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TOWARDS A RESPECIFICATION OF L2 COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: INTERACTIONAL FLUENCY AND L2 INSTRUCTION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

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ABSTRACT

The concept of "communicative competence" has generated a litany of theoretical models that formulate what are involved in competent language use and predict L2 development. Nonetheless, the analytic literature has yet to represent adequately the realities of language use that are infested with an unforeseen range of variants and occasional contingencies. I contend that theoretical formulations of communicative competence always rely on the pre-given theoretical constructs and analytic categories, which naturally gloss over actual practices of competent language use embedded in talk-in-interaction. What we need are more procedural accounts of communicative competence, looking into actual occasions of language use, questioning what occurrences of language behavior would count as a competent case of language use, before subjecting them to conceptual formula.

Following the analytic policies of ethnomethodology, the present study finds communicative competence in practical details of L2 interaction. Rather than relying on the general accounts of language phenomena that the competence theories propose, the present study focuses on furnishing descriptive accounts of the members' own undertaking of what goes on. Retrieving the member's own undertaking of their own discourse is pursued by looking into the sequential order and production of their actions. Given that interactional exchanges consist of sequences of actions, the investigation of how one action is made relevant to another within a sequential and temporal domain makes it possible for analysts to describe the members' methods of talking and order of activities through which the teacher and her students accomplish their classroom activities.
Based on the transcribed L2 interaction from a college ESL composition classroom, the findings of the present study provide an indefinite collection of competency’s evidences, found in the midst of the practical tasks and occasions that the students and teacher encounter in their L2 lessons. The first collection shows the L2 students’ competent practices of language use as they are engaged in various classroom tasks with the teacher. The second analysis chapter describes the teacher’s competent communicative acts of understanding in their practical enactment of classroom lessons.

The procedural focus of the present study and its findings pose a different question for the L2 literature that the communicative competence is the condition of L2 learning, as much as its outcome, once we look into methods of talking embedded in L2 communication. The conclusion chapter discusses the implication of the findings for the L2 literature, especially in the two areas of studies: the study of L2 language use and language classroom research.
Dedicated to classroom teachers
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It has been a long journey that has been imbued with numerous unexpected turns and challenges that have tested my patience and optimism. I would not have been able to complete this journey without the following individuals who have stayed with me along the way. My first thank goes to Suzanne Panferov, my most special friend, who generously allowed me to share her life in her classroom. My analytic skills and sensitivity have expanded in her class, watching her and listening to her students. My appreciation of her however goes beyond the wall of her classroom as she embraced me as a part of her own family. My heartfelt thanks always remain with her husband, Dima, and her parents, Ira and Kathy.

I would also like to thank my committee. Dr. Hancock has been a constant resource, and supporter of my growth as a researcher, from the very beginning. My deepest thanks goes to Dr. Samimy who has taught not only scholarship but also the care of being an adviser. Her numerous discussions and her criticism have enabled me to keep my feet in the field of language education. On various occasions, she went to extra miles to help me obtain financial support during my graduate study, which I will never forget.

Special thanks goes to Dr. Macbeth who has not only introduced me to the exciting world of ethnomethodological studies but also demonstrated disciplined scholarship. His keen sense of the literature, talent for ethnographic details, and undying enthusiasm for the members’ work have been a major source for me to continue this analytic work. Of all the countless gifts that he has given me, I most appreciate his patience throughout six years of long apprenticeship watching me grow, guiding me through, even when I was not even sure of my own ability to make it. His relentless drive
and leadership has convinced me of the value and integrity of the analytic work that I now want to identify myself with.

I also thank my study group members, Wendy and Minho. Wendy has been a special comrade. Over the years, we shared several triumphant moments and also frustrating trial and errors. She always has been my first audience who endured my often mediocre findings and weak arguments. Without her company, I would not have survived ethnomethodological hardship. I thank Minho for the special friendship that we have developed over the years. He has been most resourceful for my academic undertaking.

My special thanks goes to the literacy collaborative (LC) staff where I have been working for three years. Being away from my own family, LC staff has been another family of mine who have provided me with emotional support, daily doses of laughter, cultural resources and even life counseling. They know I have become more expressive and delightful over the years, and they are responsible for it.

My final word of thanks goes to my family, especially my parents. I do not think I can compensate my absence for such a long time and yet, they have allowed and supported me to pursue my dream. They are ones who deserve heartfelt congratulation and rewards.
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educational research. ED 434028.

first year Chinese learners and their instructors. Journal of Chinese Language Teachers
Association, 32 (1), 40-60.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Education, Applied Linguistics & TESOL Studies
Minor Field: Qualitative Research
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The historical development of the concept of “communicative competence” can be traced back to two distinctive analytic programs for the study of language that first appeared more than three decades ago. From a cognitively oriented perspective, Chomsky’s competence referred to the knowledge of structural rules of language configured in the mind (Chomsky, 1957). The evidence for the underlying operation of this mental system was sought through rigorous analysis of language forms and their structural relations. Coming from a very different analytic tradition of anthropology, Hymes (1972b) proposed that competence involves the knowledge of social relations and cultural patterns embedded in language use and the ability to realize that knowledge.

There is no doubt that the bulk of second language research is heavily indebted to these two theoretical conceptions of competence (Cook, 1993; Davis, 1995; Ellis, 1994; Firth & Wagner, 1997). In particular, these theoretical developments have been the catalyst for reconsidering language teaching practices, and for breaking away from traditional language structuralism (Bloomfield, 1933) in which the predominant concern was the formal characteristics of linguistic utterances.

After more than three decades of analytic undertakings, however, our understanding of “communicative competence” still remains conceptual and somewhat indefinite. Analytically, it is still an open question as to what communicative competence is, and how to locate it within the seemingly indefinite diversity of language behavior (Savignon, 1983; Stern, 1983; Taylor, 1988). Despite continued endeavor to search for more refined theoretical models with rigorous methodologies (Long, 1989;
Savignon, 1997), the analytic literature has yet to find a way to represent adequately the realities of language use that are infested with an unforeseen range of variants and occasional contingencies.

Nonetheless, the phrase, communicative competence has found its way into the community of language education as a useful way of speaking, variously used as a programmatic slogan, a reference to one’s proficiency, or a characterization of teaching goals. Given the diversity of its professional and analytic usage as a practical referent, we could wonder if, as a theoretical formulation, there may be still other ways to understand language competence. Perhaps, what we need are more procedural accounts of communicative competence, looking into actual occasions of language use, questioning what occurrences of language behavior would count as competent language use, before subjecting them to conceptual or theoretical formula.

In light of the theoretical dominance of communicative competence in L2 research, the present study is an empirical undertaking that finds communicative competence in the practical details of L2 interaction, by investigating college ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom interaction at a major university. A close investigation of the actual interactional events of language use offers a way to build a description of competence as it is being constituted and exists in and as the members practices of language actions in a L2 classroom. It attempts to re-specify communicative competence in the practical enactment of these classroom lessons by building description of the language use we find there, in close details. This analytic undertaking of “respecification,” therefore, is not motivated to produce new definitions or formula, or to announce a new instructional program. Instead, it takes a procedural perspective that whatever competence may be, we would likely find it on actual occasions of language use, in the detail of its interactional organization.

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1 Throughout this document, the term ‘members’ are used as a synonymous with “parties to a particular interaction.”

2 The term “respecification” has a definite origin in a sociological analytic program, ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967). A detailed account for the background is provided in the following section and chapter 2.
The task for the present chapter, therefore, is twofold. First, it is designed to situate this project of "respecification" in the locale of the contemporary literature of language education, with particular focus on the way in which language phenomena are treated in L2 theories of communicative competence. Second, it introduces a study of ESL classroom interaction that finds communicative competence in the procedural details of language use, through describing ways in which the members of L2 classroom interaction organize their talk, display their understandings to one another, and carry out their classroom affairs.

Respecification and communicative competence

The two phrases that appeared in the title of the present study, respecification and communicative competence, carry the legacy of two distinctive analytic programs on human communicative action. The term "communicative competence" is the most familiar theoretical concept and was developed by Hymes (1967) who had taken it from Chomsky's view of "competence" and expanded it. The import of competence theories have been felt most palpably in language studies, including language education where they have witnessed a number of further theoretical and analytical renderings (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972b; Savignon, 1983; Spolsky, 1989; Widdowson, 1989; Wilkins, 1982).

The lesser-known term "respecification" hails from a very distinctive analytic program called "ethnomethodology" (Button, 1991; Garfinkel, 1967; Garfinkel, 1991; Lynch, 1993b; Sharrock & Anderson, 1986). Considered a school of sociology, ethnomethodology has remained a relatively minor field and is known for its studies of micro social phenomena, and especially the domain of face-to-face social interaction. "Conversation analysis" is perhaps the most sustained and better known analytic program (Button & Lee, 1987; Markee, 2000; Psathas, 1995; Sacks, 1992; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) that has developed out of ethnomethodology since the 1960s.\(^3\) Both ethnomethodology and

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\(^3\) Maynard and Clayman (1991) claimed that CA has emerged as "perhaps the most visible and influential form of Ethnomethodological research" (p. 396), although there have been some debates on whether these two programs remain compatible in their analytic perspectives. See Schwartz (1979) and Lynch (1993a; 1993b) for Ethnomethodological critiques of conversation analysis.
conversational analysis have been characterized in reference to the post-positivistic analytic discourse whose epistemological foundations are aligned with such perspectives as hermeneutics, qualitative research, phenomenology and interaction analysis (Erickson, 1992; Gubrium & Holstein, 1997).

**Respecification**

Since the next chapter takes up in detail the analytic premise and program of ethnomethodology (EM) and conversation analysis (CA), the present section focuses on the historical ambiance of ethnomethodological initiative for “respecification” and its implication for the L2 study of communicative competence. First, the term, “respecification” represents a key analytic undertaking that ethnomethodological studies have embarked upon for more than three decades. In a nutshell, they intend to re-specify social sciences at large with respect to the order and organization of practical social actions (Lynch, 1993b). Instead of relying on conceptual structures or formal methods to account for the topics of human science such as “meaning” “context” “language and culture” and “analytic methods,” ethnomethodological studies find its topics in phenomena that can be investigated by looking into the very production of social actions by the social actors (Button, 1991; Lynch & Bogen, 1996). It recommends the study of practical action and reasoning, rather than formal or theoretical structure of action.

Note that the term, ethnomethodology, does not refer to any professional analytic methodology. Rather it represents the activities that ethnomethodological studies investigate. The term “ethno” means “members” while “methodology” indicates method. Harold Garfinkel (1974) coined the term and his discussion of its history is helpful in presenting its program.

When Garfinkel was involved in a study of trial juries in the 1950s, he recognized that there are distinctive folk methods through which jury members carried out their jury tasks. Although they could not claim legal expertise or technical knowledge about the law or the judicial system, jury members were nonetheless concerned with such legal arguments as adequate accounts, adequate description, adequate evidence, and doing the work of being a jury to get the work of deliberation done. It was methodic work, and the analytic question that concerned Garfinkel was “how to describe jurors who are doing
their methodology?” While different from academic analytic methodologies, their common sense methods of jury work were methodological too, producing the stable social phenomena by means of which a jury produces intelligible and recognizable actions and legal decision.

With this in mind, Garfinkel was looking for a term that would *topicalize* the practical methods that ordinary members of a society use to conduct their social affairs:

‘Ethno’ seemed to refer, somehow or other, to the availability to a member of common-sense knowledge of his society as common-sense knowledge of the ‘whatever.’ If it were ‘ethno-botany,’ then it had to do somehow or other with his knowledge of and his grasp of what were for members adequate methods for dealing with botanical matter (Garfinkel, 1974, P. 16-17).

The analytic goal of ethnomethodological studies, therefore, is to describe how it is that the members organize their practical tasks in practical methods of action. Accordingly, ethnomethodologists take the actual details of social interaction as the prominent field for inquiry and treat the tasks and orientation of a setting as a the practical concerted actions of its participants.

Under this analytic initiative, the bulk of ethnomethodological studies have been conducted to differently describe, or respecify the familiar topics of social science, through the study of naturally organized ordinary activities:

These themes include a long list of vernacular terms identified with basic social science concepts, including order, reason, meaning, method, and structure. Rather than endowing them with transcendent status as problems or principles, Garfinkel proposes that they are unexplicated terms for social phenomena that can be investigated in the local-historical circumstances of their production (Lynch & Bogen, 1996, p. 272).

Therefore, the task of respecification in the present study is to examine communicative competence in actual phenomena of language use, as the methods members use for achieving their practical communicative tasks. The adequacy, grammaticality or sociocultural features of language use which were associated with competence of language

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learners are now treated as topical matters for the parties themselves, whose properties are embedded, and thus displayed in the discursive organizations of L2 interaction.

**Communicative competence as members' methods**

To propose a program of respecification is also to express a concern and critique of the ways in which the phenomena of language interaction are treated in the existing theories of competence. These theories are considered, however, not in terms of their strength of propositional logic or the veracity of proposed principles, but for the extent to which they account for the details of communicative actions: In what way do these theories of competence enable analysts to describe the properties of language interaction in use?

This line of questioning is essentially concerned with the more fundamental problem in language research, namely, the relationship between theory and the world, asking in what ways the theories of communicative competence intend to portray the very competent worlds they purport to account for. In a way, this is a question of methodology, asking how the theories of communicative competence explain the phenomena of language behavior and demonstrate it analytically.

It has already been mentioned that the bulk of second language research on communicative competence is indebted to the work of Chomskyan linguistics (1965; 1980) and later, of Hymes' ethnography of speaking (1971; 1974). This transition from Chomskyan view to Hymes' is regarded as a paradigmatic change to the extent that their differences are often characterized in reference to such bipolar dimensions as mentalistic view vs. interactional view, cognitive essentialism vs. socio-cultural diversity, or language acquisition vs. language use.

Yet, despite this irreconcilable distance between them, their methodological approach to explain language phenomena follows a similar analytic trajectory, one that relies on formulations of general linguistic capabilities:

Grammar should establish general principles, applicable to all languages and based ultimately on intrinsic properties of the mind, which would explain how language is used and why (Chomsky, 1971, p. 1).
I should therefore take competence as the most general term for the speaking and hearing capabilities of a person. This choice is in the spirit of present linguistic theory (Hymes, 1971, p. 16).

Both programs rely on conceptual formulation of competence, characterizing language behavior by means of formulating general/generic properties that are considered recurrent, systematic, stable and uniform. The difference between them, therefore, has to do with the epistemic properties of the proposed constructs, or schemes, not with their analytic foundations in theory construction. In this process, the actual procedural specifics of language use and their situated details are taken-for-granted, or glossed over under the broad theoretical purviews.

This analytic policy and its tradition has deeply permeated L2 literature, especially as the way to view the nature of language acquisition and its use. Primarily, communicative competence was taken to point to the general language capacity that L2 learners develop, and is then further rendered through interrelations of various sub-constructs (Bachman & Palmer, 1985; Canale & Swain, 1980; J. Cummins, 1983). Once these theoretical formulas are accepted as reasonably adequate representations of L2 competencies, then they would become common currencies as a way to denote some properties of language, yet without reference to empirical details. For example, we are expected to know what sociolinguistic competence refers to (Canale & Swain, 1980) or what BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) (J. Cummins, 1983) are, without being shown actual occasions of language use that can display their actual organizations.

Nonetheless, in the aforementioned theories, actual language phenomena are considered in reference to the relevant constructs, as instances of some typical or aggregated properties of language use. Each instance of language use then, becomes a case of sociolinguistic or strategic competence, for example. The upshot of these formulations, however, is that actual communicative events are often glossed over under

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5 It is not certain whether any of the proposed L2 theories of communicative competence has accomplished that status of common analytic currency. Nonetheless, this is the theoretical goal intended at least.
conceptual formula or theoretical constructs. In other words, analytic attention is often pulled away from the very communicative events that the theories intend to explicate in favor of conceptual representations.

The task of respecification with its focus on descriptive analysis, therefore, begins its inquiry by making actual details of language phenomena problematic and thus investigatible. Rather than treating communicative competence as a generic construct for competence-in-interaction, the present analysis views competence as a practical matter that points to competent practices of speaking and hearing by the members to an interaction. For the present study of ESL classroom interaction, the analytic task would be to examine how ordinary L2 classroom affairs, whether it be ESL writing instruction or group work, are organized and accomplished through the practical work of understanding by the members, the language students and their teacher.

Problem Statement

The literature of language education has yielded a number of theoretical formulations which schematize “communicative competence” into several conceptual components (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972b; Savignon, 1983; Spolsky, 1989; Widdowson, 1989; Wilkins, 1982). These constructs were designed to become the frames of reference upon which instructional goals are devised and against which language proficiency is measured. What becomes problematized in the present study, however, is not the validity of theoretical assumptions, or the adequacy of research methodologies employed. Instead, the primary goal of the present study is to build descriptive accounts of what these conceptual versions of competence have taken for granted or treated as givens, i.e., the actual details of competent practices of L2 communication.

Once the analytic goal is directed to building descriptions of actual occasions of L2 use, the problem for the study becomes: how is communicative competence displayed in second language use? Accordingly, the analytic attention is paid to the procedural aspects of L2 interaction, the ways in which members of L2 communication come to terms with the contingent and occasioned character of language interaction, and
determine what to do next. This analytic task of describing L2 talk, therefore, cannot be accomplished without considering the very setting in which the talk is being produced, in the case of present study, an ESL composition class. That is to say, the members' practices of talk, and their work of achieving common understanding can not be portrayed independently of the classroom affairs they are engaged in, whether it be students answering teachers' questions or the teacher showing examples.

Accordingly, the respecification opens up a very different analytic possibility with regard to the study of communicative competence. For L2 community, the communicative competence has been always taken to be the outcome of L2 instruction, the goal of L2 instruction and/or its measurement criteria. Once we look into the actual practices of L2 communication and its relevance to L2 classroom affairs, however, we note that whatever orders, norms or problems L2 classroom interaction reveals, it is the members of the classroom who produce those orders, recognize the problems and comes to terms with them. In this light, we might pose a different problem for the study: whether and how the communicative competence may be the condition of L2 learning, as much as its outcome?

Basic Assumptions

Given that the focus of this study is to recover the practical methods through which members organize their classroom affairs and their communicative competence to those affairs, the analysis in the present study is based on taped classroom interaction. The basic assumption is that classroom order and instruction are made sensible and intelligible because the members, students and their teachers, organize their actions in such a way that sense can be made of them. This requires posit.

One of the most fundamental problems that confront any research enterprise, whether it is in language studies or a chemistry experiment, is how the given analysis provides an adequate account of the data it investigates. And it is the methodology that

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6 The account here is simply to touch upon the most pressing issue as to the methodological choice in the present study, namely the use of transcribed interactional data. Chapter 3 furnishes a further discussion on this point. Suffice it to say that since the competence is displayed in language use, transcription furnishes us a productive way of looking at it.
sets research projects apart from other ways of understanding, for example, from vernacular interpretation of the phenomena. The credence endowed to this academic methodology often resonates in buzzwords of the research field as "scientific verification," "systematic inquiry," or "empirical demonstration."

Within social science literature, and especially in language studies, analytic methodologies have always been subject to controversy and self-scrutiny. Routinely, the research community is split up into a variously configured array of methodological views and recommendations. While each analytic methodology is ascribed to distinctive facets of worldviews and principles, there is a communal consensus that it is through theoretical interpretation of the social phenomena that analysts come to achieve adequate understanding of the social phenomena they study (Sharrock & Anderson, 1987). That is to say, the choice of a particular analytic methodology, whether it is statistical analysis or ethnographic report, reflects the particular version of the worlds that the associated theoretical principles subscribe to. This theoretical attachment of analytic methodology essentially influences the way data are examined.

The distinguishing character in Garfinkel's analytic policy (1967; 1991) is that rather than accepting this conventional treatment of data, his view was drawn from the detailed empirical investigation into the nature of social phenomena. In this process, he suspends all judgment on the objects (judgment of their truth, adequacy, appropriateness, etc) in order to focus on how the target phenomena are understood, measured and acted upon in and as the members' undertaking (Lee, 1987).

Garfinkel's studies show that the members of a social interaction treat their social environments as self-explicating, and thus they make sense of their worlds from within the social setting to which they belong (Lee, 1987). In other words, social actors make sense of their surrounding worlds as adequate, intelligible, relevant, faulty, wrong, or even funny and they do it without relying on any external resources. The social worlds are made sense of, not through reflective inspection of what goes on, but in the very

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7 Garfinkel's book, Studies in Ethnomethodology (1967), has been regarded as the central text that introduces the basic policies and objectives of ethnomethodology. However, far from being theoretical exposition, this book consists of a number of exemplary analyses that led him to the formulation of ethnomethodology.
methods members display to each other as they interpret each other, collect their interactional resources, manage ever changing contingencies and act on the unfolding sequences of interaction. This does not mean that the organizations of the social worlds are so transparent that any outside observers could easily grasp them without much knowledge of the particular situation. Rather, it indicates that the orders of the social actions are observable when treated and studied in situ, as being embedded in the very tasks and competence that constitute their social organization.

It was Harvey Sacks (1992) who showed that it is indeed possible to study talk in context insofar as it is preserved in recordings and transcripts. Rather than relating linguistic forms to some externally identified functions or socio-cultural variables (Sharrock & Anderson, 1987), Sacks' analytic program sought to describe the ways in which the members of talk-in-interaction make their talk intelligible and thus observable to one another. By means of looking into the details of language production in situ, what is said, where and when it was said, what was being accomplished by saying it, in light of what possible considerations and in virtue of what intentions (Heritage, 1984) can be described analytically. Accordingly, the analytic assumption of the present study, namely, "the observability of orders in talk-in-interaction" implicates an analytic undertaking that pulls into view the members' interpretive practices displayed in the course of their ordinary discursive action.

Conventional language studies, including second language research, have endeavored to find the properties of language phenomena as self-subsistent entities that are independent of the very local setting in which they are produced. Theories of communicative competence are analytic attempts to identify and characterize the general properties of human language capability that make language interaction possible. Accordingly, every theoretical version of competence becomes tendentious because any language data are viewed in reference to the theoretical grid that each theory imposes upon. As a result, what is observed in each analysis can not be adequately considered without asking the question, "observable to whom?" or "observable in terms of what?"

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8 Conversation Analysis is not the only literature that uses recordings and transcripts of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction. Yet, CA has a particular analytic reason for it, and the difference is illustrated in chapter three.
Rather than relying on theoretical principles, the present analysis looks for local and circumstantial details because they are the primary interactional resources that the members produce, find, and utilize in their interpretive actions. Talk-in-interaction is addressed to a particular person, in response to a particular utterance and is also constructed to evoke particular consequences within that particular social setting. Having others see what you are saying is the very business of conversation (Sharrock & Anderson, 1987). This is not to deny that natural conversation is infested with misunderstanding, communication breakdowns or redundancy. Nor does it disregard the psychological state of the speaker and hearer, such as intention, and motivation insofar as it is available and relevant from within the interaction. Rather, its intent is to point out that any talk in natural setting is not randomly generated, but one that displays how the parties to the talk interpret what goes on, turn by turn.

The relevance of the observable character of talk-in-interaction to second language study could be exemplified as follows. Primarily, the analysis assumes that classroom talk displays how the teacher and students rely on each other to make out what is going on. By this, it means that understanding in the language classroom is an interactional matter in which the teacher recognizes what the students are doing by listening to what they say: whether the students are right on the instructional task at hand or whether given answers come from informed inference or a guess, for example. This becomes available to the student and analyst alike, in the way the teacher responds to the student in her next turn at talk. The students also recognize what the teacher is doing: how the teacher estimates the goodness of an answer, finds the next speaker, reprimands students, and/or relates examples to the instructional issue at hand. Orders and meanings are pulled into view, constructed and assembled by the members to the classroom in real time and in public view. Thus, the analysis is indebted to the members of the classroom interaction because the classroom is available and observable to us through their methodic interpretive work, by looking into how their talk is organized within the local context.
Research Questions

Hymes' communicative competence formulates how social features and cultural properties become an integral part of one's knowledge of and skills for language use, thereby complementing and expanding Chomsky's cognitive characterization of language structures. Despite an immense literature on language in use, however, it is not clear that we find in the literature an analytic specification of how communicative competence is revealed in actual practices of talk-in-interaction. While Hymes' framework teaches us that language utterances are socially constructed, we need to see this sociability of language used in actual practices of talk that members are engaged in. Whatever rules of speaking or systematics are affiliated to which linguistic patterns, they are embedded in actual practices and occasions. For this study, the object of analytic inquiry, therefore, is the unfolding routines and contingent events of the L2 classroom lesson embedded and enacted in its practical enactment and language production of its teacher and students.

Accordingly, the present investigation of L2 classroom interaction begins its inquiry by looking into very ordinary and familiar classroom events: "questioning and answering," "teaching through examples," and "asking for clarification," etc. By making these familiar events topical issues, the analytic focus is placed on describing how it is that those events are organized and accomplished as they are. Said differently, instead of pursuing the matter of whether these events are the evidence of sociolinguistic competence or strategic competence, or how these events could have been produced differently (more effectively, or more meaningfully), the present study examines how L2 students come to display their understanding of the given questions, or how the teacher explains the "thesis statement" through what kinds of examples. What makes L2 instruction possible is the crux of the matter that the present study sets out to examine, because only then do the familiar practices of L2 teaching and learning become available for analytic description. Their competence to their tasks, and how it is organized and displayed, is the focus of the study.

Despite this prolonged account of what the present study intends to do, there still remains an analytic dilemma of generating research questions that are flexible enough in
their scope to accommodate those issues that may arise in later stages of analysis. The following research questions are, therefore, programmatic and general in their scopes, and consist of several parts:

1. Given that the focus of the present study is to respecify “communicative competence” as proposed by Chomsky and Hymes, what are the rationales behind the alternative undertaking of competence? In what way is the proposed study different from the aforementioned formulations of competence by Chomsky and Hymes, considering in particular that Hymes’ re-characterization of competence also promises empirical investigation of actual language use (1972b)?

2. There has been an array of L2 theories of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972b; Savignon, 1983; Spolsky, 1989; Widdowson, 1989; Wilkins, 1982) whose intentions were to furnish ways to describe L2 talk in various stages of development. In proposing the respecification of communicative competence, how differently is the L2 talk (their competencies) to be described and accounted for in this alternative analysis of L2 talk?

3. L2 classroom-oriented research has investigated various classroom events, for example, teacher questioning, student participation, group work, turn-taking, error corrections, and so on. Yet, few of them have investigated these events on their own terms, meaning how these events are managed and constructed by the members of the classroom community. If communicative competence can be described as the classroom members’ practical methods with which they accomplish their communicative tasks, what kinds of alternative understanding of competence can this analysis generate with respect to the L2 classroom?

4. The present study is geared to describe the organization of language interaction in an L2 classroom, with respect to the competent language use by second language students and their teacher. The question is, in what way does this analysis help us understand communicative competence in comparison to what existing competence theories have already shown us? More specifically, what kinds of relevance or implication does this focus on descriptive analysis have for the L2 community, and to what extent can the findings serve the professional literature of language education?

Research Design

The primary focus of this research is to recover the interactional work by members of an L2 classroom by looking into the organizations and methods through
which they produce their own discourse and interpret the discourse of others. The recovery of these “members’ methods” is based on the assumption that interaction is structurally organized, and the knowledge of that organization is a major part of the competence they bring to the interactional activities (Heritage, 1984). Therefore, it is critical to follow the members’ orientation to developing sequences of the talk closely, as this permits us to see the way in which L2 classroom members construct meanings, and carry out their tasks at hand.

These interactional details of classroom performance are so strongly organized that they fall outside reflective awareness (Erickson, 1991) and their complexity often goes beyond what we can imagine (Sacks, 1992). Even intuition tends to typify the ways interaction happens, and details become lost (Heritage, 1984). To recover the details of classroom interaction and their sequential organization, the data analysis in the present study centers on real-time video-taped classroom interaction reproduced as transcripts.

**Data Collection**

Twenty hours of tape were collected from an undergraduate level ESL (English as a Second Language) composition class at a mid-western university in the US over a 10 week period of course work. This ESL composition course is required for international or immigrant undergraduate students at the university, designed to help them deal with various academic writing tasks of their content classes.

The first step was to acquire administrative approval from the program director. A written proposal was sent to the director of the program to illustrate the purpose of the study, the expected length of each taping and the human subjects document regarding protection of the participants in the study. An initial visit to the classroom was made to determine whether, and how feasible the observation would be with the student groups in the given class. In the second visit, the plan for video-audio taping of the classes was discussed with the students and they were presented with consent forms that asked for their permission for the study. The teacher and all students agreed to participate. A total 10 class periods were audio and video taped and each class covers two classroom hours over the entire quarter.

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9 See appendix
There were 11 students in this class: 4 Koreans, 1 Japanese, 1 Taiwanese, 4 Indonesians, and 1 Thai. Their majors were as diverse as the number of the students, ranging from education, business, to engineering. The instructor was a female doctoral student in foreign language education and native speaker who has taught English composition in the program for several years.

Method

The primary resource for the analysis study was the video taped classroom interaction. While video tapes can not recover all facets of what goes on in these classrooms due to the limit of what a video camera can capture and the tape recorder can catch, they do provide detailed records of the members' sequences of talk, as they are produced in real time. And while transcripts do not exhaust the detail of the tapes, they do permit us to recover various details of interactional organization as the teacher and students are engaged in temporally developing sequences of the talk, managing their variable circumstantial contexts. Using tapes and transcribed materials, the analyst can return to the data over and over again for an in-depth analysis. At the same time, these materials can be presented to others to see whether a proposed analysis usefully accounts for the organization of the talk.

The transcription follows the convention established by Jefferson (1984). The degree of technical specificity of the transcription is also determined at a level for which readers can recognize what is being said. Therefore, the use of detailed phonemic symbols will be minimized unless they reflect significant inflection of meaning, and/or mood or properties of the dynamics of the interaction. The content of the talk will be recovered largely through alphabetical representations. Some particular sound qualities that are noticeable are indicated by several symbols such as lengthening sound, cut-offs and overlap.  

The main body of the analysis consists of several collection studies. Each collection consists of similar patterns - and tasks - that students in this classroom display in the course of their lessons and their interaction with the teacher. While the definite sense of what these collected analyses are is to be made explicit as the analysis proceeds,

10 See appendix for transcript conventions that are adopted in the present study
all of them are derived from familiar, and recognizable classroom events such as asking questions, volunteering answers or making jokes. More familiar analytic variables such as power, gender, L1 backgrounds or identity are not proposed as pre-given constructs. Rather, they are described as they present themselves as endogenous features that are made visible and relevant in and as members' interactional undertaking.

Several rounds of viewing of the data corpus are necessary to locate recurrent interactional systematics by following the way that the classroom participants produce their talk in the sequential organization of turn-taking. Based on the recurrent features of interactional organization from preliminary cases, the corpus of the data was searched to find similar cases. As similar cases were collected, their systematic features were analyzed by demonstrating the participants' orientation to them. Finally, collected materials under the same organizational topics were organized and arranged to relate to the general themes of the study, to see how these interactional cases display competent language use by the speakers, and to consider how this understanding provides a different understanding of communicative competence.

Since the technical focus of this study was on transcribed classroom interaction as naturally occurring phenomena, no separate interviews of the students or the teacher were conducted. Nor did a number of informal discussions with the teacher outside the classroom become a principal part of data analysis. Interviews and talk about classroom interaction have their own distinctive organizations and ways of formulating and characterizing what happens in the classroom, thus requiring a separate analytic procedure and interest.

**Definition of the terms**

*Interaction*

Interaction as an analytic term of the L2 research literature has been characterized as an important learning “variable” (Long, 1985) which may have a positive effect on the way L2 learners acquire linguistic knowledge. Interaction in the present study, however,
points to the sequential organization of task and action through which participants collaborate to accomplish an action, continuously engaging in an analytic exercise in which understanding is displayed, and meaning is constructed.

**Communicative Competence**

The concept as proposed by Chomsky and Hymes serves as a general theoretical frame of reference through which the capability of speaker-listener to produce understanding is to be characterized. Each conception of “competence” in the literature points to different linguistic data to demonstrate the respective sense of it. Communicative competence in the present study indicates the practical action and practices through which participants display their knowledge of linguistic forms, invoke contextual relevance, and construct and revise meanings as they are jointly engaged in interaction. The respecification, therefore, intends to point to actual practices through which members display their communicative competence, as an interactional and analytic competence.

**Members**

“Members” refers to the relevant parties to any given talk. Accordingly, membership in particular occasions of the talk is something that has tremendous resilience in its parameters. External imposition of who is included in a particular occasion of interaction cannot fully account for “membership” because the question of who the members are is a matter of the interaction. The identity of participants is constantly invoked, revised and re-projected as the talk proceeds in a temporally evolving manner. The issue is who is doing what, on what sorts of occasions. Circumstances and action environments and the boundary of who to include, thus, become an interactional matter endowed to those who are party to the occasion.

**Conversation Analysis**

The phrase ‘conversation analysis’ indicates a school of sociology that has looked into the spoken discourse as the primary site by analyzing the fine details of face-to-face communication. The range of research in conversation analysis has been expanded into talk in institutional settings such as classrooms, courtrooms, TV news and interview
settings (Drew & Heritage, 1992) as well as natural conversation. The phrase in the present study, therefore, indicates not only the study of natural conversation but also the extended area of talk in various institutional settings.

**Sequential order**

Context in the present study has a much more technical, and generative, meaning than in, for example, ethnography (van Lier, 1988) or sociolinguistics (McKay & Hornberger, 1996). By “sequential context,” the present study indicates interactional environments of turn-taking, especially around previous turn and next turn in talk. The theoretical assumption for studying sequential context in talk is that the meaning is constructed turn-by-turn, thus displaying how each party hears and produces this unfolding sequence of turns.

**Classroom Discourse**

The term, classroom discourse is used interchangeably with classroom talk. It includes various ways of speaking that occur in classroom interaction, even the non-linguistic features that are perceived to be a part of the interactional process.

**Limitations of the study**

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, data gathering has not followed a stratified sampling process to include the data from different levels of students in their linguistic proficiency. For example, the beginner level and advanced language learners may generate different types of interactional outcomes. Rather, the study focuses on the much more detailed description of a particular classroom setting to more fully generate a description of the interactional proceedings rather than a comparative analysis of different classes. The study is thus a case study.

A second limitation comes from a concern about how many occurrences would be sufficient to claim that there are noticeable patterns in a particular setting. Mechanical counting of particular interactional patterns would not be appropriate because each scene has differential contextual implications. Rather, the analysis looks for particular sequence of interaction which display distinctive interactional organization (McHoul, 1978; Payne & Hustler, 1980). These single sequences are then subject to comparative
analysis with similar contexts in other data to demonstrate the regularity of the participants’ orientation to it. In addition, the findings will be reported along with the transcriptions so that the reader can evaluate whether the given analysis is something that can be found in other settings as well.

A third limitation is related to the nature of intercultural communication. Since all the participants in the study have different first language backgrounds, there might be some occasions where the interactional outcome can be associated with cultural influence from their native language background. The difficulty of handling this issue is complicated, as there has not been much baseline data available to describe how different cultural backgrounds influence the sequential proceedings of interaction. Therefore, the present analysis must be limited to the interactional organization that can be found in the materials under study. Further study will decide if the organization found here can be found in other settings too.

The significance of the study

It is an undeniable fact that the primary and foremost goal of educational research is to find better ways of enhancing learning, increase effectiveness of teaching practices, and provide means to change and improve upon the status quo. In particular, the research literature on classroom language learning is at the forefront in dealing with topics that are directly relevant to language teaching practices (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 1990; van Lier, 1988). The question then becomes, what kinds of contribution can a descriptive study make to the existing L2 research and professional literature?

I contend that before generating any useful prescription for language practitioners, there is a clear need for descriptive studies to document and illustrate the process of teaching and learning on its own terms. As Allwright and Bailey (1991) put it, “in order to help our learners learn, it is not ‘the latest method’ that we need, but rather a fuller understanding of the language classroom and what goes on there” (xviii). As Breen observed “classroom interaction has its own communicative potential and its own authentic communicative purpose. It can be a particular social context for the
intensification of the cultural experience of learning” (Breen, 1985, p. 154). Only through the description of what goes on in the classroom on its own terms, can the organization of L2 instruction be pulled into view and the properties of particular instructional features be made available for pedagogical suggestion.

In their professional life, language teachers weave through numerous events and practices in their class, dealing with a vast array of circumstances, which take different shapes at any given moment. While most of what they do in classroom may be typified by generic characterizations of routine procedures, every familiar classroom practice involves specific interactional work by the relevant parties, the teacher and students. Within this specificity, one comes to find the very picture of classroom instruction and culture of learning: the teacher finds a speaker to answer her question, students display their understanding of what goes on, and instructional goals are revealed and tasks are assigned. The description of how these practices are organized, therefore, can further our understanding of what the L2 classroom is made of in terms of practical and interactional actions of language use, for students and teachers alike.

The starting point in this alternative description of communicative competence is therefore to examine how ordinary classroom events are organized by those who are engaged in them. Which is to say, interactional details are accountable and intelligible to members of the interaction because they are organized in ways to permit participants in the scene to see each other’s work. The organization of an L2 classroom is no less public and no less complex. There are diverse elements which make L2 classroom unique: the overlap of two cultures, “foreigner talk,” the setting difference between foreign language and second language, the demographics of the students such as immigrants and/or international students, and so on. These particulars are the ones that Hymes points to as important socio-cultural variables that are associated with particular ways of speaking. Yet, the character and shape of these features needs to be demonstrated from the material itself by demonstrating the participants’ orientation to them. The present study, therefore, intends to locate interactional practices that are endogenously generated within the talk as members of the L2 classroom display their analytic work in the developing sequential organization.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following review discusses, first, how the concept of communicative competence has developed and how it has changed the way we understand the competent language use. The second part of the review reads into the alternative analytic rendering of communicative competence, introducing the program of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis that the present study bases its analytic approach. A series of brief exemplary analyses are presented as demonstrations.

The historical development of the concept of "communicative competence," especially from Chomsky's to Hymes,' reveals fundamental differences in the way the phenomena of language interaction are treated analytically. Nevertheless, the overall goal of linguistic theory remains equivalent, to characterize "competence" as the general ability that makes possible human language behavior. While it is hardly accurate to say that these two are the only perspectives on the nature of language and language use, they have exerted the most prominent influence on subsequent analytic programs in language studies, as their theoretical assumptions and methodological approaches have generated strong traditions in language education (Davis, 1995; Ellis, 1994).

Chomsky's competence

One of the fundamental goals in linguistic inquiry is to provide a systematic explication of what makes language behaviors possible; the analytic investment into language competence, therefore, evolved out of this theoretical interest in explaining the underlying human capacities standing behind ordinary language behaviors. The first
question to ask, then, is "what is so competent and remarkable about language behavior?"
The Chomsky drew his answer to this question in reference to what he called, the "creativity of language":

Most of our linguistic experience, both as speakers and hearers, is with new sentences; once we have mastered a language, the class of sentences with which we can operate fluently and without difficulty or hesitation is so vast that for all practical purposes, we may regard it as infinite (Chomsky, 1957, p. 7).

This view took a very different route from prior structural linguists (Bloomfield, 1933) who had considered that the vast majority of language utterances are similar in forms, and acquisition of that knowledge comes with repeated exposure to them. In contrast, Chomsky (1966) noted the vast range of sentences that bear no surface resemblances to each other, and how they are routinely composed on the spur of the moment in the context of speech. Except for a few cases of clichés or fixed formulas that are learned by heart, he reasoned, the vast majority of linguistic production has to do with a system of rules that assign to each utterance certain structural properties and establish formal relations among them. These rule systems enable language speakers to express indefinitely many thoughts and to react appropriately to an indefinite range of new situations (Chomsky, 1965).

The exclusive analytic focus was placed on the generative structural aspects of language forms and functional relations among them and yet, this led to a deliberate analytic asceticism to delimit the scope of research. Only those language materials that manifest the rule systems of language structures are chosen for analysis. Ungrammatical utterances are treated as the by-product of other non-linguistic elements and therefore, are considered to have little to do with the constitution of language forms:

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance (Chomsky, 1965, p. 3).

Chomsky draws a rather strict demarcation line as to what is to be researched in linguistic analysis by partitioning language behavior into two independent realms, competence and
“Competence” refers to the speaker-hearer’s knowledge of language structure and “performance” is the actual use of language in concrete situations. As an idealized construct, competence points to the language phenomena that are stable, systematic, and thus researchable. In comparison, performance indicates the language use in real world, which is infested with truncated manifestations of the underlying systems. Chomsky’s analytic program was concerned only with what competence reveals and only under idealization is performance a direct reflection of competence (Chomsky, 1965).

The question to ask, therefore, is how to explain the language acquisition process; how is this knowledge of rule systems acquired? How are these grammatical sentences to be formed, used and understood? Chomsky had to explain the process in which a child constructs this system of rules to produce and understand new sentences based on the primary linguistic data s/he is exposed to.

In characterizing the language experience a child has, Chomsky put forward what is called, “the poverty-of-the-stimulus” argument on behalf of a generative grammar that is prior to experience (1965): The language experience of a child does not furnish an adequate resource for their learning. He observed that language data as produced in its performative contexts are too impoverished and even degenerate for language acquisition to take place (Chomsky, 1965; Miller & Chomsky, 1963). Hence, the surface social world from which a child gains most of his/her initial language experience is not organized strongly enough to help them construct the rule systems of language structure. In other words, the workings of the social world are too disordered to serve the composition process of language structure (Chomsky, 1964), and thus analytically uninteresting. Furthermore, there are substantial portions of language forms that children could not have learned from the language data they have heard.

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11 This dichotomy originates from Saussure’s distinction between langue vs. parole (1962).
12 Chomsky later retreated from his early distinction acknowledging that the rigid distinction between competence and performance ignores the presence of underlying knowledge for appropriate use: For purposes of enquiry and exposition, we may proceed to distinguish ‘grammatical competence’ from ‘pragmatic competence,’ restricting the first to the knowledge of form and meaning and the second to knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use, in conformity with various purposes (1980, p. 224).
Nonetheless, children come to acquire language with such ease and complete success within five to six years, and it led Chomsky to ask: "How do we come to have such rich and specific knowledge, or such intricate systems of belief and understanding, when the evidence available to us is so meager?" (1987).

As a theoretical solution to this mystery of language acquisition, Chomsky proposed that a child is born with an language learning mechanism which he called "Language Acquisition Device" (LAD) (1964; 1965). In order to describe the LAD, Chomsky proposed two different organizations of language structures: "surface structure" and "deep structure." Surface structures produced in performative context manifest varying degrees of divergence and exceptions. Deep structures, on the other hand, represent the abstract underlying forms that organize the semantic meaning of the utterance. The idea behind these two levels of language structure is that there are systems of rules that transform deep structures into surface structures. The linguistic systems of rules, called "Universal Grammar" (UG), regulate and account for these linguistic operations and make up the initial state of the LAD in the mind, and as such provide the means to enable a child to both process language experience and develop an appropriate grammar.

These rule systems, however, turned out too abstract to learn through an inductive analysis of the language materials to which a child is exposed. Accordingly, the language acquisition would not be possible without the assistance of the inherent mental system:

The general form of a system of knowledge is fixed in advance as a disposition of the mind, and the function of experience is to cause this general schematic structure to be realized and more fully differentiated (Chomsky, 1964, p. 51-52).

The cognitive system of mind as an underlying determinant (Chomsky, 1972) coordinates the process of building language structures, and therefore the task for linguists is to uncover these workings of underlying systems by specifying their rule systems.

Chomsky's theory of competence relies on behind-the-scene operation of the cognitive system of mind which organizes and determines the character of surface utterances. The primary analytic attention was paid to validating the workings of underlying cognitive mechanisms through positing binary pairings between underlying
cognitive mechanisms and surface language structures. The materials of language analysis are therefore carefully chosen because only those that are structurally sound pull into view the operation of the underlying cognitive systems.

Chomsky succeeded in streamlining the object of linguistic analysis that would otherwise have to contend with the indefinite list of non-linguistic variables by establishing well-defined analytic perimeters to enable linguists to recover a coherent account of the generative rules of language utterances. In this way, the features of performative contexts are deliberately suppressed in favor of the analytic reliability.

