Compliments and Responses to Compliments in L2 and L1 Speakers' Interaction: A Discursive Approach

Sachiko Kondo

1. Introduction

Compliments and responses to compliments are among the most widely studied speech acts in interlanguage pragmatics. A large share of empirical studies on the speech act of compliments investigates the productions of the speech act of complimenting and compliment responses using the written or oral Discourse Completion Task (DCT) as a method of data collection. Yet, although DCT allows us to collect a large amount of data under controlled external contexts, it does not allow us to explore speech acts in situated interaction. The present study takes a discursive approach (Kasper, 2006) to explore how first and second language (L1 and L2, respectively) speakers[1] sequentially co-construct compliment activities by using the methodology of Conversation Analysis (CA).

2. Background

2.1 Compliments and Responses to Compliments

Compliment is a speech act that notices and attends to the hearer's "interests, wants, needs, goods" (Brown & Levinson, 1987:102). It is one of the many ways to express positive politeness[2] (Holmes, 1998) discussed in Brown and Levinson (1987).

Holmes (1986) specifically defines a compliment as follows:

A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit

to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer.

(Holmes, 1986:485)

In their daily conversations, people make many types of assessments. Compliment is one type of assessment, by which one evaluates the addressee positively. Assessments are social actions in the sense that people display their evaluation of what they are talking about to each other, and make judgments about, agree, or disagree with each other's evaluation (Pomerantz, 1975, 1978, 1984).

Responses to compliments, on the other hand, involve complicated face-work. The recipient of a compliment is faced with the decision of whether to agree with the addresser following the Agreement Maxim or to disagree following the Modesty Maxim proposed by Leech (1983) in his Politeness Principle. Pomerantz (1984) points out that "most compliment responses lie somewhere in between (not at the polar extremes of) acceptances and agreements on the one hand and rejections and disagreements on the other" (81).

2.2 Applying Conversation Analysis in Speech Act Research: Discursive Pragmatics

In the field of interlanguage pragmatics, in particular, L2 learners' compliment responses have been widely investigated (see Shimizu, 2009: 142-152 for an overview). Studies in interlanguage pragmatics investigate L2 learners' *communicative competence* (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972) which resides in the brain of each individual learner. In pursuit of this cognitive-oriented notion of *communicative competence,* researchers have mainly explored second language acquisition (SLA) as individual cognition (i.e., the accomplishment of a single human mind), particularly through experimental data, and their interests have not particularly included how L2 speakers accomplish sociability through interactions with co-conversants. In the present study, I attempt to analyze learners' *interactional competence* (Hall, 1997; He & Young, 1998; Young, 1999; Young & Miller, 2004) rather than their *communicative competence*. I take the stance of viewing language as socially co-constructed among co-conversants rather than viewing it primarily

as forms. Similarly, cognition is not exclusively an individual phenomenon; it is also a socially distributed phenomenon that is observable in members' conversational behaviors (Schegloff, 1991). I have chosen CA as an approach to my study because it enables us to observe how L2 speakers socially co-construct interactions and achieve intersubjectivity, based on detailed transcripts of talk-in-interactions.

Kasper (2006) advocates *discursive pragmatics*, the notion of which is to apply CA to speech act research.

> My argument for discursive pragmatics is strongly indebted to antecedent proposals for a discursive sociology (Bilmes, 1986) and discursive psychology (Edwards, 1997; Edwards and Potter, 1992), and to other theories that view meaning and action as constituted not only *in* but *through* social interaction, specifically Jacoby and Ochs's theory of co-construction (1995) and Arundale's co-constituting theory (1999, 2005).

> (Kasper, 2006: 282; *Italics* in original)

Jacoby and Ochs (1955) define the notion of co-construction as "the joint creation of a form, interpretation, stance, action, activity, identity, institution, skill, ideology, emotion, or other culturally meaningful reality" (p. 171). The theory and methodology of CA with its analytical principles and practices enable us to explore how speech acts are co-accomplished with co-conversants in and through social interaction.

2.3 Conversation Analysis in SLA

After Firth and Wagner's (1997) proposal for the reconceptualization of SLA toward increased attention to social and contextual dimensions of SLA and L2 use (Mori, 2007; Firth & Wagner, 2007; among others for an overview), the number of discussions on the usefulness of applying CA in SLA studies has been increasing annually (Kasper & Wagner, 2011; Schegloff et al., 2002; Wong & Olsher, 2000). Firth and Wagner (1997) point out an imbalance between cognitive and mentalistic orientations on the one hand, and social and contextual orientations to language on the other. The former orientation is overwhelmingly dominant in SLA research. For the reconceptualization of SLA, they proposed the following three

major changes to redress the imbalance:

> (a) a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use, (b) an increased emic (i.e., participant-relevant) sensitivity towards fundamental concepts, and (c) the broadening of the traditional SLA data base.
>
> (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 286)

