

WILDER ESCOBAR & HAROLD CASTAÑEDA-PEÑA (COMP.)

Discourse Analysis

Applied to

English Language Teaching

in Colombian Contexts:
Theory and Methods



UNIVERSIDAD
EL BOSQUE

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Introduction

At some point in history, humans began to discover the real, multidimensional and elaborate nature of words coming to the realization that they were not transparent, but rather, they possessed symbolic characteristics beyond their literal meaning which played an active part in the creation and transformation of realities. This meant that meaning-making and interpretation were a social and multifaceted negotiation which required boundless information from the social environment in order to make sense, not merely of the physical world around them, nor simply of the language-constituting bits and pieces, but about *the self* as well, especially in relation to its physical and social surroundings and its interdependence as to time and space (Gee, 1996) in a way that created individual and collective identities. Escobar (2013) defines this as:

“[...] a historical and sociocultural structure which makes the ever-changing co-formations of relationships possible between the self and the world and that, through discourse, allows us to identify, understand, conceive, construct, and accept or reject the different possibilities within a given time and space while seeking individual or collective interests. Accordingly, identity is closely and directly related to discourse since this is how individuals act and interact, position themselves and are positioned in a social place, a way of being in the world, and thus, a way to form and transform identities.” (p. 50)

Hence discourse transcends all realms of society: science, politics, religion, culture, education, psychology, language, thought, etc. Initially, and in Jørgensen & Phillips (2002)’s words, “[...]language is structured according to different patterns that people’s utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life, familiar examples being ‘medical discourse’ and ‘political discourse’” (p. 1). However, while there are socially pre-established patterns of language use which allow us to distinguish between discourse genres,

14 | types, and ways in which language behaves according to context specificities, there are also sociocultural conventions at play in interaction which create, assign, shape, and modify meaning, and whose systematical and meticulous examination would potentially expose, on the one hand, understandings of the word and the established relations to it—*inter alia* beliefs, intentions, dispositions, attitudes, choices, values, positions, desires, knowledge—and on the other, the potential that discourse poses to create, maintain, and change them (Escobar 2013; Fairclough, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Van Dijk, 1993). That is to say that once humans caught a glimpse of the scope of possibilities discourse presented to construct and modify people's knowledge, ideologies, and social understandings, they saw an advantage they could use for their gain and consequently, analyzing discourse would reap numerous benefits, among others, in the following general arenas.

Initially and at an operational level, discourse contributes to the understanding of language and language behavior, factoring in prescriptive as well as ever-changing parameters to nurture understandings about speaking and writing mechanics such as the position, form, and functions of parts of speech; the configuration of language in conversations and other speech events; and changes of language use across genres, geographical regions, generations, and communities of practices. This understanding, in turn, could potentially boost language development, not only for the purposes of learning or acquiring a subsequent language, but also to enhance the communicative performance in genres and domains in one's dominant language—of which one may not have a full command (e.g. refining texts to reach academic publishing levels or learning business vocabulary and idiomatic usage for business contexts).

Analyzing discourse beyond the fundamentals of language while bearing in mind the reciprocal influencing-dynamics that culture and language exert on one another (Escobar & Gómez, 2010) can shed light on the ways in which society structures and engages in communication as well as how such communication builds and transforms society, generates common sociocultural representations, and establishes a social order to reveal collective principles: the ideologies, values, and idiosyncrasies associated with language behavior (e.g. patterns of language use, language variations, and language evolution).

Similarly, discourse operates alongside cognitive domains creating, establishing, and justifying a socially constituted body of knowledge. In their exploration of this, Appel and Lantolf (1994) sought to explore ways in which speaking mediates thinking, comprehending, and higher-order cognitive processes to claim that “speaking not only mediates the subjects' attempts to report on what they understand from a text, but also how it serves as the process through which they come to comprehend a text” (p.

437). That is to say, “discourse is a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 1). However, discourse does not just enable knowledge construction and its diffusion, it also serves as a screening mechanism which selects what knowledge claims can be socially acknowledged by positioning people in places, employing means of communication, and designing discursive strategies that regulate what can be said about something, Foucault’s “when, where, and how” (1988). Consequently, discourse analysis may prove useful in both informing cognitive processes and uncovering the discursive strategies that establish knowledge both in society and in intentions.

At a personal level, discourse embodies ways of constructing and reconstructing our views of the world and our relationships to others, means of devising strategies to position and reposition ourselves so as to take up distinct roles in society, forms of acting in, and interacting with the world, of representing and interpreting realities and of thinking, doing, and being and thus, ways of manufacturing the self in light of the multifaceted power dynamics of social interaction (Clark, 2010; Fairclough, 2003; Foucault, 1988; Gee 1996, 1999; Norton, 2000). Examining this would help us understand the formation processes of social constructs like membership, positioning, gender, community, otherness and their corresponding associations with past experiences, present developments, and future possibilities.

At a political level, the rise of spoken discourse prompted individuals to imagine themselves as part of communities, and gave birth to the concept of nationalism which was successively reinforced with printed discourse that stressed common characteristics (capitalism, Christianity, democracy, etc.) and downplayed the differences between sub-groups (Anderson, 2006). In this regard, social forces at work have taken various forms: from the use of the most powerful biological weapons to subtle pursuits for communication control. On the one hand, country incursions like the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki or the attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii were displays of force in the quest for power accompanied by discursive elaborations of national identities, supremacy, sovereignty, and justice. Subtle occupation campaigns, on the other hand, involve the monopolization of the media: propaganda, news, movies, satellites, radio and television stations, and other forms in addition to discourse channels which exemplify the creation of confusion, bewilderment, and perplexity: “Modern and more effective power is mostly cognitive, and enacted by persuasion, dissimulation, or manipulation, among other strategic ways to change the minds of others in one’s own interests” (Van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). Hence, the value of being able to discern such phenomena lies in the potential to identify outdated and unjust social structures, to raise

16 | awareness, and to strive for social change.

Examining the nature of language and its relationships to the self, others, thought, knowledge, culture, and society is every bit what education should be about. Rogers et al. (2005), for example, explores literature about discourse analysis in education in light of those relationships it establishes with the physical and social domains (e.g. explaining methods, studying issues of reflexivity, and discussing singularities like ideology, privilege, power, and control) to conclude that critical approaches to discourse analysis have changed education and this, in turn, has widened the boundaries and altered the characteristics of discourse analysis itself.

In this specific area of English education in the Colombian national context, researchers have increasingly embraced discourse analysis to fulfill a wide range of functions. To better understand how language works, for example, Chapetón (2009) employed a qualitative and quantitative mixed-approach to discourse analysis to study frequency, distribution, and functions of discourse markers in EFL student interaction to describe pragmatic characteristics of such discourses. Castañeda (2012), on the other hand, utilized its tools to characterize discourses which emerged from women EFL learners in online discussions about literature and how language mediates their social exchanges and, consequently, their learning processes. Maloof and Housset Fonseca (2009) taught critical discourse analysis to enhance the critical thinking processes of students. On the topic of identity, Soler (2012) explored ways in which ethnic identities are discursively constituted around dynamics of adaptation, resistance and negotiation in learning. Gómez (2012) studied processes of identity construction in the EFL classroom and their relation to the development of the target language.

Moving beyond the impact that discourse analysis may have in the micro-level contexts of individual EFL classrooms, in the policy realm, Guerrero (2010) analyzed official discourses to describe the ways in which English teachers are portrayed in documents like the *Estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extranjeras: inglés. Formar en lenguas extranjeras, el reto* [Basic Standards of Competencies in Foreign Languages: English. Development in Foreign Languages, the challenge]. Escobar (2013), on the other hand, frames a study of English policymaking processes in Colombia under discourse analysis principles to illustrate discursive strategies employed to form and transform identities and, thereby, justify asymmetrical power structures in English education.

Despite the numerous aforesaid examples of studies on discourse analysis, the discussion addressing the corresponding relations of second or foreign language acquisition and discourse analysis in the Colombian context

is still limited (Castañeda-Peña, 2012); hence, this book, *Discourse Analysis Applied to English Language Teaching in Colombian Contexts: Theory and Methods* represents an attempt to complement such discussions by depicting social practices in EFL teaching and learning processes and contributing to the academic community with the assertions that may ensue in regard to language knowledge, social constructions, and dynamics of power and control.

This book presents a conceptualization and contextualization of discourse analysis, followed by studies of language patterns, structures of conversations, identity constitution, and the vision of virtual communities through online interactions. It concludes by drawing assertions between discourse analysis and the acquisition of English as a foreign language in Colombian contexts.

The first chapter, 'Classroom Discourse Analysis: Outlining the Field' draws constituents from many different discourse analysis approaches to situate and characterize classroom language. To begin, it deliberates on how discourse studies define classroom language. Subsequently, it delineates discourse analysis in *general* educational settings, from feminist post-structural analysis (a derivation) which facilitates the understanding of power dynamics of learning in foreign language classroom interactions. Accordingly, the author elaborates and advises on methodological implications regarding classroom discourse to finally expand on the analysis of discourse for English as foreign and second language settings.

The second chapter, 'Exploring Pragma-grammatical Roles of 'Do' in EFL Students Spoken Production' is a corpus linguistics study that uses computerized tools to examine naturally occurring conversations and characterize patterns of language use to subsequently compare them to the socio-cultural language configurations native English speakers use in their natural sociocultural exchange to analyze their potential impact on communication. The analysis is initially guided by patterns of use, overuse, and underuse of linguistic resources which consequently warrants the detailed examination of specific linguistic items through the creation and use of concordances; additionally, this chapter exemplifies the study of one specific linguistic item 'do' and its interrelations to other linguistic components in meaning-making attempts and in light of sociocultural representations.

Chapter three, 'Doing Research on Classroom Interaction: Approaches, Studies and Reasons' reflects upon the structures of conversations discussing three investigations conducted under conversation analysis methodologies and theories about discourse analysis. These studies postulate influences of L1 on L2, describe request events and delineate sequencing in classroom conversations. This chapter advocates discourse analysis to understand the pragmatics

18 | of interaction, the construction of social roles in the EFL classroom, and the discursive dynamics of the EFL teaching and learning endeavor.

Chapter Four, 'Unveiling the Masked Meanings of Classroom Interaction: A Critical Analysis to Classroom Discourse' seeks to characterize the identity-forming processes of EFL learners and how such identities may have an impact on the linguistic development and performance of EFL students. It advocates the need to enlarge our conception of the foreign language beyond the linguistic code and in isolation from other knowledge constructions into conceptualizations of language as a social practice that mediates cognitive processes of diverse natures.

Chapter five, 'From Underdogs to Important Speakers: Unveiling Language Learners' Identities through Peer-Approval Discourses' explores the discursive construction of status, hierarchy, and membership to groups in virtual contexts observing the interchange of opinions and reactions of students' affiliations to music, hobbies, knowledge, etc., and in terms of peer approval and disapproval. This study highlights the importance of discourse analysis in terms of the contested power struggles evidenced in a learning environment, the importance of understanding such dynamics in the teaching practice, and the possible mitigation of hostile environments to enhance learning.

Finally conclusions draw comprehensible associations between discourse analysis and language in several arenas: (a) the progressive evolution of discourse analysis and what it could represent for language education today; (b) the understanding of language make up and behavior and how discourse analysis could promote advantageous findings about linguistic structures and language use; (c) the establishment of connections between language and society to describe how language structures social life and, reciprocally, how social life structures language; (d) exploring the intricate relation between language and the self to depict identity-forming processes in foreign language interaction; and (e) describing individual and collective dynamics of social positioning which strive for distinctiveness as well as 'me' membership.

Discourse analysis holds wide-reaching importance for the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. It provides methods to acquire linguistic knowledge and update linguistic competence in a context where English is not commonly spoken in social life; it allows inquiries into social factors which play a crucial role in linguistic development and performance; and, it facilitates understanding the social appropriations of English as a foreign language and the construction and positioning of the persona in foreign language interaction.

As such, *Discourse Analysis Applied to English Language Teaching in Colombian Contexts: Theory and Methods* seeks to stimulate the discussion

about discourse analysis within the English teaching and learning processes, exemplify approaches to such analysis which may result in changes in teaching practices, and disseminate findings derived from studies which have exhibited a significant impact in the field of English as a foreign language teaching and learning in Colombia.

Wilder Escobar &
Harold Castañeda-Peña

Chapter One

*Classroom Discourse Analysis:
Outlining the Field*

A b o u t t h e A u t h o r

Harold Castañeda-Peña holds a Doctoral Degree in Education, Goldsmiths, University of London. He is an assistant professor at the School of Science and Education at Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas where he directs the Master Program in Applied Linguistics to TEFL and the Research Group Aprendizaje y Sociedad de la Información. He is interested in gender, information literacy and videogaming in relation to language learning and teacher education from a discursive perspective. He has published articles relating gender and ELT preschool education in *The Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *Signo y Pensamiento* and *Magis, Revista Internacional de Investigación en Educación*. He is also coauthor of the book *Gender and language research methodologies* edited by Harrington et al, Palgrave MacMillan (2008) and is author of the book *Masculinities and femininities go to preschool: Gender positioning in discourse* published by Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in 2009.

Classroom Discourse Analysis: Outlining the Field

Introduction

Discourse analysis in linguistics has been applied to work on the way sentences or utterances cohere into discourse (Potter, 2004) and linguists have also developed the work of discourse analysis through the use of classroom interaction. This rather restricted view of the possible scopes of the linguistic studies of discourse is challenged by Van Dijk (1981), who argued years earlier, that by “discourse studies we refer to the new interdisciplinary field between linguistics, poetics, psychology and the social sciences concerned with the systematic theory and analysis of discourses and their various contexts” (Van Dijk, 1981, p. 1). Among those various contexts, it seems that the educational context has been ranked as one important valuable object of study.

There is truth in both Potter’s and Van Dijk’s views, but their somewhat dissimilar positions about the range of action that discourse analysis has might indicate more than a lack of coherence within what is traditionally understood by discourse analysis. Consequently, a complete deconstruction of discourse analysis applied to classroom language with the philosophical approach Derrida recommends may still be needed. This entails a search for the limits and margins of discourse analysis (Derrida, 1982) if research of this type is to qualify its own scope and methods.

This deconstructive claim is especially understood if we keep in mind the overwhelming expansion of research that started especially in the late 60’s and early 70’s about specific educational contexts where classroom language is analyzed (Bellack et al., 1966; Cazden et al., 1972; Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Cazden, 1988) and is still growing to date (Christie, 2002). Discourse analysis studies have involved the second and foreign language classrooms (McCarthy and Carter, 1994; Seedhouse, 1995; Nunn, 2001) and

26 | have also seen some contributions made by feminist post-structuralist theory (MacNaughton, 1988; Blackbourn-Brockman, 2001). For a recent review regarding Latin America, see Castañeda-Peña (2012).

It is within such heterogeneous approaches that this chapter aims at briefly sketching the discourse analysis applied to classroom language. In order to achieve this goal, how discourse studies have viewed classroom language will be described; second, discourse analysis in general educational settings and the feminist post-structuralist approach will be outlined; third, discourse analysis in foreign and second language educational settings will be traced; fourth, the discussion about which methodology is appropriate to investigate classroom discourse will be summarized. Finally, I will introduce my own discussion about researching classroom discourse in foreign/second language instructional settings. The review proposed is not exhaustive but comprehensive in scope.

Classroom language viewed as discourse

What is classroom language? Does it differ from conversation? Is it a type of text? Is it a type of discourse? These are four important questions whose answers will provide scientific research with a less distorted view of discourse analysis in relation to classroom language. The expression ‘scientific research’ is as wide-ranging as it is intended to be and is used here comprehensively. As was stated in the introduction, this is due to the evolution discourse analysis has experienced regarding classroom discourse. The difference between classroom language and a conversation could be precisely identified from two properties that here will be called *symmetry and level of formality*. I will use the following transcript to illustrate these two concepts.

Interlocutor 2 (4-6) [...]

Interlocutor 1 (7) Yes. [...], they showed you a Pharaoh's body
mummified on
(8) ‘Blue Peter.’

Interlocutor 2 (9) Did they?
(10) When was this?

Interlocutor 1 (11) On Monday I think.

Interlocutor 2 (12) Good gracious me, that's fairly recently.
(13) Do you remember which one it was?

Interlocutor 1 (14) No, [...].

Interlocutor 2 (15) No.
(16) [...]

The transcript could represent two different situations and it could be assumed that I am accepting that both classroom language and a conversation

are the same. That's not my intention and I will provide a context for each situation to amend my initial assumption. First, it could be a small chat between two friends in which one is offering new information about a recent visit he/she has made to a museum. Second, this transcript could be an excerpt on a lesson about history or chemistry on mummified bodies. Symmetry as defined in any dictionary entry implies proportion. Thus, any linguistic interaction is symmetrical if the participants share on an equal basis their turn taking and their right to interrupt with specific purposes such as making new stands, agreeing or verifying if the interlocutor is still involved in the exchange. This example seems to be asymmetrical; interlocutor 1 is sharing a new topic with interlocutor 2 and they organized the interaction by assuming the role either of the questioner or of the answerer. In an ideal conversation, the relationship seems to be more symmetrical. This means that the participants talk or hold the conversation by distributing somewhat evenly their right to speak and express their thoughts. In this example, this does not happen because one of the interlocutors displays longer turns, makes more comments and asks more questions.

Regarding classroom language, this asymmetry is normally accepted, but this does not necessarily imply it should be acceptable that the teacher has a privileged position due to her/his officially assigned role to guide a teaching/learning process. In that sense, teachers hold the power to distribute turns of speaking, to formally assess what is said, to interrupt, etc. However, neither classroom language nor conversations occur out of context. Filling in the square brackets [purposefully left blank] and adding lines 1-6, and 17 contextualizes the conversation and the interaction becomes the following:

- Interlocutor 2 (1) What is the word then for doing/putting this body in its mummy
(2) case?
- Interlocutor 1 (3) Mummify.
- Interlocutor 2 (4) [They mummified it that means-yes. They drained out all the
(5) liquid from the body and rubbed special preserving oils into the
(6) body, wrapped it in bandages and put it in the case.]
- Interlocutor 1 (7) Yes. [Miss], they showed you a Pharaoh's body mummified on
(8) 'Blue Peter.'
- Interlocutor 2 (9) Did they?
(10) When was this?
- Interlocutor 1 (11) On Monday I think.

Interlocutor 2 (12) Good gracious me, that's fairly recently.

(13) Do you remember which one it was?

Interlocutor 1 (14) No, [Miss].

Interlocutor 2 (15) No.

(16) [What about you Paul?]

Interlocutor 3 (17) No, Miss.

It is obvious now that interlocutor 2 is a teacher and both interlocutors 1 and 3 are students. Most of the time, the teacher is asking questions (lines 1-2, 10 and 13), which sometimes are also used to call students' attention to something or to organize turns (line 16). The teacher uses other opportunities to inform her students (lines 4-6) or to assess what students have just said (line 12). On the students' side, the number of assumed turns seems to be comparatively smaller in this particular excerpt. Lines 7 and 8 appear to be used by the student to add a commentary to what is being stated by the teacher. Lines 11, 14 and 17 are straightforward answers to questions addressed by the teacher. According to this example, taken from Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p. 85-86), due to particular contexts and to particular participants' personalities, both classroom language and conversation could be considered asymmetrical.

On the other hand, because of the traditional role imposed on teachers, classroom language most of the time may be more asymmetrical compared to conversations. Cazden (1988), considers the construction of a lesson structure, mainly talks about variation in the speaking rights; as in the example above, she mentions that teachers tend to keep talking more than students do. She implies that there are deviations to the structure because basically classroom talk is context-shaped. However, sometimes regarding its structure, "classroom talk becomes more like informal conversation—not the same as conversation" (Cazden, 1988, p. 55). It should be recalled that the transcript provided was introduced either as a chat between friends or as a history/chemistry class. All these assumptions depend on many variables; for example, according to expected learning outcomes, both teachers and students could play an active role in the construction of classroom interactions. They might or might not negotiate knowledge co-construction according to motivational levels, attention span, and other factors (none of which are considered here).

Level of formality can be an alternative criterion to define a linguistic exchange. The dichotomy formal/non-formal attempts to describe to what extent a situated interaction makes evident who the participants are and how they relate to each other. Again, classroom language could be assumed as spoken in the formal context of education where the teacher structures the exchanges and socializes students through the use of language. Notice how students in the example taken from Sinclair and Coulthard always attached

the word *Miss* to most of their answers (lines 7, 14 and 17). I should also say that the word *social* here is used in a very wide-ranging way and that it is not my purpose now to discuss its appropriateness in describing educational purposes. Therefore, back to the initial point and, as a generalization, a conversation is typically either a formal or a non-formal co-construction and, this should be judged by the circumstances in which a particular conversation takes place.

However, symmetry and level of formality do not completely trace out what classroom language and conversations are because the last two are always embedded in the expression and construction of social meaning and it is there, in the construction of social meaning, where the level of formality may also vary. This last statement implies a deep epistemological discussion to formally characterize both symmetry and level of formality as part either of the structural or the pragmatic (and even the stylistic) level of classroom discourse and conversation. Although this chapter does not aim at being part of such enquiry, it seems to be appropriate to ask, as Sinclair and Coulthard did, about “how far different educational levels anticipate different types of discourse” (1975, p. 114), and how different kinds of conversation that might or might not share different textual patterns anticipate differences as well. This agrees with Van Dijk’s (1981) idea about what discourse studies should additionally accomplish because, as he stated, “an interactional analysis of discourse will not only be concerned with structural or functional properties of dialogues. It will especially have to indicate what the various social contexts of these structures and functions are. Not any conversation can take place in any context” (Van Dijk, 1981, p. 6).

Two concepts should be additionally explored: text and discourse. The distinction among them is necessary to move towards an understanding of myriad explanations about discourse analysis. According to Fairclough (1995), there is a common understanding for discourse analysis about what a text is; in his own words: “a rather broader conception has become common within discourse analysis, where a text may be either written or spoken discourse” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 4). It could be assumed then that discourse contains texts or rather that discourse is made out of texts. A newspaper, for example, is a written discourse about recent happenings (most of the time) that are texts contributing to the construction of a broader discourse. By the same token, the study of classroom discourse is the study of discourses made out of classroom-generated texts. In that sense, a lesson could be considered a discourse that is constructed by sequential texts structured by the interaction of teachers and students in the classroom. Consequently, classroom discourse is also text-context situated. This is what allows a dialectic interrelationship between

30| the speech producers and their situated discourse. As Fairclough (1995) asserts, language use is “imbricated in social relations and processes which systematically determine variations in the properties of language, including the linguistic forms which appear in texts” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 73).

Although the limits between properties such as symmetry and level of formality and concepts such as text and discourse seem to be blurred, they still help us to understand that classroom language and conversations are not the same, especially when properties and concepts are applied to real pieces of language interaction or when approached by different streams of discourse analysis, as will be shown below. There are also different structural, functional, social and ideological levels in discourse. For example, a teacher might claim to be democratic in his/her classroom; this involves an idea (ideological level) of a specific human being he or she shares and wants to perform his educational practice within such a framework (social level), but his/her discursive actions (functional level) may be proven as contradictory because of the speech acts (structural level) used while teaching. As a consequence, those levels should be seen and examined in light of discourse analysis theory. Such theory might be qualified as critical.

The previous considerations will not be discussed any further due to the descriptive and exploratory purpose that this chapter has at this stage. However, the fact that many things, in Potter's view (2002), are called discourse analysis constitutes a reference to revisit the investigations made through such an approach. The next section will outline discourse analysis in general educational settings and the feminist post-structuralist approach as part of additional ontology and epistemology behind it.

Discourse analysis in general educational settings

In this section I will include brief reviews about discourse analysis from the standpoint of traditional linguistic theory and from functional perspectives within the educational setting. The review will be as chronological as possible and will include feminist post-structuralist approaches to discourse analysis because of the educational settings and academic subjects these theories have normally dealt with (academic writing, mother tongue, etc.). In that sense, only two researchers will be quoted here. However, it is known that there exists a sizeable quantity of feminist literature appealing to the use of discourse analysis and other methods to analyze gender in several contexts that are not related at all to education. The review I am proposing is exploratory and does not pretend to be extensive in nature but rather illustrative of how general educational contexts have been studied through discourse analysis.

Bellack's work (1966) could be placed at a foundational level for the studies of classroom language. It is a valuable piece of research not only for the interesting data analysis it provides but also for the theoretical framework used to support the research. Bellack bases his research on the concept of teaching cycle. The teaching cycle allowed him to describe classroom discourse "as current sequences in the verbal exchange among teachers and students" and this concept also allowed him "to describe the ebb and flow of the teaching process as it develops over time." (Bellack et al, 1966, p. 5). The study was conducted while a unit of study was developed with 15 different high school classrooms involving 345 students. Bellack concludes that there is a strong correlation between dimensions of classroom discourse and dimensions of learning and suggests that research about discourse analysis in the classroom should address not only descriptive issues of such language but should also "describe the variety of outcomes that might be associated with classroom activity" (p. 235). Finally, the author asserts the existence of five rather general rules in the language game of teaching and frames language teaching within the theory of language games proposed by Wittgenstein. First, those rules imply that structuring, soliciting, responding and reacting are pedagogical moves and all of them are used in different proportions on a teaching unit. Second, it is the teacher who leads the game; students play a rather passive role in the game. Third, the teaching unit is about a substantial matter structured by the teacher. Fourth, players (teachers and students) use a referential approach to the subject matter and instead of interpretive tasks performed in the classroom there are just factual presentations and their corresponding explanations. Fifth, the degree of game success depends on the degree of commitment of both kinds of players: teachers and students. Interestingly enough, this research depended a lot on statistical analysis of frequency. Bellack's major contributions to the field of discourse analysis are his concepts of teaching cycles and moves, both units of discourse. The latter unit included a hierarchical structure supported by different types of moves such as soliciting, responding, structuring and reacting which will later be redefined by Sinclair and Coulthard; these concepts will be explained below. The same research line was followed by a number of linguists whose work will be described in the following paragraphs.

In their seminal work, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) point out that studies concerning classroom interaction started back in the 1940's when some studies about conversation were also part of scholars' interests. These two linguists define their analysis "as primarily sociolinguistic" (p. 9) under the influence of the theory of speech acts related to language functions. Potter (2004) argues that Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) took on the challenge of

32| constructing a model “to make sense of discourse structures in a whole range of different settings” (p. 201). They followed Bellack’s concept of *pedagogical move* to characterize the limits among utterances. According to Bellack (1966, p. 6) classroom verbal behavior could be a language game. Any game implies a structure and requires from players strategic moves to accomplish goals as they play. Based on these ideas of moves to play a structured game Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) identified the initiation, followed by a response which is again followed by feedback as a typical classroom exchange. The next example shows how an exchange may have different moves:

Teacher	Can you tell me why you eat all that food?	Move 1	Exchange 1
	Yes.		
Pupil	To keep you strong.	Move 2	
Teacher	To keep you strong. Yes.		
	To keep you strong.	Move 3	
	Why do you want to be strong?	Move 4	

Move 1 corresponds to a typical teacher initiation, a question in the example above, which is clearly limited by a type of boundary marked by the word ‘Yes’; in oral speech, those boundaries could also be identified by rising or falling intonations. The initiation is followed by Move 2, which is a response provided by the student and corresponds to an archetypal answer that expresses purpose by using an infinitive construction. Finally, there is an immediate teachers’ reaction or feedback, represented by Move 3, which in the example corresponds to a variety of paraphrasing. The teacher repeats what the student has said, places a boundary again, and reiterates ‘to keep you strong’ to introduce Move 4 which is the initiation of an additional exchange. The example was taken from Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p. 21) but the analysis is mine. It differs somewhat from the analysis provided by the authors for whom all the utterances in the example constitute a single exchange and to whom there appear to be only three moves. If I looked at the example again, I would have split the feedback move into two separate moves since the teacher is clearly marking a boundary between them. Yet, such minutia, 35 years later, does not affect the authors’ initial proposal and it would imply deeply re-examining Sinclair’s and Coulthard’s classification of interrogatives by situations and doing so is not the purpose of this chapter.

Additionally, moves are made of smaller units called acts; different exchanges construct a transaction and a group of transactions are part of a lesson. To sum up, acts, moves, exchanges, transactions and lessons are ranks that belong to the discourse level and each rank has its own structure realized by units at the rank below. Sinclair and Coulthard created their model while aware of the difference between what could be considered pedagogical and

what could be called linguistic in a classroom situation. The former is a major unit like a course while the latter is a portion of speech or linguistic interaction with a specific purpose within a lesson, which is a discourse unit. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p. 24) illustrate those levels and ranks as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Levels and ranks of Analysis of Classroom Discourse (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975).*

Non-Linguistic Organization	DISCOURSE	Grammar
course		
period	LESSON	
topic	TRANSACTION	
	EXCHANGE	
	MOVE	sentence
	ACT	clause
		group
		word
		morpheme

It is notable how Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) understand the level of discourse as a linking category between what is pedagogic (course, period, topic) and what is fundamentally grammatical (sentence, clause, group, word, morpheme).

Thus, there are a finite number of moves that are contained in a finite number of exchanges. Therefore, for Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) “*Framing* and *Focusing* moves realize Boundary exchanges [that are understood as exchanges with no pedagogical value at all, but they rather function as transitional exchanges between Teaching exchanges which are said to have pedagogical value] and *Opening*, *Answering* and *Follow-up* moves realize Teaching exchanges” (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, p. 44). It should be recalled that the lesson is at the top rank of the discourse level. The lesson, understood as a complete pedagogical unit, is made of transactions consisting of exchanges. Figure 1 illustrates comprehensively the authors’ abstract system of analysis of the discourse level.

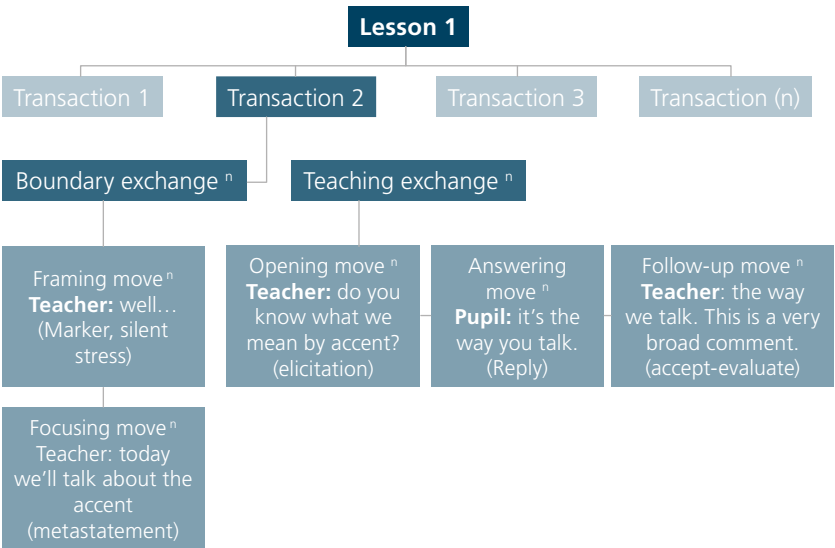


Figure 1. Sinclair's and Coulthard's System of Analysis of Classroom Discourse.

Figure 1 can be read using either a bottom-up or a top-down approach. I will explain it using the former. The teacher's utterances 'Well...' and 'Today we'll talk about the accent' structure, in the form of a marker, a silent stress and a meta-statement. They comprise two kinds of moves: respectively, the framing move and the focusing move. These two moves realize one possible boundary exchange in a lesson or a number of them. The moves of any pedagogical exchange are realized by acts, indicated in parentheses in the figure above. The teacher is making an opening move or initiation when eliciting an answer to 'Do you know what we mean by accent?' At this stage, a pupil uses an act of reply, stating 'It's the way you talk' configuring the answering move or response. Finally, the teacher introduces an acceptance act and an evaluative act when saying 'The way we talk/This is a very broad comment.' This is the follow-up move or feedback. As a result, the opening, answering, and follow-up moves cause any pedagogical exchange or a number of them. A group of pedagogical exchanges combined with a number of boundary exchanges make up the lesson, which is Sinclair and Coulthard's unit of study.

Sinclair and Coulthard's study was conducted in an English-speaking mother-tongue environment with a class of primary school learners. Their main findings, after analyzing two types of texts from their corpus—a complete lesson and an excerpt from a lesson—are conducive to generalizations implying that discourse analysis studies should have a well-designed

system of analysis. Additionally, they found out that most moves are initiated by teachers, and in that sense, a rigid structure of a class does not necessarily guarantee learning. Further studies in this area should be conducted. These two linguists also outline educational research topics or areas based on discourse analysis. These areas imply finding out how linguistic and social behavior are linked within the classroom, how to analyze different teaching styles, especially when the lesson structure is not rigid, how to give an account of peer talk, how to conduct cross-cultural studies, and how to cope with different kinds of discourse.

Discourse analysis applied to classroom language started generating more questions based on Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) findings. Scholars interested in the topic began to apply their model and to theorize about classroom language. One of those scholars was Cazden (1988) who defined the study of classroom discourse simply as "the study of that communication system" (Cazden, 1988, p. 2). Before Cazden's study, however, the sociologist Hugh Mehan had published a major work on classroom discourse analysis.

Mehan (1979) offers a considerably critical piece of work on teacher-led lessons for the moment in which his research report was published during the late 1970s. It is interesting to notice that some sociolinguists replicated the structural analysis of classroom talk proposed by Mehan at that time. Mehan, as mentioned above, *is* a sociologist himself. His study was conducted in a public school where Cazden (1988), who *has* a transformational grammar background, was the leading teacher of the mixed grade 1-3 classroom being investigated (in California, USA). Mehan's study "examines the social organization of interaction in an elementary school classroom across a school year" (1979, p. 1). The author adopted a constitutive ethnographic approach: "constitutive ethnographers study the structuring activities and the social facts of education they constitute rather than merely describing recurrent patterns or seeking correlations among antecedent and consequent variables" (Mehan, 1979, p. 18). The researcher, in order to frame his study from a theoretical point of view, followed four criteria because according to his analysis "the constitutive analysis of structuring school [...] aim[s] for: 1) retrievability of data, 2) comprehensive data treatment, 3) a convergence between researchers' and participants' perspectives on events, and 4) an interactional level of analysis" (Mehan, 1979, p. 19).

