Teaching Students to be Discourse Pragmatists: Practices in an L2 Chinese Linguistics Class

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Abstract

Chinese L2 learners can not only learn Chinese language in the classroom, but also Chinese linguistics, which is about scientific knowledge, tools, and discovery processes pertaining to the Chinese language. In this paper, I outline one area of Chinese linguistics – discourse pragmatics – and some of the most important factors relating to it that need to be incorporated into classroom teaching and describe some practices employed within an L2 Chinese linguistics class. I show that various types of authentic materials (movie clips, news media, traditional stories, spontaneous conversations, and so forth) can be used for this purpose, in a student-centered way. Some of the properties I discuss involve discourse genres, ellipses and topic chaining, interpersonal meaning negotiation using utterance-final particles, and the varied choice of terms of address for social interaction. I conclude that L2 linguistic practices of this nature can be highly relevant when learning Chinese L2 language.

Keywords: discourse pragmatics, authentic material, student-centered learning, assessment

1. Theoretical Preliminaries

Chinese L2 learners can not only learn Chinese language in the classroom, but also Chinese linguistics, which is about scientific knowledge, tools, and discovery processes pertaining to the Chinese language. Chris Livaccari, former director of Education and Chinese Language Initiatives of the Asia Society of the United States, a strong proponent of student-centered learning, recently suggested that Chinese language teachers should "teach students to be linguists" – training them to recognize patterns on their own and through group activities (Livaccari 2012). According to Livaccari, this is one of the best ways to ensure the long-term success of a Chinese language program. In this paper,[1] I argue that the same principle can be applied to Chinese

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[1] This study is in part inspired by Lihua Zhang's (2011) work and an invited workshop at UCLA in April 2012. I wish to thank her for generously sharing with me the information of the film used here. Thanks are also due to Zheng-Sheng Zhang, Andreas Guder, Christine Berg, and other readers of the paper in its early forms, for constructive comments as well as stylistic

pragmatics: we can train students to recognize authentic patterns beyond static linguistic structures and discover how discourse pragmatics is at work. Moreover, when students are able to recognize pragmatic patterns or linguistic patterns in general, they will become more informed, adaptive or savvy learners than if not.

The notion of discourse pragmatics used here refers to language use beyond structure. While traditionally linguistics is understood to deal with formal properties of language such as phonological structure, morphological marking and syntactic rules, how language is deployed for interpersonal communication is the main concern of pragmatics. Although not everyone agrees on the scope of discourse pragmatics, most would agree that it places special focus on the dynamic relationship between structure and use, namely how structure is deployed in context and how usage shapes structure (Hopper 1998; Bybee 2006).

Concerning language learning and teaching, I have elsewhere argued that language proficiency, especially advanced language proficiency (ALP), needs to be defined above and beyond the structure-based accuracy and fluency matrixes as we know them (Tao 2007). Common structural benchmarks used to define ALP typically appeal to such parameters as inventory and level of vocabulary, syntactic complexity, oral fluency, and the like. Rarely do we see ALP defined in terms of discourse pragmatics. If we emphasize the importance of social interaction and communicative competence in the definition of ALP, we need to consider a broader range of parameters for language instruction, practice, and assessment. As a starter, for instance, we may want to consider some of the following parameters:

1) Understanding genre/register differences. Discourse genres can be seen as conventionalized features being bundled together to communicate meanings suitable for specific communicative contexts. Thus conversation, narrative, fiction, news reports, academic papers, user manuals, and so forth, are recognized as common genres/registers. Genre as a discourse phenomenon has been studied from the points of view of text linguistics (e.g., Longacre 1983; Werlich 1983), corpus linguistics (e.g., Biber 1988), literary

styles (Biber and Conrad 2001), and writing (Askehave and Swales 2001), among others. Recognizing genre types and associated features will enable the learner to have a better view of the correlation between linguistic features and discourse contexts, leading to a better understanding of the individual features (Johns 2008).

2) Understanding speaking as social action. Speech Act theory has long reminded us that utterances can carry illocutionary forces (Austin 1961; Searle 1969), or as Wittgenstein (1980) puts it, "words are deeds" (Wittgenstein 1980: 46). Anthropological linguists have also advocated the view of speaking as social action, with carefully documented data from different languages and cultures (Duranti 1997). Understanding the constitutive nature of speech acts can be beneficial in the learning of a second/foreign language. For example, how and why speakers select one form over another and the effect of such choices on interpersonal relations in actual discourse (Halliday 1985; McCarthy and Carter 1994) can be critical for learners to understand the nature and relationships of linguistic forms – a prerequisite for a better grasp of the target language and culture.

