-published article which originally was one of A's assignments. B had provided a tutorial on revising the assignment when s/he was A's supervisor the previous academic year (for details of scenario 2, see Appendix E). The definition of the task situation regarding social distance and power hierarchy was subject to the individual's interpretation. During the independent preparation, as with scenario 1, the phenomenon of simply translating the instruction continues.

6.3.2.2   Stage 2: performance, opening

As with scenario 1, the external modifications entailing address term: greeting and preparator unsurprisingly continued to be the dominant moves applied in the opening of scenario 2. For example, Xuanyu opens the conversation as follows:

> Lecturer: Come in.
> Student: Hello, Mr. White ((*address term*, *greeting*)).
> Lecturer: Hello, Brook. How's everything going?
> Student: Fine. How about you?
> Lecturer: I am fine. Thanks.
> Student: Today, I have something must should* ((*upgrader intensifier*)) to discuss with you ((*want statement*)).
> Lecturer: Sure, what is it?
> (Xuanyu, scenario 2, opening, pre-enrichment)

As with Jingyu and Xueli in scenario 1, Xuanyu's linguistic concretisation of preparator-want statement here is also the literal translation of L1 spontaneous

knowledge, as evidenced by her clarification at the mediator-learner verbalisation stage:

我想表达的是'我有<u>点</u>事<u>想</u>和你谈谈' 我并没有强迫的意思
I meant to say: "I have a bit thing want with you discuss a bit" (literally).
I didn't mean to impose on him/her.

Here, Xuanyu's approach to L2 remarks through literal translation of L1 thinking is fully demonstrated. In this respect, her L2 pragma-linguistic choices of preparator were directly mediated by literal translation (i.e., object-regulation) rather than concepts. Importantly, note the adverbial intensifier, must applied in the preparator which was immediately negated by modal verb should, indicating Xuanyu's uncertainty of its use and thus indicating the locus of control was situated outside of her.

However, regarding the ZPD, she demonstrated an important development of this particular use during the post-enrichment. Specifically, intensifiers went underground, fully negated by mitigating devices such as a down-toner and getting a pre-commitment, which are considered in scenario 3. By contrast, literal translation continued to emerge throughout the programme. As will be discussed in the developmental processes chapter, Xuanyu resorted to this old learning habit in order to re-establish relations with the immediate communicative situation hence finish the role play when the latter became especially complex.

6.3.2.3 Stage 2: performance, request

As with scenario 1, plain statement, want statement and hedged performative continue to be the dominant direct strategies at step 2, request. Moreover, grounders remain the prevalent external downgrader. Here I will not repeat the analysis. Of interest here is a new external downgrader, disarmer, which appeared in Loumei, Xuege, and Jingyu's spoken products, indicating they indeed had some knowledge of this particular use. For example, Jingyu unfolds the request as follows:

> Student: Recently, I have some concerns ((*plain statement*)). The matter of fact is that my paper will be published in the *Student Bulletin*. But the … though the paper we have discussed many times, but I am always concerned about if it's perfect ((*grounder*)). So, I want you to check it and make some detailed comments with* it ((*want statement*)). I know you are very busy ((*adjunct, disarmer*)), but I want to… don't* make many mistakes ((*want statement*)). So, I hope you can give um you can spend um you can take some time to check my paper ((*hedged performative*)), is that okay? ((*tag question, consultation*))
> (Jingyu, scenario 2, request, pre-enrichment)

The modification disarmer, embodying the formal pronoun you (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989b), appears to indicate Jingyu's awareness of the interlocutor's negative wants (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Indeed, as will be discussed in the developmental process chapter, learners were not unfamiliar with this knowledge although they were unfamiliar with its technical term, constituting a foundation on which instructed L2 socio-pragmatic concepts and spontaneous knowledge (i.e., concrete life experience) are reorganised into each other.

Moreover, a tag question was observed. However, the prevailing use of direct strategies in this context seems to index a high degree of imposition and face-threatening because it is not necessarily the interlocutor's duty to enact the request. In this respect, the strategies used appear to be inconsistent with Jingyu's pre-designed meanings of being respectful and deferential.

As clarified by Jingyu at the mediator-learner verbalisation stage, meaning potential of a high degree of imposition was not her intention. Importantly, she added that she simply expressed her thoughts through a historically knowing L2 learning habit (i.e., literal translation of L1 remarks) developed since she began to learn the language. This was further evidenced by her development processes, to be considered in Chapter 7, in which Jingyu again explicitly uttered that she occasionally resorts to this old L2 learning habit, the use of want statement, when invited to reason the regression of this linguistic use after demonstrating progress in the immediately prior DA session.

6.3.2.4   Stage 2: performance, negotiation

As with scenario 1, plain statement and want statement were the dominant direct strategies at step 3, negotiation. Moreover, internal upgraders, adverbial intensifiers, were also widely observed. For example, Xueli unfolded the negotiation as follows:

> Lecturer: Correct me if I am wrong, I remember you got a quite high score on your paper last semester. You did a good job.
> Student: Yeah, but I think something is not perfect ((*plain statement*)). I really want you to give me more suggestion ((*want statement*)), and I can* try my best to finish it perfectly.

(Xueli, scenario 2, negotiation, pre-enrichment)

Similarly, Yiqiao displayed her negotiation as follows:

Student: And I <u>want you to give</u> me <u>more </u>detailed ((*upgrader intensifier*)
comments on my paper ((*want statement*)).
Lecturer: Well, I think we have already discussed about your paper several
times, right?
Student: Yes, you are right. But <u>I want to</u> get <u>more and more deeply</u>*
((*upgrader intensifier*)) detailed in* it ((*want statement*)).
(Yiqiao, scenario 2, negotiation, pre-enrichment)

Xuanyu expanded her negotiation as follows:

Lecturer: If I'm not wrong, you did a wonderful job on your paper last
semester.
Student: You know, for the publication, <u>I want</u> my paper <u>no* wrong</u>
((*upgrader intensifier*)). That means <u>I want my paper to be perfect</u> ((*want
statement*))
Lecturer: Right, I understand, but we have already discussed your paper
several times, right?
Student: Time is change*. I think many new ideas may be* come out, so, do
you mind? ((*hedged performative*))
(Xuanyu, scenario 2, negotiation, pre-enrichment)

As with scenario 1, negotiation, Xueli, Yiqiao and Xuanyu here continue the

prevailing use of want statements to reinitiate the requests. As with Jingyu, when

invited to reason this use at the mediator-learner verbalisation stage, they all

explained that the meaning potential of a high degree of imposition was not their

intention and that the use was directly based on their habitual literal translation of

L1 syntax. Different from scenario 1, upgraders of criticism and negation of

proposition were barely applied; however, mitigating devices such as apology were barely observed in this communicative situation.

However, regarding the ZPD, Xueli, Yiqiao, and Xuanyu demonstrated important development in a transfer scenario (scenario 4) during the post-enrichment. As we will see, to be considered alongside discussing the scenario, Xueli not only incorporated newly learned content knowledge of requests but demonstrated self-regulation or control over newly learned L2 socio-pragmatic concepts, deliberately applying concepts to plan, organise, and reason L2 pragma-linguistic concretisations. Similar changes were also observed in Yiqiao and Xuanyu, although they did not carry out the performance independently. By contrast, Jingyu encountered relatively more difficulties in materialising reason at the negotiation stage of scenario 4, to be considered in section 7.6. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that Xueli, Yiqiao and Xuanyu were closer to, if not having fully internalised, self-regulation or control over socio-pragmatic concepts than Jingyu.

6.3.3   Scenario 3

6.3.3.1   Stage 1: preparation

To recall the situation, student A comes to the Graduate office, requesting a call-off of a 20-day online course ban given s/he participated the course but logged off 10 minutes earlier to attend a supervisory meeting (note that the office staff B's scenario description card says the university's online registration system automatically creates registration for students when they finish the course) (for details of scenario 3, see Appendix E). I adopted the role of B.

Note that interpretations of relative power and responsibility in this context are highly subject to individuals' definitions of the situation. In this respect, it is a transfer task from scenario 1 and 2. Xuege, Xuanyu, Xueli, and Jingyu interpreted the A-B power relationship as social-equal and believed the Graduate office had the responsibility to withdraw the ban because A participated in the online course. By contrast, their peers conceived of the A-B power relationship as low to high and expressed that they would like to resolve the confusion first and then respond accordingly. But all learners uttered that they wanted to be respectful and deferential.

6.3.3.2   Stage2: performance, opening

As with pre-enrichment performances, pre-pre-strategy and preparator continued to be the popular modifications widely applied among the students. However, importantly, unlike the linguistic concretisations of these constructs manifest during pre-enrichment performances, new elements emerged at both syntactic and semantic levels. Semantically, the upgrader want statement was negated by downgraders – apology, availability checking, and seeking permission. Syntactically, statements have gone underground, successfully negated by preparatory conditions. For example, Xuanyu opened the conversation as follows:

> Student: Good morning, Madam ((*greeting*)), may I come in? ((*availability checking*))
> Office: Yes, please.
> Student: I'm sorry to bother you ((*apology*)). May I discuss my online course with you? ((*seeking permission*))
> Office: Sure.
> (Xuanyu, scenario 3, opening, post-enrichment)

Similarly, Jingyu initiates the conversation as follows:

> Student: Good afternoon, Miss White ((*greeting*)). I'm sorry to bother you
> ((*apology*)). Are you busy right now? ((*availability checking*))
> Office: It's okay. Go ahead, please.
> (Jingyu, scenario 3, opening, post-enrichment)

Compared with the literal translation of L1 local-cultural opening (i.e., spontaneous knowledge) demonstrated in pre-enrichment performances, Xuanyu and Jingyu here successfully incorporate new downgraders – apology, availability checking, and seeking permission, indicating internalisations of content knowledge and other-regulation provided during the DA sessions. Similar acts of opening were observable across learners. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that learners started to autonomously self-regulate their acts of opening at the end of the programme. Importantly, regarding the ZPD, this means that mediator-learner dialectic interactions were indeed unfolded within learners' ZPDs.

However, the research findings also show that the transformation from other- to self-regulation was not an even process. As we will see, Nina appears to be slightly out of control at the beginning of the opening; however, she successfully resumes control over the situation following private speech. Specifically, she unfolded the opening as follows:

> Student: Good afternoon, Miss um Professor ((*greeting: inaudible voices*))
> 这个人是谁呀[37] ((*laughter*)), good afternoon, Miss Tracy, sorry to bother you
> ((*apology*)). <u>Are you busy right now</u>? ((*availability checking*))

---

[37] Translation: who is this guy.

Office: Go ahead, please.

(Nina, scenario 3, opening, post-enrichment)

It appears that Nina had some difficulties with the addressing term, evidenced by

her inaudible voice, or object-regulatory private speech (McCafferty, 1992),

indicating uncertainty. Importantly, the filled pause between two addressing terms

further indicates that Nina had not fully internalised the knowledge. To solve the

problem, she simultaneously switched to L1 and sought help, as evidenced by her

other-regulatory private speech followed by laughter (i.e., object-regulatory private

speech), to which I purposefully responded with silence. This was because Nina in

the immediately prior DA session demonstrated control over the use of addressing

term, to be considered in detail in the following developmental processes chapter.

Indeed, Nina immediately resumed the responsibility of carrying on the task and

continued the role play. Thus, I would argue that regarding the ZPD, Nina

developed in important ways. More importantly, the transformation from object-, to

other-, and finally to self-regulation is not an absolute in the sense that a learner

might successfully accomplish a particular task but fail to do so with a similar task

or even the same task at a different time. I will return to this topic while discussing

developmental processes in Chapter 7.

6.3.3.3   Stage2: performance, request

Autonomous incorporation of content knowledge of requests also was widely

demonstrated across students at step 2, request. For example, Xuege unfolded her

request as follows:

Student: I'm <u>sorry to bother</u> you ((*apology*)). I <u>just</u> want to know the ban. I'm <u>a little</u> confused ((*understater*)). Yesterday, I offlined* the online course 10 minutes earlier and I met my supervisor in her office. Then I received an email from the university, [saying] that I'm banned from online course for the next 20 days because of my failure to register the course ((*grounder*)). Is there <u>any</u> chance you can explain it? ((*down-toner*)). <u>Correct me if I'm wrong</u>, ((*disarmer*)) I think the ban is <u>a bit</u> more* strict ((*understater*)). Actually, I took part in the course very carefully. So, it would be <u>very nice if</u> you can change the ban ((*downgrader if clause*))
(Xuege, scenario 3, request, post-enrichment)

Compared with the pre-enrichment performances, Xuege here successfully incorporates new L2 downgraders, such as apology, down-toner, understaters, and disarmer, demonstrating important changes with respect to semantics and syntax. Importantly, regarding the head act, her unconscious use of a want statement is replaced by a downgrader if clause, indicating the habitual literal translation, at least, has begun to go underground. Again, these changes indicate Xuege's internalisation of content knowledge. Importantly, Xuege autonomously resorted to newly learned L2 socio-pragmatic concepts to reason her pragmatic acts at the mediator-learner verbalisation stage. In this respect, I believe that the changes in Xuege's performance were the results of internalised L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge. Again, they indicate that mediator-student dialectic interactions were unfolded within her ZPD.

Incorporations of instructed pragmatic content knowledge also were observable among other students. For example, Jingyu initiated the request as follows:

Student: My name is Brook Rose ((*self-introduction*)), I want to discuss with you about the ban of um call-off the ban*. Because I had a meeting with my

supervisor, I just offline* the course 10 minutes early yesterday. But today when I began to study the course, the screen showed me that I can't share* the resource due to I was fail* to register. I don't understand the meaning of register ((*grounder*)), <u>could you</u> explain it to me <u>please</u>? ((*downgrader interrogative; politeness marker*))

(Jingyu, scenario 3, request, post-enrichment)

Compared with her pre-enrichment performance of scenario 2 (section 6.3.2.3), Jingyu here substitutes downgraders (i.e., politeness marker and interrogative) for upgraders (i.e., want statement and hedged performative). Importantly, Jingyu during the mediator-learner verbalisation demonstrated deliberate use of socio-pragmatic concepts to assist in the understanding of the communicative situation and reason instantiations of L2 pragma-linguistic choices. I would argue this is development from pre-enrichment. Moreover, Jingyu's changes in performances were not the results of her working on her own but of mediator-student dialogic interaction within her ZPD.

6.3.3.4   Stage2: performance, negotiation

Incorporations of instructed pragmatic content knowledge also were observable at step 3, negotiation. For example, Yiqiao concretised the negotiation as follows:

Office: Did you finish the online course?
Student: Sorry. I offlined* ten minutes earlier ((*apology*)) because I had a meeting with my supervisor at 2 p.m.
Office: Right. You were supposed to finish the course.
Student: Yes, I know. It was <u>my fault</u> ((*apology*)). I hope you can understand. I think the 20-day ban <u>maybe</u> <u>a little</u> ((*down-toner; understater*)) problem for me, because I cannot continue studying online ((*grounder*)). I

was wondering <u>if</u> there is <u>any</u> chance um <u>if you</u> can call off the ban

((*downgrader past tense, if clause; down-toner*))

(Yiqiao, scenario 3, negotiation, post-enrichment)

Disregarding linguistic inefficaciousness, Yiqiao here successfully incorporates into the negotiation new mitigating devices, including apology, down-toner, understater, if-clause, and imperfect, negating the habitual use of a want statement observed during scenario 2. This is development from her pre-enrichment performances. Incorporations of socio-pragmatic content knowledge also were traceable among other students' spoken products. For example, Xueli successfully attempted appreciation. Importantly, such upgraders as criticism and adverbial intensifiers once observable during negotiations in pre-enrichment scenario 1 have been replaced by variant mitigating devices in this transfer scenario.

However, as I argued in the introduction of this section, the wide intention-act consistency demonstrated in this situation might be explainable by the fact that the interlocutor somewhat had the responsibility to withdraw the ban given the student attended the online recourses. However, when responsibility was not factually resting with the interlocutor as in scenario 4 (to be considered next), wide intention-act inconsistency was demonstrated across learners' negotiations.

6.3.4 Scenario 4
6.3.4.1   Stage1: preparation

To recall the situation, student A comes to Professor B's office, requesting expertise on his/her assignment. A once attended B's lecture several times in the previous academic term but had no contact with B (for details of scenario 4, see

Appendix E). The construct of social distance appears to be ambiguous in the sense that a non-reciprocal understanding of this concept might be possible. Regarding constructs of power hierarchy and responsibility, this situation was intentionally designed to be compatible with pre-enrichment scenario 2. In this respect, scenario 4 appears to be a far transfer from scenario 2. In short, the definition of the situation was fully subject to individual's interpretation.

During dialogic preparations, all learners demonstrated, although to different degrees, capability of using socio-pragmatic concepts to assist understanding of the task situation, and to seek and plan pragma-linguistic choices. Specifically, they all interpreted that the requestee holds the authority and is not obliged to do the job of tutoring the student on her assignment. Additionally, they intended to be respectful and deferential. For example, Nina defines the situation as follows:

> 这里面就是学生下个月有个论文要交 但是这个话题对她来讲就是比较新颖 就是希望这个老师给改一下 这里好像两个人的关系也不是太近 就是这个学生认识这个老师 但是这个老师并不一定认识这个学生 因为上学期吗也上过他的很多课 虽然知道他很忙 但是还是希望他帮忙改一下 这里是下级对上级 power 肯定是老师比较高了 义务方面的话 这个老师是没有义务帮学生看的 这里就是如果说的不恰当的话 强迫度可能就会比较高了 因为你向他请求帮助 那肯定本身就对他造成一定的强迫度

> *S(tudent) has an assignment due next month. However, the topic is quite new to her. S thus thinks about seeking help from T(eacher). It seems these two are not too close. S knows T; however, T might not recognise S, because S attended T's lectures several times last semester. While S knows T's quite busy, S still wants to try her luck. It's a low-to-high situation, T holds a higher power position. With regards to duty, T has no responsibility to help S. The degree of imposition might be very high if S didn't put it in a right way. Because, requesting essentially is an imposing act.*

(Nina, scenario 4, preparation, post-enrichment)

Important changes can be observed here in comparison to pre-enrichment preparations. Specifically, although the phenomenon of enumerating available information is still observable, Nina voluntarily linked the situation to conceptual categories. Importantly, she deliberately used socio-pragmatic concepts to assist understanding of the task situation, to seek and plan pragma-linguistic choices, indicating self-order and internalisation of concepts. In this respect, I would argue that improved pragmatic performances are the results of internalised conceptual knowledge.

6.3.4.2   Stage 2: performance, opening

As with scenario 3, external modifications entailing greetings, self-introduction, checking on availability, and apology were the dominant downgraders applied among students in this situation. For example, Xueli opened the conversation as follows:

> Student: Good morning, Mr. Big ((*greeting*). I am Brooke Rose ((*self-introduction*)). I am sorry to bother you ((*apology*)). Are you busy right now? ((*availability check*))
> Professor: It's okay, go ahead.
> (Xueli, scenario 4, opening, post-enrichment)

Compared with her opening of scenario 1, Xueli here successfully incorporates new elements into her language inventory. Specifically, with the spontaneous use of local-cultural convention the want statement has been successfully negated by a downgrader – seeking the hearer's approval (act of protecting the interlocutor's

negative wants, Brown and Levinson, 1987), indicating internalisation of conceptual knowledge of face and supports (i.e., other-regulation) provided in the course of the programme. Importantly, as with scenario 3, Xueli also incorporated constructs of self-introduction and apology, indicating constant improvement derived from mediator-student dialogic interaction over the DA sessions. Moreover, as we will see later at the step 3 negotiation, Xueli not only successfully transformed newly learned content knowledge into a new situation, but deliberately applied L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge to reason her linguistic concretisations. In this respect, I believe this indicates development from the pre-enrichment performances. Importantly, the transcendent capability is the result of the internalisation of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge.

This constant act of opening was also observable among other learners, suggesting their gaining autonomous control over it within varying communication settings. However, as have discussed in section 6.3.3.2, this transformation is not an absolute, which again was demonstrated with Nina. As in scenario 3, Nina struggled slightly to organise words at the beginning of the opening, evidenced by object-regulatory private speech (e.g., inaudible voicing of um followed by a lengthy pause and continuing repetition of particular words). However, instead of seeking other-regulation as she once did in the scenario 3 opening through other-regulatory private speech, Nina picked up the role and continued the conversation, indicating her accessing mature control over the situation. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of object-regulatory private speech emerged in Xuanyu and Loumei during step 2, request, which I turn to now.

6.3.4.3 Stage 2: performance, request

Constant incorporations of requesting content knowledge were also traceable at step 2, request, among learners. Specifically, as with scenario 3, language features such as disarmer, down-toner, understater, if clause, and aspect imperfect were widely applied as semantic signs to mitigate possible embedded impositions. For example, Yiqiao unfolds the request as follows:

> Student: And yesterday we have a um a few days ago um we have an assignment. And the deadline is next month. And the topic of this assignment is quite new to me. I don't have many* knowledge in this field ((*grounder*)). And I was wondering if there is any chance that you could give me a little suggestion on this topic ((*downgrader past tense, if clause; down-toner; understater*))
> (Yiqiao, scenario 4, request, post-enrichment)

Compared with her habitual use of want statements during pre-enrichment tasks, Yiqiao here demonstrates more complex performance, both semantically and syntactically. Specifically, she successfully incorporates both syntactical (e.g., past tense, if clause) and lexical (e.g., down-toner) downgraders into the request, indicating internalisation of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge. These findings are consistent with Yiqiao's performance of scenario 3, indicating constant improvement from pre-enrichment performances. More importantly, with respect to transfer task, this constant performance indicates Yiqiao's achieving more autonomous self-regulation or control over L2 pragma-linguistic choices in novel communicative situations.

As I have argued, the transformation from object- to self-regulation is not an
absolute. As with Nina, Xuanyu demonstrated struggles with this task. Specifically,
she unfolded the request as follows:

> Student: Can I um may I um 不对 (*no*) can I ask you some questions?
> ((*seeking permission*))
> Professor: Sure
> Student: You know um 不 没有 (*no, there is no*) "you know", I have an
> assignment due next month, but the topic of this assignment is quite new for
> me. I'm get* a bit ((*understaters*)) worried when the deadline is coming close
> ((*grounder*)). I know you are um you have enough experience in this area
> ((*plain statement*)), can you help me to um can you help me in* this
> assignment? ((*preparatory*))
> (Xuanyu, scenario 4, request, post-enrichment)

As with scenario 3, Xuanyu here incorporates downgrader preparatory and
understaters, indicating development from pre-enrichment performances. However,
of interest here is the regression to self-regulatory private speech. Specifically, in
order to regain control over the situation, Xuanyu twice resorted to private speech
to assist her in evaluating, selecting, and reorganising linguistic choices.
Eventually, she resumed the responsibility of carrying out the request and
continued with the role play. In this respect, I would argue that this is development
in the transition to voluntary control. Equally important, this is a incisive example of
regression favourably influencing the reconstruction of a new functional system,
formal language in this case. However, instead of independently solving the
problem through self-regulatory private speech, Xuanyu regressed to extensive
other-regulatory mediation at step 3, negotiation, when the situation became more
complex. Specifically, she resorted to historically knowing knowledge of local-

cultural understanding of obligation in order to finish the task. Finally, to overcome the problem, she sought extensive support, which I turn to now.

6.3.4.4   Stage 2: performance, negotiation

As mentioned, students' local-cultural understanding, or spontaneous knowledge, of the concept of obligation re-emerged during the negotiation of this far transfer. Specifically, the idea that individuals belonging to the same institution have an absolute responsibility to help each other resurfaces as the direct stimulation of L2 pragma-linguistic choices (i.e., pseudo-concepts). For example, Yiqiao developed the negotiation as follows:

> Professor: Alright. May I ask who is your supervisor?
> Student: Mr. White.
> Professor: Okay, I have no knowledge about your assignment. I think it might be better if you talk to your supervisor first.
> Student: I am sorry to disturb you ((*apology*)) and I have turned to Mr. White for help, but he is not available, I think <u>you are a good choice</u> to* give me suggestion ((*grounder*)), and is there <u>any chance</u> <u>a little</u> suggestion on my assignment* ((*down-toner; understater*)).
> (Yiqiao, scenario 4, negotiation, post-enrichment)

Of interest here is the linguistic concretisation of grounder, in which the requestee somewhat is conceived as something (i.e., "a good choice") but a free agent. Consequently, it appears to be negating the interlocutor's negative wants (Brown and Levison, 1987). At the mediator-learner verbalisation stage, when invited to explain this use, Yiqiao said:

我当时想的是大家都是一个学校的学生和老师吗 不过现在看起来确实有利用不尊重对方的意味

I was thinking that we all belong to the same educational institution. But now it does sound like I was using her or something and disrespectful.
(Yiqiao, scenario 4, mediator-learner verbalisation, post-enrichment)

She however immediately proposed a reformulation, uttering:

I am sorry to disturb you. and I have turned to Mr. White for help, but he is not available. I know you are very busy. I think you are very special. You are the best in this area. So, I was wondering if there is any chance you could give me a little suggestion on my assignment.

Yiqiao's verbalisation confirms that she resorted to an experience-rooted understanding of obligation as self-regulation to regain control over the immediate communicative context and hence accomplish the role play. However, interestingly, she seems to have realised the inefficaciousness of this use by verbalising the situation. More importantly, she immediately used concepts to re-understand, or reconstruct definition of the situation (Wertsch, 1984), followed by a successful self-correction. All these observations indicate that the regression at the time occurred at an advanced higher level of mental functioning (see also Kozulin, 1991; Van deer Veer and Valsiner, 1991). Regarding mediation, what I did basically was point out the linguistic choices. Yiqiao immediately resumed the responsibility of analysing the situation and reformulating the performance. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that Yiqiao's capability of using concepts to

mediate social acts was becoming autonomous. Importantly, that regression gives rise to a new functional system becomes obvious.

Importantly, the reformulation, compared to the original form, is semantically more advanced, indicating that these two versions apparently are derived from a different measure of generality (Vygotksy, 1986) and thus improved awareness of conceptual knowledge. This fact suggests the internalisation of requesting content knowledge and other-regulative mediations provided over the DA sessions. Furthermore, this finding further supports Vygotsky's claim that generalisation or conceptual thinking is a vertical or hierarchical system rather than a linear and ready-made process. In this way, Yiqiao's regression is explainable by the phenomenon of development in the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1986) and the Vygotskyan notion of continuous access (Frawley and Lantolf, 1984; 1985).

As with Yiqiao, Xuege also resorted to experience-rooted understanding of obligation. During an immediate prior DA session, to be considered in section 7.6.3, she demonstrated proper understanding of the concept and slightly critiqued the phenomenon that the understanding of obligation is constrained to the local-cultural experience. However, she resumed this experience-rooted spontaneous knowledge while negotiating with the interlocutor. Specifically, she said:

> Professor: I have no knowledge about your assignment. I think it might be better if you talk to your supervisor first.
> Student: It's a pity. He has* a trip in China. So, I cannot disturb him, I know you are in school ((*grounder; plain statement*)). so, would you mind giving me some um little comments about* the assignment? ((*consultation; understater*))
> (Xuege, scenario 4, negotiation, post-enrichment)

At the mediator-learner verbalisation stage, I initiated the conversation regarding the concretisation of grounders. The following example precedes from this moment.

1. Mediator: 但是你后方这个

     Then you said

2. ((reads Xuege's *plain statement*))

3. Xuege: 啊 ((laughter)) 对呀

     Ah   right

4. Mediator：你当时怎么就说出来这一句了

     Where did that come from

5. 或者你当时是想传递什么情感

   What's your intention

6. Xuege: 我这嗯只是 ((laughter)) 就是想着解释说她不在 然后来找你的原因啊

     I just want to   say my own supervisor wasn't available

   and explain the reason why I went to him.

7. Mediator: 那我肯定心里想 那隔壁老师都在呢 那你怎么就不找她们呢

     Well, he might think all other teachers are on the campus, why didn't

   you go to them?

8. Xuege: 哦 是这呀 ((laughter))

     Oh, I see.

9. Mediator: 对呀 我在想 我在学校

     Right, to me, me on the campus

10. 好像给我的感觉是我就是一个资源在哪

    It seems like I'm a resource there

11. 你想什么时候用就什么时候用

    you use it any time you want

12. Xuege: 是这吗？

Is that what you think?

13. Mediator: 对呀

        Yes.

14. Xuege: 啊?嗯 可能我说的不是这个意思

        Ah, I didn't mean that.

15. 我说的只是为了解释一下

    I just want to explain why I went to him

Xuege does not realise any inappropriateness indexed by the reason after I read it out loud, as evidenced by her confirmation rather than conceptual reasoning (line 3). Upon hearing that, I realise that my first mediating prompt was unsuccessful. Thus, I explicitly seek clarification, to which Xuege responds with explanation to elaborate reasons why she did not turn to her own supervisor for help (line 6). Note that Xuege's response here is not incorrect in the sense that she correctly describes the essence of the act of explanation. However, she overlooks possible meaning potentials indexed by its content. Thus, at this moment, I launch a third type of other-regulation – representing a contradiction (line 7). Xuege seemingly grasps the trouble source as evidenced by the self-regulatory meta-comment *ah* (McCafferty, 1992), indicating improved cognitive status, and provides further justification (line 15). Our discussion continued.

1. Mediator: 我猜你的意思应该是这

      I guess you meant that

2. 如果说这个老师是你的二导 她肯定是没问题的

    It is easy to understand if I'm your secondary supervisor

3. 那个导师不在 找二导 只是理所应当的 这是规定

    Coz it's my duty to help you.

4. Xuege: 对

Right.

5. Mediator: 但是她会想 我又不是你的导师

   But I'm not your second supervisor.

6. Xuege: 哦 可能是 嗯 确实是

   Oh, true.

7. Mediator: 嗯 她这里肯定会觉得那我没有义务

   Then I might think it's not my duty.

8. Xuege: 对的 确实是有这个方面的

   Right, that makes sense.

9. Mediator: 你当时是不是没有考虑到对方没有责任这样一个事实呢

   Any chance you didn't think about the duty properly at the time.

10. Xuege: 嗯 确实是没有考虑到义务这方面吧

    Uh, I didn't

11. 因为…. ((points to the scenario description)) 上面不是说听过他几次课吗

    because   *it says I went to his classes several times,*

12. 然后感觉上应该有点熟悉的那种

    then I thought we're familiar.

13. 可能是这种吧

    Then, it's natural he helps me.

Realising that Xuege had no intention to either reason the discourse by referencing available conceptual knowledge or self-reformulate the reason, as evidenced by her both syntactically and semantically complete explanations in line 15, indicating no intention of further TCU, I launched a series of other-regulative mediations. Specifically, I explained the discourse after explicitly acknowledging her previous justifications (lines 1–3). In her response, Xuege confirmed my explanation but did not attempt to either link to conceptual reasoning or reformulate the act, as

evidenced by her simple confirmation (line 4). Upon noticing that, I explicitly connected her act with the abstract concept of responsibility. Xuege seemingly got the transition, as evidenced by her confirmation and judgment (line 8). I sought clarification to further ascertain Xuege's understanding of the abstract relation between her reason and the concept of responsibility, to which she responded with confirmation and explanation (lines 10–13).

A dialectic process, in which spontaneous and emerging abstract understandings of responsibility interdependently exist with one another within Xuege's ZPD, has fully unfolded in front of us. It is not hard to notice that Xuege's understanding of the relationship between the requester and the concept responsibility is driven from spontaneous, experience-rooted, concrete, and factual, rather than abstract and logical, thinking. However, with extensive other-regulation, Xuege's real trouble source was revealed. Specifically, focused reading, seeking clarification, representing contradiction and seeking explanation finally drove Xuege to notice the trouble source. In this respect, this series of other-regulation or, to use Wertsch's (1980) term, situation redefinition semantic mediation, are the moving principle of Xuege's transition from other- to self-regulation within this ZPD activity. It is immature to claim this transition is complete based on this single dialectic interaction. However, I would argue that this transition is happening, and its process is apparently dynamic and dialectic, indicating it might last longer till the transition is fully completed.

Xuanyu also demonstrated a similar regression. In particular, she unfolded the negotiation as follows:

Professor: Well, I think it might be better if you talk to your supervisor first.

Student: Um I really want to talk to my supervisor, <u>but I think his major is A,</u> and your major is B, so, I think maybe <u>ask you to help me, you can give me</u> some <u>more</u> opinions, <u>more professional</u> opinions on my assignment ((*grounder*; *plain statement*)).

Professor: Thank you very much for that. But the problem is I have another 20 students to supervise. I am not sure that I can find time for you.

Student: <u>I know you are very busy</u> ((*disarmer*)). How about that no ((*inaudible voice*)) I <u>was wondering if</u> I can email you a paragraph, <u>just</u> 100 words ((*past tense; if clause; downstater*)) You <u>just need to</u> read this paragraph and give me a <u>little bit</u> comment ((*explicit performative; downstater*)).

(Xuanyu, scenario 4, negotiation, post-enrichment)

I invited Xuanyu to reason the use of plain statement during mediator-learner verbalisation. As with Yiqiao, Xuanyu explained that she did not consider the requestee's negative wants at the time. Here I will not repeat our discussion. We continue the dialogue from the moment she starts to clarify the re-emergence of the old use – explicit performative. Note the self-regulatory private speech – *no* in an inaudible voice prior to the mitigating move – imperfect, as she did at step 2, request, indicating efforts to regain the locus of control. Of interest here is when Xuanyu realises that she simultaneously bypassed conceptual mediation and resorted to habitual literal translation of L1 at the time. More interestingly, she conceived of L1 speech, which traditionally is considered acceptable in the sense of a Chinese culture, as autonomously acceptable when literally translated into L2 English.

1. Xuanyu: 我要表达的意思是 这个文章不是很长吗
   I intended to say, because the article is long

2. 你<u>只</u>需要阅读<u>一小段</u> 给我<u>一点点</u>建议就够了

    you just need read a bit paragraph, give me a bit comment (literally)

3. 还是没有考虑到对方的义务吧

    I didn't think about responsibility

4. 没有义务来帮你看这个文章

    he doesn't have the responsibility to review my article

5. 我觉得语言方面还是有一点不够委婉

    I think the words I used lack mindfulness

6. 还有就是刚刚讨论的那个没有说

    It would be better if I had said what we just discussed

7. "虽然你没有义务帮我做这个事情但是我十分的感激你"之类的

    Like, "I know you don't have the responsibility, but I would be grateful if you could."

8. Mediator: 其实你刚说的中文表达出来还是蛮[

    I could understand your verbal thoughts in Mandarin sound quite

9. Xuanyu: [蛮委婉的

    mindful

10. Mediator: 蛮合理的 但是我只是猜测啊 你是不是中英一对一翻译的

    reasonable. I'm just guessing, did you literally translate the Mandarin into English?

11. Xuanyu: 就是这样 没错

    Exactly.

12. Mediator: 哦

    Oh.

13. Xuanyu:: 但是这个用英文的话要怎么表达呀

    How can I deliver this in English?

After I directed Xuanyu's attention to the use of locution-derivable, she provided a

lengthy justification in Mandarin, consisting of clarification, conceptual reasoning,

self-evaluation, and self-correction (lines 1–7). Upon hearing this, I confirmed and sought further clarification, which Xuanyu interrupted. Of interest here is the timing, which precisely accomplished my unfinished confirmation, and the content of Xuanyu's utterance, which entailed a much more positive judgment compared with mine. All these observations suggest Xuanyu's awareness of the discrepancy between verbal thought in Mandarin and L2 products. In response, I sought clarification, which Xuanyu immediately confirmed (line 10). In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that it is the nonconsciousness of conceptual thinking that eventually gives rise to habitual literal translation of L1, which consequently, if temporarily, supersedes conceptual reasoning, given verbal thoughts concretised in Mandarin are considered rational in the sense of Chinese culture.

Xuanyu sought other-regulative mediations on approach to delivering her intention in English (line 13) and the issue of literal translation (data not shown here). We afterward dialogically discussed possible linguistic concretisations. Certainly, it is premature to claim that Xuanyu had internalised the support provided based on this single interaction and would be fully capable of self-regulating acts of literal translation within varying settings in the future. However, her contributions of conceptually reasoning the inefficaciousness indicate her coming into a mature awareness of the phenomenon and control over settings to come.

As mentioned, Xueli was the only learner who demonstrated intention-act consistency during negotiation. Specifically, she successfully incorporated mitigating signs such as down-toner, sweetener, and if clause into the concretisation:

Professor: I think it might be better if you discuss with your supervisor first about your assignment.

Student: Yes? I get your point ((*understanding*)). But it <u>would be nice</u> <u>if</u> I can see my paper through your point of view ((*down-toner; if clause*)). It means a lot to me if you can share some knowledge on my paper ((*sweetener*)). Would you read my article? ((*interrogative*))

(Xueli, scenario 4, negotiation, post-enrichment)

When invited to reason the L2 pragma-linguistic choices, Xueli said:

这个地方不好说 因为他没有义务帮我看 所以我只能说好话 拍他马屁 这个场景和我们原来分析过的一篇有点像 我就是按照那个上面说的

Well, it's tough here. Because he doesn't have the responsibility to help me. So, the only thing I can do at this point is to say something nice. It's similar to material we once discussed, I imitated it.

Of interest here is Xueli's act apparently was indirectly mediated through obligation, as evidenced by her reasoning of this concept in relation to a concrete sweetener. Interestingly, she mentioned a similar communicative situation we once discussed over a DA session and imitated it in this situation, indicating the applied mitigating devices were maturing within her ZPD (Vygotsky, 1986). Apparently, it is premature to conclude that Xueli fully internalised such L2 pragmatic features as down-toner, sweetener, and if clause based on this single communicative setting. However, as I have discussed in chapter two, imitation is the sign of development within the ZPD. In this sense, it is reasonable to argue that Xueli's self-regulation or control over L2 linguistic features is at least in the process of becoming mature.

6.3.5 Discussion

So far, I have reported and discussed students' spoken performances of role plays and associated conceptual understandings produced during pre- and post-enrichment from the standpoint of two poles of the entire programme. As mentioned in the introductory section, the point of looking at students' concept formation process from two opposite poles is not so much about implying a linear model of concept formation within the ZPDs as about complementing the dialect DA process unfolded between these two poles. Importantly, it compensates the micro-genesis demonstrated later, given it is practically unrealistic to separately trace all students' micro-genesis in one section.

Overall, compared to students' spoken performances of pre-enrichment, those demonstrated during post-scenarios were significantly improved in the sense of the level of voluntary control over socio-pragmatic concepts and pragma-linguistic choices. In particular, regarding step 1 opening, preparator-seeking permission (e.g., "sorry to bother you, are you busy right now". Xueli in scenario 4, opening, post-enrichment) successfully negated a preparator-declaration (e.g., "*today, I want to talk about a thing with you*". Xueli, scenario 1, opening, pre-enrichment) which was widely applied during pre-enrichment and became in popular usage across students' openings. As I have argued, this is a qualitative development, because it is not only a negation of a linguistic feature (i.e., "*I want to talk about a thing with you*" was substituted for "*Sorry to bother you, are you busy right now*") from without, but it is a negation of local culture-rooted mode of thinking (i.e., local spontaneous knowledge) within. In other words, what was successfully negated here is not only external expressions manifest on the inter-psychological plane

(i.e., social communication) but internal spontaneous concepts instantiated on the intra-psychological plane (i.e., experience-based local perspectives). Importantly, the constant nature of this change as demonstrated during post-scenarios further evidenced these successful negations did not occur by chance.

