

Future Directions in Applied Linguistics:
Local and Global Perspectives

Edited by

Christina Gitsaki
and Richard B. Baldauf Jr.

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P U B L I S H I N G

Future Directions in Applied Linguistics:
Local and Global Perspectives,
Edited by Christina Gitsaki and Richard B. Baldauf Jr.



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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ACQUIRING ADDRESS TERMS IN INDONESIAN: A DIARY STUDY

TIM HASSALL

Abstract

This study uses a diary method to examine the acquisition of address terms by one advanced second language (L2) learner of Indonesian, during a four month sojourn in a target culture setting. The main issue that emerges for him during the study is when to use certain kin terms which mean "older brother" and "older sister" and are sometimes regarded as markers of solidarity. He makes some striking gains in the acquisition of these terms. However, his overall path of development is marked by reversals in his ability to use this type of address term, and when the sojourn ends, his ability to use them is in fact no higher than before the sojourn began. His reversals in ability to use these terms are closely linked to psychological-emotional factors: specifically an unease about being perceived as over-familiar or presumptuous, which is related in turn to a strong sense of outsider self-identity within the target culture. The study demonstrates that substantial shaping and reshaping of pragmatic knowledge may take place from the very first days in a target culture setting. It provides indirect but compelling evidence that there is no stable common path of acquisition for many L2 pragmatic features, because individual psychological-emotional factors largely determine how learners acquire those features and how well they do so. It demonstrates the high value of self-report data for revealing details of L2 pragmatic development.

Introduction

This study traces the acquisition of address terms in Indonesian by one Australian learner over a four month period, linking that development to factors aiding or constraining it. In this way it increases our understanding of basic issues in second language (L2) pragmatics, including how rapidly such acquisition can begin in a target culture setting, how large a role psychological-emotional factors play in the process, and how likely we are to find a stable path of development for L2 pragmatic features.

Background

L2 Pragmatic Acquisition in Target Culture Settings

During a stay in a target culture setting, L2 learners tend to make definite but fairly modest gains in acquiring pragmatics. While they improve in their ability to produce the target features, their performance also remains distinctly non-L2-like in some respects, even after lengthy sojourns (for a review of empirical studies see Hassall, forthcoming, a). Nonetheless, certain studies do reveal rapid gains in the target feature within the first months. Hoffman-Hicks (2000) and Matsumura (2003) found their learner subjects to improve markedly on production tasks after only 2–3 months abroad (in performing a range of pragmatic routines in French and in assessing how relative status of participants affects choice of advice strategy in English, respectively). Also, one case-study of a single learner of Indonesian (Hassall, 2006) revealed by use of diary data that during the very first weeks the learner shaped and reshaped his knowledge about the target feature (the function of leave-taking) and modified his performance accordingly.

Links between acquisition and factors that might help explain it tend to be made by writers in fairly broad terms. However, with the aid of self-report data some studies reveal quite detailed links. On the basis of interview and diary data, DuFon (2000) linked the contrasting success of two beginning learners of Indonesian in acquiring address terms to their different levels of concern for L2 social norms and values. On the basis of retrospective verbal reports from one young adult US learner of French, Kinginger (2008) showed that the learner's non-L2-like choice of pronoun (*vous*) to address French equal-aged peers was a deliberate flouting of L2 norms in order to match his chosen way of presenting himself within the target culture.

As for whether learners follow a common path of development in acquiring various pragmatic features, knowledge is still scant. For at least one feature, that of request strategies, a sequence of developmental stages has been claimed (Kasper & Rose, 2002); and for other isolated pragmatic features individual researchers have now and then posited a possible series of stages based on their own findings (e.g., Ohta, 2001 for expression of alignment in L2 Japanese). However, how many and what type of pragmatic features might be acquired in a stable sequence of stages is still largely an open question.