A growing number of SLA studies have adopted CA, especially in the past decade or so, and have contributed to enriching the social and contextual dimensions of the SLA data base (Brouwer & Wagner, 2004; Carroll, 2004; Gardner & Wagner, 2004; González-Lloret, 2009; Hauser, 2009; Hellermann, 2009; Hosoda, 2006; Ishida, 2009; Kasper, 2004; Kim, 2009; Kondo, 2011; Kurhila, 2004; Markee, 2004; Mori, 2004; Mori & Hayashi, 2006; Park, 2007; Seedhouse, 2004; Talmy, 2009; Waring, 2008; Wong, 2004; among others). In their edited book that specializes in L2 conversations, Wagner and Gardner (2004) point out that although L2 speakers may not be highly proficient, they are able to engage in quite exquisite activities in their interactions. They further suggest that L2 speakers are highly versatile in that they can use a variety of interactional resources even from the very beginning of their L2 learning. Thus, the findings of these studies indicate that L2 speakers are not "interactional dopes" (Garfinkel 1967: 68). This contrasts sharply with the way of thinking in traditional cognitive SLA, which conceives an L2 speaker as a deficient communicator "struggling to overcome an underdeveloped L2 competence, striving to reach the 'target' competence of an idealized native speaker" (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 285).

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study are three Japanese high school students (Kazu, Fumi and Hide), who attended local high schools and did home-stays for eleven months from Aug. 2001 to July 2002 in the U.S. They were in the study abroad program by American Field Service (AFS). [3] I asked each participant to self-select an interlocutor, with whom they felt very comfortable talking and to

audiotape unplanned conversations during their stay in the U.S. The recordings took place twice, first around October 2001 (Time One) and second around May 2002 (Time Two). Kazu's interlocutors were Max (host brother) and Linda (host mother). Fumi's interlocutor was Kelly (host mother), and Hide's interlocutor was Sarah (AFS liaison[4]). The participants and their native -speaking interlocutors were encouraged to talk freely on any topic without regard for the fact that they were being recorded.

3.2 Transcription and Analysis

I transcribed all the recordings from Time One and Time Two using the transcription convention described in the Appendix, which is a modified version of the system devised by Jefferson (2004). Turn-by-turn analysis was made on sequences of compliment activity by following the general analytic strategies ten Have (2007) proposed: *turn-taking organization, sequence organization, repair organization, and the organization of turn-design*.

4. Research Questions

In the present study, I explored the following three research questions.
  (1) How do compliment activities emerge in conversations?
  (2) How do L2 and L1 speakers co-construct compliment activities?
  (3) How do L2 speakers sequentially respond to compliments?

5. Results and Discussion

To begin, I will analyze Excerpt 1, in which a compliment activity emerges in the assessment activity of Kazu's swimming season. First, Kazu negatively assesses the beginning of his swimming season and then positively assesses his improvement in his swimming skills. I will focus the analysis on how compliments and responses to compliments emerge in line 26, when Max pays a compliment in response to Kazu's self-deprecating assessment that he was not good at first (line 25).

Excerpt 1: [Swimming Season] Time Two

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1      Linda: now (2) >ok now< we didn't talk about swimming season yet.
2             and Alice doesn't know a lot about your swimming season.
3             so: what what were some of the (.) highlights
4             of your swim season.
5      Kazu:  o:kay:. (.) I can express the first month of swimming,
6             with only one ex- only one word. it wa:s terrible.
7      Linda: terrible?=
8      Kazu:  =terrible. every- after every practice, I was exhaust:ed,
9             (.) a:nd (1) very tired, (.) (oh my-) I couldn't move
10            I couldn't talk at a:ll,
11      Max:  °hhhhhh.°
12     Kazu:  oh my go:d, what did I do:
11            like- (.) I felt so much gravity
12            after I got off from [ wa:ter, ]
13      Max:                       [°hhhhhh.°]
14     Kazu:  (all) gravity.hhh (1)
15     Linda: hahaha.
16     Kazu:  I can't walk solidly,
17      Max:  °hhhhhh.°
18     Kazu:  and in th- in meets, (.)
19            (in) the first meet, I got very bad times (.) but after that
20            I- I had no skill about swimming so: (.)
21            I: I'm improved very- very good,
22      Max:  um hum,
23     Kazu:  so I got award for most improved,
24      Max:  um hum,
25  →  Kazu:  but be- but that is because I was not goo:d.
26  →   Max:  hahahaha but you were good at the end right?
27  →  Kazu:  yeah, a little bit,
28  →   Max:  a little bit, [that's good]
29     Kazu:                [ in state  ] championship
30            we- we got fourth place, in state in (four states)
31  →   Max:  yeah that's very good.
32  →  Kazu:  yeah but there were only five teams.
33      Max:   (.) oh.
34     Kazu:  oh. I [got- ]
35  →   Max:        [still] that's very good.
36     Linda: yeah fourth place.
37      Max:  fourth place isn't bad.
38     Kazu:  in five teams?
39      Max:  ehehhh:.
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The topic proffer question asking Kazu about some highlights of the swimming season (lines 3, 4) is an initiation of the assessment activity of the swimming season. Although Linda formulates her question using the expression "highlights" to elicit a positive assessment of the season, Kazu gives a negative