Regarding step 2, request, successful negations were apparent across students' performances as well. For example, the dominant syntactic use of want statements in pre-requests (e.g., "*so, I want you to check it and make some detailed comments with it*". Jingyu, scenario 2, request, pre-enrichment) went underground and consequently was successfully replaced by aspect imperfect (e.g., "*And I was wondering if there is any chance that you could give me a little suggestion on this topic*". Yiqiao, scenario 12, request, post-enrichment). Importantly, this reformulated version is semantically and syntactically more advanced in comparison to the original one, apparently indicating that the former is derived from a different measure of generality, hence, improved awareness of conceptual knowledge. Again, all this developed from pre-performances and internalisations of content knowledge and mediating assistances provided over the programme, evidencing change at students' both inter-psychological and intra-psychological plane.

Finally, regarding step 3, negotiation, significant development could also be widely observed. For example, students successfully incorporated L2 constructs such as empathy, apologies, down toners, and disarmers in post-performances, negating criticism and want statements the ones prevalent in pre-negotiations. All these incorporations indicate students' coming into voluntary control over newly instructed content knowledge.

However, the phenomenon of resorting to ancient knowledge was also found in post-performances and was unfavourably influenced students' spoken post-products. In particular, at step 3, negotiation, of scenario 4, Yiqiao, Xuanyu, Jingyu, and Xuege resorted to experience-based spontaneous understanding of obligation (i.e., individuals belonging to the same institution, regardless of their specific positions and duties, should be ready and willing to provide assistance to others belonging to the same institution so as to achieve the prosperity of the institution as a social whole, even if it means that individual needs and willingness will be negated by others) as a means to self-regulate relations with the immediate task; consequently, peculiar linguistic features emerged. For example, Yiqiao said "*I think you are a good choice to give me suggestion*" (Yiqiao, scenario 4, negotiation, post-enrichment), explicitly perceiving the interlocutor as free property of the educational institution and simultaneously ignoring the latter's negative wants and associated concepts.

Put together, phenomena of progress and regression in terms of conceptual thinking and pragma-linguistic performances were found across students' spoken post-products. As will be demonstrated and discussed in the following chapter on students' micro-genetic development from a Vygotskyan thesis/antithesis notion of development, resorting to ancient knowledge or spontaneous concepts, while the internalisation of concepts is still in the process of becoming emergent, is an inherent characteristic of the latter itself (see also Lantolf and Frawley, 1984; 1985; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995). In this respect, rather than being incorrectly perceived as language incompetency, they should be seen as a means applied by students to self-regulate relations with the concerned tasks in order to finish them. I will

discuss this phenomenon further in sections 7.7–7.8 within a broader literature,

and then will turn to the idea of reconceptualising this phenomenon as shift of

control as proposed by Lantolf and Frawley (1984; 1985), to which I subscribe.

Apart from resorting to experience-based spontaneous knowledge, resuming an

ancient learning habit, literal translation also resurfaced in post-performances (to

be considered in section 7.6). Xuanyu literally translated her Mandarin verbal

thoughts into L2 English while delivering the negotiation of scenario 4. Additionally,

use of ancient pragma-linguistic features such as want statements to initiate

requests in communication settings reappeared in Jingyu's post-performances,

ultimately negating intentions to be respectful and deferential. In short, the

phenomenon of resorting to ancient knowledge was revealed and unfavourably

influenced students' spoken post-performances. However, the available data

overall have shown a successful transition from using spontaneous knowledge

(e.g., concrete experiences and literal translation) as external mediation to using

socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge as internal means to self-regulate relations

with scenario tasks across students.

This research's finding of resorting to "old" knowledge is in line with those

documented in Van Compernolle (2012; 2014), Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995), Van

Compernolle, Weber and Gomez-Laich (2016) and Frawley and Lantolf (1985). As

argued by Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995), resorting to "old" knowledge (e.g., linguistic

features) is an inherent characteristic of development in the ZPDs; thus, it is

explainable by the Vygotskyan notion of continuous access (Frawley and Lantolf,

1985). As will be demonstrated and discussed in the developmental process

chapter, apart from resuming "old" knowledge of syntactic features, resorting to old

learning habits, such as literal translation, to extensive mediating supports (i.e.,

other-regulatory mediations) and to spontaneous concepts (i.e., knowledge derived

from life experiences) are also manifestations of continuous access. I will discuss

these manifestations further later in the developmental process chapter.

7 Chapter Seven: Developmental processes

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will trace learners' micro-genetic development of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and pragma-linguistic performance. By doing so, I will develop answers to research question 1. As discussed in the methodology chapter, five different tasks were implemented to facilitate mediator-learner dialectic interaction, consisting of reading concepts (including verbalisation), L2 materials analysis, AJTs, DCTs, and role plays. For the interest of the present thesis, that is, to demonstrate development, learners' micro-geneses were traced in accordance with three parameters: task, L2 problem, and trajectory of the same problem throughout the DA sessions. In other words, to unpack the developmental processes of one and the same L2 problem, I intentionally traced these processes within the same task section.

For instance, requesting construct consultative was first discussed in sessions (1) and (2) when concept-cards were taught; however, for some reason, issues related to this feature did not emerge until L2 material analysis was conducted during session 4 and were reencountered during sessions (8) and (9) when scenarios were role-played. Against this backdrop, I purposefully traced this entire developmental process within the same task section from which the issue initially emerged, discussing episodes excerpted from sessions (4), (8) and (9) chronologically. In short, the entire process of each section parallels real life during which one encounters the same issue many times.

It is important to note that given L2 socio-pragmatic problems encountered by learners emerged gradually along the progress of the DA sessions, as they would in real life. Therefore, each section intentionally focused on newly surfacing problems as the concerned task was conducted. Certainly, more than one issue emerged as the mediator-learner dialectic interaction unfolded, as it would in a real classroom; however, it is beyond the capacity of the present dissertation to cover all issues discussed. Thus, for the interest of the present thesis, I will intentionally focus on the most frequently encountered problem/s which also turned out to be a continuous challenge to participants in the sense that the same problem might last several weeks before learner/s gained control over it.

Finally, regarding micro-genesis, the analytic focus here is on how mediating prompts (i.e., other-regulatory mediations) assisted learners in (1) understanding content knowledge of requests and (2) using conceptual meaning categories to mediate problem-solving processes and performances. The point is to make learners' internalisation processes visible alongside other-regulatory mediations. Concerned episodes were captioned with the acronym ETS, with E indicating the number of the episode; T, the sequence of time that a particular issue was encountered; and S, the session where the issue emerged.

7.2 Dialectic interaction with concepts
7.2.1 Introduction

In this section, I focus on mediator-learner dialectic interactions with L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual variations. As mentioned in the methodology chapter

(section 5.4.2.1), concepts consisting of indexicality (the leading concept), social distance, power hierarchy, self-presentation, face, and responsibility were elaborated and discussed during sessions 1 and 2 and iteratively discussed along with the implementations of tasks throughout the programme. Concerning the DA procedures embedded, all concept cards were read by following the integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3). Processes of the internalisations of these concepts all encountered problems in one way or the other. Against this backdrop, I focus on tracing learners' micro-genetic development of the leading concept – indexicality (third-order indexicality in particular) in this section. From sections 7.3 to 7.6, I will turn to the other five concepts along the implementation processes of L2 tasks.

The concerned excerpts are drawn from episodes in sessions 1 and 2. For the present concept, I will present the cases of Nina and Loumei. The selection of these two cases is primarily because of they had comparatively longer and more complex processes than their peers in terms of the amount and explicitness of support required to understand the concept in relation to social acts. Specifically, it began with mediator-learner dialectic interaction about the concept of stereotypes (section 7.2.2), followed by a discussion of stereotypes in relation to linguistic devices (7.2.3). After that, in section 7.2.4, mediator-learner verbalisation on the concept is discussed. In section 7.2.5, I discuss the process with respect to learner responses and the mediating supports provided.

7.2.2 Concept cards – indexicality

Excerpts (E1S1, E2S1 and E3S1) are drawn from episodes in session 1 while the class was discussing third-order indexicality (Card 1).

> Card 1: Stereotypes (adapted from Van Compernolle, 2012)
> *Stereotypes* are formed as people notice some behaviours of certain groups and make judgments about them. For example, some people may think that upper-class or highly educated people sound snobby, or that people from a particular city or region have funny accents (e.g., accents from India and China).
>
> *What can you infer from this explanation?*
> *What are some examples of positive stereotypes? Negative stereotypes?*
> *Can you think of any specific linguistic usage indicating different stereotypes?*
> *What do they mean to you?*

Mediator-led discussion was conducted in Mandarin after learners independently read the card. Of interest is how learners', especially Nina's, understandings of this concept were determined and constrained by external stimuli factually existing in the social surroundings (i.e., pseudo-concepts). In other words, the locus of control over the concept is situated externally in the concrete referent rather than internally in the individual's intention. To achieve the synthesis necessary for promoting learners' understanding of this concept, extensive mediating support was provided. We pick up the discussion from the very beginning when the class starts to address the first question attached to the card.

E1S1

1. Nina: 第一印象吗

First impression.

2. Mediator: 还有呢 随便说说的你的认识

   Okay, what else?

3. Xueli: 也不一定是第一印象吧

   It doesn't have to be first impression, I guess.

4. Nina: 不是 就是一个人说话 你就可能从她说话的语气 你就可以

   No. I mean, based on one's tone,

5. 首先给人家判定 ((laughter)) 贴一个标签 她是一个什么样的人

   you might judge or label him/her, what kind of person s/he is.

6. 然后 她以后 也不一定是 就是你跟她深入交流之后 也不一定她就是这种人

   however, you might learn that s/he is not that kind of person after you know him/her better

7. 但是有可能她给人的第一印象是这种人

   But s/he might leave that kind of impression at the first place.

8. Mediator: 哦 你意思是 比如说你刚一讲话 我可以判断出来你是什么地方的人

   Oh, you mean, like, we can tell where s/he comes from based on her/his accent

9. Xueli: 但是长期的接触之后

   After knowing him/her for a while,

10. Jingyu: 你发现她不是

    You found s/he is not from there.

11. Nina: 就比如说 某种性格 拿性格来说

    For example, personality,

12. 比如说 她说话第一句 她说话有时候语气 有可能比较 暴躁 或者什么的

    Her/his tone is cranky or something like that the first-time s/he talks,

13. 你给她的第一印象可能是 这个人很难相处怎么怎么样

    Your first impression of her/him is probably s/he is very difficult to deal with

14. 但是你如果真的跟她交流 就是深入交流下来 其实她并不是这样的人

    When you know her/him better, you find s/he is not that kind of person.

Nina equates the formation of stereotypes with first impressions (line 1). I seek

elaboration and Nina afterward clarifies with concrete instances (lines 4–7 and 11–

14). Specifically, she associates first impressions with an individual's tone, claiming that if the latter is "cranky" (line 12), then the former is "hard to deal with" (line 13). Unarguably, "cranky" and "hard to deal with" are manifestations of judgments. However, when put in the if-X-then-Y formula, the "cranky" tone immediately becomes the prerequisite of the judgment "hard to deal with". That is, to Nina, stereotypes are consequences of direct stimuli externally existing in the communicative situation. These stimuli (i.e., mediational means) indicate a low degree of decontextualization (Wertsch, 1985). In other words, by first impressions, Nina really means pseudo-concepts of stereotypes rather than the abstract conceptual meaning of it. To re-construct Nina's situation definition (Wertsch, 1984), I launch another prompt. Our discussion continues.

E2S1

15. Mediator: 其实你刚提到的 都是些不太好的方面的 负面的一种标签

   What you just mentioned are negative judgments.

16. Nina: Um ((final-falling intonation))

17. Mediator: 那 stereotypes 有没有好的 正向的标签

   Any chance stereotypes might include positive judgment?

18. Nina: 好的呀 ((in a low and final-falling intonation))

   Positive judgment …

19. Mediator: Um ((final-rising intonation))

20. Xuanyu: 有 就是你觉得她很聪明啊

   Sure, like you think she's smart.

21. Mediator: 对呀 很会讲话

   Right. She's good at communicating.

22. Nina: 为人处事的方式很好

   She's delightful to the surroundings.

I summarise Nina's explanation and request for clarification regarding the contradiction (lines 15–17), which Nina understands as a signal that something was missing in her explanation and thus needs to be addressed, as evidenced by her object-regulatory meta-comment (McCafferty, 1994) in a low and final-falling intonation (line 18), indicating uncertainty. All these observations suggest Nina's struggle to construct a new situation definition. Thus, I probe further, encouraging her to try again (line 19). At this point, Xuanyu takes the floor, addressing the question and then expanding on the topic (line 20). Nina successfully constructs a new situation definition, as evidenced by the simultaneous imitation of Xuanyu's utterance and expansion on the topic (line 22) after my explicit acknowledgment of Xuanyu's attempt. This moment is important because it evidences that vicarious learning is possible and the dialogic interaction was indeed unfolded within Nina's ZPD.

Regarding Nina's ZPD, important development has been demonstrated. Specifically, Nina immediately resumes the responsibility of carrying out the task and continues the discussion while noticing my acknowledgement of her peer's contribution to the topic. Regarding other-regulatory mediation, propelling the learner to think about the contradiction dominates the interaction. In this respect, the driving force of contradiction is apparent. Had the contradiction not been prompted at the time, it is difficult to imagine that Nina would have engaged herself in the situation redefinition process and that Xuanyu would have assumed responsibility and contributed to the intermittent conversation between Nina and me. In this respect, I would argue from a SCT perspective that it is the existence of

contradiction or antithesis that impelled Nina and her peer Xuanyu to expand their

understanding of stereotype. Our discussion continues.

E3S1

23. Loumei: 从外表也能判断啊

Stereotypes could be generated as well based on physical appearance.

24. Mediator: 这是比较宽泛的 那就从我们今天聊的请求的方式上 你认为呢

It's too broad. What about stereotypes in relation to requesting approaches we've discussed?

25. ((3.0 seconds))

26. Mediator: 比如说我们今天分析了很多请求的方式 对吧

We just discussed several semantic formulas of requests, right?

27. 就是请求方式上 你会不会让对方对你 或是你对对方 有一个什么样的 judgment

By any chance would your applied semantic formulas cause your interlocutor to stereotype you? Or the semantic formulas applied by your interlocutor cause you to make any judgment about her?

28. Yiqiao: 语气 ((final-rising intonation))

Tone

29. Mediator: 语气? 比如你使用祈使句这样类似的直接请求要你的导师给你看论文什么的

Tone? For example, you use the imperative in such a direct semantic formula while requesting your supervisor to comment on your writings.

30. 就是你的方式 也会让其它人对你产生 judgment 比如可能觉得这个人很

the approach of requesting might trigger judgment, like you are

31.   [粗鲁

rude.

32. Xuanyu: [不礼貌

Impolite.

33. Mediator: 这说明什么? 说明我们在请求的时候 一定要注意自己的讲话方式 因为你

开口 对方或是正向 抑或是负向的 各种标签就开始了

So, what can we infer from this? It tells us that we need to be careful with semantic formulas of requests. because, either negative or positive

> *stereotypes will consequently be generated on the part of our interlocutors.*

34. Students: ((different voices)) *Um.*

Loumei takes the floor, redirecting the topic to listing a concrete stimulus – individuals' physical appearance – that might provoke acts of stereotyping (line 23). Noticing this, I turn to the entire class, redirecting them to the pedagogical content of requests (line 24). The students' long silence sends me a signal that either the association between the act of requests and the concept-stereotypes is somewhat instable in their knowledge, or my previous question was too implicit. At this point, I realise my first form of prompt was unsuccessful. Thus, I reformulate the question, probing further (lines 26–27), which is sensitive to Yiqiao's ZPD, as evidenced by her other-regulatory attempt in a questioning tone (line 28), indicating uncertainty. In response, I offer an example, which Xuanyu reads as understandable to what she has already known (i.e., sensitive to Xuanyu's ZPD), as evidenced by the overlapped utterance which semantically completes mine (lines 29–32), indicating that she has some conceptual knowledge of stereotypes which has not been made visible through my previous prompts. Importantly, this overlap, or conversational shadowing (Murphey, 2001), suggests Xuanyu's active reception (Van Compernolle, 2015) in the sense of role-shifting from an unaddressed hearer or recipient to a knowledge producer. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that a collective ZPD has been co-constructed.

Taken together, to assist learners in associating concept-stereotypes to requests, extensive support was provided. Starting with redirecting learner's attention, I gradually reformulated it into comparatively explicit prompts, entailing offering

example. The learners' responsiveness was not substantial. Specifically, a lengthy

lack of response was encountered at the very beginning, followed by a request for

other-regulative mediations. A tentative attempt was ultimately contributed after

example demonstration. In short, explicit mediation and correspondingly thin

responsiveness indicated learners' struggles to link social act of requesting to

stereotyping. In other words, their awareness of the relation between these two

constructs barely existed at the time. However, the learners resumed responsibility

and contributed to the ongoing discussion after the sequential negotiation of the

meaning of my original prompt, which indicates they, at least, started to construct

and reorganise the link between these two constructs.

7.2.3 Concept card – linguistic markers

All designed concepts were read and discussed in session 1. Meanwhile, from

session 1, L2 pragma-linguistic constructs that could be applied to materialise

conceptual meanings were introduced by following the integrated DA procedures

and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3) (for an example of L2

pragma-linguistic constructs card see Appendix I). An issue observed while talking

about L2 pragma-linguistic constructs in relation to concepts during session 1 is,

although some students were somewhat familiar with concrete referents of these

constructs, they demonstrated unknowns of systematic use, or pseudo-conceptual

thinking. This finding is consistent with that of pre-enrichment language awareness

interviews and performances discussed in Chapter 6. As we will see, internalisation

of concept-based use of these L2 pragma-linguistic constructs turned out to be a

long and complex process.

Among the learners, Loumei's processes of internalisation demonstrated the most complexity. Indeed, she struggled with this issue throughout the programme. As will be seen in section 7.3.4, Loumei regressed to extensive other-regulative mediations in session 7 after demonstrating progress in the immediately prior session 6. However, regarding the ZPD, important development was observed in session 8 and post-enrichment transfer tasks, although Loumei explicitly commented that it was difficult for her to continue the role plays, not having notes or other visual symbolic mediators at hand, which will be considered in section 7.3.6. Importantly, however, it is precisely the complexity of Loumei's processes of internalisation that has moved me to continuously trace her micro-genetic development of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts and performance in this chapter. In this way, I believe the transparency of the complexity of DA can be maximumly achieved.

Excerpts (E4S2 and E5S2) are drawn from episodes in session 2 in which Loumei was the addressed hearer. At issue here is Loumei's struggle even after extensive support during session 1 to relate the phenomenon of stereotyping to requesting approaches and use semantic mediation to regulate stereotyping. Eventually, extensive support was provided to achieve the synthesis necessary for supporting Loumei to struggle through the process of deciding what to do to deliberately regulate stereotyping and how to do that. We pick up the discussion from the moment Loumei starts to map conceptual knowledge of stereotypes and L2 constructs onto L2 pragma-linguistic choices. Note that in the immediately prior episode, the class discussed semantic means of mapping the concept of social distance onto requests and refusals.

E4S2

1. Mediator: 你刚提到的就是你的使用方式上可能会展示出来咱俩的关系 对不对?

   You mean linguistic choices could index conversers' social relation, right?

2. Loumei: 对的

   Right.

3. Mediator: 那会不会在贴标签上有一定的影响呢?

   Could they also trigger or cause stereotyping?

4. Loumei: 会 ((final-falling intonation))

   Yes.

5. Mediator: 嗯嗯 你能具体一点吗?

   Um, could you elaborate?

6. Loumei: 如果两个人的不是特别好的话 你直接就拒绝了 显得有点不太礼貌

   If you are not close to the individual, it might be considered impolite if you directly refuse him/her.

7. 就是会感觉这个人不好相处

   Or unfriendly.

I nominated Loumei to talk about the phenomenon of stereotyping in relation to requests and refusals. However, she directly reversed the topic back to social distance/closeness, which was addressed a few minutes previously. I thus intervened to redirect Loumei's attention to the topic after implicitly acknowledging that her understanding of social distance was appropriate (line 1). Loumei seemed to misunderstand my intention, as evidenced by the confirmation in a final-falling intonation, signalling the completion of her turn constructive unit (TCU, Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974), and hence no plan for further clarification or explanation (lines 2–4). This mismatch between Loumei's definition of the situation (Wertsch, 1984) and the area of her problem was co-constructed: my enquiry was basically framed in a yes-or-no fashion which was ambiguous and might induce

294

Loumei to give a yes-or-no answer. Loumei's responsive attempt was both semantically and grammatically incomplete, or, to use Van Compernolle's (2015) notion, showed lack of interactional competence. Indeed, as E5S2 later shows, Loumei struggled to understand the intentions behind my mediating prompts.

Upon hearing her simple confirmation, I realised that my first form of support was unsuccessful; I thus explicitly asked Loumei to complete her previous TCU (line 5). In response, Loumei successfully linked refusals to pre-conceptual knowledge of third-order indexicality (lines 6–7), indicating internalisation of concepts and other-regulation provided in session 1. I attribute Loumei's action of resuming the responsibility of carrying out the discussion in this episode to the impellent of the second prompt. This comparatively explicit prompt suggests Loumei was at an early stage of development within the ZPD. The exchange continued.

E5S2

8. Mediator: 那我用什么的方法可以避开他给我贴负面标签 比如不礼貌 这样一种可能性呢?

Which L2 constructs could be used to avoid being negatively stereotyped, like, impolite?

9. Loumei: ((laughter)) 委婉一点

Indirectly.

10. Mediator: 嗯 可以具体一点吗? 我们都学过什么具体的表达方式

Um, could you be specific? Using the L2 constructs we discussed so far.

11. ((3.0 seconds))

12. Mediator: 卡片都列了那些

What we have on the cards?

13. Loumei: 嗯 ((reads the card)) 像那个同情了 或者是 agreement ((final-falling intonation))

Um.   like empathy   or

14. Mediator: 嗯 先说 "I agree with you" 这样的词 再 "but"

       Um, like   *then*

15. Loumei: 嗯嗯 就是那种

       Um, something like that.

16. Mediator: 还有什么呢?

       What else?

17. Loumei: 或者承诺 就是下次 会帮你的忙

       A promise, like, "I will help you next time".

18. Mediator: 嗯嗯

       Um.

19. Loumei: 这种也会显得你很礼貌

       This might make you look polite.

20. Mediator: 对的 最起码是不会让对方给你贴一个[

       Right. At least your interlocutor wouldn't think you

21. Loumei: [很强势的

       imposing.

Upon noticing Loumei's pre-conceptual knowledge of the concept, I impelled her a bit further, prompting her to talk about linguistic markers applied to regulate stereotypes (line 8), which Loumei seemingly understood as a signal that semantic means was sought, evidenced by a brief attempt following an object-regulatory meta-comment laugh (McCafferty, 1992), indicating the locus of control over the task was situated in Loumei (line 9). This was further evidenced by the attempt, which mismatched my intention. Note that the attempt here addresses not so much *which* question is asked in line 8 as *how* it is asked. Importantly, the enquiry is unambiguously specific. In this respect, Loumei's lack of interactional competence became apparent at that moment. I thus read my previous impellent as unsuccessful and requested elaboration (line 10). Loumei paused (line 11). The long silence indicates that she had not fully internalised newly instructed semantic signs, thereby revealing this as her real trouble source.

I then redirected Loumei to the concept cards (line 12). She began to imitate mitigating devices available on the card (line 13). However, she basically enumerated rather than mapped these devices onto specific linguistic markers, indicating the locus of control over the devices was situated in Loumei. Noticing her final-falling intonation, which indicated the closing of TCU, I offered examples (line 14). However, in her response, instead of incorporating the feedback and/or expanding on the topic, Loumei provided a comment: "*something like that*" (line 15). This somewhat mismatched utterance further indicates her struggle to self-regulate newly instructed means. I encouraged Loumei to expand on the topic (line 16). In response, she enumerated another mitigating device available on the card and then successfully mapped it onto linguistic markers, followed by reasoning through pre-conceptual knowledge of stereotypes (lines 17–21). This imitation is of importance because it indicates that the dialogic interaction unfolded within Loumei's ZPD which appears to be sensitive only to explicit mediation.

Regarding Loumei's responsiveness, significant changes are observable over these two episodes. At the very beginning, Loumei demonstrated lack of interactional competence, repetitively followed by answer-question mismatches. The phenomenon of purely recording rather than talking *about* information on the concept-card emerged, indicating object-regulation. However, Loumei finally resumed responsibility for carrying out the discussion when I impelled her to expand on the topic after the demonstration. I believe this is development from Loumei's monosyllabic confirmation at the beginning. Regarding mediation provided over this very short period, its impellent characteristic is obvious. Requesting elaboration was repeatedly launched. Additionally, explicit prompts

including visual aids and demonstration were provided. A successful attempt was finally initiated by Loumei after a follow-up explicit impellent. The purpose of mediator-student dialogic interaction, that is, facilitating students to go through the process of struggle to know what to do and how to do it (see also Poehner, 2010), and the moving principle of impelling (i.e., continuous pushes), are apparent. Had the series of prompts not continued, it is difficult to imagine that Loumei would have resumed the responsibility for problem-solving and contributed to it. In this way, from a SCT perspective, I would attribute Loumei's ultimate attempt of the problem-solving to continuous pushes as well as the struggles experienced.

However, it is premature to conclude that Loumei had internalised the content knowledge and support provided during sessions 1 and 2 based on this single interaction. As I mentioned, the fact that Loumei regressed to extensive other-regulation during session 7 made the process of transformation from other- to self-regulation within her ZPD very much longer and complex (to be considered in section 7.3.4). However, Loumei's actions of taking responsibility and contributing to the problem-solving process indicate that her self-regulatory capability is in the process of becoming autonomous.

7.2.4 Mediator-learner verbalisation

Mediator-led in-class mediator-learner verbalisation was arranged following concepts card-reading, during which learners discussed learning problems, shared learning experiences, and reflected on and compared historically knowing knowledge with newly learned knowledge of requests. Excerpts (E6S3 and E7S3) are drawn from episodes in session 3. Of interest here is the verbalism (Chapter 2)

diagnosed in learners while discussing L2 socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to performance, indicating learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge is detached from real-life practice. Among seven learners, Nina's verbalisation was so revealing that it was comparatively substantial and more complex. In the present section, I will trace the episode wherein Nina was the addressed hearer.

We pick up the conversation from the moment I invited Nina to share her thoughts. She demonstrated a practical nonexistence of the mediating stage of using newly instructed concepts to regulate (e.g., mediate, control, reformulate, or repair) social actions[38]. Consequently, in order to achieve the synthesis necessary for facilitating Nina's transformation to self-regulation, extensive assistance was provided.

   E6S3

1. Mediator: *Nina* 说一说, 你有什么想法
      Any thoughts?
2. Nina: ((gazes me)) ((3.0 seconds))
3. Mediator：就是 我们生活中拒绝是必然要发生的一种行为
      I mean, refusal happens daily
4. 我想问的就是 在你的这种 行为发生的时候
   so, when you, if you must, refuse others,
5. 你有没有考虑过 就是你有没有说之前考虑
   do you ever think about it, before you speak,
6. 如果我这样说了 将会给对方造成 face-threat 的级别有多大 1-5
   Or, if I put it in this way, how much I might threat my interlocutor's face, on a scale from 1 to 5?
7. 对方将会给我贴上一个什么样的标签
   How others might think about me?
8. Nina: Um. ((hesitating intonation)) ((3.0 seconds))

---

[38] Note that several DCTs were conducted shortly before the mediator-learner verbalisation.

9. Mediator：就是你有没有这个考虑的过程
   I mean, do you have such a thinking process?

10. 是我先考虑 然后我再拒绝
    Do you think about these concepts then refuse?

11. 还是不考虑 直接来 想到什么说什么呢
    Or, you don't, and speak whatever jumps into your mind?

12. 有没有这个思考的过程 我的意思是
    I mean, do you think about these concepts?

13. Nina: ((laughter)) 应该没有
    No.

Nina gazed at me when nominated to share her thoughts (line 2), seeking further other-regulatory explanation for the preceding question (McCafferty, 1992). I concluded that my first prompt was unsuccessful after Nina's long silence. I thus launched a second prompt, reorganising the question into a concrete communicative context (lines 4–7). The reformulation worked, at least mildly, as Nina broke the silence with an *um* in a hesitating intonation (line 8), followed by another long pause. All these observations suggest that Nina at the time engaged in a sense-making process about her own social actions. To facilitate this process, I prompted further, elaborating my utterance and seeking confirmation. Nina finally attempted to answer, she simply abandons conceptual mediating stage, following meta-comment laughs (lines 9–13), indicating a change-of-state realisation (see McCafferty, 1992). This finding somewhat mirrors what was revealed during Nina's pre-enrichment LAI. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that development lags behind learning. This phenomenon is not an anomaly in the literature of concept-formation. As I discussed in Chapter 2, developmental changes in an individual might not emerge until the fifth or sixth session. Thus, to assist Nina in reconstructing the definition of the situation, re-establishing relation with the

conceptual mediating stage in this case, I provided further other-regulative

mediations. Our exchange continued.

E7S3

14. Mediator: 我们看到的这些案例

Okay, we have read and discussed some L2 requesting material;s

15. 前面的这些个缓冲手段

these various mitigating devices

16. 其实就是给自己争取思考该如何讲话的时间

can help you better regulate your social actions in different communicative situations

17. Nina: Um.

18. Mediator: 如果你什么都不考虑 上来就直接的说 对你来讲也是 不利的呀

If you don't take these concepts into consideration before you speak, it's not good, even for yourself.

19. Nina: 是

Right.

20. Mediator: 万一你说错了 大家都知道 话这东西 出去就收不回来了((gazes the class))

Think about that, words matter. What if you say something wrong or inappropriate, you cannot unsay what you just said. The damage of your words is irreparable.

21. Students: ((mixed voices)) 对的

Right.

22. Mediator: 所以你一定要有意识的思考

So, be aware of what you're going to say

23. 不要急着拒绝别人

Don't rush into refusals.

24. 考虑将会给对方造成 face-threat 的级别有多大

Think about if I say that, how much will I threat my interlocutor's face?

25. 对方将会给我贴上一个什么样的标签

How might others think about me?

26. 如何降低对方给我贴标签的可能性 保护对方的面子

> *What can I do to maximally avoid negative stereotypes and protect the*
> *other's face?*

27. Students: ((mixed voices)) 对的

> *Right.*

I encouraged Nina to consider the other side of the dialectic (i.e., antithesis or contradiction). And I explicitly enumerated the impact of spontaneous, or unmediated speech (i.e., pseudo-concepts) (lines 14–20). Nina seemed to engage herself in the sense-making process, as evidenced by her repeated agreement (lines 17–19), indicating active reception and change-of-state awareness. It is important to note that other students were also doing listening (i.e., being active recipients), although Nina was the addressed hearer, as they reciprocated emphatic agreement when I shifted my gaze from Nina to the whole class (line 21). This active participation may show that they have similars issue as Nina and they are starting to incorporate the feedback provided to Nina. Thus, upon noticing this, I intervened, recounting the process of resuming conceptual mediation as internal stimuli toward social acts (lines 22–26).

It is noteworthy that different mediational means could have used to help Nina improve pragmatic performance in this case: for example, elaborating pragma-linguistic choices and encouraging Nina to recite them. However, as Lantolf and Poehner (2010) point out, the point of DA is not as much about helping students achieve correct forms, products, or performance at a single task as about facilitating them to experience the process of struggle to accomplish the transition from other- to self-regulation (i.e., independently determine what to do and how to do it) (see Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Poehner, 2009). Wertsch (1979; 1980)

emphasises a similar idea. Specifically, the author argues that it is in and through dialogic interaction that students gain access to learning processes; however, it is through sequential pushes that the process of transition from other- to self-regulation is facilitated and accomplished.

In sum, the evolvement of mediator-learner verbalisation is challenging but rewarding. Regarding Nina's responsiveness, specifically, she silently engaged herself in sense-making processes for her own social actions for a period. Extensive supports were launched to promote these processes. As I argued, it was through sequential prompts that Nina's realisation of her own trouble source became possible. Finally, to achieve the synthesis necessary for promoting Nina's pragma-linguistic performance, mediation that pushed the individual to consider the other side of the dialectic (i.e., antithesis/contradiction) was applied.

Thus, I would argue that diagnosing students' real trouble sources is more complex than synthesizing these troubles. As we will see throughout this chapter, comparatively substantial support was required to simply engage students verbally in the class and help them eventually realise their trouble sources. So far, I have discussed two reasons that caused this phenomenon in my researched class. One relates to the abstract nature of the prompting question itself, which simply requires sequential explicit support to promote students' understanding of it. The other concerns one student's, Loumei, lack of interactional competence, which essentially led to question-answer mismatches.

7.2.5 Summary

In this section, I have reported and traced students' first encounter with concept-indexicality over the programme. Concept cards consisting of concept definition and L2 constructs applied to index this concept were read and discussed. Regarding the discussion of concept definition, dialogic interaction with Nina was exemplified. Nina demonstrated pseudo-conceptual understanding of second-order indexicality at the beginning. However, she started to reorganise her knowledge of it, as evidenced by her resuming responsibility and contributing to the ongoing discussion after mediating supports such as seeking confirmation and exemplification. However, it is premature to conclude that Nina had obtained full control over this concept based on this single dialogic interaction; nonetheless, her successful attempt of the concerned question at the time (i.e., contribution) indicated her starting to incorporate content knowledge into her previous knowledge system.

Regarding the pragma-linguistic choices that could be used to index the concept of third-order indexicality, I focused on mediator-student dialogic interaction with Loumei in particular. As with Nina, Loumei also had required extensive mediating supports before she started to take the responsibility of addressing the concerned question. In this way, it is reasonable to argue that, at the time of session 2, Loumei's ZPD was only sensitive to explicit assistances. Again, based on this single dialogic interaction, it could be concluded that Loumei began to be able to map concept third-order indexicality onto concrete pragma-linguistic choices.

Finally, at the stage of mediator-learner verbalisation, the phenomenon of verbalism surfaced among students. That is, the absence of mediated thinking processes in communicative contexts of requesting/refusing. This finding echoed the dominant pseudo-conceptual understanding of her speech acts of requests and refusals demonstrated during pre-enrichment LAI. Importantly, the extensive explicit mediating assistances required to understand the significant role of mediated thinking process indicated more other-regulatory supports were required to achieve an abstract-to-concrete transition (i.e., voluntary control over conceptual knowledge to self-regulate social act) within her ZPD.

7.3   L2 material analysis

In this section, I will trace learners' micro-genetic development of socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to pragmatic performance of step 2, request (mitigating devices), starting with L2 material analysis task. As mentioned in section 5.4.2.4, the DA procedures embodied in L2 material analysis followed the integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3). Examples of corpus and YouTube clips were discussed from session 2 to 6. To maximally render this process clear, I choose to exemplify the case of Loumei. Compared with her peers, the process of Loumei's internalisation of mitigating devices is relatively richer and more complex in terms of both the amount and explicitness of support required to achieve self-regulation or control over their use. The discussion starts with learners-as-group's early encounters with authentic use of mitigating devices in L2 context. It then moves to a later encounter. After that, I will discuss Loumei's initial attempts at using newly learned mitigating devices in a role play,

followed by her performance of an AJT. Finally, I will discuss Loumei's L2 socio-

linguistic performances in very near and far transfer tasks.

7.3.1 Mitigating devices – Time 1

The concerned material is a YouTube clip originally titled *Sex and the City:*

Samantha and the Tranny's. Transcript of this clip could be found in Appendix Q.

Briefly, the scenario is about Samantha requesting three transgender women[39] to

leave the neighbourhood at 3 a.m. in the morning because she wants to get some

sleep. The selection of this clip was because it is relatively rich in terms of

mitigating devices use (e.g., endearment, pre-pre-strategy, grounder, disarmer,

consultation)*,* and thus it practically makes possible extensive opportunities for

learners to dialogically interact with requesting variants and socio-pragmatic

concepts. In this respect, it fits the purpose of conducting L2 material analysis, that

is, to develop understanding of socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to requesting

variants in varying situations. During mediator-led discussion, the clip was line-by-

line analysed and discussed. We pick up the discussion from the point when

consultation surfaces.

E8T1S4

1. Mediator: ((reads 'certain dark circles')) 这句话是什么意思 ((gazes the class))
   How do you understand this?
2. Xuege: 黑眼圈? ((translates the phrase))
   Dark circles …
3. Yiqiao: 黑眼圈 ((translates the phrase))
   Dark circles …

[39] The transgender women are talking very loudly in the neighbourhood in the middle of the night.

4. Xuanyu and Jingyu: 黑眼圈 ((translates the phrase))

   Dark circles …

5. Mediator: ((explains the discourse)) 这个场景中是如果休息不好的话 可能会有黑眼圈

   In this context, it suggests I might have dark circles under my eyes if I don't sleep well.

6. Samantha 在传递一层言外之意

   means

7. 请离开这里

   I need you mates to leave.

8. Students: ((mixed voices)) Um.

9. Mediator: Samantha 在后面又用了一个 *"Am I right"* 来征求对方的意见

   uses   to involve the trannies.

10. 在这里相当于   *What do you think*

    it's equivalent to

    所以这里是我们之前讲过的 to involve the hearer 的用法

    the one we once discussed

11. Students: ((mixed voices)) Um.

Xuege, Yiqiao, Xuanyu and Jingyu offered a translation of the phrase as they actively connected with my gaze and understood it as a signal that contributions from the class were widely solicited. However, simply translating the phrase instead of providing knowing *about* it suggests object-regulation. As discussed in Chapter 2, this phenomenon is not an anomaly given learners have just started to understand the task of L2 material analysis. In response, I offered a demonstrative analysis. Students responded *um* (line 8), seemingly indicating understanding. I proceeded to the consultative device, likening it to pragmatic equivalents introduced in sessions 2 and 3 when reading concept-cards, followed by meta-

discourse explanation (lines 9–12). Students again respond *um*, seemingly indicating understanding.

7.3.2 Mitigating devices – Time 2

To create more opportunities for learners to discuss content knowledge and concepts, we reviewed the same clip during session 6. I nominated Loumei to analyse the components of mitigating devices. In the following, she failed and contributions were sought from her peers. We pick up the discussion from the beginning.

E9T2S6

1. Mediator: 比如说她用到了 *Ladies, hello. As much as I respect women's rights, am I right?*

    She applied
2. 你认为她说了这么一大串 她用的是什么手段

    What are those devices?
3. Loumei: 请求

    Request.
4. Mediator: Yeah. 我知道是请求

    I know it's request.
5. 我的问题是她具体都使用的是什么手段

    My question is, what those devices are,
6. 能不能看的出来 手段

    I mean, as means.
7. Loumei: ((five seconds))
8. Mediator: 我们头几次是不是就学了那么几种手段 ((gazes at class))

    What we did during the last few sessions was understanding those means, right?
9. Students: 是的

    Yes

10. Mediator: 这里是什么手段

   So, what are they?

11. Xueli: 解释

   Explanation.

12. Mediator: Yeah 有解释

   Explanation.

13. 怎么解释的

   Could you elaborate?

Loumei says request as I invite her to map mitigating devices onto linguistic choices about Samantha's request (line 3). Note that Loumei responds in the same way she did in E4S3, which again mismatches my intention, indicating either continuous struggle to understand my questions or, more likely, lack of understanding the question (i.e., non-internalisation of mitigating devices instructed and supports provided during preceding sessions). It was premature to ascertain Loumei's problem at this moment, thus, I explicitly reformulated the question (line 5). She again failed to attempt the question after a five-second silence. I turned to gaze at the class to widely solicit contributions. Xueli immediately understood my intention and attempts the question (line 11). The dialogic interaction continues as the responsibility of analysing Samantha's request rests with Loumei's peers. We pick up the interaction from the moment Jingyu voluntarily contributed to the use of a consultative device in E10T2S6.