The retrievability of data was handled by videotaping all the corpus of materials, which in this case comprised a total of nine lessons. Each lesson was given a name for analytical purposes and was transcribed. The transcriptions were also published as a strategy to facilitate retrievability. The comprehensive data treatment was conducted bearing in mind the goal of describing the

36 | organization of teacher-led interaction. To achieve this goal, Mehan “analyzed until a small set of recursive rules was located in the interaction that describes the corpus of materials in their entirety, and in terms that are oriented by the participants themselves” (1979, p. 33). This last procedure stresses the importance of following the criteria in order to make both researcher’s and participants’ perspectives meet. The analysis made the researcher conclude that both academic knowledge and social or interactional skills are entwined. In general, it was found that classroom organization is met by verbal and non-verbal actions conducted by the lesson members (teacher and students). Table 2 is a transcription provided by Mehan (1979, p. 38) which shows how students reply to the teacher by nodding, raising or lowering hands, moving around, etc.

Tabla 2. *Sample transcription of Mehan’s corpus of materials.*

Initiation	Reply	Evaluation
3:2 T: Now these four Please	Many: (move to Seats)	T: Good
3:3 T: Ok, this is some work for the people in these rows of chairs (gestures to first rows).	Many: (nod heads)	T: Good
3:4 T: Alberto, turn around so you can See the blackboard	A: (turns; teacher Assists)	

Mehan’s (1979) initiation, reply and evaluation phases are present in all the transcriptions of the classroom structure in which the author distinguishes well-known components such as setting, opening, conducting, and closing the lesson. Those phases also hold different functions in the lesson. In the transcription above, for example, all the utterances in the initiation phase correspond to the setting of the lesson. We can see how the kinesthetic answers students provide in the reply phase and how the evaluation phase is structured out of the use of monosyllables. That is how both teacher and students construct an interactional sequence as preparation for another one in which the evaluation, mainly, plays a decisive role. Using the same excerpt quoted above, it could be argued that the use of such monosyllabic discourse in the evaluation phase contributes to balance the other two phases signaling the end of a sequence or a continuation. The first ‘good’ in the example shows the end to the instruction

of arranging the rows as stated by the teacher and it is also a marking boundary to initiate a second instructional arrangement, which is evaluated by the word '*good*' as well. "These pieces of interaction are sequences in the sense that one action follows another with great regularity. These sequences are distinctively interactional in that they involve the cooperative completion of activity by the participants involved. That is, teacher and students work in concert to assemble interactional sequences" (Mehan, 1979, p. 72).

This sociologist's analysis goes beyond the description of common and ordered regularities of interactional sequences. There are also moments in the development of a lesson when what was planned is not working at all: that the turns of a student speaking are interrupted by other students, that students' attention spans are lowered, among many other situations. All these practical circumstances influence the teacher's choice of improvisational strategies to orient students within the flow of the lesson as it evolves. Mehan (1979) found that the combination of those improvisational strategies combined with turn-allocation procedures is part of a repertoire that belongs to an interactional mechanism. Classroom participants mutually conceive such an interactional system in order to maintain social order. According to the author, classroom participants "must bring their action[s] into synchrony with people who are already talking. To do so, classroom rules for taking turns, producing ordered utterances, making coherent topical ties, and participating in ritualized openings and closings must be negotiated" (Mehan, 1979, p. 169).

This co-construction of the classroom through interaction is also discussed by some of Mehan's colleagues, among them Courtney Cazden, (1988) whose new definition of classroom discourse, mentioned above, is based on concepts expressed by Halliday (1978). In this concept, it is possible to "think of any social institution, from the linguistic point of view, as a communication network" (Halliday, 1978, p. 230). In that sense, Cazden (1988) concludes that "the study of classroom discourse is thus a kind of applied linguistics—the study of situated language use in one social setting" (Cazden, 1988, p. 3) where such a communicative network takes place. In the classroom, she mentions what is called 'sharing time': daily activity where children, (especially) inform peers about something new using a narrative. The author also points out a staged lesson structure in the different English-speaking educational contexts she explored but bears in mind the possibility of encountering variations of lesson structures and examines the relationships within context and speech. The author also explores the structure and variations of structures in lessons, peer interactions and teachers' and students' registers. In the first place, the researcher uses the concepts of initiation, response and evaluation to explain interactions in a well-staged and ordered lesson, but

38| furthermore, she states that variations are possible and necessary according to learning goals, size of group and classroom participants' backgrounds. Secondly, due to the limited proportion of moves initiated by students in the class, teachers should plan activities that involve students' interactions among themselves. Thirdly, after analyzing some bilingual contexts, the author states that teachers' registers should be adequate to create appropriate learning atmospheres for children and suggests that students need teachers' help to learn how to express themselves intelligibly. She concludes that both teachers and students are "context-creating speakers" (Cazden, 1988, p. 198) and, since context is a never-ending, changing structure, it should be revisited constantly.

In particular, a somehow recent tendency as regards this topic has been promoted by feminist epistemology. One of the many interesting contributions from the feminist post-structuralist perspective on discourse analysis is MacNaughton's (1988) idea of how discourse should be understood and analyzed. Discourse, framed in the feminist theory, is recognized as an everyday meaningful and social activity that goes further than just inter-changing information by using utterances. According to MacNaughton, (1988) discourse implies cultural and historical categories by means of which meaning is constructed, life becomes praxis and social structures are constructed. Discourse consists, then, of three inter-related dimensions that refer basically to: 1) the categories used for understanding the social world, 2) the social practices which are derived from such categories, and 3) the investments of the emotional kind, which are made through social practice. Hence, discourse analysis "involves identifying relationships between individuals, social structures and institutions" (MacNaughton, 1988, p. 161). In her goal to provide educational gender equity tools, the author discusses two main types of activities for those interested in discourse analysis. Those activities entail processes of identification and evaluation. The former process involves the recognition of who the participants in the classroom are, the social practices they may share, the emotional meanings that may be conveyed through the use of language and how these three properties are intertwined in an institutional discourse and how they frame the institution's educational practices. Consequently, the latter process refers to an assessment of the effects such educational practices have on how power relationships are shaped and their significance for different institutional discourses. MacNaughton's (1988) ultimate idea seems to be the use of discourse understanding in an educational setting "to reflect critically on teaching practices for gender equity (MacNaughton, 1988, p. 162)." Her study was conducted in a mainstream English-speaking nursery school analyzing how staff could make decisions about gender equity work with children. This work, theoretical in nature,

suggests that discourse analysis could provide nursery staff with observational focus to raise questions about educational practices and about how to set up teaching and assessment actions.

A reflection was made by Blackbourn-Brockman (2001) using discourse analysis to scrutinize the role gender manifestations play in written exercises. She is keen to examine both writing processes and written products. From a methodological standpoint, she categorizes female and male types of writing products according to previous feminist findings such as those obtained by Deborah Tannen (1990), Elizabeth Flynn, (1988) and Carol Gilligan (1982). Blackbourn-Brockman's (2001) work is descriptive in nature and shows how students from a functional point of view use written discourse. The author mainly points out findings that reflect how male students always addressed the challenge of writing competitive documents such as proposals, fund-raising letters, etc.; and how female writers constantly remained within the same pattern choice of manuscript, writing noncompetitive documents such as newsletters. The dichotomy competitive/noncompetitive was defined in terms of how persuasive the documents were in nature. The author also points out serious classroom recommendations "to encourage a fuller awareness of gender, including the way gender intersects with other socially constructed values" (Blackbourn-Brockman, 2001, p. 29). Her research was conducted in an English speaking US high school.

Christie (2002) also takes a functional perspective towards classroom discourse analysis, but her view is framed within the systemic functional linguistic theory in various English-speaking educational contexts. She follows Halliday's (1978) classic ideas of situated language and field, tenor and mode. Language is situated because it is produced within a particular context like a classroom. In such a particular framework, classroom participants use specific linguistic registers that reflect a type of social action (field) like eliciting, giving feedback, participating or replying. Classroom participants also establish relationships (tenor) between themselves and play roles like those of speaker and listener when performing specific types of social actions during a lesson. At the same time, classroom partakers determine textual patterns to be used in the interaction in order to contribute to a symbolic organization (mode) of the situation, which defines the classroom as a place to co-construct knowledge, for example. By appealing to all these theoretical constructs, Christie can formulate classroom work as a structured activity in which there are mainly regulative and instructional registers; classroom activity constitutes classroom genres, and those genres constitute macro genres. According to her, both classroom genres and macro genres are "staged, goal-driven activities, devoted to the accomplishment of significant educational ends. They are quite

40 | fundamentally involved in the organization of the discourses of schooling” (Christie, 2002, p. 22). In that sense she concludes, quoting Bernstein’s work, that it is necessary to examine pedagogic relationships in four related senses that embrace the analysis of the language used by teachers, the power relationships embedded in discourse, the special role of structuring pedagogic relationships conferred on teachers and the positioning students acquire in the pedagogic process. The latter is a relevant dimension to study since students are the ones “whose consciousness is shaped and who acquire various ways of behaving, responding, reasoning and articulating experience of many kinds” (Christie, 2002: 162). One type of experience is that of learning a second language. The next section will outline how discourse analysis has been applied to the analysis of learning English as second or foreign language.

Discourse analysis in foreign and second language educational settings

McCarthy and Carter (1994) expressed a serious concern about the way applied linguists and other linguists were looking at the language used to teach first and second/foreign languages. These two authors challenged the practice of examining isolated uses of language and argued for a discourse-based view that “prioritizes an interactive approach to analysis of texts which take proper account of the dynamism inherent in linguistic contexts” (McCarthy and Carter, 1994, p. 38). This means that they view the language classroom as a dynamic linguistic context where texts are produced interactively. In order to demonstrate the relevance of their discourse-based view to language teaching, McCarthy and Carter (1994) analyze the way common linguistic patterns might impact pedagogical aspects such as syllabus construction, materials design, and the planning of classroom activities. They conclude that linguistic patterns are entangled together to realize what they call genre, and that the spoken or written text “is a complex balance of many diverse elements (McCarthy and Carter, 1994, p. 77).” One of the authors’ main contributions to the field of discourse analysis could be the use of the linguistic dimension of mode, which is rather a free choice of speech features made by the message sender within a social context. If language learners are able to appropriately use such a dimension they will be able to cope with different communicative situations and contexts. The dimension of mode is also useful to those involved in curriculum planning, policy making and language materials writing. This is due to the fact that learning a language is “a process of analysis, of explicit attention to language, of conscious reflection on the forms and functions of language and on the means by which meanings are

made by language (McCarthy and Carter, 1994, p. 134).” This suggests that all those involved with language teaching deal with natural real language used in natural and real contexts; mode will be a way of recognizing that a question does not always seek out an oral answer because its mode might correspond to instruction, advice, or a suggestion. Finally, these two authors point out that learning a language also implies learning ‘through’ it and they prepare the ground for additional questions implying the promotion of critical language learning. This kind of learning will make learners aware of how language shapes identities and carries out ideologies and values.

Seedhouse (1995) also followed McCarthy and Carter’s concern about the predominant continuation of isolated speech-based views on classroom language. This researcher argues that an interactional discourse analysis approach to second and foreign language contexts is needed. According to him, there are five reasons for such a claim. These include the lack of unity and clarity surrounding the concept of communication, the lack of research as to how interaction in the second or foreign language classroom could foster learning, the lack of an appropriate corpus, the lack of common criteria to assess interaction, and fifth, the lack of a shared meta language to describe discourse analysis processes within language learning contexts. Seedhouse (1995) acknowledges previous discourse analysis work like that proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) but challenges it because, in his own words, “none of them is able to incorporate the unique feature of L2 classroom interaction: the connection between the pedagogical purposes which underlie different classroom activities and the linguistic forms and patterns of interaction which result from those classroom activities” (Seedhouse, 1995, p. 5). Long and Sato (1983) (cited by Seedhouse, 1995), have identified more than 200 code systems used to analyze classroom language but, according to them, the use of those quantification schemes “cannot constitute the basis of a methodology for the description, analysis and evaluation of L2 classroom interaction” (Seedhouse, 1995, 15). Classroom interaction analysis goes beyond coding transcripts; it is about understanding ways of communication. Seedhouse (1995) remarks that in the second or foreign language classroom, there are many kinds of possibilities for establishing communication through interaction since the pedagogical contexts to support communication vary in accordance with the learning opportunities that are provided by the participants of the interaction. The author concludes that a valid and reliable methodology to understand interaction intertwined with pedagogy in the second or foreign language classroom would be a useful tool for those involved in language teaching and that the “unique methodology which is required for the analysis of L2 interaction could be verified and supported by other

42 | established and complementary methodologies within a multiple perspective approach” (Seedhouse, 1995, p. 24). In that sense, this researcher explains that the use of ethno-methodological conversational analysis combined with a methodology of communication rules analysis, triangulation and an adequate and representative database is complementary.

In spite of Seedhouse’s (1995) concern about the use of a valid, reliable, and maybe unified methodology to analyze interaction in the second or foreign language classroom, discourse analysis has also been applied to explain other communicational realities embraced by interaction. Nunn (2001) uses a specific discourse analysis approach “to redefine the relationship between ritual and negotiation in ‘lock-step’ teaching in the light of research findings and recent re-evaluation of the notion of ritual in educational settings” (Nunn, 2001, p. 1). A lock-step teaching context is, for example, a rigidly structured lesson that does not allow unexpected changes in its own interactional processes due to the roles traditionally assigned to both teachers and students. Teachers are the ones who deliver knowledge and students are recipients of such knowledge. After analyzing several pieces of language excerpts from language classrooms, the researcher considers that discourse analysis cannot be relegated to a static model. This will shorten the view for teachers concerning finding out about more possibilities of using language in a creative way involving pedagogical significance and interest. This means that discourse analysis has an impact on curriculum development, methodology and teaching practices. If a model provided by discourse analysis dares to imply that the best way to teach is to have teacher-fronted classroom instruction, then teachers will be trained to perform in such a way. The author goes on to say that reducing interaction and teachers’ speeches to “structure misrepresents teacher-fronted classroom discourse as being more rigid and meaningless than it is. The characterization of rituals and exchanges as repertoires of limited choices is intended to redress the balance” (Nunn, 2001, p. 7). Nunn’s (2001) contribution should be added to the enormous quantity of work dealing with the study of classroom language (upon which this paper does not report). In writing this paper the author sought to outline how classroom language has been significantly researched by discourse analysis.

As a partial conclusion, it could be stated that discourse analysis transforms, apparently, in the same direction as conversation analysis. Both approaches to discourse manifestation refer to research dating from the early 1940’s. Discourse analysis has particularly focused on studying the language used in the classrooms, but due to the changeable nature of a classroom, discourse analysis has to reflexively approach its object of study and examine

the best procedure with which to conduct analysis. Otherwise, discourse analysis will be unable to find a clear definition of its own limits and scope.

So far this chapter has mentioned several different approaches to discourse analysis; among them, it is possible to enumerate linguistics, socio-linguistics, speech acts, systemic functional linguistics and post-structuralist feminism. In general, discourse analysis applied to second or foreign language classrooms has been derived from first language classroom findings. The main concern discourse analysts have had is that of finding a structure that supports all kinds of possible interactions in the language classroom. A variety of meta-language has been created to explain how interactions occur within a language classroom; concepts like move, cycle, and genre are intended to theoretically support patterns of classroom interaction. However, this goal has been considered difficult to attain because what is necessary, according to some discourse analysts, is to remove the tension between what is linguistic and what is pedagogic. The ultimate goal in the language classroom arena for discourse analysts interested in foreign language settings could be to give account of how linguistic issues shape pedagogical events and vice versa in a systematic way. The explanation of how language is learnt through language would, in the future, advise all those who are involved in the processes of teaching and learning a second or foreign language. Some discourse analysts of foreign language classrooms recommend that one start by constructing a corpus. This should be representative enough to undertake systematic studies of interactions in foreign language classrooms according to generational groups (for example). Moreover, the assessment of a methodology within a multiple or interdisciplinary but coherent and limited approach to classroom discourse analysis is also needed and cannot be the focus of the chapter re-constructing the history of classroom discourse analysis as a field of interest.

Summary and discussion

The main purpose of this chapter was to review how classroom language has been studied especially in the context of the teaching of foreign and/or second languages. In order to achieve this goal, I started presenting how classroom language is different from a typical conversation. That difference was argued using two criteria, which I called symmetry and level of formality. However, symmetry and level of formality do not fully differentiate classroom language and conversations. This happens because both classroom language and conversations are contingent and to a very large extent depend on context; it is this last feature that makes them differ. I also outlined two

44 | additional concepts: text and discourse. I will maintain for the purposes of my own research that classroom discourse is text-context situated and will not argue about differences between text linguistics and semantic linguistics, which at the end have the same units of analysis but are investigated from a rather different, abstract point of view.

Classroom language has been researched in the few past decades through different approaches. Table 3 summarizes my first attempt to map out a very succinct account of classroom discourse analysis. Table 3 has been organized chronologically, so the first column refers to the year the research or article was published. The name of the main researcher will be found in the second column. Column three has the type of article or book. There are different kinds of articles in this brief presentation of research about classroom discourse analysis. Some of them are either books or articles based on scientific research. By scientific research I mean that kind of investigation described in a report where it is easy to distinguish a research question and the attempt to answer it by following a rigorous process of validation or demonstration. Other articles are revision or reflection articles. The fourth column displays what has been called the tradition. Tradition in this context refers mainly to the discipline of origin from which the study derives; such discipline scaffolds the theoretical framework supporting the study and the approach to the analysis of results. The fifth column describes whether or not the study approaches the research question from a quantitative or a qualitative point of view or even from a complementary analysis between these two options. This column will also point out whether or not the study simply presents a theoretical explanation of specific phenomena. Columns number 6 and 7, when applicable, present the research participants and the level on which the research was conducted. Finally, the two last columns highlight the major theoretical contributions and summarize the main findings for each study. Some of the works outlined in this review do not clearly present theoretical contributions or conceptual variations in the sense that there is no theory construction; rather, these are used to present what has been already established in the discipline of origin.

Table 3. *Brief Relation of Classroom Discourse Models in General Educational Contexts.*

Year	Author(s)	Type	Tradition	Design	Level	Participants	Theoretical Contributions	Major Findings
1966	Bellack et al.	Book based on scientific research	Philosophy of Language	Quantitative Correlational	High School	15 courses 345 students approx.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching cycle Pedagogical move Rules framing discourse within the theory of language games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong correlations between dimensions of classroom discourse and dimensions of learning
1975	Sinclair and Coulthard	Book based on scientific research	Speech Acts Analysis	Qualitative	Primary School	One course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concepts of initiation, response and feedback Levels and ranks of analysis of classroom discourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers initiate exchanges most of the time Well-planned lessons are not necessarily successful learning environments
1979	Mehan	Book based on scientific research	Constitutive Ethnography	Qualitative	Primary School	One mixed 3-5 level course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles of constitutive ethnography applied to classroom discourse analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are rules for taking turns, producing ordered utterances, making coherent topical ties, and participating in ritualized openings and closings which are negotiated by classroom participants

Year	Author(s)	Type	Tradition	Design	Level	Participants	Theoretical Contributions	Major Findings
1988	Cazden	Book based on scientific research	Systemic Functional Linguistic Theory	Qualitative	Primary School	Several courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theoretical issues about children's narratives• Concepts of initiation, response and evaluation in the structures of lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both teachers and students create a network of communications in the classroom but students do not initiate as many moves as should be desirable• There are differences in teachers' ways of speaking• Students are not given the opportunity to interact in classrooms
1988	McNaughton	Article based on scientific research	Feminist Post-Structuralist Theory	Qualitative	Nursery School	One nursery teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom discourse is a tri-dimensional relation:• Understanding• Social practices• Emotional involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are principles with which to make decisions about the most appropriate tools to work gender equity with children
2001	Blackbourn	Article based on scientific research	Feminist Theory	Qualitative	High School	One course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concepts competitive and non-competitive writing processes and products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are pedagogical implications if students are not taught to understand gender biases in writing processes and products
2002	Christie	Book based on scientific research	Systemic Functional Linguistic Theory	Qualitative			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concepts of classroom genres and macrogenres• Concepts of regulative and instructional registers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classrooms are organized according to genres and types of registers

Chapter Two

*Exploring Pragma-grammatical
Roles of “Do” in EFL Students’
Spoken Production*

A b o u t t h e A u t h o r

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Exploring Pragma-grammatical Roles of “Do” in EFL Students’ Spoken Production

Introduction¹

The twin pursuits of developing pragmatic competence and assessing the scope of possibilities and limitations of learners’ linguistic repertoire in EFL contexts pose numerous challenges. At the outset, the communicative competence developing factors are given disproportionate attention in the EFL teaching endeavor. Linguistic instruction, for instance, governs the EFL classroom, overshadowing the socially-constructed principles behind their use (Niezgoda & Rover, 2001; Li, 2006; Zeng, 2006; Xiaole, 2009). Xiaole’s (2009) study on the perspective of Chinese EFL learners’ behavior when using compliments at different stages of general proficiency, for example, concluded that, although their knowledge of overall target pragmatic norms at a macro level increased as they grew more linguistically proficient, their knowledge at the micro level (e.g. variations in strategies of compliments based on context cues) did not develop automatically due to the difficulty of identifying idiosyncrasies of the target language quick enough to respond to them. Although linguistic proficiency is acquired before pragmatic competence, believing that knowledge about the language guarantees the development of pragmatic awareness could potentially result in pragmatic failure in real communicative events and thus the inclusion of such essential aspects in the EFL curriculum is strongly advisable.

Similarly, textbooks and the EFL teaching practice overlook other pragma-linguistic features. Cameron (1999; 2003, & 2006), for example, sought to identify Spanish EFL students’ use of metaphorical language in their

¹ Laura Arias and Kimberly Vinck participated in this project as research assistants to fulfill their pedagogical project implementation requirement to graduate from the Bilingual Education Major.

52 | argumentative writings and discovered that metaphors occurred in only 20%. This study also determined that metaphors with single verbs as vehicles were the prevailing form. The author recommended the inclusion of polysemic representations within EFL instruction to address this shortcoming in figurative language use.

Moreover, opportunities to use, establish, and appropriate social conventions of English in naturally occurring conversations are scarcely available in the Colombian context, thus limiting the development and maintenance of pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom environment. As a consequence, teachers often struggle to cope with language variations and evolution, and EFL resources fail to make an accurate approximation of sociocultural conventions of language use in its ever-changing trends and native contexts of social interaction (Escobar and Gómez, 2010 & Escobar, 2013); students are thus imperiled by what Kasper (1981) labeled “teaching-induced errors.” Kasper elaborates on the ways textbooks, teaching materials, and specific classroom norms misinform students with respect to the socially accurate, appropriate, and natural use of modals, modality marking, complete sentence responses, and incongruous explicitness in the target language. To illustrate, the complete-sentence-responses classroom rule does not point to contextual differentiations where abbreviated answers may be more appropriate creating an erroneous impression of the diversified ways in which language is used and, consequently, misdirecting the learner into potential pragma-linguistic failure (Thomas, 1983).

In that respect and considering the numerous needs the EFL classroom faces, Chapetón (2010) proposes “native comparable corpora” as a referent to identify differences and similarities of sociolinguistic patterns of use and as a resource to design strategies to mitigate salient differences that could potentially hinder communication. Similarly, numerous other studies focus on the general usefulness of corpus linguistics to foreign language teaching (Piqué-Angordans, 2006; Meyer, 2006; Recski, 2006; Viana, 2006; Herrera, 2008; Veliz, 2008; Martínez-García, 2011), while others concentrate on discovering specific linguistic patterns that might negatively affect students’ foreign language production (Recski, 2006; Piqué-Angordans, 2006; Viana, 2006; Martínez-García, 2011). The use of corpus is not limited to the EFL classroom, however. To cite some examples, the Free Trade Agreement corpus has been used to study specialized collocations (Patiño, 2013); a biology corpus is used to explore semantic discrepancies in specific technical terms (Hernández, 2002); foreign language teaching methodologies have been analyzed using a French Caribbean corpus to determine their functionality (Kawecki & Lorient, 2009); disciplinary values are regularly explored in legal

discourse (Breeze, 2011; Dubroca, 2013; Diemer, 2009); and Swales (2004) examines changes in scientific English over course of the years.

However, the use of corpora in the EFL teaching process should take a number of essential factors under consideration: 1) its size with respect to the purpose of the study, 2) an internal balance which would faithfully reflect the time period and the dialectal variation the corpus represents, 3) authors' rights when there are many participants and sources involved in the construction of the corpora, and so on and so forth. Currently, the use of corpora brings about innumerable benefits. To begin with, corpora represent samples of language in real contexts of use as fulfilling communicative needs: there is already an ample diversification as to the types of corpora available. Access to such corpora is becoming easier every day and computerized resources to manage vast amounts of data are more readily available to nurture understandings about sociolinguistic behavior. Therefore, contributions of corpus linguistics are extremely rich, but obtaining objective results requires schematized characterizations, not merely in mathematical terms (e.g. frequency), but also in detailed and descriptive depictions of a lexical nature, relations between constituents, and formulation of the English language (Veliz, 2008).

What is certain is that corpus linguistics has found its place within EFL classrooms, and innumerable research projects and investigations have brought to light the discovery that corpus linguistics can represent an asset for the EFL teaching endeavor. Recski (2006) explains the role that corpus linguistics plays in identifying and raising awareness of linguistic features and patterns and describes corpus linguistics as a reliable alternative to revise linguistic phenomena and address perplexed EFL teachers' and students' questions in regard to grammar and language use. In other words, it might be equally important for teachers and students to undertake a process of self-discovery as they formulate linguistic differentiations and generalizations to comprehend grammatical and pragmatic behavior of linguistic structures.

Examples of the value that corpus linguistics offers the EFL classrooms are limitless. One such example is the study of nine modal verbs (can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, and would), and their frequency of use in the compositions of advanced Brazilian EFL students compared to that of native English language speakers (Viana, 2006). The analysis of these modal verbs showed, among other things, that the way the Brazilian participants used modal verbs in their compositions differed greatly from the way native speakers of English used them. The research also improved understanding of the pedagogical implications of teaching modal verbs, advised methodological revisions and highlighted the importance of ongoing corpus-based investigations for language teachers and the EFL classrooms.

Throughout its history, Corpus linguistics has provided several fields of study with a reliable set of written as well as spoken texts made up of “real life” language in use. In EFL, corpus has provided teachers with new insight as to specific problems pertaining almost exclusively to their unique contexts and classrooms (Kawecki & Lorient, 2009). The identification of these has facilitated the creation of new and improved pedagogical tools as well as classroom practices in order to target the specific learners’ needs with more accuracy (Viana, 2006). Considering the ambitious goals set forth by the MEN (2014) via the *Colombia Very Well! Programa nacional de Inglés 2015-2015* (national English program 2015-2025), it is important to appraise the benefits that corpus linguistics has provided the linguistics and EFL fields, and in general, to embrace its unexploited potential in the Colombian context. Creating and using a linguistic body brings many opportunities and there is still a lot of work to find and provide more data related to the analysis of languages (Scott, 2012).

Therefore, to support the teaching and learning process, we have opted for collecting samples of the students’ naturally occurring spoken production into a corpus and studying it to identify patterns of language use and trace their bearing on accomplishing communicative functions guided by corpus linguistics principles. An initial analysis with the Rayson (2009) Wmatrix: a web-based corpus processing environment, on the regularity of the use of language structures aided the recognition of the most commonly used items in light of the part of speech they represented. These, in turn, were compared to the Corpus of American English (2006) seeking patterns of overuse and underuse. Finally, a detailed pragmatic and grammatical comparison was conducted on the greatest differences of the use of parts of speech found using the Corpus of Contemporary American English [COCA] (Davies, 2008).

This work comprises a portion of a larger research project of *Universidad El Bosque* titled, ‘Acquisition, Development and Assessment of Discursive Skills (Pragmatics)’ which profoundly examined the ways in which the EFL students employed the parts of speech they most commonly used: namely, personal and demonstrative pronouns, articles, conjunctions, prepositions, and verbs, in light of grammatical principles and pragmatic functions to characterize potential pragmatic success and failure. Accordingly, a wider range of communicative possibilities are explored through the use of Davies’s (2008) corpus in pursuit of pragma-linguistic awareness in students’ foreign language learning processes.

As such, this chapter focuses on the study of the word “do” seeking, on the one hand, to characterize the language use evidenced in the EFL corpus in light of the sociolinguistic patterns established where English is spoken

for daily communication, and on the other, to identify promising exploitations of corpus-based resources to enrich EFL teaching and learning processes. The study was guided by three research questions: 1) What sociolinguistic patterns can be identified about and around the word “do” in naturally occurring English conversations of EFL students? 2) What levels of similarity and discrepancy can be found when contrasting such linguistic patterns of EFL students with those of native English speakers? 3) What potential corpus-based resources could be integrated to EFL teaching practices?

Theoretical Framework

“Pragmatics” has been directly associated with sociocultural conventions that are subject to the specificities of contextual information to attain accurate communicative meaning (Chomsky, 1980; Crystal, 1997; Canale, 1983; Tello, 2006). Among countless definitions of pragmatics, Crystal (1985) offers one which closely depicts the nature of the project at hand, “Pragmatics [is] the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication” (p. 240).

The concept of “pragmatic competence,” in turn, refers to the ability or knowledge to employ linguistic resources to cope with the unfamiliar cultural conventions of unknown social settings in order to successfully achieve communication in diverse and complex interactions (Bachman, 1990; Kelly, 2004; Taguchi, 2009; Mirzaei, Roohani, & Esmaili, 2012). Failure or lack of competence in pragmatics results in instances in which interactions are interrupted and communication is not fully attained. These communication breakdowns can be categorized according to the source of the problem into two main domains of pragmatics, namely socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic failures (Thomas, 1983; Amaya, 2008; Mirzaei, Roohani, & Esmaili, 2012).

Given the characteristics of EFL contexts, while developing pragmatic competence in the classroom environment is particularly challenging, it is nonetheless essential for communication (Xiaole, 2009). These skills provide the language learner with contextual information and sociocultural cues to make informed communicative decisions in situations that arise and mitigate potential misunderstandings derived from the unfamiliar and pre-established conventions of a certain community (Amaya, 2008). Hence, the importance of not only examining pragmatic competence to gain a better understanding of the sociocultural rules governing language use, but also comprehending the scope of possibilities and limitations that the learners’ linguistic repertoire

56 | could present within the social systems of linguistic science, with the objective of contemplating these skills in EFL instruction (Mirzaei, Roohani, & Esmaeili, 2012).

The earliest notions of pragmatic competence were provided by Chomsky (1980), where he defined it as “knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use (of the language), in conformity with various purposes” (p. 224) and by Canale & Swain (1980) as a constituting factor of overall communicative competence. In the following years, this concept continued to be further explored to discover additional constituents such as illocutionary force and pragmatic force, both of which are important in understanding pragmatic competence (Canale, 1988; Bachman, 1990). The illocutionary act (or illocution) is the speech action performed in a particular utterance which involves two elements: a) the delivery of the propositional content (including the sense and reference) (Leech & Thomas, 1990) and b) the particular force with which the utterance is produced (e.g. request, command, suggestion, assertion) (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985, pp. 1-2). An example of this is the difference between the force evoked with each of these speech acts: “He urged me to shoot her,” and “He asked me to shoot her,” or “He invited me to shoot her” (Leech & Thomas, 1990, p. 95). The illocutionary force of the utterance would be of urgency, request, or invitation, any one of which would alter the sense of the utterance. Illocutionary force, on the other hand, is the speaker’s “intention” behind the utterance. It is the combination of 1) the “point” of the utterance and 2) the particular “presuppositions and attitudes” that go with that point. These may include: the strength of the point, sincerity conditions, and strength of sincerity conditions, to name a few. In the English language, the types of speech acts that the illocutionary force distinguishes are: asserting, promising, exclaiming, inquiring, excommunicating, and ordering, among others (Crystal, 1980, p. 152; Searle & Vanderveken, 1985, p. 1, 7-9, 20-21).

Such a broad definition is subsequently divided into two domains: Pragmalinguistics and Sociopragmatics competence (Thomas, 1983; and Leech, 1983). Pragmalinguistics refers to the linguistic resources used to convey particular connotations. The use of these resources may include strategies such as directness or indirectness, which can either soften or harden the intended speech act (Kasper, 1997) e.g. using buffers like “would you mind...” or “I was wondering if you...” rather than bluntly making a request. The knowledge that one possesses these tools or strategies is, therefore, what is known as Pragmalinguistic Competence (Dippold, 2008). The appropriate implementation of this knowledge so as to make suitable linguistic choices, subsequently, is known as Sociopragmatic Competence (Dippold, 2008, p. 132; Delahaie, 2011).

Failing to achieve communication due to any of the aforementioned factors is referred to as “Pragmatic Failure” (Thomas, 1983; Liu, 2004; Aridah, 2010) and can essentially occur in two main scenarios. When there is a lack of knowledge about the linguistic variables needed to accurately formulate a particular speech act (pragmalinguistic) and when knowledge of the social and/or contextual variables determining appropriate pragmalinguistic choices is scarce (sociopragmatic) (Leech, 1983 & Delahaie, 2011). Trosborg, (2010) states that pragmalinguistic failure relates to a linguistic deficiency “caused by differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force,” while sociopragmatic failure results from a lack of sociocultural knowledge and “cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior” (p. 16). Both the inadequacy of linguistic resources and obliviousness to the social rules which govern their use can result in pragmatic failure and, although not extraneous to it, this is often associated with foreign language use (Tello, 2006), suggesting a pressing need for developing pragmalinguistic and socio-pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom (Kelly, 2004; Tello, 2006; Xiaole, 2009; Aridah, 2010; Mirzae et al., 2012).

Although most attribute this failure to a greater emphasis placed on developing linguistic competence overlooking sociocultural or inter-language factors (Xiaole, 2009), others claim this to be an “imperfect command of lower-level of grammar” (Thomas, 1983, p. 94). Undoubtedly though, opportunities for EFL learners to be exposed to the sociocultural conventions established by the native speakers of English, as well as environments to appropriate them, must be created for the EFL teaching endeavor in order to not only form knowledgeable learners of language structures but also competent speakers capable of modifying their discourse under diversified sociocultural conditions.