assessment "terrible" about the first part of the season without hesitation (lines 5, 6). Then he elaborates and explains his assessment by giving details of how exhausted he was and how he felt gravity when he came out of the water (lines 8-16). He adds that his swimming time was not good at first (line 19). Although he basically sticks to his assessment that it was "terrible" in his explanation, he also talks about how he improved toward the end of the season (lines 20, 21), assessing it as "very good," which shows some orientation to Linda's question that asked for a positive assessment of the swimming season (lines 3, 4). Kazu follows up his positive assessment by saying that he received an award for "the most improved" (line 23).

Then, in line 25, he deflects his positive evaluation, which is designed with the contrast marker "but" and an account of why he received the award with the explicit account marker "because." In this explanation, he tactically shifts the prior positive assessment to a slightly negative assessment to attend to the social norm of avoiding self-praise (Pomerantz, 1978). Max orients to this shift-down and pushes it up again using laughter and a positive evaluation in line 26, which is designed with the contrast marker "but" and the positive assessment expression that Kazu was "good at the end." Max seeks agreement by using "right?" with a rising intonation. Kazu agrees immediately with the agreement token "yup" but follows it with the mitigation "a little bit" (line 27), again deflecting his own accomplishment so that he does not push up the positive assessment too high. Max orients to this and repeats "a little bit" to display his agreement, then makes a positive assessment saying "that's good" (line 28). Max's recycling Kazu's expression "a little bit" and the following positive assessment displays Max's alignment with Kazu's speech. In lines 29 and 30, Kazu provides another example, that his team came in fourth place in the state championship, to explicate and reinforce positive assessment, to which Max shows his understanding of Kazu's account by making a positive assessment again, "yeah that's very good.", this time upgrading his positive assessment with the intensifier "very" (line 31). Kazu receives it with the agreement token "yeah," but again he pushes the positive assessment down with the contrasting marker "but" and providing information that his team was in fourth place among only five teams (line 32). In response to this tone-down, Max pushes the assessment up again by saying that in spite of the fact that there were only five teams, it is still very good (line 35), which is followed by Linda's agreement (line 36).

Throughout this long sequence of evaluating the swimming season, which involves compliments and responses to compliments, Kazu tactically pushes his

assessment up and down both to align himself with Max and to attend to the social norm of avoiding appearing too proud of himself. Responding to compliments is truly a complex interactional work (Pomerantz, 1978). Pomerantz explains that hearers are in a dilemma of whether to agree or disagree with compliments because although agreement is a preferred social action, it is at the same time against the social norm of avoiding self-praise. Pomerantz points out the following pattern of agreement with scale-down as one of the possible types of agreement to compliments:

A: compliment ↑
B: scale-down ↓
A: strong positive term↑

In response to A's compliment as the first assessment, B provides scaled-down agreements containing more moderate-positive expressions as the second assessment. Then, A reaffirms the praise with a strong-positive term in the third assessment position. Pomerantz notes that the scale-down in the second assessment position "exhibits features of both agreements and disagreements" (p. 95). The L1 speaker's upgrade in lines 26, 28, and 31 of Excerpt 1 can be analyzed as the third place slot in the compliment pattern described above. The data that we have just observed show that, in the longer compliment sequence, Kazu in B's position is actively involved in both scale-down and agreement with compliments given by his co-participant. Kazu and Max engage in tactful negotiations of the assessments of whether Kazu's improvement is "good" or "not so good." Max gives a positive assessment of the improvement as a compliment to Kazu. On the other hand, Kazu does not go strong about giving a good assessment of himself in trying not to violate the Modesty Maxim (Leech, 1983; Pomerantz, 1978). However, the two are in no way opposing each other. Instead, Kazu tactfully balances his way of giving assessments in order to align himself with the interlocutor. He demonstrates his sensitivity to the conflicting constraints on compliment responses.

Next, I will analyze another example of compliment activity in the conversation among Kazu, Max and Linda. Prior to the excerpt, they had been talking about how Kazu's English has improved over the year. While Kazu explicates his assessment about his reading ability with detailed information, a compliment activity emerges in line 17.

