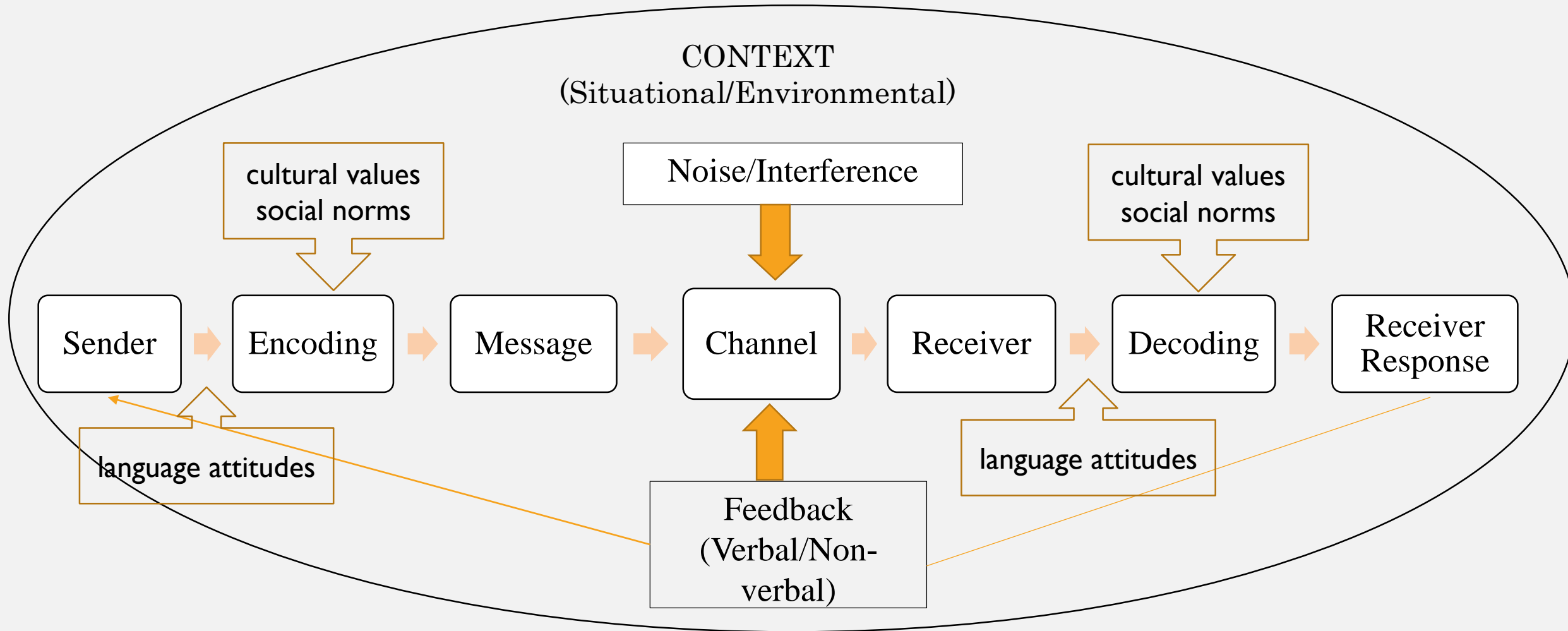


NATIVE SPEAKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS L2 ENGLISH USERS: REACTION TO ACCENT

Foreign Language Acquisition &
Communication II

WHAT IS 'COMMUNICATION'?



A process model of communication (Jackson, 2014, p. 76)

L2 AS A SOCIAL ACTIVITY

- Positioning: through relating *self* and *other* in a socio-cultural context, a person takes up and/or is assigned by others a certain part or role that makes his/her action intelligible.
- Identity: who am I?
 - ‘[i]dentity is the social positioning of self and other’
(Bucholt & Hall, 2005, p. 586, italicized in original)
- Learning is an individual process. It is happening in classroom.
- Learning is a social phenomenon, reflecting our social nature as human beings and capability of knowing through interaction.