E10T2S6

1. Jingyu: 还有最后 *am I right* 她这里是反问的语气 征求对方的意见

   And   she is consulting the trannies?

2. Mediator: 想博得对方的同意

   To make them accept the request,

3. ((explains the line)) 你看我没有说错的啊 大家都化妆 都懂得 黑眼圈再好的化妆品也遮不住

> *See, I'm right. We all wear make-up, and understand even the best make-up can't cover dark circles.*

4. 所以请你离开 我要睡觉

So, please leave, I need to sleep.

5. 技巧上就是刚 Jingyu 说的

This is what Jingyu just mentioned.

6. 什么 ((rising intonation))

What is it?

7. Jingyu, Yiqiao and Xuanyu: Consultation.

8. Mediator: Yeah. 所以在这个请求的过程中 她并不是一个单纯的解释

> *So here she did not just use explanation.*

9. 你想想 如果她没有前方的　　　　　　　Ladies hello! 上来就解释 效果可能不太一样

Think about the difference if she had not said,

10. 能不能理解我的意思

You see

11. 就从我们刚分析的过程中 Loumei 你认为你是哪一点还有问题的

based on what we just discussed, what do you think the trouble is?

12. Loumei: 还是那些手段 我可能就是一瞬间反应不到

> *I still couldn't recognise those means.*

13. Mediator: 嗯 上上周我们讲过的 中间隔的有三周 中间有看过吗

> *Alright, did you review what we covered during the last three weeks?*

14. Loumei: 呵呵 ((laughter))

> *Hehe*

15. Mediator: Ah. ((rising intonation))

I explicitly acknowledged Jingyu's attempt and then provided explanation (lines 2–4). Jingyu, Yiqiao, and Xuanyu immediately verbalised the concept as I elicited the class to link the linguistic concretisation to a mitigating device (line 7), indicating

internalisation of instructed knowledge of consultative device and supports provided during previous sessions. Importantly, mediator-student dialogical interaction was unfolded within their ZPDs.

I turn to Loumei, inviting her to reflect on the analysis process and verbalise her problem (line 11), which she immediately understands as a signal that her learning approach might be problematic, as evidenced by her self-evaluation in line 12. This moment perfectly manifests Vygotsky's thesis/antithesis notion of development in the ZPD. That is, the student's learning problem on the intra-personal psychological plane is revealed through other-regulative mediations on the inter-psychological plane. In this case, the problem appears to be Loumei's not knowing the possibilities of request variants. Thus, to achieve the synthesis necessary for promoting Loumei's self-regulation or control over the content knowledge, I probed further, seeking explanation. In response, Loumei laughed (line 13), indicating struggles (see McCafferty, 1992). Our conversation continued, during which Loumei stated that she has difficulties remembering newly learned possibilities of request variants.

This dialogic interaction is indeed meaningful. As we will see in section 7.3.4, when Loumei reencounters the construct of consultation, although she again fails to independently analyse the construct, she recognises the problem herself and links it back to the constructs we discussed in E9T2S6. Importantly, she actively contributes to the process of conceptualising and reformulating the construct. Before I trace this process, I want to talk about a novel trouble that Loumei encountered with mitigating devices. That is, mapping L2 socio-pragmatic concepts onto mitigating devices in communicative situations.

7.3.3 Mitigating devices – Time 3

To improve pragma-linguistic performance, pre-enrichment scenario 1 was replayed as a very near transfer during session 7. However, Loumei and Nina again demonstrated intention-act inconsistency. Loumei essentially exhibited the same performance she did during pre-enrichment. Here, I will not re-demonstrate her performance; I sought explanation at the mediator-learner verbalisation stage. We pick up the discussion from the beginning. Of interest here is Loumei, and Nina resuming an old requesting approach – random association. The concerned verbalisation is important, because, as we will see, the real trouble source for Loumei and Nina is not so much the inadequacy of content knowledge of requests as the lack of the mediating stage of socio-pragmatic conceptual thinking. In other words, pure input of content knowledge per se misses the real trouble. Importantly, unlike time 2, even though Loumei did not independently realise her trouble source, she actively contributed to the problem-solving process as responsibility rested with her. That is, her ZPD demonstrates changes.

E11T3S7

1. Mediator: 好 Loumei 这是 你问问题的所有方式 ((reads Loumei's performance)),

    Alright,   these are your requests.
2. *和上次一样 你没有使用任何其它的句型*
   You basically repeated what you said last time. You didn't use anything we covered so far.
3. Loumei: ((laughter)) 没有 就是当时想不到那么多

    No, I didn't. I couldn't recall any of those mitigating devices at the time.

4. Mediator: 想不到那么多 ((repeats Loumei's utterance with a final-rising intonation))

   You couldn't recall.

5. Loumei: ((laughter)) 我基本上在对话的过程中都是根据潜意识里最原始的 就是想到什么说什么

   I basically spoke whatever jumped into my mind, subconsciously.

6. Nina: ((laughter)) 我也是

   Me too.

7. Mediator: "我也是" ((makes an impression of Nina with a bit exaggeration))

   Me too.

8. Nina, students: ((laughter)) ((multiple voices))

9. Loumei: 我就感觉 我就是凭自己的潜意识 或是主观意识 就直接往外出了

   I feel like I speak whatever jumps into my mind spontaneously, subconsciously.

10. Mediator: 我想说的是 我们学了这么久 为什么上节课还使用了 今天又不行了呢 是不是笔记做的不到位

    My point is, it's been weeks and you did a good job during our last session, what's wrong today? Anything wrong with your notes?

11. 来我看看你的笔记

    Can I see your notes please?

12. Loumei: 对 我没有做怎么说

    Right, I didn't make notes about hows.

13. Mediator: 哦 你看看 你做的都是说什么的笔记 ((turns to the entire class))

    大家对话的过程中问任何相关的都可以 这个不是重点 重点是你打算怎么说 怎么 把你的请求以你自己认为合理 的方式表达出来 能不能懂我的意思

    Oh, I see, your notes are all about whats. Literally, you can mention anything relevant. Contents are not the focus, the focus is how you are going to materialise your requests in your believed appropriate way, see?

14. Nina/Loumei: 懂了

    I see.

15. Mediator: 下次做笔记的时候 需要考虑一下 好吧

Please focus on this.

16. Loumei: 好的

Okay.

The discussion begins with me inviting Loumei to explain the intention-act mismatch, which she obviously understood as a signal that the linguistic markers she applied were problematic and needed to be addressed, as evidenced by her self-regulatory meta-comment laughter (McCafferty, 1992) followed by explanation (line 3), indicating her awareness of the problem. I repeated her utterance in a final-rising intonation, which Loumei perceives as a signal that I was confused thus required more explanation, as evidenced by her follow-up laughter prefaced by justification: she subconsciously speaks whatever jumps into her mind (line 5). All these observations suggest that Loumei basically abandoned the mediating stage of socio-pragmatic conceptual thinking she demonstrated during the immediate prior session. Interestingly, Nina immediately engaged with Loumei, claiming the same problem (line 6).

At this point, I intervened. I gave an slightly exaggerated impression of Nina (line 7). The students including Nina burst into laughter. It is reasonable to argue that the act of Nina's meta-comment laughter suggests her becoming aware of her regression, or backsliding (Selinker, 1972, 1992). However, Loumei appears to miss my impression of Nina as a signal that her thinking process is problematic and thus needs reorganisation, as she repeats the object-regulatory meta-comment explanation, continuously referencing her sub-consciousness of action (line 9). Of interest here is the timing of Loumei's re-clarification, which takes up

the space that normally would be occupied by an inquiry of assistance to overcome the problem. This observation indicates Loumei's lower level of situation definition (Wertsch, 1984), compared with students who seek support in similar situations. In this respect, I would argue that Loumei is still at an early elementary stage toward self-regulation or control over L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance.

Upon hearing Loumei's repeated meta-comment on sub-consciousness, which is beyond the pedagogical focus, I chose not to address it. To re-construct her definition of the situation, I instead redirected the topic, seeking explanation for the improved performance demonstrated in the immediate prior session (line 10). Loumei immediately utters the problem (line 12) when I simply offer to check her notes, indicating her awareness of the trouble source. In response, I reexplain the pedagogical objective after explicitly acknowledging that her self-evaluation is correct, to which Nina and Loumei signal redefinition of the situation (Wertsch, 1984) evidenced by their self-regulatory meta-comments: "I see" (line 14) (McCafferty, 1992).

To summarise, although Loumei failed to independently solve the problem, she realised the trouble source herself. Regarding support provided to achieve Loumei's situation redefinition (i.e., realisation of the trouble source in this case), what was required was basically implicit prompts seeking explanation and clarification, although the meta-explanation of the situation is of significance. However, compared with the heavily extensive other-regulative mediations required during the immediate prior session (E10T2T6), this time more responsibility for diagnosing the learning problem rests with Loumei. I believe this

is development. However, Loumei's reliance on external signs (i.e., notes) as means to mediate her thinking process indicates that she has not yet internalised L2 socio-pragmatic concepts and content knowledge of requests. Indeed, Loumei could not accomplish the role play without the mediation of external signs by the end of the programme, as she reflected during the post-enrichment (to be considered in section 7.3.5).

7.3.4 Mitigating devices – Time 4

Loumei was invited to analyse and reason a requesting situation while conducting an AJT during session 8. The concerned AJT is Jingyu's pre-enrichment performance of scenario 2 demonstrated in section 6.3.2.3. To recall, Jingyu in the role play tries to engage the requestee (i.e., a professor) in rereading her paper and offering detailed comments when the requestee has no responsibility to do so. The analysis started with Loumei independently recognising requesting constructs and then reasoning them by applying available socio-pragmatic concepts. Finally, mediator-learner discussion was conducted. We pick up the discussion as Loumei starts to analyse consultative devices (E12T4S8) with which she demonstrates slight struggles and then moves on to verbalisation on this construct in E13T4S8.

E12T4S8

1. *Loumei:* ((reads the request))
2. "Is that okay" 这句话加上比不加上好
   It's better to have this.
3. Mediator: 为什么
   Why?
4. Loumei: 因为毕竟是请求一个老师吗
   Because the interlocutor is a teacher.

5. Mediator: 嗯

        Um.

6. Loumei: 哎 不行 同级可以   *Is that okay?* ((soft voice))

        Wait, no, it is okay to use between socially equal individuals.

7. 哎 下对上 上对下可以 下对上有点 ((soft voice))

   Wait, low-to-high, it's okay with high to low, but low to high, it's a bit

8. 下对 um 我觉得这一句换成   *would you mind* 会比较好一点吧

   low-to   *I think it's better to replace it with*

9. Mediator: 嗯

        Um.

After reading the request, Loumei immediately points out the consultative device and offers positive comments (line 2). She reasons the use by emphasising the teacher from whom the student seeks help. Note that the if-X-then-Y formula Loumei applied during pre-enrichment LAI re-emerges, indicating pseudo-conceptual thinking. However, she simultaneously negates the answer through self-regulatory private speech in a soft voice and links the concretisation to the concept relative power (lines 6–7). This movement is significant in the sense that Loumei starts to use L2 socio-pragmatic concepts to mediate problem-solving processes, indicating her internalisation of instructed concepts and supports provided during preceding sessions. In this respect, it is development from time 3.

However, the fact that Loumei failed to reach a clearer conclusion, as evidenced by her switch to the reformulation of the concretisation from unfinished reasoning (line 8), indicates that her control over socio-pragmatic concepts to mediate problem-solving processes is still in the process of maturing. Note the filled pause, which interestingly occurs at the turning point of unfinished conceptual analysis to reformulation, further indicating Loumei's unmatured control over concepts to solve

problem. Importantly, the reformulation is somewhat semantically equivalent to the original version in this context, apparently indicating Loumei's confusion with the constructs. Thus, I redirected Loumei to this topic at the end of the analysis. We pick up the conversation from there.

E13T4S8

1. Mediator: 就是刚刚那个 *Is that okay?*

   Back to

2. 你也是在纠结啊 关于是应该是下对上还是上对下

   Seems like you're confused with low-to-high or high-to-low.

3. Loumei: 嗯 我有点纠结 ((laughter))

   Um. I am a bit confused

4. Mediator: 嗯 你比如说举个例子啊

   Um. For example,

5. 你看老师后面也用了这个

   the professor afterwards used a similar construct

6. Loumei: ((reads the construct)) "Is that alright?".

7. Mediator: Yeah.

8. Loumei: 这是上对下

   Here it's high-to-low.

9. Mediator: 嗯

   Um.

10. 这个场景中学生对老师这样用了 老师对学生也这样用了

    The student uses it, so does the professor in the context.

11. 你觉得呢

    What do you think?

12. Loumei: 我觉得上对下和平级之间可以用

    I think it's okay with high-to-low and social equals,

13. 但是这个下对上我感觉有点不太妥当

    I feel it's odd to use it here.

14. Mediator: 嗯

    Um.

15. Loumei: 感觉和那个 *"What do you think*?".

        Feels like:

16. ((2 seconds))

17. 我感觉这和 *"Is that okay?"* 相似

    It's similar to:

18. Mediator: 嗯

        Um

19. Loumei: 我感觉这个下对上有点不妥当

      I feel it's odd to use with low-to-high.

20. Mediator: 为什么呢

       Why?

21. Loumei: 我觉得这里下对上 ((pause))

      I think low-to-high

22. 你这样说有点 ((gazes the script, soft voice)) 不妥当

    it's odd.

23. Mediator: 比如说我们上次的欲望都市里的场景   *"Am I right?"*.

    Remember the Samantha clip we once discussed:

24. 她是从道德情感上 想让对方采取行动

    Samantha tries to make the trannies take moral responsibility and leave.

25. Loumei: 这个下对上听起来怪怪得

      Sounds weird to use in low-to-high.

26. Mediator: 嗯 你觉得这个老师会不会说 '不 okay'

      Um, do you think the teacher might respond with "It's not okay".

27. Loumei: 会

      Yes.

28. Mediator: 为什么 你觉得她这里是违反了我们原来讲过的那个概念

      Why? Which concept does it mismatch?

29. Loumei: Responsibility ((gazes at me, high voice))

30. 这不是人家的义务

    It's not the teacher's responsibility to do the job.

31. Mediator: 嗯 哪你觉得可以怎么改改呢

      Um, how would you reformulate it?

32. Loumei: 改成　　　　　　　　I would appreciate 的句型会好

　　　　　It's better to use:

33. Mediator: 嗯

　　　　　Um.

Three critical instances of support are dialogically negotiated to assist Loumei in redefining the relation between the sign *Is that okay*? and meaning category-responsibility, which arguably is an important concept in this communicative situation. The first one emerged after Loumei confirms her struggle with the sign (line 3). I directed her attention to a similar use. Loumei immediately read the sign out loud (line 6), although reading was unnecessary at this moment. However, it was important in the sense that it suggested Loumei's effort to re-establish the relation with the consultative device. However, this prompt failed to work as Loumei again engaged herself in the process of problem-solving through a meaning category, relative power (lines 12–22). Note that Loumei comments three times on the oddness of the use but fails to read that the student seems to impose on the professor, asking him to engage in an act that is not his duty (lines, 13, 19 and 22). Interestingly, Loumei likens *Is that okay?* to *What do you think?*, which was discussed in session 3 while reading concept-cards and re-discussed in session 4 (E8T1S4), indicating internalisation of content knowledge and supports provided during preceding sessions. Regarding the ZPD, this means the mediator-student dialogical interaction had unfolded within Loumei's ZPD.

The second major instance of other-regulation thus emerged (line 23), in which I redirected Loumei's attention to a similar use in the Samantha-tranny clip discussed in session 6. However, Loumei fails to attempt the problem as she

continues to comment only on the oddness of the use (line 25). To help Loumei

reconstruct her definition of the situation, I launched a third round of support.

Specifically, I described a hypothetical communicative situation and sought

answers, which Loumei confirmed (line 27). Upon hearing this, I further probed,

eliciting Loumei to connect the linguistic sign with newly instructed concepts, which

Loumei successfully attempted (line 29) followed, importantly, by a novel

understanding of the situation definition through the concept of responsibility.

Equally important, the change in Loumei's voice from low to high and the shift of

her eye movement from gazing at the script to gazing at me (lines 22 and 29)

indicate Loumei's transformation from object- to self-regulation (see McCarferty,

1992). I believe this is an important development within Loumei's ZPD from the

prior session 7. This is further evidenced by her successful attempt at reformulation

in line 32.

In sum, the dialogic interaction with Loumei is complex but rich and rewarding. To

achieve the synthesis necessary for reconstructing Loumei's situation definition

and functional system, consultative devices in this case, a series of mediations was

negotiated. However, importantly, instead of solely assisting Loumei in solving the

immediate problem, that is, reformulating the request, the negotiated support

essentially focused on continuously propelling Loumei to self-realise what the

problem was and how to solve it. Indeed, as Lantolf and Poehner (2010) point out,

supporting students through processes of struggle to figure out what to do and how

to do it is the whole point of DA. To see that propelling did, in fact, give rise to

development in the case in point, I will consider an excerpt (E13T5S8) drawn from

an episode in the same session in which Loumei demonstrated that she had

indeed internalised my support and was thus capable of constructing the correct consultative device with increased autonomy.

7.3.5 Mitigating devices – Time 5

Loumei was invited to reperform pre-enrichment scenario 1 during session 8, given she failed this very near transfer task in the immediately prior session 7. Different from session 7, Loumei this time incorporated mitigating devices. Given the focus here is Loumei's micro-genetic development of concepts in relation to mitigating devices in general and consultative devices, I will only trace the mediating stage manifest during the mediator-learner verbalisation. Note that during the role play, Loumei applied the construct *Would you mind?*; however, she simultaneously negated it through the self-regulatory meta-comment *No* in Mandarin and attempted the reformulation. During the mediator-learner verbalisation, I redirected Loumei's attention to this use. We pick up the conversation from there.

E14T5S8

1. Mediator: 你这里的　*"Would you mind?"*.
       Here after,
2. 你当时说出来之后马上就说了"不对"
   you immediately said, "No".
3. Loumei: 嗯
       Um.
4. Mediator: 为什么呢
       Why?
5. Loumei: 因为当时一说出来我就意识到 就是有点迫使她接受一样
       Because after I said that, I immediately realised I was like imposing on him.
6. 就是刚那个　　　　　　*"Is that okay?"* 的用法
   It's similar to the use of

7. 所以后面我马上换成了 *"I would appreciate it if you can."* 的句型

    That's why I immediately reformulated it to

When invited to clarify the negation of the initial construct, Loumei immediately references the concept imposition to elaborate her definition of the situation and justify the reformulation (lines 5–7). Importantly, Loumei likens the initial construct to L2 construct *Is that okay?* we discussed a few minutes ago, rather than conceiving of the former as a substitution for the latter as she did during time 4, indicating internalisation of content knowledge of consultative device and support provided in the immediate prior episode. Regarding the ZPD, this means previous mediator-student dialogic interaction was unfolded within Loumei's ZPD.

Moreover, the reformulation – constructs of appreciation and conditional – is syntactically and semantically more advanced than the original version, indicating the transition from low to high field of measure of generality (i.e., processes of the formation of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts has been advanced). It is important to note that this transition surfaces after the self-regulatory private speech *No*, indicating that Loumei is closer to self-regulation or control over pragma-linguistic choices in communicative situations.

Compared with the extensive exemplifications and confirmation sought in E12T4S8, this time I simply requested explanation. Meanwhile, Loumei's contribution to the problem-solving process in this episode is extensively greater than that in E12T4S8, as evidenced by the decreased and less explicit support required. In short, Loumei demonstrates important development within the ZPD from E12T4S8. Thus, I would argue that her improved pragma-linguistic performance in this case is the result of internalised L2 socio-pragmatic concepts

and mediator-student dialogical interaction within the ZPD. To see ZPD-oriented mediator-student dialogical interaction does promotes L2 pragma-linguistic performance in this case, I will briefly discuss Loumei's post-enrichment performance of a far transfer task in scenario 3 (7.3.5), in which her transcendent ability is demonstrated.

7.3.5

I am Brooke Rose, and I had online course – How to write a dissertation – between 12 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the* [yesterday] afternoon, but yesterday I received an email, claiming that I am banned from any online course for the next 20 days ((*explanation*)). So, would you um I was wondering if you, can you, could talk about the 20-day ban with me? ((*imperfect*, *if clause*)) (Loumei, scenario 3, request, post-enrichment)

Constant incorporation of newly learned mitigating devices – imperfect and if clause – is observed in this communicative situation, although instances of self-reformulation are traceable. However, self-regulatory private speech goes underground. This is development from prior session 8. During the mediator-learner verbalisation (E14S9), Loumei self-evaluated that she had made noticeable progress (line1). However, she also mentioned the role of external signs in mediating her thinking process while performing (lines 3–5).

E15S9

1. Mediator: 今天的表现要比上节课好很多 你个人是怎么认为的
   Good job, what do you think?
2. Loumei: 我感觉比头几次要好很多
   Much better.
3. 但就是看着材料 准备好久
   But I still have to rely on these notes and need to prepare for a long time.

4. 就是看着说 就是把意识来过来和你对话

   I have to be really focused.

5. 但是如果没有足够的时间准备 不把东西写出来的话 估计就接不上了

   If I don't have enough time to prepare and check these notes while speaking, it might be difficult for me to respond on the spot.

7.3.6 Discussion

So far, I have traced Loumei's micro-genetic development of a mitigating device, consultation, in relation to socio-pragmatic concepts. Overall, this developmental process is long and complex, in which Loumei demonstrated bidirectional struggles, that is, concrete-to-abstract (i.e., abstracting meaning categories from concrete communicative situations) and abstract-to-concrete (i.e., mapping concepts onto different communicative situations). Along with others, three remarkable phenomena were observed, namely, listing available information, regression, and self-regulatory private speech, which I will briefly recall and discuss.

First, pure enumeration of available information was observed when students started to analyse L2 materials. To recall, in E8T1S4, when the students as a group started to talk about the YouTube clip, Xuege, Yiqiao, Jingyu, and Xuanyu simply translated the transcript. As discussed, this phenomenon indicates that the locus of control over the task was externally situated within the information in front of the students, or object-regulation (see Frawley and Lantolf, 1984; McCafferty, 1992). As Frawley and Lantolf (1984) point out, object-regulation demonstrated at the outset of practicing L2 tasks might relate to the fact that individuals lack experience with the concerned task and thus object-regulated understanding

signals their starting to understand the task. Indeed, with extensive other-regulatory assistances, students started to talk about L2 materials in session 5 (E10T2S5), indicating the emergence of self-regulation. In this respect, my research findings support Frawley and Lantolf's (1984) claim. However, Loumei's struggle continued. To recall, in session 5 (E9T2S5), she failed again to abstract meaning categories from L2 materials. She afterward explained that she had struggled to dedicate some time to the programme (E10T2S5). In this respect, Loumei's poor performance with L2 material analysis might be explainable by her inactive engagement with the programme.

Second, the phenomenon of regression to extensive support was also observed. Specifically, while students initially attempted to map newly learned concepts onto communicative situations, they resumed random association and/or pseudo-concepts. To recall, in E11T3S7, Loumei and Nina explicitly claimed the lack of a conceptual mediating stage in their verbal thinking process after demonstrating progress in the immediately prior session. To overcome the problem, they regressed to extensive other-regulation. However, as demonstrated, this regression became the source of development and eventually gave rise to re-constructions of functional systems. In this respect, it now appears that this regression, rather than being a problem, was just what was needed to allow changes to happen when mediator and student dialogically worked together within the ZPD. It is the key element for the progress we call internalisation. This research finding is well in line with Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) which I discussed in Chapter 4.

Finally, self-regulatory private speech or dialogue (Wertsch, 1979) was observed. To recall, Loumei reassumed private dialogue, delivered in the fashion of L1-Mandarin amid role-playing during the last session. As demonstrated by her verbalisation in E14T5S8, from concrete referent-teacher (pseudo-concept) to abstract concept-relative power (real concept), Loumei completed this transition through private dialogue. In this respect, private dialogue functioned to assist her reflection on the immediate and mediated pragma-linguistic choices, selection between these choices, and finally, self-regulatory control over the immediate communicative setting, hence accomplishing the ongoing role playing.

This instance of resorting to private dialogue provides a beautiful manifestation of the attentional processes, selection attention and monitoring (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990), further supporting Vygotsky's argument on the meta-cognitive function of self-regulatory private speech. In short, private dialogue functions as self-regulation for the individual in order to gain control over the situation, that is, to complete the task. Thus, I would argue that, within the Vygotskian dialectical process model, the phenomenon of resorting to private dialogue, regardless of being delivered in L1 or L2, should not be perceived as inadequate language competence; instead, it should be reinterpreted as individuals trying to identify themselves in relation to communicative settings while within the process. However, though Loumei's self-regulatory function has demonstrated its existence in the form of private speech, it is still premature to assess her self-regulatory capability of voluntarily controlling concepts within varying communicative settings based on a single dialogic interaction.

It is noteworthy that, besides Loumei, Nina was another among the students who did not verbally demonstrate self-regulatory capacity of talking about L2 materials during session 5. Although it is beyond the present study to argue correlation between non-verbalisation and non-self-regulatory capacity, micro-genetic analyses of empirical results suggest that the process of Nina's concept formation is comparatively more complex than that of students who verbally engage in tasks, in the sense of resorting to previous knowledge and regression to extensive explicit other-regulatory help. Because of this, I will dedicate section 7.5 to tracing and understanding Nina's process of concept formation. For the moment, I will continue unfolding students' micro-genesis in the ZPDs, starting with AJT.

7.4   AJTs

In this section, I continue tracing learners' micro-genetic development of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to performance of step 3, negotiation, starting with AJTs. As mentioned in section 5.4.2.5, the DA procedures embodied in AJTs followed integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3). As mentioned in the methodology chapter, by analysing and discussing which L2 constructs are used and how they are applied, AJTs aim to assist learners in determining what to do and how to do it in varying communicative situations. That is, AJTs provide students with opportunities to re/test, re/organise, and re/construct their understanding of pragma-linguistic choices in relation to L2 socio-pragmatic concepts.

Since I traced micro-genesis of step 2, requests, in the preceding section, I will now focus on step 3, negotiation. The present study found that, among all

instructed variants, criticism and grounders are the top two constructs whose internalisation is significantly challenging for students. As demonstrated and discussed in Chapter 6, the locus of control over these two constructs even in post-enrichment session resides externally with learners' practical life experience (i.e., spontaneous knowledge) rather than internally with their intentions. Thus, for the present section, I will trace learners' micro-genetic development of the concept of criticism and in section 7.6, grounders.

As mentioned in Chapter 6, Loumei is the only student who attempted criticism during post-enrichment, which turned out to be inconsistent with her predesigned meaning intention. As we will see, this concept turns out to be a big challenge for Loumei throughout the programme. Eventually, to overcome the problem, Loumei resorted to extensive other-regulatory support. Against this backdrop, I continued choosing Loumei as a case to demonstrate the complexity of the micro-genesis of criticism in my classroom. It starts with her early encounter with this concept and its associated use in an AJT during session 5. Then, the discussion turns to her second encounter during session 8. Finally, I will discuss her application of the concept during a post-enrichment role play in session 9.

7.4.1 Criticism – Time 1

The concerned AJT is Loumei's pre-enrichment scenario 1 performance demonstrated in section 6.3.1.4. Role-players' names were removed from the transcript, thus students had no knowledge whose performance we were discussing. This AJT was thoroughly discussed in session 5 with the class in which Loumei was the principal addressed hearer and contributions were solicited from

the class when she failed attempts. Excerpts (E16T1S5, E17T1S5) are mediator-learner discussions drawn from episodes in this session. At issue here is Loumei's struggle with talking *about* pragma-linguistic choices (i.e., recognising each component of negotiation and reasoning them by referencing newly learned L2 socio-pragmatic concepts) and deploying newly learned content knowledge to reformulate them when necessary. Consequently, extensive support was provided. The conversation begins from the moment Loumei starts to address negotiation.

E16T1S5

1. Loumei: 是直接拒绝 是学生拒绝老师 是下对上

   It's a direct refusal. The student refuses the professor. It's a low-to-high situation.

2. 是没有考虑到对方的面子问题的 也没有考虑她们之间的社会距离

   The student didn't consider the professor's mianzi and the social distance between them.

3. Mediator: Um. 她是怎么具体拒绝的 她使用的是什么方法

   Could you please elaborate how exactly?, What devices the student used?

4. Loumei: 直接拒绝 ((final-falling intonation))

   Refused directly.

5. Mediator: 我知道 我是说直接的哪种

   Alright. I mean could you elaborate which specific device?

6. Loumei: 啊?

   Ah?

I invited Loumei to first recognise the semantic components embodied in the negotiation, then verbalise their potential meanings, and finally provide judgment followed by reason. She partially attempts the question, followed by a pure judgment (lines 1–2). Unarguably, Loumei indeed linked the semantic component to such concepts as face and social distance; however, she failed to fully attempt

the question (i.e., her response mismatched my intention). Upon hearing that, I redirected her to the topic, asking for elaboration (line 3), which Loumei understood as a signal that her previous response was problematic and thus needed to be readdressed, as evidenced by her brief answer in a final-falling intonation, indicating no intention to expand on the TCU (line 4). As in E5S3 (section 8.2.4), Loumei's attempt here addressed not so much *what* as *how*. In other words, her answer was irrelevant to the immediate question. In this respect, as with session 2, Loumei's definition of the situation constrained her from continuing the task.

I thus realised that my first prompt was unsuccessful. To help Loumei reconstruct her situation definition, I explicitly reformulated my question (line 5). She failed to attempt, as evidenced by the self-regulatory meta-comment *ah* (line 6), indicating that she understood the question; thus her situation definition changed. This moment is critical in that it signals that the reformulated question was sensitive to Loumei's ZPD, or, to use Wertsch's (1984) notion, my reorganised situation definition successfully connected with Loumei's situation definition. In this respect, a base for imitation was successfully negotiated for Loumei. This moment beautifully manifests Vygotsky's thesis/antithesis notion of development in the ZPDs. That is, Loumei's problem is revealed through inter-psychological dialogue. To achieve the synthesis necessary of promoting Loumei's self-regulation or control over pedagogical contents, I questioned further. The exchange continues in E17T1S5.

E17T1S5

7. Mediator: 我不认为她是一个简单的直接拒绝
   I don't think she simply directly refused the professor.

8. 是的 她用了一个 "no" 字 还有其它的吗

    Sure, she used the word "no". What else?

9. ((3 seconds))

10. Mediator: 她有匹配其它的吗 她肯定有匹配其它的 她中间说了这个一大堆呢

    She said a lot in here. What else did she do?

11. Loumei: 解释

    Explanation.

12. Mediator: 那个单词和句子是解释

    Which word or sentence is explanation?

13. Loumei: ((translates the remarks and reads them)) "如果牙医有时间 我就不会和你换了"

    "If he had time, I would not make you change the appointment".

14. 算吗 ((very low voice))

    Is it?

15. Mediator: 这是解释吗 ((rising intonation))

    You sure?

16. Loumei: 这算吗

    Is it.

17. Mediator: ((translates the remarks and re-reads them)) 如果牙医有时间 我干嘛要和你换呀

    If the dentist had time, why would I ask you to change the appointment?

18. Yiqiao: 这算是批判

    It is a criticism.

19. Mediator: 这就是 criticism.

    It is.

20. 她在 criticise 她的导师 这不是解释啊

    The student was criticising the professor rather than explaining.

21. Loumei: ((points at remarks of explanation))下面那个 ((falling intonation))

    Down here …

22. ((3 seconds))

23. Mediator: 她还说了什么   Oh. 下面有解释

    What else?   There is the explanation.

24. Loumei: Um.

25. Mediator: 这句是解释 对吧 ((reads remarks "Because the dentist is very busy. And I feel a great deal of pain"))

This one, right?

26. Loumei: Um.

I explicitly acknowledged Loumei's attempt by demonstratively pinpointing the direct semantic component of refusal applied in the negotiation and elicit her to expand on the topic (lines 7–8). I saw my first form of support was unsuccessful after witnessing Loumei's three-second-long inaction. Thus, I launched another explicit attempt, which Loumei understood as a signal that there were other semantic components that needed to be recognised, as evidenced by her successful attempt (line 11). However, she maps the concept onto the pragma-linguistic concretisation of criticism, followed by an other-regulatory meta-comment in a low voice (lines 13–14), indicating uncertainty. All these observations suggest that Loumei's previous attempt, though correct, was a random guess. So far, I would argue that it is the continuing push generated at the inter-psychological plane that helps diagnose Loumei's trouble source: unawareness of the concept, criticism. That is, it is the dialectical interaction, or contradiction, that propelled Loumei's trouble source to emerge. Had I simply accepted Loumei's attempt in line 12, her real trouble source would not have been revealed. Again, as I have argued in Chapter 4, regarding the mechanisms of other-regulation, graduation and contingency are necessary but insufficient to promote development.

To help Loumei resume the responsibility of carrying out the correction, I hinted at incorrectness via rising intonation (line 15). However, she failed to understand my intention, and continued seeking confirmation (line 16). Thus, I read my previous

prompt as unsuccessful. In response, I offered an explicit discourse explanation, which Yiqiao perceived as a signal that the concerned construct was not an explanation and thus needed correction, as evidenced by her successful attempt in line 18. However, after I explicitly acknowledged that Yiqiao's attempt was correct, instead of synthesising the contradiction just revealed, Loumei immediately redirected the topic, pointing at the remarks of explanation.

Interestingly, Loumei's act of redirecting the topic fills up the space which is generally occupied by a quest for elaboration, explanation, and/or demonstration. However, Loumei failed to attempt any of these. This observation is parallel to Vygotsky's observation of child pseudo-conceptual thinking. Specifically, when supposed to synthesise contradictory opinions and/or actions, the child demonstrates insensitivity (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky (1986) reinterprets this phenomenon as the individual lacking control over the immediate words or concepts embodied because his/her understanding of them is still regulated by pseudo-concepts of these words or concepts. Indeed, as we will see in E19T3S8 (considered in section 7.4.4), Loumei's resorting to pseudo-conceptual understanding of criticism firmly supports Vygotsky's notion of insensitivity to contradiction.

It is difficult to ascertain internalisation of the concept criticism and support offered during this dialogic interaction at this moment. However, as we will see, although Loumei again failed to independently recognise the concretisation of criticism during session 8 while analysing an AJT, she demonstrated strong sensitivity to contradiction emerging from the inter-psychological plane and subsequently contributed conceptual understanding of the construct. Now, I would like to trace

Loumei's second encounter with criticism drawn from a later episode in the same session (E18T2S5) in which I intentionally redirected Loumei's attention to the construct.

7.4.2 Criticism – Time 2

Here the students start to demonstrate, although to different degrees, capabilities of deliberately using concepts to mediate social acts, indicating development from session 4. However, Loumei did not, as she failed to reason and reformulate negotiation. Consequently, contributions were solicited from her peers.

E18T2S5

1. Mediator: Loumei, 你觉得她这个组合怎么样

   how you think about the negotiation?
2. Loumei: ((lengthy pause)) 下对上的话 会显的   ((lengthy pause)) (####)

   In the context of low-to-high, it seems like
3. 就是这个导师会给她贴一个负面的标签

   the professor will negatively stereotype the student.
4. Mediator: 嗯 你认为把这句怎么改改 下句 导师可能就不会这么说

   Alright. How would you reformulate it so that the professor would probably respond in a different way?
5. ((7 seconds))
6. Mediator: 你觉得这这句应该怎么改改呢

   How would you reformulate it?
7. Loumei: ((lengthy pause))
8. Mediator: 谁来试试 如果是你的话 你会怎么改改这个句子

   Anyone? Any ideas?
9. Yiqiao: 我认为要把这个 criticism 去掉 不能对导师这样的批判 毕竟她是地位高的

   I think it's better off if criticism's removed, because the professor holds a relatively higher position of power here.
10. Mediator: Um.

11. Yiqiao: 对的 还有就是最好不要使用直接的拒绝   "no".

    Besides, it's better not to use the direct refusing sign,

12. Mediator: Um.

13. Yiqiao: "I think" 这个词有点太主观 没有充分考虑到对方的

    this phrase is too subjective, it didn't take into consideration the

    interlocutor's

14. negative wants. 可以换成疑问句   "I was wondering if it's

    possible?"

    It could be reformulated into a query,

15. Mediator: Very nice.

16. Jingyu: 这句可不可以改成   "I hope so, but…"

    Any chance it can be reformulated into,

17. 就是先同意她的看法 然后在转折说自己的观点

    I mean first agree with him/her, then express my opinion.

18. Mediator: 当然可以

    Of course.

I redirected Loumei to the negotiation, seeking her thoughts on its use. She successfully attempted some concepts – relative power and stereotypes – to mediate the problem-solving process; however, her continued lengthy pauses seemed to indicate struggles (lines 2–3). To resume mediator-student dialogical interaction (i.e., to stay with Loumei's situation definition), I acknowledged that her analysis was reasonable and invited her to reformulate the concretisation (line 4), given she had demonstrated instances of imitation of requesting content knowledge in session 2 (section 7.2.2). Loumei paused. To ascertain Loumei's trouble source, I launched another prompt, encouraging her to retry the reformulation. However, she paused again (line 7). I thus turned to the class, which Yiqiao immediately understood as a signal that contributions were being solicited, as evidenced by her voluntary attempts, followed by Jingyu's offer (lines 9–17).

The conversation continued until all students were invited to attempt the reformulation.

Yiqiao deliberately deploys concepts of relative power, degree of imposition, and negative wants to mediate the reformulation. She successfully negates such upgraders as criticism, bluntness, subjectivizer, and explicit performatives through conceptual reasoning, indicating internalisation of socio-pragmatic concepts and requesting content knowledge. Additionally, the reformulation is syntactically and semantically more advanced than the original one. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that her improved pragma-linguistic performance is the result of internalised socio-pragmatic concepts. As with Yiqiao, Jingyu demonstrates similar conceptual reasoning in this case. All these observations evidence that Yiqiao and Jingyu's understanding of criticism not only has reached a higher latitude of conceptual thinking but has reached it earlier than Loumei at least. Importantly, they indicate Yiqiao and Jingyu's becoming autonomous self-regulation or control over variants of requesting and socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge within the ZPD. Equally important, the active engagement of Yiqiao and Jingyu also suggests that a collective ZPD is co-regulated between the students and me, even though Loumei is the addressed hearer.

In section 7.4.3, I continue tracing Loumei's micro-genetic development of construct criticism during session 8 during discussion of other AJT material. As we will see, although she failed to recognise the concretisation of criticism and reformulate it independently, she demonstrated important development regarding the ZPD.

7.4.3 Criticism – Time 3

The concerned material is a student's performance of scenario5, transcript could be found in Appendix R. To recall the communicative situation, student A turns to classmate B for help regarding her homework. During step 2, request, A applies downgrader, promise of reward, to soften the illocutionary force. Specifically, A offers to help with B's homework in the future. However, B refuses, saying, "It's my own business", presumably transmitting a meaning potential of criticising A's failure to handle her own business.