Excerpt 2: [Reading Ability] Time Two

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1       Linda: how about in reading.(.) I remember when you
2              first ca:me, tha:t you couldn't read
3              the newspaper. (.) very well.
4              (.)
5       Kazu:  ↑I can read. no ↑I could read, (1) for sports paper,
6       Linda: uh huh,
7              (3)
8       Kazu:  yeah (  )[yeah ]
9       Linda:         [do you] remember how long it would take you?
10      Kazu:  yeah.
11      Linda: so what's changed about your reading.
12      Kazu:  my (.) reading became so faster. (.)
13             very very very faster. (.) than it used to. (1)
14             eighty- thirty minutes to read newspaper, (1)
15             only one section. (.) but right now it only takes
16             like thirty seconds or one minute,
17  →   Max:   hhhhu. that's very ↑GOOD.
18  →   Kazu:  yeah. (2) but it's because of (.) American studies.
19      Linda: [right.]
20  →   Kazu:  [they  ] made me read so: much.
21             (1)
22      Linda: do you remember how long it used to take you
23             to read thee history book?
24      Kazu:  yup,
25      Linda: how- [how long    ]
26      Kazu:       [five hours,] six hours,
27      Linda: to read how many pages.
28      Kazu:  eight.
29      Linda: and uh now that we're at the end of the year,
30      Kazu:  one or thr- one or two, co-=
31      Linda: =one or two what.
32      Kazu:  couple hours,
33      Linda: to read eight pages?
34      Kazu:  yup,
35      Linda: uh huh,
36             (2)
37      Max:   well they're big pages.
38      Kazu:  yeah.
39      Max:   history textbook.
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Linda produces a topic proffer statement to specifically talk about Kazu's reading ability (line 1). She makes an assessment that Kazu could not read newspapers very well when he first came to the States (lines 1-3). The action that Kazu takes in the following turn (line 5) is a disagreement. He claims that he could read sports papers. Then, Linda, after reminding him with "do you remember" how long it would take him to read, specifically asks what has changed about his reading (line 11). Kazu

initiates his response to this question with an explicit assessment strengthened by repetitive use of intensifiers, saying that his reading has become "very very very faster" compared to before (lines 12-13). Following this positive assessment, Kazu explicates the assessment of his reading ability in detail (lines 14-16).

In line 17, a compliment by Max emerges in response to the explanation Kazu gives of his improvement in reading ability. Max makes a positive assessment "that's very good" (line 17), which is an action of complimenting Kazu at the same time. He intensifies his compliment with prosodic emphasis on the expression "good," i.e., stress and high pitch. After an agreement token (line 18), Kazu explains that his improvement can be attributed to the "American Studies" course (line 18) that had a heavy reading load (line 20).

As we have observed in Excerpt 2, Kazu contrasts the past and the present to demonstrate his improvement in reading. This contrast is "reacted to" (Depperman, 2005: 293) by Max, bringing consequential effects on the sequential development. Max orients to the positive side of the contrast, and compliments Kazu's improvement. In response to Max's compliment, although Kazu gives an agreement token "yeah," first, he shifts the merit to the course he took, that is, "American Studies." Pomerantz (1978) advocates the principle of "referent shifts" (p. 101) as one of the solution types of compliment responses and explains it as follows:

> In a compliment (A1) a recipient is praised either directly or indirectly; in this type of response, the recipient performs a subsequent praise (A2) which has other-than-self as referent.
>   A1: A praises B.
>   A2: B praises other-than-self
>
> (Pomerantz, 1978: 101)

In Excerpt 2, in response to the compliment, Kazu reassigns the praise, "shifting the credit from himself to an other-than-self referent" (Pomerantz, 1978: 102), namely, the American Studies course. He does this in a contrasting way with the contrast marker "but" (line 18) as part of his account of why he has improved in reading. This example adds another piece of evidence that Kazu is able to show sensitivity to interactional norms in responding to compliments, as also discussed in the analysis of Excerpt 1.

In Excerpt 3, Fumi and Kelly are at first talking about the possible schedule

conflict between an AFS conference and a basketball tournament. Then, Fumi initiates an assessment activity about her basketball skill, in which a compliment activity emerges (lines 71-72). I will analyze how it emerges and how Fumi responds to the compliment.