ACCENT

- Accent: the way in which people in a particular area, country, or social group pronounce words (Cambridge English Dictionary)
- (L)isteners' judgments of how closely the pronunciation of an utterance approaches that of a native speaker (Trofimovich & Isaacs, 2012: 905)
- Accentedness: the degree of difference between the pronunciation of an utterance and a listener's internalized representation of it. → The greater the divergence, the greater the accentedness (Munro, 2018: 413)
- Often assessments based on NS norms
- A variety of a language that is the result of differences in pronunciation between speakers or group of speakers. Accents can be regional, or social. ELF sees L2 accents of English as equivalent to regional L1 accents. (Walker, 2011)

INFLUENTIAL FACTORS FOR PRODUCTION & COMPREHENSION

- Segmental features: phonemes (vowels, consonants) [e.g., rock vs. lock → /r/ vs. /l/]
- Suprasegmental features: word accent, intonation, pauses
- Fluency: speed of utterance delivery
- Vocabulary: appropriateness in a context, richness (varieties)
- Grammar: accuracy, complexity
- Language attitudes: How you perceive a particular language and its speakers

MATSUDA (1999)

- Manuel Fragante's story
- Born and raised in the Philippines, received education in English, excellent command of English, with a university degree in law, trained in a few military bases in the US and served to the American military, multilingual (4 languages)
- 1981 taking a civil service examination along with over 700 other applicants and being ranked first on the list of eligible.
- After a brief interview, he was turned down for the job in the Division of Motor Vehicles due to his heavy Filipino accented English-pronunciation.
- He sued the DMV and lost.
- A linguist stated that “Mr. Fragante speaks grammatically correct, standard English, with the characteristic accent of someone raised in the Philippines” (p. 1337).
- Also, he stated that a prejudice against this accent “will cause some listeners to “turn off” and not comprehend it” (ibid, underlined by Shibata).

MATSUDA (1999)

- James Kahakua's story
- Born and raised in Hawaii, speaker of English with Hawaiian Creole accent and standard English with a Creole accent, served in the U.S. Army for 20 years, studied meteorology while in the Army, worked as Chief Meteorological Supervisor in Hawaii, received a BA in science from the University of Hawaii.
- In 1985, applied for the weather broadcaster advertised by the National Weather Service and was turned down due to his voice quality.
- Had never trouble making himself understood to any speakers of English
- Sued and lost
- The linguist stated that "Hawaiian English Creole pronunciation is not incorrect, rather it is one of the many varieties of pronunciation of standard English" (p. 1346).

EH, HOWZIT? WASSAMATTAH YOU? CANNAH TALK DA KINE?

YouTube: Hawaii Pidgin The Voice of Hawaii

MUGFORD (2018)

- Call center in Mexico
- Bilingual of Spanish and English
- Customers: callers from the States
- Non-native vs. native speakers
- Agents are not allowed to give where they were located and who they were (last name, ethnic background, etc.) while being trained to be friendly, conversational and outgoing.
- Interview with nine Mexican bilingual call-center employees, conducted in English

MUGFORD (2018) (P. 176)

- [1] Caller: Where are you located from?
 Agent: We are located in Mexico.
 Caller: I want to speak to someone in the United States.
- [2] Caller: I don't understand you. I don't understand you.
 Agent: And I'm like, you were understanding me at the beginning of the call and because of your issue you are now telling me that you don't understand me.
- [3] Caller: Where are you located?
 Agent: I am in Mexico.
 Caller: I knew it, I knew it you are in somewhere else because when I talk with an American they always help me.
- [4] Can I talk to somebody else because I don't speak Mexican.

MUGFORD (2018) (P. 177)

- [5] *Nationality and linguistic competence*

S2: Where are you from?

S1: From Mexico.

S2: Um, that's why you are speaking nonsense.

S3: Don't be rude.

S1: No, what I am telling you is correct. So I'm not talking nonsense.

- [7] Mexicans are lazy and not good for anything.

MUGFORD (2018) (P. 177)

- [11] *Ethnic background*

S2: Where are you from?

S1: Mexico.

S2: Just wat a minute.

S3: (shouting in background) I don't want to speak to nobody who comes from Mexico. I don't want those *beaners* or *mojos*.

S2: My husband, you know he is the owner of the account. I wouldn't like you to mess with it. So don't touch it. We don't want to be disrespectful. He doesn't like Mexican people. But I would like to speak to someone in the United States.

POWER RELATION BETWEEN/AMONG INTERACTANTS

- Power imbalance: customers vs. agents
- Cultural impoliteness: lack of linguistic/communicative competence, racial rejection
- (Resistance) Strategies: pragmalinguistic resources (e.g., directness and indirectness, routines, and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts (Kasper & Rose, 2001: 2, cited in Mugford); sociopragmatic resources (“social appropriateness of communicative behavior” (Kecskes, 2014: 16, cited in Mugford), e.g., putting a customer on hold for a long time, (and hanging up on him/her).

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- Mugford, G. (2018). Critical intercultural impoliteness: “Where are you located? Can you please transfer me to someone who is American?” *Journal of Pragmatics*, 134, 173-182.