This formulation of competence as an underlying mental capacity has had a great impact on the way in which language research is conducted, especially in the study of second language acquisition. The analytic focus on the internal system led a number of early researchers (Corder, 1974; Dulay & Burt, 1974) to propose the existence of mental systems that are responsible for the development of the second language. The study of "interlanguage" is a case in point; here, researchers suggested the existence of a mental internal system that accounts for the interim grammar which learners build on their way to full target language competence (Selinker, 1972). Others have developed second language acquisition theories based on UG models (Cook, 1993). There are others who looked into the possibility of a more general cognitive operation involved in second language acquisition process (Bialystok, 1991; McLaughlin, 1990; Meisel, Clahsen, & Pieneman, 1981). Similar to Chomsky's analytic asceticism, this line of research has endeavored to discover underlying systems that are relieved of the circumstantial organizations of actual language use.

Diversity and social life in language use: A first respecification

When he proposed an alternative conceptualization of communicative competence, Hymes (1967) was writing in response to Chomsky's view that the social environment has no systematic influence on the construction of language competence. Hymes' primary concern was to reinstate the social realities of speech communication as central objects of his linguistic analysis (1971) and to demonstrate that performative contexts are also constitutive of the surface forms of language utterances: "A new
approach was needed, one which would take the organization speech itself as an object of study, and consider the meanings and abilities associated with speaking in particular communities” (Hymes, 1992, p.32).

Furthermore, he observed that there is a considerable range of individual differences whose systematic variations have to do with the socio-cultural memberships of the speaker (Hymes, 1972b). Unlike Chomsky, Hymes envisioned a more comprehensive theory of competence that can accommodate both the knowledge of language use and the abilities to realize and effectuate that knowledge (1987).

**Realities of language use**

For Hymes, the most unique feature of language utterances drawn from real communicative contexts is that they are chosen out of a vast array of repertoires and alternatives (1974). For whatever linguistic act that a given utterance is seen to play, whether it be greeting, complaining, joking, double-talking, displaying of animosity, showing insolence, offering condolence and/or crafting humor, there is an infinite array of alternative ways of speaking that the speaker could/would have taken.

While Hymes considered this diversity of language utterance as fundamental, the properties of chosen language utterances can be manifested only when considered in relation to the very social setting from which they are drawn (Hymes, 1974). That is to say, the particular linguistic utterances of living speech inevitably refer to and act on behalf of the very features of circumstance in which they were produced: the characteristics of speech context, the identities of the speaker and listener, beliefs and norms of the social group and occasional characters of interaction. Any given utterance thus is viewed as one that comes out of array of linguistic repertoires, and the determination of a particular linguistic form is a matter of recognizing and/or realizing “what can be said when, where, by whom, to whom, in what manner, and under what particular social circumstances” (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 7-8).

The language patterns and their socio-cultural features, however, are not simply the manifestation of differential knowledge and ability dispersed across different individuals randomly. The linguistic choice is primarily the manifestation of the norms of the speech community one belongs to (Hymes, 1974), as each speech community
organizes speech styles, their contexts, the means of expression and their meaning. In other words, language production reflects the norms and rules of speaking among and across the relevant speech communities:

Communities differ significantly in ways of speaking, in patterns of repertoire and switching, in the roles and meanings of speech. They indicate differences with regard to beliefs, values, reference groups, norms and the like, as these enter into the ongoing system of language use and its acquisition by children (Hymes, 1972a, p. 42).

The realities of speech context is a place where the relevant speech communities or social groups exhibit their identity through different ways of speaking and rules of use.

Given this evident interdependence between language and performative contexts in everyday life, Hymes postulates a very different version of how children acquire their language (1971). Chomsky had envisioned the image of children who are born with the ability to master any language with almost miraculous ease and speed, who actively proceed with the unconscious structural interpretation of speech that comes its way. For Hymes, the image of children is transformed into ones who navigate through the realities of speech situations where various norms and cultural expectations interrelate in complex ways. A child is not capable of producing all of the possible sentences which the LAD generates, but of producing particular sentences that are appropriate for the occasion underway. "He or she acquires the capability as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner" (Hymes, 1971, p. 277): the rules of speaking.

While Chomsky's competence is concerned only with knowledge of grammar as a self-generating mechanism, Hymes' proposal embraces the idea that competence theory needs to recognize the social character embedded in the language choice made by language users. As a result, the parameters of knowledge that competent language speakers know are much broader in scope than what Chomsky had suggested (Hymes, 1971). Hymes' communicative competence exhibits the knowledge of the densely populated networks of socio-cultural elements behind the particular choice of language utterances. Since the social world confers, influences and generates reservoirs of communicative resources from which each individual speaker comes to choose a particular linguistic utterance(s), the social environment of performance, according to
Hymes, is not impoverished at all as Chomsky had envisioned. Children as communicating beings come to learn these different ways of speaking and rules of use as they are exposed to a dense array of verbal repertoires within speech community (Hymes, 1992).

In addition to the socio-cultural knowledge that is involved in language use, Hymes also recognized that there are individual differences that can not be explained exclusively through the epistemological properties of cultural systems: "It is important to distinguish those of actual persons from what may be attributed to an ideal system of the whole" (1987, p. 224). Each individual has different knowledge as to the possible alternative ways of speaking and the ability to use that knowledge in each speech occasion (Hymes, 1971). These individual differences are ascribed to non-cognitive factors that each person brings into the speech context in the form of motivation, self-identity, confidence or courage. Furthermore, one's language ability can be altered through different kinds of language experiences one might have. That is why a sheer exposure to the same kinds of language materials, for example, does not guarantee the same degree of language acquisition.

As Hymes' concept of competence includes both knowledge and ability for use, he frees the concept "performance" for the properties of actual use and actual events (Hymes, 1971) such as genres and interactional organizations. In comparison to Chomsky's view that language performance is the byproduct of imperfect or partial realization of competence (Chomsky, 1957), Hymes' performance recognizes that actual events of speaking have systematic orders whose properties (patterns and dynamics) are often independent of and thus not reducible to terms of individual or standardized competence (as in a concert, play or party) (Hymes, 1971). For any linguistic analysis of actual language use, then, a communicative act is viewed as the interaction between individual competence and performance properties.

**Analytic approach**

Hymes' theory of communicative competence intends to deal with a heterogeneous speech community, differential competence and the constitutive role of socio-cultural setting (1992). It serves as a conceptual framework to make it possible to
specify diverse facets of capability that underlie language use. In his framework, the communicative competence can be specified in terms of the following four dimensions: (1) whether (and to what extent) something is formally possible (culturally recognizable and/or permissible); (2) whether (and to what extent) something is feasible (there are cultural conditions in implementing linguistic means); (3) whether (and to what extent) something is appropriate (appropriateness is the notion under which rules of use, rules of speaking, which govern relations between scenes, participants, genres, channel, and the like); and (4) whether (and to what extent) something in fact occurs (Hymes, 1972b).

The kind of analytic program that Hymes had in mind, "the ethnography of speaking" (Hymes, 1962; Saville-Troike, 1989), was one that identifies underlying substantive cultural properties that account for particular patterns of speech. Given that language use was seen as a process of arriving at a particular communicative means out of a welter of alternative possibilities, he proposed a common analytic framework that allows analysts to reveal the similarities and differences of particular ways of speaking, through comparing and contrasting within and across cultural systems:

Language could be described in terms relevant to a specific system, yet applicable to all; terms, that is, free of bias due to a particular context, and mediating between given systems and general theory, doing justice to both. In Phonology, the concepts of the phoneme, and then of distinctive features, have been such (Hymes, 1974, p. 434).

For example, particular language patterns are characterized in reference to an abstract unit, "speech style," as one that refers to different ways of speaking. Details of differences and variances among speech styles can be identified in terms of two intersecting functional dimensions: "referential" and "stylistic." Referential function refers to designate and predicative roles that a given utterance plays, for example, naming things and stating about them: "I am hungry" or "you are a lawyer." What is talked about, however, may be relayed through the aid of stylistic options as they qualify and modify the things talked about: "No, not that one, the BIIIG one."

Once stylistic properties of given utterances are identified, they are inspected to see if the properties could be related to and attributed to the larger speech unit, or "speech community" (Hymes, 1974). "Speech community" is defined as "a community sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation
of at least one linguistic variety" (p. 54). The role and/or function of any given utterance is thus identified and characterized in reference to these common analytic frameworks. Furthermore, these frameworks help to compare and contrast ways of speaking to other uses within and across speech communities.

To recap, the principal achievement of Hymes' theory of communicative competence is that it recognizes a pivotal role of socio-cultural organizations behind language use that were once treated as being outside the purview of linguistic inquiry by Chomskyan linguists. As a rejoinder to Chomsky's cognitive essentialism, Hymes brings into view the diversity embedded in ways of speaking (Hymes, 1989) which is socially drawn and culturally determined. Yet, Hymes never breaks completely from the normative analytic tradition, as his competence is still rendered through conceptual formula and theoretical constructs.

Situated Practices: The Second Respecification

**Hymes' sociability**

While Hymes' focus on "sociability" of language introduced a new analytic possibility to the study of language, it opened up a conundrum too. His intent was to bring the cultural properties of language to the central stage of linguistic analysis by demonstrating that the shared knowledge of social categories and cultural systems are enacted in language use. This undertaking unbounds an indefinite array of non-linguistic elements that Chomsky had effectively suppressed in his analysis. The systematics and regularities of surface language structures thus become a representational medium through which the workings of underlying socio-cultural properties are brought into view. In other words, properties of language-in-use are considered to represent the workings of normative cultural systems, social types and categories (Lee, 1991), and members of the relevant speech communities are considered to share the knowledge of how these cultural systems are organized and manifested in language use. Competent speakers, wittingly or unwittingly, recognize this interdependence of grammar and culture, and bring about that knowledge of rules of speaking in their communicative actions (Saville-Troike, 1996).
This version of competence, however, potentially yields a tendentious account of language, one that treats talk-in-interaction as a structureless medium which simply transforms the shared norms and propositional contents of the given culture (Schegloff, 1991). While communicative competence formulates the capability of knowing and making use of this "shared knowledge" in the given language use, it is simply taken for granted that the talk-in-interaction itself is also constitutive part of meaning making, displaying the members' interpretive actions of what goes on. That is to say, normative social categories become unproblematic resources for analysts to draw corresponding relations between language patterns and cultural realities. Parenthetically, these social factors and cultural patterns become Hymes' version of deep structures that motivate and shape the characters of language functions.

This insistence on relying on binary pairings between language patterns and cultural realities is, however, precisely why Hymes' analytic program tends to look beyond the given discourse, instead of working entirely within the empirical phenomena of language production themselves. Conceptual formulations of competence portray the typical and/or aggregated properties of language that are often detached from and independent of the very specific ways in which the members to an interaction construct their language.

The following exchange of the talk between a mom (A), her five-year-old daughter (B) and the mother's friend (C) illustrates the case in point. The speaker B has just interrupted speaker A and C as they were conversing:

A: Brynn, what did I tell you when adults are talking?
B: (silence)
C: OK, well...

Any competent language speaker would immediately recognize that the speaker A is doing a reproach to Brynn (the speaker B). The analytic task is then to demonstrate how this reproaching is done recognizably.

If one follows Hymes' analytic framework, one would come to identify the relevant social categories at work such as social identities of the participants (a mom, her child and the second adult) and features of situational contexts (The adults were talking and an interruption has just occurred). Once relevant socio-cultural categories are
identified, they become analytic resources through which analysts educe the relevant rules of speaking that the persons of the identified social categories are to follow: the speaker A as a mother is reproaching her child. One might note that this reproaching is done with a question and compare other uses of questions in conversation. Furthermore, some analysts of postmodern discourse may stretch this scenario to representational nexus of the gender relation or adult-child power issue in their accounts.

Neither of these analyses, however, shows how the recognizable action, reproaching, is accomplished, first and foremost, as the collaborative work of understanding by the members to this interaction, the speaker A, B and C. First, note that "Brynn, what did I tell you when adults are talking?" is produced as a question. Unlike a statement, the question routinely calls for an answer and thus, obliges its recipient – in this case, Brynn – to produce a relevant response. Yet, this question “what did I tell you...?” refers back to certain past events that are known to and thus shared by the speaker A and Brynn. That is to say, “what did I tell you...?” is a question of accountability for a circle of members (Macbeth, 1998), such as family members or classmates, who were there and remember what happened “last time.” By questioning “what did I tell you...,” the speaker A evokes this knowledge of this shared history from Brynn, and thus makes it the ground for her reproach: “we have already talked about this and you should have known this.”

Second, “…when adults are talking” is a formulation¹ of what Brynn did in the previous turn and of what these two other participants, the speaker A and the speaker C, were doing at the moment. What Brynn did could have been characterized in different ways; asking a question or complaining, for example. By the same token, what the speaker A and C were doing could have been characterized in other ways: chatting,

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¹ The term “formulation” was taken from the work by Garfinkel and Sacks (1970) who use it to refer to the members' practice of formulating their own conversation:

A member may treat some part of the conversation as an occasion to describe that conversation, to explain it, or characterize it, or explicate, or translate, or summarize, or furnish the gist of it, or take note of its accordance with rules, or remark on its departure from rules. That is to say a member may use some part of the conversation as an occasion to formulate the conversation (p.350-351)

That is to say, formulating practices are one of the ordinary linguistic actions that people use to clarify, identify, define, and/or describe what they are doing.
joking or even sitting together. Yet, what Brynn did was formulated in reference to who these two other persons are and what they were doing at the moment. By "...when adults are talking," the speaker A characterizes herself and the speaker C as adults, which teaches Brynn how her identity is to be heard. That is to say, by invoking the category of adults, the speaker A implicates what identity she wants Brynn to assume and thus, makes explicit what kind of role she expects Brynn to play for this occasion.¹⁴

This word, adults, seems to work as a categorical term, but whose use is quite different from formal analytic categories that analysts bring into their interpretation of language phenomena.¹⁵ First, the properties of adults are situationally invoked and thus locally assembled in the very course of action. In other words, the adequate sense of adults is made available, not because the participants had a prior agreement as to the appropriate ways of speaking among identified social types of participants like a mom or child, but because of the speaker A's methodic use of the category drawn from what happens in the sequence of talk.

While this has been my analysis of how the speaker A's remark is constructed, speaker A's work of reproaching entirely relies on Brynn's competence to hear it that way, and speaker C, too. Note that the speaker A's remark was produced as a question and yet, Brynn (the speaker B), instead, produces a silence. This silence is not simply an opting out but a display of Brynn's understanding that the speaker A's remark was a question that did not call for an answer. This is her agreement to the practical actions that speaker A's remark is seen to carry out, evoking who the speakers A and C are, what they were doing in the previous turn, and what Brynn is expected to do in next turn. And the speaker C's next remark "OK, well..." displays his recognition of how the work of reproaching is done and agreed to by Brynn, in resuming the course of the talk that was halted momentarily.

As it happens, the remark "Brynn, what did I tell you when adults are talking" becomes a reproach, not because there are some inherent semantic properties that the

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¹⁴ See Payne and Hustler (1980) who describe how a classroom teacher uses his/her identity as a teacher as a way of inviting students to take their identity as students.

¹⁵ Members in talk-in-interaction often use certain kinds of social categories or types in their talk (Hester & Eglin, 1997a) to describe persons (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979) or places (Schegloff, 1972).
speakers and hearers are deemed to know. Rather, it becomes a reproach because speaker A makes it hearable through her methods of talking: she formulates what was done in the previous turn by Brynn, elicits relevant features of social identity of the participants, and thus instructs Brynn in how to interpret her remark as a reproach. More importantly, though, speaker A’s remark becomes a reproach as Brynn produces her agreement as such, and by speaker C in subsequently resuming their talk.

This brief analysis implicates a very different analytic undertaking for both the participants and the professional analyst, one that treats any interactional events as local achievement by the member’s interpretive action. In other words, to do analysis of language is to treat the interaction as being constitutive of the very composition of language utterances and their meaning (Schegloff, 1991). Talk-in-interaction itself displays members’ distinctive methods for organizing their talk to produce contextually relevant actions, whether they are making complaints, answering a question that does not call for an answer, doing reproach, or any other social action.

The question of how actual communication comes to take the shape that it does, therefore, is an empirical question that calls for analytic descriptions of how the members to an interaction construct the particular interactional trajectories that they do, out of the indefinite and alternative interactional possibilities. Departing from the previous analytic view that relies on cultural systems and social types as unproblematic analytic resources, this alternative view takes on more of a procedural approach in which communicative competence becomes revealed in the very course of action as the members organize their talk and actions for each other.

Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis

Sociability in the respecification

The respecification of communicative competence the present study sets out to undertake resonates with the analytic policies of ethnomethodology (Button, 1991; Garfinkel, 1967; Lynch, 1993b) and conversation analysis (CA) (Sacks, 1992; Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). For ethnomethodologists, the world is experienced as an intersubjective one, known or knowable in common with others (Zimmerman &
Pollner, 1970) because people contribute to the organization of their affairs in collaboration with each other: members’ practices of meaning making are always practical, interpretive, and constructive exercises in producing visibly evident worlds for each other.

Rather than relying on the unified treatment of social phenomena under overarching conceptual frameworks or cultural systems, ethnomethodologists attend to the ordinary methods through which persons conduct their practical affairs. In this view:

The objective reality of social facts as an ongoing accomplishment of the concerted activities of daily life, with the ordinary artful ways of that accomplishment being by members known, used, and taken-for-granted, is, for members doing sociology, a fundamental phenomenon. (Garfinkel, 1967, vii)

This focus on members’ practical methods for the construction of ordinary activities and worlds emerged from the realization that the most central feature of the organization of social activity is its achieved intelligibility for the participants. Social orders are found in the locally situated occasions of interaction, and members display to each other those orders when they carry out mundane practical actions.

Communicative competence, following this analytic initiative, is to be sought not in the conceptual formulation of epistemic properties of language use, nor in the interrelation of substantiated social types, but rather in the practical methods through which members interpret and produce a cogent and visible world for each other. Ethnomethodological studies, therefore, have tried to make these methods topical and perspicuous, and thus recognizable to readers (Lynch, 1993b), and they endeavor to situate their inquiries in the identifying details of practical actions carried out in the practical realities of social interaction.

Certainly, the emphasis on the realities of language interaction is not new to the field of language studies as we find in Hymes’ focus on “sociability” of language. Yet, there is a discernable difference in the way ethnomethodological studies treat language phenomena. Hymes’ communicative competence intended to formulate the general capability of language use and to draw conceptual frames of reference through which “socially constructed nature of language” is accounted for. In contrast, ethnomethodological studies of language use finds “the sociability” of language use not
in the epistemic formulations of language, but in methodic ways through which members collaborate to accomplish their interactional affairs. There is no doubt that ways of speaking contain an array of rules of speaking that are expressive of cultural systems and/or social identities of the participants, as Hymes observed. Yet, ethnomethodologists insist on finding them by demonstrating the members’ orientations to them in their practical tasks and circumstances. Only then, could we describe what rules or identities are actually in use.

For Hymes, the “actual reality of the speech situation” represents the locale from which analysts educe the substantive components of the culture shared by the members of a particular speech community (Hymes, 1971). Particular ways of speaking represent the corresponding norms and regularities of the given culture, and thus communicative competence is taken to be the capacity to know and use this knowledge in communication. In comparison, ethnomethodologists note that the particularity of the situation is a fundamental interactional resource for members as they find the relevance of the given speech event in the course of action, project their interpretation, and establish meaning. Communicative competence is to be found, therefore, in the ways in which members make their talk adequate and intelligible for each other in the very course of action. Lynch sums up this difference as follows:

In ethnomethodology, the adjective local has little to do with subjectivity, perspectival viewpoints, particular interests or small acts in restricted places. Instead, it refers to the heterogeneous grammars of activity through which familiar social objects are constituted. Instead of trying to overcome heterogeneity by theoretically postulating a homogeneous domain, ethnomethodologists attempt to investigate a patchwork of “orderness” without assuming that any single orderly arrangement reflects or exemplifies a determinate set of organizational laws, historical stages, norms or paradigmatic orders of meaning. They do not deny the historical and social “contexts” in which social action and interaction take place; rather, they insist that specifications of such contexts are invariably bound to a local contexture of relevancies (Lynch, 1993b, p. 125).

**Conversation Analysis**

Conversation Analysis (CA) is perhaps the most well known analytic program that has developed out of ethnomethodology since the 1960s (Button & Lee, 1987; Psathas, 1995; Sacks, 1992; Sacks et al., 1974). It is Harvey Sacks who initiated this new empirical enterprise as he envisioned an analytic approach that deals with the details of
mundane and ordinary social activities: “Could there be some way that sociology hopes
to deal with the details of actual events, formally and informatively?” (Sacks, 1984, p.
26). For this undertaking, Sacks was inclined to the domain of interaction as the object of
their new analytic inquiry. Behind this undertaking is Sacks’ observation that actual
social events are organized, not just at the level of abstract or underlying levels, but at all
levels, and thus shown an organization of “order at all points” (Sacks, 1992, p. 33).
Schegloff sums it as follows:

This view, rather like the ‘holographic’ model of information distribution, understands
order not to be present only at aggregate levels and therefore subject to an overall
differential distribution, but to be present in detail on a case by case, environment by
environment basis. A culture is not then to be found only by aggregating all of its
venues; it is substantially present in each of its venues (1992b, p. xlvi)

This order exists, however, not in the form of an array of underlying social and
institutional factors as the conventional sociologists have conceived. Rather, these orders
are something that is constituted in and as the members’ interpretive practices in talk-in-
interaction. For example, conversation analysts note that the members to an interaction
are constantly engaged in the task of interpretation: members display what they know,
attend to the way meaning is constructed, project their analysis of what goes on and make
their analysis available to each other. In the pursuit of their ordinary affairs, members
constantly invoke and rely on the competence of each other as they construct an ordered

This is very contrastive to other analytic programs that look into the discourse
organization. For example, speech act theory (Searl, 1969) takes the understanding as a
matter of making sense of propositional contents that utterances contain: the emphasis on
the propositional contents formulate ‘understanding’ in reference to definitions,
references, rules of uses, contexts, intentions and etc. In contrast, the present study with
its interest in the achievement of common understanding finds communicative
competence in a very practical task that the parties to the talk-in-interaction carry out,
namely, the members are able to produce the adequate next turn on time (Macbeth,
2000). For the members, this task of producing the adequate next turn on time is very
much local and interactional; they need to attend to and project what the previous turns
entails and calls for and figure out when to talk and how to talk in the very course of action. That is to say, their talks are not generated just randomly, but the outcome of their constant interpretive actions and choices; they make sense of what others say, display what they know, attend to the way meaning is constructed, and make available their analysis of what goes on to each other. That is to say, the present study describes the practices and methods that are involved in producing the adequate next turn.

This analytic focus on the methods of talks is not so much out of the attempt to deny the presence of definitions, semantics, contexts, identities, and/or rules of language use. Rather it reflects the ethnomethodological initiative to shift our analytic focus to the practices of talk, and their grammar of actions that the members display by which they make their actions accountable and understandable (Mishler, 1979).

This will secure the status of understanding as a natural phenomenon, specify the work members do to accomplish it, and determine some of the interests and capacities which members must have as part of the social and conversational competence which permits their work, their accomplishment, and their commitment to them. (Moerman & Sacks, 1988, p. 182).

The members' work of understanding is therefore local, immediate, contingent and continuous as they assemble their interpretive resources within the discourse, display their understanding and determine what to do next in the very course of action. Understanding is therefore not a matter of "cracking a code" (Heritage, 1984) that displays the rules of grammars as scripts for language acts, but of the practical language action of the members who find relevant contexts, assemble local circumstances and thus make intelligible "what goes on" for each other. Even the simple utterance, "what did I tell you when adults are talking" is the outcome of richly configured interpretive actions. That is to say, CA is about the order and organization of social action in talk-in-interaction, not language per se (Psathas, 1995). This is where we find the achievement of common understanding, and therefore, communicative competence.

**Turn-taking organization**

One of the fundamental properties of real-time talk that manifests the elaborate warp and woof of the interpretive work of the members to an interaction is the "turn-taking" organization (Sacks et al., 1974). In a nutshell, "turn-taking" displays the
detailed methods through which members to spontaneous conversation coordinate their speakership among themselves. The presence of such a system comes from the observation that overwhelmingly, there is an orderly transition from one speaker to another with precision and little overlap in natural conversation (Levinson, 1983). This recurrent achievement of not only orderly speaker transition but the articulation and understanding of the parties in interaction is not simply the outcome of formal rules or structures that are pre-encoded in the mind of language users. Rather, it is something that the members to an interaction have to accomplish on each and every occasion.

Accordingly, the members in natural conversation are involved in real-time tasks to make possible an orderly transition of speakership and other observable regulation of conversational organization. These tasks include locating the possible transition points from which they could initiate the transfer of speakership, and determining who, among the potential speakers, speaks next after any current speaker.

One of the most insistent and recurrent lessons to be taken from this ‘turn-taking’ organization is that the talk-in-interaction is locally organized as members manage their speakership on a turn by turn basis, one utterance at a time:

In characterizing the turn-taking system with which we have been dealing as ‘local management system,’ we note the following clear features. (1) The system deals with single transitions at a time, and thereby with only the two turns which a single transition links; i.e., it allocates but a single turn at a time. (2) The single turn it allocates on each occasion of its operation is ‘next turn.’ (3) While the system deals with but a single transition at a time, it deals with transitions: (a) comprehensively – i.e., it deals with any of the transition possibilities whose use it organizes; (b) exclusively – i.e., no other system can organize transitions independent of the turn-taking systems; and (c) serially, in the order that they come up – via its dealing with ‘next turn’ (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 725).

**Sequentiaorganization: Temporal order**

At the heart of the turn taking system is the temporal, sequential organization of natural conversation (Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). By sequence, it is meant that utterances in talk-in-interaction take shape within a temporal domain, namely, what a speaker says in the next turn is oriented to what the prior speakers said in the immediate prior turn:

At is most basic, conversation analytic research into sequence is based on the notion that
in a variety of ways the production of some current conversational action proposes a
local, here-and-now 'definition of the situation' to which subsequent talk will be oriented
(Heritage, 1984, p. 245)

One of the most elementary examples that shows how utterances are made relevant
sequentially is found in 'adjacency pair' (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Adjacency pairs
refer to the phenomena of talk in which some current turns project a relevant next
activity, or range of activities, from another party in the next turn. For example, a
question once produced strongly implicates that the relevant second part (answer) will be
forthcoming, or at least the failure of the appropriate second part is noticeable. Many
conversational actions take place within this pairing link such as greeting sequence or
invitation.

Sequential organization marks the local construction of meaning as each utterance
is tied retrospectively and progressively to both the prior and next turn. To a surprising
degree, this sequential tie among utterances radically restricts the possibility of making
disorderly utterances. Note the following examples:

((B has just told A that his sister is coming to the US to visit him))
A: Does your sister speak English?
B: Well, she speaks very good Japanese!
A: Well, Hehehe.

While one would easily recognize that the speaker B is making a joking response to A’s
question, the question is how B’s seemingly irrelevant remark is heard as an answer to
A’s question.

Note that B’s question is produced under the sequential context that A’s question
has created: namely, A’s question is asking for a characterization of B’s sister in terms of
her English fluency. That is to say, the sequential placement of the question informs the
speaker B, and analysts too, of how B’s answer is going to be heard. Only then, could we
infer that B’s comment on her sister’s Japanese proficiency is produced as a paradoxical
response as to his sister’s English proficiency. To put it differently, the meaning of
speaker B’s answer can not be made without referring to what was asked and thus the
sequential implicativeness of the utterances. It is the sequential relevance of this talk that
the speaker B relies on, as he comes up with this rather interesting answer to the question.
**Indexical expressions**

The members' interpretive work of understanding is also found in what is called, the indexical expression of natural language. Indexical expressions has been defined as a word, sentence, or proposition whose meaning depends on the context in which appears; their meanings are not stable and thus vary with circumstances in a staggering degree of particularity and divergence. The classic examples include the proterms such as “we” “you” “here” “there,” or “yesterday.” The meaning of these utterances could not be grasped without seeing who was speaking, when and where it was said, and by knowing what had been said just previously (Heritage, 1984). However, the indexical character is not limited to these particular categories of utterances. Rather, all language use and the actions are indexical in nature (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970) because “meaning is always within context and context incorporate meaning” (Mishler, 1979, p. 14). Note the following example.

(A and B are talking about A’s husband)

1. A: He is an extremely intelligent person, he went to college when he was 14.
2. L: Oh, really?
3. A: Yeah, he came here to the States when he was 19, he came here to study PhD, so he is, he is, by a lot of standard, genius, he is very very intelligent.
4. L: What is he doing?
7. A: Yeah, I know.

On consideration, the referential meaning of the utterance, “mathematics” is ambiguous or indefinite as are the meaning of “intelligent person,” or “genius.” Each is implicated in the use and meaning of the other on this occasion. What otherwise might be thought an unequivocal utterance, mathematics cannot be grasped here without referring to how it is used in this particular exchange. Even if we look into the social contexts of the speaker’s identities and norms, it is not likely that we could make principled account of these meanings without considering the sequential organization of the exchange.

For an adequate understanding of what goes on here, one has to suspend the assumption that there is some constant meaning for the word, mathematics, one whose sense remains stable over various applications. Instead, we are forced to treat it as an indexical expression whose meaning is embedded in the ways that members use it in the
course of action. Thus, analytic focus is placed on describing, for example, how the word is made relevant to what other parts of the talk, and what semantic properties are invoked, and enacted by whom, through the sequential context and organization of their exchange.

This analytic policy requires a closer look into the unfolding sequences of the talk. Note, first, that speaker L’s response in line 2 “Oh, really” displays how he hears speaker A’s characterization of her husband (he went to college at the age of 14): for example, as a display of surprise, admiration or an invitation to say more (rather than a question). By the same token, the next turn (line 3-4) shows how speaker A takes speaker L’s response “Oh, really”: acknowledging speaker L’s appreciation of her formulation and then, offering a further account.

Having noted how the speaker A’s husband and his particular identity are introduced and appreciated by speaker L, we then come to notice that these first exchanges become the local history on which the continuing sequence is built. That is to say, speaker L’s question “what is he doing?” is a loaded question that carries on its back the local history in which the speaker A’s husband was characterized as an exceptionally gifted person. Thus, the question, “what is he doing” is referenced to this particular identity that speaker A and L talked about in previous turns; such answers as “he is watching TV” or “baking bread” would not be relevant answers.

Accordingly, speaker L’s response to speaker A’s answer, “studying mathematics” displays how speaker L treats these two different features about speaker A’s husband: being exceptionally gifted and studying mathematics. Primarily, speaker L is heard to connect two different categorical properties about speaker A’s husband. These two categories are made reflexive to each other as the meaning of one category is assembled in reference to the other category: “studying mathematics” provides an adequate sense of what an exceptionally gifted person can do and at the same time, the property of “being a gifted person” evokes a particular inference as to who would be doing ‘studying mathematics.’ As it happens, A’s response in line 8 “Yeah, I know” recognizes speaker A’s interpretive work.

As a result, the meaning of “mathematics” cannot be grasped outside of the local sequential order of the talk. Rather, it is an indexical expression whose sense is to be
found, not in a self-sufficient referential content, but in the local specifics of its practical use. In other words, its indefinite property is managed and made into adequate sense through speakers A and L's methodic interpretive work as their work is displayed to one another in the course of action.

To sum up, what otherwise could present insurmountable difficulties to linguists, the omnipresent indexicality of natural language becomes managed and reconciled as the members organize their talk for one another by means of pointing to a certain set of features of the interlocutors and/or the contextual setting in talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 1987). Hymes was right when he claimed that every linguistic act is one chosen out of welter of infinite alternatives, and this diversity is one of the hallmarks of human language behavior (Hymes, 1972a). Yet, this brief analysis suggests that the specification of how an interaction comes to take a particular interactional form requires description of the members' actual practices of talk, rather than insisting on abstract formulation of the corresponding relationship between language patterns and socio-cultural types.

Since members come to terms with contingent circumstances and the indexical character of the talk on each and every occasion, the pragmatic moves that members make in talk-in-interaction display the interpretive work that goes on in natural conversation. In CA's analysis, the competence of the language users is sought within the interactional events by making perspicuous the process in which the participants choose particular interactional trajectories out of a welter of possibilities and the vicissitude of natural language to achieve common understanding:

(CA intends to) specify the work members do to accomplish it, and determine some of the interests and capacities which members must have as part of the social and conversational competence which permits their work, their accomplishment, and their commitment to them (Moerman & Sacks, 1971/1988, p. 182).

**Critiques of Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis**

Ethnomethodological orientation to details of social phenomena, however, has been often misunderstood (Lynch & Bogen, 1996) as an epistemological perspective that credits the local, micro or immediately visible actions, while denying the existence of larger and more abstract socio-cultural phenomena such as power, language socialization,
cultural difference, gender, motivation, social status, etc. Consequently, a number of criticisms have been raised against Ethnomethodological studies especially with the following kinds of objection\(^\text{16}\): “It is all very well to conduct close studies of intricate social interaction, but how can you understand these if you don’t take into account the broader social or cultural context?” “What about the gender or power relations?” or “These events are taking place in the school context, so you need take into account school circumstances!” Even those who are sympathetic with ethno methodology’s capability to address the face-to-face and local determinants of actions are quick to point out that Ethnomethodological studies are limited to micro aspects of face-to-face communication and largely incapable of specifying the structural conditions which occasion the particular properties of any local setting (Gidden, 1978).

Ethnomethodological studies take interest in the relevance of socio-cultural structures and larger socio-cultural contexts too, but with an important difference. Instead of treating events and their contexts separately, they treat them together (Lynch, 1993b). When the inquiry begins with observations of details of social events, whether it is the talk exchange in language classrooms or a science laboratory, ethnomethodologists note that the very language they use to describe what happens is not simply describing what happens, but it is constituting the very affairs it describes. What happens is available as we describe (Macbeth, 2001b) — in our ways of speaking,\(^\text{17}\) finding particular identities of the members, evoking particular properties of context, and thus making what we describe sensible, typical, interesting, adequate or even boring etc.

\(^{16}\) See Lynch (1993b) and Sharrock and Anderson (1986) for various criticisms raised against ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. In L2 literature, Firth & Wagner’s view (1997) was treated as being representative of conversation analysis by their critics such as Long (1997), Kasper (1997), and Gass (1997a). In my own view, however, Firth & Wagner were making a global argument as to the direction of the present L2 research, rather than featuring conversation analysis as the alternative analytic program.

\(^{17}\) “Ways of speaking” here is different from Hymes’ use of it (Hymes, 1974). This will be explained further in the next chapter. Suffice it to say that “ways of speaking” here is concerned more with particular methods the members employ to make his/her talk intelligible and understandable, whereas Hymes’ “ways of speaking” is indicative of larger patterns of speaking that point to the relevant speech community.
What this implicates is that there is no distinctive vintage point for any theoretical or analytic formulation over the way in which the members make of them. For example, some theoretically motivated constructs were adopted to measure the efficiency of the question and answer in language education – in terms of referential vs. display quality of question (Long & Sato, 1983), the cognitive processing (Koivukari, 1987) or communicative quality (Brock, 1986). Yet, we note that properties of any given question also become subject to members’ own undertaking displayed in and as the members’ talk; the members find the given questions as adequate, wrong, funny or even irrelevant in the teacher’s following comments or the reaction from the rest of the students. It is the students’ and teacher’s competent practices of talk-in-interaction that particular features of questions are evoked, certain properties of contexts are brought into view and thus questions and answers are made sense to each other.

Communicative competence in L2 literature

*Theory Construction in Second Language Acquisition*

Hymes’ call for inquiry into the reality of communication has been instrumental for the development of a more function-oriented approach in language education, moving away from the earlier preoccupation with formal language structures (Richards & Rogers, 1986). Since then, “communicative competence” has become more of a discursive phrase, permeating L2 professional discourse in every possible way: as the emblem of the new instructional program, or a rationale for alternative teaching methods and/or testing measures, for examples.

Nevertheless, the analytic influence that Hymes’ analytic program has had on L2 literature has remained fairly conceptual and programmatic, rather than empirical or

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18 This is known as “Ethnomethodological indifference” which treats descriptive accounts of social phenomena, whether it is vernacular or professional, not as a corrective that evaluates the accounts as being faulty or correct, but as an empirical matter whose adequacy is to be discovered on its own terms:

Ethnomethodological studies of formal structures... (seek) to describe members’ accounts of formal structures wherever and by whomever they are done, while abstaining from all judgments of their adequacy, value, importance, necessity, practicality, success, or consequentiality. We refer to this procedural policy as ‘Ethnomethodological indifference’ (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, p. 345).
specific. It has been conceptual where subsequent L2 theories have generated various conceptual frames of references through which L2 communicative competence could be defined and characterized (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980). It has been programmatic where L2 theories of communicative competence are essentially tied to, and thus reflect the disciplinary interests in, developing guidelines to organize language programs and/or testing systems.

Accordingly, L2 theories of communicative competence are doubly bound; on the one hand, they ought to meet the theoretical goal to account for L2 language while they need to accomplish a pedagogical goal of prescribing L2 development. That is to say, the adequacy of the given theories is to be estimated, not exclusively on the degree to which it offers a principled account of L2 language phenomena, but also in terms of its potential to map out sequences of and programs for language development.

Without a substantial amount of empirical studies of actual L2 communication set in place, however, it can be problematic to prefigure what the theories should look like and what roles they ought to play. Furthermore, there are a variety of analytic paradigms with different theoretical assumptions and research methodologies, which makes it hard to bring out any coherent consensus on what good theories should look like.

Nonetheless, there is a salutary optimism that it is indeed possible to prefigure the theories that own an internal validity of coherence while retaining an external value of practicality to inform and improve educational practices. This expectation is summed up well in Stern's view of good theory (1983):

A good language teaching theory will strive to provide a conceptual framework devised for identifying all factors relevant in the teaching of languages and the relationships between them and for giving effective direction to the practice of language teaching, supported by the necessary research and enquiry (p. 32).

Thus, we are advised to be patient because in due time with accumulated analytic
undertakings, we will find the theories that will meet these doubly bound qualifications. What we need in the meantime is the rigorous criteria that can filter out ephemeral fads of the time or invalid versions of theories.19

A recent series of debates on the theory construction in the L2 literature is very instructive because it furnished rare occasions for us to reflect on substantive theoretical assumptions, analytic approaches, and epistemological issues that had not been hitherto considered with such rigor.20 The presence of well-established theories is considered a token of the maturity of a field as an academic discipline, and yet it is a daunting task to accomplish in heterogeneous fields such as language education with its differing array of interdisciplinary influence from neighboring disciplines. The present review of the aforementioned debates intends to examine how L2 phenomena have been formulated and characterized across different theoretical renderings and analytic approaches.

Among other things, we note that different theories of second language acquisition exert substantial influence on how language data are viewed and utilized, and this bears on the entire research process ranging from generating research questions, to data analysis and theorizing. The differences across analytic programs have been explained in reference to several comparative formulations, for example, quantitative vs. qualitative, cognitive approach vs. socio-cultural approach, second language acquisition vs. second language use, or scientific rationality vs. hermeneutics (interpretation). Among them, the following excerpts represent two very distinctive analytic perspectives that were highlighted in the aforementioned debate.

Neither will we abandon our day-to-day assumptions that general laws can be proposed and checked, that there is a real world out there that we can learn much about, and that rational inquiry is more effective than solipsism, and more worthwhile as a human and social endeavor (Gregg et al., 1997 p. 551).

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19 Stern proposed five criteria that good theories have to have; usefulness and applicability, explicitness, coherence and consistence, comprehensiveness, explanatory power and verifiability and simplicity and clarity.

20 By this series of debates, I refer to ones that began in the special issue of applied linguistics in 1993, 14(3) in which several leading researchers in the field were invited to write about theory construction in SLA (Beretta, 1993; Beretta & Crookes, 1993; Gregg, 1993; Long, 1993; Schumann, 1993). Several researchers responded to this (Block, 1996; Lantolf, 1996; van Lier, 1994) followed by a response paper collaboratively written by Gregg, Long, Jordan and Beretta (1997). Firth & Wagner's article (1997) set in motion another series of debates (Gass, 1997b; Kasper, 1997; Long, 1997).
To sum up, theorizing in SLA, to the extent that it means a principled and sustained attempt to come to an understanding of phenomena in the field, is less a matter of looking for causes, or positing laws, and more a question of listening, communicating, and coming to agreement (van Lier, 1994 p. 331).

At the core of the debates, there are epistemological issues as to how to see language phenomena, which leads to the differences in analytic methodologies. For example, the pursuit of general laws would involve an entirely different analytic undertaking from van Lier’s humanistic rendering of language research. Consequently, the debate on theory construction centers on more philosophical matters, such as the nature of language and the transcendental principles of its acquisition, methodological orthodoxy and the nature of the social reality that surround second/foreign language.

**Second Language Research and Scientific Rationality**

One of the most predominant analytic approaches in SLA literature is one that takes the second language research to be a scientific endeavor (Beretta, 1993; Beretta & Crookes, 1993; Gregg, 1993; Long, 1993). Theorists in this tradition attempt to emulate the phenomenal success of natural science and they find their conceptual resources in the work of philosophy of science. Beretta and Crookes (1993) ascribe to the rationality of science the causal agents in generating the new ideas and suggest implementing the reasoning strategies of scientists drawn from the work of philosophy of science (Darden, 1991) for the production of new ideas for L2 research. The rationality of the scientist is regarded as the optimal gateway to generating correct hypotheses in second language research, and is thus critical for theory building.

While sharing the same view with Beretta and Crookes (1993) with regard to treating natural science as the most desirable model for theory building, Long (1993) considers it critical to assess the existing theories for the success of second language research because:

The field has an obligation to act as quickly as possible to reach the point where we can respond to practitioners' questions on such matters in some other way than by informing them of existence of numerous different points of view of equal merit... We should make it clear for the benefit of insiders and outsiders; and one way of doing this is by a rational process of theory selection and unification (p. 229)
This urge for theory culling reveals a deeply entrenched allegiance to the rationality of science and its methods as the optimal research approach for generating reliable and valid knowledge about L2 language phenomena. The upshot of this view is that analytic focus is calibrated to generate the theoretical/conceptual principles behind L2 phenomena, and the acquisition of competence is one such principle notion according to Gregg (1993):

SLA theory is a theory of acquisition of linguistic knowledge, and thus requires a property theory or functional analysis of that knowledge. But it is also a theory of the acquisition of linguistic knowledge, and acquisition is the domain par excellence of transition theory (p. 279, emphasis in original).

The foregoing pledge to scientism in L2 research represents an analytic undertaking that strives to find the common thread among diverse L2 phenomena and to generate principled accounts of them. The consensual subscriptions to scientific rationality of the analysis and the use of standardized research approach are favored.

As a result, language phenomena become abstracted into conceptual constructs such as “competence” or “interlanguage,” or “negotiation for meaning” just as science needs abstract theoretical concepts such as “mass” or “acceleration” to knit discrete empirical observations, for example, falling apples or rolling balls down inclined planes. It is essentially through “reasoning” and “inference” strategies that analysts formulate rules; their formulations are essentially the products of their perceived interrelation among the aforementioned constructs. In other words, L2 phenomena are subject entirely to the analysts’ theoretical undertaking, and thus the character of any given L2 utterance is treated in reference to the theoretical assumptions and research protocols under consideration.

**Alternative Rendering on Second Language Research**

In response to the foregoing kinds of scientific rationalism, several researchers in the field countered that there are alternative ways of constructing theories in second language research (Block, 1996; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Lantolf, 1996; van Lier, 1994).

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21 Gregg relies on Cummins’ distinction between property theory and transition theory (R. Cummins, 1983). In brief, property theory deals with the instantiation of a property in a system whereas transition theory is concerned with the status of change of the given phenomena looking for the cause and effect.
While there is no single clearly conceived alternative to the aforementioned scientism, all these authors are in unison in attacking unitary treatments of L2 phenomena and calling for paradigmatic shifts in the theory construction. Naturally, their arguments have turned to broad philosophical and epistemological matters: how to view the nature of language, how to estimate the validity of the given research and what constitutes acceptable findings and L2 theories.22

First, van Lier (1994) admonishes the aforementioned scientism for its tendency to separate pedagogical relevance from theory construction. For him, what characterizes L2 research is the diverse array of research purposes, contexts of learning and discourse worlds. Therefore, theorists must consider their practical affairs or pedagogical concerns to be an integral part of theory building in second language research.

Furthermore, he questions if natural science is worthy of emulation as an appropriate analytic model to follow in the study of L2 phenomena and suggests that analytic description of L2 language learning should imply interpretation of the observable or experienced phenomena by the participants. Theorizing in SLA is, therefore, less a matter of “explanation of the phenomena” than of “understanding of how people learn language.” Block’s conception of theory construction (1997) follows the same path in that he views the classroom as a distinctive social context in which people interact and thus, language lessons are far more than the execution of curriculum and methodology.