Excerpt 3 [Dance Party & Basketball] Time One

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1      Fumi:   I think we should have another
2              dance party hehehe:.
3      Kelly: ↑U:. now that would be fu:n,
4      Fumi:  $ yeah:hh.$
5      Kelly: (          ) maybe they will.
6              (°maybe they have another dance
7              party.°)
8              (1)
9      Kelly: [ and the:n   ]
10     Fumi:  [do you know ] anything about it,
11     Kelly: nhu-nhu (.) no
12             they haven't [sent me ]any information=
13     Fumi:                [why not.]
14     Kelly: =$ yet. heh heh heh:$
15     Kelly: they will send us
16             information-, (1) we should get it
17             in the mail probably
18             in the first week of January.
19     Fumi:  °ok° but- I'm kind of afraid,
20             beca:use I might have
21             tournament [( at that time    )]
22     Kelly:            [oh for basketball.]
23     Fumi:  yeah:.
24     Kelly: hu::m.
25     Fumi:   so: but I have to be there, because
26             it's orientation.
27     Kelly: yeah.
28     Fumi:  it's not like para:de.
29     Kelly: right. yeah. it's a required thing.
30             but sometimes, (.) they'll let you:
31             come later.
32     Fumi:  oh really?
33     Kelly: so we'll have to ask. we'll
34             [find out.]
35     Fumi:  [  WA:  ] ah
36             $ I don't wanna miss it.ha::hh. $
37     Kelly: no. you don't wanna miss any of it,
38             it's FU:n. [hhhu:.]
39     Fumi:  [YEAH::]hahaha: I kno:w
40     Kelly: [ ( )  ] I think it'll be ok.
41             you know, am coach is very good about,
42     Fumi:  yeah:.
43     Kelly: when AFS requires the students to go.
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44      Fumi:   yeah:.
45      Kelly:  you just have to tell him (before). (.)
46              AFS, this is a requirement. I must
47              go to conference.
48      Fumi:   yeah. but I'm getting better:,
49      Kelly:  °um-hum,°
50              I got my £↑FIRST three point in
51              the la:st ↑ga::me?£
52      Kelly:  yee::hy. ((cheering voice))
53      Fumi:   ha[haha::.]
54      Kelly:    [hahaha.]
55      Kelly:  well maybe it's because- I know um
56              Americans play basketball, don't they,
57              differently?
58      Fumi:   yeah:.
59      Kelly:  =than what you used to?
60      Fumi:   it's really different.=
61      Kelly:  =and you're also playing
62              [in a new position] and-
63      Fumi:   [ and they have-  ]
64      Fumi:   yeah. and they have played more than
65              thi:rty ga:mes before I joined=
66      Kelly:  =°oh.°=
67      Fumi:   =the team.
68      Kelly:  °yeah°. yeah together so- [that,]
69   →  Fumi:                            [I'm ]
70   →          so behi:nd,
71   →  Kelly:  ↑yeah:. but getthing
72   →          [a three pointer is goo:d.]
73   →  Fumi:  [$ YEA:: I know $ hahahaha:]
74   →  Kelly:  that was VE::RY good.
75              so, hopefully you'll be able to
76              play- (.)
77      Fumi:   more.
78      Kelly:  some more as you [go. ]
79      Fumi:                    [yeah.]
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Fumi and Kelly are talking about the dance party that they might have in January. Fumi initiates a new subtopic by saying that the basketball tournament might fall on the same date as the dance party (lines 19-21). After Kelly and Fumi exchange turns concerning possible ways to solve the problem (lines 29-47), Fumi initiates an assessment concerning her basketball ability in line 48. First, she explicitly assesses that she is getting better (line 48). Then she provides an account that she scored her first three points in the previous game (lines 50-51). Her emphasis on the word "first" implies that she had not been doing very well before the previous game. Kelly, at first, orients to Fumi's positive assessment of her getting the three-pointer by using a cheering voice "yee::hy" (line 52). After the

two laugh together (lines 53-54), Kelly then orients to Fumi's negative assessment that she had not been doing well before the last game, by providing accounts of why Fumi had not been doing well. The first reason that Kelly provides is that Americans play basketball differently from Japanese (lines 55-59). The second reason Kelly gives is that Fumi is playing in a new position (lines 61-62). Then, Fumi participates in co-constructing accounts by providing the third reason that her teammates had played more than thirty games before she joined the team (lines 63-68). Kelly acknowledges this with a quiet "yeah" token (line 68), and before Kelly finishes what she initiated to add something, Fumi makes the concluding assessment that she is so behind (lines 69-70), which is a closure to the smaller sequence in which both speakers make a negative assessment that Fumi was not doing well. In response to Fumi's self-deprecating assessment, Kelly goes back to the previous positive assessment about Fumi's getting a three-pointer, which is designed with an agreement token to agree with Fumi's negative assessment that she is behind (line 71), followed by contrast marker "but" and a compliment with the explicit positive assessment adjective "good" that has prosodic emphasis (lines 71-72). Fumi makes a second assessment to agree with Kelly, which starts in the middle of Kelly's assessment remark (line 73). Here, the speaker's heightened participation in the activity of assessment begins before the assessment term itself (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992: 163). Fumi attends to Kelly's assessment and aligns herself with the emerging talk as an assessment even before the assessment term itself, in this case before the adjective "good" is actually produced. Fumi's partially overlapped agreement is designed with an emphatic "yeah" and "I know," which shows her epistemic stance (line 73). Then Kelly gives a third upgraded assessment, "that was very good," with the stressed and prolonged intensifier "very" (line 74).