Bachman (1990) recognizes pragmatic competence as one of two core components of language competence complemented by an “organizational competence.” In his model, pragmatic competence is not subordinate to grammar and text organization, but rather co-ordinates with formal grammatical knowledge which further interrelates with “organizational competence” in complex ways (Savignon, 1991; Kasper, 1997). Kelly (2004), Tello (2006), Xiaole (2009), Aridah (2010), and Mirzae et al (2012) come into agreement with Bachman (1990) in that pragmatic competence is not a subject which should be taken for granted in language teaching, but rather, that it plays a vital role in effective communication (Kasper, 1997).

Even though a pressing need for the pragmatic development of EFL users is evident, there is still a speck of doubt as to whether or not it can be taught in the EFL classroom and how (Kasper, 1997). According to Jenny

58 | Thomas (1983), it is relatively easier to overcome pragmalinguistic than sociopragmatic failure. She argues that, since it is basically a matter of highly conventionalized usage of language, tackling pragmalinguistic failure would only require language teachers to teach it alongside grammar instruction; overcoming sociopragmatic failure, however, would not only involve the knowledge that the speaker has about the language, but also their beliefs as to how that language functions and is to be used.

Several authors (Judd, 1999; Amaya, 2008; Bardovi-Harlig, 1992) suggest specific tools and techniques for developing students' pragmatic awareness in a second or foreign language so that they may have what it takes to make adequate decisions in communicative situations. Judd (1999) presents three types of techniques: cognitive-awareness raising activities, such as presentations and discussions; receptive-skills development by using teacher generated materials or natural data; and productive-skills teaching through role-playing and interactive communication activities. Byon (2005) and Amaya (2008) find that role-playing is a great way for students to replicate real-life conversation patterns. Amaya suggests that an interesting twist on role-playing would be to rehearse the role-play several times, but changing the elements of the contextual scenario. This is so that students recognize that the codifying of a conversational interchange will change depending on a series of contextual elements.

Thomas (1983) clarifies that cross-cultural pragmatic failure is not restricted to interactions between native and non-native speakers. In her paper, she specifies that the term "cross-cultural" pragmatic failure can refer to any interaction between any two people with uncommon linguistic and/or cultural backgrounds. She goes on to explain that even speakers of the same language, because of their different contextual backgrounds and/or differences in communities of practice, can experience a similar breakdown in communication (House and Kasper, 1981). Although it would be impossible to teach or expose students to all the cross-cultural linguistic idiosyncrasies, it is possible to sensitize students about such differences so that they expect them and keep an open mind to their existence (Amaya, 2008).

Cross-cultural pragmatic failure due to misinterpretations between different speech communities is also a common phenomenon worth exploring in pursuit of a better understanding about language behavior. According to Gumperz (2001), a speech community is any congregation of human beings characterized by regular and frequent interaction of signs (verbal, physical, or written), set apart from other similar aggregations by significant differences in language usage. These could range anywhere from neighborhood gangs, occupational associations, small bands bound by face-to-face contact, to modern

nations divisible by smaller groups or sub-regions (Irish English vs. Scottish English). The proviso for these groups to be considered speech communities is that they show very specific linguistic peculiarities that merit special study.

Other terms involving slightly different characteristics have been associated with the concept of “speech community.” An Interpretive Community for instance, as opposed to a Speech Community, does not involve the gathering of individuals, but rather an open network of people who share ways of reading text (Fish, 1980; Borg, 2003). It was originally a concept created by Fish (1976), mainly as an extension of Reader-Response Criticism, a school of literary theory, which focuses primarily on the reader’s or audience’s experience with the text rather than on the form of the text itself. He argued that the text in and of itself does not have any particular cultural assumptions outside the author’s intent, but that it is our membership, rather, in a particular interpretive community (i.e. cultural background, past experiences, interests, etc.) that makes us give a text a particular interpretation. An interpretive community, therefore, sheds light on the social derivation of interpretation (Borg, 2003).

A discourse community is a subsequent type of community that combines aspects of both the speech and the interpretive community: the idea being that people do not communicate with everyone everywhere, but they rather interact in smaller social groups or circles. These social groups or circles, in turn, gather into communities, which typically share specific goals and use communication to achieve those goals (Swales, 1990). Johns (1997) and Porter (1986) on the other hand argue that these communities may share interests, but their goals may not necessarily align (e.g. the alumni of a university). An element that best sets discourse community apart from any other sort of community is that communication typically takes place in written form. Additionally, membership in a speech community is restricted by numerous sociocultural factors, since discourse community membership is a matter of choice: for example, a society of stamp collectors around the world who are united by a shared interest in the specific stamps of Hong Kong (Swales, 1990). Although these people never physically meet, they are interacting via newsletters, blogs, emails, etc. with particular language patterns with which they use to communicate and pursue their goals (Borg, 2003). Because of its peculiarity of form, the type of text becomes a genre on its own and therefore complies with the proviso of its meriting special linguistic study. In other words, a speech community could potentially be local using face-to-face interaction and serving the needs of socialization and solidarity, while a discourse community could be spatially dispersed, formed around socio-rhetorical functions, and is mainly mediated by text.

Prior (2003) points out that Swales' description of Discourse Communities in 1998 resembles Lave & Wenger's (1991) description of Communities of Practice. In both descriptions, local groups involve mutual engagement emphasizing co-presence, a mutual project with a common goal and/or a jointly negotiated enterprise which gives rise to shared lexis, shared linguistic repertoire, regular communicative genres, and a recognized sense of purpose, specifically, in communities with a common craft and/or profession (e.g. the lunch room at work, an online discussion board, a group of engineers working on a similar project or problem, a specific group of adolescents creating their own identity). Interestingly, there is a corresponding relationship between language and community: language evolves conforming to the communicative needs of the community and the community is in turn transformed by the use of language in the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

What these authors (Swales, 1990; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Borg, 2003; Prior, 2003) and their different descriptions of communities bring to light is that people communicate in different groups and circles, and we can be members of any number of different communities at the same time. In each one we are required to adjust the way we communicate in order to accommodate our lexis to the communicative objectives, other members of the community, and sociocultural conditions. Essentially, pragmatic competence is the ability to resort to sociolinguistic repertoire to satisfy a communicative need in a given situation. The abovementioned issues highlight the importance of recognizing differences in language use according to contextual information e.g. changes in word choice, register, force in a friend's conversation versus in a parent-teacher meeting.

In sum, pragmatics studies the use people make of language in particular situations to accomplish specific communicative objectives and the degree to which such use addresses or fails to address the purpose intended. Pragmatic competence, on the other hand, concerns the ability to recognize, interpret and appropriately respond to contextual information in order to make up-to-date communicative decisions in discursive situations as well as with the capability to adjust to changes and employ strategies to cope with unfamiliar and diversified sociocultural conventions drifting across communities of practice.

Research Design

Discourse analysis offers interpretative elements to understand language behavior in light of social dynamics and holds a corresponding relation with other significant areas in social science such as speech act theory, interactional

sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication, pragmatics, conversation analysis and variation analysis (Brown, 1983; Thomas, 1983; Schiffrring, 1994; Bassols, 2003). Brown (1983) states that discourse analysis explains “how humans use language to communicate and, in particular, how addressers construct linguistic messages for addressees and how addressees work on linguistic messages in order to interpret them” (p. 9). Such messages can take the form of oral speech or written text and their analysis relies heavily on pragmatics to adequately interpret intentions, beliefs, behaviors, and feelings in utterances, word choice, frequency of use, and sentence structure in texts offering an integrated functional and comprehensive approach to the understanding of social dynamics in countless fields of the human sciences (Bassols, 2003).

Successively, corpus linguistics stems directly from discourse analysis as a methodology that seeks to assemble naturally occurring speech production samples to conduct computer-aided examinations of language and the use of language in its context variants (Wu, 2009). Wu defines corpus linguistics as “A methodology for investigating language and language use and obtaining quantitative evidence through large quantities of naturally occurring texts” (p. 129). As such, corpus linguistics facilitates the collection, organization, systematization and statistical calculation of natural interactions among students, assesses their impact and intervenes to enhance performance.

Data, in this research design, were composed of two corpora. On the one hand, there was the EFL learner’s corpus stemming from ten one-hour discussion of fourteen students of an undergraduate bilingual education program who were divided into small conversation groups of three to five participants each. Bearing in mind that the study did not intend to identify the most common topics the students talked about but rather how they used language to speak about diverse themes, the teacher or organizer provided a different conversation topic for each of the implementations appealing to students’ interests such as cell phone use, sexual preferences, stereotypes, annoying aspects in relationships, and politics in education, among others. Additionally, there was one moderator in each small group who guided the conversation in different forms like debates, round table discussions, lectures, interviews, narrations, etc. to enhance interaction among the participants. The resulting oral production was transcribed, edited and assembled as the EFL students’ corpus and will be cited in the analysis as (EFLLC) displaying the initials of the participants to protect their identities.

On the other hand, a corpus of native English speakers was vital as a point of reference to assess the scope of possibilities and shortcoming of students’ English use and after a meticulous depuration, Rayson’s Wmatrix

62 | (2009) and Davies's (2008) *Corpus of Contemporary American English* were selected. Rayson (2009) provided frequency profiling features at different levels. At the word level, it systematized the students' corpus by word, frequency, and collocation, provided concordances, and allowed it to be compared, statistically, to the American English 2006 (AmE06) [the interphase had these same features at the parts of speech and semantic levels]. Davies (2008) provided definitions, synonyms and antonyms, contextualized concordances with color-coded parts of speech, context and genre-based frequency information, language variation, and evolution trends.

1. The process and procedures involved the following ten steps:
2. Extensive review of literature on discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, and pragmatic related theory;
3. Selection of participants based on the academic English level they were taking (the highest EFL course offered);
4. Creation of inviting and friendly environments to carry out the conversations;
5. Taping, transcription, and editing of conversations, to make them into the EFL learners' corpus which was labeled EFLLC;
6. Identification and selection of a native speakers' corpus to serve as a point of reference;
7. Conducting an analysis of word-, collocation-, and parts of speech frequency on the EFLLC;
8. Conducting an analysis of overuse and underuse between the EFL production and the native speakers' production to recognize salient differences worth examining qualitatively;
9. Conducting a detailed descriptive study of the EFL students' English use contrasted with native speakers' language patterns to explore potential possibilities and limitations;
10. Identification, characterization and discussion of linguistic patterns and differences;

Elaboration of written and oral reports on the process.

Data Analysis

In terms of frequency, the word "do" was a noticeable indicator in the students' interactions; it appeared 1,400 times as the twenty-first most commonly used item in the students' corpus. Even though its relative frequency may appear low at 1.28%, it is the second highest-frequency verb after the third person, singular of the verb to be (see Table 4).

Table 4. *Part of Speech frequency in EFL students' spoken production.*

Part of Speech	Code	Frequency	Relative Freq.
Singular common noun (e.g. book, girl)	NN1	9595	8.79
Interjection (e.g. oh, yes, um)	UH	5412	4.96
general preposition	II	5013	4.59
1st person sing. subjective personal pronoun (I)	PPIS1	4992	4.57
Formula	FO	4683	4.29
General adjective	JJ	4553	4.17
Base form of lexical verb (e.g. give, work)	VV0	4453	4.08
General adverb	RR	4124	3.78
Article or determiner (e.g. the, no)	AT	4097	3.75
Coordinating conjunction (e.g. and, or)	CC	3985	3.65
Plural locative noun (e.g. islands, streets)	NN2	3093	2.83
Infinitive (e.g. to give... It will work...)	VVI	3087	2.83
Possessive pronoun, pre-nominal (e.g. my, your, our)	APPGE	2737	2.51
Singular article (e.g. a, an, every)	AT1	2475	2.27
Subordinating conjunction (e.g. if, because, unless, so, for)	CS	2381	2.18
Singular determiner (e.g. this, that, another)	DD1	2242	2.05
Is	VBZ	2163	1.98
2nd person personal pronoun (you)	PPY	2078	1.9
Not, n't	XX	1988	1.82
That (as conjunction)	CST	1959	1.79
Infinitive marker (to)	TO	1534	1.41
Do	VD0	1400	1.28

A subsequent comparison of the frequency of the EFL learners against the native speakers' use of “do” (Table 5 below), where (O1) is observed

64 | frequency in the EFL learners' corpus and (O2) is observed frequency in the corpus of American English (1%) and (2%) values show relative frequencies in the texts; (+) indicates overuse in O1 relative to O2, (-) indicates underuse in O1 relative to O2. The table is sorted on log-likelihood (LL) value to show key items at the top. Rayson (2009), invites some revealing accounts of overuse and underuse posing “do” in a seventh place of salient deviation and showing a prominent overuse of the word.

Table 5. *Frequency Comparison chart, Native vs. Non-native (10 items displayed out of 219 compared).*

POS	CODE	O1	1%	O2	2%	O1 Use	LL
Interjection (e.g. oh, yes, um)	UH	5412	4.96	1048	0.11	+	19260.92
Formula	FO	4683	4.29	1502	0.16	+	14893.15
1st person sing. subjective Personal pronoun (I)	PPIS1	4992	4.57	8358	0.86	+	6982.34
Singular common noun (e.g. book)	NN1	9595	8.79	150674	15.59	-	3514.76
Base form of lexical verb (e.g. give)	VV0	4453	4.08	14159	1.46	+	2925.12
Past participle of lexical verb (e.g. given, worked)	VVN	319	0.29	21686	2.24	-	2766
Do	VD0	1400	1.28	1463	0.15	+	2751.75
General adjective	JJ	4553	4.17	77584	8.03	-	2248.22
2nd person personal pronoun (you)	PPY	2078	1.9	4710	0.49	+	2154.26
Singular proper noun (e.g. London, Jane, Frederick)	NP1	1248	1.14	33310	3.45	-	2099.26

The aforementioned characteristics of the word “do” in the learners’ corpus provided the basis for a more detailed analysis. Consequently, the concordance of “do” was created to examine ways “do” was being used and when it was accomplishing or failing to fulfill multiple sociolinguistic functions. This, in turn, exposed linguistic patterns related to the use of the word “do” in discourse markers and conversation fillers, sociocultural conventions, forms of agreement and disagreement, and pragmatic word associations.

Do in Speech Markers and Conversation Fillers

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Discourse markers and conversation fillers play a vital role in communication, signaling different stages, clues, and configurations of a conversation among interlocutors (Bortfeld, Leon, Bloom, Schober & Brennan, 2001). Such a role takes on an even greater value for EFL students when compensating for lack of vocabulary and/or knowledge of sociolinguistic conventions. In the students' corpus, the word “do” turned out to be one of the most commonly used words largely due to the fact that the learners overused the expression “I don't know” as a conversation filler that, in most cases, achieved some form of function and in others, just hindered communication. Predominantly, “do” was used as a filler in expressions like “I don't know” to allow time to recall words, expressions, or linguistic resources and maintain the flow of conversation as evidenced in the two extracts below:

RD22: [...] Reject this kind of people, but I think that I respect all that, I think that it is normal. I think that we have to be... **I don't know**... be tolerant but I think it's another word but the society I think this is we get mad because of that. The society is gonna be worst and worst and worst they **I don't know** for me is that.

MM18: He tried to punch the other guy, so when you are like that, eh, **how do I say**, like that aggressive, I, I think that means something else. I mean, you should show respect for, for, s-, for other people's preferences. When you get that aggressive, I consider that you are hiding something. (EFLLC)

In the first instance, the speaker is trying to think of the most suitable adjective to describe the way we ought to approach differences. “We have to be ... “I don't know...” buys him time to think of the word he is trying to retrieve or to undergo a selection process among his/her options. Likewise, expressions like “how do you say?” “How do I say?” “I don't know how to say” or “I don't know, how do you say,” were recurrent, suggesting a struggle to recall linguistic items to convey their ideas in a way that would most accurately reflect their original thought as is the case of the second example. “How do I say” was a rhetorical question not only to buy time to think of the word “aggressive” but to structure his/her idea. This embodies the strategies students use to compensate for sociolinguistic shortcomings representing a significant trait of the overall communicative competence and partially explaining the prominent appearance of the word “do” in the students' corpus.

As a discourse marker, “I don't know” draws a distinction between expressing assumptions and stating facts as in “I heard-- I don't know, I guess it was from Dan Deaver, our producer,” where the speaker uses ‘I don't know’ to clarify that s/he is assuming that Dan was the person who provided that

66 | information, or a little more explicitly as in “a former rock singer? I don’t know, does he still sing? Where the speaker actually accompanies his/her uncertainty with a question at the end” (Davies, 2008). The following transcription illustrates the students’ attempt to make such difference in their production.

MM18: [...] We were having, ha, dinner and, and he touched another guy was like, **I don’t know**, maybe twenty, twenty-two years old, no more than that. And, the guy was like, I don’t, Don’t touch me! What are doing? (EFLLC)

The learner is estimating another person’s age by first stating that he does not know it, but announcing that he is going to venture into an approximation with a subsequent “maybe.”

The linguistic possibilities to attain this function are endless, however, more pragmatically frequent responses comprise “must’ve been” to introduce the assumption and the word “around” to have a safe numerical range for his/her inference, for example, “he touched another guy. He must’ve been... I don’t know... maybe around 20, 21” (Davies, 2008). In the following data sample, a similar phenomenon appears to have occurred with respect to approximations and assumptions; this time, predicting future events:

QL20: We are starting in that process; maybe, **I don’t know** ten years or twenty years, people will say ok. He is gay but it doesn’t matter. But now is oh! Is gay and everybody start to making like a noise or gossiping about people and I think that is just because we are starting with this open-minded process. (EFLLC)

The speaker is once again discounting words like “about” to make the approximation and “in” to signal a prediction into the future as well as awkwardly repeating the word “years.” Accordingly “maybe in... I don’t know... about ten or twenty years” would have been a better choice considering the occurrences of closely similar structures regularly fulfilling the same function in spoken English (Davies, 2008). The former extract is also grammatically lacking thus making the text particularly difficult to understand and unveiling a significant, this time corresponding, relation between grammatical accuracy and pragmatic linguistic success; however, being able to resourcefully incorporate those structures takes time, practice and most importantly, some sort of regular exposure to such sociocultural conventions.

Occasionally, “I don’t know” promotes interaction welcoming questions, opinions, and contributions from other participants in the construction of a collective standpoint “I don’t know, what you think? I love that one” (Davies, 2008) where the speaker lets others know that a particular claim is, by no means, irrefutable as shown below.

SB06: Well I think that is like a previous knowledge that we have because a with the live to the Jesus in the Earth, ha, he (oh, let me), ha, he like ha, give,

gave at some, ha, values, some issues that we must do or we must not do in order to, to follow certain, certain, certain things in the religion, well I think that it can be like a, like a restriction that they have in order to, to, to exalt, I'm not sure if is the correct word, but in order to exalt his name, ha, eh saving some, eh purity, **I don't know**

RD22: Aaa yeah. Well, we was we are talking about sexual preferences and if you think that the person born with that...**I don't know**...thinking that like women or men or some like that. What do you think about it? (EFLLC)

Despite the grammatical difficulties, the students achieve a discursively understandable utterance where they explain their beliefs and make them open for discussion by saying “I don't know,” at the end of a statement, giving the other participants the opportunity to step in to agree, disagree or elaborate on it. The second situation accompanies this attempt with an explicit request for the other participants' opinions. This function nurtures the conversation as it invites questions and comments and boosts the flow of interchange when the main objective may not only be the making of a claim but rather talking about it.

In the same way, “I don't know” between ideas may also serve as a sort of appositive providing the conditions to describe, exemplify, nominate, and define within accounts as in “Like a cable comic whose act is, I don't know, anti-Semitic jokes or racist jokes or they are just a ...” (Davies, 2008). The sample below illustrates a number of instances in which “I don't know” is being used to create a pair of parentheses for clarification, idea development or support.

CS08: I know something, there are a lot of people that have the skills or the ability to, to be a singles during eh, complete life but also, **I don't know**, maybe you, ha, I believe that everyone, everywhere has a, a heart and in some specific time you, you have to, to the, to the hope, to the wishes, **I don't know**, to, to, to create a family to, to, to, have, ha, daughters, sons, kiss somebody, a beautiful, eh, girl, I don't know, so, ehm well. I am a Christian people, so, ehm when, when I see the “pastors” I see like a, a man as, as men. Yeah? and involve all aspects in your life, family. (EFLLC)

Herein, “I don't know” introduces potential reasons as to why priests could and should get married. Addressing the controversial issue at hand, the students elaborate their opinions on personal beliefs and make them evident by including “I don't know” in their utterance. Likewise, the next student demonstrates their use of “I don't know” to nominate examples related to the topic, “ways to win a girl over”:

CS08: Yes, I have a case, is, is, is, is so funny because, eh, my cousin told me hem, that he, he, he was a, a girlfriend, now but she, she was fall in love the, the priest of the ‘La Calera’ church, so, this priest, OK, ehm, start to, to, **I**

don't know, how to say that, conquer this, this girl with, **I don't know**, ehm with letters, with songs, with something like that... (EFLLC)

In the excerpt above the student realizes that the word "conquer" may not accurately convey his/her idea and compensates by using examples.

Likewise, the expression is commonly used to indicate a continuum: there could possibly be additional examples or instances but, for some reason, they are going to be left unsaid as in the example from COCA "someone, an ambulance... a doctor... I don't know" (Davies, 2008) the intervention below, reflects a similar intention.

MM18: No I suppose that ... if you are gay and then you have children or, **I don't know**. Then maybe then, you, you transmit that to your children, but I, actually, no, I have no idea. (EFLLC)

Herein, the expression "I don't know" goes after stating an instance in which a gay individual could become a parent thus serving as a gateway for other instances like adopting, surrogate mothers, etc. with feebleness and vagueness in an attempt at diplomatic uncertainty as to the case being made. In the next excerpt, for example, the student is naming instances which provide role models for people; s/he mentions a couple and then says "I don't know" to subsequently continue the list.

QL20: Yeah I think that we follow models but we really is a, a space when in our lives when we realized that something, that parents or church or **I don't know**, or school say around, and we start to change it, our mind, even we have the models because some gays or lesbians people have mother and father, maybe they never divorce, get divorced. (EFLLC)

This could suggest that the "I don't know" bought time for additional examples to be triggered and that had s/he not been able to evoke other cases, the sentence would have probably ended with "I don't know" meaning there are more items but they are going to be left unsaid.

Even though "I don't know" as a filler and as a discourse marker may represent resourceful strategies to compensate for linguistic deficiencies, it can also become an obstruction in speech patterns.

RD22: Traditional and is hard to be eee or for most of the people this country accept that kind of people and accept that well even he, that person is gay or not, is a person and he has the right, her has the right or she has the right, sorry. Amm to be birth they want and if was we have to respect that, I think we are so ammm **I don't know** ammm we miss we miss that part of the other continent I think that.

RD22: Yeah, but of course, I think of course they are going to, the kid, are going to ask, ask they why he have aaa two guys, two girls and why he or her have a different kind of family, that the others **I don't know**, kids have and so

it depends in the way that they [...] their children and the way that, I don't know ammm and giving an advice and show how is the world and I don't know, it depends on a lot of things, not just because they are gay or they are a marriage gay the kids are going to... (EFLLC)

The previous excerpts, as well as several we have yet to observe, display a persistent occurrence of fillers in short ideas to buy time to retrieve items, express assumptions, welcome questions, and nominate examples; however, this affects the flow of communication. Completely natural conversations are fierce competitions for participation, power, and control in terms of turn taking, floor holding, eloquence and fluency, etc. People are usually unwilling to wait for long pauses between words and ideas in interaction. In this regard Saville-Troike (2003) states that “[...] sounds must be produced in language-specific but regular sequences if they are to be interpreted as a speaker intends; the possible order and form of words in a sentence are constrained by the rules of grammar, and even the definition of a well-formed discourse is determined by culture-specific rules of rhetoric” (p. 10). Unsurprisingly, those who have a higher command of the language already have an advantage. In other words, as members of an “interpretive community,” our EFL learners may have been successful partaking in the interaction with speakers of a similar English proficiency level and socio-cultural background, but may face difficulties functioning in conversations with highly competent speakers from unfamiliar English variations or with different socio-linguistic histories.

Common Socio-cultural Conventions within an Interpretive Community

Certainly, sharing their first language and sociocultural background plays an intricate role in the interactions of students allowing them to code switch, to inquire about a particular word, concept, or at least a doubt and to interpret overgeneralizations of a grammatical or syntactical nature and collective sociocultural conventions at most to, consequently, understand each other's mistakes, silences, intonations and so on and so forth. This brings about a series of perks for the group of EFL learners when interacting in English as being able to corroborate, reassure, support, and correct each other when in doubt about the language itself. The following data sample encompasses some of those phenomena:

AS03: OK, I, I think that get married is very important for a couple, yeah?, and, OK, whatever eh, things ha, the love and the, **ha how do, how do you say** ‘fidelidad?’ Fidelity (participants help), OK, no, and for me the get married for, for Catholic church is a customer, and I don't, I don't agree, eh, I, I don't

agree with, with that because mmm, customer is a, is a traditional, I don't know, and for me the, the best way for, for, for live, **I don't know**, with, with some, with some eh, in my case, eh, man, is a, OK, there are, there are mmm, eh, a good eh, thumbs and, and, and things and and, eh, those, OK, the, the religion is not a, a, a, a, **I don't know**, I'm confused with that, mmm, is, is not mandatory for do that, yeah? The, there are a lot of eh, eh, important, eh, important things in that, in that, in that, eh, in that case. (EFLLC)

To begin with, the speaker is unable to recall a word for “faithfulness” and code-switches to inquire about it and effectively obtains a word that closely conveys his/her idea from his/her interlocutors. ‘Fidelity’, the term s/he takes from the audience, is a transparency from the Spanish cognate *‘fidelidad’* and the word ‘fidelity’ is generally recurrent in magazines, newspapers, and academic English (Davies, 2008). Even though it met the immediate communicative needs this discourse community had, it was not exactly the most suitable for the contextual situation. Successively, the student uses wrong words, erroneous word forms and repetitive fillers like “I don't know” but manages to make him/herself understood. Towards the end of the quote, the student uses “I don't know,” again, this time followed by “I'm confused,” to actually express uncertainty as to where s/he stands on the matter. Despite all the aforesaid inadequacies in speech production, the communication successfully continued to be supported by the conventions the participants shared and co-constructed in interaction. The down side to this, though, is that sometimes pragmatic and linguistic development emerges as a result of the linguistic awareness that break-downs in communication bring about. In other words, if you are being understood despite your grammatical mistakes and pragmatic failures, it becomes problematic for you to pinpoint the right or wrong uses of linguistic resources for particular contextual situations and hence to adjust them to the sociocultural norm. In an early intervention displayed below, for example, the words “priest” and “prediquing” were introduced by one of the participants

CS08: I don't know how do you say ‘sacerdote’ in English, **‘priest’**? Sorry teacher, **priest**, ehm, eh. OK, this priest eh, has a girlfriend but they give the **‘prediquing’** in the church, so is, is so damned because Jesus come the world to, to share all aspects of our life, so is damned that, that people can't get married. I think that. (EFLLC)

Even though the student knows the word “priest,” s/he seeks confirmation from the other conversation participants. Once s/he gets ratification from the group with a simple “yeah” or nonverbal nodding, s/he backs up to incorporate it and restate his/her sentence all over again in the target language making it a much more significant communicative event. The word in this case is a piece of a puzzle and when it fits right, the speaker, as well as the

interlocutors, are able to see the whole picture in the target language as an integral communicative act making sense of the interrelations among sociolinguistic constituents. In a later intervention though, both words recur in conversation

CS08: Yes, I have a case, is, is, is, is so funny because, eh, my cousin told me em, that he, he, he was a, a girlfriend, now but she, she was fall in love the, the **priest** of the ‘La Calera’ church, so, this **priest**, OK, ehm, start to, to, I don’t know, how to say that, conquer this, this girl with, I don’t know, ehm with letters, with songs, with something like that, and the girl broke up with my cousin because, she, she, she said him “Oh no, I, I am fall in love him, to the priest,” so, is so ridiculous but is so funny because in the, in Calera, town nobody knows the relationship between the, this girl and the priest, and the priest, ehm, continue ehm, “**predique**,” I don’t know, in the church. (EFLLC)

“Priest,” the word that had already been validated as the right word for that particular purpose, is used with confidence and without reiteration. “Predique” on the other hand, never receives a negative response in previous conversations so the student continues to use it as a word for “preach.” Since this is an adaptation from Spanish (which all participants in the conversation speak), the message is well understood. Had there been a breakdown in communication, the speaker would have had to pursue ways to make his/her speech comprehensible and through trial and error refine his wording to an accurate phrasing potentially embracing his failure for the improvement of his/her performance.

Conversely, there were also situations in which the learner showed him/herself to be well aware of the mistake and strategically chose a word that closely resembled his/her idea letting others know that s/he was not using the most appropriate word and perhaps seeking collaboration:

QL20: We lost our cell phone and maybe you have the... **I don’t know**, like... the recognition of the passwords in our cell phones; people would take our cell phones can take a lot of information connection right? (EFLLC)

In this excerpt, the student says “I don’t know” to signal uncertainty and the word “like” to make an approximation. Although the actual message is ambiguous, the speaker successfully asserts his/her indecision about the most appropriate word. In a similar vein, the samples below show a more explicit elaboration of such intention.

MD16: I think is some kind of Eh advantage well I **don’t... I... I don’t know which is the word, which is the best word** to, to use in that case, but I think I’m advance Eh because my my age, so, so happy with it and well, I, when I was like in excuse me, when in thou in in twenty nine months Uhm well Eh well five years ago doesn’t matter. Uhm five years ago, I started to well, to to play guitar.

EA10: Yeah, true you are not gonna have a... a relationship, not relationship but **I don't know if is the right way to say that** but relationship. (EFLLC)

The speakers explicitly say that they do not know if they are using the most appropriate word for the case they are trying to make because even though there are words and structures that seem grammatically correct ["Language reflects the context in which it is used. We adapt our speech to suit our audience and talk differently to children, customers and colleagues. The purpose of talk will also affect its form" (Holmes, 1992, p. 285)] language use is contingent on pragmatic features which are hardly limited to only their meaning but which also signal ways they should be employed—like a manual with instructions on when to say what to whom and how.

EA10: If I has enough time to maybe working in another thing or learning or study in something I tried to take the time to do that, because the job **permit** me to do this yeah?

EA10: So for that reason I'm... I'm saying that; that Catholic influences the the culture and the culture don't do or don't **permit** that kind of behavior yes? (EFLLC)

The word "permit," for instance, is not commonly used in spoken, natural interaction; however, it is appropriate in academic contexts which make it pragmatically appropriate for scholarly papers, public speeches, scientific publications, etc. as in "Donoghue envisions that the PhyloCode will permit a scientist to name any clade that seems important" (Davies, 2008). There are other synonyms of the word better suited for informal conversations like "allow," or "let happen," and this use of the word "permit" in their interaction is mainly connected to the fact that it resembles the Spanish cognate *permitir*.

In sum, in these guided conversations, environments were created where the participants, consciously or unconsciously, recognized English as the language to be spoken and made a point to speak it. The creation of such an environment propelled a series of opportunities to use language for real communication needs like validation, reiteration, inquiry, clarifications, and requests around and about the communicative event at hand or language related matters. The students were reminded of particular words or phrases and maintained interaction in collaboration. However, they relied on common sociolinguistic conventions when their own English knowledge proved inadequate to fulfill their communicative intentions and that not always led to the learning or acquisition of the target language.

Forms and Functions of Agreement and Disagreement

In higher-order thinking, being able to argumentatively disagree is an invaluable practice that allows you to voice a stance in direct opposition to others yet still

highly respect the impact of the claim, previously provided information, the diplomacy with which it should be delivered, the relevance of the argument, and the sequencing or structuring of the contention. Multiple linguistic resources varying in complexity level, form, and function are often used to attain or closely meet such purposes. In the case of our EFL students, the word “do” was repeatedly associated with expressions of agreement and disagreement.

Pragmatically speaking, the impact of disagreements depends directly on the resourcefulness exhibited to involve denotations of quantity and degree in the statement. Expressions like “I don’t agree,” in the first intervention, fundamentally and safely achieve discrepancy in a general manner while failing to provide the implications that expressions like “I totally disagree” or “I strongly agree” would provide.

EA10: (...) If they’re homosexual eh, or lesbian homosexual, ha both are the same. And I am not ha I... I don’t agree with that idea.

MM18: I, I, don’t think that that’s, that’s an excuse for the, for our levels. That, I mean, I completely disagree with that. (EFLLC)

The excerpts above display two accounts of disagreement, each with its own characteristics. Unlike in the first participation, the use of the word “completely” in the second serves to quantify the amount by which the speaker disapproves. Similarly, “completely/entirely/totally agree,” “agree one hundred percent,” or “couldn’t agree more,” are common utterances that accomplish full agreement, but differ from “strongly agree,” by indicating emotions and intensity. (Davies, 2008) These wide-ranging expressions touch the extremes of agreement and disagreement, and others like “I somewhat agree,” “I don’t necessarily agree,” “I don’t quite agree,” etc. (Davies, 2008) appeal to partial acceptance and are also scarcely found in the students’ linguistic repertoire or hardly ever retrieved and employed in discursive situations. This signals a shortcoming in these students’ ability to modify structures to convey particular degrees of agreement or disagreement.

A subsequent characteristic of agreement and disagreement appears to be the ability to elaborate supplementary details.

AS03: [...] And for me to get married for, for Catholic church is a customer, and **I don’t, I don’t agree, eh, I, I don’t agree** with, with that because mmm, customer is a, is a traditional. (EFLLC)

Although the speaker clearly establishes his/her difference about marriage and goes even further by trying to provide reasons for his/her position, s/he is unable to retrieve the right word. S/he uses the word “customer” instead of “custom” but strategically adds the synonym “traditional” which, even though it is in the wrong form, reinforces the information thus ensuring a degree of understanding at the other end of the conversation. The former resembles a pragma-linguistic failure where the linguistic resources available

74 | prove inadequate to communicate an idea, accompanied by an elaborate to argue a claim. This attempt compensates for the potential deficiencies, and that, in itself, is a complex communicative as well as cognitive endeavor.

