

Locating Politeness in Interaction

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Cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics have operated largely under the combined frameworks of Searle's speech act theory (1969, 1975, 1976) and Brown and Levinson's (1978/1987) politeness theory. These theories are predicated on a rational actor model of social action, according to which speakers determine illocutionary force and politeness on the basis of means-end cost-benefit calculations. The rationalist model is associated with a conceptualization of pragmatic meaning as the product of speaker intention packaged in the linguistic conventions of a particular language. By contrast, ethnomethodological, poststructuralist, and constructionist perspectives locate politeness in social-discursive practice rather than individual cognition. In this talk, I will examine politeness phenomena in interaction from the vantage point of one such approach, conversation analysis. Based on a variety of interactional materials, I will show how participants orient to politeness through the sequential arrangement of their interaction and their use of linguistic and other semiotic resources. Politeness is re-specified as an emergent and co-constructed phenomenon that makes visible social members' orientations to normative and moral frameworks in concrete situated activities.

Gabriele Kasper is Professor of Second Language Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Among her book publications are *Talk-in-Interaction: Multilingual Perspectives* (Nguyen & Kasper, 2009), *Misunderstanding in Social Life* (House, Kasper, & Ross, 2003), *Pragmatic Development in a Second Language* (Kasper & Rose, 2002), and *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (Rose & Kasper, 2001). Her past work centered on sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and methodological aspects of interlanguage pragmatics. Currently her research focuses on applying conversation analysis to the study of second language interaction and learning and on qualitative research in second language studies.