

ビジネス英語における戦略的なスモールトーク： どういうトーク？ 日本人はうまくやっている？

ジョーゼフ・ウィリアムソン (大東文化大学経営学部)

Strategic workplace small talk in business English: What is it and how well do Japanese businesspeople do it?

Josef WILLIAMSON

Key words: strategic small talk, BELF, workplace communication, intercultural communication, sociopragmatics

Abstract

In L1 business English contexts and many intercultural contexts in which English is used a business lingua franca (BELF), small talk is used strategically to manage crucial business relationships and thereby facilitate business collaborations. As business across language barriers has become a global norm, it is vital to understand how strategic small talk is used by BELF speakers for whom it is not an L1 convention, such as Japanese businesspeople, and how different ways of doing business small talk might be perceived. In this paper, common functions and features of strategic small talk as it is enacted in mainly L1 English contexts are examined and a descriptive framework is proposed consisting of five value-categories: egalitarianism, collaboration, convergence, engagement and individualism. A comparison of the attitudes and role play performances of Japanese BELF users with the framework reveals significant points of difference within four of the five value-categories. Consequences for BELF collaborations are also discussed.

要旨

L1 (母語) ビジネス英語の場面と多くの共通言語として使用される英語 (BELF) の場面では、重要なビジネス関係を管理するために、スモールトークが戦略的に使用される。文化的に馴染みのない BELF スピーカーが、戦略的スモールトークを使用しているのか、どの様に使用しているのか、

相手にどのような印象を与えているのかを理解することが重要である。この論文では、主に L1 の英語の場面で制定されている戦略的スモールトークの一般的な機能と特徴を調べ、5つの主義に分けるフレームワークを提案する：Egalitarianism（平等主義）、Collaboration（コラボレーション）、Convergence（収束）、Engagement（興味）、Individualism（個人主義）。日本人の BELF ユーザーから収集された思考アンケートデータとスモールトークのロールプレイデータを調べた結果、フレームワークと比較すると、5つの主義のうち4つの中で大きな違いがあることが分かる。結果は、BELF コラボレーションの影響について論じる。

Table of contents

1. Introduction
2. What is strategic workplace small talk?
3. How well do Japanese businesspeople do strategic workplace small talk in English?
4. Investigating differences between Japanese BELF small talk and L1-English small talk
5. Conclusion
6. References

1. Introduction

Small talk is used in business as an intentional strategy to facilitate business communication and collaboration by managing the relationships between interactors (Holmes, 2000; Koester, 2010; Pullin, 2010). It is abundant in L1 English-only contexts (e.g. Holmes, 2000), as well as many English as a business lingua franca (BELF) contexts (e.g. Pullin, 2010). In Japanese BELF contexts, however, it is less common. Handford and Matous, for example, found that Japanese engineers actively avoided small talk in conversations with Hong Kong Chinese construction site foremen (2015). BELF is a multicultural phenomenon which inevitably reflects the L1 norms of its participants (Ehrenreich, 2016). Therefore, for BELF users for whom strategic workplace small talk is not an L1 convention, such as Japanese businesspeople, it is likely to be rarer and less proficiently exploited.

For those that use it, strategic small talk is a remarkably flexible and multifunctional relational tool. It can be used, for example, to quickly establish rapport in first encounters where unfamiliarity with cross-cultural norms of interaction creates ambiguity around how people should behave towards each other. For L1 Japanese-speaking businesspeople, however, used to hierarchical politeness and formality with non-intimates, strategic small talk is dispreferred and therefore rare (Yamada, 1997). When using English, it is therefore often avoided or performed inappropriately.

In the present paper, I will address the following two research questions about strategic workplace small talk in Japanese BELF.

1. What is strategic workplace small talk as it occurs in English?
2. How well do Japanese BELF users do strategic workplace small talk?

In addition to addressing these questions, I will discuss the cultural implications of a decision to teach strategic workplace small talk in business English training and other educational contexts in Japan.