The participant below correspondingly used communicative strategies to satisfy the need to offer details to enhance understanding and support a viewpoint.

MM18: I consider that religion is like uhm like like the process of doing certain things in order to ha, in order to gain something or to obtain something from God, and **I don't believe** that. I, I, I, believe more in something like a relationship with God.

MM18F: Mean that for me is completely different. So, that's why I say that **I don't believe** in religion at all. I don't like I hate it, actually. (EFLLC)

The conceptualization s/he elaborates about religion leads to a stance of divergence from his/her own personal beliefs and prepares the grounds to discuss the characteristics that s/he rejects regarding religion. This pragmatics of English as their foreign language shapes meaning by adding impact, providing solace, and adding the negotiation of meaning when their linguistic repertoire is particularly lacking.

Not only does attempting to agree or disagree involve diverse connotations and ways to support ideas, but it also requires the ability to consider previously delivered information. On the topic of religion, for instance, these students addressed discrepancies in relation to one another's opinions.

RL24: But I think it, that, that's, that depends on the person. Because, ha not, not all, all, all, all the people have the same, ha way of believe in God. For example, ha there are some traditions that when you pass in front of a church you have to makes a cross and **I don't like it, I don't like** to do that.

SR26: I think it's the same it's like the same reason. It's something like to show resp re respect when you are, eh ehcr eh crossing next to the church: I think it's something like that.

RL24M: No the ash cross... **I don't like that... I don't believe it.**

MM18: Just as I said before, I, I think that's tradition and **I respect that from other people**, but, eh to me it has no meaning. (EFLLC)

In the preceding exchange, disagreement takes different shapes. In the first instance, the speaker takes into account previous information to dissolve what appears to be a generalization by clarifying that not all cases are identical and encouraging the participants to factor in discriminating aspects. The word "but" signals an attitude of disagreement preparing the audience for the dissenting nature of the speaker's contribution following her/his disagreement with reasons as to why this is not always the case, appealing to differences in beliefs and citing examples like Ash Wednesday. The next speaker takes part in the conversation by conveying a degree of disagreement with the former

by providing a justification as to why people do what they do. Towards the end of this transcription, the first speaker comes back into the conversation to reaffirm that s/he does not like this particular custom, that s/he respects it, but that it doesn't hold a particular significance for her/him.

By using expressions like “I respect that,” “I don't believe,” and “To me, it has no meaning,” the students achieve diplomacy as they present ways to communicate that their own point is one of many valid points of view and that was very commonly in the corpus of native speakers of English e.g. “I understand that argument and I respect that argument but ladies and gentlemen, if we erode it...”; “you know, I don't believe in coincidences. It may be, but that is something that ...”; “To me, a star player's most important stat is games played” (Davis, 2008). Such configuration of language fosters an environment for open discussion even in the existence of ungrammatical features. This is yet another example of how grammatical and pragmatic principles maintain a close relationship; though, not always in subordinate or corresponding dynamics.

Diplomacy is also achieved in a number of different other ways, for example, it is not uncommon to state something you agree with first to subsequently introduce your disagreement as in “I don't dispute them. What I don't agree with is the charge that...” (Davis, 2008) in this regard the learners used the following expression.

MM18: They gave me the chance and that's what I want to do because I wanna teach! **What I don't agree with is like**, with the, ehm like with the, the I mean the way they do things. They, I mean with English is English teachers are not supposed to be as Spanish teacher. (EFLLC)

With this, s/he is proposing a new structure; rather than using the common “I don't agree with,” the student balances a positive and a negative aspect in his/her argument stating what she/he agrees with followed by “what I don't agree with is” adding a mediating-effect where not everything would be a negative.

Configuring accounts about the past to express disagreement with their own decisions or contemplate external events to take a political stance is yet another component of agreement and disagreement dynamics and is evidenced below:

EA10: Oh! Well because I got the opportunity to work as a English teacher, so I started to do this; I quit my job and I started to teach. It wasn't the best decision that I had. **What do you mean with free?** You don't need to pay for that thing? Ok, so in other words we don't have to pay for educating us right? Yes?

QL20: Ha ha ha.

EA10: Well, that sound good but sometimes we are not appreciated things...

QL20: That are free.

EA10: That are free. Yeah? We are not appreciated them. (EFLLC)

In the first intervention, the student makes a comprehensible assessment of a decision s/he had previously made. S/he successfully conveys a lack of satisfaction about his/her decision by stating that it could have been better. Then, the student inquires about the meaning of the word “free,” mentioned in a previous intervention, to be able to elaborate his/her perspective on free education. S/he shows a degree of disagreement that s/he justifies by suggesting that we tend to take things for granted when they don’t cost us anything. S/he finds validation and support from his/her interlocutor when his/her sentence is completed by someone else. It was also found that the students expressed their agreement and disagreement in regard to likes and dislikes:

QL20: **I don’t really like** the public universities because of that. Because I say ok I go because I need it but if I go to finish my career one or two or three years later than I minded, that’s not good for me. I prefer pay for a career in order to have the time that I have to do it and that’s it. (EFLLC)

There are aspects of the public universities that students do not approve of and to establish that they say, “I don’t like that about public universities.”

Somewhere along the continuum of forms and functions of agreement and disagreement lies the particular ability to express neutrality.

EA10: Well, I think that everybody in the world has something to give me. **It doesn’t matter** if a man or... or woman or if eh, eh, eh, ok **it doesn’t matter** that. I am not taking into account if this is this factor influences me, I don’t think so. I think that that’s because this is a human being and that’s it. I have to a, a maybe I have to receive something from from him, form her or from it I don’t know. (EFLLC)

The sample above represents an attempt to give the benefit of the doubt, to express impartiality, to recognize universal truths about human beings, to support their stance which falls within a wide spectrum of possibilities rather than on the extremes. With word order inconsistencies like “it doesn’t matter that,” rather than “that doesn’t matter” or “it doesn’t matter,” the participant achieves a degree of neutrality in the controversial conversation.

Undoubtedly, the wide-ranging forms of expressing agreement and disagreement encompass countless roles in social interaction, some of which are general and fall short of providing detailed information in communicative acts, while some others are complex reaching multifaceted descriptions of the contentions at hand. The learners were successful in expressing disagreement in general terms; however, pragmatic competence demands a more diversified selection of sociolinguistic resources to be able to modify structures

to adjust degrees, levels, quantities, intensity and intentions of agreements and disagreements.

Word Associations

The ways in which linguistic resources are combined to convey meaning and to make sense of the social world around us represent an important differentiating factor between languages. Roger (1999) states that “Language not only signals where we come from, what we espouse, and to whom we belong, but it also operates tactically and strategically to invest our individual, gender or ethnic franchise” (p. 172). Word-order patterns vary from Spanish to English, for instance, as is the case of questions, infinitive forms, and inversions (etc.). In English, there are additional elements needed for particular structures: an auxiliary is needed for queries or negative statements which alter the syntactical organization of the phrase, whereas Spanish relies heavily on voice intonation and punctuation to discriminate between inquiries and declarative accounts; furthermore, the full infinitive form of English verbs have the extra word “to” as in “I need to learn.” Furthermore, structures like “so do I,” “neither do I,” and “should you have any further questions,” (referred to as inversions) are nonexistent in Spanish linguistic forms. Correspondingly, there are also structures in Spanish which require additional words or different word patterns like articles where English does not necessarily use them as is the case of generalizations e.g. “Children today have less physical activity than they did 10 years ago” (Davis, 2008) Expressing this same idea in Spanish would require an article preceding the noun “children.”

There also exist words that can be omitted in one language but not in the other; in English, for instance, some relative pronouns can be omitted in defining clauses if the pronoun is not the subject of the clause. In Spanish, just one word can convey numerical, grammatical tense, and meaning information and such information is contained within morphemes like the word *comimos* (we ate) which has the pronoun “we” imbedded within it. Moreover, there are sociocultural principles governing word choice and word association in any given language. Social norms and culturally established conventions govern these associations even within variations of the same language: prepositions in British English are employed differently than in American Standard English (on the weekend vs. at the weekend). Hence, an exploration about the pragmatic associations around and about the word “do” became a salient theme in our students’ production.

Out of the total 1400 occurrences of the word “do” in the students’ corpus, 1284 were negations, 4 were instances in the participle form “done,”

78 | and the remaining were affirmative accounts. Additionally, “did” appears 200 times, of which 136 were negative statements. Accordingly, the learners predominantly linked the word “do” to negative connotations largely due to their overuse of the expression “I don’t know” and their underuse of other more socially common expressions such as inversions, emphatic forms, and tag questions, and the misuse of collocations.

AS03: Yeah. In that time, **don’t, don’t, don’t think** in technology, in no.

AS03: But is accustomed.

RL24: When, when, when I lived in Cali with my father, we lived there for three years in a big farm and that was three years without eh, maybe a cinema, without eat hotdog, pizza ... Nothing, yeah. That was, I was disconnect for the, for the real world... No, they ... **there doesn’t exist anything of that ...** I miss a lot of normal things. Sometimes you need ah, some of that things. Maybe if you want to go see a movie, you can go. But, I, I can’t go to any place. Maybe to the pool.

CS08: But, but is.

ZR28: In, in this case, eh, in you go don’t see television, don’t music only. (EFLLC)

The text above is the embodiment of the prevailing use of the negative form of the verb “do” in the corpus. Initially, the lack of vocabulary and speaking practice affects fluency, evidenced in the hesitation and repetition of words like “don’t” three times in the first line. The student’s intervention also resembles Spanish linguist behavior when omitting the personal pronoun “you” to make the generalization “in that time [you] don’t think in technology” and the connection of “think” with the preposition “in” when in spoken English, it is more common to see “think” next to “about” for this particular purpose (Davies, 2008). However, complex structures like “there doesn’t exist anything of that...” similar to “You know, for us there doesn’t exist any problems of settlements,” in Davies (2008) which, statistically speaking, is mostly common in the spoken genre of news reports, are strangely achieved in this particular case.

Consequently, some expressions unveiled Spanish syntax influencing the structuring of ideas in English as shown below:

EA10: Umm I remember when I was around six, **seven years** that my grandma told me that I needed to pray that... How can I say that at night but not in the bed, I had to do this hhahaa stand up right? And it was like a, it was something shocked for me because why? I was around seven years...six years but I was **thinking about... Why do we have to do this**, right? And my grandma had never told me why we have to do this; just you have pray but amm. (EFLLC)
When accounting for somebody’s age, ending the phrase with the

word “year” as in “I was around seven years... six years” is very uncommon in regular spoken English use: you either say “I was around six... seven” or “I was around six... seven years old.” Tense functions also vary between these two languages: the progressive form, for example, appears to be very common in Spanish speech and that translates into the subsequent use of the structure [“but I was thinking about why we have to do this”] which displays a tense disagreement because the speaker is narrating past habits, thus you would probably expect to hear “and I thought to myself ...” or “and I used think...” or “and I would think” ... rather than “but I was thinking about” (Goldstein, 2009; Goldstein, Metcalf, Holley & Norris, 2009).

On the topic of word associations, the students’ corpus revealed some trouble with differentiating the words which are regularly combined with “do” and “make” using them indistinctively and pragmatically inappropriately.

QL20: You try to **do** the best your **effort** most of the time, but they didn’t see anything and you feel frustrated because you are not teaching from seven to three or to seven to four, you are teaching twenty four hours. (EFLLC)

In English, “effort” is not normally linked to the word “do” and the most frequent collocations involving “effort” are “make an effort,” “something takes effort,” “effort is required”; hence, when “effort” has the superlative “best” describing it, it most often appears with ‘make’ as in “Our aspiration may become simply to make our best effort and make it close.” It is not uncommon to see it linked to “give” either like “What I learned from Kevin is you give your best effort and all those things take care of themselves”; or “put” as in “He put in his best effort and lost” (Davies, 2008). “Do the best effort” was not found in Davies’ (2008) corpus which suggests a low frequency use or no use at all; however, the progressive form of the verb “do” is indeed associated with “effort” in the spoken genre as in the following example: “We are doing our best effort and if they are there, we are going to find them” (Davies, 2008).

BY06: I think that it’s a **choice** that they, they **do** in order to do what they want to, to **do** or what they want who with who they want to, to stay but also it depends on the situations or the experience that they have been eh having eh among the time. (EFLLC)

Similarly, the word “do” is rarely accompanying “choice” and ideas about it are usually expressed as “you make a choice”; “you have a choice”; “you also face a choice”; “there is/are (a) choice(s)” or the very common expression “you don’t have much of a choice” (Davies, 2008).

MB17: For example, I wanted a tattoo and my mom told me, ‘If you **do** a **tattoo**, please don’t come back to home.’

CS08: So, if you change your, your, your mind, maybe you can find or go or walk to, to, to **do** your **dreams** come true, maybe no? And, that’s all. (EFLLC)

By the same token, “do” is also mistakenly linked to “tattoo” above in the expression “if you do a tattoo” instead of the more pragmatically accurate structure “if you get a tattoo” for this purpose, and “dreams” in “do your dreams come true” instead of “make your dreams come true” (Davies, 2008). The same is true for the word “issue” in the sample below.

BY06: Well I think that is like a previous knowledge that we have because a with the live to the Jesus in the Earth, ha, he (oh, let me), ha, he like ha, give, gave at some, ha, values, some **issues** that we **must do** or we must not do in order to, to follow certain, certain, certain things in the religion. (EFLLC)

“Issue” is most commonly found close to the verb “to be” in different forms as in “there will be an unspoken issue” (Davies, 2008). You also focus on an issue, you avoid an issue, resolve an issue, face or address an issue or something becomes an issue (Davies, 2008). However, the combination of “issues you must do or must not do” is not used.

Grammatically speaking, some forms resemble an overgeneralization of English rules as is the case of attempting to negate with full infinitives in the next transcription.

EA10: we... we... decide **to don't** have more pets ever, because it was so sad for us and more we were little kids. (EFLLC)

The structure above bears a resemblance to regular English negations where you would need the verb with the auxiliaries *do*, *does*, and *did* as in “I don't like vegetables.” This constitutes a grammatical overgeneralization of such form in the aforesaid sample to negate the infinitive verb after “decide” where the most appropriate organization would have been “I decided not to have more pets.”

In other words, learning lexis does not necessarily yield the expected results in communicative performance. There are sociolinguistic norms governing word combination, sentence structure, representations, and language use in general; regardless of dictionary definitions, the behavior of words is delimited by socio-cultural information which must be acquired in order to become communicatively competent.

Conclusions

Find order for an English learner to appropriately use the word “do” in conversation it is not sufficient simply to know that it serves as a verb as well as an auxiliary. It is equally insufficient to understand only its inflections for tense, plural and singular forms. Countless communication patterns associated with the word “do” were identified as inherent in four general classifications: “do” in discourse markers and conversation fillers; “do” employed to negotiate

meaning in the target language through shared sociocultural conventions; “do” in forms and functions of agreement and disagreement; and “do” in word combinations. Such patterns unveiled ongoing attempts to realize diverse sociolinguistic functions like turn-taking, floor holding, reiteration, validation, clarification, agreement and disagreement. However, many such attempts displayed insufficient linguistic repertoire and/or sociocultural deficiency in the target language and, thus, greatly differed from the sociolinguistic patterns of “do” employed by native speakers of English.

Even though conversation fillers and discourse markers like “I don’t know” allow time for the learner to retrieve linguistic resources, draw differentiations between assumptions and facts, soften statements to signal a level of uncertainty inviting questions, and prepare to introduce supporting elements (e.g. examples, descriptions, and clarifications), their overuse is a disruptive configuration of language which unveils a deficiency in lexicon and linguistic resources.

Methods, channels, means, and properties of communication are conventions collectively constructed by the members of a society engaging in regular sociocultural exchange over the course of time and seeking to meet mutual ends or in pursuit of individual goals (goals that, in one way or another, involve their communities). Nevertheless, such conventions are not limited to language codes but embody cultural knowledge, gestures, beliefs, intentions, etc. Despite the helpful role they played in the interaction of our EFL learners by allowing them to rely on their shared linguistic and sociocultural background for inquiry, validation, interpretation, and reiteration of the target language, they also became hindrances or obstacles which inhibited the shaping forces otherwise exerted on language development via social responses to pragmatic success and failure.

Furthermore, in order to fulfill diversified denotations like diplomacy, neutrality, impact, intensity, quantity, etc., agreeing and disagreeing take on endless forms. Attaining such ample communicative range demands, on the one hand, copious dimensions of linguistic repertoire; and on the other, the ability to adjust such repertoire to the specificities of contextual characteristics. Our EFL learners exhibited elementary forms of agreeing and disagreeing, which allowed them to express the general notion of discrepancy but often fell short of actually conveying comprehensive connotations of that communicative function.

Irrespective of grammatical accuracy and syntactical structuring, word association is governed by sociocultural rules of use. Certain words work better in conjunction with certain other words contingent to circumstantial conditions. For starters, there are words that are common to only selected

82 | communication genres (e.g. academic, spoken, correspondence, etc.); similarly, combining words calls for considerations beyond formulaic understandings of the grammatical functions of the parts of speech and requires a level of acquaintance with the sociocultural communicative conventions pre-established by the communities of practices. The corpus of EFL learners' spoken production revealed a significant level of unfamiliarity with such conventions evidenced in the socially awkward and pragmatically inappropriate associations they made with the word "do."

Considering the social and geographical distance to the target language which limits exposure to the actual use of the language for communication, the second best alternative to understanding language behavior in its social context lies in the examination of actual samples of language used to accomplish communicative functions (corpus) which display a scope of endless possibilities framed within sociocultural guidelines of use. In that respect, the Corpus of Contemporary American English [COCA] (Davies, 2008) illustrates the value that corpus-based resources could potentially offer autonomous learning, or the EFL teaching process, by providing, among others, the following resources:

- a. A tool to sort linguistic items by the actual frequency of use that would allow the learner or teacher to prioritize and enhance lexical acquisition;
- b. A contextualized word sketch discriminating grammatical information on the parts of speech the word represents;
- c. A bank of synonyms and antonyms with the option to create color-coded part-of-speech concordances to get acquainted with its social specificities;
- d. Multi-word queries informing the most common collocates (2- to 5-word sequences);
- e. General and specific contextualized definitions of the word accompanied by potential word alternatives;
- f. Genre-specific examples and frequency of language use; and
- g. Features to trace language shifts in terms of time and space.

Chapter Three

*Doing Research on Classroom
Interaction: Approaches, Studies
and Reasons*

A b o u t t h e A u t h o r

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Doing Research on Classroom Interaction: Approaches, Studies and Reasons

Introduction

Spoken interaction is the set of actions of talking to other people. In those actions, people make statements that hold their ideas, points of view, thoughts, meanings, and intentions (Searle, 1979). We interact with the language that we use to communicate with our family, friends, peers and other people around us. Progressively, we acquire that language with its linguistic, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic characteristics throughout constant use.

Sociolinguists (including Labov, 1972; Jakobson, 1982; Tannen, 1982; and Spolsky, 1998) agree that the places in which we mostly use and learn our mother tongue are social and educational settings such as home, workplace, school, college or university. In such settings, we learn more and more about interacting with our peers and with others. The classroom is also a setting where we exchange our knowledge, thoughts, ideas, points of view, and intentions. Considering the current paradigms of globalization, interculturality, international communication, and business, classroom interactions may not exclusively occur in our mother tongue. Media is promulgated in diverse languages, of which English seems to be the most widespread. According to Crystal (2003), English has achieved a “genuinely global status” since it has developed a social, business, and educational role that people around the world recognize. Hence, we need to learn new languages in order to have broader access to the social, business and educational worlds. In the context from which I write this, that of Colombian academia, Spanish is our first language (L1) while English is the most common target language (TL) to learn, because of its prominence in our social, business, and educational worlds. Learning it has become a true or dire need for those immersed in these worlds.

By taking into account the varied alternatives to learning English in the Colombian context, including language academies, educational institutions, and on-line courses, the most common way to learn it still seems to be the language classroom. In this setting, learners attend a number of classes to interact in the target language in order to learn and/or acquire it competently. In this chapter, by presenting the results of three research projects on language classroom interaction, I provide evidence that talking in this context is composed of varied interaction patterns that the teacher and the learners create, co-construct, and then maintain in line with the context and established conventions of the class. Such interaction patterns are also the evidence of the learners' use of English in the activities that usually happen in this language classroom.

In presenting these studies, I initially talk about four approaches that study language classroom interaction in light of discourse analysis. Afterward, I present three research works on classroom interaction in English language classes under the conversation analysis approach. The first work reveals the influence of Spanish lexicon in English learning in three different classroom settings. The second describes the manner in which the interaction patterns of *asking about content and adding content* occur in the English language classroom. The last work postulates the *request-provision-acknowledgement (RPA) sequence* from an analysis of excerpts in which learners ask teachers for English language equivalents of Spanish lexical items. I also describe the inquiry, questions, objectives, and justification of each work, all along with the corresponding instruments and participants.

The findings, conclusions, and pedagogical implications of these research works come afterward. Now I will state three reasons for doing research on language classroom interaction. The first one explains how research on language classroom interaction can help understand the pragmatics of such interaction. The second describes how research on language classroom interaction can help unveil and define the participants' roles in such interaction. The third reason points out that research into language classroom interaction can help one discover the manner in which language teaching and learning take place. At the end of the chapter, I suggest issues for further research into language classroom interaction.

Language Classroom Interaction

Language classroom interaction is the set of communicative events (conversations or exchanges) that the teacher and the learners co-construct from the context to promote language learning and/or language use (Ellis, 1994). The

instructional-pedagogical purpose of this interaction is to engage the learners in conversations promoting language learning and language use as well as shaping their language in the classroom. These conversations or exchanges take place in different classroom situations (or contexts) in which “the participants alternate turns speaking, appear to understand each other’s intentions, and frame their responses accordingly” (Johnson, 1995, p. 4).

Under this conception, the classroom participants give language the function of being simultaneously the code, the system, and the resource with which they convey meaning, intention, and perform behaviors in interaction (Kurhila, 2006; Gibbons, 2006). Language then brings about meaning that serves to construct interaction in context. In a language classroom, it is through interaction that the learners learn and/or acquire not only the target language but also new knowledge. Therefore, as Long (1983) states, “The language being used is the vehicle and object of study” (p. 67).

Two variables are relevant in understanding language classroom interaction: the content of the interaction and the participants involved in it.

The content of classroom interaction refers to the meaning that the teacher and the learners negotiate throughout the talk. According to Van Lier (1988), the content of classroom interaction can be less/more topic-oriented or more/less activity-oriented, depending on the focus of an activity or the topic of the class. However, for Kasper (as cited in Seedhouse, 2004a), there are only two types of content in a classroom interaction: language-centered (when the focus is the usage of the language) or content-centered (when the focus is the use of the language). Similarly, Hasan (as cited in Seedhouse, 2004a) organizes classroom interaction into formal and informal: the former describes the structures and form of the target language (TL) and the latter the communication within it.

The second variable of classroom interaction concerns the participants in the interaction. Johnson (1994) establishes the teacher-learner interaction in which the teacher controls the content, use of language, and learners’ participation in class. Equally, Johnson (1994) identifies the presence of learner-to-learner interaction. In this type of classroom interaction, the learners use the target language with one another in classroom activities. A third type is the learner-teacher interaction. According to Richards and Lockhart (1994), this type of classroom interaction occurs when a learner volunteers to provide content during a discussion opened for using and/or learning the target language. In the learner-teacher interaction, the learners provide the content; thus, they create the opportunities to use the language in class.

90 | Research on Language Classroom Interaction

Significant research on language classroom interaction has found distinguishable characteristics in the way its participants interact with each other. For example, Lightbown (1983) analyzed the effects of teachers' speech acts on learners' communicative behavior and found that teachers' speech acts are mainly directives and assertives that make the learners perform commanded actions and provide solicited information. Another study is Long and Sato's (1983) and Lewis' (1993) analysis of teachers and learners' questions which they classify in accordance with their function in interaction. They state that questions in the language classroom can be "open" or "closed," echoic or epistemic. Johnson (1995) studied the teachers' enacting verbal/instructional scaffolds. She found that teachers construct knowledge progressively when learners resort to eliciting or requesting them for explanations and/or clarifications about contents in a conversation or the target language use. Long (1996) and Mackey and Philp (1998) studied *recasts* as an opportunity for learners to notice features of the target language. They found that there are positive recasts and negative recasts. The former informs language learners about what is grammatical in the utterance (the correction) while the latter informs about what is ungrammatical in the utterance (the mistake). Van Lier (1988) and Schegloff (2000) examined *repair* in classroom interaction. They postulate four different types of repair: self-initiated self-repair, other-initiated self-repair, self-initiated other-repair, and other-initiated other-repair. A final significant vein of research comes from Krashen's (1982) and Swain's (2000) studies about the *adjusting* and *caring for* input/output between the teacher and the learners. They state that caring evidences the manner in which both share responsibility for maintaining interaction by recognizing or omitting each other's perspectives.

All these studies reveal that both the teacher and the learners display some recurring interaction patterns with their interactive effects when they are trying to communicate in the language classroom. Therefore, the co-constructed language classroom interaction is composed of opportunities to initiate or self-select when to participate, elicit or request explanations and clarifications, recognize others' perspectives, ask the participants' help to construct, reconstruct, or complete utterances in order to continue expressing meaning, and lastly, practice manners of introducing, managing, and closing participation. With all these findings, classroom interaction has truly become an important issue to research in the field of language education.

Along these findings, educational research has inquired about the state of affairs that language classroom interaction can build. As a result, we can find research on three main aspects:

- Institutional practices that have revealed structures of power in classroom interaction (as per Richmond & McCroskey, 1992);
- The manner teachers and learners position themselves as powerful or powerless participants in institutional discourse (for instance see Reda, 2009);
- The analysis of classroom discourse in the need to resist and subvert the structures of power exerted by teachers or learners (as per Rogers, 2004).

In order to study these aspects of classroom interaction, researchers apply a number of approaches in the field of discourse analysis. Four representative approaches are conversation analysis, critical discourse analysis, post-structuralist discourse analysis, and feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis.

The conversation analysis (CA) approach serves to identify patterns of communication and social acts that emerge in language classroom interactions (Schegloff, 1997; Markee, 2000). Cameron (2001b) also agrees on defining CA as an approach to analyze details from data in talk-in-interaction. For these three authors, CA is a data-centered form of discourse analysis whose purpose is to describe and interpret sequential patterns that are observable in language classroom interactions. Below, I will account for CA in more detail since the three research works I present in this chapter rely on this approach.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has roots in the fields of rhetoric, text linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, socio-psychology, cognitive science, literary studies, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and pragmatics (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA belongs to Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) because it sees language as a form of social practice in which social and political domination is reproduced (Fairclough, 2001).

The difference between CA and CDA resides in the orientation of the problem and the way to analyze it. While CA focuses primarily on the patterns of communication or interaction in language in use to unveil the social functions of such patterns, CDA studies the social phenomena in terms of the ritual and institutional practices by revealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies (Fairclough, 1995).

CDA is a relevant approach to study language classroom interaction since it prompts the revelation of the relations of power between teachers and learners, or among learners, through the analysis of their interaction and social

92 | exchanges. In such a way, CDA mainly helps discover power and resistance in the occurring interaction in the classroom, in discipline as a package of power, different types of pedagogical violence to exercise power, students' subjugation practices and behaviors, and to make sense the manner the classroom actors construct and express meaning.

Besides CDA, post-structuralist discourse analysis (PDA) describes and illuminates the manner in which participants of a discursive event "position themselves or by the others as powerful or powerless by competing in the social or institutional discourse" (Baxter, 2002, p. 829). In other words, PDA seeks to unveil how an individual positions or repositions the other(s) as powerful in certain moments and as powerless in other moments through discursive acts. The analysis then focuses on how individuals negotiate and shape their subject positions by multiple subjectivities and through discourse during a discursive event. Situation that can also happen in classroom interaction. PDA has three principles (Baxter, 2002, 2003). The first is skepticism towards universal causes. It states that the "will to truth" is also a "will to power." In other terms, the "superior" knowledge of an individual about the world enables him/her to hold power over the others and their "inferior" knowledge. The second principle is the contestation of meaning in which there is no fixed meaning in the competing forms of knowledge. Therefore, participants continuously negotiate and contest meaning through language and discourse (this can happen in the classroom interaction). The last PDA principle is the discursive construction of subjectivity. This principle establishes that in the construction of discourse, human identities are constructed. Therefore, the formation and reformation of identities is a continuous process, accomplished through actions and discourses in which individuals can have different subject positions in different discursive contexts.

Another representative approach in the field of discourse analysis of classroom interaction is the feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis (FPDA). This approach has two bases: a vision of feminism, and a vision of post-structuralism. Both are connected conceptually and pragmatically against other visions of discourse analysis (Baxter, 2003). In essence, FPDA is the counter-discourse to, or the unified liberating voices against, the discourse of elites established in CDA. Its main goal is to analyze discourse in pursuit of the need to understand, resist, and subvert structures of power.

FPDA follows three principles (Baxter, 2003). The first is the functional belief in a universal cause. The analysis of discourse following this principle seeks to transmit or inculcate a *liberatory* knowledge that means making people aware of their subjugation by consciousness raising and by equipping them with the tools to seek freedom from all forms of oppression.

The second principle is the notion that the personal is political. This principle centers on people's experiences to gain self-knowledge and give expression to their subjectivity. The third FPDA principle is the search for a common voice expressing a cause. This principle seeks to unite in the common cause a group of confronting power structures of oppression, the voices, arguments, and demands for change. The unified voice competes with power to make it realize what it is to be subjugated.

As stated, these four approaches belonging to what calls "the umbrella of discourse analysis" have enormously contributed to the understanding of interaction and the state of affairs it brings to the language classroom. Research with these approaches has then revealed the social acts, the structures of power, classroom participants' positions, and the need to resist and subvert their structures of power in the institutional practices in language classroom interaction.

Three Research Works in Language Classroom Interaction

In this section, I present three research works that I have conducted on language classroom interaction. They reveal a likely Spanish lexical influence in the occurring interaction in English language classrooms, the manner in which the interaction patterns of *asking about content* and *adding content* occur in the language classroom, and the way in which learners ask teachers for the English language equivalent of a Spanish lexical item. The three research works follow the CA principles. This methodology provides help in determining how teachers and learners act and use language to interact in the classroom setting.

Conversation analysis in language classroom interaction

Schegloff (1997), Markee (2000), and Cameron (2001b) define CA as an approach that closely analyzes details in talk-in-interaction to describe and interpret emergent sequential patterns. According to Seedhouse (2004a), several studies under the CA approach have provided linguistic findings in classroom interaction, although CA's primary interest resides in its social acts. This situation has created two branches. The first is Linguistic Conversation Analysis (LCA). It studies linguistic aspects of interactions from data themselves without taking into account the context in which they emerge. The second is Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis (ECA). Its primary interest is in the social acts that occur in interactions and only marginally in language. Schegloff (1988), Cameron (2001b), and Seedhouse (2004a) understand

social acts as all those utterances, or set of utterances, that serve as a function in communication and that are packaged and delivered in linguistic terms. In other words, social acts are the language that participants use, with its communicative functions to interact in a determined context. In CA, understanding and interaction are inseparable. Understanding is “a continuous, dynamic process, which is constructed and modified in and through interaction” (Kurhila, 2006, p. 19).

Seedhouse (2004a) proposes five sequential stages in the research process of ECA:

1. Unmotivated looking for discovering new phenomena in interaction;
2. Inductive search for a collection of instances of the phenomenon;
3. Establishment of regularities and patterns that unveil the occurrences of the phenomenon and the manner in which the participants methodically produce them;
4. Detailed analysis of the phenomenon for explicating its rational organization and normativity;
5. Generalized account of the phenomenon in the broader matrix of the interaction.

By following these stages, CA researchers can analyze details in talk-in-interaction to reveal emergent sequential patterns, the same ones that are delivered linguistically, and with communicative functions in a determined context.

Seedhouse (2004a) also highlights four main principles of ECA research:

- Seeking to identify and describe the organization of social acts in talk-in-interaction, and the manner in which the interactants produce, develop, and maintain them.
- Visualizing interaction as a systematically organized and rational construction due to the interactants’ active decisions concerning what is occurring. In such a way, any turn at talk becomes a display of a cognitive, emotional, and attitudinal state, as well as a display of the analysis of context and previous turns in the sequence.
- Seeing interaction as context-shaped and context-renewed. As a result, the analysis of data must treat utterances in interaction by reference to context and assumptions about the other interactant, and not merely literally.
- Unveiling patterns of communication in transcribed excerpts of interaction to determine the interactants’ empirical orientation towards the interaction. Patterns of communication determine how

participants understand and respond to one another in their turns at talk, with a central focus on how they construct the sequences.

By following these sequential stages and principles, I was able to determine additional interaction patterns between teachers and learners in the English language classroom. At this point, it is pertinent to clarify that neither of the three research works I present in this section contained any intervention since my participation in the interaction or any manipulation of the context may have altered the natural structure of the interaction in progress. In agreement with Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), the purpose of a descriptive study, as my three research works are in essence, seeks to identify, classify, and describe the results that data illustrate in the interaction, without any manipulation of the context.

First research work: the influence of students' Spanish lexicon in English language classes.

Recent research on language education has determined that language learners tend to use their first language (L1) as a tool to create interaction in second language (L2) classes, as the studies compiled in Ritchie and Bathia (2009) and the work of Ellis and Shintani (2013) evidence. These studies demonstrate that learners predominantly use their L1 to find equivalents in the L2 lexicon and grammatically construct ideas in the L2. According to Krashen (1982), this can be the result of asking learners to produce earlier in their L2 learning process, which makes them eventually fall back on their L1. However, as Jackendoff (1983) states, learners can use their L1 to comprehend L2 when the learning actions demand the understanding and interpretation of linguistic and sensory units of meaning in both languages. Those units of meaning are the language lexicon. They can be words, multi-words, poly-words, collocations, and institutionalized expressions (Lewis, 1993).