3) Strategies for stance marking. The scope of stance is usually understood to include both epistemic and affective stances (Ochs 1996). Epistemic stance refers to the speaker's commitment to what is being said in terms of certainty and source of information. Affective stance has to do with the speaker's emotional and attitudinal orientation toward what is being said (Ochs 1996). In spontaneous conversation, speakers utilize lexical, grammatical, prosodic, and also gestural devices, to express stances (Goodwin 1990). Understanding stance-marking in a multimodal environment can give learners a major advantage in seeing how multiple semiotic resources work in concerted ways, which can raise consciousness about how to mobilize multiple resources for interaction in the target language.

4) How speakers manage information flow, track discourse entities, and maintain discourse coherence and cohesion (Halliday and Hasan 1976). Discourse is not simply a bunch of isolated sentences put together, but rather language materials needed to form a coherent whole. Tracking what is being said before, and linking different elements together in order to continue the flow of speech in an orderly and interactively appropriate manner, is a skill that learners have to acquire and practice. To acquire this type of skill, pedagogically-speaking, it is hard to imagine there are any other ways apart from exposing the learner to real discourse.

5) The final parameter to consider for a pragmatically sound pedagogy is interactional moves. This refers to how conversation participants make moves in consideration of the local, social, cultural and interactive contingencies (Duranti and Goodwin 1992). Classical pragmatic notions (such as politeness and face), sociolinguistic factors (such as power relations and identity, Bucholtz and Hall 2005), cultural norms (Kramsch 1993, 1998), as

well as interactive preference patterns identified by Conversation Analysts (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974), are all relevant here. As CA research has shown, the key is to view these contingencies as locally managed and subject to speaker negotiation.

The above is by no means an exhaustive list of features related to discourse pragmatics and its teaching, however, these should be among some of the most important factors that can and should be incorporated in the language classroom. Following a brief discussion of instructional approaches below, I will show how these features can be taught in the context of Mandarin Chinese, through some real examples.

I wish to state upfront that this paper should be treated as a position paper with illustrative examples based on a special classroom setting for *Chinese linguistics*; more empirical research is obviously needed to test out the validity of the claims made here.

2. Pedagogical Approaches

Discourse pragmatics is generally known to be elusive, for it touches upon a myriad of interlocking factors which make it difficult to describe, let alone be taught, to the learner. To remedy this, I contend that key pedagogical notions and best practices must be established and tested in the classroom, not just in theory. The main approaches employed here are the use of authentic materials and a focus on student-centered activities.

Although scholars are still debating what constitutes authentic material (e.g., Swaffar 1985; Rings 1986; Little et al. 1989; Xian, Wu, and Tao 2012), it is generally assumed that authentic materials are language produced by native speakers in real contexts – in both spoken and written modes – other than for language teaching. Note that for the spoken mode, while I am advocating using the most spontaneous type of texts (including natural conversation, see Tao 2011) as the ideal type of material, I am open to the idea of using edited texts such as from movies and TV shows, among other media forms. The main reason for this is that media texts can emulate natural speech to some degree (Quaglio 2009; Tolson 2001), hence their usefulness as a teaching material, they can have high entertainment value due to superior visual makeups, and they can also facilitate instruction in ways unmatched by other types of authentic materials (Zhang 2011).

Regarding the student-centric approach, past experiences show that any effective language pedagogy must take student involvement as a central concern. What is understood as student-centered learning (SCL) emphasizes students' learning needs, responsibilities and activities in the learning process (Nunan 1988; Kember 2009). Under this approach, students should be given ample opportunity to work in groups and work on problem-solving, as well as other forms of active tasks. The most important ingredients of SCL are

active student participation and the discovery process it entails. As Livaccari (2012) points out, students need to be encouraged to develop discovery skills that will benefit them in the long-term. Also, through empowerment and participation, students generally feel more engaged and will be better motivated to learn the target language. Finally, extensive student involvement will also help create a more conducive classroom environment for learning to take place.