Loumei failed to recognise the sign of criticism while analysing the material independently. I redirected her attention to the construct during mediator-student discussion. Loumei resorted to life experience when invited to explain principles of the use of criticism, uttering the if-familiar-then-okay formula. To achieve the synthesis necessary for promoting Loumei's development, she regressed to extensive other-regulation. We pick up the conversation from the moment Loumei starts to justify her principle, in which she exemplifies an instance that her roommate offers to tidy up her laundry, but she refuses with "别动我的东西 那是我自己的事情 我自己会弄" (literally, "Don't touch my things. That's my own business. I can do it myself"). Of interest here is Loumei's response to contradiction negotiated at the inter-psychological plane. Specifically, different from the first and second encounter of criticism in which Loumei demonstrated pseudo-conceptual understanding, this time she successfully connects criticism to abstract social meanings such as rudeness and face-threatening (i.e., pre-conceptual understanding).

E19T3S8

1. Mediator: 如果真是这种情况下 你会说 "那是我自己的事情" 你还是会说 "谢谢"

   How about "thank you" compared with "it's my own business" in this context?

2. 其实你的心里是请不要动我的东西我自己来 但是你嘴巴上会表达出来吗

   An inner voice might say "don't touch my stuff, it's my own business", but will you say that to her face?

3. Loumei: 同学之间熟了会

   To classmates, yes, if I'm familiar with her.

4. Mediator: Okay 那就是熟了 也没必要这样啊 说个 "谢谢" 不就好了吗

   Though you're familiar with her, do you think it's necessary, given "thank you" can deliver the same meaning?

5. 何必要把事情搞得这么僵

   Why? Do you choose to make it difficult?

6. Loumei: 没有 ((laughter)) 我觉得大家都习惯了 都是这么说

   No.　　　　　　　I mean we all get used to that, that's how we talk.

7. 有时候 我心里也会不舒服

   Though sometimes I do feel quite uncomfortable about it.

8. Mediator: 对呀 你也感觉到了不舒服是吧

   See, you do feel uncomfortable, right?

9. 直接说 "谢谢哦 下次我自己来吧" 不就好了吗

   Don't you think "Thank you, please let me do it next time" can convey the same meaning?

10. Loumei: 这种完全不一样 这种是比较客气的 很礼貌

   This one is quite respectful and polite.

11. Mediator: 对呀 言外之意不是一样的吗 "不要动我的东西"

   Right? It delivers the same meaning as "don't touch my personal stuff".

12. 为什么要这么直的说出来呢

   Why did you choose a hostile way?

13. Loumei: ((laughter)) 这个可能跟那个　　　　　　　　um social distance 有关

   It might have something to do with

14. Mediator: 哦

   Oh.

15. Loumei: 如果跟一个不熟的人 我绝对不会这么说的 ((laughter))

    I'd never say that to someone I'm unfamiliar with.

16. Mediator: 你的意思是我们原来讲的其余的概念都不考虑了 权力地位 面子 责任 标签
    都不管了

    You mean you don't care about other things like relative power, face, responsibility,
    and stereotypes.

17. Loumei: 那也不是

    No, it's not like that.

    ((20 seconds))

18. Mediator: 那你认为这里的这句话换种说法会不会好一点

    Do you think it's better if we put it in another way?

19. Loumei: 会 比如说 "好呀 如果我遇到什么问题的话 我一定找你" 后面再加一个
    maybe 什么的

    Yes, like, "that's great, I will find you if I have problems." followed by

20. 毕竟以后的事谁也不知道

    'cause I might need her help in the future.

I sought confirmation to determine Loumei's understanding of criticism and gratitude, offering choices that, linguistically, fit into the refusing context she exemplified; Loumei immediately confirmed that she would choose criticism as a meant to refuse a familiar other (line 3). In response, I probed further, asking for clarification, listing possible consequence of applying criticism in the context, which Loumei apparently understood as a signal that her previous confirmation needed elaboration, as evidenced by her clarification and comment (lines 6–7). A self-contradiction (i.e., she knows it is inappropriate, but still uses it) was fully revealed at this moment. Upon hearing that, I confirmed her comment and elicited her understanding of construct gratitude, which Loumei immediately rendered as respectful and polite (line 10).

All these observations indicated that Loumei had some knowledge of constructs criticism and gratitude. In response, I probed further (line 12). Loumei referenced concept social distance, claiming the if-familiar-then-criticism-okay formula (lines 13-15). Interestingly, she stopped at the point where reflection on other L2 socio-pragmatic concepts generally should be added, and her laughter indicates that her utterance is semantically and grammatically complete and no further TCU is intended. To ascertain Loumei's definition of the situation, I sought confirmation, which Loumei politely denied (line 17). After a lengthy pause, I redirected the topic, seeking reformulation, which Loumei immediately understood as a signal that the concretisation was problematic and needed correction, evidenced by her offer and explanation (lines 19–20).

Interestingly, the reformulation (i.e., positive opinion and avoidance) was not the one I previously offered (i.e., gratitude). Loumei instead incorporated new downgraders discussed during session 2 rather than simply reproducing what was provided. This suggests internalisation of content knowledge of refusals and support provided during previous sessions. Regarding the ZPD, this means that mediator-learner dialectic interactions of session 5 were indeed unfolded within her ZPD. Importantly, the reformulation is syntactically and semantically more advanced than the original one. Accordingly, it indicates a transition from a lower to a higher field of measure of generality, i.e., the process of concept formation has been advanced. Certainly, it is premature to claim that Loumei had achieved control over construct criticism based on this single dialogic interaction; however, her autonomous use of downgraders as means of face-protecting is becoming ready.

However, Loumei resorted to the *if-X-then-Y* formula, or pseudo-conceptual thinking once demonstrated during pre-enrichment LAI. Thus, to achieve the synthesis necessary of assisting Loumei's development, I provided extensive support, entailing representing contradiction, seeking clarification, meta-discourse explanation, and providing answer. In this respect, Loumei demonstrates a regression from session 5. However, the fact that she successfully incorporated newly learned downgraders into the reformation indicates that a new functional system, face-saving in this case, is becoming autonomous. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that regression has given rise to development.

To see that regression did, in fact, lead to development in the case, I will consider a final excerpt (E19T4S9) drawn from an episode in the post-enrichment session in which Loumei demonstrated that she had internalised previous support and was thus capable of realising and self-correcting inefficacious linguistic choices with increased autonomy.

7.4.4   Criticism – Time 4

The concerned interaction is Loumei's verbalisation on step 3 negotiation of scenario 4. Regarding the performance, briefly, at step 1, opening, and step 2, request, Loumei successfully incorporated newly learned mitigating devices. However, at step 3, negotiation, as with pre-enrichment scenario 1, she attempted upgrader criticism in this far transfer, which was inconsistent with her pre-designed intentions of being deferential. However, unlike pre-enrichment, she realised the inefficaciousness of the use and attempted repair. The conversation excerpt begins when Loumei starts to clarify the application of criticism.

E20T4S9

1. Mediator: ((reads the negotiation: "I have talked with* him twice. But he said it's my own work. He wants me do* um he really gave nothing source <u>for us</u>"))

2. 你觉得这句话哪一点有点不当

   Any problem here?

3. Loumei: 可能就是我的表达有问题

   I think it's the word.

4. 我想说的是   ((pause))   你看 我在第二 我在后边儿说了

   What I meant to say is.   Look, later on I repaired it.

5. ((translates and reads the repair)) 他想让我们给出不同的想法和东西

   He wants us to be creative.

6. 所以我在第一句 我一表达出来我就感觉错了 ((refers to the top sentence))

   I immediately realised it's inappropriate to say that.

7. Mediator: 你觉得哪里错了

   In which aspect you think it's inappropriate?

8. Loumei: 就是听起来有指责不尊重自己的导师

   It sounds I'm criticising my teacher, it's disrespectful.

9. 这个是老师 他也是老师 我是学生 我就是考虑到我是来请求的

   They both are teachers, I'm a student seeking help.

10. Mediator: 嗯

    Um.

11. Loumei: 而且那一句说的真的是 ((gazes at the floor)) um …

    That's really …

12. 老师没有<u>给我</u>任何东西 ((translates and rereads the negotiation))

    He didn't' help at all.

13. 因为我当时想不出来其它的词了 所以我也没有立马改

    Coz I couldn't find another word at the time, so I didn't reformulate it immediately.

Loumei blamed the word when I directed her attention to the remarks, followed by an unfinished justification of intention and switch of topic, starting to talk about the repair in a follow-up exchange (lines 3–4). Of interest here is the filled pause which

precisely occurred at the point where Loumei was supposed to verbalise her intention behind the remarks. Importantly, Loumei did not attempt to continue the unfinished justification, as her self-evaluation of the criticism was semantically and grammatically complete (line 6). Upon hearing that, I probed further, seeking elaboration. Loumei apparently understood it as a signal that her self-evaluation was inadequate and needed further explanation, evidenced by her resuming the responsibility of carrying out the conceptual mediating task, deliberately applying the concepts of criticism and face-threatening to negate inefficacious linguistic choices (lines 8–13). In this respect, I believe this is development from session 5 and 8.

The incorporation of socio-pragmatic concepts into problem-solving process suggests that Loumei has some knowledge of socio-pragmatic concepts, indicating internalisation of, at least partial, support provided during excerpt E17T2S5. However, the very fact of her afterward realisation rather than beforehand precaution indicates that Loumei's control over these concepts had not matured at the time, because "the word is almost always at hand when the concept is ready" (Tolstoy, 1903, p. 143, cited in Vygotsky, 1986, p. 151). In this respect, Loumei regresses to old spontaneous knowledge for a moment in order to forward the ongoing role play. Indeed, as Vygotsky (1986) argued, "the major problem is an absence of appropriate concepts" in the individual (p. 151). In this sense, it is difficult to claim that Loumei had internalised concepts of criticism and face based on this single dialogical interaction. However, regarding the ZPD, Loumei's contribution to this dialogic interaction apparently expanded, as the responsibility for pinpointing and reasoning the concerned problem extensively rested with her

after I directed her attention to the remarks. All these observations suggested Loumei's internalisation of support provided in excerpt E19T3S8. Thus, I would argue that preceding other-regulative mediation was negotiated within Loumei's ZPD.

Another phenomenon revealed in this dialectic interaction is the emergence of pseudo-concepts. Note that while justifying the pragma-linguistic choices, apart from concepts, criticism and face, Loumei resorts to the concrete referent of the concept of power: teachers (line 9). Regression to pseudo-concepts manifested at this moment, indicating the interdependence of conceptual and pseudo-conceptual thinking during the transition from other- to self-regulation within the ZPD. This research finding is consistent with the phenomenon discussed in Kozulin (1984) and Vygotsky's (1986) study of concept formation discussed in Chapter 2. In this respect, my research finding supports the notion that regression, to either pseudo-concepts or previous knowledge or both, is an inherent characteristic of the Vygotskyan thesis/antithesis notion of concept formation within the ZPD (see Frawley and Lantolf, 1984; Kozulin, 1990). Thus, it is explainable by the Vygotskyan principle of continuous access discussed in Chapter 2. In this way, by resorting to spontaneous knowledge, Loumei was trying to regain control over the immediate reflection task.

However, importantly, this does not mean that Loumei at this moment fully regressed to the knowledge status quo manifested during pre-enrichment. Instead, Loumei's taking of responsibility and contributing to the dialogic interaction (i.e., using L2 socio-pragmatic concepts to reason her definition of the situation and providing reformulation of the concerned pragma-linguistic markers) indicate

internalisation of pedagogical contents and other-regulation previously provided. Additionally, the reformulation is syntactically and semantically more advanced than the original version. In this respect, it evidences the idea that the regression emerged at a higher level of mental functioning. This finding is well in line with Vygotsky's conclusion that when regression occurs, "the organism may become transformed from a higher to a lower state or stage, but that would *not* constitute retracing a previously traversed path in development" (Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991, p. 176). The phenomenon of regression can only be explained by the factual progress to a higher level of conceptual thinking (Vygotsky, 1986). In this sense, Vygotsky's developmental dialectical synthesis of ZPD is obvious. That is, object-regulation exists inter-dependently with self-regulation, which in turn makes resorting to object-regulation and/or other-regulation (regression) an inherent characteristic of development.

Clarifying and evidencing that regression emerges at an elementary higher level of individuals' mental functioning is relevant and important. Apart from obtaining a better understanding of its true essences across individuals' developmental processes of concept formation, namely, individuals resorting to object-regulation or other-regulation to regain control over the immediate communicative setting, we have established a more solid ground to reorganise the way concept formation has been perceived (e.g., McLaughlin, 1990). That is, it is essentially progress from within instead of regression (incompetence or mistakes) from without. In the context of L2, I once again reached the same conclusion: it might be more accurate if L2 incompetence, or failure, is reinterpreted as a control shift from self-regulation to object-regulation in order to forward the immediate task.

7.4.5 Discussion

In this section, I have traced Loumei's micro-genesis of socio-pragmatic concepts-power and face in relation to criticism and associated pragma-linguistic concretes. Bidirectional development of this process, concrete-to-abstract and abstract-to-concrete, have been fully unfolded in front of us in her four encounters with this construct. It is still premature to conclude that Loumei fully developed voluntary control over this construct, given that she did not independently successfully attempt its use during a role play in the last session of the programme. However, she independently recognised the inefficaciousness of its use and subsequently resumed responsibility of reasoning, which suggests her becoming autonomous in her self-regulation of this construct. In this way, I would argue that Loumei indeed internalised, if not fully, pedagogical contents of pragmatics and other-regulatory assistances provided over the programme. Accordingly, dialogical interactions were unfolded within her ZPD.

During the analyses, I have demonstrated structural functions played by regression from Vygotsky's thesis/antithesis perspective on development within the ZPDs. Specifically, it was the occurrence of regression that triggered the synthesis necessary for promoting Loumei toward the target of concept-based pragma-linguistic use, and subsequently it was the antithetical other-regulatory supports that materialised this synthesis. In this sense, echoing Wertsch (1980), I would argue that, dialogical interaction opens the door to learning; however, it is antithesis, contradiction, or collision materialised by mediator that pushes students' development within the ZPDs. This contradiction might, from outside the immediate interaction context, look like "tortures" (see Wertsch, 1980). However, the fact that

they functioned as the moving principle which gradually assisted Loumei's

emergence of a new perspective for looking at L2 construct criticism as it fully

unfolded in front of us. In this way, these series of "tortures" are the concrete

manifestation of Vygotsky's argument of instruction: "the only good kind of

instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it; it must be

aimed not so much at the ripe as at the ripening functions" (1986, p. 188). In this

sense, I would go further and argue that mediator-student dialogic interaction,

without two cooperatively co-constructing difficulties and collisions, is helpless in

terms of promoting development; these difficulties are the inherent components of

successful DA. However, by saying that I do not intend to suggest the more

difficulties, the better; instead, only difficulties aiming at realising synthesis are

helpful. In this respect, I would argue that "bruises" (Rousseau, cited in Vygotsky,

1986, p. 165), or collisions are powerful stimuli of voluntary concepts when co-

constructed within the ZPD.

Importantly, as I have demonstrated through the micro-genetic analyses, the

emergence of internalisation is not only a process, but one full of complexities.

Specifically, a series of dialogical interactions were conducted, during which

extensive other-regulatory help was provided. Additionally, pseudo-concepts

and/or everyday knowledge re-emerged in the process of Loumei's concept

formation. Importantly, they re-emerged not as meaningless or useless remains of

primitive functioning, but instead surfaced as means for Loumei to regain control

over ongoing communication contexts. In this way, resorting to pseudo-concepts

and/or everyday knowledge (i.e., regression) had a significant role to play during

communicative settings. Accordingly, not only is regression an inherent

characteristic of the process of internalisation, but it also bears structural functions within. Indeed, as argued by Wertsch and Stone (1985), "the emergence of [this] voluntary control is the general process involved in Vygotsky's approach to internalisation" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 65).

Another thing I want to mention here concerns the fact that internalisations of varying concepts do not progress at the same pace and might not reach the same level. Study results show that Loumei successfully connected request to the abstract meaning category explanation; however, she unsuccessfully abstracted meaning potential criticism from concrete negotiation. It was obvious that Loumei's concept formation of explanation preceded that of criticism. As I argued in Chapter 7, transition from other- to self-regulation within ZPDs is not an absolute; similarly, transition from pseudo-concepts to real concepts is not an absolute either. That is, formation processes of some concepts might last longer. These findings of Loumei are parallel with those found in Vygotsky (1986), which I discussed in Chapter 3.

7.5   DCTs

In this section, I will continue to trace students' micro-genetic development of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to pragma-linguistic performance of step 3, negotiation, starting with DCTs. As mentioned in section 5.4.2.6, the DA procedures embodied in DCTs followed the integrated DA procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3). As with L2 material analysis and AJTs, the micro-genetic development manifested throughout the implementation processes of DCTs is long and complex. Importantly, as discussed in Chapter 6, the mapping of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts onto step 3, negotiation turned out to

be more difficult for the students, thus, in this section, I will continue this topic but focus on socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to other downgraders such as empathy, disarmer, avoidance, and understaters.

Among the seven learners, Nina's struggle with mapping concepts onto performance (i.e., abstract-to-concrete transition) were comparatively more conspicuous; consequently, richer mediating support in terms of both amount and explicitness were provided. Thus, in this section, I chose to exemplify the case of Nina, tracing her micro-genetic development of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts and performances. To make this transitional process concrete, the discussion starts with Nina's first attempt to map empathy onto a refusing performance as part of the practice of step 3, negotiation. It then moves onto Nina's second encounter with the construct in which her real trouble source was revealed. After that, I will discuss Nina's third attempt to concretise the construct during a role play in which she failed to independently solve the problem. However, regarding the ZPD, Nina demonstrated important development. Finally, Nina's encounter with this construct during a post-enrichment scenario 4 will be traced.

7.5.1 Empathy – Time 1

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, DCTs were done in three phases: first, peer-peer discussion, then student independent performance, and finally mediator-learner dialectic interaction. The concerned DCT situation requires a learner (playing the role of a house host) to refuse a janitor's offer for a broken vase (see Appendix S for situation transcript). During peer-peer discussion, I performed as an information collector (i.e., no intervention at this moment). Based on my

observation, discussions were conducted in Mandarin. During mediator-learner discussion, when invited to share the written product, Nina volunteered, reading "It doesn't matter. The small china vase isn't ((switches to Mandarin)) 不值钱 ((literally not worth money))". Nina was interrupted because of L1 remarks. The discussion begins here.

E21T1S3

1. Mediator: ((reads, *"It doesn't matter"*)) 你是什么意思

   What do you mean?

2. Nina: 就是 "没关系"

   I mean, "Don't worry".

3. Mediator: Okay.

4. Nina: "不值钱" 怎么说

   How to put it in English?

5. Mediator: ((gazes the class and repeats the remarks))

6. 我们怎么说啊

   How do we say this?

7. Xuanyu: "Don't worth a penny".

8. Mediator: 这里你可以用   "no big deal".

   In this context you might use

9. Yiqiao: Oh, *"no big deal"*

10. Mediator: 不要说这个东西 "不值钱"

    Please don't say "it doesn't worth a penny".

11. 这个是我们中国文化的表达 直译传递不了这层中国文化的

    It's a Chinese culture–loaded expression. It's meaning cannot be delivered by literal translation

12. 你上来来个不值钱

    when you use it literally.

13. Yiqiao: 'Don't worth more'

14. Students: ((laughter))

15. Mediator: 这是什么 谁能听懂你的意思

What's that

16. "*no worries; don't worry about that*".

17. 这些表达 相当与 "不值钱" 安慰对方

    Those are equivalents   delivering empathy.

18. *"No worries"* 就可以了

    It's fine.

19. Nina: "No worries. I understand you um but maybe you shouldn't do this, because you because I know your family financial situation. It's not good".

20. Students: Whoa! 这也太让人难堪了

    This's so embarrassing.

The issue here appears to be linguistic, as Nina switches to L1 remarks to maintain intersubjectivity. This was further confirmed as Nina clarified that the intention behind *it doesn't matter* was to show her empathy (line 2). She explicitly requested assistance regarding the L1 remarks 不值钱 (literally, *no worth money*), after I implicitly acknowledged her response. Of interest here is this phrase – a Chinese culture–loaded notion, which seems to make no sense when literally mapped onto English in this communicative situation. To reach a general understanding of students' definition of the situation (i.e., whether the trouble source was superficially lexical or pseudo-conceptual thinking), I gazed at the class, widely soliciting contributions. Xuanyu immediately offered the literal translation of the L1 remarks (line 7). This moment is crucial, because it highlights the fact that the real trouble source is more complicated than vocabulary inadequacy. It is L1 thinking or thinking in pseudo-concepts[40].

---

[40] To clarify the relation of spontaneous concepts to scientific concepts, Vygotsky (1986) heavily exemplified L1 in relation to L2, claiming that the way L1 is used as mediating stage to L2 learning resembles spontaneous thinking, or pseudo-concepts, rather than real conceptual thinking.

I thus offered an answer (line 8). I find this mediating prompt unsuccessful in the sense that as a DA practitioner it was my responsibility to relinquish the responsibility of searching for the L2 equivalent at that moment (e.g., Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994), even though it did not fully deprive students of a learning opportunity, as evidenced by Yiqiao's attempt of the L2 equivalent (line 13). Interestingly, Yiqiao's offer seems to have simply replaced a word of Xuanyu's version, consequently causing laughter among students. Importantly, this meta-comment laughing (McCafferty, 1992) seems to indicate students' noticing the inefficaciousness of literal translation in this context. Thus, I pointed out the issue and provided an explanation (lines 15–18). However, as I have demonstrated and discussed in Chapter 7, students, especially, Xuanyu, resorted to this historically knowing learning approach during post-enrichment role plays.

Nina successfully incorporated the feedback and continued the DCT (line 19). This imitation indicates the mediator-student dialogic interaction did indeed unfold within Nina's ZPD. However, Nina was interrupted again. The trigger was the intention-act inconsistency manifest in her written product, which seems to have been conceived by the class as humiliation, as evidenced by the meta-comment (line 20). When invited, Nina did not immediately clarify her intention in front of the class. Her peers subsequently shared their products in turn with the class. I intentionally re-raised the topic during the mediator-learner verbalisation. We pick up the conversation from the point Nina when starts to talk about her DCT performance represented in line 19.

7.5.2   Empathy – Time 2

The issue here, as repeatedly emphasised by Nina (E22T2S3), seems to be that of linguistic choices. However, it turned out to be the incomplete transition from abstract concept positive/negative face to concrete application, or the verbalism discussed in Chapter 3. To solve the problem necessary to promoting Nina's development, she resumed extensive other-regulative mediations.

E22T2S3

1. Nina: 我是想站在对方的角度说 但是 ((falling intonation))

    I intended to speak for her by putting myself in her position, but …

2. Students: ((multiple voices)) 但是说出来的话 ((falling intonation))

    But the linguistic choices …

3. Mediator: 我们说站在对方的角度说 是当我们请求的时候 说

    Speaking of putting yourself in other's position, we mean, when requesting, you start with, like

4. 我知道你很忙/我知道我应该提前给你打个电话

    I know you're busy, and I should've called you ahead.

5. 对不对 这叫站在对方的角度说

    Right? This is putting yourself in another's position

6. Nina: ((laughter)) 我的本意是站在对方的角度去说

    I intended to put myself in her position to protect her face,

7. 可能就是词

    maybe it's the words

Nina repeats her intention but stops unfinished (line 1). Her hesitation indicates uncertainty, as further evidenced by the final-falling intonation, indicating no intention for a new TCU. The whole class seems to understand Nina's falling intonation as a signal of turn-availability, as evidenced by their unanimous contribution, blaming speech (line 2). Of interest here is, if the word had been the

real problem, Nina should have simply closed the DCT after incorporating the support *no worries,* and deleted the rest of line 19 (E20T1S3). Thus, upon hearing the students' response, I probed further, exemplifying concretisation of face-protecting and seeking clarification (line 3–5), which Nina apparently understood as a signal that her previous clarification was problematic and further explanation was required, evidenced by her intention repetition and blame for words (lines 6–7). Our conversation continued.

E23T2S3

8. Mediator: 但是你这又不是去保护她的 negative face 有必要去站在她的角度去说啊
   But you're not protecting her negative face; is it necessary to put myself in her position?

9. Nina: ((refers to the syntax morpheme in her DCT remarks)) 它不应该是通用的吗
   They fit all, don't they?

10. Xueli: 概念搞混了
    She's confused by the concept.s

11. Mediator: ((reads the DCT product)) ((gazes Nina))

12. 但是你要知道这个语境不适合这么说呀
    You misunderstood the context here.

I questioned further, seeking clarification. In her response, Nina verbalised her hypothesis of the applied syntax morpheme in a questioning tone, seeking confirmation (line 9). The very fact of seeking confirmation indicates misunderstanding of the applied syntax morpheme in relation to face-protection. Importantly, by saying "They fit all, don't they", Nina is talking about pragma-linguistic syntactic structures (e.g., I understand, but…. because….) that fit all different concrete referents rather than communicative situations sharing conceptual similarities. This is further confirmed in E23T2S3, to be considered

next. Thus, Nina here denotes a concrete referent rather than abstract conceptual meanings, or "concrete analogues of abstract concept" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 134). In this respect, her thinking process is still externally controlled by concrete referents (i.e., pseudo-concepts) rather than internally by concepts (i.e., conceptual thinking).

This episode manifests Vygotsky's thesis/antithesis notion of development in the ZPD. That is, dialogic interaction at the inter-psychological plane diagnoses Nina's trouble source at the intra-psychological plane – nonconsciousness of concept face-protection. In this respect, I would argue that had non-dynamic assessment been applied, Nina's real trouble source would not have been diagnosed and might appear as a purely lexical issue, but dialogic interaction reveals the antithesis (i.e., Nina's nonconsciousness of face-protection and lack of voluntary control over it). Thus, in order to achieve the necessary synthesis, that is, to promote Nina's development of pragma-linguistic performance in relation to concepts, I provided extensive support, starting as follows.

    E24T2S3

13. Mediator: Nina, 你是用的时候把这些概念给忘了 是吗

                did you forget to think through the concepts?

14. Nina: ((points at the socio-pragmatics and pragma-linguistics relationship diagram))

15. 也不是给忘了但是 就是 我当时真的是只能想到里面的点

    Not really. Actually, the only thing I could think of at the time is concrete pragma-linguistic expressions.

16. Mediator: 就是思维在这一块上 ((points at pragma-linguistic expressions))

        You mean here?

17. Nina: 对

    Yes.

18. ((points at socio-pragmatics)) 就是总结的那些概念的 然后就直接给抛在脑后了

All concepts we discussed were gone at the time.

19. Mediator: 举个例子啊 我给你写一下 ((writes on the blackboard))

Let me show you how to connect them in concrete communication situations.

Upon hearing Nina's explicit verbalisation of her thinking process (lines 15–18), I redrew the socio-pragmatics-pragma-linguistics relation diagram (Appendix T) on the blackboard. The exchange continues after line (19), in which we thoroughly re-discussed L2 socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to pragma-linguistic concretisations within varying communicative situations. Interestingly, at the end of the exchange, Nina explained that had Mandarin been allowed in the situation, she would have simply uttered "没关系 不用太在意 你继续做你的事" (literally, *It doesn't matter. No worry. You keep doing your thing*). This moment is critical because it highlights the apparent fact that Nina's L1 spontaneous thinking and L2 theoretical thinking[41] were in conflict with each other at the time, as evidenced by the resultant twisted performance (line 19, E20T1S3) in that it is neither a literal translation of the Mandarin remarks nor the L2 equivalent (note in this case the former coincidently somewhat matches the later). In this respect, I would argue that odd speech manifested in L2 communication discourse might be a phenomenon of the ongoing process of theoretical thinking being reorganised into spontaneous thinking and of the latter adapting to the former. Frawley and Lantolf (1984) observed a similar phenomenon of L2 discourse peculiarities emerging during L2 learners' transformation from object- to self-regulation. I have discussed this topic

---

[41] Note that Vygotsky explicitly analogises the interdependent relationship between spontaneous thinking and scientific thinking to that between L1 and L2.

in Chapter 2, I will not repeat it here. However, the point I wish to make is the mediating stages involved from thoughts to words, as Vygotsky (1986) claims, are complicated and peculiarities of L2 discourse are means L2 learners resume use of to regain control over the ongoing communicative situation (see also Frawley and Lantolf, 1984).

It is difficult, however, to ascertain whether and, if so, how much Nina internalised the conceptual knowledge and support provided during session 3 at this moment. Importantly, as discussed in section 7.3.3, Nina again, with Loumei, explicitly claimed the absence of a conceptual mediating stage while role-playing, after demonstrating during session 6 her ability to use conceptual knowledge to mediate semantic constructs of requests/refusals. Briefly, in order to overcome the problem, Loumei and Nina regressed to extensive other-regulative mediations during session 7. However, as I argued in section 7.3.3, a new functional system, incorporating the mediating stage of socio-pragmatic concepts into performance in this case, is emerging from regression and becoming autonomous, indicating internalisation of support provided. To see that regression did give rise to development in this case, I will consider an excerpt (E24T3S8) drawn from an episode of session 8 in which Nina demonstrates that she has indeed internalised support provided during previous sessions and is thus capable of mediating through concepts and self-correction with increased autonomy.

7.5.3 Empathy – Time 3

Nina encountered the same issue while concretising empathy during a near transfer role play in which Nina, adopting the role of a finalist, seeks information

about part-time job from a programme director (role adopted by me). Transcripts of the scenario comprise Appendix J. The concerned excerpt is Nina's verbalisation on the use of a modifier – the adverbial, little – during the role play, which appears to soften the illocutionary force when the reverse is expected given her intention of being deferential, expressed during the dialogic preparation stage. As we will see, although eventually Nina did not independently reformulate the inefficacious linguistic concrete, she demonstrated important development with regards to the ZPD. We pick up the discussion from the moment I redirect Nina's attention to the use of the adverbial, little.

E25T3S8

1. Mediator: ((reads "*Maybe this problem is a <u>little </u>difficult for you*"))
2. 你觉得这句话哪一点有点不妥

    Any problem in this sentence?
3. Nina: 可能 因为前面给对方提出来一系列的问题或是要求之类的

    Maybe, because I asked her lots of questions and also a big favour?
4. 那下面这句话就是 ((rereads the sentence))

    Then this sentence
5. 可能这个 *little* 估计用的有点不太好吧 ((falling intonation))

    probably in here is a bit problematic.
6. Mediator: 嗯

    Um.
7. Nina: 因为你毕竟向人家提出了很多的问题

    Because I actually asked her lots of questions.
8. Mediator: Yeah，这就是我有疑问的地方

    that's the thing I'd like you to clarify.
9. Nina: 嗯 提出了很多的请求 这个副词估计用的不太恰当

    Right, I made lots of requests. This adverbial is a bit inappropriate.
10. Mediator: 你表达的意思是 我给你提出了很多问题 这些问题言外之意 肯定会给你带来很大的麻烦

> *So, what you meant to say is you made lots of requests and those*
requests would highly possibly bring her lots of troubles.

11. Nina: Um 是

> *Yes.*

12. Mediator: 所以你觉得把这个 little 改成那个词可能好一点

> *So, which word is better than little here?*

13. Nina: 就是

> *I think it ….*

14. ((10 seconds))

15. Mediator: 比如说 我们原来用的最多的是 "I know you are quite busy",

> *For example, we once discussed the use of*

16. 我们一般不会说 "I know you are a little busy"

Usually, we don't say,

17. 我们一般都说 "I know you are quite busy", "you are very busy" 对不对

we use, *right?*

18. Nina: 对对对

> *Right, right.*

19. Mediator: 来 [加强对对方 ((overlapped))

> *to emphasise*

20. Nina: [加强对对方 um 表示歉意的程度吧

> *to emphasise* *degree of regret*

21. Mediator: 对 所以这里把这个 little 可以改成

> *Right. So, we can reformulate little into*

22. Nina: 改成 quite 或者 very.

> *or*

23. Mediator: Um.

24. Nina: 可能就是这个副词不太恰当

> *Tthe adverbial is a bit inappropriate.*

25. 这个场景要用程度比较强的副词 就是为对方考虑

In this context, an intensifier is needed to protect her negative want.

26. Mediator: 对

> *Right.*

After I directed Nina's attention to the remarks, she almost immediately pinpointed the problem (lines 3–5). However, the repeated use of hedging indicates her hesitation. Importantly, instead of applying conceptual knowledge to mediate the problem-solving process and offering self-correction, Nina merely offers a judgment. Note that Nina's judgment is both grammatically and semantically complete, as further indicated by her final-falling intonation. All these observations can be read as a signal that Nina closed the utterance, hence had no intention of linking the use of the adverbial to her conceptual knowledge of face-protection.

To help Nina reconstruct her definition of the situation, in response, I explicitly accepted Nina's attempt and signaled her to continue (line 8). This mediating prompt was rendered as unsuccessful as Nina simply repeated her remarks rather than using conceptual knowledge to reason and self-correct the problem (line 9). Upon hearing that, I launched a second prompt to lift Nina's situation definition, which she simply confirmed. At this moment, I questioned further, inviting Nina to self-correct the problem. She failed to attempt this, followed with a long pause, indicating struggles (lines 13–14). I thus initiated another form of support, reminding Nina of the concretisation of negative face-protecting discussed during previous sessions (lines 15–17), which apparently led to Nina's understanding, as evidenced by her repeated confirmation (line 18). This was further evidenced by her overlapping utterance which practically complements mine (line 20). Note the filled pause occurring between my utterance and the complement, arguably suggesting that Nina had not achieved full control over the construct of face-protection. I explicitly accepted Nina's response and solicited a contribution of reformulation, which she successfully attempted (line 22), followed with

explanations in which Nina successfully used the concept, face-protection, to mediate the situation definition (lines 24–25).

The fact that Nina uses concept face-protection to mediate the understanding of the situation indicates that she apparently has some knowledge of the concept. Importantly, note the reformulation – to very from the original performance, little, they semantically belong to two different fields of measure of generality, which in turn indicates a hierarchical structure of conceptual thinking is emerging in Nina's the ZPD (i.e., a degree of conceptual thinking is ripening). Moreover, compared with her full attention focusing on concrete referents during E21T2S3, Nina finally connected linguistic concretisation with conceptual knowledge of face-saving during E24T3S8. All these observations indicate that Nina indeed internalised supports provided during E23T2S3.

Taken together, from E21T1S3 to E24T3S8, Nina's micro-genetic development of concept face-protection was unpacked in front of us. With regards to support, a gradual transition from explicit to implicit other-regulatory mediation is obvious. To recall, extensive instructions were provided during session 3. However, in E24T3S8, my role mainly consisted of seeking confirmation and inquiry. Regarding Nina's responsiveness, significant changes were manifest, transforming from mere agreement throughout session 3 to offering explanations, identifying problems, self-correction, and conceptual reasoning during E24T3S8. In this respect, the transition from other- to self-regulation was becoming autonomous.

Importantly, although in both E21T1S3 and E24T3S8 Nina eventually failed to independently reformulate linguistic concretisations, the responsibility for

recognising and solving the problem extensively rests with Nina in E24T3S8. Moreover, her contribution to the reformulation in E24T3S8 is noticeable and support provided is extensively explicit. Finally, the fact that Nina deliberately used concept face-protection to reason the situation in E24T3S8 apparently indicates internalisation of the conceptual knowledge of face and mediating support provided over session 3. Regarding the ZPD, it means that the dialogical interactions co-produced throughout session 3 have indeed unfolded within Nina's ZPD.

Thus, I would argue that had a non-dynamic assessment approach been applied to diagnose Nina's development of pragmatic capability, none of those concrete and meaningful aspects of her transformation to self-regulation emerging within the ZPD would have been revealed. Moreover, had development of pragmatic capability been purely judged on independent performance, Nina's active contribution to problem-solving process and gaining mature control over the concept of face-protection would not have been diagnosed; consequently, a conclusion of no development of pragmatic capability would have been reached. However, this does not tell the whole truth. Indeed, as argued by Poehner (2009), a fair assessment of development can only be achieved when ultimate facts (i.e., solving or non-solving problems) and sensory materials of developmental moments (e.g., taking responsibility over problem-solving processes) are combined, because it is the combination of the two that makes the micro-genesis a whole.

Finally, Nina's improved conceptual knowledge can not only be attributed to mediating support rendered available during mediator-learner dialogic interaction (i.e., interaction within Nina's ZPD), but to her in-the-process-of-ripening ability which thus could be reorganised through the former. It is premature to claim that

Nina has fully developed control over concept face-protection after E24T3S8. However, her self-realisation of the problem and extensive contribution to the dialogical problem-solving process indicate her becoming-autonomous ability. To see the transcendency of the ability in the case in point, I will consider a final excerpt (E25T4S9) drawn from an episode of the post-enrichment session in which Nina demonstrates that she has indeed internalised support and is thus capable of conducting a far transfer role play with increased autonomy.

7.5.4 Empathy – Time 4

E26T4S9 is Nina's verbalisation on step 3, negotiation of scenario 4. Analysis of the communicative situation can be found in Chapter 6. Given the interest here is tracing Nina' L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual understanding in relation to performance, I will focus on the mediator-learner verbalisation stage. Briefly, during dialogic pre-preparation, Nina read the student's relation to the interlocutor as low-to-high power hierarchy and socially distant. Moreover, she uttered that she intended to be deferent given the interlocutor has no responsibility to engage in the review of her assignment. At step 3 negotiation, after the interlocutor's refusal, "*I am not sure your assignment is related to my area*", Nina negotiated a deal that was in her best interest as she says:

> I totally understand you ((*understanding*)). But I have attended your lecture several times. I know your lecture ((*plain statement*)), maybe my assignment is a little close to your lecture, so, I think maybe you can give me some opinions ((*understater; down-toner*; *hedged performative*)).

We pick up the discussion from the moment Nina starts to clarify her remarks.

E26T4S9

1. Nina: ((references the *plain statement*)) 这句说的确实是 太<u>打</u>对方<u>脸</u>了[42] ((laughter))

   It's so embarrassing.

2. Mediator:你当时有理解到对方的话其实是一个搪塞而不是咨询你的论文和她的领域是否相关

   You know it's an avoidance, not a question, right?

3. Nina: 我知道这是一个搪塞 她是在拒绝我

   I know it's an avoidance. She's refusing me.

4. Mediator: 嗯

   Um.

5. Nina: ((pause))

6. Mediator: 嗯 哪然后呢

   Um, and …

7. Nina: ((laughter)) 然后 那你要是再提出请求

   and, if you want to get what you want ((3 seconds))

8. 我就是想顺着她的话说其实 ((laughter))

   I just have to play with the words and pretend I didn't get her point.

9. Mediator: 所以 你是知道她的言外之意的

   So, you knew its psychological subject

10. 但是你回答我的时候确是按字面意来回答我的

   but you answered to its grammatical subject.

11. Nina: 我也在想啊

    Right.

12. Mediator: 啊

    Ah.

13. Nina: 让她帮我   ((laughter))

    To make her help me.

Nina immediately acknowledged that her negotiation was face-threatening,

followed by a self-regulatory meta-comment laugh (line 1), indicating full

---

[42] "<u>打脸</u>" ((literally, *slap face*, of which the English equivalent is face-threatening)) is a Chinese proverb.

awareness of the situation. To determine Nina's situation definition, I sought

confirmation that she had understood the interlocutor's utterance as a query rather

than avoidance (line 2). Nina immediately claimed the psychological sense of the

utterance as a refusal (line 3)[43]. Her understanding of avoidance as a refusal

strategy and voluntary mastery of this knowledge to regain control over the

immediate situation indicate Nina's internalisation of content knowledge and

support provided over the programme.