Although the sequence we have just observed is a complex assessment activity that involves both positive and negative aspects of Fumi's basketball ability, Fumi is actively and appropriately participating in it by co-constructing accounts (lines 55-70) and showing agreement using an emphatic agreement token (line 73) in a synchronized way.

What has happened in the compliment sequence from lines 71 to 74 is one type of praise sequences that Pomerantz (1978) points out. A speaker's strong-positive term (↑) may be responded to with the recipient's moderate-positive term (↓), and then the speaker reaffirms the praise with a strong-positive term (↑). Pomerantz shows the following example for this type of

praise sequence.

   [AP:fn]

	B:	I've been offered a full scholarship at Berkeley and at UCLA
↑	G:	That's fantastic
↓	B:	Isn't that good
↑	G:	That's marvelous

                                               (Pomerantz 1978: 96)

In the praise sequence by Kelly and Fumi, Fumi first makes a self-deprecating statement that she is behind in her basketball ability compared to her teammates, although B's statement in Pomerantz's example is a positive statement about the person's being offered scholarships from two universities. Then Kelly praises Fumi for getting a three pointer in a basketball game with a positive term "good" (↑) (lines 71-72). Fumi shows her agreement with an emphatic yes token and "I know," which can be considered a moderate response (↓). Orienting to the moderate response by Fumi, Kelly restates her positive assessment with the intensifier "very" to strengthen and reaffirm her praise (↑). This shows that Fumi is exposed to the social action of strengthening a compliment with an upgraded positive term in response to a moderate self-praise.

Excerpt 4 provides another example of how an L2 speaker responds to a compliment paid by an L1 speaker. Prior to the excerpt, Hide and Sarah were talking about the content of an essay Hide wrote after receiving an award in a jazz contest. Hide has explained that his essay contained the story of how he improved in playing the piano during his stay in the U.S. Excerpt 4 starts right after the ending of Hide's story-telling about his essay.

Excerpt 4: [Playing the Piano] Time Two

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1   →   Sarah: but- and you did <sSUCH a good jo:b.>
2           that was SO: much fu:n to hear you pla:y.
3   →   Hide:  (°'nd that°) it was really fun to pla:y
4   →          also because-, (.) I always played solo
5   →          so: I'm-  I have never played a (2) umm
6   →          piano with: other member:s or in a ba:nd,
7       Sarah: um hu:m,
8   →   Hide:  I (.) °yeah° except °um° uh:mm (2)
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9   →          °what's that uh:m° accompany?
10     Sarah: °um hum°,
11  → Hide:   accompaniment.
12     Sarah: °um hum°,
13  → Hide:   °yeah°. I did like accompaniment
14  →         like every year in um junior high,
15     Sarah: oh did you?
16     Hide:  °yeah°.
17     Sarah: in Japan.
18     Hide:  °yeah°.
19     Sarah: A:ND umm,
20            (1)
21     Hide:  I did third- third grade? (.) was
22            the first accompaniment.
23     Sarah: REALLY.
24     Hide:  yeah.
25     Sarah: oh my go:sh (1) SO: (1) NO:W
26            when you go back to Japan,
27     Hide:  °um hum°,
28     Sarah: do you think that you will do more,
29            (.) umm jazz?
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In lines 1 and 2, Sarah gives a compliment about Hide's playing the piano with the positive expression "you did such a great job," and she expresses her affective stance by making an assessment that it was fun for her to listen to him play (line 2). The compliment emerges as a concluding assessment to Hide's story-telling about his essay. Rather than agreeing or disagreeing with Sarah's compliment, Hide shows his alignment with Sarah by orienting to the affective expression "fun" and shows that it was fun for him to play the piano (line 3). Hide manages to "avoid self-praise" (Pomerantz, 1978) and shifts the focus away from his self-praise to his affective stance about playing the piano. In so doing, he displays his alignment with Sarah by orienting to the affective expression "fun" first used by her, and by using the expression "also" to emphasize that he shares the same feelings as Sarah. An interesting point is that after Hide makes the assessment that it was fun for him to play the piano, he explicates his assessment in detail, initiated by the explicit account marker "because" (line 4). He explains that he had only played solo and had never played with other people or in a band before he began playing in a jazz band in the States (lines 4-6). Then, he initiates an additional explanation that there is an exception to his not playing with other people, and he further explains that he has experience accompanying (lines 8-24). Hide's identity as a language non-expert locally emerges when he initiates a repair for word search (Goodwin, M. H., 1983; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986) in line 9 asking "what's that" followed by hesitation.

However, he self-repairs by supplying the expression "accompany." This sequence indicates that a compliment activity develops into another extended telling prefaced by Hide's assessment to avoid self-praise, even though Hide locally displays his identity as an L2 speaker.