Lantolf’s response to the rationality of scientific research paradigm (1996) represents a postmodern critique of the scientific approach to L2 research. While agreeing with van Lier (1994) that natural science might not be the most appropriate analytic model to follow, he observes further that research is a matter of representations that involves particular sets of conventions, social practices and analytic goals. Thus,

22 In a jointly written paper, Gregg, Long, Jordan & Beretta (1997) claims that they do not make a positivist’ argument:

We have no interest in defending any positivist stance – especially since none of us is a positivist – and no objection to those who seek to work out new approaches to research and theory construction, just so long as they do not abandon rational argument and methods (p. 550).

Thus, the charges made by Lantolf, van Lier and Block against them are ascribed to misunderstanding on their part.
analysts' observations are always and everywhere mediated by society, objects, and above all, by language and the representation of the self; discourse determines, shapes and motivates the very reality that we are in. So truth is constructed and then, the analytic question is directed, not to the presence of universal truth, but to how particular explanations are constructed and made adequate: "Interest now shifts from truth existing independent of its explanation to how the explanation is constructed and made adequate" (p.735). Accordingly, there is no inherent privilege to be endowed to scientific theories.

Firth and Wagner (1997) encapsulate the overriding difference between these two analytic paradigms. For them, the SLA research literature has been skewed by the dominance of cognitive, mentalistic and individualistic views of discourse and communication. Therefore, they call for the re-conceptualization of SLA research by accommodating a social and contextual orientation to language:

Meaning is not an individual phenomenon consisting of private thoughts executed and then transferred from brain to brain, but a social and negotiable product of interaction, transcending individual intentions and behaviors (p. 290)

What is needed of the field at this stage of development is not so much a theory culling as Long aspires (1993), but a more critical assessment of the fundamental concepts and research approaches in second language research. By bringing a more acute awareness of and sensitivity to the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use, Firth and Wagner hope to see alternative renderings of such fundamental concepts as interlanguage, language learners, communication strategies, input and interaction.

Firth and Wagner's call for re-conceptualization of research endeavor has met several reactions (Gass, 1997a; Kasper, 1997; Long, 1997). What is common among these reactions is the claim that Firth and Wagner have confounded two totally different phenomena: "language use" and "language acquisition." What becomes problematic in Firth and Wagner's characterization of L2 research, according to these authors, is not the research approaches per se, but the topics of research as they would determine subsequent analytic procedures:

The goal of research on SLA, qualitative or quantitative, inside or outside the classroom, in the laboratory or on the street, is to understand how changes in that internal mental representation are achieved, why they sometimes appear to cease, and which learner, linguistic, and social factors affect and effect the process.(Long, 1997 p. 319)
The goal of my work, but rather to understand what types of interaction might bring about what types of changes in linguistic knowledge. (Gass, 1997a p. 84)

Behind this distinction between language use and acquisition, there lies the analytic assumptions that these authors subscribe to: language phenomena are first subject to the topics of inquiry that analysts bring into the research process. For Long et al., the conceptualization of language phenomena is not itself a matter of naturalistic inquiry, but rather of professional analytic distinction, or theory. From this, their analytic focus is placed on highlighting the essential properties of knowledge of the second language, and not the procedural aspects of how language is used on actual occasions.

The discrepancy even between quantitative and qualitative research methodology or the cognitive view and a socio-cultural view actually becomes abated under the analytic purview that it is analysts' theoretical orientation and analytic goal that determines the analytic process. Thus, Long claims, “few would dispute that SLA takes place in an interactional and sociolinguistic context. A persistent question in the field, however, is the relevance of that context, and of different dimensions of it, to acquisition” (Long, 1997 p. 318).

**Theory construction and communicative competence**

What underlies this controversy is that it is research purposes and relevant theoretical views of language that condition and determine the data selection and their analysis. That is to say, any theoretical rendering and adopted methodologies involve a set of theoretical assumptions and methodological procedures that prefigure the way in which the given language phenomena are viewed. Yet, it should be noted that these renderings are somewhat external to the very communicative events for which those theories intend to account. In other words, language phenomena often become the interplay of the different analytic commitments, and formulations that analysts bring into view to the task.

In this way, actual events of speech exchange are always subject to the particular formulations that analysts uphold: for example, studies of interlanguage pragmatics, or input modification. Once this analytic topic is set in place, the given data are subject to the particular formulation, highlighting particular properties of interaction, drawing on
particular social identities of the participants, and/or relating to particular aspects of contexts. This essentially leads to a kind of correspondence between the data and the proposed analytic variables, for example, L2 utterances are analyzed in reference to the ethnic backgrounds of the speaker or to other features of the ethnographic context.

This correspondence is, thus, independent of and distant from the ways in which discourses are organized by the participants. The actual organizations of the discourse are often glossed over in favor of finding evidence for the underlying variables that analysts are interested in. What can be missing in this is a close description of how it is the parties to the talk undertake its orderly production, and the tasks of understanding, and thus construct the character of their language use in the course of action on actual occasions.

In light of this analytic relation between L2 theories, language phenomena and analytic approach, it is worthwhile re-examining the previous theories of communicative competence in L2 literature. The task is to make visible the ways in which these theories identify and formulate the language phenomena they report. The following section is designed to review the existing theories of communicative competence, questioning how L2 phenomena have been accounted for and what kinds of properties and organizations are brought into view, and in what manner, in these theories.

L2 theories of communicative competence

One of the early researchers who attempted to relate the communicative competence to L2 teaching was Munby (1978). He developed a framework that can specify a person’s communicative competence in the second language. This framework was designed as a conceptual guideline to help language practitioners develop teaching practices that would foster students’ competence for communicative use of language.

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23 This analytic attitude goes back to the phenomenological attitude initiated by Husserl (1960) who intended to re-specify the way his contemporary philosophies (19th century) viewed natural science a distinctive kind of knowledge. His intent was not to offer alternative theories to Galilean science, but to examine the presuppositions of that tradition of inquiry (Sharrock & Anderson, 1986). Ethnomethodological ‘respecification’ in the present study follows a similar analytic attitude, topicalizing how theories of L2 communicative competence and their presuppositions view language phenomena.
Despite the practical purposes it promises to fulfill, Munby’s theory was constructed through borrowing and assembling various theoretical properties from Hymes (1971), Halliday (1978), and Wilkins’ notional categories (1976).

Savignon’s characterization of communicative competence (1983) shares the same programmatic goal as Munby’s, in that it intends to serve as a conceptual benchmark upon which language teachers can determine the nature of their tasks with particular focus on the role of context in communication. Savignon’s framework was designed to help language practitioners choose classroom tasks that provide ample opportunities for their students to interpret, express and negotiate meaning.

The influence of Hymes’ theory was made most evident in the following group of theories (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; J. Cummins, 1983) with more specified sub-parameters. Canale and Swain’s seminal paper on communicative competence (1980) has been enormously influential in L2 literature with its integrative analytic scope in which:

Emphasis is on preparing second language learners to exploit those grammatical features of the second language that are selected on the basis of, among other criteria, their grammatical and cognitive complexity, transparency with respect to communicative function, probability of use by native speakers, generalizability to different communicative functions and contexts, and relevance to the learners’ communicative needs in the second language (p. 29).

Accordingly, Canale and Swain’s model reveals multiple frames of reference through which various facets of second language are to be revealed, with four specifying sub-constructs, each of which is independent and yet interrelated: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence.

Cummins’ work (1983) received attention from the literature for how his theory provides rationales for the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement. While critiquing Canale & Swains’ model (1980) for not being able to explain the developmental stages of L2 language, Cummins tried to differentiate the informal use of language and academic use of language proficiency on a developmental continuum. His model contains two intersecting dimensions whose properties are to be

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24 In their original paper (Canale & Swain, 1980), there were only three constructs and Canale added the fourth components later: discourse competence (Canale, 1983).
measured, respectively: academic use of language proficiency (Cognitive/academic language proficiency: CALP) is measured by the extent of cognitive involvement in given task. Interpersonal use of language proficiency (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills: BICS), on the other hand, is dependent upon the degree to which language use is supported by a range of meaningful paralinguistic and situational clues. Cummins’ model provides a means to characterize the properties of language tasks and demands that surround particular language utterances.25

Bachman’s model (1990) is the most complete and detailed in its scope among all theories of L2 communicative competence. Developed for language testing, his model intends to accommodate not just linguistic but also non-linguistic systematics that are considered relevant to communicative language use.26 There are two main constructs in Bachman’s communicative competence: communicative language ability, and strategic competence. The communicative language ability represents the knowledge of organization of language and the relationship between language users and the context of communication. The strategic competence refers to cognitive operations and even psycho-physiological mechanisms that help implement the components of language competence. The strength of Bachman’s model lies in its finely specified sub-components which makes it easier for analysts to classify a vast array of second language utterances.

L2 theories of competence and L2 phenomena

If one considers the relation between the aforementioned L2 theories of competence and the L2 phenomena, each theory can be thought of as a heuristic construct that formulates and characterize a vast array of language phenomena without going over the details of language data. Once they are taken as a reasonable representation of communicative competence, they become common frames of references through which particular L2 phenomena could be accounted for. Furthermore, they serve as conceptual guidelines to map out L2 programs and to devise language testing. That is to say, L2

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25 Canale (1983) criticizes Cummins for equating language proficiency with communicative proficiency as if communication is the only or most important use of language.

26 According to Bachman, his model is designed to test not just the language abilities, but also the means to observe and measure such abilities.
theories of communicative competence are seen to serve two somewhat different goals: the analytic goal to account for the properties of L2 language phenomena, and the pedagogical goal to furnish conceptual guidelines for mapping out L2 developmental sequences. In the process, actual language phenomena are characterized in reference to sets of generic and general constructs.

The problem is that generic formulations of competence often take for granted the ways in which language phenomena are organized in and as the members’ undertaking. As utterances are characterized in reference to the proposed constructs, these pre-given theoretical principles often stand in the way of describing how the members to an interaction organize their language use, recognize and collect its relevant features, come to terms with the indexical character of language utterances, and perform meaning-making in the course of action. The question of ‘what is competent about language use’ cannot be answered without referring to these theoretical formulations. Often, this array of constructs, whether it is grammatical competence or sociolinguistic adequacy, turn out loosely assembled schemes that gloss over an indefinite array of vicissitudes and contingencies of talk-in-interaction.

Socio-cultural concerns in L2 literature

There is another theoretical realm in which Hymes’ analysis of the socio-cultural aspects of communication was taken up with a somewhat distinctive emphasis on culture. Kramsch’ view on context and culture (1993) and the socio-cultural theory of Lantolf and Pavlenko (1995) are good examples of analytic attempts to theorize the cultural aspects of language.

Kramsch (1993) views language communication as dialogue between people with different roles and statuses. Language is, in this view, at the intersection of the individual and the social: an expression of an individual’s thoughts and intentions and of a speech community’s knowledge and expectations. Accordingly, there is a potential for cultural conflict when people with different language backgrounds are engaged in communicative acts. Thus, Kramsch proposes the concept of “cultural competence” as an integral part of one’s communicative competence, one’s capability to behave in accordance with the social conventions of a given speech community. Accordingly, the diversity and
variability of language cultures receive analytic attention with a view to providing a conceptual basis upon which teaching professionals can recognize these conflicting cultural differences, and apply this knowledge to their teaching practices (Kramsch, 1993). Language professionals, thus, are advised to delve into the cultural significances embedded in second language use and to make them explicit in the teaching practices.

Another relevant analytic program to the theory of communicative competence is that of sociocultural theory (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995) drawn from the work of Vygotsky. While the notion of communicative competence has never featured prominently in this analytic program, sociocultural theory addresses the same issue that had motivated Hymes’ view of communicative competence: what it means to know and use a language and how that ability is acquired by children.

Sociocultural theory features the mental process, the consciousness of human mind, as one that carries out the business of living and whose capacity is developed through interactional activity with other humans and with socio-culturally constructed artifacts. While starting with performing elementary biological functions, the mental process of thinking eventually develops into higher orders that carry out complicated cognitive functions. This transformation is made possible through the mediation of culturally constructed artifacts such as tools, symbols, and language is the most elaborate sign system.

Language in this perspective is a highly sophisticated symbolic tool that is culturally determined and social constructed (Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). Social interaction between children and adults, thus, represents the process in which salience and patterns of realities, which otherwise remain amorphous for the child, are pointed, described and displayed. As the representational medium of specific cultural and historical conditions, the language patterns contain the characteristics of a relevant culture.

Socio-cultural theory thus radicalizes traditional cognism in that the very developmental organization of cognition is ascribed to social interaction. Contrary to Chomskyan cognitive determinism in which human beings are born with innate capability to process language, the sociocultural theory proposes that constitution of
cognitive capabilities is culturally specific and enacted through interactional activities. The relevance of socio-cultural theory to L2 communication is that language interaction is now seen as a major determinant for the development of the mental capacity that is responsible for language development.

**Culture and Language**

The socio-cultural view of language use follows a paradigmatic shift in the way language phenomena are viewed, namely from cognitive essentialism to social construction. As a result, the phenomena of language interaction become subject to different theoretical formulations and frame of references. Despite the markedly different epistemological properties of proposed theories, however, the place of theory remains much the same, as actual details of language interaction are characterized and represented in reference to theoretical formulations. Kramsh's view of culture and context, for example, enjoins particular ways of characterizing language interaction to bring out the cultural knowledge and contextual relevance from the given language phenomena. The socio-cultural theory (Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995) also imposes particular ways of rendering language phenomena in such a way that language interaction is projected in an idealized space to demonstrate and corroborate that socio-cultural properties are constitutive of language development.

The upshot of the aforementioned theories on culture and language is that because properties of any language data are determined in reference to the proposed formula, the analysis itself becomes indifferent to the interpretive actions of the members on the actual occasions of language use. What becomes prominent in this process is the cultural systems or variables that are considered to motivate and shape the surface language phenomena. While no one can disagree on the significance of cultural knowledge in communication, conceptual formulation often results in an analytic tendency to gloss over and thus take for granted the very phenomena of language interaction on which the very theoretical formulations are based. In other words, theoretical characterizations of language phenomena tend to erase the details of language interaction, in preference for theoretical demonstrations of the envisioned outlook. Thus, no matter how well-demarcated or coherent theoretical formulations are, understanding competence becomes'
a matter of characterizing, formulating and inferring, rather than showing and
demonstrating how the given L2 phenomena take place in the way they did. The
alternative view of communicative competence, therefore, intends to take cultural
knowledge and contextual relevance not as unproblematic analytic resources operating
the behind-the-scene as cultural variables, but as a topic of inquiry, so as to find how they
are demonstrated in and as members' practices of talk in the practical details of their
actions and strategies.

Communicative competence as methods of speaking

The principal achievement of L2 theories of communicative competence is that
complicated communicative phenomena could be represented by transforming them into
a few recognizable constructs. The theoretical concepts such as "sociolinguistic
competence" (Canale & Swain, 1980) or "pragmatic competence" (Bachman, 1990) have
become common frames of references in L2 academic/professional community. Behind
this analytic undertaking is the analytic assumption that language utterances themselves
are self-contained entities that manifest an array of cultural relevance and contextual
properties when viewed in their situated niches.

This characterization of L2 theories of communicative competence is not meant to
deny the usefulness that L2 theories of competence have for the language teaching
profession. Instead, it points out how the actual details of communicative actions are
subsumed by these underlying schemes and principles. Thus, we still face an empirical
task to demonstrate and describe actual occurrences of language behavior that would
count as competent language use. As has been described before, real-time language
interaction involves contingent and indexical properties that require constant interpretive
work of understanding from the participants. No matter how coherent the theories of
communicative competence become, the use of abstracted constructs inevitably runs the
risk of locking the analysis away from recognizing the detailed procedural aspects of
language interaction.

Thus, the alternative analysis presented in this study takes communicative
competence as a topic of inquiry calling for a close inspection of communicative events
to describe the way in which L2 speakers and their interlocutors carry out their interactional affairs. Rather than disengaged definitions, the study will look at the competence of the classroom participants as they assemble their interactional resources co accomplish their common understanding. Competence will be their assessment and demonstrable orientation, first. Competence will be examined from within their local affairs. And it turns out not to be an order of competence that can be theoretically reduced. Rather than a single or even a few conceptual formulations, competence becomes a diverse assay of speaking and listening practices that afford the evident sense of things like questions, answers, examples, misunderstandings, jokes, stories, etc. The idea is that rather than a definition, we get an indefinite collection of competency's evidences, each tried to the practical tasks and occasions that the students and teacher encounter in their L2 lessons. Rather than treating communicative competence as given, therefore, the present respecification is oriented to make L2 phenomena perspicuous, and thus treat them as interactional achievements accomplished in the course of action.

For example, we note that in the presence of a competent community of native language speakers, L2 speakers such as those international and immigrant students in the present study, do not have all interactional options and/or resources that native speakers have available. In lieu of the endless things that first language competence would permit, their communicative actions are infested with communication troubles and their repairs (Ellis, 1994). Yet, no matter how deficient or incomplete any given L2 utterances may sound, the interpretive task for L2 speakers and their interlocutors remain no less real and complicated. Language teachers have to figure out what students mean even when students' questions are tainted with ungrammatical phrases. Often, this capability of understanding L2 talk is a part of the professional work of second/foreign language teachers.

By the same token, students are constantly involved in the work of achieving understanding, when attending to the ways in which the teacher asks questions, chooses next speakers and/or evaluates proposed answers in the very course of action. The teacher and students are constantly challenged to react to contingent matters, to display their understanding of each other in each and every turn, to find problems and deal with
them. Classroom interaction involves deep structures of sociability and the joint construction of meaning making, which display how the participants demonstrably rely on the competence of each other.

Consequently, the present study is geared toward generating an empirical description of how L2 communication competently takes place in L2 classroom. As an illustration, note the following exchange between a teacher and her student from an ESL (English as a Second Language) composition class at an American university. T is the teacher and S1 is a student.

T: You have the copy of midterm information sheet, rules and regulation, it’s five thirty, don’t be late.
S1: Five thirty? I am hungry.
Ss: (laughing)

From this exchange, we recognize that the student’s remark “Five thirty? I am hungry” is not a grammatical utterance and yet, it accomplishes a certain communicative action, namely joking (or complaining). From this exchange, some analysts who are informed of theories of communicative competence might note that the speaker B’s remark is a display of his general cognitive skill, “strategic competence,” which somehow compensates his lack of grammatical competence. Others who follow Hymes’ analytic initiative might bring to our attention the features of the socio-cultural context, highlighting the social identities of the participants (ESL teacher and her students), and circumstantial contexts (L2 classroom talk) in order to demonstrate, for example, how it is that the cultural context and particularity of the setting are relevant to this exchange.

What is missing and thus taken-for-granted in the aforementioned views is that it is the competence of the participants that makes this utterance hearable as what it is, either a joke or complaint. What happens here is constituted in and as the members’ undertaking, particularly for this student and his classmates who produced a collective laughter. First, S1’s utterance “Five thirty, I am hungry” displays his interpretive work as to the teacher’s remark in the previous turn “You have the copy of midterm information sheet, rules and regulation, it’s five thirty.” Note that seeing the teacher’s remark “five thirty” followed by “don’t be late,” was referring to the students’ mid-term. But S1’s “five thirty” followed by “I am hungry,” makes it relevant to mealtime. Ordinarily, the
teacher’s comment “five thirty” was to be heard as unproblematic and self-evident reference to the exam time. Yet, the student B’s remark “five thirty, I am hungry” evokes a totally different way of speaking, bringing out a different, and playful meaning for the same phrase.

It is evident that “five thirty” is an indexical expression whose organization is simply outside the purview of its referential meaning. If so, the adequate account for this short exchange has to focus on the procedural aspects of meaning making, namely, how five thirty is used in this time by whom and in what manner. As it happens, the student B’s remark “Five thirty, I am hungry” displays the work of hearing how the teacher’s remark was produced, finding a different way of speaking of it and thus accomplishing a different social action, making a joke (or complaint). This interactional accomplishment does not go unnoticed by the rest of his classmates who recognize in S1’s rejoinder this shifted relevance of “five thirty” and the action it produces. The students’ collective production of laughter in the next turn thus displays both their and his competence to recognize the methodic work of understanding that first the teacher, and the student have exhibited in their remarks.

As an educational researcher, one might feel obliged to point out that the student B should have said “I would be hungry” instead of “I am hungry” and there is no objection to making it so. Analytically, however, the exclusive focus on what should have been done can stand in the way to understanding the competent work of understanding that these participants display as they manage their contingencies of interactional tasks and organize their classroom affairs.

As Hymes reminded us (1974), different ways of speaking are appropriate for different socio-cultural contexts. Yet, these ways of speaking can not be made out by reference to generalized relational configurations among social categories and cultural systems. Rather, ways of speaking are the lively methods of talking that the members put into the talk-in-interaction as they interpret what others say, organize their interactional resources and act on the circumstances. Language use is not simply the application of and manifestation of a generic and general human capacity that is captured in abstracted
principles or theoretical schemes. Rather, communicative competence is pulled into view in and as the members' management of the contingent circumstances of language in use, accomplishing their relevant social affairs through language in use.

In the absence of the repertoires that native language allows, second language interaction poses a great challenge for L2 students, and their teachers too. Nevertheless, L2 speakers manage to organize their talk, to make adequate sense and adequate reference with the linguistic and other devices they have at hand. Even in cases when communicative breakdowns occur, they become managed by the members in the course of no less competent action, whether they are unattended, or dealt with. Through the detailed workings of understanding, classroom tasks are carried out, teaching can proceed and learning takes place. The analytic task for the present study is to describe how these tasks of understanding, and it is in reference to them that find the relevant sense of “competence.”

Hymes' proposal teaches us that communicative competence reflects one's capability to realize social relations and cultural patterns in his/her use of language. The present study takes the lesson, instead, and uses it as a study policy, that the realization of social relations and cultural patterns are themselves on-going orientation and achievements in the L2 classrooms, of the concerted activities by the members to L2 interaction. That this accomplishment is made available in the way members demonstrate in their practices and yet, taken-for-granted (Garfinkel, 1967) is a fundamental phenomenon this study sets out to examine. Rather than making a judgment as to what aspects of sociocultural features become problematic, or characterizing language utterances in reference to native norms or target ends, the analysis looks into how L2 classroom instruction is made visible, readable, interpretable, understandable, problematic, and intelligible by the members of the interaction, as their competent hearing and productions.

Accordingly, the present study focuses on the situational events themselves and examines how the teacher and students cooperatively assemble them. Instead of identifying in advance certain variables and their relevance to the socio-cultural backdrop, the analysis intends to demonstrate how an activity takes its shape and
meaning locally through members' practical action and interactional competence to the
tasks at hand. Whereas previous analysis has concentrated on uncovering the relevance
of pre-given constructs, the present analysis treats each classroom event a locally
organized case that that competent classroom members accomplish in the course of their
lessons.

An Exhibit

Because the relevance of communicative competence as members' practice and
its difference from Hymes' formulation of it can be lost in the argument, the following
section offers this exhibit of this alternative reading of communicative competence
through a brief analysis of scene from a university ESL classroom. The scene is
reproduced as a transcript and shows the talk exchange between the teacher and a student,
named Winston. Although transcripts cannot recover all of the relevant facets of
interaction, they can provide a record of the members' analysis of what goes on as the
interaction unfolds in temporal order in how, for example, any next utterance typically
displays how the speaker of the turn hears the previous turn.

The following excerpt is from a college ESL composition class. As the teacher
begins in line 56, students are seen to have just finished an activity in which they had
paraphrased a title of an article from the school newspaper of the day.

Winston 41596
56. T: Now, how did you do, anybody want to volunteer, read us first the original
57. title and your paraphrase, (1.0) anybody want to volunteer?
58. (2.0)
59. W: ((he dropped his pen on the floor and picked it up))
60. T: Who is the bravest person in this room?
61. (2.5)
62. T: Winston, how is your title and- paraphrase?
63. W: Not good.
64. Ss: //((laughing))
65. T: //Why don't you read us the title?
66. W: It was pretty har//:d
67. T: //The title might not be good either, but read us your title.
68. W: Trip marks Clinton's new role.
69. T: Trip, trip, marks=
70. W: =Trip, trip

27 This remark above "transcripts as record of member's analysis" is taken from Macbeth (1998)
and developed in the chapter three.
T: Yeah, trip=
W: =Trip (.) marks=
T: =Trip mark's Clinton's new role.
W: Uhu hum
T: OK, so it's the front page, is anybody else doing this one, trip marks Clinton's new role? It's on the front page, anybody else did this?

The teacher's beginning remark brings the students together as "the class," a most familiar classroom organization in which individual students become the collectivity of the cohort (Payne & Hustler, 1980). The constitution of the students as a cohort is not something that just comes off automatically. Rather, it is jointly produced, as the teacher organizes the room, producing the occasion where the students are treated as a cohort. For example, the personal pronoun "you" in line 56 addresses everyone in the class. From this point on, the talk becomes two-party-talk between the teacher and the students as a cohort. Thus, every exchange of the talk becomes public, made hearable to everyone in the room. As the multiple individuals constitute one party to the talk, any one who speaks among the cohort will be a representative of the party (McHoul, 1978).

T: Now, how did you do, anybody want to volunteer, read us first the original title and your paraphrase, (1.0) anybody want to volunteer?
W: ((he dropped his pen on the floor and picked it up))
T: Who is the bravest person in this room?

Here, the teacher is trying to find a volunteer who would offer his/her paraphrase for class review. Finding a next speaker can be done in a variety of ways (McHoul, 1978), and calling for self-selection often results in a collective silence by the cohort (line 58). Dealing with no response is one of the distinctive professional tasks every classroom teacher has to face on a regular basis. Although one can speculate why the students are not responding, we want to know what the teacher makes of this silence by looking into the teacher's next utterance in line 60 "who is the bravest person in this room?" The teacher's utterance displays that she is still looking for a volunteer, but her solicitation is an upgraded one, pre-formulating the would-be volunteer as the bravest.

The cohort's collective silence in line 58 became a basis for this second call, reformulating the identity of "volunteer" into "the bravest" person - we can say, a "local
hero” who would volunteer for the task at hand. Nonetheless, the teacher gets a silence again (line 61) during which she is seen to search the room. Then, Winston gets found in line 62 as a result of the teachers’ repeated solicitation and the subsequent silence by his classmates.

62. T: Winston, how is your title and paraphrase?
63. W: Not good.
64. Ss: //((laughing))

The teacher’s next turn in line 62 “Winston, how is your title and paraphrase?” is produced and understood as a distinctive way of speaking. While she selects Winston for the task at hand, it is made through an indirect way of speaking (Searl, 1975). Which is to say, instead of a more direct and referentially transparent request—for example, “Winston, read us your title”—the teacher is producing an indirect way of speaking with its pre-requesting form. Subsequently, Winston has to be competent enough to figure out what is being asked and how.

Winston’s rejoinder in line 63 “not good” is, therefore, the display of how he hears this indirect way of speaking. On the surface, his rejoinder “not good” is directed to the linguistically literal meaning of the teacher’s request, “how is your title and paraphrase?” In other words, “not good” seems a perfect and normal response to the teacher’s “how is your title and paraphrase?” Yet, what Winston is seeing through is the character of the teacher’s question as pre-request, and uses it—attending how the request is organized in the teacher’s question. Said differently, by making negative remark “not good,” Winston is attempting to withhold the impending task that falls on him and he is using the teacher’s pre-request as an interactional resource for his refusal. This is very sophisticated communicative competence on Winston’s part because he is showing more competence than what the teacher is asking, displaying his understanding of how he was asked.

Winston’s display of competence is also being witnessed by the rest of the cohort when they produce laughter in line 64. Their laughter reflects the cohorts’ interpretive

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28 In addition, this remark, “who is the bravest person in the room?” opens up a further possibility as to who can speak next because, while one still can self-selects, it also allows any student to nominate others, for example, by saying “Winston is.”
work in closely hearing how the exchange of talk and its potential as meanings have
developed. This is the demonstration of their communicative competence too, being able
to analyze what has been said and how it has been said in the unfolding sequence of the
talk. The relevance of communicative competence to the members corresponds to the
way in which they recognize how the shape of meaning is progressively created, refined
and invoked by each other in the course of action. That capability is displayed in their
methodic dealings of the ever-changing local context and it is what makes classroom
interaction – and instruction - possible.

65. T: //Why don’t you read us the title?
66. W: It was pretty har//:d
67. T: //The title might not be good either, but read us your title.
68. W: Trip marks Clinton’s new role.

Winston’s “not good” followed by the laugher alters the shape of the context that
the teacher had laid out and it is now the teacher’s task to come to terms with the newly
transformed context. The teacher’s next utterance “why don’t you read us the title?” (line
65) displays how she hears Winston’s “not good.” My claim is that she is reasserting her
exclusive right to allocate the turn to whomever she wants as a classroom teacher
(McHoul, 1978), her solicitation is done differently this time. Remaking the same
message routinely indicates that the speaker figures that there was a problem in the way
his/her previous utterance was understood (Schegloff et al., 1977). That is to say, the
teacher’s remark in line 65 displays her analysis of how Winston heard her previous
question: maybe there was a problem with Winston in figuring out what was asked for.
That the teacher is seen to attempt to remove the ambiguity that her previous request
created, displays how the teacher manages this indexical nature of language in use. This
ambiguity is one that the teacher and the cohort find in the course of action, through their
sustained analysis of how Winston treated the teacher’s initial request. The teacher’s
remark in line 65 “why don’t you read us the title” delivers her more direct request,
closing down the alternative interactional trajectory Winston’s remark has opened. In an
ironic way, this can be seen as her appreciation of Winston’s doubly sophisticated
interactional twist shown in his “not good” in line 63.
It is commonplace to find problems of understanding in natural interaction; ambiguity and/or misunderstanding are routine occurrences in talk-in-interaction. As analysts, we may be tempted to look elsewhere to find the source of problems: deficient linguistic outcomes, differences in cultural norms and/or lack of motivation. Members in talk-in-interaction, however, are engaged in sustained analyses of their own conversation, assessing each turn for what was made of the last one - for example, that it yielded misunderstanding, ambiguity or even disregard. The recommendation is to stay with the discourse to see how the members manage and make relevant the next course of action.

Winston’s next rejoinder “It was pretty hard” displays his analysis of how the teacher heard his “not good” (line 63), and is speaking in 65. On the one hand, he could be seen to continue to refuse to do the requested task. On the other hand, he may have wanted to address the fact that his “not good” has evoked laughter from the cohort, suggesting that he was joking around, to which he now responds more seriously.

The point is that just as the teacher’s “why don’t you read us the title” was intended to remove any ambiguity from her earlier solicitation, Winston’s “it was pretty hard” is seen to be doing the same for his earlier remark “not good.” In other words, just as the teacher’s upgraded request is her analytic move, shaped by her on-going analysis of how Winston treats her indirect way speaking, Winston displays his own analytic move through his analysis of how the teacher has treated his earlier remark, as deserving of a more direct request.

The accounts so far are not intended as a remark about insufficiency of the utterances or the incompetence of those who produced them, for example, by claiming that they should have said it differently. To do so would be to leave the data to look elsewhere; to find better ways of speaking which might have served the participants better, rather than appreciate how the teacher and Winston come to terms with the problem of understanding and manage the indexical property of natural language, just as they do.

The sequential analysis of the given data shows that ambiguity is a creature of the interactional sequence, something that members find in the course of action as they interpret how others treat their remarks. It can even be the product of their
communicative competence. This is their analytic achievement, most mundane in kind and yet critical in their dealing with their affairs. Through their analyses, they recognize the work of understanding, assemble relevant resources from the local context, manage the indexicality of language utterances and thus accomplish their interactional tasks.

Given this exchange of analytic displays, the teacher’s next turn “the title might not be good either, but read us your title” can be heard as furnishing her assessment of what Winston made of her prior turn “why don’t you read us the title?” First of all, “the title might not be good either” is heard to be the teacher’s first rejoinder to and acknowledgement of what Winston has been doing, namely his play on her first pre-request. It may be an effective way of dealing with such a rebellious move by Winston, namely: ‘I know what you have been saying, but it’s only for practice...I am not saying that it has to be good.’ At the same time, she produces her second reformulation of her request, and its unambiguous directive “read us your title.” Not only does it clarify what she wanted him to do, but also puts and end to what Winston has repeatedly tried to do, i.e. build an alternative meaning from her prior turn.

The most visible relevance of communicative competence to those who are engaged in the natural interaction is that they produce ongoing analyses of what is going on, and this analytic move is continuously displayed and made available to each other. Their sense-making becomes an interactional practice within which they constantly refer to, invoke and rely on each other’s competence to accomplish their interactional tasks at hand. Each utterance, at times, may have yielded misunderstanding, ambiguity or confusion. Those properties or problems, however, are found and addressed within the domain of interaction as each next utterance displays the members’ analysis of what the other party was doing, whether it is acknowledging persistence, sensing an upgraded intensity, or finding an irony. This fabric of interpretation that exhibits its properties sustains the very picture of classroom life, enabling the members to organize their practical circumstances.

The immediate purpose of the transcript and its brief analysis was to demonstrate how to specify, in a descriptive analytic program, the essential sociability of language behavior for which Hymes’ proposal of communicative competence was instrumental.
Instead of proposing another theoretical conception of competence parallel to his, the respecification seeks ways to exhibit the socio-cultural organization of language use as endogenously constructed by and within members' practices in natural interaction. The critiques of Chomskyan linguistics and Hymes' conception as generic and general characterization of communicative competence are not sufficient to demonstrate a definite sense of it, and thus will always beg the question: How is "competence" to be demonstrated in the actual practices of talk-in-interaction?

The primary focus in this respecification is on how it is that the teacher and students accomplish their classroom affairs as competent persons in their classroom. It is the members' displays of their interpretive practices that constitute this constructive process of teaching and learning, and that demonstrate their communicative competence, that the present study sets out to examine. If communicative competence is something that is achieved and recognized by members of the interaction, communicative competence gets its life in the interactional collaboration. No rules or definitional terms can fully appreciate the achievement that members accomplish in their interaction. Nor can their artful and methodic interactional work be recovered if the actual materials of language use are treated independently of the local and situational context. This work of understanding is not just privately owned and mentally possessed knowledge. Nor is communicative competence for participants just the ability to produce particular features of language use that are the objects of L2 instruction. Rather, it is the very competence that permits L2 education to take place. Through this competent work, instruction falls into place, curriculum material is brought into view, speakers are nominated and activities are developed.

Put differently, the present study intends to describe the achievements of interaction on their own terms by returning the judgment of appropriateness of the talk to the members of the interaction. Their judgment is displayed, not in their reflective accounts or in observers' categorical constructs, but in the practical tasks in which they are engaged. Accordingly, it is critical to look seriously at the members' analysis of the talk because that is where the orders and regularities that are relevant to them, and what we could recover their work of communicative competence is exhibited.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The methodology section in research reports describes the procedural details of the research process: determining types of data, gaining access to the research site, recruiting participants, collecting and analyzing the data. In general, the research methodology manifests the theoretical and methodological stances of the analysts in reference to the normative paradigm and methodological conventions of the given field.

Locating theoretical and methodological grounds for the given research, however, does not provide a full account for the practical work that accompanies any research process. Language data are infested with deviances and ambiguity that do not fit the categorical formulations analysts put forward (Schachter & Gass, 1996), and data analysis often calls for more than what the theoretical and methodological injunctions could predict and explain. To some extent, the success of an analysis hinges on the analysts’ knowledge and craft in managing the array of divergences the data generates.

While there are several book-length methodology textbooks written for L2 researchers (Johnson, 1992; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Nunan, 1991), their characterization of methodologies remain sketchy, highlighting distinctive features of different research methodologies and drawing comparisons among them in rough contours. Most published research articles do not have sufficient space to offer elaborate procedural details that might inform the readers of the decision making processes involved at various stages of research.

In light of the aforementioned methodological issues, the present section consists of two parts; theoretical rationales behind the methodological choices made in the present study and procedural details involved in each stage of research process. This study drew
its methodological rationale from a particular analytic genealogy that places the primary analytic focus on the local, sequential organization of interaction order, in real time. A particular analytic focus is placed on the type of data that the present study uses, namely, transcribed classroom discourse.

The transcription as an analytic resource for L2 classroom discourse research

As classroom discourse has become an important analytic resource for educational researchers (Cazden, 1986; Edwards & Westgate, 1994), the literature of language education has seen an increasing number of studies that use transcription in their research. TESOL Quarterly, for example, has published 36 feature articles that used transcription in their research between 1990 and 1999, which makes it almost one article per volume. The increasing use of transcription in L2 research, in large measure, has to do with the burgeoning interest in sociolinguistic research (McKay & Hornberger, 1996; Poole, 1992; Pride, 1979; Tarone & Swain, 1995; Young, 1999) and qualitative research (Davis, 1995; Lazaraton, 1995; van Lier, 1988) with its interest in interpretation and “emic” perspective.

Despite its wide acceptance, however, very few research studies take transcription as a topic of inquiry, except for a few passing remarks on the subject (Crookes, 1990; Green, Franquiz, & Dixon, 1997; Kasper, 1997; Roberts, 1997; Seedhouse, 1995; van Lier, 1988), although there is a plethora of perspectives and suggestions on “what to transcribe” and “how to analyze them” in general language studies, (Edward, 1992; Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999; Mishler, 1991; Ochs, 1979; Psathas & Anderson, 1990; West, 1996).

Notwithstanding these few discussions, the ways in which transcribed L2 discourse is used are critical indices of vastly different analytic approaches among

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29 By this, I mean the ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (CA) whose programmatic principles and research approach are introduced in the chapter I and II.

30 It should be noted that there is a discernable difference in how the real-time data are transcribed and analyzed in the present study from other analytic programs that also deal with transcribed interactional data: for example, discourse analysis (Coulthard, 1985), ethnography of speaking (Hymes, 1962; Saville-Troike, 1989) and sociolinguistics (McKay & Hornberger, 1996; Young, 1999).

31 This number does not include a number of interview studies that also used transcription in their research.
second/foreign language studies. The recent debate on "the discourse and communication" in L2 research (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Gass, 1997a; Hall, 1997; Kasper, 1997; Liddicoat, 1997; Long, 1997; Poulisse, 1997; Rampton, 1997), for example, exhibited an exemplary case of how the same L2 discourse was taken to show completely different analytic perspectives and methodologies, quite contrary to our sanguine expectation that empirical demonstration would bring disputes to an end, or at least palliate theoretical differences.  

While the advent of the sociolinguistic approach and its reliance on transcription opened up a new possibility that actual discourse could be captured and pulled into analytic purview, it also generated a series of analytic dilemmas. First, the transcription now becomes a principal methodological resource through which the workings of real worlds are made available for analytic descriptions. Yet, this certainly does not mean that transcription reveals the same reality to any beholder, as the traditional naïve realism had conceived (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999; Mishler, 1991). The analytic diversity of the literature challenges the assumption that transcription is a transparent medium to what goes on in the real world.

Second, the use of performance data in language analysis means that analysts now have to come to terms with the indefinite array of nonlinguistic factors which were successfully suppressed in Chomskyan linguistics (1964). The amount of relevant variables to be considered in language analysis is nearly limitless, which led Cook (1990) to explain that these factors can be traced back to sociolinguistic approach.

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32 This debate begins with Firth & Wagner’s claim that mainstream L2 research is overtly individualistic and mechanistic and thus fails to account for interactional and sociolinguistic dimension of language. Several excerpts of transcribed L2 discourse drawn from the work of several leading researchers in the area of communication strategies and input modification were reanalyzed. Subsequently, a number of researchers wrote reactions to it.

33 There are other analytic programs that use transcribed discourse, for example, the studies of “input/interaction” whose interest in classroom discourse centers on determining the nature of input and interaction in the language classroom. For complete reviews of this literature, see Gass (1997b), Long (1996), Pica (1994), and Wesche (1994). The mainstream research into classroom discourse, however, focuses on identifying behavioral characteristics of effective language teachers or to measure the learning behaviors (Allwright, 1988). But it suffices to say that the use of transcription can be traced back to sociolinguistic approach.

34 See Clifford (1983), Erickson (1992), and Mishler (1991) for further accounts for naïve realism in ethnography, education and language studies.
to claim that including all relevant extra-linguistic contexts in transcription is a theoretical and practical impossibility.\textsuperscript{35} The methodological question is how to describe analytically what motivates the selection of a particular approach (Bloom, 1993) and how to justify the process.

**Transcriptions as theory**

The presence of an indefinite array of socio-cultural variables and the equally diverse analytic strands, therefore, seem almost to preclude the possibility of a neutral or unified view on the use of transcription (Green et al., 1997; Kasper, 1997; Psathas & Anderson, 1990). Rather, each respective use of transcription is affiliated to particular analytic lineage, research goals and disciplinary convention, as ones that motivate and determine the way transcribed discourse is made out.

How data is transcribed, analyzed, and presented depends on the research objective, the researcher's theoretical commitment, and not least, the context of presentation...the point is that there is no transcription system that is privileged over others in and of itself (Kasper, 1997, p. 308).

In research on discourse, the decisions concerning how to produce a transcript...reflect theoretical assumptions about relations between language and meaning, and between method and theory, and are consequential for what we report as findings as well as how we interpret and generalize from those findings (Mishler, 1991, p. 277).

This implies that transcribing practices are an integral part of the analytic process such that the choice analysts make in representing data displays their view of the relation between language and the world, or the analysts' interpretation of the world (Denzin, 1995; Edwards, 1991; Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999).

The title of the well-known article by Ochs (1979), "transcription as theory," is emblematic of this relationship between transcription and analysts' theoretical and methodological stance. Ochs' goal in her article was to illustrate how the transcription system could be a source of bias rooted in the researchers' theoretical agendas and analytic goals. Mishler (1991) has shown how different transcriptions are designed to fit the particular theoretical assumptions the given analyst upholds and thus, transcriptions

\textsuperscript{35} That is why Cook (1990) titled his article, "transcribing infinity."

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are "re-presentations" of speech as part of analysts' 'world-making.' More recently, the book edited by Jane Edwards and Martin Lampert (1993) contains a collection of articles that represent an array of transcription conventions from a wide range of disciplines.

Given that every transcript is saturated with distinctive theoretical positions and research of the given field, researchers are advised to become more reflective about their transcription procedures and to address the constructive nature of transcription during the research and when it is reported (Mishler, 1991; Poland, 1995). It is recommended, for example, that the analytic process be made more perspicuous to show how analysts' political/theoretical assumptions are entered into the specifics of transcription (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). There is no doubt that recognition of these properties is critical to identify and understand the properties of transcribed interaction. Yet, it should be noted that often the focus of analysis is directed to establishing correspondence relationships between these extra-contextual properties and the discourse patterns that are identified, rather than looking into ways in which each utterance is made relevant to each other in the course of action. Gumperz's "conversational inference" (1982) provides an example that illustrates the sociolinguistic treatment of language phenomena.

Gumperz: Conversational Inference

Gumperz proposed an empirical approach that bases its analytic account on the actual interactive process that participants display, rather than the socio-cultural categories set a priori (1982). "Conversational inference" refers to this situated process in which participants in a conversation assess other participants' intentions and on which they base their responses. A basic assumption is that:

This channeling of interpretation is effected by conversational implicatures based on conventionalized co-occurrence expectations between content and surface style. That is, constellations of surface features of message form are the means by which speakers

36 Cook (1990) represents pragmatics based approach to transcription to present extralinguistic factors for analysis of discourse. Ochs (1979) draws her suggestions for inquiries into child language acquisition. West's suggestion (1996) is directed to those ethnographers who intend to use conversational data in their research report whereas Gumperz's system (1993) reflects his analytic initiative to display the linguistic signs that conversationalists utilize in their interaction. See Edward & Lampert (1993) for further accounts.

37 By this remark, I do not mean that Gumperz' analytic program is the most typical of the sociolinguistics inquiry into language interaction. Gumperz' analysis is used here to demonstrate how the given analytic assumptions orient and constraint the way language phenomena are analyzed and represented.
signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is to be understood and how each sentence relates to what precedes or follows. (Emphasis in original, Gumperz, 1982, p. 131)

These linguistic signals that contribute to the signaling contextual presuppositions are called “contextualization cues” and through the exchange of these cues, participants to interaction make sense of each other, predict the course of action, and make out communicative intentions.

Gumperz’ approach is a laudable endeavor to overcome the earlier sociolinguistic analyses (Labov, 1980; Sankoff, 1980) that relied on statistically generated social categories, in favor of a more dynamic and procedural view. His analytic program attends to the situated nature of language interaction, identifying and utilizing socio-cultural knowledge that are embedded in various linguistic signals in actual discourse (Gumperz, 1992).