2. What is strategic workplace small talk as it occurs in English?

The academic study of small talk as a general phenomenon has highlighted its functional role of transitioning between various types of transactional talk and its social role of

interpersonal management. The first analysis of small talk in English academic literature was that of Malinowski (1923), who described conversational formulae with low semantic content, coining the term *phatic communion*. Later, Laver explored phatic communion further describing it as ‘a complex, part of a ritual, highly-skilled mosaic of communicative behaviour whose function is to facilitate the management of interpersonal relationships’ (Laver, 1975; p. 236). Laver also noticed a tendency for small talk to occur at the margins of transactional talk, at the openings and closings of encounters, for example, and that speakers use small talk sequences to negotiate their respective social roles and status (1975). The function of small talk in filling in the gaps between transactional talk is also often remarked upon (e.g. Holmes, 2000) and in L1 English, the deliberate avoidance of silence through the use of small talk appears to be one of its key functions (Jaworski, 2000; Laver, 1975; Malinowski, 1923; McCarthy, 2000).

In many workplace contexts, small talk is similarly ubiquitous and similarly functional, but in addition, there is also a tendency for small talk to be used strategically, as a way to ensure that relationships among collaborators are sufficiently developed to advance business goals (Cruz 2013; Holmes, 2000; Pullin, 2010; Săftoiu 2012). As Coupland puts it, small talk is a way to ‘oil the wheels’ of business (Coupland, 2000). But workplace small talk is also sometimes used in pursuit of a specific strategic goal. Otsu (2020) provides a good BELF example of this involving a Japanese engineer and a Malaysian hotel driver. She reports how both interactors sought to utilize a sequence of small talk for the purpose of gathering useful information about a shared business acquaintance.

2.1. Team building small talk

In the workplace, good working relationships are seen as vital for productive business communication and small talk is seen as a fundamental tool to facilitate those relationships (Coupland, 2000; 2003; McCarthy, 2003; Pullin, 2010; Săftoiu, 2012). Small talk is also utilized to mitigate the strains on those relationships that the power imbalances and high-stakes decision-making of business sometimes impose. Pullin reports how a Swiss-German manager and his younger French subordinate spent a significant time before a team meeting discussing their musical tastes, seemingly to diffuse the tension between them that had arisen as a result of an argument the day previously (2010). In this way, Pullin argues, they were consciously and therefore strategically using small talk to repair the rapport required for business to proceed.

In western cultures, small talk is good at repairing relationships across hierarchical gaps like this because western politeness norms tend to conform to what Scollon and Scollon referred

to as a solidarity system (1995). In western workplaces solidarity systems feature reciprocal registers, often informal, which is the norm of small talk (Brown & Gilman, 1960; Morand, 1996). Where solidarity systems are conventional, small talk is also prominent. However, BELF encompasses cultures which tend towards a more hierarchical type of politeness, such as Japanese business. In such contexts, the informal reciprocity required by strategic small talk is seen as inappropriate across large status and social distance gaps.

2.2. Goal-oriented small talk

In business cultures where small talk is conventional, Coupland describes small talk proficiency as a 'prerequisite for institutional success' (2003, p. 5). The act of doing small talk becomes a way of signalling one's corporate identity, of showing that one belongs to the group. Done well it can promote an aura of personal significance, competence and trust. It can be utilized in the pursuit of certain goals by implying that the listener is bound to the speaker by bonds of intimacy. Holmes reports one such example from a New Zealand government office (see example 1).

Example 1. In a New Zealand government office

A=Subordinate, B=Superior

1: A: Can I just have a quick word?

2: B: Yeah sure have a seat

3: A: Great weather eh?

4: B: Mmm

5: A: Yeah, been a good week. Did you get away skiing at the weekend?

6: B: Yeah, we did. Now, how can I help you?

7: A: I was just wondering if I could take Friday off and make it a long weekend.

(Holmes, 2000, p. 55-56)

Subordinate A uses small talk to establish solidarity with their superior B before making a request for a day off. By doing so, A is effectively weaponizing intimacy with B in an attempt to have the request accepted. B is clearly aware of the strategy and in line 4 is reluctant to be drawn into the small talk. In line 6, he explicitly changes the topic to business.

Small talk can be used in the pursuit of institutional goals as well as the personal. Employees in service industries are trained to deliver small talk sequences such as 'how are you today?' and 'have a nice day' in the hope that customers may feel more obligated to buy.