To ascertain Nina's definition of the situation, I probed further seeking explanation,

which Nina apparently understood as a signal that her simple confirmation was

inadequate and needed clarification, as evidenced by her meta-discourse

explanation (lines 7–8). Of interest here is Nina's continuing self-regulatory meta-

comment laugh (McCafferty, 1992), seemingly indicating awareness "of the activity

of the mind – the consciousness of being conscious" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 170). I

probed further and sought confirmation, querying if Nina intentionally addressed

the stable *meaning* of the interlocutor's remarks (i.e., *"I am not sure"*) rather than

the *sense* (i.e., *"I cannot help you"*), which she explicitly acknowledged (lines 11–

13).

If we disregard any possible stereotypes on part of the interlocutor after hearing

Nina's negotiation, what happened here is a micro-manifestation of Nina's

internalisation of conceptual knowledge of especially second-order indexicality and

positive want and of support provided during mediator-learner dialogic interaction

---

[43] To recall, Nina during pre-enrichment LAS explicitly claimed that the promise of future
acceptance and avoidance, to her, were not considered expressions of refusals.

in Nina's ZPD. Specifically, when Nina's request was negated by the interlocutor, she consciously deployed concept second-order indexicality to mediate her pragma-linguistic choices so as to protect her positive want. Certainly, it is premature to claim that Nina has fully internalised the knowledge of indexicality based on a single role play; however, that she is becoming autonomous and confident in consciously using the knowledge to regain control over the communicative situation is obvious. Once again, assessed in isolation, Nina's linguistic choices would have been evaluated as inappropriate, indicating no development of pragmatic capability. It is the mediator-learner dialogic interaction that renders the dynamics of Nina's development process clear.

7.5.5 Discussion

In this section, I have traced Nina's micro-genetic development of socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to the pragma-linguistic downgrader empathy. Overall, this developmental process was remarkably circuitous, meandering throughout the nine-week programme. Specifically, that thinking in complexes, pseudo-concepts, and conceptual thinking interdependently exist, together with regression, characterises this entire process. It can be concluded that Nina was becoming autonomous in terms of regulating socio-pragmatic concepts to obtain control over tasks at the end of the programme. However, it is premature to argue that, for the same task at different times and/or different tasks at different times, she was ready to self-regulate social acts of requests.

Importantly, the finding that Nina continuously shifted between elementary pseudo-concepts and advanced higher mental function concepts over nine sessions, while

encountering similar tasks at different times and/or different tasks at different times, is in line with Frawley and Lantolf's (1985) conclusion that transition from object- to other-regulation and to self-regulation within the ZPD is not an absolute. That is, individuals who successfully attempt a particular task at one time might fail to do so at different times on the same task; similarly, individuals who successfully attempt one task might fail to do so on different tasks. However, these empirical results do not negate the fact that dialogic interaction unfolded within individuals' ZPDs is helpful. Indeed, as Poehner (2009) argues, improved performance is the eventual rather than the immediate product of concept formation though its immediacy is sometimes observable. He continues that improved performance should not be perceived as the only indication of successful dialogic interaction (DA); instead, sensory materials which give birth to this performance, entailing increased claim of responsibility and contribution to the problem-solving process and decreased other-regulatory supports required, should be indications of successful DA. This not-an-absolute is an inherent characteristic of development in the ZPD. Indeed, Vygotsky's thesis/antithesis notion of development claims that developmental process is an integration of evolution and revolution, during which individuals' capabilities are constantly changing while newly instructed theoretical concepts and existing spontaneous concepts are dialectically reorganised into each other (Vygotsky, 1981, 1986; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995; Frawley and Lantolf, 1985; Poehner, 2011).

At this moment, the drive behind Nina's growing voluntary control over communicative settings and ripening awareness of socio-pragmatic concepts is clear. As I argued in section 7.4.6, dialogic interaction and contingent other-

regulative mediations provided throughout the nine sessions were the moving

principle underlying individual's emerging consciousness of concepts. Indeed, as

Wertsch (2007) argues, dialogic interactions, other-regulatory support (e.g., signs,

notes, diagrams, collisions/contradictions) and all other types of mediation are the

"hallmark of human consciousness" (p. 197). In this respect, I would argue that

Nina's higher forms of behaviour were the internalised semantic mediations

provided over the programme.

7.6   Role play

In this section, I will continue tracing learners' micro-genetic development of L2

socio-pragmatic concepts in relation to pragma-linguistic performance of step 3

negotiation, starting with the initial attempts at role plays. As mentioned in section

5.4.2.7, the DA procedures embodied in role plays followed the integrated DA

procedures and task implementation procedures (section 5.4.2.3). Starting from

session 6, learners began to use newly learned concepts to mediate acts within

dynamic communication situations. As discussed in the methodology chapter, role

plays were done in three phases: first, mediator-learner dialogic preparation;

second, performance; and finally, mediator-learner verbalisation. As with DCTs, the

micro-genetic development manifest throughout the implementation processes of

role plays is long and complex. Importantly, as I demonstrated in Chapter 6,

processes of mapping socio-pragmatic concepts onto step 3 negotiation turned out

to be quite problematic. Thus, in this section, I will continue this topic but focus on

concepts in relation to the downgrader, grounder.

To achieve this goal, I will choose Jingyu as a case. The reasons behind this decision are twofold. First, although all seven learners were covered in the present chapter, I heavily focused on Loumei and Nina's micro-genetic development, given the richness of support they demanded to internalise concepts. As I discussed in Chapter 6, Jingyu demonstrated consistent performance improvements, as did her peers, during post-enrichment role plays, in this respect, she is representative of the class. Second, however, unlike her peers during post-enrichment mediator-learner verbalisation, Jingyu was the only student who explicitly claimed that it is an absolute that teachers from the same institution have the responsibility to help students when requested. Consequently, our dialectic interaction on this topic is relatively thicker than that with her peers. In this respect, Jingyu's case arguably captured wider dynamics of mediator-learner dialogic interaction and thus is critical.

As mentioned in preceding sections, to assist students in adjusting to the transition from abstract understanding of concepts to using the concepts to master acts, pre-enrichment scenarios 1 and 2 were re-implemented as very near transfers in sessions 6 and 7. It turned out the transition was very uneven but rewarding. Enactment of concepts, especially obligation and degree of imposition, continuously caused problems. In the present section, I will first trace the dialogic preparation of scenario 1 wherein a student started to talk about the concepts, and then the mediator-learner verbalisation of scenario 2 in which students reflected and commented on Jingyu's reperformance of scenario 2. After that, Jingyu's third and fourth encounter with the concepts during post-enrichment scenarios 3 and 4 will be discussed respectively. As a reminder to the reader, given the interest here

is students' micro-genetic developmental processes of concepts in relation to performance, only mediator-student dialogic preparations and mediator-learner verbalisation will be traced.

7.6.1 Reason/explanation – Time 1

During the mediator-student dialogic preparation, students either volunteered or were nominated to talk about the scenario. Specifically, Nina demonstrated instances of deliberate use of social distance to assist understanding of this situation, and seek and plan concrete pragma-linguistic choices; Xuege addressed power hierarchy, and Yiqiao, self-presentation. We pick up the discussion from the moment I nominated Jingyu to expand on the topic. Of interest here is that Jingyu seemed to struggle to link meaning categories of obligation and degree of imposition to social acts. Finally, to overcome the problem, she resumed extensive support.

E27T1S6

1. Mediator: Jingyu, 呢

    anything else?
2. Jingyu: Um. ((final-falling intonation))
3. Mediator: 这里面的义务关系

    Any idea about the dynamics of responsibility?
4. Jingyu: Um.
5.   ((3 seconds))
6. Mediator: 咱俩 之前是约好的是吧

    The appointment has been scheduled, right?
7. Jingyu: 嗯

    Um.
8. Mediator: 是谁违约了

Who wants to call it off?

9. Jingyu: 是 我学生

    The student.

10. Mediator: 你 对吧

    You, right?

11. Jingyu: 嗯

    Um.

12. Mediator: 你违约了 这事我就不承担责任了

    You want to call it off, thus the professor has no responsibility to owe the consequence.

13. Jingyu: 对

    Right.

14. Mediator: 言外之意是 这件事 我是没有义务的 你跟我换时间 我没有义务答应的

    In other words, the professor is not obliged to accept your request for a reschedule.

15. Jingyu: 嗯

    Um.

16. Mediator: 所以你在语言用词上你要小心

    You need to be mindful of your words.

17. Jingyu: 对 就是道歉啊

    Right, like an apology,

18. 还有就是 一些 please

    or

19. 就是站在对方的角度立场

    and disarmer,

20. 或者是 consultative ((laughter)) 咨询

    or   consultative.e

21. Mediator: 咨询   consultative

    Consultative.

22. Jingyu: 嗯 对   consultative.

    Um right,

23. Jingyu: 就是 整个过程中要降低自己的语调 因为是你在请求

I need to minimise the degree of imposition, coz I'm the one who's asking for a favour.

When invited to verbalise on the thinking process, Jingyu hesitated, and the final-falling intonation sent a signal that she had no plan to initiate a new TCU (line 2). To ascertain Jingyu's definition of the situation, I intervened, directing her attention to the dynamics of responsibility involved (line 3). She again failed to attempt the topic. I realised that my previous prompt was unsuccessful after Jingyu's long pause. Thus, I launched a second attempt, eliciting her to re-understand the communicative situation (line 6). This time, Jingyu started to engage with the intersubjectivity. To help Jingyu reconstruct her situation definition, I explicitly redirected her to concept responsibility (line 12). Jingyu seemed to have gotten my point, as evidenced by her acceptance (lines 13–15). I thus redirected her attention to linguistic markers, reminding her to be cautious, which Jingyu obviously understood as a signal that she needed to link the concerned concept to linguistic choices, as evidenced by her successfully mapping the former onto the latter (lines 17–23). All these observations indicate that Jingyu had some knowledge of requests. Interestingly, Jingyu misspoke mitigating device consultative and immediate resorted to L1 to remain intersubjectivity (i.e., mutual-understanding), following meta-comment laughs, which suggest her struggle for control over it. Jingyu immediately incorporated my recast and linked it to the concept of degree of imposition (line 21).

Jingyu encountered difficulties using conceptual knowledge to mediate understanding and reasoning of the communicative situation from the very beginning. To achieve the synthesis necessary for assisting Jingyu to regain

control over the immediate task, extensive other-regulative mediations were negotiated, entailing discourse analysis and meta-discourse explanation. Regarding responsiveness, Jingyu finally resumed responsibility and started to independently map the concepts face-protection and degree of imposition onto L2 pragma-linguistic choices, resuming the responsibility of carrying out the immediate task. All these observations indicate internalisation of content knowledge and other-regulative mediations provided during previous sessions. However, the fact that she resorted to extensive support suggests that Jingyu's transition from other- to self-regulation is still in the process of emerging.

Importantly, after assisting Jingyu in re-understanding the communicative situation, I linked the latter to socio-pragmatic concepts. However, had I prompted Jingyu to take the responsibility of carrying out this transition, different mediator-student interactive dynamics might have emerged. Indeed, as Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) point out, knowing when and how to relinquish the responsibility of continuing the immediate task is the key to facilitating L2 learners' transition from other- to self-regulation. I quickly realised the over-mediation and immediately withdrew from it, relinquishing the responsibility of mapping the concepts onto pragmatic choices to Jingyu, which she then successfully attempted.

The dialogic preparation continued until all relevant concepts were covered. Role plays were conducted afterward (seven students separately partnered with me). All students successfully demonstrated intention-act inconsistence. For the current interest, I will continue Jingyu's second encounter with the concept obligation while reperforming scenario 2 during session 7.

7.6.2 Reason/explanation – Time 2

During mediator-learner dialogic preparation, learners unanimously agreed that the lecturer holds the authority and should be respected. However, learners demonstrated different interpretations regarding social distance. Jingyu, Loumei, and Xueli conceived of the student-lecturer relationship as close, reasoning that the two met each other a long time ago. By contrast, Xuege, Yiqiao, Nina, and Xuanyu considered the relationship distant and decided to play safe, worrying that the lecturer might not remember the student. Moreover, all learners stated that the lecturer had no responsibility to offer comments on the student's article.

All learners separately role-played the scenario with me in the role of the lecturer. When it was Jingyu's turn, the other learners were observing, taking notes, or preparing their own performances. Briefly, in step 1, opening, Jingyu resumed an old usage – upgrader want statement – and in step 2, request, she used the upgrader explicit performative. For step 3, negotiation, she applied modifiers of understanding and an upgrader, plain statement. For the requesting strategy, she initially used a want statement but immediately negated it with downgraders, appreciation and if clause. Specifically, she unfolded the step 3 negotiation as follows:

> Yeah, I <u>totally understand</u> that* your schedule ((*understanding*)). <u>But the thing is</u> <u>that this paper is very important to me. It can benefit my career in the future</u> ((*plain statement*)). I want you to um I would <u>appreciate it</u> <u>very much</u> <u>if</u> you could read it again and give me some comments ((*appreciation; adverbial intensifier; if clause*)).

I believe the applications of understanding and appreciation here are development from her pre-enrichment performance. However, the concretisation of grounder plain statement was inconsistent with her intention to minimise the degree of imposition. Given that the interlocutor did not have the responsibility to offer help, her request delivered a high degree of imposition by ignoring the former's negative want (see Blum-Kulka, et al. 1987b).

Mediator-learner verbalisation was afterward conducted, in which learners were encouraged to comment on Jingyu's performance. We pick up the verbalisation from the moment I invited Nina to comment on the step 3 negotiation, concretisation of plain statement. Of interest here is learners' contributions to the diagnosis of the real trouble source underlying the unawareness of the concepts of obligation and degree of imposition. As we will see, to reveal the trouble source, extensive support was provided.

E28T2S7

1. Mediator: 娜你来说说看 你觉得这里哪个概念没有完全的处理好

    Nina, which concept do you think wasn't handled carefully?

2. Nina: 我觉得是那个 responsibility, 强迫度

    I think it's   degree of imposition.

3. Mediator: Responsibility. Yeah ((final-rising intonation))

4. Nina: 嗯 那个 ((low voice))

    Um, that

5. Mediator: 她没有意识到对方其实是没有义务去帮助她的 对吧

    She didn't realise that the professor had no duty to help her.

6. Nina: 对

    Right

7. Mediator: 嗯 为什么呢? 她为什么没有意识到?

    Why?   How come

8. 有时你也会意识不到 对吧

   sometimes you didn't either, right?

9. Nina: 嗯 是

   Um.

10. Mediator: 那为什么呢? 在你的场景中你为什么也没有意识到

    You didn't either, why?

11. Nina: 因为在某一特定的场景中 你对某件事情特别的着急

    Because sometimes you're so anxious about something

12. 有可能当时自己的心里 真的是只顾及到自己的感受了

    the only thing you can think about at the moment is yourself.

13. Mediator: Oh. ((final-decreasing intonation))

14. Students: ((multiple voices)) ((laughter))

15. Mediator: 在坐的其它人呢? 你没有没有这种类似的?

    Anyone?   Different ideas?

16. 太着急了 只想着自己 其它的我都不管了

    You are too anxious to think about others.

17. Nina: 就是在特别着急的情况下

    Especially when you're anxious about something.

18. Mediator: 做为一名学生你有什么特别着急的事情 无非是中午吃什么去几号窗口买饭

    What counts as urgent to you as a student – which Chinese cuisine for lunch?

19. Students: ((multiple voices)) ((laughter))

20. Xuege: 学生有可能觉得 这个老师之前是负责这个的

    The student might think because the teacher once was responsible for this,

21. 她就想着以前也是找这个老师 所以这次也找这个老师

    it was this teacher last time; so, it should be him/her this time as well.

22. Mediator: 哦 但她就想了这么一点

    Oh, but she didn't realise,

23. 没有想到上次老师是有义务 这次老师是没有义务的

    it's the teacher's job last time, but not anymore.

24. Xuege: 对对

    Right.

25. Mediator: 嗯 习惯了是不是

Um. It's become a spontaneous reaction.

I nominated Nina to share her thoughts. She immediately linked the remarks of reason to concept-responsibility (line 2). I echoed her utterance, signalling her to continue. Interestingly, Nina responded with um and attempted in a low voice to repeat her utterance but stopped in the middle (line 4), indicating uncertainty. I sought confirmation, to which Nina responded, right (line 6). To ascertain Nina's definition of the situation, I probed further, seeking the trouble source that gave rise to FTAs (lines 7–10). In response, Nina justified, blaming anxiety (lines 11–12). I responded um with a final-decreasing intonation, which students understood as a signal that Nina's justification was limited in the sense of degree of decontextualization (Wertsch, 1985) and thus needed explanation, as evidenced by students' self-regulatory meta-comment laughter (line 14). Interestingly, however, none of the students attempted to take the floor. Noticing this, I realised that my last prompt was unhelpful in engaging students with the immediate problem-solving process. Thus, I further probed, this time explicitly seeking expansion on the topic. The students obviously understood my prompt as a signal that Nina's justification was limited and thus needed clarification, as evidenced by Nina's second attempt (line 17). However, she only repeated her previous remarks. To help students resume the responsibility of carrying out the problem-solving process, I relaunched another prompt, explicitly negating Nina's reasoning by

kiddingly comparing it to choosing Chinese cuisine during lunch break[44], thus normalising the process.

Xuege obviously understood my intention this time, as evidenced by her active contribution to the concerned problem, commenting on lived experience in relation to ignorance of obligation (lines 20–21). I afterward linked FTA to the concept of responsibility and closed the topic by purely pointing out the phenomenon that unawareness of obligation is internalised social relations, historically knowing the teacher-student relation in this case (lines 22–25). This final prompt although not unnecessary, was undesirable. Had I relinquished the responsibility of using socio-pragmatic concepts to help understand this situation, more sensory dialogic interaction with regards to what-to-do and how-to-do-it might have been elicited. At this moment, Jingyu took the floor. Our exchange continued.

E29T2S7

1. Jingyu: 我就觉得 两个人对话的时候 就是我们学的 我们都理解

   To me, I understand all that we've discussed.
2. 但是就是需要反应一下我要用哪个

   However, while role playing, I need time to think about what and how to say it.
3. Mediator: Yeah.
4. Jingyu: 在加上咱俩对话那个时候 时间有点紧

   Plus, the time pressure,
5. 然后一紧张 然后 就把原始的给说出来了

   then I became so nervous that the historically knowing knowledge,
6. 就把最早的 记忆里最深刻的说出来了　　　　　　　　　比如 *I want you to*

---

[44] Chinese foods are famous for variance in terms of colour, aroma, taste, and appearance; consequently, which cuisine to choose has become culturally well known as the most difficult everyday decision to make.

previously learned stuff which are deeply rooted in my memory jumps out, like, "I want you to."

Jingyu explicitly blamed time as well as psychological pressure and defended her regression to historically knowing knowledge (lines 4–6). Importantly, she exemplifies one of her frequent requesting strategies – want statement – which I demonstrated and discussed in Chapter 6, indicating her "consciousness of being conscious" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 170). However, given the present study does not investigate emotion in relation to L2 pragma-linguistic choices, I did not comment on Jingyu's explanation. Nonetheless, resorting to historically knowing knowledge was a typical means Jingyu applied to re-establish relation with the ongoing role play to regain self-regulation or control over the immediate situation.

So far, how the real trouble source underneath students' unawareness of concept obligation was revealed has unfolded in front of us. Regarding the support provided to facilitate this process, three major prompts were concretised: seeking explanation, soliciting contribution, and constructing collisions. By contrast, students demonstrated relatively monotonous responses. Nina's repeated justification and other students' continuing meta-comment laughter constituted most of the reactions. In this respect, it is reasonable to argue that implicit hints and explicitly soliciting contributions was not helpful in the sense of making students take over responsibility and contribute to the problem-solving process. However, constructing collisions successfully impelled students to realise, reflect, and ultimately reason out the immediate problem, which eventually rendered students' real trouble source clear. In this way, it can be concluded that it is the

collisions, contradiction, or antithesis constructed on the part of the mediator that finally diagnose the students' real trouble source.

Jingyu faced the task of mapping meaning categories of obligation-free, face-protection and low degree of imposition onto pragmatic performances again during post-enrichment scenarios. As I demonstrated and discussed in section 6.3.3.2, Jingyu demonstrated constant improvement from pre-enrichment performance while role-playing scenario 3 in terms of intention-act consistency. However, intention-act inconsistency reappeared a few minutes later while performing step 3 negotiation of scenario 4. As we will see, Jingyu resorted to her lived experience, or spontaneous understanding of obligation, as the means to self-regulate relations with the ongoing negotiation in order to finish it. To achieve the synthesis necessary for Jingy to re-construct her definition of the situation, she regressed to extensive mediation. Although Jingyu failed to solve the problem independently, she took responsibility for carrying out the task and successfully attempted the reformulation. To see how this regression to other-regulation gave rise to development in the case in point, I will consider a final excerpt drawn from post-enrichment session 9 in which a new functional system, mapping concepts of power, face-protection, and low degree of imposition on pragmatic choices, emerged in this case.

7.6.3 Reason/explanation – Time 3

During the dialogic preparation, Jingyu verbalised her interpretation of the context and meaning intentions to be delivered. She emphasised the non-responsibility on part of the professor and thus intended to be deferential, respectful, and mindful of

the amount of imposition. Regarding step 1, as with scenario 3, Jingyu opened the

conversation with a pre-pre-strategy (greetings), apology and preparation

availability checking, indicating autonomous control over step 1, opening.

Regarding step 2, request, she incorporated downgraders such as a grounder and

aspect imperfect. Compared with the direct strategy of want statement applied in

the reperformance of scenario 2 in session 7, I believe this was development.

However, she used the upgrader plain statement at step 3 negotiation, which

seemed to be inconsistent with her pre-designed intention. Furthermore, private

speech want statement emerged, which was immediately negated by at attempt at

downgrader past tense. She unfolded the negotiation as follows:

7.6.3

Mediator: Okay, who is your supervisor?

Jingyu: Miss. Smith is my supervisor. But I have attend* your class
((*grounder plain statement*)). And I think your class is very interesting, so,
um and I admire you very much ((*sweetener*)), So, I want you to um, so, I
wanted you can* help me ((*past tense*)).

Mediator: Thank you, but I do not think that I am the right person for this,
the main reason is that I have no knowledge about your topic. I think it's
better if you can talk to your supervisor first.

Jingyu: My supervisor has* a trip in a foreign country, and the assignment is
urgent ((*grounder plain statement*)). So, I wanted you to give me your
opinion ((*past tense*)). And it only 500 words, it won't take you much time
((*plain statement; understaters*)).

(Jingyu, scenario 12, negotiation, post-enrichment)

During mediator-learner verbalisation, Jingyu talked about her performance. We pick up the discussion from the moment she started to reason out the plain statement.

E30T3S9

1. Jingyu: 因为我不是他的学生

   Because I'm not his student,

2. 然后我后边 跟他说一句就是在之前我参加过他的课程

   then I said, I once participated in his class.

3. Mediator: 嗯

   Um.

4. Jingyu: 然后就是间接的告诉他 他也是我的导师

   Then I was trying to indirectly tell him he is also my supervisor.

5. 所以说我感觉他帮我是正常的

   So, I think it's his obligation to help me.

6. Mediator: 为什么你参加过他的课 他就是你的导师

   Why do you think because you once participated in his class, that then he is your supervisor?

7. 这个课是上一年的事啊

   It was last year, how is that relevant now?

8. Jingyu: 就是 我想表达的是就是我之前参加过他的课程

   I mean, I meant to say I once was in his class.

9. 然后就是我觉得他非常负责任 什么的

   And I think he is a responsible person

10. 然后就是刚好我导师又不在 然后我想寻求一下他的帮助

    And coincidently, my own mentor is unavailable, so then I thought I could seek help from him.

11. Mediator: 你的意思是通过说你曾经参加过他的课

    You mean by saying you were in his class?

12. 就是传递你们是师生关系 然后他有义务帮你 对吗?

    You're sending him a cue that there's a student-teacher relationship, thus he has the responsibility to help you, right?

13. Jingyu: 嗯 就是想要套近乎

Um, I intended to diminish the social distance.

14. Mediator: 我懂 但是这种逻辑很奇怪呀

   Help me understand the logic here.

15. Jingyu: 嗯 ((rising intonation))

   Um.

16. Mediator: 他也许会说 那是去年的事

   The teacher might say that was last year,

17. "去年我是你的导师 现在我没有责任了呀"

   I was your supervisor last year, but it's not my responsibility anymore.

18. Jingyu: 嗯

   Um.

19. Mediator: 责任已经解除了呀

   The obligation doesn't exist anymore.

20. Jingyu: 嗯

   Um.

21. Mediator: 但是你还是想用以往的这种关系来暗示她来做 是吗?

   But you still want to use that historical relation to make him help you, right?

22. Jingyu: 嗯 ((laughter)) ((pause)) 要是改的话 我就用提到第三方这个手段 说

   Um.   To reformulate, I'd use a third party, like

23. "I have talked to my mentor" –

24. "他高度向我推荐您"

   he highly recommended you.

25. "I don't really know if this request is appropriate,

26. "but I would appreciate it if you could help me."

27. Mediator: 嗯 为什么当时并没有这么说呢

   Um, why didn't you say this in the first place?

28. Jingyu: ((laughter)) 可能是没有想到吧

   Maybe I didn't recall that at that moment.

Jingyu justified the pragmatic choices of negotiation by referencing practical life experience (lines 1–5), indicating pseudo-conceptual thinking. Interestingly, she

proposed an if-teacher-then-responsibility formula. To determine Jingyu's understanding of the situation (i.e., situation definition), I sought explanation. She apparently misunderstood my intention, as evidenced by the essentially literal translation of the applied negotiation (lines 8–10). At this moment, I realised my previous support was unsuccessful. I thus launched a second prompt, explicitly linking concrete student-teacher relations to the concept of responsibility and seeking confirmation, which Jingyu denied (line 13). Importantly, instead of translating the negotiation, she then applied concept social distance to mediate her definition of the situation, indicating development from pseudo-concepts. However, she seemed to have ignored other relevant socio-pragmatic concepts. In response, I explained the communicative discourse and sought clarification, to which Jingyu responded with meta-comment laughter and reformulation following a brief pause (lines 16–22), indicating a changed situation definition. Note the filled pause that occurs precisely between the laughter and the subsequent reformulation, indicating Jingyu's conceptual understanding of responsibility to come. Importantly, her talking about semantic component (i.e., third-party) beforehand apparently indicates consciousness and thus self-control over action. Equally important, the reformulation, consisting of such mitigating devices as disarmer and appreciation (lines 23–26), indicates her internalisation of content knowledge of requests and support provided during the programme. I probed further, seeking explanation after implicitly acknowledging Jingyu's attempt. In response, she laughed and explained that she did not recall those concretes at the time (line 28), indicating development lags behind learning.

Although Jingyu failed to independently attempt the reasoning behind obligation embodied in the immediate situation, she successfully attempted the reformulation as the understanding of the concept became clearer. That Jingyu simultaneously resumed the responsibility and contributed to the problem-solving process indicates maturing self-regulation (i.e., dialogic interaction was unfolded within the ZPD). However, to achieve this synthesis, Jingyu regressed to extensive other-regulative mediations, entailing explicit re-construction of Jingyu's situation definition in line 16. It is important to note that had I relinquished the responsibility of re-defining the situation to Jingyu herself at this moment, different dynamics of mediator-learner dialogic interaction might have been negotiated. Certainly, it is premature to claim that Jingyu has internalised the concept of obligation and is ready to use this concept to mediate act in varying communicative situations based on this single dialogic interaction. However, her autonomous use of the concept is becoming obvious, which further proves Vygotsky's claim, which is correct, that "the developmental process lags behind the learning process" (1978, p.90).

The last comment on Jingyu's performance of negotiation in this far transfer task concerns the phenomenon of resuming historically knowing syntactic features of requests. As I discussed in the preceding section 7.6.3, in which Jingyu explicitly talked about (E28T2S7) this phenomenon, Jingyu here again demonstrated her struggle to overcome this issue, as evidenced by the object-regulatory private speech, "*So, I want you to um So….*", prior to reformulation. However, the fact that Jingyu immediately reformulated her use indicates that she was shifting at the time to self-regulation from object-regulation. However, the filled pause situated precisely between the private speech and the reformulation suggests that Jingyu

had not fully internalised control over the ancient syntactic use of want statement and the use of aspect-imperfect and was still in the process of becoming autonomous.

7.6.4 Discussion

In this section, I traced and discussed students' developmental process of task-role plays. I focused on the micro-genesis from session 6 wherein students began to use newly instructed socio-pragmatic concepts to mediate performance within dynamic communication settings. Specifically, processes of students' internalisation of concept obligation and associated concretisations were traced, in which Jingyu was the principal addressed hearer. Overall, her transition from other- to self-regulation was long and complex. Over her first two encounters with the concept, extensive assistances were provided to help her plan, reflect on, and reorganise the relationship between the concept and the immediate tasks. As demonstrated in 7.6.3, sequential prompts including request for explanation, soliciting contributions, and colliding response via humor were attempted to assist students finding the real trouble source of their continuing ignorance of obligation. Ultimately, it was collision that impelled the students to take responsibility and start to contribute to the concerned problem.

As I have argued, soliciting contributions did not work in my research class. Importantly, this study shows that the point of helpful other-regulatory prompts has nothing to do with whether it is explicit or implicit; instead, it has everything to do with whether the prompt can reveal or disclose contradictions that are antithetical to the students' L2 hypothesis. Apparently, this process inherently necessitates

sequential mediating prompts, explicit or implicit. This finding is in line with Wertsch's (1979; 1980) study into the transition from other- to self-regulation discussed in Chapter 2. In particular, the author argued that (mother-child) dialogic interaction factually opens the door to learning; however, the emergence of antithesis is the driver of the learning journey. This idea was further developed in Lantolf and Poeher (2010). As the authors repeatedly emphasised, the key point of mediator-student dialogic interaction has nothing to do with assisting students to ultimately reach correct or appropriate answers or performances; on the contrary, it has everything to do with impelling the students through the struggles of understanding "what to do and how to do it" (p.26). Again, this process inherently necessitates multiple mediating prompts, explicit or implicit.

All this once again leads us to think about the validity of other-regulatory support. As argued by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), to be helpful, support must be simultaneously gradual and contingent, to which I subscribe. As pointed out by the authors, gradual advancement facilitates more meaningful and sensory materials to emerge, which in turn makes possible adequate time for the mediator to adjust previous mediations to meet students' personalised needs. Additionally, contingency, by withdrawing support promptly, creates opportunities for students to take over the responsibility of problem-solving. However, contingent and gradual delivery of other-regulative mediations in my research class did not ensure the emergence of contradiction and antithesis and importantly did not ensure spontaneous development. Additionally, this study shows that to make other-regulation contingent is like creating a piece of art. For example, as I have demonstrated in 7.6.3, although the students apparently perceived Nina's

reasoning of such concepts as negative wants, face-saving, and obligation in relation to pragmatic choices as with low degree of decontextualization, or diverted from their own perceptions, they simply responded by laughing rather than voluntarily taking the responsibility of solving the concerned problem. Consequently, I was pushed to reformulate my preceding mediating prompts and relaunch a new sequential assistance. Because of this, I would argue that prudent behaviours, for example, laughter as manifest in my research class, might complicate the mediator's assessment and trigger more explicit other-regulatory supports than needed. My point is the process of mediator-student dialogic interaction is more complicated than just being gradual and contingent. Again, it is a dialectical and very much personal process, requiring mediator and students co-construct learning opportunities.

Lantolf and Poehner (2010) explicitly point out that development within the ZPD is a personal process depending on students' uptake of the mediating assistance provided. Apart from subscribing to this idea, I would argue that provision of support within the ZPD also is a personal process. In other words, had different prompts been provided in the above episodes, a different set of students' responsiveness would have emerged. Indeed, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1995) emphasise the possibility that, for a typical mediator-learner dialogic interaction, different mediators likely would deploy different types of mediating support and different learner responsiveness would surface accordingly. In this respect, the authors suggest that there is no one-size-fits-all other-regulation. This notion is also traceable in Lantolf and Poehner (2010). In particular, the authors explicitly claimed that "by supporting learners as they struggle to move beyond what they

can achieve independently, mediation – whether implicit or explicit – potentially pushes development forward" (p. 28). Based on the analysis of the above dialectic interaction, I would like to build on Lantolf and Poehner's (2010) idea and argue that the characteristics of support (whether implicit or explicit) is not the focus of the transformative process from other- to self-regulation. Rather, to use Wertsch's (1984) notion, the process of co-construction of the learner's situation definition is aided by continuous contradiction or antithesis on part of the mediator to impel learners to "struggle through the process" of realising what the real trouble source is and how to resolve it (p. 29), thereby assisting the learner in ultimately reconstructing new situation definitions in ultimately reconstructing new situation definitions. Once again, the conclusion I reached in section 7.4.5, is collisions, or contradictions, are powerful stimuli of awareness when mediator and learners are working within ZPD activity.

As I examined in Chapter 3, empirical findings regarding the significant role of continuous contradiction or antithesis constructed on part of the mediator within learners' ZPDs can also be found in Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995), in which the authors demonstrated how the Vygotskyan notion of thesis-antithesis ultimately assisted the emergence of new language structure within the learners' ZPDs. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 2, Lantolf and Poehner (2010) explicitly point out that it is likely more sensory learning materials would have been co-constructed, had the teacher prompted the students further rather than simply accepted their responses to the immediate task.

Furthermore, regression to ancient knowledge also emerged. As demonstrated and discussed in section 7.6.4, Jingyu began to show significant development during

her third encounter with concept obligation, indicating internalisations of content knowledge and mediating assistances provided during session 6. However, she resorted to experience-rooted spontaneous knowledge of this concept as the means to self-regulate relations with a new communication task a few minutes later. This finding parallels with findings on other student-participants, though the degrees vary. It appears that, when such variables as low-to-high social status, low-to-high power hierarchy, negative face, and non-responsibility are collectively involved in a given communicative situation, chances of thinking-speech inconsistency and of assuming spontaneous and experience-rooted knowledge as self-regulatory mediation to complete role-playing tasks are pervasive. If we accept the fact that the researched students' lived experiences are somewhat distant from these conceptual variables (by distant here, I mean these variables emerge as everyday concepts even comparatively later than conceptual variables such as equal power, equal social status, and non-responsibility encountered on a daily basis in Chinese university life), the findings reported here suggest that spontaneous knowledge is continuously active and that concept formation is anything but a ready-made process. These continuous actives of L2 learners' spontaneous knowledge (e.g., concrete experiences and literal translation) in the developmental processes of socio-pragmatic conceptual variances found in my study are in line with Vygotsky's description of the law of the ZPD discussed in Chapter 2. That is, spontaneous knowledge and conceptual knowledge interdependently exist with one another; and the former might become active again especially under difficult situations (Vygotsky, 1986).

From pre-enrichment to the last session, learners' experience-rooted spontaneous understanding of conceptobligation seemed to go underground for a period then came back to function again. Again, this phenomenon is what Frawley and Lantolf (1985) referred to as continuous access. This finding further supports Vygotsky's argument: ancient mechanisms of thinking, spontaneous knowledge, for example, instead of dying out, go underground and might come back as self-regulatory mediation when individuals face more difficult situations. Following this line of argument, learners' odd or peculiar linguistic choices of request should not be read as manifestations of L2 incompetence or incapability; instead, they should be perceived as a type of self-regulatory mediation applied by L2 learners to assume control over the communicative task. Indeed, as reconceptualised by Frawley and Lantolf (1985, p. 23), "given the Vygotskyan concept of continuous access, the problematic structure of second language discourse can be understood as reflective of the attempts by the producers to gain self-regulation in the task by reverting to other knowing strategies".

Finally, I wish to conclude this section by using Vygotsky's words, "to introduce a new concept means just to start the process of its appropriation. Deliberate introduction of concepts does not preclude spontaneous development, but rather charts the new paths for it" (1986, p. 152).

8 Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1   Introduction

Following the previous chapter which traced and discussed university-level

Chinese students' micro-genetic development of L2 socio-pragmatic conceptual

knowledge and performance over a nine-week period, this chapter will present the

conclusions reached, based on previously made discussions. Along with that, the

chapter will also discuss the implications the key findings of the study could have

for ZPD-based DA on both theoretical and practical levels. Following that, the

chapter will discuss the possible limitations of the study. And finally, suggestions

for further research will be introduced.

8.2   Addressing research questions

The study presented in this dissertation aimed to understand development in L2

micro-genesis in the ZPD and promote L2 socio-pragmatic capability through

mediator-student dialectically and dialogically working together within the latter's

ZPD, centring on facilitating the internalisation of socio-pragmatic concepts as an

orienting basis for language use (i.e., ZPD-based DA). The investigation sought to

answer five principal questions:

1. In what ways does ZPD-based dynamic assessment refine mediational

    moves and learner reciprocity over the course of a nine-week programme?

2. Can ZPD-based dynamic assessment and concept-based pragmatics

    instruction improve the development of learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual

    knowledge? If so, how?

3. Can ZPD-based dynamic assessment and concept-based pragmatics instruction improve the development of learners' performance abilities? If so, how?

4. What is the relation between the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD?

5. What does regression in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD look like and what is its relation to the development of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance capabilities?

The research findings of Chapter 6 clearly demonstrate that the learners' socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge and performance abilities developed over the nine-week period. It also suggested that pseudo-concepts, or spontaneous knowledge, of socio-pragmatic variations were resumed by learners to re-establish their relation with the task at hand and finish it, especially when the communicative situation became complicated. However, it appears that this regression is what was needed to allow changes to happen when mediator and learner with differing situation definitions were working together within ZPD activity. Moreover and importantly, the learners' understanding of the socio-pragmatic concepts constituted the mediating stage for developing their performance capability to use the language forms taught them. This development was the result of not only the internalisation of instructed socio-pragmatic concepts, but also learners' maturing capabilities and their internalisation of other-regulatory mediation projected within ZPD activity. These five questions were further explored in Chapter 7 by tracing learners' micro-genetic developmental processes through which socio-pragmatic knowledge and performance abilities develop. In the following sections, I address

each of the research questions, synthesising the findings reported in Chapters 6 and 7.

8.2.1 Socio-pragmatic knowledge

The study focused significant attention on the development of socio-pragmatic knowledge through the internalisation of concepts and mediation co-regulated within ZPD activity. As I discussed in Chapter 2, this emphasis follows from the central importance that Vygotsky (1978, 1986, 1987) attributed to the role of word meaning, or concept, and inter-psychological activity towards the development of higher mental functions. Mediation, through concepts or signs, can expand individual's abilities to understand, analyse, plan, compare, and regulate social actions to obtain self-regulation or control over varying communicative situations. Regarding the speech act of requests, socio-pragmatic conceptual variations entailing orders of indexicality, power hierarchy, social distance, obligation, degree of imposition, and face were systematically instructed.

The findings of pre-enrichment language awareness interviews and role-play performances (stage 1, preparation and stage 3, mediator-learner verbalisation) (Chapter 6) revealed three major themes of socio-pragmatic understanding within learners' zones of actual development (ZADs). First, thinking in complexes dominanted as the mediational means of controlling learners' verbal thinking. In particular, random association and pseudo-concepts as the principal guidance towards requesting strategies were widely observed among learners, as evidenced by the if-friends-then-direct and if-teachers/bosses-then-indirect formulae. Second, pseudo-conceptual and pre-conceptual thinking interdependently existed within

learners' ZADs. Finally, and more importantly, spontaneous knowledge of social distance and power hierarchy was even more frequently encountered among learners than that of degree of imposition, face, and obligation.