Address Terms in Indonesian

Bahasa Indonesia, henceforth Indonesian, is the national language of Indonesia and is spoken by a large majority of Indonesians. It has a wide variety of kin terms of address, the choice of which varies widely from one region to another (see Jenson, 1988). Two are the very widely used terms *Bapak* 'father' and *Ibu* 'mother' (shortened to *Pak* and *Bu* respectively). These two terms can be regarded as pan-Indonesian. They are overtly respectful, although they need not convey deference, and are typically used to an adult male/female of fairly mature years or of higher rank than the speaker, to show respect (see Jenson, 1988). Beneath the level of those two 'parent' kin terms is another level of kin terms: terms which are the main focus of this paper. These terms mean literally 'older brother' and 'older sister' (although they are often used to adults younger than the speaker as well). Kin terms at this 'sibling' level, while polite, are not overtly respectful; and tend to convey a feeling of solidarity with the addressee (see Jenson, 1988). The best known of these are the Javanese pair *Mas* 'older brother' and *Mbak* 'older sister'. (Examples: *Mas dari mana?* 'Where are you from?' or *Mbak, ini berapa?* 'Sister, how much does this cost?').

Speakers in non-Javanese-speaking areas of Indonesia tend to use their own equivalent sibling kin terms from the local language instead of the words *mas* and *mbak*. However, it appears the Javanese terms *mas* and *mbak* may be spreading to non-Javanese speaking regions of Indonesia as well (see Errington, 1998).

The Study

The subject of this study, the writer, is a white male native speaker of Australian English, and an advanced learner of Indonesian. At the time of the sojourn I was in my early forties and had been learning Indonesian for

15 years, largely by self study, but also at one point by completing an undergraduate major in Indonesian. For the previous seven years I had also been teaching Indonesian at university. I had visited Indonesia for six trips of three to eight weeks duration: mostly holidays with a strong informal language learning focus.

The Sojourn

The main period examined is a four-month sojourn in Indonesia. My main purpose for embarking on the sojourn was to learn Indonesian informally by exposing myself to the linguistic and cultural environment; and also, during the first three months, to find a quiet spot to work on my own academic reading and writing. I stayed in three regions. First I spent two months in the Minangkabau region of West Sumatra, comprising a month in the city of Padang and a month in the large nearby town of Bukittinggi. Then I spent one month in the capital city of Jakarta, on the island of Java. Last, I spent one month in the Sundanese region of West Java, in the city of Bandung. In each place I stayed in a guesthouse/boarding house.

My typical daily routine for the first three months was as follows. I would wake up early and spend some hours working on my own reading and writing; go out into town by myself to explore for the rest of the day, and come home in the early evening and then study Indonesian by listening to radio and reading novels or newspapers. My main interactions were a few casual conversations with fellow lodgers or with staff of my guesthouse in the morning and the evening, plus a variety of service encounters while out in town during the day. In the places I stayed in West Sumatra, many service encounters developed into social conversations, and strangers would often strike up social conversations with me in public too. In the capital city of Jakarta, that rarely occurred.

During the last month of the sojourn, in Bandung in West Java, I taught full-time in a private English language college. During my working hours at this school I used English almost exclusively. My interactions in Indonesian during this month consisted mainly of brief casual conversations with staff of my guesthouse, and a range of daily service encounters.

Data Collection

The study uses a diary method, whereby I kept a journal of my own learning of pragmatics. The diary method, using either a self-study diary written by the researcher or diaries commissioned from participants, has

been employed in many studies of second language acquisition, including a number of pragmatic acquisition specifically (e.g., Cohen, 1997; DuFon 2006; Kinginger, 2008). For discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the diary method see, for example, Bailey (1991).

The diary was written long-hand in exercise books. I wrote in it most days, about five days a week. In total the diary consisted of 272 pages of entries. At the start of Week 9, I re-read the entire diary up to that point and made a time-ordered matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to display all the data visually. Based on that display, I identified three pragmatic issues as salient: terms of address, leave-taking and greeting, and started to narrow the focus of my study, collecting data on these three features almost to the exclusion of others for the next four weeks (till Week 12). After Week 12 I continued to make entries for another four weeks solely on my learning of address terms. The diary yielded a total of 112 entries to do with my learning of address terms.