In L2 classes where Spanish is the learners' L1, as is the case of this research work, I noticed that the learners tended to use the lexicon of this language when interacting in English (the L2 language), a situation that sometimes made interaction difficult to construct. Consequently, my first research work sought to determine the way learners used the Spanish lexicon, the occasions in which they most used it and its influence in the L2 language classroom interaction. The objectives sought to identify the classroom interactions in which learners used Spanish lexicon as a means for understanding and communicating meaning in the L2, and for identifying how such use influenced their classroom language interaction.

This research work did not delve into Spanish interferences, but into establishing whether the use of Spanish lexicon in English classes helped learners achieve higher understanding and communication of meaning in language classroom interaction. With this research work, I wanted to highlight the importance of providing language teachers with relevant information concerning the learners' use of Spanish lexicon in English classes so that it could serve as a starting point to reflect upon how interaction in the English classroom occurred when students fall back on Spanish.

This research work followed the systematization of experiences approach (Macintyre, 2002). It is a process of describing, comprehending, interpreting, and then conceptualizing actions or partaking in experiences. The approach has six stages: problem identification, evaluation, conclusions and recommendations, application/practice, reflection, and consideration of new inquiries. As the objective of this first research was to identify the classroom interactions in which learners used Spanish lexicon when interacting in English and its influence in such interaction, I followed only the first three stages of the systematization of experiences. The instruments of data collection were audio-recordings and transcripts of learners' use of Spanish lexicon while interacting in English in class. I collected data during the second semester of 2005 and the first semester of 2006.

The participants were forty-three adults and fifty-two teenagers. The adult learners belonged to two classes, each at a different language academy. One class was of an advanced level (the B2 level in the Common European Framework of Reference–CEFR), and the other of an intermediate level (the B1 in CEFR). They were all undergraduates who were learning English for personal or professional reasons. In total, thirteen sessions of two hours each were recorded for these participants, two sessions per month, approximately. The teenage learners belonged to two different schools. Both classes were of high school students (eleventh graders) at intermediate level (the B1 in CEFR). They were learning English as part of the school curriculum that had a bilingual approach. In total, nine sessions of one-and-a-half-hours each were recorded for these participants, one session per month.

The approach to analyzing the interactions in data was Linguistic Conversation Analysis – LCA. This approach analyses linguistic aspects of interactions from data without taking into account the context in which they emerge (Seedhouse, 2004b). The study of Spanish lexicon use for the understanding or communication of meaning in English classroom interactions demands the syntactic analysis of words, multi-words, poly-words, collocations, and institutionalized expressions of both languages while L2 learners interact in class. Hence, I transcribed the twenty-two audio-recorded

sessions in those moments when Spanish lexicon occurred in such interaction. Subsequently, I analyzed those moments to identify how the learners' use of Spanish lexicon influenced their interaction in English in class.

Results. Lucero, Penagos, and Granados (2006) compiles the findings of this first research work. The results initially indicate that Spanish lexicon influences language classroom interaction in aspects of lack of success, failure, affection, interference, and age. These results agree with studies done by Rivers (1983), Ellis (1994), and Gass & Schachter (1996) on the manner in which L1 accompanies L2 learning and use. Therefore, the results corroborate that not all the learners enjoy or achieve equal success in learning English because of their age, personality, motivation, learning attitude, and the form of learning the new language. Having observed learners with different ages, at different contexts, and at two different CEFR levels gives evidence of these results.

In addition, the participants use Spanish lexicon to learn the meaning of an English lexical item in two distinctive moments of interaction: (a) when they need to understand the full word-by-word meaning of a sentence in English, and (b), when they need to communicate meaning in this language.

In the first moment, they say aloud in Spanish the text they read or listen to in English. When they run across an English lexical item that they do not recognize, the teacher becomes the interpreter and the source of knowledge since the learners permanently ask him for the meanings they do not understand in the sentences they read or listen. The following examples from data give an account of this moment:

- The class topic was favorite movies in the adult group. The learners were reading the plot of a movie. Despite the text was in English, The majority of the learners were reading aloud in Spanish. The text said, "This movie is about a New York man who travels to Boston and meets a woman there..." As they were pointing to each word of the text with their fingers, they were saying aloud, *"esta película es acerca de un hombre de Nueva York quien viaja a Boston y se encuentra una mujer allí..."* Later, in the same text, they ran across with the word "luggage." Immediately, they called the teacher and asked him *"Teacher, ¿qué es luggage?"* This situation continued throughout the whole text.
- The class topic was personal information in the teenagers' class. The teacher was asking them about their age. She asked a learner, "How old are you?" She asked the teacher *"¿que cómo estoy?"* The teacher replied, "Your age, dear." The learner then answered, "ahh, teacher, sixteen."

In the second moment, when the learners need to communicate meaning in English, the Spanish lexicon generated a process of transfer from Spanish into English. It was noticeable in three particular processes:

- Omission of pronouns, auxiliaries, and lexical items (e.g. “*es importante*”/“is important,” “[*yo*] *fui al parque*”/“went to the park,” “*yo he ido antes*”/“I gone before”).
- Spanish-like sentence structure or word order (e.g. “*me pasas una hojita por fa*”/“you give a paper please”/“can you give me a piece of paper, please?” “*enfrente del tablero esta el professor*”/“in front of the board is the teacher”/“the teacher is in front of the board”).
- Incorrect use of pronouns (e.g. “*el libro es de él*”/“the book is of he”/the book is his, “*esta maleta es de ella*”/“this bag is of she”/“the bag is hers”).

The frequency of the learners’ use of Spanish lexicon to learn the meaning of an English lexical item, either to understand the full word-by-word meaning of a sentence in English or to communicate meaning in this language, then depends on four factors:

- Teacher’s methodology. As the teacher pushes the participants into speaking, they are more aware of the need of using English for interacting in class, although the sentences they constructed might display certain amount of Spanish lexicon, which may progressively disappear throughout more use of English. On the contrary, if the teacher allows the use of Spanish, the learners’ interest in communicating in English decreases, promoting less English learning.
- Incomprehensible input. The more the class presents the learners with sophisticated vocabulary and unfamiliar words in English, the more they tend to use Spanish lexicon in their interactions.
- Unfamiliarity with English lexical items. When the learners are constructing sentences to express meaning and do not know the English equivalents, they ask for them in Spanish.
- Student-student interaction. The participants seldom speak in English among themselves when there is no teacher monitoring.

In sum, the results of this first research work reveal that the learners use Spanish lexicon for communication needs such as associating and negotiating meanings in English, asking for and understanding referential meanings of lexical items and confirming English grammatical structures and teacher’s requests. It mostly happens when they need to understand the full word-by-word meaning of a sentence in English and when they need to communicate meaning in this language. This use reveals the learners’ ability to make lexical and grammatical judgments, which depends on the input of and familiarity

with English lexical items. The more associations they can make between the two languages, the more able they seem to be to negotiate meaning in English. If it does not happen, it may influence language classroom interaction to the extent of leading the learners into using Spanish lexicon for communication needs and referential meanings when asked to speak in English, which constitutes a large use of language transfer, as Gass & Schachter (1996) demonstrate in their work, too.

Second research work: asking about content and adding content.

This work analyzed utterances from John R. Searle's theory of speech acts (1979) in order to find distinctive interaction patterns in teacher-learner conversations. This second research work expands the previous one in detailing the interaction patterns that emerge between teacher and learners in the English language classroom, the moment they occur, and the manner in which the utterances that comprise those interaction patterns possibly influence interactants' interactional behavior. Additionally, the inquiry came out of existing studies of different interaction patterns in L2 classroom interaction, such as learners' participation prompts, clarification requests, repairs, recasts, and managing of classroom interaction through adjacency pairs and sequences. Although the preliminary observations presented all these interaction patterns, it was not plainly explicit at what moments these structures emerged, or what influence the utterance-by-utterance development of these structures' might exert on teacher and learners' interactional behavior.

Consequently, this second research work pursued three objectives. The first was to identify what interaction patterns with what utterances emerged in teacher-learner interactions. The second objective was to describe when and how the teacher and learners co-constructed and developed those interaction patterns. The last objective was to identify the potential influence that the utterances of those interaction patterns had on the teacher and learners' interactional behavior.

The participants consisted of a university-level class of 24 learners whose ages ranged from 19 to 26. Their first language was Spanish. They were at intermediate level of English (the B1 in CEFR). Apart from attending this class to learn English, they were majoring in either business management, accounting, or economics. I selected this class because of two reasons: Its learners possessed linguistic and pragmatic abilities to use English communicatively according to their English language level and the activities of the syllabus for this class sought for using English to describe, suggest, express,

100 | and deal with information in various communicative functions and uses. I observed and video-recorded twelve sessions of two hours each during an academic period of sixteen weeks.

Different from the first research work in which the linguistic conversation analysis (LCA) was applied, this second research work followed the process of analyzing data from the Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis (ECA) approach (Seedhouse, 2004a; 2004b). With ECA, it was possible to describe and analyze the social acts in talk-in-interaction, and not simply the linguistic aspects of interactions in the data. Thus, the analysis for this second research work was data-driven and context-situated, following the ECA principles and procedures described two sections above (conversation analysis in language classroom interaction). In order to reinforce the ECA approach, I also applied the speech acts analysis proposed by Thornbury and Slade (2006). With this second data analysis approach, I revealed with more detail the influence of the utterances on the interactants' interactional behavior. I observed, video-recorded, and transcribed twelve 2-hour sessions of the same class during the second academic period in 2010, a class weekly. As a researcher, I was a non-participant observer in both the activities and planning of this class.

Results. The detailed analysis of the transcribed sessions of this second research work revealed the constant co-construction of two interaction patterns between the teacher and the learners: (a) asking about content, and (b) adding content (Lucero, 2011; 2012).

Asking about content. This interaction pattern consists of a learner's question directed to the teacher for an explanation or clarification about the content of a linguistic exercise. The pattern constantly emerged at any time during a session either when the learners were doing linguistic exercises (such as pronunciation drills and grammar-focused exercises) or when the teacher was correcting the answers of those exercises with the learners (corrections on lexical items, grammar structures, and pronunciation). In this interaction pattern, the interchange of utterances does not focus on the rehearsal of grammar or pronunciation drills but on understanding the content of the drills or linguistic exercises. The content that the learner asked about became the topic of the interaction.

The speech act analysis showed six speech acts that the teacher and the learner in interaction maintained every time the pattern of *asking about content* emerged in class. I exemplify the speech acts of this interaction pattern in Table 6 below.

Table 6. *Speech Acts in the interaction pattern of asking about content.*

Interaction	Structure	Speech Acts
[[The teacher is correcting a linguistic exercise of <i>passive voice</i> with the whole class]] T: ...yes their product was placed. Placed is also a verb. Was placed. (3 sec.) Clear?	The learners are doing the exercise or the teacher is correcting the exercise.	
L: no. When do you when do you: use eh... was is the: the product they they?	a. A learner asks the teacher for explanation.	1. Chipping-in 2. Eliciting
T: because you refer to the product: Yes. To the product. You TALK about the product. They is not. They is not, you just refer to the product, and the product is singular. And then the computers were made. Clear? [[The teacher addresses to the whole class]] (6 sec.)	b. The teacher provides the learner with the explanation.	3. Answer initiating 4. Explaining or Clarifying 5. Closing
L: yes [[The teacher goes on correcting the exercise with the whole class]]	c. The learner acknowledges the explanation.	6. Acknowledgement

Note: Adapted from Lucero (2012).

The potential influence that these speech acts have on the teacher's and the learners' interactional behavior in class likely depends on what content the learner asks, the construction of his/her questions, and the content the teacher includes in the answer. There seems to be enthusiasm to interact when the learners are more familiar with and interested in the contents, which allows them to construct questions with more facility and relevance. Equally, the interaction is extended when the teacher's answer includes content that the learners are able to understand and fosters more expression of ideas.

Adding content. In this interaction pattern, the teacher provides space for the learners to contribute with content to his or her explanation or clarification in a speak-out exercise. Subsequently, a learner or a number of learners adds content to that topic. The teacher then evaluates or accepts each contribution(s) and finally continues with the speak-out exercise. A speak-out exercise is any type of contextualized class activity that a language teacher designs to maximize interaction and verbal output (Stern, 1983; Harmer, 2007). It can emerge at any time along the session when the teacher's explanation or clarification is needed.

102| The speech act analysis showed four speech acts in this interaction pattern (see Table 7 below). The teacher and learners normally followed them during speak-out exercises in class.

Table 7. *Speech Acts in the interaction pattern of adding content.*

Interaction	Structure	Speech acts
[[The teacher is explaining an item in the activity]]	An item takes place in the activity. The teacher explains or clarifies the item.	1. Explaining or Clarifying
T: ok for example in January we have winter time, right? (3 sec.)	a. The teacher opens room for learners' contributions.	2. Eliciting or Nominating
L: because in Colombia we no have winter station.	b. A learner adds content to the item.	3. Contributing
T: ok yeah in Colombia we don't have winter, yes it's true, so here we have summer all:: year long. Ok so let's listen to the same part [[the teacher plays the part of the video on again]] so please listen, listen...	c. The teacher evaluates or accepts the learner's contribution.	4. Evaluating or Accepting

The potential influence of the speech acts of the pattern goes in harmony with the dynamics of the speak-out exercise. While the teacher holds the responsibility of introducing, explaining, and controlling the activity, the learners feel the necessity to contribute with content when the teacher has just opened space for it. The teacher then needs to evaluate or accept each contribution. A constant necessity to co-construct the interaction in the explained manner is latent in this pattern.

Further analysis revealed the presence of a regulatory speech act (Wunderlich, 1980) in both interaction patterns. It emerged when the learners did not fulfill the established conventions of adding detailed content or using English in their contributions or questions. The teacher performed this speech act generally through a verbal or non-verbal lexical item or a (set of) statement(s) to urge the learner to repeat the performance with the pre-established conventions (e.g. "do it in English"). The potential influence of this regulatory speech act resided in the teacher's control of the established conventions of the exercise to demand the learners for an amplified/translated (set of) statement(s) as an opportunity to use English in the interaction. On

the learners' behalf, it dealt with affective and linguistic factors by creating anxiety and testing their English proficiency level.

Third research work: code switching to learn the L2 equivalent of an L1 word: the RPA sequence.

This third research work identifies and describes the distinctive interaction pattern that teachers and learners co-construct when the latter asks for the L2 equivalent of an L1 word. This research inquiry emerged when I noticed that teachers and learners seemed to follow a particular sequence when the learners did not know the English equivalent of a Spanish lexical item at any time during the language class.

The main objective of the study was then to illustrate the functional level of each turn of the sequence. It required the description of the moments the sequence emerged, its development, and the implications of each turn to language classroom interaction. By illustrating and describing these issues, this third research work demonstrates a new interaction pattern that teachers and learners co-construct to establish mutual understanding of meaning and interactional movements in the language classroom.

I audio- or video-recorded twenty sessions of four English pre-intermediate level classes at university level (five each), in which Spanish was the L1. I transcribed the recordings when the class activities suggested the learners engage in a great amount of talk in English, for example, discussions, short presentations, and class reports. In the analysis of the transcripts, I focused on the moments when the learners asked for the English equivalent of a Spanish lexical item. In addition, I examined all the transcripts that I had used in the two previous research works in order to identify the presence of the sequence in the other contexts of English learning. Therefore, I analyzed the transcripts of 54 sessions in total. I did not consider excerpts that took into account the learners' use of long utterances in Spanish for clarifying, emphasizing, or expressing messages in the English class since they were out of the scope of this third research work.

For the data analysis, I once again followed the Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis (ECA) (Seedhouse, 2004b). With this approach, I was able to identify the organization of the sequence and the manner in which the interactants developed a shared understanding of it throughout the interaction. Along the ECA approach, I conducted a speech acts analysis (Searle, 1979; Thornbury & Slade, 2006) in order to find the main interactional function of each turn of the sequence.

Results. This third research work reveals a distinctive interaction pattern that teachers and learners co-construct when the learners do not know the English equivalent of a Spanish lexical item at any time during the class. I named this interaction pattern the request-provision-acknowledgement (RPA) sequence (Lucero, 2011). This interaction pattern has a sequence of three turns (see Table 8 below):

1. *First turn: Request.* It contains the learner’s current talk, the breakdown, and the request for the L2 equivalent of the L1 lexical item. The breakdown in the conversation is linguistic and only causes a short stop in the learner’s talk. Thus, the breakdown does not cause a fracture in the flow of the interaction or in the whole understanding of the learner’s talk. The request can be in the L1 or in the L2, but always with the requested lexical item in the L1.
2. *Second turn: Provision.* It encloses the teacher’s provision of the requested L2 equivalent. The teacher always provides the L2 equivalent with all the morpho-syntactical accuracy and features needed to fit into the learner’s idea that presented the breakdown. The provision of the lexical item depends on the teacher’s own interpretation of the current idea that the learner is trying to communicate.
3. *Third turn: Acknowledgement.* It holds the learner’s acknowledgement of the teacher’s provision. The learner can acknowledge it by incorporating the L2 equivalent into the continuation of his or her talk or simply by recognizing it and going on with the talk.

Table 8. A Sample of the RPA Sequence to Know the L2 Equivalent of an L1 Word

First turn Request	L: The main topic of the movie is about drugs. She wants act like the TV program in the moxvie. She starts to... to take pills for... eh... how do you say <i>bajar de peso</i> ?
Second turn Provision	T: To lose weight.
Third turn Acknowledgement	L: <u>To lose weight</u> because... eh... she wants put a red dress that she used before.

Note: Adapted from Lucero (2011)

The function of these turns points to the learner’s need of the L2 equivalent to solve the breakdown and to continue constructing his or her current idea. Both the teacher and the learner need the L2 equivalent to achieve a full understanding, in the L2, of the content of the idea that the

learner is expressing. This situation goes in accordance with the established convention of the class of using the L2 to express content in class activities.

Overall, the RPA sequence is an interaction pattern for the negotiation of meaning that shows the interlanguage strategy of contrasting L1 and L2 for communication and learning. Additionally, the RPA sequence allows learner-initiated interaction that puts into practice the pragmatic language competence since the learners utilize the request turn as an extended talk to solve the problem of the L2 equivalent of an L1 lexical item in the communication of ideas. Furthermore, the teacher's provision of the L2 equivalent gives an account of the continuant understanding of the learners' meanings in talk-in-interaction. Therefore, the L2 equivalent provision is constructed in conversation since it provides input and accounts for the learners' needs of the current communication.

Implications of the Three Research Works

After having presented the results of my three research works, it is notable that language classroom interaction is composed of varied interaction patterns that the teacher and the learners create, co-construct, and then maintain, all in line with the particular interactional context and the established conventions of the class. The teacher and the learners institute such contexts and conventions as they progress in their interactions. In consequence, language classroom interaction is full of co-constructed interaction patterns that depend not only on learner and teacher's factors (Johnson, 1995; Cameron, 2001b; Seedhouse, 2004a; and Kurhila, 2006) but also on the particular interactional contexts and the established conventions of the class. The cited authors point that the factors that allow the presence of determined interaction patterns are, on one side, learner's age, L2 proficiency level, roles, and motivation, and on the other side, teacher's agenda, assumed roles, lesson plans, materials, and management.

The three research works presented in this chapter contribute to the findings of language classroom interaction by exposing that the interaction patterns that may emerge in a language classroom not only depend on the stated factors but also on the interactional contexts and the conventions of the class. Both the teacher and the learners institute the interactional context by progressively determining the sequence and function of their talk-in-interaction in similar class activities (how to interact in certain moments of the class activities, e.g., by waiting for teacher's nomination, answering teacher's questions, receiving feedback or evaluation, adding content, asking for clarification, confirmation, or content). Equally, both the teacher and the learners institute the established conventions of the class by indicating, throughout the

106 | class activities, what is permitted to do in the talk-in-interaction (e.g., L1 use, accurate L2 speaking, short answers or contributions, immediate corrections, incorporation of feedback, evaluation, or lexical-item provision).

In the results of the three research works, it is visible how the interactional context and the established conventions of the class cause the emergence of particular interaction patterns to happen. For instance, more presence of L1 lexicon in L2 talk may reside on premature demands to produce well-constructed L2 talk, which holds an institutional belief of making the learners use accurately and fluently the L2 since the very first classes and proficiency levels. Another example is the repetition of the interaction pattern of *asking about content*, in which the learners ask the teacher for further explanation or clarification about the content of a linguistic exercise. The teacher and the learners established it according to the convention of learners' asking for unclear content at any time throughout the class activity. Similarly, it happens to the pattern of *adding content* in which the learners know that the space the teacher opens is only for their contributions. Alternatively, the RPA sequence seems to be maintained in varied contexts when English language learners request their teachers for the provision of the L2 equivalent of an L1 lexical item, expectation that the teacher feels the necessity to fulfill with the accuracy to fit into the learner's current idea.

Although language classroom interaction is composed of varied interaction patterns, in the three research works, it is notable that some of them seem to be *repetitive* and others may be *particular*. On the one hand, they can be *repetitive* when the same interaction patterns occur in different L2-learning contexts, say EFL and ESL in diverse classroom settings and countries. For example, take the ones I identified in my second research work: initiation-response-evaluation/feedback (IRE/IRF) pattern, clarification requests, confirmation checks, acknowledgements, repairs, recasts, and adjacency pairs. These interaction patterns have been investigated and identified in different classroom settings and countries (Long & Sato, 1983; Rivers, 1983; Schegloff, 1990; Johnson, 1995; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Schegloff, 2000; Cameron, 2001b; Seedhouse, 2004c; Kurhila, 2006; and Thurnbury & Slade, 2006). On the other hand, interaction patterns in the language classroom can be *particular* when they exclusively occur in a determined language-learning context. Examples of these are the patterns I display in this chapter: *adding content*, *asking about content*, and the RPA sequence. Thus far, I have encountered these patterns only in the context of teaching English as a foreign language where Spanish is the L1. Therefore, further research to study these three interaction patterns is required to see if they also happen in other contexts, say other L2, ESL, or language-learning contexts. If they also occur in other

classroom settings different from the ones investigated, they will become repetitive interaction patterns; on the contrary, they are particular interaction patterns that only occur in the contexts investigated.

This hypothesis strengthens Seedhouse's (2004c) theory on micro- and macro-discourses. This author defines micro-discourses as the ones that occur in the interaction patterns and macro-discourses as the ones that indicate how the micro-discourses are unified across the contexts. The three interaction patterns presented in this chapter deal with micro discourses because they reveal how the teacher and the learners, mutually and reciprocally, co-construct their interactions in particular contexts, ways, and structures in order to negotiate or communicate meaning, and exchange ideas, points of view, thoughts, and intentions. By detecting these manners, the compilation of the patterns can manage to describe the linguistic, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic characteristics of language classroom interaction. In Seedhouse's words, "the manner micro-discourses are unified in varied contexts" (2004c, p. 172).

These research issues can possibly sound unexceptional, but the task of finding them demands systematic and holistic research in language classroom interaction. For instance, setting the IRE/IRF sequence, or the request-reply adjacency pairs, or repair structures, or the interaction patterns in this chapter demanded large amounts of gathered data and further research to make common sense. As language teachers, we are likely to identify them easily when we interact with our learners. However, discovering the particular characteristics of the interaction patterns demands compilation, management, systematization, and analysis of a great amount of data to discern their structures, organization, and functionality in the language classroom. In the analysis, the researcher always needs to keep in mind the context, the function of each turn or utterance, the manner in which each one structures the interaction, and the boundaries of the pattern. As Gibbons (2006) clarifies, researchers need to pay attention to "the linear structures of language that arise out of the vertical structures of discourse" (p. 49). Such analysis does not take place only once, but much study is needed to confirm that the pattern steadily takes place over the data collected.

Faced with such hard work, the researcher must go beyond the linguistic aspects of the interactions and focus more on meaning. The analysis must take into account the manner teachers and learners utter every turn in the service of making each other understand what they are saying. For instance, the three interaction patterns of *adding content*, *asking about content*, and the RPA sequence follow this perspective. They show another manner to co-construct language classroom interaction. Distinctively, *asking about content* requires mutual understanding of the learners' requests and the teacher's reply. *Adding*

108 | *content* demands that learners understand the opened space to contribute with content; afterwards, the teacher's acceptance of such contribution displays a comprehension of that content. In the RPA sequence, the provision of the L2 equivalent cannot happen if the teacher is not able to understand the idea and the moment when a learner requests for the L2 equivalent.

Hence, the three interaction patterns are evidences of interactions to negotiate meaning in which, to my point of view, the teacher cannot be only the English language-knowing participant and the learners the English language-practicing participants. Both the teacher and the learners need to be actively processing the manner in which they co-construct the interaction, each one from her/his role. As the interaction patterns in this chapter display, the teacher may hold the role of the interaction initiator, space opener, explainer, evaluator, L2-equivalent provider, and/or class-convention demander; in addition, the learners may be the interlanguage users, requesters, acknowledgers, and/or content adders. One role needs, strengthens, and confirms the other to co-construct language classroom interaction. This characteristic of interaction makes the patterns mutually and reciprocally constructed. For instance, in the pattern of *adding content*, when the teacher is explaining or clarifying content or a topic and opens space for the learners to contribute with content, the teacher's roles of interaction initiator and space opener need, strengthen, and confirm the learner's role of content adder or requester. Equal reciprocity happens in the interaction patterns of *asking about content* and the RPA sequence. The learner's role of requester needs, strengthens, and confirms the teacher's role of provider and, subsequently, the learner's role of acknowledger.

In such reciprocity, teachers and learners get used to accommodating their turns to respond to the necessity of co-constructing interaction patterns. Every turn holds a linguistic construction, a determined function, and a desirable intention (a principle of speech acts, Searle, 1979). We would be unable to talk about co-construction in language classroom interaction without both accommodation and functionality. As I give evidence with my three research works, teachers and learners tend to repeat and exercise the same co-construction of interaction patterns that they both create as the class sessions progress. By considering all of this, we can talk of the emergence of interaction patterns in the language classroom.

Another implication is that the existence of interaction patterns in language classroom interaction evidences participants' ability to use the L2 appropriately in language classroom situations. A primordial characteristic of interaction patterns is that they are composed of distinctive turns with a determined construction. The determined construction of a turn does not mean a determined grammatical structure. It means that learners can utter

their turns without following a determined grammatical structure, but a determined construction of their talk. For example, in *asking about content*, learners can chip into the teacher's clarification or explanation and elicit content in different grammatical ways. In *adding content*, learners can contribute to it by using different grammatical structures. In the RPA sequence, learners can request by following different grammatical structures, in either English or Spanish, but always by following the construction of requesting after a breakdown in his or her speech and with the requested lexical item in the L1. This is why I affirm that the interaction patterns are composed of distinctive turns with a determined construction.

In this case, the language that the teacher and the learners use in their respective turns always has a defined function and a reaction to that function. This situation indicates that both the teacher and the learners know how to use what they have learned about the L2 appropriately for creating, co-constructing, and maintaining classroom interaction. Therefore, both interactants utilize principles of L2 pragmatics in their interactions in class, a skill that Walsh (2011) calls Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), the interactional knowledge "in which language is used to establish, develop and promote understandings" (p. 3) in the language classroom. In the analysis of the three research work results, I noticed that the interactants use acquired principles of L2 pragmatics (e.g., identifying language of the classroom setting, using language for specific functions, defining the range of communicative possibilities, making choices to express meaning, and maintaining talk-in-interaction). They just do it because they infer such principles from their acquired abilities to use language, either L1 or L2, in different social and classroom situations. This implication reinforces one of Halliday's (1978) pioneer postulates in pragmatic competence. He affirms that pragmatic studies need to focus more on the use of language and discourse in the statements people utter rather than on their linguistic aspects.

By considering this postulate, the emergent situation must then induce the teacher to know and understand more about L2 pragmatics as an essential component to exercise appropriately more classroom interaction for language learning. If this is the case, language teachers need to have pragmatic knowledge of how interactions may occur in class as part of their disciplinary, pedagogical, and content knowledge of language teaching. This pragmatic knowledge can make the teacher be not only aware of the varied manners that interaction may happen in the language classroom, but also attentive to meet learners' language necessities in the interaction.

This perspective goes in line with current language education principles, in which teaching and learning consist of engaging learners as functional and social interactants. Therefore, when language teachers only teach about L2

110| usage, learners are not able to use it outside of the classroom. The premise is clear; learners learn the language they hear around them. If they only hear about grammar and structures, they will speak by primarily thinking about grammar and structures. On the contrary, if they hear and learn about how to negotiate meaning interactively, they will know to hold interactions to communicate meaning. In order to achieve such functions, language teachers need to create an atmosphere in which classroom activities promote interactions in the L2, so that learners can be effective, functional, and social interactants in the L2.

Research on language classroom interaction proves that learning is inherently a collaborative and interactional process. In language education, researchers, teachers, and learners need to understand that the act of negotiation of meaning is the act of interacting. It happens as soon as two people gather to communicate something. Interaction is thus a productive teaching and learning technique since it focuses on meaning. Every turn that one interactant adds is done in the service of making the other understand what he or she is trying to communicate.

Why Doing Research on Language Classroom Interaction?

This section highlights the importance of doing research on language classroom interaction in order to suggest new directions and perspectives. The results and implications of the three research works lead the discussion to the reasons for doing research on the occurring interactions in the language classroom. By taking into account my work in this field, research on this field is essential because it may gradually lead language education participants to understand the pragmatics teachers and learners use to co-construct interactions in the language classroom, and the manner in which such interactions mold teaching practices and language learning development. Equally, research on language classroom interaction may expose the roles teachers and learners play in the revealed interactions.

With respect to the understanding about the pragmatics of language classroom interaction, the language used in the exchange of utterances always holds a defined function and a reaction from that function. This means that both teachers and learners draw upon previously acquired L2 linguistic resources for the co-construction of classroom interaction. This fact points to the principles of L2 pragmatics in language classroom interaction. Therefore, the more research on how teachers and learners use the L2 in classroom interaction, the more understanding of how they use it in this context to

communicate ideas, points of view, thoughts, meanings, and intentions, and of what interaction patterns they create, co-construct, and maintain to do so.

The results presented along this chapter reveal distinctive paths that both teachers and learners follow to make the interaction flow until the conversational event ends. They do it by using L2 and/or L1 according to the situation that the classroom interaction presents. With these findings, I demonstrate that research on language classroom interaction can help understand how teachers and learners use the L2 and/or the L1 for meaningful communication and negotiation in the different situations that may occur in classroom activities; in other words, the pragmatics of language classroom interaction. As interactions in this context are samples of teacher-learner or learner-learner realizations of language use, they certainly expose the type of language each one uses in the interaction. In the study of such realizations, we may discover the language functions and the interaction patterns that not only determine the “organizational coherence of talk” (Schegloff, 1990, p. 53) but also establish the interactional conventions in classroom interaction.

As I stated one section above, language teachers need to have pragmatic knowledge of how interactions may occur in class. It can make the teacher more attentive to the varied ways that interaction happens in the language classroom. This knowledge of the pragmatics of the language classroom interaction loads language teachers with conversational resources to promote language use and/or solve learners’ language necessities during interaction.

The second reason for doing research on language classroom interaction refers to the manner it can help unveil and define the participants’ roles in such interaction. When learners interact with each other, or with the teacher, the language they use, the functions they give to it, and the reactions they have from the received language create the roles each one assumes in the interaction. Thus, language classroom researchers can study and define the role that each participant assumes throughout an interactional event by considering the language, the functions given to it, and the reactions generated from it in the interactional event. Each participant can have different roles while an interactional event is in progress.

One remarkable issue to mention in this respect is the fact that once a teacher and the learners start executing the structure of an interaction pattern, such structure establishes the roles each one needs to assume. We cannot forget that the language, its situational functions, and the reactions to it, define the turns that compose the structure of an interaction pattern. Along the same line, we need to keep in mind that teachers and learners are the ones who create, co-construct, and maintain the interaction patterns. Hence, we need further study to define with more extend the roles each participant assumes

112 | when interacting in the language classroom so that we can unveil how teachers apply their teaching practices and learners react to those practices.

A final reason for doing research on language classroom interaction aims to contribute to the discovering of the mode that L2 teaching and learning happens. Language teachers have always wondered if the interaction that they promote in classroom contributes to learners' language learning. Research on this matter can give a clearer idea whether or not the interactions constructed in the classroom promote L2 communication and learning. This research focus can consequently elucidate what type of interactions support more effective L2 teaching and learning.

Further Research

Throughout this chapter, I have introduced four approaches to studying language classroom interaction under the umbrella of discourse analysis. By following the conversation analysis approach, I have presented three research works that reveal Spanish lexical influence in L2 learning, and the interaction patterns of *asking about content*, *adding content*, and the RPA sequence. The results and implications of these research works have served to explain three reasons for doing research on language classroom interaction.

The content of this chapter raises issues for further research on language classroom interaction. The first issue for further research is the need to see interaction in the language classroom from the very beginning of a session, throughout it, and within the next sessions. Consequently, the research scope of language classroom interaction must account for the interactions that occur all the time in all the sessions of a course. By compiling all these data, we can understand more the pragmatics of language classroom interaction, unveil and define the participant's roles in such interaction, and discover how L2 teaching and learning truly takes place.

Secondly, we still lack further research on comparing interaction patterns in the language classroom to the ones occurring in social interaction. As the main goal of the language classroom is to prepare learners to be able to communicate and interact in the L2 socio-cultural life, comparing language classroom interaction to social interaction may expose the extent to which both are similar or different. If they are significantly similar, we can consider language classroom interaction to be fruitful since it does prepare learners for social interaction. On the contrary, if both are substantially dissimilar, a need to find out in what aspects they are different materializes. Further research will need to study what language classroom interaction does prepare learners for social interaction.

Johnson (1995), Cameron (2001a), Seedhouse (2004c), Kurhilla (2006), and Gibbons (2006) claim that the type of language classroom interaction presented in a determined class depends on the pedagogical purpose of the lesson and the teacher's pedagogical style. The cited studies in language classroom interaction identify an array of interaction patterns. Under this belief, research on language classroom interaction has closed in on describing how interaction contributes to language development simply by observing it when opportunities to practice L2 are provided. It is my point of view that this type of research only sees classroom interaction as the practicing of the structural, functional, and communicative aspects of the language that the teacher has previously taught. As interaction patterns build language classroom interaction, further research requires discerning as to what bases interactants choose to establish and maintain the co-constructed interaction patterns. By doing so, further research can determine if language classroom interaction mostly depends on the pedagogical purpose of the lesson and the teacher's pedagogical style, or on the interactants' communicative competence and styles. The results might open wider the door to new paradigms in language education since language teaching approaches and programs would have to demand that people in charge of teaching a target language not only be competent socio-cultural interactants but also qualified language teachers.