However, post-enrichment role-play data (stage 1, dialogic preparation and stage 3, mediator-learner verbalisation) clearly demonstrate that learners' socio-pragmatic knowledge had developed. As I discussed in Chapter 6, learners successfully incorporated concepts into the mediating stage, deliberately applying newly learned conceptual knowledge to analyse varying communicative situations, plan, compare, select, and self-regulate requesting variants, although object-regulation (e.g., enumerating available information) was also traceable at stage 1. As I mentioned, however, regression to pseudo-conceptual thinking of real concepts and as a result to extensive semantic mediations emerged at stage 3 of a transfer role play. As argued, transformation from object- to other- and finally to self-regulation is not an absolute, and continuous access (Frawley and Lantolf, 1985) is an inherent characteristic of development within ZPD activity.

Furthermore, importantly, a new functional system (i.e., re-construction of pseudo-conceptual knowledge and theoretical knowledge of socio-pragmatics) emerged while mediator-learner dialectically and dialogically worked through the regression. More importantly, learners' maturing socio-pragmatic knowledge, which could not function independently and thus solve the problem, was manifest. As I argued, had non-DA approaches been applied, this still-in-the-process-of-maturing capability would not have been diagnosed, and judgments of pragmatic incompetence based on a single observation of static assessment would have been drawn.

8.2.2 Performance abilities

The research findings (Chapter 6) of post-enrichment role-play performances clearly demonstrate development from pre-enrichment to post-enrichment. Step 1, opening, showed local-cultural use of upgraders seeking pre-commitment and/or availability checking during post-enrichment performances; want statements were successfully negated by downgraders. This important change at both syntactic and semantic levels can only be explained by the students' development of a higher level of conceptual thinking. At step 2, constant development of performance abilities was also manifest in requesting. Regarding the head act, syntactic downgraders entailing past tense, if clause, and interrogative replaced upgraders such as want statements, plain statements, and explicit performatives. Moreover, lexical downgraders incorporating understaters, down-toners, and consultative devices successfully negated upgrader adverbial intensifiers. Furthermore, important changes were also observed in adjuncts to the head act. Apart from grounders, downgraders entailing apology, appreciation, and disarmer were successfully applied. Taken together, these empirical findings showed development in the performance abilities from the pre-enrichment stage. More importantly, the increased complexity of both syntactic and semantic aspects can only be explained by the internalisation of a higher level of conceptual understanding.

However, intention-act inconsistency was demonstrated at step 3, negotiation, during post-enrichment. First, although downgraders – past tense and if clauses – were still dominant, plain statement and explicit performatives were resumed in the case of Xuanyu (Chapter 6). Second, self-regulatory private speech emerged to

help negate, compare, and select linguistic forms in the cases of Xuanyu (Chapter 6) and Loumei (Chapter 7). Moreover, plain statements as part of grounders were resumed in the cases of Yiqiao, Xuege (Chapter 6), and Jingyu (Chapter 7). Furthermore, an old learning habit – literal translation – was observed in Xuanyu. Shortly, regression to historically knowing knowledge was observed, although at different aspects, during post-enrichment transfer scenario 4. Interestingly, however, none of these phenomena was observable in post-enrichment transfer scenario 3.

Again, based on these research findings, a tentative conclusion appears to be that transition from other- to self-regulation is not an absolute, and regression to historically knowing knowledge is an inherent characteristic of development within ZPD activity. Indeed, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, development is a complex process full of uneven "wave-like curves" (Vygotsky, 1935, cited in Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991, p. 309), with progress and regression interdependently existing yet dialectically negating each other (Vygotsky, 1981; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995). However, as demonstrated and discussed in Chapter 7, regression occurred at an advanced higher level of development while mediator and learner were co-creating ZPD activity, and thus it is incorrect to conceptualise regression as being purely negative (see also Vygotsky, 1986; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995; Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991).

Another conclusion that can be drawn here, which echoes that of Vygotsky (1986), is that the transition process in which abstract understanding is gradually mapped onto concrete acts or performances (i.e., the up-down stage of concept formation) appears to be relatively more challenging than the transition process in which

empirical experience is reorganised with and into conceptual understanding (i.e., the bottom-up stage of concept formation) embedded in the processes of concept formation. Van Compernolle (2012) explains this phenomenon as the development of the conceptual knowledge preceding that of performance abilities. He hints here that the bottom-up stage of concept formation precedes the up-down stage of concept formation, about which I have a slightly different account. Performance ability, or transfer capability from abstract understanding to concrete performances, is part of the process of, or an inherent component of concept formation (Vygotsky, 1986). In this respect, by saying performance ability lags behind development of conceptual knowledge, Van Compernolle (2012) somewhat suggests that concept formation and performance capability can be seen separately and thus performance inability should be explained by anything but an incomplete internalisation of concepts, which appears to be against Vygotsky's (1986) idea of concept formation.

8.2.3 Mediation in ZPD, conceptual knowledge, performance abilities

That mediator-learner dialectic interactions in ZPD activity are the source and result of development of conceptual knowledge and performance abilities was extensively explored from several aspects in Chapter 7 (i.e., concept card-reading, L2 material analysis, AJTs, DCTs, and role plays). The findings of concept card-reading (section 7.2) clearly demonstrate that pseudo-concepts of socio-pragmatic variations were the locus of control over learners' thoughts and social acts. However, maturing pre-concepts became autonomous as mediator and learners-as-a-group dialogically talked about socio-pragmatic variations (e.g., Xuanyu shifted the role from information receiver to pre-conceptual knowledge creator in

section 7.2). This moment demonstrated that the locus of control of socio-

pragmatic conceptual knowledge had started to transfer from other (i.e., mediator)

to self (i.e., learner). Importantly, the dynamics of learners actively engaging in the

process of redefining the situation of the task (i.e., transforming the locus of control

of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge from pseudo-concept or concrete object

to pre-concepts or abstract signs) along with semantic prompts were fully unfolded

(e.g., Nina simultaneously imitated Xuanyu's attempt and expanded on the topic in

section 7.2). As I argued, this is development from other- to self-regulation,

resulting not just from mediational prompts (i.e., other-regulation) but from learners'

maturing pre-conceptual knowledge in ZPD activity. More importantly, had static

assessment been applied, none of these sensory materials that eventually gave

birth to the concept would likely have been diagnosed; consequently, individuals

equipped with pre-concepts likely would have been treated unfairly, similar to those

using only pseudo-concepts.

The developmental processes of L2 material analysis (section 7.3) and AJTs

(section 7.4) further disclosed the significant role of DA as the moving force

towards the development of socio-pragmatic concept formation. As discussed,

learners started with only enumerating information available in the visual field (i.e.,

object-regulation). By continuingly adjusting my original definition of the situation to

connect with the students-as-a-group's situation definition by following the

mechanisms of ZPD-oriented mediation (Chapter 2), learners started to

deliberately use newly instructed concepts to analyse, understand, and re-organise

L2 and AJT materials, actively engaging in the transition from empirical experience

to abstract understanding embedded in the process of concept formation. As I

argued, this exemplifies the transition from other- to self-regulation within ZPD activity (i.e., internalisation).

Notably, however, the findings of this study clearly demonstrated that this transition is not an absolute (e.g., Loumei failed to reason through concepts in the same L2 material in a later session). To synthesise the problems necessary to promote learners' situation definitions or control, extensive other-regulative mediations were resumed (i.e., regression). However, findings of micro-genetic developmental processes repeatedly demonstrated the emergence of new functional systems over the course of regression. As I argued, the regression was what was needed to allow changes to happen when mediator and learners with differing situation definitions co-create ZPD activity. In this respect, a reasonable conclusion that could be drawn here is regression can favourably influence the course of development as well as the nature of semantic mediation and eventually give rise to novel development when other-regulatory mediation is co-negotiated in ZPD activity. Another broader conclusion that can be reached here is that higher forms of behaviour – analysing and understanding task situations through real concepts – are internalised other-regulatory mediation.

The micro-genetic developmental processes of DCTs and role plays further demonstrated the driving power of mediator-learner dialectic interaction towards development in ZPD activity and the dialectical relation between semantic mediation, socio-pragmatic knowledge, and performance abilities. As demonstrated, the phenomenon of resorting to historically knowing knowledge (i.e., local-cultural or spontaneous language forms, the L2 learning habit of literal translation, private speech, and spontaneous concepts) became relatively more

observable, especially when task situations became complex, indicating the dialectically negating relation between newly instructed socio-pragmatic theoretical knowledge and spontaneous knowledge, as well as the non-absolute transition from conceptual knowledge to performance. Importantly, the findings of this study showed that although learners may have failed to independently solve given problems, they nonetheless demonstrated becoming autonomous self-regulation or control over thoughts and acts by taking responsibility for carrying out the problem-solving processes when allocated and offering contributions. As argued, these were internalisations of conceptual knowledge and semantic mediation dialectically negotiated in ZPD activity over the course of DA sessions. Importantly, these findings also robustly reject traditional assessment approaches that abstractly link unsuccessful independent performances to learner incompetence and ineffectiveness of instruction (Chapter 4). As proposed, however, had non-dynamic assessment been applied, none of these meaningful transitions to self-regulation would have been diagnosed.

8.2.4 ZPD-based DA, mediational moves, and learner reciprocity

The present study found that the relation between ZPD-based mediational moves and learner reciprocal responses is dialectic. Tracing the micro-genetic developmental process in ZPD activity (Chapter 7) clearly demonstrated how ZPD-based DA dynamically and dialectically negotiated and reformulated semantic mediation based on learner reciprocal responses. It now appears that this process is complex and full of difficulties or conflicts and contradictions essentially because the redefinition of a task situation by learners is the result of the mediator-learner dialectic co-negotiation of the situation definitions of the task rather than something

given from the mediator. However, as argued, these difficulties are just what were needed to allow changes (including online other-regulatory mediations, the learner's understanding of the task as well as a new functional system of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge) to happen while mediator and learner co-create ZPD activity. Moreover, importantly, as with the fact that development in ZPD activity is very much a personal process because it requires active engagement on the part of learners (see also Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Poehner, 2009), semantic mediation projected onto the learner on the spot is in a large sense also "personal" given the re-construction of the learner's situation definition is a creative process (Chapter 2). However, by personal, I do not mean that it was unsystematic and unintentional. On the contrary, to create an imitation environment (which is a sufficient and necessary condition of co-creating ZPD activity as discussed in Chapter 2), semantic mediation needed to be constantly under refinement so that it was compatible with the personalised situation definitions manifest by the learners (e.g., in the cases of Loumei and Nina).

The findings of this study also demonstrated that being gradual, contingent, and dialogical as regards other-regulatory mediation co-negotiated in ZPD activity was necessary but not sufficient for development to happen among the students in the study (e.g., in the cases of Loumei and Nina). To achieve this goal, semantic mediation provided in my context needed to be effective when using contradiction, antithesis, or collision against the learner's situation definition of the task at hand. As I discussed in Chapter 7, the very existence of this antithesis was the driving force to change learner's reciprocal responses and consequently to raise their consciousness of concepts constructed in ZPD activity. Importantly, this finding

supports the idea that mediational instruction is not so much about either explicit or implicit instruction (if this is the case, the entire complex learning-instruction process is superficially reduced to components, that is, abstract explicit and/or implicit instruction) as about mediator and learner dialectically working together to co-construct the latter's definition of the task situation.

8.3   Contributions and implications

In this section I will discuss contributions and implications that this study makes to L2 DA and instructed pragmatics based on its findings. I will start with contributions to ZPD-based DA research and practices of DA and CBPI in L2 contexts. After that, I will briefly explore its implications for L2 research and pedagogy as well as teacher education and curriculum.

8.3.1 Contributions to L2 research and pedagogy

Assessment of L2 learner's development of higher mental functions in the field of SLA has been a contentious question (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002; Lantolf and Poehner, 2004, 2013). Static assessment (Chapter 3) has advantages in its own way; however, its product-focused nature barely touches on the sensory materials of developmental processes that give birth to the final product (Lantolf and Poehner, 2004; Poehner and Lantolf, 2005). As I discussed in Chapter 2, the basic assumption underlying static assessment holds that an individual's future is his/her past (i.e., past-to-present model, Valsiner, 2001). Put differently, static assessment intends to find out what the individual was, rather than what the individual might become. Meanwhile, the past-to-present model insists that only

independent performance can disclose an individual's abilities. However, the findings of this study clearly demonstrated that independent products collected, based on a single observation, failed to diagnose the maturing abilities of the individual that can only function and be revealed on the interpersonal plane, that is, through mediator and learner dialogically and dialectically working together in ZPD activity. In this way, the findings of this study corroborate and expand on previous research into dynamic assessment in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity (Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995; Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Poehner, 2009), thereby providing an additional perspective on the performance-ability relationship in L2 assessment research.

In instructed L2 pragmatics research and in SLA literature (Ellis, 2008; Taguchi, 2015), the nature of instruction (i.e., either explicit or implicit) is another contentious issue (Kasper, 2001; Kasper and Rose, 2002; Kasper and Roever, 2005; Taguchi, 2011, 2015). As discussed in Chapter 4, experimental work on which type of instruction, explicit or implicit, is more effective has found mixed results, thereby leaving the question open. Traditional perspectives on explicit-implicit instruction suggest that intensive input of explicit/implicit knowledge leads to improved independent L2 performances. However, the findings of this study indicate that helpful instruction is not so much about either-or as about whether it focuses on awakening learner's maturing abilities and that transition from other- to self-regulation, or instruction to development, is not an absolute, therefore a learner's unsuccessful independent performance does not necessarily indicate that the instruction is unhelpful. In this way, the present study, therefore, confirms and expands on previous research into L2 instruction (in the ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1986;

Lantolf and Poehner, 2010; Poehner, 2009; Frawley and Lantolf, 1985), providing one more perspective on the instruction-development relationship in L2 instruction research.

In SLA literature (Selinker, 1972, 1992; Selinker and Lamandella, 1981; Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995), the function of backsliding, or regression, in L2 developmental process is also a contentious issue. Traditional perspectives on regression appear to focus on describing, rather than evalutating, the phenomenon. For example, Selinker and Lamandella (1981) picture it as "cline progression", describing the L2 learning process as an individual moving away from one stable plateau to the other stable plateau and regression as the individual backtracking to a previous stable plateau (p. 207). Similarly, Huebner (1983) parallels the L2 learning process to an individual struggling to find his/her way out of a maze, and regression to the individual backtracking to a point where an alternative route is available. These studies suggest that regression does nothing useful, but unfavourably pulls back the L2 developmental process. However, the findings of the present study indicate that novel functional systems can emerge from regression. As I argued, it appears that regression is just what may be needed to allow reorganisation of newly learned and old knowledge to happen when mediator and learner with differing situation definitions dialectically interact in ZPD activity. In other words, instead of playing an unfavourable role, regression essentially drives development in the ZPD. The findings of this study therefore corroborate and expand on previous research into regression in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD (Lantolf and Aljaafreh, 1995), thereby providing another praxis-based perspective on the regression-development relationship in L2 research.

A central argument in the present study is that higher forms of behaviour (e.g.,
using socio-pragmatic concepts to analyse communicative situations, planning
performances, solving problems encountered during communication, reasoning
pragma-linguistic concretisation) are about control (i.e., object-controlled, other-
controlled, or self-controlled). The findings of this study demonstrate that learners
resuming L2 discourse peculiarities (e.g., odd hesitations, meta-commentary
private speech, and word repetition) as well as historically knowing knowledge,
especially when communicative situations become complex, was a means for the
learner to re-establish relations with the ongoing event in order to regain self-
regulation or control over the situation and finish the task. Put differently, L2
discourse peculiarities have functional roles to play in developmental processes.
As Frawley and Lantolf (1985) propose, which the findings of this study
corroborate, L2 discourse peculiarities should be reconceptualised as inherent
characteristics of development in L2 micro-genesis in ZPD activity, rather than
language incompetence or failure, as traditionally interpreted (e.g., Thomas, 1983).
The findings of this study therefore confirm and expand on previous research into
peculiarities, or private speech, in L2 micro-genesis (Frawley and Lantolf, 1985;
McCafferty, 1992), thereby providing an additional praxis-based perspective on the
L2 peculiarity-development relationship in L2 research.

8.3.2 Implications for research and pedagogy

Another important argument in this study is that improved performance abilities are
internalised socio-pragmatic concepts, or semiotic mediation. The findings of this
study demonstrate that conceptual knowledge provides learners with
decontextualized knowledge that allows them to execute decisions voluntarily and

materialise intentions deliberately within varying communicative situations. In this way, self-controlled individuals will potentially be synthesised, which is the goal of education (Vygotsky, 1986). Thus, the implication for L2 pedagogy would be that concept, or word meaning, should be the minimal element of language teaching. In L2 pragmatics classrooms, this means that such concepts as orders of indexicality, social distance, power, degree of imposition, face, and obligation should be prioritised and systematically introduced. Following that, variants of language forms of requests, in this case, can be discussed to understand possible instantiations of socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge in different communicative settings. Notably, the discussion of language forms should not aim to exhaust possible manifestations of socio-pragmatic concepts. Instead, the pedagogical goal should be to assist learners in developing decontextualized knowledge so that learners can make decisions voluntarily when circumstance requires. This meaning-to-form pedagogical approach will potentially expand learners' inventory of symbolic mediational means, which in turn will empower their deliberate use of language forms.

However, socio-pragmatic concepts cannot be internalised as separate from the ability to use these concepts to regulate acts. This study used a variety of tasks to facilitate the internalisation of socio-pragmatic concepts. Moreover, mediator-learner dialectical interactions generated alongside these tasks created numerous learning-teaching opportunities in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD. Thus, an implication for L2 pedagogy would be to purposefully design and dialectically implement various tasks, assisting learners in using newly learned socio-pragmatic conceptual knowledge to regulate social acts. In the classroom teaching of L2

pragmatics, DCTs and role plays can be iteratively conducted within the framework of DA. Moreover, transfer tasks should also be implemented to promote learners' transcendent abilities. This study demonstrated the importance of designing transfers that are sensitive to learners' ZPDs. Teachers of L2 pragmatics should consider learners' maturing capabilities when implementing transfer tasks. In this way, not only would performance in ZPD activities reveal the extent to which learners' conceptual knowledge could be transformed to acts, but it would also pave the way for the emergence of a novel functional system by pushing maturing abilities further during discussion.

Another implication for L2 research and pedagogy is that assessment and instruction should be integrated into classroom teaching of pragmatics as an unseparated entity. This study has illustrated the dialogical-dialectical process of simultaneously assessing and teaching L2 socio-pragmatic knowledge in a Chinese context. In L2 classrooms, mediator-learner dialogic interactions need to be appreciated. That is, all participants of a concerned activity, including mediator and learners, should respect and draw on one another's perspective, working collaboratively on pedagogical tasks. By raising awareness and implementing the dialogic approach in Chinese university contexts, learners' voices will be heard and respected. Moreover, the findings of this study reveal there is a consistency in the benefit of creating collisions or antithesis, combined with mechanisms of dialogue, graduation and contingency, across learning-teaching processes. Therefore, the mechanism of collision should also be applied in L2 classrooms to awaken learners' awareness of the gap between her/his and other's perspective on same language-related problems, especially when local-culturally constrained empirical

experience of the learner appears to impede the appropriation of scientific concepts. In this way, dialogic and dialectic mediator-learner interactions can work in tandem to promote the transition of psychological tools from interpersonal plane to intrapersonal plane.

In correspondence with the discussion of regression in section 8.3.1, another implication for L2 research and pedagogy is that researchers/teachers should take regression to historically knowing knowledge and extensive other-regulatory mediations as an opportunity to understand the underlying causes of learners' poor performances and subsequently to co-negotiate attuned support so that language-related problems can be overcome. Instead of perceiving regression as negative, and/or leaving learners to their own capabilities when regression emerges, teachers should create and grasp the opportunities surfacing from the process of regression in ZPD activity, reorganising learners' L2 knowledge.

This present study argues that mediational moves, learner reciprocal responses, symbolic mediators, the emergence of learners' novel functional system, and L2 products interdependently exist with each other. Empirical studies exploring these five constructs individually and/or separately might fail to recognise the dialectical relations between them. Therefore, L2 pragmatics research should investigate these five constructs collectively in order to obtain a better understanding of the instruction-development relationship.

Although all seven participants in the present study developed, though to different degrees, both conceptual knowledge and performance abilities in transfer ZPD tasks, there might be variation in the qualities of transcendent abilities in real life

outside of the L2 classroom. In future research, further exploration of the qualities of conceptual knowledge and their relations to transcendent abilities in real life would likely provide meaningful insight into differences in qualities of transcendent abilities in and outside L2 formal educational contexts. This issue could be addressed by introducing computer-mediated social-interactive contexts (Belz and Kinginger, 2002; Belz and Thorne, 2006; Zeng and Takatsuka, 2009).

8.3.3   Implications for teacher education and curriculum design

Although this study is not directly concerned with the education of L2 teachers, there are implications for this domain. The pedagogical approach adopted in this dissertation took a radical departure from traditional perspectives on the importance of the future as well as instruction and its relation to development in the ZPD. From this perspective, L2-teacher-education programmes may be well served to include coursework designed to challenge teachers' deep beliefs in the past-to-present and development-preceding-learning model by introducing the dialectical perspective on L2 instruction and development. Additionally, this study demonstrated the functional role of L2 discourse peculiarities and reconceptualised their understanding from a Vygotskyan notion of control and continuous access. From this perspective, an L2-teacher-education programme ought to include a section designed to challenge teachers' beliefs about regression, specifically the typically conceived belief of regression as a negative influence on development, by introducing the notion of functional system and mediation in the ZPD. Further, the mediation approach adopted in this dissertation took a radical departure from traditional perspectives on language form and its relation to social meanings. From this perspective, an L2-teacher-education programme ought to include sections

designed to challenge teachers' beliefs about form-to-meaning language teaching/learning by introducing the notion of concept, or word meaning, as the minimal instructional component. In this way, the goal of education – a self-regulated individual – likely would be achieved.

Expanding the ideas presented in the preceding paragraph, this study may also have implications for L2 curriculum design. Regarding minimal instructional components, L2 socio-pragmatic concepts entailing orders of indexicality, social distance, power, degree of imposition, face, and obligation can be integrated into curricula, which then can be illustrated by a variety of pragma-linguistic features of language in L2 materials.

8.4   Limitations of the study and further research

This study took a relatively in-depth look at DA and its relationship to the development of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts and performance abilities in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD from several angles, however, it has limitations. First, limitations of the scope of the research design and methodology exist. This study included a small number of participants (N=7) registered in only one intermediate-level Chinese university English class. In addition, the micro-genetic development processes traced in Chapter 7 were heavily centred on four complex case studies of individual learners whose internalisation processes required relatively thick other-regulatory mediations and whose developmental processes demonstrated remarkable wave-like curves. Although a limited number of participants and careful selection of representative micro-genetic episodes allowed for an in-depth look into the complexities of L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD, it will be necessary in the future to

expand the breadth of the research design to include a larger number of

participants as well as participants with differing L2 levels. It should be pointed out

that, given this study subscribes to the Vygotskyan notion that development of

higher mental functions is a dialectical dynamic process, a control group and/or

comparative group was not embedded into the research design. As discussed in

Chapter 4, abstractly investigating independent L2 products collected from a single

observation, which typically is what the design of a control/comparative group

does, fails to capture the sensory material that gives birth to these products. Future

comparative research might have the potential to inform L2 DA and/or socio-

pragmatic research; however, as I discussed in Chapter 3, product-focused and

process-focused interpretations of development are rooted in incommensurable

theories (Dunn and Lantolf, 1998), thus, it is important for researchers not to mix

one developmental theory with that of another.

Limitations in the scope of the data collection are also apparent. Because this

study extensively focused on socio-pragmatic conceptual development in L2 micro-

genesis in the ZPD, other social-historical sources of and influences on

development were not emphasised. Participants' learning experiences of and

encounters with L2 requests in real life situations prior to this study were discussed

as anecdotes during the mediator-learner verbalisation held at the end of each

session; however, this study did not formally attempt to collect data about the

learners' social-historical experiences with socio-pragmatic concepts in both L1

and L2 contexts or how these L1 social-historical experiences mediate the

understanding of L2 socio-pragmatic concepts. More formal information about

these areas would certainly be beneficial to future research. In addition, because of

personal issues (e.g., participants expressed discomfort about talking in front of camera, and the researcher could not afford electronic equipment that can capture complete information of a 360-degree scene or record a full range of student activities from multiple angles in the classroom), only audio recordings of mediator-student dialogic interactions were available. More formal approaches to collecting visual data, such as facial expressions, would certainly be beneficial to future studies.

Other limitations in the scope of the data analysis also exist. It was unrealistic to analyse everything each learner said over the course of study (approximately 35-hours of audio recordings), therefore it should be considered that there were limitations to the scope of the data analysis. The focus of the ZAD assessment of socio-pragmatic knowledge was limited to pre-enrichment language awareness interviews and role-play performances (Chapter 6). The scope of Chapter 7 was limited to studies of four individual learners whose internalisation of concepts in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD were relatively long and complex. However, the data of four chronological traces of micro-genetic development in the ZPD covering nine sessions revealed the wide range of developmental dynamics that emerged in the learners' ZPDs. These included how the mediator and student dialectically and dialogically constructed novel functional systems along with regression in L2 micro-genesis in the ZPD and how transition from other- to self-regulation was achieved through mediator-student dialectical interactions. Each of these issues is and continues to be the focus of future studies of development in the ZPD. Additionally, it is noteworthy that the categories of request (e.g., internal/external mitigating moves) that the present study applied were mainly adopted from pragmatic studies

conducted back in the 1980s (e.g., Blum-Kulka et al., 1989b; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984), future research projects that draw on more recent studies of categories of request would certainly be beneficial to pragmatic instruction in L2 classrooms. Furthermore, the request resources (e.g., L2 materials, YouTube clips) that the present study used for classroom activities reflected mainly my interests and understanding of the uses of request. A series of other resources would certainly be beneficial to future studies.

Reference list

Ableeva, R. (2010). *Dynamic assessment of listening comprehension in second language learning. PhD dissertation.* Pennsylvania State University.

Ableeva, R. & Lantolf, J. (2011). Mediated dialogue and the micro-genesis of second language listening comprehension. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, *18*(2), 133-149.

Ahamed, M. (1988). *Speaking as Cognitive Regulation: A Study of L1 and L2 Dyadic Problem-Solving Activity. PhD dissertation*. University of Delaware.

Alcon-Soler, E. (2007). Fostering EFL learners' awareness of requesting through explicit and implicit consciousness-raising tasks. In G. Mayo (Ed.), *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 221-241). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Aljaafreh, A., & Lantolf, J. (1994). Negative feedback as regulation and second language learning in the zone of proximal development. *The Modern Language Journal, 78*(4), 465-483.

Allami, H., & Naeimi, A. (2011). A cross-linguistic study of refusals: An analysis of pragmatic competence development in Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pragmatics 43*(1), 385-406.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Michael Holquist (Ed.), Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Belz, J., & Kinginger, C. (2002). The cross-linguistic development of address form use in telecollaborative language learning: Two case studies. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 59*, 189-214.

Belz, J., & Thorne, S. (2006). *Internet-mediated intercultural foreign language education.* Boston, MA.: Heinle & Heinle.

Blum-Kulka, S. (1987). Indirectness and politeness in requests: Same or different? *Journal of Pragmatics, 11*, 131-146.

Blum-Kulka, S., & Levenston, W. (1987). Lexical-grammatical pragmatic indicators. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 9*(2), 155-170.

Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and Apologies: A Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCASRP). *Applied Linguistics, 5*(3), 196-213.

Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (1989b). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies.* Norwood, NJ: Publishing Corporation.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Use.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bruner, J. (1985). Vygotsky: a historical and conceptual perspective. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *Culture, communication and cognition: Vygotskian perspectives* (pp. 21-34). Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, *1*(1), 1-47.

Cazden, C. B. (1988). *Classroom discourse: the language of teaching and learning.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Celce-Murcia, M., Dornyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1995). Communicative competence: A pedagogically motivated model with content specification. *Issues in Applied Linguistics, 6*, 5-35.

Chaiklin, S. (2003). 'The zone of proximal development in Vygotsky's analysis of learning and instruction'. In A. Kozulin, B. Gindis, V. Ageyev, & S. Miller (Eds.), *Vygotsky's Educational Theory in Cultural Context* (pp. 39-61). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Charles, S. (2011). *Dynamic assessment in a Yugtun second language intermediate adult classroom. PhD dissertation.* University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline.* Harvard University Press.

Cole, M., & Scribner, S. (1978). Introduction. In L. Vygotsky, *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes* (pp. 1-14). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Cook, G. (1999). Communicative competence. In K. Johnson & H. Johnson (Eds.), *Encyclopaedic dictionary of applied linguistics* (pp. 62-68). Oxford: Blackwell.

Creswell, J. (2007). *Qualitative enquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches.* London: Sage.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Crystal, D. (1997). *The Cambridge encyclopaedia of language* (2nd Edition)*.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davydov, V. (2004). *Problems of developmental instruction: A theoretical and experimental psychological study.* P. Moxay (Trans.)*.* Moscow: Akademyia Press.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2003). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials.* London: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th Edition.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Dewaele, J. (2008). Appropriateness in foreign language acquisition and use: Some theoretical, methodological, and ethical considerations. In R. Manchon, & J. Cenoz (Eds.), *Doing SLA research: Theoretical, methodological, and ethical issues.* (Vol. 46). Special issue of the International Review of Applied Linguistics.

Dunn, W., & Lantolf, J. (1998). Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and Krashen's i + 1: Incommensurable constructs; incommensurable theories. *Language Learning, 48*, 411-442.

Ebadi, S., & Rahimi, M. (2019) Mediating EFL learners' academic writing skills in online dynamic assessment using Google Docs, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *32*, 527-555,

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd Edition)*.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R., Loewen, S., Elder, C., Philp, J., & Reinders, H. (2009). *Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning, testing and teaching.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Eslami-Rasekh, Z., A. Eslami-Rasekh & A. Fatahi (2004). The effect of explicit metapragmatic instruction on the speech act awareness of advanced EFL students. *TESL-EJ 8*(2), 1–12.

Eslami, Z. R. & Liu, C. N. (2013). Learning pragmatics through computer-mediated communication in Taiwan. *Iranian Journal of Society, Culture, and Language*, *1*(1), 52–73.

Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (1989). Internal and external modification in request realization. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House, & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* (pp. 221-247). Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.

Felix-Brasdefer, J. C. (2008). Pedagogical intervention and the development of pragmatic competence in learning Spanish as a foreign language. *Issues in Applied Linguistics* 16, 49–84.

Feuerstein, R., Falik, L., Rand, Y., & Feuerstein, R. (2002). *Dynamic assessment of cognitive modifiability.* Jerusalem, Israel: ICELP Press.

Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y., & Hoffman, M. (1979). *The Dynamic Assessment of Retarded Performers: The Learning Potential Assessment Device, Theory, Instruments, and Techniques.* Baltimore, Md.: University Park Press.

Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y., & Rynders, J. (1988). *Don't Accept Me As I Am. Helping Retarded Performers Excel.* New York: Plenum.

Frawley, W. (1997). *Vygotsky and Cofnitive Science. Language and the Unification of the Social and Computational Mind.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Frawley, W., & Lantolf, J. (1984). Speaking and Self-Order: A Critique of Orthodox L2 Research. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 6*(2), 143-159.

Frawley, W., & Lantolf, J. (1985). Second language discourse: A Vygotskian perspective. *Applied Linguistic, 6*(1), 19-44.

Frawley, W., & Lantolf, J. (1986). Private speech and self-regulation: A commentary on Frauenglass and Diaz. *Developmental Psychology, 22*(5), 706-708.

Galperin, P. (1989). Organization of mental activity and the effectiveness of learning. *Soviet Psychology, 27*(3), 65-82.

Galperin, P. (1992). Stage-by-stage formation as a method of psychological investigation. *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology, 30*(4), 60-80.

Ghobadi, A. & Fahim, M. (2009). The effect of explicit teaching of English 'Thanking formulas' on Iranian EFL intermediate level students at English language institutes. *System* 37, 526–537.

Griffin, P., & Cole, M. (1984). Current activity for the future: The Zo-ped. In B. Rogoff & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Children's learning in the "Zone of Proximal Development"* (pp. 45-64). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Halenko, N. & Jones, C. (2011). Teaching pragmatic awareness of spoken requests to Chinese EAP learners in the UK: Is explicit instruction effective? *System 39*, 240–250.

Harley. T. (2017). *Talking the talk: Language, Psychology and Science*. Routledge.

Haywood, H., & Lidz, C. (2007). *Dynamic assessment in practice. Clinical and educational applications.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Haywood, H., Brown, A., & Wingenfeld, S. (1990). Dynamic approaches to psychoeducational assessment. *School Psychology Review, 19*, 411-22.

Hollway, W. & Jefferson, T. (2000). *Doing qualitative research differently.* London: SAGE.

Holzman, L. (2018). Zones of Proximal Development: Mundane and Magical. In J. P. Lantolf, M. E. Poehner, & M. Swain (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Development* (pp. 42-55). New York, NY: Routledge.

Howell, K. E. (2013). *An introduction to the philosophy of methodology.* Los Angeles: SAGE.

Huebner, T. (1983). *A longitudinal analysis of the acquisition of English.* Ann Arbor: Karoma.

Hymes, D. (1964). Formal discussion of a conference paper. In U. Bellugi, & R. Brown (Eds.), *The Acquisition of Language. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development.* Malden: MA: Blackwell.

Hymes, D. (1972). Models of the interaction of language and social life. In J. Gumperz, & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication* (pp. 35-71). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Hymes, D. (1974). *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation* (pp. 13-31). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Kagan, J. (2009). *The three cultures.* London: Cambridge University Press.

Kasper, G., & Rose, K. (1999). Pragmatics and SLA. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 19*, 81-104.

Kinginger, C. (2001). i + 1 ≠ ZPD. *Foreign Language Annales, 34*, 417-425.

Kristave. (2016). *Sex And the City- Samantha & The Tranny's [Video]*. Retrieved
    from YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uE0KxG5AOEM.

Kozulin, A. (1984). Psychology and philosophical anthropology. *The philosophical
    forum, XV*(4), 443-458.

Kozulin, A. (1986). Vygotsky in Context. In L. Vygotsky, *Thought and Language*
    (pp. xi-lvi). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

Kozulin, A. (1990). *Vygotsky's psychology: A biography of ideas.* New York:
    Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Kozulin, A. (1991). Life as Authoring: A Humanistic Tradition in Russian
    Psychology. *New Ideas in Psychology, 9*, 335-351.

Kozulin, A. (1998). *Psyhcological tools: a sociocultural approach to education.*
    Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Kozulin, A. (2003). Psychological tools and mediated learning. In K. Alex, B.
    Gindis, V. S. Ageyev, & S. M. Miller (Eds.), *Vygotsky's educational theory in
    cultural context* (pp. 15-38). Cambridge: Cambridge Universtiy Press.

Kozulin, A. (2018). Mediation and Internalization. In J. P. Lantolf, M. E. Poehner, &
    M. Swain (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Sociocultural Theory and
    Second Language Development* (pp. 23-41). New York: Routledge.

Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing interviews.* London: SAGE.

Lantolf, J. (2000). Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural
    theory and second language learning* (pp. 1-28). Oxford: Oxford University
    Press.

Lantolf, J. (2006). Language emergence: implications for applied linguistics- a
    sociocultural perspective. *Applied Linguistics, 27*(4), 717-728.

Lantolf, J., & Aljaafreh, A. (1995). Second language learning in the zone of
proximal development: a revolutionary experience. *International Journal of
Educational Research, 23*(7), 619-632.

Lantolf, J., & Poehner, M. (2006). *Dynamic assessment in the foreign language
classroom. A teachers guide.* University Park, PA: Centre for Advanced
Language Proficiency Education and Research.

Lantolf, J., & Poehner, M. (2010). Dynamic assessment in the classroom:
Vygotskian praxis for second language development. *Language Teaching
Research, 15*(1), 11-33.

Lantolf, J., & Poehner, M. (2013). The unfairness of equal treatment: objectivity in
L2 testing and dynamic assessment. *Educational Research and Evaluation,
19*(23), 142-157.

Lantolf, J. P., Poehner, M. E., & Swain, M. (2018). *The Routledge Handbook of
Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Development.* New York:
Routledge.

Lantolf, J., & Thorne, S.L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second
language development.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lawrence, J., & Valsiner, J. (1993). 'Conceptual roots of internalization: from
transmission to transformation'. *Human Development, 36*, 150-67.

Leech, G. (1983). *The principles of pragmatics.* London: Longman.

Leung, C. (2005). Convivial communication: Recontextualizing communicative
competence. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 15,* 119-144.

Levinson, S. (1992). Activity types and language. In P. Drew, & J. Heritage (Eds.),
Talk at work: Interaction in institutional and settings (pp. 66-100).
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Li, Q. (2012). Effects of instruction on adolescent beginners' acquisition of request modification. *TESOL Quarterly 46*(1), 30–55.

Lichtman, M. (2014). *Qualitative research for the social sciences.* London: SAGE.

Lidz, C. (1991). *Practitioner's guide to dynamic assessment.* New York: Guiford.

Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (1993). *How languages are learned.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Luria, A. (1976). *Cognitive Development. Its Cultural and Social Foundations.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Luria, A. (1982). *Language and Cognition.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Mason, J. (2002). Qualitative interviewing: asking, listening and interpreting. In T. May (Ed.), *Qualitative research in action* (pp. 225-241). London: SAGE.

McCafferty, S. (1992). The use of private speech by adult of second language learners: A cross-cultural study. *The Modern Language Journal, 76*, 179-189.

McCafferty, S. (1994). Adult second language learners' use of private speech: A review of studies. *The Modern Language Journal, 78*, 421-436.

Mead, G. (2015). *Mind, Self, and Society.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press (original work published in 1934).

Mercer, N. (2000). *Words and Minds*. Routledge.

Minick, N. (1987). Implications of Vygotsky's theories for dynamic assessment. In C. Lidz (Ed.), *Dynamic assessment: an interactive approach to evaluating learning potential* (pp. 116-40). New York: The Guilford Press.

Negueruela, E. (2003). *A sociocultural approach to teaching and researching second language: Systemic-theoretical instruction and second language*

development. Unpublished doctoral dissertation: The Pennsylvania State University.

Negueruela, E. (2008). Revolutionary pedagogies: Learning that leads (to) second language development. In J. Lantolf, & M. Poehner (Eds.), *Sociocultural theory and the teaching of second languages* (pp. 189-227). London: Equinox.

Negueruele, E., & Lantolf, J. (2006). Concept-based pedagogy and the acquisition of L2 Spanish. In S. Salaberry, & B. Lafford (Eds.), *The art of teaching Spanish: second language acquisition from research to practice* (pp. 79-102). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Newman, D., Griffen, P., & Cole, M. (1989). *The construction zone: working for cognitive change in school.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Newman, F., & Holzman, L. (1993). *Lev Vygotsky. Revolutionary Scientist.* London: Routledge.

Nicholas, A. L. (2016). *A dynamic assessment of interactional competence in Japanese learners of EFL: the act of requesting.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation: The University of Exeter.

Piaget, J. (1952). *The Origins of Intelligence in Children.* New York: International Universities Press.

Piaget, J. (1959). *The Language and Thought of the Child.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Poehner, M. (2005). *'Dynamic Assessment of Oral Proficiency Among Advanced L2 learners of French'. PhD dissertation.* Pennsylvania State University: University Park.

Poehner, M. (2007). Beyond the test: L2 dynamic assessment and the transcendence of mediated learning. *The Modern Language Journal, 91*(3), 323-340.

Poehner, M. (2008). *Dynamic assessment: a Vygotskyan approach to understanding and promoting L2 development.* USA: Springer.

Poehner, M. (2009). Dynamic assessment as a dialectical framework for classroom activity: evidence from second language (L2) learners. *Journal of Cognitive Education and Psychology, 8*(3), 252-268.