Findings and Discussion

In an earlier pragmatics diary which I had kept during a three-week trip to cities in Central Java one year earlier, I had explicitly noted that I felt wary of the 'sibling' kin terms *mas* and *mbak* due to the familiarity they tend to convey; and reported that I was using those terms only sparingly for that reason. That provides useful context for this present story of acquisition during the sojourn described in this chapter.

First Leg: Weeks 1–8: Minangkabau Region of West Sumatra

When I began this first leg of the sojourn I was certain that the Javanese terms *mas* 'older brother' and *mbak* 'older sister' were inappropriate to use here in West Sumatra. For this belief I was relying purely on hearsay: I had read or been told at least twice that people outside Java found it insulting to be addressed with Javanese address terms like *mas* and *mbak*. So on my first day, as soon as I found a likely informant, I asked him what the equivalent local terms are. [Note that while all conversations quoted in diary entries took place in Indonesian, they are presented here in English translation for the readers' convenience.]

(1) With the official in the tourist bureau today, he was so helpful and obviously intelligent that I asked him what address terms to use for people younger than *pak* [father] and *bu* [mother]. He told me: *uda* for men and *uni* for women. He even gave me a little lesson—he pointed to a little child, and said "You couldn't call her *uni*, she's too young" (which I found

obvious), and then pointed to a 35ish female colleague, and said, "You could call her *uni*, or more formally, *bu*." That was very useful—it made the term *uni* seem a very close equivalent to [Javanese] *mbak*. (Diary entry, Padang, Week 1, 31/12/01)

To this demonstration from my informant I make a reply which shows my wariness of the familiar address terms:

(2) I said: "I'd call her *bu* ['mother'] to be safe"—hoping he'd say: "Right, fine". But instead he replied a bit guardedly, saying "Right, okay, but sometimes if a woman's not married yet it can make her feel a bit old if she's called *bu*." (Diary entry, Padang, Week 1, 31/12/01)

I commented on that last remark of his, in the same entry:

(3) Mm, I might have to vary between *uni* and *bu* a bit more adventurously than I'd been planning—I'd already been feeling a mild *uni* nervousness akin to my *mbak* nervousness: I'm worried about being over-familiar. (Diary entry, Padang, Week 1, 31/12/01)

I then asked this informant: "Does it sound strange for a foreigner to use *uda* and *uni*?"—a question which revealed another type of inhibition about these local Minang terms: that they might be in-group markers of local identity. He answered me:

(4) "No, it sounds fine: quite *akrab* [familiar, close]". (Diary entry, Padang, Week 1, 31/12/01)

However, this reply that it sounds "*akrab*" reinforced my concern that I might sound presumptuous by using them. I noted in the same entry: "That made me a little wary[...] in the same way as I feel with *mas*."

Even so, immediately after that episode, I start to use these new terms, and do so with success.

(5) I've used them each a couple of times today already to get people's attention, (including to a passing waiter and to a shop assistant) and it's been fascinating and rewarding. [...] it was gratifying to see their relaxed, automatic responsiveness to it each time. (Diary entry, Padang, Week 1, 31/12/01)

Just a couple of days later, still in my first week, I have what in retrospect turns out to be my crowning achievement in using these terms:

(6) I just had a smooth friendly chat with a 25ish worker at the hotel here [...] he called me *anda* [a pronoun used to distant equals]—I tossed up for a second whether to call him ‘*anda*’ back, but then I chose *uda* and said it—and noted a good response to it. I did it to make us closer—I felt he was being very polite, distant, playing it safe. So I took the initiative here. (Diary entry, Padang, Week 1, 02/01/02)

So at this point, after very short while, I’ve rapidly learned these two new terms and am using them with success. I also look them up in my dictionary at home that evening and confirm that they do in fact mean ‘older brother’ and ‘older sister’, which further reassures me that they are the exactly the terms I was looking for.

However, the very next day, an incident occurs which starts to change my knowledge about these sibling terms. I notice the *Javanese* term *mas* being used to me—directly counter to my belief that the Javanese terms *mas* and *mbak* are not used here.