Overall Discussion

How compliments emerge in sequential contexts

Observations of Excerpts 1 to 4 show that compliments emerge in various assessment contexts.

・ Excerpt 1: A compliment by Max emerged in response to Kazu's self-deprecating assessment about his swimming season.
・Excerpt 2: A compliment by Linda emerged in response to Kazu's telling about how he has improved his reading skills.
・Excerpt 3: A compliment by Kelly emerged within an assessment activity of Fumi's basketball skills.
・Excerpt 4: A compliment by Sarah emerged as a concluding remark orienting to Hide's story-telling about his improvement in piano skills.

The compliments we have found in the present study are likely to occur in natural conversations, where participants generally construct all aspects of their turns and talks in orientation to their co-conversants. Heritage (1989) explains the notion of "context-sensitiveness" that any participant's communicative action is "doubly contextual, in that the action is both context-shaped and context-renewing" (p. 2). These compliments sharply contrast with the kinds of compliments that are elicited in many of the studies in interlanguage pragmatics by using written or oral DCTs or role-plays in controlled settings [5]. Bu (2010) lists six compliment response strategies she found in her role-play data. See the following three examples that illustrate the compliments and compliment responses elicited in her data.

(1) Compliment Upgrade: The complimentee agrees with and increases the complimentary force.
　　　A: Nice T.V set!
　　　B: Thanks. Brand new.
(5) Compliment Downgrade: The complimentee qualifies or downplays the

compliment force
> *A: It's a really nice car.*
> *B: Oh no. It looks like that but actually it has a lot of problems.*

(6) Disagreement: The complimentee thinks the compliment is overdone, and therefore directly disagrees with it.
> *A: You're looking brilliant .*
> *B: Oh. No, I don't think so.*

Bu (2010: 12; numbers are as in the original)

These examples in Bu (2010) show a compliment in one turn and its response in the next turn. Although the data from DCTs and role-plays in controlled settings are useful in quantitative studies, the present study indicates that compliment activities emerge from certain contexts and are *shaped* and *renewed* (Heritage 1989) in and through contexts. In other words, while traditional speech act studies treat context as external variables, such as power, distance, and rank of imposition (Brown & Levinson 1987), in CA context is "interaction-internal" (Kasper 2006:304). Most importantly compliment activities are sequentially co-accomplished by both speakers in multiple turns.

How L2 and L1 speakers co-construct compliment activities

The present study reveals that the conversation participants constantly orient to what and how their co-participants contribute to the interaction. For example, a story-telling is reacted to with a compliment, which displays the recipient's understanding of the story (Excerpt 4). Self-deprecating assessments are oriented to with compliments (Excerpts 1 and 3). Compliments are oriented to by the action of avoiding self-praise (Excerpts 1, 3, and 4) and by the action of shifting the object of praise (Excerpt 2). The conversants co-construct accounts for both positive and negative assessments (Excerpt 3). A complimenter upgrades her compliment by restating the positive assessment orienting to a moderate agreement by a complimentee. The sequential analysis enables us to observe how "interactants are constantly monitoring, determining, and responding to as interaction unfolds" (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995: 176). Compliments and compliment responses are part of such co-accomplished assessment activities as social actions.

How L2 speakers sequentially respond to compliments

The findings in the present study indicate that L2 speakers are not

"interactional dopes" (Garfinkel 1967: 68). This contrasts sharply with the way of thinking in traditional cognitive SLA, which conceives an L2 speaker as a deficient communicator "struggling to overcome an underdeveloped L2 competence, striving to reach the target competence of an idealized native speaker" (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 285). The L2 speakers in the present study have *interactional competence* to display their awareness of social norms of agreement, disagreement, and avoiding self-praise. They constantly orient to their interlocutors' particular conduct and co-accomplish whatever activities they are involved in at the moment the conduct is produced. Sequential analysis enables us to observe how L2 speakers tactfully achieve "in between-ness" in compliment responses.

From the CA perspective, membership identities such as L1 vs. L2 speakers and non-native vs. native speakers are only relevant when participants display their concerns to such identities in interaction (Kasper, 2004, 2009; Hosoda, 2006; Kondo 2011). Although Kondo (2011) in her larger developmental study including the same L1 participants as the present study demonstrates that identities of language-expert and non-expert become locally relevant in their conversations with their L1 co-participants especially in Time One, in the excerpts analyzed here, we do not see much orientation by the participants to their language expertise, except one case of word search in Excerpt 4. The noticeable phenomena, however, was that only the L1 speakers acted as complimenters and the L2 speakers as compliment-receivers. I would argue that this is not related to language expertise per se, but to their social roles in particular topics in their conversations. In the present study, the L2 speakers were high school students who were studying abroad and were under the care of their host family members and AFS liaison, who happened to be L1 speakers. The care-takers were more likely to play the social role of complimenters who praised their younger co-participants' development of certain skills such as swimming and playing the piano, not necessarily their linguistic skills.