Nonetheless, it should be noted that he still characterizes language interaction in reference to normative social categories or cultural systems. Language patterns are ascribed to the interplay of socio-cultural categories that are considered to aggregate and abstract the divergent realities of language use. The analytic risk involved in this undertaking is that there is a limitless array of possibly relevant social categories and cultural variables, any of which could be pertinent to the discourse organizations under consideration: ethnic affiliations of the participants, communicative intentions of the speaker, motivations, participants identities, norms of speaking, perspectives or beliefs, communicative goals, contextual features, personality types, local history among relevant parties and etc. To this problem, Gumperz put forwards the view that the analysts’ ethnographic insight comes to determine which one, out of the entire roster of possible socio-cultural variables, becomes the basis for conversationalists’ inference.

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38 On this point, Gumperz wrote:
An individual’s choice of speech style has symbolic value and interpretive consequences that can not be explained simply by correlating the incidence of linguistic variants with independently determined social and contextual categories (1982, p. vii).

39 Sacks (1972) called this “the problem of relevance” where one chooses one way of characterizing members over the others. While conventional approach attends to the attributes of the settings, participants and contexts, such characterizations invoke particular aspects of the setting and not others (Schegloff, 1992a).
The upshot of this undertaking is that the validity of the analysis is leveraged on the analysts’ interpretive competence to look beyond the surface organization of language utterances to identify the behind-the-scene-operation of the socio-cultural properties and contextual elements. Meanwhile, the participants’ undertaking of their discourse is treated at most as secondary, and thus also subject to the social relation that the analysts impose on the data. The following example of Gumperz analysis illustrates the case in point.

((A husband sitting in his living room is addressing his wife. The husband is of middle class American background, the wife is British. They have been married and living in the United States for a number of years))

Husband: Do you know where today's paper is?
Wife: I'll get it for you.
Husband: That's O.K. Just tell me where it is. I'll get it.
Wife: No, I'll get it. (Emphasis in original, Gumperz, 1982, p. 134-135)

Gumperz' analytic goal is “to identify strategies of interpretation that are potentially available to speakers of certain backgrounds” (p. 139) by looking into ways in which discourse level signs affect interpretation of seemingly unambiguous message. Thus, he offers the following analysis of the foregoing exchange:

It would seem at first glance that what is at issue here is listeners' failure to respond appropriately to an indirect speech act. But directness is often itself a matter of socio-cultural convention...interpretive differences of this type have been found to be patterned in accordance with differences in gender and ethnic origin (p. 135).

Gumperz's analysis proceeds in two steps. First, he immediately characterizes trouble in the wife's remark, "I'll get it for you," in that the wife fails to recognize the unambiguous indirect remark made by the husband. The next step is to find the source of the problem and he ascribes it to the fact that these two speakers belong to different social groups which have different normative ways of speaking; thus, a British wife is not able to recognize an American way of speaking.

This is not meant to indicate that Gumperz’s analysis is an erroneous interpretation of the segment. Rather, it is to show that his interpretation imposes a particular analytic trajectory, one that relies on particular social attribute(s) that he pulls...
into view, namely the social identities of the participants, which is somewhat indifferent to the members’ own undertaking of their discourse. The problem is that there is a litany of other social types and cultural categories that are possibly relevant to the talk – the couple’s general mood of the day, their interactional history on the same or similar matter, personal communication styles, and motivations, to name a few. It is on the basis of his own ethnographic insight that Gumperz determines that the gender and national identities of the speakers is relevant to why the given discourse happens in the way it did.  

An alternative analysis, however, could treat the transcribed discourse as a record of the members’ interpretive actions of their own discourse. Before characterizing the talk in reference to the external social categories, the alternative looks into the internal organization of the discourse, for example, how each utterance is made relevant to the other. Primarily, note that each utterance is sequentially relevant to its prior, as each subsequent turn at talk displays how the speaker of the turn understands the previous turn. This sequential organization marks the local determination of meaning making that directs the analytic focus on the members’ interpretation of their discourse.

The wife’s remark “I will get it for you,” for example, displays how she heard her husband’s initial utterance, as a pre request. Similarly, the husband next remark “That’s O.K. Just tell me where it is. I’ll get it” shows how he interprets his wife’s hearing of his earlier remark. This sequential analysis, thus, brings into view that the participants in this exchange recognize how the other party understands their previous remark and based on that understanding, they build their next remark. The husband comes to see that his wife took his initial remark as a request although he intended it to be a question and thus, he tries to remove this ambiguity by expressing his intention to get the paper himself.

41 Gumperz played the above excerpts to a panel of judges to corroborate the unverbalized perceptions and presuppositions that underlie interpretation. Nonetheless, it does not resolve the problem of relevance that is raised here, because the judges were already primed to see the relations that Gumperz laid out for them, not any other ways of characterizing the event.

42 Gumperz’ proposes that the husband’ remark was intended as a question whereas his wife heard it as a request. However, it is entirely possible to view that the wife heard it as a question, but insisted on bringing the paper herself, anyway.
"That's O.K. Just tell me where it is, I will get it." The wife also recognizes how her husband receives her initial offer and thus, she insists on getting the paper for him, "No, I'll get it."

That they recognize this problem, or the ambiguity of their talk in the course of action, therefore, is their interactive accomplishment and based on that interpretation, they determine what to do next. Said differently, member’s exchange of the talk, reproduced in transcription, displays their interpretive undertaking of their own discourse, as constructive language users (Macbeth, 1998). They find the import of the given talk in reference to the exigency of the situation and build their own discourse accordingly, rather than as cued actors who would operate on a particular set of linguistic or cultural scripts. The alternative undertaking of transcribed discourse, therefore, calls for a completely different analytic undertaking, one that looks into the procedural sequences of meaning-making.

**Transcript as Record**

Taking its lesson from the every day use of language, the alternative view of transcription begins its analytic quest with reading into the members’ analysis of their talks. This focus is not motivated by a naïve realism that relies on the presence of an independent and objective “real world.” Nor does it intend to ignore the “transcription as theory” view that all transcriptions are necessarily selective. Instead, transcription is taken to furnish us with the temporally emergent details of interactional sequences, and the produced order of the discourse.

This approach follows the analytic policy of conversation analysis (CA) (Button & Lee, 1987; Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff et al., 1977). With a goal to produce formal description of the details of actual events of talk-in-interaction, CA investigates the actual procedures and sequential structures that members employ as they come to terms with the temporally evolving sequences of talk. The use of transcription, therefore, represents CA’s analytic policy to avoid speculative expositions of language discourse in favor of detailed observation of what happens and how it happens (Heritage, 1984). Accordingly, CA analysis focuses on sequential organization of the talk because it displays the way in which the talk-in-interaction is organized through members’ competent analytic methods.
and orientation (Garfinkel, 1967), as they organize their talk based on their understanding of what was said before, manage the unseen range of vicissitudes of language phenomena, and determine what to do next.

This view is echoed in the question that Harvey Sacks raised when he first developed CA, “Could there be some way that sociology hopes to deal with the details of actual events, formally and informatively?” (Sacks, 1984). A great resource to this analytic task was the availability of recording machines that allow conversation analysts to record actual conversation for later analysis:

I started to work with tape-recorded conversations. Such materials had a single virtue, that I could replay them. I could transcribe them somewhat and study them extendedly – however long it might take. The tape-recorded materials constituted a ‘good enough’ record of what happened. Other things, to be sure, happened, but at least what was on the tape had happened (Sacks, 1984, p. 26).

The use of tape-recorded conversation, therefore, did not spring from a grand theoretical interest in language per se. The interest was sociological and had to do with the fact that tape-recorded conversation offers a practical solution to those who wanted to describe actual social events in detail (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984; ten Have, 1990) and therefore, “transcription is one way we try to ‘get our hands on’ actual occurrences in order to study social order in fine detail” (Jefferson, 1985, p. 26).

The status of transcript, in this regard, is as a representation of the actual interaction (West, 1996) serving as a convenient research tool that allows an access to the naturalistic data. Accordingly, the transcript does not comprise the “final” or “complete” authority in CA’s analysis (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984; ten Have, 1990), and the adequacy of the given analysis is assessed when they are compared with a direct listening/viewing of the original data (Psathas & Anderson, 1990). What constitutes the data, therefore, is the record of members’ interpretive actions through which they manage an array of contingency and vicissitude of interactional organization, and carry out their daily affairs (Sharrock & Anderson, 1986).

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43 This remark is made as early as 1964, when Sacks and his colleagues began to develop this new analytic program. His view on conversation is found primarily in his lectures given between 1964 to 1972 transcribed and edited by Gail Jefferson (Sacks, 1992). The quotation is culled from the lecture reproduced in the edited book by Atkinson & Heritage in 1984.
Transcripts, as a record of members' interpretive actions, thus allows the inspection of taken-for-granted procedures members display as they organize their talk. Accordingly, it presented very practical tasks for Jefferson who developed the transcription system for CA (Jefferson, 1984), namely, how to display real time records of social interaction in the 2 dimensional field of the page. The Jefferson system is particularly concerned with capturing the sequential features of talk.

**Transcribed discourse in the present study**

The advent of the sociolinguistic approach in L2 research put forward the view that the language classroom is a unique social space where a litany of social types and/or contextual properties come into play (Stern, 1983). The discourse patterns found in language classroom, reproduced in transcription, are taken to display the corresponding features of social attributes (Brumfit & Mitchell, 1990b; Johnson, 1995) such as 'nonnative students', 'native teachers,' 'ethnicity,' 'EFL vs. ESL contexts,' 'communicative language teaching,' 'students' perceptions,' and so forth. The analytic authority as to "what" kinds of social and contextual properties become prominent in the given analysis often has a great deal to do with the particular analytic goal and theoretical assumptions that analysts bring into the research process.

The alternative analysis, however, begins with what transcriptions pull into view, namely, an array of practical methods of participants in their classroom interaction. The analytic task is, then, not whether the given L2 discourse display the workings of the aforementioned social attributes, per se. Rather, it treats transcription as a record of participants' analytic work of understanding, which displays some version of their sensitivity to the ways in which the discourse and contexts are pulled together. It is through their methods of talk that the members manage the unfolding properties of communicative events and accomplish the interactional tasks at hand.

While most of what happens in the language classroom may be typified by the generic caricature of routine procedures, every familiar classroom practice involves specific interactional work by the relevant parties, the teacher and students. Within this specificity and through members' methods of talk, one comes to understand practical,
discursive organization of classroom instruction and its culture of learning. While it is not likely that transcripts can recover all relevant facets of classroom interaction, they often provide revealing records of members' interpretive work of understanding.

**Procedure**

**Contexts & Participants**

The data for the present study is collected in an ESL composition course at a Midwestern state university. The program consists of three levels (106, 107 and 108) for nonnative undergraduate and graduate course. The present study chooses the intermediate course (107) for undergraduate international students at the summer quarter of 1998. The overall goal for the ESL composition program is to bring students' expository writing skills to a level at which they can successfully compete in regular university courses with their American and other English-speaking students. Undergraduate students who complete the ESL sequence enroll in English 110 freshman English.

The composition course that was taped for the present study is called, Advanced English as a Second Language, is 5 credit hour course. The class met three times per week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Friday class lasts one hour whereas Monday and Wednesday classes are two hour long. Since this group of students have already learned the basic skills for academic writing in 106 course, the 107 course is designed to give them practical experience with, as well as increased awareness and mastery of academic writing conventions related to summarizing, paraphrasing, documentation, and analytic writing in response to reading sources.

During the course, they have various writing assignments. They are required to write two summaries based on the assigned reading materials, 3 essays with multiple revisions which are also based on one or two outside sources. The final project includes a portfolio using their own writings. There is one 2 hour midterm in which students are asked to write comparison and contrast essay and one final exam where they ought to write synthesis/response essay. In addition, the instructor of the class runs her own website in which she places the students' essays for the students' purview.
The student group consisted of four nationalities: Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese and Thai. There was only one female student out of 12 students. All of the students were undergraduate students at the time of investigation. The classroom teacher was a native female teaching associate (TA) who was pursuing her doctoral degree in foreign language education at the time of investigation. She holds an master’s degree in Russian Language & Literature and has taught ESL composition in the program for four years.

Data Collection

The primary focus of the present study is to recover the ways in which the participants in L2 classrooms produce their own discourse and interpret the discourse of others. It is through particular methods of talking that these participants accomplish the classroom tasks at hand; by methods, I mean that they show how they understand each other and organize their talk to be sensible and intelligible to each other.

Accordingly, the primary object of the present study is the real-time talk-in-interaction in L2 classrooms, reproduced as transcripts. The use of transcription as the data source has to do with how interaction is so strongly organized as to fall outside reflective awareness (Erickson, 1991), often beyond what insightful linguists can imagine (Sacks, 1992). Even intuition tends to typify the ways interaction takes place, and details become lost (Heritage, 1984). Analytically, recorded materials allow the analyst to return to the data over and over again for an in-depth analysis. This makes it quite different from the observational data that the field researchers use; they often rely on their field notes or memories to retrieve what happens. Transcribed data can also be also presented to others to see if a proposed analysis adequately accounts for the organization of the talk.

The data corpus of the present study consists of 20 hours of videotape of ESL composition class instruction at an American university. This covers 10 different class sessions over one summer quarter. The main focus in data collection was to ensure that the talk exchange especially between the teacher and her students, was adequately recorded for later transcription, which entails several technical matters: what kinds of recording equipments are needed, where to set them up in the class and what I need to do during the recording. To capture the voices of the teacher and students is always
challenging because they constantly move around during the class session, and they often talk while facing away from the recording machines. While ethnographically oriented researchers would make observational notes during their observation, I found it quite impossible to do so during the taping because coordinating the audio and video recording machines requires one’s undivided attention to follow the dynamics of their classroom interactions.

One video camera and one audio recorder were used for recording. The video camera was placed behind the student group at the right corner of the classroom for three reasons. First, the right corner of the classroom at the back provides the widest angle for the video camera such that it allows the analyst to identify who talks at the given time without losing sight of general dynamics of the whole class. Second, this location is outside students’ normal peripheral vision during their classroom interaction and thus it is much less obtrusive to the classroom activities they are engaged in. Third, it is not entirely possible for one audio-recorder to catch all the voices during the class because students’ seats are widespread. An external microphone was attached to the video camera to record the voices of the students who sit close to the camera and an audio recorder with another high-sensitive microphone attached is placed on the opposite side from the video camera, on the table located right next to the teacher’s table. The audio recorder picked up the voices of the teacher and students who sit at the front.

Because the object of the analysis for this study was classroom interaction as naturally occurring phenomena, no separate interviews of the students or the teacher were conducted. Nor did a number of informal discussions with the teacher outside the classroom become a principal resource for analysis. Interview data offers a completely different kind of data, often focusing on the members’ reflective accounts of what happens, which is outside the purview of the present study.

The taping was carried out at regular intervals during a 10-week long session; starting from the third week to the last week of the quarter. The class was a 5-credit hour

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This particular classroom is equipped with tables that allow students to set up their laptop computer on the table. Chairs are located along the long and wide tables that are fixated in rows, which is why students are spread out in this class than most other classrooms where they sit on a chair that has a small table attached to it.
intermediate English composition class which met three times a week; Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In order to ensure the continuity of the contents of the courses that were taped, two consecutive classes were taped in a given week; mostly Monday and Wednesday class because both classes were two hours long.

**Transcription**

Transcripts do not recover all facets of what goes on in these classrooms, due to the limits of what the camera can capture and what the tape recorder can catch. The transcription of the collected data follows the convention established by Jefferson (Jefferson, 1984). The degree of specificity of a transcription often becomes an important issue as different analytic programs recommend different sets of instructions (Edwards & Lampert, 1993). The principal dilemma is that while there is a need to recover phonetic qualities of the given utterances as close as possible to the actual sounds, an extremely detailed transcription makes it hard for the readers to understand them.

In the analytic literature, the degree of specificity is determined by the research objectives and conventions of the given analytic community (Edwards & Lampert, 1993). The phonetic qualities and its detailed differences may carry significant theoretical or topical importance for some sectors, such as phonetic research (Du Bois, 1991), but not others; it often becomes an issue to realize slight contours of pitch, tone, or abnormal phonetic pronunciations, overlap, hesitation and so forth.

In coming to terms with this dilemma, the present study took a middle ground to balance the readability of the transcription and close representation of the actual sounds. The contents of the talk are recovered largely through alphabetical representations, instead of phonemic symbols, to make the transcripts readable. Certain utterances are, however, represented through special symbols to indicate distinctive sound qualities and temporal parameter of the task’s production and organization. Note the following example where a few distinctive sound qualities are the part of what goes on in the sequence. In this segment, the teacher is explaining what adverb clause means, providing two examples: quickly and slowly. As she speaks, she speaks quickly for _quickly_ (marked by >< sign) and slowly for _slowly_ (marked by ::: drawling sound):
122205
239. T: Jungkim wins brownie point for the day, adverb clauses, so: how do
240. we know that, >in sentence number 2 and number 4<, there is an adverb
241. clause other than the fact that I underlined them, what is an adverb
242. clause, how do you recognize them? (.) why do we use?
243. (1.5)
244. S5: Describe
245. T: Describes, kind of- an adverb, describes a verb, right? I walk
246. ► slowly, >I walk quickly< right?, walking slooo:why >quickly?<
247. ((she is showing the walking gestures))

Here is another case where the different sound qualities influence the way the members
interact. In the very course of answering the teacher’s question, the student (S7) in line
548 displays that he is becoming to realize what the teacher was taking about in the
previous turn in 547:

30857
((The teacher and her students are evaluating the sentences that the students have written
on the OHP))
543. T: All right, OK, what question do you have?
544. S7: Aha, problem about the essay,
545. T: We talked about this already, (;)
546. S?: ( )
547. T: You were here, weren’t you? Raymond wasn’t here.
548. ► S7: Oh, OK, oh, yeah, OOO::HYE:::AH.
549. (Laughter)
550. T: Oh, yeah.

In general, the use of detailed phonemic symbols is minimized unless they reflect
significant changes of meaning, and/or mood or properties of the dynamics of the
interaction.

There is another important element in determining the level of precision in a
transcription. This data corpus deals with nonnative speakers of English whose
pronunciation of English sounds quite different from that of their native counterparts.
Nonetheless, the different phonetic sounds are not noted in transcripts unless it becomes
an issue in the talk. Note the following segment, for example, where the teacher was
having a hard time figuring out what the student (W) is saying, which leads to a long
stretches of turns to resolve the issue:

845982
76 T: What did you write?
W: Aha, visiting offers new wok.
T: Offered a new:::
W: Wok,

T: New walk?
W: As a leader, wok, wok,
Ss: ((laughing))
T: Walk, as in walk,
W: as a leader.
((tossing the chalk to Winston))
W: Clinton's visiting offers a new wok.
T: Write down your last word in the board,
W: Wok, double u, oh, ar, kei, wok.
T: Work?
W: Wok, //wok?
Ss: //((laughing))
T: Work, open your mouth my boy, work.
W: Work.

This segment shows that the student's pronunciation of the word work becomes problematic as the teacher cannot figure out what that means. Since the analytic focus is on describing how the problematic item is identified and dealt with by the members of the interaction, it becomes important to show how the word 'work' is pronounced by this student (W) and how the teacher hears it in the transcripts.

The analysis

Once the data are collected, the next step was to determine what to transcribe from the entire corpus which amounts to 20 hours of classroom sessions. This decision entails both a practical and theoretical dilemma; theoretically, because of the qualitative nature of the study, the analytic topics and objects were to emerge as the analysis proceeds. Concerning the practical aspect, however, how can a cohesive and coherent analysis be accomplished if certain topics or themes were not established beforehand? Furthermore, the data corpus itself showed variability: Each classroom session consisted of an array of different classroom activities with a different span of time involving different people; some class sessions consisted entirely of two-party talk between the
teacher and the students while other sessions saw no involvement from the teacher. Some activities lasted more than 40 minutes whereas there are a number of short exchanges that are no more than a few seconds.

Preliminary viewings became necessary before getting into the actual transcribing process; I needed to find a system for dividing each classroom session into manageable units of analysis; a forty-minute long interaction is not an appropriate unit for either data analysis and research reporting. At the same time, I avoided using linguistic patterns or discourse types (Bygate, 1988; Crookes, 1991) as an analytic unit in order to maintain the analytic focus on actual interactional tasks that the teacher and her students were carrying out. Therefore, the analytic topics are organized around what they were doing at the given moment, for example, asking a question, explaining homework assignment or giving examples.

Taking these issues into consideration, the following steps were taken in transcribing the data corpus. First, I watched the whole data corpus video several times while making notes in order to identify the kinds of tasks that the members of the classroom were engaged in: questioning and answering, teaching through examples, building descriptions in the L2, the teacher's third turn response, use of categories in classroom talk, and so on. These tasks became focal points in later viewing in which a more detailed analysis were targeted. In each viewing, new categories emerged while old categories become refined or sometimes discarded in favor of new ones and along the way, some segments of the data were transcribed for sample analysis and reporting.

Segmenting the data corpus in this way makes it possible to make collections of similar interactional organizations. The present study therefore becomes a collection study that assembled a series of episodes of interaction that shared discernable interactional character. Each collection pulled into view a distinctive interactional fluency of the members as they come to terms with vicissitudes and contingent character of talk-in-interaction.

After identifying the boundaries between episodes in each session, the preliminary transcription also helped to map out the two largest topical themes that the data corpus yielded: teacher talk, and students talk. Later, a detailed transcription was
made for each episode marking certain discourse and linguistic qualities that display the ways in which the members communicative in real-time. The number of episodes that each classroom session generated ranges from 10 to 33. In total, 191 episodes were identified from the entire corpus. Each episode varies in its size such that the most simple episode consists of three line interaction whereas the longest episode yielded 75 lines of transcript. On the average, each episode contained 27 lines of interaction which amounted to 6145 lines in total.

Each episode was investigated for its organizational features in reference to the ongoing sequence and activities that the members are seen to carry out. While some episodes reveal one finding, the majority of episodes reveal multiple findings that require separate treatments. As a result, it became unrealistic to keep track of different findings and categories manually on a hard copy of transcribed materials.

For more effective management of the data corpus, all findings classified categorically were recorded into the software called “NUDIST” (Non-numeric Unstructured Data, Index Searching and Theorizing). This is a software package designed to aid researchers in handling non-numerical and unstructured data in qualitative analysis. In particular, NUDIST ensures to group the similar findings and code into the formal entries while allowing me to keep separate records of my analysis attached to it. The same episodes therefore could be recorded repeatedly in different analytic categories or topics in the file while making it possible for one to restructure the collections as the further analysis yields different findings. Note however that I use NUDIST not to analyze the materials, but to organize, and ‘hold’ the collections, and see how they developed. In other words, it was an organizational device rather than an analytic one.

The analytic chapter of the present study consist of several collection studies. The first chapter represents a number of analyses of the collected sessions that display competent use of language on the students’ part. It consists of five analytic sub-categories: a) L2 talk as interpretive action, b) imperfect L2 utterances as methods of talking, c) building descriptions, d) students’ formulation and e) membership categorization in student talk. The second part consisted of several collections that show
competent practices of teaching by the teacher. This chapter is designed to pull into view the most routine and normal practices of teaching. This chapter generated five sub-categories too: a) the work of questions, b) dealing with L2-ness, c) teaching through examples, d) courses of actions and e) formulation by teacher.
CHAPTER 4

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN AND AS L2 STUDENTS’ METHODS OF TALK

The theories of communicative competence have served L2 professions in various ways: as criteria to measure language proficiency, conceptual principles to guide language programs, or benchmarks to evaluate teaching practices. Each competence theory furnishes interpretive resources through which the actual phenomena of language use are characterized and explained. Accordingly, it is critical to understand theoretical grounds and methodological rationales at a given research because they premise particular ways of understanding language phenomena.

Following the analytic policy of ethnomethodology, however, the present study takes a different analytic route, a procedural approach whose principal focus is on describing the phenomena of language interaction on their own terms. This means that instead of treating language interactions as representations of strategic competence or communicative language teaching, for example, the present study takes actual phenomena of language use as topics of inquiry (Zimmerman & Pollner, 1970), looking into actual choices and methods of talk embedded in the talk-in-interaction.

The present study is therefore not bound to the traditional topical categories that have often been used to formulate L2 discourse: for example, interlanguage (Selinker, 1972), input vs. interaction (Gass, 1997b; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994), or L2 pragmatics (Kasper & Rose, 1999). Rather, the primary attention is given to describing how the members accomplish their tasks at hand through what kinds of interactional exchanges: for example, how the L2 students recognize what goes on, display their understanding of it, and assemble and organize their interactional resources to accomplish the task at hand.
The present chapter presents five collection studies of L2 students' talks. Each section presents a collection of transcribed classroom discourse that manifests similar methods of speaking by the L2 students as they are engaged in various classroom tasks.

**L2 talk as interpretive actions**

The conventional SLA literature sees inaccurate and/or inadequate L2 utterances as sources of communicative troubles, and thus in need of pedagogical treatments. Yet, the present study notes that there is more to language-in-interaction: language forms themselves are essentially indefinite and therefore, the members manage and overcome this indexicality through interactional exchanges.

This involves highly contingent interactional negotiations among the members, as is evidenced by a chronic practical task for members, namely, to produce adequate next turns on time (Macbeth, 2000; Moerman & Sacks, 1971/1988). For the members, this task of producing an adequate next turn on time is very much local and interactional; they need to attend to and project what the previous turns entail, and to figure out when to talk and how to talk in the very course of action. Each next turn is the result of their constant interpretive actions and choices; they make sense of what others say, display what they know, attend to the way meaning is constructed, and make available their understanding to each other.

**L2 students' interpretive actions in communication troubles**

The present section deals with cases of communication troubles. By communication troubles, I do not mean only those cases where the source of the problems are the inadequate or incomplete discourses produced by L2 students. It implies instead trouble within a larger domain of common understanding; because of the indefinite nature of the talk, the members constantly analyze what goes on and organize their talk accordingly. Note in the following excerpt how the students (S1 and S3) find a communication trouble and manages its resolution.

424024

((The teacher is asking about the midterm exam that her students took in the previous day))

248. T: What were the questions he gave you?

45 This point is illustrated in the chapter II.
249. S5: Which one is the more aha:: has a stronger (effect on you)
250. T: Which story had a stronger effect on you? OK, what else?=
251. S9: =Do you feel some kind of pity or sorry for::
252. T: Do you feel pity for Toshiko or for Acho?
253. T: Oh, OK, anything else?
254. S3: That's it.
255. ▶ T: These two, he gave you two, (.) how many of you chose the pity one?
256. ▶ S1: No, no.
257. ▶ S3: You mean (.) ( pity)
258. S?: // pity
259. ▶ T: Insult or pity?
260. ▶ S1: That's the topic.
261. ▶ S3: Pity for the character?
262. ▶ T: Pity for the characters

The teacher's question in line 255 “how many of you chose the pity one?” refers to one of the two questions in the midterm exam.

The several subsequent turns in line 256-260 shows, however, that students were confused about what the teacher meant by “pity one” and how they come to terms with it. S1 gives first evidence of problem of understanding in 256, and S3 offers a tentative understanding in 257. The teacher produces her question as a choice – insult or pity – in line 259. S1’s remark in line 260 shows that he is not quite sure of what the teacher means by “insult” and “pity,” and points out how he understands them by saying “that’s the topic.” In contrast, S3’s remark in line 261 shows that he recognizes what the teacher was referring to and asks for clarification, and gets it in 262. How these L2 students recognize the problems of understanding and set out to repair them demonstrates their competent practices of talking. The following excerpt shows another case where one student (S1) repairs his question after seeing how the teacher interpreted his question differently than he had intended.

614021
47. T: And there is also a thing called, your portfolio.
48. S3: What’s that?
49. T: Which I was- I will bring you a sample port- portfolio on (. ) Monday,
50. basically, you are gonna need to go back and look at everything that you
51. have written this quarter and select something out of there, for portfolio,
52. OK? (. ) with that, I will give you (. ) a long set of directions from my boss
53. about how to do this, but I will show portfolio so you kind of know what is
54. coming?
55. ▶ S1: Why do we have to do this?
T: Hum?
S1: Why we have to do this?
T: Why you have to do that, it's a course requirement.
(laughter)
T: OK, it's aha-
S1: Uh, for me what kind thing I learn.
T: What do we learn from it?
S1: Uh hmm.
T: Really the best part of that is to look back and see what you have been able to do over the quarter, it's helpful to know how far you have come, cause you don't see in ten week.

The teacher's remark in line 58 shows how she understands S1's question (line 55 and 57); the teacher's remark "it's a course requirement" shows that she hears S1's question as a complaint about the task.

S1's following turn in line 61 shows that he recognizes a problem in her hearing of his question. S1's reformulation exhibits what he figures the problem was in his earlier remark and repairs it accordingly. This is more than a simple replacement of one utterance with the other; his repaired utterance "what kind of thing I learn" is designed to clear up the misunderstanding his previous question has generated, and in line 64-66, the teacher replies to the question he intended. The next sequence is another case that displays a student's interpretive action; this time, it is directed to the silence made by the teacher.

T: In East-Asian classrooms, the central duty of teacher is to impart knowledge, and that of the students is to absorb whatever the educator has to deliver.
S1: ( )
T: So what do you think that means?
S2: I guess we have to memo- I guess we have to: uh- the student in east Asia they had to do everything that teachers told them do.
T: Right, can uh, can students, this, you see this little thing here?
S1: Right?
The S2’s remark in line 623-624 is produced as an answer to the teacher’s question about the passage from the assigned article. Yet, this answer is followed by a noticeable gap in line 625. In classroom discourse, this gap anticipates the 3rd turn of three turn sequence, called IRE (Initiation-Response-Evaluation) (Mehan, 1979), where the teacher produces her feedback on the answer.

S2’s subsequent comment in line 626 however shows that this student takes this silence as projecting negative feedback or disapproval by the teacher of his answer, and therefore, he is trying to reformulate it. This demonstrates that even silence is not an empty space in interactional exchanges, but a richly configured turn whose meaning is actively interpreted by the student whose turn receives it.

**Interpretations on the organizations of talk**

The present study finds in materials like these the communicative competence of members’ interpretive acts of understanding that are displayed in real-time as they monitor what is being said, display what they know, and produce relevant next remarks. The present section exhibits cases where the students’ interpretive acts display their sensitivity to the organizational features of the talk exchange. Figuring out what to say, when to say it, and how to say it involves an order of analysis in the course of action. The following excerpt illustrates the case in point; one student (S1) repeats his remark that is first produced in overlap with the teacher’s comment.

014525

((The teacher is explaining how the teaching staffs grade students’ essays))

115. T: Now, you will sometimes have, what it’s called a split, (3.0), OK, one
116. group gives a paper A, another group gives it C, (.) so then, we have to
117. decide, and this is where today, I was worried deciding on your grade, you
118. can’t just look at it, ‘aha looks like an A,’ you have to be able to (.) argue
119. your reasons, ‘I think it’s A because it has strong thesis statement, it has
120. connected topic sentences, introduces the quotes, explain sentences’ so
121. forth, you might say, ‘I think, we think it’s C paper because it doesn’t
122. really explain examples of- has only one quotation’ (.) whatever, OK, so
123. you have to have reasons behind your grade, all right?, my father always
124. says, ‘just give everybody As.’
125. S1: Right.
126. S0: Yeah.
127. S3: Right.
128. T: Yes, of course university ( ) come and say now “why,”
129. ► S1: //I like your father.
130. T: I wouldn’t be able to justify.
The remark in line 129 by S1 is produced as a thoughtful joke, built off of the teacher’s reference to her father. Produced in overlap of the teacher’s comment in line 130, he repeats his remark in line 131, placing it where it is sure to be heard.

That the members are oriented to the organization of the talk also manifests their sensitivity to the topic of the given occasion. Note in the following excerpt how one student (S3) finds a way to successfully initiate a topic that is not directly relevant to the ongoing subject.

In line 278-279, S3 is trying to initiate a topic for everyone to discuss. While it is not unusual for students to initiate small talk in the classroom, this entails a risk that the teacher might not respond or ignore the attempt.
The student’s remark in line 278-279 is heard to solicit the teacher but fails to receive a teacher’s rejoinder (line 280). In the next turn, therefore, the student produces another solicitation through question, “right?” and this finally gets a response from the teacher (line 282). This response is exactly what S3 has been waiting as he begins talking before the teacher finishes her turn (line 283). This overlap is very telling in that it shows how S3 treats the teacher’s remark: he takes the teacher’s rejoinder as a ratification of his proposed topic, which he and others pursue through several turns.

The following excerpt shows another case that demonstrates the members’ sensitivity to the organization of talk; note how one student (S4) begins his question in line 127.

314852
(The teacher is preparing the class for the upcoming midterm exam)

115. T: Now one small word of advice, make sure you spell the title correctly, make sure you spell authors’ name correctly if you use ( ), make sure you spell the characters’ name correctly, you have the stories right there.
116. S1: OK
119. T: OK?
120. (1.0)
121. T: All right, so main character in Swallowing clothes is who?
122. S7: Toshiko.
123. T: Toshiko:
124. T: The main character in: Ginango is?:
125. S1: A::cho:
126. S4: Can I ask something?
127. T: Ye:::s.
128. S4: Who is, who is gonna take our essays, (.) our exams?
129. T: There will be the other, the other 107 teachers, my boss and myself, although what happens, (.), that’s probably a good question.

The teacher and her students are discussing the story they have read in preparation for an exam. While students in classroom settings are often encouraged to ask questions, this question in line 126 carries a deferential quality; instead of blurting out the question, he chose to pre-request if he could ask a question, thus leaving the teacher the choice to allow him to ask it. The deferential character shown in this question reveals his competence to find a way to ask a question that is not directly relevant to what goes on at the given moment. To sum, that the students are oriented to the organizational features of the on-going talk demonstrates that members’ interpretive actions is more than
recognizing the contents of utterances, but also attending to the very composition process of the given talk: where and how those utterances are placed in the very course of action.

**Interpretive actions and Cognition**

It is a general consensus that meaning making is a cognitive process through which the members recognize the intentions and process the messages that are contained in the given utterances (Anderson, 1993; Johnson-Laird & Watson, 1977). Yet, the present section explores the possibility that meaning making is more than recognizing the propositional contents or cracking codes embedded in the given utterances. Meaning-making is a constitutive process in which the members note "how" the given utterances are produced, under what sequential contexts, and in what manner by whom, whatever cognitive processes are involved. The following excerpt illustrates the point in which one student (S4 in line 98) figures out the answer to his question from the interaction.

---

T: Which one do you want to do first, grade the group essay or talk about final exam stuff?

S3: Grade first.

S1: Grade first.

T: Grade first, OK, kind of what I thought (=)

S4: Can I ask one more question?

T: Yes.

S4: Aha:: I want to ask about portfolio,

T: OK, what’s your question about portfolio?

S4: If I choose essay number one?

T: Uh hum.

S4: Can I still choose essay number three?

T: Sure, (.) sure.

S4: It doesn’t matter?

T: You gonna choose three samples, and you are choosing from essay number one, number two, number three, (.) your midterm, two in-class writings,

(2.0)

S1: And material:: journals?::

T: And ( ) your journals?::

S4: I mean, I thought, I thought, if I choose, hum:: one from

T: //Anything like that.

S4: essay, I have to choose the ( )

T: //No, you- I mean if there are you could choose one number two number three, kind of boring, but you could do that.

S4: OK.
The student’s question in the above excerpt (line 94 and 96) is about which writing samples they ought to include in their portfolio. By using particular examples (essay number one and essay number three), S4 intends to see if the writing samples he is supposed to choose have to be relevant in some ways.

This answer however receives a positive answer by the teacher in line 97 “sure sure” and S2’s next remark in line 98 displays how he understands the teacher’s answer: “it doesn’t matter?” Note that this inference by S4 is not to be found in the semantics of the teacher’s answer. Rather, S4 draws his inference by looking into the way in which the teacher’s answer was produced: given that S4’s question was about the relationship between two writing samples, the teacher’s casual affirmations leads S4 to infer that the choices of two samples do not have to be related.

The fact that talk-in-interaction displays cognitive processes means that the members are capable of recognizing what becomes problematic and why. The following excerpt shows how one student (S3) identifies what becomes problematic in the exchange between one of his classmate (S1) and the teacher, and thus attempts to clear up the problem for them.

830640
((The teacher and her students discuss how to use citation marks in their writing))
387. T: OK, so if you use the exact word, you might use quotations marks (.)
388. if you change them, you don’t use quotation marks but you still need to give
389. the name and the page number.
390. S1: Name is the first name, or magazine.
391. T: //Yeah, for the purpose of this class, you are just
392. gonna use last name and page number.
393. S1: Last name, but mainly, I have to put the: magazine: name (. ) magazine
394. name or::
395. T: What name?
396. S1: Magazines, ( )
397. T: You are gonna use, either Phu or Sung.
398. S3: I mean, you know, he is asking you know, if you read article from the
399. magazine, and then, there is an author for::
400. T: //You use the author’s name,
401. S3: For the=
402. T: =Now- I am not, I am saying name, I am not saying title.
403. S3: Title, yeah.
404. T: OK, name, last name.
S3's remark in 398-399 follows the exchange between the teacher and a student (S1) and the teacher is having trouble with S1's remark in line 395. S3's remark is heard to address this problem. First, he recognizes that by observing how the teacher responds to S1's question, the teacher did not hear the word "magazine" from S1's question. Therefore, S3 places this problem word in the sentential context, "if you read article from the magazine" as an interpretive resource for the teacher to figure out what was said. Second, by adding a comment "then, there is an author," S3 provides a resource for the teacher to compare references: namely, there are two choices between magazine name and author's name.

The close monitoring of what goes on at the given moment makes it possible for students to predict what the teacher is going to say before her utterances are produced. Note the following example where the student S1 says what the teacher is going to say, before she says it.

122803
((The teacher and her students are going through sentences written by the students))

327. T: Let's look at number two, "I think he did not act fairly because he
328. treated Ginango like slaves," (1.0) is there, what is the punctuation in the
329. sentence, what did I do when I wrote it down?
330. (2.0)
331. T: How did I punctuate?
332. (4.0)
333. T: "You look at the sentence Toshi", how did I punctuate?
334. S1: You don't need, I think
335. S?: // ( )
336. T: How punctuation did I use in sentence number two?
337. S?: Comma=
338. S?: = Comma.
339. T: Where is the comma-
340. (Bell ringing)
341. T: Now we all wait.
342. S?: ( )
343. T: Do I have a comma here?
344. S1: You don't need I think,
345. ▶ T: //No; we don't have to have one, OK, but what if I move
346. ▶ this,
347. ▶ S1: To the front.
348. ▶ T: To the front, then, what's gonna happen?
349. S3: Comma and:
350. S?: // (Comma)
351. T: Because he treated Ginango like slaves, comma, I think he did not act fairly
S1 in line 347 completes the sentence that the teacher has started in line 345-346. This completion involves an array of interpretive work on his part, pulling together various resources. First, the student is aware of how the teacher organizes her remark in line 345: the teacher is accepting S1's answer, and then produces another question. At this point, S1 is able to predict what question the teacher is going to ask because he can see that placing 'comma' has been the topic of the discourse. Therefore, the teacher's next question is one whose answer should identify another placement for the comma. Based on this reasoning, S1 is able to complete the last phrase of the question that the teacher began to produce in line 347.

The next segment shows rather complicated interpretive work by one student. In this segment, the teacher and her students are discussing the cultural differences between American and their home culture. My interest here is how the student (S1) comes up with the answer "dog" to the teacher's question in line 494 "who eats Hamburger in my house?"

---

T: Jungkim is very much fixed on school, but I am asking about real life, forget about school, what is the biggest difference in real life for you?
S5: Attitude.
T: Attitude, language, behavior,
(2.0)
T: Food?
S5: Yeah.
T: Uh::: food-, how many of you think that Americans love Hamburger?
(1.0)
T: Uh, uh, uh::
S?: ( )
T: Do you know who eats Hamburger in my house?
S1: Dog
(laughter)
T: He gets the leftover if he steals them, my husband is one who eats of course he is an American, but, not really an American, you know, so food we assume is the big difference, right, maybe clothing sometimes, behavior, greetings, all those kinds of things, and she is bringing this down to very specific level, not just school even, she talks a little about that, but goes down to ways of understanding a text.
Note first, the teacher’s question in line 493 “do you know who eats hamburger in my house?” is produced within a sequential context where the teacher has already asked “how many of you think that Americans love hamburger?” This question could present a puzzle for the students; considering that Hamburger is an American food. The question projects an ironic answer because she herself is an American and this becomes an interpretive resource for the student in the next turn (S1): the answer must be somebody who is not an American. S1’s answer ‘dog’ therefore displays creative interpretive work, identifying the categorical properties as to who are Americans in the teacher’s house and who else might live there.

**Conclusion**

The primary analytic focus in the present section was to describe the interpretive actions that L2 students display as they come to terms with contingent interactional tasks. Instead of characterizing L2 talk in terms of their grammatical accuracy or sociolinguistic adequacy as the theories of communicative competence have proposed, the present study looks into each interactional exchange to see how L2 students carry out the interactional tasks at hand.

Each interactional exchange displays the members’ interpretive actions as they recognize what goes on at the given moment, display how they understand the import and relevance of what is being said, identify what becomes problematic, and project the next course of actions. The series of analysis demonstrates that each interactional exchange requires the L2 students to display what they make of the given sequences. The communicative competence in talk-in-interaction is more than the language knowledge per se, as the theories of communicative competence have proposed. Rather, their competence enters the very composition of the talk in which their interpretive actions are displayed in the vast range of contingent and situated tasks that only close inspection of the discourse reveals.

**Imperfect L2 utterances as methods of talking**

L2 researchers often marvel at how nonnative speakers accomplish their interactional tasks although they do not have the whole array of language resources that
their native counterparts have. The question is how to explain this phenomena analytically, and the bulk of L2 theories of communicative competence attribute this ability to a generic cognitive process (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983): when there are communicative troubles, L2 speakers display a certain array of strategic moves to compensate for their lack of linguistic proficiency.

The question is whether communication breakdown is the only case where the members of L2 interaction show their strategic movements. Does this mean that other successful communicative exchanges do not show the members’ strategic, interpretive, and/or cognitive skills? Isn’t every language behavior the outcome of members’ interpretive actions, as the previous section demonstrated? That is to say, isn’t there a theoretical inconsistency for the aforementioned undertaking that separates language competence from cognitive operation?

In light of this problem, the present study takes a sociological understanding. By sociological, it means to note that people produce utterances to do something – asking questions, making jokes, displaying their understandings of each other, reproaching students or making arguments. The analytic focus is then placed on describing the choices and methods of talk as these students accomplish their actions and thus, bringing into view what the previous theories have take for granted in their bipolar distinction.

The current section intends to respecify “strategic competence” by demonstrating that troubled L2 utterances are often more than linguistic errors to be compensated. Rather, they often exhibit L2 students’ interpretive acts of communication as their fragmented, incomplete and ungrammatical utterances in fact show their competences to make use of a litany of interactional resources – sequential contexts, the teacher’s knowledge, common sense knowledge, and their interactional histories.

**Incomplete remarks as methods of talking**

Nonnative students’ remarks are often infested with incomplete words or phrases. Yet, a close look into the sequential organization often displays that these incomplete utterances in fact make competent use of an array of interpretive resources. For example,
students' incomplete utterances may work to bring out and use the teacher's competence
to figure out what they had intended to say. Note the following excerpt where the student
(S2 in line 131) produces a one word answer, without further elaboration:

121108
((The students have just finished three-minute free writing task on an article they have read
as an assignment. They are discussing one of the characters in the story))
125. T: How many of you said, the question was, discuss your opinion of
126. Schemmer, did he act fairly?
127. S?: No
128. T: How many of you said no?
129. ((Several hands up))
130. T: Hum, OK, ( ), my goodness, what were your reasons?
131. » S2: Discriminating.
132. » S6: Because ( )
133. » T: ( ) he just discriminated?
134. (5.0)
135. » T: Because what he said?
136. (2.0)
137. T: We- we know something's wrong, and what did he say?

The teacher in line 130 is soliciting students to elaborate on their answers for their
midterm exam. While this question received a very terse one-word answer by a student
(S2), the next remark by the teacher shows that it is good enough for her to figure out
what was intended; and the teacher turns this answer into a full sentence: “he just
discriminated?” That is to say, this short answer exhibits that this student makes most of
the teacher's competence to pick up what was intended in his one word answer.

The following excerpt displays a similar case where one student (S2) invites the
teacher to complete the sentence he started in line 162.