A final issue for further research from the content presented in this chapter is the continuation of research on code switching and code mixing to go on unveiling the real role of L1 in L2 interaction in L2 language learning contexts. This continuation must aim at determining how L1 helps construct and (re)organize L2 knowledge for future use in communication.

Chapter Four

*Unveiling the Masked Meanings of
Classroom Interaction: A Critical
Analysis to Classroom Discourse*

A b o u t t h e A u t h o r

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Unveiling the Masked Meanings of Classroom Interaction: A Critical Analysis to Classroom Discourse

Introduction

This chapter has a twofold purpose. Firstly, it aims at identifying and analyzing different identities students construct as learners of a foreign language when interacting within an EFL classroom. Secondly, it describes how this identity construction might have possible effects on students' language learning processes. The study relies on principles of CCDA (Classroom Critical Discourse Analysis) and was carried out with undergraduate students from a private university in Bogota (Colombia). The idea of implementing CCDA has to do with the need of looking beyond fixed categorizations and rather listening to how learners negotiate different identities as they employ diverse cultural and linguistic resources to construct knowledge in EFL classrooms. Throughout the process of data collection, through transcripts of oral interactions and interviews, a new perspective of pupils as social actors who hold multiple social identities was discovered. The reflections on the different interactions undertaken in the classroom helped participants to take different positions that offered possibilities for different and multiple subjectivities that shaped and reshaped their thoughts and expectations as foreign language students. Results show that issues such as the use of L1 in the EFL classroom, the teacher's conception of language learning and teaching and the silent fight for power among teacher and students constitute important elements in the struggles of students when constructing their social and individual identities as learners within a given classroom community.

According to Gómez (2012):

“Learning a foreign language has become a must in this globalized world. Establishing social, commercial, economic and academic relationships with other countries has become a must, and in this scenario, the English language seems to be the link that connects all these interactions and harbors the skill

with which to handle them bearing in mind that knowing a different language implies knowing a different culture” (p. 61).

In other words, English is the vehicle to know and understand the new worlds we have to relate to. Besides, there is no secret in saying that for political, economic and ideological reasons, English has become not only the language to learn, but also, the language considered as a common tool for communication.

Nevertheless, the process learners have to go through in order to reach this goal is not an easy one. Despite the increasing use of technology reflected in virtual platforms in order to learn languages (which helps students save time and even money) it is also appropriate to say that the main place and source of learning is still the classroom where students get to interact and find more opportunities to enhance their communicative skills.

All the things that happen in the little universe the classroom represents are strongly related to the experiences that individuals live every day: the way they relate to others, the way they communicate and the way they perceive and are perceived by others. These facts insinuate or indicate that the interactions developed and constructed by learners are supposed to be carried out in a certain “ideal” way in order to make effective learning and teaching happen.

However, this ideal scenario certainly changes across contexts, preferences and needs of learners, and it is at this specific point that interactions start to re-accommodate in order to serve the purpose of a specific learning situation. What teachers must take into account is who participates in the interactions and in which way these are constructed in order to somehow guarantee effectiveness in the language-learning process. These interactions then can be intertwined through two different layers: the visible one in which the roles of students and teachers are established by clear rules, and the invisible, informal one, in which what is left unsaid, reflected in attitudes, behaviors, and language usage, says even more about whom students are as language learners. Thus, the idea of writing this chapter has to do with showing some samples of the interactions between teachers and students in an English class, and how these interactions speak assist in comprehension of the role of both actors in the teaching and learning process that often goes unnoticed. The conclusions of the chapter will reveal what was found throughout the process and how these findings might actually be considered within the new dynamics of language learning.

The research study here discussed started after a two-month period of observation in which I could identify some initial concerns related to the development of the speaking skill and the effects of student-teacher

and student-student interactions in the development of the language learning process.

In classroom practices, learning can be understood as the product of interaction. From the moment the teacher comes into the classroom and greets students, the power of the teacher-student relationship starts shaping the results of the learning process. In every participation, in every silence, in every piece of feedback or group work, the construction of knowledge is knitted into dynamics that nobody sees but that can be crucial when enhancing the objectives and results of a learning process, putting aside the typical reason to explain students' performances when learning a language: they simply either have, or do not have, the necessary learning skills. As we are about to see, it is a bit more complex.

According to Mackey (1999), conversational interaction facilitates second language development. Given the fact that the problem I identify was researchable (taking into account students' attitudes in the class, their scores obtained during the period of observation and a needs analysis carried out) these interactions, to some extent, had an effect on the way students develop their individual learning process; additionally, they reflect not only on the vision of language learning that students hold, but also that held by the teacher regarding language teaching and learning. As a result of this, I could observe that when developing any kind of activity in the classroom, students created a sort of "interdependence" that makes them interact with their peers all the time, using either Spanish or English. However, this situation promotes an environment in which students' interaction coerces individual performance; it means students think they understand as long as they have a partner next to them in order to clarify or correct what they have already obtained from the topics that are supposed to be learned in class. The teacher, on the other hand, seems to legitimate these interactions acknowledging that *both* students indeed understood the topics explained. Thus, as a result of this needs analysis, when it comes down to expressing ideas in an individual way, most students observed are not able to do so; the output of this negotiation process is reflected in a few words that do not express any clear ideas about what the student probably wants to say. This being the case, I decided to pose the following research questions and objectives in order to have a better understanding of this phenomenon.

Main question:

- What does classroom interaction reveal about students' identity construction as language learners in an EFL university classroom?

Sub question:

- What does this identity construction inform us about students' views on teaching and learning a foreign language?

Along with the questions proposed, the intention with this project was to pursue the following research objectives:

- To identify the different identities students construct as learners of a foreign language when interacting within an EFL classroom;
- To analyze how these identities reveal students' visions on language learning; and
- To analyze the possible effects of classroom interaction on students' language learning process.

Considering the importance that the negotiation of meaning has in the development of the second language learning process, this study would create a starting point for an understanding of meaning negotiation which would not only benefit the language learning process itself, but other processes of student interaction with different people and in different social contexts.

Theoretical framework

This section draws on several studies that account for different experiences researchers have had in regard to identity construction in different contexts and how this construction might have an effect on the way students conceive their learning process. The three key aspects developed were, Identity as a general construct, *Identity of students as language learners* and *Classroom interaction* that also represents one of the multiple faces identity should entail if we analyze interactions within an educational context.

The Concept of Identity

I consider it important to highlight why it is necessary to study and do research on the concept of identity in EFL settings and its possible effects on a further reconstruction or at least awareness of the dynamics in the process of foreign language teaching and learning.

Firstly, it is important to state the way identity is understood and undertaken within the framework of this study. This way has to do with the concept of the nature of identity as a dynamic entity that can be negotiated, transformed and achieved (Bernstein, 2000), and discursively constructed (Le Page, 1986). In other words, identity is constructed and co-constructed by oneself and others bearing in mind the way social dynamics are developed and the different roles individuals assign or are assigned according to specific situations. Regarding Wenger's (1998) words, identity is constructed in

relationships with others, extending from the past and stretching into the future. Identities are malleable and dynamic, a permanent construction of who we are and who we might become as a result of our participation with others in the experience of life. It is an ongoing process of negotiating the self-engaging in a community of practice.

This recalls Gómez' words:

"This concept of identity within the field of social sciences has gained a remarkably favorable position for humanists, sociologists, cultural theorists and of course educational researchers. They have constantly wondered about the new ways in which human beings relate to each other and how these dynamics between the individual and their relation to others can be analyzed and understood. As a consequence, identity is a concept that groups traditional terms and puts all of them beyond biological features or even behaviors that can be imitated and learned through the same social interaction. These terms that go from individual to social features raise a question as to how they had been studied separately given the complexity of human nature and its relations." (2012)

Therefore, the main intention with the study of identity is to understand how terms such as *character*, *nature*, and *personality*—terms that have to do with biological determinants—can be connected to other notions such as *attitudes*, *conceptions*, and *beliefs*. The studies on identity seem to account for this interconnection.

Construction of Identity

Having acknowledged that the nature of identity goes beyond static determining factors and becomes a dynamic entity mediated by individual and social interactions, the term *identity construction* comes into play and raises relevant questions. How are these interactions produced? What are the different aspects that influence the position of an individual within an interaction with his/her environment? From a theoretical perspective, the concept of identity construction has evolved from sociological to postmodernist perspectives.

The first sociological studies on the matter, back in the 70's and 80's, focused identity construction primarily on the construction of the "me" (Cerulo, 1997), exploring the ways in which interpersonal interactions mold an individual's sense of self. Nevertheless, in the last 20 years, this sense of construction has certainly shifted due to three specific trends.

Firstly, given the great influence of social and nationalist movements within the academic fields, scholars started to pay attention to group agency, which refers, according to Pakalev (2011), to "some groups of individuals have

124 | [having] one capacity which is usually attributed only to individual human beings” (p. 205), and the role of individuals within specific communities. Thus, identity studies started to be located within the “site of the collective” (Appiah & Gates, 1995) and issues such as race/ethnicity or gender/sexuality started to gain great consideration. Secondly, due to intellectual concerns with agency and self-direction, scholars started to analyze the mechanics by which different identities are created, maintained, subverted or changed. Finally, the influence of new communication technologies and how these have re-created a whole sense of oneself has led to studies of the negotiation of identity in a space where no physical presence is necessary.

Taking this fact into account, the complexity of identity construction is condensed as Egan-Robertson (1998) claims, “in an intersection of a myriad of complex sociological factors within a historical moment” (p. 455). The process of identity construction has to do therefore with the experiences individuals live within a specific social environment. This process of construction is the one that determines a game of identities that would not have been the same if the context were different.

Since the purpose of this research was to unveil the hidden meanings of classroom interaction, it would be suitable to recall Bakhtin’s ideas (1981) on how human beings engage in internal dialogues that are the result of many voices and how through these dialogues we are able to construct and reconstruct ourselves. These internal voices could be expressed through what we say, in other words, through discourse. The issue is that, most of the time the dynamic organization in which different identities can align or even come into conflict with each other can go unnoticed. The identity as language learners is one of those that comprise part of a multidimensional space and that has to do not only with the roles, positions and voices of students as part of the community that the classroom represents, but also as individuals in the process of understanding a language that is different from their own.

Language and identity

Language in this research experience is certainly not limited to a “set of rules for communication” (Gee, 1990). Rather, it is about a view of language as the key element for identity construction. As Belsey (1980) suggests, “it is through language that people constitute themselves” (p. 85); it is through language, then, that people define and redefine who they are and who they might become. Language can also be considered as an identity kit that signals membership in particular groups, and given our nature as social beings, the use of this language may vary according to the context that defines the way we

relate to others and ourselves. We can, therefore, perform different identities. As Gee and Crawford (1998) state, “we can take on different identities depending upon the social setting, yet there are relationships between our different selves” (p. 140).

Gómez has stated (2012), “thanks to Norton’s work (1997) on the intertextual analysis of the relation of language and identity, we can unveil its real importance within the language teaching process in EFL settings within the expectable differences of five different studies.” Norton analyzes as to socio-cultural contexts and communicative situations and we see that some general conclusions can be drawn from and even related to the experiences I lived in the classroom setting that was the object of this study. The act of considering identity—in Norton’s words “complex, contradictory and multifaceted” (p. 419)—shows how students go through a permanent process of change which is part of the process of affiliation with a social group that, in this case, is comprised of teacher, students and their surrounding environment. This construction of a social identity, which is understood by Norton as the relationship between the individual and the larger social world, is a relationship that is mediated through institutions such as families, schools, and workplaces, among others. This construction of social identity is also intertwined with the never-ending process of finding an individual identity that could be reflected in the need of students to be part of the circle that they create as a classroom community, though unfortunately the members of the community do not always validate this.

Identity as language learners

The relation between language and identity is a key aspect in the comprehension of the ongoing process of identity construction of the students who are the participants of this research experience.

Regarding identity construction of students as language learners, Luke (1996) suggests that learners have multiple social identities that help them take up different positions in daily interactive behaviors and that the positions “offer possibilities for difference, for multiple and hybrid subjectivities that human subjects make and remake” (p. 86).

Some studies (Morita, 2004; Chavez, 2007) suggest the complex way students get engaged in the dynamics of a classroom interaction that might be affected by both intrinsic and extrinsic behaviors that are constituted, resisted, or legitimated depending on the particular setting this interaction is taking place in, and the way students and teachers consider what the idea of a “good environment” in the classroom means.

Gómez (2012, p.64), mentions one study (Morita, 2004) that found that students position themselves in a second language classroom based, “not only with the way they are seen and perceived by others, but also the background each student has from previous life and learning experiences that make them face situations in different ways.”

As part of the findings for this study, analysis suggested that a major challenge for the students was negotiating discourses, competence, identities, and power relations so that they could participate and be recognized as legitimate and competent members of a given classroom community. Regarding this issue, it is important to take into account the concept of Community of Practice or “COP” (Wegner, 1998); this concept conceives of learning as a social process in which experiences, thoughts, ideas, opinions and knowledge on a specific subject are shared. The complexity of the classroom as a community of practice deals with the necessity of group members to belong to and become validated by that community. In Morita’s study (2004; cited in Gómez, 2012, p. 64), this concept of COP was evidenced in a new dynamic of interaction in which newcomers (the new members of the community) tried to fully participate in group dynamics sharing with the most “experienced” members of the same community.

According to this, COP relies on a permanent struggle for belonging that goes beyond just “being part of” to get to a stage of “being recognized as” part of the specific community. Whether consciously or unconsciously, each student goes from a peripheral to a legitimate position depending on the way each one negotiates his/her role within the community. In Lesser’s and Storck’s (2001) words, different learners may be granted different degrees of legitimacy (validation) depending on how a given COP organizes social relations of power.

In this specific case, identity was defined and redefined by the way these power relations were constructed and situated in the COP. In other words, how students are able or unable to display their *competences* (the abilities that are acknowledged and valued by the same community) and the different strategies they used in order to make those competences evident to the rest of their classmates. It means the strategies students chose in order to go from the periphery to legitimization in their classroom.

These strategies were reflected in 3 different situations: silence as a way of resistance, discussion with the teacher about students’ roles in the classroom and positioning phenomenon in which some students explicitly negotiate their role in the classroom community in order to avoid being positioned and categorized by their peers or by the teacher. It is interesting to see how Morita (2004) concludes that the membership and identities that the students

constructed in a given classroom simultaneously shaped and were shaped by their class participation and interaction; however, some students looked for different ways to be part of the community that were equally validated by the rest of the group such as silence and the way it was used in order to construct membership.

That being said, an adequate theory of learners' identity entails understanding of their subjectivities and how they negotiate different positions using different identities. It is the way students perform different identities in order to shape their positions and interactions in a learning environment. This means that teachers must look beyond fixed categorizations and listen to how learners negotiate different identities as they employ diverse cultural and linguistic resources to construct knowledge in classrooms.

Classroom interaction

Classroom interaction, which is definitively the main scenario for this process of identity construction as language learners, comprises both the social environment and the means through which students build up their individual identity and struggle to find ways to re-create it within the community they belong to: the community of EFL students. At this point, it is important to understand how this construction of identity takes place within the classroom setting. We must start by taking a look at the two elements that certainly compose the dynamics of not only a language classroom, but the dynamics of life itself: teaching and learning. For the purpose of this study, it is necessary to consider the relationship between the two main actors of an educational community and thus, how teaching and learning are developed within classroom practice.

According to Tudor (2001; cited in Gómez, 2012, p 65)

"It has been always complex to set agreements as to what teaching is, what it involves, and what the most effective way to teach a second language would be. This complexity also depends on the vision of language and the vision of learning that both teachers and students hold. The classroom constitutes a constant stage of debate in which whether in an explicit or implicit way (most of the time), teachers and students are adapting their approaches, methodologies and strategies in order to set an environment that allows students to learn."

It was later suggested by Tudor (2006) that "classroom teaching is strongly negotiative in nature" (p. 181).

This concept of negotiation is not necessarily related, as stated before, to an open discussion about what has to be done in the classroom, just as

128 | it is considered under the learner center approaches or explicit decision making (Nunan, 1998), neither to some theories of teaching described as a process of “*accommodation*” (Giles et al., 1991), in which individuals have an unconscious adaptation to the rules, attitudes and norms of others.

The kind of negotiation that Tudor (2001) speaks of is vital in order to understand the identity construction process within language classrooms. As a matter of fact, there have been several studies on the matter due to trying to understand the nature of classroom negotiation.

One study carried out by Duff and Uchida (1997) in a language school in Japan considered the effect of students’ expectations and preferences on teachers’ behaviors when teaching; specifically, how their sociocultural identities and practices were negotiated and transformed. This study concluded that students play a key role in this process of transformation: they can negotiate their teachers’ behaviors taking into consideration their own conceptions of language teaching and learning, and the way they try to modify the common dynamics of education that they were used to receiving. This study also suggests how important it is to bear in mind the vision of language teaching and learning that students hold and how these might either foster or coerce their interactions with their teachers.

The way students and teachers carried out this negotiation was evidenced in an “open environment,” in which students had the advantage of sharing perceptions, opinions and goals in the form of discussions that were even reflected in curriculum changes. Nevertheless, as Tudor (2001) states, this form of what he calls “more or less” explicit negotiation that can be also considered as formal, serves mainly institutional purposes. These changes produced by classroom dynamics can be taken, adapted and reconstructed with the objective of maintaining the stability of the roles of each one of the actors in the educational community, and there will always be some things that are left unsaid. Here is when the other type of negotiation, the informal one, gains great importance.

In conclusion, and after having presented the different studies, theories and standpoints on the process of identity construction of students as language learners within the environment of classroom interaction, we can say that this construction implies a spectrum of individual and social features that meld into a vision of the present towards the future mediated through language and discourse.

Research Methodology

This research study was undertaken using principles of qualitative research, which means employing a multiplicity of methods and an interpretative and

naturalistic approach to studying a phenomenon. Recalling Webb's words (1988), qualitative research is an effort to comprehend not only the modes of cultural arrangements, but how those arrangements are experienced by individuals in order to pursue meaning. Qualitative research comprises the frame of this study, and its specific paradigm. The specific approach and methodology to carry it out is described below.

The context in which this research took place was a private university in Bogotá, Colombia. The conception of English as an official and mandatory subject in this private university's curriculum is a reflection of the permanent concern of the university about broadening students' perspectives towards international issues as well as knowing the foreign contexts they may be exposed to after graduation.

This specific study was carried out with students majoring in journalism and involved a population of 18 students (7 men and 11 women) aged between 18 and 23 years and a male teacher, who, at the time of the study, had about five years of experience. The environment within the course was generally friendly, and the relationship among the students and the teacher as well as among the group of students was kind and respectful.

Instruments for data collection

The process of designing the instruments was an evolving process that led me as researcher to draw final interpretations and conclusions from primary sources of data (transcripts from video recordings) when comparing and contrasting these data with field notes and interviews that substantiated what was observed. These primary instruments, taking into account the kind of data that was going to be analyzed (spoken discourse) as well as the unit of analysis (spoken interactions in the classroom), gave account as to how students constructed their identities as learners. Transcriptions were organized to allow me to facilitate the process of categorization. According to Lindsay (1999), the choices that researchers make about transcriptions enact the theories they hold and constrain or narrow the interpretations they can draw from their data.

As additional instruments for data collection, I used field notes as descriptions and accounts of events, written in a factual and objective style (Burns, 1999). These provided me with useful insights on non-verbal information, physical settings, group structures, reactions and interactions of the participants. These field notes would be useful in order to compare and contrast what students expressed in their diaries with the researcher's views and reflection upon the class.

On the other hand, and bearing in mind that there was not an intervention phase as such, the implementation of instruments had a two-way purpose:

- To select from the video recordings what to transcribe;
- To have a clear scheme of transcription (conventions and symbols) for a better understanding of the data collected.

At this point, it is important to highlight another fact in this evolving process for developing instruments of data collection: as the methodology for data analysis relied on Kumaravadivelu's CCDA (1999), the transcriptions, although the primary source of data, were (and should be) complemented by an instrument that provides the researcher with secondary data to support the interpretations stated in the phase of data analysis: interviews. They were very useful when trying to understand the reactions, attitudes and comments of the participants in order to follow up on their impressions on the development of their speaking skills. The interviews were semi-structured and were conducted individually or in groups depending on the evolution of the peer interaction process and the particular or common issues presented in the observations.

Research approach

The paradigm, approach, and methodology of this study are interrelated and closely connected. More than a hierarchical order, they link to one another relying on the line and principles of discourse analysis.

According to this, the research paradigm is Discourse Analysis (DA). According to Johnstone (2008), DA contributes to answering questions about social relations, social identification, identity construction and unveiling ways of acting and being, the center of human experience and activity. This being said, discourse analysis constitutes an alternative and most likely a transformative line of research that accounts for thinking, approaching, and analyzing phenomena in natural settings.

Taking this point into account, DA also has different approaches to be considered. The one I am taking into consideration as the framework for data analysis is the one proposed by Kumaravadivelu (1999), CCDA. Classroom discourse, like all other discourses, is socially constructed, politically motivated, and historically determined; that is, social, political, and historical conditions develop and distribute the cultural capital that shapes and reshapes the lives of teachers and learners. At this point, it is important to highlight the fact that this approach has not been widely used in our particular educational settings. The idea, therefore, is to enrich the ongoing explorations in the field that have been undertaken by researchers in our country and determine how all these research experiences can contribute to a more acute analysis of the different factors that teaching and learning English in the Colombian context might entail.

Hence, according to this approach, the EFL classroom is not a secluded, self-contained mini-society; it is, rather, a constituent of the larger society in which many forms of domination and inequality are produced and reproduced for the benefit of vested interests; therefore, an analysis of classroom discourse must necessarily include an analysis of the discursive practices and discursive formations that support the structure of dominant discourses.

As Wenger (1998) states, identity is an ongoing process of negotiating one's self-engaging in a community of practice. Classroom setting then is observed as a community in which multiple relationships take place, and the variables that might contribute to identity construction and formation could be interwoven within the roles of individuals that are part of it. It is a matter of observing the dynamics in which that community is involved through what Geertz (1973) calls "thick observation and explanation" (p. 62) and how these dynamics shape what students are and might become as language learners (cited in Kumaravadivelu, 1999).

Then, Critical Ethnography could be considered an attempt to go further with quantitative or qualitative approaches to data analysis. According to Kumaravadivelu (1999), this methodology allows the researcher to penetrate hidden meanings and glean or underscore connections within discourse. My mission as a researcher in light of this methodology is to deconstruct dominant discourses as well as counter-discourses by posing questions at the boundaries of ideology, power, knowledge and all those aspects that contribute to the identity construction of students. Therefore, this research methodology involves the gathering of spoken, audio and video data from multiple sources, including interactional episodes, interviews and discussions with participants at different levels and at different times.

Thus, Critical Ethnography, enclosed within the frame of CCDA, would be considered as Geertz states, "not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 1999, p. 145). In other words, the idea of interplaying CCDA and CE within this project is to start considering the sociocultural reality that influences identity formation in and outside the classroom. However, it is important to separate learners' linguistic needs and wants from their sociocultural needs and wants. Thus, the negotiation of the meaning of discourse and its analysis should not be confined to the acquisition aspects of input and interaction (reflected in aspects like turn-taking), but should also take into account participants' complex and competing expectations and beliefs, identities and voices, fears and anxieties.

132 | Methodology for data analysis

Bearing in mind that Kumaravadivelu (1999), has not yet proposed a detailed methodology for data analysis, and considering not only the principles of the framework but the general construct in this research study, I found the appropriate bases in Grounded Theory to analyze the data collected under the considerations of Critical Ethnography. According to Canagarajah (1993), under the principles of critical ethnography, the researcher should approach data analysis and findings through an inductive and recursive process: expect patterns, categories, or themes to evolve as data collection proceeds rather than imposing them a priori. Besides, when reporting, the researcher should also show evidence of triangulation, a systematic process of looking across multiple data sources for findings and confirming or disconfirming evidence.

Results of the research experience

Taking into account the principles of grounded approach under the light of critical ethnography (Kumaravadivelu, 1999), each one of the five transcripts has gone through a process of coding and establishment of patterns in order to find the categories.

Taking into consideration the framework mentioned above, I here present the findings after the process of data analysis. All the categories presented are the product of a careful analysis of spoken interactions undertaken in an EFL university classroom and complemented under the light of theoretical support that closely relates to the findings of this project.

Students and their passive resistance

The student finds him/herself in permanent struggles related to the way he/she is conceived as a language learner. In this first category, there are three subcategories that depict the way students try to discursively fight for a negotiation that either positively or negatively contributes to the process of identity construction.

L1 vs. L2 strategies for understanding

The use of the mother tongue becomes an essential resource for classroom interaction in the context of this study. Each one of the actors (students and teacher) makes use of L1 with different purposes and on different occasions, but definitely with an evidentiary effect on identity construction through the interaction process.

First of all, students' use of L1 is directly related to two main purposes: the first one is to check for understanding on the contents being taught in class when the interaction is different from providing an answer requested by the teacher. This purpose can take many different directions according to what a student's intention is or what s/he wants to express. These different directions are related to expressing full ideas of what is being discussed in class, to check and show understanding of what the teacher is saying, to prove that they might have more knowledge on the subject than the rest of their classmates, to talk to each other when undertaking group activities and when addressing the teacher for individual questions. Excerpt 1 illustrates a situation in which the teacher and one of his students are trying to figure out the definition of passive voice and its relation to a specific field: art. (Given the fact that the excerpts provided are composed of a mixture of English, broken English and Spanish, an English translation in italics is provided for ease of reading).

Excerpt 1

T: How do you define that? ¿Qué sería la voz pasiva? According to those examples...it was taken, it was designed, it was created, it was taken? (S2 SIGUE HABLANDO CON S9)

How do you define that? What would be the passive voice? it was taken, it was designed, it was created, it was taken? (S2 KEEPS TALKING TO S9)

T: Excuse me? Las cosas hablan por si solas...can you expand more, what do you mean?

Excuse me? Things speak for themselves...can you expand more, what do you mean?

S2: No es que hablen por si solas, el arte también necesita el ruido para expresar, o sea...la fotografía (...)

It is not that they speak for themselves, art also needs noise to express, I mean... photography (...)

T: So you are associating passive voice with art...so you can use passive voice when you are talking about art...mmm.

Although the teacher neither validates nor forbids the use of the L1 in the classroom, he certainly does not interact with students using Spanish. This can be considered a type of resistance regarding the fact that, at such a high level of language study (this is the final course in the series), students are not supposed to use their mother tongue. However, the teacher's purpose for using English in the classroom is contradicted by a very common phenomenon that implicitly acknowledges the importance of the use of L1 in the learning process: code switching.

Taking into account the long instances of teacher talk, he uses this strategy in order to make himself understood about what he says. In the

134 | following case, for example, he is trying to get the students to guess the name of the artist who designed a very important building in Colombia.

Excerpt 2

T: So yeah, by whom was it designed? ¿Por quién fue diseñado?

S2: (...)

T: So what is the only one that you have there...

S2: Is Colombian, pero (TEACHER INTERRUPTS)—

T: It's Colombian, yes, it's Colombian but probably you don't remember...the name...¿no recuerdan?

S6: (...) She's dead? Lo unico que me acuerdo es que ya murió, pero pues no sé... (...) She's dead?

(The only thing I remember is the she already died, but I don't know...)

T: Is a very important architect, take it for granted...what is the only, what is the only name that you have left from the list...

Although this code switching process does not compose a part of all of the teacher's turns, it actually contributes to students' comprehension of teacher's instructions and comments. It would be considered the moment in which students find the way to follow the teacher's instructions without asking anyone what they are supposed to do. It is also the strategy the teacher finds in order not to break the "flow" of the class that would otherwise be broken by a request from students for explanations.

The use of L1 in this university classroom unveils a process of identity construction that works towards a common goal, which is the learning of a foreign language, but it is undertaken using the L1 nonetheless. In the development of each class, there are two dimensions being constructed simultaneously in one single student i.e. the learner who uses his/her knowledge about the language to answer teacher's questions, and the learner who uses his/her mother tongue in order to relate his background and life experience to the purpose of giving meaning and understanding to what is being said about the foreign language. This situation, due mostly to a serious language constraint, could shape students' vision of language as an instrumental one which coerces the negotiation of the self that allows students to position themselves as "more" or "less" powerful within interaction, unless Spanish is used. The language constraint is acknowledged by short entries in the mother tongue, and the struggle of Spanish use is resisted by the teacher by speaking in English regardless of whether or not the students address him in Spanish. They are constructed as subjects able to comprehend rather than subjects being able to use and produce language.

The concept of L1 as a strategy in this specific classroom setting might differ from the purpose L1 is supposed to entail. Thus, I find a kind of mismatch between what is evidenced in the data, and what studies and scholars

state about the role of L1 in EFL classrooms, especially in the code switching phenomenon evidenced in the teacher's talk. According to Turnbull (2009), the target language must be understood by students. In order to accomplish this goal, the first language use can facilitate intake and thereby contribute to learning. In regard to this issue, code switching arises as a contextualization cue (Gumperz, 1982) that organizes and structures talk.

Recalling Turnbull's words (2009), we can see that if we consider the language learner not as an imperfect monolingual speaker of the second language but as a budding, incipient, multilingual person whose model is the multilingual speaker, it seems reasonable to expect and allow code switching and, in general, the use of the first language to emerge naturally within second and foreign language classrooms.

Circulating power: struggles for knowledge.

Throughout the analysis of the data, power struggles for whoever holds knowledge have been observed. Taking into account the teacher's long entries compared to the short answers provided by students, one might think that the teacher is the "holder of knowledge" and the students' role is either that of a "translator" or "reproducer" of language rules. Nevertheless, a deeper look at the data makes some patterns evident. These patterns give account of a process of "power circulation" (Foucault, 1980) and position knowledge as an object of a high value in order to position both teacher and students as active members of the community of practice, represented by this EFL classroom (Wenger, 1998).

These struggles for knowledge among students and teachers are undertaken in two different scenarios. The ones regarding the language and the ones regarding the previous experiences that students held and that might contribute to the development of the class.

In the struggles about language, students sometimes position themselves as knowledge-holders since they are giving the teacher instructions as to what should or should not be used regarding a specific grammar structure. Since the teacher depends on their answer to continue with the exercise, s/he cannot avoid the fact of having students telling him/her the steps s/he has to follow. In these cases of power circulation, laughing seems to be the students' reaction from being the ones who tell the teacher what the correct grammar form is, and more so, when the teacher seems to get confused about students' comments. However, the teacher resists this loss of control by ignoring what students are suggesting s/he do. Although students do not respond to or argue over the teacher's final decision, which acknowledges that students' answers are correct, they certainly transform the vision they hold about the teacher as the one who "knows it all," who is privileged in the class. Excerpt 3, in which

136| both the students and the teacher are arguing about the past tense of the verb “take” within the correction of one of the grammar exercises students were doing, serves to illustrate this point:

Excerpt 3

T: What can we use here?

S3: Took.

T: Yeah, take?

S3: Mmm (hesitates).

T: What do you say?...

S4: No, pero es...took

No, but it is ...took

T: Ok

S4: No es el present, es past

It is not the present, it is the past

T: Ok I know...yes, yes...but took?

S: (...)

T: Can you please spell it?

S4: In Spanish teacher? (Ss laughs)

T: Come on!

S5: Yes T-O-O-K

T: Or take? I'm going to write it in the present, ok?...Take...another one?

S5 (To his group): Pero, no sé supo cual era (2s). ¿Por qué take?

(To his group): But we didn't know which it was (2s). Why take?

As we can see, another struggle for knowledge arises in the classroom and is the type of knowledge that goes beyond the learning of the language and makes up part of students' background knowledge. The importance of taking into consideration students' prior knowledge on a specific subject gets reduced to the frustration of a wrong answer in which the teacher smoothly seems to win the battle.

Students as “answerers.”

The act of having students position themselves and being positioned by the teacher as the ones who answer has several implications that depend on two main aspects. Students are “free” enough to speak at any moment, given the fact there is no nomination or pointing from the teacher; however, the “choral responses” give account as to how the teacher expects students to have the right answer, assuming they have a general understanding of the grammar contents being taught in class. Excerpt 4 is proof of this situation.

Excerpt 4

T: I have some sentences that we are going to distinguish (...) hope so; so, just

on the right you have these sentences, ok?...So, that's it. The first sentence is:

"I can't stop loving you." Do you understand it? You understand it?

Ss: (Speaking in a low voice) Yes.

T: Sorry?

Ss: Yees! (Ss laugh)

T: What does it mean? What does it mean in Spanish?

Ss: Yo no puedo dejar de quererte...

I can't stop loving you...

T: No puedo dejar de amarte, ¿cierto? Yeah? Good... the second: "I'm afraid of flying" What does it mean in Spanish?

I can't stop loving you, right? yeah? Good... the second: "I'm afraid of flying"

What does it mean in Spanish?

Ss: (Mumbling in Spanish)

T: Le tengo miedo a volar, ¿yeah? Good...the next one is, "Thanks for coming today."

I am afraid of flying, yeah? Good...the next one is, "Thanks for coming today."

Ss: Gracias por venir hoy.

Thanks for coming today

T: Gracias por venir hoy, ¿good? Here: "We all dislike getting up early." What does it mean in Spanish?

Thanks for coming today, good? Here: "We all dislike getting up early." What does it mean in Spanish?

It is important to take into account that although choral responses are given by the vast majority of the class (in this particular instance by translating some sentences into Spanish for students to understand the use of gerunds), not all the students take part in them, creating a situation in which those who do not speak are covered by the umbrella of an answer that is not constructed but rather the product of previous knowledge. It is a matter of repetition rather than a process of meaning construction. The fact that they answer as a group does not guarantee that all of them know about the topic.