However, the student-centered approach, as advocated above, does not necessarily preclude explicit instruction. In fact, as will be shown in the subsequent sections (for example on ellipses and particles), mixing student-centered activities with explicit instruction is often necessary and effective, which supports some of the findings in studies on non-Chinese languages. For example, Félix-Brasdefer (2008), in an experimental study on Spanish, shows that explicit instruction on discourse pragmatic properties in Spanish L2 teaching yields better pragmatic strategies and a better retention rate than that of the control group. As a non-experimental study, this paper aims mainly to raise questions about discourse pragmatics teaching in the Chinese L2 context and share classroom teaching strategies in a particular context, i.e., an introductory Chinese linguistics class for undergraduates (including both non-native and native Chinese speakers) at a major research university in the US.

3. Practices in an Introductory Chinese Linguistics Class

Having discussed the theoretical and methodological orientations of this study, I now describe some practices used in several teaching units of an L2 Chinese linguistics class, where Chinese discourse pragmatics is a focus. For these modules, various types of authentic materials (movie clips, news media, traditional stories, spontaneous conversations, and so forth) are used and student-centered actives are devised in order to teach discourse pragmatic properties of the Chinese language.

Now a few words about the L2 Chinese linguistics class in question. This class, taught over the past five academic years, is an introductory linguistics class designed for undergraduates at an American public university. Students enrolled in the class come from all parts of the campus. A very small portion, typically less than 5%, take Chinese and/or linguistics as a major; the vast majority majors in a non-Chinese/linguistic field, ranging from humanities and social sciences to sciences and engineering. However, nearly 50% of the students are learners of Chinese as a second language or a heritage language. The required Chinese proficiency level for taking this non-obligatory course is two years or higher, although in some cases exceptions can be made when some equivalent proficiency level can be demonstrated. The student body mandates that the linguistics class be taught in an

accessible and engaging manner, which, of course, is arguably true of all undergraduate courses.[2]

I will now discuss some of the discourse pragmatic themes dealt with in this class.

3.1. Discourse Genres and Linguistic Features

As stated earlier, discourse genres are typically realized as multiple features working together in particular discourse contexts. In order to enable the students to recognize these features, two separate TV media clips, from among other media clips, are selected from the internet,[3] both of which involve a speech by a prominent Chinese politician, Hu Jintao, the former President of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Secretary General of the Chinese Communist Party, who was head of the Communist Youth League (CYL) prior to his presidency. In these speeches that were reported via TV broadcast, one was given at a National People's Congress when Hu was President of the PRC, and reflects a read-aloud, scripted formal style, while the other was given when he was head of the CYL during a media question and answer session. The latter represents a more spontaneous, casual style.

The pedagogical focus of this unit is on features of formal/scripted and informal/spontaneous speeches produced by the same speaker. First, students were given a handout containing a transcript of the two speech samples in Chinese and English and the instructor introduced the background of both. The entire class then went through the main points of each speech to make sure the language was understood. The students were asked to pay close attention to how the speaker delivered these two speeches and write down anything they believed showed differences between them. The two TV clips were then played multiple times.

(1) Hu Jintao's Formal Speech[4]
　　我们坚信香港同胞,
　　We strongly believe that Hong Kong compatriots and
　　澳门同胞,
　　Macao compatriots
　　不仅有智慧,
　　not only have the wisdom

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　　　[4] Punctuation units in the transcript reflect the read-aloud speech units.

有能力、有办法,
and the ability
把特别行政区管理好建设好,
to manage and develop well the Special Administrative Regions.
也一定能在国家事务中,
(You) will also be able to participate in national affairs
发挥积极作用,
(and) play positive roles.
同全国各族人民一同共享,
(You will) share with the rest of our peoples of all ethnicities
做中国人的尊严和荣耀。
the dignity and pride of being Chinese.

(2) Hu Jintao's interview regarding a Japanese Youth Delegation in China
这个日本青年啊,
Now that the Japanese young people
已经给中国青年,
(to the young people of China)
带来了这个日本人民和日本青年,
have brought from Japan
对中国人民和中国青年的友情.
the friendship and goodwill of the Japanese people and the Japanese youth.
我们想呢,
So we are thinking,
我们希望,
so we are hoping that
日本的青年啊,
the Japanese youth
也能够把中国人民,
will also bring the friendship of the Chinese people
和中国青年,
and the Chinese youth
对日本人民,
to the Japanese people
和日本青年的友情,
and the Japanese youth
能够带回去。
And bring (this friendship) back home.