024956
((The students has just finished practice exam for the final exam))
146. T: OK, but when you do get your to- when you get your exam, you'll get
147. ( ) a prompt, a question or two just like you had in your midterm exam,
148. and you'll need to choose one to focus on, when do get it, you have to read
149. it, and then, decide what's the most important part of the question is, what
150. is the most important part here what are you- what do you need to respond
151. to here?
152. S1: Price
153. S?: ( )
154. S1: Money
155. (2.0)
156. T: You see price money up there anywhere?
157. (1.0)
158. T: What are the most important word?=
159. S1: //Aha
160. S?: =(
161. ▶ S2: Is it fair, is it fair to:::
162. T: Do you think yeah, (.), do you think it is fair, do you think is asking for your:: opinion, we are just gonna be your response, (.) OK, do you think it
163. is just fair (.) OK,
164. S2’s remark in line 161 is tied to the local sequential context where the teacher tries to
demonstrate a way to find important topics from the writing prompt (line 146-151). A
couple of students have answered (S1 and S?), both of which received negative feedbacks
from the teacher in line 156.

S2 tries next, and yet his answer is far from being complete as his remark ends with
a sound stretch at the end (line 161): “Is it fair, is it fair to:::.” While this way of
speaking often is heard to invite the interlocutor to complete the rest of the sentence, the
inviting utterance has to contain adequate information for the teacher to work with. The
teacher’s remark in the next turn thus demonstrates that S2’s remark is adequate enough
for the teacher to elaborate on his unfinished answer (line 162-164). The next excerpt
shows a similar case where the S3’s question is expounded in the subsequent exchange.

314155
((The teacher is reading the assignment sheet which lists things to do for peer review))
5. T: Copy of the peer review of my essay by, (.) that means if I give the copy
6. of my essay to Tommy (.) he-1 will write Tommy (.) if I don’t have review
7. from Tommy, I have to explain why he didn’t do, I gave it to him, he didn’t
8. do or I didn’t give him the copy, OK? (.) I attended to tutorial with Suzanne,
9. that means last week, did you come to tutorial with me?
10. S?: Yeah=*
11. T: =Yeah, I think you all came, so put yes (.) I completed a peer review for::
12. somebody else (.) OK? and then, any comment you have?
13. ▶ S3: What if I, I sent email to Tommy for peer review,
14. (1.0)
15. ▶ T: And he didn’t- he didn’t review your essay? (0.5) or did- did you peer
16. ▶ review him or did he peer review you?
17. ▶ S3: Both, for duh:: I, I did my comment to uhu:: Tommy ()
18. ▶ T: That’s what he should have done.
19. S3: We do ( )
20. T: //And he should print them out, include in his folder, no, he prints
21. S3: //Not me right?
22. T: them out, cause they are in this assignment and then, you print out
23. the assignment, the comment he wrote, OK?
The teacher’s remark in line 5-9 provides a detailed instruction as to how to do peer review; she is listing courses of actions that the students have to take to complete the task.

S3’s question in line 13 “what if I, I sent email to Tommy for peer review” enacts a part of one of these courses of actions. Yet, the enactment is incomplete; it initiates, but does not complete the scenario. In addition, the silence in the subsequent turn indicates that this student is not trying to finish his answer but to return the floor to the teacher. The teacher’s next remark in line 15-16 furnishes possible completions for S3’s partial account: “And he didn’t review your essay, or did you peer review him or did he peer review you?” That is to say, while S3’s remark leaves a gap to fill, it displays his competence in engaging the teacher in its collaborative completion.

Often, nonnative speech displays an amusing effects because of the incomplete nature of the talk. For example, the following excerpt shows how S7’s remark misses important components in his speech, which evokes a laughter in line 516.

321431

((The teacher and her students are talking about the midterm exam that is scheduled in the following day))

501. T: You need to watch, you need to watch your time cause you need to give
502. yourself time- we are gonna grade- as if you have time.
503. S1: (That’s )
504. T: So you have to, you have to take a watch and plan your
505. time,
506. S2: ( )
507. T: Don’t spend an hour on your first body paragraph.
508. (2.0)
509. T: OK?
510. S4: No summary?
511. T: You won’t need to do a summary.
512. S7: // ( )
513. ► S7: We have to have three::: bodies?
514. (1.0)
515. T: Three body paragraphs,
516. (laughing)
517. S7: Three body paragraphs,
518. T: Uh hum, not necessarily, that’s that’s generally what you see.
Previous turns as resources

Sequential organization shows how utterances are tied to each other in a temporal domain; namely, the current turn is oriented to and acts upon the previous turn. This is so not only topically, but in the way of speaking, or how answers are formatted; how turns by consecutive students are constructed. Accordingly, the previous turn becomes a primary interactional resource as L2 students build their talk. This section displays how L2 students make the most of the sequential nature of the talk, as they derive how to speak from the previous utterances. They demonstrate how their interpretive understanding relies upon the locally situated sequence in hand. The first sequence show that the student (S3) in line 118 draws his answer from the previous answer in line 115.

415440
((The teacher is discussing the criteria that students should use when they do peer-review))

103. T: What is the most important part of an essay?
104. S1: Thesis.
105. T: Thesis, OK, you want to check, make sure there is a thesis statement
106. (2.0) make sure () that they have a strong opinion, or semi strong because
107. you are doing just syn- aha:: syn-the-sis information essay, right? () what
108. other things are you looking for?
109. (4.0)
110. S3: Hum::
111. T: Jungki:=
112. S3: =(
113. T: Jungkim, what else are you looking for?
114. (3.0)
115. ► S1: Topic sentence
116. T: Thank you, Topic sentences, what else?
117. S?: (Su )
118. ► S3: //Supporting () sentence,
119. (1.0)
120. S3: ( )
121. T: //OK::
122. (1.0)
123. T: So what does that mean?
124. S3: Evidence,
125. S6: Quotation from all the text
126. T: //Quotation, and what do you need to make sure that you do
127. quotation from::?:
128. S1: Text but but,
129. T: From all::: the texts.
130. S?: //All::
131. T: OK? this assignment requires to leave you, to quotations from all the
texts, right? what else do you need to look for?
The teacher is going through several evaluation criteria for the students’ peer reviewing activity, which leads to a multiple exchange of questions and answers. The teacher is soliciting “the most important part of the essay” (line 103), and gets a first answer and item: “thesis” (line 104). The teacher accepts this and briefly explains what kinds of ‘thesis’ is needed. In the next turn, the teacher asks another question: “What else are you looking for?” (line 113). In 115, S1 offers a next item (“topic sentence”), and the teacher accepts it, and asks for another. The next answer “supporting sentence” therefore is a kind of corollary of the previous answer “topic sentence”; S3 hears “topic sentence” in the previous exchange and therefore produces a very similar “supporting sentence.”

Similarly, the following excerpt shows another case where one student’s remark (S2) is a resource for a next student’s answer.

621328
((The students are doing a short writing exercise))
T: I want you to retrieve your own thesis statement, to see if you are on the target
SI: Mines is very behind
T: Way behind the target?
S1: Yeah.
S2: Mine is out of order.

S1 initiates exchange, volunteering his assessment of how “on target” his thesis statement is. The teacher replies in line 274: “Way behind the target?” S1 affirms her reformulation, and then, S2 volunteers his own: “Mine is out of order.” While we could wonder just what he means, it demonstrates his competence to build his remark from previous turn, using the format “mine is…”

**Giving examples instead of accounts**

The foregoing sections are intended to show that L2 students make most of what the teacher knows. This includes the teacher’s common sense knowledge and/or the knowledge of the shared history and what they have experienced together. The question is what are the methods the students are using in evoking these interpretive resources. The present section reports a collection of transcripts where L2 students are using examples when they are asked to provide explanations. Note that the use of example in the present section is a way of answering the teacher’s question, thus a way of speaking
that displays their competence to move their interaction forward. The following illustrates the case in point as the student (S1) answers the teacher’s question about what “reader response” is (line 1099).

532155
(The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on difference in reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))

1084. T: She is trying to help them in reading in their not in the first language,
but in their second language, she saying there is a problem here is the way
East-Asian students have been taught in the past to read and the way
American students American teachers teach, OK, think about this, she
is saying there is a problem with the way students have been taught to
read in Asia, and then when they come to America, there is a conflict
in the way they are taught, does that make sense?

1091. (1.0)

1092. T: So she offers a solution, so it's like there is a conflict and she is offering
a solution as a way to mitigate to solve this conflict, what is the solution
she offers?

1095. (1.0)

1096. T: It's in that paragraph?

1097. (4.0)

1098. T: Reader response, what do you think reader response is?

1099. (1.0)

1100. T: One approach that I have found has benefited East-Asian students in my
class is the reader response approach, what do you think reader response
writing is?

1103. S1: Like our journals?

1104. T: You have to response, Jungkim?

1105. S1: Like our journals?

1106. T: Like your journal, next paragraph, what does she talk about?

While the teacher’s question line 1098 and 1100-1102 calls for an account for “reader response,” S1’s answer in line 1105, “like our journals?” points to one of the writing activities that the students did in the past. Instead of providing a definition of reader response, S1 points to one example of it that they have done together: something the teacher would recognize. It is a way of answering by example, rather than by definitions or explanations. Rather than propositional knowledge, it relies on their shared history in the room. The following excerpt shows another case where the student (S4) is using an example to clarify what he means.

014129
(The teacher is talking about what goes in their portfolio))

66. T: Yeah, Toshi.
S3's question in line 67 and the teacher's answer (68-70) are concerned with what to include in their portfolios. S3's subsequent question in line 71 "even class writing," however, poses a puzzle for the teacher because she cannot find its relevance to "the third assignment" that she has been talking about. Therefore, S3 produces a repair which begins with "I mean...", and turns to the example "just five minute writing." This answer "five minute writing" refers to what they have done in previous class and therefore, is a recognizable reference; the teacher recognizes its relevance in the next turn (line 75-77). The example is used to clarify what they each mean by "class writing."

**Conclusion**

Strategic competence is a theoretical construct that refers to the ability of language learners to compensate for their linguistic inability to deal with interactional tasks. This undertaking, however, entails an improbable assumption that some interactional occasions are the outcome of strategic moves while others are not. As this implicitly imposes a demarcation between language competencies and generic cognitive operation, the actual language phenomena are largely under-specified.

The present section represents an alternative analytic approach to retrieve the array of interpretive actions that are involved in incomplete and troubled L2 utterances. The organization of these utterances show the methods of talking as L2 students come to terms with contingent tasks of interpretive actions. Their incomplete utterances are often indications of how they make use of certain kinds of interpretive resources to get their meaning across. This competence is a part of what sustains L2 pedagogy and makes their classroom learning possible.
Building extended turns

To describe something is one of the most familiar interactional tasks we are constantly engaged in everyday life. The classroom setting is no exception, as students are often called on to make descriptive accounts: elaborating what they said, showing how they understand what goes on, or offering their opinions on certain issues. These descriptive accounts is one way for the members to allow an access to the social worlds they are engaged in; their social worlds is managed, maintained, and acted upon through the medium of ordinary description.

Nonetheless, building descriptions involves technical and practical often involves technical and practical tasks of producing more than one utterance (or sentence). Saying more than one utterance is however not simply a matter of producing a string of sentences; they have to be related to each other and thus coherent.

Considering their limited language proficiency, this task of building description presents a daunting task for these nonnative speakers because what they can do is reduced relative to the endless things that their first languages would permit. The question of how to get students to say more than one word turns is one of the recurrent problems in L2 instruction. The present section reports the analysis of cases where nonnative students produce multiple utterances in the course of their classroom activities. The analytic interest focuses on how they do it: namely, how nonnative speakers with limited proficiency organize their multiple utterances and what kinds of interpretive resources they pull into view.

Extended turns: Ordering utterances

In producing extended turns of multiple utterances, it is essential for the speakers to tie each utterance of the turn topically and sequentially (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Only when each component of the turn is made relevant to the other, is the

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46 ‘Description’ is a major topic for Harvey Sacks (1992); it is at the heart of how we could have ‘accountable’ worlds in and as the members’ description of their social world.

47 Conversation analysis (Sacks et al., 1974) suggested that natural conversation is organized by minimal units, called TCU (Turn Construction Unit). TCU could be a phrase, sentence, or even a word, whose main function is to allow the speaker to predict where and when the current speech is going to end. This projectability makes possible speaker transition. Note, therefore, that TCU is not a linguistic unit, but interpretive resources for the conversationalists to proceed their talk-in-interaction.
entire turn heard as coherent and thus intelligible. Extended turns contain some transitional remarks that connect them. Some remarks include utterances that characterize previous and/or next remark, to help the interlocutors to sort through the continuing utterances produced in real-time.

Unfortunately, L2 speakers do not have all the necessary linguistic resources to use when they are engaged in building descriptive remarks through extended turns and therefore some extended turns seem to contain several disconnected utterances in a row. Yet, the close inspection of these cases suggests that what are seemingly disorganized utterances in fact display interpretive acts of understanding on the students’ part. Note in the following excerpt how one student’s remark (S1 in line 39-40) exhibits this ordering work.

120731
)((The students are doing a three-minute free writing about an article they have read as an assignment))

33. T: OK, take a deep breath, who was Schemmer first of all?
34. S?: Overseer...
35. T: He was the overseer, so how was he involved in the story?
36. S1: By accident
37. (Laughter)
38. T: OK, can you explain that Jungkim?
39. ► S1: He was passing by the barracks, he heard aha::: some noise and duh:::
40. ► yelling from barracks he ( ) , and he find the::: criminal activity=
41. T: =OK, it's kind of like, he was on patrol, walking around aha and
42. then, he heard the screaming and he went to check things out and what
43. did he find when he got there?
44. S?: Dead body
45. S?: //((
46. T: OK, a dead body and:::
47. S1: Five suspect.
48. S?: ///Five ( ).
49. T: Five suspects, five people he considered suspects, right, what did he
50. do, () in that moment?

The task for S1 in line 39-40 is to elaborate on his previous answer “by accident”: namely, how the character became involved in the story by accident. S1’s remark consists of a series of utterances; the first, “he was passing by the barracks,” is followed by “he heard some noise.” One may want to add a connector between these two utterances to indicate how they are relevant: a simple “and” or “then” would do the work.
Nonetheless, we hear that these two utterances are tied sequentially; "He was passing by the barracks" happens first, and then, "he heard some noise." His explanation works as a re-telling of the story line in a course of action.

Similarly, the next two phrases "yelling from barracks" and "he found criminal activity" (in line 40-41) do not have any linguistic device to show how they are related. Nonetheless, we hear that one incident precedes the next. In a way, each utterance generates a local context upon which the next utterance is built; and this sequential organization within the organization of his extended turn is one of the principal interpretive resources that L2 speakers utilize as they build multiple utterances.

That L2 students are capable of putting utterances in a sequential order sheds some light on how to understand L2 speech that is seemingly disconnected and even ungrammatical. For example, the following excerpt shows a series of phrases (line 225) that are not grammatically complete.

821258
((Students are reading newspaper articles on the Clinton sex scandal to find a quote that gives the information about the case))
223. S3: It has to be:: about::
224. T: Something about whether he is guilty or not.
225. S3: No matter:: I mean, no matter Lewinsky, or Paula Jones
226. (laughter)
227. T: Stick:: good question (whistling) stick to the Monica Lewinski thing,
228. don't deal with Paula Jones.
229. S2: OK.
230. S3: OK.
231. T: Don't deal Whitewater, just deal with Lewinsky, good question.

S3's question in 225 comes as bits and pieces of phrases without being placed in a grammatical frame; especially the phrase "no matter" does not have adequate grammatical phrases after it. Note however that listing two names "Lewinsky" and "Paula Jones" after the phrase "no matter" furnishes adequate information for the teacher to pick up what was meant by this phrase, as seen in the teacher's remark in line 227-228. This displays S3's competence as he rely on the sequential ordering of what he knows to get the meaning across.48

48 S3 is also displaying his greater knowledge of Clinton's trouble, and the class appreciates the humor of listing Paula Jones – they laugh.

114
One other method involved in building multiple utterances is to formulate what is to come in the next utterance, which helps the interlocutors to recognize sequential relationship. Note in the following example that the teacher's comment in line 322-324 consists of a formulating remark in the first sentence "remember what we talked about." Through this formulation, one can make sense of what comes next in the subsequent turns: "how do you decide whether…" In contrast, note how the student (S1) builds his description (line 327-333).

222715
((The teacher and students are discussing ways to compare and contrast in writing))

322. T: Uh hum, remember what we talked about, how do you decide whether you
323. point by point or hold or hold, sometimes call hold to hold, how do you
324. decide?
325. S1: Depends on ( )
326. T: //Depends on your topic, it depends on your topic
327. S1: //Yeah,
328. I mean the: so, one two three four, I have four uhu: categories,
329. T: Uh hum.
330. S1: Each category has uhu: compare contrast, compare and contrast,
331. compare contrast, compare contrast, like this way or just combine everything
332. and compare everything, and the contrast?
333. T: It depends on your topic.
334. (1.0)
335. T: OK, I can't tell you any other way, but it's, depend on the topic.

S1's description in line 330-332 tries to explain one of two options in doing comparing and contrasting; To do so with each of his categories, or to do so summatively, across them. In his explanation, however, the student repeats the same phrase "compare contrast" to explain the four cases under consideration. One could certainly find alternative ways of speaking to avoid repeating oneself, such as "do compare and contrast for each four categories or…" Nonetheless, it should be noted that this repetition is a method of speaking by this nonnative speaker to carry out this task of explaining one option. In repeating the pairing, he is virtually enacting the series of operations, and thus showing what he means in that way.

The task of building description involves an array of interpretive acts of communications and thus can present a daunting task for the L2 students. The next
section demonstrates that the multiple utterances by L2 students in fact display methods of speaking that show ways in which L2 students make use of the sequential properties of talk-in-interaction.

**Organizing acts in building utterances**

That L2 students’ multiple turns are sequentially organized demonstrates their interpretive acts of understanding that are embedded in their discourse constructions. For example, the speakers recognize how their previous utterances are heard: as indefinite, ambiguous, sensible, partial, wrong or even funny. Accordingly, they try to specify, elaborate, repair or continue in subsequent turns. The present section furnishes cases that show their orientation to the organizational properties of the utterance they are producing. Note in the following utterances by S3 (line 476-478) that he is aware of how his remark is progressively being shaped.

831404

(((They have just finished an exercise of using quotations from newspaper articles on the Clinton scandal))

462. T: We don’t know what’s going be, going to be decided, but you can not
463. very well have, the entire country saying ‘Oh, we forgive him, we forgive
464. him,’ and Congress even say ‘we forgive him, forgive him’ and the grand
465. jury saying, ‘No, we don’t,’ so, they will be a lot of press influence, we are
466. gonna hear about this very very long time.
467. S3: But, about the Kennedy, Kennedy scandal, but the: what-
468. T: //John F. Kennedy?
469. S3: Yeah, but the:: what’s her name?
470. T: Marilyn Monroe?
471. S3: Yeah, she:: what-
472. T: //He has, what, what is different between when Kennedy was
473. the president and now?
474. S3: But I think, you know, Kennedy has more, Kennedy has more politics,
475. now, because you know, Ma- Marilyn Monroe was you know, I mean she::
476. I think she::
477. T://Prettier than ( )
478. (laughter)
479. S2: I don’t understand the:: Hillary, she doesn’t care about, she cares about,
480. she is forgiving that he had an affair, (I don’t know why people sticking nose)
481. T: //See that’s,
482. that’s exactly what is different when John F Kennedy was the president,
483. people didn’t ( ) president’s life, the public media, were not able to see.

S3’s task in line 474-476 is to explain the difference between two presidential scandals; first, he claims that “Kennedy has more politics.” This claim is however indefinite, and
therefore, his next utterance “because, you know, Ma- Marilyn Monroe...” is heard to qualify what he means by “Kennedy has more politics.” This is the nature of building extended turns: being aware of how one utterance is understood and deciding what to say next. The following excerpt shows a more explicit example of how the student (S1) monitors his current utterance to build sequentially relevant next utterances.

025106
((The teacher and her students are discussing the final exam))
175. T: The question that you had before the exam
176. ► S1: //Just, just reading that (.)
177. T: Aha.
178. ► S1: //Is not, (.) good aha:: question because you need aha:: aha surrounding
179. T: //((
180. ► S1: information about the:: computer things in America, so I can write down-
181. T: //So what- what information, what are you gonna draw, what information are you going
182. to use?
183. ► S1: Because I have to know about the:: the:: what is this, infor- information
184. ► the:: background::, the- school background or something like that,
185. T: //OK, OK,
186. S1: Teachers, how many computers, they have labs??, without that:::
187. (1.0)
188. T: //OK, OK,
189. S1: It is-
190. T: //What-, this is-, this is general questions, you are not going to get
191. the numbers like how many computers there are, most schools do not
192. have computers in their classrooms,
193. S1: I didn’t know that.
194. T: //Most schools have one lab if they are luck, they are
195. very very lucky, OK, now what are you gonna use those to, to draw
196. to writing your response?

S1’s question in line 176 begins with characterizing (and criticizing) the exam question referenced by the teacher: “just reading that is not good question.” Yet, this remark would remain indefinite unless he qualifies what he means by “not good question” and his criticism needs to be shown. His next utterances (line 178-180) are organized to qualify and specify his initial formulation: “because you need aha:: aha surrounding information about computer things in America.” And in line 193, using the teacher’s rejoinder, he produces a case in point of the kind of information one would need. The following shows a similar case where a student’s extended turn demonstrate an array of interpretive acts to make them relevant and thus coherent.
S1's question in line 229-233 shows an extended turn: first, he started out with a very general question "my question is how to make thesis statement." His next utterance in turn attempts to specify his first remark; this remark "it can be little different, I mean styles are different..." is designed to point out that there are multiple possibilities for making a thesis statement. S3's next remark in line 230 "I mean styles are different" could be heard as indefinite in itself and thus, his subsequent turns specify what he means with a collection of examples: "depends of the: what kinds of thesis statement, information paper, and response paper, persuasion paper, thesis statement little bit different."

Often, L2 students break down their multiple utterances into several interactional exchanges in order to confirm whether the interlocutor understands what has been said, before moving onto the next segment. Note the following example of an exchange between the speaker (S4) and the teacher.

322859
((The teacher and her students are discussing midterm exam))
591. T: Toshi
592. ► S4: Hum, we read the story, right? and then, we know how is- how is
593. ► the story?
594. (1.0)
T: Right=
S: =So when I write something you know learn from the story, do I have
to mention it?
S: Uhu huh,
S: =You just quote°
T: Same question?
S: Yeah
T: If you are using exact words from the story (.) like here I just had this,
Benarge's copy I found it said 'Toshiko was dumbfounded, ( )
tararar' if I copy words from the story (.) on your exam, you have to (.)
you have to all use this, use this probably more often than you think you
should, if you have any doubt, should I use quote should I not, use them.

S4's question in 592-593 becomes a prefacing question for the next question in line 596-597. This question provides a basis upon which his next utterance is built; thus his first utterances 'we read the story and then, we would know the story' becomes preliminary information from which he draws his next utterance in line 596-597. The next segment shows a similar case.

T: So, OK, what are your questions, yeah, Toshi.
S: It says, remember that you are not offering your, uhu opinion on this
T: Right.
S: What does that, what does that mean?
S: (like can we just like) in my opinion or
something like that or:::
S: I mean cause all, we have the opinion about the story,
T: Uh hum.
S: And then, ( )
T: //Your text, you are not, you are reading a story.
S: Oh, yeah=,
S: =Yeah.
S: But anyway we got to, we got to prove that opinion so I can we can
make uhu::: each topic sentence.
T: Yeah, what you want to do is this, you don’t have (. ) a super strong opinion
that says, after reading these articles, our group has decided that computer
should be never ever ever be used in the classroom. What you want to do is
maybe a recommendation.

S4's remarks in line 799 and 801 become preliminaries to his question in line 805-806. In this way, the student sets up the basis for his real question in line 805-806.
While the sequential organization of the talk indicates that utterances are made relevant as they are produced, this ordering action involves an array of interpretive actions by the speakers; s/he estimates how his/her earlier remark is heard and based on that understanding, s/he qualifies, specifies, exemplifies and characterizes them in the next turn.

**Turn construction through repair**

There is no doubt that L2 discourse shows ungrammatical phrases, inadequate utterances and repetitions, especially when L2 speakers try to build extended turns in real-time speech. Nonetheless, all these troubles in talk do not go unnoticed by L2 speakers themselves; in fact, they often “repair” these troubled utterances as they go in the very course of actions.

Repair in conversation refers to the fixing of the trouble conversation (Schegloff et al., 1977). What becomes trouble in conversation is indefinite with an impressive array of list that includes not simply linguistic errors and their replacements, but the problems involved in members’ work in common understanding (Moerman & Sacks, 1971/1988), “as in the understanding of a prior turn, understanding it in the projectable course of its construction for the kid of turn it is, what work it is doing, what it calls for next, what understanding it evidences of still prior turns, etc” (Macbeth, 2000, p. 11).