Students as communicative beings

Taking into account the identity students are supposed or are "forced" to assume given the interaction dynamics undertaken in the classroom, I found within the process of data analysis that students have the need and the right to be acknowledged and heard in the classroom. This category, then, depicts the different strategies students used in order to resist the passive role the teacher had been assigning them. Fruitful interactions before class time, implicit freedom to speak, and the teacher trying to coerce students into using these alternative ways of interaction make up part of this category.

138 | Alternative interactions: fighting against required answers

Two alternative phenomena are presented in the classroom apart from the “Teacher-pupils” interaction, which has to do, of course, with pupil-pupil interaction. First, the group work is related to the way learners relate to each other taking into account a common denominator: the activity suggested by the teacher. Using L1 when the teacher is not around, and trying to understand each other in the L2 with the help of the teacher, each one of the students assumes a role that implies a whole different turn regarding students as passive agents, i.e. they have the chance to be more “real.”

Opposite to what the teacher might think of the students’ talk when he is not around (where they use L1 to talk about things that are not related to the class), they are actually engaged in understanding the nature and complexity of the task the teacher is assigning them. This process entails that pupil-pupil interaction is divided into three different stages as described below:

1. *The clarification stage*, in which students are concerned about checking the understanding of the concepts the teacher already explained as well as the task or activity they are supposed to undertake. Within this stage of interaction the roles are pretty well defined since the group arrangement is usually the same. There is one student who is in charge of clarifying the concepts and telling the others what they are supposed to do. This is the student who usually interacts with the teacher in the L2. This student is the one in charge of answering the questions and organizing the way in which the group works. The rest of the students become note takers, or they just pay attention to the instructions and follow them.
2. *Task undertaking stage*, in which the student who builds up his/her identity as the “leader,” who is in charge of clarifying the doubts of other students, starts to work on his/her own. The other students take heed and start to wonder about the best way to undertake the task.
3. *Socialization stage*: in which the same leader takes the floor and starts eliciting information on the results of the task. This pupil waits for classmates to give the answers and he/she finally gives his/her own. As soon as this happens, the rest of the group just modifies the answers they have. This leader validates the word of his/her peers, but he/she certainly does not legitimate what they have to say about the task itself.

Along this process the use of L2 is reduced to the questions and answers assigned by the teacher. The process and further comments are carried out

entirely in the L1. This distribution of student roles when they work together constitutes a pattern in this classroom given the fact that the group activities the teacher assigns during the lessons are the same.

Identity shapers.

Within this third and last category, I classified the main aspects that have contributed toward shaping the identity of students as language learners in this particular classroom. Even though these two aspects have been mentioned along the data analysis, there are some specific details that are essential in order to comprehend the way students understand, construct and see themselves as part of the language classroom. These two identity shapers are the teacher and the group dynamics.

The first thing I must say regarding these two sub categories that emerged from the data collected is that it was revealed how complex the dynamics of interaction in the classroom might be. These identity shapers entail a series of events, behaviours, ideas and points of view that, sometimes, due to the rush we are living in in our daily teaching practice, we might not be able to see.

The teacher as an identity shaper.

This subcategory will be developed from two different perspectives: the role of the teacher's concept of language and its strong influence in students' identity construction, and the social implications of the "tagging" phenomenon (that is related to the process of identification of an individual or a group through a concept that depicts their characteristics) that is presented in the classroom.

Teachers and other language educators are somehow faced with the question of where to start and around which aspects of the "complex phenomenon" of language they should structure their teaching. These dilemmas refer to the way language can be analyzed and presented to students in an effective and meaningful manner. According to Tudor (2001), one of the answers could be to look at the language as a linguistic system and to present this system to students. Once this choice is made, however, some questions arise as to the elements around which the language system should be presented. Then, the way teachers understand the concept of language comes into play. This concept represents, as has been evident throughout the data analysis, a key factor in the teacher's discourse that influences directly his students' identity construction and the different roles they assume as language learners.

A second aspect to consider is the collective social implications of classroom interaction. The interaction between pupils and teacher unveils a never-ending cycle in which the role of students might be redefined, depending

140 | on the dynamics of the group and the activity itself. In a first step, I evidenced the different prejudices students have regarding the ability of their partners when undertaking group activities. These prejudices are co-constructed due to the self-image construction students build in the classroom. The following excerpt evidences this fact:

Excerpt 5

T: So, we are going to check the homework (2s), are you ready?

S1: (In an ironic way) “Claro teacher, yo fui el primero en traer todo, hagamosle de una.”

(In an ironic way) *Of course teacher, I was the first one who brought the homework, let's correct it right now!*

ALL STUDENTS LAUGH

Situations in which one of those students that is not characterized by having a very good performance in English says he brought his homework and wants some feedback imply a process of identity construction that shapes the identity of students with consequences that will be reflected in group work interaction. In this particular piece of interaction, the reason for this is that, firstly, he seems to legitimate himself as a learner who does not like to complement his learning process by doing homework. Secondly, this same behaviour of the student, which is also acknowledged by his peers with laughter, would apparently lead the rest of the group to think he is not interested in the activities related to the class and is, therefore, a person who is not going to assume any active role within group work. As a matter of fact, when undertaking group activities, this particular student breaks with the typical distribution of students, who usually work together. On the contrary, he goes back and forth in the different groups, and his role within them is usually that of a “receiver” of knowledge. The teacher appears to accept this role assumed by the student by allowing him to move among groups in spite of the predictable group arrangement of the classroom.

This game of identities students and the teacher play definitely affects the way students define themselves and others in the classroom. The teacher, using “implicit” expressions such as lazy, smart, and absent-minded, constructs identity features that are, somehow, legitimated by students.

Thus a process of “labelling” is produced in which students are defined as “locho,” who is a lazy person, “pilo,” a person who understands and performs easily in any academic field, or “conchudo,” a person who is always depending on someone else to do for him/her what he/she is supposed to do. What is worrisome about this situation is that these tags are either explicit or implicit making students include and accept them as part of their personalities. At this point it would be worthy to ask to what extent those tags affect

students' performances in the classroom and what might a teacher do in order to avoid this kind of discrimination that, according to what was observed in my classroom, certainly affects the students' roles towards the process of language learning.

This issue of roles and identities within group interaction might change as students become aware of the value of other students' opinions when talking about common topics. Below we can take into consideration some reflections such as the one presented in Excerpt 6, which is an interview of one of the students:

Excerpt 6

"Debo confesar que al principio no me gustaba mucho la idea de trabajar en grupo, pero tuve la oportunidad de trabajar con dos personas y nos entendimos chévere."

I must confess that at the beginning I didn't like the idea of working in groups, but I had the opportunity of working with two people and we got along quite well.

(Student 3)

These comments that come from students are a valuable insight and proof of this change that can lead students, as seen in the data, to get to express themselves in an individual way using L1, but making a great effort to use L2 as much as possible. Nevertheless, without letting the "question-answer" style, the teacher focuses his attention on certain students depending on the kind of activity he is undertaking. Although he does not make students aware of the phenomenon in the context of the class, this could be considered a favorable situation since the teacher enhances participation by taking into account the different abilities students have in terms of the use of the language they are learning.

Identity construction through power relations

This subcategory was the product of both a careful look at the data and the most relevant aspects encountered in the categories presented in the results of the study. Thus, one common feature to all the categories was the struggle for power, and the way this power is exercised in different parts of the interaction. Power is produced for different purposes that can be depicted as power for knowledge through the use of the language, power through gender, power through role shifting and power through visions of language. This subcategory that is intertwined in all the categories of analysis also unveils the classroom as a space that is continually organized to maintain power relations, so deeply embedded that language teachers sometimes might fail to recognize them.

The idea with this overarching sub category is to get to a new understanding of power as a product of interrelations among individuals, constituted through processes of interactions. It is also the opportunity to see how the classroom is seen as the space to be used in order to "keep 'others' 'in

142 | their place” (Morgan, 2000, p. 275) and how the actors involved in this space might discursively resist this idea.

In relation to power through the use of language, it was evident in the data how language was the means by which both students and teacher exercise power. Using the L1, students claimed to be legitimated in their position of communicative learners. Although they are learning a new language, they need the support of their mother tongue in order to express their ideas. They recognize the ability of the teacher to communicate in English, and use it as a model to follow. However, they might value the condition of learning as a process that takes time and acknowledge L1 as a powerful tool in order to avoid the communication gaps that can be produced due to their language constraints.

The teacher, on the other hand, fights back regarding this vision through the almost exclusive use of the L2, supported by his beliefs and experiences on how language is supposed to be taught (as was depicted in the previous category). That is the reason why, through most of the excerpts presented in this chapter, students constructed their identity as passive receivers—even though it might be useful at some point in the process to start “communicating” in the foreign language. Although a power relationship is present in the interaction, the power at this point does not circulate; it seems static because the fact of having students just giving required answers does not reflect the starting point of a communicative process.

Power circulation is produced in some other moments of the class that go beyond teacher-group interaction. This circulation is created in some micro spaces that redefine roles and therefore shape identities. One of the ways in which power circulates is through gender. In the group work scenario, for instance, the dominant role of women in the classroom was evident. Even the teacher acknowledges this phenomenon as something that calls his attention in the way males and females relate to each other. However, he considers it as another variable of classroom dynamics that has no real relevance in students’ learning process. This fact can be evidenced in Excerpt 7:

Excerpt 7

T: Well, there is a thing that always calls my attention, did you notice the way they were organized? Five of the nine couples were male and female students, in 4 out of the 5, the ones who made the comments and organized the information were women. The boys just keep on nodding their heads and writing what girls said. (TEACHER LAUGHS) That is something very common you know? I guess girls are always more outgoing.

It was interesting to observe how women are the ones who take the “leading roles” among the different groups, and men just assume a position of

acceptance in terms of the plan to follow in order to undertake each one of the tasks. Thus, a kind of gendered discourse is constructed in this classroom and is legitimated by the teacher and other students. The women in this classroom may be engaged in a permanent construction of themselves as women, but beyond that, they are students who are mastering a language apart from their own. Sunderland (2002) brings up an interesting debate related to this construction of gender identities, wondering whether women are permanently performing their gender or if they are constructing other identities simultaneously. In this case, they are constructing their identities as women and as learners of a second language using the power that other students seem to “give away” when developing group tasks. A proof of this fact is that when it comes to the expression of ideas orally, the “micro-universes” created in the groups cause most of the students to give the power to the one (a woman) they consider more suitable for representing them.

In conclusion, this analysis intended to bring about understanding as to the way interaction shaped and reshaped students’ discourse and identity, and how these permanent modifications contributed to their construction as language learners. Understanding identity construction as a dynamic entity that is socially produced can also reveal social arrangements that maintain power relations in language learning settings.

Conclusions

As Gómez confirmed in a previous investigation,

“The process of analysis of different interactions in this university EFL classroom was important to realize the different ways in which both teachers and students can certainly create environments that facilitate the negotiation and construction of identities despite the ‘static’ behaviors both actors enroll in a so-called typical English class.” (Gómez, 2012, p. 72)

After the process of analysis and explanation of the different categories encountered in the process of data analysis, very interesting conclusions were reached, that can also be part of a discussion as to the findings from previous paragraphs.

The use of L1 is a valuable strategy for students to get an understanding of the topics studied in the class, as well as the main way of communication when teacher-student interaction is not taking place. It is a way to position themselves as subjects of knowledge that, beyond the constraints in the foreign language, are able to express and give meaning to the interactions that are taking place in the classroom. This phenomenon appears to be an important point when it comes to justifying the reasons why students use

144 | Spanish in the English classroom and why it is that some teachers do not allow its use in the classroom. At first glance it seems to be an effective strategy in order to “set the right environment” and get students engaged in the use of the foreign language. Nevertheless, if we take a closer look at this fact, the teacher might not acknowledge all the struggles students go through when trying to use L2 in their attempts to express themselves.

Regardless of the reasons each student has, these internal fights of students can be set within two different positions: the individual struggles of the student who acknowledges the importance of speaking a foreign language but due to different factors, that can be either cognitive or social, does not behave as though they feel that the use of the L2 is vital for effective communication. On the other hand, we have the individual struggles reflected in the social contexts in which the student is learning the language: the fact of having students who have better proficiency, the relationship established with a teacher who demands the use of the L2, and the way the student’s classmates see him/her as part of a “whole” in which s/he has to play a specific role.

In this particular classroom, for instance, the learning of English as a foreign language is held by communication that uses primarily the L1, but it is frowned upon or shunned by the teacher who just uses it when code switching, shaping the vision and perspective of language learning as instrumental ones that do not certainly relate to the student’s self as a whole, and an identity of learners who “work for the moment,” without any meaningful insight of learning a second language. Just as students struggle in order to understand how the language works and how it can be internalized, teachers also deal with issues related to what might be the best way to engage students in the learning process. However, it is inevitable that a pattern of teaching that is influenced by teachers’ beliefs and background experiences stands out among his clear conscience as to how every student has a different way to learn a language.

Thus, the mismatches begin when there is no negotiation among what teacher and students think. If the teacher does not consider how students might feel as learning individuals rather than English language students, it is going to be very difficult to set agreements as to what the best way is to use a foreign language within particular contexts. If this continues to happen, all the dynamics in the classroom will remain hidden under the fight for power and resistance. It is not my intention to disregard the importance of these typical student-teacher interactions as doing so would be to deny the nature of identity construction that is an inherent part of human beings in every stage of life; rather, it is more a matter of how these dynamics can be redirected towards a balance that both actors can benefit from.

It is important to clarify at this point that the intention through the analysis of the data collected was never to portray the teacher as “bad” or “good” on what he does, but was just a process of unveiling the dynamics in the classroom and how, from what he and his students say, the process of identity construction was revealed. As a matter of fact, the teacher was eager to know about the process of analysis and how the study could contribute to the improvement of the teacher–learning process. Through an “informal talk” that we had towards the end of the process of analysis, I had the opportunity to let him know about the findings. He was surprised about all the things he had not noticed about the class and acknowledged the importance of reflection in classroom settings, not only on an individual basis but also on a permanent process of negotiation with his students. Interestingly enough, the teacher seemed to start a process of reflection whose first step was observing the results of the study. Somehow, he looked at himself in the mirror and realized many different aspects of being a teacher that appeared to be forgotten due to the “repetitive practices” that sometimes dominate the teaching field. The teacher expressed his concerns about how the pedagogical practices become rituals as time passes and how those behaviors that might be inevitable could be reformulated and transformed.

Recalling Gómez’ words, “power struggles in the classroom that affect the “regular flow” of this university classroom are directly related to knowledge and how it is constructed, imposed or owed in a community of practice.” Since these struggles cause the teacher to lose face with his students and change the role of students e.g. giving them the power to possess knowledge, role positioning becomes a cycle that is supposed to be closed when the teacher recovers his discourse identity (Gee, 2001) and students return to their positional identity (Holland et al., 1998) in which they are supposed to return to their social role in the classroom community. The fact of having students resisting some of the rules implicitly imposed by the teacher does not mean, however, that they do not legitimate the teacher as “the one in charge” when it comes to the shaping of the teaching learning process.

In short, being able to unveil these hidden dynamics has to give some room for both teachers and students to look beyond fixed categorizations and listen to how learners negotiate different identities as they employ diverse cultural and linguistic resources to construct knowledge in classrooms. If a student is labeled under a “permanent identity,” both students and teachers might be missing the chance to discover potential subjectivities that can bring benefits to the teaching-learning process. Thus teachers’ roles include encouraging students to be “interested, critical, communicative, to hold a plurality of points of view, and a desire to question and make sense of it all”

146 | (Gunderson and Anderson, in press, cited in Gunderson 2000, p. 695). The pedagogical implication of this perspective is that instructional practices and language learning curriculum must be grounded in the diverse experiences of the learners in such a way that their multiple viewpoints, diverse cultures, languages and personalities serve as resources for English language learning.

Implications of DA studies in our pedagogical field

In a study like this, the pedagogical implications can be regarded in a different way from the one usually undertaken in a study in which there is a direct intervention. Thus, the implications of this study will be highlighted from two different directions: the importance of the concept of identity construction in classroom interaction and the importance of the reflective role of teachers and students in a new construction of pedagogical practices.

Therefore, it would be important to highlight two main aspects that clearly connect the pedagogical dimension and the research questions: identity and interaction. In regard to identity, the fact of defining students' and teachers' identities not as a linear entity, but rather as a process of permanent construction mediated through the discourse, entails a vision of pedagogy that might certainly be a starting point towards a change in what the roles of both teachers and students are supposed to be within the classroom setting. The process of interaction in which the negotiation of identity is constructed, implies the fact that in a dialogical perspective that might be limited to the regular turns in classroom interaction (Initiation –Response and Feedback) (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), the hidden process of interaction that underlies those turns could help us in the understanding of how students perceive themselves as learners of a foreign language and how the teacher might contribute or coerce the construction of that identity, constructing his /her identity even as a guide or as a “knowledge provider” for students.

It is a matter of seeing what is beyond the surface of the things that are said in order to understand who we are and who we might become as school actors whose identities are yet to be defined or redefined depending on the changing dynamics that the classroom can provide. According to this, sometimes we might not be aware of the consequences of not allowing everyone to express his/her opinions without being interrupted and being disrespected by their teacher and peers. How can this “social negligence” that starts in the classroom have serious effects on students' learning process? How does this abuse of power mediated through discourse entail consequences in the development of values of respect and tolerance in students?

Thus, another implication of a study with these characteristics is to get teachers into a state of reflection and awareness that will allow them to evaluate current pedagogical practices and how through sharing experiences among colleagues, some decisions can be made as to the way students are going

through their learning process and even the way they are assessed, which can be modified or restated according to the needs or expectations of the students.

Rather than giving account of methodological routes to follow when learning a foreign language or learning strategies to lead a successful process in students, the pedagogical concern of a study of this nature is to help teachers and students rethink the way they relate to each other in the classroom and how the analysis of such dynamics might optimize language learning overall. Within a transformative view of language and teaching, both actors of this community shall be willing to acknowledge that not everything is written, and that what we say, how we say it and even what we do not say at all are also part of communication circles that account for a better understanding of human communication.

These are valuable reflections that we might start taking into consideration—what is not said and what is hidden in issues of injustice and social inequity in order to respect and value what students actually do say. There would be no “perfect recipes” but rather alternative and transformative views of teaching and learning from what is said and experienced in each EFL classroom.

On the other hand, it is necessary to highlight the importance that this study might have as to the development that teachers must receive in the research area. Beyond the formal sense of the term, research can actually be done by teachers just by observing and reflecting upon what happens in our daily practice. The teacher who participated in this study was able to realize how the things he said could actually affect or modify the way students behave in the classroom: a pretty valuable realization.

It is important to raise awareness of how being language teachers goes beyond using the right methodology for a specific population to prepare a good class or to create rapport with students; it is, rather, a matter of acquiring some interest in knowing what students really feel and perceive about their learning process in order to make it meaningful for them. However, this should not be only a teacher’s task. Students as “administrators” in their process of identity construction can use strategies in order to start reflecting upon their own processes of learning and engage in a process of negotiation with the teacher. In this way, the success or failure could stop being a “teacher’s responsibility issue,” but rather a teaching-learning process issue with a balanced process in which the fact that we are all different is taken into consideration. In short, as Tudor (2001) states, diversity is a fundamental feature of language teaching (p. 181). Thus, the different participants involved in the language teaching process have differing conceptions on what it entails and how it should best be pursued.

Chapter Five

*From Underdogs to Important
Speakers: Unveiling Language
Learners' Identities through
Peer-approval Discourses*

A b o u t t h e A u t h o r

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From Underdogs to Important Speakers: Unveiling Language Learners' Identities through Peer-approval Discourses

Introduction

When I started working at a bilingual private school, I was amazed by the intricate web of relations and interactions among my teenage students. The way they formed their social groups and the way these groups related to each other were very interesting to observe, and even to be a part of, since we as teachers also play a role inside the classroom and therefore, inside such interactions (De Costa, Clifton and Roen, 2010). I could observe that said interactions started when students looked for others who shared their tastes in music, their ideologies and even their physical appearances. Once they found them, they would form social groups that would determine their behavior and relationships, since each group would eventually acquire status based more or less on “coolness and popularity.”

These observations, particularly on the construction of status among equals in a bilingual environment, inspired me to conduct my master's degree research project on this school and population, especially because the school offers a very special environment: the school's facilities are part of a private university, and its main purpose is to prepare students for university life, which is why it has only tenth and eleventh grades (the last two years of Colombian high school education); students do not wear a uniform, and they are responsible for their schedule and their individual learning processes as part of their growth as autonomous learners.

Through the study of different theories related to this phenomenon I came across the work of Judith Baxter (2003), who had investigated this topic and considered it to be closely related to Peer Approval Discourses (PADs). The pieces of speech used by people to talk about other people may

154 | show agreement (approbatory discourses) or disagreement (non-approbatory discourses), and thus generate acceptance or rejection towards other people's behaviors, opinions, etc.

With this theoretical construct in mind, I conducted a second observation of my students and realized that PADs were present in everyday relations and communicative acts inside the school and that these were sometimes portrayed through name-calling or labeling (Hudak and Kihn, 2001, p. 14). One could regularly hear a student calling another 'ñoño' (nerd in Spanish) or 'brutos' (dumb in Spanish) more than once, inside and outside the classrooms. Parallel to this, I found another theoretical construct that seemed suitable for my research: Language Learner Identities (LLI). From Lave and Wenger's perspective (1991), identities depend on our interactions with others and the participation and place we adopt in a given community. Since classrooms are learning communities, LLI's are the positions students adopt inside the English classroom, and said positions are affected by the way students are perceived by both themselves and others (Castañeda-Peña, 2008). Therefore, one could infer that students' identities inside the classroom are affected by students' interactions and PADs.

Based on my observations and the theory I found related to the phenomenon, I framed my research problem around finding out whether these discourses and identities, which affected students' relationships and statuses outside the classroom, had any effect on their foreign language learning process inside the classroom. I then focused on identifying the types of PADs that emerged in the classroom and on the way these discourses were related to students' language learner identities and their Foreign Language Learning (FLL) processes.

Additionally, it was interesting to discover that even though PADs are part of daily interactions and constantly emerge in all types of classrooms, very few studies related to this topic had been carried out in the Colombian context. This reality made this phenomenon more interesting and relevant for investigation, especially because of the opportunity to analyze them in situ, thanks to the richness of the population and the context.

Language, Identity and Discourse: Theoretical Concepts

The theoretical concepts used for the development of this study were organized into three main groups: Language and socialization, identity and EFL, and discourse and identity.

Language and socialization. One of the most important aspects an English teacher finds in a classroom is the use of language inside the context, because language is the main tool (Vygotsky, 1978) we use in order to socialize and co-construct the different discourses we use in our daily life. Therefore, language is a mediator between individuals and society when it helps us conceptualize social interactions (Haliday, 1985); and it is also a mediator between individuals and reality when it helps us conceptualize the outer world. Thus, mediates to constitute our identity, our ideologies, our beliefs and our places in the world (Lantolf and Appel, 1994).

As we can see, language and socialization are closely related more evidently inside an FLL classroom (English in this particular case) given that language is not only the mediation tool (Lantolf and Appel, 1994), but the subject matter itself. As stated by Willett (1995): “Language learning is the process of becoming a member of a sociocultural group” (p. 475); and Schieffelin and Ochs (1986), affirm that such vision of language has been in the minds of those who are devoted to understanding the interdependence of language and sociocultural processes and structures.

Schieffelin and Ochs’ (1986) add that there are two ways in which language converges: “socialization through the use of language” (when we use the language in order to interact and socialize with others) and “socialization to use the language” (when we see socialization and interaction processes as opportunities to use the language and practice linguistic skills). This means that when we approach interactions and socializations in relation to language, not only are we trying to understand the way people integrate a social group by using the language, but also the way they become part of a group in order to use a target language.

Some studies that share this vision of language are the ones conducted by McKay and Wong (1996) and Lantolf and Appel (1994). In the first study, the authors’ objective was to determine the different relations existing among language and power in Chinese teenage learners of a second language. In the second study, the authors wanted to show the way in which the mediation process worked through the use of text recall tasks in native and foreign language speakers of English. In each case, the relationships between language and society and language and reality were explored, demonstrating that people will always recur to language in order to mediate meaning and make sure other people understand them socially and linguistically.

Identity and EFL. Wenger (2000) defines identity as the way relations and status positions change between groups of individuals. In other words, the way we interact with others has an impact on the way we perceive and are

156| perceived by the others. Thus, each individual shapes their identity according to the social environment where they perform, the different connections they create between their own psyche and the connection they manage to establish with other individuals in a given context.

In this sense, we could say that the identities we constitute in different contexts are based on others' recognition and validation of our position and status in the community (Kielhofner, 2007). Our identity is the position we adopt in a given social group and it varies according to other people's perceptions of us as individuals in different contexts. An example of this conception of identity would be the difference between the way a woman behaves in her home with her children and the way a woman behaves on her job. In the first case she acts like and is perceived as a mother by her offspring. In the second case she acts like and is perceived as (or expected to be) a professional in her career or field of knowledge.

This definition of identity implies that the construction of identity is not linear but is designed through intertwined trajectories, which tell our history and connect our past with our present and our future (Wenger, 2000). Therefore identity is a contextual, collective, unfinished process, which evolves through time.

Observably, EFL situations and particularly classrooms are some of those collective environments that will offer opportunities for interaction and identity construction, mainly because of the role language plays, as it is the tool to transmit knowledge and also the main content for the learning process. As stated by Weedon (1987) "Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed" (p. 21). Hence, it could be said that language students' perceptions of themselves, of their peers and their positioning (status) inside the classroom emerge and depend upon different communicative factors, such as the way they talk, their body language, their discourse, their vocabulary, etc.

Among the authors who have dealt with these issues inside the L2 classroom, we have Norton Peirce (1995), who states that when we talk about social identities inside the classroom we have to include our language learners and their contexts, as well as power relations among second language learners and target language speakers. In my specific case, these power relations were to be seen among both low proficiency and high proficiency students.

Norton Peirce (1995) also highlights the dual role language plays when we talk about language learners' identities inside classrooms. On the one hand, language constitutes language learners' identities (i.e. through its

use, identities are formed). On the other hand, language is constituted by such identities, since learners shape language through their use based on their experience and perceptions. Heller adds to this that it is “through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it also defines the access or rejection you may have or not to powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak” (as cited in Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 13). This turns language learning into a powerful socially mediated practice that will define language learners’ interactions, status (power relations), and even their own identities.

Several different studies share and have developed different contributions to this same idea of second language learning and identity. A second study was undertaken by Norton (2000), for instance, where she tackles power and identity related issues such as gender, race, class, ethnicity and sexual orientations, explaining how inequality (aroused by mainstream opinions related to those issues) results in silent students who do not feel comfortable expressing their ideas, and others who will speak louder and will gain confidence in their learning process.

Another example of this type of research is Willett’s investigation (1995) into a group of immigrant first graders who were becoming part of an L2 class and environment. In this study, the main objective was to do a follow-up of ESL students’ participation in everyday classroom interactions. The author portrays the relationship between language learning and identity, as students were using their classroom and their language for constructing a micro political system where language, ideologies, social relations and identities were being co-constructed.

Local research studies have not been very popular in previous years, but some people are starting to understand their relevance and so we can find two studies in Colombia which tackle this topic. On the one hand, we have Zuluaga, López and Quintero’s study (2009), which is a research endeavor where pre-service teachers, advisors and students work together in cultivating their background and cultural identity. The aim of the study was to include part of the subjects’ rural and background culture into their practice and learning process. The case was developed at the University context, where they worked with the coffee culture through content-based activities in order to bring back the relevance of rural identity and sought its preservation in school students.

On the other hand we have Escobar and Gómez’s (2010) study. In this research project the main objective was to analyze the identity processes that were carried out through language learning in the Nasa indigenous tribe. The authors point out that even though we think we are teaching culturally-oriented

158 | curricula, we may not be doing this as properly as we should: talking about the United States is talking about our target culture, but it is also important to realize that we should also talk about our own identity as Colombian citizens since it is what we know well and it could work as an excuse for students to interact in the aforementioned target language.

When we take a look at the kinds of research studies mentioned above, we realize the kinds of impact students' identities have on their performance at school. We can see that what other students say about them is important, that their discourses affect their proficiency and that they can be both validating or not.

Discourse and identity. There are not many authors that tackle this relation among discourse, identity and language theoretically. Actually, since it is a relatively new field, most of the sources where this relation comes from are research studies, indicating it is evolving slowly to eventually become theory. Because of that, in the following paragraphs I will explain (through the conclusions I have drawn from several studies that tackled this matter) the relation between what we say or how we act, and the way others respond to our behaviors and words.

For instance, a more concise way of describing the vision of discourse I used for my study is found in Castañeda-Peña's research (2008) where it is claimed that, "Discourses comprise ways of understanding the world, talking about it and – especially but not limited to – 'becoming and/or being' within it." (p.114) As for its relation with identity, Norton Peirce (1995) states: "Identity is a site of struggle produced in a variety of social situations (...) subjects are both positioned by relations of power and resistant to that positioning" p. 14-15). This means that we use discourses in the way Castañeda-Peña (2008) defines them, to position ourselves in reality, to be or become part of the world or a particular group of people. In other words, in every single interaction we have with other people, we are struggling to impose and adapt our ideas, beliefs, ideologies, etc. (our discourses, for short), and in so doing we are building our identities and places in society.

A different study that shows the importance of gender identity and language learning is the one conducted by Teutsch – Dwyer, (2001), where they perform a Discourse Analysis case study on a male Polish immigrant. Through interviews the authors realized that the immigrant was having problems in learning the language due to his inability to accept the way women behave more freely in the States, compared to women's general behavior in his native Poland. Duran's (2006) case study is similar to Teutsch – Dwyer's in the sense that through the analysis of audio and video recordings of classroom interaction, they were capable of finding teachers' and students'

discursive patterns that showed gender conceptions and their effects on an educational context.

Similarly, Castañeda-Peña (2008) conducted a discourse study on a group of preschoolers in a town close to Bogotá. In this research endeavor, the author focused on gendered discourses and the way these discourses affected their language learning process. In this study, the author does talk about peer-approval discourses and language learning identities (Castañeda-Peña, 2008). This was a close-up of one of the possible ways I had for organizing and developing my instruments and my own research design. Also regarding PADs and language learning identities, Baxter (2003) conducted a study where she investigated how the comments made by the people inside a classroom affected students' performances in oral presentations.

Finally, I found Bourne's (2001) case study in a multi-lingual primary classroom very closely related to my study. In her case study, the researcher found that even though teachers focus their attention on pedagogical discourses inside the classroom, these discourses do not have as much impact on the construction of their identities as the discourses they have with their peers inside and outside their classroom. As a result, she decided to construct her classroom as an environment open to a variety of discourses and positions, where children are not merely the "receptors" of knowledge, but active participants in their own learning process through a complex web of interactions with both their teachers and their classmates. In relation to the idea of seeing students as "receptors," it is also important to mention Escobar's (2013) study on "identity-forming discourses." In his article, Escobar states that there are some strategies that different government institutions use in order to easily shape identities to make them more open to submission and manipulation. Despite the fact that this study is not directly related to classroom discourses, it opens a new window into the variety of effects discourses have on identities: power relations, and how a given discourse, whether it is from a government institution or a classmate, can create power relations and lead us to adopt a powerful or submissive position inside a given social group.

As we can see, interactions and positions inside classrooms, more specifically English classrooms, are affected by different aspects which may include the PADs used in relation to the English proficiency level of students, which was my own research concern. These ideas are part of a very enriching field for critical applied linguistics and discourse analysis given that language helps us constitute our own identity and our perception of others. From this research's aim, this positioning phenomenon inside the language classroom is an important aspect to be studied in relation to students' second language learning. In the end, taking it from this discursive perspective, it is all about

160 | the language and the way we use it to establish power relations, not only at school but anywhere we go.

Method

Taking into account the theoretical constructs mentioned before, I started conducting my research process at a bilingual private school, located in Bogotá, Colombia, offers 10th and 11th grades only (11th graders in Colombia being seniors as are 12th graders in the United States). It is located inside a university. The main objective of this school is to offer students the opportunity to start adapting to university life before actually being submerged in it. Students do not wear any uniforms and they participate in different first-semester university subjects in the areas of study that interest them.

At the time of my research, the school had multilevel English classrooms. Given the variety of students the school admitted—students from bilingual schools, schools from abroad (the USA and Brazil for instance), traditional schools, etc.—the classrooms were organized to offer the program to the different students according to the level they were placed in (pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate). This led to classrooms with a broad variety of students with different backgrounds, ideologies, behaviors, struggles and thus, identities.

Of the program participants, a total of 22 10th graders volunteered. These were divided into two groups (one calendar A and one calendar B). Out of these 22 students, only 2 were female. Most were under the age of 18, so their parents had to sign a consent form accepting their participation in the study. The students who were already 18 years old voluntarily signed the consent form in order to become participants of the research project.

The criterion I used in order to choose my participants was the fact that they were my students, which turned them into convenient participants (Gravetter and Forzano, 2011). I worked only with the ones who were willing to participate.

Based on the previous studies conducted by different researchers on this topic and the fact that they had all used this methodology for their own studies, I determined that using Discourse Analysis (DA) was a sensible approach to this problem. More importantly, the analysis of PADs is the analysis of social discourses which, as defined by Martin and Rose (2003), are those discourses that stop being separate clauses and start becoming a set of “meaning comprising texts and behaviors” (Martin and Rose, 2003). When we talk to others and we imprint messages with our words, we are using a social discourse, and the same happens with responses to others’ discourses.

As long as a person is sending, accepting or rejecting a message—or a person (as was the case with my population)—the person is using social discourse.

As for the particular type of DA, I chose Descriptive DA over Critical DA (Gee, 2010), since I intended to understand the way language worked and the reasons for it to work the way it did in my particular context, including its effects on the EFL learning process. In other words, I wanted to understand a phenomenon related to interactions and language. It was not my intention to intervene in my classroom and change a particular issue I considered problematic or take a political stand towards a social problem perceivable in discourse. Therefore, my study was purely descriptive.

Subsequently, I videotaped a set of classes and transcribed all the verbal interactions of the students in order to analyze their PADs. I chose this data collection technique because I was the teacher of one of the classrooms observed, so I did not have the opportunity to analyze discourses and teach the lesson at the same time. The transcriptions allowed me to thoroughly review the session and analyze aspects that would have been overlooked otherwise, such as spontaneous speech, non-verbal expressions, gestures and body language (Candela, 2001).