Among the features that students were able to notice, the following were further discussed and elaborated by the instructor:

1) Complexity of utterances, where the written-language based speech shows more complex structures, while the spontaneous spoken text shows more simple structures;

2) Use of particles (such as *a* 啊 and *ne* 呢), with more found in the spontaneous speech than in the formal presentation;

3) Intonation and prosodic patterns, highlighting solemn and steady speech patterns in the formal talk vs. the casual tone in the informal media session; and,

4) More personalized (e.g., 我们想呢 *wǒmen xiǎng ne* 'we think'，我们希望 *wǒmen xīwàng* 'we hope') and emotional expressions (plus laughter and smile) being used in the spontaneous speech and less so, or in more stylized forms (e.g., 我们坚信 *wǒmen jiān xìn* 'we firmly believe'), in the formal one.

Through this exercise, students learned that register differences are realized in systematic ways, i.e., bundled linguistic features, and that even large discourse modes (spoken vs. written language) can have further intra-register variations (cf. Tao and Liu 2010a, 2010b).

3.2. Ellipses and Topic Chaining

Chinese is well known for topic constructions and the prevalence of zero anaphora (Li and Thompson 1976, 1979). Some of the cases involve topical elements, especially when a topic, such as an agent, is re-mentioned (or tracked) in the subsequent text, forming a so-called topic chain (Tsao 1979).

For this unit, simple topic structures, involving agent ellipses, are first introduced and explained. The students were asked to observe, in particular, the differences between those sentences with an expressed subject and those without (indicated by the parentheses ( )), when the topic is identical across multiple clauses. This is illustrated in the made-up examples below:

(3) 我出了门，( )骑上自行车，( )只骑了20分钟就到学校了。看来今天我的运气不错。
(3) 我出了门，我骑上自行车，我只骑了20分钟就到学校了。看来今天我的运气不错。
'I got out, rode my bike, and arrived in school in only 20 minutes. Looks like I am really lucky today.'

The main idea to be driven home is that ellipses are not random and that full clauses are not always "better" than their elliptical counterpart when conveying meaning in Chinese (cf. W. Li 2006).

In order to teach this aspect of the language, a fable, *The North Wind and the Sun*, was selected and given to the students in both Chinese and English (the English translation is omitted in this paper). The students were first asked to raise any questions about the text and then instructed to find places in the text where they believed an agent/topical element was missing

(unexpressed). Finally, the students were asked to tell if the missing subject was expressed verbally.

(4) The North Wind and the Sun

běifēng hé tàiyáng
北风　和　太阳
běifēng hé tàiyáng wèile juédìng shuí zuì lìhàizhēngchǎoleqǐlái zhèshíhòu tāmen kàndào lùshang yǒu
北风　和 太阳 为了 决定 谁 最 厉害 争吵 了 起来。这时候 他们 看到 路上 有
yī gè chuānzhe hòudàyī de xíngrén zǒule guòlái jiùtíyì shuō rúguǒ shuí néng ràng xíngrén xiān tuō
一个 穿着 厚大衣的 行人 走了 过来，就提议 说，如果 谁 能 让 行人 先 脱
xià dàyī shuíjiù suàn lìhài
下 大衣，谁 就 算 厉害。

běifēng mǎshàng chōng shàngqù duìzhe xíngrén měnglièdìchuī leqǐlái dànshìyuèchuī xíngrén yuè bǎ
北风　马上 冲 上去，对着 行人 猛烈 地 吹 了 起来，但是 越 吹 行人 越 把
shēnshàngde yīfu guǒ dé gèng jǐnle zuìhòu běifēng zhǐhǎo fàngqìle zhèshí tàiyáng jiāng
身上 的 衣服 裹得 更 紧了。最后 北风 只好 放弃了。这时，太阳 将
wēnnuǎnde yángguāng fàngshè chūlái xíngrén lìjí tuōdiàolezìjǐ de hòudàyī
温暖 的 阳光 放射 出来，行人 立即 脱掉 了自己 的 厚大衣。

zuìhòu běifēng zhǐhǎo chéngrèn tàiyáng bǐ zìjǐ gèng lìhài
最后 北风 只 好 承 认 太阳 比自己 更 厉害。

The students were able to identify three places where the subject is not expressed. These are: (他们) 就提议说 'they propose', in the first paragraph, and two instances in the second paragraph: (北风) 对着行人猛烈地吹了起来 'the north wind blows fiercely to the traveler' and 但是 (北风) 越吹行人越把身上的衣服裹得更紧了，'however, the more the wind blows, the tighter the traveler holds on to his warm cloak'.