These repairs are a central interpretive resource for building extended turns. We have been seeing them throughout the data fragment. In the following excerpt, the student’s question contains a number of repairs (line 344-346).

```
320 T: How about (. ) duh: Ginango, what kinds of questions do you still have about that story?
321 S9: Why Ginango (?)
322 S7: (laughter) TrWhy?
323 (1.0)
324 S9: ( ) Ginnango ( ) didn’t tell the truth?
325 T: V^y (.) didn’t (.) Ginango tell the truth? (.) OK.
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336. ((The teacher is writing down on the board))
337. S4: Uhu::
338. T: Toshi?
339. S?: //That didn't close?
340. T: Uhu huh?
341. S4: What is the.. ending of it?
342. S?: Huh (laughter)
343. (5.0)
344. ► S4: I mean, if- aha:: if that kind of question is on:: on the exam, duh: re- is,
345. ► is that any, like, right or wrong answer cause we guess right?
346. T: There is no correct-, there is no, hey you should be (glad), this is the only
347. test (.) in terms of ( ) there is no right or wrong answer.

S4's question in 344-345 a number of repairs: the very fist remark “I mean…” is a repair of what he said in the previous exchange with the teacher in line 341. Similarly, his next remark “if- aha…” is also repaired immediately into the full sentence “if that kind of question is on…”; through this repair, the speaker secures the turn and takes time producing his answer. The next utterance, “re-” is repaired into “is that any, right or wrong answer” which is followed by “cause we guess right?” That is to say, the repair actions in building multiple utterances demonstrate the members’ competence to secure the turns, recognizing the problem and build the next utterance in the very course of action.

In the following excerpt, the student (S1 in line 1018-1019) is trying to answer the question that was raised by his fellow student, S2.

531206
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on difference in reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))
1010. T: Yeah, there are students who don't how to read language in their own
1011. language?
1012. S2: ( )
1013. T: Sure, sure, sure, sure, that's my, that's my research area, Yo-An is looking
1014. oral communication, mine is looking at issues of (.) L1 and L2 transfer, kind
1015. of thing.
1016. S2: ( ) kind of stu::pid or something, something with their brain.
1017. T: Are you stupid if you can't read in your first language?
1018. ► S1: No, I know, I know, some people who can speak English without
1019. ► writing their, without how to write their first language=
1020. T: =Right, right, right, right, some language don't have written
1021. S1: //I know that but
1022. T: forms.
S1's description in 1018-1019 not only answers the teacher's question (line 1017) but also elaborate on what the teacher's question meant. S1 is trying to complete the sentence adding prepositional phrase “without” but cannot finish the sentence “without writing their.” Therefore, he repairs it to “without how to write their first language.” Grammatically, this repaired phrase “without how to write their first language” is not adequately constructed, and yet this “how to” phrase allows him to convey intended message more readily than his previous turn.49

While this repair indicates the level of language proficiency of the nonnative speakers who are still struggling with their English, the close analysis of repair sequences also shows their work of communication; how they project how their remarks are to be heard and organize them accordingly. The following excerpt shows a similar case (S4 in line 941-944).

530657
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on difference in reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))
923. T: Transferring what they know about reading process into the second language learning, these students apply more or less the same reading techniques they used to the first, in their first language reading. (.) OK, what does that mean?
927. (2.0)
928. T: Everybody see where we are?
929. S1: Yeah.
930. T: Transferring what they know about reading process into the second language learning, the students apply more or less same reading techniques they used in their first language reading.
933. (2.0)
934. S0: Reading habit.
935. T: Reading habit, Taehong says, (.) what kind of reading habit, what is she talking about here, ( ) Raymond?
937. S6: Translating
938. T: Does she talk about (.) translating?
939. (1.0)

49 L2 speakers often rely on formulaic speech production because it allows them more time to develop their speech (Raupach, 1984): for example, repeating the same phrase that are familiar to them. Note the following excerpt in which the nonnative organizes her discourse around ‘how to’ phrase.

242. The language teacher, they have to know their own culture because you are teaching language, it's not just teaching, how to speak, how to say that in English, or in language, you have to know, you have to know how to interact with people, if you want to focus on how to interact with people, you should know the culture
940. T: She calls it trans-ferring.
941. ▶ S4: I think they- they look- uhm:: read the same way to be:: you know, even
942. ▶ even when you, when you read second language reading,
943. ▶ T: OK
944. ▶ S4: //As same as, same as um first language, ( ) same way to read
945. T: //OK
946. ▶ S4: because every body has, like different ways to read.
947. T: OK, idea is she is saying that you read in the second language many
948. students read in the second language, in this case we are talking about
949. English, like they are doing in their first language (. ) everybody understand
950. that?

S4's remark in line 941-942 is meant to explain what "transferring process" means in L2 reading. This remark contains various repairs. As he progressively builds his turn; first he says, "I think they-," then, he repeats the subject 'they' and add a verb 'look.' In the next utterance, he repairs "look" to "read" and adds the phrase "the same way to be." This utterance contains several stretched words "uhm:::" and "be:::"; structurally, they help secure the turns to build more complete sentence and thus preventing other students to take the floor. Next, this student (S4) says, "even even when you, when you read second language reading" is followed by the teacher's feedback "OK," which he overlaps and continues in 945. Line 945 manifests a couple of repairs as he completes the sentence "as same as, same as um first language, ( ) same way to read...," continued to 946.

To sum, the foregoing excerpts show that producing extended turns involves an array of interpretive tasks; they show that they are on task, repairing the previous utterances and thus demonstrating their orientation to the production of sequentially relevant next remarks. Repairs in these cases are not simply trouble-shooting operations but interpretive actions that perform several functions: securing the turn, elaborate and specify the previous remarks, and achieving common understanding.

**Conclusion**

The present section examined the work of building extended turns in real-time. It entails several distinctive kind of tasks. For example, the speaker has to be aware of how his/her previous remarks are heard and to recognize what has become problematic in the
process before generating the next remarks. Accordingly, the next utterances are drawn from their previous utterances as they elaborate, repair, specify and qualify them in the very course of action.

While L2 speakers have limited linguistic resources, they seem to have a litany of methodic ways to accomplish their tasks of building extended turns. While they are often unable to produce grammatically coherent transitional connectors or formulating remarks, their utterances still show orderly sequential organizations. They also watch how their utterances are built over the course of actions, recognizing what becomes problematic in the previous turns and repair them to make them sequentially coherent.

The extended turns by nonnative speakers display their methods of talking as they make choices in the very course of action. Each choice of action is derived from and occasioned by what went on in the previous turns. As these L2 speakers are building their extended turns, they constantly monitor how his/her previous remarks are heard and work to assemble what to say next. They are rich sites for finding the exercise of communicative competence by L2 speakers in the classroom.

**Student formulations**

The term “formulation” was taken from the work by Garfinkel and Sacks (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970) who use it to refer to the members’ practice of formulating their own conversation:

A member may treat some part of the conversation as an occasion to describe that conversation, to explain it, or characterize it, or explicate, or translate, or summarize, or furnish the gist of it, or take note of its accordance with rules, or remark on its departure from rules. That is to say a member may use some part of the conversation as an occasion to formulate the conversation (p.350-351)

Formulating is one of the ordinary language actions that people use to clarify, identify, define and describe what they are doing; thus the members’ formulation often clarify the equivocal sense of what they are doing (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Lynch, 1993b).

L2 students are also involved in formulating practices in their classroom discourse. They accomplish a wide range of actions through formulations: they show how they understand what goes on, confirm or refute what was said, explain what
becomes problematic, make jokes and so on. While theories of communication provides formal accounts of the competent practices in L2 language use, the members’ formulations show us more of their practical methods for making their remarks intelligible and observable.

**Formulating what one did/said**

To formulate what another has said is a familiar way through which the members show how they understand each other. While L2 students often formulate what was said, the object of their formulations varies in each interactional occasion. The present section describes three different formulations and examines how each displays methodic ways of talking by the L2 students. The first excerpt shows a student (S3 in line 132-133) formulating what the teacher has explained so far.

614424

((The teacher and her students are discussing writing assignments))

119. S3: How can I, you know place the aha:: your, compar- I mean, contrast, in
120. para- I mean, contrast in one para- oh, one body paragraph or and you know::
121. T: What you need to do,
122. S3: Hm::::::
123. T: What you need to do is to pick we have talked about this on Wednesday,
124. you need to pick, probably two or three issues that are common in both of
125. these articles and discuss them in your respon- in your synthesis section.
126. S1: Two?
127. S3: Yeah uh::
128. T: //Two or three issues, you can't compare and contrast the whole article
129. S3: //You probably
130. T: you are not summarizing them, remember Taehong asked that, are we
131. we summarizing these, no, you synthesize them, take the students,
132. ► S3: //So you are saying that, we, we, we put this
133. ► you know () we do that synthesis instead of summary?
134. T: Right.

The above interactional exchange is concerned with a writing assignment: namely, synthesizing.

S3’s question in line 119-120 points to a more specific issue in synthesizing: how to compare and contrast in this synthesis exercise. The teacher’s following remark (line 123-125 and 128-131) is produced as an answer and also displays how she understands S3’s question: That S3’s not clear about the difference between summarizing and synthesizing. S3’s remark in line 132-133 is therefore produced as a rejoinder to the
teacher's remarks, formulating what the teacher has been trying to say. Through this formulation, S3 performs an interactional task: namely, acknowledging what the teacher is saying "we do synthesis instead of summary?" and achieving agreement and understanding.

That formulating practices are a part of actions performed by the student is more explicit in the next example in which the teacher formulates what one student (S4) did by using a Russian word to demonstrate what decoding means.

525915
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on difference in reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))
812. T: She uses the word, decoding? what does that mean to decode something?
813. S2: Recording?
814. T: To what?
815. S2: If you record something,
816. T: That's record:ed, what does that mean::
817. ((The teacher writes down something on the board))
818. T: What do you think that word is?
819. S1: It's a sign.
820. (3.0)
821. T: Do you see Taehong?
822. S0: Uhuh hmm.
823. (1.0)
824. T: What do you think that word might be, if I tell you it's a name a place.
825. S?: A::
826. ► S2: //America.
827. S1: uh::
828. T: Very good, A-me-ri-ca, this is uhuh- America, in Russian (.), you had to
829. look and try to fit OK, this letter, and this letter, this letter, those are the same
830. (.) this one is the same and so have this- three in the middle that are kind uh::
831. tripping you up (.) a little bit, right? So what you did you look at this (.) at
832. least James did, and he figured out, uh, he took a guess probably (.) that kind
833. of guess?
834. ► S2: Strategy.
835. T: The strategy, guessing is a strategy he made a guess, he took what he knew
836. about word and he decoded it. Russian is a lot like a code, you have to figure
837. it out.
838. S2: ( ).
839. T: ( ) there is an idea that reading is like decoding, you look at
840. something and you look at every word and understand its meaning, OK,
841. so she calls local reading decoding (2.0) and then the opposite of local reading
842. is (.) global reading.
The teacher's remark in line 828-833 refers to her demonstration of what decoding means 817-828. Note that the teacher's explanation (line 828-833 and 835-837) centers on how S2 came up with the right answer in the previous demonstration: "so what you did, you look at this, at least James did, and he figured out, uh, he took a guess, that kind of guess?" This remark is a formulation of what happens through which the teacher explains the process that is involved in decoding. S2’s remark in line 834 is produced under this sequential context. The teacher characterizes what S2 did “he took a guess” and his remark “strategy” is another way of formulating what he did. That is to say, what S1 did became available in different ways of speaking.

The next excerpt is another case of formulation; this time, one student (S1 in line 398-399) is formulating what one of his classmates said in the previous turns (line 393-394, and 396).

830640
((The teacher and her students discuss how to use citation marks in their writing))
405. T: OK, so if you use the exact word, you might use quotations marks (.)
406. if you change them, you don’t use quotation marks but you still need to give
407. the name and the page number.
408. S1: Name is the first name, or magazine.
409. T: //Yeah, for the purpose of this class, you are just
410. gonna use last name and page number.
411. ▶ S1: Last name, but mainly, I have to put the: magazine: name (. ) magazine
412. ▶ name or::
413. T: What name?
414. ▶ S1: Magazines, ( )
415. T: You are gonna use, either Phu or Sung.
416. ▶ S3: I mean, you know, he is asking you know, if you read article from the
417. ▶ magazine, and then, there is an author for::
418. T: //You use the author’s name,
419. S3: For the=
420. T: =Now- I am not, I am saying name, I am not saying title.
421. S3: Title, yeah.
422. T: OK, name, last name.

S3’s formulation in line 398-399 refers to the exchange between the teacher and S1 (line 391-397). S1’s question in line 393-394 is concerned with the teacher’s explanation about how to use names in citation; S1 is asking if he needs to put the first name of the author or of the journal.
As analysts, we are often tempted to furnish our own assessment of what the problem was with the members' exchange. Yet, the present analysis intends to stay with the sequential organization of the talk to see what the members make of the situation. S3's subsequent remark in line 398-399 therefore displays how he understands what went on in the previous exchange. S3's comment formulates what S1 was doing in the previous turns: "he is asking you know...."; it demonstrates that he has been following the exchange between the teacher and S1, and offers his analysis of what the problem of understanding may be.

The subsequent remark "if you read article from the magazine, and then, there is an author" shows his analysis of what became problematic in the above exchange: namely, there are two potential sources to cite, the author and the magazine. S3's remark "if you read article from the magazine, and then, there is an author" is instructing the teacher how to locate them. S3 effectively formulates S1's question and what confused the teacher in the previous exchange: the choice between the author's name and the name of the journal. To sum, his formulation becomes an interpretive resource to help the teacher figure out what S1 meant, and respond to his question.

**Directionality**

Formulating practices in talk-in-interaction reveal particular ways of seeing and doing things. That is to say, formulations are methods of talking through which the speaker show particular choices over alternative ways of speaking in terms of how s/he wants the interlocutor to understand the remark; the talk reveals tendentious characters that proceeds to a particular direction. As a result, this directional aspect in each remark reveals a distinctive kind of communicative competence. L2 formulations manifest a particular choice over alternative ways of speaking; this choice ranges the whole gamut from the selection of words, to the ordering phrases, to the manner of speaking and/or timing of the talk in the given sequence.

The next excerpt shows a formulation by a student (S3 in line 277-278) of the teacher's account of school funding in the U.S.

025426

((The teacher and her students are discussing the final exam))

257. S3: My question is (.), you know, aha::why why the:: I mean, is there a
something like aha:: what's that, go- government, you know, so then,
you know, educational::
T: ///( ), we do have the department of education
S3: ///Depart- yeah, yeah.
T: does not fund our school like ministry of education ( ) many
of your countries, but schools are locally funded, ( ) that means, Com-
Columbus public district is supported by people who live in the city of
Columbus.
S3: I mean, where does the tax go, I mean for, you know ( )?
T: ///The taxes, now let's-
let's think about this, think about:: everybody know where where Dublin is?
S3: Yeah
T: ( ) Dublin is a nice part of town, Dublin school district is very
wealthy, ( ) why?
S3: Cause aha:: the:: the:: rich people tax-
S?: ///Tax payers,
T: Taxpayers, they pay a lot of money, Columbus public is not very
wealthy.
S3: Ah, so so then, you are saying that you know, the: rich, rich neighborhood
because of they pay a lot of taxes so then they should deserve you know,
T: So their schools get a lot of money,
S3: So like aha::
T: ///So, the rich gets richer and the poor gets poorer,...

S3's remark in 277-278 formulates what the teacher has been explaining (line 260-275) about the funding resources for American public schools. Note that S3’s remark is not simply a repetition of what the teacher said. Instead, his formulation extends what the teacher said by means of assembling different ways of speaking: for example, the use of “rich neighborhood,” and “they should deserve” are distinctive ways of saying what the teacher referred to, thus being tendentious and directional. These ways of speaking become resources for everyone in the room.

The following excerpt shows a student formulation of what the teacher has said in previous turns (line 426-428).

(T hey have just finished an exercise on using quotations, using newspaper articles on Clinton case))

T: So how many of you still think he is guilty? (3.0) two three and half,
the rest of you say no?
S2: I think guilty and not guilty.
T: Guilty and not guilty, how many of you think he is guilty and not guilty?
S6: Guilty and not guilty?
T: Uh hmm (laughter)
SI: What is that, guilty and not guilty.

T: Guilty in one hand but not guilty on the other hand.

S3: But the: they didn't, they didn't announce, they didn't make, you know, the judge didn't make, you know, verdict yet, right?

T: They didn't make:

S3: Verdict=

T: A verdict, well (. ) it's not, there is not necessarily going to be a verdict or there could be, (. ) we have no idea what's going to happen=

S3: =So then, you are saying that, you know, it depends on, you know, the American I mean, American public opinion or you know::

T: It could I think if American public opinion says we forgive him, we forgive him, then, the: Congress can't very well turn around and impeach him.

S3's remark in 424-425 is an explicit formulation: “so then, you are saying....” His subsequent remark “it depends on American public opinion” shows how he makes sense of the teacher’s account on the Clinton case. This formulation shows a particular directionality, displaying particular ways of seeing and doing things. This is very significant for the local context of talk because it becomes a basis for the further talk; the teacher ties her comment to S3’s formulation and develops her account in line 427-428.

The last example of student formulation shows a rather different kind in that the student’s formulation refers not to a particular remark but to generic sense of what is happening to the classroom members. This excerpt shows that the students are not quite ready for the task the teacher wants to begin.

((The students are about to begin peer review group essays))

T: OK, let me have your attention before you start to read, let's not, let's (.)

S5: Thesis statement.

T: OK, before that?

S5: Thesis statement.

T: OK, let's?: make sure you got a thesis statement?

((The teacher is writing on the board))

T: What else do we have (. ) gentleman are you ready?

S3: Ahm::

T: Ready (. ) Jungkim are you?
S3’s formulation in line 117 “this is very Monday” is heard to formulate the discourse that has gone before it where the teacher and her students were not able to get to the task; there is some confusion about the handout, and some students did not get the article. This remark “this is very Monday” reflects a sophisticated assessment; its formulation contains a categorical remark relying on commonsense knowledge of what Monday can be like. He offers it as an explanation, perhaps even an excuse. Although his remark is not grammatically correct, the teacher recognizes the action it displays and offers her own formulation “it’s definitely Monday, yes, I know.”

**Conclusion**

The import of formulating practices in L2 classroom is that it shows us more of what goes on in L2 classroom interaction. First, they display the members’ competent practices of language use in their orientation to the locally situated context of talk, referring to what was said or done before. Second, through formulation, members show what they make of what goes on, as they characterize, define, specify, identify, criticize, elaborate and/or approve what goes on.

That the members are methodically orient to the local context of talk and actively engage it sheds light on the analysis of L2 talk too. While theories of communicative competence have furnished analytic formulations of L2 phenomena, the members’ formulations lead the analysis to look into the procedural aspects of talk-in-interaction, for how their talk displays their orientation to their own conversation, and how the members make of their own talk, and act on it accordingly.

**Membership Categorization in Student Talk**

The present study finds communicative competence in actual language use and the L2 students use of categories provides a good exemplar of their competent methods of
talking. Conversation analysts have shown that speakers use certain social types to describe persons (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979), places (Schegloff, 1972), and the litany of other non-personal objects (Hester & Eglin, 1997b). For example, the utterances like “he is a graduate student” or “It is Friday” contain categories that call upon common sense knowledge and practical reasoning from the interlocutors, find in the use of the categorization and meaning.

We deploy categories in our talk in order to accomplish an array of interactional task — generate accounts, make accusations, tell jokes, answer questions and deliver invitations. Yet, this use of categories in real-time is locally situated; the use of categories organizes the ways in which the speakers bring out the relevant social structures - settings, activities, tasks, topics, and/or identities - and make them relevant to what goes on. The purpose of the present section is not to find patterns or locate rules of use for particular categorical utterances. Rather, it intends to describe how the L2 student makes competent use of them, in assembling sensible courses of action. In the following example, the teacher and one of her student (S1) evoke different categorical properties from the sake time referent.

322305
((The teacher is announcing the midterm))
530.  T: OK? this is basically just kinds of rules and regulations of the exam,
531.  reminder you are going to Hitchcock Hall to room 31.
532.  S?: Uha huh,
533.  T: It's five thirty tomorrow evening.
534.  (2.0)
535.  T: OK, don’t be late (.) please don’t be late, might not get a seat.
536.  ►  S1: Oh, man, five thirty, huh.
537.  ►  T: Five thirty.
538.  ►  S1: //OK, I am hungry
539.  (laughter)
540.  T: Eat something.
541.  (laughter)
542.  T: Eat something before you take the test.

We recognize that the student’s remark “I am hungry” carries out a communicative action, namely complaining (line 536) and joking (line 538). The question is how this act of complaining-joking is accomplished and the answer has to do with how S1 uses the categorical property of the referent “five thirty.”
The teacher has just announced the time for the exam (line 533), and the phrase “five thirty” therefore become relevant to the exam time. While this hearing of “five thirty” is self-evident and thus unproblematic for the cohort, the student (S1)’s remark “OK, I am hungry” (line 536 and 538) evokes a totally different property from the same referent “five thirty,” making it relevant to mealtime. That is to say, what otherwise would have been a routine reminder of a time referent suddenly opens up a different possibility in understanding and making use of the given phrase. This use of categorical possibilities “5:30” evokes particular features of common sense knowledge and makes them available for the course of action: being funny or ironic.

**Identities in discourse**

The following segments show exchanges where L2 students’ use of categories center on the identities of the persons involved. Social identities have been extensively discussed in language education literature (Amin, 1997; Cook, 1999; Nelson, 1999; Peirce, 1995), and yet most studies treat social identities as pre-given entities. In contrast, the following excerpts demonstrate that social identities are locally invoked and used in and as the members’ interpretive actions, as the members collect and deploy certain categorical properties in their talk. Note in the first excerpt that a couple of students (S2 and S3) are making categorical remarks on women (line 292-293).

((The teacher is writing on the board for the next task))

278. ► S3: You know, (.) somebody who major in English literature or you know, English language, I think they are all creative.
279. (2.0)
280. S3: Right?
281. T: I think you are all creative.
282. S3: //When you get, when you get, whenever you got ( ), you just come out, you know, idea just like this ((snapping his finger)), right?
283. T: Who?
284. S3: ((Pointing to the teacher))
285. T: Oh, no, no.
286. S3: No?
287. S2: Women are better ( ) than men.
288. T: Women are better at language than men, hm:::
289. S2: Yeah, they are linguistic.
290. S3: Yeah, they are very linguistic, really, yeah.
291. T: That’s debatable.
The above excerpt begins with the remark by one student (S3) who makes a compliment on the teacher’s language fluency (line 278-279); here, S3 relates the teacher’s fluency to her major “somebody who major in English literature or English language, they are all creative.”

S2’s next comment in line 290, however, brings on a different category “women are better.” S3’s formulation “yeah, they are linguistic” (line 293) is produced to express his agreement with S2’s observation; and both S2 and S3 use the term “linguistic” as if it is a technical term that denotes linguistic dexterity. While this term “linguistic” is not an normal lexical usage, its sense is deployed and tied to the sequential context where the identity of “women” has been made relevant to the linguistic fluency. This excerpt therefore demonstrates how social identities in talk-in-interaction are locally occasioned and interactionally generated as a part of the work of communicating sense and meaning.

Note in the following excerpt how one student (S1) uses a category of his identity to make a joke (line 535). The segment is concerned with the talk exchange in which the traditional role of husband and wife in Asian countries are being discussed.

The teacher’s question in line 530 is a display question (Long & Sato, 1983) that intends to make the point that traditionally, fathers in Asian countries do not attend to the house chores; this remark itself brings out a particular property from an array of possible
features that the category "father" could generate. The teacher's next question in line 533 is therefore to demonstrate her point through referring to a particular house chores. S1's remark in line 535 is heard as a joke and its humor depends on the categorical property that the teacher has portrayed in the previous turn. That is to say, S1's response is projecting an alternative characterization of the category of "father" to what has been portrayed so far.

That social identities are projected in particular ways by members pulls into view an array of interpretive acts of communication that go into the construction of L2 talk. Note the following excerpt how the student (S1) portrays his own identity using a kind of categorical remark.

515315
((The Students are reading their classmates' journal as a classroom activity))
25. T: Tommy, are you reading somebody's journal?
27. T: Why not?
28. S5: ( )
29. T: Who didn't do a journal?
30. S1: ((Raises his hand))
31. T: Uh::, OK::
32. S1: O::K,
33. (laughter)
34. ► S1: OK, OK, Mr. Kim see you later, OK.
35. (laughter)
36. T: Take it outside:::

The teacher's remark in line 31 is produced when she learned that S1 did not do his homework assignment (line 29-30) and her remark in line 31 is produced as a result. S1's next remark in line 34 begins with repeating what the teacher said; and he is using the teacher's voice, thus imitating and displaying his recognition of what the teacher meant in the previous turn. S1's next remark "Mr. Kim see you later" requires a posit. First, he characterizes himself as Mr. Kim; this term is different than what they have been using when they call each other, using the first names. That S1 transforms his identity from his first name (Jungkim) into Mr. Kim is seen to highlight a different role relationship than what the first name basis relationship would implicate; Mr. Kim carries the official tenor that evokes his role and responsibilities as a student in this class who has failed to do an assignment.
By using the term, “Mr. Kim,” S1 is also the teacher’s identity too, as someone who would use this categorical address form in this situation. S1's remark “Mr. Kim see you later” therefore shows how Ms. Panferov, not Suzanne, would handle Mr. Kim, not Jungkim who did not do his homework. By bringing out this role relationship, S1 virtually enacts what the teacher meant when she said “Uh:: OK:::” in line 31, which triggers laughter again by the student cohort (line 35). Interestingly, the teacher’s following comment in line 36, “take it outside” shows that the teacher is willing to go along with this act of joking.

**Sequentially produced categories**

The use of categories in talk is often sequentially generated (Watson, 1997); the meaning of the given utterance is made sense of in reference to what is said in previous turns. For example, note the following excerpt to see how students’ use of categories is occasioned by and reflexive to how the teacher builds her account in the previous turns. This segment begins with the teacher’s answer to a question about what to include in the students’ portfolio.

014256

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92.</td>
<td>S4: Aha:: I want to ask about portfolio,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93.</td>
<td>T: OK, what’s your question about portfolio?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94.</td>
<td>S4: If I choose essay number one?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95.</td>
<td>T: Uh hum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96.</td>
<td>S4: Can I still choose essay number three?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97.</td>
<td>T: Sure, (.) sure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98.</td>
<td>S4: It doesn’t matter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99.</td>
<td>T: You gonna choose three samples, and you are choosing from essay number one, number two, number three, (.) your midterm, two in-class writings, (2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.</td>
<td>S1: And material:: journals?:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101.</td>
<td>T: And ( ) your journals?:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102.</td>
<td>S4: I mean, I thought, I thought, if I choose, hum:: one from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103.</td>
<td>T: //Anything like that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104.</td>
<td>S4: essay, I have to choose the ( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105.</td>
<td>T: //No, you- I mean if there are you could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106.</td>
<td>T: choose one number two number three, kind of boring, but you could do that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The talk exchange between S4 and the teacher (line 92-98) is concerned with what to include in the students’ portfolio among all writings the students have done so far.
The teacher's remark in line 99-101 therefore lists the writings that the students could include in their portfolio. The teacher begins by mentioning that there are three samples needed and continues to illustrate what these three samples could be in the following turn: "you are choosing from essay number one, number two, number three, (.) your midterm, two in-class writings." S1's following comment in line 103 is therefore about the list, and what is included in it. He adds his own category to the list by saying "and material:: journals?" Note that S1's item exhibits the same categorical properties that the teachers' examples belong to, namely anything they have written; and this displays his interpretive acts indicating that he has closely followed what the teacher has formulated. That is to say, S1's use of category in his talk and what the relevant categories of their written works are, is locally occasioned and thus sequentially produced.

What becomes relevant in the given sequence of talk and how the given categories are made sense of in the talk-in-interaction is largely local and situated; the members' use of categories orient to prior local references. That the categories members use are sequentially produced demonstrates that the members are engaged in constant maintaining and interpreting the discourse as a resource for their own discourse production. Note the next example where one student makes a joke in line 224 by organizing categorical terms, and how this joke is sequentially occasioned and relevant.

720815
((Students are doing peer reviewing))
210. S2: When is our final draft gonna be::
211. T: Final draft?
212. S2: Yeah.
213. T: Monday.
214. S2: This Monday?
216. S2: ( )
217. T: We can make it earlier if you want.
218. S2: No.
219. (9.0)
220. S2: What about the our- our last essay ( )?
221. T: Your second draft is due is on next Monday.
222. S2: OK.
223. T: ( )
224. ► S2: I will just do it Sunday night
225. (Laughter)
The student's remark in line 224 deploy the categorical remark "Sunday night" as a time of the week's known in common by students and teacher as a last opportunity for completing Monday assignment. What this reference implicates is occasioned by and thus reflexive to what the teacher said in previous turn (line 221): "Your second draft is due, is on next Monday." There is a certain relationship between these two days, and a self-characterization emerges from them: doing an assignment on the day before the due date implies the role of the student and their responsibilities. Also it shows the kind of student he is. The laughter in line 225 the cohort's recognition of his category work.

**Conclusion**

The use of categories in talk-in-interaction displays the students' competence as they evoke particular features of common sense knowledge and make available distinctive interpretive resources in the very course of action. Yet the question of how they make that knowledge available and what they do with it is a matter of empirical investigation. The task of the present analysis is to begin those investigations, by delving into the practical actions that L2 students carry out when they use categories in their talk.

ESL classroom presents a unique social environment of nonnative speakers of English who do not have the whole array of language resources their native counterparts have. Nonetheless, the task in their classrooms is no less contingent and interactional; they have to deal with the vast array of language tasks in real-time. Their use of categories in their talk therefore brings into view ways in which L2 speakers make use of their common sense knowledge and practical interpretive resources, many of which are locally occasioned and thus sequentially based.

The present chapter has presented a number of cases across analytic sections to document the interpretive work and communicative competence that the L2 student displays in these classroom lessons. Their competence in talk-in-interaction is central resource for them, their teacher and the practical course of their lessons. Chapter 5 brings a similar analysis to the teacher's work of building local contexts of competent communication.
CHAPTER 5
THE WORK OF TEACHING IN L2 CLASSROOM:
TEACHERS' COMPETENCE

Previous research in communicative competence finds competences in linguistic, pragmatic, cultural and behavioral patterns that the members display in their talk, and yet the analytic description of these patterns is somewhat independent of actual context of use. That is to say, the actual language phenomena are often treated as resources to characterize the pre-given categories or theoretical constructs: for example, pragmatic competence (Bachman, 1990), basic interpersonal communicative skills (J. Cummins, 1983). The upshot of this approach is that most of what goes on in language classroom is often typified or simply glossed over.

In contrast, the present study takes a procedural approach that treats language phenomena as topics of inquiry and therefore looks into the choices and methods that organize their production in the talk-in-interaction. By this, I do not mean to simply highlight those forgotten specifics that are missing in the conventional research. Rather, the present study follows the members' own undertaking in assembling their interaction. In this undertaking, therefore, it becomes critical to take into account the enterprises that the teacher and her students endeavor to accomplish. Therefore, classroom interactions are viewed as a field of work-practices through which the teacher and her students carry out their work of teaching and learning and enacting their lessons.

This analytic focus on the procedural details recognizes that L2 classroom talk is an essentially collaborative accomplishment between the teacher and her students: they display how they understand each other, locate what becomes problematic and organize their talk accordingly in the very course of interaction. As much as the L2 students' competent practices of talk is what makes L2 instruction possible, it is the teacher's
competent communicative acts of understanding that enables L2 instruction to take place; through these acts, curriculum materials are brought into view, questions are answered and activities are developed and carried forward.

Since the preceding chapter described the methods of talking and choices of actions that L2 students display, the present chapter inquires into teacher’s talk to describe how they accomplish their classroom tasks. Instead of formulating the teacher’s talk in reference to such analytic categories as foreigner talk, comprehensible input or negative feedback (Allwright, 1988; Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 1990; van Lier, 1988), the present study examines the teacher’s competence in the practical enactment of classroom instruction, through which they pull together an array of resources and accomplish their work of teaching.

**The work of questions**

The work of questions is probably one of the most studied topics in educational research, as it is the utterly familiar and predominant forms of teacher talk. The most recognizable analytic formulation of teacher’s questions is found in the three turn sequence, commonly known as Initiation-Reply-Evaluation (IRE). The analytic description of three turn sequences goes back to the work by Sinclair and Coulthard (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) who used them as a descriptive unit for their discourse analysis. It was Mehan’s work (1979) that brought a sequential analysis to these three turn sequences, as the central resource for the teacher and students in organizing the practical enactment of classroom lessons (Macbeth, 2001a). The ubiquitous presence of these three turn sequences has produced a rich research literature, as IRE sequences themselves became subject to various theoretical and analytic formulations.

In L2 literature, teachers’ questions has occupied a special place because they are considered an important part of language input for the students’ language learning. In particular, the emphasis on communicative oriented teaching since the early 1980s prompted the investigation of the teachers’ questions to evaluate their potential for promoting students’ learning opportunities (Brock, 1986; Ellis, 1994; Long & Sato, 1983; Nunan, 1987). For example, some questions are considered less effective for
communicative use of language, or display unequal power in the teacher and students relationship. With the emergence of qualitative and postmodern research, the bulk of research have explored the socio-cultural implications in teachers' questioning behavior.

Notwithstanding these undertakings, there are still very few studies that actually look into the procedural details displayed in the teachers' questions: how each question is occasioned, what becomes problematic in the process, how does the teacher deal with the problems and what kinds of practical actions do they perform. Furthermore, teacher questions involve too vast an array of interpretive acts of understanding to formulate in a few generalized remark. Note the following excerpt that demonstrates the range of interpretive work that the teacher's questions exhibits.

723644
((The students have just finished a grammar exercise on relative pronouns. The teacher is reviewing the sentences that the students have corrected.))

331. T: Anyway, this is from them, 'The- the drinker who addicted to the alcohol can destroy family ties and break a friendship,' what is the main subject of the sentence?
332. S1: Drinker.
333. T: Drinker, and what is the main verb?
334. S1: Destroy.
335. T: And we have an object?
336. S6: Destroy (the object)
337. (1.0)
338. T: Family tie and we have another verb, break up, friendship, right?
339. (1.0)
340. T: What about in between?
341. T: What does, (2.0) what kind of word is who?
342. (2.0)
343. S6: Adjective?
344. S1: Adjective, who, we don't need- uh we need uh:: the:: ( ) who adjective.
345. T: What does, (2.0) what kind of word is who?
346. S1: Relative
348. T: Relative pronoun, just like ( ) which was relative pronoun, who was relative pronoun for a person, right, so who is referring to?
349. (1.0)
350. S1: Drinker.

50 Young (1992) finds in IRE sequences a process in which "the teacher as an authority on the subject matter is converted into being in authority not just over the conduct of the work of the classroom but over the subject matter." (p. 111)
51 But, see McHoul (1978) for a different undertaking of classroom discourse.
355. T: //Drinker, referring back to drinker, and what is the complete clause?
356. (1.0)
357. T: Who:
358. S1: Was.
359. S?: ( )
360. S1: Is, is, is...
361. T: //Who’s addicted?
362. S1: Is.
363. T: How far do I go? (.) through the alcohol, and you are telling me to put in
364. a verb, right, cause what do we have, addicted is- is what?
365. S1: It’s verb transitive, or: adjective
366. T: The adjective form, () so we need a verb, what verb we’re gonna use?
367. S1: //Is
368. S1: Is.
369. ((The teacher is putting ‘is’ in the board))

Note the sheer number of questions that the teacher produces in this short excerpt and also the different array of interpretive work each of this question displays and requires of the students.

This series of questions are sequentially tied as each question becomes a base for the next one: the teacher’s question in line 343 “what about in between?” is produced under the sequential context where the teacher already asked about the main subject (line 331-333) and the main verb (line 335) before. Notice also that some of the teacher’s questions become interpretive clues that help students to find the answers. For example, the teacher’s question in line 351-552 and 355 tell the students where to look to find the answer: the teacher’s question in line 355 “what is the complete clause?” becomes a clue in that if one knows what the complete clause involves, then, s/he would figure out what is wrong in the sentence under consideration. The last question in line 363-364 shows a different kind of questioning: this time, the teacher begins her remark with elaborating S1’s answer “you are telling me to put in a verb” and uses it for her next question, “cause what do we have, addicted is what?”

The array of work involved in the teacher’s questions displays her competence through which she demonstrates how she understands what the students know, and brings interpretive resources to them. The analytic task of the present study is to describe how these interpretive and pedagogical tasks are accomplished in the course of real-time interaction.
The indexicality of questions

The indexicality of natural language refers to how language utterances are not independent of the contextual, sequential and local occasions in which they are used. Language utterances alone are inherently incomplete and indefinite and therefore, sense making is always accomplished through the members’ interactional negotiation. Teacher questions also manifest this indefinite properties and therefore, it is through the interactional exchanges with her students, not through the semantic analysis of the utterances, that the questions take an sense and meaning.

This is not a complaint. Rather, it opens up an analytic possibility that treats the questioning and answering process as interactional accomplishments managed through the interactional exchange by the teacher and her students. For example, note in the following segment how the teacher and her students find the teacher’s initial questions indefinite and come to terms with it in the subsequent turns.

524807
((The teacher and students have been discussing teachers in East-Asian countries and in America))
558. T: So teachers are considered not only- experts at what they teach also
559. important spiritual guides, do you think that’s true in America?
560. S?: No.
562. T: Is this how, teachers as experts, what about in America?
563. ((Writing down things on the OHD))
564. (5.0)
565. T: What’s the opposite, what do you think?
566. (1.0)
567. S2: They are friendlier.
568. S1: A kind of job.
569. S2: I mean what are you- what are you saying?
570. T: Teaching, talk about teachers, how are teachers looked in America?
571. (1.0)
572. T: Teachers as experts means they are:: are well::
573. S1: Respected=
574. T: =Respected, are teachers respected in America?
575. S?: Yeah.
576. S1: //Yes, I mean like we respect you but I don’t know about what’s what’s
577. America ( )
578. T: //() Not talk about me, but in general, as a profession ( ) is he, in
579. general as a profession, teachers are not respected in America.
580. (1.0)
581. S1: Really?
582. T: Hum,.. Nice puzzled look on your faces, no, doctors lawyers, teachers no.

143
S2: I guess we got confused because are we, are we, are we, this group here, are we, do you mean the American groups or Asian-

T: //I am trying- //You are looking at what she says in her article, (.) OK, she is saying, that teachers are respected, and so we know she is contrasting this with America., right, she is writing this probably for American teachers teaching ESL with East-Asian students.

The teacher’s question in line 558-559 turns out to be indefinite as the subsequent questions and answers display. For example, a couple of students are asking for clarification (569 and 576-577) and there is a confusion about which group is being referred to (583-584). That is to say, the above exchange shows that the teacher and her students find the teacher’s question indefinite in the course of action, and therefore, they become engaged in the interactional negotiation to question, elaborate, challenge and reformulate the question.

This indexical nature of language use therefore implicates a completely different approach to the teachers’ questions. Rather than imposing any external criteria to prescribe the correct way of asking questions, the present analysis examines how it is that the teacher and her students display their understanding of what goes on and come to terms with the problems at hand. Only then, can one see actual pedagogical work that is involved in the teacher’s questions. Note in the following excerpt how the teacher and her student (S1) manage the indefinite properties of the teacher’s question in line 438-440.

(They have just discussed different writing styles of East-Asian students))

T: Tell you what, not thinking about this topic, if I ask you (.) to tell me the biggest difference between your home culture and American culture, what would it be, what’s the first thing?

SI: Students are different.

T: No, no, no, that’s the thing you wake up this morning, I think, students are different, what do you think what is the biggest-

S0: //language.

T: Language, what else?

(3.0)

S1: Teaching system is different.

T: Talking about life not talking about school.

(laughter)

S1: I am sorry.
452. S?: Behavior.
453. T: Behavior, what kinds of behavior?
454. (5.0)
455. T: Like on the street behavior, behavior at home, (.) greetings.

Note that the teacher’s question in line 438-440 comes with her signal that she is shifting the topic “Tell you what, not thinking about this topic” (line 438).

S1’s response to the teacher’s question displays how he understands the teacher’s question, and his answer centers on the academic character “students are different.” This answer receives a severe negative feedback from the teacher; it is not an answer to the question she intended. Similarly, S1’s next remark “teaching system is different” gets another negative feedback by the teacher for its focus on academic features. This time, the teacher provides an explicit formulation of what she meant: “Talking about life, not talking about school.” Other students’ answers receive more positive feedback from the teacher: for example, “language” by S0 and by another student “behavior.”

While the teacher’s feedback on S1’s answers have been negative, her feedback shows that the teacher learns how her initial question was understood and based on that understanding, she organizes her next comment (443-444 and 449). In other words, the teachers’ negative feedback becomes interpretive resources, as they informs the students about the kind of question she is asking, and kind of answers she is expecting. Similarly, the teacher’s remark in line 455 is the outcome of her analysis of what the students were doing in line 454: she hears the students’ silence in line 454 as a remark on the sense of her question in 453, and therefore organizes her next turn to offer more specified examples “like on the street behavior, behavior at home, greeting.” To sum, the above description displays the interpretive work of understanding embedded in the teacher’s questions as she identifies what becomes problematic from the students’ answers and determine what to do next.

The following sequence shows another case in which the teacher recognizes that her question remains indefinite and therefore provides extensive reformulations.

122504
((The teacher and students are doing a grammar exercise on adverbial clauses. They are looking at a textbook))
284. T: OK, what you see here:: is a menu of different ways of creating adverbial
clauses, everybody see this, >Raymond, can you share with Jungkim < 286. you can this list (.) this is important because often you want to take two sentences and combine them into one sentence, right? Just like what I asks- us: what I asked you to do right now, you want to be able to combine your- sentences, why, why would you want to combine sentences?

(2.0)

T: Don’t think too hard here, this is not a big question, why would you want to combine sentences, I think Schemmer is wrong, (2.0) Schemmer treated Ginago like a slave, Schemmer must confess to god, Schemmer discriminates against Ginango ((The teacher is reading the sentences students have generated))

(2.0)

S9: Explain,

T: Es what?

S9: Explain,

(0.5)

S9: Explain.

(3.0)

T: Explain, but in general why would you want to combine sentences?

S?: //I don’t know.

S2: //I don’t know.

S?: Really continue the::

S?: ( )

S1: To tell the reason? Or::<

S?: //Reason?

S?: Explain why ( )

T: Aha.. you guys are all ( ) kind of too smart, you just- you just sometimes combine, your style is better, instead of saying >Schemmer is wrong<, >Schemmer discriminates<, >Schemmer treated Ginango like slave<, Schemmer bluh bluh bluh, sometimes you want to combine two sentences into one, just for your style, right, one way of doing that is adverbial clause, in this case we are looking at reasons explaining yourself, this is important to be able to do in your essay about Ginango, you are explaining whether you think different authority is unfair or whether you think Acho was treated unfairly, you need to be able to explain your reasons, this is good kind of menu to help you select different ways of connecting with adverbial clause.

The teacher’s question about why people combine sentences in their writing initially receives no response from the students (290). The teacher’s following comment in line 291 “Don’t think too hard here, this is not a big question” reflects that the teacher recognizes how her question is heard, and therefore, she provides extensive reformulations of the questions (292-294). Subsequently, several students try to answer, and yet the teacher does not get the answer she wants. Eventually, the teacher gives the answer herself in line 310-320.
That the teacher's questions are routinely indexical in nature is very instructive in understanding interactional exchanges in L2 classrooms, in that it directs our analytic focus to the interactional and contingent properties of talk-exchanges between the teacher and her students. Often, the teacher question leads to multiple sequences of talk in which the teacher finds the indexical properties of her questions, recognizes what become problematic and reformulates her questions.

**Steering the discourse**

Often, the teacher becomes involved in multiple exchanges with her students to convey the question and the kind of answer it projects. The teacher may find it necessary to ask preliminary questions before asking the main question. Accordingly, each question the teacher asks is often used to steer the discourse along a particular interactional trajectory. The following excerpt illustrates a case in point that each of the teacher's questions leads to a next course of actions.

315446

((The teacher and students are reviewing the articles they have read in preparation for midterm exam))

221. ► T: So tell me (.) what happened in Swallowing Cloth?

222. (2.0)

223. ► T: What was the main plot?

224. (1.0)

225. ► T: What was the main event?

226. (2.0)

227. S9: ( )

228. T: Junki?

229. S9: (Nurse gave birth illegitimate child)

230. (The teacher is writing down S9's answer)

231. S3: ( )

232. T: OK, then, what?

233. S7: ( )

234. T: Benarge?

235. S7: ( )

236. ► T: Boy, we have to- nurse gave birth an illegitimate child but- why did

237. ► the nurse freak- why Toshiko freaked out, freak out?

238. S1: ( )

239. S4: // ( )

240. S?: ( )

241. ((The teacher is writing on the board))

242. T: OK, the doctor wrapped the baby in newspaper?

243. (2.0)

244. T: Then, what happened?
In reviewing the story the students have read, the teacher began with a generic question (what happened?) in line 221, which receives no response from the student in line 222. In her following turn, the teacher reformulates her initial question (line 223 and 225), calling for the main plot; the teacher’s question becomes more specific and thus directional.

The teacher’s question in line 236-237 shows another case of steering work: she reformulates the student’s answer “nurse gave birth a illegitimate child” and then, asks a question “but why Toshiko freaked out?” This question is heard to highlight a particular aspect of the story, requiring the students to view the story from a particular point of view she is proposing. The teacher’s question in line 251-252 displays a similar steering works.

The steering work displayed in the teacher’s questions therefore demonstrates that each question performs a certain kind of interactional work; it brings out particular interpretive resources, makes use of the students’ answers, and thus guides the students through indefinitely possible hearing of the question. These acts of communications are essentially tied to and therefore contingent upon the teacher’s understanding of what students know at the given moment, which is itself derived from and occasioned by her ongoing exchange with the students. Note in the following excerpt how the teacher’s question is built upon the student’s response in previous turns.

120731
((The students are doing a three-minute free writing about an article they have read as an assignment))

33. T: OK, take a deep breath, who was Schemmer first of all?
34. S?: Overseer...
35. T: He was the overseer, so how was he involved in the story?
36. S1: By accident
37. (Laughter)
38. T: OK, can you explain that Jungkim?
39. S1: He was passing by the barracks, he heard aha::: some noise and duh:::
yelling from barracks he ( ), and he find the::: criminal activity=
40. T: =OK, it's kind of like, he was on patrol, walking around aha and
41. then, he heard the screaming and he went to check things out and what
42. did he find when he got there?
43. S?: Dead body
44. S?: /(/)
45. T: OK, a dead body and:::
46. S1: Five suspect.
47. S?: /(/Five ( ).
48. T: Five suspects, five people he considered suspects, right, what did he
49. do, ( ) in that moment?
50. S?: Arrest.
51. S1: /(/)
52. T: He arrested them, what else did he do?

The exchange between the teacher and her student (line 34-35) establishes a particular
identity of the character ‘Schemmer’ as an ‘overseer,’ which becomes a basis for the next
course of action. That is to say, the teacher’s question in line 35 “how was he involved in
the story” is built upon the sequential context in which the teacher and her students
agreed that this character “Schemmer” was an overseer.

The teacher’s next question in line 42-43 “what did he find when he got there?”
comes after the teacher and her students agreed as to what happens in the story in line 39-
42. Similarly, the teacher’s question in line 49-50 “what did he do in that moment?” is
placed after the teacher and her students have confirmed that the overseer found five
suspects. The above series of questions demonstrate that the teacher’s questions are not
generated randomly, but display steering qualities, pulling into view particular properties
from the discourse.

The following segment also shows a teacher’s question (line 282-283) that points to
a particular way of understanding the story under consideration.

((The teacher and students are reviewing the articles they have read in preparation for
midterm exam))
279. T: OK, how about the Ginango?
280. (3.0)
281. S7: ( )

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The teacher's question in line 282-283 starts out with a generic "what's going on" and then, she characterizes the answer, "how does the story become somewhere?" This question invites the students to attend to the story in the way that the teacher describes; the students are asked to view the story in reference to the teacher's characterization of what happens: the story becomes somewhere. This is a method of talking that the teacher displays, bringing out particular interactional resource for the students.

Questions become clues

The previous section shows how the teacher's questions direct her students to particular pedagogical and interactional trajectories as the teacher organizes her questions to become clues that lead to the final answers. One of the primary resources for the teacher to build her questions in this way is the students' response; by looking into the students' responses, she recognizes what becomes problematic and infers what needs to be done. Note the following segment where the teacher reformulates her question differently after she hears the students' silence to her initial question.

124242

(The teacher and her students are discussing the sentences written by the students))

421. T: The sentence up here, uhu, "I think he didn't act fairly, (1.5), although
422. he treated Ginango like slaves," number, number two? If we change
423. because to although, it-, it's still adverbial clause, but does that meaning
424. hold, does that work?
425. (1.0)
426. T: I think he did not act fairly, although he treated Ginango like slaves?
427. (1.0)
428. T: Logically, does that work?
429. (2.0)
430. T: What does although mean?
431. (2.0)
432. S?: ( )
433. S?: //Even though.
434. S4: Despite,
435. T: Even though:: it means contrast, look at all those here, where is it,
436. right here, contrast, OK, so, we need to be sure use-, use right medicine,
437. ( ) for the right symptom, OK?

The teacher's remark in 426 responds to the student turn that was not taken in line 425 and therefore, she repeats her question. Repeating one's remark often displays how the speaker of the turn understands the intervening turn: in this case, the teacher might think that the students did not understand or hear the question.

This question, however, is followed by another silence in line 427. To this silence, the teacher reformulates her question “Logically, does that work?” In comparison to the previous question, this reformulation brings out a different resource for the students; this question invites the students to attend to a logical relation among the components of the given utterance. While produced as a question, this remark becomes a clue that suggests a way of figuring out what the questions (line 421-426) are looking for.

Similarly, the following segment shows that the teacher's question contains an important clue for the students to figure out what they must do to answer it.

124454
((They are doing a grammar exercise from a textbook))
441. T: Let's try number one, I bought all my textbooks, (.) a time clause,
442. S7: Yesterday.
443. T: Let's make a time:: clau::se, now, Benarge said, yesterday,
444. S?: ( )=
445. ▶ T: =What is it-, hhhh, no, ( ), what is a clause, what do you
446. ▶ have to, have to have a clause?
447. S4: Subject and verb.
448. T: Uhu what?
449. S?: Subject and verb?
450. T: ( ) too fast, I didn't understand, aha, subject plus verb, so that
451. yesterday is just:: and that,
452. S3: I bought all my textbook,
453. T: //So can you make a clause, I bought all my textbook.
454. S3: After::, after the quarter.
455. S2: After quarter hahaha
456. (laughter)
457. T: After the quarter, is that a clause?
458. S?: Yeah.
459. S4: No, no, no, no.
460. S?: ( 
461. T: After the clause, that is a phrase, it doesn't have a verb, after:
462. S4: After I finish=
463. T: =After I have lunch, after I finish lunch.

The teacher's question in line 445-446 begins with the question, "what is a clause?" and then, she reformulates it into "what do you have to have a clause?" The reformulated question is quite different from the first one as it highlights a particular property, namely, the structural components of clause. This formulation therefore becomes more specific about the question, by narrowing down the way of speaking that would constitute its answer.

Similarly, the following segment contains a teacher's question (787-788) that is designed to help the student find a word meaning.

525816
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on difference in reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))
769. T: Classic book, that whole paragraph is about classic book and then, she
770. the third, one two three four, the fourth line from the bottom, she talked
771. about Chinese as opposed to the vernacular form, what is vernacular?
772. S2: ( with gesturing)
773. T: Those are binocular.
774. S2: ( where is
775. S1: //the same thing?
776. T: No, no, bin-n-ular, ver-nacular.
777. S2: So we are talking binacular right?
778. T: What?
779. S2: What are we talking about?
780. T: We are talking about the word that here, vernacular.
781. (1.5)
782. T: The third line to the bottom?
783. (2.0)
784. T: Third line from the bottom.
785. S2: Uh ah.
786. T: This is where we probably underline the word, figure out, what
787. do you think the opposite of classic might be?
788. S2: Uh modern, fiction?
789. T: Something modern, something fiction?
790. (2.0)
791. S2: Something maybe even informal like slang.
792. (2.0)
793. T: Maybe I just put slang so you can keep that in mind.
This exchange is concerned with the meaning of the term 'vernacular' (line 771). After a series of questions and answers that shows that the students did not find the question, the teacher asks a question that uses a different interpretive resource (786-787); she uses a word “classic.” This question displays a distinctive method of talking by the teacher showing meaning by invoking its opposite. The teacher reasons that the students know what “classic” means and uses that common sense knowledge to help them figure out what “vernacular” means.