Fairclough has described such use as part of a *conversationalization* process in modern public discourse (1994). Kuiper and Flindall (2000) observed examples of small talk being used like this by New Zealand supermarket checkout operators with their customers (see example 2).

Example 2. At a New Zealand supermarket checkout

A=Checkout operator, B=Customer

1. A: Hi, how are you? You had a good week?
2. B: Yeah, good thanks
3. A: Survived the bad weather?
4. B: At least it's fine now..

(Kuiper & Flindall, 2000)

The checkout operator initiates small talk in line 1 and 3. The customer reciprocates in lines 2 and 4 indicating that the strategy has succeeded in establishing rapport between them.

2.3. The special issues relating to first-encounter small talk

First encounter small talk is especially difficult. The lack of relational histories between participants serves to restrict available topics and casts ambiguity on the assessment of face risk (McCarthy, 2000). First-encounter small talkers therefore tend to favour topics assumed to be common to all participants and of low risk, such as the weather (Coupland & Yläne-McEwan, 2000). In intercultural contexts such as BELF, one such common topic is the intercultural nature of the interaction itself. Mori (2003) reported how Japanese and American university students implicitly and explicitly referenced each other's cultural identities, and seemed to enjoy doing so. But, as Zhu pointed out (2015), it is sensitive to perceptions of relevance. When interculturality is assessed as irrelevant or inappropriately ascribed (e.g. perceived as stereotypical) it has potential to cause offence (Zhu, 2015).

3. How well do Japanese BELF users do strategic workplace small talk?

Studies of Japanese BELF have revealed a reluctance to initiate and sometimes engage in strategic small talk. In the example from Otsu (2020) mentioned above, the sequence she reports is notable in being initiated and largely advanced by the Malaysian participant rather than the Japanese. Otsu argues that this reluctance arises from a concern with the sociopragmatic appropriateness of such small talk encounters in L1 Japanese business communication. She suggests that a fear of impeding on the other's territory or of adopting

inappropriate solidarity across the status gap of hotel worker and guest may be explanatory factors. Handford and Matous report a similar reluctance by two Japanese engineers to do small talk with the local Hong Kong Chinese site managers they were supervising (2015). They found that the two engineers avoided small talk both at the margins of business talk and during lunch breaks, and that this habit was noticed and criticized by local staff.

The difficulties Japanese businesspeople have at utilizing strategic small talk can be put down to sociopragmatics. It is often not seen as appropriate in business Japanese. This means that in BELF contexts, Japanese English speakers lack fluency with the genre and perhaps more significantly tend to transfer L1 notions of (in)appropriateness, hence, the tendency for avoidance. To develop the skill of strategic BELF small talk and overcome any reluctance to participate, educational practitioners need to supply their Japanese learners not only with the 'hows' but crucially, also with the 'whys' of small talk. In other words, teachers should provide a systematic model of the features of small talk backed up by the values they represent. I developed such a framework based on features reported in Sociolinguistics studies (Williamson, 2016) and present a revised version here (table 1). It constitutes an answer to research question 1.

Table 1. Descriptive framework of L1 English strategic workplace small talk

| Values | Sociopragmatic features |
|----------------|---|
| Egalitarianism | Downplaying of status difference; informal register Inclusive participation; topics and the floor open to all |
| Collaboration | Efficient turn-changes; silent gaps avoided Talk co-construction; backchannels; linguistic assistance |
| Convergence | Avoidance of face threat; agreement preferred; topics 'safe' Establishing common ground; things in common identified |
| Engagement | Preference for stimulating content (interesting/amusing) Engagement signals; backchannels; follow-up questions |
| Individualism | Individual orientation ('I think' not 'we think') Personal topics common (privacy threshold applies) |

(Based on Williamson, 2016)

4. Investigating differences between Japanese BELF small talk and L1-English small talk

The aim of research question 2 was to assess how and in what ways Japanese BELF users are likely to diverge from L1-English norms of strategic small talk as described in the

framework. To answer it, two sets of primary data were collected from Japanese BELF users employed at the head office of a large manufacturing company and analysed. In the first study, I compared the assessments of (in)appropriateness between the Japanese BELF users and L1 English professionals in a first-encounter small talk scenario. In the second study, I analysed elicited conversation data collected during role-play performances of the same first-encounter small talk scenario.