The students learned that ellipses in a topic chain can help create a sense of cohesion. Typically linked clauses with expressed subjects in each part, on the other hand, may actually express a sense of independence and disjointedness. So the latter structure may not be appropriate for large chunks of discourse.

3.3. Utterance-final Particles

As discussed earlier, utterance-final particles are a pervasive feature of spoken discourse in Mandarin (Chao 1968; Li and Thompson 1981). They may be simple from a syntactic point of view, yet they are rich in discourse pragmatics. In this unit, we focus on interpersonal meaning negotiation, using utterance-final particles.

The material used for this unit is a clip from the movie 实习生 *shíxíshēng The Interns*.[5] The episode involves a visit to a hotel from a potential investor, whom the hotel manager is trying to lure into investing in his business to carry out expansion plans. Two interns (Lin, the protagonist, and

[5] For another study using the same movie, see Zhang (2011).

one other) are assigned to help host the visitor and accompany him bowling onsite. However, during the bowling scene the investor slips and falls over in the bowling alley, embarrassing himself in front of everyone, while the two interns score highly and celebrate wildly. In the end, the investor leaves the bowling alley visibly upset, which makes the hotel manager and his female assistant nervous and, at the same time, angry at the interns.

Figure 1: The bowling scene

From left to right: hotel manager, manager's assistant, investor, Lin's intern friend, and intern Lin.

The key linguistic point is the contrast in language used by the hotel management toward the investor versus that toward the interns. When addressing the investor, the manager and his assistant use utterance-final particles extensively, in an obvious attempt to ingratiate themselves with him. When talking to the interns, however, the language used by the manager is stern, even bordering on scolding, and features a total lack of utterance-final particles.

In class, the students were first given a quick review of final particles, including sound assimilation patterns in cases such as *a* 啊, *ya* 呀 and *wa* 哇, which most of them could recall, based on past learning experiences. However, when asked about the functions of the particles, few could give a coherent account, as expected.

The students were then given a transcript of the bowling scene from the movie. Before playing the relevant clip, a few questions were posed to the class:

(5)
Who uses particles more?
Where/when are the particles used?
How are the particles used in terms of communicative motives?

These questions were meant for the students to pay attention to the relation-
ships between use of particles and speaker roles, as well as speakers' inter-
active moves.

The movie clip was then played a few times. Control of the viewing
process was aided greatly by the Transana software program (Woods and
Fassnacht 2013), which enables line-by-line navigation and display, as well
as the integration of text, audio, and video. While text is obviously important,
in this context the prosodic features of the particles (lengthening, stress
patterns, or lack thereof) and visual images are all critical for an effective
understanding of the use of particles (or lack thereof).

Figure 2: A Transana screen grab with text, audio, and video aligned
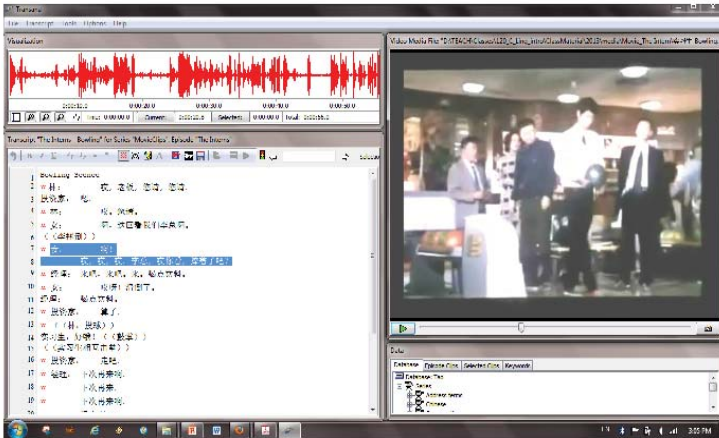
The following is the transcript of the bowling scene:

(6) The bowling scene
    01)林：   哎，老板，您请，您请。
    02)投资家：嗯。
    03)林：   哎。您请。
    04)女：   啊，这回看我们李总啊。
    05)   （（李摔倒））
    06)女：   啊！
    07)   哎，哎，哎。李总，哎你看，摔着了吧？
    08)经理：   来吧，来吧。来。喝点饮料。
    09)女：   哎呀！滑倒了。
    10)经理：   喝点饮料。
    11)投资家：算了。
    12)   (转身回座)