The following segment shows another case where the teacher’s display questions become a resource for her students in making sense of a prior question.

025757
((The teacher and her students are discussing the final exam))

339. T: Are teachers who complain (.) that educational technology is making their workload, like the work they have to do, (.) too heavy, are they reasonable or unreasonable in their complaint?

340. S?: ( )

341. T: Reasonable?

342. S?: ( )

343. T: Oh, the idea is this, what does your teacher do in their job, what do we do, you see me three days a week (.) so is that all we do?

344. S5: No.

345. T: Now, Columbus State, they only pay me when I am in the classroom but am I working only when in the classroom?

346. S5: ( )

347. T: I have to grade, I have to do preparation, I have to meet students, (.) then, the idea of, of technology is it takes time to put something out of webpage, you have to learn how to do it, you have to do all that, some teachers say, ‘aha, it’s too much work,’ like what we do in the journal this quarter, I don’t know any other teachers do that, ( ) too much work.

The teacher’s task in line 345-346 is to explain the passage about the teachers’ work load and she accomplishes this by making a series of questions in line 345-346 and 348-349. Making her questions rhetorical in ways that point to affirmative answers (e.g. “...is that all we do?”), the teacher establishes her point about the teacher work load, interactionally.
Breaking down questions

The above examples have shown how teacher questions afford an array of resources, putting them together in sequentially recognizable manners. Among these resources, teachers are often seen to break one question into several sub components in order to deal with the preliminary issues before going back to the primary issue. Note in the following example that the teacher comes to find out that the students are having trouble with a word in the given passage and therefore, she addresses that problem first.

532155
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on differences in reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))
1070. T: ESL teachers, ESL reading instructors have the difficult task of finding appropriate instructional approaches, to help redress limitations of students reading habits, (2.0) what does that mean?
1071. SI: ( )
1072. ► T: What is the word mean redress?
1073. SI: Hahaha,
1074. ► T: Not get dress, that's kind of different meaning here,
1075. SI: Different meaning here?
1076. ► T: And it's nothing to do with taking off putting clothes on, if you redress a problem, you kind of fix it, and this case she talks about redress the limitations, she's talking about fixing limitation, so what is the problem she is describing?
1080. redress the limitations, she's talking about fixing limitation, so what is the problem she is describing?

The teacher’s question in line 1074 shows what she figures became problematic for her students in the passage. Before discussing the overall meaning of the passage (line 1080-1081), therefore, she addresses the word “redress”, as this word is essential for understanding the whole passage. Note that her analysis of their difficulty turns out to be an target, at least for SI.

The following segment displays a more extended sequence in which the teacher leaves the larger question to deal with a question by a student (S2) who is having trouble understanding what “transfer” means (971-980). Note how the teacher accomplishes this task of helping the student understand the word.

530935
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))
971. T: What she is saying is transfer of not words, not translating words for words, but transfer of skills, so keep this in mind, we'll gonna look at that a little more, uhmm what she is saying, this is kind of, this is almost ( .)
974. almost her hypothesis, (.) that she is promoting and she is gonna try to try
975. to prove idea that these students are reading in English just like they are
976. reading in their first language, that’s why they are having some trouble in
977. English, I am not going to tell you about how they read their first language
978. OK, this is a big turning point, right here, in the article page, 38, a big
979. turning point you might want to put a star next to that (.) paragraph.
980. S3: Star.
981. T: Just so that you find ( ) page 38, transfer what they know
982. about reading process.
983. (3.0)
984. ► S2: I don’t understand about this.
985. (1.0)
986. ► T: What is your first language James?
987. ► S2: Korean.
988. ► T: What is your second language?
989. ► S2: English
990. ► T: OK, she is saying that (.) you as an East-Asian will read English using the
991. same kind of strategies, like you have on the board, (.) as you do in Korean.
992. S2: Of course, we do, isn’t everybody doing that?
993. T: Uh::, that’s debatable, that’s debatable, that’s what the part of the whole
994. debate is about.

In addressing the student’s problem in 984, the teacher breaks her question into a series
of questions (984 and 988) and the student (S2) provides an answer to each question.
When the teacher explains what “transfer” means in later turns (990-991), she is using
specific references that S2 used when he answered the teacher’s questions. By breaking
the question into a series, she makes the question more answerable for the students, and
uses those answers in her subsequent account.

While the above side sequence is triggered by the students’ question, the teacher
often finds the need to break down her questions into manageable units in the very course
of asking them. In the following segment the teacher sidetracks to ask questions
embedded in the course of asking her central question.

521953
((The teacher is talking about the article on East-Asian students writing))
373. T: She is talking about how East-Asians have been taught to read and
374. she says they have been taught to read very locally.
375. S0: Yeah.
376. (2.0)
377. ► T: And she is trying to explain to- who, who do you think she is writing
378. ► this audience- writing this paper for, who do you think her audience is?
379. S?: Teachers
380. S1: Da- da::
The teacher in line 377-378 is trying to explain what the author of the article claims and then, she stops and asks a question about the readership for the assigned article in line 378. This is the first question of a series in which the teacher probes further about the source of the article, “what journal does this come from,” and about the readership of the identified journal in line 384 “so who do you think read college ESL?” The students are able to answer each of these questions, which become bases for the teacher to build her next account (line 389-393) where the teacher characterizes the author’s claim.

The following segment shows a similar case where the teacher breaks one issue (662-663) into several questions to demonstrate her points.

525317
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))

662. T: What about the next paragraph, students in Asian classrooms offer little input to the class, what is this about?

663. T: What does she mean by input, OK-, the next paragraph?

664. (5.0)

665. T: What does she mean by input, OK-, the next paragraph?

666. (2.0)

667. S9: (participation)

668. T: Participation, classroom participation in interaction, in East-Asian classrooms that she described that who talk?

669. T: Participation, classroom participation in interaction, in East-Asian classrooms that she described that who talk?

670. S1: Teachers.

671. S?: ( )

672. T: OK, in American classroom, who talk?

673. S1: Both.

674. T: Both, (1.0) good answer, Jungkim, OK,

675. (2.0)

676. S?: (Sometimes )

677. T: Sometimes?

678. S?: ( )

679. T: Sometimes no depending on, if you go to one of those big lectures
680. chemistry 101 are you gonna talk?
681. S?: No
682. S?: //No
683. T: No way:::

The teacher's first question is met by a long silence in line 664 and subsequently, the teacher and her students narrow the issue down to the matter of "participation" (line 667-668). The teacher's subsequent turn is heard to explain the participation in Asian classrooms and she accomplishes this through breaking the issue into two questions that are contrastive; the teacher asks about who talks in Asia and in America. The answers to these questions in turn become bases for the teacher to explain how the participation issue is presented in the given article.

**Accountability**

The accountability in the present section concerns the cases where the teacher challenges the students to qualify their answers; that is to say, the teacher uses her third turn to ask the students if they understand the significance or rationale when they offer their answers, as in the next sequence.

415440
((The teacher is discussing criteria students should use when they do peer-review))

116. T: Topic sentences, what else?
117. S?: (Su )
118. S3: //Supporting () sentence,
119. (1.0)
120. S3: ( )
121. T: //OK::
122. (1.0)
123. ► T: So what does that mean?
124. S3: Evidence,
125. S6: Quotation from all the text
126. ► T: //Quotation, and what do you need to make sure that you do
127. ► quotation from::?:
128. S1: Text but but,
129. T: From all::: the texts.
130. S?: //All::
131. T: OK? this assignment requires to leave you, to quotations from all the
texts, right? what else do you need to look for?
132. S1: And:: examples,
133. T: Examples you can also use::,
134. ► T: ((Writing on the board)) these two form your evidence
The teacher's question in line 123 asks for the accountability of the answer in line 118 "supporting sentence"; this question is not calling for the meaning of the utterance, but the relevance of the answer in terms of the task at hand. Similarly, note in the subsequent turns in line 126-136 where the teacher establishes that "examples" and "quotations" form the evidence; here, what becomes issue is not the semantic meanings of "example" or "quotations," but their functional roles in a familiar task. The purpose of the question is therefore directed to see if the students understand the import of each answer. Another case of calling for accountability is seen in the following sequence.

521248
((The teacher is explaining two different kinds of reading strategies))
232. T: There is an understanding (2.0) that you sometimes read for global understanding, (.) what do you think that means?
233.  
234.  
235. S4: Whole, whole thing?
236. T: Whole thing, that you read for the whole thing, (.) what is the whole thing?
237.  
238. S?: Everything.
239. S4: //Everything ( )
240. S1: //Story.
241. T: Everything in entire essay- does that mean you read the entire essay?
242. (2.0)
243. S4: And try to capture uh lar::ge (.) understanding.
244. T: A lot of understanding, you try to catch but main glo::bal understanding
245. (. ) all right I call I just right global understanding.

The teacher's third turn 236 accepts the answer "whole thing," and it also asks for its meaning: "what is whole thing." While the teacher accepts S? and S4's answer "everything" in the subsequent turn (line 241), she then asks another question which is designed to relate these 'definitions' to the practical task at hand: "does that mean you read the entire essay?" This question and its answer then return the teacher to the original question with new, and local resource for answering it, which she does in 245.

The following segment shows that the teacher is trying to have students identify the rationales behind their activities.

825853
((Each group found a quote that would represent Clinton case from newspaper and put them on OHP))
254. T: =OK, now remember I asked you, just do informational, (.) how does this one start?
256. (1.0)
257. S1: We think.
258. S3: Eee.
259. ▶ T: We think Clinton is only guilty to his wife, (3.0) OK, now, (.) let me
260. ▶ before we we break this apart, what, Benarge, what'd this assignment like,
261. ▶ what kind of writing you were doing there?
262. ▶ S7: Informative writing
263. S1: ( )
264. ▶ T: //Informative writing, what- how are we putting the information together?
265. ▶ S7: Synthesizing
266. ▶ T: Synthesizing, OK, I wanted to stop and do a little synthesis exercise ( )
267. ▶ you remember that synthesis is not necessarily opinion, OK, particularly, in
268. ▶ your group essay, I'd look (all those again), OK, so probably, don’t want to
269. ▶ a comment like this, we think Clinton is guilty, so.

Note that the teacher’s question in line 260-261 is occasioned by the answer by S1 “We think.” Through this question, the teacher reminds the students of the rationale behind the activities that are underway: “what kind of writing you were doing here?” Later the teacher’s questions elicits the students answer about “informative writing” (line 262) and “synthesizing” (265), based on which the teacher provides summative remark as to why she had the students do the task they are doing.

**Conclusion**

The present analysis takes a procedural approach in investigating teacher questions in L2 classrooms. The properties of the questions are described by looking into how the members treat their questioning and answering process in actual sequences of talk. Accordingly, the sequential organization of question and answers is the primary analytic resource for the parties and the analyst alike, as it makes it possible to describe the interpretive work of understanding questions across the production of their exchange.

It was noted first that questions are not self-sufficient and their meanings are often indefinite, and therefore, how questions are made answerable is largely left to the interactional exchanges between the teacher and her students. The sense and relevance of the given questions are constantly challenged, elaborated and negotiated as the teacher assesses student understanding, finds her interpretive resources, and accomplishes the pedagogical task in the course of discursive action.

Accordingly, the teacher’s questioning often involves multiple sequences in which multiple pedagogical and interactional tasks are embedded. The teacher uses
questions to steer the discourse in particular ways, and some questions become clues for the next questioning sequence. Often, the teacher breaks the question down into several smaller sequences where she addresses the preliminary issues before moving onto the next or prior sequences.

Dealing with L2-ness

What makes the language classroom unique is that language teachers weave through numerous occasions where their nonnative students produce incomplete, inadequate and/or incorrect language utterances. The bulk of L2 research has explored this issue and reported various types of errors and their possible sources (Corder, 1981; Edge, 1989; James, 1998; Richards, 1974). The focus of the present study is, however, not on identifying types of errors or evaluating their influences. Instead, it intends to describe the practical methods of talking as the teacher comes to terms with the language productions of her students.

While previous research traditions may have us believe that L2 interaction and its troubles are to be screened out for pedagogical remedies, they often gloss over and thus take for granted how indeed language teachers deal with L2 discourse in the course of a lesson; for example, how she recognizes that a given utterance has become problematic, figures out what the intended meaning was, draws inferences from available resources, asks for clarification or at times, let it pass. That the teacher manages learner languages (Ellis, 1994) is a mark of her professional and interactional competence, through which the teacher carries out her daily work of teaching. The following section presents a collection of analyses that describes how the teacher comes to terms with problematic L2 sequences.

Figuring out what students mean

One of the most familiar tasks for L2 language teachers is to make out the language utterances that are not immediately sensible; these utterances consist of wrongly chosen words or expressions that are put together in imperfect discourse structures. The following excerpt illustrates the case in point.
321227
((Students are asking about midterm essay exam that is scheduled in the following day))

456. ▶ S1: How many papers do I make?

457. S4: Yeah, how long do we have to write?

458. ▶ S1: //How many paper:::

459. ▶ T: How many pages?

460. S?: Yeah.

461. T: Oh, 6 would be good.

In this segment, both S1's question (line 456 and 458) is not produced in a normal form. Yet the teacher's following remark (line 459) shows that she figures out what the student meant and reformulates the question: "How many pages?" After her question is confirmed by the student, the teacher goes ahead to answer: "oh, 6 would be good." The next segment shows a similar case where the teacher deals with the problem with the student's question before she answers the question (line 517).

321431
((The teacher and her students are talking about the midterm exam that is scheduled for the following day))

501. T: You need to watch, you need to watch your time cause you need to give

502. yourself time- we are gonna grade- as if you have time.

503. S1: (That's )

504. T: So you have to, you have to take a watch and plan your time,

505. S2: ( )

506. T: Don't spend an hour on your first body paragraph.

507. (2.0)

508. T: OK?

509. S4: No summary?

510. T: You won't need to do a summary.

511. S7: //(

512. ▶ S7: We have to have three::: bodies?

513. (1.0)

514. ▶ T: Three body paragraphs,

515. (laughing)

516. S7: Three body paragraphs,

517. T: Uh hum, not necessarily, that's that's generally what you see.

The S1's question in line 512 is about what needs to be included in their midterm essay test. Note this question is followed by a noticeable silence by the teacher (line 513), indicating that the teacher is considering this utterance. The teacher's subsequent turn shows that she figures out what the problem is in S7's remark and reformulates the question in her answer (line 514).
While figuring out imperfect utterances is a routine interactional task for language teachers, this often involves more than understanding a word or two. Sometimes, the teacher is faced with the task of unscrambling multiple utterances or filling in multiple gaps. In the following excerpt, the teacher elaborates on the student's question about writing a group essay that was not sufficient in providing the details necessary for an answer.

215043
95. T: ( ) but what I want to do is to make sure you understand
96. the goal, the main goal of the assignment, you are talking information
97. and- from different sources and putting it together into one, yes.
98. ➤ S7: Aha.. do we have to read a like, aha, supposed to read, aha...(2.0)
99. ➤ an essay and then, combine it or:
100. ➤ T: I: would not recommend you each try essay and try to combine it, you
101. ➤ need to write one essay between all of you as a group.

S7's question in line 98-99 is about the group writing assignment and yet, it does not have all the necessary details that would make sense to us.

Note however that the teacher's subsequent remark in line 100-101 shows that she identifies what was intended. First, the teacher recognizes that the student (S7) was describing two options for the task and therefore, she began with discommending one option that S7 was pointing to in her question: "I would not recommend you each try essay and try to combine it." This remark is therefore produced as an elaboration of what S7 was trying to say in her question in the teacher's answer. This is followed by an additional comment by the teacher describing what she recommends them to do: "You need to write one essay between all of you as a group." This segment shows how the teacher sorts through fragmented the phrases of the question in producing her answer.

While the above segments show that the teacher recognizes what the students meant almost immediately, she is not so lucky in the following segment.

121108
((The students have just finished three-minute free writing task on an article they have read as an assignment. They are discussing one of the characters in the story))
125. T: How many of you said, the question was, discuss your opinion of
126. Schemmer, did he act fairly?
127. S?: No
128. T: How many of you said no?
129. ((Several hands up))
130. T: Hum, OK, ( ), my goodness, what were your reasons?
131. ▶ S2: Discriminating.
132. ▶ S6: ( )
133. ▶ T: ( ) he just discriminated?
134. (5.0)
135. ▶ T: Because what he said?
136. (2.0)
137. ▶ T: We- we know something's wrong, and what did he say?
138. S?: ( )
139. T: So ( ), OK, what else, other reasons?
140. S1: //He:: deceived himself?
141. T: He deceived himself? OK, any other reasons?

The teacher’s remark in line 130 asks the students to give the reasons why they gave a negative answer about one character, Schemmer, from the story they have read. Note that the student (S1) produced a one word answer: discriminating.

In order to make sense of this answer, the teacher begins with placing the answer in a sentential form (line 133): “he just discriminated?” This is heard to ask for clarification from S6: ‘is this what you mean?’ but there is no response from the student (line 134) and the teacher speculates further. This time, she is trying to figure out the rationale behind his answer: ‘you are saying ‘he discriminated’ because what he said?’ This question does not receive any response from the student either and therefore, she goes back to the source of her question: “what did he say?” (line 137). Although this series of questions did not elicit answers from the students, they demonstrate the kind of interpretive tasks that the teacher has to carry out as she makes sense of the incomplete answers produced by the L2 students: asking for clarification, elaborating on what was said, projecting questions in different ways, and clarifying questions in her answers.

This task is often more than the matter of replacing the incorrect versions with the correct ones. Rather, the teacher’s task is sequential and contingent upon what goes on; she relates the utterances to the task at hands, estimates what the students know, and pull together analytic resources that are available. Through this work of understanding, the teacher makes sense of the students and makes possible the continuation of whatever instructional tasks are underway.
Making use of context

It is noted in the previous section that the teacher’s task of discerning the intended meaning from the L2 utterances involves interpretive tasks of understanding. Among them is the ways the teacher makes use of the relevant context. This term ‘context’ has become a buzzword in L2 analytic literature, especially since Hymes urged us to take into account the social context in understanding communicative competence (Hymes, 1972b). Yet, context can mean many things. The description of context in the present section on how local and sequential context is put to use as the teacher deals with the L2 utterances produced by her nonnative students. Note the following excerpt to see how the teacher is able to complete the sentence that a student (S3) was not able to.

320846
((The teacher and students are reviewing the articles they have read))
403. T: OK, Daijin, what do you think here?
404. (3.0)
405. T: What similarity do you see?
406. S3: Hup, uhm:: they are both fool- they both are fool.
407. T: Fool:: of what?
408. S3: //Yeah
409. S3: Fool of, (.), because To- Toshi, uhu Toshiko, she is oversensitive,
410. overreacting,
411. T: OK
412. ► S3: And Acho (.) didn’t::
413. (2)
414. ► T: Didn’t react.
415. S3: OK.

Note in line 409-410 that the student (S3) is explaining why he thinks that two characters in the article are fools; S3 gives a reason for one character (Toshiko). In the subsequent turn (line 412), S1 is trying to give a reason for the second character (Acho) but he can not complete his sentence as his last phrase is trailing off.

The teacher’s remark in line 414 comes after a noticeable silence in line 413 that indicates that the teacher is waiting for the student to finish his sentence. Recognizing that S1 is not able to finish his utterance, the teacher completes the sentence by adding a word “didn’t react.” That the teacher comes up with the word “react” is instructive about what kinds of interpretive work of understanding she has to perform; not only did the
teacher have to be familiar with the story but also relate the story to the way S3 formulated the characters (being fool). The next example shows a similar case where the teacher is able to complete what one student (S3) began in line 90.

614231
79. T: What are your questions?
80. S3: You know (.) basically I:: I guess uh:: the- I, I text- ar- article firom (.)
81. her her umm Sung,
82. S1: ( )?
83. T: ( ) Sung, the first one ( )=
84. S3: =Yeah, I, I, I think what- what she did is just- contrast, contrast, the uh::
85. you know, East-Asian read- reader styles and American reader style and
86. teaching styles something like that,
87. T: Uh hum=
88. S3: =And then, (2.0) and the guy, ain- da:: her, Phu?
89. T: Uh hum.
90. S3: She, she, she describes about the uh:: her- ( ) you know:
91. T: Her writing experience.
92. S3: //Her own experience, so then, (.) my problem is you know, when I
93. write you know outline or composition for this?

S3’s question is produced through multiple turns (80-81, 84-86, 88 and 90) each of which becomes a basis for the next utterance. Accordingly, the teacher’s phrase (line 91) that completes S3’s comment demonstrates how the teacher monitors closely the entire sequence, recognizing how the questions are organized and even more, projecting where this question is going. That is to say, the teacher’s remark (line 91) displays the interpretive work of understanding in which the teacher recognizes what goes on in the sequence and collaboratively completes the students’ turn.

The teacher’s interpretive work is also shown in cases where the teacher continues a student’s remark for the rest of the cohort as seen in the following example.

531206
((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on reading))
1029. T: And then these are English letters, (.) some languages that people use to
1030. communicate with don't have any letters or characters or symbols anything-
1031. S2: //What can do that?
1032. T: You talk, you don't write anything down.
1033. S2: What can you say how ( )
1034. T: //Most language, most languages do have written
1035. forms but- (.) languages like Kmri don't have a written form.
1036. S1: Because of that, some country use the English alphabet.
1037. S2: OK, I understand, I understand, I understand ( ).

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The above interaction involves an exchange where S4 is trying to explain to another student (S2) that there are some languages that do not have written forms.

Note S4's remark (line 1040-1042) attempts to give examples of the regions where languages without written forms could be found and he is using the phrase "local area." This phrase "local area" remains problematic because it does not point to a particular regions that are contrastive to America or Asia as the teacher had mentioned earlier (line 1035). The teacher's overlapping remark (line 1043-1044) takes S4's phrase "if you go" and completes it to illustrate what S4 meant by "local area.": "there are tribal languages in Africa." Her repetition and completion demonstrates how she follows the discourse closely, recognizes what becomes problematic in S2's description and clarifies the ambiguous utterance.

The above examples show how dealing with L2 utterances involves more than correcting linguistic errors, it entails the competence to recognize and make use of the sequential contexts that are evolving continuously through interaction. The following example demonstrates this contextualizing work by the teacher as she responds to each of S2's question in line 71 and 75-76.

014129
((The teacher is explaining the writing portfolio assignment))
66. T: Yeah, Toshi.
67. S3: Do you still need outline of something?
68. T: Yeah, if you are gonna to choose to turn the third assignment, the third essay as a part of your portfolio, you should have everything in there that is in your folder for the third assignment.
71. S3: Even (include) class writing?
72. (1.0)
T: If you choose the third assignment, that's not your in-class writing.
S3: I mean, I mean, we make like, you know, just five minutes writing.
T: Like a free write related to the assignment, yeah, OK, so if you choose to do that, make sure you photocopy it, because I am not gonna go looking for other folder when I grade your portfolio.

This exchange involves a discussion about what needs to be included in the students’ portfolio. The teacher’s account in line 68-70 uses ‘third assignment’ as an example to illustrate how to organize the content of the portfolio.

S3’s question in the following turn “Even (include) class writing?” shows what is problematic for S3 in hearing what is included in her example of “third assignment.” Thus, she clarifies the relevance ‘class writing’ to the third assignment she has been explaining. Hearing this, S3 repairs his question by formulating what he was referring to differently: “I mean, just five minute writing.” The teacher then recognizes what S3 is referring to: “Like a free write, yeah, OK.” This exchange displays how the teacher’s understanding relies on her understanding of the sequential context that is renewed in each turn at talk, as seen in S3’s repair in line 74.

Repairs

In classroom interactions, it is considered one of the primary tasks of the language teachers to make corrections when s/he finds a student’s remark inadequate or incomplete. The bulk of L2 research has pursued this line of research, endeavoring to find the optimal approach for error corrections (Corder, 1981; Edge, 1989; James, 1998; Richards, 1974). The present study however pursue a different analytic goal. Rather than imposing an external criteria of what constitutes an error, it intends to follow how the members recognize communication troubles and decide to repair them as they go, or, in other cases, how apparent linguistic errors are bypassed without explicit corrections.

The analytic goal behind this undertaking is to find a way to describe the procedural aspects in which the teacher deals with linguistic errors in the course of action. Note in the following excerpt how the teacher’s utterance demonstrates that she recognizes a linguistic error from the students’ remark, and repairs it as she goes.
S?: Toshiko ( )

(T:OK,( )Toshiko, what did she do first thought?)

S?: ( )

T: OK, (something like that) where is ( ), Toshiko thought- think

baby will kill her son, when?

S?: 20 years

T: In 20 years, so what happened in the end?

What is repaired in the above segment is S?’s answer “20 years.” By repairing this to ‘in 20 years,’ the teacher is giving continuity to the sentence she has been building in her previous turn (line 252-253): “Toshiko think the baby will kill her son in 20 years.” That is to say, this repair shows more than simply filling the missing word, but constructs the discourse to fit within the ongoing sequence of talk. The following excerpt shows a similar case of repair.

T: OK, let me have your attention before you start to read, let’s not, let’s (.) let me still have your eyeballs?::, still have your eyeballs up here, what are we going to look for, in terms of doing this peer review, what, what criteria are you looking at?

S1: Uh:: topic sentence.

T: OK, before that?

S5 : Thesis statement.

T: OK, let’s??? make sure you got a thesis statement?

((The teacher is writing on the board))

T: What else do we have (.) gentleman are you ready?

S3: Ahm::

T: Ready (.) Jungkim are you?

S?: ( )

S3: ( we- we only got one.)

S4: ( )

((Students are trying to see if they got all the copies they need)

T: ( ) so confusing.

S3: This is very Monday.

T: It’s definitely Monday, yes I know.
S3’s comment in 117 is meant to be a remark that characterizes what is happening at the moment: students are not quite ready for the class, scrambling to get ready for the lesson. In the subsequent turn, the teacher is seen to repair the use of adverb “very” in S3’s remark replacing it with “definitely,” and yet, this repair shows that the teacher recognizes the interpretive work that the student’s remark displays.

In contrast, the following excerpt shows a case where the teacher’s remarks display a more extensive treatment of the errors as she tries to find an alternative to the student’s expression in line 472.

125553
((The teacher and her students are doing grammar exercise in the textbook: making an adverbial clause))
469. T: Taehong, a single person live carefree life?
470. S0: ( )
471. T: What- what was that Taehong? While married person
472. ► S0: // ( ) lives carelife.
473. ► T: Lives a care:: life, OK, careless care:: that makes sense, unfortunately,
474. ► care is not the opposite to careless, maybe care::ful life?
475. S0: ( )
476. T: //I don’t know, care, what do we have, careful or careless,
477. S2: Careful.
478. T: //What ez careless mean? Carefree is ( ), carefree, what
does carefree mean?
479. S1: Don’t care.
480. S0: ( )
482. T: You have no worry, you are, you are free, tutututut, whatever you want
483. wherever you want.

S0’s answer in line 472 “carelife” is taken up by the teacher in the next turn in line 473-474, as she is trying to figure out what S0 meant by “carelife.” In this remark, the teacher is attempting to match different words to the sentence to figure out the source of the problem: “lives a care:: life, OK, careless care:: that makes sense” The teacher’s subsequent turn in line 474 displays that she figures out the problem: ‘S0 uses carelife as the antonym of careless life and therefore she suggests “careful life” for S0. This demonstrates the interpretive works of communication that goes into the repair process: the teacher has to figure out why the students are using the given utterances under what contexts and then find the adequate way of speaking.

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It is noted earlier that there are some occasions where the teacher's response is more than simple error correction, once the analytic focus is placed on how the members make sense of their interactional exchange. For example, in the following segment, the student (S2) and the teacher interpret what goes on in completely different ways.

121651
((Students were asked to write their opinions on one of the characters that appeared in the story they have read in one sentence))
178. T: OK, read me your whole sentence from the beginning.
179. S2: OK, in my opinion, Schemmer is discriminated against Chinago.
180. T: //Hang::: on in my opinion.
181. ((The teacher writing S2's sentence on the board))
182. T: Schemmer what?
183. S2: ( ) Schemmer is against, >Schemmer is discriminate against
184. Ginango<( )
185. T: Schemmer discrimin::ates, >discriminates is a verb<, discriminates?
186. S2: Schemmer is.
187. T: I am correcting your grammar as we go.
188. S2: //OK
189. T: Schemmer discriminates against,
190. S2: Ginango.
191. T: Ginangos.(.) is that it?
192. S2: OK.

In the above excerpt, the teacher is writing S2's sentence on the board which reads, "Schemmer is discriminate against Ginango." Her remark in line 186 shows that she is addressing the grammar problem with S2's answer, and writing the corrected version on the board. Yet, S2 hears this as the teacher's having a problem in understanding what he said in the sentence, for the purposes of writing it on the board; for the teacher, it is grammar, but for S2, it is understanding. The teacher's next turn in line 187 displays that she now hears how S2 understands her question in line 186 and therefore, she explains what she was doing "I am correcting your grammar as we go."

This segment therefore displays that the discourse is subject to interpretive work at each turn at talk; the members display how they understand each other in the course of action, which becomes a basis for them to determine what to say next. It has been the focus of the conventional research to develop categories of errors from L2 utterances, to
find optimal ways of correcting them. Yet, the above sequences demonstrate that the
members in talk-in-interaction find ways to deal with it, and do their own corrections,
then and there.

**Conclusion**

The present sections shows that while L2 utterances are infested with incomplete,
imperfect, incorrect phrases or expressions, they are parts of lively talk-in-interaction that
calls for immediate, contingent and recognizable communicative acts from the teacher;
she recognizes what is being said in reference to the task underway, finds what becomes
problematic in the foregoing turns, explores possible alternatives and repairs them in the
course of action. Often, students' utterances become concerned with matters of common
understanding that go beyond simple error correction, displaying how she understands
what the students are getting at, so that the lesson may proceed.

It has been the canonical approach to consider L2 discourse in reference to
external criteria such as grammatical integrity, sociolinguistic adequacy or topical
coherency, such that the sources of the problems are identified for pedagogical
interventions. This undertaking has often glossed over the ways in which student and
teachers are already engaged in their task, in which the teacher endeavors to figure out,
recognize, and reformulate the problematic utterances in the course of action. Whatever
solutions are presented by the teacher for addressing inadequate L2 utterances, it requires
the work of understanding, for example, consulting what the students know, recognizing
what becomes relevant in the foregoing sequences of talk, formulating other ways of
bringing up the matter for the student.

**Teaching through examples**

The present section furnishes a descriptive account of the organization and use of
examples, inquiring into how examples come about in real-time sequences of classroom
talk and what kinds of communicative actions they display. It is not the primary interest
of the present paper to classify examples according to some uniform criteria or to make
the issue of adequacy and/or accuracy of the given examples. Nor is this analysis meant
to promote a particular instructional approach. Rather, the principal focus of the analysis
is to provide descriptions of how examples are occasioned in the actual course of teaching, what they do in the evolving sequences of talk, what kinds of resources they make available and how students are oriented to them.

In prior studies, the properties of examples are pre-formulated in reference to the target concept. For example, the analytic focus is placed on mapping out relations between examples and concepts (Anderson, Fincham, & Douglas, 1997; Brown, 1992; Di Vesta & Peverly, 1984; Hamilton, 1989), not on how examples are used in the classroom and through what kinds of interactional and pedagogical acts of communication by the teacher. As a result, the detailed work of communication embedded in examples remain largely under-specified, at most taken-for-granted.

In contrast, the present approach focuses on the sequential order of classroom instruction by inquiring into the organization of examples. While the aforementioned studies looked into the corresponding relationship between principles and examples, the present study treats examples as a part of classroom routines and among the ordinary actions that teachers carry out, noting that examples can not be considered independently of the actual contexts in which they are produced. Note the following case to see how the teacher’s example in line 245-246 and 248 come off in the very course of action as she is describing a point of grammar.

122205
239. T: Jungkim wins brownie point for the day, adverb clauses, so::: how do
240. we know that, >in sentence number 2 and number 4< there is an adverb
241. clause other than the fact that I underlined them, what is an adverb clause,
242. how do you recognize them? (. ) why do we use?
243. (1.5)
244. S5: Describe,
245. ► T: Describe, kind of- an adverb, describes a verb, right? I walk slo:::wly,
246. ► >I walk quickly< right? Walking slo:::wly >quickly<?
247. S?: ( )
248. ► T: I may describe adjective too, I am VERY tired, OK, (1.0) now, what
249. about the sentences though?

First, note that the teacher’s example in line 245-246 is occasioned by the student’s answer in line 244 that responds to the teacher’s question in line 241-242. The teacher’s remark in line 245 therefore becomes a third turn as a feedback on the student’s answer.
(line 244): “I walk slo::wly, >I walk quickly< right? Walking slo::wly >quickly<?” That is to say, her examples are occasional, and contingent upon what goes on in the given sequence as a part of ordinary and routine practices of teaching. The analytic description therefore centers, not on the features of examples per se, but on how they come about in any given sequence and what kinds of resources they offer to the teacher.

**Indefinite nature of accounts and the role of example**

I have already mentioned that prior research on examples has relied on the binary correspondence between examples and concepts where the character of examples is pre-determined. Yet, the real-time discourse in the classroom setting shows that examples contain more than what this binary distinction suggests. Primarily, examples are often a part of larger pedagogical actions being carried out at the given moment, over a number of turns at talk.

The fact that some accounts and concepts require multiple examples indicates that they are far from being definite; their meaning is not something that is understood once-and-all-for. This is not a complaint that the speaker is unclear or ambiguous. Rather, it alludes to the inherent character of natural language; the meaning of a given utterance is not self-sufficient. Often, they require a great deal of interpretive works by the participants to manage the indexical nature of the talk (Garfinkel, 1967); how the students hear the account, what semantic or contextual properties are highlighted, and enacted by whom under what sequential context. Examples are often produced as a part of this interactional negotiation process in which the teacher becomes aware of the indexical nature of their accounts and can therefore provide an example(s) to clarify, demonstrate, prove and/or specify their meanings.

Note the following case where the teacher is trying to explain the difference between a global vs. local understanding of a text. If one takes ‘global’ and ‘local’ as definitions or accounts, her following examples bring about a series of actions to specify how she is using global and local, and how they ought to be heard.

521345

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52 What examples exemplify could be various things: an account, concept, principle, rule, claim, so on and so forth. Here, I simply use the term ‘account’ as a generic referent, although I will use a different term when it is needed.
((The teacher is explaining two different kinds of understanding: global vs. local understanding))

251. T: And over here:: what's the opposite of global?
252. S1: Local
253. T: ( )
254. S1: Local=
255. T: =Local, (2.0) these are two, sometimes contradictory ideas of reading,
256. global reading is when you take something and you just go scheme through,
257. you look for general understanding,
258. (1.0)
259. T: Like you might pick up the Lantern, (.) or famous newspaper, you might
260. just scheme through look for something to see if there is anything interesting,
261. you might say, "really nothing," local, Ohio kind of thing, maybe you are
262. looking word by word by word, you are looking for something specific,
263. Tommy was just looking for his copy of the article, he was looking for
264. something that look like the text that Eddie had, that had name Sung on it,
265. he was looking, you are looking through that word, Sung, he was looking
266. for local, so when you read you can look for something very broad, or you
267. can look for something very specific.

The teacher's task is to differentiate global and local reading and she uses various strategies to accomplish her goal. First, the teacher characterizes what global reading is in line 255 and 257 and then furnishes the example of that characterization in line 259-261. Here, the teacher's description "go scheme through" or "look for general understanding" is reflexively demonstrated by the example in 259-262 "look for something to see if there is anything interesting."

Once the teacher establishes what global reading is, this becomes a reference point from which she builds her next account for local reading as a contrast. The teacher begins with a general account "you are looking for something specific" and her example using 'Tommy' is presented to demonstrate local reading. That is to say, what otherwise would be seen as a simple binary relationship between account and examples, are shown as the interpretive work of understanding, as her examples specify and demonstrate her accounts that otherwise would have remained indefinite. Similarly, the following excerpt shows another case where the teacher's example is produced to specify her questions that are rather indefinite (line 438-440).
the biggest difference between your home culture and American culture,
what would it be, what's the first thing?
(3.0)
S1: Students are different.
T: No, no, no, that's the thing you wake up this morning, I think, students
are different, what do you think the biggest-
S0: //language.
T: Language, what else?
(3.0)
S1: Teaching system is different.
T: Talking about life not talking about school.
(laughter)
S1: I am sorry.
S?: (
T: Behavior, what kinds of behavior?
(5.0)
T: Like on the street behavior, behavior at home, (.) greetings,
(6.0)
S1: I think class size is a very important issue.
T: Class size?
S1: //Yeah,
T: //Is that the biggest cultural difference?

Note that the teacher's question in line 438-440 about "the cultural difference between your home culture and American culture" does not immediately get an answer. Instead, following a (3.0) pause, S1 tries a consecutive answers (line 442 and 448) which met with a strong disapproval from the teacher in line 443-444 and 449). The next answer 'behavior' in line 452 is received positively by the teacher; she repeats the answer and asks for elaboration by saying 'what kinds of behavior.' This call for elaboration is then followed by another silence of about five seconds. The teacher's example in line 455 "Like on the street behavior, behavior at home, (.) greetings" is produced under this sequential context.

Note that the organization of the examples in line 455 is to be understand as a part of the larger sequences in which the students have been trying to answer the question, 'the biggest difference between your home culture and American culture.' Yet, the subsequent interactional exchanges show that the teacher finds in the course of action that her initial question about cultural difference was essentially indefinite and led to various exploratory answers, though even they do not quite seem to work. The sequential
context, the teacher’s examples in line 455 are doubly bound: they are tied to her immediate question in line 453 “what kind of behavior” and at the same time to the initial question about “the biggest difference between students’ home culture and American culture.”

What otherwise would have been taken-for-granted as a part of the account-example binary actually involves sustained interpretive work on the teacher’s part; she comes to find the indexical nature of her initial question through question and answer exchanges with several students. In each exchange, the teacher and her students organize their talk for one another to show how they hear what was said. Based on that understanding, the teacher provides examples to illustrate how the question should be heard. Interactional exchange becomes an essential resource for the teacher as she determines what to say next; the teacher comes to learn what becomes problematic in the students’ understanding, and to estimate what example would be useful.

**Formulations and examples**

Routinely, the teacher has to characterize her examples in particular ways in order to help students see the examples in the ways she wants; therefore, examples are inevitably tendentious and oriented to a particular direction, selecting particular ways of seeing and saying things. The following excerpt illustrates a case in point as the teacher formulates the student’s remark before giving her example (236 and 240-245).^54

222035

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>246.</td>
<td>T: Yes, Jungkim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>247.</td>
<td>S1: My question is ahhh, how to make thesis-thesis statement(.) it can be little different, &gt;I mean styles are differents depends on the:: what kinds of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>248.</td>
<td>thesis statement, information paper, and response paper, persuasion paper,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>249.</td>
<td>thesis statement, little different, for example, Toshiko, I don’t like Toshiko,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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^53 I infer that the line 452 was ‘behavior.’

^54 The term “formulation” was taken from the work by Garfinkel and Sacks (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970) who use it to refer to the members’ practice of formulating their own conversation:

A member may treat some part of the conversation as an occasion to describe that conversation, to explain it, or characterize it, or explicate, or translate, or summarize, or furnish the gist of it, or take note of its accordance with rules, or remark on its departure from rules. That is to say a member may use some part of the conversation as an occasion to formulate the conversation (p.350-351)

That is to say, formulating practices is one of the ordinary linguistic actions that people use to clarify, identify, define, and/or describe what they are doing.
The teacher's example in 240 through 241 is heard to counter what the student (S1) was proposing in his example. First, the teacher formulates S1's last example as a "personal response type" (line 236) and compares it with her own example in line 240-241 "you are doing something like, some of the most important issues...." Second, she is giving another formulation of S1's remark in line 243 "you are not giving a personal, like or dislike" and then, she formulates the alternative she is suggesting "you are kind of evaluating." In this way, the formulations and example are mutually contexting.

Note the following example for a similar case where the teacher's formulation becomes an interpretive resource for the students to understand the example. The teacher formulates what S2 did in line 830-839.

((The teacher and her students are reviewing an article on difference in reading instruction in East-Asian countries and America))

843. T: She uses the word, decoding? what does that mean to decode something?
844. S2: Recording?
845. T: To what?
846. S2: If you record something,
847. T: That's recorded, what does that mean:
848. ((The teacher writes a Russian word on the board))
849. T: What do you think that word is?
850. S1: It's a sign.
851. (3.0)
852. T: Do you see Taehong?
853. S0: Uhu hmm.
854. (1.0)
855. T: What do you think that word might be, if I tell you it's a name of a place.
856. S?: A:
857. S2: //America.
The above sequence begins with the teacher’s demonstration of what decoding is: she writes a Russian word that means ‘America’ and S2 provides a correct answer in 826. Note that the teacher’s response to S2’s answer is formulating what S2 did, “you had to look and try to fit this letter… he took a guess probably.” In the subsequent turn, S2 provides his own formulation of what he did, saying “strategy.” The teacher acknowledges S2’s formulation as she continues “guessing is a strategy, he made a guess, he took what he know about the word and he decoded it.” The work of formulating an example illustrates how the work of “decoding” was made available in different ways of speaking, and how they involve distinctive methods of talking and listening on the teacher’s part. Through this interpretive work, the teacher accomplishes her task of explaining the term “decoding.”

The following segment also shows the teacher’s formulation and examples; here, the teacher explains to her students what to do and what not to do in doing their group essay writing.
This exchange is occasioned by S4’s question about the teacher’s written instruction on the assignment: namely, how to generate a topic sentence in their group essay.

The teacher’s response in line 807-809 begins with her formulation of ‘having an opinion’: “you don’t have a super strong opinion that says…,” and this is followed by an example that illustrates what a super strong opinion might be: “after reading these articles, our group has decided that computer should be never ever ever be used in the classroom.” This example establishes a reference point for the next turn in which the teacher provides an alternative case; if the first remark is her suggestion of what not to do, the subsequent formulation and example is her suggestion of what to do. That is to say, the teacher’s turn in line 811 “what you want to do is maybe, give a recommendation,” is heard to be in contrast to the previous formulation of ‘super strong opinion.’

Each example is provided along with repeated formulations that inform the students about how to understand these examples. At the same time, each example complements the other and specifies what the accounts point to. The accounts and examples thus elaborate each other; the sense of “super strong opinion” is being
constituted through her example “after reading these articles, our group has decided that computer should be never ever ever be used in the classroom” and this example teaches how to hear “super strong opinion.” Similarly, the teacher’s talk in line 820 is another formulation—and example of what students should not do as an account “it’s not going to be a personal opinion like what you have been doing in your response essay.”

The next excerpt also shows a teacher’s remark that provides contrastive comparisons through formulations and examples. Here, the teacher is trying to explain what needs to be done in peer review.

415235
(The teacher is talking about peer review and peer grading)
68. T: So three things I want you to keep in mind, () everyone gets comments
69. for both essays, you will have two essays to look at today, you need to make
70. sure that you look at both of them as an individual, and give some comments,
71. () OK, sometimes you have more than two people you will need to share
72. the essay () excuse me, second one, do not criticize but rather give suggestion,
73. ► () you might say, ‘hey, I can’t find your topic sentences in this paragraph or
74. ► there is no concluding sentence in this paragraph, I don’t understand where
75. ► it ends,’ OK, also three, you are looking only at structure and content, not at
76. grammar, OK?

Note how the teacher’s example follows her account “do not criticize but rather give suggestion.” In the subsequent turn, the teacher furnishes examples of what “suggestion” would look like (line 73-75). In this particular example, she is using the voices of the students who would be engaged in providing ‘suggestion’ not ‘criticizing’: “hey, I can’t find your topic sentence….”

Notice that the term “hey” in line 73 is a friendly term that could be used among friends and it represents a way of speaking that her students would adopt in their communication. The following two remarks in her examples “I can’t find your topic sentence” and “there is no concluding sentence” shares a one point: something is missing. Pointing out that something is missing in one’s writing therefore is how she illustrates and thus characterizes what suggestion means, as opposed to “criticizing.”

This section considers how examples are intricately mixed with the accounts (formulations) that they exemplify, as they are reflexive to each other. While each account formulates and characterizes what needs to be done, their meanings would
remain indefinite without examples as each of above segments illustrate, for example, what “what super strong opinion” means or what is “synthesizing.” Examples given by the teacher for each account point to a particular interactional trajectory that tells the students how to see the subsequent examples. Examples in turn clarify the indefiniteness of each account and brings out particular properties. Accounts and examples are interlocked and they elaborate on each other. Again, the interpretive work behind these account-examples are locally occasioned and situationally constituted; the teacher’s reaction, formulation and explanation are based on her analysis of how students hear her accounts and identify what kinds of interactional resources she needs to bring into view.

**Categorical matching**

While providing examples is a part of locally situated action sequences, each example also pulls into view some interactional resources that are unique and distinctive for the given occasion. One of the features that the teacher’s examples display is that they make use of categories in their talk. Members to talk-in-interaction make use of certain kinds of social categories or types in their talk (Hester & Eglin, 1997a); they describe persons (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979) or places (Schegloff, 1972). While the use of categories calls upon the teacher’s competence as to how she understands what the students know about the language, the context, and topic, her use of categories remains locally situated. That is to say, the sense of categories and their interpretive resources are very sensitive to the sequential organization of the given occasion.

The present section therefore reports a collection of excerpts that show the use of categories embedded in the teacher’s examples. Also note that the ESL classroom presents a unique challenge for the teacher because she does not share cultural and linguistic backgrounds with her students and such background is central to category use. The following excerpt illustrates the case in point where the teacher is trying to explain the teachers’ status in the US as is described in the assignment article that the students have read.

525017

((The teacher and students have been discussing teachers in East-Asian countries and in America))

597. T: So we can- so we can kind of guess what the, what the contrast is, they are respected in, in East-Asian and probably not so much in America, we
599. can also just of our knowledge kind of decide what she is saying, OK, except-
600. S5: Who is respected in America?
601. T: ( )
602. S5: Who is respected in America?
603. T: //Who is respected? doctors, lawyers, professional
604. sports players, Chicago Bulls.
605. (laughter)

The question by S5 in line 600 and 602 about who is respected in the US came from the article in which the author claims that the teachers are not respected in America (line 597-599). That S5's question is occasioned by the aforementioned discussion indicates that he is trying to find a comparative benchmark; he is trying to get a sense of what kind of professions are respected and then, he would understand the relative status of the teachers in the US.

The teacher's answer in line 603-604 therefore lists some professions that are respected in America and they are categorical remarks. This list certainly relies on the students common sense knowledge as to what these professions have in common and how that common feature is to be contrastive to the teacher's status in this country. This is the communicative competence on the teacher's part, and what she expects of their competence, as she brings out what the students are familiar with; the students recognize the teacher's work that her list displays as they produce a laughter in line 605.

Similarly, the next excerpt shows that the teacher is using an example for its categorical properties. Here, the teacher is responding to the question by a student who asks what kind of style they ought to use in their group writing.

423629
((The teacher and her students are discussing peer-review task))
170. T; Let me- Eddy was asking a good question, let me share with you, he
171. is asking (.) how do we do this, we have three people in our group we
172. all have different styles of writing, (1.0), style is not so important we
173. are talking about academic writing,
174. S3: That's why we spent 5 hours.
175. S1: //((
176. style?)
177. T: OK, academic writing is pretty much styled, pretty already prescribed
178. S3: //((
179. eighty dollars)
180. T: OK, so remember you are not submitting this to New York Times, you
181. can if you want, but for now, you are just doing a group exercise, the
182. exercise is more important than how do you reconcile problems in terms
183. of disagreeing or arguing in that.
The teacher's comment in 172 begins with a generic contrast between "writing style" and "academic writing": "...style is not so important, we are talking about academic writing." In the following turn, she elaborates that academic writing is pretty much already styled, meaning there are no different styles to choose from in this exercise.

Later in the turn, the teacher provides a contrasting example as a way to illustrate her point: "so remember you are not submitting this to New York Times." This remark evokes categorical properties as to the qualities that their writing should have. That is to say, the teacher uses a category of "New York Times" to illustrate the kind of writing and priorities she want her students to practice in this task.

That the use of examples rely on the common sense knowledge of the students is illustrated in the following excerpt. Note in the teacher's initial remark in line 3-9 that she is assigning an article that deals with a racial issue along with the reasons why she chose this article for the students' reading. My analytic interest in this excerpt is how the teacher explains "Dick and Jane" story to her students. Considering that the students in this class are from foreign countries and therefore they are not familiar with the story, this task of explaining what "Dick and Jane" could be a daunting task for the teacher.

414522

3. T: This is (.) an interesting article, it's, it's a true essay by aha, (.) man who
4. was born in America, but he is a Puerto Rican descent, and I thought,
5. because we talked a little about how the Ginangos were treated beca- treated
6. by the French and British because of (.) their Chinese background and so
7. forth, I thought this might be an interesting essay to look at, this will be
8. your journal for Wen- for Monday.
9. (1.0)
10. T: OK?
11. S1://What's the story about?
12. T: You will see when you read it, but I do want to explain to you is this,
13. this thing about Dick and Jane: it's very confusing if you don't understand
14. what (.) what this refers to, Dick and Jane are two characters in a very very
15. old traditional children's story book, we'd have asked my mother when she
16. was here, she knew the story Dick and Jane, she'd say, "Oh, yeah of course,"

183
17. OK? (.) it’s about two blonde, probably blue eyes children (.) one is named
18. Dick, one is named Jane who have a perfect house in a perfect family and
19. they have a perfect friend, they have a good dog, unlike my dog, they have
20. a dog name Spot, and all this (.) and the author uses this, I want you to look
21. at how he uses Dick and Jane, he uses them as an example (.) of the ultimate
22. perfect American white idea, OK?
23. S?: OK.
24. T: He is an Puerto Rican writing this, so he does not (.) fit into the quote and
25. quote Dick and Jane category (.) of the old story book.

First, note that the teacher formulates what this ‘Dick and Jane’ story is in line 14-15
“Dick and Jane are two characters in a very very old traditional children’s story.” This
characterization becomes the local context upon which her further talk is established.

Furthermore, the teacher’s remark on her mother in line 15 “we’d have asked my
mother when she was here” relies on the interactional history that she and her students
shared; reminding them of the time when her mother was present in the class. Second,
the teacher’s next remark “she knew the story Dick and Jane, she’d say ‘Oh, yeah of
course’” evokes a particular feature from the category that her mother could represent.
The question of which categorical feature to single out finds its answer in the sequential
organization of the talk; be reminded that this example of her mother follows her
characterization of the Dick and Jane category as a “very old traditional story” in the
previous turn. The teacher’s claim that her mother would recognize this story
immediately by saying “oh, yeah of course,” shows that she links this two categories; her
mother and old traditional children’s story; namely, this story is something that people
like my mother would recognize and this is the kind of story it is.

To sum, while “Dick and Jane” category is absolutely esoteric cultural knowledge
to the students, the teacher’s example uses the most familiar and thus immediately
recognizable categories for her students; “old traditional story” and “people like my
mother.” The teacher’s resource is therefore common sense knowledge that is available
even to her nonnative students. That is to say, the teacher brings out the interpretive
resource through her method of talking as she evokes the local history that students
shared, highlights particular properties of the given categories and makes them relevant
to the topic she is discussing.
The use of examples illustrated in the above excerpt are occasional and locally constituted, as the resources the teacher makes use of are from local resources; previous turns, shared history or common sense knowledge. One can list several categories that are used in this excerpt to provide theoretical characterizations of them; White idea, my mother, her nonnative students, Dick and Jane, old traditional story, Puerto Rican and so forth. Yet, there is no way to explain the work of teaching that this teacher displays, once these different categories are extracted from their contexts of use without referring back to the interaction in real time. That is to say, the interpretive work of teaching involved in this example is the teacher's method of talking in which she assembles the necessary objects, brings forth available resources, and shows how those resources ought to be seen in relation to the given pedagogical goal at hand.

**Conclusion**

There is no doubt that examples are one of the most familiar organizations of talk in classroom discourse; as part of the interactional work of teaching, one can see it in almost every other turn in classroom talk. The analytic understanding of examples has so far been formal in nature, attempting to figure out the generic properties in reference to the target constructs they exemplify. In this analytic undertaking, it becomes necessary to treat examples as discrete entities with prefigured properties, which would then be subject to pedagogical control. In contrast, the present study treats examples as part of ongoing discursive sequences, embedded in the ordinary work of teaching that carry out certain actions; to explain, demonstrate, analogize, compare and contrast. Examples therefore reflect the interpretive actions on the teacher's part as she estimates how her students hears her questions, recognizes what becomes problematic and what kinds of resources are needed in the given sequence of teaching.