First-encounter small talk scenario

Imagine that you are attending an international conference in Tokyo. During a coffee break, you have a small talk conversation with a foreign English-speaking attendee. It is the first time you have met.

4.1. A survey of cross-cultural attitudes

4.1.1. Methods and analysis

In the first study, data was collected using an attitudinal survey instrument. A questionnaire consisting of twenty-four small talk moves set in the context of the first-encounter scenario above (see Williamson 2016 for the complete questionnaire). The survey instrument was completed by cohorts of seventy Japanese employees and sixty L1 English speakers who were resident in Japan at the time and who were accessed through an online professional network. A conversational move is here defined as an utterance that serves to initiate an interactional sequence. The small talk moves that comprised the survey instrument were selected from a corpus I had accrued from notes taken while teaching small talk role plays based on the above scenario over the course of numerous business communication training programs. Twelve appropriate moves and twelve inappropriate moves were selected as assessed by a team of L1 English-speaking business trainers.

Respondents were asked to choose S (successful), N (neutral) or U (unsuccessful) for each move within the context given above. The guidance they received was as follows.

In your small talk conversation, if you said each of the below moves, do you think the move would improve the mood of the talk (S), have no effect on the mood of the talk (N), or damage the mood of the talk?

L1-English respondents were also asked to provide explanatory comments on the questionnaire. The assessments were translated into point scores (S=1, N=0, U=-1) and mean scores were calculated for each move and each cohort. Where those means differed significantly and especially across the +/- divide, it was taken to be evidence for a cross-cultural attitudinal difference. The moves that generated the top five such differences can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Five most significantly different mean assessments of (in) appropriateness of first-encounter BELF small talk moves

| Small talk moves (Scenario=networking at an international conference in Tokyo) | L1 English speaker means -1>m<1 | Japanese BELF user means -1>m<1 | Differentials 0>d<2 |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. We have four seasons in Japan | -.733 | .314 | 1.047 |
| 2. What do foreigners think about Ichiro? | -.767 | .000 | .767 |
| 3. Why do you know about hanami? | -.217 | .543 | .760 |
| 4. What's the famous food in your hometown? | -.067 | .623 | .690 |
| 5. How's Japan? | -.085 | .543 | .628 |

4.1.2. Results

L1-English respondent comments suggest that out of the most divergent five moves in table 2, most (moves 1, 2, 3 and 5) were interpreted as irrelevant interculturality as illustrated by a British male informant who critiqued them as 'you-are-a-foreigner questions'. This suggests that unlike in the university student conversations reported by Mori (2003), interculturality in this context is more sensitive and less easily performed. When it is assessed as irrelevant, it can be seen (at least by L1-English speakers) as conflicting with the Individualism value of the framework.

The only exception to irrelevant interculturality in the top five divergent moves was move 4: 'What's the famous food in your hometown?' L1-English speaking respondents commented that the question seemed 'strange' or was 'difficult to answer'. This would suggest that it conflicts with the requirement for inclusivity under the value of Egalitarianism in the framework. The topic was difficult to talk about and therefore assessed as being non-inclusive. This may be explained by the fact that regional food is not a significant cultural phenomenon among the Anglo-Saxon cultures from which the L1-English cohort was mostly comprised.

4.2. Elicited trainee small talk

4.2.1. Methods and analysis

The second study was designed to find out how trainees would be likely to behave in actual first-encounter small talk by analysing discourse elicited in role-play performances. Audio data was collected of twenty role plays involving the author and individual trainees based on the scenario above. The data was transcribed according to the conventions established by Jefferson (2004) with some adaptations (see table 3) and compared with the framework to qualitatively assess features of divergence.

Table 3. Discourse transcription conventions

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (.) | Just noticeable pause |
| (..) | Noticeable pause |
| (...) | Extended pause |
| Nice [to meet] you [Anyway] | Overlaps |
| Anywa- | Sharp cut off |
| Really | Elongated vowel sound |
| (Do you) | A guess at unintelligible sounds |
| () | Unclear sounds |
| A: Good?= B: =yeah | No discernible pause between turns |

Based on Jefferson (2004)

4.2.2. Results

The analysis revealed that there were five common behaviours that diverged from the framework within four of the five value categories. Convergence was the only value which appeared to be completely shared.