13)   （（林：投球））
14)实习生： 好哦！（（鼓掌））
15)   （（实习生相互击掌））
16)投资家： 走吧。
17)经理：   下次再来啊。
18)   下次再来。
19)   下次再来啊。
20)   慢走啊！
21)   慢走！
22)   下次再来。
23)   慢走啊！
24)   （（走回来，对林奇））
25)   不是跟你交代了吗？要让人家玩儿得开心。可你倒好，
26)   一中午打了三局。让人家一局都不开张。你也忒--！

After the movie clip was played a few times, students were told to first identify final particles in the transcript. They were able to identify tokens such as *a* 啊, *ba* 吧, and *le* 了 as final particles. Some of the students asked about the different uses of *le* 了 as an aspect marker versus as a particle, as well as the differences between interjections and final particles for such tokens as *a* 啊 and *ai* 哎. The functions, and their locations of the tokens in the stream of speech, were discussed as criteria. The students were then instructed to try to answer the questions posed in (5). After discussing these, the students were further probed to explore some more general questions:

- How are the distribution patterns observed across the speakers in the episode?
- What can these uses tell us about the nature of Chinese utterance-final particles in general?

In the end, the students learned, through discovery and discussion processes, that particles are pragmatically significant in Chinese discourse, since they are closely tied to the negotiation of social relations in interpersonal communication. Moreover, they learned that particles can be produced with varied prosodic features and that the lack of particles can be a significant contrast to segments where particles are present.

3.4. Use of Terms of Address

Chinese culture is said to be highly sensitive to social hierarchy, and this is best reflected in the use of terms of address, including address terms for both kinships and non-kinships (Gao 2000). In everyday language use, the

speaker's choice of terms of address can reflect power relations and, at the same time, constitute social interactive moves.

To show how terms of address are used for social interaction, two other clips from the movie, *The Interns*, were selected. The first is a family dinner scene involving the family of the protagonist, Lin Qi (林奇). In this scene, Lin is concerned about how his fellow interns might perceive his father, a janitor who happens to be working at the same hotel as them all. Over dinner, the young intern tells his father not to call him by his nickname, Qi Beir 奇贝儿, in public, fearing that he may be embarrassed by an association with his father's low social status. The father is naturally upset, and so is his mother.

Figure 3: The family dinner scene prior to the start of the internship the next day

(7) 家庭晚餐

母:	哟!没酒了。
父:	奇贝儿,再来一杯。
林奇:	哦。（拿酒）
	嗯。（倒酒,酒洒出）
父:	在学校没学过倒酒吧?
林奇:	嗨,当然学过。可这是在家里呀。
父:	在哪儿都一样!连家里人都伺候不好,还能伺候好客人?嗯?
林奇:	您别老"伺候,伺候"的。听着别扭。
母:	那就换个词儿,说"服务"。啊?
父:	"服务"和"伺候",还不是一个意思!"为人民服务", 那就是伺候老百姓!
	我说奇贝儿,伺候人,不丢面子!你爸爸伺候别人一辈子。 把你伺候这么大,我可一点也没有觉得寒碜!
林奇:	那是您!我可不能像您似的。窝窝囊囊一辈子。
父:	哼!
母:	奇贝儿!怎么跟你爸说话呀?

父： 我说奇贝儿，你要是觉得伺候人窝囊，当初就不该上职高。
林奇： 我…
父： 既然上了职高，就不该觉得伺候人窝囊。
林奇： 爸，我上职高，可不是为了一辈子伺候人。
父： 那你为了什么呀？
林奇： 我有我的打算，将来您就会知道。
父： 咳，我说，奇贝儿，你…
林奇： 爸，明天就要到饭店去实习了，到了那儿，您可别老"奇贝儿，奇贝儿"的喊我。
母： 哟！
父： 哎，我不喊你"奇贝儿"，喊你什么啊？
母： 咳，那就喊他大名："林奇"。
林奇： 最好，连大名也别喊。
母： 哎咳？
父： 哼！
母： 小名也不让喊，大名也不让喊，那你爸喊你什么啊？"林先生"？
林奇： 哎–
母： 嗯？
父： 哦，你是觉得你爸，当这个清洁工，丢你的脸了！不想当众人面，认你爸，是不是？
林奇： 我……
母： 哎，哎呀，老头子，奇贝儿不是这个意思。
父： 什么不是这个意思啊？他就是这个意思。我养的儿子我还不知道啊？
母： 哎，别发火儿！别发火儿！当心身子。
义： 好好好，你实习你的，我干我的。咱爷俩就当谁也不认识谁，行了吧？

The next day, as the interns are arriving at work, Lin Qi, who is walking with a friend and pushing his bicycle, sees his father in front of the lobby but pretends not to have noticed him. The story then takes a dramatic turn, with Lin Qi's backpack falling from his bicycle; his father sees this and tries to get Lin Qi's attention, only to find himself agonizing over what term of address he should use to call his son.