(7) Another hotel staff member who I’d chatted to once earlier said to me as he passed, “*Selamat pagi Mas*” ‘Good morning, *Mas*.’ I noticed he’d said “*Mas*”. Curious, I asked him about it: “*Mas* is Javanese, isn’t it?” “Yes”, he said. “In Padang it’s *uda*.” I asked him then: “Can you use *mas* here, too? Would people in the street mind if they’re called *mas*?” “No”, he answered, “They’re used to it.” (Diary entry, Padang, Week 1, 03/01/02)

As a result I start to change my beliefs about how acceptable *mas* is, resolving in the same entry: “I’ll relax about using *mas* accidentally”.

My belief about how acceptable *mas* is changed further when a few days later I hear a customer call loudly to the restaurant cashier “*Mas*.” I record in that entry:

(8) Now I’m getting confident to use it sometimes myself—I will. (Diary entry, Padang, Week 2, 07/01/02)

So these two noticings of *mas* are important in shaping my knowledge about how acceptable it is to use in this region (see Schmidt, 1993).

At this point, I would seem to have a wealth of sibling terms to choose from: local or Javanese. However, in reality it turns out quite differently. First, as regards *female* terms, I do not conclude from my noticing of the Javanese term *mas* ‘older brother’ that Javanese female *mbak* is also acceptable here. Instead, I note:

(9) I suspect *mbak* is not so acceptable here. I’ll avoid it, unless I do start to hear it. (Diary entry, Padang, Week 2, 07/01/02)

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In fact, I never do notice *mbak* used here in the Minangkabau region (probably just because I had not created a highly rich environment for pragmatic input) and so I never revise this strictly idiosyncratic notion that *mbak* sounds more Javanese to the Minang ear than *mas* does.

Second, as a result of noticing the Javanese term *mas* I start to regard the local terms *uda/uni* as heavily marked for local ethnicity. Not long afterwards I muse:

- (10) If you can just say *mas*, then does *uda* sound a bit much coming from me [i.e. a foreigner]? (Diary entry, Padang, Week 3, 15/01/02)

Before long, I have entirely dropped these local terms which I had embraced a few weeks early, and which I had been convinced were appropriate. I reflect in Week 6:

- (11) I'm not using *uda* or *uni* at all these days—somehow they feel a bit embarrassing, a bit too native, local. The information I've been picking up that *mas* is okay here makes them feel a bit presumptuous to use. (Diary entry, Bukittinggi, Week 6, 03/02/02)

Now I have moved right back to my initial stage of not using *uda/uni* at all, showing how strongly my strong sense of outsider self-identity is affecting my pragmatic performance. As a result, I now have trouble addressing people with terms at the not-overtly-respectful level. This is most marked for females. I sum up the problem like this:

- (12) I haven't used *uni* for ages, and I feel that *mbak* is too Javanese. (Diary entry, Bukittinggi, Week 8, 15/02/01)

An entry from two days prior to that shows the results:

- (13) Lost in the street, I stopped a woman with "Permisi, Bu." (Excuse me, 'mother'). I thought before I said it that she did look a bit too young for *Bu*, but I thought I could get away with it. [...] She looked distinctly offended. (Diary entry, Bukittinggi, Week 8, 13/02/01)

Here I opt for an inappropriately respectful term, which can make the interlocutor feel older than she is. So evidently I have *no* female kin term at the sibling level which I can effectively use. As for male terms, I am doing better, but not a great deal better, as shown in this episode in a restaurant the same week:

(14) When I wanted to get the bill, I called out "*Mas*" to the youngish waiter nearby, but deliberately said it half-inaudibly, in case it wasn't the right thing to call him. I've caught myself doing that once or twice before recently, too. (Diary entry, Bukittinggi, Week 8, 14/02/02)

That is, I have dropped the local male term *uda*, and while I am sometimes using the Javanese term *mas*, I am doing so with hesitation.

Table 13-1 below sums up my acquisition during this first and longest leg of the sojourn.

Table 13-1: Stages in acquiring not-overtly-respectful address terms during Weeks 1–8 (in the Minangkabau region of West Sumatra).