Five ways in which trainees' behaviour diverged from the framework

1. Irrelevant interculturality (divergent from the Individualism value)
2. A preference for questions over disclosures (divergent from the Collaboration value)
3. Insufficient follow-ups and backchannel responses (divergent from the Engagement value)
4. A reluctance to initiate (divergent from the Collaboration value)

5. An overuse of formality (divergent from the Egalitarianism value)

Divergence 1. Irrelevant interculturality

As in the first study, subjects here also made implicit or explicit references to the intercultural nature of the encounter. As discussed above, when such references lack an obvious relevance to the conversational topic, this behaviour diverges from the Individualist value of the framework because the speaker is acting on behalf of a group rather than as an individual (see extract 1).

Extract 1. (Subject S3)

51. S3: How do you feel the Japanese food or Japanese people?
52. I: (.) er::m, we-, pfff, (..) well Japanese food's great
53. S3: Gre [at a:h]
54. I: [Yeah love] it, yeah um, It's popular in England you know
55. S3: A:h [a:h] h, have you ate the sashimi or sushi?
56. I: [yeh]
57. I: I, in the UK or or [here?]
58. S3: [Ah] in Japan
59. I: Yes we had sushi last night [the business] was great
60. S3: [last night] a:h
61. S3: Raw fish, are you- can you eat, raw fish?
62. I: Sure sure sure, it's popular in London you know
63. S3: Popular [o:h]
64. I: [Yeah] it's very- there're many: sushi restaurants
65. S3: o:h, Ah many!-
66. I: Well, many, there're, there're some, yeah, it's quite popu-
67. S3: -a::h-
68. I: -You can buy sushi in the supermarket
69. S3: a::h, er, next [week], er I, I'll go to the, UK-
70. I: [yeh] -Oh really?
71. S3: Uh, can you recommend, the good restaurant?

In extract 1, subject S3 made indirect references to the interculturality of the encounter.

He did this by highlighting the culture difference through the question in line 51, then alluding to the stereotypical view that non-Japanese cannot eat raw fish in line 61, and finally failing to engage with the disclosures made by I about sushi availability in the UK in lines 67 and 69.

Divergence 2. A preference for questions over disclosures

Extract 1 also exemplifies a common tactic of the subjects to adopt an interrogative position focused on questioning the interlocutor rather than disclosing information about themselves. In extract 1, S3's first disclosure isn't until line 69 when he says that he plans to visit the UK. However, his next move is back to a question (line 71) rather than an elaboration about his initial disclosure. Such an imbalance of questions over disclosures is inconsistent with the Collaboration value of the framework because it suggests that the speaker is avoiding co-construction.

Divergence 3. Insufficient follow-ups and backchannel responses

The Engagement value in the framework requires the small talk interactor to signal engagement while listening, through the use of backchannels or follow-up questions. However, these features were largely absent from the data. Linguistic shortcomings may be a causal factor but the quality of some of the data suggests that it is not the only factor and that subjects may not fully share the same Engagement value (see extract 3).

Extract 3. (Subject S2)

23. I: It, it's my first visit to [Japan]
24. S2: yes [yes, yes]
25. I: I've never been, I've never been to East Asia before
26. S2: Mm
27. I: So, everything is new
28. S2: [A:h I see]
29. I: [e::r] Everything is interesting
30. I: [The food, the buildings], the people the, everything
31. S2: [mmmm, yeah, mmm]

In extract 3, the interlocutor, I, was talking about his first visit to Japan in an attempt to

establish common ground with S2. However, his disclosures elicited only short response tokens from subject 2 and no follow-up questions at all (lines 24, 26, 28, 31). No attempts were made at engagement beyond that.

Divergence 4. A reluctance to initiate

A reluctance to initiate was also a common feature of the trainee data and another feature that suggests a reluctance to perform co-construction required by the Collaboration value of the framework (see extract 4).

Extract 4. (Subject S1)

12. I: Good good, great (.) yeah (..) enjoying the conference?
13. S1: Yes very, good conference
14. I: Mm (...)
15. S1: m, where are you from?