A second data collection tool I used was field notes. While in class I would write down aspects that caught my attention in the form of key words or questions and then check the relevance of such impressions in relation to the video recording. By the end of this phase, I had collected approximately 8 hours of video recordings, which were later transcribed and divided into different files named after the date, the activity, and the group that participated. I also ended up with 16 entries in my field notes, an entry for each session I observed and designed for this research task.

Finally, I used sociograms in order to triangulate my data. These are tools used to measure interpersonal relations in terms of rejection, acceptance or indifference (Quintero, 1997) in the form of graphics. With the combination of these three tools I was able to put synthesize a significant amount of information about my students' PADs, their interactions in the classroom, and the possible effects these may have on the construction of their language-learner identities.

In order to analyze the transcriptions of the sessions and my field notes, I decided to follow a grounded-theory process, using *ATLAS.ti* 5.2. Through the use of this software I highlighted the emergence of PADs and gave them codes that helped me to organize my data. Using this software also allowed me to organize the codes into webs of meaning which helped me interweave the relations between different interactions on different days and classes, as well as with the sociograms and field notes.

162 | Instructional design

Peer approval discourses normally occur in environments where students feel comfortable; that is, students need to feel that they are not expected to use such discourses so they emerge anyway. Therefore, it was necessary to create an environment in this English classroom where interactions occurred naturally (Kendon, 1990) to examine the PADs. Thus, I designed a series of activities that fostered communication among the participants during the recorded sessions, as well as allowed them to be active participants in the classes (Grundy, 1987).

For example, I asked my students to think about a social issue they would be interested in working on. The purpose of this request was to stimulate students' engagement in the topic so they would become more critical and open to discussion. When they decided they wanted to work on the topic of human trafficking, they suggested a debate based on a movie, and they brought the movie *Trade* (Emmerich, R. and Heller, R. [Producers] and Kreuzpaintner, M. [Director] 2007) as an option for us to watch and work on.

After they decided on the topic and on the type of activity they wanted to do, I designed a series of questions based on the movie. I wanted all my questions to be as thought-provoking as possible and to aim towards open-ended discussions in order to create transformative subject learning and thinking-centered learning (Henderson, Hawthorne and Stollenwerk, 2000) where students would feel more comfortable showing themselves through their speech and using language as a means for self-expression (Tudor, 2001).

One example of this type of question was:

- What are the social problems that human trafficking presents or entails in a country such as Colombia? Think of the target population that would be affected the most and the way it would be affected.

They first answered these questions individually in order for them to organize their insights and opinions both from a personal perspective and in a controlled environment (Tudor, 2001), and then, they shared their answers with other classmates so that they could discuss and argue their ideas before others in a communicative space (Tudor, 2001).

Another example of a question framed within transformative subject-learning (Henderson, Hawthorne and Stollenwerk, 2000), and based upon the actions of characters in the chosen movie, was the following:

- What would you do if someone close to you (a friend or a relative) became a victim of human trafficking? Would you act and try to

save the person as did Adriana's brother? Or would you be more of a passive actor like her mother?

This type of question encouraged students to think more deeply about their opinions and feelings towards human trafficking as they got the opportunity to see themselves as part of "the world in movement" (Kelley, 1962, in Henderson, Hawthorne and Stollenwerk, p. 6, 2000) and as a person aware of what goes on around him/her and able to reflect critically and look for actions within his/her reach in order to tackle the problem.

After the discussion, the final stage was to work as a group in order to design a creative way to portray insights and thoughts about human trafficking and its consequences in our country. In this stage, they worked on activities such as creative writing and visual creations (posters and videos, etc.) autonomously.

This task and several others used throughout the study were framed within the same visions and perspectives and offered students the space for them to interact with each other. As they did this, I had the opportunity to study the way they positioned themselves, the terms they used to address each other, and the way these terms and interactions affected their foreign language learning process.

Findings

As stated by Escobar (2013): "Discourses are not merely expressions of individual and collective identities but are guided by intentions to safeguard interests and strive for specific objectives, thus shaping identities" (p. 50). With this statement, we can see the close relation between emerging discourses among students and the identities that arise from said discourses. In the following section, I present the discourses and identities that are part of this study.

Discourses that expressed disapproval of others' words or actions were constant throughout the data-collection period. These "non-approval" discourses gave way to learner identities that became part of the classes where students spoke their mind and showed they did not agree with what the other students were saying. Among the non-approval discourses, we find the following categories:

Debunking discourses. These discourses are used by students whenever they want to point out their classmates' wrongful actions or words and express their disagreement. Whenever these discourses appear we find that students become debunkers (the ones who point out the speakers' mistakes

164 | and judge them on those) or the “debunkees” (the ones who are being pointed at or accused).

The debunkers. When we talk about debunking someone or something, we refer to the way we behave when we find inconsistencies in what we are analyzing, and then expose it so everyone else knows that it is not true. In the case of some of my students, they debunked each other’s oral presentations. One specific case occurred during a presentation my students made about an influencing character in their lives. In calendar A, for example, as Carlos² was doing his presentation about Bob Marley using PowerPoint slides, one of his classmates, A. Montaña noticed something was wrong with the slides he was presenting:

Extract 1:

102 Carlos: He [Bob Marley] teach me that the world is no only money, is no only the system (inaudible) is no only the... material things... the life is more than that.

103 Teacher: Ujumm, ok.

104 Carlos: Ok (points at the screen) Bob Marley.

105 (A student in the back whistles and the others laugh)

106 Carlos: His name is Robert Nesta Marley.

107 Montaña: ¡Lo sacó de Wikipedia! (he got it out of Wikipedia!)³

108 Carlos: He born in February 6 of 1945 in Jamaica, and he die of cancer in May (pronounced “mai”) May (pronounced correctly) 11 of 1981 in Miami.

109 Montaña: In Miami? (Incredulously)

110 Carlos: In Miami. Eeeeh he died because he have? Has? Had?

(Caviedes, 2012. P. 75)

From the excerpt above, we can infer that when Montaña realized Carlos’s slide was purely a copy/paste from the Wikipedia website, he started to question Carlos’s information and felt the necessity to expose his “failure” in front of his classmates and teacher. In this case, it was an academic debunk since the mistake Carlos committed was related to the source of his presentation since all he did was copy and paste the information he used for the assignment.

Another debunking also occurred during this same class session: a sentimental one. In this case, when our prior “debunker” did his own presentation about his grandfather, his classmates apparently felt the necessity to call him out because he used pictures of Homer Simpson instead of his grandfather:

² The students’ real names have been changed for ethical concerns.

³ Spanish interventions from the transcripts were translated in order to enhance reading comprehension.

Extract 2

50 Montaña: He is important in my life because he took the paper of my father, he change (inaudible) he take all the responsibility of me and my brother. He is one of the reason why I do everything.

51 Teacher: Ok.

52 Montaña (smiles and says): No tenía fotos de él. (He shows an image of the character Homer from the television show The Simpsons because he says he did not have any photos of his grandfather)

53 (His classmates laugh.)

54 Jose L.: ¿Qué tiene que ver? (what does Homer have to do with your grandpa?)

55 (Montaña keeps laughing.)

56 Poncho: ¡Re rabón con el abuelito! (You're really rude to your grandpa!)

57 Jose L.: ¿Se parece a Homero? (Does he look like Homer?)

58 Montaña: No, pero... (No, but...)

59 Poncho: ¡Es Homero guevon! (It is Homer, you fool!)

60 Montaña: My grandfather important in my life because...he is the most intelligent person in the world (students in the back keep laughing at Homer's image) when you talk with him he can answer all world topics, if you have a question (inaudible) over this thing I got a motive to do anything in my life. And fin.

(Caviedes, 2012. P. 76)

The process of debunking may include other phenomena within it. In this case, we can see that *labeling* takes place while one student *debunks* another. If we take into account McCarthy and Crichtlow's (1993) insights about labeling, we can see that the person who is the object of labeling is not aware of it. If we see lines 56 and 59 of the previous extract, we see that Poncho calls Montaña two different names or labels in two different moments: "rabón" (a pejorative way in Spanish to refer to someone who is being impolite) and "güevón." (a synonym of stupid, or fool). As both labels are a negative response to Montaña's actions, and these are the way Poncho gets Montaña's attention, we can see that in this specific case one learner uses ridicule to label another.

Overall, in the previous examples of this "debunking" we can see that there is a disapproval discourse (Baxter, 2003) in relation to the fact that students did not approve of what their classmates did when one student decided to plagiarize an entire article from Wikipedia, or when another decided to compare his grandfather to Homer Simpson. This disapproval discourse and the classmates' reactions make it evident that there was a learner identity in construction. In fact, there were two.

On the one hand, we find that there are the students who decide whether or not their classmates' attitudes and actions are acceptable; they are the debunkers, and on the other hand, we find the "debunkees," who are the students whose actions and attitudes are analyzed and rejected. Of these debunkers, we find the ones who ignore and do not pay attention to what their classmates accuse them of, such as Carlos (see Extract 1), and we find the ones who try to excuse themselves out of the rejection such as Montaña (see Extract 2).

Disregarding discourses. These discourses emerge when students try to get rid of their responsibilities in academic tasks assigned for group work by making others speak for them, even if they do not think their classmate will do better. These discourses bring out an identity called the "underdogs," who are the students who strive in order to save the group's performance. These students are usually the ones who are forced to speak for their groupmates, so that the others do not have to.

The "Underdogs." This identity belongs to the people who are forced to speak by someone more powerful than they are, especially within a group. These underdogs are the ones who save the day even if the other members of the group do not think they will be able to do it. Even when other group members do not appreciate what these individuals do for the group, these underdogs will go ahead and do it.

In the following extract we will see the case of a group of three students ("Pana," Pinto and Buitrago), where the students are reluctant to speak despite being good language learners. In this case, they look for a way to get out of the public speaking task.

Extract 3

035 (Students look at each other and at the piece of paper they have)

036 Pinto: Profe, ya explicamos lo de esto, lo... (Miss, we already explained this...)

037 Teacher: Can you please explain it again?

038 (Pana and Pinto point at Buitrago)

039 Pinto: (pointing at Buitrago) Buitrago usté (You do it Buitrago)

040 Pana: (pointing at Buitrago) Tú te lo sabes. (You know it)

041 Buitrago: (reading the piece of paper) The steps I follow to make a decision... so you take the good thing and the bad thing in a table of the question you take, and then you put a score in each one consequence, and then you add them and the biggest score is the best decision you can take.

042 Teacher: Ok.

043 Buitrago (Turns the paper and points at the cartoon strip): And this they made (points at Pana and gives him the sheet)

044 (While Buitrago is speaking, Pinto gives his back to the public and writes with his finger on the board. Pana says “so...” and looks at Pinto, then he stops finger writing on the board, comes next to his classmate and starts talking.)

045 Pinto: When the major ask to do the metro system in Bolivar City (smiles) they... all the people concer that he... have to do it... and then when he asks for the metro in Usaquen (pronounced like Iusaquen) the people say no because they are so rich so they... so they don't need it.

046 Pana: They don't like that.

(Caviedes, 2012. P. 86)

In the situation in Extract 3, two of the members of the group decided they did not want to explain to the instructor (me) what they did during the group work, so they pointed at Buitrago, leaving the responsibility to him, so that he would explain what they did. More interestingly, Buitrago decided to do it without even hesitating, and he did not care that his classmates ignored him while he spoke, as long as I listened to him.

As I went through my field notes of this session, I realized that some of my observations whenever this type of reaction from my students appeared, provided evidence of the way students who needed a higher grade behaved:

“It is interesting to notice how some students speak for a very long time whenever they are part of a group, probably in order to outstand from the rest of their classmates. Is it because they think they could get a better grade? I need to check this behavior” (F.N. 10Asession4)

From my perspective, whereas Buitragos' classmates thought they were taking advantage of him, he took advantage of speaking for a longer time, and maybe having the opportunity to get a better grade, which eventually he did. Maybe that was why he did not care about his classmates forcing him to speak.

Disregarding discourses also give way to another identity: the connoisseurs. Unlike the students who try to abdicate their responsibility by throwing it to the underdogs, the connoisseurs take complete control of their group activities in order to outdo their classmates and show their superiority.

The “Connoisseurs.” A connoisseur is a person that could be considered an expert in some specific topic. I decided to choose this name for my next identity because there are some students in my classes that behave this way. This kind of identity is given to different behaviors; in this case, I will refer to the two patterns that were the most common among my students.

In the first pattern, I found that some of these connoisseurs liked interrupting their classmates in order to show their knowledge on any given topic. One of the most remarkable cases of connoisseurs who interrupted their classmates was that of Jose L., who constantly interrupted his classmates during oral presentations or group work. Observe his actions in the following exchange:

Extract 4

- 002 Carlos: Ok. Eeeeeeh... The steps tha we... made out to make a decision
were like yahoo answers, eeheh... flip a coin, think about it... by yourself,
view the horoscope, view ... future consequences.
- 003 Kate: (Takes the paper from Carlos) Ask for advice (giggles) ask to Viviana.
- 004 Jose L. (Takes the paper from Kate): Ask to Viviana. Use
Blackberry messenger...
- 005 Kate (Trying to look at the paper): And flip the...
- 006 Jose L.: (Doesn't let Kate read) And flip the icking.
- 007 Teacher: Ok.
- 008 Jose L.: And about the comic (showing the paper to the camera).
- 009 Kate (Reads the question written on the board): What if you were the
major of Bogota, and you had to (inaudible) ...
- 010 Jose L. (Interrupting Kate): It's a joke, 'cause the majors are always saying
bullshit, so...
- 011 Carlos: B.S. (Kate and he are laughing)
- 012 Jose L. (Without paying attention to Carlos): he says "blah, blah, blah,
promise a metro, blah, blah, blah."
- 013 (Carlos and Kate try to hold the paper.)
- 014 Kate (Trying to look at the cartoon strip and interrupting Jose L.): And
then... a good...
- 015 Jose L.: Yes a worker-- (tries to say something else but Kate interrupts him)
- 016 Kate (Reading the strip): And says I'm supposed to work six hours, six
hours but...
- 017 Kate, Jose L. and Carlos (together): "Aguila!"
- 018 Jose L.: Beer! (Laughs)
- 019 Carlos (Takes the paper for him to read): And then... He's like
healthy, rich...
- 020 Jose L. (interrupts): (inaudible)
- 021 Carlos: He says "I always keep my promise" but then, but... lame
contractors... so...
- 022 Jose L. (interrupts): (inaudible)
- 023 Kate (interrupts): (inaudible)
- 024 Carlos: It's nothing there.
- 025 Jose L.: Is a city metro.
- 026 Kate: A small...
- 027 Jose L.: A small city.
- (Caviedes, 2012. P. 80)

As we can see in Extract 4, Jose L. decided to use his "connoisseur" skills in order to try to "own" the presentation. He interrupted both of his

classmates several times, and tried to take control of the presentation whenever he felt that Kate and Carlos hesitated at giving information. He would then say what they were expected to say.

Even though his classmates had the knowledge to continue with the presentation, he stepped in and showed how much he knew and repeatedly jumped in to add comments of his own so that the whole idea was expressed—and he was the one expressing it. I also found reference to this behavior in my field notes, as I referred to the students who showed it as “*know it alls*,” as an attempt to portray in my own words the way these students tried to own the group reports and presentations.

“Jose L. is always trying to show off his knowledge regarding everything. He has this need to show me (and his classmates) what a know it all he is” (F.N. 10A session 4)

It is important to state that Jose L.’s behavior can be characterized as a good learner attitude. From Rubin’s perspective (1975), good language learners are composed of three main features: aptitude, motivation and opportunity (Rubin, 1975, p. 42). In Jose L.’s case, I believe that he is attempting to show his language learning skills since he tries to use the target language as many times as possible in order to show how much he has learned and how much his skills have improved.

Despite the fact that approval discourses are not as common as non-approval discourses, they play a very important role in classrooms. The most common discourses that appeared during the study were validating discourses. These discourses are the ones that denote respect and validation for the speakers’ discourses in terms of the information they offer and their overall behavior.

Validating discourses. Two types of identities emerge from validating discourses: the validators and the important speakers. Validators are the students who, in contrast with the debunkers, accept and validate students’ behaviors, opinions, etc. They usually ask questions, complete ideas and show interest towards their classmates’ presentations, opinions, etc. Important speakers on the other hand, are allowed to have longer interventions and more people interacting with them during their turns to speak.

The “important speakers” and the “validators”. There were some speakers among my students who took longer turns than their other classmates when speaking. During the revision of my data, I realized that these speakers had a very interesting factor in common: they were usually interrogated by their classmates, and not through random questions, but through questions that really showed interest in the content of their speech. These were the “important speakers,” the students who asked the questions, as they were the ones who gave the speakers the opportunity to deliver their message by

170| validating what the speaker said were the validators. If we take a look at Figure 2, we can see that the discourse the validators use (participating and showing interest in the speaker) gives the speaker the opportunity to become a sort of sub-teacher.

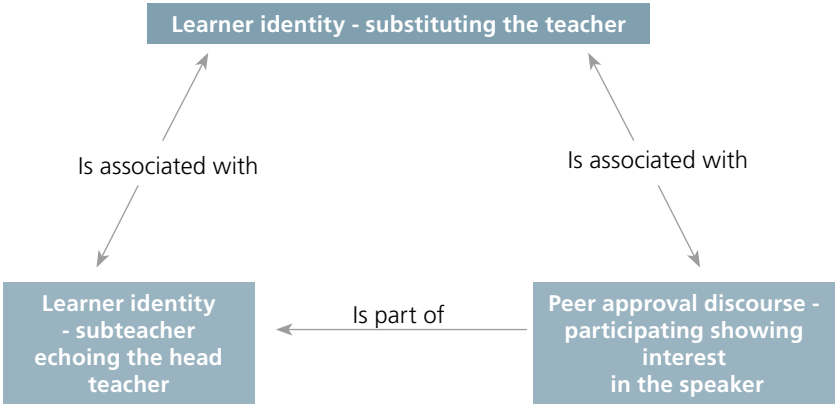


Figure 2. Network of patterns and grouping of data.

In Figure 2 (Caviedes, 2012, p. 68) we can see that the peer approval discourse, called participating and showing interest in the speaker, emerged in two identity discourses of the *sub-teacher*: echoing the teacher, and substituting the teacher. Hence, the peer approval discourses gave way to identities where students felt confident enough to reprehend their classmates.

One of the classes where this was noticeable was in the second session of my intervention in calendar B, where students had to talk about an influential person in their lives. In this group, two of the students had the most representative importance and validation, and it was reciprocal. The first student, Samuel, was talking about Tupac Shakur, when Francisco started asking him who that person was:

Extract 5

- 143 (Samuel starts writing a name and a date on the board. In the meantime, Anna asks Samuel (the one who just presented) to stop annoying Dania. When one of the students sees the name on the board (Tupac Shakur) he starts saying “yo! Yo! Yo!” (“me, me, me!”) Anna asks Samuel II to start presenting.)
- 144 Samuel: Well... my character is Tupac Shakur... he is a... a rapper that died in 1996, He was born in 1975... eehhhh.
- 145 (It is very hard to listen to Samuel. Students are talking among themselves and don't pay attention.)

146 Francisco: Is that the name of Tupac, or is like aaa...??

147 Samuel: No, es el nombre (It's his name): Tupac Amaru Shakur.

(Caviedes, 2012, p. 69)

As we can see in Extract 5, before this question, the students were not listening to Samuel, and were actually making a lot of noise. After Francisco showed interest, Samuel started to have longer turns, where no one interrupted him and students started to pay more attention:

Extract 6

160 Samuel: And he started there his life, and he had to pass through a lot of problems... her mom... his mother was crack addict...

161 Someone in the back: Whaaat? (Other students laugh.)

162 Samuel: He was very poor, but he was always like hanging with drug dealers and... and all that, murderers, and all that, so he was into the arts, like into graffitis, into writing and lyrics, and then... he started.... He was kicked in ... his mother kicked him out of his house, and some drug dealers he was friend of, like sponsored his career, because he was like really close, they like give him money to go to the studio and record something... and doing that he knew a guy called... I don't remember the name but he was a famous artist... started recording with him and he signed a... contract? Un contrato...

(Caviedes, 2012, p. 70)

When we take a look at Extract 6, we can see that as Samuel moved on with his presentation, he started to talk more about his character. He becomes an important speaker because he is allowed to speak about his character without being as interrupted as his classmates were previously doing. As part of my field notes, one of the aspects I wrote about while doing this activity with this group was actually the fact that students did not listen to the person in the front because some of them were more interested in other activities.

Extract 7

164 Samuel: He signed a contract with... Interscope records.

165 (In the back students start talking again, Anna asks them to be quiet.)

166 Samuel: Shut up!

167 Samuel: So... so what so... he started growing as an artist and he started to be very controversial because of his letters and... lyrics and what he said on the lyrics, he was always like against police brutality, racism and all that stuff like poli... social stuff... he started a... like a... code he called... "thug life" (he writes it on the board), well, it sounds like very bad, but it's really like... a limit for... this is a code like... he design for... limiting... eeeh... let's say criminals from doing some things that go... just don't go with this thing... eeeh...

(Caviedes, 2012, p. 71)

In Extract 7, Samuel is taking a stand where he takes up the teacher's position and demands attention from his students. He attempts to dominate the situation and expects students to pay attention to what he is saying, which makes him part of the group of sub-teachers (Walkerdine, 1990) who are students that see themselves as the ones in charge of the situation. In this case, Samuel is the one who apparently feels entitled to impart discipline and reprimand those who do not behave the way he expects them to.

Later on, when it is Francisco's turn to speak about the character he chose, Samuel interacts with him by asking questions and showing interest in the speaker. If we look at Figure 3 (Caviedes, 2012, p. 74), it looks like they tend to ask each other questions and answer their questions (as if they were in a conversation on their own). An apparent consequence is that they catch their classmates' attention, since the classroom becomes gradually silent for the speaker to present:

Who asks questions during presentations in 10B?

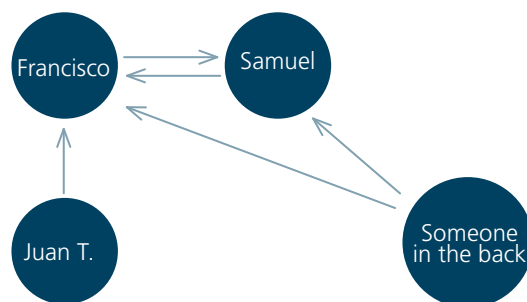


Figure 3. *Who asks questions during Francisco's presentation?*

(Caviedes, 2012, p. 74).

As we can see in Francisco's and Samuel's cases through the sociograms, it might be suggested that the difference between them and the other classmates in terms of the amount of attention they received is the fact that they worked together to help each other and ask questions, even though they were not friends. This strategy they used and the way they approved of each other's presentation by paying attention and participating are what make them validators and important speakers in different stages of the class.

Castañeda-Peña (2008) talks about friendship networks. In such research project, the participants organized a system where the main reason to help each other in the EFL learning process was due to how much they liked each other. Even though the network that Francisco and Samuel create

is not necessarily friendship centered, it is evident that this cooperation pact helped them through the oral presentation process, and through the process of building an identity in the classroom where they were entitled to be respected and receive attention from their fellow classmates.

It is possible to observe through the data I presented above, that PADs among students emerge in two different directions, which are basically approving or disapproving of what the others say. In order to understand the emergence of such discourses and why they appear, it is important to have in mind students' personalities and contexts.

As for the relation between the emergent discourses and identities that appear in the classroom, sometimes identities are causes for discourses to emerge, and sometimes discourses are cause of the identities that appear in the classroom. In other occasions, it is not clear which aspect is the one that gives space to the other; it all depends on the context and the students involved in the study.

Finally, we can see how the identities students form during classes affect their language learning processes, such as the case of the *underdogs*, who were forced to speak longer, but actually through their longer interventions acquired a better grade and ended up saving their group's presentations. Although this is not a criterion for stating that a student has improved their proficiency in the language, it demonstrates a desire for investing more time in the learning process as they accomplish the goal of speaking in front of their peers and their teacher.

Additional to this, relationships such as the ones created between the *validators* and the *important* speakers suggest that creating an environment where all the students feel like *important speakers*, could lead to the development of a more assertive learning community, where students feel more confident at the moment of communicating in the foreign language

Conclusions

At the beginning of this research, my main goal was to analyze the relation between the way students behaved inside a classroom, or language learner identities (Castañeda-Peña, 2008) and the acceptance/rejection they showed to their classmates, or PADs (Baxter, 2003). The analyzed data showed that there is actually a close relation between students' behavior and the acceptance/rejection they offer and receive from their classmates. Since the classroom is a community, the identities and the discourses I found were related to social features that made students behave one way or another (i.e. trust, friendship and collaboration issues, etc.).

There are several discourses and identities that emerge inside an EFL classroom. For instance, discourses that showed disapproval of others' words or actions were a constant during the data collection process. In the case of this discourse, it gives space to a learner identity that becomes part of the classes where students spoke their mind and showed they did not agree with what the other students were saying. The debunkers, are the speakers who are not afraid to speak their mind, and are not afraid to point at the others' wrongful actions or words.

There were also other discourses that had a positive connotation such as the ones students use in order to show interest in the speakers' speech. These discourses helped students build their identities as language learners inside the classroom. We can see how the important speakers have longer interventions and people interacting with them during their turns to speak.

In a broader vision of the research and the findings, it is possible to observe that Baxter's PADs (2003) do emerge in EFL classes. The discourses of approving or disapproving of others are a constant in an environment where people are part of a community where they are pushed to show their knowledge and skills, but most of all, their points of view and their identity.

Moreover, we found evidence that these discourses, even though they are not the only ones who have an influence, actually help shape students' language learner identities (Castañeda-Peña, 2008), which are part of students performance and show how self-confident students can be of showing their work to their classmates.

The main conclusion of this research is that there actually is a relation on how students address each other and how they act in the classroom, and the kind of learner they are. Good or bad learners aside, my students are teenagers, friends, validators, they use others and are used by others, they are chameleons that change identity depending on what they need to appear and who they need to impress, but most of all, they are persons, they have feelings, and their opinions and ideas count inside a classroom where they are the main characters.

Further Research

This study provided evidence of the different PADs that emerge in a classroom, and the identities students adopt from such discourses, which proves the importance of accepting and embracing students as individuals, each one of them with an identity (or set of identities) that shape their position inside the classroom. However, it is important to foster research studies that focus on the

relation these discourses and identities have with students' language learning processes in terms of performance and competence in a foreign language.

Additionally, as I reviewed the data I gathered, I noticed that my interventions were also present in the discourses that emerged in the lessons. Although they were not the focus of the research, I can't help but think of the possibility to look deeper into teachers' approval and non-approval discourses, and the way these discourses affect students' language learning processes and their own formation of identities inside a classroom.

In order to conduct further research related to these issues, I suggest the following questions:

- What is the impact of using language learning identities as strategies for fostering students' foreign language performance?
- What is the relation between students' language learner identities and their investment in the EFL class?
- What language learner identities emerge from written activities in the FL classroom? Are they the same as the ones that emerge from oral activities?
- How do teacher approval discourses affect students' learning identities and their performance in a foreign language?
- What teacher identities emerge from teacher approval discourses in a FL class?

Conclusions

As expressed in the introduction to this book, this final chapter discusses comprehensible associations between discourse analysis and language learning, keeping in mind the following aspects: (a) the progressive evolution of discourse analysis and what it could represent for language education today; (b) the understanding of language makeup and behavior and how discourse analysis could promote advantageous findings about linguistic structures and language use; (c) establishing connections between language and society to describe how language structures social life and, reciprocally, how social life structures language; (d) exploring the intricate relation between language and the self to depict identity-forming processes in foreign language interaction and (e), describing individual and collective dynamics of social positioning which strive for distinctiveness as well as membership.

The progressive evolution of discourse analysis and what it could represent for language education today at local and global levels

There is no doubt about the importance of undertaking discourse analysis studies to comprehend what happens in foreign and second language learning (Castañeda-Peña, this volume). This book represents such an undertaking while also making a statement on discourse analysis knowledge being constructed at a local level in relation to language education. By undertaking different and intertwined discourse analysis traditions, this book is showing potential horizons in terms of adopting and adapting discourse analysis to local research objectives that could be interpreted globally. In that sense, this book makes a contribution across contexts highlighting the use of worldwide discourse analysis traditions.

One example of methodologies used to research foreign language contexts is corpus linguistics, (Escobar, this volume): a sociocultural understanding of attempted meaning making in language learning via the use of particular linguistic elements in a relational and interrelational way. It seems to be clear that interactions are (co-)constructed in myriad ways, and learning about how this happens from the corpus perspective would add a lot to the vast field of discourse analysis in relation to language learning.

Another discourse analysis methodology covered in this book is conversation analysis (Lucero, this volume). Coming to grips with language teachers' and language learners' conversations or "talk" in the classroom proves to be a challenging and demanding analytical task. This methodology contributes in different ways. Primarily, through conversation analysis it might be easier to understand the advantages and disadvantages of using the first language while learning a second one in a foreign context (See also Gómez, this volume). This could be a discussion on pejorative perspectives of first language use in target language classrooms. This seems much needed at the local level. This would also discuss language policies in education and understandings of bilingual education. But from a methodological perspective, what appears to be important is to use conversation analysis to study "the interactions that occur all the time in all the sessions of a class" (Lucero, this volume). This could apparently guarantee a more comprehensive understanding of what goes on in the language classroom as a discourse analysis research program.

Gómez (this volume) follows the critical paradigm of discourse analysis where power is at stake (See also Caviedes, this volume). However, Gómez opts for a re-visited concept from a methodological perspective. By reducing critical discourse analysis to the service of the language classroom, inquiry goes "beyond fixed categorizations and rather [listens] to how learners negotiate different identities as they employ diverse cultural and linguistic resources to construct knowledge in EFL classrooms" (Gómez, this volume; see also Caviedes, this volume). This methodological variation of critical discourse analysis might be looked down on by "purists"; however, this methodological discrepancy also allows the putting forward of arguments of social character that unveil inequalities and power issues regarding micro-political systems in the language classroom that could be foreseen from a macro-ecological perspective. This implies understanding the language classroom as a whole on its own yet being part of major sociopolitical and cultural structures driven by competing value systems.

Lastly, in order to "understand the way language worked and the reasons for it to work the way it did ... including its effects on the learning process of EFL," Caviedes (this volume) used a descriptive approach to discourse

analysis. Simply put, she was trying to see how interaction operated between interlocutors and spotting the moments in which they experienced discourses differently in the language classroom. This also paves the way for a research agenda in which language learning is viewed through the discourse analysis lenses. Thus inquiry is related to the discursive understanding of language learning and the emergence, validation and resistance to various ideologies always present in the language classroom. Ideologies that, as was demonstrated in these studies (Gómez; Caviedes; Lucero; Escobar, this volume), affect learning in one way or another.

The understanding of language makeup and behavior and how discourse analysis could promote advantageous findings about linguistic structures and language use

Something common to the diverse studies introduced in this book is that they go beyond the sentence level and propose language learning as a subject to inquire about from a discursive perspective. This could be better seen as language-in-use in natural settings (e.g. the language classroom). This view suggests an analytical/relational paradigm for discourse analysis methodologies used in foreign language learning research. By this, it is implied that even though linguistic directions of discourse analysis could also explain language learning at a structural level (analytical level), more social approaches are also needed (relational level) viewing learning as “something” that is discursively constituted. Both levels (e.g. analytical and social) are rather complementary. This also gives an epistemological and ontological status to the study of language learning from a discursive perspective. We are “discourse” when we not only learn a language but learn one drawing on discourses. This, of course, does not attempt to be a grand narrative in discourse analysis; it is rather an ethical positioning. A future publication would be the appropriate forum for this suggestion.

Establishing connections between language and society to describe how language structures social life and, reciprocally, how social life structures language

Despite the linguistic or social emphasis of discourse studies on language learning, something that seems to hold true to both perspectives is the genuine concern for the interphase of language learning and society. This interphase encompasses a bidirectional performative standpoint. As briefly presented above, this stance draws on epistemological and ontological perspectives that

180 | will directly discuss the pedagogical reasoning underpinning language teaching, language policy making and language teachers' professional development. All these are avenues for future research that could be tackled using discursive angles.

Exploring the intricate relation between language and the self to depict identity-forming processes in foreign language interaction

Discourse studies in relation to language learning pose, then, new ideological research horizons. This is not simply rhetorical oxymora as doing discourse analysis is indeed an ideological position regarding methodologies to study language learning. This raises new questions that are social and linguistic in nature (see the authors in this volume) but also that situated in the context of language-in-use and in naturally occurring (mostly) classroom interactions. When people interact they draw on discourses and perform or enact identities (e.g. those of the language learner) which become part of the nexus of language knowledge/social construction. In this sense, there are still many unanswered questions related to identity formation thinking of identity as multiple and non-static. Identity (see Gómez and Caviedes, this volume) has proven to be a fruitful epistemological site where identity features such as gender, race, social class, age, and origin, among others, need to be addressed to explain language learning. Discursive methodological positions could address them.

Individual and collective dynamics of social positioning which strive for distinctiveness as well as membership

Something that could not be overlooked is the fact that whenever people draw on discourses to evidence or portray who they are ideologically, they are also experiencing power in one way or another. This means that when language learners resort to language-in-use they also position others and are positioned at the same time. This apparently has consequences in terms of language learning that need to be explored and we would like to argue that discourse analysis in its multi-faceted variations (see Lucero, this volume, when presenting Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis) offers a methodological opportunity to accomplish this task.

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By moving away from instrumental views of language, the book *Discourse Analysis Applied to English Language Teaching in Colombian Contexts: Theory and Methods* situates the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language along a broader spectrum of socio-culturally elaborated discursive dynamics. To offer this complex and multifaceted perspective, it presents five discourse studies informed by diverse methodologies, and aims to provoke further and deeper considerations around the issue of English teaching and learning in Colombian contexts. Similarly, this work also exemplifies academic community building where different institutions, researchers and students have partnered to inquire into, understand, and share their findings regarding EFL teaching and learning in Colombia.

