

Interactional Explanatory Expression: A Theoretical Framework in Intercultural Pragmatics

Puyu Ning

Doctoral School of Linguistics, Péter Pázmány Catholic University

25.6.2020

The background features several sets of concentric, curved lines in shades of gray, some solid and some dashed, creating a sense of motion and depth. A blue speech bubble shape is positioned on the left side of the slide.

Contents

- **Introduction of the research topic**
- **Preliminary work**
- **Research plan**
- **Dissertation plan**

Introduction of
the research
topic

Background & significance of the research

- **Communication reality**
Interview about intercultural
experience
- **Theorisation necessity**
Gap of explanation theorisation in
intercultural pragmatics

Philosophy of Science

While most of work in philosophy of science (Hempel & Oppenheim 1948, von Wright 1971, Achinstein 1983, Bromberger 1993, Salmon 1998, Woodward 2005 etc.) centres around the truth-conditions of scientific explanation,

- **von Wright** (1971:111) suggests that human action can not be explained causally by scientific or natural laws but has to be understood in a social and cultural context.
- **Achinstein** (1983: 3) proposes an illocutionary theory of explanation by developing a fundamental concept of explaining act to differentiate the act and the 'product' of explaining.
- **Grimes** (1987:91) defines a fundamental distinction between an explanation proposition and the giving of an explanation.

Speech Act Theory & Social Psychology

- Searle (1969:29): illocutionary force in interaction
- Speech act realisation strategy in apology, request, refusal across lingua-cultures: CCSARP, Wierzbicka (2003), Gass & Selinker (2008) etc.
 - e.g. Explanation in Chinese: Liao & Bresnahan (1996), Jiang (2015)
- Interpersonal explanation and attributionists:
 - Common sense psychology: Heider (1958), Kelley (1967), Weiner (1974)
- linguistic marker, causal relation, etc.
 - e.g. Antaki (1988, 1992, 1994, 1996) Draper (1988)
- Explanation categories: Austin (1957) *A Plea for Excuses*; Scott and Lyman (1968), Billing (1987), etc.

Introduction of
the research
topic

Background & significance of the research

- **Communication reality**
Interview about intercultural
experience
- **Theorisation necessity**
Gap of explanation theorisation in
intercultural pragmatics

Research Questions

- How to define **Interactional explanatory expression** in intercultural pragmatics?
- What are the general features of it?
- What are the major types/functions of it?
- What factors can influence/determine the efficacy of it in intercultural interactions?



Data and methodology

Data collection:

- Corpus exploration
- Interview (post facto)
- Experimentation

Data analysis methodology:

- Constant comparative method, grounded approach
- Discourse analysis
- Statistical analysis

Preliminary work

Conference:

- Chinese impoliteness (2019.6 IPrA 16)
- Ritual excuse: Chinese vs Hungarian from intercultural to interpersonal communication (2019.7 IAICS 25)
- Cross-cultural apology studies; a meta-analysis (2019.7 SymPol 13')

Publication:

- Ritual public apology: a case study of Chinese (2018.2 , Discourse, Context & Media, in English)
- The contribution of intercultural pragmatics for intercultural communication studies: taking the example of Chinese traditional thoughts and moral orders (Intercultural Communication Forum, 2019. 6, in Chinese)
- **Evaluation of explanations in interaction (Modern Foreign Languages, 2020. 3, in Chinese)**
- **Interactional explanatory expressions in intercultural communication (working paper, in English)**

Highlights in the progress

- Evaluation of explanations in interaction
([Modern Foreign Languages, 2020. 3, in Chinese](#))

Major findings:

- ▶ Attribution features of explanations in interaction correlate significantly with the interactional evaluation.
 - ▶ The ritual aspect of explanation plays important role in different cultures
- Interactional explanatory expressions: an analytical framework in intercultural communication ([working paper, in English](#))
Working theory of “Intercultural explanatory expressions”



Research plan

- **Experimentation**
 - Speech act realization and evaluation (causality in request and refusal)
 - Ritual explanatory expressions and its cultural difference
(publications)
- **Corpus exploration**
- **Theorisation**

Explanatory expression in intercultural pragmatics with the interview data
(publications)

Experimentation

Experiment 1 (HU, CN, EN)

**Speech act realization and evaluation
(request & refusal)**

- DCT (written or audio)
- Comprehension/judgement task

Experiment 2 (HU, CN, EN)

Ritual explanation

(based on the Experiment 1)

- Comprehension/judgement task

Dissertation plan

- I. Introduction**
- II. Literature review of explanation research**
- III. Defining interactional explanatory expression**
- IV. Types/function of interactional explanatory expression**
- V. Evaluation of interactional explanatory expressions**
- VI. Ritual explanatory expressions across cultures**
- VII. Conclusion**



Thank you!

ning.puyu@nytud.mta.hu