In extract 4, S1 does not, at first, accept the chance to initiate in line 13 producing only a short response token. It is only after the interlocutor does not initiate himself in line 14, leading to an extended silence, that S1 initiates in line 15.

Divergence 5. An overuse of formality

The Egalitarianism value requires small talk to be largely informal in register. This is because reciprocal informality enables people of unequal social status to create the illusion of equality required for small talk. The registers produced by the trainees in the second study tended to switch between formality and informality. Thus, the talk did not seem egalitarian in style (see extracts 5 and 6).

Extract 5. (Subject S3)

6. I: Busy in here (...)
7. S3: My name is Tomohiro Kato
8. I: Ah, er: Jeff Brown (.)
9. S3: Jeff Brown

Extract 6. (Subject S1)

51. I: Are you, are you in the steel industry?

52. S1: Yes I, I work in steel-making company

In extract 5, S3 makes a formal self-introduction in line 7 and in extract 6, S1's repetition of the full question language in line 52 is a formal feature.

5. Conclusion

In the present paper, I asked myself two research questions about strategic workplace small talk: 1) What is strategic workplace small talk as it occurs in English? and 2) How well do Japanese BELF users do strategic workplace small talk?

The first question I addressed by reviewing the literature across fields including Sociolinguistics, Pragmatics and Business Communication and compiling the observed features of strategic small talk into an analytical framework. Although there are some BELF data, overwhelmingly the literature in English is biased towards L1 contexts and so the framework can only be seen as representative of L1 English users although other BELF users may share some or all of its norms. The framework illustrates common sociopragmatic features of strategic workplace small talk and how those features align with underlying values. I proposed that there are five distinct values: 1. Egalitarianism, 2. Collaboration, 3. Convergence, 4. Engagement and 5. Individualism. How well and to what extent this framework applies to authentic strategic workplace small talk in both L1-English and more widely in BELF contexts, will need to be validated in future research.

To address the second question, I collected attitudinal data from Japanese businesspeople and L1 English speakers via a survey instrument and I collected elicited conversation data from Japanese businesspeople via audio recording. Taken together, the results of the two studies reveal that the Japanese subjects diverged in a number of significant ways from L1-English norms as represented by the framework and that the divergences were based on different attitudes about (in)appropriateness. These results support a tentative conclusion that when not avoiding strategic small talk, Japanese BELF users tend to do it differently from L1 English speakers and, in certain cases, those differences risk being negatively assessed.

Divergence from four of the five values in the framework was observed on the part of the Japanese subjects. Divergence from the Egalitarianism value was found in the occasional overuse of formality in the role plays and in an assessment of an inaccessible topic as appropriate in the survey. Divergence from the Collaboration value was found in a preference for questions over disclosures and a reluctance to initiate conversation sequences in the role plays. Divergence from the Engagement value was found in a lack of follow-up questions and backchannel tokens in the role plays. And finally, and perhaps most significantly based on the critical comments collected from L1 English respondents, divergence from the Individualism value was seen in both the survey responses and the role play performances. This was most often represented by a tendency towards irrelevant interculturality.

The evidence here is that Japanese BELF strategic small talk differs qualitatively from the sociopragmatic norms of L1 English in ways that may impact on the relational success of the talk. The need to adapt to the norms presented in the framework here, however, is dependant on how widespread in BELF those norms are and how useful strategic small talk is to Japanese businesspeople. This can only be determined by further research into strategic small talk in a much wider set of BELF contexts than is currently available. Strategic workplace small talk offers a great deal of utility and efficiency, however. Given these realities, many Japanese BELF users may feel that strategic workplace small talk as it is enacted by L1 English users is a useful tool they would like to learn.