Stage	Features
Stage 1: On Arrival	Do not know the local terms <i>uda/uni</i> . Am certain that the Javanese terms <i>mas/mbak</i> are not used in this region. Use <u>no</u> terms at this politeness level.
Stage 2: Week 1	Learn the local terms <i>uda/uni</i> . Use both of them effectively to a number of interlocutors.
Stage 3: Week 2	Learn that male Javanese term ' <i>mas</i> ' is sometimes used in this region. Resolve to use <i>mas</i> alongside local male term (<i>uda</i>), at least sometimes. Doubt whether Javanese female term <i>mbak</i> is used in this region.
Stage 4: Week 3	Start to feel uneasy about using local terms <i>uda/uni</i> .
Stage 5: Weeks 4-8	Never use local terms <i>uda/uni</i> . Do not use Javanese female term <i>mbak</i> . Use Javanese male term <i>mas</i> hesitantly and sparingly only.

Although the data collection started to focus more narrowly on address terms after Week 8, my development during the last two legs can in fact be described quite briefly, below.

Second Leg: Weeks 9-12: Jakarta

I now move to the Indonesian capital for four weeks. Jakarta, on the island of Java, has a highly mixed population, with a large proportion from the Javanese-speaking regions: Central and Eastern Java.

From previous trips to Jakarta, I know that the Javanese terms *mas* and *mbak* are both readily acceptable there (see Errington, 1998), and so after my trouble with address terms in the Minangkabau region, I feel relieved at first to be back on familiar ground with address terms. On my first evening, I note:

(15) In an internet cafe, I wanted to get the young manager's attention: I thought of *mas*, had a moment of unease before I said it, but then realised: it's Jakarta-*mas* is fine! It's the *only* [not-overtly-respectful, male] term that's right here, really. It's nice to be back. (Diary entry, Jakarta, Week 9, 07/03/02)

The next day too, my first full day in Jakarta, I remain on a high with these address terms *mas* and *mbak*: using them repeatedly and feeling good about doing it.

(16) I went out to the University of Indonesia [...] The main thing was asking strangers for information: I did it all day. I used *mas*, *mbak*, *pak* and *bu* to various people, and felt I was choosing them really well. I felt fine about using them all, and got friendly positive responses all day. (Diary entry, Jakarta, Week 9, 08/03/02)

However, I soon start to become quite uncomfortable with using both *mas* and *mbak* here in Jakarta too. A week later I record avoiding *mbak* in a social context where it would be highly acceptable by L2 norms:

(17) Chatting with the (late 30s) owner of the roadside eatery where I was having dinner, I was idly conjecturing what I should call her. I was coming down on the side of *mbak*—she was younger than me—but I felt slight misgivings about whether it was respectful enough. So instead I deliberately managed to avoid a “you” word for her through the conversation. (Diary entry, Jakarta, Week 10, 15/03/02)

Around the same time I also reflect explicitly on this female term, noting:

(18) I'm relatively wary of *mbak* in Jakarta/Java. A familiar term to a female is obviously more risky—there's more chance of them resenting the presumption. (Diary entry, Jakarta, Week 11, 19/03/02)

As for the male term *mas* the picture is more complex. I seem to want to delude myself that I am comfortable with *that* term at least, here in Jakarta. On one occasion, when I apparently resort to my old *fudging* strategy of half-saying *mas* by saying it softly only, I can't quite accept the evidence that that's what I'm doing:

(19) The friendly pony-tailed waiter set down my breakfast tea [...] but he'd forgotten the milk I'd ordered with it. I called "*Mas*", but he didn't hear. I called *Mas* more loudly, but he still kept going. Someone near him said "Someone's calling you!! '*Mas*!'" and he turned around promptly. I *thought* I was confident with the *mas* when I said it to him. (Diary entry, Jakarta, Week 10, 17/03/02)

It is only a week later that I fully accept that I have trouble using *mas*, too, in Jakarta/Java, when I'm forcibly faced with evidence of it:

(20) I felt surprised on reading diary entries from my last trip [i.e. a year earlier], to see that I felt wary not only of *mbak*, but even of *mas*! I felt a bit embarrassed and disappointed—I thought I'd started this trip pretty comfortable with *mas*, at least. (Diary entry, Jakarta, Week 11, 23/03/02)