(8) 第二天在饭店门前
 （一群实习生向林父问路，略去）
 林奇/朋友： 哈哈，哈哈。
 朋友： 哈哈，真逗，真逗。
 朋友： 林奇，是真的假的啊？
 林奇： 真的，真的。

      （（书包落地））
父：   奇--，学生!
朋友：   哎，林奇，那个清洁工喊你。
林奇：   （（无语））
父：   嗯。((把书包递给林奇))
林奇：   （（无语））
林奇：   这老头，还拾金不昧呢。
朋友：   你怎么连声"谢"都不说啊?
林奇：   啊? 哦，说了，你没听见。

Again the clips were played through Transana, enabling easy navigation of the relevant places to ensure detailed viewing. After watching the clips several times over, the class was engaged in an exercise based on the following set of questions:

- What terms of address are used?
- Who uses the terms?
- Who is the recipient of the utterance?
- What are the address terms referring to?
- What social relation do the terms display and create?

A sample answer sheet, based on the bowling scene (see example (6) above), was provided to guide the students, as indicated in (9).

(9)

Speaker	Term	Addressee	Reference	Social Relation
女助理	李总"	投资人	CEO	Sought-after business partner
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

The students were then divided into groups and asked to identify no less than five – or as many cases they could find – uses of terms of address in the two episodes. They were asked to write down the answers on the worksheet (illustrated in (10)), discuss these among themselves, and then be prepared to present findings to the entire class.

(10)

	Speaker	Term	Addressee	Reference	Social Relation
1)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Students were able to identify a number of terms used in the two clips: 林奇, 奇贝儿，林先生，学生，儿子，爸，老头子，老头，清洁工，爷儿俩 etc. The alternation patterns over the two clips served as a dramatic demonstration of the subtle changes in social meaning and the motivations for the choice of different address forms.

4. Assessment

Just as with instruction, the assessment of learners' discourse pragmatic skills is equally difficult. At the end of term, a final examination was set, utilizing some of the materials used in the classroom. This was done in two ways. First, some of the class materials were used for totally unrelated assessments, for example, the fable text given in (4), was also used for students to identify morphological and syntactic features. This is illustrated in test questions 1)-4) shown below in (11). Another way these authentic materials were used for assessment was to test about the same issues discussed in class, as shown in items 5) and 6).

(11) Sample assessment questions based on authentic materials.

From this passage, find out the following and fill in the blanks:
1) Two nouns: _____   _____
2) Two verbs: _____   _____
3) A classifier: _____
4) A postposition: _____
5) A clause with an ellipsis: _____
6) A clause with a comparative meaning: _____

A similar test was designed using the same media materials to examine a discussed issue. This can be found in (12). While it was not possible to play the audio-video media files in the final examination, it was possible to use excerpts of authentic materials (transcripts of spoken texts and written texts) as the basis to construct a test question. A sample question, based on part of the transcript in (8), is given below.

(12)

Based on the materials provided here, discuss the use of at least **three different terms of address** in Chinese, with a focus on the social relations being projected when the movie character uses a particular term at a particular moment.

One may argue that this is mainly a summative assessment (Black and William 1998), since it is given at the end of the term for final grades. However, I would like to view the entire instructional process as a combination of

both formative and summative assessments, as the class integrates student activities throughout instruction and discussion, with these everyday activities also being counted toward the final grade.

5. Discussion

5.1. Reflections on Using Authentic Materials

In the previous sections, I briefly described some of the practices in teaching discourse pragmatics to an L2 introductory Chinese linguistic class, which include both instructional practices and assessment design. My practice has been guided on the basis of integrating authentic materials with student-centered, discovery-oriented activities, aided by occasional linguistic instructions and explanations. The sources for authentic materials came from a variety of texts, ranging from news media to fables to movie clips (I have also used natural conversations involving greeting patterns, which due to their complexity, will be discussed in a separate paper). For all of these units, student participation was an integral part of the instruction. This is realized through a variety of in-class activities: free discussions, guided exercises, group activities, and class presentation. It becomes clear that in comparison to other sessions of the same class, when authentic materials are used, students tend to show a stronger interest for participation.