References

- Blum-Kulka, S. (2000). Gossipy events at family dinners: negotiating sociability, presence and the moral order. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 213-240). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- Brown, R. & Gilman, A. (1960). The pronouns of power and solidarity. In T. A. Sebeok (Ed.), *Style in Language* (pp. 253-276). Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Capras, D. (2015). *Small Talk*. New York: Collins.
- Coupland, J. (2000). Introduction: Sociolinguistic perspectives on small talk. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 1-25). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- Coupland, J. (2003). Small talk: Social functions. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 36 (1), 1-6.
- Coupland, N. & Ylanne-McEwan, V. (2000). Talk about the weather: Small talk, leisure talk and the travel industry. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 163-182). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- Cruz, M. P. (2013). An integrative proposal to teach the pragmatics of phatic communion in ESL

- classes. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 10 (1), 131-160.
- Ehrenreich, S. (2016). English as a lingua franca (ELF) in international business contexts: key issues and future perspectives. In K. Murata (Ed.), *Exploring ELF in Japanese Academic and Business Contexts: Conceptualisation, research and pedagogic implications* (pp. 135-155). New York: Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (1994). Conversationalization of Public Discourse and the Authority of the Consumer. In R. Keat, N. Whitley N. & Abercombie (Eds.), *The Authority of the Consumer*. London: Routledge.
- Handford, M. & Matous, P. (2015). Problem-solving discourse on an international construction site: Patterns and practices. *English for Specific Purposes*, 30, 85-98.
- Holmes, J. (2000). Doing collegiality and keeping control at work: small talk in government departments. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 32-61). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- Jaworski, A. (2000). Silence and small talk. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 110-132). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation* (pp. 13-31). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Koester, A. (2010). *Workplace Discourse*. London: Continuum.
- Kuiper, K. & Flindall, M. (2000). Social rituals, formulaic speech and small talk at the supermarket checkout. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 183-207). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- Laver, J. (1975). Communicative functions of phatic communion. In A. Kendon, R.M. Harris & M.R. Key (Eds.), *Organization of Behavior in Face-to-Face Interaction* (pp. 215-238). New York: Mouton.
- Malinowski, B. (1923). The problem of meaning in primitive languages. In C. K. Ogden & I.A. Richards (Eds.), *The Meaning of Meaning*. London: Kegan Paul (International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method). Supplement 1.
- McCarthy, M. (2000). Mutually captive audiences: Small talk and the genre of close-contact service encounters. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 84-109). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- McCarthy, M. (2003). Talking back: 'small' interactional response tokens in everyday conversation. *Research on Language in Social Interaction*, 36 (1), 33-63.
- Morand, D. (1996). What's in a name? An exploration of the social dynamics of forms of address in organizations. *Management Communication Quarterly* 9 (4), 422-451.
- Mori, J. (2003). The construction of interculturality: A study of initial encounters between

- Japanese and American students. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 36 (2), 143-184.
- Otsu, A. (2020). An analysis of BELF small talk: A first encounter. In M. Konakahara & K. Tsuchiya (Eds.), *English as a Lingua Franca in Japan: Towards Multilingual Practices* (pp. 213-232). Switzerland: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Pullin, P. (2010). Small talk, rapport and international communicative competence: Lessons to learn from BELF. *Journal of Business Communication* 47 (4), 455-476.
- Săftoiu, R. (2012). Small talk: a work of frame. In S. Măda & R. Săftoiu (Eds.), *Professional Communication across Languages and Cultures* (pp. 213-235). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Scollon, R. & Scollon, S. W. (1995). *Intercultural Communication*. Oxford, Blackwell.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2008). Face, (im)politeness and rapport. In H. Spencer-Oatey (Ed.), *Culturally Speaking: Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory* (2nd edn) (pp. 11-70). London: Continuum.
- Tracy, K. & Naughton, J. M. (2000). Institutional identity-work: A better lens. In J. Coupland (Ed.), *Small talk* (pp. 62-83). Harlow: Longman-Pearson.
- Williamson, J. (2016). Small talk: Sociopragmatic discord in the business English classroom. [online]. In P. Clements, A. Krause & H. Brown (Eds.), *JALT 2015: Focus on the learner: Post Conference Publication of the 42nd Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Materials Exhibition, Shizuoka, Japan, November 20-23, 2015* (pp. 216-224). <http://jalt-publications.org/node/4/articles/5390-small-talk-sociopragmatic-discord-business-english-classroom>
- Yamada, H. (1997). *Different Games Different Rules: Why Americans and Japanese Misunderstand Each Other*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Zhu, H. (2015). Negotiation as the way of engagement in intercultural and lingua franca communication: Frames and reference and interculturality. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 4 (1), 63-90.