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A foundational feature of human communication lies in the fact that what a speaker means often goes beyond the literal meaning of what the speaker says. Within linguistics and philosophy, theories of meaning capture this fact by distinguishing between linguistically encoded (semantic) and contextually derived (pragmatic) aspects of communicated meaning. Following the seminal work of Paul Grice and much subsequent theorizing (Grice, 1975; Horn, 1984; Levinson, 2000; Sperber & Wilson, 1986), pragmatics is viewed as a form of intention recognition that involves inferentially reconstructing the meaning that the speaker had in mind and wanted to convey, beyond the literal meaning of an utterance.

For the child learner, becoming pragmatically competent means becoming able to bridge the gap between what words and sentences mean and what the speaker intended to communicate by uttering them in a specific context. Crucially, however, since the meanings of words and sentences themselves are often unknown to the young child, developing pragmatic competence also involves using intention recognition to *discover* semantic meaning—for instance, by consulting the speaker's eye gaze or mental state to understand the meaning of a novel word. Thus, from the perspective of the young learner, pragmatics both enriches linguistic-semantic meaning (e.g., during the interpretation of known words and structures) and restricts hypotheses about linguistic-semantic meaning (e.g., during the interpretation of unknown words). Perhaps because pragmatics is so richly and inextricably linked with the ability to both process and acquire language, and interconnects with a host of linguistic and cognitive processes, the large literature on pragmatic development has long resisted a neat synthesis. For example, a considerable body of work shows that very young children, even infants, are exquisitely attuned to the eye gaze and knowledge of their interlocutors, and use such sophisticated social reasoning to learn the meaning of novel words (Baldwin, 1991; Bloom, 2000; Southgate, Chevallier, & Csibra, 2010). Yet, in other respects, children's ability to infer what others mean appears fragile and task-dependent, and many pragmatic phenomena that involve indirect or implied meanings—perhaps most famously metaphor and irony—present difficulties even for older learners (Grigoroglou & Papafragou, 2017; Matthews, 2014).

In recent years there has been a wealth of exciting research on the nature and acquisition of pragmatics fueled by several concurrent developments across related fields: new formal models within theoretical linguistics that explore the semantics-pragmatics interface; more sophisticated psycholinguistic methods for studying how children (and adults) produce and interpret language in context; integrative efforts within developmental psychology to relate pragmatic growth to children's cognitive abilities—especially the ability to think about others' mental states (known as *theory of mind*) and a collection of control processes such as working memory, inhibition, and task-switching (known as *executive function*); and more theoretically oriented approaches to the pragmatic profile of special populations such as individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) that are known to face social and communicative challenges. Current work on how children acquire pragmatic competence builds on these new approaches to understand both children's early sensitivity to pragmatic principles and their growing ability to implement these principles across different

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pragmatic phenomena. This work also points to several mechanisms that allow children to overcome early limitations and become fully adult-like, competent communicators.

With these issues in mind, the present author and the leadership of the Society for Language Development organized a symposium on the topic of pragmatic development on November 12, 2015, at Boston University. The invited speakers were Eve Clark, Jesse Snedeker, and David Barner. The goal of the symposium was to highlight classic and more recent findings and theorizing in this rapidly changing field, and to promote discussion of where the field should go next. The three speakers were later invited to prepare articles for a special issue of *Language Learning and Development* dedicated to pragmatic development (one of them, Jesse Snedeker, could not contribute a paper at that time.) Danielle Matthews was also invited to write an article for this issue. The present volume represents a variety of empirical topics, methods and perspectives that is characteristic of the state of the art in pragmatic development.

In her article, Eve Clark examines how interactions between children and their caregivers might facilitate language development, paying special attention to conversational scaffolding or corrections offered by caregivers and their potential impact on children's speech. The article makes the important point that language learning does not happen in a pragmatic and social "vacuum" but is deeply embedded in conversation, such that conversational dynamics themselves might shape the outcome of language learning. Clark's data raise fascinating questions about how exactly children reconstruct what adults intend every time they correct the children's language use, given that a correction might implicitly target any one of the many formal or functional properties of a linguistic token. A further interesting issue is whether the conversational practices (including caregiver corrections) that Clark describes might vary across language-learning communities and, if so, what the implications might be for young language learners.

Danielle Matthews, Hannah Biney, and Kirsten Abbott-Smith offer a comprehensive review of how individual differences in children's pragmatic ability relate to their language (mostly, vocabulary, and grammar) and cognition (especially theory of mind and executive function) in both typical and atypical populations. This paper takes on the Herculean project of organizing disparate and often conflicting sets of data from multiple studies that are usually not considered together. The review clearly shows that linguistic growth and cognitive skills are broadly related to pragmatic development; however, current evidence does not yet point to associations between the development of specific pragmatic phenomena and well-defined aspects of linguistic or cognitive performance. The authors conclude by offering many valuable recommendations for the field, including the need to develop a deeper understanding of the cognitive presuppositions of specific pragmatic phenomena, a better toolkit of individual differences measures that follows best practices in the field and a theory-driven way of connecting the two.

Finally, Lara Hochstein, Alan Bale, and David Barner investigate the computation of pragmatic meaning in individuals with ASD, a group that—as mentioned already—is known to be characterized by social and communicative deficits. They report that high-functioning adolescents with ASD appear indistinguishable from neurotypical individuals in some aspects of their pragmatic performance, even though they do not reliably use speaker knowledge to constrain their pragmatic inferences. This research supports the growing evidence that ASD is not characterized by global communicative deficits; rather, the field needs a more nuanced, theoretically informed approach to explain communicative patterns within sub-groups of this widely variable population. The authors also raise the more speculative possibility that calculations of inferred meaning in typically developing children might also selectively draw on speaker knowledge (and might in other cases be computed instead via alternative, non-Gricean routes). This intriguing possibility needs to be tested more fully by future research.

As is obvious from the breadth of the papers in this special issue, questions about the nature and growth of pragmatic communication have no simple answer. Pragmatics is not a monolithic entity but a complex intention-recognition system that interfaces with both language and non-linguistic cognition in several specific ways. Jointly, the papers in the present issue suggest that new progress in

the field will come from developing precise, theoretically motivated connections between pragmatic mechanisms on the one hand, and semantic and cognitive mechanisms that underlie individual phenomena (and the specific tasks used to test them) on the other.

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