A more important issue in combining the use of authentic materials and guided student participation is that authentic materials are not always transparent to the learner. As such, one cannot expect that students will be able to get the most out of authentic materials merely by being exposed to them. There must be carefully orchestrated efforts, explicit explanations, as well as well-designed activities that serve as the link between authentic materials and student-centered activities, so that L2 students are not overwhelmed by the wealth of information and the complexity of the natively-produced materials. My emphasis on the self-discovery process as aided by teacher guidance (see, for example, some of the pre-screening questions in (5), such as "who uses particles more?") is one such effort towards addressing this issue. No matter how (in)effective this may have been, we hope that future material design and classroom teaching will take this important issue into consideration.[6]

5.2. Pedagogical Effects

As stated earlier, this study, being non-experimental in nature, does not concern itself with pedagogical effects in different groups as evidence of effectiveness. However, it is gratifying to report that overall student reactions have

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[6] I thank Danjie Su for reminding me of this important issue.

been very positive. On completion of the course, students participated in a normative evaluation exercise regarding both the course and the instructors, as part of routine university requirements. Some of the remarks seem to attest to the effectiveness of the pedagogical approaches taken here. At the risk of gloating, I cite a few comments here: "This course [is] very interesting and interactive"; "thoroughly engaged"; "[it] creates an environment where everyone will participate"; "the knowledge from the class is very applicable and useful". Perhaps the most gratifying comment any instructor of a Chinese linguistics class would appreciate is this: "[the instructor] made me inter-est[ed] in linguistic[s], [and] made me want to learn more about Chinese linguistic[s] (*sic*)."

While most of the students are undergraduates, a group of visiting overseas MA students, majoring in teaching Chinese as a second language, also attended some of the lectures. One of the MA students remarked that in Chinese:

(13)
"每个语法点都配有相应例子，通过例子进行讲解，清晰易懂，最后还有一个影音材料，活跃课堂气氛……。"
"在我以前接触的对外汉语课程里从来没有学校设定这样一个语言学课程，所以我今天很惊喜地发现原来外国学生也可以学语言学……。"
(Rough translation: Grammar points were easily understood with illustrations of examples. Audio/visual materials lightened up the overall classroom atmosphere. I have never seen a required introduction to Chinese linguistics class like this for teachers and was surprised to see that learners could also study Chinese linguistics.)

This suggests that for training graduate students, whose career goal is to teach Chinese as a second/foreign language, the approaches taken here – chiefly using authentic materials and student-centered activities – appear to be equally applicable.

6. Conclusions

By now it has become common knowledge that discourse pragmatic competence is an indispensable part of the language repertoire. However, pragmatics is also known for its elusive nature, having to do with multiple factors and largely non-formal features. Exactly what constitutes a pragmatically sound pedagogy and how best to approach discourse pragmatics in classroom instruction should be the focus of our instructional exploration and profess-sional training.

I hope to have shown that an effective approach to the instruction of properties of Chinese discourse pragmatics must involve authentic materials and student-centered activities, for it would be difficult to demonstrate

discourse pragmatic properties without real texts and speech. It would be equally hard to instill pragmatic properties in the learner by simply giving lectures without student participation and involvement. As the scope of discourse pragmatics is practically boundless, we train students to develop critical skills in order to make discoveries on their own and to prepare them for the real life situations they will inevitably face.

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如何使学习者成为语用学家：
来自二语语言学课堂的实践

摘要

　　一般来说，语言学习的课堂应该在最大程度上避免成为语言学的课堂，因为两者有本质的不同。但这并不是说二语学习不需要借助于语言学的知识和训练。语言学无非是关于语言知识的学问，注重于认识语言规律的工具手段和发现程序。这种学问——如果能够合理利用的话——没有理由不能成为帮助学习者提高语言习得的一个手段。本文重点说明，语用学的内容也可以成为学习者提高语言能力的一部分。我们通过汉语语言学课堂中的若干实际教学单元说明，基于真实材料和以学习者为中心的教学法可以提高学习者对汉语话语语用学的掌握。这种以发现程序为重点、以学习者积极参与为宗旨的教学观可以用于汉语语言学和语言的教学。

关键词： 话语语用学， 真实语料， 学习者为中心的教学法， 语言测试