Poehner, M. (2009b). Group dynamic assessment: Mediation for the L2 classroom. *TESOL Quarterly, 43*, 471-91.

Poehner, M. (2011). Dynamic assessment: fairness through the prism of mediation. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 18*(2), 99-112.

Poehner, M. (2011). Validity and interaction in the ZPD: interpreting learner development through L2 dynamic assessment. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 21*(2), 244-263.

Poehner, M. (2012). The zone of proximal development and the genesis of self-assessment. *The Modern Language Journal, 96*(4), 610-622.

Poehner, M., & Lantolf, J. (2003). Dynamic assessment of L2 development: Bringing the Past into the Future. *CALPER Working Papers Series, No, 1.*, The Pennsylvania State University, Centre for Advanced Language Proficiency, Education and Research.

Poehner, M., & Lantolf, J. (2005). Dynamic assessment in the language classroom. *Language Teaching Research, 9*(3), 233-265.

Poehner, M., & Lantolf, J. (2010). Vygotsky's teaching-assessment dialectic and L2 education: the case for dynamic assessment. *Mind, Culture, and Activity, 17*(4), 312-330.

Poehner, M., & Lantolf, J. (2013). Bringing the ZPD into the equation: capturing L2 development during computerized dynamic assessment (C-DA). *Language Teaching Research, 17*(3), 323-342.

Poehner, M. E., & Infante, P. (2017). Mediated development: A Vygotskian approach to transforming second language learner abilities. *TESOL Quarterly, 51*(2), 332-357.

Poehner, M. E., & Infante, P. (2019). Mediated development and the internalisation of psychological tools in second language (L2) education. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 22*, 1-14.

Poehner, M., & Van Compernolle, R. (2011). Frames of interaction in dynamic assessments: developmental diagnoses of second language learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 18*(2), 183-198.

Poehner, M., Zhang, J., & Lu, X. F. (2015). Computerized dynamic assessment (C-DA): diagnosing L2 development according to learner responsiveness to mediation. *Language Testing, 32*(3), 337-357.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in sociocultural activity.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Rogoff, B., Malkin, C, & Gilbride, K. (1984) Interaction with babies as guidance in development. In B. Rogoff & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Children's learning in the "Zone of Proximal Development"* (pp. 31-44). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Safont, M. P. (2004). An analysis of EAP learners' pragmatic production: A focus on request forms. *Ibérica 8*, 23−39.

Salomon, G. (1991). On the cognitive effects of technology. In L. Landsman, *Culture, Schooling and Psychological Development.* Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.

Saussure, F. D. (1959). *Course in general linguistics.* T. W. Baskins (Ed.). New York: The Philosophical Library.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics. In G. Kasper, & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 43-57). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3-32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics, 10*, 209-231

Selinker, L. (1992). *Rediscovering interlanguage.* London: Longman.

Selinker, L., & Lamendella, J. (1981). Updating the interlanguage hypothesis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 3*, 201-220.

Shrestha, P., & Coffin, C. (2012). Dynamic assessment, tutor mediation and academic writing development. *Assessing Writing*, *17*, 55–70.

Shrestha, P. N. (2017). Investigating the learning transfer of genre features and conceptual knowledge from an academic literacy course to business studies: Exploring the potential of dynamic assessment. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 25*, 1-17.

Shrestha, P. N. (2020). *Dynamic assessment of students' academic writing: Vygotkian and systemic functional linguistic perspectives.* Switzerland: Springer.

Siekmann, S., & Charles, W. (2011). Upingakuneng (when they are ready): Dynamic Assessment in a third semester Yugtun class. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 18*(2), 151-168.

Silverstein, M. (2003). Indexical order and the dialectics of sociolinguistic life. *Language and Communication, 23*, 193-229.

Stern, R. (2013). "My station and its duties". Social role accounts of obligation in Green and Bradley. In K. Ameriks (Ed.), *The Impact of Idealism: Volume 1, Philosophy and Natural Sciences* (pp. 299-322). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sternberg, R., & Grigorenko, E. (2002). *Dynamic testing. The nature and measurement of learning potential.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stone, C. A. (1993). What's missing in the metaphor of scaffolding? In E.A. Forman, N. Minick, & C.A. Stone (Eds.), *Contexts for learning: Sociocultural dynamics in children's development* (pp. 169-183). New York: Oxford University Press.

Stone, C. A. (1998). The Metaphor of Scaffolding: Its Utility for the Field of Learning Disabilities. *Journal of learning disabilities, 31*(4), 344-364.

Swain, M., Lapkin, S., Knouzi, I., Suzuki, W., & Brooks, L. (2009). Languaging: University students learn the grammatical concept of voice in French. *Modern Language Journal, 93*, 5-29.

Swain, M., & Watanabe, Y. (2013). Languaging: Collaborative dialogue as a source of learning. In C. Chapelle, *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics.* Oxford, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

Syllabus for College English Test. (2006). *National College English Testing Committee.* Shanghai, China: Shanghai Language Education Press.

Taguchi, N. (2015). Instructed pragmatics at a glance: Where instructional studies were, are, and should be going. *Language Teaching, 48*(1), 1-40.

Takahashi, S. (1996). Pragmatic transferability. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 18*(2), 189-223.

Takahashi, S. (2001). The role of input enhancement in developing pragmatic competence. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 177-199). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Takimoto, M. (2006). The effects of explicit feedback on the development of pragmatic proficiency. *Language Teaching Research* 10, 393–417.

Takimoto, M. (2007). The effects of referential oriented activity in the structured input task on the development of learners' pragmatic proficiency. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics, 13*, 46–60.

Takimoto, M. (2009). The effects of input-based tasks on the development of learners' pragmatic proficiency. *Applied Linguistics, 30*, 1–25.

Tan, K. H. & A. Farashaiyan (2012). The effectiveness of teaching formulaic politeness strategies in making request to undergraduates in an ESL classroom. *Asian Social Science, 8*, 189–196.

Tarone, E. (1980). Communication strategies, foreigner talk, and repair in interlanguage. *Language Learning, 30*(2), 417-431.

Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning, and schooling in social context.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics, 4*, 91-112.

Tzuriel, D. (2011). Revealing the effects of cognitive education programmes through Dynamic Assessment. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practices, 18*(2), 113-131.

Valsiner, J. (2001). Process structure of semiotic mediation in human development. *Human Development, 44*, 84-97.

Valsiner, J., & Van der Veer, R. (1993). The encoding of distance: the concept of the zone of proximal development and its interpretations. In R. Cocking, & K. Renninger (Eds.), *The development and meaning of psychological distance* (pp. 35-62). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Van Compernolle, R. (2010). Towards a socio-linguistically responsive pedagogy: Teaching second-person address forms in French. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 66*(3), 445-463.

Van Compernolle, R. (2011). Developing second language socio-pragmatic knowledge through concept-based instruction: A micro-genetic case study. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*, 3267-3283.

Van Compernolle, R. (2011a). Developing a sociocultural orientation to variation in language. *Language & Communication*, 1-19.

Van Compernolle, R. (2012). *Developing socio-pragmatic capability in a second language through concept-based instruction.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation: The Pennsylvania State University.

Van Compernolle, R. (2013). Concept appropriation and the emergence of L2 sociostylistic variation. *Language Teaching Research, 17*(3), 343-362.

Van Compernolle, R. (2015). *Interaction and Second Language Development.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Van Compernolle, R. (2015). Native and non-native perceptions of appropriateness in the French second-person pronoun system. *Journal of French Language Studies, 25*, 45-64.

Van der Veer, R., & Valsiner, J. (1991). *Understanding Vygotsky.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1981). The genesis of higher mental functions. In J. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology.* Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe.

Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and Language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky. Volume 1. Problems of General Psychology. Including the Volume Thinking and Speech*. New York: Plenum Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1998). The problem of age. In R. Rieber (Ed.), *The collected works of L.S. Vygotsky: Volume 5: Child psychology* (pp. 187-206). New York: Plenum Press.

Wang Zhenya. (2000) *Language and culture* (*with language and cultural self-study outline*) (Chinese Edition). Higher Education Press.

Wegerif, R. (2005) Reason and creativity in classroom dialogues, *Language and Education*, *19*(3), 223–238.

Wegerif, R. (2008). Dialogic or dialectic? The significance of ontological assumptions in research on educational dialogue. *British Educational Research Journal, 34*(3), 347-361.

Wegerif, R. (2011). From dialectic to dialogic. In T. Koschmann. (Ed.), *Theories of learning and studies of instructional practice* (pp. 201-222). New York: Springer.

Wegerif, R. (2013). *Dialogic: Education for the Internet Age*. London and New York: Routledge.

Wegerif, R. (2015). Technology and teaching thinking: Why a dialogic approach is needed for the twenty-first century. In R. Wegerif, J. Kaufman, & L. Li (Eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Research on Teaching Thinking* (pp. 451–464). Oxford: Routledge.

Wegerif, R. (2018). A dialogic theory of teaching thinking. In L. Kerslake, & R. Wegerif (Eds.) *Theory of Teaching Thinking* (pp. 101–116). Oxford: Routledge.

Wellington, J. (2000). *Educational research: contemporary issues and practical approaches.* London: Continuum.

Wells, G. (1999). *Dialogic inquiry: toward a sociocultural practice and theory of educiton.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wen, X. (2014). Pragmatic development: an exploratory study of requests by learners of Chinese. In Z. Han (Ed.), *Studies in Second Language Acquisition of Chinese* (pp. 30-56). Bristol/Buffalo/Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

Wertsch, J. (1979). From social interaction to higher psychological processes: a clarification and application of Vygotsky's theory. *Hum. Dev*, 1-22.

Wertsch, J. (1979b). The Regulation of Human Action and the Given-New Organization of Private Speech. In G. Zivin (Ed.), *The development of self-regulation through private speech.* John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Wertsch, J. (1980). The signification of dialogue in Vygotsky's account of social, egocentric, and inner speech. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 5*, 150-162.

Wertsch, J. (1984). The Zone of Proximal Development: Some Conceptual Issues. In B. Rogoff, & J. Wertsch (Eds.), *Children's Learning in the "Zone of*

Proximal Development" New Directions of Child Development (pp. 7-18).

San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wertsch, J. (1985). *Vygotsky and the social formation of mind.* Cambridge, MA:

Harvard University Press.

Wertsch, J. (1993). 'Commentary'. *Human Development, 36*, 168-71.

Wertsch, J. (1998). *Mind as Action.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wertsch, J. (2007). Mediation. In H. Daniels, M. Cole, & J. Wertsch (Eds.), *The*

Cambridge companion to Vygotsky (pp. 178-192). Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press.

Wertsch, J., & Stone, C. (1985). The concept of internalization in Vygotsky's

account of the genesis of higher mental functions. In J. Wertsch (Ed.),

Culture Communication and Cognition: Vygotskian perspectives (pp. 162-

179). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Westphal, M. (1998). *History and truth in Hegel's phenomenology (third Edition).*

Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

White, L. (1959). The concept of culture. *American Anthropologist, 61*, 227-251.

Widdowson, H. G. (2007). Un-applied linguistics and communicative language

teaching: A reaction to Keith Johnson's review of *Notional Syllabuses.*

International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 17, 214-220.

Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving.

Journal of Child Psychiatry and Psychology, 17, 89-100.

Wood, D. (1988). *How children think and learn.* Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell.

Zhang, Y. (1995). Strategies in Chinese requesting. In G. Kasper (Ed.), *Pragmatics*

of Chinese as Native and Target Language. Technical Report NO. 5 (pp. 23-

68). Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Centre.

Zhao, D. G., Cai, Y. H., & Dang, Y. R. (2017). *2017 中国大学评价研究报告*. 武汉理工大学出版社.

Appendices

Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

St Luke's Campus
Heavitree Road
Exeter UK EX1 2LU

http://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/education/

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

Title of Project: Dynamic assessment and concept-based instruction of socio-pragmatic capacity in second language learning

Researcher(s) name: Yanyan Yang

Supervisor(s):   Philip Durrant
Gabriela Meier

This project has been approved for the period

From: 12/07/2017
To: 20/09/2019

Ethics Committee approval reference:

D/16/17/52

Signature: Date: 12/07/2017
(Professor Vivenne Baumfield, Director of Research, Graduate School of Education)

Appendix B

Information SHEET and Consent
Form FOR RESEARCH

Title of Research Project

Dynamic assessment and concept-based instruction of socio-pragmatic capacity in second language learning

Details of Project

Introduction

My name is Yanyan Yang. I am a PhD candidate, studying in the University of Exeter, UK. I would like to invite you to take part in a five-week research programme being carried out by myself as a part of my PhD study in the University of Exeter.

The research will study a new teaching-learning approach to English as a foreign language among university level Chinese students.

I am trying to find out whether Chinese students' EFL (English as a foreign language) communicating capability would be improved during the programme and if so, how their EFL communicating capability be improved.

The benefits of taking part

I believe that the benefits of taking part in this programme are noticeable. First of all, you will have a living experience of English learning from a new way. Second, you will receive continuous one-on-one teacher-student mediating instruction regarding your own language learning difficulties. Last but not the least, you will have numerous opportunities to improve your interpersonal communicating competence in English.

What will you do if you take part?

If you agree to take part in the study:

you will have numerous opportunities to cooperatively share English-speaking experience, discuss and critically think about knowledge that dynamically mediate our everyday language choices under specific English-speaking communication settings.

you will be provided with systematic and coherent instructions regarding social appropriateness in relation to English language usage.

you will be provided with personalised tutorials and substantial opportunities to improve your communicative performance in English. For example, you can keep your own reflective diaries immediately after each personalised tutorial in which you can write down your own thoughts regarding the tutorial, specific language problems that you want me to focus on during our next tutorial and/or areas that you are still struggling with. You will be welcomed to share your reflective diaries with me before our next tutorial.

you will have two opportunities to share with me your main concerns regarding your EFL (English as a foreign language) learning process in the form of one-on-one dialogical interviewing. The first dialogical interview will be conducted at the very beginning of the study and the second one at the end. Both interviews will also involve your EFL awareness regarding everyday language choices under specific English-speaking communication settings and learning experience over the course of this study.

your language learning processes occurred over the course of the study will be both video and audio recorded. That is, our dialogical interviews, in-class teaching-and-learning activities, and one-on-one tutorials will be both video and audio recorded. By so doing, you will have numerous chances to reflect on your own performance throughout and witness the language learning progress you would achieve over the course of the study.

You should be aware that:

you do not have to agree to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this programme, you always have the opportunity to withdraw from the programme if you feel uncomfortable with the study at any time.

Contact Details
For further information about the research /interview data (amend as appropriate), please contact:
Name: Yanyan Yang
Postal address: Graduate School of Education, St Luke's Campus, Heavitree Road, Exeter, EX1 2LU.
Telephone: 00 44 (0) 7490441138
Email: yy338@exeter.ac.uk

If you have concerns/questions about the research you would like to discuss with someone else at the University, please contact the project supervisor:
Dr. Durrant through P.L.Durrant@exeter.ac.uk

Confidentiality
All data will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below so that I am able to contact you at a later date). Your data will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Data Protection Notice
The research data will be collected through several different sources (classroom teaching and activity video-recordings, semi-structured interviews, L2 users' reflective dairies and one-on-one instructor-learner tutoring audio-recordings, etc.). All electronic data of the research will be backed-up to the University of Exeter U-drive. All written documents will be kept in a locked cabinet. All data will be integrated and reorganised via anonymous code, for example, interview (activity)-001(number) -M (sex)-20 (age). All electronic and published data and analysis documents about the present research will be saved securely by the research for five years after the accomplishment of the present research process and then they will be destroyed using a shredder. All electronic device and Windows directory that data have been saved in will be password-protected. At the outset of the present research and data collection stages, all participants will be informed about the data collecting, using, reporting and saving process.

The information you provide will be used for research purposes and your personal data will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation and the University's notification lodged at the Information Commissioner's Office. Your personal data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties. The results of the research will be published in anonymised form.

Anonymity
All data will be held and used on an anonymous basis, with no mention of your name, but we will refer to the group of which you are a member.

Consent
I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.
I understand that:
there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may withdraw at any stage;
I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me;
any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications or academic conference or seminar presentations;
If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form;
all information I give will be treated as confidential;
the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

..............................………………….. ....……………….……..
(Signature of participant) (Date)

……………………………………………………

……………………………………………..………

(Printed name of participant)(Email address of participant if they have requested to view a copy of the interview transcript.)

...................…………………..................................…………………..

(Signature of researcher) (Printed name of researcher)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s).
Your contact details are kept separately from your interview data.

Appendix C

Mandarin version of semi-structured interview questions:

1. 这些表达方式你认为有什么相同或是不同点吗？如果有的话，这些相同点和不同点是什么？请各自描述。
2. 你是如何决定使用哪种表达方式的？有什么因素，或是规则，抑或是概念在引导你吗？如果有，那么它们具体是什么呢？

Appendix D

Pre-/post-enrichment W-DCTs

Situation 1

You are a male engineer working in a new company. You have noticed a female colleague named Sharon. She is a very nice girl, but you haven't got many chances to talk to her at work. You want to ask her out some time this weekend.

In this situation, if you want her to accept your request, how seriously would you pay attention to the way you make the request? Please circle a number. Very slightly …………………very seriously

1   2   3   4   5

You:

Your colleague Sharon: Thank you very much. But I actually don't think that would be a good idea. Don't get me wrong, but how do you know I'm not married?

Situation 2 (adapted in Allami & Naeimi, 2011, p. 402)

You teach English at a university. It is just about the middle of the semester now. one of your students asks to speak to you.

In this situation, if you refuse the student, how seriously would it embarrass the student? Please circle a number. very slightly...............................very seriously

1   2   3   4   5

Student: Ah, excuse me. Some of the students were talking after class yesterday. We kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar.

You:

Student: well, it was only a suggestion.

Situation 3

You have been working in an advertising company now for some time. You work hard and have made fair contributions to the company. Given that the living cost is increasing really fast in your city, you have to spend more on your rent and else.

Thus, you think it is time to request for an increased pay, otherwise you plan to find a new job. You are now in your boss' office.

In this situation, if you want your boss to accept your request, how seriously would you pay attention to the way you make the request? Please circle a number. Very slightly …………………very seriously

1   2   3   4   5

You:

Your boss: I totally understand your situation here. However, the economic environment has been noticeably bad for our company during the past two years. I think it is a bit difficult for the company to offer you an increased pay under such a circumstance.

You: Well, then I guess I'll have to look for another job.

Situation 4

You and your newly acquainted friend plan to eat outside tonight. She suggests a newly opened French restaurant. However, you prefer Italian food, given you just had French last week. Besides, the Italian restaurant is a bit cheaper.

In this situation, if you refuse your friend, how seriously would it embarrass your friend? Please circle a number. very slightly................................very seriously

1   2   3   4   5

Friend: How about trying the newly opened French restaurant tonight? It might be fun. What do you think?

You:

Friend: well, maybe next time.

Appendix E

Pre-/post-role plays

Pre-enrichment scenario 1 (adopted in Takahashi, 1996, p. 222)

Student A's role: You have an appointment with Professor H, whose seminar you are now taking, at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow. You are supposed to talk with him about a topic for the term paper for his seminar. However, you suddenly need to go to the dentist around the same time tomorrow. It is very hard to change the appointment with the dentist: you cannot take any other time slot for treatment and you are now feeling a great deal of pain. So, you really want to go to the dentist tomorrow. You understand that Professor H is a very busy person, and, in fact, you had a hard time getting an appointment with him, but you have decided to ask Professor H to change the appointment.

Pre-enrichment scenario 2

Student A's role: You are now thinking of submitting your paper for publication in *Student Bulletin*. This paper was written for the Pragmatics course offered by lecturer (Jack Big) last semester. You have discussed with your lecturer about your draft several times and you have already made a lot of revisions. You really want lecturer to read your revised paper again and to give you more detailed comments. Lecturer is very busy this semester because he has a lot of classes to teach. But you would really like to submit your revised paper for *Student Bulletin*, so you have decided to ask lecturer to read your revised paper again. Now you are in his/her office.

Post-enrichment scenario 3

Student A's role: You have an online course – *How to Write Up Dissertation*, between 12am to 2pm in the afternoon. However, you have a supervisory meeting with your supervisor at 2pm. Then, you decide to offline the *How to Write Up Dissertation* online course ten minutes earlier and meet your supervisor in his/her office. Later on, you receive an email from the University, claiming that you are banned from any online course for the next 20 days because of your failing to "register" the *How to Write Up Dissertation* online course in the afternoon. You are a little bit confused and you think the ban is ridiculous, because you actually took part in the online course. Then, you decide to visit the Online Course Management office to justify yourself and persuade them to call off the 20 days ban.

Post-enrichment scenario 4

Student A's role: You have an assignment due next month; and the topic of this assignment is quite new to you. You are getting a little bit worried when the deadline is coming close. At this point, you have decided to turn to an expert (Jack Big) for help. This expert is a Professor in the university and you once attended his lecture several times last academic term. Besides, you understand that he is quite

busy at this very beginning of the new academic term. But you really need help and you have decided to have a try. Now, you are in his office.

Appendix F

Socio-pragmatic concepts

Card 1- *Stereotypes* (adapted in Van Compernolle, 2012)

Stereotypes are formed as people notice some behaviours of certain groups and make judgments about them. For example, some people may think that upper class or highly educated people sound snobby, or that people from a particular city or region have funny accents (e.g., accents from India and China).

What can you infer from this explanation?
What are some examples of positive stereotypes? Negative stereotypes?
Can you think of any specific linguistic usage indicating different stereotypes?
What do they mean to you?

Appendix G

Internal mitigating moves (syntactic)

1. Tense: conditional: "would you?"

   "***would you*** help me?"; "………. ***if you have time***."

2. Aspect: use of the imperfect "I wanted"

   "I ***wanted*** a coffee"; "I ***was wondering*** if I could join your study group."

3. Mood:

   "I ***would like to*** ask you a favour".

4. *Pronoun choice: Formal verb, person and pronoun*

   "Could ***you*** (formal) help me?"

5. Negation:

   "***Wouldn't*** you lend me your car?"

Internal mitigating moves (lexical/phrasal)

6. Politeness markers: "please"

   "Can I ***please*** have an extension on this paper."

7. Consultative device: Expressions to involve the hearer

   "***Would you mind*** lending me a hand?"

8. Subjectivizer: Elements in which a speaker explicitly expresses their subjective opinion about the proposition, reducing the assertiveness of the request (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989b).

   "***I believe / think /suppose***..."

9. Cajoler: Conventionalized speech items which do not commonly enter into syntactic structures but are used to increase or restore harmony between the interlocutors.

   "***You know/you see***, I'd really like to ask you a favour."

10. Appealers: These elicit a hearer's attention, occur in a syntactically final position, and may signal turn-availability. Tags are common (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989b).

    "I need your computer to finish my assignment, ***okay***?"

11. Hedges: Adverbials used to avoid an accurate propositional condition

"can you hold this sweater? ***It's just that*** I don't have any money...?"

12. Down-toner: Used by the speaker to modulate the impact his or her request is likely to have on the hearer (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989b).

   "do you think you could ***maybe*** lend me your notes?"

   "Is there ***any*** way I could get an extension?"

   "***It would be nice*** also to have some time dedicated to Jake's work though.

13. Adverbial intensifier

   "I would be ***most*** grateful if you could let me use your article?"

External mitigating moves

14. Preparator

   "***I'd like to ask you something*** ..."; "***You know what would be nice*** …."

   "***Are you busy right now***?"

15. Grounder: "explanations, or justifications for his or her request" (Faerch & Kasper, 1989, p.239)

   "I am trying to study here";

   "Judith***, I missed the class yesterday.*** Could I borrow your notes?***"***

16. Disarmer

   "***I know you don't like lending out your notes***, but could ..."

   "***I don't really know if this question is allowed, but*** ……"

17. Promise of Reward

   "Could you give me a lift home? ***We'll use my car tomorrow***."

18. Imposition Minimizer

   "Would you give me a lift, ***but only if you're going my way***."

19. Sweetener

   "***You look great***."

20. Pre-pre-strategy

   "***Hello sir, how are you today***?"

21. Appreciation

    "***I would appreciate it***."

22. Self-introduction

   "***Hey, I'm in your politics class***."

23. Confirmatory strategy

   "***I would be grateful if you could help me***."

24. Getting a pre-commitment

   "***Could you do me a favour***? ..."

25. Apology

   "***I'm sorry to bother you but*** could I request a few days off?"

(categories and examples, adapted in Blum-Kulka et al. 1989b; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984; Blum-Kulka 1987; Blum-Kulka and Levenston 1987)

Appendix H

Pragma-linguistic card- Head Act

Direct

1. Mood-derivable (imperative): *You shut up.*

2. Performative: *I am telling you to shut up.*

3. Hedged performative: *I would like to ask you to shut up.*

4. Locution-derivable: *I want you to shut up.*

Conventionally indirect

5. Suggestory formula: *Let's play a game.*

6. Query-preparatory: *Can you draw a horse for me?*

Non-conventionally indirect

7. Strong hint: *This game is boring.*

8. Mild hint: *We've been playing this game for over an hour now.*

(adopted in Ellis, 2008, p. 173)

What do you know about these three types of request strategies?

Can you think of some communicative contexts when you would want or need to use direct, conventionally indirect, non-conventionally indirect conventions?

Appendix I

Pragma-linguistic card – internal modification

1. Tense: conditional "would you?"

   "***would you*** help me?"

2. Aspect: use of the imperfect

   "I ***wanted*** a coffee"

   "I ***was wondering*** if I could join your study group."

3. Mood:

   "I ***would like to*** ask you a favour".

4. Pronoun choice: Formal verb, person and pronoun

   "Could ***you*** (formal) help me?"

5. Negation:

   "***Wouldn't*** you lend me your car?"

(adapted in Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989b)

What do you know about these internal modifications?
Can you think of some communicative contexts when you would want or need to use these internal modifications?

Pragma-linguistic card: adjunct to head act

1. Preparator:

   "***Are you busy right now***?"

2. Grounder: "explanations, or justifications for his or her request" (Faerch & Kasper, 1989, p.239)

   "Judith***, I missed the class yesterday.*** Could I borrow your notes?***"***

3. Disarmer

   "***I know this is short notice***;

4. Promise of Reward

   "Could you give me a lift home? ***We'll use my car tomorrow***."

5. Imposition Minimizer

   "Would you give me a lift, ***but only if you're going my way***."

6. Sweetener

   "***You look great***."

7. Pre-pre-strategy

   "***Hello sir, how are you today***?"

8. Appreciation

   "***I would appreciate it***."

9. Self-introduction

   "***Hey, I'm in your politics class***."

10. Confirmatory strategy

    "***I would be grateful if you could help me***."

11. Getting a pre-commitment

    "***Could you do me a favour***? ..."

12. Apology

    "***I'm sorry to bother you but*** could I request a few days off?"

(categories 1-12, adapted in Blum-Kulka *et al*. 1989b; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984; Blum-Kulka 1987; Blum-Kulka and Levenston 1987)

What do you know about these external modifications?

Can you think of some communicative contexts when you would want or need to use these external modifications?

Appendix J

Sociopragmatic-pragmalinguistic connection card

Card 2: positive stereotypes -- indirect request strategies; external/internal mitigating devices

Soliciting (idealistically) positive stereotypes can be achieved, in part, through your choice among indirect request strategies. You can also point to positive stereotypes by using either external or internal or both mitigating devices. External devices include, for example, *availability check, getting a pre-commitment, appreciation, disarmer, sweeteners, grounder, imposition minimizer*; internal devices *politeness marker*, *understaters, hedges* and *down-toners*. (adapted in Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989b; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984; Blum-Kulka 1987; Blum-Kulka and Levenston 1987)

What can you infer from this explanation?
Can you think of some examples when you would want or need to use external and/or internal devices to trigger positive stereotypes?

Appendix K

Scenario prompts

Scenario 5

Student's role: You have a phone interview with a work-study program director in France today. The program is for a summer job in Montpellier where you would work part time in a hotel and take language courses at the university. You know you're a finalist, but you don't know what job you might get. On your application, you indicated that your top two preferences were front desk receptionist and wait staff (waiter/waitress) in the hotel restaurant because those jobs would allow you to interact in French with other people—one of your main reasons for wanting to go to Montpellier. Also, you don't know when you would be expected to arrive because some jobs are expected to start at the beginning of July, while others start in mid-July. This is a potential problem since you and several of your friends have planned a trip to New York from July 1-July 10.

Other's role: You're a work-study program director in Montpellier, and you're calling a finalist to offer him/her a job. Unfortunately, his/her first choice—receptionist—is has already been offered to someone else. You want to offer the waiter/waitress job in the hotel restaurant, which starts July 1. Alternatively, although the applicant did not show interest on the application, there is also a position as an assistant in the kitchen (aide cuisine) that starts July 15.

Scenario 6

Student's role: You need to meet with your professor to discuss an upcoming exam, so you go to his office to ask if he's available now or sometime soon for the two of you to talk. Since the exam is next Monday, you need to talk with him soon. Normally, you're available in the mornings between 10 and 11 and in the afternoons from 3 to 5. On Fridays you don't normally come to campus, but technically you're free since you don't have any classes then.

Other's role: A student comes to see you about an upcoming exam. You can talk now for only a few minutes because you have a meeting soon. Otherwise, your office hours are Tuesday, 11-12, and Thursday, 2-3. In addition, you're normally around Friday mornings, so you could meet then.

Scenario 7

Student's role: You are planning a trip to Paris with a friend for next summer, so you need to get some information about places to stay. You call a travel agency in France to ask for some recommendations. You and your friend would like to stay close to the center of Paris – for example in the Quartier Latin or near la Tour Eiffel – but you have a budget of 50€ per night for both of you together. Of course, you want something clean but it doesn't have to be fancy. You also want a private

room. Your budget is very strict, so you're also willing to stay farther away from the center of town if it means a cheaper place. You plan on being in Paris for 10 nights.

Other's role: You are a travel agent in Paris. An American student calls you to arrange lodging for a 10-night stay. Because of the budget, you recommend a couple of youth hostels and one hotel in the suburbs of Paris. Hostel A is 60€/night and in the Quartier Latin. Hostel B is 45€/night but is located on the north side of Paris, far from the center. Hostel C is only 40€ per night, but the room would be shared with 2 other people. The hotel is in the suburbs and costs 50€/night.

Scenario 8

Student's role: Two weeks ago, a French professor from PSU came to your class to talk about a one-year study abroad opportunity in France. You and a friend really want to go study abroad, so you go to his office to talk to him (your friend isn't available right now, so you go alone to ask for the two of you). However, you're not sure whether you meet the requirements to participate in the study abroad program, so you'll have to convince him you're qualified. Also, you really need to talk to him now because you and your friend have to tell your parents soon that you're interested in going.

Other's role: You are a French professor at PSU and in charge of a study abroad program in Paris. You have been recruiting students for a couple of weeks, and there has been quite a bit of interest. You have to set up formal interviews with program applicants, but some students come by your office unannounced to talk to you even if they haven't applied for the program. The application deadline is tomorrow.

Scenario 9

Student's role: You recently met an exchange student from France. He doesn't know many people at PSU because he's only been here for a couple of weeks. The two of you have gotten together a couple of times for lunch and seem to get along well. You and your roommate are having a party at your place on Friday and want to invite him, so you call to invite him.

Other's role: You're an exchange student from France, and you don't know many people at PSU because you've only been here for a couple of weeks. However, you have met one person, [student's name], and been out to lunch a couple of times. You'd like to go out and meet more people, but it's difficult because you don't live very close to campus. Also, you don't know your way around State College very well yet. This weekend will be especially busy because you have a lot of work to do and also one of your friends from France, who is studying in Philadelphia, happens to be in town.

(scenario 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are adopted in Van Compernolle, 2012, p. 215-218)

Appendix L

Transcript Conventions (adapted from Jefferson, 2004)

(( ))   describing something that can't be easily represented in writing. For example, ((laughing))

(( ))   transcriber's notes

[ ]   overlapping speech

(2)   longer pause. (Doesn't need to be exact, but internally consistent within transcript)

*   linguistic peculiarity. For example, "Before having* an appointment with you, I forget* that I have* had an appointment with a dentist (Yiqiao, scenario #1, *request*, pre-enrichment)

A   participants' requesting uses. For example, "I think I need to refuse to have an appointment with you" ((*plain statement*)). (Yiqiao, scenario #1, *request*, pre-enrichment)

Appendix M

Nina language awareness interview

1. Me:简单了解一下你的情况亲爱的
   You alright? Shall we get started? Don't worry, it's just some simple questions.
2. Nina:好的
   Okay
3. Me:就是说你们现在的学习中和英文沟通交流有关的都有哪些
   How's everything going? How's your study? Anything related to English communication?
4. Nina:跟英语有关的
   Related to English communication?
5. Me:嗯对的 就是跟英文有关的沟通交流
   Right. Something like, communications that you do with English.
6. Nina: Uh (ten seconds)
7. Me:或者说课堂上有的相关的东西都有哪些
   Anything related to English communication that you encountered during class?
8. Nina: Uh 介绍自己的情况
   Uh, like introduce yourself
9. Me:嗯介绍自己的情况 就是自我介绍对吗
   introduce yourself, you mean self-introduction
10. Nina:嗯对的 然后还有 其他的
    Yeah, and
11. Me:嗯
    Uh
12. Nina:像我们现在讲课的话 就是因为是商务 商务就会慢慢的跟那个商务接轨
    The courses that we have at the moment are business English, so what we do in class is kinda related to business.
13. Me:商务场景吗
    You mean English communication within business contexts?
14. Nina:对商务场景
    Right, English communication within business contexts
15. Me:目前练到的都有哪些商务场景
    Any specific business context you have encountered so far?
16. Nina:有那种情景对话就是打电话的
    Like giving someone a call.
17. Me:嗯
    okay
18. Nina:然后还有那个
    And
19. Me:打电话 打电话干什么
    You mentioned English communication through phone calls. What's the call about?
20. Nina:打电话就是询问 像那种投诉信似的
    Like inquiry, something like making a complaint

21. Me:投诉
    Complaint?

22. Nina:对 就是说 这个在你们这儿定的东西 然后要么就是价格不合理 然后还有那个
    Right, like, we ordered something from you, however, for example, the price was unreasonable, and

23. Me:嗯 那还有什么吗
    Okay, and anything else?

24. Nina:还有就是 上次讲的那个啥 叫
    Something we discussed in class a few days ago, what's it about? I couldn't remember.

25. Me:嗯 是不是前台接待那种
    Uh, like English communication at reception?

26. Nina:前台接待?
    Reception?

27. Me:别人打电话过来咨询最基本的信息 有这样的吗
    Like customers calling for some basic information of the company, anything like that?

28. Nina:哦 不对 有那个求职面试
    Uh not really, I got it, it's about interview.

29. Me:嗯 你的意思是 我是面试官 你是过来面试的吗
    Okay, you mean as an interviewee, how to communicate in English during an interview.

30. Nina:嗯 对的
    Right

31. Me:你要说服我你自己条件还不错
    Like you have to persuade the interviewer that you're qualified for the job.

32. Nina:对对对
    Right, right

33. Me:可以胜任这个工作
    You can manage the job

34. Nina:对对
    Right, right

35. Me:这个其实对你的英语能力要求还是蛮强的 你得说服我 要不然我为什么要选你呀 对吧
    This is tough, right? You've got to persuade the other that you're the one for the job.

36. Nina:是
    Right

37. Me:还有什么吗
    Anything else?

38. Nina:上次好像是一个 那个情景是 uh…. 好像就这三个情景吧 一个是向别人介绍自己
    The one we discussed during the last class uh…. I guess it's just these three. The first is about self-introduction.

39. Me:介绍自己
    self-introduction

40. Nina:投诉信 然后就是刚刚那个求职的
    Complaint, and interview

41. Me:嗯嗯
    okay
42. Nina:嗯
    Right
43. Me:你知道的 英语的沟通涉及的面是很广的 不仅仅限制在我们刚聊的求职面试说服对方
    There are many other things that we can do with English, right? Apart from interview, persuasion we just discussed.
44. Nina:对的
    Right
45. Me:当然说服肯定得有 比如这次我回国我得说服我爹妈多给我点钱花花
    But you're right, persuasion is quite an important speech act in our daily life, for example, I've got to persuade my parents to give me more money before I travelled back to China this time.
46. Nina:哈哈哈哈 ((laughs))
47. Me:那我得用尽招数啊 或者我说服你们学院的院长关于的我的研究对学生们的好处 用尽各种说服的技巧
    Thus, I had to use some persuasion skills. Similarly, I got to use some skills to persuade the dean of your department as regards the benefits of participating the programme.
48. Nina:对的
    Right
49. Me:当然我们生活当中还有其他的语言行为 比如说请求啊 邀请啊
    But we also encounter other speech acts daily, such as, requests, invitation.
50. Nina:对的
    Right
51. Me:你邀请同学过来呀 邀请老师参加派对什么的 都有可能的
    Like you invite your classmates, teachers for a party or something, right
52. Nina:对对对
    Yeah
53. Me:还有就是拒绝对方 这个也是我们生活当中非常常见的行为 然后我们这次的研究学习的涉及到第一个是请求
    And refusal, it's also a very common speech act in our daily life. The present study is about the speech act of request
54. Nina:请求
    Request
55. Me:对 第二个就是拒绝
    Right, and refusal
56. Nina:拒绝
    Refusal
57. Me: Yeah
58. Nina:这个好像是商务写作里边儿有
    It seems we've encountered these two in the Business writing class
59. Me:是吧 我这边给你几张卡片 你简单的看一下这些个卡片 就是你读下来 你觉得他们之间有什么相同点或者是不同点没有

Great. Okay, I've got several cards, could you please read them first, and then see if you can notice any similarities and/or differences between them based on your knowledge.

60. Nina: ((Reading)) 好像语气有点不同

It seems like the tones are different.

61. Me:嗯 做的事情是一样的吗 都是干什么的

Okay, are they all about the same speech act? What are they doing?

62. Nina: Uh (20 seconds) 第一个 ((looks at 'Got any Winston?'))

The first one

63. Me:嗯

Yeah

64. Nina: ((reads 'Got any Winston?'))

65. Me: Yeah 这个是一种香烟

Sorry, Winston here is the name of a cigarette.

66. Nina:香烟？

Cigarette?

67. Me:嗯 对的 香烟的名字

Yeah, it's *the name of a cigarette.*

68. Nina:哦 这个情景应该就是 不相识的人 就像是这种男人吗

Oh, I see, it's like, two strangers, like guys

69. Me:嗯

okay

70. Nina:他们就是见面的时候 就会不自觉的 为了打招呼不自觉的递过去

When they first meet each other, they unconsciously give each other cigarettes as a means of greeting.

71. Me:嗯嗯 或者是你想抽 但是你没带 或者有火吗 借个火

I see, or you wanted to have a cigarette, but you happened to not have one on you, or you didn't have a light on you, then you wanted to ask for a light.

72. Nina:对

Right

73. Me:你觉得这种表达怎么样

What you think about the language used?

74. Nina:这个 就是平常的打招呼啊

Well, it's a very common way of greeting each other.

75. Me:就是你觉得这种表达方式 和其它的表达方式比较 你觉得有什么相同不同点吗

Anything else? Any other difference between these cards?

76. Nina:我觉得这个比较好 ((looks at 'I know you can't bear parties…'))

I think this one is better.

77. Me:嗯 为什么 你觉得它哪点好

Okay, why, in which way you think it's better than others?

78. Nina: (20 seconds)

79. Me:是因为它长吗

Because it's longer than others?

80. Nina:不是因为它长

No, not because it's longer than others.