The present section shows that teachers' examples are enacted within the larger sequence of teaching actions where participants are involved in elaborating and clarifying the indefinite nature of their talk; each turn at talk is not sufficient on its own terms. Rather, they require meaningful negotiation among participants; they ask, refer to and
formulate how they understand each other and based on that understanding, they
determine what to do next. The teachers’ examples are generated in this context of
managing the indexicality of the target accounts.

Teachers’ examples also contains various categorical properties which often
evoke particular resources. The question of what kinds of resources are pulled into view
depends on the teacher’s interpretive actions; sometimes she evokes the interactional
history she shared with her students while other times she relies on the common sense
knowledge students might have. Each example in this collection opens up a certain
property that is often reflexive to the accounts that the teacher is trying to establish; each
account is elaborated by examples, and examples are embedded in each account. That is
to say, the organization of examples are not separable from the accounts that they are
examples of. The teacher constantly formulates the proposed accounts, which informs
the students about what to make of the following examples.

Courses of Actions

In the literature of language education, the concept of communicative competence
has served a conceptual principle and analytic tool with which teaching goals are
established, activities are developed and the results are assessed. What teachers do in the
classroom therefore is often identified and evaluated in reference to the character of what
these conceptual principles render. Behind this conceptual formulation, however, there
are unrecognized and therefore taken-for-granted aspects of classroom activities.
Namely, each and every classroom task involves certain courses of actions that the
members take up, whether it is the discussion of a homework assignment or group
project. That is to say, classroom lessons involve practical sequences of actions.

There are occasions that bring these courses of actions sequences explicitly into
the members’ purview and as a result, they openly question what to do, speculate what is
involved, and estimate and project next adequate courses of actions. Note in the
following excerpt, for example, where the teacher’s instruction (line 24-26) consists of a
set of procedures of what to do for the task she is proposing.
((The students are about to do a free-writing exercise. The writing prompt reads: “Discuss your opinion of Schemmer in ‘The Chinangos,” did he act fairly?’))

18. T: Did he ask fairly?
19. S1: What did he do?
20. S2: (
21. T: Schemmer was the overseer, supervising.
22. (5.0)
23. S3: Do what?
24. ➤ T: Did he ask fairly, to do this, you need to write down the prompt, (0.5) then,
25. ➤ you have to remember who he was in the story, and then consider whether he
26. ➤ he acted fairly enough.
27. (4.0)
28. T: I will give you three minutes to write.

The teacher is explaining what to do in this free-writing exercise in line 24-26. Yet, notice that her remarks break this task down into several steps of practical actions sequences: “you need to write down the prompt,” “you have to remember who he was in the story” and then, “consider whether he acted fairly enough.” That this task is translated into courses of action sequences reveals an aspect of classroom interaction that has not been looked closely in the previous research. The current section therefore presents a collection of sequences that show the ways in which the practical courses of actions are recognized, questioned, reformulated and acted upon in the very course of the lesson.

**Accounts vs. Courses of actions**

The teacher’s accounts in the classroom carry out a wide variety of tasks: explaining concepts, reproaching students, and/or organizing activities. Yet, a closer look reveals that the bulk of these accounts are organized in terms of courses of actions sequences the students might have to take. That the teacher lays out courses of actions sequences is found in the encompassing range of her tasks: not just when she gives directives, but also when she provides definitions, explains concepts or even gives instructions on the tasks. The following excerpt displays a case where the teacher is explaining the difference between two concepts (global vs. local reading) by laying out the actual sequence of actions one might take for each case.

521345

((The teacher is explaining two different kinds of understanding: global vs. local understanding))
T: Local, (2.0) these are two, sometimes contradictory ideas of reading, global reading is when you take something and you just go scheme through, you look for general understanding, (1.0)

T: Like you might pick up the Lantern, (. ) or famous newspaper, you might just scheme through look for something to see if there is anything interesting, you might say, "really nothing," local, Ohio kind of thing, maybe you are looking word by word by word, you are looking for something specific, Tommy was just looking for his copy of the article, he was looking for something that look like the text that Eddie had, that had name Sung on it, he was looking through that word, Sung, he was looking for local, so when you read you can look for something very broad, or you can look for something very specific.

The teacher's task here is to explain two different kinds of readings and yet, her account is not a conceptual one, but a practical one in that she lists courses of actions for the students to follow. For example, the teacher's explanation about global reading in line 255 consists of two stepwise procedures: "you take something" and "you just go scheme through, you look for general understanding." (line 256-257). Similarly, her account for the opposite concept "local reading" is explained through describing courses of actions: "you are looking word by word by word, you are looking for something specific." (line 262-263). Similarly, the next example displays that the teacher explains what synthesis is through listing courses of actions for the students to follow.

((The teacher is talking about a group essay: The synthesis of three different articles the students have read))

T: This is (. ) a tricky essay, not in the sense you are not doing response, you are not including opinions, like you normally have been doing (. ) but you are synthesizing, that means taking (. ) information from different (. ) parts and putting it together, (1.0), like if you- you know what music synthesizer is, it takes like different kinds of music (. ) put all together in one instrument and you can do all different kinds of things with it, you are doing the same thing but with information, OK, so I wanted to point out some of the highlight to this.

In the above account of what synthesis is, the teacher translates it into a series of actions the students need to take: "that means taking information from different parts and putting it together." Note however that this method of talking is interactionally generated because her account is tied to and therefore contingent upon her previous remark. Her
account of synthesizing is drawn from and made relevant to how she understands what
the students are normally doing (line 25-26): "you are not doing response, you are not
including opinions, like you normally have been doing." This demonstrates that the
teacher's account is neither formal nor conceptual, but orderly and methodical in bringing
out interpretive resources from their local history that the teacher and her students share.

The teacher is listing of courses of actions is also found when she is explaining
the written instructions. Note in the following excerpt that the teacher translates one line
of instruction into several sequences of actions, thus giving the concrete sense of what the
students need to do.

314245
(After a series of questions about what to do on peer review)
32. T: Let's take a look at this, I know it's kind of confusing paragraph, "copy
33. of peer review of my essay," that means somebody peer reviewed you on
34. email, they send it to you, you print that out, then, on the bottom of that or
35. backside somewhere so I can see it, you write a paragraph describing how
36. how you incorporated your peer's comment, (1.0), OK, if (.) the comment
37. that Tommy gave you was just -- garbage? ( ) Tommy's comments, he
tell me to do things I didn't need to do, or those are really good ideas, so I
did this (.) OK, you will have two peer reviews for this assignment, draft
number one and draft two, you've already done one peer review, and you
you are gonna do the second one, so make sure both are in there.

What concerns the teacher in the above excerpt is the phrase "copy of peer review of my
essay," and the teacher's account in line 33-36 reveals the series of actions sequences that
the given phrase implicates. Similarly, the following excerpt shows that the teacher's
instruction on portfolio consists of courses of actions that the students are called to take.

815150
(The teacher is handing out an instruction on how to do portfolio)
32. T: This is a portfolio for what it's worth for this class, basically you get a
33. folder like this that has pockets, and has this, this things here, OK, what you
34. have, what the portfolio is, comprised of is beginning, there is a letter to me
35. (.) dear Suzanne, and in this letter, you are going to tell me about your writing,
36. and how it has changed over this quarter, now the way to do that, ( .) you
37. have to go back and look at everything you have written in this term, you
38. need to go back and look at your first paper, you second paper which I will
give you back today, you need to look at some of your first writing, you
39. need to look at your journals, your free writing, all kinds of stuffs that you
40. have been (.) writing, you need to go back and look at that, you have to,
41. basically, your job in this letter is to convince me that your writing has
The teacher's remark in 32-43 explains the instruction on how to do the portfolio to the students, and she lays out courses of actions sequences for the students to take. First, the teacher explains that the students need to get a folder, and then write a letter to her (line 33-35). In subsequent turn, she lays out a series of actions for the students to take to complete the given task.

That some of the teacher's accounts manifest the actual courses of actions sequences provides a telling glimpse of the nature of the work that the teacher's talk displays; namely, she is often called to provide accounts that are practical, actual and specifiable enough for the students to follow up. The choice of particular sequences of actions therefore reflects the teacher's competencies to recognize what goes on at the given moment and produce sequences of action that the students would recognize.

**Accountable action sequences**

The course of action sequences the teacher brings out are not simply an order of things to do. Rather, each action in a series has a organizational reasons for their positions in the sequence. Every now and then, the teacher explains or offers accounts for those rationales for particular courses of actions. Through them, the teacher justifies, reformulates, rationalizes, explains and illustrates what needs to be done. Note in the following example how the teacher provides explanation of why she is suggesting a particular course of action: "pick two or three issues" (line 124-125).

614424

((The teacher and her students are discussing writing assignments))

135. S3: How can I, you know place the aha:: your, compar- I mean, contrast, in
136. para- I mean, contrast in one para- oh, one body paragraph or and you know::
137. T: What you need to do,
138. S3: Hm::::::
139. T: What you need to do is to pick we have talked about this on Wednesday,
140. you need to pick, probably two or three issues that are common in both of
141. these articles and discuss them in your respon- in your synthesis section.
142. S1: Two?
143. S3: Yeah uh::
144. T: //Two or three issues, you can't compare and contrast the whole article
145. S3: //You probably
S3's question in 119-122 led the teacher to explain a series of courses of actions that the students need to take for synthesizing. This account is followed by the student's question regarding the number of issues (line 128). In the following turn, the teacher confirms the number “two or three” (line 130) and provides a rationale for these particular numbers “you can't compare and contrast the whole article, you are not summarizing them” (line 130, 132). This account by the teacher therefore brings into view the practical reasons why the teacher suggested that particular numbers for the students.

Similarly, the following excerpt shows that while the teacher is going through the instruction for the peer-group review, she provides the rationale for certain courses of actions she recommends.

The teacher's account in 183-194 provides a procedural account that illustrates what the students should be doing when they do peer review. Note that the teacher’s instruction in line 186-187 “make sure you sign off” is followed by her explanation of how signing off would be useful to other people involved in the project: “…so that they can come to you when they are confused.” In line 190-191, the teacher is providing a hypothetical situation “don’t tell him, ‘oh, I like your essay’” as an example of what not to do and her
The teacher’s remark in 43-53 shows her account for the student’s project: preparing the portfolio. She explains what the students need to do, using an example where the students decide to use their third assignment (line 46). This account is followed by her explanation of why she wants them to do in the way she described (line 50-51): “I want to see the whole package, not just the final draft, but how you worked up to that.” This rationale is also related to her suggestion on photocopying in line 47 “you should photocopy everything.”

The courses of actions that the teacher’s account manifests therefore display orderly sequences of actions where the presence of each action is accountable, whether it is organizational or pedagogical in nature. Occasionally, the teacher is called to bring out her rationale for the students to see the relevance of what goes on and this itself constitutes a part of the pedagogical work of teaching.
Opening up details of actions

That classroom tasks are often described through course of action sequences poses an analytic question as to what those descriptions consist of and what functions they perform. When the given tasks or issues are translated into procedural sequences, the members' interactional exchange often are evolving around generating specifics about what those action sequences require. The following excerpt shows, for example, that the student asks a question about a course of action sequence involved in the given task.

314155
((The teacher is reading the assignment sheet which lists things to do for peer review))
5. ► T: Copy of the peer review of my essay by, () that means if I give the copy
6. ► of my essay to Tommy () he- I will write Tommy () if I don’t have review
7. ► from Tommy, I have to explain why he didn’t do it, I gave it to him, he didn’t
8. ► do it or I didn’t give him the copy, OK? () I attended to the tutorial with
9. Suzanne, that means last week, did you come to tutorial with me?
10. S?: Yeah=
11. T: =Yeah, I think you all came, so put yes () I completed a peer review for::
12. somebody else () OK? and then, any comment you have?
13. ► S3: What if I, I sent email to Tommy for peer review,
14. (1.0)
15. ► T: And he didn’ t- he didn’t review your essay? (0.5) or did- did you peer
16. ► review him or did he peer review you?
17. ► S3: Both, for duh:: I, I did my comment to uhu:: Tommy ( )
18. T: That’s what he should have done.
19. S3: We do ( )
20. ► T: //And he should print them out, include in his folder, no, he prints
21. S3: //Not me right?
22. ► T: them out, cause they are in this assignment and then, you print out the
23. assignment, the comment he wrote, OK?

The teacher’s account in line 5-9 explains a part of instruction on “doing peer-review” and her account lists several courses of action that students need to take for this assignment. The question by S3 (line 13) opens up a further detail of what could be involved in this sequence: “what if I sent email to Tommy for peer review?”

The teacher’s subsequent remark in line 15-16 raises a further specific issue that was not mentioned in her previous account: “does that mean he didn’t review your essay” or “who is to review whose writing?” S3’s answer to the question therefore clarifies what becomes problematic. This exchange therefore shows that any part of a course of action sequence is subject to contingency as they open up more issues and thus require

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further negotiation; the members are therefore actively involved in managing the account by confirming, reformulating, questioning, and clarifying. Line 20-22, for example, clarifies who prints out what document.

Similarly, the next excerpt shows that students' questions are often directed to unspecified courses of action.

215043
((The teacher is talking about the group essay that students are to write))
94. T: ( ) that's why you have a sample, we are gonna look at
95. the sample a little bit, but what I want to do is to make sure you understand
96. the goal, the main goal of the assignment, you are taking information
97. and- from different sources and putting it together into one, yes.
98. ► S7: Aha.. do we have to read a like, aha, supposed to read, aha...(2.0)
99. ► an essay and then, combine it or::
100. ► T: I:: would not recommend you each try essay and try to combine it, you
101. ► need to write one essay between all of you as a group.

S7's question in line 98-99 addresses a procedural aspect of the given task: namely, are they supposed to write individually and then combine it or write one all together, a specific and practical detail what was not covered in the teacher's account in line 94-97. Similarly, the following excerpt shows another case of question by a student that deals with procedural issues.

830640
((Each group found a quote that would represent Clinton case from newspaper and put them on OHP))
360. T: But this is, this is a good idea (.) to start, some people think one way,
361. some think another way, but again, I can not emphasize enough, you need
362. to introduce the quotation, give it, it is really long, really really long,
363. summarize it, and then, you want to make sure, you explain it.
364. (2.0)
365. T: OK? (agree) Tommy?
366. (1.0)
367. T: Yes, Jungkim.
368. ► S1: When we summarize the quotation, do we have to use the quotation
369. ► marks?
370. ► T: It's a good question, if you, if you give a quotation, if you take the exact
371. ► words and put them in your paper, you have to use quotations marks,
372. ► author's name, page number.
373. S1: Uh hmm.
374. T: If you summarize it, or paraphrase it, just use the author's name and page
375. number, you only use the quotation marks to show that you- you use the
376. the exact words.
The student (S1)'s question in line 368-369 delves into more specific details than what the teacher's account (360-363) explained. That is to say, this question by S1 shows that the teacher's initial account is still indefinite and the student's question opens up specifics that is involved in the task. This is not a complaint that the teacher's account is incomplete, but an invitation to see the contingent nature of the interactional exchange in which the teacher and her students deal with the specific details of what to do in the course of actions and develop their accounts collaboratively. The following excerpt shows another case where the teacher's account addresses a litany of procedural and practical issues as she lay down a course of action sequence for synthesizing activity.

214914
((The teacher is talking about a group essay: a synthesis of three different articles the students read.))
38. ► T: What you need to be ready to do with your essay, your group essay, your
39. ► collaborative essay, is look at these different texts that you have, (.) you've
40. ► got:: two major texts, right? Computer requirement for students, using
41. ► technology in teaching, and then, the letter to the editor, you will need to take
42. ► (.) all three of these texts, and talk about all three of them (1.5) you can't
43. ► include all the information because you do have aha- you have a limit of (.)
44. ► seven hundreds fifty words, so what you need to be able to do as a group
45. ► first of all, read through these understand these, right, and then, you need
46. ► to be able to go into them and decide, what is, the whole thing education
47. ► and technology, but what are the subtopics, and that's what you will need
48. ► to decide as a group and then decide how you are going to organize, are you
49. ► going to whole to whole, part by part or point by point, that they call it here,
50. ► you need to make those decision, OK, you need to decide whether or not
51. ► not you are gonna make an outline together, do you want to jump right in and
52. ► do the draft, do you want assign somebody to do the introduction, somebody
53. ► to do this something else, something else, that's what you need to do here,
54. ► OK, you need to have constant communication about it.

Note that once the teacher relies on procedural courses of actions in her account, it opens up a litany of issues to address. Primarily, courses of actions are translated into ordered actions; first student need to read the whole article (line 45), then, decide the issue to write (line 46) and determine how to organize them (line 48). The decision of what to do therefore has a great deal to do with the stage of the action sequence. The use of examples shown in the above excerpt works to order the sequence and her comments
becomes very specific and concrete as to what becomes issues in each stage of actions; often those issues can not be made available in a generic account but appear only as the developing account.

Conclusion

That the array of classroom tasks are rendered through course of action sequences brings into view the practical details of teaching that the teacher display in her day's workings. While not all pedagogical talk by the teacher consists of describing action sequences, the bulk of what students do could be broken down into sequences of actions. This particular aspect of teacher talk is found in a vast range of classroom tasks. Even definitions, written instructions and directions are organized around practical sequences of actions to follow.

These action sequences are not randomly generated lists. The presence of each and every action has an organizational and sequential place within the developing account. That the vast array of courses of actions are described also means that the their descriptions have concrete references and therefore, the descriptions naturally opens up further details whose characters and relevance are specific and concrete. That the teacher is capable of translating the task into courses of actions is therefore part of her communicative competence as it calls for her ongoing estimation of what goes on and what the student knows at the given moment. At the same time, these accounts are collaboratively produced with the students and take shape across the contingence of interaction. The communicative competence they display and achieve is thus a shared competence.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of the present study is to respecify communicative competence through descriptive analysis of the phenomena of L2 interaction. The task of respecification is pursued by means of questioning what occurrences of language behavior could count as a competent case of language use, rather than formulating them theoretically and/or conceptually. The findings reported in the two previous chapters contain what might be found in the common, practical and ordinary practices of L2 classroom interactions as competent practices of language use.

This task of respecification therefore proposes a very different way to understand what communicative competence is and how to find it. While communicative competence is always considered the goal and outcome of L2 instruction, the analytic undertaking of respecification brings into view that communicative competence is the condition of L2 learning, as much as its outcome, once we look into methods of talking embedded in L2 communication.

Considering the diverse range of findings reported in the previous two analysis chapters, the present chapter is designed to address two issues. First, it revisits the rationales behind respecification, as a way to reiterate the ways to understand the analytic findings reported in the analysis chapters. Second, it discusses the implication of the present study for the L2 literature, especially the two areas of studies: the study of L2 language use and language classroom research.

The phenomena of language use and analytic description

The notion of communicative competence was a catalyst for the movement towards the communicative language teaching, providing the theoretical bases with which analysts formulate what is involved in competent language use. On a practical domain,
competence theories have furnished guiding principles for practitioners as they organize their language programs, test language performance and formulate teaching practices (Savignon, 1993; Spolsky, 1989).

Behind these achievements of competence theories, however, there is a possibility that the theories of communicative competence and their subsequent analytic programs take for granted the procedural aspects of L2 interaction; the language phenomena are treated as analysts' resources to represent and demonstrate their theoretical and programmatic formulations. As a result, the detailed methods of speaking and the order of interaction through which the teacher and her students accomplish their classroom activities are excluded from consideration as topics of inquiry in their own right (Zimmerman & Pollner, 1970). The prime case that illustrates this point is the teacher's questioning process.

Teachers' questions have received substantial amount of research attention and generated a litany of findings in educational studies (Carlsen, 1991; Cazden, 1986; Evertson & Green, 1986). In particular, the L2 literature has seen a number of studies that tap into various aspects of language teachers' questions (Chaudron, 1988; Lighbown, 2000): display vs. referential question (Long & Sato, 1983), the depth of cognitive processing (Koivukari, 1987) or communicative quality (Brock, 1986). While each of these categories becomes an analytic topic for examining questions, their findings tend to have little to do with procedural ways in which each question builds its course through interactional exchange between the teacher and her students. In other words, very few studies of questioning have looked into the interactional exchange between the teacher and her students in which the very sense of the questions are explored, reformulated, elaborated and made sense of in the course of action.

Another example that illustrates this familiar tendency to gloss over interactional details is found in studies of problematic utterances by L2 speakers. This analytic literature, called error analysis, has centered on formulating the types of errors and working out effective ways of correcting them (Corder, 1974; Edge, 1989; James, 1998; Richards, 1974). This undertaking, however, bypasses the interpretive acts of communication embedded in those utterances: in other words, even the incomplete and
inadequate utterances are the outcome of the L2 students’ interpretive acts and strategic moves. Its analysis also takes for granted how the teacher comes to terms with the problematic L2 utterances in the very course of interaction.

The point is that the use of abstract constructs inevitably runs the risk of locking the analysis away from recognizing the detailed procedural aspects of language phenomena. No matter how coherent the theories of communicative competence become, we still face an empirical task to demonstrate and describe actual occurrences of language behaviors that would count as competent language use. The question is how to retrieve these language phenomena and make them topics for analytic description: how to make the phenomena of language interaction investigatible such that the vast array of methods of talking and choices of actions could be pulled into view for analytic description.

In order to address this question, we follow the analytic insight from conversation analysis that sees the first achievement of natural language use is the accomplishment of common understanding (Moerman & Sacks, 1971/1988), first evidenced in the production of next turns, on time (Macbeth, 2000). Being able to produce a next turn at talk involves an array of competent acts of understanding by the members; the members need to attend to what the previous turns entail and figure out what to say and when. Their talk in natural interaction is not generated randomly or propositionally. Rather, turns at talk are the outcome of the constant interpretive actions and choices. Members make sense of what others say, display what they know, attend to the way meaning is constructed, and make available their analysis of what goes on in the course of their language use.

This provides the methodological bases for the present study whose primary focus is to retrieve the members’ own undertaking and practices of their discourse, by looking into the sequential order and production of their actions. Given that interactional exchanges consist of sequences of actions, the investigation of how one action is made relevant to another within a sequential and temporal domain makes it possible for the analysts to describe the members’ undertaking of their discourse.

The focus... is not on general constitutive conditions, or even on rules in Searle’s sense, but on practices and methods – on how members, in particular contexts (or classes of
context arrived at by examining particular contexts), methodically construct their talk so as to produce a possible instance of an action or activity of some sort, and to provide for the possible occurrence next of various sorts of actions by others (Schegloff, 1992b, p. xxvi).

This analytic approach does not intend to ignore what the prior research has accomplished, especially in the theories of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983; Preston, 1981; Savignon, 1983; Shehadeh, 1999; Spolsky, 1989; Swain, 1985; Widdowson, 1998; Williams, 1999). Rather, it insists on describing the phenomena of language use as it is produced by the members, and attends to the members’ methods of talking and choices of actions as they carry out their classroom affairs.

Respecification and its implication

It is noted that the primary analytic focus in the present study was to describe the methods that the members of L2 classroom deploy as they carry out an array of classroom tasks. This implies that the present analysis does not separate the practical actions the members accomplish from their linguistic means, for the sake of identifying linguistic patterns or discourse features independent of the context in which they are used. This requires a posit.

The traditional language studies begin their analysis with identifying linguistic patterns and/or discourse systems and then, look for the underlying agents behind those patterns or systems. For example, discourse analysis (DA) views that the coherence and order in conversation is found at the level of speech acts or the interactional moves that are made by the utterance of those expressions (Levinson, 1983). These speech acts or interactional moves are considered to generate and shape the discourse patterns. That is to say, their understanding of language actions is not procedural, but definitional in that they try to match the language patterns with the defined sets of language actions, rather than looking into the procedures by which the members make their own discourse in the course of interaction. The problem is that this view assumes that there is a well-defined set of action sequences that could correspond to the coherent sets of discourse patterns. Garfinkel formulates this undertaking as follows:
It is a conception in which a sign and referent are respectively properties of something said and something talked about, and which in this fashion proposes sign and referent to be related as corresponding contents (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 28).

In contrast, Garfinkel's own approach stresses that understanding language is not to be regarded as a matter of recognizing corresponding contents from language utterances;

but of understanding actions – utterances – which are constructively interpreted in relation to their contexts. This involves viewing an utterance against a background of who said it, where and when, what was being accomplished by saying it and in the light of what possible considerations and in virtue of what motives it was said. An utterance is thus the starting point for a complicated process of interpretative inference rather than something which can be treated as self-subsistently intelligible (Heritage, 1984, p. 140).

That is to say, the present analysis notes that members are engaged in a certain array of actions and therefore, describes the constitutive processes in which social events become shaped and made available for the members themselves, whether the teacher is explaining homework assignments or students are asking questions. The present study is therefore not interested in whether the given instances of language utterances correspond to certain categories of actions, but how each activity is organized in the very course of interaction:

We are not looking for those sorts of patterns which become visible only through comparing many different occasions or undergoing a sophisticated sociological training. We want to attend to those matters which are visible in the midst of the activity which manifests them (Sharrock & Anderson, 1982, p. 173).

That the present analysis treats the members' talk and their social affairs together brings into view that the work of teaching and learning is never generic; that is to say, whatever happens in the classroom, it is going to be about something specific on a certain day, within specific, practical and sequential contexts. The analytic task then is to describe closely how the members carry out their tasks weaving through the diverse array of interactional contingencies through looking into the sequential organizations of the talk. Since the task of respecification emphasizes the procedural details of language use and methods of talking embedded talk-in-interaction, the present study relies on a completely different approach in its reporting of the results, namely, it takes the descriptive analysis to be the ultimate goal of research undertaking. The question is what kinds of descriptive analysis is promoted here and how it is different from other perspectives.
Description owns its own pedagogy

The emphasis on members' own undertaking of classroom discourse resonates with the well-known catch phrase in classroom-oriented research in L2 literature, "to understand what goes on." Allwright and Bailey (Allwright & Bailey, 1991) put it, "in order to help our learners learn, it is not 'the latest method' that we need, but rather a fuller understanding of the language classroom and what goes on there" (xviii).

Despite decades of research endeavors to reveal "what goes on" in language classrooms, however, it appears that this task is linked to various theoretical principles and analytic assumptions. An overwhelming tendency is to recommend the description as a preliminary to the more thorough and complete explanation of educational phenomena. In other words, description alone is not sufficient, as Long claims:

The problem is that ...it is insufficient simply to describe what happened when particular structures were taught or particular pedagogic tasks were used, as so many studies have done. It is necessary to theorize beforehand (in these cases) the principles governing teachability and learnability (Long, 1989, p. 164).

And therefore, "when applied to a study, 'description' may be a label of condemnation, its dismissive qualifier 'mere' taken for granted" (Peshkin, 1993). This is why descriptive oriented analytic programs have fallen on hard times in recent years. In fact, L2 researchers have found the descriptive task "unwieldy" (Brumfit & Mitchell, 1990a), "too complicated" (Allwright, 1997) and "inadequate due to the lack of principles and sound theories" (Long, 1989).

This view of description reflects the traditional analytic view of language education studies: actual language phenomena are analyzed in reference to pre-given variables. Even among those research studies that center on socio-cultural elements, their methodological basis of theorizing remains the same in that language phenomena are formulated in terms of pre-given and external variables: those variables are considered identifiable across settings and independent of the actual interactional contexts. The research literature discovers these variables, identifies their operations and predicts their functions and roles, which become interpretive resources for the analysts as they identify, characterize and formulate actual language phenomena. That is to say, theoretical formulations and their methodological approaches determine what to see and how to see...
the language phenomena, and in the process, the practical activities of teaching and learning become simply the site for and evidence of whatever underlying variables that the analytic protocol promotes. Accordingly, the ultimate goal of analysis of language is to clarify and map out the relations among these underlying variables, and this constitutes ‘explanation.’ The analytic description of ‘what goes on’ takes on analytic value only when it produces information that is relevant to the analysts’ theoretical commitments to generating ‘explanation.’

This is not to disregard the accomplishment of the conventional studies of L2 communication, but to point out how the research literature identifies its analytic topics and formulates actual language phenomena. When descriptive work is tied to the analytic commitment to explanation, however, the very properties of practical actions that the teacher and her students accomplish become subject to theoretical formulations and programmatic slogans because language phenomena are understood as the interrelation of underlying variables. Note in the following comment by Long how the role of research is portrayed in reference to those pre-given and external constructs:

The goal of research on SLA, qualitative or quantitative, inside or outside the classroom, in the laboratory or on the street, is to understand how changes in that internal mental representation are achieved, why they sometimes appear to cease, and which learner, linguistic, and social factors affect and effect the process (Long, 1997, p. 319)

Theoretical constructs, such as internal mental representations and/or social factors, are interpretive resources for analysts who then determine ways to choose and process the language phenomena, rather than describing the phenomena as being experienced by the members. As a result, it is conventionally important for analysts to make clear their analytic views and assumptions because that is how the readers locate the theoretical and methodological premise that the given research is based on:

The demand is that the warrant they provide should be appropriate for the claims that they make. In times of shifting paradigms and competing perspectives, one cannot simply take the acceptability of one’s position on truth and reality for granted. One has to prepared to argue for it (Edge & Richards, 1998, p. 353).

It is not the intention of the present chapter to claim that its analytic undertaking is free of a perspectival point of view embedded in its own research undertaking. Nor is it
motivated to resolve analytic differences by proposing different ones. Rather, it intends to clarify and articulate that the descriptive analysis of the present study takes a completely different route.

Rather than relying on the general accounts of language phenomena that the theories of communicative competence propose, the description in the present study means to portray the order and competence of the members' own undertaking of what goes on: in other words, to demonstrate how the world is being experienced and assembled by them (Sharrock & Anderson, 1986). One of the keys to this task is to look into the sequential organizations of the talk because it allows the analyst to see the relations among action sequences, and this brings into view the members' methods of talking and choices of actions. The description provides a way to gain insight into how material worlds of context and contingency are made intelligible and sensible to the members as practical matters in the very course of action. This is not to disregard the litany of variables that the previous studies have generated. Rather we take it that:

The elemental problem is to understand not what patterns activities fall into, but how they are 'put together' into whatever patterns they might make: it is the assembling, not the final shape of the assembly, that is of interest (Sharrock & Anderson, 1982, p. 175).

The close attention to the details and local character in the present study should be understood, not as a zeal for the minute details, but as an analytic necessity to make accountable the ways the members manage and organize their classroom events. The previous two analysis chapters have furnished an exemplary descriptive analysis of how the orders of contingencies and interactions are organized by the members of the L2 classrooms.

Hymes' communicative competence formulates the general capability of language use and draws conceptual frames of references through which the "socially constructed nature of language" is accounted for. In contrast, the present study notes that realizations of social relations and cultural patterns are themselves on-going orientations and achievements in the L2 classrooms, enacted through the concerted activities by the members to L2 interaction. Therefore, the analytic focus is to describe how L2 classroom interaction is made visible, readable, interpretable, understandable, problematic and intelligible by the members of the interaction, as their competent hearing.
and productions. As we find the communicative competence in the description of how the members, the teacher and her students, manage the indefinite and contingent interactional affairs and accomplish their classroom task, the findings of the present analysis generate completely different implications for the existing L2 literature.

Respecification and L2 language competence

It is noted that competence theories have been used as analytic resources to characterize and explain the actual phenomena of language use; and actual occasions of language use are subject to the analytic categories that these theories proposed. Accordingly, L2 language use has been subject to various theoretical formulations, each of which identifies the underlying variables that shape and motivate L2 language phenomena. For example, a number of L2 theories of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; J. Cummins, 1983; Savignon, 1997) consist of multiple frames of reference through which various facets of second language use are to be revealed: for example, grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. There are other theoretical views that point to different epistemic characters: for example, the late-booming interest in the post-structural, interpretive and qualitative approaches that highlight the socio-cultural aspects of language use (Crookes, 1997; Holliday, 1999; Kramsch, 1993; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995; Ranney, 1992). It is noteworthy however that the difference among these different theories is epistemic in nature; that is to say, the differences are in the theoretical formulations and principles, not in their methodological approach as to how to analyze the second/foreign language use.

Accordingly, we still face an empirical task to demonstrate and describe actual occurrences of language behavior by showing the members’ orientation to the given analytic accounts, for example, competent language use. No matter how coherent the given theories of communicative competence become, the use of theoretical constructs inevitably runs the risk of turning the analytic focus away from describing the members’ grammar of actions, in favor of relating them to theoretical formulations.

While there have been various theoretical alternatives in the literature, suggesting different ways of understanding L2 language competence, their suggestions often remain indefinite and conceptual. They are conceptual, because they rely on the readers’
understanding of the logic and rationality of the given theoretical propositions, rather than on demonstrating them in and as the members’ methods of talking. They are thus indefinite, because actual L2 phenomena are infested with the vast array of exceptions and contingent variations, which defies the most complicated theoretical specification. Note the following comment by Cook who proposes a rather arresting theoretical alternative to the L2 studies:

Language teaching would benefit by paying attention to the L2 user rather than concentrating primarily on the native speaker. It suggests ways in which language teaching can apply an L2 users model and exploit the students’ L1. Because L2 users differ from monolingual native speakers in their knowledge of their L2s and L1s and in some of their cognitive processes, they should be considered as speakers in their own right, not as approximations to monolingual native speakers (Cook, 1999, p. 185).

To refer to the compound state of a mind with two languages of L2 language users, Cook coined the term “multi-competence.” Cook’s intent behind “multi-competence” is to point out that knowing two languages are qualitatively different from those of the monolingual native speakers in a number of ways (Cook, 1996). Rather than imitating native speakers, Cook argues, it would be more fruitful to focus on successful L2 user.

This alternative proposes a profoundly different implications for L2 professions in terms of setting up the goal of L2 instruction and theoretical formulations of L2 language use. Nonetheless, it should be noted that Cook still faces an empirical task of demonstrating what counts as a “successful case” of L2 users, as opposed to using native speakers as the formal standard. That is to say, what Cook calls for is to change the nature of the goal, theoretical constructs, the ways of thinking about L2 language phenomena. One might claim that this alternative undertaking might be more effective or fit to the present post-modern emphasis of diversity and multiple realities. Yet, there still remains an empirical task that would show what could be the cases of competent language uses by L2 speakers. That is to say, it does not resolve the task of demonstrating and bringing into view the competent practices of L2 uses in the most ordinary and practical use of L2 use.

This is not to refute Cook’s call for a different approach to L2 teaching. Rather, the present study considers his proposal as a topical matter, that the realization of going
Beyond native speakers is itself an on-going orientation and achievement by L2 speakers, enacted through the concerted activities by the members to L2 interaction. That this accomplishment is made available in the ways the members demonstrate in their practices and yet, taken-for-granted (Garfinkel, 1967) is a fundamental phenomenon this study sets out to examine and that is where we draw implications and contributions that the present study generate for the studies of L2 language use.

For example, Cook’s proposal for ‘going beyond native speakers’ is designed as a new goal for L2 instruction. Yet, the present study has shown that competent language use involves an array of interpretive actions from the L2 speaker. The section on “Building extended turns,” for example, has demonstrated that producing extended turns for L2 students calls for an array of interpretive acts. In the very course of action, L2 speakers monitor how their utterances become shaped, how they are made relevant to previous turn through what kinds of interpretive resources; based on that understanding, L2 speakers elaborate, repair, specify and qualify them in the very course of action.

It is at this level of language use that one can see what is involved in using L2 language. Unless the analytic description deals with the language use at this level, there is a possibility that Cook’s proposal could remain as a temporary fad, without any substantive analytic findings. When the analytic undertaking looks into the interpretive actions embedded in actual L2 use, one could find that the competence is not simply a matter of producing theoretical demarcations or formulating epistemic characters. While Cook tries to propose an alternative theoretical guideline for L2 research, it remains to be seen how his proposal is made available and describable empirically and in and as the members’ methods of talking because members are seen to have competence of language use that makes L2 instruction possible. Cook’s insight will never work as a proposal as long as the conventional analysis approach remains intact.

Each and every interactional task in the classroom demonstrates that L2 students display their interpretive actions and their choices of actions and this very competence becomes a basis for the teacher to carry out their classroom activities. While conventional research may formulate what goes on in reference to theoretical projections, the present study demonstrates the procedural details of each interactional episode. These
procedural details inform language professionals of the actual, occasional, practical and contingent nature of their classroom interactions. Before relying on the theoretical formulations, this brings into view the indefinite and open field of L2 language use. Its competent use displays that the L2 users do not begin just zero competence, but they are already very competent language users who know how to see the language field, recognize the relevance and determine what to do next. Highlighting this aspect of L2 competence and making it available analytically is the task that comes before theoretical formulations and this is where we find the contributions that the present study can make to the existing L2 studies of language use.

**Respecification and classroom oriented research**

The general goal of educational research is to find ways of enhancing learning, increase the effectiveness of teaching practices, and provide the means to change and transgress the status quo. In particular, the research literature on classroom language learning is at the forefront in dealing with topics that are directly relevant to language teaching practices. The question then becomes, what kinds of contributions can the alternative analysis make to existing classroom oriented research.

I contend that before generating any useful prescriptions for language practitioners, there is a clear need for descriptive studies to document and illustrate the process of teaching and learning on its own terms. Only through description of what goes on in the classroom on its own terms, can the organization of L2 instruction be seen in its entirety. The distinctive nature of the respecification of language classroom studies of the present study is that it specifies L2 teaching by showing how the classroom activities are organized by the teacher and her students themselves. This analytic task calls for a different expectation as to what we can find about classroom learning from analytic description. McDermott addresses the issue of how to see classroom learning and how to describe it analytically:

The term learning simply glosses that some persons have achieved a particular relationship with each other, and it is in terms of these relations that information necessary to everyone's participation gets made available in ways that give people enough time on task to get good at what they do. If that happens enough, it can be said that learning happens...This is a primary fact that we have made little use of theoretically. If we can stop focusing on who learns more or less of particular, culturally
well-defined fragments of knowledge, and ask questions instead about what is around to be learned, in what circumstances, and to what end, learning achievements would become statements about the point of contact available to persons in various social settings (McDermott, 1993, p. 277)

The descriptive task that the present study takes on therefore shares McDermott's concern, treating classroom interaction as work-practices, describing the participants' practices of work displayed in their methods of talk as they manage the local specifics and accomplish their affairs. The present study exemplifies the analytic descriptions of how the teacher and her students assemble their lives in their classroom together, and finds collections of competency's evidences. This is the very competence that permits L2 instruction to take place; through this competent work, instruction falls into place, curriculum material is brought into view, speakers are nominated and activities are developed. This descriptive task becomes the basis for the respecification and finds its foremost contribution to the existing L2 classroom oriented research.

Accordingly, the analysis chapters are organized around the most familiar classroom activities found in the L2 setting. Each section in the analytic chapters is therefore not theoretically motivated nor conceptually devised. Rather, they consist of collections of competent language use by the teacher and her students in the midst of the most ordinary and familiar classroom activities. The section titled "Teaching through examples" illustrates, for example, that the present analysis looks into the most mundane and ordinary work of teaching by means of describing interpretive acts of communication when the teacher uses examples in her teaching. The analysis describes how the teacher organizes her examples based on her understanding of how the students understand her accounts, evokes some common sense knowledge, brings out the shared history and make her accounts more intelligible.

Another example that shows the descriptive analysis of the familiar L2 classroom activities is the section titled, "Dealing with L2-ness." While L2 utterances are infested with incomplete, imperfect, incorrect phrases or expressions, they are parts of lively talk-in-interaction that call for immediate, contingent and recognizable communicative acts from the teacher. That is to say, dealing with the incomplete and imperfect L2 utterances involves an array of interpretive work of communications on the teacher's part as she
consults what the students know, recognize what becomes problematic in the foregoing sequences of talk and estimates optimal ways of addressing the problems. Furnishing the analytic description of how the teacher comes to terms with problematic L2 utterances furthers our understanding of the professional work that is distinctive for L2 teachers.

The section on "Courses of action" demonstrates that the bulk of classroom learning and teaching activities involve a procedural sequences of actions that the members to take, whether it is a homework assignment or group projects. The bulk of classroom tasks are often translated into the courses of action sequences and therefore, this aspect reminds us that classroom teaching is an essentially practical action, not simply conceptual exercises. This does not mean that teaching involves simply ordering an array of action sequences. Rather, the presence of each and every action has an organizational and sequential reason at the given moment: their presence is accountable. Describing how this is so is an empirical task that the present study demonstrates through its descriptive analysis: For example, the present study reports occasions where some parts of action sequences are brought into the members’ purviews, and displays that they question what to do, speculate what is involved and project the adequate next course of action.

Description of this kind therefore comes before theoretical formulations of what goes in the classroom as it brings into view the procedural details of how the classroom activities are organized. Instead of formulating the teacher’s talk in reference to such analytic categories as foreigner talk, comprehensible input or negative feedback (Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 1990; Pica & Doughty, 1985; White & Others, 1991), the present study finds the teacher’s competence in her assembling work as she pulls together the litany of practical resources and accomplish her work of teaching. It is at this level of practical enactment of classroom instruction where any suggestion for pedagogical changes or any reform movement might commence:

Reformers, however, seldom ask the basic questions: How do teachers teach? Why do they teach the way they do? Instead, they frequently leap to the question: How should teachers teach? In doing so, these policymakers and practitioners often harvest disappointment from reform expenditures... Thus the premature question – how should teachers teach? – yields a shallow conclusion for reform failures: intransigent teachers
were to blame. Asking prior, more fundamental, questions about existing practices and investigating what these practices yield produces a very different analysis (Cuban, 1987, p. 34)

Essentially, the analysis in the previous chapters therefore is presented not as a challenge to the conventional classroom oriented research, but as suggestions as to how we might begin the inspection of such instances (Sharrock & Anderson, 1982). The close enactment of classroom tasks therefore provides basis and resources for the professionals to shift their attention to more procedural aspects of their work, exploring what they are capable of, how their students react to their remarks and what kinds of interactional consequences are generated.

**Limitations and future studies**

Because the analytic goal behind the respecification of communicative competence is to describe in procedural details the interactional organization *in and as* members' own undertaking, the question of what kinds of studies could follow the present study is somewhat different from what we find in the future studies section in traditional L2 research. Conventionally, each research finding is recognized as being a part of the larger analytic literature with similar research topics and research methodology and this is how the continuity of the research literatures are maintained. It is only through incorporating various research studies therefore that one gains insight into the wholesome understanding of the phenomena under study.

It is difficult to maintain that one view of classroom events is more accurate than another. Rather, we must learn from each perspective, identify matches and mismatches among perspectives, and examine relationship between perceptions and behavior... By investigating several perspectives in each study, we will improve our understanding of the social reality of classrooms (Weinstein, 1983, p. 306)

In this perspective, it is important to recognize the relation between language phenomena and the research perspective, namely, *analysts' interpretation of the world* (Denzin, 1995; Edwards, 1991) because the theoretical premise and its methodological rationales determine the entire research process.

In contrast, the analytic undertaking of respecification takes a different analytic route and the findings of the present study invites a very different kinds of research
projects for future studies. Two lines of future research seem appropriate as a result of this study. One would be to continue to explore the analysis of the transcribed collections presented in the previous two chapters. The other would be to continue and extend descriptive analysis to other topical collections.

The analytic description presented in the previous chapters could be further developed. The description of transcribed discourse represent the interpretive acts of communications that the teacher and her students display. Many analytic descriptions of the interactional exchanges are too brief to show the diverse range of members’ practical methods of talking each transcribed discourse display. That is to say, each transcribed collection deserves more in-depth analytic account in order to demonstrate systematic and orderly production of language use in the classroom. For example, due to the analytic focus on bringing together similar cases of language interaction, the organizational details for each segment did not receive the sufficient space: each turn at talk involves the interpretive actions on turn-taking organization.

Analytic descriptions therefore remain at an exploratory in order to make the findings intelligible with particular focus on giving the sense of what the teacher and her students are doing as the basis for the descriptive analysis. Future studies therefore could take up each collection and furnish more detailed analyses to describe the members’ choices over alternative courses of actions, whether it is a matter of regulating the turn-taking issue, or of bringing into view some interpretive resources. Looking into detailed interactional organization can furnish us with a fuller understanding of what goes on as Schegloff has noted:

Though it prompts impatience in those who aspire to more global claims and assertions, over and over again close examination of brief exchanges which may initially appear to casual inspection to be utterly unremarkable, or even transparently characterizable in vernacular or commonsense terms, turn out to yield rather complex, and different complexioned, understandings (Schegloff, 1997, p. 180)

It is through their sophisticated work of understanding that the members accomplish their ordinary classroom affairs.

The second task for the future studies is to look for different collection of competency’s evidences, than ones reported in the analysis chapters. There are a number
of candidate collections of interactional exchanges that would constitute the practical
tasks and classroom events that the teacher and her students encounter in their L2 lessons.
The following lists include those organizational details that were not included in the
analysis section because the data corpus did not contain enough numbers of cases that
display the similar methods of talking.

Upon gathering further data, convincing evidences of the competent practices of language
use in L2 classroom might be made. For example, although the analytic chapter features
the teacher's questioning process as evidence of competent practices of talk, students'
questions also display distinctive organizational features that reveal the litany of
interpretive work of understanding on the students' part. The teacher's talk also displays
several other organizational works: for example, the bulk of her talk is oriented to
organizational and management work in her classroom. There are also a number of
interactional exchanges that display ways in which the teacher and her students deal with
the cultural aspects of talk embedded in the talk-in-interaction. As long as the analytic
descriptions are oriented to the members' own undertaking of their discourse in the
sequential organization, future studies would bring into a new way of understanding this
talk-in-interaction.
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APPENDIX A

STUDENT CONSENT FORM
I am writing you this letter to request for your permission for me to observe and tape this 107 classroom. I am a graduate student in the field of Foreign Language Education. This is a relatively new field which gains most of its knowledge from observing and talking with students in foreign and second language classrooms. I am interested in how communication is developed within a classroom (how students and teacher interact, etc.). Therefore, I have chosen to observe this 107 class.

Throughout this quarter, I would like to observe and possible tape (audio and/or video) your class upon your permission. None of this will affect your 107 grade in any way nor will your identity be revealed in any context without your permission. Later I will analyze the information (data) that I collect; should you at any time want to see the data or ask questions about them, feel free to contact me.

On the bottom of this page, I have included a permission slip for you to sign. This acknowledges that you understand that you will not be affected by this study in anyway and that your identity will remain anonymous. This form also allows me to observe and tape the class in the remaining summer quarter. Please sign and date the form and return to me as soon as possible. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

July 13, 1998

Yo-An Lee

Student Consent Form

I understand the purpose of the study and allow Yo-An Lee to observe and to tape this 107 composition class. I also consent to the sue of the data for analysis and research report.

Name (Print) __________________________

Signature ____________________________ Date ________________
APPENDIX B

Transcript Notation
Transcript Notation

1. Overlapping: //
   T: The question that you had before the exam
   S: //just reading that

2. Contiguous utterances: =
   There is no interval between adjacent utterances, the second being latched
   immediately to the first.
   T: Your text, you are not, you are reading a story.
   S: Oh, yeah=
   T: =Yeah.

3. Intervals within and between utterances: (1)
   When intervals in the stream of talk occurs, they are timed in tenths of a
   second and inserted within parentheses, either within an utterances.
   T: Does she talk about translating?
   (1.0)
   T: She calls it transferring.

4. Prolonged speech: :::
   S: I think they look, uhm::: read the same way to be::: you know,

5. Emphasis: ______
   T: Dick and Jane are two characters in a very very old traditional
   children’s story book.

6. Faster speech: > <
   When part of an utterance is delivered at a pace quicker than the
   surrounding talk.
   T: Describe, kind of- an adverb, describes a verb, right, I walk slo::wly, >I
   walk quickly< right?

7. Cut-off: -
   A short untimed pause within an utterance.
   T: I think they- they look- uhm:::

8. Quite speech: o o
   S: Aha::: oUhm::o, let’s see.

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