6. Conclusion

The present study analyzed how L1 and L2 speakers sequentially co-construct compliment activities. Using CA as a theoretical and methodological foundation, the study has demonstrated (1) how compliment activities emerge in sequential

contexts, (2) how L2 and L1 speakers co-construct compliment activities, and (3) how L2 speakers sequentially respond to the compliments paid by their interlocutors.

Compared to traditional interlanguage pragmatic speech act studies in which L2 speakers meta-pragmatic awareness is investigated by analyzing their choice of conventional speech act strategies, CA analysis enables us to observe how actions are co-constructed by the participants in conversations, and how actions are part of L2 speakers *interactional competence* (Kasper, 2006).

Pedagogically speaking, it is important that the dialogues in textbooks reflect authentic language use (Golato, 2002). In order to develop authentic materials for teaching about speech acts such as compliments and responses to compliments, apologies, refusals, and requests, it would certainly benefit us to turn more to discursive pragmatics, including the sequential analysis of how such speech acts emerge and develop contingently and how conversants co-accomplish them.

Notes

[1] The identities of native /non-native speakers, L1 /L2 speakers, or language experts/non-experts are not predominant identities themselves in conversations (Gardner & Wagner, 2004). These are identities that speakers can adopt locally in conversations, or they may not adopt them at all. From CA perspective, these identities become relevant only when speakers orient to them, for instance, by initiating repair of linguistic forms or correcting pronunciation. Based on this notion of identities, I adopt the term "L1 /L2 speakers," which is more neutral than "native /non-native speakers" (Gardner & Wagner, 2004:16).

[2] Brown and Levinson (1987) identify two categories of politeness strategies in Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) on record with redressive action: positive politeness (roughly, the expression of solidarity) and negative politeness (roughly, the expression of restraint).

[3] AFS is one of the world's largest not-for-profit volunteer-based organizations; it has a 90-year history. It offers international exchange programs in more than 50 countries through local AFS organizations. AFS provides intercultural learning and volunteer opportunities for students, young adults, teachers and families through international exchanges.

[4] Hide's interlocutor, Sarah, is an AFS Student Family Liaison, whose primary role is to maintain regular contact with her assigned AFS student and host family

and provide support when needed.

5 See Golato (2003) for a comparison of DCTs and CA analysis using recordings of naturally occurring conversation to study compliment responses in German.

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Appendix: Transcription Conventions

Based on the Jefferson Transcription System

http://www-staff.lboro.ac.uk/~ssjap/transcription/transcription.htm

Symbol	**Meaning**
[ ]	Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. They are aligned to mark the precise position of overlap.
↓	Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement, over and above normal rhythms of speech. They are used for notable changes in pitch beyond those represented by stops, commas and question marks.
→	Side arrows are used to draw attention to features of talk that are relevant to the current analysis.
Under<u>lin</u>ing	indicates emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis and also indicates how heavy it is.
CAPITALS	mark speech that is hearably louder than surrounding speech. This is beyond the increase in volume that comes as a by product of emphasis.
°**I know it,**°	"Degree" signs enclose hearably quieter speech.
that's r*ight.	Asterisks precede a "squeaky" vocal delivery.
(0.4)	Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, four tenths of a second). If they are not part of a particular speaker's talk they are on a new line.
(.)	A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.
((stoccato))	Additional comments from the transcriber, e.g. about features of context or delivery.

she wa::nted	Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound; the more colons, the more elongation.
Hhh	Aspiration (out-breaths); proportionally as for colons.
.hhh	Inspiration (in-breaths); proportionally as for colons.
Yeh,	"Continuation" marker, the speaker has not finished; marked by fall-rise or weak rising intonation, as when delivering a list.
y'know?	Question marks signal stronger, "questioning" intonation, irrespective of grammar.
Yeh.	Full stops mark falling, stopping intonation ("final contour"), irrespective of grammar, and not necessarily followed by a pause.
bu-u-	Hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound.
>he said< **< he said>**	"Greater than" and "lesser than" signs enclose speeded-up talk. Occasionally they are used the other way round for slower talk.
solid.= =We had	"Equals" signs mark the immediate "latching" of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval.
heh heh	Voiced laughter. Can have other symbols added, such as underlining, pitch movement, extra aspiration, etc.
sto(h)p i(h)t	Laughter within speech is signaled by h's in round brackets.
( )	Empty parentheses indicate that the transcriber was unable to understand what was said. The length of the parenthesized space reflects the length of missed speech.
(word)	Parenthesized words and speaker designations are especially dubious.

Additional notations

$ $	surrounds "laughing" voice.
£ £	surrounds "smile" voice.

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