81. Me:嗯
    okay
82. Nina:就是 像这个他说他不能忍受聚会 但是他是 他在尽力的劝说他
    It's because, look, it says that s/he understands that the other cannot bear parties; but s/he is trying to persuade the other
83. Me:嗯
    okay
84. Nina:劝说他 然后让他
    She's persuading the other to
85. Me:哪一句是在劝说他
    Which word/s are about persuading?
86. Nina:就是这个 'I know you can't bear parties'
    This one
87. Me:这个是说 ((translates the line)) 我知道你这个人不太喜欢参加各种 party
    Okay, it says 'I know you can't bear parties'
88. Nina:对呀
    Right
89. Me:就是从我的角度 展示出来 我确实是在为你考虑
    It's like showing caring for the other
90. Nina:对 他的感受吗 然后
    Right, his/her feelings, and then
91. Me:嗯？
    Okay?
92. Nina:但是 就是 也为了让他能参与进去 然后就是尽力的劝说他吗
    But, it's like, in aiming to engage the other, then persuading her/him
93. Me:嗯就是从我的角度出发 说我知道你不喜欢 但是这个真的很好 你来吧
    Okay, it's like from my perspective, expressing that I know that you don't like it, but it's really good, please come.
94. Nina:不是 我感觉是 从我的角度出发 然后再考虑他的感受
    No, I think it's from my perspective, then show my concern about other's feelings.
95. Me:嗯 那其他的几个呢
    I see, what about the other cards?
96. Nina:其它就是没有考虑别人的感受 就像这个 'you shup up' 闭嘴 ((translates the line))
    真的就是只考虑自己的 就是完全没考虑到别人的感受
    The others didn't take other people's feeling into consideration, like this one 'you shut up'. It's all about her/himself. s/he didn't consider other people's feelings at all.
97. Me:嗯
    okay
98. Nina:就是这个句子给人一种 感觉那个很
    It makes people feel like
99. Me:很怎么样
    Feel like what?
100. Nina: (ten seconds) 反正意思就是只考虑自己 不考虑别人的感受
    Whatever, it's all about her/himself, and didn't consider other people's feelings at all.
101. Me:好的 那你认为这种表达方式呢 ((reads 'Can you draw a horse for me?'))

Okay, what about this one?

102. Nina: (ten seconds) 这个应该是表示一种请求吧

This one should be a request.

103. Me:嗯 哪其它的都不是请求吗 不是向对方请求做某事吗

Oaky, what about others? Aren't they requests? Aren't they about asking someone to do something?

104. Nina:这个

Well.

105. Me:借我一根香烟 ((translates 'Got any Winston?')) 你觉得这不是一种请求吗

what you think? Don't you think it's a request?

106. Nina:也是 但是我感觉他的语气不一样

Well, maybe. But its tone is different from others.

107. Me:你的意思是他们最大的区别是语气上不同

You mean the essential difference between them is tone.

108. Nina:啊 对的

Right

109. Me:好 我们在再换一些卡片

Okay, let's see one more group of cards.

110. Nina:这个是 (20 seconds) 这个应该是当别人向你发出请求的时候 有的时候可能是你有事 没有时间什么的 然后就是拒绝他吗

These are….. these should be about, when other people make requests toward you, sometimes you might have other things to do, and consequently, you've got no time, then you refuse her/him

111. Me:嗯 你的意思是这些卡片涉及到的语言行为是拒绝 是吗

Okay, you mean these cards are all about speech act of refusals, right?

112. Nina:应该是

I guess so.

113. Me:比如说这个 ((points at 'I refuse')) 这个是吗

Let's see this one, what you think?

114. Nina:这个是

It's a refusal.

115. Me:那你觉得还有那个是拒绝

Which one else is also a refusal?

116. Nina: (15 seconds) 这个不太像是拒绝 ((points at 'I will do it next time'))

This one doesn't like a refusal.

117. Me:嗯

okay

118. Nina:这个不是拒绝

It is not.

119. Me:这个不是?

Isn't it?

120. Nina:嗯

It's not.

121. Me: 'I will do it next time' ((rereads the line))下次吧 ((translates the line))

122. Nina:这个是表示不确定的 ((points at 'I'm not sure'))

This one is about uncertainty.

123. Me:嗯

Okay.

124. Nina:或者别人向你问某件事的时候 你不太确定

Or, when someone asks you about something, you're not quite sure.

125. Me:嗯

okay

126. Nina:就会对别人说

Then, you might respond with that.

127. Me:嗯 哪有没有可能 比如说举个例子 我今天晚上想邀你出去玩 你说 I'm not sure. 会不会这样说

Okay, any chance, for example, I invite you to have some time out at a local hangout tonight, you might say I'm not sure. Does that make any sense?

128. Nina:也许 但是一般情况下 如果说 像你刚说的是今晚吗

Maybe, but normally, you said it's tonight, right?

129. Me:嗯

Right

130. Nina:哪今晚的时间在昨天就已经会知道今天会发生 就是大概会发生哪些事 应该 如果真的是别人邀请你的话 让你去某个地方的话 那 那个时间感觉你已经知道了呀 要是去就失去 不去就是不去

Well, if it's tonight, I already knew my schedule for today since yesterday. Then, if someone actually invited me to go to some places, I already knew my schedule, so, there is nothing to be unsure about. If I'm going, I'm going; if not, then not. There's nothing unsure about.

131. Me:嗯

Okay

132. Nina:不是说去不了 因为有某些事

It's not about can or cannot, it's just I've already got something else to do.

133. Me:嗯 那你说这个是不是拒绝 'I'm not sure' ((reads the line)). 他的言外之意是什么呢

Okay, then you think this is not a refusal. Any chance that you thought about its connotation, the meaning implied by the line?

134. Nina:这个 (ten seconds silence)

Well

135. Me:他嘴巴上说 'I'm not sure'. 其实言外之意是不去 有没有这种可能呢

Any chance that s/he lip saying 'I'm not sure', what s/he really means is 'I'm not going', any possibility of this kind of expression?

136. Nina:有 好像有些时候 说不出口的话 就会有这种句子

Maybe. Like in some situations, when it's kinda embarrassing to say no directly to other's face, then you might say this.

137. Me:嗯

okay

138. Nina:但是感觉要是再往下延伸的话 那别人会问你到底能不能去

But what I was thinking is, in that case, what if the other continues to push you and ask you for confirmation as regards whether you will go or not.

139. Me:嗯 就是这句话我表达出来 我很清楚我的意思 但是对方可能没有抓住我的 point 你是这个意思吗

I see. You mean you're clear about what you mean by saying that, but the other might not be capable of grasping your point or intention, right?

140. Nina:啊嗯

Right.

141. Me:哦 那另外几个呢

I see, what about others?

142. Nina:这个是拒绝 ((points at 'I'm sorry, I've got a headache'))

This one is also a refusal.

143. Me:嗯 但他这个的拒绝方式是什么 是不是直接拒绝

Okay, what kind of refusing skill is it? Is it a direct one?

144. Nina:不是

No.

145. Me:那是什么

What is it then?

146. Nina:他说他头痛 ((translates the line))

S/he said s/he got a headache.

147. Me:这是一种什么

What kind of refusing means is it?

148. Nina:委婉

Indirect

149. Me:委婉的什么

Indirect what?

150. Nina:拒绝

Indirect refusal.

151. Me:我知道这个是拒绝 他这里是什么战略措施来拒绝我的

You're right it's a refusal. But What kind of refusing means s/he is using to refuse me?

152. Nina:通过 (ten seconds)

It's……

153. Me:我说我头痛 不方便 或者说我没车 没自行车 这些都是什么

Things like 'I've got a headache'; 'it's inconvenient'; 'I don't have a car or bicycle'; what are those means?

154. Nina:Uh

155. Me:或者说我不知道路 这些都是什么

Or 'I don't know how to get there', what are those means?

156. Nina:Uh (ten seconds)

157. Me:算不算是借口

Are they excuses?

158. Nina:哦对 (laughs)

Oh, right.

159. Me:好 那其它的呢

Okay, what else?

160. Nina:这个也是拒绝吧((points at 'I hope I can help')) 他说希望他能帮助你 其实是他可能没有这个能力

This one is also a refusal. s/he said s/he wanted to help, but maybe s/he was not able to help.

161. Me:嗯 哪这个呢 ((points at 'if you have asked me earlier…'))

    Okay, what about this one?

162. Nina:这个也是 就是委婉的拒绝

    This one is also a refusal. It's an indirect refusal.

163. Me:好的 我们刚看了好多不同的方式 语言表达不一样的哦 假如说是你的好朋友关系好的朋友 你一般会用那种方式呢 你会用这个吗 ((points at 'if you have asked me earlier…'))

    Okay, we've read several conventions, if it's your close friends, which convention you might use? Will you use this one?

164. Nina:不会 这个就是别人找你帮忙 你恰好没有时间 可能就会说如果你早点告诉我的话 我我可能就会抽出来时间

    Not really. This one is about when someone asked you, you happened to get no time, then you might say 'if you have asked me earlier, I would make time for you'.

165. Me:那你为什么不会用在好朋友上呢 怎么 或者说 这么多的表达方式 你是怎么确定怎么用的呢

    How come you decide not to use it with your close friends? Or, how you decide which one to use among those various conventions?

166. Nina:我会 (five seconds) 像这个 如果别人问我说你要是 uh 他邀请你帮忙 但是你确实是很想帮他的忙 ((points at 'if you have asked me earlier…'))

    I think, like this one, if someone asks me, uh, asks you to do her/him a favour, but you indeed wanna help

167. Me:那你会怎么用呢 会在什么样的场景下使用

    How you decide to use it? In what contexts you might use it?

168. Nina:场景啊?

    Contexts?

169. Me:嗯

    Right

170. Nina:会对同学

    My classmates

171. Me:同学

    classmates

172. Nina:同学之间 还有朋友 还有 (ten seconds) 我觉得不相识的人应该也可以 不熟悉的

    Classmates, and friends. I think it's also okay to use with strangers, someone I'm not familiar with.

173. Me:嗯 哪假如说 你们学院的院长找你 你认识你们院的院长吗

    Okay, will you use it if the dean of your department asks you for a favour? Do you know the dean?

174. Nina:不认识

    No, I don't.

175. Me:嗯 哪假如说 你们学院的院长找你帮忙 你不想做 你会用这种方式吗

    Okay, if the dean asks you for a favour, you don't want to do it, will you refuse him/her by using this convention?

176. Nina: Uh 有可能 但是我不会说直接的拒绝
    Maybe. But I won't refuse directly.
177. Me:那你是不会用这个的吗 ((points at 'I refuse'))
    Will you say this?
178. Nina:不会 这个太直接了
    No. this one is too direct.
179. Me: Okay 哪你的意思是这剩下的都是间接的 对吧
    You mean the rest are indirect, right?
180. Nina:嗯
    Right
181. Me:哪假如说 你们学院的院长找你帮忙 你不想做 你会怎么拒绝呢
    Well, if the dean asks you for a favour, you don't want to do it, what would you say?
182. Nina: Uh (20 seconds)
183. Me:还是随意用 想起来那个用那个呢 还是非常有考虑的要用那个
    Will you randomly pick up one that jumps into mind? Or will you think thoroughly?
184. Nina:肯定要仔细考虑呀
    Of course, I will think thoroughly
185. Me:嗯 哪你会用哪个呢
    Okay. What you might say then
186. Nina:我觉得我会用'I'm not sure' 吧
    I think I will say 'I'm not sure'.
187. Me:嗯 哪如果说我们之间没有段位上的差异 是朋友的话 哪你会用哪个呢
    What if we are socially equal, for example, your friends, what will you say?
188. Nina:这个 ((points at 'if you have asked me earlier…')) 如果你要是早点告诉我的话
    ((translates the line))
    This one.
189. Me:嗯 哪如果是善意的谎言呢 '如果你要是早点告诉我的话' ((translates the line)) 其实
    就是你早点告诉我 我也不要去的那种 有没有可能是一种白色的谎言呢
    *Okay, what if the line is a white lie: 'if you have asked me earlier…'. It really means
    even if you told me earlier, I wouldn't do it either. So, any chance this line is just a
    white lie.*
190. Nina: (20 seconds)
191. Me:你生活中没有说过白色的谎言吗
    Have you ever used white lie in your life?
192. Nina:哎 我这人 不行 就是一说谎 感觉自己就
    I'm not good at this, if I lie, I might feel
193. Me:但是这个并没有什么恶意
    This does not mean you're intended to hurt others
194. Nina:我知道
    I know.
195. Me:但是你生活中没有这么说过
    You never done this.
196. Nina:嗯 就是 不太那个啥
    Right, it's …..

197.Me:好的 我想再问一下 就是你刚讲到请求是语气的区别 拒绝是直接和间接的区别 我想问的就是这么多种表达方式 到底是什么东西在指引你做出不同的选择的呢 什么样的东西 什么样的概念 什么样的理念 我感知不到的 是什么东西诱导你做出不同的选择的

Oaky, we've discussed all these conventions. You mentioned that the difference between requesting conventions is tone; and the difference between refusing conventions is direct or indirect. How do you decide which linguistic convention to use? Are there certain factors, rules, or concepts that guide your choice?

198.Nina:感觉就是自己的内心吗

I think it's my heart.

199.Me:内心 你能细致一点吗 内心的什么 内心的阴暗面吗

Your heart? Can you be specific? What do you mean by heart?

200.Nina:不是阴暗面 就是 不同的人不同事

I mean different people, different things.

201.Me:嗯人和事 人 你指的什么 这个人的外貌吗

It's people and things. By people, you mean his/her physical appearance

202.Nina:不是外貌

Not physical appearance

203.Me:是什么

What is it then?

204.Nina:看他跟我熟悉不熟悉

Like whether I'm close to her/him or not

205.Me: Okay 熟悉不熟悉 还有呢

Familiarity. What else?

206.Nina:还有 (20 seconds)

And

207.Me:事 你指的什么

By things, you mean

208.Nina:麻烦不麻烦

Whether it is troublesome or not

209.Me:你的意思是 譬如 伤不了筋骨的事 是可以的

You mean, if it won't cause any psychical harm, you might not refuse it.

210.Nina:嗯

Right

211.Me:哪还有什么呢

Anything else

212.Nina: Uh 时间上吧

Um, time

213.Me:时间 能具体一点吗 我不知道你指的是什么意思

Time, can you be specific?

214.Nina:时间就是 要是那个时候别人找你帮忙 那个时候你没有时间 你就直接拒绝了

I mean, if someone asks me to do something at the time that I've already got a plan, then I will have to refuse her/him directly.

215.Me:哪还有什么吗

Anything else?

216.Nina:还有 可能是环境啊 还有场合

And environment and event/situation

217. Me:场合 能再具体一点细致点说么

Situation, could you be a bit specific?

218. Nina:那比如我某个人邀请我去某个地方 但是那个场合 比如夜总会什么的 我是真的 我也不愿意去 我就直接拒绝了

Like someone asks me to go to some events or some places, but the social surroundings there are quite… like nightclubs, I'm not willing to go to that kind of events, thus I'll refuse directly

219. Me:嗯 哪还有什么

I see, anything else

220. Nina:还有 没有了 就这些吧

I guess that's it.

Appendix N

Jingyu language awareness interview

1. Me:你们目前课堂上有涉及到英语交际方面的东西么
   Is there anything related to English communication in your class?
2. Jingyu:有啊
   Yes
3. Me:那都有哪些呢
   What are they
4. Jingyu:比如说提供信息
   Like offering information
5. Me:除了这些基本的社交 你们还有练习到其它的吗 比如请求啊 拒绝啊
   Anything else? Like request, or refusal.
6. Jingyu:有啊 另外的课上我们有练习过请求
   Yes, we once discussed requests in one class
7. Me:好的 目前你们涉及的请求 你们都会用什么样的请求方式呢
   Great, based on your knowledge, any request forms you know
8. Jingyu:比如说我想要问你需要留下什么信息
   Like, I ask you if you want to leave a message or something
9. Me:好的
   Okay
10. Jingyu:就是'what can I do for you'
    Then 'what can I do for you'
11. Me:嗯
    Okay
12. Jingyu: ((translates 'what can I do for you')) 就是我可以帮助你吗 'if necessary, I can convey your message to my 什么什么'
    ''what can I do for you, if necessary, I can convey your message to my whatever'
13. Me:嗯
    Okay
14. Jingyu:还有就是 'if you, can you leave some message' ((translates the line)) 就是你可以留下什么信息 大概就是这些
    Or, 'if you, can you leave some message', something like that
15. Me:好的 除了这种方式的请求 还有其它方式吗
    Okay, any other ways of making requests
16. Jingyu: (Ten seconds)
17. Me:比如说你们是很好的朋友 你会怎么说呢 你会用你刚提到的句型吗 (quotes Jingyu's line 'can you leave some message')
    For example, if we're close friends, how will you put the requests, will you use the form you just mentioned
18. Jingyu:应该不会吧 对两个关系特别好的人 直接看门见山 比如说 '你有钱吗 借我点钱'
    Not really, I mean, if two are quite close, the direct form is preferable. For example, 'Got any money? Lend me some money'

19. Me:嗯

    Okay

20. Jingyu:如果两个人关系不是特别好的话 我就会说 '我最近手头有点紧' 先解释一下原因 然后说'你可以借我点钱吗'

    If we are not close, I might say 'I'm short of money recently' I mean first explain a bit, then you can say 'Can you lend me some money'

21. Me:好的 你刚有提到关系比较好的 关系稍微远点的 还有没有其它的一些东西就是在你请求的时候你需要去遵循的呢

    Okay, you just mentioned close and distant, any other factors, rules or concepts that you need to consider while making requests

22. Jingyu:请求的话 首先要考虑你所要请求的东西对方是否拥有

    I think first I need to think if the requestee has what I request for

23. Me:好的

    Okay

24. Jingyu:比如说他现在 譬如说现在他口袋里只有 100 块钱 然后他把钱给丢了 你需要知道他口袋里有没有钱 然后你如果问人家的话 人家说没有 这不是问了也等于白问吗 所以说你需要了解你要借的东西他是否有

    For example, he got 100 RMB in his pocket, then he lost the money, you need to know whether he got the money or not, if you ask for the money, then the requestee might say he got no money, then it's a waste of time and your problem still is not solved. That's why you need to know if the requestee got what you need.

25. Me:嗯

    Okay

26. Jingyu:就是你要考虑对方的实力

    Like you've got to think the requestee's possession.

27. Me:嗯好的 我这边给你几张卡片 你简单的看一下这些个卡片 就是你读下来 你觉得他们之间有什么相同点或者是不同点没有

    Great. Okay, I've got several cards, could you please read them first, and then see if you can notice any similarities and/or differences between them based on your knowledge.

28. Jingyu:这个是

    This one

29. Me: Winston 这里是中香烟的名字

    Winston here is the name of a cigarette

30. Jingyu: ((translates "I know you can't bear parties…"))我知道你不能忍受这个 party 我觉得这个话 'you shut up' 这的话 在我看来这两个人的关系应该可好 特别好

    I think this one 'you shut up', the requester and the requestee are very close

31. Me:哦

    Okay

32. Jingyu:这三个可以分为一类

    These three conventions fall into one group

33. Me:嗯

    Okay

34. Jingyu:这两个有可能是用于两个陌生人之间 然后这两的话可以表现出这两人的关系 就是我又绕到两个人的关系上了

These two can be used between strangers; and these two conventions index the two are very close. Now I am talking about the relation between the requester and the requestee again.

35. Me:没关系 怎么想的说就是的

It's okay, no worries, just share what you think

36. Jingyu:这两个的话就是表现出来这两个人的关系不是特别的好 如果你知道他不喜欢这个 party 或是知道他容忍不了的话 你可以让他任凭他自己意愿 你想走的话你也可以走只要你开心就好

these two conventions index the two are not close. I mean if you knew s/he doesn't like the party or you knew s/he cannot bear it, you can let s/he do whatever s/he wants

37. Me:嗯

Okay

38. Jingyu:就是表示请求的意思 'you shut up' 这个太强硬了

This request 'you shut up' is too imposing

39. Me:嗯

Okay

40. Jingyu:这个可能就是用于两个关系特别好的人 你对他这么说 他不回认为你怎么怎么样 就是会理解你

It might be happening between two quiet close individuals. Like even though you put it in this way, s/he understands you and won't judge

41. Me:好的

Okay

42. Jingyu:然后这个吧 'can you draw a horse for me?' 这个应该是一种请求吧 这个就有点像我刚刚说的那个 'what can I do for you?; can I help you?'

This one 'can you draw a horse for me?', it's a request. It's like the one we discussed previously 'what can I do for you?; can I help you?'

43. Me:好的

Okay

44. Jingyu:这个就是表现出来尊重 就像我平时给学弟们讲的 你多用 'thank you' 这样的词 'I'm sorry; can you' 这样的词 首先你表现出来对对方的尊重 来体现你的个人素质

It's respectful. Like what I usually told juniors when I tutored them, try to use words like 'thank you', 'I'm sorry; can you', it can show your respect to others

45. Me:好的

Okay

46. Jingyu:如果两个人的关系很好的话 可以直接一点 如果两个人的关系不是很好的话 可以委婉一点 好的话 大可以开门见山

If the two are quite close to each other, direct forms are alight; if distant, indirect forms are preferred. Like I said, if the two are close, it's okay to go straight to the point

47. Me:哦 好的 好的 我们再来看一次这些卡片 随便讲没关系的

Okay, let's look more cards, don't worry, just tell me how you think of them

48. Jingyu:这两个 感觉 (translates 'if you had asked me a bit earlier') '如果你早点告诉我的话' 就是去不了 也是一种拒绝

These two, I think are refusals

49. Me:好的

Okay

50. Jingyu:我又想说两个人的关系怎么样

Now again I want to talk about the relation between the requester and the requestee.

51. Me:没关系的 有什么你说好了

No worries. go ahead. Share what you think

52. Jingyu:这个的话 ((translates 'if you had asked me a bit earlier')) '如果你早点告诉我的话 我将会怎么着' 这个表现的是在他不知前情的情况下 也可能是 他知道的 然后已经做好了准备 就是你问他的时候 他会说你怎么不跟我说呢 你早点告诉我的话 我将会怎么着 然后这两个可以表现出他两个的关系不是特别好 说先表现出你没有对对方有充分的了解

It shows that the requestee doesn't know very well about the requester, that's why s/he said if you have told me earlier, it shows that the two are not close since they don't know each other's situation very well

53. Me:好的

Oaky

54. Jingyu:所以他会把责任推到对方的身上 然后这个 'I will do it next time' 我觉得这两个的性质是一样的 ((points at 'if you had asked me a bit earlier'))

That's why the requestee tries to get her/himself off the hook by blaming the other. This one, 'I will do it next time', is similar to 'if you had asked me a bit earlier'

55. Me:这两的话 在什么样的场景下使用呢

How you decide to use them then

56. Jingyu:这个的话 ((points at 'if you had asked me a bit earlier'))不能用于上下级

This one cannot be used between individuals with different power

57. Me:你指的是上对下 还是下对上不合适

Which one you think is inappropriate, high to low, or low to high

58. Jingyu:不能下级对上级 因为这样话你把责任推到上级身上 会让上级感觉到错误是他 如果是下级的话 你肯定会说是我自己没做好 你会把责任推到自己身上

Low to high is inappropriate, because if you do so, you might make the high think s/he is the one who should be responsible for this. In the situation of low to high, the low might say it's her/his fault and let the high off the hook.

59. Me:好的

Okay

60. Jingyu:这个话 'I will do it next time' 这个应该也是对自身的一种推卸 'I'm not sure' 哦我不确定 这个应该是在对方问你的时候 然后你的一种不太确定 就是表现的不是太绝对 比较中性一点

'I will do it next time' is way of letting her/himself off the hook. 'I'm not sure' is telling the requestee that you are not sure if you can do it or not. It's a modest way.

61. Me:哦好的

Okay

62. Jingyu:就是不是太直接 如果太直接的就会让对方感觉你这人太绝 这个 'I wish I could help you' 这个就是有点像 一个朋友有什么问题 学习上啊 生活上啊 但是他不愿意跟你说 你自己主动的话 你去问他 他要是不愿意说的话 你就可以跟他说 'I wish I could help you' 这样的话他要是愿意和我说 就说 不愿意说 也会感到就是还有人陪你 感觉到计较温暖

It's not too direct, otherwise, people might think you're rude and unclever. 'I wish I could help you' is like, you got a friend, then s/he got some issues, like study or life, but s/he doesn't want to share with you her issues. Then you go to her and as her what's the problem, then you can say the line 'I wish I could help you'. Then, if she wants to share her problem with you, then she will do; if not, she can still feel like she got company and feels warm inside

63. Me:好的

    Okay

64. Jingyu:这个 'I have a headache' 这个就是个借口 这个拒绝就是一个确定的事实

    'I have a headache' is an excuse which is a fact.

65. Me:好的

    Okay

66. Jingyu:这个 'I refuse' 这个是直接拒绝 直截了当 这个可能是当时你心情不太好 要么就是特别好的两个好朋友 他邀请你出去玩 你不想去 你就直接说了

    'I refuse' is a direct refusal. It might because you got a bad mood; or it's because you are quite close to the interlocutor. Like she invites you to play out, you don't want to go, then you tell her directly.

67. Me:嗯

    Okay

68. Jingyu:这个表现的一方面就是情绪的问题 或者是两个人的关系特别的好

    Well, it's about either your mood or your close relation with the interlocutor

69. Me:嗯

    I see

70. Me:好的 我想再问一下就是这么多种表达方式 到底是什么东西在指引你做出不同的选择的呢 什么样的东西 什么样的概念 什么样的理念 我感知不到的 是什么东西诱导你做出不同的选择的

    Oaky, we've discussed all these conventions. How do you decide which linguistic convention to use? Are there certain factors, rules, or concepts that guide your choice?

71. Jingyu:首先是环境吧

    First, it's the environment

72. Me:能细说一下么 你指的是中国外国这个环境吗

    Can you be specific? Do you mean China and foreign countries?

73. Jingyu:中国外国这个环境这个不是 我说的是生活的大环境

    Not really, I mean the environment you're living in

74. Me:你的意思是

    You mean

75. Jingyu:比如有的人就比较直接 然后我首先考虑的是我的身份

    For example, some individuals are born with a strong personality. Then, I'll think about my identity

76. Me:你的意思是

    You mean

77. Jingyu:就是我的身份是作为你的朋友呀 下属呀 作为和你粘不上边的人

    My identity, like am I your friend, or your employee, or someone stranger

78. Me:好的

okay

79. Jingyu:两个人的关系 自身的身份 两个人是好朋友呀 两个人是上下级 两个人之间关系没有特别好 人际关系

I mean the relation between the two. My identity, like are we friends, or employer and employee, whether we are close.

80. Me: Okay

Appendix O

Yiqiao language awareness interview

1. Me:你们目前课堂涉及到的英语交际方面的都有什么呀
   Is there anything related to English communication in your class?
2. Yiqiao:打电话之类的
   Like making phone calls.
3. Me:这些电话都是关于什么的
   What are these calls about?
4. Yiqiao:咨询一些信息之类的
   Like asking for some information
5. Me:其它的社交行为譬如请求邀请之类的 你是怎么考虑它们的用法的 我这边有些卡片 你先读一下它们 然后说一下你认为它们之间有没有相似或是不同点
   There're other speech acts like request and invitation. How to you think their use? I've got several cards, could you please read them first, and then see if you can notice any similarities and/or differences between them based on your knowledge.
6. Yiqiao:有 我觉得这个有命令的意思 ((points at 'You shut up'))
   Yes, I think this one sounds like an order.
7. Me:好的
   okay
8. Yiqiao:这个是
   This one is
9. Me: Winston 这里是中香烟的名字
   Winston here is the name of a cigarette
10. Yiqiao:这个是请求 ((points at 'Got any Winston?'))
    This's a request
11. Yiqiao:这个是建议 请求 ((points at 'Can you draw horse for me?'))
    This's a suggest, request
12. Me:好的
    Okay
13. Yiqiao:这个有点鼓励的意思 ((points at 'I know you can't bear parties…'))
    This one sounds like an encouragement
14. Me:好的 就是你认为这些卡片有没有相似或是不同点
    Alright, any similarities and/or differences between them
15. Yiqiao:有
    Yes
16. Me:你认为是什么
    What is it you think
17. Yiqiao:这个比较强硬一点 ((points at 'You shut up'))
    This one is a bit imposing
18. Me: Okay 然后呢
    Okay, what else
19. Yiqiao:我觉得这个最委婉 ((points at 'I know you can't bear parties…'))

I think this one is the most modest compared with others

20. Me:好的 那比如说举一个例子啊 比如说我们是同一个寝室的闺蜜 你想让我把窗户关上 哪你会采取哪一种方式呢

   Alright, let's say, for example, we're close friends living in the same hall, if you wanted me to shut the window, which way you might make the request

21. Yiqiao:我感觉我会用这种 ((points at 'You shut up'))

   I think I'll put it in this way

22. Me:好的 为什么呢

   Okay, but why

23. Yiqiao:我觉得其它的几个有点见外了

   I think the other forms sound too courteous, too polite, like might make the other feel I intended to keep a distance between us.

24. Me:好的 我们再来看一次这些卡片 随便讲没关系的

   Okay, let's look more cards, don't worry, just tell me how you think of them

25. Yiqiao:我感觉这两个是一类的 ((points at 'I'm not sure' and 'I will do it next time'))

   I think these two conventions fall into one group

26. Me:嗯 'I'm not sure' 和这个 'I will do it next time'

   Okay, 'I'm not sure' and 'I will do it next time'

27. Me:好的

   Okay

28. Yiqiao:这个 'if you had asked me a bit earlier' 和'I wish I could help' 是一类

   These two conventions fall into one group

29. Me:这个呢 ((points at 'I refuse')) 你单独列出来了

   What about this one? You just isolated it from others.

30. Yiqiao:这个是最强烈的 最直接的

   It's the most imposing one,

31. Me:好的 我想再问一下就是这么多种表达方式 到底是什么东西在指引你做出不同的选择的呢 什么样的东西 什么样的概念 什么样的理念 我感知不到的 是什么东西诱导你做出不同的选择的

   Oaky, we've discussed all these conventions. How do you decide which linguistic convention to use? Are there certain factors, rules, or concepts that guide your choice?

32. Yiqiao:一方面是看他那个请求是什么

   It depends on what the request is about

33. Me:你能具体一点吗

   Could you be specific

34. Yiqiao:就是要看自己的能力 然后时间上啊 条件与不允许 有没有过分什么的

   I mean I need to consider my capability, then my schedule, if the situation allows, and also if the request is socially acceptable

35. Me:嗯

   Okay

36. Yiqiao:比如说有的请求太过分了

   For example, some requests are socially unacceptable

37. Me:好的

   Okay

38. Yiqiao:然后其它的就是 考虑到关系 自己想不想 乐不乐意去帮你

    Then, it's our relationship, whether it's against my will, whether I like to do it or not.

39. Me:嗯 乐不乐意去 你刚提到了关系 能再补充一些吗

    Okay, whether you like it or not. You just mentioned relationship, could you be specific.

40. Yiqiao:就是看值不值得去帮助你

    I mean I've got to think if it's worth my time and effort.

41. Me:好的 还有什么因素吗

    Alright, any other factors or rules

42. Yiqiao:就这两点吧 我感觉我会考虑这两个因素

    I guess just these two. These two are the factors I've got to think about.

43. Me:好的

    Okay.

Appendix P

Role play results (requests)

Pre		Loumei	Jingyu	Nina	Xuege	Xuanyu	Xueli	Yiqiao
Professor	Opening	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy;	Pre-pre-strategy; Self-introduction;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Preparator; Pre-pre-strategy; Apology;
	Request	Grounder; Locution-derivable;	Grounder; Performative;	Grounder; Refusal; Performative;	Grounder; Query;	Grounder; Apology; Politeness marker; Conditional;	Grounder; Consultative device;	Grounder; Bluntness (refusal); Consultative device; Performative;
	Negotiation	Criticism	Strong hint; Apology; Performative; Imposition minimiser; Performative;	Acceptance;	Disarmer; Sweetener; Reason; Adverbial intensifier;	Apology; Negation of proposition; Reason; Performative;	Query; Acceptance;	Acceptance;
Lecturer	Opening	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Sweetener; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;
	Request	Grounder; Locution-derivable; Disarmer; Performative;	Grounder; Locution-derivable; Disarmer; Performative; Appealer (tag);	Grounder; Performative;	Grounder; Apology; Consultative device;	Grounder; Apology; Consultative device; Performative; Down-toner;	Locution-derivable; Grounder; Consultative device;	Grounder; Locution-derivable;
	Negotiation	Explanation; Performative; Disarmer; Apology; Performative;	Avoidance; Strong hint; Argument; Adverbial intensifier; Locution-derivable; Locution-derivable; Performative;	Explanation; Performative;	Explanation; Performative;	Reason/argument; Consultative;	Agreement; Reason; Locution-derivable; Down-toner; Reason; Locution-derivable;	Agreement; Locution-derivable; Explanation; Locution-derivable;

Appendix P continues

Post		Loumei	Jingyu	Nina	Xuege	Xuanyu	Xueli	Yiqiao
Uni officer	Opening	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator; Self-introduction;	Pre-pre-strategy; Apology; Preparator; Self-introduction;	Pre-pre-strategy; Apology; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy;	Pre-pre-strategy; Apology; Getting a pre-commitment;	Pre-pre-strategy; Self-introduction; Apology;	Pre-pre-strategy; Self-introduction; Preparator;
	Request	Grounder; Imperfect;	Grounder; Politeness marker; Conditional;	Grounder; Consultative device; Appreciation; Imperfect;	Grounder; Conditional; Cajoler; Down-toner;	Grounder; Politeness marker; Cajoler; Appreciation; Cajoler;	Grounder; Consultative device;	Apology; Grounder; Imperfect;
	Negotiation	Reason/explanation; Promise;	Reason/explanation; Down-toner;	Reason; Down-toner;	Reason/explanation; Consultative device; Consultative (tag);	Reason;	Reason/explanation; Appreciation;	Reason/explanation; Promise; Imperfect;
Professor	Opening	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator; Getting a pre-commitment;	Pre-pre-strategy; Apology; Getting a pre-commitment;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator; Self-introduction;	Pre-pre-strategy; Self-introduction; Sweetener; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator; Getting a pre-commitment;	Pre-pre-strategy; Self-introduction; Apology; Preparator;	Pre-pre-strategy; Preparator;
	Request	Sweetener; Imperfect; Conditional; Adverbial intensifier; Appreciation;	Disarmer; Grounder; Imperfect (wanted); Imposition minimiser;	Sweetener; Grounder; Imperfect; Conditional;	Grounder; Conditional; Down-toner;	Sweetener; Grounder; Query;	Sweetener; Grounder; Disarmer; Consultative device;	Grounder; Imperfect; Down-toner; Down-toner;
	Negotiation	Reason/explanation; Performative; Reason/explanation; Reason/explanation; Appreciation;	Reason/explanation; Sweetener; Imperfect (wanted); Reason; Imperfect (wanted); Imposition minimiser; Reason/explanation; Imperfect (wanted); Down-toner;	Empathy; Reason/explanation; Disarmer; Down-toner; Down-toner; Agreement; Empathy; Reason/explanation; Down-toner;	Reason/explanation; Consultative device; Down-toner; Disarmer; Reason/explanation; Sweetener; Down-toner; Down-toner; Imposition minimiser;	Reason; Performative; Disarmer; Imperfect; Performative;	Empathy; Down-toner; Sweetener; Conditional; Disarmer; Imposition minimiser	Apology; Reason/explanation; Down-toner; Down-toner;

Appendix Q

Sex and the City: Samantha and the Tranny's
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uE0KxG5AOEM)

> Samantha: Ladies, hello, I live right up there.
> Now, as much as I respect women's right for a little, little something with certain New Jersey gentlemen. I have a request. I have a very early business meeting, and I think we all know, there are certain dark circles even the cleverest make-up can't cover. Am I right?
> Tranny: Sorry to wake you baby. We'll take it down a little bit.
> Samantha: I appreciate. By the way, I am Samantha.
>
> ………

Appendix R

Odd number: Student A who initiates the request. Even number: Student B who tries to refuse.

1. Hello Jack. How are you doing?
2. I am fine. Thanks. How about you?
3. I am quite good. I heard that you got a distinction. Congratulations.
4. Thank you……… [don't know how to respond]
5. [breaking the ice] Jack, I'd like to ask you for a favour.
6. What's up?
7. You know, I don't know if you can recall the assignment we once discussed last week.
8. Yes.
9. I am thinking about having it published it next year.
10. Okay. It is good to publish it.
11. Yeah, I know. But there is one thing that I really need your help. Recently, I am widely collecting comments in our community. I was wondering if you can have a look at it, I mean, given your excellent academic achievement and your very much critical perspective in this field. It means a lot to me and my paper if you can share some knowledge on my paper.
12. Though I am very glad to help you; and I have…… I don't know if I have any knowledge of your air [area].
13. No worries about that. It is very close to the assignment we discussed. Come on, Jack, I know you, your academic writing is very good. You can also check my grammar if you don't mind.
14. Okay, if it is, it is no problem.
15. That's wonderful. You are my life saver.
16. But I think, you know, I also have my assignment to deal with.
17. I totally understand. I know you are also very busy with your dissertation recently. But, bro, I tried my best, and I have run out of ideas. Be honest with you, my mind got blocked here. Please Jack, I am drowning in here and I definitely need your help. Come on, Jack, I promise it won't take you more than twenty minutes. Just one time and I won't bother you again. Anything that you want me to do, you name it. If you need help about your assignment, you let me know. I will try my best to help you.
18. Um… I will do my assignment on myself. And it is my own business. And for your assignment, I will try my best to help you.
19. That's wonderful. Thanks. See you around.
20. See you.

Appendix S

W-DCT

You arrive home and notice that your cleaning lady is extremely upset. She comes rushing up to you.

In this situation, if you refuse your cleaning lady, how seriously would it embarrass your cleaning lady? Please circle a number. very slightly...................very seriously

1   2   3   4   5

Cleaning lady: oh, God. I'm so sorry. I had a terrible accident. While I was cleaning, I bumped into the table and your china vase fell and broke. I feel very bad about it. I'll pay for it.

You: (knowing that the cleaning lady is supporting three children)

Cleaning lady: no, I'd feel better if I paid for it.

(adopted in Allami and Naeimi, 2011, p. 401-2)
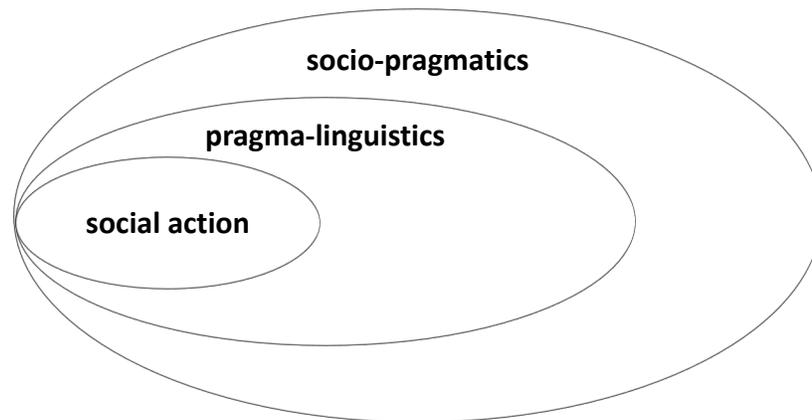
Diagram 1: Interwoven nature of social action (goals), pragma-linguistics (means), and socio-pragmatics (schema) (adopted in Van Compernolle, 2012, p. 21)