I finished this short Jakarta leg of the sojourn with a modest ability to use both *mas* and *mbak* effectively. I record using them successfully twice in the last week in Jakarta (i.e., Week 12): *mas* to the young man who sells me a paper in the mornings, and *mbak* to the owner of an eatery I have dinner at, while recording feelings of unease each time. My level of ability with them is very much the same as before I embarked on this sojourn; that is, I can use them hesitantly and sparingly (see Table 13-2 below):

Table 13-2: Stages in acquiring not-overtly-respectful address terms during Weeks 9–12 (in Jakarta).

Stage	Features
Stage 1: Week 9:	Am confident that Javanese terms <i>mas/mbak</i> are used in this region. Use both these terms to a range of interlocutors, and feel good about using them.
Stage 2: Weeks 10-12	Display hesitation in using both <i>mas</i> and <i>mbak</i> . Feel wary of <i>mas</i> and especially of <i>mbak</i> for their familiarity.

Final Leg: Weeks 13–16: Sundanese region of West Java (Bandung city)

The final leg of the sojourn was in the city of Bandung. While Bandung is on the island of Java, it is not in a Javanese-speaking region. It is the capital of the Sundanese region, and the local language is Sundanese, not Javanese.

Thanks to my experience in the first leg of the sojourn, I was now sceptical of the folk wisdom that Javanese terms *mas* and *mbak* were taboo in non-Javanese-speaking regions. As a result I now thought it quite likely that these two terms were used in Bandung. I was able to clarify my ideas on this on the train journey to Bandung:

(21) I got talking on the train to the guy sitting next to me, who's living in Bandung now, but who comes from Central Java. I asked him: "Are the terms *mas* and *mbak* for Bandung too?" He said: "They're more for Central and East Java [i.e. the Javanese-speaking regions]." And he told me what the local Sundanese equivalents were (*kang* and something else, I don't remember what.)" (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 13, 31/03/02)

However with my earlier West Sumatran experiences in mind, I questioned this informant further on that point. I note in the same entry:

(22) I asked him 'Can *mas* and *mbak* be used here in Bandung, too?' (I'm learning!) He said 'Yes'—and he added that *mas* and *mbak* are the terms that *he* always uses himself, when he's in Bandung! (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 13, 31/03/02)

This effectively dispels any reservations I have about whether *mas/mbak* are acceptable by L2 norms in this large city of Bandung, which is close to Javanese-speaking parts of the island. I add to the same diary entry:

(23) I didn't even try to learn the two local terms he'd told me. I wouldn't be comfortable using them now I know that *mas/mbak* are an option. (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 13, 31/03/02)

However, my usual concern about simply sounding over-familiar by using *mas* and *mbak* continues to constrain my use of them. In my first week in Bandung I opt out of addressing a youngish clerk in the post office as *mbak* even though it is a suitable term to address her with:

(24) In the post office, I was going to call the (late 20s) clerk *bu*, but decided she was too young. Then I decided to call her *mbak* instead, but

that felt too daring. So I didn't use either—I just said: "Can these [postcards] please be franked?" (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 13, 04/04/02)

In the same week I also commit a pragmatic error by avoiding *mas*:

(25) Today I used *pak* [father] to a guy even though I knew he looked too young for it—a mid-20s stranger in the street, to ask directions. He didn't seem to mind, but it was a weird context to use *pak*, and I knew that when I did it. I seem to be avoiding *mas* still. (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 13, 06/04/02)

I start reflecting more systematically on my resistance to sibling terms. Once I use the overtly respectful term *pak* 'father' to a young and casual-looking magazine seller, who grins broadly, as if he finds the *pak* amusing. This was purely a mistake on my part—I simply hadn't looked at the seller before saying *pak*. However I then make use of that mistake:

(26) Straight after, I replayed the scene mentally with *mas* instead, and realised it would have taken a bit of nerve on my part to actually say it. I half-anticipate a rude reply if I say *mas*—it's riskier than *pak*, no doubt about that. (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 14, 13/04/02)

What experiences, I then wonder, have led me to "half-anticipate a rude reply" if I say *Mas*? I promptly recall, in the same diary entry, *one* unpleasant experience from four years earlier, in Jakarta, where I called a young bus conductor "*Mas*" and the middle-aged *driver* got angry because he thought I was saying it to *him*. I suspect that that a single bad experience from long ago might still be subtly discouraging me from using these sibling terms. Conversely, no number of good responses seems to be enough to make me feel comfortable with these terms. However, once I get such a positive response to *mbak* that it does prompt me to reflect on what I am sacrificing by not using these terms more often:

(27) I stopped a woman at the mouth of a laneway this afternoon to ask directions. She looked about 35. I took a punt on *mbak*, asking by way of preface, "*Mbak*, can I ask something?" I said the *mbak* softly out of unease that it sounded too familiar, but she looked pleased, and was downright warm and friendly, in fact. (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 13, 10/04/02)

I reflect on that in the same entry:

(28) I get the feeling that *mbak* is the friendly choice to use. I tend to opt for respectful distance instead, by saying *bu*—it feels safer. (Diary entry, Bandung, Week 13, 10/04/02)

I can see the position quite clearly here: I am creating unnecessary distance from people I meet by not addressing them as *mas* or *mbak*. But that insight does not make me change the way I use those terms. During my remaining three weeks, on both occasions when I do record using one of these terms (*mbak* to a shop assistant in Week 15, and *mbak* again to a young woman sitting next to me in a public mini-bus in Week 16), I record using the term reluctantly, only after casting around for other options and rejecting them first. My development during this final leg in Bandung is summed up in Table 13-3.

Table 13-3: Stages in acquiring not-overtly-respectful address terms during Weeks 13–16 (in Bandung city, in the Sundanese region of West Java).

Stage	Features
Stage 1: On journey to Bandung	Think it likely that Javanese terms <i>mas/mbak</i> are used in Bandung. Learn that they are indeed sometimes used there. Do not try to learn the local equivalent Sundanese terms.
Stage 2: Week 13-16	Use both <i>mas</i> and <i>mbak</i> sparingly only. Am explicitly aware of my unease about using both.

During the sojourn described above, my knowledge that these sibling kin terms are intrinsic to the L2 pragmatic repertoire contends regularly with a psychological resistance to using them. I do sometimes manage to produce one of these sibling terms, seemingly always to good pragmatic effect. However I use them only infrequently, and even late in the sojourn will occasionally commit downright pragmatic error (see Sample 25) rather than use a term of this type even when I know it to be appropriate by the L2 norm.

This has obvious implications. For a modest number of features, a stable path of acquisition will exist and in their case psychological-emotional factors will play a limited role only (perhaps analogous to their role within the 'multidimensional model' for acquisition of L2 grammar: see Hassall, forthcoming, b). However, for many other pragmatic features, especially ones which learners perceive as closely linked to L2-specific

cultural norms, individual psychological factors will dominate their acquisition to the extent that no stable common path of development will exist.

Conclusion

This study traces a learner's path of acquisition of an L2 pragmatic feature during a sojourn in the target community, linking that development to factors aiding or constraining it. The study demonstrates that substantial shaping and reshaping of pragmatic knowledge may take place from the very first days of such a sojourn. It graphically illustrates the non-linear nature of L2 pragmatic development. By revealing the complex and idiosyncratic blend of factors that influences this learner's acquisition of one pragmatic feature, it provides indirect but compelling evidence that the path and outcomes for acquiring many L2 pragmatic features will be highly individual. In particular, the study highlights the powerful and complex role that individual psychological-emotional factors can play in pragmatic development. For this learner those (overlapping) factors consist of a concern about seeming over-familiar, a strong sense of self-identity as a foreigner, and reluctance to claim in-group status either as a member of a local speech community or more broadly as a fictive sibling. This demonstrates the high value of self-report data for understanding how L2 learners acquire pragmatic ability, pointing to a promising way forward in the quest to understand that process better.

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